**Intelligent street light system using IoT**

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**ABSTRACT:**

In the age of smart technology, energy consumption and automation are essential components of a sustainable smart city. “Intelligent street light system” utilizes IoT concepts to optimize energy use by automatically adjusting LED brightness based on ambient light level detected by the LDR sensor. This is built with an Arduino microcontroller, LDR (Light Dependent Resistor) sensor, and LEDs. The system automatically adjusts the brightness of the street lights based on the ambient light levels detected by the LDR sensor. When natural light is low, the LEDs glow brighter, and when there is sufficient daylight, the intensity reduces, thereby conserving energy and also improving visibility.

**Keywords:** Smart Street Light, IoT, Arduino, LDR Sensor, Energy Efficiency, Automation.

1. **INTRODUCTION:**

Street lighting is a vital part of public infrastructure that ensures the safety and visibility of roads, pathways, and public areas during low-light conditions. It significantly contributes to reducing road accidents, discouraging criminal activity, and enabling secure pedestrian movement. Despite its importance, many existing street lighting systems are inefficient, outdated, and energy-consuming. Most operate on fixed schedules using timers or manual controls, regardless of the actual lighting or environmental conditions. This approach often results in unnecessary energy consumption and inadequate lighting in situations where real-time adjustment is needed.

Environmental factors such as seasonal changes and unpredictable weather conditions can cause variations in natural light availability. For example, during summer, daylight often lasts until 7 PM, but traditional systems may turn lights on as early as 6 PM, wasting electricity. In contrast, during winter or cloudy days, darkness may fall by 5 PM, yet lights may not turn on until later, leading to poor visibility. These inconsistencies highlight the shortcomings of fixed-timing systems in addressing real-world needs.

Some advancements have been made in the form of light-sensitive systems that use Light Dependent Resistors (LDRs). These systems can detect ambient light and turn lights ON or OFF accordingly. However, while LDR-based automation provides a limited improvement, it still does not fully solve the problem. These systems cannot detect visibility issues caused by fog, heavy rain, or pollution, where light levels may not fall below the threshold, but visibility is still poor. Moreover, most of these systems only offer a binary lighting mode (ON/OFF), without any ability to adjust brightness based on the actual requirement.

1. **EXISTING SYSTEM:**

In most urban cities across the globe, street lighting networks use conventional control systems that depend on simple electronics and a restricted sensing capability. These two broad categories are mostly time-controlled systems and motion sensor-based systems.

1. **TIME-CONTROLLED STREET LIGHTING SYSTEMS**

Most widespread street lighting uses pre-programmed schedules. A microcontroller or a simple programmable timer is employed to switch lights on and off at specific times, typically from sunset (say, 6 PM) to sunrise (say, 6 AM). These times are programmed manually or by astronomical clocks that compute sunset and sunrise times from the city's geographical coordinates. The circuitry may include relays or contactors to switch high-voltage lights on and off. Though such systems are inexpensive and dependable, they do not take into account actual-time illumination conditions such as cloud cover, fog, or rain.

1. **MOTION SENSOR-BASED STREET LIGHTING SYSTEM**

To render lighting energy-efficient, some systems use motion detection through Passive Infrared (PIR) sensors or ultrasonic sensors. These sensors identify movement from vehicles, bicycles, or pedestrians. Upon detecting movement, the streetlight is switched on or becomes brighter. It dims or turns off after a time period of inactivity (a few minutes to seconds). This method saves power by utilizing full brightness only when it detects activity. Sensor data is generally processed by microcontrollers such as Arduino or Raspberry Pi, which regulate the levels of lighting.

1. **LIGHT-DEPENDENT RESISTOR-BASED SYSTEMS**

Some systems also have Light Dependent Resistors (LDRs) to sense ambient light. At times when natural light falls below a specific level (such as in dusk or foggy conditions), the system turns on the streetlights. LDRs provide a limited degree of automation based on environmental lighting but do not cover other visibility conditions such as heavy rain or fog.

