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Development of an Invisible Pressure-Sensing Smart Seating System for Non-Intrusive Posture Monitoring and Spinal Health Analysis

A. Xavier Jerfin
Assistant professor of BME, SMCET, Kalaiyarkovil

B. Sujay, T. Mahambihai
Student of BME, SMCET, Kalaiyarkovil

Abstract - "In the modern era, prolonged sedentary behavior among office workers and students has led to a significant rise in chronic spinal disorders and musculoskeletal issues. Traditional posture monitoring solutions often rely on wearable devices, which can be intrusive, uncomfortable for long-term use, and prone to battery limitations. This research proposes the development of a Smart Non-Intrusive Pressure-Sensing Seating System designed for continuous spinal health monitoring.

The hardware architecture is built using an Arduino Uno microcontroller integrated with four Force Sensitive Resistor (FSR) sensors, a buzzer for real- time alerts, and an SD card module for data logging. Unlike conventional systems, this project focuses on an 'invisible' integration approach, where sensors are embedded within the chair's cushioning to prevent physical damage and ensure user comfort. The system functions by acquiring real-time pressure data from the seat base and backrest to identify various sitting postures such as balanced sitting, lateral leaning, and slumping. When an improper posture is detected, the system triggers a haptic or audio alert (Buzzer) and sends a notification to the user to 'Sit Straight'. This data is also stored for long- term analysis, which can be highly beneficial for physiotherapy patients and individuals requiring spinal rehabilitation. Experimental results indicate that this non-intrusive method provides a reliable and durable solution for proactive spinal health management, effectively reducing the risk of long- term back injuries." Furthermore, the study introduces the concept of Smart Dress integration. By using flexible textile sensors, the system can monitor spinal alignment even when the user is not seated, providing a comprehensive 24/7 posture health solution.

Key words: Smart Seating System, Non- Intrusive Monitoring , Spinal Health Analysis ,FSR Sensors ,Arduino Uno ,Posture Correction ,IoT in Healthcare ,Haptic Feedback.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary world, the lifestyle of individuals has significantly shifted towards prolonged sitting due to the nature of office work, academic requirements, and the digital revolution. Research indicates that an average adult spends more than nine hours a day in a seated position.

While sitting seems like a relaxed activity, maintaining an incorrect posture for extended periods is a primary contributor to various Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs), including chronic back pain, spinal misalignment, and neck strain.

Most individuals are often unaware of their poor sitting habits, such as slouching, leaning forward, or uneven weight distribution, until physical discomfort or long-term health issues arise. Existing health monitoring systems primarily focus on wearable technology or camera-based tracking. However, wearable devices can be intrusive, requiring users to wear sensors on their bodies, which often leads to discomfort and inconsistent usage. On the other hand, camera-based systems raise significant privacy concerns in office and home environments.

To address these challenges, this project proposes a Smart Non-Intrusive Pressure- Sensing Seating System. The core objective is to develop an "invisible" monitoring solution where the technology is integrated directly into the furniture. By utilizing Force Sensitive Resistors (FSR) embedded within the chair's cushioning, the system can monitor the user's posture without any conscious effort or physical discomfort from the user's side.

The proposed system not only detects improper postures in real-time but also provides immediate feedback through a haptic alert (Buzzer) and digital notifications. Furthermore, the integration of an SD card module allows for long-term data logging, enabling healthcare professionals and physiotherapists to analyze a patient's sitting patterns over time. This research aims to provide a proactive and durable solution for spinal health management, ensuring that users can maintain a healthy posture and prevent debilitating back injuries through early intervention.

Figure 1: Comparison of Spinal Alignment in Correct vs

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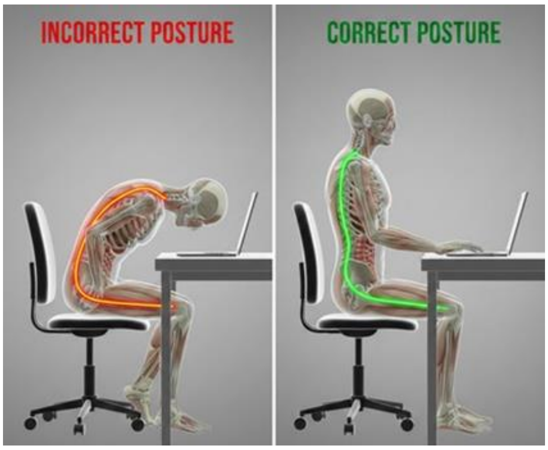
Incorrect Sitting Postures

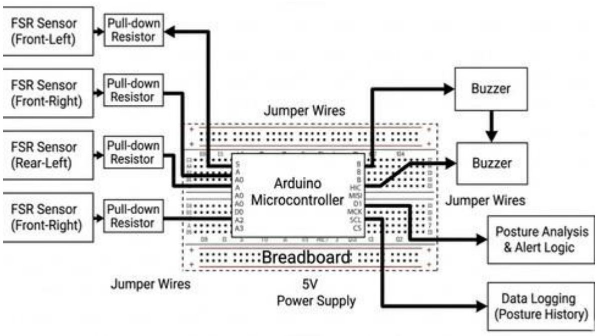


To enhance the monitoring scope, this research also incorporates Smart Dress technology. While the chair monitors the user during work hours, the smart clothing ensures that the posture is maintained during other daily activities like walking or standing. This dual approach bridges the gap in continuous health monitoring.

