

ENHANCED INTERNET OF THINGS LOAD BALANCING ALGORITHM
WITH AWARENESS IN RESOURCES AVAILABILITY

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ABSTRACT

Internet of Things (IoT) backed by blockchain preserves data from being tampered on peer-to-peer network communication between the IoT devices. Unfortunately, blockchain is an intensive computing process because of the consensus algorithm. Hence IoT device is not suitable for blockchain because IoT device is mostly a low computing device and made up with limited resources. This study propose the Awareness in Resources Availability (AIRA) algorithm that apply with weight least connection (WLC) algorithm at IoT blockchain platform. The purpose of the algorithm is to reduce the usage of resources on the IoT nodes; the parameters that will be compared are CPU percentage, RAM usage, and network throughput. The research methodology using three types of experiment in order to evaluate the AIRA algorithm performance and the experiment performs with a different type of load balancing. The load balancing algorithms used to compare with the AIRA algorithm are weight round-robin (WRR) and weight least connection (WLC). It was discovered that with a limited amount of resources at the low computing of IoT nodes, in most cases, the AIRA algorithm performs better compare to WRR and WLC in terms of reducing the CPU utilization, RAM usage, and network throughput. In conclusion, the AIRA algorithm is the best method to reduce the resources consumption of node at IoT-blockchain platform base on result, the average reduction of CPU utilization is 56 percent, the average reduction of RAM usage is 16 percent, the average reduction of network throughput for receive is 72 percent and finally the average network throughput for send is 81 percent.

ABSTRAK

Internet Benda (IB) yang disokong oleh blok rantai memelihara keselamatan pada komunikasi rangkaian rakan ke rakan antara peranti IB. Malangnya, blok rantai adalah proses pengkomputeran yang intensif oleh kerana algoritma konsensus. Oleh itu peranti IB tidak sesuai untuk blok rantai kerana peranti IB kebanyakannya adalah peranti pengkomputeran rendah dan mempunyai sumber terhad. Oleh itu, dalam kajian ini, kami mencadangkan algoritma Kesedaran dalam Ketersediaan Sumber (KKS) yang di gunakan bersama pengimbang beban sambungan terkecil berwajaran (STB). Tujuan KKS adalah untuk mengoptimumkan kemampuan IB; parameter yang akan dibandingkan adalah peratusan CPU, penggunaan RAM, dan daya pemprosesan rangkaian. Bagi menilai prestasi algoritma KKS, eksperimen telah di jalankan dengan pengimbangan beban yang berbeza. Algoritma pengimbang beban yang kami gunakan untuk menilai algoritma KKS adalah robin pusingan berwajaran (RPB) dan STB. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa dengan jumlah sumber yang terhad pada nod pengkomputeran rendah, dalam kebanyakan kes, algoritma KKS berkerja lebih baik berbanding STB dan RPB dalam mengoptimumkan peratusan CPU, penggunaan RAM, dan daya pemprosesan rangkaian. Kesimpulannya, algoritma KKS dapat mengurangkan penggunaan sumber IB di IB-block rantai, di mana ia dapat mengurangkan purata peratusan CPU sebanyak 56 peratus, kemudian pengurangan purata penggunaan RAM sebanyak 16 peratus, dan akhir sekali pengurangan purata daya pemprosesan rangkaian untuk menerima sebanyak 72 peratus dan pengurangan purata daya pemprosesan rangkaian untuk menghantar sebanyak 81 peratus.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIRA	-	Awareness In Resources Availability
CPU	-	Control Processing Unit
FIFO	-	First In First Out
IOT	-	Internet of Things
RAM	-	Random Access Memory
VM	-	Virtual Machine
P2P	-	Peer to Peer
PB	-	Petabytes
WLC	-	Weight Least Connection
WRR	-	Weight Round Robin

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Internet of Things (IoT) refers to interconnected objects that allow people or things to be connected, has different characteristics that consist of computation and storage capabilities (Rachedi *et al.*, 2017). There is a drawback for this IoT or edge node to sharing data using a peer-to-peer (P2P) network. This is due to IoT connections will raise an issue of security, where the connection may create leakage of privacy of user information (Jong-Hyouk and Kim, 2017).