LDR-based systems in existence only offer typical binary ON/OFF control rather than adjusting the intensity of the lighting, which limits their efficiency and adaptability. These limitations highlight the need for more advanced and multi-sensor-based lighting systems.

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1. **PROPOSED SYSTEM:**
2. **OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSED SYSTEM:**

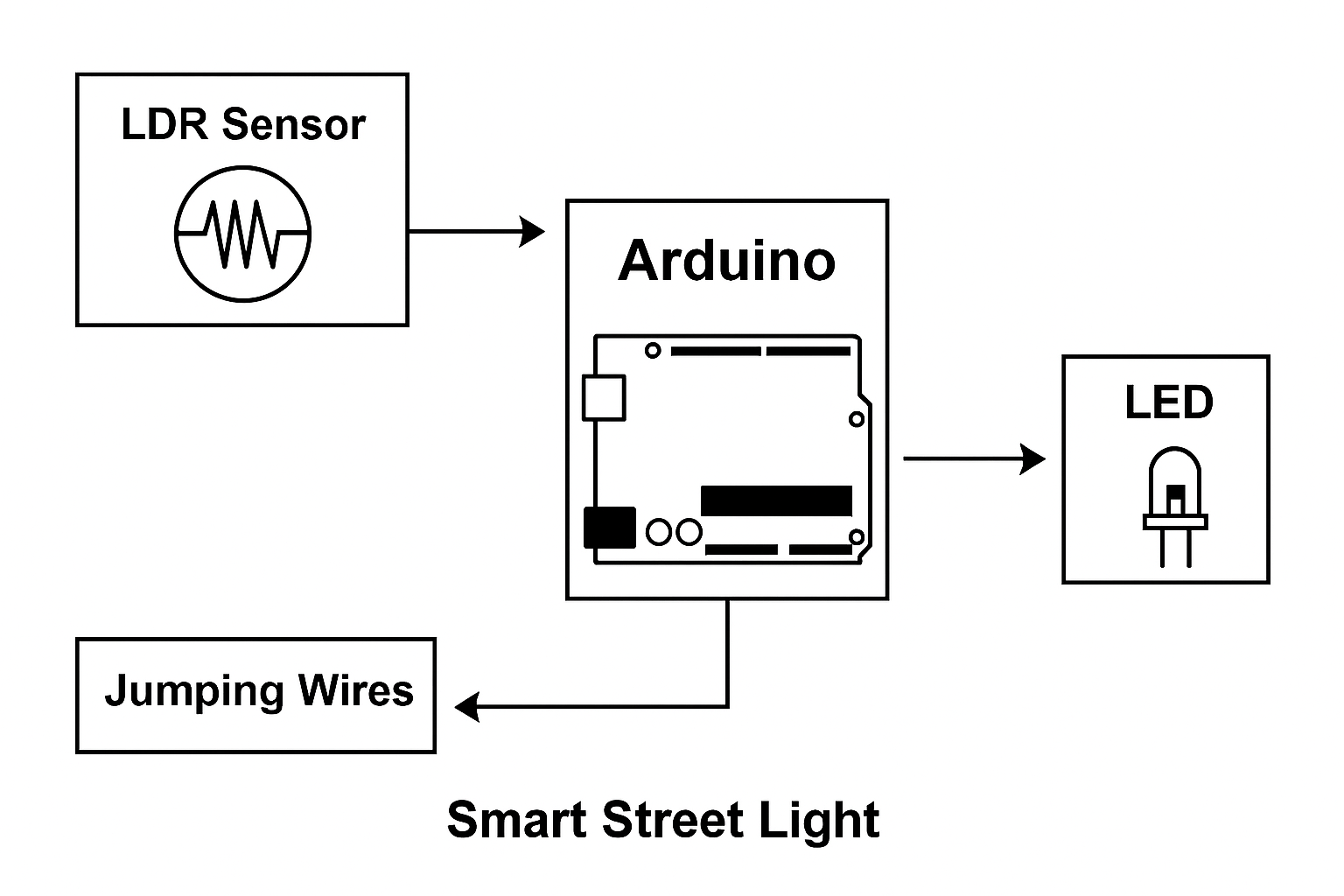
The proposed system aims to create an energy-efficient and adaptive street lighting solution using IoT principles and low-cost hardware components. It eliminates the limitations of timer-based or manually controlled lighting by dynamically responding to real-time ambient light levels. The system is centered around an LDR sensor for detecting light intensity and an Arduino Uno microcontroller for decision-making and controlling LED brightness. The objective is to provide adequate lighting only when necessary, thereby reducing electricity consumption while maintaining visibility and safety in public areas.

