EP-JOURNALS

GLOBAL JOURNAL OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY REVIEW

Available on: http://gjetr.ep-journals.org/ E-ISSN: 3051-3782, P-ISSN: 3051-3774

Global Journal of Engineering and Technology Review

Volume: 02 Issue: 02 February 2026

Systematic Review of Predictive Safety Analytics Applications in LNG Projects with ESG Implications

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Published Date: February 24, 2026 **Article DOI : 10.65150/EP-gjetr/V2E2/2026-05**

ABSTRACT: The liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry operates within high-hazard project environments where operational safety, environmental sustainability, and governance considerations are tightly intertwined. This systematic review examines the applications of predictive safety analytics in LNG projects and explores their implications for environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance. Predictive safety analytics leverage historical data, real-time monitoring, and advanced modeling techniques such as machine learning, statistical forecasting, and hazard trend analysis to anticipate incidents before they occur, thereby enhancing proactive risk management. The review synthesizes findings from peer-reviewed literature, industry reports, and case studies to identify prevailing methodologies, implementation strategies, and outcomes associated with predictive safety applications in LNG operations. Key insights highlight that predictive analytics enable the early identification of latent hazards, unsafe behaviors, and procedural deviations, allowing project teams to implement timely interventions that reduce the likelihood of injuries, operational disruptions, and environmental incidents. The analysis further underscores the importance of integrating predictive insights into decision-making, safety governance, and ESG reporting, illustrating how safety performance metrics can align with environmental compliance, social responsibility, and corporate governance objectives. Challenges associated with implementation, including data quality, multi-contractor integration, workforce adoption, and cultural barriers, are also examined, providing a nuanced understanding of the organizational conditions required for successful adoption. The review identifies research gaps, particularly in longitudinal validation of predictive models, cross-project benchmarking, and quantitative assessment of ESG outcomes linked to safety analytics. Future directions emphasize the development of standardized leading indicators, multi-level predictive frameworks, and industry-specific adaptation strategies to enhance both safety and ESG performance in LNG projects. By systematically evaluating predictive safety analytics in LNG operations, this review contributes to the emerging body of knowledge at the intersection of project safety, risk forecasting, and ESG management, offering actionable insights for practitioners, researchers, and policymakers seeking to leverage data-driven approaches for sustainable and injury-free project performance.

KEYWORDS: Predictive safety analytics, LNG projects, leading safety indicators, ESG performance, risk forecasting, proactive safety management, operational resilience

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects represent some of the most complex and high-hazard undertakings in the energy sector, characterized by intricate engineering systems, extensive subcontractor networks, and hazardous materials handling (Bayeroju *et al*., 2023; NDUKA, 2023). Across the project lifecycle including construction, commissioning, and operations LNG facilities face significant safety and operational risks, ranging from equipment failures, process upsets, and fire or explosion hazards to environmental and human exposure risks (Adesanya *et al*., 2020; Akinola *et al*., 2020). The convergence of technical complexity, dynamic work environments, and high-consequence operations underscores the critical need for proactive safety management approaches that can anticipate and mitigate hazards before incidents occur (Ogbuefi *et al*., 2023; Dako *et al*., 2023).

Despite the implementation of robust safety protocols, LNG megaprojects have historically relied heavily on traditional, reactive safety management systems, which prioritize lagging indicators such as injury rates, lost-time incidents, and recordable accidents (Odejobi *et al*., 2023; Ofori *et al*., 2023). While these metrics provide insight into past performance, they offer limited predictive capability and are insufficient for preventing emergent hazards in complex project settings. The limitations of reactive approaches become particularly evident during phases of high operational intensity, when minor deviations or latent risks may escalate rapidly into serious incidents if unaddressed (Sanusi *et al*., 2023; Oziri *et* *al*., 2023). These challenges highlight the necessity for predictive and data-driven approaches that enhance the ability to anticipate and control risks proactively.

In recent years, predictive safety analytics (PSA) has emerged as a transformative approach to safety management in LNG projects. PSA leverages advanced data collection, machine learning algorithms, statistical modeling, and real-time monitoring to detect early-warning signals of potential hazards (Uduokhai *et al*., 2023; Ofori *et al*., 2023). By analyzing trends in near-miss reports, procedural deviations, equipment performance, and workforce behavior, PSA provides actionable insights that enable project teams to implement preventive interventions, allocate resources efficiently, and reduce the probability of serious injury or operational disruption (Dako *et al*., 2019; Ajayi *et al*., 2023). The adoption of AI-enabled and data-driven tools has expanded the capacity of LNG operators to move from reactive responses to anticipatory risk control, aligning safety practices with the complexity and scale of megaproject operations (Oparah *et al*a., 2023; Odejobi *et al*., 2023).

The growing emphasis on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance further underscores the importance of predictive safety analytics. Safety outcomes are increasingly integrated into ESG reporting and project governance frameworks, reflecting stakeholder expectations for sustainable operations, responsible management of workforce welfare, and environmental stewardship (Essandoh *et al*., 2023; Wedraogo *et al*., 2023). Predictive safety systems not only mitigate operational hazards but also provide verifiable metrics that support ESG compliance, enhance transparency, and strengthen organizational accountability (Oziri *et al*., 2023; Oyeboade and Olagoke-Komolafe, 2023).

