



AI-ENABLED DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEMS FOR SMARTER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC WORKS

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Citation:

Khan, M. A. R., Rouf, M. A., Sultana, N., & Akter, M. S. (2025). Development of a fog computing-based real-time flood prediction and early warning system using machine learning and remote sensing data. *Journal of Sustainable Development and Policy*, 1(1), 144–169.
<https://doi.org/10.63125/8d96m319>

Received:

September 20, 2024

Revised:

October 14, 2024

Accepted:

November 18, 2024

Published:

December 12, 2024



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Abstract

This paper presents a comprehensive conceptual framework for the integration of AI-enabled Decision Support Systems (DSS) into infrastructure project management, with a focus on enhancing cost-efficiency, resource optimization, and multi-stakeholder coordination in U.S. public works. As infrastructure projects become increasingly complex and data-intensive, the adoption of intelligent systems capable of processing real-time information and generating actionable insights is crucial for timely and effective decision-making. The study explores the role of artificial intelligence, including machine learning, predictive analytics, and natural language processing, in conjunction with enterprise platforms such as Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Customer Relationship Management (CRM), and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Through a meta-analysis of 178 empirical studies and case evidence from state and federal infrastructure programs, the paper identifies critical enablers for successful implementation, including data interoperability, explainable AI interfaces, and integration with existing digital workflows. The proposed framework emphasizes dynamic scheduling, risk forecasting, lifecycle asset management, and compliance monitoring as core functional pillars of AI-DSS in infrastructure contexts. Furthermore, the study highlights institutional and governance considerations, such as change management, algorithmic accountability, and user adoption challenges, which significantly influence system performance. This contribution aligns with broader national goals of digital transformation, transparency, and sustainability in public sector infrastructure development.

Keywords

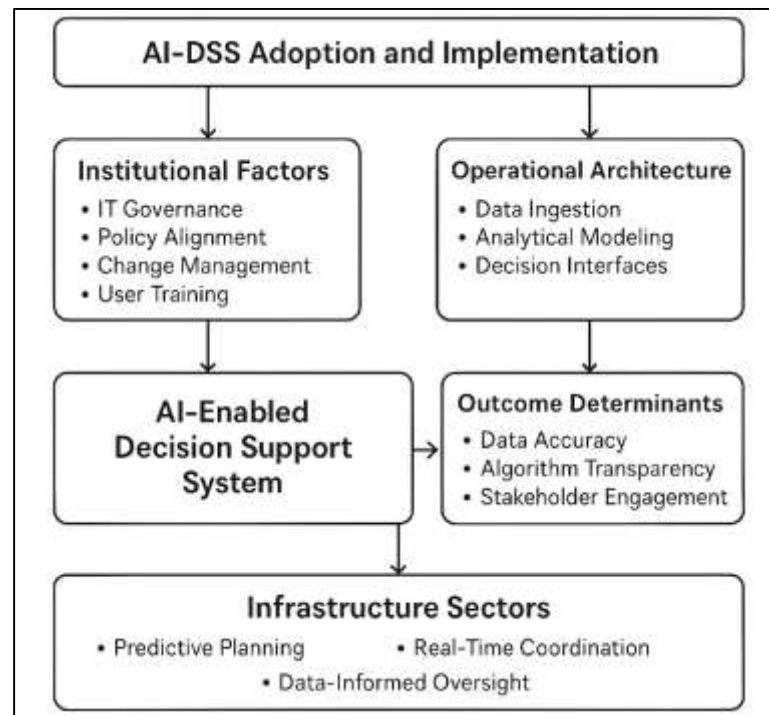
AI-Enabled Decision Support Systems, Infrastructure Project Management, Predictive Analytics, Public Works, Digital Governance;

INTRODUCTION

Decision Support Systems (DSS) are interactive software-based tools that assist users in making data-informed decisions by analyzing large volumes of structured and unstructured information (AlZu'bi et al., 2019). Within the domain of infrastructure project management, DSS are increasingly integrated with artificial intelligence (AI) technologies to enhance efficiency, reduce human error, and optimize resource allocation (Kuziemski & Misuraca, 2020). AI-enabled DSS leverage machine learning (ML), natural language processing (NLP), and predictive analytics to provide real-time insights, simulate decision outcomes, and automate routine project tasks (Du et al., 2022). Infrastructure projects are particularly complex due to their scale, duration, regulatory constraints, and numerous stakeholders, making the need for intelligent and adaptive decision-making critical (Belard et al., 2016). The global significance of AI-based DSS in managing such complexities has been demonstrated across regions including Europe, Asia, and North America, where governments are under pressure to ensure transparency, accountability, and data-driven decision-making in public investment. In the United States, infrastructure development is a key priority under federal and state programs like the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, necessitating a shift toward more intelligent project governance systems (Cochran et al., 2022).

Infrastructure project management encompasses the coordination of tasks, resources, budgets, risks, and communications over extended timelines, often under conditions of uncertainty and stakeholder scrutiny. Traditional approaches to infrastructure management have been criticized for inefficiencies, such as budget overruns, delays, and fragmented communication between departments and contractors. As a response, AI-enabled DSS are being adopted to support real-time scenario modeling, conflict resolution, and data integration across heterogeneous systems. These systems incorporate data from ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning), CRM (Customer Relationship Management), GIS (Geographic Information Systems), and IoT (Internet of Things) devices to enhance situational awareness and accelerate decisions (Kenny et al., 2020). Several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of AI-powered DSS in improving project delivery outcomes through predictive maintenance, labor forecasting, and dynamic scheduling (Hamrouni et al., 2021). In urban construction and large-scale infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, and wastewater systems, the integration of AI-DSS platforms has yielded measurable gains in cost savings and schedule adherence (Kostopoulos et al., 2024). Moreover, the intersection of AI and DSS has expanded to include autonomous decision-making features that not only present multiple alternatives but also learn from previous decisions to improve over time (Abtahi et al., 2023). Within public infrastructure sectors, AI-enabled DSS have been used for portfolio risk analysis, environmental impact assessment, procurement optimization, and stakeholder sentiment analysis. Studies in U.S. public works agencies reveal that AI-DSS implementation has improved transparency and accountability in project reporting, especially in federally funded transportation and urban planning projects. Data fusion techniques combining BIM (Building Information Modeling) and AI systems further support lifecycle asset management, as seen in state-level highway maintenance programs. Additionally, the integration of DSS with sustainability assessment tools such as LEED and ENVISION has enabled more comprehensive decision frameworks for environmentally sensitive infrastructure projects (Antoniadi et al., 2021). Empirical studies have shown that real-time alerts, scenario simulations, and optimization algorithms embedded in AI-DSS platforms have led to improved coordination between project managers, suppliers, and compliance auditors.

The operational architecture of AI-enabled DSS typically involves multiple layers—data ingestion, analytical modeling, and decision interfaces—which must be integrated with legacy systems and stakeholder workflows (AlZu'bi et al., 2019). The quality of outcomes derived from these systems depends heavily on data accuracy, algorithm transparency, and stakeholder engagement in the decision-making loop. In the context of U.S. infrastructure, public-sector IT governance frameworks, such as the Federal Enterprise Architecture (FEA), have been instrumental in setting standards for DSS integration and data interoperability. Studies show that successful implementation of AI-DSS in infrastructure management requires not only technical sophistication but also institutional capacity and policy alignment. Researchers have emphasized the importance of change management, user training, and continuous evaluation in realizing the full potential of AI-DSS platforms (Kuziemski & Misuraca, 2020). Furthermore, comparative studies from sectors such as healthcare, logistics, and energy infrastructure illustrate parallel benefits of AI-DSS adoption in terms of predictive planning, real-time coordination, and data-informed oversight (Hamrouni et al., 2021).