IoT connectivity has security problems that have urged worldwide researchers to combine IoT and blockchain technology. This blockchain technology seems capable of solving security issues for IoT, as blockchain characteristics are distributed, transparent, persistent, and secure (Songara and Chouhan, 2017). Blockchain is a distributed peer-to-peer network that can prevent the single point of failure situation (Zheng *et al.*, 2017) and enable interaction for non-trusting members with each other without a trusted intermediary, in a cryptographically verifiable method (Es-samaali, Outchakoucht and Leroy, 2017).

There is awareness among researchers about IoT and blockchain combination which is excellent and could be used to transform many industries. This combination gives IoT devices the ability to carry out autonomous data exchange through smart contracts. Implementation of blockchain on IoT could overcome the problems associated with the centralize IoT applications approach (Kshetri, 2017). This is because if centralization occurs at IoT application, it could bring to a single point of failure.

Although the combination of IoT and blockchain might improve from the standpoint of protection, blockchain technology is computation expensive. In addition, IoT devices are designed with poor flash memory and Random Access Memory (RAM) compared to the traditional digital scheme (e.g. PC, Laptop, etc.), and the devices use lightweight version of General Purpose Operating System (GPOS) or Real Time Operating System (RTOS) (Hossain, Fotouhi and Hasan, 2015).

This IoT has resources limitations, where most IoT devices have limited resources, including bandwidth, computation (Buccafurri *et al.*, 2017), and memory, which is incompatible with the requirements of complex security solutions (Dorri *et al.*, 2017b). Blockchain needs heavy computation process to participate in the consensus algorithm, but resources constraint at IoT devices will restrict the number of blocks that can be generated.

1.2 Research Background

The use of blockchain technology in the IoT environment opens up a variety of possibilities. For example, the IBM Autonomous Decentralized Peer-to-Peer Telemetry project (ADEPT) uses the blockchain to create a distributed network of devices (Daza *et al.*, 2017). Currently, researchers focus on redesigning the blockchain paradigm to improve blockchain performance while maintaining its decentralized nature (Bano, Al-Bassam and Danzis, 2017). Enormous effort has been made to improve storage limitation on IoT, to utilize blockchain technology. For example, by building the blockchain infrastructure in distributed cloud architecture, creating a smart home as a cluster, using virtual resources to host a blockchain, implementing sidechain, separated cluster, and creating a hierarchical architecture.

A blockchain decentralized ledger begins with an initial block, often known as the genesis block. When a new block is created, the previous block's hash values are entered. Any modifications to a prior block would result in a different hash code and be immediately accessible to all blockchain participants once a new block is

generated. As a result, blockchains are regarded as tamper-resistant distributed transaction ledgers (Samaniego and Deters, 2016). Bitcoin, for example, adopts the Proof-of-Work (PoW) method (also known as mining), in which distributed nodes pool the computer resources to participate in a mathematical puzzle with frequently adjusted complexities (Yuan and Wang, 2016). However blockchains are computationally intensive and include significant bandwidth overhead and latency, making them unsuitable for IoT devices (Dorri, Salil S. Kanhere and Jurdak, 2016).