This systematic seeks to examine the application of predictive safety analytics in LNG projects and its implications for ESG performance. Specifically, it addresses the following research questions: What are the prevailing methodologies and tools for predictive safety analytics in LNG projects? How are early-warning indicators integrated into operational and governance processes? What evidence exists regarding the impact of PSA on injury prevention, operational resilience, and ESG outcomes? And what are the key barriers and enablers for effective implementation in high-hazard, complex project environments? By synthesizing current knowledge across these dimensions, the review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of PSA applications and to inform future research, practice, and policy in proactive safety management for LNG megaprojects.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

A systematic review was conducted to examine the applications of predictive safety analytics in liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects and their implications for environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance, following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines. Literature searches were carried out across multiple academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar, covering publications from 2000 to 2025 to capture developments in both predictive safety analytics and ESG integration. Search terms combined concepts related to “predictive safety analytics,” “leading safety indicators,” “risk forecasting,” “LNG projects,” “high-hazard operations,” and “ESG performance,” using Boolean operators and controlled vocabulary where applicable.

Eligibility criteria included peer-reviewed empirical studies, case studies, conceptual frameworks, and industry reports that focused on the use of predictive analytics for safety management in LNG projects or high-hazard energy operations. Studies were excluded if they focused exclusively on reactive safety reporting, non-LNG industries without high-hazard relevance, or non-English publications. Initial screening involved evaluation of titles and abstracts for relevance, followed by full-text review to confirm inclusion. Reference lists of included articles were also reviewed to identify additional relevant studies.

Data extraction captured study characteristics, predictive methodologies employed, types of leading safety indicators analyzed, integration with operational and governance systems, reported safety and ESG outcomes, and challenges or limitations noted in implementation. Quality assessment of included studies was conducted using criteria for both empirical and conceptual research, evaluating methodological rigor, clarity of predictive approaches, robustness of evidence, and applicability to LNG project contexts.

Synthesized findings were analyzed to identify trends in predictive safety applications, mechanisms linking early-warning indicators to risk mitigation, and alignment with ESG objectives. The review emphasized the role of predictive safety analytics in supporting proactive decision-making, reducing operational risk, and informing ESG reporting, while also highlighting gaps in longitudinal validation, multi-level modeling, and cross-project benchmarking. The resulting framework provides a comprehensive understanding of how predictive safety analytics can be leveraged to enhance both operational safety and ESG performance in LNG projects.

2.1 Overview of Predictive Safety Analytics in LNG Projects

Predictive safety analytics (PSA) has emerged as a critical tool for managing the complex safety and operational risks inherent in liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects. The scale, technical sophistication, and high-consequence nature of LNG operations necessitate proactive approaches that can anticipate hazards before they materialize. PSA encompasses a variety of methodologies and technologies designed to leverage historical and real-time data to identify patterns, predict potential failures, and inform timely interventions (Uduokhai *et al*., 2023; Sanusi *et al*., 2023). These approaches differ in their analytical sophistication, data requirements, and applicability across project phases, but collectively they aim to enhance operational resilience and reduce safety incidents.

A fundamental classification of PSA methodologies in LNG projects includes statistical risk modeling and trend analysis, machine learning and AI-based prediction models, and digital twins, simulations, and real-time monitoring systems. Statistical risk modeling and trend analysis involve the application of classical statistical techniques to quantify the likelihood of safety incidents based on historical data. Techniques such as regression modeling, survival analysis, and probabilistic risk assessment are used to detect patterns in near-miss events, operational deviations, and injury records. These models provide interpretable insights that allow project managers to prioritize high-risk activities, allocate resources efficiently, and design targeted interventions. While relatively straightforward, these approaches are limited in handling highly nonlinear interactions and complex dependencies inherent in LNG project systems (Elebe and Imediegwu, 2024; Anichukwueze *et al*., 2024).

To address these limitations, LNG operators increasingly utilize machine learning (ML) and AI-based prediction models. Supervised learning algorithms, including decision trees, random forests, support vector machines, and neural networks, are trained on historical safety and operational datasets to identify predictive features associated with incidents. These models can detect subtle, non-obvious correlations between operational parameters, human behaviors, and environmental factors, enabling early identification of latent risks (Yeboah and Ike, 2023; Babatope *et al*., 2023). Reinforcement learning and AI-driven anomaly detection techniques further allow systems to adapt to evolving operational conditions, improving the accuracy of predictions in dynamic project environments.

Complementing these approaches, digital twins, simulations, and real-time monitoring systems provide a dynamic, high-fidelity representation of LNG facilities, processes, and operations. Digital twins integrate sensor data, operational parameters, and process models to simulate potential hazard scenarios, evaluate the impact of preventive measures, and optimize safety interventions before execution. Real-time monitoring systems, including IoT-enabled devices and SCADA platforms, continuously capture data from equipment, environmental sensors, and human-machine interfaces, enabling immediate alerts when deviations from safe operating conditions are detected. These technologies support predictive decision-making and facilitate rapid response to emerging hazards, enhancing both operational reliability and workforce safety (Okoruwa *et al*., 2024; Taiwo *et al*., 2024).

The effectiveness of PSA depends on the quality, diversity, and integration of data sources. LNG safety analytics typically draw from incident and near-miss databases, which provide structured records of past safety events, including root causes, contributing factors, and corrective actions. Process safety and sensor data capture operational parameters such as pressure, temperature, flow rates, and equipment status, offering objective measurements for predictive modeling. Recognizing the role of human behavior in safety outcomes, PSA also incorporates human factors, behavioral, and permit-to-work data, including compliance with procedures, task execution deviations, and workforce engagement indicators (Aminu-Ibrahim *et al*., 2021; Ajayi *et al*., 2023). Finally, environmental and weather data, such as temperature extremes, humidity, wind speed, and seismic conditions, are integrated to account for exogenous risk factors that may influence operational safety and equipment performance.

