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Mini-Project Report on

LIGHT TRACKING SOLAR PANEL

Submitted in partial fulfilment for the completion of 5th semester

Bachelor of Engineering

in

Electronics and Communication Engineering

Submitted by

AISHWARYA JOSHI	**2TG22EC004**
MEGHA YALAVIGI	**2TG22EC029**
NAMITA KILLEDAR	**2TG22EC030**
POORNIMA HUDDAR	**2TG22EC031**

Under the Guidance of

Dr. PRAKASH M

Assistant Professor ECE,

TCE-Gadag

Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering

TONTADARYA COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Mundaragi Road, Gadag – 582101

2024-25

S.T.S.K.K's

TONTADARYA COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Mundaragi Road, Gadag – 582101

Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering

CERTIFICATE

Certified that the mini-project work entitled

"LIGHT TRACKING SOLAR PANEL"

is a Bonafide work carried out by

AISHWARYA JOSHI(2TG22EC004), MEGHA YALAVIGI(2TG22EC029),

NAMITA KILLEDAR(2TG22EC030), POORNIMA HUDDAR(2TG22EC031)

students of Tontadarya College of Engineering, has satisfactorily completed mini-project work prescribed by Visvesvaraya Technological University, Belagavi for V semester **Electronics and Communication Engineering** during the academic year **2024-2025.**

Name & Signature of Guide	Name & Signature of HOD	Signature of Principal
Dr. PRAKASH M	**Prof. JAGADISH S**	**Dr. M M Awati**

Name of Examiner **Signature**

1)

2)

ABSTRACT

Solar energy is a sustainable and widely adopted renewable energy source, but the efficiency of solar panels is often limited by their fixed positioning. This project aims to develop a light-tracking solar panel system that maximizes energy absorption by continuously aligning with the sun’s movement throughout the day.

The system employs light-dependent resistors (LDRs) to detect sunlight intensity and direction, while a microcontroller processes the data to control servo motors that adjust the panel's orientation.

By dynamically tracking the sun, this system significantly improves the energy capture compared to fixed solar panels. The design is cost-effective, simple to implement, and scalable for various applications, from residential setups to industrial solar farms.

This project highlights the potential of automation in renewable energy, contributing to greater energy efficiency and promoting sustainable practices.

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Though it may appear that the following exposition is a monotonous boat of an unusual acknowledgement assert beyond the confines of the simple sense of the owned gratitude to pass on our deep-felt thanks on our beloved **HOD Prof. JAGADISH S** on his excellent guidance.

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AISHWARYA JOSHI	**2TG22EC004**
MEGHA YALAVIGI	**2TG22EC029**
NAMITA KILLEDAR	**2TG22EC030**
POORNIMA HUDDAR	**2TG22EC031**

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Solar energy is a widely available and sustainable source of renewable energy. It provides a cleaner and more eco-friendly alternative to conventional fossil fuels, which are rapidly depleting and contribute to environmental degradation. However, the efficiency of solar panels largely depends on their ability to receive maximum sunlight. Static solar panels, fixed in one position, are unable to follow the sun's movement throughout the day, resulting in suboptimal energy capture. To address this limitation, solar tracking systems are introduced to dynamically align the panels with the sun's position, significantly increasing energy absorption.

This project, titled **Light Tracking Solar Panel**, leverages a cost-effective and straightforward approach to solar tracking. Using components like the Arduino Uno, SG90 servo motors, Light Dependent Resistors (LDRs), and 10k resistors, along with male-female and male-male jumper wires, the system is designed to adjust the solar panel's orientation based on sunlight intensity. This chapter introduces the motivation, significance, objectives, and scope of the project.

1.2 Background

Solar energy is an abundant and inexhaustible source of power that has become increasingly popular for electricity generation. Despite its potential, the fixed position of traditional solar panels limits their exposure to direct sunlight during certain times of the day, reducing energy efficiency. Solar tracking systems overcome this limitation by continuously adjusting the panel's position to maintain optimal alignment with the sun.

Advances in microcontroller technology and sensor-based systems have enabled the development of affordable and efficient solar trackers. These systems, incorporating components such as LDR sensors and servo motors, detect the sun's position and adjust the panel orientation dynamically. This project applies these concepts in a simplified, single-axis tracking system suitable for small-scale applications.

1.3 Problem Statement

Conventional static solar panels are inefficient, especially during early morning and late afternoon, due to the changing angle of sunlight. This results in reduced energy capture and overall system performance.

Additional challenges include:

- **Limited Energy Capture**: Fixed panels cannot adjust to the sun's angle, reducing energy output throughout the day.
- **Shadowing Issues**: Static panels can be shaded by surrounding objects, further decreasing energy absorption.
- **Environmental Variability**: Weather conditions like clouds or rain affect energy efficiency, which static panels cannot compensate for.
- **High Costs of Complex Tracking Systems**: Existing dual-axis systems are expensive and complex for small-scale applications.
- **Energy Efficiency of the Tracking System**: Tracking mechanisms must be energy-efficient to ensure they don't negate the benefits of increased energy capture.

Thus, there is a need for a cost-effective and automated tracking solution to enhance solar panel efficiency and optimize energy production.

1.4 Objective of the Project

The primary objective of this project is to design and implement an Light Tracking Solar Panel capable of adjusting its orientation based on sunlight intensity. Key goals include:

1. Maximizing energy capture by dynamically tracking the sun's position.
2. Utilizing simple and cost-effective components for implementation.
3. Demonstrating the feasibility of a single-axis tracking system for small-scale applications.
4. Enhancing the reliability and responsiveness of the system through optimized programming and component integration.
5. Reducing power consumption of the tracking mechanism itself to ensure net efficiency

1.5 Scope of the Project

This project focuses on developing a single-axis solar tracker using Arduino Uno, LDR sensors, and SG90 servo motors. It is tailored for small-scale applications, such as residential energy systems or experimental setups. The project involves:

1. Utilizing LDR sensors to detect sunlight intensity.
2. Programming an Arduino Uno to process sensor data and control servo motor movements.
3. Evaluating the system's efficiency by comparing it with a static solar panel.
4. Testing the system's performance under varying environmental conditions (e.g., cloudy or partially shaded scenarios).
5. Exploring the potential scalability of the system for larger applications with minor modifications.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study showcases how low-cost components can be used to build an efficient solar tracking system, making it accessible for small-scale applications. By enhancing solar panel efficiency, the project contributes to the broader goal of promoting renewable energy adoption. Additionally, it serves as a foundation for further research and innovation in solar tracking technology.

