

# Designing An Efficient Target Tracking Protocol Based on a Clustering Algorithm and Recovery Mechanism in Wireless Sensor Networks (WSNs)

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## Abstract

Target tracking is one of the most important and complicated applications of wireless sensor networks. In this application, temporal and spatial information of mobile object is continuously investigated at particular times. Energy saving is one of the main challenges in target tracking sensor networks. In this paper, we present a clustering, recovery mechanism with virtual grid and the base station as a fundamental element for target tracking in wireless sensor networks. Hence, we introduce an efficient protocol namely (NBSOTT). NBSOTT protocol tries to reduce the number of transmitted packets and subsequently, energy consumption in order to meet the current needs of clustering. Also, using virtual grid reduces time of decision which causes to the object retaining and faster recovering. For evaluation, we compare the proposed protocol with the BSOTT and EBSOTT algorithms.

**Keywords:** *Clustering; Location; Recovery; Target tracking; Virtual grid; Wireless sensor network.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Recently, the rapid developments of various technologies for sensing, computing and communication have brought a lot of momentum to the research in wireless sensor networks (WSNs) [1]. Due to their low cost and capabilities for pervasive surveillance, sensor networks and their applications have tremendous potential in both commercial and military environments [2].

Wireless sensor networks (WSNs) is a new network paradigm that involve the deployment of hundreds even thousands of low-cost, energy-limited, small, and application-specific sensor nodes to create applications for factories monitoring and control, disaster response, military sensing intelligent house control, and, etc.

Target tracking is one of the most important applications in WSNs. In a target tracking system, we can track a moving target like a person or a vehicle that is traveling a WSN with sensing capability of sensors. In this application, locational and positional information of a moving target is constantly studied in each time instance.

Also, energy saving is one of the main challenges in WSNs. It is because of the energy of a sensor node which is limited and replenishment of its battery is usually impossible. So the lifetime of a sensor node is strongly dependent on its battery lifetime and the lifetime of a WSN is directly related to the lifetime of its sensor nodes. Thus, if we can preserve sensor nodes more time in the network, we will increase the network lifetime.

Object tracking sensor networks have two critical operations: 1) monitoring: sensor nodes are required to detect and track the movement states of mobile objects; 2) reporting: the nodes that sense the objects need to report their discoveries to the applications.

In this paper, a tracking protocol was presented based on a new clustering method and new recovery mechanism with virtual grid had Base Station (BS) tracing as the basis for performing tracking application of moving targets in wireless sensor networks.

This proposed protocol exploit BS as a powerful resource from both energy and computation perspectives. Using new technologies like RFID and new antennas long range transmission with small antenna size have been possible [3]. In our approach BS undertakes management of cluster formation, active nodes rotation and part of transmissions needed for tracking the target. In our protocol, all sensors are equipped with 3Dcubic antenna that allows them to receive information from long distances at 915 MHz radio frequency [3].

Since BS manages the clustering and recovery mechanism, it has a good knowledge of nodes energy level. Current existing protocols for target tracking use only distance parameter for clustering algorithm, but our protocol uses two parameters, distance and energy, for clustering algorithm, and also, it improves virtual grid ideas to divide each network into  $M \times N$  square area and uses the nodes in each grid, so that the less number of sensors can be used in recovery operations.

The proposed protocol was simulated and compared with other existing tracking methods. Simulation results show that our protocol improves network lifetime.

Rest of the paper is organized as follows: In section 2, literature survey of clustering algorithms, target tracking and recovery algorithms are presented. In section 3 assumptions during network deployment are presented. In Section 4 we discuss proposed protocol. Simulation and performance comparison between existing and proposed approach is discussed in section 5. Section 6 concludes the paper with summary and future work.

## 2. LITERATURE SURVEY

Moving object tracking using WSN has received considerable attention in recent years and intended solutions can be mainly classified into five schemes, which are: tree-based tracking, cluster-based tracking, prediction-based tracking, mobicast message-based tracking and hybrid methods.