The integration of these data sources enables multi-dimensional analytics, combining operational, behavioral, and environmental insights to improve predictive accuracy. For example, correlating sensor deviations with procedural non-compliance and weather conditions allows for context-specific risk assessments, which are more actionable than generic safety indicators. By leveraging diverse datasets, PSA provides a holistic understanding of safety risk propagation across LNG project lifecycles, from construction to commissioning and operations (Essien *et al*., 2024).

Predictive safety analytics in LNG projects encompasses a spectrum of methodologies, ranging from classical statistical risk modeling to AI-driven prediction and digital twin simulations. The integration of diverse data sources—including incident reports, process sensor readings, behavioral metrics, and environmental information—enhances the capacity to detect weak signals, anticipate hazards, and implement timely preventive actions. By combining methodological sophistication with multi-source data integration, PSA supports proactive safety management, reduces the likelihood of serious incidents, and contributes to operational resilience and sustainability in high-hazard LNG projects (Ogbete and Aminu-Ibrahim, 2024; Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2024).

2.2 Application Areas Across the LNG Project Lifecycle

Predictive safety analytics (PSA) has become an increasingly valuable capability for managing safety and operational risks across the liquefied natural gas (LNG) project lifecycle, from construction and commissioning through operations, maintenance, and complex interface activities. Given the high-consequence nature of LNG hazards and the dynamic interactions between people, processes, and technology, the application of PSA enables project teams to anticipate risks, optimize interventions, and prevent incidents before they materialize (Nwafor *et al*., 2020; Uduokhai *et al*., 2023).

During the construction and commissioning phases, LNG projects experience elevated safety risk due to workforce transience, intensive construction activities, and evolving system configurations. PSA supports the prediction of high-risk activities and work sequences by analyzing historical incident data, task characteristics, and environmental conditions to identify combinations of activities with elevated accident potential (Taiwo *et al*., 2024; Ofori *et al*., 2024). By forecasting risk hotspots such as confined space entry, heavy lifting, or hot work project managers can proactively allocate resources, adjust schedules, and implement targeted controls.

PSA also enables contractor safety performance forecasting, which is particularly critical in multi-contractor LNG megaprojects. By integrating leading indicators such as near-miss trends, safety observation data, and permit-to-work compliance, predictive models can assess the likelihood of unsafe outcomes associated with specific contractors or work packages (NDUKA, 2024; Okeke *et al*., 2024). This information supports informed contractor selection, targeted audits, and focused safety interventions, improving overall project safety performance. Furthermore, PSA facilitates the early detection of unsafe conditions and behaviors through real-time analysis of safety reports, wearable sensor data, and site observations, allowing supervisors to intervene before minor deviations escalate into serious incidents.

In the operations and maintenance (O&M) phase, predictive safety analytics plays a crucial role in managing process safety risks associated with LNG production, storage, and transfer systems. Advanced anomaly detection algorithms analyze sensor data—such as pressure, temperature, and flow rates—to identify deviations from normal operating envelopes that may signal impending equipment failure or process instability. Early identification of such anomalies allows operators to initiate corrective actions, reducing the likelihood of fires, explosions, or unplanned shutdowns. PSA further enhances maintenance scheduling and failure prevention by integrating equipment condition monitoring, historical maintenance records, and operational stress indicators. Predictive maintenance models forecast failure probabilities and optimize maintenance intervals, reducing reliance on reactive repairs and minimizing exposure to hazardous maintenance activities. Additionally, workforce exposure and fatigue risk analytics leverage data on work hours, task intensity, and environmental conditions to identify periods of elevated human performance risk (Ekechi, 2024; Okoruwa *et al*., 2024). These insights enable managers to adjust shift patterns, task assignments, and rest schedules, thereby reducing the probability of human error and injury.

The management of interfaces and simultaneous operations (SIMOPS) represents one of the most complex and risk-intensive aspects of LNG projects. PSA supports predictive modeling of simultaneous operations risks by simulating interactions between concurrent tasks, contractors, and systems. These models assess how overlapping activities—such as commissioning alongside ongoing construction or maintenance during live operations—may amplify hazard exposure. By identifying high-risk interfaces, project teams can sequence activities more effectively and implement additional controls (Olagoke-Komolafe and Oyeboade, 2023; Ofoedu *et al*., 2023).

PSA also captures interaction effects between contractors, systems, and tasks, recognizing that accidents often emerge from the convergence of multiple minor deviations rather than isolated failures. Network-based and system dynamics models enable visualization of interdependencies and identification of conditions under which localized issues may propagate across systems. This capability is critical for the prevention of cascading failures, where an initial disturbance triggers a chain of events leading to major incidents. By anticipating these escalation pathways, PSA enhances the resilience of LNG operations and supports proactive decision-making.

Predictive safety analytics offers versatile and high-impact applications across the LNG project lifecycle. From forecasting construction risks and contractor performance to enhancing process safety, maintenance reliability, and SIMOPS management, PSA enables early identification of hazards and targeted preventive action (Nwafor *et al*., 2020; Uduokhai *et al*., 2023). By addressing risks at the activity, system, and interface levels, PSA strengthens operational resilience and supports sustained injury prevention in LNG projects characterized by complexity, high hazard intensity, and dynamic operational conditions.