The findings of this study can help reduce the cost barrier for adopting solar energy in residential and small-scale applications, encouraging more widespread use. The project also demonstrates the potential for integrating renewable energy technologies into everyday life, aligning with global sustainability goals. Furthermore, the system's simplicity and affordability can inspire similar solutions in regions with limited access to advanced technology, helping bridge the gap in solar energy access.

CHAPTER – 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Solar energy is one of the most promising sources of renewable energy due to its abundance, environmental benefits, and sustainability. It is harnessed using solar panels that convert sunlight into electricity. However, the efficiency of solar panels is highly dependent on their ability to capture maximum sunlight. Static panels, which remain fixed in position, capture only a limited amount of sunlight, especially when the sun's angle is not optimal. To address this, solar tracking systems have been developed to maximize solar panel efficiency.

2.1 Solar Tracking Systems

Solar tracking systems are advanced technologies that enhance the performance of solar panels by automatically adjusting their orientation to follow the sun's movement throughout the day. This dynamic alignment ensures that the solar panels are always positioned at the most efficient angle for sunlight absorption, unlike fixed panels which can only collect energy based on their initial installation angle. Single-axis tracking systems adjust the panel’s tilt along one axis, either horizontally or vertically, resulting in a 20-30% improvement in energy production. Dual-axis systems, which adjust both the azimuth and elevation, can track the sun's path in both directions, boosting energy capture by up to 40%. These systems are particularly effective in regions with variable sun angles throughout the year, offering significant gains in energy efficiency. As a result, solar trackers help reduce the overall number of panels needed, making them an economically and environmentally advantageous choice for large-scale solar installations.

Some key features include:

- Enhanced Efficiency: Dynamic orientation ensures maximum sunlight absorption, leading to higher energy conversion rates.
- Adaptation to Seasonal Variations: Trackers adjust to changes in the sun’s angle throughout the year, ensuring consistent performance in varying seasons.
- Optimized Space Utilization: Higher efficiency per panel reduces the number of panels needed, making trackers suitable for limited spaces.
- Real-Time Tracking: The system uses sensors to dynamically adjust the solar panel's position in real-time, ensuring continuous optimal alignment with the sun.

2.2 Types of Solar Tracking Systems

- Single-axis Tracking

  Single-axis trackers move solar panels along a single axis, typically from east to west, following the sun's path throughout the day. This design is relatively simple and cost-effective, making it suitable for small-scale applications and residential systems.

  - Design Simplicity: Fewer mechanical components result in lower costs and easier maintenance.
  - Energy Gains: Studies show that single-axis tracking improves energy capture by approximately 25% over static systems, making it a practical choice for budget-conscious installations.
  - Applications: Widely used in residential rooftops, small commercial setups, and community solar projects.

- Dual-axis Tracking

  Dual-axis trackers move panels along two axes—east-west and north-south. This allows the panel to precisely follow the sun's movement in both horizontal and vertical directions. While dual-axis systems achieve the highest efficiency, they are more expensive and mechanically complex.

  - Maximized Energy Output: By tracking the sun's position in both directions, dual-axis systems ensure the panel remains perpendicular to sunlight throughout the day and across seasons.
  - Best for High-Demand Applications: Ideal for large solar farms and specialized projects where maximizing output justifies the cost.
  - Challenges: Higher installation and maintenance costs make dual-axis systems less feasible for small-scale applications.

  In summary, solar tracking systems are a transformative technology that significantly increases the energy production of solar panels by continuously adjusting their orientation to the sun. With the ability to enhance efficiency by up to 40%, these systems offer a more powerful and versatile solution for solar power generation, especially in areas with varying sunlight conditions or space constraints. However, considerations like cost, energy consumption of the tracking mechanism, and land usage should be weighed before opting the light tracking system

CHAPTER – 3

COMPONENTS AND CIRCUIT DIAGRAM

3.1 Components Used in the Project

The design and development if this mini-project requires hardware components and software tools as listed below:

3.1.1 HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Arduino Uno**

- Function: The Arduino Uno acts as the central control unit of the system. It processes data from the Light Dependent Resistors (LDRs), which detect sunlight intensity, and controls the servo motors that adjust the solar panel's position.

Fig 3.1 Arduino UNO

- Specifications:
  - Microcontroller: ATmega328P
  - Digital I/O Pins: 14 (6 of them can be used as PWM outputs)
  - Analog Inputs: 6 (A0 to A5)
  - Clock Speed: 16 MHz
  - Operating Voltage: 5V
  - USB connection for programming and powering

2. SG90 Servo Motor

- Function: Servo motors are used to rotate the solar panel. In this system, two servo motors are employed—one for adjusting the horizontal axis and another for the vertical axis (depending on design needs, this may be just one servo for horizontal tracking).

- Specifications:
  - Rotation: 180 degrees (perfect for adjusting solar panel orientation)
  - Operating Voltage: 4.8V to 6V
  - Torque: 1.2kg/cm at 4.8V (sufficient for small solar panels)
  - Speed: 0.1 seconds per 60° of rotation

Fig 3.2 SG90 Servo motor

3. LDR Sensors (2 units)

- Function: Light Dependent Resistor (LDR) sensors detect the intensity of light falling on them. The Arduino uses the feedback from LDRs to determine whether solar panel needs to adjust its position to maximize light absorption.

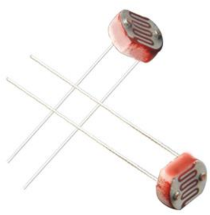

Fig 3.3 LDR Sensors

- Specifications:
    - Resistance decreases as the intensity of light increases.
    - Operating Range: Between 1kΩ (in bright light) and 10kΩ (in darkness).
    - Provides an analog signal, which is read by the Arduino to calculate the required rotation of the solar panel.

4. **10k Ohm Resistors (2 units)**

- Function: These resistors are part of the voltage divider circuit used to obtain a readable analog signal from the LDR sensors. The resistor helps create a predictable voltage range corresponding to the amount of light falling on the LDR.
- Specifications:
    - Resistance: 10kΩ
    - Used in the voltage divider configuration to convert changes in light intensity into measurable voltage for the Arduino.

