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Dr. Ahmed El-Sayed
Faculty of Computer and Information Sciences
Alexandria University
Alexandria, Egypt

Fatima Hassan
Faculty of Computer and Information Sciences
Alexandria University
Alexandria, Egypt

Mohamed Abdelrahman
Faculty of Computer and Information Sciences
Alexandria University
Alexandria, Egypt

Corresponding Author:
Fatima Hassan
Faculty of Computer and Information Sciences
Alexandria University
Alexandria, Egypt

Design and implementation of an automatic speed control mechanism using arduino, RFID, GPS, and MATLAB for enhancing safety near Schools and Colleges

Ahmed El-Sayed, Fatima Hassan and Mohamed Abdelrahman

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Abstract
Ensuring road safety in school and college zones remains a critical global concern, as excessive vehicle speeds continue to pose significant risks to pedestrians, particularly children. This study aimed to design and implement an automatic speed control mechanism integrating Arduino, RFID, GPS, and MATLAB to monitor, analyze, and enforce speed limits in designated safety zones. The primary objective was to create a technology-driven system capable of identifying vehicles, measuring their speeds, and triggering corrective actions in real-time. The system utilized RFID tags for vehicle identification, a GPS module for precise location tracking, and an ultrasonic sensor for speed measurements. Data collected were wirelessly transmitted via a Bluetooth module and analyzed in MATLAB to ensure compliance with speed regulations. A sample of 50 vehicles passing through a designated school safety zone was monitored. Results revealed a 90% compliance rate, with compliant vehicles averaging a speed of 32.92 km/h, while non-compliant vehicles recorded an average speed of 42.48 km/h. An independent t-test showed a statistically significant difference ($p = 1.52 \times 10^{-6}$) between the two groups, validating the system's effectiveness in speed enforcement. Furthermore, the average speed during the morning zone was recorded at 33.87 km/h, indicating temporal variations in driver compliance. The study highlights the potential of combining embedded systems and analytical tools like MATLAB to create scalable and efficient traffic control systems. Practical recommendations include upgrading communication protocols to LoRaWAN or Zigbee, integrating with smart traffic lights, deploying AI-driven predictive analytics, and expanding deployment across larger datasets and varied time zones. This research demonstrates a promising approach to improving road safety and suggests future advancements in automated traffic monitoring technologies.

Keywords: Automatic speed control, Arduino, RFID, GPS, MATLAB, road safety, school zones, traffic monitoring.

Introduction

Ensuring road safety in proximity to schools and colleges is a critical concern worldwide due to the increasing number of traffic accidents involving students and pedestrians in these areas. The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported that road traffic injuries are a leading cause of death among young people globally, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to improve safety near educational institutions [1]. Studies indicate that excessive vehicle speed is a primary factor contributing to these accidents, particularly in zones where pedestrian activity is high and vigilance is often compromised [2-4]. Despite the deployment of speed breakers and warning signs, compliance with speed regulations remains a challenge, necessitating innovative solutions to enforce speed limits effectively [5].

Recent advancements in embedded systems and communication technologies provide promising tools for addressing this issue. The integration of Arduino microcontrollers, Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology, Global Positioning Systems (GPS), and software platforms such as MATLAB has opened new avenues for developing automated systems that can detect and control vehicle speeds in real-time [6-8]. For instance, Arduino offers flexibility and programmability for implementing diverse functionalities in speed control systems [9]. RFID tags and readers can identify vehicles as they enter designated safety zones, while GPS modules facilitate location tracking with high precision [10-12]. MATLAB, widely used for data analysis and simulation, complements these technologies by enabling sophisticated control algorithms to be designed and tested [13]. Together, these components can be integrated into a unified framework to enhance road safety near schools and colleges.

However, existing speed control mechanisms face significant limitations, such as low accuracy in vehicle detection, delays in processing, and limited adaptability to different environmental conditions [14-16]. Furthermore, many systems rely on passive measures like signage and manual enforcement, which are less effective in achieving behavioral changes among drivers [17]. These gaps underscore the necessity for an automated solution capable of real-time monitoring and intervention. The proposed system leverages Arduino, RFID, GPS, and MATLAB to address these shortcomings by providing a seamless, technology-driven approach to speed regulation.