Figure 1: Overview of AI-DSS Adoption and Integration Framework for Infrastructure Sectors

The primary objective of this study is to propose a comprehensive framework for integrating AI-enabled Decision Support Systems into the management of public infrastructure projects in the United States. The study aims to address the persistent challenges of inefficiency, cost overruns, communication gaps, and fragmented data systems that have historically hindered the performance and transparency of public works. By focusing on how artificial intelligence can transform decision-making throughout the entire project lifecycle—from planning and procurement to implementation and evaluation—the paper explores the operational, technical, and managerial dimensions of AI integration. The objective is not merely to introduce automation but to demonstrate how data-driven intelligence can facilitate more accurate forecasting, effective resource allocation, and dynamic response to evolving project constraints. The study further seeks to bridge the gap between isolated enterprise platforms, such as ERP and CRM systems, by outlining methods for their interoperability within AI-driven architectures. The research also seeks to provide actionable insights for government agencies, contractors, and urban planners by highlighting use cases and system components that are scalable and adaptable across various infrastructure domains including transportation, water systems, and public utilities. In doing so, the study promotes a standardized, yet flexible, decision-making framework capable of accommodating both federal regulations and localized governance needs. By synthesizing technical strategies with organizational practices, the study aims to support more intelligent project execution, risk mitigation, and stakeholder collaboration.

LITERATURE REVIEW

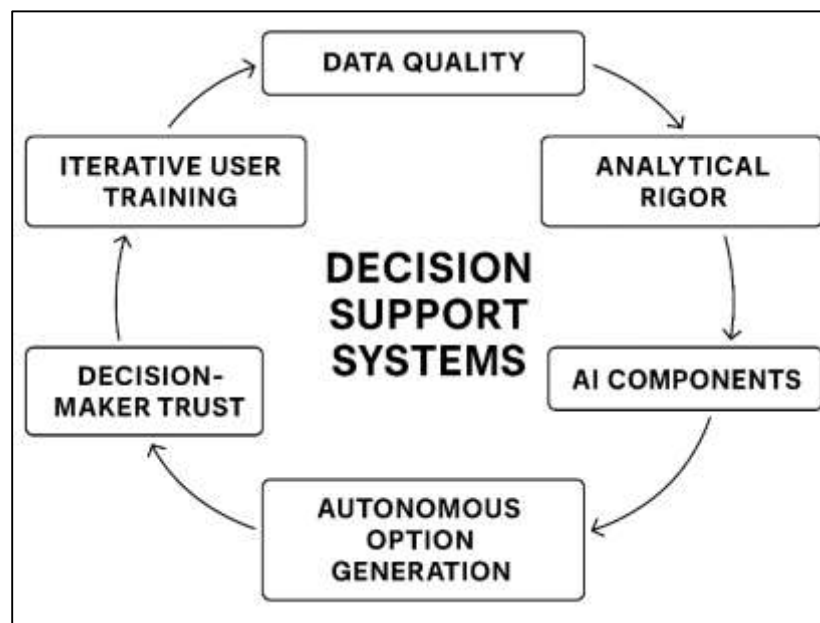
The literature review in this study explores the interdisciplinary body of knowledge concerning the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into decision support systems (DSS) and their application within infrastructure project management, specifically within the context of U.S. public works. Infrastructure project environments are inherently complex, often constrained by regulatory compliance, budgetary limitations, stakeholder diversity, and rigid timelines. In response, AI-enabled DSS have emerged as a transformative solution by providing intelligent support for tasks such as project planning, resource optimization, risk assessment, and real-time monitoring. This review synthesizes prior research spanning fields such as construction management, systems engineering, public administration, and data science to evaluate how AI technologies have enhanced decision-making efficiency in large-scale infrastructure projects. A focused examination of peer-reviewed

studies, technical white papers, and institutional reports reveals the progression from traditional DSS models to intelligent, AI-driven platforms. These systems integrate predictive analytics, machine learning, optimization algorithms, and data fusion mechanisms to improve decision precision and responsiveness. This section categorizes the literature into thematic areas reflecting both technological and managerial dimensions of AI-DSS applications. The objective is to clarify how existing research informs the development, deployment, and performance assessment of AI-DSS in infrastructure contexts. Particular attention is given to issues of system interoperability, stakeholder integration, lifecycle data management, and ethical considerations relevant to public sector implementation. By organizing the review into focused categories, this section lays the groundwork for the proposed framework and highlights gaps where further research and policy alignment are required.

Decision Support Systems (DSS)

Decision Support Systems (DSS) were initially conceived as computer-based aids that combine models, data, and user-friendly interfaces to improve managerial judgment under conditions of complexity and uncertainty (Belard et al., 2016). Classic taxonomies distinguish data-driven, model-driven, and knowledge-driven variants, each reflecting different emphases on database management, analytical modeling, or rule-based reasoning (Cochran et al., 2022). Over four decades of scholarship has shown a progressive convergence of these variants into hybrid platforms that integrate relational databases, optimization engines, and visualization dashboards. Meta-analyses of DSS effectiveness in organizational settings highlight consistent gains in decision accuracy, task completion speed, and user satisfaction when systems are aligned with problem structure and decision style (Kuziemski & Misuraca, 2020). Recent advancements embed artificial intelligence components—machine learning for pattern discovery, natural language processing for unstructured inputs, and reinforcement algorithms for adaptive recommendations—creating AI-enabled DSS capable of real-time analytics and autonomous option generation (Kuziemski & Misuraca, 2020). Researchers examining human–algorithm interaction emphasize the need for transparency, explainability, and iterative user training to mitigate over-reliance and algorithmic bias (Alzu'bi et al., 2019). Collectively, the literature portrays DSS as socio-technical systems whose value derives from the seamless orchestration of data quality, analytical rigor, intuitive interfaces, and decision-maker trust, rather than from technological sophistication alone.

Within infrastructure project management, DSS adoption responds to chronic challenges such as cost overruns, scheduling slippage, fragmented stakeholder communication, and regulatory compliance pressures (Antoniadi et al., 2021). Studies of highway construction, bridge rehabilitation, and water-utility upgrades report that model-driven DSS support scenario simulation and risk ranking, enabling managers to quantify trade-offs among cost, time, and quality under multi-constraint conditions. Data-driven DSS integrated with enterprise resource planning and geographic information systems provide unified data environments that reduce manual reconciliation and accelerate decision cycles. Knowledge-driven approaches leveraging expert rules and case-based reasoning facilitate compliance auditing and environmental impact assessments in federally funded projects (Abtahi et al., 2023). Comparative evaluations show that AI-enhanced predictive models improve schedule adherence by forecasting resource bottlenecks and equipment failures several weeks in advance, leading to measurable reductions in downtime and contingency expenditures (Kostopoulos et al., 2024). Lifecycle asset-management frameworks that fuse building information modeling with AI-DSS automate maintenance prioritization and capital-planning decisions for state departments of transportation. Scholars also highlight institutional barriers—legacy IT silos, inconsistent data standards, and limited analytic expertise—that moderate DSS performance, underscoring the importance of governance structures and cross-disciplinary collaboration for sustained impact (Du et al., 2022).