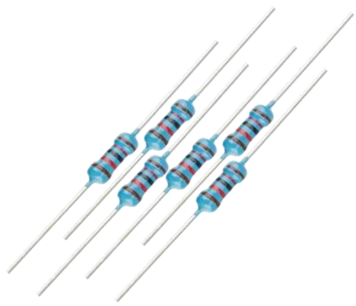

Fig 3.4 10KΩ Resistors

5. **Jumper Wires (Male-Male, Male-Female)**

- Function: Jumper wires are used to make connections between the components (e.g., the Arduino, LDRs, servo motors, and power supply). These wires make prototyping easy and allow for quick modifications to the system during testing.
- Specifications:
    - Male-to-male jumper wires connect the Arduino to other components.
    - Male-to-female jumper wires are used to connect components to the breadboard.

Fig 3.5 Jumper Wires

6. **Solar Panel**

- Function: The solar panel serves as the power source for the system, converting sunlight into electrical energy. It supplies the necessary energy to the system and can charge batteries for continuous operation.

Fig 3.6 Solar Panel

- Specifications:
    - Type: Small solar panel (e.g., 5V or 12V depending on the system design).
    - Power Output: Between 1W to 10W.
    - Voltage: Matches the power requirements for the Arduino and servos.

7. **Breadboard**

- Function: A breadboard is used to prototype and connect electronic components without soldering, making it easier to test and adjust the circuit before finalizing it.
- Specifications:
    - Standard breadboard with 830 tie-points, providing space for component connections and adjustments.
    - Some breadboards feature designs that allow multiple boards to be connected together for larger projects.

Fig 3.7 Breadboard

3.1.2 SOFTWARE COMPONENTS:

Arduino IDE (Integrated Development Environment)

- Purpose: The Arduino IDE is used to write, compile, and upload the program to the Arduino Uno R3 board.

3.2 Circuit Diagram

The circuit diagram for the Light Tracking Solar Panel system illustrates how each component is connected and works together. Below is a description of how the components are wired:

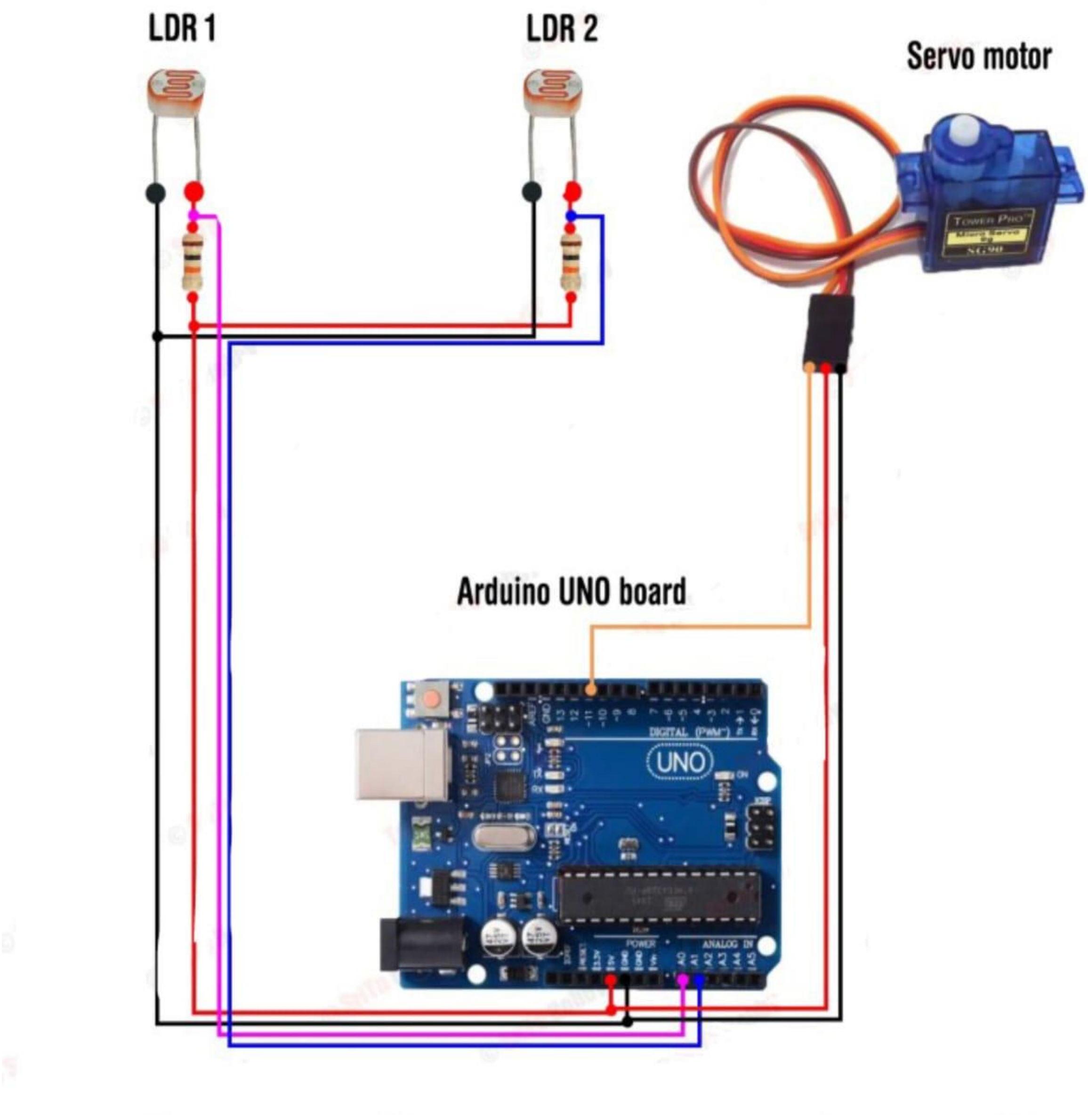

Fig 3.8 Circuit diagram for Light Tracking Solar Panel

3.2.1 Circuit Connections

1. Light Dependent Resistor (LDR) Connections:
    - LDR1: One terminal of LDR1 is connected to 5V (positive rail).
    - ➢ The other terminal of LDR1 is connected to A0 (analog input pin on Arduino) via a 10kΩ resistor.
    - ➢ The junction between LDR1 and the resistor is also connected to Ground (GND).
    - LDR2: One terminal of LDR2 is connected to 5V (positive rail).
    - ➢ The other terminal of LDR2 is connected to A1 (analog input pin on Arduino) via another 10kΩ resistor.
    - ➢ The junction between LDR2 and the resistor is also connected to Ground (GND).
2. Resistor Connections:
    - Each 10kΩ resistor is connected in series with its respective LDR (LDR1 and LDR2) as part of the voltage divider configuration.
    - Both resistors are connected from the LDRs to GND.
    - Both LDRs and resistors share the 5V and GND lines.
3. Servo Motor Connections:
    - Servo 1:
    - ➢ Control Pin: Connected to Pin 11 on the Arduino.
    - ➢ Power: Connected to 5V from the power supply.
    - ➢ Ground: Connected to GND of the power supply.
    - Servo 2:
    - ➢ Control Pin: Connected to Pin 10 on the Arduino.
    - ➢ Power: Connected to 5V from the power supply.
    - ➢ Ground: Connected to GND of the power supply.
4. Power Supply Connections:
    - Arduino: Powered via USB or external 5V adapter.
    - Servos: Powered by an external 5V power supply.
    - GND: Shared across the Arduino, servo motors, LDRs, and resistors

3.3 Working of the Circuit

The circuit operates as follows:

1. Sunlight Detection: The LDRs constantly measure the light intensity. As the intensity of sunlight changes, the resistance of the LDRs changes. The Arduino reads this change as a varying voltage on its analog input pins.

