



IOT-ENABLED REAL TIME WATER QUALITY MONITORING SYSTEM FOR SMART CITIES WITH SOLAR AND WIND ENERGY HARVESTING

T. Thenmozhi*, S. Hemavarshini, T. Kaviya** & S. Mahalakshmi****

* Assistant Professor, Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Dhanalakshmi Srinivasan Engineering College (Autonomous), Perambalur, Tamil Nadu, India

** UG Student, Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Dhanalakshmi Srinivasan Engineering College (Autonomous), Perambalur, Tamil Nadu, India

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Abstract:

An IoT-based real-time water quality monitoring system is designed to ensure safe and efficient water management in smart cities. The system uses sensors to continuously measure key water parameters such as pH, temperature, turbidity, and total dissolved solids (TDS). The collected data is transmitted through IoT technology to a cloud platform for real-time monitoring and analysis. Solar energy harvesting is integrated to provide a sustainable and uninterrupted power supply, reducing dependency on conventional energy sources. This system enables early detection of water contamination, supports timely decision-making, and promotes eco-friendly operation, making it ideal for smart city applications. To ensure uninterrupted operation, a solar energy harvesting unit is incorporated, converting solar power into electrical energy to run the system efficiently even in remote locations. The collected data is sent in real time to IoT platforms, enabling users and authorities to monitor water conditions through mobile applications and web dashboards. Alerts and notifications are generated when parameters exceed safe limits, allowing quick action to prevent contamination. This system reduces manual monitoring efforts, enhances accuracy, and promotes eco-friendly operation. It plays a crucial role in smart city infrastructure by ensuring safe drinking water, improving environmental monitoring, and supporting data-driven decision-making. The Blynk app is used for real-time monitoring, notifications, and an easy-to-use interface, while Arduino IoT Cloud is used for device control and dashboard management.

Key Words: Internet of Things (IoT), Arduino Uno, ESP32, Tracking Sensor, Solar Panel, Battery, Converter

Introduction:

Water is one of the most essential resources for human life, and maintaining its quality is a critical challenge in modern urban environments. With rapid urbanization and industrialization in smart cities, water pollution has become a major concern. Traditional methods of water quality monitoring involve manual sampling and laboratory testing, which are time-consuming, costly, and do not provide real-time data.

To overcome these limitations, the integration of Internet of Things (IoT) has emerged as an effective solution. An IoT-enabled water quality monitoring system uses sensors and communication technologies to continuously collect and transmit data about water parameters such as pH, temperature, turbidity, dissolved oxygen, and conductivity. These sensors are deployed in water bodies like rivers, lakes, and reservoirs, enabling real-time monitoring and quick detection of contamination.

In smart cities, such systems play a vital role in ensuring safe drinking water, efficient water resource management, and environmental protection. The collected data is sent to cloud platforms, where it is analyzed and visualized. Authorities can access this information remotely and take immediate action if any parameter exceeds safe limits.

A key enhancement to this system is the use of solar energy harvesting, which makes the system self-sustainable and eco-friendly. By utilizing solar panels, the monitoring units can operate independently without relying on conventional power sources. This is especially beneficial in remote or hard-to-reach areas where power supply is limited or unavailable. Solar energy reduces operational costs and supports green energy initiatives in smart cities.

Overall, the combination of IoT and solar energy creates an efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable solution for continuous water quality monitoring. This system helps in early detection of pollution, reduces human intervention, improves data accuracy, and supports the development of healthier and smarter urban environments.

Related Work:

Research on IoT-enabled real-time water quality monitoring systems has significantly increased due to the growing need for efficient water management in smart cities. Earlier systems mainly relied on traditional methods and manual sampling, which were time-consuming and lacked real-time analysis.

With the advancement of IoT technology, researchers have introduced systems that use sensors to continuously monitor important water quality parameters such as pH, turbidity, temperature, and dissolved oxygen. These sensors are connected to microcontrollers like Arduino or Raspberry Pi, which collect the data and transmit it through wireless communication technologies such as Wi-Fi, GSM, or LoRa to cloud platforms. This enables real-time monitoring, remote access, and faster decision-making, making the system more efficient compared to conventional approaches.

In addition to IoT, earlier studies also explored Wireless Sensor Networks (WSN) for water quality monitoring, where multiple sensor nodes were deployed across water bodies to collect and transmit data to a central station. Although WSN systems were cost-effective and suitable for localized monitoring, they suffered from limitations such as high energy consumption, limited

scalability, and lack of advanced data processing capabilities.