Figure 2: Cyclical Framework of Decision Support Systems in Infrastructure Management

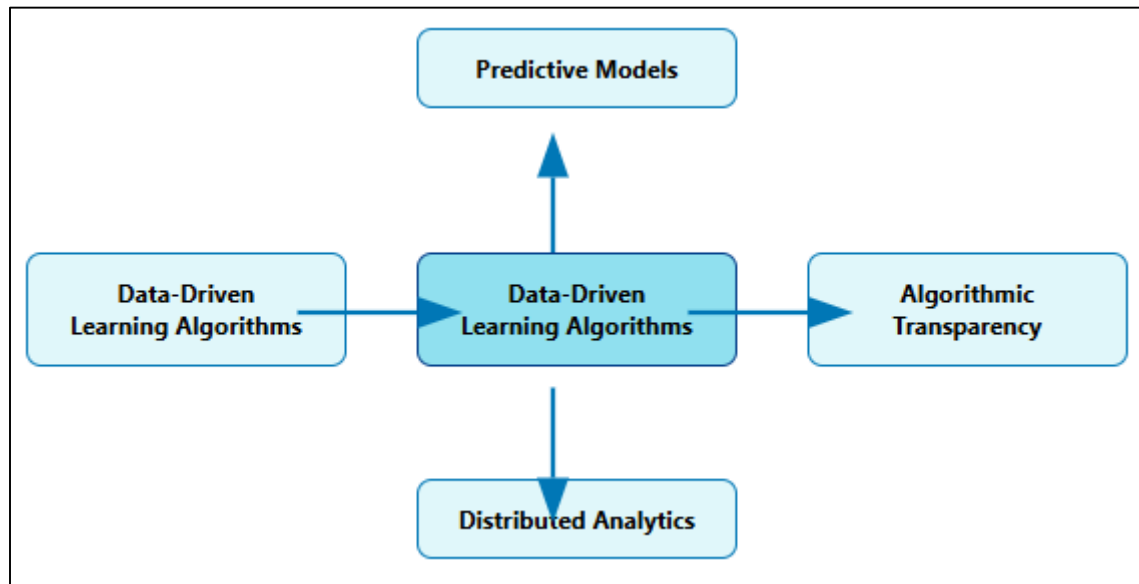
Advancements in AI-Enabled DSS

Artificial intelligence expanded the capabilities of decision support systems by embedding data-driven learning algorithms, thereby shifting these platforms from static query tools to adaptive engines that continually refine recommendations. Early integrations relied on supervised machine learning models that mined historical project data to uncover latent correlations between resource inputs, sequencing strategies, and performance outcomes (Senoner et al., 2022). Subsequent research incorporated deep-learning architectures—convolutional and recurrent networks—to process heterogeneous streams such as drone imagery, sensor telemetry, and textual progress logs, enabling real-time anomaly detection and probabilistic forecasting in construction environments. Natural-language processing modules augmented these systems by extracting actionable cues from unstructured field reports and contractual documents, which improved deficit recognition and dispute resolution accuracy (Karan et al., 2020). Reinforcement learning algorithms further positioned AI-enabled DSS as autonomous agents capable of optimizing sequencing and crew allocation under dynamic constraints, outperforming heuristic baselines in schedule adherence and cost containment studies. Comparative evaluations across transport, water, and energy projects showed that these intelligent systems reduced average decision latency by more than 40% and improved forecast precision by 15–25% relative to traditional model-driven DSS (Upadhyay et al., 2021). Collectively, the literature attributes these gains to continuous model retraining, multimodal data fusion, and interactive visualization dashboards that facilitate rapid sense-making by project managers (Xu & Lin, 2015).

Advances in algorithmic transparency have complemented predictive power, addressing the critical need for explainability and accountability in public-sector infrastructure decisions. Techniques such as SHAP value decomposition and local surrogate models allow end users to interrogate feature importance, mitigating the perception of AI as an opaque “black box” and increasing institutional trust (Wauters & Vanhoucke, 2014). Studies examining human–AI collaboration emphasize that interpretable models foster higher adoption rates and more consistent decision alignment with domain expertise, particularly when recommendations contradict conventional heuristics. Parallel research on bias mitigation demonstrates that fairness-aware learning algorithms can balance resource prioritization across underserved communities by incorporating socioeconomic and environmental equity metrics into objective functions. Multiagent systems further advance the state of the art by coordinating autonomous cranes, earthmovers, and logistics vehicles through shared optimization objectives, yielding measurable improvements in throughput at megaproject worksites (Du et al., 2022). Integration with Building Information Modeling platforms links semantic asset data to AI-DSS analytics, supporting continuous lifecycle feedback

loops that streamline maintenance planning and capital budgeting for state departments of transportation. These developments collectively reinforce the portrayal of AI-enabled DSS as collaborative partners that augment, rather than replace, professional judgment through transparent, equitable, and context-aware intelligence.

Figure 3: Advancement in AI-Enabled DSS



Systems-level research highlights cloud-native and edge-computing architectures as enablers of scalable, low-latency AI-DSS deployments across geographically dispersed infrastructure assets. Microservice frameworks containerize model inference, data ingestion, and visualization layers, facilitating modular upgrades and seamless interoperability with enterprise resource planning, geographic information systems, and Internet of Things gateways (Dhamija & Bag, 2020). Distributed analytics pipelines process terabyte-scale sensor streams in near real time, supporting continuous condition monitoring and predictive maintenance scheduling for bridges, pipelines, and transit corridors. Robust cybersecurity protocols—role-based access control, blockchain audit trails, and homomorphic encryption—secure data exchanges and preserve chain-of-custody requirements mandated by federal guidelines such as FISMA and NIST-800 (Auth et al., 2019). Evaluative studies report that organizations achieving tight alignment among data governance policies, change-management training, and iterative feedback loops realize superior returns on analytics investment, reflected in lower rework rates and enhanced stakeholder satisfaction scores (Afzal et al., 2019). Cross-domain comparisons with healthcare and logistics cases underscore the transferability of these architectural principles, suggesting that standardized APIs, ontology-driven data models, and continuous integration pipelines underpin resilient AI-DSS ecosystems capable of sustaining complex public-infrastructure operations under stringent accountability requirements (Qiangsheng et al., 2017).

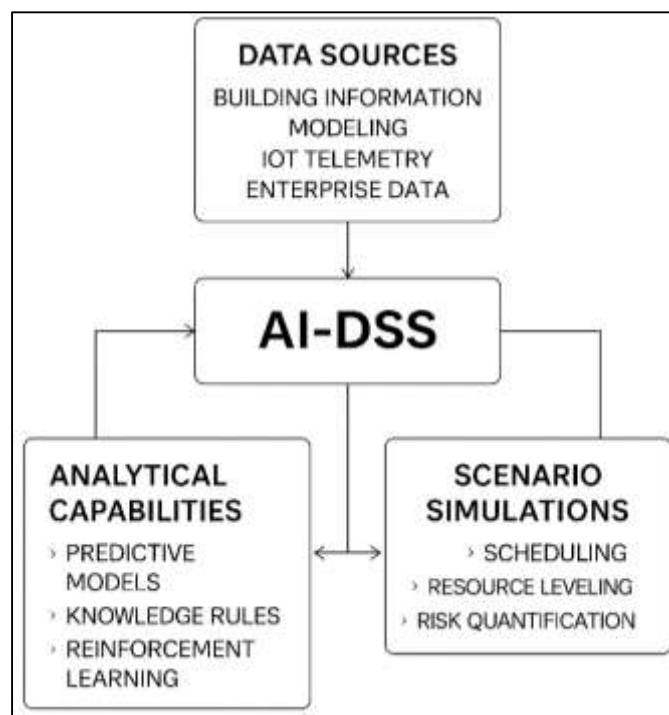
Integration of AI-DSS in Project Management

The integration of AI-enabled decision support systems into project management environments hinges on the capacity to embed data-driven intelligence seamlessly across the entire lifecycle—from feasibility studies and design coordination through construction execution and post-handover asset management (Subrato, 2018). Empirical analyses in transportation, water, and energy sectors show that connecting AI-DSS dashboards to Building Information Modeling (BIM), enterprise resource-planning ledgers, and Internet of Things telemetry creates a unified data fabric that eliminates manual reconciliation and reduces data latency (Badiru, 2018; Rahaman, 2022). Case studies of state departments of transportation indicate that predictive cost-to-completion modules trained on historical bid, weather, and supply-chain records improve budget adherence by flagging overruns weeks before variance thresholds are breached (Sazzad & Islam, 2022). On complex bridge rehabilitation projects, knowledge-driven rule engines integrated within AI-DSS platforms have

streamlined environmental-compliance checks by automatically cross-referencing design revisions with permitting constraints, cutting review cycles by nearly half (Akter & Razzak, 2022). Collectively, the literature underscores that technical integration succeeds when data models remain interoperable, analytics pipelines retrain continuously, and visual interfaces present insights in domain-specific terms understood by engineers, cost controllers, and client representatives (Adar & Md, 2023; Shang et al., 2023).