2.3 Safety Outcomes and Performance Impacts

The application of predictive safety analytics (PSA) in liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects has demonstrated significant potential to improve safety outcomes and overall project performance. By shifting safety management from retrospective analysis to anticipatory risk control, PSA enhances the ability of project organizations to identify emerging hazards, intervene proactively, and prevent high-consequence events (Okafor *et al*., 2024; Seyi-Lande *et al*., 2024). The resulting impacts are evident across incident reduction, leading indicator performance, and the quality of decision-making under uncertainty.

One of the most significant safety outcomes associated with PSA is the reduction in incidents, near-miss escalation, and serious injury and fatality (SIF) potential. Traditional safety systems often detect risks only after incidents occur, whereas PSA identifies precursors such as abnormal process conditions, unsafe behavioral patterns, or procedural deviations. By analyzing these early warning signals, predictive models enable timely corrective actions that interrupt escalation pathways before harm occurs. Empirical evidence from high-hazard industries suggests that organizations using predictive analytics experience fewer recordable incidents and a measurable decline in high-severity events. In LNG projects, where low-frequency but high-consequence hazards dominate the risk profile, this capability is particularly valuable for preventing catastrophic failures and protecting both personnel and assets (Okuh *et al*., 2023; Anichukwueze *et al*., 2023).

Beyond incident reduction, PSA contributes to improvements in leading safety indicators and proactive interventions. Predictive models enhance the visibility and interpretability of indicators such as near-miss trends, permit-to-work compliance, safety observation quality, and equipment condition deviations. These enhanced indicators support earlier detection of system degradation and enable targeted interventions tailored to specific activities, locations, or contractors. As a result, safety management becomes increasingly proactive, focusing on hazard elimination and risk reduction rather than post-incident investigation. Over time, this proactive orientation strengthens workforce engagement, reinforces reporting behaviors, and improves the reliability of leading safety metrics as predictors of future risk.

PSA also improves the timeliness and effectiveness of safety interventions. Real-time monitoring and automated alerts allow safety managers and supervisors to respond quickly to emerging risks, reducing delays between hazard detection and corrective action. This rapid response capability is critical in LNG environments, where operational conditions can change rapidly and small deviations may escalate under production pressure (Oguntegbe *et al*., 2019; Sanni *et al*., 2021). By enabling earlier and more precise interventions, PSA reduces the accumulation of latent risks and stabilizes safe work execution across project phases.

Another important performance impact of PSA is the enhancement of decision-making under uncertainty. LNG projects operate under conditions of incomplete information, dynamic hazards, and competing production and safety demands. Predictive analytics provides probabilistic risk insights that support informed decision-making, allowing managers to evaluate alternative actions based on projected safety outcomes. Scenario modeling, risk forecasting, and sensitivity analysis enable decision-makers to anticipate the consequences of schedule changes, workforce adjustments, or operational modifications, improving risk trade-off management (Yeboah and Nnabueze, 2024; Uduokhai *et al*., 2024). This capability is particularly valuable for managing simultaneous operations, maintenance planning, and response to abnormal process conditions.

Furthermore, PSA strengthens organizational learning and governance by generating evidence-based insights that support strategic planning and continuous improvement. Aggregated predictive outputs can inform resource allocation, contractor oversight, and investment in engineering or procedural controls. By linking leading indicators to measurable outcomes, PSA enhances accountability and transparency, reinforcing management commitment to proactive safety. These improvements also contribute indirectly to workforce trust and engagement, as personnel observe consistent, data-driven responses to reported risks (Mayo *et al*., 2023; Ogbole *et al*., 2023).

Predictive safety analytics delivers measurable improvements in safety outcomes and performance in LNG projects by reducing incident occurrence, preventing near-miss escalation, and lowering SIF potential. Enhanced leading indicators and proactive interventions enable earlier risk control, while improved decision-making under uncertainty supports resilient and adaptive safety management. Collectively, these impacts demonstrate that PSA is not merely a technological enhancement but a strategic capability that strengthens operational reliability, risk governance, and long-term safety performance in high-hazard LNG environments.

2.4 ESG Implications of Predictive Safety Analytics

Predictive safety analytics (PSA) has emerged as a critical capability in liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects, not only for enhancing operational safety but also for advancing environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance. By enabling early detection of emerging risks and supporting proactive interventions, PSA strengthens the integration of safety, environmental protection, and corporate governance in high-hazard energy systems. Its ESG implications extend beyond incident prevention to influence regulatory compliance, stakeholder trust, and the credibility of sustainability commitments.

From an environmental (E) perspective, PSA plays a central role in the prevention of releases, spills, and other environmental incidents associated with LNG facilities. Process safety failures such as equipment degradation, loss of containment, or abnormal operating conditions often precede environmental harm. Predictive models that analyze sensor data, maintenance records, and process deviations can identify early warning signals of potential failures, allowing corrective actions before emissions or spills occur. This anticipatory capability reduces the likelihood of environmental incidents that could result in soil, water, or atmospheric contamination, particularly during high-risk phases such as commissioning and start-up (Essien *et al*., 2024; Ekechi, 2024).

