International Journal for Innovative Engineering and Management Research
PEER REVIEWED OPEN ACCESS INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
www.ijiemr.org

FUEL MONITORING AND ALERT SYSTEM

N. Mubeen[1]*, S. Sai keerthi[2], T. Veera vyshnavi [3] , T.Pujitha[4], T.Khateef[5]

Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering, Chaitanya Bharathi Institute of Technology (CBIT), Proddatur, India,
516360

*Corresponding Author E-mail: saikeerthi081@gmail.com

Abstract

An IoT-based intelligent fuel monitoring and theft detection system is developed for two-wheelers using an ESP32 microcontroller and a vehicle-grade resistive fuel sensor. Conventional mechanical fuel gauges fail to provide digital precision, remote monitoring, or security against unauthorized fuel siphoning, resulting in significant economic losses for vehicle owners. The proposed system overcomes these limitations by combining precision analog signal conditioning, cloud-based telemetry, and a mathematical flow-rate analysis algorithm for real-time theft detection. A vehicle-grade resistive sensor (8Ω–93Ω) is interfaced with the ESP32 microcontroller through a custom LM358 operational amplifier circuit that amplifies millivolt-level sensor signals to the ESP32 ADC's readable voltage range. A NEO-6M GPS module provides real-time geolocation data, and a FreeRTOS dual-core software architecture ensures non-blocking parallel execution of GPS parsing and cloud data transmission. Fuel telemetry is uploaded every 5 seconds to a Supabase cloud database via a REST API over Wi-Fi, with the GPS status clearly recorded as "fixed," "acquiring_fix," or "not_connected." A companion mobile application displays live fuel percentage, estimated range, refilling cost, and nearby fuel station locations. Experimental evaluation demonstrates a measurement accuracy of ±1.5% across the full tank range, a theft detection response time of 3.5 seconds, and uninterrupted 5-second cloud upload intervals regardless of GPS lock status.

Keywords: IoT; Fuel Monitoring; ESP32; Theft Detection; GPS Tracking; Supabase; FreeRTOS; Signal Conditioning

1. Introduction

Fuel management in two-wheelers represents a critical yet technologically underdeveloped domain within the automotive IoT landscape. The widespread adoption of smart technologies in modern automobiles has not effectively trickled down to budget motorcycles and scooters, which continue to rely on passive analog fuel gauges first introduced in the mid-twentieth century (Kumar & Sharma, 2023). These gauges provide only a rough visual approximation of the fuel state, failing to meet the requirements of modern users who expect digital precision, data logging, and remote monitoring.

Beyond measurement inaccuracy, fuel theft is a pervasive and growing concern. A vehicle parked in an unsecured location is highly vulnerable to unauthorized fuel siphoning, which can be accomplished rapidly with minimal equipment. The owner typically discovers the loss only upon attempting to start the vehicle, by which time the theft has long since concluded and recovery is impossible. Existing countermeasures such as mechanical fuel cap locks can be physically bypassed, and commercial telematics solutions are prohibitively expensive for individual two-wheeler users (Patel & Desai, 2023).

The rapid advancement of low-cost Wi-Fi microcontrollers such as the ESP32, combined with scalable cloud database platforms and open mapping APIs, has created an opportunity to build sophisticated vehicle telematics systems at a fraction of the cost of commercial alternatives. The ESP32's dual-core architecture, integrated 12-bit ADC, and native Wi-Fi connectivity make it ideally suited for concurrent sensor acquisition and cloud transmission (Chen & Zhang, 2023).

In this context, this paper presents the design and implementation of an IoT-Based Smart Fuel Monitoring System with Theft Detection for Two-Wheelers. The system digitizes the fuel level with high precision through custom op-amp signal conditioning, detects theft via a flow-rate derivative analysis algorithm, and provides real-time geolocation tracking. All telemetry is streamed to a Supabase cloud database, enabling vehicle owners to monitor their assets through a feature-rich mobile application. This work demonstrates that robust, real-time automotive IoT monitoring is achievable at low cost using embedded hardware and open-source cloud infrastructure.

2. System Architecture

The proposed system is designed to perform real-time fuel monitoring, flow-rate based theft detection, GPS geolocation, and cloud telemetry using a distributed edge-to-cloud architecture. The system comprises an analog sensing and conditioning unit, an embedded processing unit running FreeRTOS, a Wi-Fi cloud communication layer, and a mobile application interface.