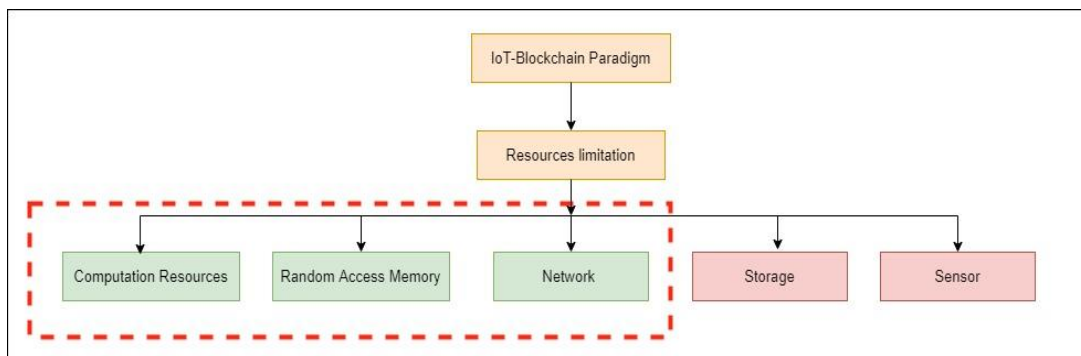


Figure 1.1 IoT-blockchain Resources Limitation

As shown in figure 1.1, IoT base blockchain resources limitation can be categorized into five classifications. The first is the computational power of IoT devices (Binara N.B. Ekanayake, Halgamuge and Syed, 2018). The second is constrained available memory in terms of Random Access Memory (RAM) (Cirani *et al.*, 2014). The third is network bandwidth, where IoT must communicate among heterogeneous devices (Yi, Li and Li, 2015). The fourth is the storage capacity (Bao, Chen and Guo, 2013) of IoT devices to store created blockchain blocks after the vast data exchange had occurred. The fifth is the sensor, where an IoT device also typically limited by a single receiver unit (Fafoutis *et al.*, 2015).

IoT backed by blockchain might solve security issues on a peer-to-peer network. Unfortunately, IoT device has resources limitation which they are typically restricted in terms of functionality for computational power (Sharma and Park, 2018) and available bandwidth (Samaniego and Deters, 2017a). Furthermore, a cheaper IoT device is more widespread with large number of nodes. However a cheaper IoT device is provided with smaller RAM (Malina *et al.*, 2016). Moreover, a scalable system is considered a success if it can handle an increase in work, e.g. an increased

computations (Hagström, Dahlquist and Hagström, 2017). As seen in Figure 1.1, this study emphasizes on the IoT resources limitation of computation power, random access memory and network throughput. This study involves resources allocation, at the same time, it engage with reducing resources consumption of IoT nodes backed by blockchain.

1.3 Problem Statement

Security and privacy of information at IoT devices are naturally garnering much attention from the research community (Dorri, Salil S. Kanhere and Jurdak, 2016). Researchers agreed that the combination of IoT and blockchain will solve security issues on a peer-to-peer network (Dorri, A., Kanhere and Jurdak, 2017) and will help many industries. Moreover, IoT integrated blockchain is tamper-resistant due to public ledger shared to every participant and transactions can happen without middleman involvement (Yeow *et al.*, 2017).

Numbers research had been done to solve IoT resources limitations, so that IoT devices can utilize blockchain technology. A few types of research carried to resolve limited storage at IoT devices, for example, the first one is by creating a cluster of a smart home as a point of storage for a blockchain ledger (Dorri, Salil S Kanhere and Jurdak, 2016). The second example is by creating virtual memory on the cloud as a second resource for IoT devices to store blockchain ledger (Stanciu, 2017). The third example, by using lightweight consensus to execute transactions or smart contracts during data exchange between IoT devices (Dorri *et al.*, 2017b). Although much research is made to solve IoT limited storage for integrating blockchain, only a few studies resolve IoT resources limitation on computation power, random memory access, and bandwidth.

Although blockchain-based methods enable decentralized security and anonymity, they come with a lot of energy, latency, and computation overhead, making them unsuitable for most IoT devices with limited resources (Dorri *et al.*, 2017a). Next, the increase of user will lead to connection created towards

IoT devices grow unboundedly and furthermore the workload to validate the blockchain transaction will consume the IoT device's resources. Afterwards if the connections are not distributed fairly between devices which some devices might have high number of connection while other devices are idle will lead to performance issues during peak time. Therefore a method must be used to minimise workload variances between IoT devices in order to achieve the optimum performance outcomes (Soklic, 2002) . Furthermore, the load balancing can increase the performance of the system by helps to execute the task in minimum time (Kumar and Sharma, 2017).