In tree-based target tracking, nodes in a network may be organized in a hierarchical tree or represented as a graph in which vertices represent sensor nodes and edges are links between nodes that can directly communicate with each other. Examples of tree-based methods include STUN (Scalable Tracking Using Networked Sensors) [4], DCTC [5] and OCO (Optimized Communication and Organization) [6].

In cluster-based methods, network is divided into clusters. A cluster consists of a cluster head (CH) and member sensor nodes. A CH is responsible for collecting data from its cluster's members, calculates the current target location and sends it to the sink. Cluster-based methods are divided into 2 categories, static clustering and dynamic clustering. In static clustering methods, clusters are formed at the time of network deployment and remain unchanged until the end of network lifetime. But in a dynamic clustering algorithm, clusters are formed dynamically as target moves. Examples of cluster-based methods are presented in [7], [8], [9] and [10].

Prediction-based methods are built upon the tree-based and the cluster-based methods, with added prediction models. These algorithms are methods that with a prediction mechanism predict next location of target and with attention to estimated location, only select some nodes that are near to this location for tracking and other nodes remain in sleep mode for energy saving. Examples of prediction-based algorithm are PES (Prediction-based Energy Saving) [1], DPR (Dual Prediction-based Reporting) [2] and DPT (Distributed Predicted Tracking) [11].

Mobicast protocols are designed to predict object moving direction. Appropriate nodes are wake up to detect the object before it arrives.

Some protocols fulfill the requirements of more than one types of target tracking which are termed as hybrid tracking methods. Other methods like binary sensor nodes and clustering based method in [12] and [13] have disadvantages such as higher energy consumption, traffic and increased collision probability and consequently increased energy consumption.

In Base Station Based Target Tracking (BSOTT) protocol, (see [14] and [15]) BS is used as a powerful source from two aspects; energy and calculation, to be able to provide the possibility of BS's intervention in tracking process using new antennas.

All above described tracking algorithms may suffer from loss of target as WSN have limited resources. Also, if there are more numbers of failed nodes around, target may go undetected. For next nodes, which were supposed to be active in tracking, may not have the trace of target, causing the situation of loss of target. Other issues like communication failures during transmission of information, localization errors during tracking, and abrupt change in target velocity may also cause loss of target. Following reasons may result in loss of target:

- a) Communication failures: Nodes may not be able to communicate due to obstacle like tree, specially, in case of forest WSN. Packet loss and delay in response can also be considered in this case.
- b) Node failures: As sensor nodes have limited battery power and if they remain active for a long time, battery may drain faster leading to failure. Physical capturing of node and hardware failure are also the reasons of node failure.
- c) Sudden change in target speed: As speed of target changes suddenly, the difference between actual and predicted location of target becomes large, resulting in loss of target.

Therefore, various recovery mechanisms (RMs) are proposed by researchers. RM for wild life tracking is presented in [16] where a simple recovery mechanism for wild life, tracking based on popular places is considered. Popular places, they are the places where animals (targets) frequently visit for water, shelter and rest. If target is lost then by checking their presence at these places recovery can be done. Another RM for wild life tracking using hierarchical clustered WSN is studied in [17]. In paper [18], a lightweight target tracking protocol (LTTP) with three levels of RM is discussed. RM for target recovery using static clustered WSN is discussed in [19]. Also, in this paper, we propose an efficient approach with less communication overhead for successful recovery.

## 3. Overview

### 3.1 Assumptions

Our algorithm considers dynamic clustered architecture for target tracking. Following assumptions are made about the sensors and the sensor network in the development of the proposed target tracking algorithm:

- 1- It is assumed that sensors are binary sensors and each sensor is aware of its own location and they are stationary. Also, BS knows the topology of the WSN.
- 2- It is assumed that BS is outside of the surveillance field, plugged to an unlimited energy source and capable of long range transmissions through higher transmission power at 915 MHz frequency.
- 3- Sensing ranges (RS) for all the sensors are the same and communication range (RC) is double the sensing range.
- 4- All sensors are equipped with 3-D cubic antenna to be able to receive BS packets at 915 MHz from a long distance.
- 5- All have the same battery power.
- 6- The sensor network environment is divided cells with dimensions of  $100 \times 100$ .

