

## A SURVEY ON CLUSTER BASED ROUTING PROTOCOL IN WIRELESS SENSOR NETWORK

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### ABSTRACT

In the last few years, wireless sensor networks (WSN) have become an active area for researchers due to its broad and growing application. However, routing is a critical issue that needs consideration as it directly impacts the performance of WSN. Several protocols have been proposed to address this issue as well as reducing energy consumption and prolong a lifetime of the sensor nodes in WSN. Based on structure of network, routing protocols in WSN can be broadly classified into three categories: flat routing, hierarchical or cluster based routing and location based routing. Due to certain advantages, clustering is flatter as an active stem in routing technology. In this paper, a survey on cluster-based routing protocol for WSNs has been done and comparisons made on the basis of energy efficiency, delivery delay, cluster stability, load balancing, and algorithmic complexity. Strengths and limitations of each scheme are presented.

**KEYWORDS:** Wireless sensor network, Cluster based routing, Sensor, Routing protocol.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Wireless Sensor Network (WSN) applications are widely used in several areas such as industrial, military, habitat monitoring, environment and disaster management [1]. The main elements of WSN are the sensor nodes that have many limitations in its characteristic like power resource, computational capability, bandwidth and memory. These nodes have the capability to communicate each other and with one or more super nodes called the base station (BS). The base station may be connected to the Internet, and each node consists of sensor for a specific task (one or more task). The sensor is consist of a radio module used to send data via a wireless medium, a micro controller for processing, and power supplier for provide the necessary energy for all components in the tiny device. Typically, batteries are the main power source in the sensor nodes and due to its adhoc deployment, recharging is a difficult task. Routing is one of the most important challenge issues that directly affected the performance of WSN [4]. The main goal of the routing protocols in WSN is to develop efficient algorithms to reduce the power consumption and extend the life time of the network's nodes. There are many factors that can affect the performance of WSN. These include scalability, energy consumption, bandwidth, data aggregation, mobility, redundancy, multipath, end to end delay, network load, packet loss and localization [4]. There are also many hybrid routing protocols proposed to reduce the time for network partition and uniform the nodes energy distribution. Depending on the network structure, the routing protocols in WSN are divided into three types: flat, hierarchical, and location-based routing protocols [12].

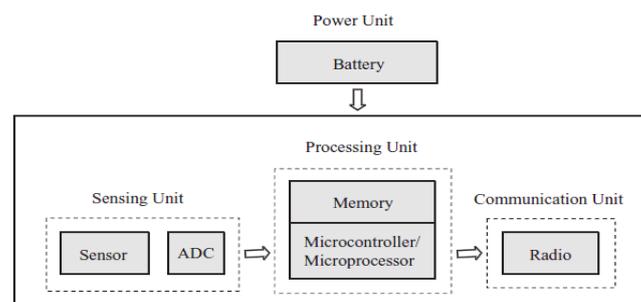


Fig. 1. Sensor node Architecture

In flat routing protocols, all nodes perform the same task in the network and normally use flooding to transmit data to the BS. The flat topology is effective in the small-scale networks. Location-based routing protocols used some real time applications, also call position-based to transmit data depending on the geographical positions. In hierarchical routing protocols, nodes perform different task. Cluster head (CH) in one or two in every cluster and main function of CH is data processing and message transmission between CHs or with the BSs, the rest of nodes calls ordinary nodes (ONs) or member nodes (MNs) that perform the sensing and transmit the data to the CH. This means that creation of clusters and assigning specific task to cluster heads can significantly contribute to scalability, lifetime and energy efficiency. In this paper I present an ample survey of various cluster based routing protocols proposed in recent years.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 describes the routing protocols in wireless sensor networks. Section 3 describe the cluster based routing protocols. Section 4 compare the different cluster based routing protocols in WSN. Some open issued are discussed in section 5 and section 6 concludes the paper.

## II. ROUTING PROTOCOLS IN WIRELESS SENSOR NETWORKS

Routing is a method to find out path between the source node and the destination node. Routing in WSN is really challenging due to the intrinsic characteristics that differentiate these networks from other networks. The design of routing protocols in WSNs is affected by several exigent factors. The efficient communication can be achieved in WSNs by overcoming these factors[4].