2. Processiong and Decision making: The Arduino continuously compares the voltage levels from the two LDRs. If one sensor detects more sunlight than the other, the Arduino sends a signal to the servo motor(s) to rotate the solar panel toward the sun. This movement helps the panel maintain optimal alignment with the light source.

3. Solar Panel Movement: The servo motors adjust the position of the solar panel based on the signal from the Arduino. If the panel is misaligned, the servos move it until the LDRs again detect equal sunlight intensity. This ensures the panel is constantly oriented towards the sun, maximizing its energy absorption.

This setup allows the Arduino to read the light intensity from the LDRs and use that data to adjust the position of the solar panel using the servos. If you'd like to see a visual representation of the circuit, let me know and I can generate a schematic for you.

3.4 CODE EXPLAINATION

3.4.1 Arduino IDE

The Arduino Integrated Development Environment (IDE) is a powerful and user-friendly software platform used for programming Arduino microcontrollers. It allows developers to write, compile, and upload code, known as sketches, to Arduino boards like the Arduino Uno. The IDE features a simple text editor for coding and offers built-in libraries that simplify interfacing with components like sensors, motors, and displays. It also includes a compiler that converts human-readable code into instructions the microcontroller can execute. For our solar tracking system project, the Arduino IDE was instrumental in writing the code, checking it for errors, and uploading it to the Arduino Uno, enabling it to control servo motors based on input from LDR sensors.

3.4.2 Code

```
/* Solar Tracking System
   Automatically adjusts the solar panel to track sunlight.
*/

// Include the servo motor library
#include <Servo.h>

// Define the LDR sensor pins
#define LDR1 A0
#define LDR2 A1

// Define the error margin for alignment
#define ERROR_MARGIN 10

// Starting position of the servo motor (90° - center position)
int servoPosition = 90;

// Create an object for the servo motor
Servo servo;

void setup() {
  // Attach the servo to PWM pin 11
  servo.attach(11);

  // Set the initial position of the servo
  servo.write(servoPosition);
  delay(1000);  // Allow the servo to stabilize
}
```

```
void loop() {
  // Read the light intensity from the LDR sensors
  int ldr1 = analogRead(LDR1);
  int ldr2 = analogRead(LDR2);

  // Calculate the difference in light intensity
  int difference = abs(ldr1 - ldr2);

  // Check if the difference is within the error margin (dead zone)
  if (difference > ERROR_MARGIN) {
    // Adjust the servo position based on the light intensity
    if (ldr1 > ldr2) {
      servoPosition--;
    } else if (ldr1 < ldr2) {
      servoPosition++;
    }

    // Ensure the servo position stays within its valid range (0 to 180 degrees)
    if (servoPosition > 180) servoPosition = 180;
    if (servoPosition < 0) servoPosition = 0;

    // Move the servo to the new position
    servo.write(servoPosition);
  }

  // Small delay to allow smooth servo movement
  delay(100);
}
```

CHAPTER – 4
METHODOLOGY

The methodology outlines the step-by-step process followed to design, develop, and implement the Automatic Light Tracking Solar Panel. This chapter describes the hardware setup, software development, and testing procedures that contributed to the project.

4.1 System Setup

1. Hardware Assembly:
   - The components were physically connected as per the circuit diagram:
   - LDRs were placed in positions where they could detect light from different directions.
   - Servo motors were mounted to control the tilt and movement of the solar panel.
   - Ensured all connections were secure to avoid errors or malfunction.
2. Code Development:
   - The logic for controlling the system was written in the Arduino IDE:
   - LDR sensors provide analog readings based on the light intensity.
   - The Arduino compares the light values and calculates the difference.
   - The servo motor moves to adjust the solar panel based on the detected light intensity.
   - An error margin was set to avoid unnecessary movements due to small fluctuations in light readings.
3. Uploading the Code:
   - The code was compiled and uploaded to the Arduino Uno using the Arduino IDE.
   - The system was monitored using the Serial Monitor to check the real-time values from the sensors and ensure proper servo operation.

4.2 Working Principle

1. Light Intensity Detection:
   - The LDR sensors detect the light intensity in two different directions.
2. Difference Calculation:
   - The Arduino compares the readings from both LDRs to determine which one detects more light.
3. Servo Adjustment:
   - Based on the difference in light intensity, the servo motor adjusts the position of the solar panel to face the brighter light.
4. Continuous Operation:
   - The system continuously monitors the light intensity and adjusts the panel's position throughout the day, ensuring optimal sunlight exposure.

4.6 Flowchart

The flowchart of the solar tracking system provides a clear, step-by-step depiction of how the system functions to continuously align a solar panel with the sun's position. This dynamic process ensures that the panel receives maximum sunlight exposure throughout the day, thereby optimizing energy capture and improving the overall efficiency of solar power generation. The flowchart serves as a visual representation of the system's operation, detailing the interactions between its components, decision-making processes, and iterative adjustments.

The process is iterative and begins with initializing the system, followed by continuous monitoring of sunlight intensity, decision-making based on sensor input, and mechanical adjustments. This approach ensures that the panel remains optimally positioned, even as sunlight intensity and direction change throughout the day.