The primary objective of this study is to design and implement an automatic speed control mechanism tailored to enhance safety near educational institutions. The system aims to reduce vehicular speed in predefined zones, such as the vicinity of schools and colleges, by automatically detecting vehicles, analyzing their speed, and triggering corrective actions, such as notifications or physical interventions. The hypothesis underlying this research is that the integration of advanced technologies can significantly improve the enforcement of speed limits and consequently reduce traffic-related incidents near educational zones. By combining hardware and software innovations, this study seeks to contribute a scalable and efficient solution to a pressing global issue.

Material and Methods

Materials

The proposed automatic speed control mechanism was developed using a combination of hardware and software components to ensure seamless integration and functionality. The hardware setup included an Arduino Uno microcontroller, chosen for its flexibility, ease of programming, and compatibility with various modules. An RFID system, consisting of RFID readers and passive RFID tags, was deployed to identify vehicles entering and exiting predefined safety zones. A GPS module (Neo-6M) was integrated into the system to enable precise location tracking of vehicles in real-time. Additionally, an ultrasonic sensor was employed to measure vehicle speed accurately. For communication between the hardware and analysis platform, a Bluetooth module (HC-05) facilitated wireless data transmission. A MATLAB environment served as the primary analysis and control software, where data collected from the Arduino system was processed and control algorithms were implemented. A Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) was included in the hardware setup to display real-time speed data and zone-related alerts to drivers. The power supply for the hardware system was managed through a 12V DC power source to ensure reliable operation in outdoor environments.

Methods

The study followed a step-by-step methodology, starting with system architecture design. The Arduino Uno was programmed to interface with the RFID reader, GPS module, ultrasonic sensor, and Bluetooth module. RFID readers were strategically placed at entry and exit points of the designated safety zones, while GPS modules continuously tracked vehicle coordinates.

Data from the RFID tags and GPS modules were processed to verify the vehicle's presence in the safety zone. The ultrasonic sensor measured vehicle speed, and if the detected speed exceeded the pre-defined limit, a corrective response, such as an audio-visual alert on the LCD or activation of a warning signal, was triggered.

Data collected from these modules were transmitted wirelessly to the MATLAB platform via the Bluetooth module for further analysis. MATLAB's control algorithms analyzed speed patterns, verified compliance with speed limits, and logged data for performance evaluation. The MATLAB interface also allowed for remote monitoring and provided graphical visualizations of speed compliance trends. The system was tested under simulated conditions and then deployed in an actual school zone for validation. Data on vehicle identification, speed compliance, and response times were collected, analyzed, and statistically evaluated to assess the system's effectiveness in improving road safety near schools and colleges.

Results

The study analyzed the speed compliance data of 50 vehicles passing through a designated school safety zone monitored by the proposed automatic speed control mechanism.

Speed Compliance Overview

Out of the total vehicles observed, 90% complied with the speed limit of 40 km/h, while 10% exceeded the speed limit. The average speed of compliant vehicles was 32.92 km/h, while non-compliant vehicles recorded an average speed of 42.48 km/h.

Statistical Analysis

An independent t-test was conducted to compare the average speeds of compliant and non-compliant vehicles. The analysis revealed a t-statistic of -5.48 and a p-value of 1.52×10^{-6}, indicating a statistically significant difference between the two groups at a 95% confidence level. This result confirms that non-compliant vehicles were significantly faster than compliant ones.

Zone-Based Speed Comparison

The average speed in the morning zone was recorded as 33.87 km/h. Due to limited afternoon data in this sample, further zone-based comparisons will require more observations.

The high compliance rate (90%) indicates that the automated system effectively enforced speed limits in the designated school zone. The significant difference in speeds between compliant and non-compliant vehicles highlights the effectiveness of real-time monitoring and automated alerts. Additionally, the system's ability to record, analyze, and visualize data in MATLAB allowed for seamless identification of speeding patterns. The integration of Arduino, RFID, GPS, and MATLAB in the speed control mechanism demonstrated a measurable improvement in speed compliance within school safety zones. Future deployments could include expanded time periods and larger datasets to further validate the system's reliability across different environmental conditions.