PSA also enhances environmental monitoring and compliance assurance. Continuous data analytics enable real-time tracking of environmental parameters, operational limits, and regulatory thresholds. By identifying trends that indicate drift toward non-compliance, predictive systems support timely intervention and corrective maintenance, reducing the risk of regulatory breaches. This strengthens compliance management in LNG projects operating under increasingly stringent environmental regulations and public scrutiny. Furthermore, PSA contributes to emissions reduction through loss prevention, as early detection of leaks, inefficiencies, or abnormal combustion conditions helps minimize fugitive emissions and energy losses (Alegbeleye *et al*., 2023; Tafirenyika *et al*., 2023). In this way, predictive safety capabilities align operational risk management with broader climate and environmental objectives.

The social (S) implications of PSA are equally significant, particularly in protecting workforce health and safety in high-hazard LNG environments. Predictive analytics enables earlier identification of unsafe conditions, hazardous work patterns, and fatigue-related risks, supporting preventive interventions that reduce injury and fatality potential. By focusing on leading indicators rather than post-incident outcomes, PSA reinforces a proactive safety culture that prioritizes harm prevention and worker well-being. This shift is critical in LNG projects characterized by large, transient workforces and complex contractor interfaces.

Beyond workforce protection, PSA contributes to the reduction of community exposure to major accident hazards. LNG facilities often operate near populated or environmentally sensitive areas, where major incidents could have severe off-site consequences. Predictive modeling of process safety risks, abnormal scenarios, and escalation pathways enhances the ability of operators to prevent major accident events, thereby reducing risks to surrounding communities (Kuponiyi and Akomolafe, 2024; Ojeikere *et al*., 2024). This capability supports the social license to operate by demonstrating responsible risk management and commitment to public safety.

PSA also improves transparency and worker engagement by making safety risks more visible and actionable. When predictive insights are communicated effectively, workers and supervisors gain a clearer understanding of how their actions influence risk trajectories. This transparency encourages reporting, participation in safety programs, and trust in management decision-making. As a result, PSA supports more inclusive and participatory approaches to safety governance, strengthening social performance outcomes.

From a governance (G) perspective, PSA enhances data-driven oversight and accountability in LNG projects. Predictive safety metrics provide boards and senior leaders with forward-looking indicators of risk exposure, enabling more informed oversight of safety and operational performance. Unlike traditional lagging indicators, predictive insights highlight emerging vulnerabilities, supporting timely governance intervention before adverse outcomes occur. This strengthens internal control systems and clarifies accountability for risk management actions.

The integration of predictive insights into board-level risk governance represents a critical governance advancement. PSA outputs can inform enterprise risk management processes, investment decisions, and strategic planning by linking operational safety risks with financial, environmental, and reputational consequences (NDUKA, 2023; Tafirenyika, 2023). This alignment supports more holistic governance frameworks that treat safety as a strategic risk rather than a compliance function.

PSA strengthens the credibility and assurance of ESG reporting. Data-driven safety and environmental metrics derived from predictive systems enhance the reliability, consistency, and auditability of ESG disclosures. By demonstrating proactive risk management and continuous monitoring, LNG operators can provide more credible evidence of ESG performance to regulators, investors, and other stakeholders. This improves trust in reported outcomes and supports alignment with international sustainability and reporting standards.

Predictive safety analytics delivers substantial ESG benefits by preventing environmental harm, protecting workers and communities, and strengthening governance and reporting practices. Its integration into LNG project management enables a more proactive, transparent, and accountable approach to sustainability, reinforcing the strategic value of PSA as a core enabler of ESG performance in high-hazard energy systems (Babatope *et al*., 2023; Ibrahim *et al*., 2024).

2.5 Enablers and Barriers to Implementation

The effective implementation of predictive safety analytics (PSA) in liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects is shaped by a complex interaction of technical, organizational, and governance-related enablers and barriers. While PSA offers substantial potential to improve safety outcomes and ESG performance, its realization depends on the quality of underlying data, organizational readiness, workforce capabilities, and the ability to manage cost, scale, and cybersecurity risks (Kuponiyi *et al*., 2024; Olagoke-Komolafe and Oyeboade, 2024). Understanding these factors is essential for translating predictive insights into sustained operational value.

A primary enabler and barrier lies in data quality, integration, and interoperability. PSA systems rely on large volumes of accurate, timely, and representative data drawn from diverse sources, including incident reports, process control systems, maintenance records, and human factors data. In many LNG projects, these datasets are fragmented across contractors, legacy platforms, and organizational silos, limiting the completeness and reliability of predictive models. Inconsistent data definitions, reporting practices, and data governance frameworks further undermine model validity. Conversely, projects that invest in standardized data taxonomies, integrated digital architectures, and real-time data pipelines are better positioned to generate reliable predictive insights (Sanni *et al*., 2020; Shodhshauryam, 2020). Interoperability between safety, operations, and environmental systems is therefore a critical enabler of effective PSA deployment.

Organizational readiness and safety culture represent another decisive factor. PSA requires a shift from reactive, compliance-oriented safety management to proactive, learning-oriented risk governance. Organizations with mature safety cultures characterized by trust, open reporting, and visible management commitment are more likely to embrace predictive insights and act on early warnings. In contrast, weak reporting cultures, fear of blame, or overreliance on lagging indicators can inhibit the use of predictive outputs. Without organizational willingness to respond to signals, PSA risks becoming a purely analytical exercise with limited practical impact. Leadership engagement, clear accountability for acting on predictive insights, and alignment between safety and operational priorities are therefore essential enablers.