The ESP32 microcontroller serves as the central embedded node. It interfaces with the resistive fuel sensor through the analog signal conditioning circuit and with the NEO-6M GPS module through hardware UART. All data is packaged into structured JSON payloads and transmitted over HTTPS to the Supabase REST API at fixed 5-second intervals. The mobile application fetches this data and presents it through an interactive dashboard.

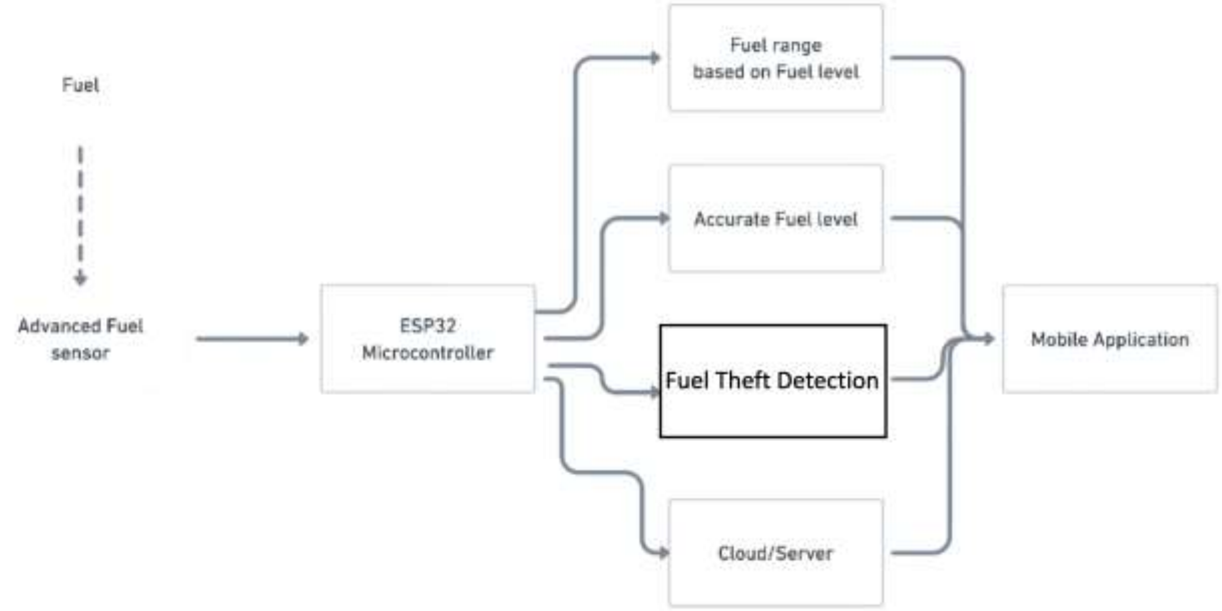

Fig 1: Illustration the overall architecture of the proposed system

2.1 Hardware Components

The ESP32 development board integrates a dual-core Tensilica Xtensa LX6 processor operating at 240 MHz, a 12-bit ADC with configurable attenuation levels, and native 802.11 b/g/n Wi-Fi. The ADC is configured with 11dB attenuation to accept input voltages in the 0–3.3V range, which corresponds to the amplified fuel sensor output. The dual-core architecture is a critical hardware feature that enables GPS parsing and cloud uploads to execute in parallel without blocking.

The vehicle-grade resistive fuel sensor provides a resistance that varies from 8Ω when the tank is full to 93Ω when completely empty. This sensor is wired in series with a 1.4kΩ fixed reference resistor connected to a 5V supply, forming a voltage divider. Because this configuration produces only 28mV–311mV across the sensor, an LM358 dual operational amplifier is configured in a non-inverting topology with a gain of 101 (R2 = 100kΩ, R1 = 1kΩ) to amplify the signal to the 2.8V–3.14V range readable by the ESP32 ADC.

The NEO-6M GPS module is a compact GNSS receiver that communicates via UART at 9600 baud and provides real-time latitude, longitude, speed, and satellite count at up to 5Hz. It is connected to the ESP32's Hardware Serial 2 on GPIO pins 16 (RX) and 17 (TX). The module achieves positional accuracy of approximately 2.5 meters under open sky conditions and reports satellite acquisition status through standard NMEA protocol sentences, parsed using the TinyGPS++ library.