To overcome these issues, modern systems have integrated cloud computing, allowing for data storage, visualization, and analysis over time. Cloud platforms provide better accessibility and enable authorities to monitor water quality from anywhere. However, they also introduce challenges related to data security and dependence on internet connectivity.

To address the problem of continuous power supply, especially in remote or rural areas, researchers have incorporated solar energy harvesting into water monitoring systems. Solar panels, along with charge controllers and batteries, are used to provide a sustainable and eco-friendly power source, reducing dependency on conventional electricity. This approach enhances the system's reliability and makes it suitable for long-term deployment. However, solar-based systems can be affected by environmental conditions such as reduced sunlight during cloudy or rainy days, which may impact performance.

Recent advancements focus on combining IoT with solar energy harvesting to develop fully autonomous and energy-efficient water quality monitoring systems. These hybrid systems use low-power components, optimized communication techniques, and energy management strategies to ensure continuous operation with minimal maintenance. Furthermore, some studies have integrated artificial intelligence and data analytics to predict water quality trends, detect anomalies, and provide early warning alerts.

Despite these developments, challenges such as sensor accuracy, system cost, scalability, and integration with existing smart city infrastructure still remain, indicating the need for further research and innovation in this field.

System Architecture:

The system architecture of an IoT-enabled real-time water quality monitoring system with solar energy harvesting is designed as an integrated framework that ensures continuous sensing, processing, transmission, and monitoring of water parameters in smart cities.

At the core of the system are multiple sensors deployed directly in water bodies to measure important parameters such as pH, turbidity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, and conductivity. These sensors continuously collect real-time data, which is then fed into a processing unit such as a microcontroller like Arduino Uno or a Wi-Fi-enabled module like ESP8266.

The processing unit converts the analog signals received from the sensors into digital data, performs basic filtering and calibration, and prepares the information for communication. Once processed, the data is transmitted through a communication layer using wireless technologies such as Wi-Fi, GSM, or LoRa, enabling remote data transfer without the need for physical connections.

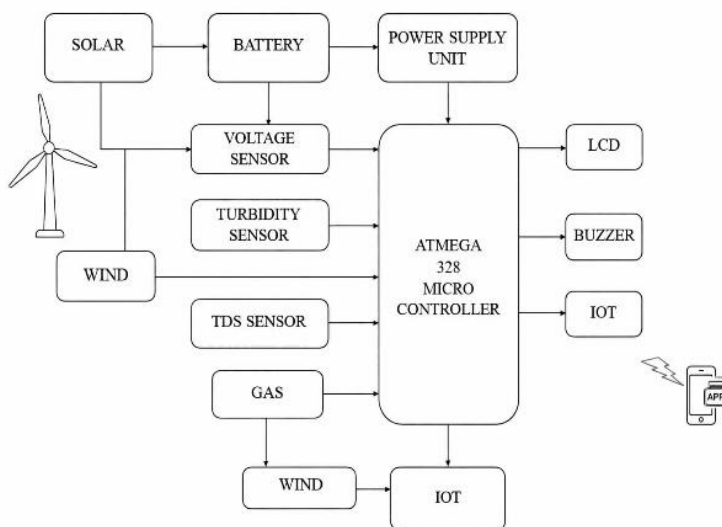
The transmitted data is sent to cloud platforms such as ThingSpeak, where it is stored, analyzed, and visualized in the form of graphs and dashboards. This cloud layer plays a crucial role in maintaining historical records, identifying trends, and generating alerts when water quality parameters exceed permissible limits. Users, including municipal authorities and environmental agencies, can access this information through mobile applications or web interfaces, allowing them to monitor water conditions in real time and take immediate corrective actions when necessary.

An essential component of this architecture is the solar energy harvesting system, which ensures an uninterrupted and sustainable power supply. Solar panels capture sunlight and convert it into electrical energy, which is regulated by a charge controller and stored in rechargeable batteries. This stored energy powers the sensors, microcontroller, and communication modules, making the system highly suitable for remote or off-grid locations where conventional power sources are unavailable.

By combining IoT technology with renewable energy, the overall architecture becomes cost-effective, environmentally friendly, and capable of operating autonomously for long durations. This supports efficient water resource management and enhances sustainability in smart city environments.