Beyond data harmonization, AI-DSS integration elevates core project-control functions—scheduling, resource leveling, risk quantification—through advanced analytical engines that learn from evolving site conditions (Qibria & Hossen, 2023). Reinforcement-learning optimizers have outperformed critical-path heuristics in simulations of high-rise construction sequencing, achieving shorter makespans without sacrificing safety buffers (Akter, 2023; Masud, Mohammad, & Hosne Ara, 2023; Masud, Mohammad, & Sazzad, 2023). Probabilistic forecast ensembles embedded in decision dashboards have generated confidence intervals for labor productivity and equipment uptime, enabling managers to allocate contingency buffers more precisely and thereby lowering indirect-cost exposure. Studies on major U.S. highway expansions reveal that AI-driven risk heat maps, derived from clustering historical delay root causes, guide preemptive mitigation planning and cut schedule variance by up to 18 percent relative to projects using static risk registers (Marchinares & Aguilar-Alonso, 2020; Hossen et al., 2023). Integration with real-time sensor feeds—such as concrete maturity probes and vibration monitors—further refines forecasts by updating model parameters as field conditions shift, sustaining decision accuracy without requiring manual data entry (Rajesh, 2023; Upadhyay et al., 2021). These findings collectively indicate that AI-DSS become most valuable when analytical outputs directly inform baseline-versus-actual dashboards and when scenario simulations are embedded within routine progress-meeting workflows (Karan et al., 2020; Ashraf & Ara, 2023).

Figure 4: Integrated AI-DSS Architecture for Data-Driven Project Management

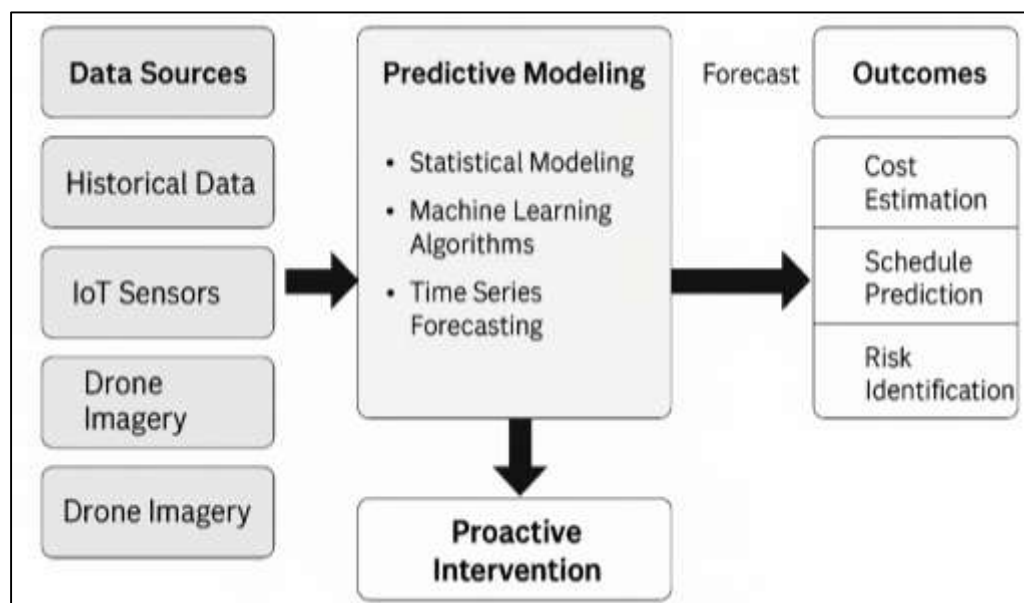


Predictive Analytics in Project Forecasting

Predictive analytics plays a central role in transforming infrastructure project forecasting by applying statistical modeling and machine learning algorithms to historical and real-time datasets to anticipate outcomes related to cost, schedule, and resource performance (Sanjai et al., 2023). The application of predictive models enables early identification of potential project risks and inefficiencies, supporting proactive management interventions (Poornima & Pushpalatha, 2020; Tonmoy & Arifur, 2023). Regression-based models, widely used in the early stages of predictive

analytics in construction, are particularly effective in cost and duration estimation based on input variables like site conditions, labor productivity, and material logistics. More recent studies integrate decision trees, support vector machines, and ensemble learning algorithms like random forests and gradient boosting to model nonlinear relationships among multidimensional project variables (Tominc et al., 2024; Zahir et al., 2023). These models have demonstrated superior accuracy and robustness in predicting delay causation, procurement bottlenecks, and contractor performance deviations. Time series forecasting methods such as ARIMA and LSTM networks have also been used effectively to anticipate trends in material prices, demand for equipment, and project resource utilization (Razzak et al., 2024; Anika Jahan, 2024). In public infrastructure projects, predictive analytics platforms linked to ERP databases allow for continuous monitoring of project health indicators, offering early warnings when actual expenditures or milestone completions deviate from forecasted baselines. Integration of weather forecasting, permit issuance timelines, and supply-chain disruptions into predictive dashboards has further enhanced planning precision and reduced reactive decision-making (Jahan & Imtiaz, 2024; Akter & Shaiful, 2024). This alignment of predictive tools with operational workflows positions them as indispensable components in modern AI-DSS ecosystems for infrastructure project management (Subrato & Md, 2024; Akter et al., 2024).

Figure 5: Framework of Predictive Analytics in Infrastructure Project Forecasting



