e-ISSN: 2582-5208
International Research Journal of Modernization in Engineering Technology and Science
(Peer-Reviewed, Open Access, Fully Refereed International Journal)
Volume:06/Issue:11/November-2024 Impact Factor- 8.187 www.irjmets.com

ENERGY-EFFICIENT IOT DEVICE MANAGEMENT USING ESP-32 FOR SMART AGRICULTURE: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a comprehensive review of energy-efficient IoT device management techniques in smart agriculture using ESP-32, a low-cost and versatile microcontroller with Wi-Fi and Bluetooth capabilities. With the rapid development of IoT and precision agriculture, IoT device management becomes a crucial challenge, particularly in optimizing power consumption while maintaining reliable and timely data collection. By reviewing 15 recent research papers, we explore various approaches to address this challenge, focusing on ESP-32-based architectures, protocols, and management strategies for energy efficiency in smart agriculture. The insights and findings discussed in this paper contribute toward achieving sustainable IoT deployments in agriculture, with implications for both large-scale and small-scale farming.

Keywords: Energy-Efficient Iot, Smart Agriculture, ESP-32 Microcontroller, Power Optimization, Sustainable Iot Deployment.

I. INTRODUCTION

Smart agriculture represents a transformative approach to farming that incorporates IoT technology to enhance productivity, monitor environmental conditions, and optimize resources such as water, nutrients, and energy. By deploying IoT devices across agricultural fields, farmers gain access to real-time data on soil moisture, temperature, humidity, and plant health, enabling precise and timely interventions to boost crop yield and efficiency. This data-driven approach also contributes to sustainable resource usage, as farmers can reduce waste by targeting specific areas with tailored inputs. In large or remote fields, where traditional monitoring is labor-intensive or impractical, IoT solutions offer a scalable means to automate data collection and improve agricultural management.

Despite these benefits, the widespread use of IoT in agriculture faces a substantial challenge in managing power consumption. IoT devices deployed in fields are often far from electrical grids, making consistent power supply a significant concern. Consequently, ensuring these devices are energy-efficient is critical to their success, especially in remote or off-grid locations. Without careful power management, devices would frequently require battery replacements or recharging, leading to increased maintenance costs and interruptions in data collection. Efficient power management is thus essential for continuous monitoring and smooth operation, minimizing the need for manual intervention and maximizing the uptime of these systems.

The Role of ESP-32 in Agriculture IoT

The ESP-32 microcontroller has become a favored choice in agriculture IoT applications because it combines energy-efficient operation with robust connectivity. Developed by Espressif Systems, the ESP-32 is known for its cost-effectiveness and versatility, equipped with integrated Wi-Fi and Bluetooth capabilities that enable seamless communication even in remote settings. Additionally, it offers various low-power modes, allowing it to switch between active data collection and low-energy states as needed. This feature is especially useful in applications like smart agriculture, where continuous data collection is necessary, but constant communication is not. The ESP-32 can monitor environmental parameters and store data locally, processing it on the device (an approach known as edge computing) and transmitting only essential information. This selective transmission approach significantly reduces energy consumption while maintaining the system's reliability.

With its dual focus on low power consumption and reliable connectivity, the ESP-32 is an attractive solution for IoT systems that need to operate in challenging agricultural environments. In practice, this means that an ESP-32-based sensor system can operate on battery or solar power for extended periods, offering farmers an efficient and scalable solution for monitoring large fields without the need for frequent maintenance.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 ESP-32 and its Applications in Smart Agriculture

The ESP-32 microcontroller has emerged as a powerful platform for IoT applications, especially in agriculture. Its built-in Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connectivity, coupled with low power consumption modes, make it ideal for remote sensing and monitoring applications. In research paper [1], ESP-32's capability to handle complex data from multiple sensors was emphasized, where authors developed an automated irrigation system with real-time soil moisture monitoring. They noted that efficient power management strategies significantly extended the lifespan of the system, minimizing the need for frequent maintenance.

In research paper [2], the authors explored the use of ESP-32 for a weather monitoring station, showcasing its ability to integrate seamlessly with various sensors, including temperature, humidity, and light sensors. The study highlighted that leveraging ESP-32's deep sleep mode contributed to a 30% reduction in power consumption, which is critical for long-term agricultural monitoring applications.

2.2 Energy-Efficient Communication Protocols

Communication protocols play an essential role in managing energy efficiency. Research paper [3] examined the use of lightweight communication protocols, such as MQTT, over ESP-32 devices in smart agriculture. The findings suggested that MQTT, due to its minimal overhead and efficient data handling, reduced the energy required for data transmission by nearly 20% compared to HTTP. Another study [4] explored LoRaWAN with ESP-32, where authors found that long-range communication minimized the number of relays, thus enhancing the battery life of IoT devices in large agricultural fields.

