

# A Survey on Energy Aware Load Balancing Techniques in Cloud Computing

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**Abstract:** Cloud computing is coming up into view as a new computing standard that is receiving great attention in both academic as well as business community. It provides pay-as-you-use model for accessing different services over the web that can be accessed from anywhere and at any time. Despite of so much of merits it also faces some challenges. One of the main key issues that needed to be taken care of is load balancing. Load balancing is basically about distributing the workload among all the nodes in an even manner such that it will have positive effect on the factors like resource utilization, scalability, fault tolerant etc. Many algorithms and methods have been proposed for this purpose. Here, in this paper we are going to investigate some of these load balancing techniques and the latest approaches used for load balancing in order to provide efficient resource utilization, overall cost minimization etc.

**Keywords:** cloud computing, load balancing, virtualization, energy aware, load balancing algorithms.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Cloud computing has received a great attention in both academic as well as industrial community as a computing paradigm that provides dynamically scalable and virtualized resources as a service over the web. It has emerged as a next generation platform that has moved computing and data away from desktop and portable PCs to large data centres. Cloud computing provides access to different services on pay-as-you-go basis i.e. users have to pay for on the basis of usage which makes it easy to adjust capacity quickly [1].

Thus, Cloud Computing is a framework that provides on-demand network access to a shared pool of computing resources (e.g. networks, servers, storage, and applications). These resources can be provisioned and de-provisioned quickly with minimal management effort or service provider interaction [2].

Currently, there are a lot of multiple vendors offering cloud services such as Amazon, Microsoft, IBM, Google, HP, Oracle, Citrix, EMC etc. Many researchers have attempted to define the cloud computing. Buyya et al. [3] have defined it as follows: "Cloud is a parallel and distributed computing system consisting of a collection of inter-connected and virtualised computers that are dynamically provisioned and presented as one or more unified computing resources based on service-level agreements (SLA) established through negotiation between the service provider and consumers."

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) [4] characterizes cloud computing as "a pay-per-use model for enabling convenient, available, on-demand network access to a shared pool of configurable computing resources (e.g. networks, servers, storage, applications etc.) that can be provisioned and released with minimum management effort or service provider interaction."

### A. Characteristics

According to the national institute of standards and technology's definition of cloud computing, there are following five essential characteristics of cloud computing [4]:

- On demand service- Cloud computing provides consumers with on demand access to different resources over the web.
- Broad Network Access- In cloud computing all the capabilities available over the network are accessed through different mechanisms.
- Resource Pooling- Service providers use different models to pool the resources to make them available to their consumers. All the resources are assigned dynamically and reassigned according to demand.
- Rapid Elasticity- Quantity of resources can be increased or decreased at any time according to the customer's requirements
- Measured Service- In cloud computing environment, usage of different types of resources can be monitored, controlled for both consumers and the provider

### B. Cloud computing architecture

Service means different types of applications provided by different servers across the cloud. Over cloud many services are delivered to the users which can be divided mainly into three types: Software as a service, Infrastructure as a service and Platform as a service [5].

These services are available to the consumers on subscription basis under the pay-as-you-go model [6]. On the basis of services provided, generally a cloud computing architecture can be coarsely divided into four layers: the hardware/datacenter layer, the infrastructure as a layer, the platform layer and the application layer as shown in the figure given below [7]:

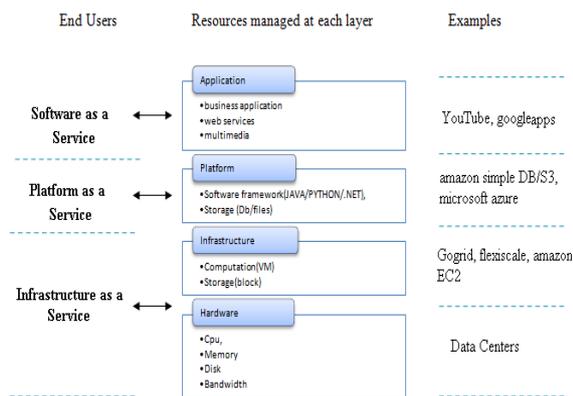


Fig. 1 Cloud Computing Architecture

- The hardware layer: At this layer, the physical resources of the cloud including physical servers, routers, switches and cooling systems are managed. It is usually implemented in data centers. Some of the issues handled at this layer include fault tolerance, traffic management, hardware configuration, power and cooling resource management.
- The infrastructure layer: can be referred as the virtualization layer, the infrastructure layer creates a pool of storage and computing resources by partitioning the physical resources using virtualization technologies such as Xen [8] and VMware [9]etc.
- The platform layer: Consists of operating systems and application frameworks. The platform layer aims at minimizing the burden of deploying application requests directly into virtual machine containers. For example, Google App Engine works at the platform layer for providing the API support to implement storage, database and business logic of web applications.
- The application layer: At the highest level of the hierarchy, lies the application layer that is responsible for providing the actual cloud applications. Cloud applications differs from the traditional ones as they have the advantage of the automatic-scaling feature to achieve availability, better performance, and lower operating cost.