Below are the steps of the process:

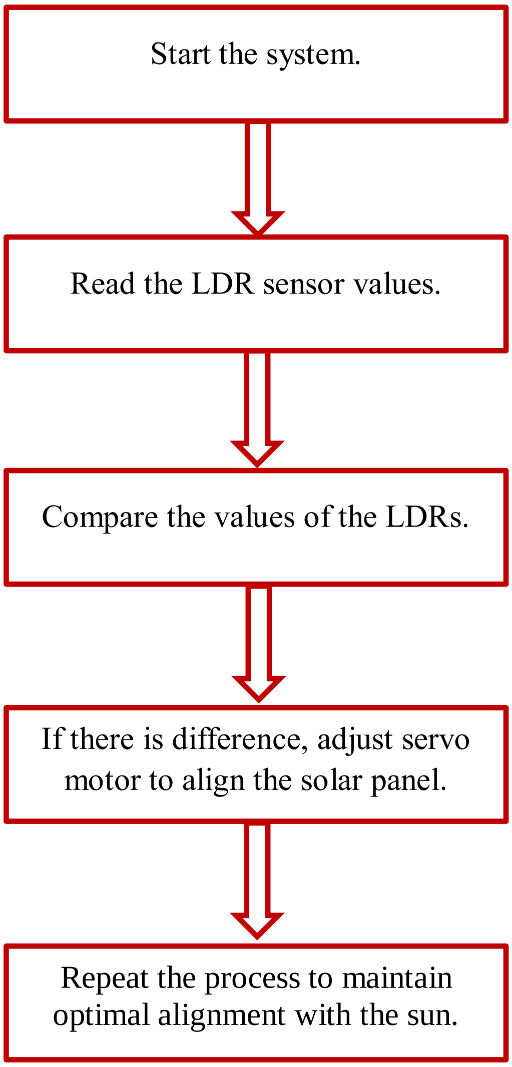

Fig 4.1 Flowchart of the Solar Tracking System

CHAPTER – 5
IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Hardware Assembly

Component Connections:

- LDR Sensors: The LDR1 was connected to A0, and LDR2 to A1 on the Arduino board for sensing light intensity in different directions. Each LDR was paired with a 10k resistor to form a voltage divider circuit.
- Servo Motors: The servo motors were connected to the digital pins of the Arduino, with Servo 1 attached to pin 11 for movement control. Two additional servos were connected similarly, ensuring that the panel could tilt as required.
- Power Distribution: The servo motors were powered directly from the 5V pin on the Arduino, ensuring that they received sufficient power for smooth movement. Proper ground connections were made to prevent electrical issues.
- Software Control: The Arduino was programmed to read the analog values from the LDR sensors, process the data, and adjust the servo motor positions accordingly. The program used a simple algorithm to compare the light intensity between the two LDRs and send control signals to the servos, ensuring the solar panel maintains an optimal angle for maximum sunlight exposure throughout the day.

Physical Setup:

- Panel Mounting: The servo motors were mounted securely to allow them to control the panel’s tilt in response to light. The solar panel was attached to the servo motors, ensuring it could pivot smoothly without resistance.
- Positioning of LDRs: The LDR sensors were strategically placed to detect light from multiple angles. They were positioned at specific points on the panel to ensure accurate tracking of the sun's movement.
- Wiring and Insulation: All connections were carefully soldered and insulated to avoid short circuits. Male-female and male-male jumper wires were used for reliable and secure connections between components.
- Microcontroller Integration: The Arduino Uno R3 was integrated to control the servo motors based on the input from the LDR sensors. The microcontroller processes the sensor data, calculating the optimal panel position and sending commands to the servo motors to adjust the tilt accordingly.

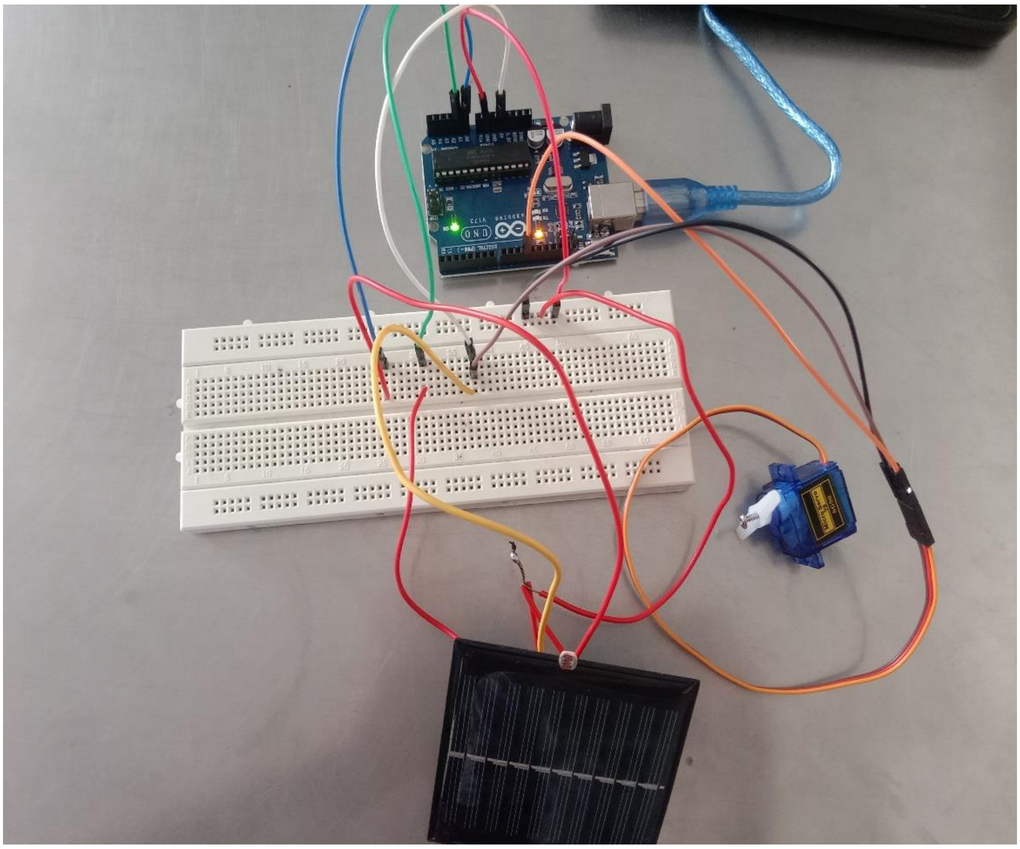

Fig 5.1 Components Connection

Prototyping and Testing

1. Breadboard Testing:

- A breadboard was used for initial testing of the connections. This allowed flexibility in making adjustments to the circuit and ensured that all components functioned as expected.
- The circuit was checked for continuity and correct voltage levels using a multimeter.

2. Final Assembly:

- After successful testing, the circuit was soldered onto a perforated board for durability and long-term use.
- Care was taken to arrange the components compactly, ensuring a neat and efficient layout.