### 2.1 Design Challenges of Routing Protocols in WSNs

Routing protocols in WSNs are responsible for discovering and maintaining energy efficient routes in the networks, in order to make communication reliable and efficient. Due to the limitations in the kind of network, the main aim of routing protocol design is extending the network life time by keeping the sensors alive as much as possible. There are some challenging factors which are important in designing routing protocols[2,4]. These are given as:

**2.1.1. Node deployment:** Deployment is very application dependent and affects the performance of the routing protocols. It can be manual or randomized. In the first strategy, the nodes are manually placed and data is routed through predestined paths. In manual deployment, coverage of areas is satisfied with careful choice of node density. Although this is good choice when nodes are costly and their operations are influenced by their locations, it is not good for harsh environments. On the other hand, in random deployment, the nodes are scattered arbitrarily. If the application is related to event detection, then it is efficient to have a random node deployment to get effective results.

**2.1.2. Energy consumption:** The main aim of routing protocols is to convey data among sensors and sinks in efficient manner. Each sensor node consumes energy in sensing, processing, receiving and transmitting information. Among these data transmission is the most energy consuming task. Since, the sensor nodes have limited energy resources, energy depletion of some nodes results in great topology and network connectivity changes, reorganization of network and finding new routes[4]. So, there is a need to design routing protocols that can accommodate the trade off between energy optimization and accuracy.

**2.1.3. Nature of node:** In WSN, the nodes that are scattered over the environment can be either homogeneous or heterogeneous. Homogeneous nodes have the same capabilities such as, range of transmission, battery life, and processing capacity while heterogeneous nodes have different capabilities. The majority of the network architecture assumes that sensor nodes are stationary. However mobility of base stations as well as of nodes is necessary in several applications.

**2.1.4. Coverage:** In WSNs, each node prevails a certain view of the environment. A given sensor's view of the environment is limited both in range and in accuracy[2,4]. Hence coverage area is essential design issue.

**2.1.5. Scalability:** The number of nodes deployed in the field may be variable i.e. few numbers to few thousands. The routing protocol be required to be able to work with massive amount of nodes. When the number of nodes is extensive, it is infeasible that each node maintain a global knowledge of network topology.

**2.1.6. Quality of service:** the routing protocols should be able to provide certain level of QoS that is required by the application[4]. The QoS parameters can be bandwidth, delivery delay, throughput, jitter etc. For instance, target detection and tracking applications required low transmission delay for the time sensitive data. While, multimedia networks requires high throughput.

**2.1.7. Application:** The routing protocols are very application specific. In other words, different scenario or network environments need different routing protocols. From the application's viewpoint, data can be collected from the environment using various methods such as, time driven, event driven, and query driven methods. In time driven methods, the sensor nodes send their data periodically to BS or Gateways. In event driven methods, sensor nodes report the collected data when the event occurs. Eventually, in query driven methods, the BS request the data from the nodes and send a query.

## 2.2 Classification of Routing Protocols in WSNs

In WSNs, the network layer is used to implement the routing of incoming data. In multi-hop networks, the source node cannot reach the sink directly. So, intermediate nodes have to relay their packets. The implementation of routing tables gives the solution. WSN routing protocols can be classified into five ways, according to the way of establishing the routing paths, according to the network structure, according to the protocol operation, according to the initiator of communications, and according to how a protocol selects a next hop on route of forwarded message[9]. The taxonomy of routing protocols is shown in figure

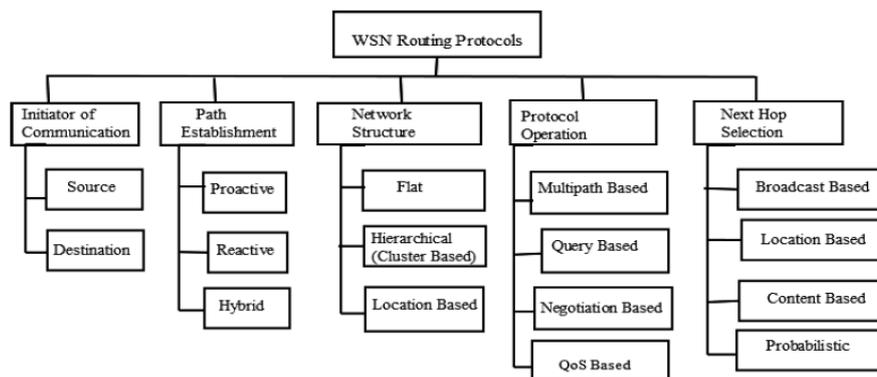
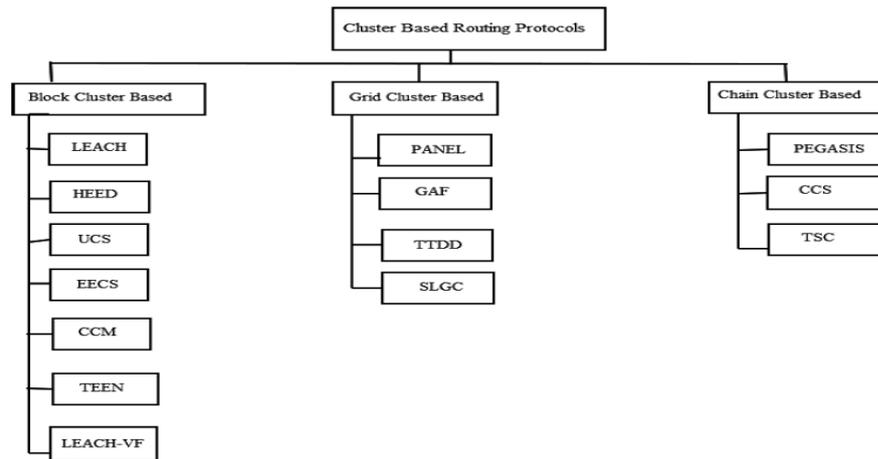