Next, to understand how load balancing works, examination on the work of other researchers in load balancing and IoT has been conducted. For example, the (Nababan, Pramananda and Bakhtiar, 2021) implement weight least connection at MQTT broker of IoT device. Because each IoT device has different specifications, the weighted least connection is more efficient because it can determine the weight in comparison to the round robin algorithm. According to the findings of the study, the weight least connection can reduce CPU usage when handling the publish-subscribe process with 1000 clients. Afterward, the author (Qiu *et al.*, 2018) designing a multi-core Task-Efficient Sink Node (TESN) based on heterogeneous architecture, it improves processing speed, achieves load balance, and avoids large-scale congestion of sink nodes in IoT sensor networks. The TESP based on WLC can balance the load on each core and reduce network congestion. Next study made by Hellani (Hellani *et al.*, 2021) performed task allocation between the nodes by introducing an enhanced resource allocation scheme based on the weight least connection (WLC).

Moreover, researchers also use WRR on their study for example the author (Ting-Dong and Xuan-Rong, 2017) propose improved weighted round robin (IWRR) method to schedule the traffic data, IWRR optimized the scheduling of real-time and non real-time mixed traffic data by creating a temporary transmitting queue with a priority borrowed. The IWRR method can enable real-time traffic data to be transferred better in a continuous and timely manner, while also having a shorter average transmission delay of the traffic data on the whole, according to simulation results. Afterward, research made by (Alsmadi *et al.*, 2021) had propose new fog

computing environment and use WRR scheduling algorithm to solve the task scheduling problem. The fog computing paradigm's fundamental goal is to connect a large number of smart objects. Hence, WRR algorithm role is to assigns tasks to fog nodes based on their available processing capacity and remaining energy. Then, another study (Abed and Younis, 2019) proposed a load balancing in cloud computing, so it able to dynamically distribute the workload across nodes to avoid overloading any individual resource, by combining weight round robin (WRR) with an adaptive firefly algorithm.

In addition, designing new distributed architectures is one of the important objectives in securing the IoT network (Sharma, Chen and Park, 2018). According to the author (Sahoo *et al.*, 2020), to achieve optimal overall system performance, certain resources such as CPU, memory, and bandwidth must be optimised. Due to high demand from the forwarding plane, resource consumption becomes unbalanced in terms of CPU, memory, and bandwidth. Furthermore, resource allocation management of the edge device is basically based on the assessment of power, CPU, and memory on nodes resources (Babou *et al.*, 2020) and poor resources allocation management will lead to node overload due to excessive CPU, memory and network (Singh, Korupolu and Mohapatra, 2008). Hence, the CPU utilization, memory usage and network throughput is crucial parameter to be use to evaluate the resources consumption at IoT device. Furthermore, the author (Jutadhamakorn *et al.*, 2017) evaluate the performance of cluster IoT devices base on their CPU utilization, memory usage, and amount of network traffic as well.

After all, the goal of this study is to propose an algorithm that assists IoT devices reduces resources consumption at blockchain platforms. Then, the Awareness in Resources Availability algorithm has been proposed which applies at the IoT node, and AIRA's role is to determine CPU utilisation prior to transaction validation on the blockchain. As mentioned before, the IoT device has a constraint on its resources, but the blockchain is an intensive computation process. Hence, the AIRA algorithm avoids the CPU, RAM, and network throughput at the node from getting overloaded due to the blockchain validation process. It is important to prevent the resources from getting overloaded because if resources consumption is not being

reduced at the node, then the performance of the overall platform will decrease. Furthermore, blockchain operates in a decentralized manner, and then any transaction must be validated by multiple nodes, and if there is a failure on the single node, then the transaction is not validated. Moreover, this study uses BigchainDB as a blockchain platform because it is a lightweight blockchain (Rasolrovey and Fokaefs, 2020), making it suitable for IoT devices with limited storage.

Next, a suitable load balancing algorithm for the IoT and blockchain platforms need to be identified. Based on the literature review, WLC and WRR are well-known among researchers, particularly in the IoT field. Additionally, the weight round-robin is known as static load balancing and the weight least connection is known as the dynamic load balancing. Besides, the load balancing algorithm's role is to allocate the workload among the IoT nodes. Then, experiment is done to evaluate the WRR and WLC performance in IoT-blockchain platform, and the experiment results show that the WLC works better than WRR. Hence, the Awareness in Resources Availability (AIRA) algorithm is applied at the node, which the IoT blockchain platform operates using WLC. Then, the performance of AIRA algorithm in reducing resources consumption at the node is verified using parameter of CPU, RAM, and network throughput at each node. These parameters are frequently chosen based on the related work mentioned above.