#### C. Compelling features:

Cloud computing has many compelling features that attracts both business and technical users. Some of these benefits are following [6, 10]:

- Almost Zero Upfront Infrastructure Investment
- More Efficient Resource Utilization
- More Efficient Development Life Cycle
- Autonomic software updates
- Just-in-Time Infrastructure
- Reduced Time to Market
- Usage-Based paying
- Auto-scaling
- Proactive Scaling
- Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity
- Improved Testability

#### D. Research Challenges:

As we have already discussed cloud computing has so many benefits but despite of these merits it also faces various challenges that are following:

- Energy management
- Virtual machine migration
- Automated service provisioning
- Traffic management and analysis
- Server consolidation
- Storage technologies and data management
- Data security
- Novel cloud architectures
- Software frameworks
- Load balancing

In remaining paper is organised as follows. In second section, load balancing is described. Third section contains the literature survey of some existing energy aware load balancing techniques. Fourth section describes the discussion and comparison between the algorithms. Fifth one contains the conclusion.

## II. LOAD BALANCING

In cloud computing environment, requests for different datacenter resources comes at variable time instances. These dynamic workloads tend to make some systems overloaded while some of the systems remain unused. Therefore, it is very necessary to distribute this dynamically coming load effectively so as to prevent such uneven resource utilization. Here comes load balancing concept in use. Load balancing is basically a method of distributing load across different computer clusters, disk drives, CPUs, network links and some other resources, to achieve improved optimal resource utilization, minimize response time, maximize throughput and avoid overloading [11]. Following are some of the aims of Load balancing [12]:

- increase the service availability,
- To maximize the utilization of resources,
- Enhance the performance
- Maintain system stability
- Make a system fault tolerant
- achieve the user satisfaction
- minimize the execution time and waiting time of task coming that are from different location

while balancing the load ,we need to take care of some factors that can be used to measure the performance of a load balancing algorithm. These factors are [13]:

- Associated Overhead
- Fault Tolerant
- Migration Time:
- Migration overhead and other associated overheads
- Response Time:
- Utilization of resources
- Scalability

The increasing demand for computational power has led to development of large scale datacenters consuming a large

amount of electrical energy. To decrease this consumption of energy there is a need to balance the load in a way that results in less usage of energy. In this paper, some of the energy aware load balancing approaches are discussed.

### III. EXISTING TECHNIQUES

Virtualization is a rapidly evolving technology that provides a range of benefits to computing systems, such as improved resource management and utilization, application portability and isolation and system reliability etc [14]. Also it provides with features like live migration that helps in moving virtual machines on run. Using this capability we can optimize the resource utilization and thereby energy consumption can be improved. In the field of cloud computing, many works have been done by using this aspect of virtualization to improve the energy efficiency of a cloud. Some existing techniques are discussed below:

- Bo Li et al. [15] have proposed a novel approach called Ena-Cloud which improves the energy consumption using application live placement dynamically. In Ena-Cloud each application is encapsulated in a Virtual Machine, which helps in live migration and application scheduling to minimize the number of running machines and there by helps in saving energy. The placement of application is considered as a bin packaging problem and an energy aware algorithm is designed to tackle the problem. Two main goals of Ena-Cloud are:
  - Minimizing the number of running server nodes
  - Minimizing the number of migrations

Above goals are achieved in the paper by aggregating workloads so tightly as to reduce the number of running servers by performing application live migration and filling small workloads in the resource gaps available. Also an Over-provision approach is introduced to deal with dynamic resizing of requirements for resources. One demerit of this technique is that this technique result causes migration overhead.