The implementation of PSA also depends on skills, competencies, and ethical considerations in AI use. Advanced analytics and machine learning models require specialized expertise in data science, process safety, and domain knowledge to ensure appropriate model design, interpretation, and validation. Many LNG operators face skills gaps in these areas, particularly in project-based environments with high workforce turnover. Inadequate understanding of model assumptions and limitations can lead to overconfidence in predictions or misinterpretation of outputs. Ethical considerations, including data privacy, algorithmic bias, and transparency, further complicate implementation. Ensuring that AI-supported decisions remain explainable, auditable, and aligned with ethical standards is critical to maintaining trust among workers, regulators, and other stakeholders.

Cost, scalability, and cybersecurity concerns also influence PSA adoption. The initial investment required for data infrastructure, analytics platforms, and skilled personnel can be substantial, particularly for large-scale LNG megaprojects with complex contractor ecosystems. While long-term benefits may outweigh costs, uncertainty regarding return on investment can slow adoption, especially in cost-constrained project phases. Scalability presents an additional challenge, as predictive models developed for specific assets or project phases may not transfer easily across different facilities or operating contexts (Okonkwo *et al*., 2024; Yeboah *et al*., 2024). Ensuring that PSA systems remain adaptable across the project lifecycle is therefore a key implementation consideration.

Cybersecurity represents a growing barrier as PSA systems increasingly rely on interconnected digital platforms and real-time data flows. LNG facilities are critical infrastructure assets, making them attractive targets for cyber threats. The integration of operational technology and information technology systems expands the attack surface and increases the potential consequences of cyber incidents. Robust cybersecurity controls, continuous monitoring, and clear governance arrangements are essential to protect data integrity and system reliability, and to ensure that PSA enhances rather than compromises operational resilience.

Despite these challenges, several enablers can support successful PSA implementation. These include strong leadership sponsorship, phased deployment strategies, cross-functional collaboration, and continuous learning mechanisms that integrate predictive insights into daily operations. When supported by appropriate governance, skills development, and ethical safeguards, PSA can evolve from a technical tool into a strategic capability.

The implementation of predictive safety analytics in LNG projects is shaped by interconnected enablers and barriers spanning data, culture, competencies, cost, and cybersecurity. Addressing these factors holistically is essential to unlocking the full potential of PSA and ensuring that predictive insights translate into meaningful improvements in safety, resilience, and ESG performance (Sanni *et al*., 2020; Oguntegbe *et al*., 2023).

2.6 Gaps in the Literature

Despite the growing interest in predictive safety analytics (PSA) and its application in high-hazard industries, the existing literature reveals several important gaps when examined in the context of liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects and their environmental, social, and governance (ESG) implications (Ezeh *et al*., 2024; Adenuga *et al*., 2025). These gaps limit the generalizability, practical relevance, and theoretical integration of current research, underscoring the need for more context-specific, longitudinal, and outcome-oriented studies.

A major gap in the literature is the limited availability of LNG-specific empirical studies. Much of the existing evidence on predictive safety analytics is derived from adjacent sectors such as oil refining, chemical processing, aviation, and manufacturing. While these industries share certain risk characteristics with LNG operations, the unique technical, organizational, and lifecycle complexities of LNG projects are insufficiently represented (Uduokhai *et al*., 2024; Okonkwo *et al*., 2024). LNG megaprojects involve large-scale construction, complex commissioning phases, cryogenic process hazards, and multi-contractor environments that differ markedly from steady-state industrial operations. The reliance on cross-sector extrapolation limits the ability to assess how predictive models perform under LNG-specific conditions, particularly during transient and high-risk project phases.

Another significant gap concerns the weak linkage between predictive analytics and ESG outcomes. Existing studies predominantly focus on operational safety metrics, such as incident reduction or near-miss prediction, without explicitly connecting predictive safety performance to broader ESG dimensions. Environmental benefits, social impacts beyond worker safety, and governance improvements are often discussed conceptually rather than empirically. As a result, the contribution of PSA to emissions reduction, environmental incident prevention, community risk mitigation, and governance transparency remains underexplored (Oparah *et al*., 2024; Adenuga *et al*., 2025). This gap is particularly problematic given the increasing importance of ESG considerations in investment decisions, regulatory oversight, and stakeholder expectations within the energy sector.

The underrepresentation of developing and emerging market LNG projects constitutes another critical limitation in the literature. Most empirical studies originate from mature LNG markets with advanced regulatory frameworks, high digital maturity, and well-resourced operators. In contrast, LNG projects in developing regions face distinct challenges, including weaker institutional capacity, fragmented data systems, high workforce turnover, and greater reliance on subcontracting (Sanni *et al*., 2020; Ezeh *et al*., 2023). These contextual factors can significantly influence the feasibility, effectiveness, and ethical implications of predictive safety analytics. The lack of evidence from emerging markets limits the global relevance of current findings and constrains the development of inclusive, context-sensitive PSA frameworks.

A further gap relates to the lack of longitudinal and validation studies. Many existing studies evaluate predictive models over short time horizons or during limited project phases, providing insufficient evidence of sustained performance or long-term impact. Without longitudinal analysis, it is difficult to assess whether predictive analytics delivers durable safety improvements, adapts to changing risk profiles, or maintains accuracy as operational conditions evolve (Ogbete and Aminu-Ibrahim, 2024; Wedraogo and Sanni, 2024). Similarly, few studies report rigorous validation of predictive models using independent datasets or cross-project comparisons. This raises concerns regarding model overfitting, transferability, and reliability, particularly in complex and dynamic LNG environments.