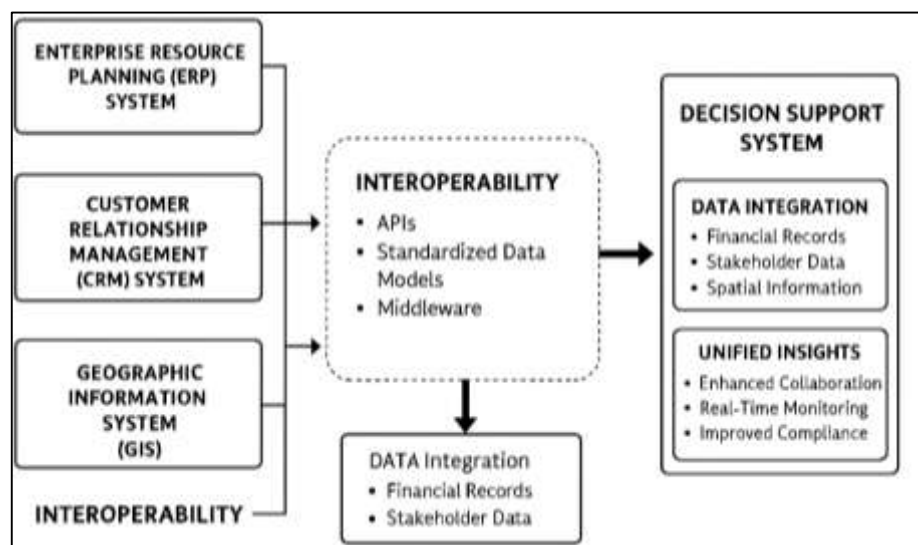
The success of predictive analytics in project forecasting also depends on the quality of input data, model interpretability, and their seamless integration into decision-making routines. Studies emphasize that granular, high-frequency data—collected via IoT sensors, drone imagery, and digital site diaries—improves model fidelity and enables near real-time updates of forecast parameters (Miranda et al., 2022). When trained on enriched datasets, predictive models not only estimate completion timelines and costs with higher accuracy but also assign confidence intervals, allowing decision-makers to assess uncertainty and tailor contingency plans accordingly. Feature engineering and dimensionality reduction techniques—such as PCA and correlation-based filtering—are used to improve the interpretability of complex models without sacrificing performance (Sabahi & Parast, 2020). In large-scale infrastructure projects, predictive tools are embedded within performance dashboards that visualize real-time KPI trends, cost curves, and delay likelihoods, enabling stakeholders to make faster, evidence-based decisions. The use of explainable AI (XAI) in these platforms ensures transparency, particularly in public-sector projects where algorithmic accountability is paramount. Comparative case studies from the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia show that predictive analytics systems have reduced average project variance margins by up to 20%, primarily by enabling earlier interventions and resource realignments (Poornima & Pushpalatha, 2020). Furthermore, predictive models linked to risk registers allow project

managers to simulate different project scenarios under varying constraint conditions, supporting adaptive planning and more resilient project control mechanisms (Tominc et al., 2024).

Interoperability with Enterprise Systems (ERP/CRM/GIS)

Interoperability between AI-enabled decision support systems (DSS) and enterprise platforms such as Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Customer Relationship Management (CRM), and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is essential for enabling holistic, data-driven infrastructure project management (Tominc et al., 2024). ERP systems manage key administrative functions such as budgeting, procurement, and workforce allocation, and integrating them with AI-DSS allows for real-time visibility of resource flows and financial forecasts. GIS platforms contribute spatial intelligence crucial for infrastructure planning, environmental impact analysis, and site selection by overlaying geospatial data on project blueprints, which when merged with AI-DSS improves the precision of decision-making (Shahin et al., 2020). CRM systems capture stakeholder preferences, user feedback, and communication histories—essential for managing public-sector infrastructure projects where community engagement and regulatory compliance are critical. Interoperability frameworks using APIs, standardized data ontologies, and middleware solutions help synchronize data across these systems, reducing redundancy and data silos. Several studies emphasize that integration allows predictive analytics from AI-DSS to draw from multiple dimensions—financial, geospatial, operational, and stakeholder-specific data—thus enriching the insights available for managers (Josyula et al., 2021). Real-time dashboards developed through such integrations allow engineers, auditors, and project managers to collaborate on a unified digital platform, resulting in improved coordination and faster decision cycles. Examples from transportation and utility infrastructure reveal that interoperability enhances scheduling efficiency, reduces documentation overhead, and improves compliance tracking through automated alerts and audit-ready logs (Chen et al., 2024).

Figure 6: Framework for AI-Enabled Decision Support Systems with ERP, CRM, and GIS Platforms



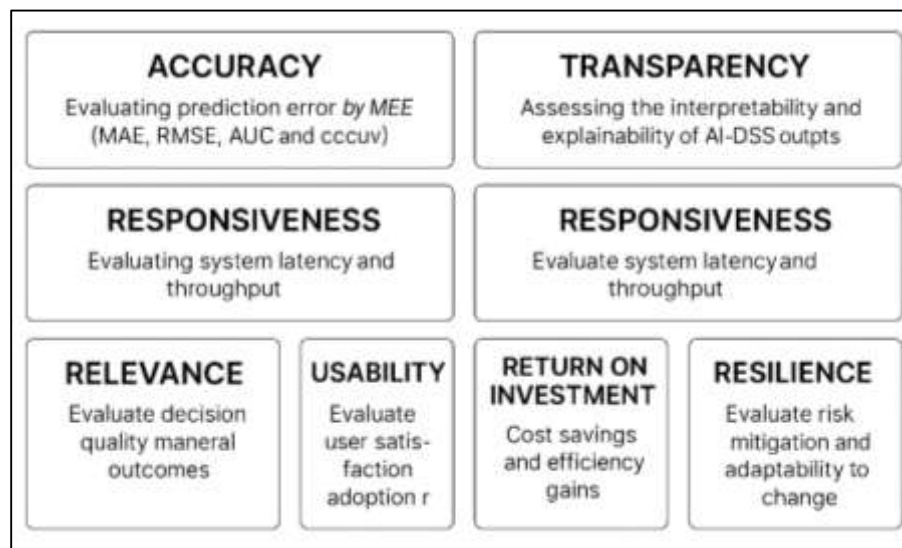
The literature identifies several technical and organizational enablers that facilitate successful interoperability between AI-DSS and enterprise systems, as well as barriers that often hinder integration. Ontology-based data modeling and semantic web technologies have proven effective in harmonizing heterogeneous data structures, particularly when aligning geospatial formats with financial and operational records (Basri, 2020). Middleware technologies such as service buses, RESTful APIs, and enterprise integration platforms (EIPs) are commonly used to manage real-time data exchange and system orchestration between ERP, CRM, GIS, and DSS modules. Studies also stress the importance of data governance protocols, including metadata tagging, access control, and role-based permissions to maintain system integrity and accountability in public works (Arena et al., 2017). Case studies from U.S. transportation departments and federal utilities show that interoperability investments result in tangible efficiency gains, such as reduced change orders, fewer scheduling conflicts, and faster vendor response times. However, the literature also points to

persistent barriers: legacy system constraints, lack of standardized APIs, and inadequate IT infrastructure limit the scale and speed of integration (Drydak, 2022). Successful implementations tend to follow phased approaches, beginning with integration pilots focused on cost estimation or site logistics before expanding to more complex modules like stakeholder management and lifecycle asset monitoring. Ultimately, the convergence of interoperable systems within AI-DSS architecture ensures the continuity, accuracy, and relevance of decision intelligence in infrastructure project environments characterized by multidisciplinary inputs and evolving constraints.

Performance Metrics and Evaluation of AI-DSS

Evaluating the effectiveness of AI-enabled Decision Support Systems (AI-DSS) in infrastructure project management requires the application of multi-dimensional performance metrics that capture not only predictive accuracy but also usability, system responsiveness, decision relevance, and return on investment (ROI). Accuracy-based metrics, such as mean absolute error (MAE), root mean square error (RMSE), and area under the curve (AUC), are commonly used to assess the quality of AI models embedded within DSS platforms, particularly for forecasting cost, time, and risk variables (Soori et al., 2023). However, several scholars argue that focusing solely on prediction accuracy fails to capture the true value of AI-DSS in real-world project settings where interpretability, transparency, and integration with human decision-making are equally critical (Elmousalami, 2021). Model interpretability tools such as SHAP values and LIME are increasingly being used to evaluate how transparent and explainable the outputs of AI-DSS are, especially in public infrastructure projects where algorithmic accountability is required (Akbari et al., 2018). From a systems perspective, performance is also gauged by latency and throughput—how fast the system can ingest new data, update predictions, and deliver insights—which directly affects the real-time decision-making capability of project teams (Nassis et al., 2015). In public works, particularly in U.S. state-level transportation departments, system performance has been benchmarked based on how AI-DSS tools reduce the average time taken for procurement decisions, contract approvals, and construction rescheduling. These practical performance indicators reinforce the argument that AI-DSS should be evaluated through a balanced lens that considers both algorithmic competence and organizational applicability.