1. **OVERALL SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE:**

The system architecture of the Intelligent Street Light System project includes four core components working together to automate streetlight behaviour based on real-time lighting conditions. The Sensor Module consists of a Light Dependent Resistor (LDR), which continuously measures ambient light intensity. It sends analog signals to the Control Unit, which is an Arduino Uno microcontroller. The Arduino processes this input and determines the appropriate lighting level using predefined thresholds coded into the system.

To control the lighting output, the Arduino utilizes its internal Pulse Width Modulation (PWM) capability. Instead of simply turning the LED ON or OFF, the Arduino adjusts the brightness of the LED by varying the duty cycle of the PWM signal. This enables smooth dimming and brightening of the Output Module, which consists of LEDs that simulate actual streetlights.

A stable Power Supply provides the necessary voltage to the Arduino and other components to ensure continuous operation. The components are interconnected using jumper wires, forming a simple and modular circuit layout suitable for prototyping. This architecture allows the system to automatically adapt lighting intensity based on environmental changes, thereby improving energy efficiency and visibility.



**Figure 1.** System Architecture of an Intelligent Street Light System Using IoT

1. **AMBIENT LIGHT DETECTION MODULE:**

This module is responsible for sensing the light intensity in the surrounding environment using an LDR (Light Dependent Resistor) sensor. The LDR alters its resistance based on the amount of light falling on it—lower resistance under bright conditions and higher resistance in dim or dark surroundings. This change in resistance is converted to a voltage and sent as an analog input to the Arduino. The Arduino reads this value, typically ranging from 0 to 1023, and uses it to determine whether lighting is needed. When the ambient light falls below a defined threshold—such as during evening hours, in cloudy weather, or on foggy mornings—the sensor signals the need to activate the streetlight. When the light level is sufficient, such as in the middle of a sunny day, the system keeps the lights off, conserving energy.

1. **MICROCONTROLLER-BASED DECISION ENGINE:**

The Arduino Uno functions as the central control unit of the system. It continuously monitors the LDR’s input and compares it against a user-defined threshold coded in the program. Based on this comparison, the Arduino executes a decision-making logic to determine the level of brightness required. It uses built-in PWM (Pulse Width Modulation) functionality to vary the brightness of the connected LEDs. Unlike systems that use basic ON/OFF switching, PWM allows the Arduino to deliver a controlled amount of power to the LEDs, enabling smooth brightness transitions. This results in an intelligent lighting system that reacts not only to whether it’s dark or light but also to how much lighting is needed.

1. **SMART BRIGHTNESS CONTROL LOGIC:**

The system does not rely on fixed timers or manual intervention but instead functions dynamically based on real-time ambient light levels. This adaptive behaviour allows the streetlights to respond intelligently to varying environmental conditions. For instance, during bright daylight hours, the system keeps the LEDs turned OFF to conserve energy. In conditions such as dusk or overcast weather, the LEDs are set to operate at medium brightness, providing sufficient illumination without excessive power use. During nighttime or in poor lighting conditions, the LEDs run at full brightness to ensure clear visibility for road users. Furthermore, in scenarios like foggy or rainy mornings—an enhancement considered for future versions—the system could turn the lights ON regardless of the time of day, improving safety during reduced visibility.