Furthermore, these parameters are selected because our experiment uses a virtual machine, hence there are no power resources involved such as batteries. Moreover, the node's storage is not evaluated because BigchainDB is known as a lightweight blockchain. It is assumed that the AIRA algorithm would reduce resource consumption at each node, and it would lowering CPU utilization, RAM consumption, and network throughput, thereby addressing the issue of IoT device resource constraints.

1.4 Research Question

The research questions of the study are:

- i) What is the performance of WLC and WRR for the CPU, RAM and network throughput of IoT at the blockchain platform?
- ii) How to improve the resources consumption of IoT node at blockchain platform that utilize the WLC algorithm?
- iii) How much reduction on CPU, RAM and network throughput of IoT node by using AIRA algorithm?

1.5 Research Objectives

This study objective is to reduce the resources consumption at node in IoT blockchain platform. To achieve the main objective, the sub-objectives are needed as follows.

- (a) To investigate the performance of weight round robin (WRR) and weight least connection (WLC) load balancing on distributing workload at IoT-blockchain nodes.
- (b) To develop the AIRA algorithm that aware on resource availability in purpose to reduce the resources consumption of the node at IoT-blockchain platform.
- (c) To verify the AIRA algorithm performance on CPU, RAM and network throughput by comparing with the WRR and WLC as the benchmark.

1.6 Scope of Study

The scopes of the study are:

- i) Experimentation by virtual machine as the IoT node at the blockchain platform.
- ii) Focus on the four nodes of virtual machine as the IoT nodes. Each node has 2 Cores of CPU 3.40 GHz, 2 GB RAM.
- iii) Focus on the IoT node resources and the parameters of CPU, RAM and network throughput.
- iv) Each node installed with BigchainDB and its operation system is Ubuntu 18.04 LTS
- v) Focal points at reducing the resources consumption of IoT node in the IoT blockchain platform.

1.7 Significances and Original Contributions of This Study

In this research, a significant problem based on the literature study is the integration of IoT and blockchain which currently faces an issue of resources constraint at IoT devices. Blockchain is computationally intensive, which less effective on IoT devices with constrained resources. Hence, the load balancing that give capability for IoT-blockchain to allocate workload is applied.

Although, the allocation of workload among nodes is successful, the node resources overload may happen especially on CPU, RAM, and network. Afterward, this study has few contributions:

- i) Development of AIRA algorithm that aware on resources availability at IoT node.
- ii) New architecture consisting of data layer, service layer and consensus layer to assist AIRA algorithm in purpose to reduce the resources consumption at IoT node.

1.8 Thesis Structure and Organization

This research proposal is divided into five chapters and presented as follows:

In chapter 1, the introduction of the fundamental concept of this research is given to explain few essential components such as IoT, blockchain, safety benefit for IoT to be backed by the blockchain and IoT limited resources for blockchain. Then, mainly sections of the research like problem background, problem statement, research goal and objectives, research scope and significance are discussed specifically.

Then, chapter 2 discusses the literature review regarding the research domain where a basic understanding of the Internet of Things, blockchain, IoT-blockchain and load balancing. This chapter also includes a review of the related works and a discussion on trends and tendencies related to this research.

Then, chapter 3 discussed details regarding the research methodology. The operational research framework is explained with research materials such as software and operating systems environment setting. This chapter discussed detail on each experiment setup that done in this study.

Chapter 4 will be discussed AIRA algorithm overview and reasoning behind this algorithm. Moreover, this chapter also discusses in detail the node architecture, the pseudocode, mathematical equation, sequence diagram and whole IoT blockchain platform.

Chapter 5 will show the experiment results of WRR and WRR load balancing and the proposed architecture. The focus parameters in this chapter are the CPU, RAM, and network. Then, AIRA algorithm result is compared with of WRR and WLC load balancing result. Lastly, the AIRA algorithm needs to verify its effectiveness in reducing the resources consumption of IoT node.

Lastly, chapter 6 concluded this research by explaining the research remarks, the contribution of the study, limitation of the study and future works.

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