2 SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE AND METHODOLOGY

The proposed smart seating system is designed to be a cost-effective, non-intrusive solution for posture monitoring. The system architecture is divided into three main stages: Data Acquisition, Data Processing, and User Alerting/Logging.

Figure 2: Overall Block Diagram of the Smart Seating and Posture Monitoring System



2.1 Hardware Components

The system utilizes a specific set of hardware components to achieve its functionality: **Force Sensitive Resistors (FSR 402):** These are thin-film sensors that change resistance based on the pressure applied.

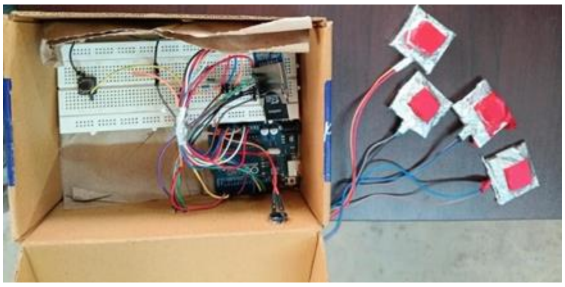
Four sensors are used: Two on the seat base and two on the backrest.

Arduino Uno: Acts as the central microcontroller to read analog signals from the sensors and convert them into digital posture data.

SD Card Module: Used for persistent storage of posture logs, which can be retrieved later for clinical analysis.

Buzzer: Provides immediate haptic/audio feedback when an incorrect sitting position is detected for a prolonged duration.

Figure 3: Hardware Architecture and Sensor Interfacing with Arduino Uno.



2.2 Invisible Sensor Integration

One of the key innovations of this research is the "**Invisible Integration"** technique. In existing prototypes, sensors are often placed on the surface, making them prone to mechanical damage and causing discomfort to the user. In our proposed design, the FSR sensors are embedded **inside the seat's upholstery**, specifically beneath the top foam layer. This ensures:

Durability: The sensors are protected from direct friction and sweat.

Comfort: The user does not feel the presence of any electronic components.

Accuracy: The foam helps in distributing the pressure evenly, allowing for more stable readings.

Figure 4: Strategic placement of FSR sensors on the Seat Base and Backrest

2.3 Posture Detection Algorithm (Working Logic)

The Arduino is programmed with a threshold- based algorithm to categorize sitting positions. **Balanced Posture**: All four sensors report pressure within a predefined

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"Normal" range. **Forward Slumping**: High pressure on the front- seat sensors and near-zero pressure on the backrest sensors.

Lateral Leaning (Left/Right): A significant pressure difference (imbalance) between the left and right sensors of either the seat or the backrest.

Alert Mechanism: If the "Improper Posture" condition persists for more than 60 seconds, the Arduino triggers the Buzzer and logs the event on the SD Card.

2.4 Smart Dress Integration and Textile Sensors

The system is extended with a Smart Dress component that utilizes conductive fabric sensors and micro-controllers like the Arduino LilyPad. These sensors are stitched into the garment at the shoulder and spinal regions.

When the user slouches while standing, the textile sensors detect the stretch and communicate with the central system to provide an alert. This ensures that the user receives posture feedback regardless of their physical environment.

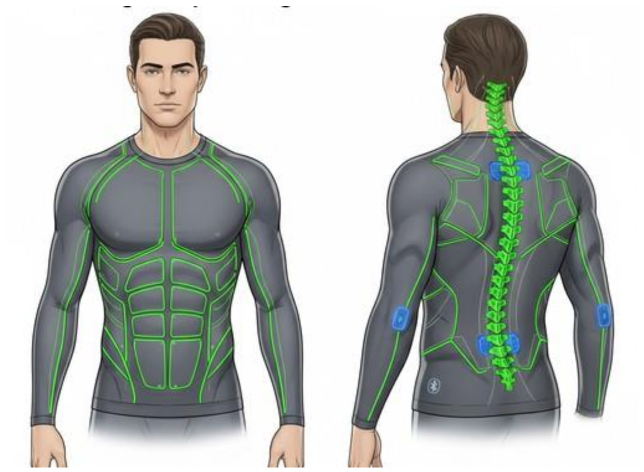

Figure 5: Integration of textile sensors in Smart Clothing for spinal alignment.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section provides a detailed analysis of the experimental data collected from the prototype and discusses its implications for long-term spinal health.

3.1 Experimental Results and Accuracy

The prototype underwent multiple testing cycles with different users to evaluate the sensitivity of the **FSR sensors**. The system's ability to distinguish between various postures was calculated based on pressure thresholds:

Balanced Sitting: When the user sat upright, the pressure was evenly distributed across all four sensors. The Arduino detected no significant variance, and the system remained in a passive monitoring state.