Fig. 2. Taxonomy of routing protocols in WSNs

The network structure based routing protocols are categorized as: flat based, hierarchal based, and location based routing protocols. In flat based routing, every sensor node plays same role. While, in hierarchal based routing, sensor nodes have different roles. So, when network scalability and efficient communication is needed, hierarchal or cluster based routing is the best choice.

## III. CLUSTER BASED ROUTING PROTOCOL IN WIRELESS SENSOR NETWORKS

The cluster based routing is energy efficient method in which nodes those having high energies are arbitrarily selected for processing and sending data while nodes those having low energies are used for sensing and sending information to the cluster heads. This property of cluster based routing contributed to the scalability, lifetime maximization, and energy minimization[31,32,33,34]. The cluster based routing protocols are classified into three broad categories- block based, grid cluster based, and chain cluster based routing protocols. The taxonomy of cluster based routing protocols is shown in figure.



**Fig. 3.** Taxonomy of cluster based routing protocols in WSNs

The popular block cluster based routing protocols are LEACH, HEED, UCS, EECS, CCM, TEEN, LEACH-VF etc as shown in figure 3[33,34]. The merits and limitations of block cluster based routing protocols are given in table 1.

The popular grid cluster based routing protocols are PANEL, GAF, TTDD, SLGC etc as shown in figure 3[33,34]. The merits and limitations of grid cluster based routing protocols are given in table 2. The popular chain Cluster based routing protocols are PEGASIS, CCS, TSC etc as shown in figure 3[33,34]. The merits and limitations of these protocols are given in table 3.

**Table 1** Summary of merits and limitations of block cluster based routing protocols

Algorithm	Merits	Limitations
LEACH[41]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Each node has equal chance to become cluster head but cannot be selected as cluster head in subsequent round so load is shared between nodes</li> <li>2. LEACH uses TDMA so it keeps CHs from unnecessary collisions</li> </ol>	LEACH use single hop communication so it can not used in large scale networks
HEED[11]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fully distributed routing scheme</li> <li>2. HEED achieves load balancing and uniform CH distribution</li> <li>3. HEED achieves high energy efficiency and scalability by communicating in multi-hop way</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Unbalanced energy consumption due to more CH generation</li> <li>2. Massive overhead due to multiple rounds</li> <li>3. Additional overhead due to several epochs</li> </ol>
UCS[13]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Nodes in cluster can be variable</li> <li>2. UCS is bi-layered model and two hop inter cluster communication</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. it is limited by assumptions that CHs are predetermined as well as network is not homogeneous</li> <li>2. Residual energy of node is not considered and not sufficient for large range networks</li> </ol>
EECS[16]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. EECS constructs more balanced network in term of energy consumption and communication load</li> <li>2. Use dynamic sizing of clusters</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. lot of overhead due to global information for communication</li> <li>2. single hop communication consume lot of energy</li> </ol>
CCM	Less energy consumption compared with LEACH	Chain head selection criterion
LEACH-VF[42]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Solve the problem of area with overlapped sensing coverage and sensing hole</li> <li>2. In LEACH-VF some nodes can be moved to coverage inside the cluster are</li> </ol>	Load balancing is not up to the mark
TEEN[23]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Data transmission can be controlled by varying two thresholds</li> <li>2. Well suited for time critical</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. whenever thresholds are not meet, the node will not communicate</li> <li>2. data may be lost if CHs are not able to communicate with each other</li> </ol>