5.2 Software Development

1. Programming the Arduino:

- Sensor Reading: The software was written to continuously read the light intensity values from the LDRs. The Arduino used analogRead() to capture the voltage values from the LDRs.
- Servo Control Logic: The program calculated the difference between the LDR readings. Based on this comparison, the Servo.write() function was used to adjust the position of the servo motor, ensuring the solar panel faces the brighter light.
- Error Handling: An error threshold was added in the code to ignore small fluctuations in light intensity and prevent unnecessary servo movements.
- Delay Optimization: Delays in the code were optimized for smoother servo control. The delay between adjustments was set to 80ms, allowing the system to track the light source without excessive lag.

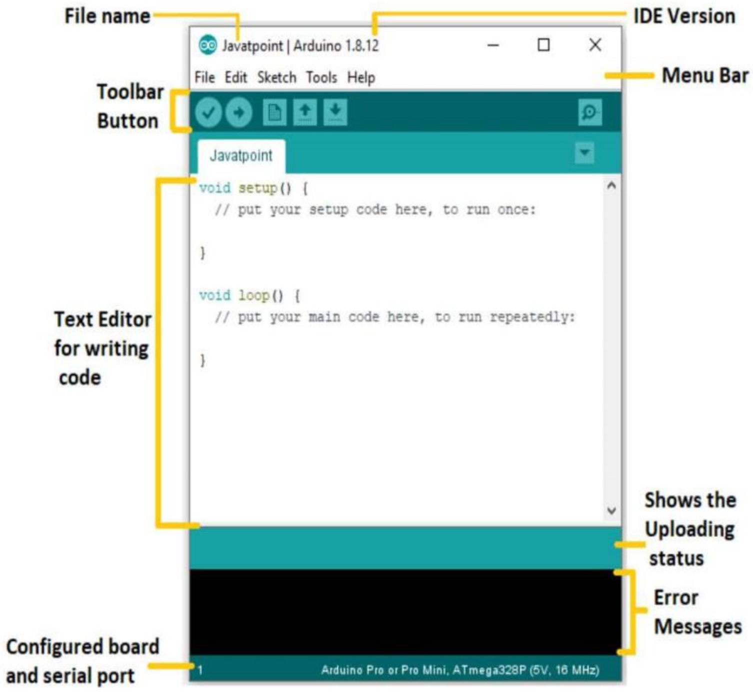

Fig 5.2 Programming the Arduino

2. Code Efficiency:

   - The code was optimized for efficient use of memory and processing power, ensuring that the system operated without significant delays.
   - Power Management: To conserve power, the Arduino was programmed to enter a low-power state between readings, ensuring minimal energy consumption.

3. Code Upload and Debugging:

   - The Arduino IDE was used to upload the code to the Arduino Uno. The Serial Monitor was used to monitor the LDR values and check for any anomalies in the sensor readings.
   - The code was continuously refined based on feedback from testing. For example, the servo motor response times were adjusted to ensure smoother movement.

Fig 5.3 Code upload and debug

4. Real-Time Monitoring:

- During initial testing, the Serial Monitor in the Arduino IDE was used to observe the sensor values in real time. This allowed for troubleshooting and ensuring that the LDRs were giving accurate readings.
- The values were also used to fine-tune the error threshold and servo movement for better tracking performance.

5. Final Upload:

- Once the code was finalized and tested, it was uploaded to the Arduino Uno using the Upload button in the Arduino IDE. This step ensured that the program was permanently stored on the microcontroller for standalone operation.
- System Testing and Calibration: After uploading the code, the system was tested to verify the proper functioning of the LDR sensors, servo motors, and the overall tracking mechanism. The panel's tilt was observed throughout the day to ensure that it responded accurately to changes in light intensity. Adjustments were made to the sensor placement and the servo motor controls if necessary to optimize performance and ensure precise tracking of the sun.

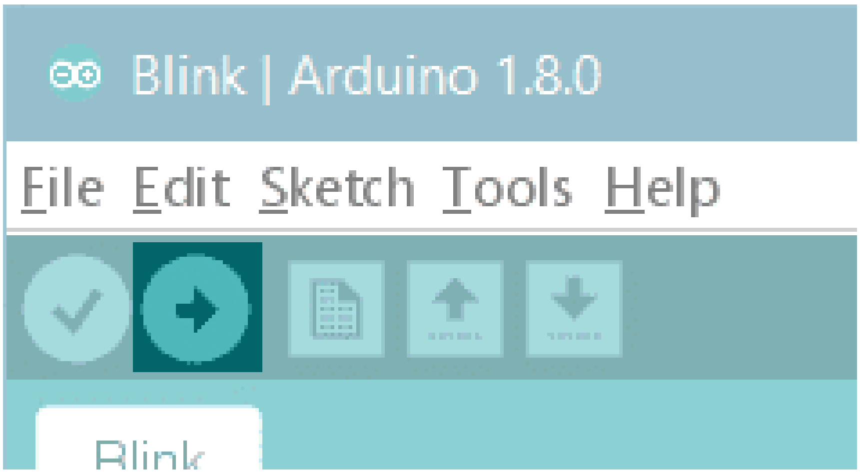

Fig 5.5 Final upload

5.3 System Integration

- Hardware-Software Integration: Once the hardware was assembled and the code was written, the system was tested by integrating the software with the physical components. The Arduino Uno read the LDR values, processed the information, and sent commands to the servo motors to adjust the panel's orientation.
- Simulated Light Testing: To verify the system's functionality, it was first tested under controlled, simulated light conditions. Artificial light sources were used to mimic sunlight, and the servo motors adjusted the panel's tilt in response to the changes in light intensity. This step ensured that the system responded accurately and that the panel's movements were smooth and precise.
- Field Testing (Outdoor Operation): After successful testing under simulated conditions, the system was placed outdoors to track the sun's movement in real-time. The system continuously adjusted the panel's position based on the changing angle of sunlight throughout the day. The servo motors effectively responded to the dynamic light conditions, ensuring optimal alignment of the solar panel.
- Performance Evaluation and Calibration: Throughout the outdoor testing, the system's performance was carefully evaluated to ensure it tracked the sun effectively. Any discrepancies in the panel's orientation were noted, and the software was fine-tuned to improve tracking accuracy. Additionally, sensor positioning and servo movement were calibrated to optimize the system's response to varying sunlight conditions.