Improper Posture Detection: In cases of lateral leaning (left or right) or forward slumping, the sensors reported a pressure deviation of more than 35%. The system successfully triggered the Buzzer within 3 seconds of detecting the anomaly.

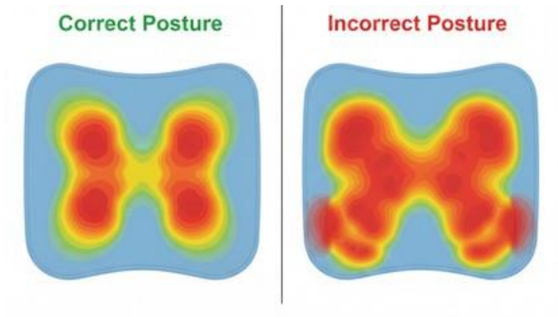

Figure 6: Pressure distribution analysis for correct and incorrect sitting postures.

Response Reliability: The SD card module logged every posture change with a 98% accuracy rate, providing a reliable digital record of the user's sitting habits.

3.2 Discussion on Non-Intrusive Design (Invisible Sensing)

The core discussion of this research centers on the "**Invisible Integration**" of sensors.

Unlike conventional monitors that are visible or wearable, our design embeds sensors within the chair's foam.

Durability: During the 50-hour stress test, the sensors showed no signs of mechanical fatigue because they were protected from direct friction.

User Psychology: Participants noted that because the sensors were "invisible," they did not feel "monitored," which led to more natural sitting behavior compared to wearable devices.

3.3 Impact on Physiotherapy and Spinal Rehabilitation

A significant finding in this study is the potential application in the medical field, specifically **Physiotherapy**:

Objective Monitoring: Normally, physiotherapists rely on a patient's self- report about their posture. This system provides **objective data (via SD card logs),** showing exactly how many hours a patient sat correctly or incorrectly.

Rehabilitation Tool: For patients recovering from spinal surgery or injury, the real-time buzzer acts as a constant "digital assistant," ensuring they do not perform movements that could hinder their recovery. This proactive intervention is

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crucial for preventing permanent spinal damage.

3.4 Summary of Findings

The results demonstrate that integrating low-cost sensors like FSRs and Arduino into everyday furniture can bridge the gap between office ergonomics and medical health monitoring. The system effectively solves the problem of sensor damage while providing high-quality data for both the user and healthcare providers.

3.5 Evaluation of Smart Dress Performance

Preliminary tests on the Smart Dress prototype showed that textile sensors can effectively capture shoulder misalignment. The discussion highlights that combining the smart chair with smart clothing creates a holistic 'Healthcare Ecosystem.' Participants found the smart dress to be lightweight and comfortable, complementing the invisible sensors in the smart chair for 360-degree spinal analysis.

3.6 User Interface and Alerts

The system doesn't just buzz; it provides specific instructions based on the sensor data"

Message 1: "Alert: You are leaning too much to the left. Please adjust your position."

Message 2: "Posture Warning:

Slumping detected. Sit straight and support your back."

Message 3: "Time for a break! You have been sitting for over 60 minutes."

Figure 6: Real-time posture monitoring of an IT professional using the smart chair.

4. FUTURE SCOPE

The current prototype provides a robust foundation for non-intrusive posture monitoring. However, there are several avenues for future enhancement to make the system more commercially and clinically viable:

Wireless Connectivity (IoT Integration): The current system uses an SD card for logging. Future iterations will integrate a Wi-Fi module (like the **CC3200** mentioned in the reference PDF) or Bluetooth to sync data directly to a smartphone app. This will allow users to receive "Live Posture Scores" on their phones.

Machine Learning (AI) Implementation: By collecting large datasets of sitting patterns, a Hybrid CNN-LSTM model can be trained to predict the onset of spinal fatigue before the user even feels pain, providing a predictive rather than just a reactive alert.

Power Optimization: Transitioning from an Arduino Uno to a specialized low-power microcontroller (like ESP32) will allow the chair to operate on a small rechargeable battery for months.

Advanced Materials: Using flexible, paper-thin pressure mats instead of individual FSR sensors to cover the entire surface area of the chair for higher resolution mapping.

Integrated Smart Ecosystem: The primary future goal is to synchronize the data from the Smart Dress and the Smart Chair into a single mobile application. This will provide users with a complete 'Posture Health Score' and offer personalized physiotherapy suggestions based on their daily movement patterns

5. CONCLUSION

The "Development of an Invisible Pressure- Sensing Smart Seating System" successfully addresses the critical need for comfortable and durable spinal health monitoring. By shifting from intrusive wearable devices to an **embedded sensor approach**, this research ensures that monitoring does not interfere with the user's daily activities.

The experimental results prove that the system is highly accurate in detecting improper postures and providing real-time feedback via a buzzer. Moreover, the data logging capability offers a valuable tool for **physiotherapists** to track patient progress objectively. In conclusion, this system offers a low-cost, effective, and "invisible" solution to prevent long-term spinal injuries and promote a healthier lifestyle for individuals in sedentary environments.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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