### 3.2 Sensing and Communication Model

In this paper, binary sensors' sensing disk has a radius of RS and binary sensing model is considered [14]. Sensors can detect the target once it enters to the sensing range of the sensor. Formally, the mode is as follows:

$$S_i(T) = \begin{cases} 1, & \text{if } d(S_i, T) \leq R_s(i) \\ 0, & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \quad (1)$$

Where  $S_i(T)$  is the sensed data of the sensor  $S_i$  and  $d(S_i, T)$  is the distance between the sensor  $S_i$  and the target T. Fig.1 shows how  $S_1$  senses the target T but  $S_2$  does not sense the target T.

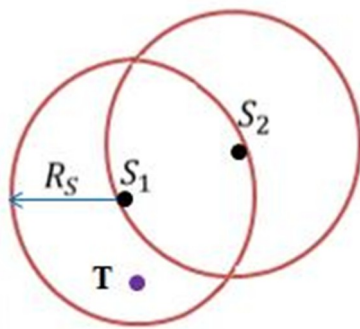


Fig.1. Illustration of the Sensing region

An important assumption made in this paper is equipping sensors with 3-D cubic antenna. Using this antenna, it is possible to have both RFID technology and miniaturized wireless communication equipment at the same time. The

frequency of operation lies in the UHF RFID band, 902 MHz–928 MHz (centered at 915 MHz). The ultra-compact cubic antenna has dimensions of  $3\text{cm} \times 3\text{cm} \times 3\text{cm}$ , which features a length dimension of  $\lambda/11$ . The cubic shape of the antenna allows for “smart” packaging, as sensor equipment may be easily integrated inside the cube’s hollow interior.

Binary sensors have minimal assumptions about sensing capabilities. At this frequency long range transmission for BS is possible. However, sensors use 2.4 GHz for inter sensor transmissions and merely BS uses 915 MHz to send its data in one-hop and for long range. Fig. 2 shows how BS transmit command message to lead the clustering, and CH replies target location hop by hop. Binary reporting, smart sensors also can act as binary sensors. So, proposed tracking algorithm is applicable to both binary and smart sensor networks.

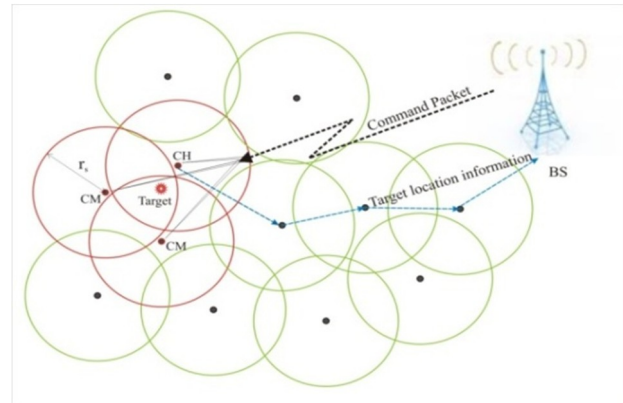


Fig.2. Illustration of the BS and sensors communication

### 3.3 Localization

Assuming target T has the coordinate of  $(X_T, Y_T)$ , all the sensors located in a circle centered at the point  $(X_T, Y_T)$  with a radius RS can detect the target. Generally, the centroid of the sensors that can detect the target can be a fair approximation for target location. The location of the target can be estimated using the centroid approach [14]:

$$\begin{cases} \bar{X} = \frac{1}{n_{sd}} \sum_{i=1}^{n_{sd}} X_i \\ \bar{Y} = \frac{1}{n_{sd}} \sum_{i=1}^{n_{sd}} Y_i \end{cases} \quad (2)$$

Where  $(X_i, Y_i)$  and  $n_{sd}$  is the coordinate of the sensors and the number of sensors that detect the moving target respectively. The estimated coordinate of the target T is  $(\bar{X}, \bar{Y})$ .