**Table 2.** Summary of merits and limitations of grid cluster based routing protocols

Algorithm	Merits	Limitations
PANEL[12]	1. PANEL is energy efficient that ensure load balancing and long network life time 2. supports asynchronous applications	1. clusters are predetermined 2. to determine geographic position information, special conditions are needed, which is not always available
GAF[12]	1. GAF increase the network lifetime by saving energy 2. Routing fidelity is maintained	Large traffic injection and delay is not predictable
TTDD	1. Resolve the numerous mobile sinks and moving problem of sink in large scale WSNs 2. suitable to event detecting WSNs among irregular data traffic	1. Large latency 2. low energy efficiency 3. TTDD require sensor nodes to be stationary and location aware
SLGC	1. Lower energy consumption in SLGC compared to LEAH	Large overhead due to complex data communication

**Table 3**Summary of merits and limitations of chain cluster based

Algorithm	merits	Limitations
PEGASIS[9]	1. Energy load is distributed uniforms 2. reduce overhead due to dynamic cluster formation 3. decrease number of data transmission	1. Long delays cause a node to become bottleneck 2. network is not vey scalable 3. not suitable for time varying topologies
CCS	Energy consumption is reduced 2. reduced data flow from BS in CCS	1. unbalanced energy consumption 2. Large delay due to long chain
TSC	TSC reduces redundant data transmission in network by breaking long chains into smaller chains	Node distribution in unbalanced

#### IV. COMPARISON

Table 4 summarizes the comparison between popular cluster based routing protocols on the basis of energy efficiency, delivery delay, cluster stability, load balancing, and algorithmic complexity[32,33,34, 35].

Scheme name	Energy efficiency	Delivery delay	Cluster stability	scalability	Load balancing	Algorithm complexity
LEACH	Very low	Very small	Medium	Very low	Medium	Low
HEED	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
UCS	Very Low	Small	High	Low	Bad	Medium
EECS	Medium	Small	High	Low	Medium	Very high
CCM	Very low	Small	High	Very low	Medium	Medium
LEECH-VF	Medium	Small	High	Very low	Medium	Medium
TEEN	Very high	Small	High	Low	Good	High
GAF	Medium	Very small	Medium	High	Medium	Medium
PANEL	Medium	Medium	Low	Low	Good	High
TIDD	Very low	Very large	Very high	Low	Good	Low
SLGC	Medium	Very small	Medium	Very low	Medium	Medium
PEASIS	Low	Very large	Low	Very low	Medium	High
CCS	Low	Large	Low	Low	Very bad	Medium
TSC	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Bad	Medium

## V. ISSUES IN CLUSTER BASED ROUTING PROTOCOL IN WSN

The much research work has been done to query the drawbacks of clustering techniques and to improve the individuality of cluster based routing methods but there are still several issues to be addressed for the efficient use of cluster based routing techniques[33,34]. The some open issues need to be addressed are:

**5.1 Calculation and selection of cluster heads:** CH is utility of computation and communication energy model for the clustering schemes. If the multi hop scheme is used then CHs count supposed to be revised. The performance and availability of adjacent CHs is an important factor for relaying the data of clusters. Consequently, CH role in rotation of adjacent clusters must be considered as dominant factor in selection process of CH.

**5.2 Scalability:** In a few large scale deployments, it is usually desirable to enlarge the monitoring area amid new nodes. So, careful observations are required to check the adaptability and scalability of clustering techniques.

**5.3 Topology of network:** Topology changes owed to territorial circumstances in realization of WSNs. So it is important to focus on the strength of clustering methods.

**5.4 Fault tolerance:** Transient fault management owed to temporal link failures desires much more attention.

**5.5 Redundancy management:** Minimizing the use of massively redundant nodes for building trustworthy and proficient relay backbone. The combined data of CHs relayed to BS must be investigated further.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

Wireless sensor networks have become an active area for researchers due to its broad and growing application. However, routing is a critical issue that needs consideration as it directly impacts the performance of WSN. To support scalability, grouping nodes into clusters has been popular method in WSNs. In this work, I surveyed the status of research and classified the different clustering methods. This paper classifies the taxonomy of cluster based routing protocols. In this work, I focus on the merits and limitations of different cluster based routing protocols and represent them in tabular form. On the basis of comparison between different schemes, it is clear that cluster based routing protocols are useful in performance improvement of wireless sensor networks. This paper will be very useful for the research group those are interest development, modification or optimization of routing algorithms for WSNs. Although these routing protocols shows the improvements but still there is possibility of improvements in Wireless sensor networks. Further research would be needed to address issues related to Cluster formation, cluster head communication and data fusion.

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