System Design and Methodology:

Block Diagram:



At the top left, the solar panel captures sunlight and converts it into electrical energy. This energy is stored in the battery, ensuring continuous power even when sunlight is not available. The stored energy is then regulated by the power supply unit, which provides a stable voltage to the entire system. A voltage sensor is connected to monitor the battery or supply voltage level, helping the system track power conditions and avoid failures. The core part of the system is the ATmega328 microcontroller, which acts as the brain. It collects and processes data from multiple sensors:

- Turbidity sensor measures the clarity of water (how muddy or clear it is).
- TDS sensor (Total Dissolved Solids) measures the concentration of dissolved substances in water.
- Gas sensor detects harmful gases or pollutants present in water.
- All these sensor values are sent to the microcontroller, where they are analyzed in real time.

On the output side:

- The LCD display shows the current water quality parameters.
- The buzzer gives an alert if the water quality exceeds safe limits.
- The IoT module sends data to a mobile app or cloud platform, allowing users to monitor water quality remotely.
- Overall, this system uses solar energy for power, sensors for data collection, a microcontroller for processing, and IoT for remote monitoring, making it ideal for smart city water management.

Software Tools:

- **Arduino IDE:** This tool is used to develop and upload embedded programs into microcontrollers. It helps in reading sensor data such as pH, turbidity, and temperature, processing it, and controlling communication modules. It also provides libraries that simplify interfacing with various sensors and IoT devices.
- **Proteus Design Suite:** This software is used for designing and simulating electronic circuits before actual hardware implementation. Engineers can test the functionality of sensors, microcontrollers, and communication modules virtually, which helps reduce errors and development costs.
- **Tinkercad:** Tinkercad is a user-friendly online simulation tool, mainly suitable for beginners. It allows users to create and test simple circuits, write basic code, and understand system behavior without requiring physical components.
- **ThingSpeak:** ThingSpeak is a cloud-based IoT platform that collects data from sensors via the internet. It stores real-time data, displays it in graphical formats, and allows basic data analysis. It also supports alert systems when water quality parameters exceed safe limits.
- **Blynk:** Blynk is a platform used to develop mobile applications for monitoring and controlling IoT systems. It provides a user-friendly interface to view real-time data, receive notifications, and interact with the system remotely.
- **MATLAB:** MATLAB is used for advanced data processing, modeling, and visualization. It helps in analyzing large datasets, identifying trends, and improving system accuracy through simulations and algorithms.
- **Python:** Python is widely used for backend processing, automation, and data analytics. It can also be used to implement machine learning algorithms for predicting water pollution and automating alert systems.
- **Node-RED:** Node-RED provides a visual programming interface to connect sensors, APIs, and cloud services. It simplifies IoT application development by enabling drag-and-drop connections between different components.
- **Firebase:** Firebase is used for real-time database management and application integration. It helps in storing and synchronizing data instantly between devices and user applications, ensuring fast and reliable access to water quality information.

Working Principle:

The working principle of an IoT-enabled real-time water quality monitoring system with solar energy harvesting is based on continuous sensing, data processing, wireless communication, and remote monitoring.

The system begins with various sensors placed in the water body to measure important parameters such as pH, turbidity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, and conductivity. These sensors continuously detect changes in water quality and convert the physical and chemical properties of water into electrical signals. The generated signals are then sent to a microcontroller such as Arduino Uno or a Wi-Fi-enabled module like ESP8266, where the analog signals are converted into digital data using an inbuilt analog-to-digital converter.

The microcontroller processes this data, performs necessary calibration, and formats it for transmission. Once processed, the data is transmitted through a communication network using technologies such as Wi-Fi, GSM, or LoRa to a cloud platform like ThingSpeak. In the cloud, the data is stored, analyzed, and displayed in graphical formats for easy understanding.

Users can access this information through mobile applications or web dashboards, enabling real-time monitoring from any location. If any parameter exceeds predefined safe limits, the system automatically generates alerts in the form of notifications, messages, or alarms, allowing authorities to take immediate action.

The entire system is powered by a solar energy harvesting unit, which includes a solar panel, charge controller, and rechargeable battery. The solar panel converts sunlight into electrical energy, which is stored in the battery and used to operate the sensors, microcontroller, and communication modules. This ensures uninterrupted operation even in remote or off-grid areas.

By combining real-time sensing, IoT communication, and renewable energy, the system provides an efficient, automated, and sustainable solution for maintaining water quality in smart cities.