## 4. PROPOSED ALGORITHM

Our algorithm is divided into two stages, clustering and recovery.

### 4.1 Clustering

Clustering is one of the most needed important operations of aggregation and data fusion. Dynamic clustering algorithms problem is that when target frequently changes its location, reclustering must be invoked and with the course of time communicative overhead imposed by clustering, which makes clustering to lose the initiative. In our proposed algorithm clustering, overhead is minimized by using BS. Whenever reclustering is needed, BS broadcasts a command message to announce the new CH and cluster members (CMs). The base station uses the following methods to select the cluster heads and cluster members. In this method, BS estimates target location. Nearest sensor to target's estimated location is the candidate of being CH, however its energy level must be upper than a predefined energy level we call it  $\alpha$  here. If candidate node energy level doesn't satisfy  $\alpha$  then the next nearest node to target will be candidate of being CH. This process continues until a candidate node satisfies  $\alpha$  condition, otherwise BS decides to lower  $\alpha$  to half of its current value. Then, BS starts to examine candidates one by one to find the appropriate CH. Also, BS chooses the farthest sensors to estimated location of the target as cluster members (CMs).

In proposed clustering method, the area covered by CMs would be greater and it would help the target to be identified by cluster and the probability of losing target trace would decrease and so network lifetime would increase. Fig.3 shows the proposed clustering method with cluster size 3.

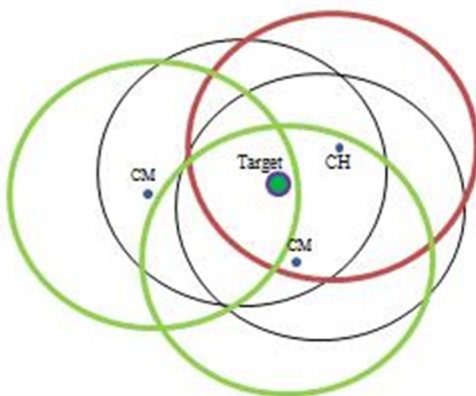


Fig.3.The proposed clustering method with cluster size 3.

Then, BS forms a command packet including clustering information such as CH and CMs IDs and transmits the packet over the WSN through a long range transmission. It is noticeable that BS sends its data in one hop at 915 MHz and with a high power. Also, sensors use 3-D cubic antennas to receive BS data. Activated sensors of the field receive the packet and extract the information and clustering is over. Using received information about target new location, BS decide which sensor must be the new CH. BS lets the sensors to be informed of the new CH and CMs. If any node failure causes missing the target, recovery operation is invoked. This phase continues until BS finds the target.

### 4.2 Recovery

Recovery mechanism needs to be initiated to find the exact location of the lost target. In this paper, we are proposing an efficient recovery mechanism. In this method, the sensor network environment is divided cells with dimensions of  $100 \times 100$ . Each sensor node is located within this field, resulting in one of these cells. The BS estimates target location and saves which cell is the target location [20]. Detail of recovery process is as given below:

- Step 1: The last cell, which the target is located, is saved in a list.
- Step 2: We search target in the list.
- Step 3: If the target was found, therefore, the recovery process is finished.
- Else
- Step 4: All its neighboring cells are add to the list.
- Step 5: Go to Step 2.

Using our recovery process causes that less number of nodes participates in recovery operations, therefore, nodes consume less energy and will increase the network lifetime. As a result, our mechanism works as follows:

At the beginning of this algorithm, all nodes are in sleep mode except border nodes. When a border node finds a target in its sensing range, it waits for a random time called back off time to avoid collision. Then, the border node sends its sensed data to the BS. Upon receiving sensed data from border nodes, BS estimates target location. According to the clustering algorithm presented in this section, the BS selects the cluster heads. Since, all sensors autonomously return to sleep mode after a period of time, BS needs to trigger CH and CMs to awaken them and make them ready for receiving command message. BS broadcasts command message containing new CH's ID, over the WSN to inform sensors about the new CH, subsequently other awakened sensors that are not CH will be CMs. Sensors work in two distinct modes shown in Fig.4 [14].