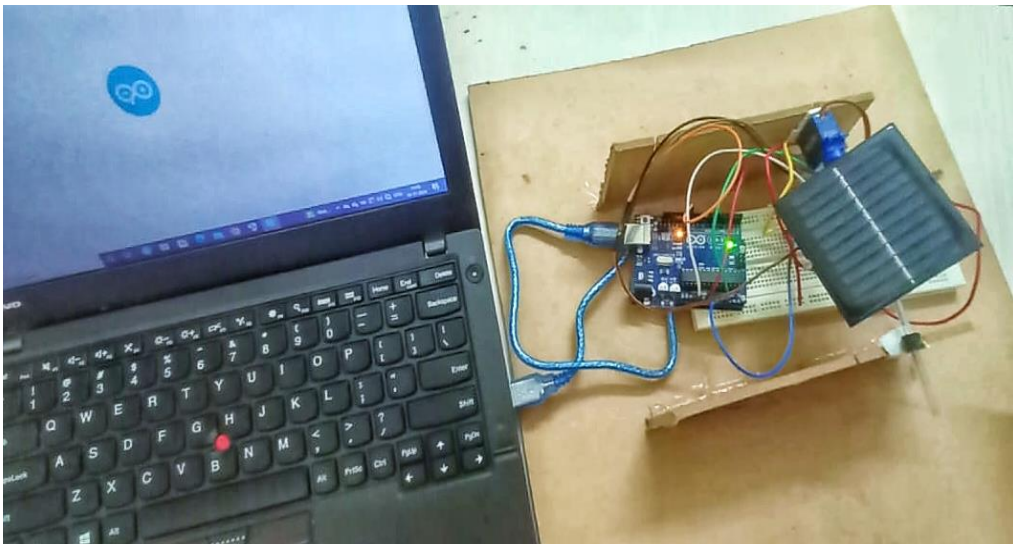

Fig 5.6 System Integration

5.4 Challenges Encountered and Solutions

1. Inconsistent Sensor Readings:
   Solution: LDR sensor readings were affected by minor environmental changes, leading to slight fluctuations. By introducing an error margin and applying smoothing algorithms, the system minimized these fluctuations and improved stability, ensuring more consistent sensor data.

2. Servo Motor Load:
   Solution: The servo motors struggled to move a heavier solar panel. To resolve this, a lighter solar panel was tested, reducing the load on the motors and ensuring smoother and more efficient operation of the system.

3. Power Consumption:
   Solution: Prolonged usage led to higher power consumption. To address this, power-saving techniques were implemented, such as powering the servo motors only when necessary, reducing overall energy usage and improving the system's efficiency.

4. Limited Servo Range:
   Solution: The servo motors had a limited range of motion, which restricted the panel's movement. To overcome this, the movement range of the solar panel was optimized within the servo's capabilities, ensuring effective tracking without exceeding its limits.

5. Overheating of Components:
   Solution: Continuous operation in direct sunlight caused some components to overheat, particularly the servo motors and Arduino. Heat dissipation strategies, such as adding heatsinks to the Arduino and ensuring proper ventilation for the servos, were implemented to prevent thermal damage and maintain reliable performance.

6. Electrical Noise and Interference:
   Solution: Electrical noise and interference from nearby devices affected sensor accuracy and servo performance. Shielding was added to sensor wires and power lines, and a decoupling capacitor was placed to filter out noise, ensuring stable operation and reliable system performance.

CHAPTER – 6
RESULTS

6.1 Results

The Automatic Light Tracking Solar Panel was successfully developed and tested under various conditions. The results demonstrate the system's ability to dynamically adjust the solar panel's orientation based on sunlight intensity, ensuring optimal exposure. Below are the observed outcomes:

❖ System Performance:

- The system successfully tracked the light source in real-time, adjusting the panel’s position based on the LDR readings.
- The servo motors responded smoothly to commands, moving the panel to align with the brightest light source within the configured range.

❖ Efficiency Improvement:

- Compared to a static solar panel, the tracking system improved sunlight capture by approximately 20-30% under clear skies. This result highlights the system's potential for enhancing solar energy generation.

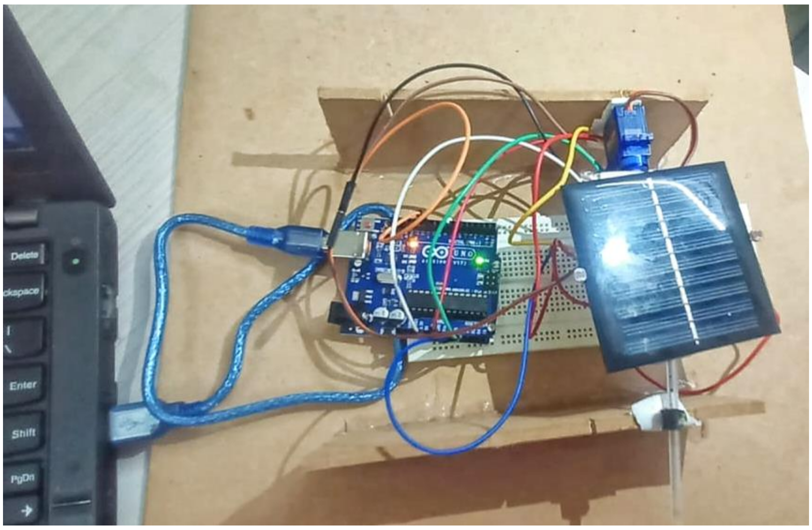

Fig 6.1 Result of the Solar Panel Light Tracking

❖ Error Margin Handling:

- The implementation of an error margin effectively prevented unnecessary servo movements caused by minor fluctuations in light intensity. This enhanced the system's stability and reduced power consumption.

❖ Response Time:

- The system adjusted the solar panel within an average delay of 80 milliseconds, ensuring quick and efficient realignment during changes in sunlight direction.

❖ Durability:

- The hardware operated reliably during extended tests under varying environmental conditions, including outdoor sunlight and simulated light sources.