- Dzmityr Kliazovich et al. [16] have presented a scheduling solution named as e-STAB which takes care of traffic requirements of cloud applications and focuses on the role of communication fabric providing optimized energy efficient traffic load balancing and job allocation in data center networks. Effective distribution of traffic helps in improving quality of service of running cloud applications by reducing the number of congestion hotspots, packet losses and communication related delays. This improvement comes in without sacrificing the energy efficiency. Main goals of e-STAB are:
  - To achieve load balanced network traffic
  - Prevent network congestion
  - Achieving above goals while optimizing the energy consumption of datacenter IT equipments.
- Li He [17] has described a multi-objective decision making method of virtual machine placement based

on grey correlation degree in order to maintain the energy consumption reduction while improving the resource utilization. In this paper, Li has used three factors like the energy consumption, server level agreement (SLA) violation and server load as the evaluation indexes. Functions for these three factors are built using there evaluation indexes and a multi objective decision making model is established for VM placement. The proposed method analyses the influences of the CPU utilization on SLA violation, energy consumption. It also used to analyse the influence of the server load on the number of migrations.

It reduces average SLA violation and energy consumption. It also decreases the total number migrations as it has used server load as an evaluation index and therefor it leads to reduce the loss of CPU utilization in the VM migration.

- T. Kokilavani [18] has explained the Min-Min algorithm for load balancing. It begins with the set of tasks that are not assigned to any server. Firstly, in this algorithm minimum completion time of all the unassigned tasks is calculated. Then from these calculated minimum completion times, a minimum completion time is selected which has the most minimum value among them all. Then the task having the selected minimum completion time is assigned to the corresponding machine required and this task is removed from set of unassigned tasks. After this the execution time for all the tasks running on that machine is calculated and updated. This process will continue until all the unassigned tasks are assigned with the required resource.

This algorithm achieves better performance where the numbers of tasks with smaller execution time are more than the larger ones. This algorithm has drawback that it can lead to starvation. Also it does not consider the task heterogeneity.

- T. Kokilavani [18] has also discussed a technique similar to the Min-Min load balancing algorithm and named that technique as Max-min load balancing algorithm. It also begins with the making a set of unassigned tasks. At first step, calculation of minimum completion time for each unassigned task. After that from these minimum completion times that minimum completion time is selected which is maximum of them all. Now task corresponding to the maximum minimum time chosen is assigned to the processor required by that task and this task is removed from the set of unassigned tasks. Then execution time of assigned task is added and execution times for all other tasks present on that machine are updated. It has the merit that all the requirements are known already which helps algorithm in performing well.
- Zhong Xu et al. [19] have explained a simplest load balancing technique i.e. Round Robin load balancing algorithm. In this, all the processes are divided into

the processors. The round robin scheme is used for allocating the jobs. It allocates the job to first processor randomly and then to other processors in a round robin fashion. Here job is assigned to the processors in a circular order without considering the priority. Although distribution pattern of workloads is same among all processors but execution time is different. As a result, at any instant of time, some processors tend to heavily loaded while some remain idle. Therefore, this algorithm is mostly used on those web servers where http requests are not only similar in nature as well as equally distributed.