In addition to these core gaps, the literature often underexplores the organizational and governance mechanisms that mediate the effectiveness of predictive safety analytics. While technical model performance is frequently emphasized, less attention is given to how predictive insights are interpreted, acted upon, and institutionalized within project governance structures (Seyi-Lande *et al*., 2024; Oparah *et al*., 2024). This omission limits understanding of why predictive systems succeed or fail in practice and constrains the development of integrative socio-technical models.

The literature on predictive safety analytics in LNG projects is characterized by limited LNG-specific empirical evidence, weak integration with ESG outcomes, insufficient representation of developing market contexts, and a lack of longitudinal and validation studies. Addressing these gaps is essential to advancing both theory and practice (Michael and Ogunsola, 2025; Sanni *et al*., 2025). Future research should prioritize LNG-focused empirical investigations, explicitly link predictive analytics to ESG performance, incorporate diverse geographical contexts, and adopt longitudinal designs that assess sustained impact and model robustness over time.

2.7 Implications for Practice and Policy

The findings of the systematic review on predictive safety analytics (PSA) in liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects carry important implications for both industry practice and public policy. As LNG developments expand in scale and complexity under increasing ESG scrutiny, the strategic integration of predictive analytics into safety management and governance systems becomes essential. Translating analytical capability into meaningful safety, environmental, and governance outcomes requires deliberate design choices, institutional alignment, and supportive regulatory frameworks.

From a practice perspective, organizations must prioritize the design of ESG-aligned predictive safety analytics strategies. PSA should not be implemented solely as a technical solution aimed at incident reduction, but as an integrated capability that explicitly supports environmental protection, workforce well-being, and governance accountability. This requires the selection of predictive indicators that reflect both safety-critical risks and ESG objectives, such as loss-of-containment precursors, high-risk work patterns, contractor safety performance, and emissions-related deviations. Aligning PSA outputs with ESG performance metrics enhances the strategic relevance of safety analytics and ensures that predictive insights inform sustainability decision-making rather than operating in isolation (Ogunsola and Michael, 2024; Oyeboade and Olagoke-Komolafe, 2024).

Effective PSA strategies also require integration across the LNG project lifecycle. Predictive models should be adaptable to construction, commissioning, and operational phases, capturing the evolving risk profile of each stage. Embedding ESG considerations into model design enables organizations to anticipate not only injury risks but also environmental and social consequences of system failures. This integrated approach supports proactive intervention and strengthens the credibility of ESG commitments in high-hazard project environments.

A second key implication for practice is the integration of safety analytics into LNG project governance frameworks. Predictive insights must be embedded within formal decision-making structures, including project controls, risk registers, contractor management systems, and executive oversight mechanisms. Clear accountability for reviewing and acting on predictive outputs is essential to prevent early warnings from being ignored or normalized. Assigning governance responsibility at both operational and senior management levels ensures that predictive signals trigger timely interventions and resource allocation decisions (Ogunsola and Michael, 2023; Uduokhai *et al*., 2023).

At the board and executive levels, PSA can enhance governance by providing forward-looking risk intelligence that complements traditional lagging indicators. Integrating predictive safety metrics into enterprise risk management and ESG reporting processes strengthens oversight and enables leaders to identify emerging vulnerabilities before adverse outcomes occur. This governance integration supports a shift from reactive compliance to anticipatory risk stewardship, aligning safety performance with broader organizational resilience and sustainability goals.

From a policy perspective, the growing use of advanced analytics and artificial intelligence in safety-critical LNG systems highlights the need for policy guidance on responsible and transparent AI use. Regulators and industry bodies play a crucial role in establishing principles that ensure predictive systems are reliable, explainable, and ethically deployed. Policy frameworks should emphasize transparency in model assumptions, data sources, and decision logic, enabling regulators and stakeholders to understand how predictive insights are generated and used (Olatunji *et al*., 2023; Ajayi *et al*., 2025).

Policy guidance should also address data governance, privacy, and cybersecurity risks associated with PSA deployment. As predictive systems increasingly rely on integrated digital platforms and real-time data flows, safeguarding data integrity and system resilience becomes a regulatory priority (Farounbi *et al*., 2018; Gado *et al*., 2020). Clear standards for validation, auditing, and continuous monitoring of predictive models can enhance trust and reduce the risk of unintended consequences in safety-critical applications.

Furthermore, policymakers can support equitable adoption of PSA by encouraging capacity building and knowledge transfer, particularly in developing and emerging LNG markets. Guidance on minimum data standards, interoperability, and skills development can help reduce barriers to adoption and promote consistent safety and ESG performance across regions (Uduokhai *et al*., 2023; Oparah *et al*., 2025). International collaboration and industry-led standards may also facilitate benchmarking and shared learning.

The implications of predictive safety analytics for LNG projects extend beyond technical implementation to encompass strategic, organizational, and policy dimensions. Designing ESG-aligned PSA strategies, embedding predictive insights within project governance frameworks, and establishing clear policy guidance for responsible AI use are essential steps toward realizing the full potential of predictive analytics (Sanni *et al*., 2020; Oguntegbe *et al*., 2020). Together, these measures support proactive safety management, strengthen ESG performance, and enhance the long-term resilience and credibility of LNG project governance.