Parameter Aggregation:

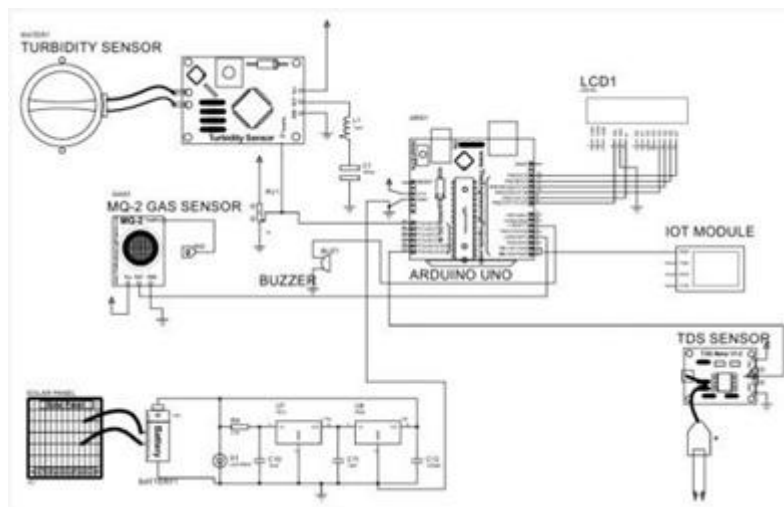
Parameter aggregation in an IoT-enabled real-time water quality monitoring system refers to the process of combining multiple sensor readings into a single meaningful output or index for easy understanding and decision-making. In this system, different sensors measure parameters such as pH, turbidity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, and conductivity. Each of these parameters individually describes a part of the water quality; however, analyzing them separately can be complex. Parameter aggregation simplifies this process by merging all values into a unified result, such as a Water Quality Index (WQI).

Steps Involved in Parameter Aggregation:

- **Data Collection:** Parameter aggregation begins with collecting data from multiple sensors such as pH, turbidity, temperature, and dissolved oxygen. These sensors continuously measure water quality in real time and send raw data to the microcontroller.
- **Data Pre-processing:** Before aggregation, the collected data is cleaned to remove noise, errors, or missing values. This step improves accuracy and ensures reliable results.

- Normalization of Parameters: Different parameters have different units and ranges. Therefore, the values are converted into a common scale to enable effective combination without bias.
- Aggregation Method: Mathematical techniques such as average, weighted average, or index-based calculations are used to combine all parameters into a single value.
- Weight Assignment: Each parameter is assigned a specific weight based on its importance to water quality. For example, toxic parameters may have higher weight compared to less harmful ones.
- Water Quality Index (WQI) Generation: After aggregation, a final value called the Water Quality Index (WQI) is produced. This single value represents the overall condition of water quality.
- Real-Time Processing: In an Internet of Things (IoT) system, aggregation occurs continuously in real time, enabling instant monitoring and quick decision-making.
- Alert Generation: If the aggregated value crosses predefined thresholds, the system automatically generates alerts or notifications to authorities for immediate action.
- Data Visualization: Aggregated data is displayed on dashboards or mobile applications in simple formats such as graphs or indicators, making it easy for users to understand.
- Decision Support: Parameter aggregation helps government authorities and smart city systems make informed decisions regarding water treatment, pollution control, and resource management.

Circuit Diagram:



Main Components:

1. Turbidity Sensor:

Measures the cloudiness (impurities) in water.

- High turbidity indicates dirty water.
- Sends an analog signal to the controller.

2. MQ-2 Gas Sensor:

Detects harmful gases such as methane, smoke, and other pollutants around the water.

- Useful for identifying contamination.
- Output signal is sent to the controller.

3. TDS Sensor (Total Dissolved Solids):

Measures dissolved substances such as salts and minerals in water.

- Indicates the purity level of water.
- Higher TDS values mean more dissolved particles.

4. Microcontroller - Arduino Uno:

Acts as the brain of the system.

- Collects data from all sensors (turbidity, gas sensor, TDS sensor).
- Processes the data and controls system operations.

5. LCD Display (LCD 16x2):

Displays real-time values such as:

- Turbidity level
- TDS value
- Gas presence
- Helps users easily monitor water quality.

6. IoT Module:

Transmits data to the internet or cloud platform.

- Enables remote monitoring via mobile or computer.
- Widely used in smart city applications.

7. Buzzer:

Provides an alert sound when:

- Water quality is poor

- Harmful gas is detected
- Acts as an immediate warning system.

Power Supply Section:

8. Solar Panel:

Converts sunlight into electrical energy.

- Makes the system eco-friendly and self-powered.