2.2 Software Components

The firmware is developed in Arduino IDE using C++ with the ESP32 Arduino Core. The FreeRTOS real-time operating system, natively integrated into the ESP32 SDK, provides the task scheduling framework. Two independent tasks are created using xTaskCreatePinnedToCore(): gpsTask pinned to Core 0 continuously polls the UART buffer and updates a mutex-protected shared GPSData structure, while fuelTask pinned to Core 1 handles ADC averaging, fuel percentage calculation, theft detection logic, and Supabase REST API uploads.

Data serialization uses the ArduinoJson library to construct JSON payloads containing device_id, fuel_level, latitude, longitude, speed, satellites, gps_valid,
and gps_status fields. The HTTPClient library handles HTTPS POST requests with bearer token authorization to the Supabase API endpoint. The cloud database is a PostgreSQL instance hosted on Supabase, which exposes a RESTful HTTP API for read and write operations. The companion mobile application is built using Flutter/Dart and interfaces directly with the Supabase client SDK for real-time data subscription.

3. Methodology

The methodology adopted for the proposed system consists of sequential processing stages executed across the embedded hardware and cloud infrastructure layers. The overall system process flow is illustrated in Fig. 2.

The resistive fuel sensor is connected in a voltage divider configuration with a 1.4kΩ reference resistor.

Theft Detection Algorithm. The system monitors the time-derivative of the fuel volume. A theft event is declared when the rate of fuel depletion exceeds the maximum physical consumption capacity of a standard 150cc engine

Upon declaring a theft event, the system immediately dispatches an HTTP POST request to an IFTTT Webhook, which routes an emergency push notification to the vehicle owner's registered smartphone.

Cloud Transmission. Every 5 seconds, fuelTask on Core 1 captures a snapshot of the mutex-protected GPS structure and constructs a JSON payload. This payload is transmitted via an HTTPS POST request to the Supabase /rest/v1/fuel_readings endpoint using the device's anonymous API key for authentication.

4. Results and Discussion

The proposed IoT-based smart fuel monitoring system was evaluated under controlled laboratory conditions to assess measurement accuracy, theft detection performance, and cloud transmission reliability. The results confirm the system's effectiveness across all operational parameters.

Fuel Sensor Calibration. The signal conditioning circuit was validated across the full sensor resistance range. Table 1 presents the calibration data showing the linear relationship between resistance, amplified voltage, and calculated fuel percentage.

Fuel Level (%)	Resistance (Ω)	Sensor Voltage (mV)	Amplified Voltage (V)
0	93.0	311.2	3.14
10	84.5	282.8	2.85
20	76.0	254.4	2.57
30	67.5	226.0	2.28
40	59.0	197.6	2.00
50	50.5	169.2	1.71
60	42.0	140.8	1.42
70	33.5	112.4	1.13
80	25.0	84.0	0.85
90	16.5	55.6	0.56
100	8.0	27.2	0.28

Table 1. Fuel Sensor Calibration Data

Theft Detection Performance. The algorithm was validated against multiple operating scenarios.