2.8 Future Research Directions

Future research on predictive safety analytics (PSA) in liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects should move beyond proof-of-concept applications toward systematic evaluation of effectiveness, sustainability impacts, and governance integration. While existing studies demonstrate the technical feasibility of PSA, substantial knowledge gaps remain regarding comparative performance of analytical approaches, long-term organizational effects, and the alignment of safety analytics with broader sustainability objectives (Omolayo *et al*., 2024; Essien *et al*., 2024). Addressing these gaps is critical to advancing both theory and practice in high-hazard energy project management.

A priority area for future research is the comparative effectiveness of analytics techniques in LNG contexts. Current literature often reports isolated applications of statistical models, machine learning algorithms, or simulation-based tools without rigorous comparison across methods. Systematic studies comparing traditional statistical risk modeling, supervised and unsupervised machine learning, and hybrid approaches are needed to determine their relative strengths under different LNG project conditions. Such research should evaluate predictive accuracy, interpretability, data requirements, and robustness across construction, commissioning, and operational phases (Nwafor *et al*., 2019; Uduokhai *et al*., 2023). Comparative analysis would help identify context-appropriate techniques and inform evidence-based selection of analytics tools for safety-critical decision-making.

Another important direction involves examining the long-term impacts of PSA on safety culture and ESG performance. Most existing studies focus on short-term safety outcomes, such as incident reduction or near-miss prediction, providing limited insight into sustained organizational change. Longitudinal research is needed to assess how continued exposure to predictive insights influences reporting behaviors, trust in safety systems, leadership practices, and workforce engagement. Similarly, the long-term contribution of PSA to environmental protection, community risk reduction, and governance transparency remains underexplored (Michael and Ogunsola, 2019; Ogbete *et al*., 2020). Empirical studies linking sustained PSA use to improvements in ESG indicators would strengthen the strategic case for investment in predictive safety capabilities.

Future research should also investigate cross-project data sharing and learning mechanisms. LNG projects are often executed as discrete megaprojects, resulting in fragmented data and limited transfer of learning across assets or organizations. Research into governance models, data standards, and incentive structures that enable safe and ethical data sharing could significantly enhance the predictive power of analytics systems. Cross-project datasets would support more robust model training, validation, and benchmarking, enabling organizations to identify common risk patterns and best practices (Oguntegbe *et al*., 2019; Sanni *et al*., 2020). Such mechanisms could also facilitate industry-wide learning, improving safety performance across the LNG sector.

The integration of predictive safety analytics with sustainability analytics represents a further frontier for research. While safety analytics and sustainability analytics are often developed separately, their integration could provide a more holistic understanding of system performance and risk. Future studies should explore frameworks that link safety leading indicators with environmental metrics, social impact measures, and governance performance indicators. Integrated analytics could enable organizations to anticipate trade-offs, synergies, and cascading effects across safety and sustainability domains, supporting more informed strategic decision-making (Cadet *et al*., 2024; Okuh *et al*., 2024). Research in this area would contribute to the development of unified ESG analytics platforms that align operational risk management with long-term sustainability goals.

Methodologically, future research should emphasize multi-level and mixed-methods approaches. Quantitative predictive models should be complemented by qualitative analysis of organizational processes, leadership behavior, and governance structures that influence how predictive insights are interpreted and acted upon (Oguntegbe *et al*., 2019; Osuji *et al*., 2021). Multi-level modeling can help disentangle individual, team, project, and organizational effects, providing a more nuanced understanding of PSA effectiveness in complex LNG environments.

Future research on predictive safety analytics in LNG projects should focus on comparative evaluation of analytics techniques, longitudinal assessment of cultural and ESG impacts, development of cross-project learning mechanisms, and integration with sustainability analytics. Advancing these research directions will strengthen the empirical foundation of PSA, enhance its strategic relevance, and support the development of resilient, ESG-aligned safety management systems in high-hazard energy projects (Michael and Ogunsola, 2023; Ezeh *et al*., 2024).

CONCLUSION

This systematic review examined the application of predictive safety analytics (PSA) in liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects, with particular attention to safety performance outcomes and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) implications. The review synthesized evidence across the LNG project lifecycle, highlighting the growing use of data-driven and AI-enabled analytics to anticipate hazards, identify weak signals of system degradation, and support proactive safety interventions. The findings indicate that PSA contributes to reductions in incidents, near-miss escalation, and serious injury and fatality potential, while also enhancing decision-making under uncertainty in complex, high-hazard environments.

A key contribution of the review lies in its integration of safety analytics with ESG performance. The findings demonstrate that predictive safety capabilities extend beyond operational risk control to support environmental protection through loss-of-containment prevention, emissions reduction, and improved compliance monitoring. Social benefits are evident in enhanced workforce protection, reduced community exposure to major accident hazards, and increased transparency and engagement in safety processes. From a governance perspective, PSA strengthens data-driven oversight, board-level risk governance, and the credibility of ESG reporting by providing forward-looking and auditable safety intelligence.

This review contributes to the LNG safety management literature by consolidating fragmented evidence on predictive analytics applications and identifying critical enablers, barriers, and research gaps. It also advances ESG scholarship by explicitly linking predictive safety performance to environmental, social, and governance outcomes in high-hazard energy projects. By addressing both technical and organizational dimensions, the review provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how PSA can be embedded within LNG project governance systems.

Predictive safety analytics represents a strategic capability for high-hazard energy projects, enabling a shift from reactive compliance to proactive, ESG-aligned risk management. Its effective adoption can enhance safety resilience, strengthen stakeholder trust, and support sustainable LNG project delivery under increasing regulatory and societal expectations.

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