- Dynamic round robin [20] load balancing algorithm is an advanced form of round robin load balancing algorithm. For consolidating the VMs placement it has two rules: the first one states that the machine in retiring state will not be given any load and it will be powered off after all the VMs running on it finish their execution. According to the second rule if any machine that is in use for a very long period of time is in its 'retiring' state then it is forced to shut down by transferring all the VMs running on it to another machine. It prevents any machine from reaching to its saturation point
  - Qi Zhang et al. [21], in their paper have provided a control theoretic solution to the dynamic capacity provisioning problem. The given solution claims to minimize the total energy cost while meeting some performance objectives. The dynamic capacity provisioning problem is an approach for energy saving in data centers by adjusting the data center capacity dynamically i.e. done by turning off the unused machines. In this paper, this problem is modelled as a constrained discrete-time optimal control problem and also it uses model predictive control to find the optimal control. The proposed dynamic capacity provisioning system controls the number of running servers while keeping in mind factors like demand fluctuations, the cost of dynamic capacity reconfiguration and variance in energy prices. In this paper, through simulations and analysis, it is shown that the given model can provide significant reduction in cost while maintaining an acceptable average scheduling delay for individual tasks. Despite of having several advantages it lacks behind at one point i.e. it assumes all the machines to be homogenous in nature.
  - S. Usmin et al. [22] presented an approach named as EVISBP i.e. Enhanced Variable Item Size Bin Packing. It uses virtualization technology to allocate data centers resources dynamically based on application demands and it also supports green computing by optimizing the number of servers actively used. Here, the resource allocation problem has been modelled as the bin packing problem where each server is a bin and each VM is item to be packed. It has used live migration as a variant of the relaxed classical online bin packing problem and a practical algorithm is developed that works well in a real system according to SLAs. In the given method, adjustment of available resources is done to each VM within and across physical servers with memory de-duplication technologies. Some of the benefits of this approach are that it can be used where multiple resource constraints are considered. It is a relaxed online method as it does not assume any knowledge of the future while managing the current event and a little movement of already packed items is allowed. In the paper, performance of the given algorithm is not checked corresponding to heavy network load.
  - Anton Beloglazov et al. [23] have proposed an energy management system for virtualized Cloud data centers that reduces not only operational costs as well as provides Quality of Service (QoS). The main concept used here is live migration of VMs. In the paper a decentralised architecture of the resource management system is presented and continuous consolidation of VMs is done on the basis of current utilization of resources, thermal state of computing nodes and virtual network topologies established between VMs. Three stages of continuous optimization of VM placement have been proposed but heuristics for a simplified version of first stage have been presented in the paper. This supports heterogeneity of both VMs and hardware. Also no knowledge about particular applications running on the VMs is required and it is independent of workload.
  - Jeffrey M. Galloway et al. [24] have presented an energy aware load balancing approach for IaaS cloud architecture and named it as PALB. The approach considers the heterogeneous nature of local organization's cloud. This proposed algorithm keep track of state of all computing nodes and decide the number of computing nodes need to be in operating state on the basis of their respective utilization percentage. This algorithm could be applied to power aware cluster controller of a local cloud. The presented algorithm consist of three sections. The first section is responsible for finding where to place the new VMs on the basis of utilization percentage of all running nodes, that's why it is called as the balancing section.
- The next section i.e. the upscale section is used to power on some extra computing nodes if all the running nodes have reached to utilization over 75%. The third section is downscale section which is responsible for shutting down the idle nodes to save power. It reduces the energy consumption more as compared to some existing load balancing algorithm. It balances the load between the computing nodes. Also it works well in heterogeneous environment.
- Kyong Hoon Kim et al. [25], in this paper have investigated power aware virtual machine placement

scheme for real time environment. The main goal of the given method is:

- To model a real time service in the form of a real time virtual machine request.
- To manage the placement of the virtual machines using DVFS (Dynamic Voltage Frequency Scaling) schemes.
- Zhen Xiao et al. [26] have introduced an energy aware approach for all allocating data center resources dynamically according to application requirements using virtualization that minimizes the number of servers used and hence supports green computing. A predictive algorithm has been given that can predict the future resource needs without looking inside the vms.

The concept of skewness has been discussed in the paper which is basically a measure of unevenness among resource utilizations of multi-resources at that server. Also by minimizing the skewness we can effectively balance the workloads on the servers. Two main goals of the algorithm are:

- Avoiding the overload
- Minimizing the energy consumption and thereby supporting the green computing.

Some merits of the proposed methodology are that it predicts the future needs without looking inside the VMs and hence reduce the placement churns. Also it helps in green computing by minimizing the number of running servers by turning of the servers with very low utilization.

- Nguyen Trung Hieu et al. [27] have put forward a virtual machine placement algorithm for large datacenters called MAX-BRU that maximizes the resource utilization, where MAX-BRU stands for multi dimensional maximized balanced resource utilization. The stated algorithm makes use of multi-resource constraint metrics:  $d^{\text{th}}$  dimensional resource utilization ratio ( $RU^d$ ) and resource balance ratio. With help of these metrics firstly most suitable server is chosen and then the corresponding vm request chosen. The main objectives of MAX-BRU are:

- Maximizing the minimum utilization and
- Maximizing the balance of load among different types of resources on a server.

The algorithm claims to achieve not only above goals but also have some other benefits. It improves the resource utilization by decreasing the number running servers and hence results in reduction in energy consumption.

Despite of such advantages it has some drawbacks also. Firstly, no method for analysing the overload is explained. Also, it does not explain any scheme for reducing the number of running server during low hours.