1. **BENEFITS OF INTELLIGENT STREET LIGHT SYSTEM:**

The proposed system offers multiple benefits over traditional street lighting. Firstly, it significantly enhances energy efficiency by automatically turning lights ON only when required and adjusting brightness based on real-time needs. Secondly, it is cost-effective, built using affordable components such as the Arduino Uno, LDR sensors, and LEDs, making it ideal for large-scale deployment in both urban and rural areas. The system also promotes automation, eliminating the need for human intervention or rigid time-based control. Its environmental responsiveness allows it to adapt to changes in lighting caused by weather or seasonal variations. Lastly, the design is scalable and upgradable, making it easy to integrate future enhancements such as solar panels, motion detection, or IoT-based monitoring and control, thus aligning it with the vision of smart city infrastructure.

1. **IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS:**
2. **DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK:**

The Smart Street Light system is developed using a combination of hardware components and embedded programming. The core of the system relies on Arduino Uno, programmed using Embedded C++ via the Arduino IDE, which controls the logic for sensing ambient light and adjusting LED brightness. The sensor used is an LDR (Light Dependent Resistor), which sends an analog input to the microcontroller. The development does not involve frontend or backend web components, as it is an embedded system project. Instead, debugging and output monitoring are handled through the Arduino Serial Monitor. The system operates autonomously without user interface layers, emphasizing low-cost and energy-efficient hardware design.

1. **SENSOR INTEGRATION AND CONTROL LOGIC:**

The primary sensor module includes an LDR that detects ambient light levels and feeds continuous analog input to the Arduino Uno. The microcontroller is programmed with logic that compares the LDR value to a pre-defined threshold. If the light level falls below this threshold (indicating low ambient light), the Arduino activates the streetlight. The control logic uses Arduino’s internal PWM (Pulse Width Modulation) to adjust the brightness of the LED based on the severity of darkness. This allows the system to operate in a graduated manner rather than using simple binary ON/OFF switching..

1. **REAL-TIME BRIGHTNESS ADJUSTMENT:**

The system runs in a continuous loop, monitoring real-time environmental light changes. Based on the live input from the LDR, the system dynamically alters the LED brightness through PWM, offering gradual light transitions. This mechanism ensures that lighting adapts to environmental conditions such as overcast skies, dusk, or early morning fog. The Arduino processes all readings in milliseconds, enabling responsive real-time adjustments without any human intervention.

1. **HARDWARE SETUP:**

The hardware setup includes an Arduino Uno, an LDR sensor, one or more LEDs, resistors, and jumper wires. The system is powered by a DC adapter, ensuring portability and ease of setup. LEDs are directly powered and controlled by Arduino PWM pins. The design is modular and can be scaled for more LEDs or integrated with higher voltage lighting components in real-world applications..

1. **PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND SYSTEM TESTING:**

To ensure the system performs as intended, multiple test scenarios were carried out under varying light conditions. The LDR response was evaluated during bright daylight, twilight, night-time, and artificial light exposure. The brightness levels of the LED were adjusted and verified in real time using PWM. Serial Monitor outputs were used to validate sensor values and logic thresholds. Functional testing showed that the system reliably turned ON the LED during low light and adjusted brightness proportionally.

1. **ALGORITHM:**

The control logic for the Smart Street Light system is implemented on the Arduino Uno using embedded C++. The algorithm continuously monitors ambient light levels through an LDR sensor and adjusts the brightness of the LED accordingly using internal PWM. The system operates in real time to provide adaptive lighting and optimize energy usage.

1. **STEP-BY-STEP ALGORITHM:**
2. **Initialize Pins and Variables:**

Set the sensor pin (sensorPin) to A0, which reads the potentiometer (simulating ambient light).

Set the LED pin (ledPin) to 9, which will control the brightness of the LED.

Define sensorValue to store the raw value from the sensor.

Define brightness to store the mapped brightness value for the LED.

1. **Setup:**

Set the LED pin (ledPin) as an output to control the LED.

Begin serial communication at a baud rate of 9600 to send data to the Serial Monitor.

1. **Loop:**

Step 1: Read the analog value from the sensor pin (sensorPin) and store it in sensorValue (range 0-1023).