9. Battery:

Stores energy generated by the solar panel.

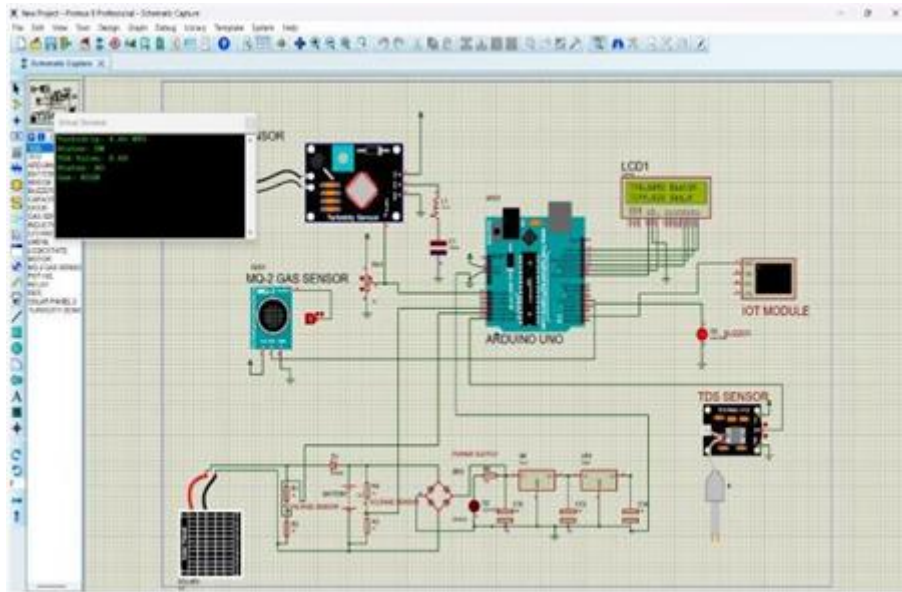
- Supplies power during nighttime or low sunlight conditions.

10. Voltage Regulator Circuit:

Ensures a stable voltage supply to all components.

- Protects the Arduino and sensors from damage due to voltage fluctuations.

Result and Discussion:



This diagram represents a detailed simulation of an IoT-enabled real-time water quality monitoring system with solar energy harvesting, implemented using the Arduino Uno as the central controller. The system integrates multiple sensors and communication modules to continuously monitor and analyze water quality parameters.

The turbidity sensor measures the cloudiness or suspended particles in water, indicating the level of contamination. The TDS sensor evaluates the concentration of dissolved solids such as salts and minerals, reflecting the purity of water. In addition, the MQ-2 gas sensor detects the presence of harmful gases around the water source, which may indicate chemical pollution or hazardous environmental conditions.

All these sensors provide analog signals that are fed into the Arduino, where they are converted into digital values, processed, and compared with predefined threshold limits to determine whether the water quality is safe or unsafe.

The processed data is simultaneously displayed on the LCD module, allowing users to observe real-time readings such as turbidity level, TDS value, and gas status. The simulation also includes a virtual terminal that outputs the same data in text form, which helps in debugging and verifying the system during the design phase.

When any of the sensed parameters exceed permissible limits, the Arduino activates a buzzer that serves as an immediate warning system to alert users about potential water contamination. Furthermore, the IoT module connected to the Arduino enables wireless transmission of the collected data to a cloud platform or remote device, allowing users or authorities to monitor water quality from anywhere in real time.

The power supply section of the system is designed using a solar panel, which converts sunlight into electrical energy, making the system energy-efficient and suitable for remote or rural areas. The generated energy is stored in a rechargeable battery, ensuring uninterrupted operation even during nighttime or low sunlight conditions.

A voltage regulation circuit consisting of rectifiers, capacitors, and voltage regulators is used to provide a stable and constant power supply to all electronic components, thereby protecting them from voltage fluctuations.

Overall, this simulated model demonstrates a smart, automated, and sustainable solution for continuous water quality monitoring in smart city and environmental applications. It effectively combines sensing, processing, alerting, communication, and renewable energy technologies into a single integrated system.

Implementation:

An IoT-enabled real-time water quality monitoring system for smart cities with solar energy harvesting is implemented by integrating sensing, communication, power management, and data analytics into a unified system that operates continuously with minimal human intervention.