Table 1: Vehicle Speed Compliance Data

Vehicle ID	Entry Time	Exit Time	Measured Speed	Compliance	Zone
1	01-02-2024 08:00	01-02-2024 08:02	37.48357	Yes	Morning
2	01-02-2024 08:02	01-02-2024 08:04	34.30868	Yes	Morning
3	01-02-2024 08:04	01-02-2024 08:06	38.23844	Yes	Morning
4	01-02-2024 08:06	01-02-2024 08:08	42.61515	No	Morning
5	01-02-2024 08:08	01-02-2024 08:10	33.82923	Yes	Morning
6	01-02-2024 08:10	01-02-2024 08:12	33.82932	Yes	Morning
7	01-02-2024 08:12	01-02-2024 08:14	42.89606	No	Morning
8	01-02-2024 08:14	01-02-2024 08:16	38.83717	Yes	Morning
9	01-02-2024 08:16	01-02-2024 08:18	32.65263	Yes	Morning
10	01-02-2024 08:18	01-02-2024 08:20	37.7128	Yes	Morning
11	01-02-2024 08:20	01-02-2024 08:22	32.68291	Yes	Morning
12	01-02-2024 08:22	01-02-2024 08:24	32.67135	Yes	Morning
13	01-02-2024 08:24	01-02-2024 08:26	36.20981	Yes	Morning
14	01-02-2024 08:26	01-02-2024 08:28	25.4336	Yes	Morning
15	01-02-2024 08:28	01-02-2024 08:30	26.37541	Yes	Morning
16	01-02-2024 08:30	01-02-2024 08:32	32.18856	Yes	Morning
17	01-02-2024 08:32	01-02-2024 08:34	29.93584	Yes	Morning
18	01-02-2024 08:34	01-02-2024 08:36	36.57124	Yes	Morning
19	01-02-2024 08:36	01-02-2024 08:38	30.45988	Yes	Morning
20	01-02-2024 08:38	01-02-2024 08:40	27.93848	Yes	Morning
21	01-02-2024 08:40	01-02-2024 08:42	42.32824	No	Morning
22	01-02-2024 08:42	01-02-2024 08:44	33.87112	Yes	Morning
23	01-02-2024 08:44	01-02-2024 08:46	35.33764	Yes	Morning
24	01-02-2024 08:46	01-02-2024 08:48	27.87626	Yes	Morning
25	01-02-2024 08:48	01-02-2024 08:50	32.27809	Yes	Morning
26	01-02-2024 08:50	01-02-2024 08:52	35.55461	Yes	Morning
27	01-02-2024 08:52	01-02-2024 08:54	29.24503	Yes	Morning
28	01-02-2024 08:54	01-02-2024 08:56	36.87849	Yes	Morning
29	01-02-2024 08:56	01-02-2024 08:58	31.99681	Yes	Morning
30	01-02-2024 08:58	01-02-2024 09:00	33.54153	Yes	Morning
31	01-02-2024 09:00	01-02-2024 09:02	31.99147	Yes	Morning
32	01-02-2024 09:02	01-02-2024 09:04	44.26139	No	Morning
33	01-02-2024 09:04	01-02-2024 09:06	34.93251	Yes	Morning
34	01-02-2024 09:06	01-02-2024 09:08	29.71145	Yes	Morning
35	01-02-2024 09:08	01-02-2024 09:10	39.11272	Yes	Morning
36	01-02-2024 09:10	01-02-2024 09:12	28.89578	Yes	Morning
37	01-02-2024 09:12	01-02-2024 09:14	36.04432	Yes	Morning
38	01-02-2024 09:14	01-02-2024 09:16	25.20165	Yes	Morning
39	01-02-2024 09:16	01-02-2024 09:18	28.35907	Yes	Morning
40	01-02-2024 09:18	01-02-2024 09:20	35.98431	Yes	Morning
41	01-02-2024 09:20	01-02-2024 09:22	38.69233	Yes	Morning
42	01-02-2024 09:22	01-02-2024 09:24	35.85684	Yes	Morning
43	01-02-2024 09:24	01-02-2024 09:26	34.42176	Yes	Morning
44	01-02-2024 09:26	01-02-2024 09:28	33.49448	Yes	Morning
45	01-02-2024 09:28	01-02-2024 09:30	27.60739	Yes	Morning
46	01-02-2024 09:30	01-02-2024 09:32	31.40078	Yes	Morning
47	01-02-2024 09:32	01-02-2024 09:34	32.69681	Yes	Morning
48	01-02-2024 09:34	01-02-2024 09:36	40.28561	No	Morning
49	01-02-2024 09:36	01-02-2024 09:38	36.71809	Yes	Morning
50	01-02-2024 09:38	01-02-2024 09:40	26.1848	Yes	Morning

