Design and Implementation of a Smart, Sustainable IoT-Powered Aquaponics System Using Solar Energy

Alazar Wake, Eden Yoseph, Filmon Nezif, Yordanos Mekonen

Department Of Electrical Engineering

Higher Colleges of Technology

Sharjah, UAE

**Abstract**

*In recent years the pressing issues of food insecurity and pollution, have created the need for a reliable source of nutrients while reducing emissions to a minimum. As a result, there has been a growing interest in sustainable agricultural practices. One such practice is Aquaponics. Aquaponics combines aquaculture and hydroponics, to provide a symbiotic environment where fish waste fertilizes plants, and plants purify the fish water. While promising, traditional aquaponics systems demand intensive monitoring and control, posing labour and operational cost challenges. To address these issues, this research proposes developing a smart, solar-powered aquaponics system, leveraging the Internet of Things (IoT).*

*Conducted in Sharjah, UAE, a region with abundant solar resources, the system employs solar panels to charge a battery that powers the entire setup, thereby minimizing environmental impact. ESP32 microcontrollers and relays are used to automate lighting and pumps based on real-time data. Sensors monitor critical parameters such as water flow, temperature, and pH levels, ensuring optimal conditions for both fish and plants.*

*By utilizing sensors to monitor vital parameters and automate system responses , the system aims to overcome traditional limitations, maximize productivity, minimize resource consumption, and promote environmental sustainability.*

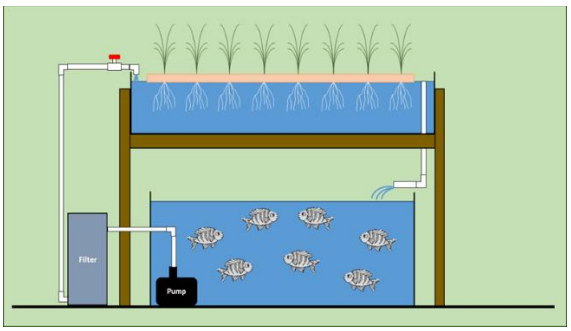
*Keywords: Aquaponics, Solar Power, IoT, Sustainable Agriculture, ESP32, Renewable Energy*

# I. Introduction

## Background of the study

For thousands of years, human civilization has relied on traditional agricultural practices as a primary source of food. However, the current high population growth could lead to food shortages if food production does not increase significantly. According to the FAO [1], food production needs to increase by 70% compared to 2005 levels by 2050 to feed the projected population of 9.1 billion. Just expanding on traditional agriculture is not a viable way to achieve the goal. This is due to two reasons, one being the water consumption of a traditional agricultural system, this system doesn't circulate water which makes it the most water-consuming process above all others at around 70 percent of the freshwater consumption[2] and the other reason is soil usage, increase in population means less arable land as more farm lands are transformed to a neighborhood and most rural areas are urbanized, which agriculture used to thrive in.

As a result, there has been growing interest in sustainable agricultural practices that are both water efficient and space efficient. Perfect example of this would be Aquaponics. Aquaponics is a method of growing plants and raising fish together in a closed loop system in a mutualistic arrangement. In this arrangement the plant gets nutrients from the fish waste, while the fish benefit from cleaner, less concentrated water.




Aquaponics addresses many of the challenges faced by traditional agriculture, creating a more sustainable environment with water and space efficient capabilities. However, traditional aquaponics systems require intensive monitoring, control, and management to ensure success as both the fish and the plant require a certain environmental state to function in [3]. Failing to