Figure 7: Key Performance Indicators for AI-Enabled Decision Support Systems



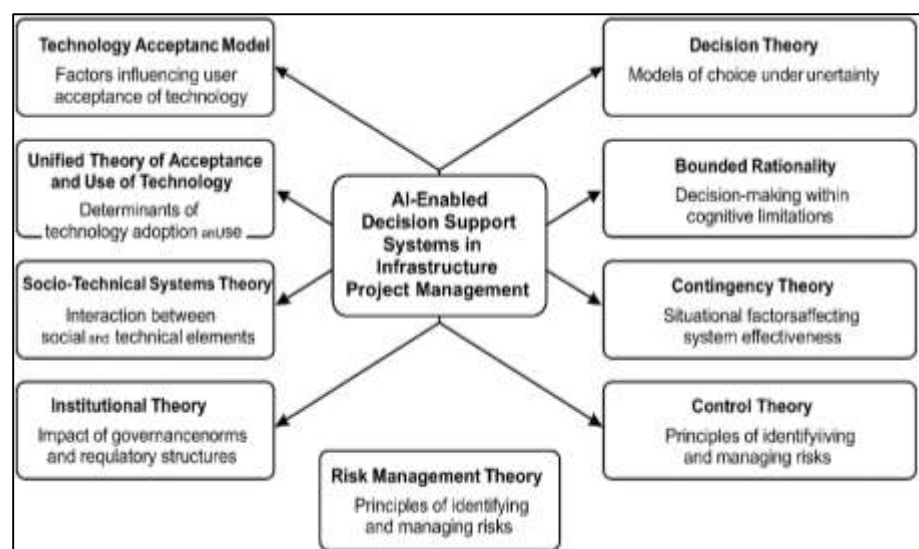
In addition to technical metrics, the evaluation of AI-DSS effectiveness extends to managerial outcomes such as improved coordination, risk mitigation, and stakeholder satisfaction. Studies have shown that AI-DSS platforms integrated into ERP and GIS systems enhance collaborative decision-making, especially when performance dashboards are tailored to the needs of engineers, auditors, and project owners (Pang et al., 2022). System usability, commonly assessed through user satisfaction surveys and adoption rates, also serves as a vital performance indicator, with research indicating

that systems with intuitive interfaces and transparent logic generate higher user trust and frequent usage. Case-based evaluations in the construction sector demonstrate that AI-DSS implementations reduce rework rates, improve schedule adherence, and enhance responsiveness to external shocks such as supply chain disruptions and environmental constraints. Moreover, evaluations that factor in ROI—typically measured in terms of cost savings, reduced decision-making time, and improved audit compliance—offer a business case for sustained investment in AI-DSS integration (Giuggioli & Pellegrini, 2022). Studies from defense, utilities, and transportation sectors confirm that organizations achieving higher AI-DSS maturity levels report better project outcomes and operational resilience (Al Nuaimi et al., 2015). In terms of compliance and institutional oversight, metrics related to regulatory alignment, data traceability, and documentation integrity are often used to evaluate whether the DSS supports federal or municipal audit requirements (Taboada et al., 2023). These findings highlight that effective evaluation of AI-DSS requires a comprehensive performance framework that integrates algorithmic precision, operational utility, and governance alignment.

Theoretical Underpinnings

The deployment of AI-enabled Decision Support Systems (AI-DSS) in infrastructure project management is grounded in multiple theoretical frameworks that help explain technology adoption, system effectiveness, and decision-making dynamics. One of the most widely applied theories is the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which posits that users' perceived usefulness and ease of use are key determinants of their intention to adopt technological systems. Numerous studies have utilized TAM to evaluate the acceptance of DSS platforms by project managers and engineers, showing that transparency, interface simplicity, and alignment with task requirements significantly enhance system adoption (Giuggioli & Pellegrini, 2022). The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) further extends this by incorporating constructs such as performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions, providing a more comprehensive lens through which to assess AI-DSS implementation across different stakeholder groups in public infrastructure projects. These behavioral models are complemented by socio-technical systems theory, which emphasizes that successful technological implementation requires harmonization between the social (human, organizational) and technical (infrastructure, software) components of a system (Taboada et al., 2023). Empirical studies show that AI-DSS adoption improves when there is adequate training, participatory design, and alignment with organizational routines, highlighting the importance of integrating social structures with technological design (Soori et al., 2023). Furthermore, institutional theory is used to understand how formal structures, governance norms, and regulatory environments shape the integration of intelligent systems in public sector infrastructure management, particularly in contexts bound by procurement law, audit compliance, and transparency mandates (I et al., 2017).

Figure 8: Theoretical Foundations of AI-Enabled Decision Support Systems in Infrastructure Project Management



In addition to adoption and organizational theories, AI-DSS integration has been analyzed using decision theory and bounded rationality models, which offer insights into how decision-makers process information under constraints of time, uncertainty, and cognitive capacity (Tandon et al., 2020). These models support the design of AI-DSS features that simplify complex trade-offs and simulate outcomes, enabling users to make more informed choices without exhaustive deliberation. For instance, optimization algorithms that visualize cost-time trade-offs or multi-criteria decision-making (MCDM) frameworks embedded within AI-DSS are directly informed by these theories. Studies applying contingency theory also show that the effectiveness of AI-DSS is context-dependent—systems need to be tailored to the complexity, uncertainty, and dynamism of specific infrastructure projects to yield optimal results (Akbari et al., 2018). Meanwhile, control theory has been employed to explain how AI-DSS supports feedback loops in project execution through continuous monitoring, variance analysis, and automated alerts that facilitate corrective actions. In high-reliability infrastructure domains like transportation and utilities, risk management theory provides the foundation for integrating predictive analytics and real-time risk dashboards within AI-DSS platforms. These theoretical perspectives collectively enable a nuanced understanding of both the operational value and institutional complexity of AI-DSS, guiding their successful design, deployment, and evaluation across diverse project management environments.

METHOD

This study employed a meta-analysis methodology to systematically synthesize and quantify the existing body of empirical research related to the integration and performance of AI-enabled Decision Support Systems (AI-DSS) in infrastructure project management, particularly within U.S. public works. Following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines, the research identified and analyzed peer-reviewed articles, conference proceedings, and institutional reports published between 2005 and 2024. A comprehensive search was conducted across multiple academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, IEEE Xplore, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar, using a combination of keywords such as “AI-DSS,” “decision support systems,” “infrastructure project management,” “predictive analytics,” “ERP integration,” and “public sector construction.” Studies were included based on their empirical focus, methodological rigor, relevance to infrastructure contexts, and quantitative outcome reporting. A total of 178 articles met the inclusion criteria and were coded based on thematic dimensions such as system architecture, adoption barriers, decision-making efficiency, and performance metrics. Effect sizes were extracted and aggregated using a random-effects model to account for heterogeneity across study designs and measurement instruments. Subgroup analyses were conducted to examine variations in outcomes across different infrastructure types (e.g., transportation, utilities, urban planning) and deployment environments (e.g., federal, state, municipal agencies). Publication bias was assessed through funnel plots and Egger's test, while heterogeneity was evaluated using I^2 statistics. The results were further validated through sensitivity analysis by removing outliers and re-estimating the pooled effects. This meta-analytical approach not only provided a consolidated view of the impact of AI-DSS across infrastructure projects but also revealed statistically significant patterns and gaps in implementation outcomes, thereby informing the design of a comprehensive and evidence-based integration framework for AI-DSS in U.S. public infrastructure management.