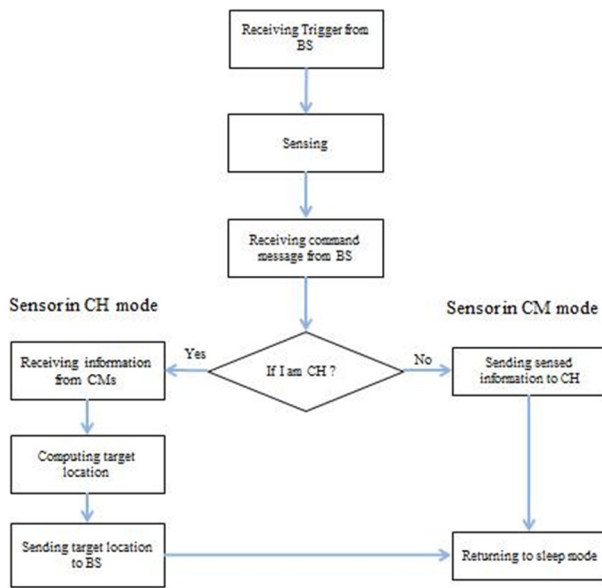


Fig.4. Working stages for sensors.

However, if new CH and the latest CH are the same, BS won't transmit any command message indicating that everything is as the same. Then, the very last CH again is CH for the new round and CMs just transmit their sensed data. Once a member detects the target, it sends its scan data (its location and the time finding the target) to the CH. CH performs data fusion to get the location of the target, and reports to the BS periodically. Receiving tracking information from sensor field, BS starts to evaluate target location. Then, if target is not in the sense range of the current CH, BS dismisses current CH and choose a new CH as mentioned before. So far BS leads tracking process. However, any failure needs to be handled. In this case presented recovery operation is invoked. If BS succeeds to capture the target, then tracking process starts from the beginning, otherwise BS does recovery process until it finds the target or reach to end the of the network lifetime. Fig. 5 shows working stages of the BS in two conditions; normal condition and target miss condition.

Being triggered by BS, sensors change their state to sensing state and wait to receive command message. After receiving command message, they check to see if they have been announced as CH or not. If a sensor is not announced as CH, then it is CM. CM broadcast sensed information and CH receives the information from all CMs. Then, CH computes exact location of the target using (2). Finally, CH sends target location to BS. Due to energy conservation, CH and CMs return to sleep mode at this point.

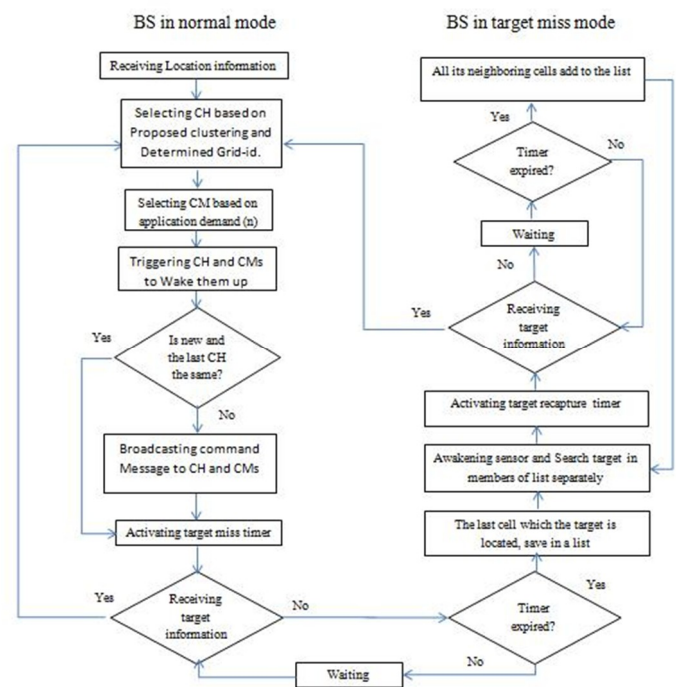


Fig.5. Working stages for base station (BS).