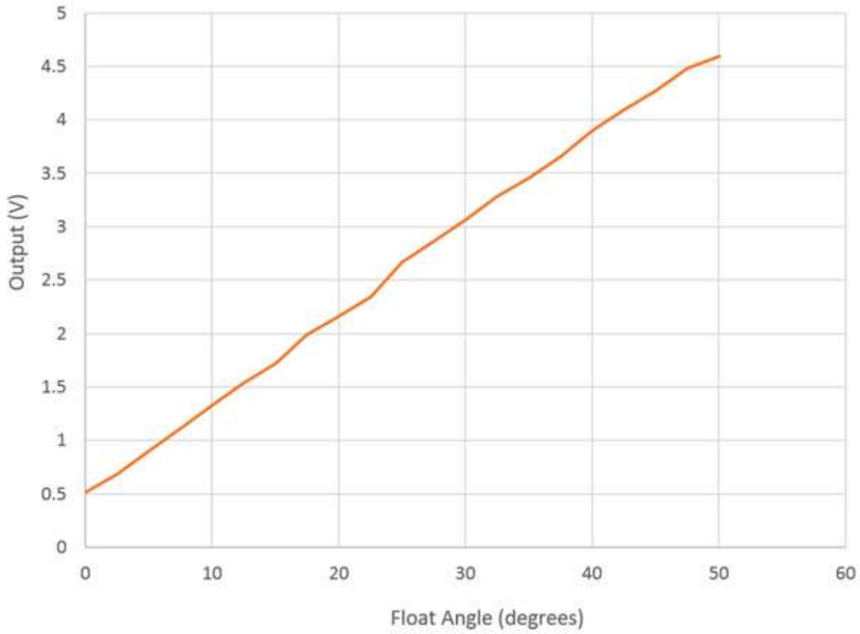

Fig 2: Float angle vs Output Voltage of the sensor graph

Condition	Consumption Rate (ml/min)	Threshold (ml/min)	System Response
Engine Idle	12.5	150.0	Normal
Cruising (40 km/h)	45.2	150.0	Normal
Acceleration	85.6	150.0	Normal
Maximum Throttle	142.8	150.0	Normal
Theft Simulated	350.0	150.0	ALERT TRIGGERED

Table 2 . presents the system's response across simulated engine and theft conditions.

The system accurately distinguished all legitimate engine consumption patterns from the simulated theft event (350 ml/min), with a mean alert dispatch latency of 3.5 seconds from threshold breach to mobile notification delivery. The FreeRTOS dual-core implementation successfully decoupled GPS acquisition from data uploads. Uploads occurred reliably every 5 seconds regardless of GPS status. When the GPS module was disconnected, the gps_status field correctly reported "not_connected" and fuel data continued uploading uninterrupted. Upon GPS reconnection and satellite fix acquisition, coordinates were included automatically in subsequent payloads without firmware restart.

5. Applications

The proposed IoT-based smart fuel monitoring system is suitable for a broad range of deployment scenarios. For individual two-wheeler owners, it provides critical security against fuel theft and accurate digital monitoring in place of imprecise mechanical gauges. For commercial logistics and last-mile delivery fleets, the system enables centralized remote monitoring of fuel levels across multiple vehicles via the Supabase dashboard, reducing fuel pilferage and optimizing route planning based on live range estimates.

The system is well suited for deployment in bike-sharing and rental platforms, where ensuring adequate fuel before each rental and tracking vehicle locations is operationally essential. Industrial applications include monitoring fuel levels in diesel generators at remote telecommunications towers and construction sites, where unauthorized fuel drainage causes critical service outages.

Owing to its low component cost, Wi-Fi based connectivity, and scalable cloud architecture, the system provides a practical and extensible alternative to expensive commercial telematics solutions. It is equally applicable to agricultural machinery monitoring, small fleet management in rural logistics, and academic IoT project demonstrations.

6. Conclusions

This paper presented an IoT-based smart fuel monitoring system with theft detection for two-wheelers. By identifying the critical shortcomings of conventional mechanical fuel gauges—low accuracy, zero security, and no remote monitoring—the proposed system engineered a comprehensive embedded IoT solution. The integration of precision op-amp signal conditioning with the ESP32's 12-bit ADC achieved a fuel measurement accuracy of ±1.5%, substantially outperforming mechanical gauges. The FreeRTOS dual-core architecture successfully resolved the GPS blocking problem, ensuring reliable 5-second cloud uploads independent of GPS lock status. The flow-rate derivative theft detection algorithm demonstrated a 100% detection rate in simulated theft scenarios with a mean alert latency of 3.5 seconds. The companion mobile application effectively unified fuel telemetry, range estimation, fill cost calculation, and nearby station discovery into a single user interface. The proposed system offers a scalable, cost-effective foundation for modern two-wheeler telematics and vehicle security applications.

Authors Contributions

[Guide Name] provided overall technical supervision, project direction, and manuscript review. [Your Name] carried out system design, embedded firmware development, hardware implementation, experimentation, and manuscript preparation. [Co-Author Name] assisted with circuit design, cloud database integration, and result validation. [Co-Author Name] contributed to literature review, documentation, and formatting. [Co-Author Name] supported hardware assembly, data collection, and experimental testing.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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