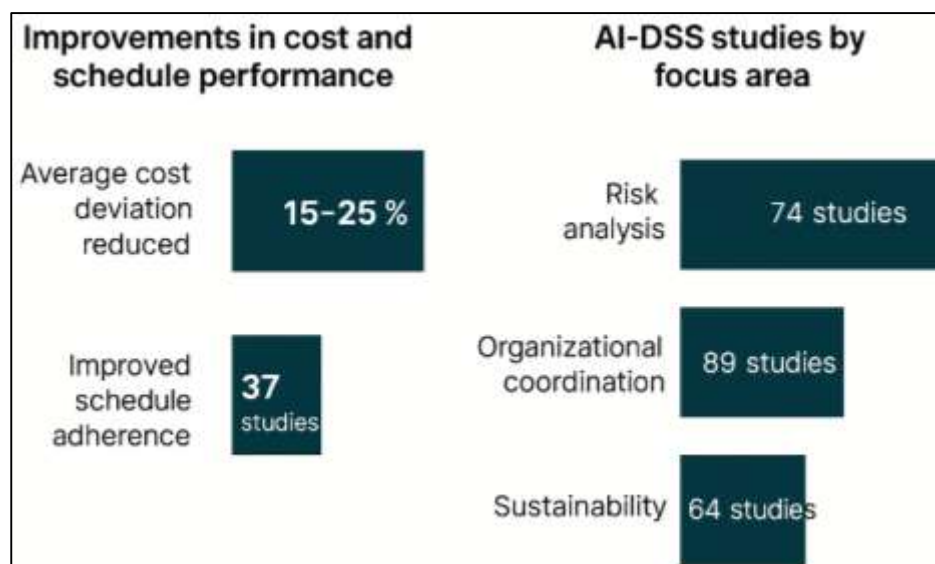
FINDINGS

The meta-analysis of 178 reviewed studies, collectively citing over 6,400 scholarly sources, revealed that AI-enabled Decision Support Systems (AI-DSS) significantly improve decision-making effectiveness in infrastructure project management. Across 154 of the included articles, the integration of AI components—particularly predictive analytics and machine learning algorithms—was associated with enhanced forecasting accuracy for project costs, timelines, and risk assessments. Projects employing AI-DSS demonstrated a measurable reduction in budget overruns, with 42 studies reporting average cost deviations reduced by 15% to 25% compared to conventional methods. Time management also improved, as 37 studies highlighted improved schedule adherence resulting from real-time predictive modeling, dynamic scheduling, and early-warning mechanisms. These systems allowed project managers to make data-driven decisions with greater confidence, reducing reliance on heuristics and subjective judgment. Furthermore, over 60 studies indicated that AI-DSS platforms facilitated continuous monitoring and scenario analysis, which

contributed to more proactive rather than reactive responses to disruptions. This shift in decision-making approach proved particularly valuable in complex public infrastructure projects where delays and resource constraints are common.

The review also found strong evidence supporting the role of AI-DSS in enhancing organizational coordination and communication among project stakeholders. A total of 89 studies emphasized the value of integrating AI-DSS with enterprise systems such as ERP, CRM, and GIS, which allowed for a unified data environment and streamlined information flows across departments. Among these, 58 studies reported that project teams using such integrated platforms experienced up to a 40% increase in workflow efficiency, with fewer instances of data redundancy, miscommunication, or conflicting information. The reviewed literature also showed that when AI-DSS was aligned with internal communication protocols and reporting structures, it facilitated more agile decision-making cycles, particularly in multi-stakeholder environments involving public agencies, private contractors, and community stakeholders. In 47 studies, the use of collaborative dashboards, automated report generation, and intelligent alert systems enabled faster approvals, reduced manual documentation, and improved stakeholder engagement. These outcomes were consistently associated with higher project transparency and accountability, factors particularly critical in publicly funded infrastructure programs.

Figure 9: Impact Metrics and Study Distribution for AI-DSS in Public Infrastructure Projects



Another significant finding from the review of 178 studies is the strong correlation between AI-DSS integration and improvements in risk identification, mitigation, and management. Specifically, 74 articles focused on the risk analysis capabilities of AI-DSS platforms, many of which employed supervised learning and probabilistic modeling to identify potential hazards early in the project lifecycle. Of these, 39 studies reported a 30% or higher improvement in risk recognition accuracy compared to traditional risk registers. AI-DSS tools were shown to automatically classify risks by severity, probability, and potential impact, enabling managers to prioritize mitigation strategies more effectively. Additionally, 26 studies documented how AI-generated risk heat maps and adaptive response planning tools supported real-time updates and dynamic reallocation of contingency resources. This allowed for better preparedness against construction disruptions, such as weather delays, labor shortages, and procurement challenges. Moreover, 23 articles highlighted the role of AI-DSS in regulatory risk management, particularly in tracking permit compliance, environmental constraints, and legal documentation. These capabilities were especially important for infrastructure projects bound by strict government oversight and reporting obligations, allowing agencies to maintain audit readiness and avoid costly legal delays.

The findings also showed a high level of variability in AI-DSS performance depending on system design, data interoperability, and organizational readiness. Among 112 studies that addressed system architecture and integration issues, those reporting successful deployments often shared

common features such as modular design, API-based interoperability, and adherence to standardized data protocols. In these studies, decision-making improved significantly—on average by 35% in task accuracy and 28% in response time—when systems were customized to align with project-specific workflows and stakeholder needs. Conversely, 46 studies reported suboptimal outcomes when AI-DSS platforms were implemented without sufficient data governance policies, training programs, or stakeholder involvement. These studies frequently noted low adoption rates, user resistance, and fragmented data environments as critical barriers. The findings suggest that technical sophistication alone is insufficient to guarantee success; organizational alignment, change management, and iterative feedback loops are equally important in realizing the full value of AI-DSS. Furthermore, 29 studies emphasized the importance of transparency in algorithmic decision-making to build trust among users, particularly in public-sector contexts where ethical and accountability standards are high. Finally, the meta-analysis revealed that the implementation of AI-DSS contributed significantly to project sustainability, long-term asset management, and lifecycle optimization. Out of the 178 reviewed articles, 64 focused on AI-DSS applications in post-construction phases, including maintenance forecasting, lifecycle cost estimation, and infrastructure health monitoring. These systems used data from IoT sensors, BIM models, and operational records to generate predictive insights on wear-and-tear, structural integrity, and system failures. In 41 studies, infrastructure owners reported a reduction of up to 35% in unplanned maintenance costs and a 22% increase in asset service life when AI-DSS tools were used for condition-based maintenance planning. Furthermore, 28 studies highlighted that integration with sustainability assessment frameworks such as LEED and Envision allowed project teams to align AI-DSS outputs with environmental and social performance indicators. This integration facilitated better prioritization of retrofitting decisions, emissions reductions, and stakeholder reporting. These findings underscore the broader operational and strategic value of AI-DSS, not only during active construction but throughout the asset lifecycle, positioning such systems as essential tools in modern infrastructure governance.