Step 2: Map the sensor value from the range 0-1023 to the PWM range (0-100) and store it in brightness.

Step 3: Adjust the LED brightness using the analogWrite() function based on the mapped brightness value.

Step 4: Print the sensorValue and the corresponding brightness value to the Serial Monitor for debugging.

Step 5: If the brightness value is less than 20 and sensorValue is less than or equal to 80:

Set the LED brightness to brightness.

Turn the LED off (set brightness to 0) after a short delay of 100 milliseconds.

Wait for 1 second (1000 milliseconds).

Step 6: Wait for 5 seconds before the next loop iteration.

1. **End of loop:**

The loop repeats continuously to adjust the LED brightness based on the sensor reading.

1. **DISCUSSION:**
2. **SYSTEM PERFORMANCE AND REAL-WORLD RELEVANCE:**

The Smart Street Light System designed with an LDR sensor and Arduino was found to be quite responsive in its ability to adjust according to the current ambient light conditions. In contrast to the traditional systems running on fixed schedules, our design adjusts dynamically not only the ON/OFF status of the streetlight but also brightness levels according to the light intensity in the environment. The result is that visibility is maximized when required and energy is saved when maximum brightness is not required. By employing the LDR to sense different light conditions like bright daylight, cloudy, foggy mornings, or dusk/dawn, the system automatically adjusts the brightness of the LED output. For example, in clear daylight, the lights are OFF; in early evening or in partial fog, the system illuminates at 50%–70% brightness; and in total darkness or thick fog, brightness is raised to 100%. This type of fine-grained, real-time control guarantees both public safety and energy efficiency are addressed at the same time.

1. **PRACTICAL BENEFITS:**

The practical benefits of this system lie in its energy-efficient approach and smart adaptability. Unlike conventional street lighting systems that rely on binary ON/OFF operations, this model introduces multi-level brightness scaling depending on the surrounding light intensity. This ensures that lighting is only as bright as necessary, significantly reducing energy consumption. Furthermore, the system is fully automated, functioning without the need for human intervention. This makes it ideal for remote areas or locations where regular maintenance is difficult. With minimal hardware requirements—just an LDR, Arduino, and LEDs—the setup remains cost-effective while leaving room for future feature integration. Additionally, the system offers an indirect method of weather sensing. Although it lacks direct sensors for rain or fog, it deduces such conditions through decreased ambient light levels and adjusts accordingly.

1. **LIMITATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS:**

Despite these advantages, there are some limitations. The system currently depends solely on LDR input, which restricts its ability to distinguish between different causes of low visibility such as fog or dense cloud cover. The brightness levels are divided into fixed ranges, lacking the flexibility or intelligence to make finer adjustments based on real-time conditions.

1. **FUTURE ENHANCEMENTS**

To add more functionality and intelligence to the system, the following developments are proposed: Machine Learning Models: Future releases can train models using LDR patterns over seasons in order to forecast when lights must gradually brighten or dim. PWM-Based Smooth Dimming: Application of PWM (Pulse Width Modulation) for precise brightness control may render transitions smoother and power-efficient. Cloud Integration: Sensor information can be uploaded for centralized monitoring, enabling remote control and maintenance notifications. Solar Power Integration: Incorporating solar panels and battery storage will render the system entirely self-sustaining and environmentally friendly.

1. **CONCLUSION**

The Intelligent Street Light System proposed and implemented in this project successfully demonstrates a cost-effective, energy-efficient, and adaptive solution for modern urban and rural infrastructure. By leveraging an Arduino Uno and LDR sensor, the system dynamically responds to real-time ambient light conditions, adjusting LED brightness accordingly through PWM control. This eliminates the inefficiencies of traditional time-based or manual systems, significantly reducing unnecessary power consumption while maintaining optimal visibility and safety. The prototype proves the viability of using IoT-based automation in public lighting systems and serves as a scalable foundation for future enhancements such as solar integration, motion detection, and remote monitoring. With minimal hardware requirements and robust performance under varied lighting conditions, this system aligns well with the vision of sustainable and smart cities.

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