## 5. SIMULATION

In this section, using computer simulation, we evaluate performance of proposed algorithm and compare our proposed method with two other algorithms, BSOTT [14] and EBSOTT [20]. In this review, all algorithms have been simulated in two different cluster member numbers. In fact we changed cluster members from 3 to 5, to investigate impact of this variant on different network parameters. Our simulation has done in c# simulator (Microsoft Visual Studio 2010).

Three below parameters for evaluate performance of our algorithm with others.

- 1- Network lifetime: The time that the first node of network dies.
- 2- Energy consumption of nodes.
- 3- Transmitted Packets.

### 5.1 Simulation Environment

The NBOSTT algorithm described in the previous section was simulated a wireless sensor network consisting of a set of sensor nodes randomly deployed in a field of 1000×600 m<sup>2</sup>. The sensor network environment is divided into cells with dimensions of 100 × 100. Each sensor node is located within this field, resulting in one of these cells (see Fig. 6).

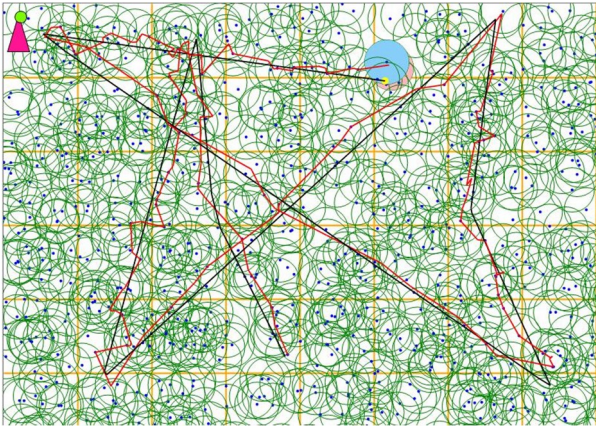


Fig.6. Simulation environment.

Also, the simulation model is considered a network which the number of its nodes is varied between 1000 and 4000. Target motion model is random waypoint and target is moving with the maximum velocity of  $V_{max} = 10\text{m/s}$ . Each sensor node is able to detect the existence of nearby moving target communicate with other sensor nodes in the vicinity and do some simple computation. Sensor nodes are aware of their location. Sensing range ( $R_s$ ) is considered 30m and communication range ( $R_c$ ) is 60m. Each sensor begins with an initial energy of 3 J. The transmission energy is 0.175 J and reception energy is 0.035 J, and the sensing energy is  $1.75 \mu\text{J}$  [21]. Basic information of each sensor node is considered as Table1 [21].

Table1: Basic information of each sensor node.

Parameters	Value of parameters
field size ( $\text{m}^2$ )	1000×600
size of grid	100×100
number of sensors	1000 – 4000
maximum speed of a mobile target: $V_{max}$ (m/s)	10
sensing range ( $R_s$ )	30 (m)
communication range ( $R_c$ )	60 (m)
initial energy	3 J
transmission and reception energy	0.175 J
sensing energy	$1.75 \mu\text{J}$
reception energy (J)	0.035

## 5.2 Simulation Results

In this section, we evaluate performance of our algorithm and compare our algorithm with BSOTT and EBSOTT in the network lifetime, average energy consumption of nodes and transmitted packets. Performance of the proposed algorithm was compared with cluster members 3 and 5 with changing the number of nodes.

### 5.2.1 Network Lifetime

Network lifetime is the most important parameter in comparison of majority of WSN's applications. For more comparison, we run our simulation in many different scenarios, with different node number and two different cluster member numbers, and calculate the network lifetime. We considered time that the first node of network dies as network lifetime. The lifetime of a sensor node is strongly dependent on its battery lifetime and the lifetime of a WSN is directly related to the lifetime of its sensor nodes. Thus, if we can preserve sensor nodes more time in the network, we will increase the lifetime of the network.

Fig.7 shows effect of increasing number of sensors and cluster members respectively on the network lifetime. As this diagram shows, network lifetime in proposed algorithm is more than other methods and this time increases as the nodes number of network increase.