In research paper [5], researchers introduced adaptive duty cycling based on environmental conditions, allowing the ESP-32 device to alter communication intervals dynamically. This adaptive technique resulted in approximately 25% power savings during non-critical periods, making it ideal for applications where constant monitoring is unnecessary.

2.3 Power-Efficient Data Acquisition and Processing Techniques

Data acquisition and processing are energy-intensive tasks in IoT deployments. In research paper [6], a low-power data acquisition framework for ESP-32 was presented, utilizing onboard processing to filter and compress data before transmission. This approach reduced transmission frequency, which, in turn, conserved power. Additionally, research paper [7] developed a system that used edge computing on ESP-32, where data from sensors was processed locally. The findings showed a reduction in overall energy consumption by 18%, as fewer transmissions were required.

Another innovative approach in research paper [8] involved employing a tiered data-processing architecture with ESP-32. Here, the authors divided tasks between the ESP-32 microcontroller and a cloud server, allowing energy-intensive computations to be offloaded, thereby conserving power on the ESP-32 device.

2.4 Energy Harvesting Techniques

Energy harvesting has been proposed as a promising solution for prolonging the lifespan of IoT devices in agriculture. In research paper [9], solar energy harvesting was integrated with ESP-32 to support its operation in a crop monitoring system. The study showed that, with a 10 W solar panel, the ESP-32 device could operate autonomously for extended periods, eliminating the need for frequent battery replacements. Similarly, in research paper [10], piezoelectric energy harvesting was employed in conjunction with ESP-32 to generate power from mechanical vibrations in the field, which was particularly effective in windy conditions.

2.5 Power Optimization Algorithms

Optimization algorithms can significantly enhance energy efficiency. In research paper [11], authors presented an energy-efficient task scheduling algorithm for ESP-32-based agricultural IoT systems. The algorithm prioritized high-energy tasks during peak sunlight hours, allowing solar-powered devices to complete intensive tasks when energy was most available. Research paper [12] introduced a machine-learning-based prediction model that adjusted the sleep schedule of ESP-32 devices based on environmental patterns, achieving an average energy savings of 35%.

A notable optimization approach in research paper [13] employed a genetic algorithm to dynamically adjust ESP-32's power modes in response to changing environmental factors. This adaptive power control method was shown to extend device lifetime by 40%, demonstrating its effectiveness in managing power consumption in unpredictable agricultural environments.

2.6 Case Studies and Applications

In research paper [14], a case study was conducted using ESP-32 to manage water usage in a vineyard. The study implemented a moisture-based irrigation system that reduced water waste by 45% while also extending device battery life through strategic power management. Another case study in research paper [15] examined pest monitoring in rice fields using an ESP-32-powered sensor network. The authors demonstrated that by using energy-efficient protocols and optimizing device sleep cycles, they could continuously monitor pest activity without significantly draining power. In research [16], it is mentioned that This study quantifies agricultural variables including temperature, humidity, and soil moisture that have an impact on production. Nevertheless, keeping an eye on environmental variables is essential to raising agricultural yields. Two chilli plants—one with and one without an automated system—were used in the experiment. They were irrigated by hand once a day at 7:00 a.m. While the other plant's moisture measurement keeps declining, it is projected that the plant with the technology can maintain the ideal moisture level. Additionally, automated watering speeds up plant development in comparison to manual watering. As a result, it is expected that a smart agricultural system will increase plant growth and system efficiency.

In [17], it is mentioned that This working model's primary idea is to use electronic sensors integrated into the agricultural field to offer a smart irrigation system. The field and its crops might get a reaction based on the value detected by the sensor. The sensor's data can be updated on a specific webpage or through the Internet of Things module that is used in the system. For example, the temperature and moisture levels are tracked via the Internet of Things, and if they are found to be below the ideal range, irrigation is turned on automatically, eliminating the need for manual water regulation.

III. CONCLUSION

The ESP-32 microcontroller, with its low-cost, low-power consumption, and integrated communication features, is increasingly becoming a staple in smart agriculture applications. As evidenced in recent research, effective power management strategies, such as energy-efficient protocols, optimized data acquisition, and power harvesting, can greatly enhance the sustainability of IoT devices in agricultural settings. Each of these strategies contributes to minimizing power consumption while ensuring the functionality of remote monitoring systems. Future research can further explore hybrid approaches that combine multiple power-saving strategies and adaptive techniques for even greater energy efficiency.

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