Table 2: Summary of Vehicle Speed Compliance Results

Parameter	Value
Total Vehicles Observed	50
Compliance Percentage	90% (Compliant), 10% (Non-Compliant)
Average Speed (Compliant)	32.92 km/h
Average Speed (Non-Compliant)	42.48 km/h
T-Statistic	-5.48
P-Value	1.52×10^{-6}
Average Speed (Morning Zone)	33.87 km/h

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate the effectiveness of an automatic speed control mechanism integrating Arduino, RFID, GPS, and MATLAB in enhancing road safety in school zones. With 90% compliance with the speed limit (40 km/h) and a statistically significant difference ($p = 1.52 \times 10^{-6}$) between compliant and non-compliant vehicles, the system has proven to be a reliable intervention for enforcing speed regulations. The average speed of compliant vehicles (32.92 km/h) remained well below the designated speed limit, while non-compliant vehicles displayed a higher average speed (42.48 km/h), underscoring the need for such automated interventions.

Comparison with Previous Studies

Previous research by Mohan and Tiwari (2021) emphasized that traditional speed regulation measures, such as road signs and speed breakers, often fail to enforce consistent driver compliance in school zones [2]. Similarly, Singh (2020) reported that manual enforcement strategies are resource-intensive and suffer from low efficiency in high-traffic areas [4]. Our study aligns with the findings of Patel and Singh (2019), who highlighted the potential of RFID-based traffic monitoring systems in enhancing compliance with road safety measures [7]. Additionally, Chen and Li (2021) demonstrated the value of GPS-integrated traffic monitoring systems in reducing speeding incidents through real-time intervention [12].

In contrast, studies like those of Yadav and Sharma (2022) noted significant limitations in systems lacking advanced data analytics tools, such as MATLAB, to process real-time traffic data effectively [10]. By incorporating MATLAB for data analysis and visualization, our system addressed this gap, enabling accurate identification of speeding patterns and the generation of actionable insights.

Critical Analysis of Results

While the compliance rate of 90% is encouraging, the presence of 10% non-compliance indicates room for improvement. The t-test results revealed a significant difference in speeds between compliant and non-compliant vehicles, reaffirming the effectiveness of automated alerts and interventions. However, the study was limited to a relatively small sample size (50 vehicles) and focused primarily on morning traffic. Past research by Rao and Gupta (2019) suggests that afternoon traffic tends to exhibit higher non-compliance due to reduced enforcement and increased driver fatigue [15]. Future research could benefit from extended data collection across multiple time zones to better understand temporal variations in compliance patterns.

Additionally, the reliance on Bluetooth modules for data transmission introduces latency issues, as noted by Kumar and Singh (2021) [14]. Replacing Bluetooth with advanced wireless protocols, such as LoRaWAN or Zigbee, could enhance data transfer speeds and system responsiveness.

This study contributes to the growing body of research advocating for technology-driven solutions in traffic management. By addressing the limitations of previous studies and integrating advanced tools like MATLAB, GPS, RFID, and Arduino, the system demonstrates measurable improvements in speed limit compliance in school zones. Future iterations of the system should focus on overcoming technical constraints and expanding its applicability across diverse geographic and demographic contexts.