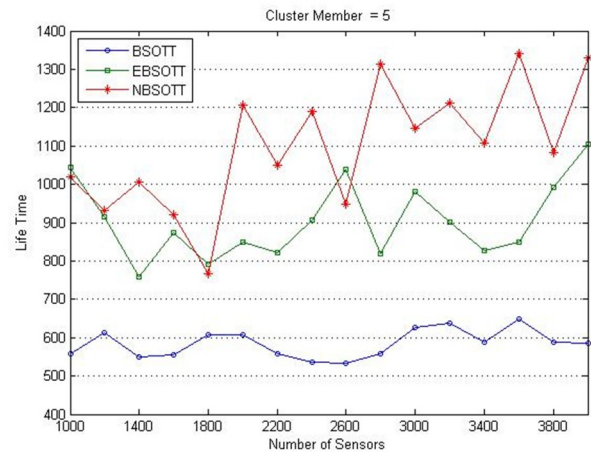


Fig.7. Effect of number of sensors on network life time.

Fig.8 illustrates effect of cluster members on the network life time. Increasing cluster members again leads to growth of message transmission. Hence, cluster head battery drains much faster and it shortens the lifetime.

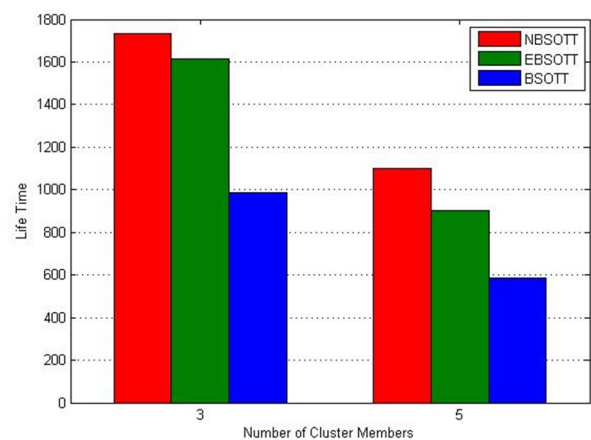


Fig.8. Effect of cluster members on network lifetime.

### 5.2.2 Energy Consumption

The second parameter that has been studied in this research is energy consumption. Almost in all WSN's applications energy consumption is considered and regardless of the fact that which parameter is improved, energy consumption must be kept low. Moreover, energy consumption should not depend on number of sensors since this dependency limits scalability of the network. Fig.9 shows that not only proposed algorithm consumes less than its rivals energy, but also slope of the diagram indicates that there is no significant dependency between number of sensors and energy consumption in our algorithm as opposed to other algorithms compared.

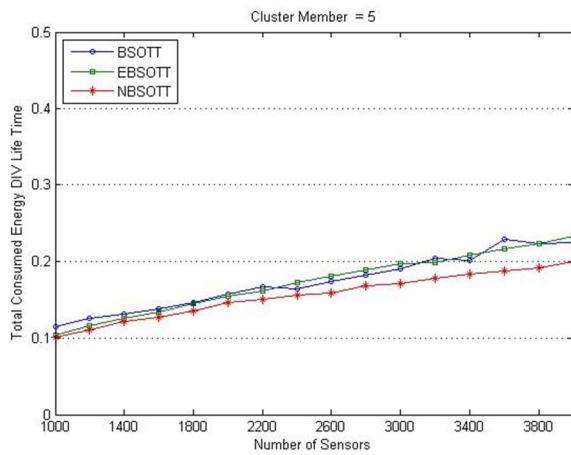


Fig.9. Effect of number of sensors on energy consumption.

In Fig. 10, relation of cluster members and energy consumption has been taken into consideration. There are two facts in Fig.10. First, increasing cluster members leads to more energy usage. Second, BSOTT algorithm has more energy disposal in all two cases than proposed method.