The implementation begins with the deployment of water quality sensors such as pH, turbidity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, and conductivity sensors at various water sources like lakes, rivers, and distribution pipelines. These sensors are interfaced with a microcontroller unit (such as Arduino, ESP32, or Raspberry Pi), which acts as the core processing unit. The microcontroller collects analog or digital signals from the sensors, converts them into meaningful data, and performs initial

processing such as filtering and calibration to ensure accuracy.

To enable real-time monitoring, the processed data is transmitted to a cloud platform using IoT communication technologies such as Wi-Fi, GSM, or LoRa. The communication module connected to the microcontroller ensures that data is sent at regular intervals or when abnormal conditions are detected. In the cloud, platforms like ThingSpeak, AWS IoT, or Blynk store and analyze the data.

Dashboards are created to visualize parameters in real time, allowing authorities and users to monitor water quality remotely through web or mobile applications. Alerts and notifications are also configured to warn users when any parameter exceeds safe limits, enabling early detection of contamination.

A key aspect of the implementation is the integration of a solar energy harvesting system to make the setup energy-efficient and sustainable. Solar panels are installed to capture sunlight and convert it into electrical energy. This energy is regulated using a charge controller and stored in rechargeable batteries, which supply power to the sensors, microcontroller, and communication modules.

Power management techniques are applied to reduce energy consumption, such as placing the system in sleep mode when it is not actively sensing or transmitting data. This ensures continuous operation even in remote areas where conventional power supply is not available.

The system also includes data logging and analytics features. Historical data stored in the cloud can be analyzed to identify trends, seasonal variations, and pollution sources. Machine learning algorithms can be applied for predictive analysis, helping authorities take preventive measures. Additionally, the system can be integrated with smart city infrastructure, enabling automated control actions such as activating water treatment processes when contamination is detected.

Overall, the implementation of this system provides a reliable, cost-effective, and eco-friendly solution for continuous water quality monitoring. It reduces manual sampling, improves response time to water pollution issues, and supports sustainable urban development through the use of renewable energy sources.

Conclusion:

The IoT-enabled real-time water quality monitoring system with solar energy harvesting represents a significant advancement in smart city infrastructure by addressing both environmental sustainability and efficient resource management. This system ensures continuous and accurate monitoring of crucial water parameters such as pH, turbidity, temperature, and dissolved oxygen, which are essential for maintaining safe water standards. By eliminating the need for manual sampling and laboratory testing, it reduces human effort, operational delays, and the chances of errors, thereby making the monitoring process more reliable and efficient.

The integration of IoT technology allows seamless data transmission from remote sensing units to cloud platforms, where the data is stored, processed, and visualized in real time. Authorities and users can access this information through web or mobile applications, enabling them to monitor water quality from anywhere at any time. The system's ability to generate instant alerts when parameters exceed permissible limits helps in early detection of pollution, preventing potential health hazards and environmental damage. This proactive approach supports timely intervention and improves overall water management practices.

A major strength of the system lies in its use of solar energy harvesting, which makes it highly suitable for deployment in remote and rural areas where power supply is unreliable or unavailable. Solar panels capture renewable energy, which is stored in batteries and used to power the entire system, ensuring uninterrupted operation. This not only reduces electricity costs but also promotes the use of clean and green energy, aligning with sustainable development goals.

Furthermore, the system supports data logging and long-term analysis, enabling the identification of pollution trends, seasonal variations, and potential contamination sources. Advanced analytics and machine learning techniques can be applied to this data for predictive analysis, helping authorities take preventive measures rather than reactive actions. The system can also be integrated with automated control mechanisms, such as triggering water treatment processes or shutting down contaminated supply lines, enhancing its effectiveness in smart city ecosystems.

Overall, this implementation provides a cost-effective, scalable, and eco-friendly solution for ensuring water safety and quality. It plays a crucial role in protecting public health, conserving natural resources, and supporting sustainable urban development. As smart cities continue to evolve, such intelligent monitoring systems will become essential components in building a safer, healthier, and more resilient future.

Future Work:

Future work focuses on improving sensor accuracy and expanding the system to detect a wider range of contaminants. The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning can enable predictive analysis and smart decision-making, allowing the system to identify potential water quality issues before they occur.

Enhancements in communication technologies such as LoRa and NB-IoT can further improve long-range data transmission and reliability, especially in remote areas. Additionally, improving solar energy efficiency and implementing advanced power management techniques will ensure better energy utilization and longer system operation.

Further developments may include strengthening data security, improving system scalability, and enhancing integration with existing smart city infrastructure. These improvements will make the system more robust, reliable, and efficient for large-scale deployment.

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