**Table. 1 load balancing techniques**

Name of Technique	Type of technique	Parameters considered	Aim of the technique	description
Ena-Cloud [15]	Dynamic	Vm migration Number of migrations Number of servers Resource utilization	Minimizing the number of servers used by using concept of bin packing with vm migration Also minimizing the number of vm migrations.	Each application is encapsulated in vm for live migration and application scheduling to minimize the number of running machines. Saves energy. Reduces resource gaps Causes migration overload Takes more time
E-Stab[16]	Dynamic	Traffic requirements of cloud applications and traffic load balancing Energy efficient job allocation	Achieving load balanced network traffic And preventing network congestion while optimizing the energy consumption.	It takes care of traffic requirements of cloud applications and focuses on the role of communication fabric providing optimized energy efficient traffic load balancing and job allocation Improves QoS by reducing the number of congestion hotspots, packet losses and communication related delays
A Method of Virtual Machine Placement Based on Gray Correlation Degree[17]	Dynamic	Energy consumption SLA violation Server load	Aims to reduce the energy consumption with improvement of resource utilization	multi-objective decision making method of vm placement based on grey correlation degree that uses energy consumption, server level agreement (SLA) violation and server load as the evaluation indexes reduces average SLA violation also minimizes energy consumption decreases the total number migrations and therefore it leads to reduce the loss of CPU utilization in the VM migration.
Min-Min algorithm[18]	Static	Completion time Task allocation	Aims to balance the load by properly allocating the job while reducing the overhead and response time	achieves better performance where the numbers of tasks with smaller execution time are more than the larger ones it can lead to starvation it does not consider the task heterogeneity Not fault tolerant
Max-Min algorithm[18]	Static	Completion time task scheduling	Aims to assign tasks in a manner to improve the allocation and utilization	all the requirements are known already which helps algorithm in performing well. But does not support dynamic environment Not fault tolerant
Round Robin load balancing algorithm[19]	Static	Job allocation Response time Resource utilization	Assigns tasks in round robin fashion to reduce the overhead and increase the resource utilization	Allocates the jobs to the processors in round robin fashion Not consider priority while allocation Not works well in heterogeneous environment
Dynamic Round Robin Load balancing algorithm[20]	Dynamic	Vm placement Fault tolerant Migration time	To improve simple round robin technique Makes it dynamic	Machine unring for the longest time is forced to shut down and all its task are migrated to another machin with low utilization Avoids saturation point
Dynamic Energy-Aware Capacity Provisioning[21]	Dynamic	Data center capacity Energy cost	to minimize the total energy cost while meeting some performance objectives	an approach for energy saving by adjusting the data center capacity dynamically minimizes total energy cost
Enhanced Variable Item Size Bin Packing[22]	Dynamic	Optimizing the number of servers SLA	Aims to optimize the number of servers actively used	uses virtualization technology and concept of the bin packing problem for dynamic resource allocation supports green computing
Energy Efficient Resource Management in Virtualized Cloud Data Centers[23]	dynamic	Operational cost QoS Utilization and thermal state of the computing nodes	Aims to manage the energy consumption, reducing the operational costs while maintaining the QoS.	live migration is used Vm consolidation is done on the basis of current utilization of resources, thermal state of computing nodes and virtual network topologies established between VMs Three stages of continuous optimization of VM placement have been proposed but only first stage is discussed supports heterogeneity of both VMs and hardware
Power Aware Load Balancing[24]	dynamic	Resource utilization Percentage Power aware	Aims to introduce power aware load balancing for IaaS cloud architecture	Decides number of computing nodes needed to be run based on respective utilization percentage. Algorithm consists of three sections Supports heterogeneous environment
power aware virtual machine placement scheme[25]	dynamic	Vm placement Power usage management	Aims to manage the placement of the virtual machines using DVFS schemes for real time environment	Works well in real time environment Provides power aware virtual machine placement
Dynamic Resource Allocation using Virtual Machines[26]	dynamic	Overload avoidance Skewness Number of servers used	Aims to minimize the number of servers used and skewness and to avoid overload	A predictive algorithm is designed for predicting the load. Also a mechanism for overload avoidance is provided Minimizes number of servers used. Supports green computing
MAX-BRU[27]	dynamic	Resource utilization ratio Resource balance ratio Multiple resource constraints	Aims to Maximizing the minimum utilization and Maximizing the balance of load among different types of resources on a server.	Resource utilization and balance ratio metrics are combinely used to find the suitable server and then corresponding suitable vm request for that server is chosen. improves the resource utilization no method for overloading and downscaling is explained

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

Load balancing is one of the main issues of cloud computing and balancing the load energy efficiently is more major task to do. In this paper, some energy aware load balancing algorithms are discussed. These techniques are aimed to allocate the resources to the vm requests in a way to reduce the energy consumption. Each of these have some merits and demerits. In future, we will try to design an algorithm that is able to overcome some of these demerits and can improve the resource utilization energy efficiently while considering other performance factors also.

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