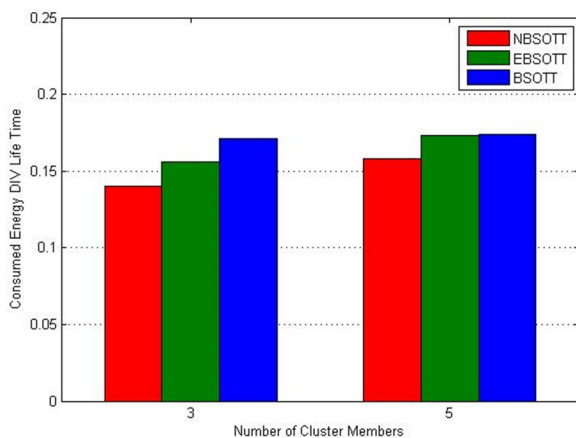


Fig.10. Effect of cluster members on energy consumption.

### 5.2.3 Transmitted Packets

Number of transmissions during tracking process in the field of WSN is an important factor mostly known as radio silence. Number of transmitted packets must be kept low for both energy and radio silence reasons. Number of transmitted packets in the proposed method is less than the BSOTT and EBSOTT. Transmitted packets shown in Fig.11, is an average number and shows the ratio of actual transmitted packets to network life time.

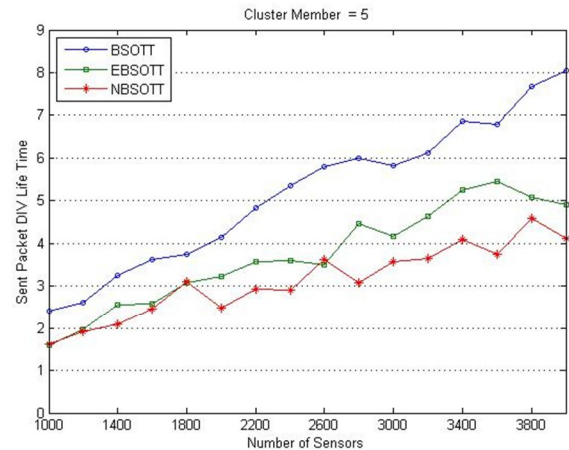


Fig.11. Effect of number of sensors on transmitted packets.

Obviously raising cluster members results in more message exchange between cluster head and cluster members to form and manage a cluster. Thus, the more member a cluster have, the more transmissions it needs (Fig. 12).

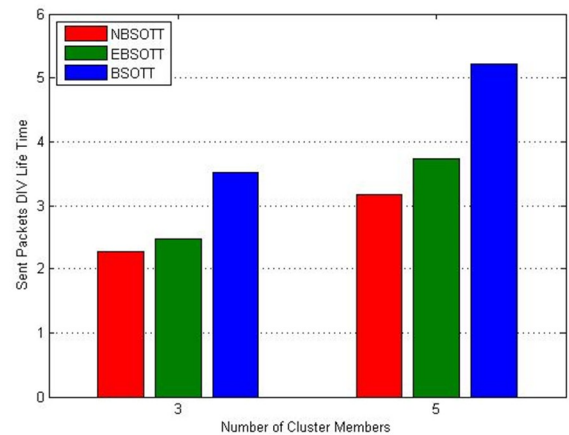


Fig.12. Effect of cluster members on transmitted packets.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

One of the main limitations of WSN is the limited power of sensor nodes. This limitation affords that saving energy and increasing network lifetime become two main issues in WSN's applications and protocols.

In this paper, we presented a Clustering and recovery mechanism with virtual grid for target tracking in WSNs.



Proposed protocol uses from an efficient clustering algorithm and recovery mechanism with virtual grid. Our protocol considers both energy and distance parameters for clustering. Also, it improves virtual grid ideas to divide each network into  $M \times N$  square area and uses the nodes in each grid, so that the less number of sensors can be used in recovery operations. Therefore, this scheme reduces the number of transmitted packets. So, this method for target tracking led to reduce energy consumption and increase the network lifetime too. The density of the sensor nodes in the network has some impacts on energy consumption and number of transmitted packets. In the future studies, we will focus on prediction methods to improve the proposed algorithm.

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