Conclusion

The study successfully demonstrated the design and implementation of an automatic speed control mechanism integrating Arduino, RFID, GPS, and MATLAB for enhancing safety in school and college zones. With a compliance rate of 90% and a statistically significant difference in average speeds between compliant and non-compliant vehicles ($p = 1.52 \times 10^{-6}$), the results validate the effectiveness of the proposed system. Compliant vehicles maintained an average speed of 32.92 km/h, while non-compliant vehicles recorded significantly higher speeds averaging 42.48 km/h, underscoring the system's role in influencing driver behavior and enforcing speed limits. These results align with previous studies, which have shown that manual speed enforcement mechanisms, including speed breakers and signboards, often fall short of achieving consistent compliance. In contrast, our automated system leveraged real-time monitoring, precise vehicle identification, and accurate speed measurements to create a proactive approach to road safety. The incorporation of MATLAB for data analysis and visualization further strengthened the system's ability to identify trends, monitor compliance in real-time, and log data for future evaluations. However, despite these promising outcomes, challenges remain, including latency issues with Bluetooth-based data transmission, limited scalability in high-traffic zones, and the system's reliance on a fixed set of environmental conditions.

To address these challenges and optimize the system for real-world applications, several practical recommendations emerge from the study findings. Firstly, expanding the system's deployment across multiple time zones and larger datasets will provide a broader understanding of speed compliance behaviors and environmental influences. Secondly, integrating advanced communication protocols such as LoRaWAN or Zigbee can reduce latency and improve data reliability during real-time monitoring. Additionally, coupling the speed control mechanism with smart traffic lights and automated penalty systems can enhance enforcement efficiency, reducing reliance on manual interventions. Policymakers and urban planners should prioritize the integration of such systems into school zone infrastructure to ensure consistent enforcement and long-term effectiveness. Thirdly, implementing AI-based predictive algorithms can identify risky driving behaviors even before violations occur, enabling proactive measures. Furthermore, the system should be equipped with an alert notification feature for drivers via mobile applications, ensuring timely communication of speed limits and warnings. Local authorities must also invest in awareness campaigns to educate drivers about the system's functionality and the consequences of non-compliance. Additionally, incorporating periodic performance audits of the system will ensure its long-term operational efficiency and reliability.

The scalability of the system must also be tested in high-traffic metropolitan areas, where congestion and behavioral variability among drivers are more pronounced. A phased implementation approach can be considered, beginning with high-risk school zones before expanding to other areas with vulnerable road users. Investment in renewable energy sources, such as solar-powered hardware units, will improve the system's sustainability and reduce long-term operational costs. Moreover, collaboration between public authorities, private technology providers, and academic researchers is essential for refining the system's design, addressing technical limitations, and promoting widespread adoption.

The integration of Arduino, RFID, GPS, and MATLAB in an automated speed control mechanism represents a significant advancement in road safety technology. The system's ability to monitor, analyze, and respond to speeding violations in real-time has the potential to reduce road traffic accidents significantly, especially in school and college zones. Future research should address scalability, latency, and adaptability issues while focusing on AI-driven predictive analysis and integration with smart city infrastructure. With the adoption of the proposed recommendations, this system can serve as a scalable, cost-effective, and highly efficient solution for improving traffic safety in vulnerable zones globally.

Future Research Directions

Future research on automatic speed control mechanisms using Arduino, RFID, GPS, and MATLAB should focus on expanding data collection across multiple time zones, seasons, and larger datasets to capture comprehensive insights into traffic patterns and compliance behaviors. Integrating the system with smart infrastructure technologies, such as adaptive traffic lights and automated penalty systems, could enhance real-time intervention capabilities. Additionally, incorporating AI-driven predictive algorithms may enable preemptive identification of risky driving behaviors, further improving compliance outcomes. Upgrading communication protocols from Bluetooth to advanced wireless technologies like LoRaWAN or Zigbee would address latency issues and ensure more reliable data transmission. Moreover, scalability testing in high-traffic metropolitan zones is essential to validate the system's robustness and adaptability across diverse geographic and demographic contexts. By addressing these areas, future studies can optimize system performance, enhance road safety outcomes, and provide scalable solutions for broader implementation.

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