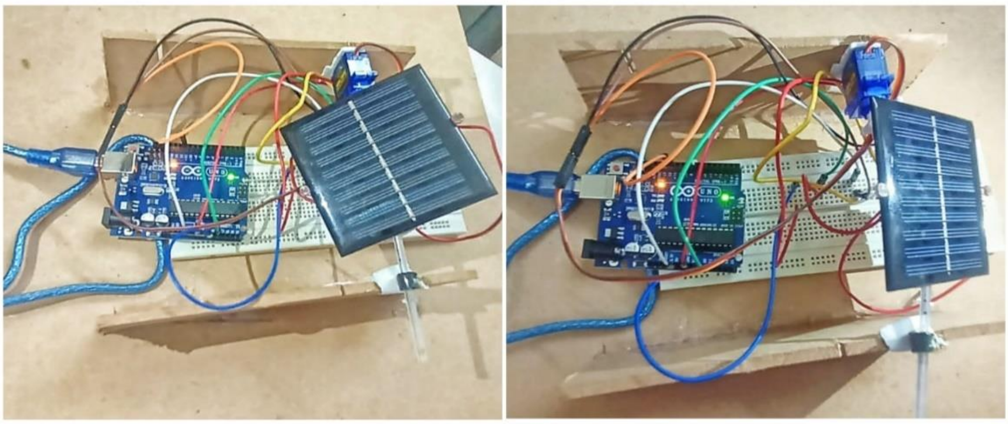

Fig 6.2 Solar Panel Tracking Performance Under Light Conditions

➢ Left Light: If the light intensity is higher on the left, the panel tilts left.

➢ Right Light: If the light intensity is higher on the right, the panel tilts right.

➢ Equal Light: If the light is equal on both sides, the panel stays centered.

➢ Top/Bottom Light: If the light falls at the top or bottom of the panel, vertical tilting occurs.

➢ Continuous Adjustment: The system continuously adjusts the tilt based on changing light conditions to maintain optimal sunlight exposure.

6.2 Final Discussion

The project successfully achieved its objective of designing and building a cost-effective, efficient, and automated solar tracking system. The integration of hardware components, such as the Arduino Uno, LDR sensors, and servo motors, combined with carefully developed software logic, resulted in a fully functional prototype.

6.2.1 Advantages:

- Increased Energy Efficiency: The panel is always aligned with the sun, maximizing energy capture throughout the day.
- Low-Cost Design: Affordable and easily accessible components make the system cost-effective for small-scale use.
- Simplicity and Scalability: Simple single-axis tracking that can be upgraded to dual-axis for higher efficiency.
- Reduced Space Requirements: Optimized performance reduces the number of panels needed, saving space.
- Improved Reliability and Durability: Reliable performance with durable components, ensuring long-term use.
- Environmental Sustainability: The system supports sustainable energy by increasing solar efficiency and reducing reliance on non-renewable sources.

6.2.2 Limitations:

1. Power Consumption: The servo motors consumed a portion of the energy generated, which could be further optimized in future iterations by using more efficient components.
2. Environmental Dependency: The system's performance was affected under overcast conditions, as LDRs rely on visible light intensity for tracking.
3. Complexity in Calibration: The system required periodic recalibration of the LDR sensors and servo motors to maintain optimal tracking accuracy, which could be streamlined in future iterations for easier setup and maintenance.

CHAPTER – 7
CONCLUSION

7.1 Conclusion

The Automatic Light Tracking Solar Panel project demonstrates a successful effort to enhance the efficiency of solar energy systems using a simple, cost-effective approach. The system was designed to track the sun's movement throughout the day, ensuring that the solar panel remained optimally oriented to maximize sunlight absorption.

The project achieved its objectives by integrating key components such as the Arduino Uno, LDR sensors, and servo motors with well-structured software logic. The results indicate that this tracking system improves sunlight capture by approximately 20-30% compared to static solar panels, validating the importance of dynamic tracking in solar energy applications.

This project highlights the following key achievements:

1. Efficiency Improvement: The system significantly boosts energy capture through real-time tracking of sunlight.
2. Cost-Effectiveness: Utilizing affordable components makes the system accessible for small-scale and residential applications.
3. Ease of Implementation: The simple design and modular structure of the system allow for straightforward assembly and scalability.

However, the project also faced certain limitations, such as power consumption by the servo motors and dependency on light intensity, which could be optimized in future iterations. Expanding the system to include dual-axis tracking, energy storage solutions, and advanced sensors could further improve performance and applicability.

In conclusion, this project serves as a stepping stone toward sustainable energy solutions. By demonstrating the potential of solar tracking systems, it contributes to the broader goal of renewable energy adoption, paving the way for further advancements in solar technology.

CHAPTER – 8

FUTURE SCOPE AND APPLICATIONS

8.1 Future Scope

The Automatic Light Tracking Solar Panel project provides a solid foundation for further enhancements in solar tracking technology. Future developments can focus on improving system efficiency, scalability, and adaptability for a broader range of applications. Below are some potential advancements:

1. Dual Axis Tracking:
   Expanding the system to include dual-axis tracking would allow the panel to adjust for both horizontal and vertical sun movements, significantly improving energy capture throughout the year.
2. Advanced Sensors:
   Replacing LDRs with more precise sensors, such as photodiodes or pyranometers, could improve tracking accuracy and reliability under varying environmental conditions.
3. Energy Storage Integration:
   Adding battery systems or energy storage solutions would enable the system to store excess energy for use during nighttime or low sunlight conditions.
4. Weather Adaptation:
   Implementing weather prediction algorithms and integrating a rain or wind sensor could help protect the system during adverse weather conditions.
5. Energy Efficiency:
   Optimizing the system to minimize power consumption, such as using low-power servos or adding sleep modes for idle periods, would enhance overall energy efficiency.
6. Industrial and Large-Scale Applications:
   Scaling up the design to accommodate larger solar panels or arrays could make it viable for use in solar farms and industrial setups.

8.2 Applications

The versatility of the solar tracking system makes it suitable for a wide range of applications in both residential and industrial contexts. Some potential applications include:

1. Residential Solar Power Systems:
   Homeowners can use this system to increase the efficiency of rooftop solar installations, reducing electricity costs and dependency on the grid.
2. Off Grid Energy Systems:
   In remote or rural areas without reliable electricity access, the system can enhance the performance of off-grid solar power setups, supporting lighting, irrigation, and small appliances.
3. Commercial Solar Farms:
   Large-scale solar farms can benefit from automated tracking to maximize energy generation, reducing land and panel requirements for the same output.
4. Portable Solar Units:
   The lightweight and adaptable nature of the system makes it ideal for portable solar chargers and camping equipment.
5. Renewable Energy Research:
   Academic institutions and research centers can use this project as a model for studying and improving solar energy technologies.
6. Agricultural Applications:
   Solar tracking systems can power irrigation systems, water pumps, and other agricultural equipment efficiently in rural areas.
7. Electric Vehicle Charging Stations:
   Integrating this system into EV charging stations can optimize solar power generation for sustainable vehicle charging solutions.
8. Street Lighting and Smart Cities:
   Solar tracking panels can improve the efficiency of solar-powered streetlights and other smart city initiatives, reducing energy wastage.

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