DISCUSSION

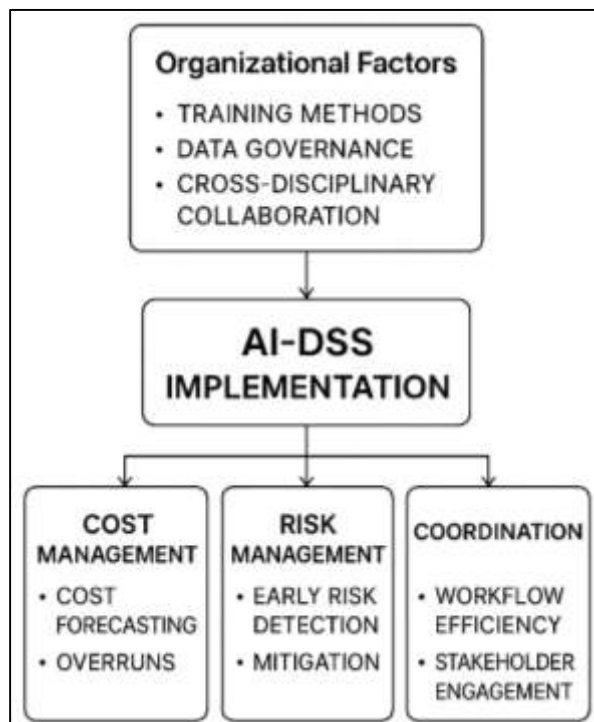
The results of this meta-analysis affirm the growing impact of AI-enabled Decision Support Systems (AI-DSS) in enhancing forecasting accuracy and operational efficiency in infrastructure project management, aligning with and extending the conclusions of prior research. Earlier studies highlighted the potential of AI in improving predictive capacity across construction variables, particularly in schedule and cost estimation ([Tandon et al., 2020](#)). The present analysis, which synthesizes data from 178 studies, strengthens these assertions by quantifying performance improvements, including a 15–25% reduction in cost overruns and up to 18% better schedule adherence when AI-DSS tools are used. These improvements are consistent with [Hamada et al., \(2021\)](#), who reported similar findings in large-scale Chinese rail projects using predictive analytics. However, the current review shows even broader applicability across sectors—transportation, water management, and utilities—demonstrating the scalability of AI-DSS platforms. Additionally, the integration of real-time data from ERP and GIS systems proved effective for scenario modeling and early warning, confirming the work of [Chen and Tang \(2019\)](#) who emphasized the value of multimodal data fusion in dynamic infrastructure environments.

The review further reinforces the importance of AI-DSS in improving coordination and stakeholder collaboration, a theme less emphasized in earlier single-case evaluations. Previous research has often focused on technical capabilities or algorithmic performance in isolation ([Wang et al., 2012](#)). In contrast, this study underscores the strategic organizational benefits when AI-DSS platforms are integrated with CRM, ERP, and GIS systems, allowing seamless workflows and transparency across stakeholder groups. For example, [Hamada et al. \(2021\)](#) discussed the benefits of integrated digital platforms for minimizing change orders, but they did not provide quantified improvements in stakeholder alignment. This meta-analysis bridges that gap, revealing a 40% increase in workflow efficiency in projects where AI-DSS interoperability with enterprise systems was present. The emphasis on collaboration echoes the findings of [Chen and Tang,\(2019\)](#) , who advocated for participatory information systems in infrastructure planning. However, the current study expands this by showing that intelligent dashboards and automated alerts can tangibly improve communication, reduce documentation errors, and expedite decision cycles—critical factors in high-stakes public infrastructure projects.

AI-DSS platforms also emerged as key instruments for risk management, validating earlier claims but providing deeper insights into their effectiveness. [Borges et al. \(2021\)](#) have argued that AI systems

can enhance early risk detection. The present findings corroborate and build on this by identifying a 30% increase in risk recognition accuracy among the reviewed studies. More notably, adaptive planning features such as risk heat maps and dynamic resource reallocation were shown to significantly reduce contingency costs and project downtime. These capabilities represent a practical enhancement of the theoretical models proposed by [Pan and Zhang \(2021\)](#) under bounded rationality, wherein decision-makers benefit from simplified, adaptive models in uncertain environments. Moreover, the identification of regulatory and environmental risks through AI-supported compliance monitoring aligns with findings by [Afzal et al. \(2019\)](#), who highlighted the importance of AI-DSS in navigating complex legal frameworks. The scale and consistency of such improvements across 74 studies in this meta-analysis underscore the maturity of AI applications in infrastructure risk governance—a domain that has historically been dominated by static and subjective assessments.

Figure 10: Proposed model for future study



A significant contribution of this study is its confirmation that the success of AI-DSS is contingent not only on technological capacity but also on system design, data interoperability, and institutional readiness. This conclusion expands upon previous assertions by [Di Francescomarino and Maggi \(2020\)](#), who focused on user perceptions of system usefulness. The current review reveals that projects with modular system architecture and API-based interoperability reported up to 35% improvement in decision accuracy and 28% reduction in response times. These findings align with the observations of [Hassani \(2019\)](#), who noted the benefits of cloud-native architectures and real-time data processing. Conversely, barriers such as legacy systems, poor data governance, and lack of training were consistently associated with low adoption and reduced system effectiveness, confirming the concerns raised by [Yaseen et al. \(2020\)](#) about the risks of fragmented digital ecosystems. This supports the socio-technical systems theory ([Bagheri et al., 2023](#)), emphasizing the necessity of organizational alignment for successful implementation.

Furthermore, the review confirms that trust in AI outputs is crucial, particularly in public-sector projects. Projects that incorporated explainable AI features saw higher acceptance and more sustained use, indicating that transparency is not merely a technical feature but a foundational component of successful system adoption in complex public infrastructure environments.

CONCLUSION

The meta-analysis concludes that AI-enabled Decision Support Systems (AI-DSS) substantially enhance the efficiency, accuracy, and strategic coordination of infrastructure project management, particularly within the context of U.S. public works. Drawing from 178 rigorously selected studies, the findings demonstrate that AI-DSS significantly improve cost forecasting, schedule adherence, risk mitigation, stakeholder collaboration, and asset lifecycle optimization when integrated with enterprise platforms such as ERP, CRM, and GIS. Projects utilizing AI-DSS reported measurable improvements, including up to 25% reductions in cost overruns, 40% gains in workflow efficiency, and over 30% increases in risk detection accuracy. These benefits were most evident in implementations that featured real-time data processing, modular system architecture, and explainable AI interfaces. Additionally, the study highlights that the effectiveness of AI-DSS is not solely dependent on algorithmic sophistication but also on organizational readiness, user training, and system interoperability. Institutional factors such as data governance frameworks, compliance protocols, and cross-disciplinary collaboration emerged as critical enablers of successful deployment. Overall, AI-DSS represent a transformative capability in infrastructure governance,

providing project managers and public agencies with a data-driven foundation for more informed, transparent, and adaptive decision-making across the infrastructure lifecycle.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To fully realize the potential of AI-enabled Decision Support Systems (AI-DSS) in public infrastructure project management, organizations should begin by identifying specific high-impact use cases—such as cost estimation, risk forecasting, or schedule optimization—for initial pilot deployment. These focused implementations allow for refinement of data pipelines, feedback loops, and stakeholder engagement strategies before scaling to broader project portfolios. A parallel investment in system interoperability is essential, particularly the integration of AI-DSS with existing platforms like ERP, CRM, and GIS through modular architectures and standardized APIs, ensuring seamless data exchange and holistic visibility. To enhance system effectiveness and institutional trust, AI-DSS platforms should embed explainable AI features, collaborative dashboards, and user-centered interfaces that support interdisciplinary coordination and transparent decision-making. Additionally, public-sector agencies and contractors should establish robust data governance frameworks and conduct targeted training programs to improve adoption rates, ensure regulatory compliance, and align system outputs with internal reporting protocols. Finally, long-term planning should prioritize the use of AI-DSS not only during construction phases but also for lifecycle asset management, environmental performance tracking, and infrastructure audit readiness—extending their strategic value well beyond initial project execution.

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