

IoT-Based Industrial Boiler Monitoring & Control System

Thiru Senthil Adhiban N 

Assistant Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering,
Sengunthar Engineering College (Autonomous), Thiruchengode, India
tsamechphd@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-1089-3644>

Ranjith Prabhu K, Murugan C, Sugan R

UG Scholar, Department of Mechanical Engineering,
Sengunthar Engineering College (Autonomous), Thiruchengode, India



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Abstract: Industrial boilers play a vital role in power generation, manufacturing, chemical processing, and food industries. However, unsafe operating conditions such as excessive temperature, pressure rise, and low water levels can lead to severe accidents, equipment damage, and production loss. Traditional boiler monitoring systems rely heavily on manual inspection and localized control mechanisms, which are prone to human error and delayed response. This project proposes a Smart Boiler Monitoring and Control System using Internet of Things (IoT) technology to ensure safe, efficient, and real-time boiler operation. The system integrates temperature, pressure, and water level sensors with an IoT-enabled microcontroller (ESP32/Arduino). Sensor data is continuously acquired and transmitted wirelessly to a cloud platform (ThingSpeak) for real-time monitoring, data logging, and analysis. A threshold-based control mechanism is implemented to automatically trigger protective actions such as boiler shutdown or parameter adjustment during abnormal conditions. Additionally, the system includes an alert and notification module that sends instant warnings to operators via SMS/email/mobile dashboard, enabling rapid decision-making. The proposed system enhances boiler safety, reduces manual intervention, improves energy efficiency, and supports predictive maintenance. This solution is cost-effective, scalable, and suitable for both industrial and small-scale boiler applications.

I. INTRODUCTION

Boilers are essential thermal devices used to generate steam or hot water by transferring heat energy to water. They are widely deployed in industries such as textiles, power plants, refineries, food processing units, and pharmaceutical manufacturing. Despite their importance, boilers pose significant safety risks if not properly monitored and controlled. Boiler failures can cause explosions, fire hazards, equipment damage, and loss of human life. Conventional boiler monitoring systems are primarily manual or semi-automated, requiring continuous human supervision. Operators must periodically check gauges and manually regulate control valves. Such approaches are inefficient, time-consuming, and susceptible to delayed responses, especially in large industrial setups. Moreover, traditional systems lack centralized data storage and remote monitoring capabilities. With the advancement of IoT and cloud computing, it has become feasible to monitor industrial equipment remotely in real time. IoT enables continuous sensing, wireless communication, intelligent control, and cloud-based analytics. Applying IoT to boiler systems significantly improves operational safety, reliability, and efficiency. This project focuses on developing an IoT-based smart boiler monitoring and control system that automates data acquisition, cloud visualization, safety control, and alert generation. The system ensures continuous real-time monitoring of critical parameters and automatically responds to unsafe operating conditions.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Industrial boiler operations involve a high risk of overheating, dry running, and pressure imbalance, which can lead to energy wastage, equipment damage, and even explosions. The existing manual monitoring systems suffer from several limitations such as delayed response to abnormal conditions, inaccurate readings, and the inability to access real-time data remotely. In many small and medium-scale industries, automation and control systems like SCADA are expensive to install and maintain. Therefore, there is a growing need for a low-cost, reliable, and real-time monitoring solution that can automatically track boiler parameters and provide remote access for operators and engineers. The main problem addressed by this project is the absence of a smart system that can combine sensor-based monitoring, automatic control, and cloud connectivity to ensure safety and efficiency in boiler operations

2.1 OBJECTIVE

The main objective of the IoT-Based Industrial Boiler Monitoring and Control System project is to develop a smart and efficient system that can monitor and control boiler operations in real time. The system aims to continuously measure critical parameters such as temperature, pressure, and water level using IoT-enabled sensors, ensuring safe and reliable operation.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The advent of the Internet of Things (IoT) and its increasing penetration into industrial environments has spurred a wave of research into monitoring and control systems for heavy duty assets such as boilers. More broadly, industrial monitoring using IoT has been recognized as a means to improve real time visibility, automation and efficiency in manufacturing, energy and utility sectors. For example, a review of industry monitoring using IoT highlights how sensor networks, communication protocols and analytics form the backbone of digital industrial systems. IER Journal These foundational insights carry over directly to boiler systems, which require continuous monitoring of parameters such as temperature, pressure, water/steam level and flow, combined with remote actuation and control. Indeed, the monitoring of boiler performance is increasingly being addressed via IoT enabled platforms: real time tracking of operating status, failure detection, and data driven optimization are now viable. For instance, one solution emphasizes that boiler conditions are often unclear in real industrial settings, leading to inefficiencies and increased maintenance costs—and that continuous monitoring of key parameters via IoT can remedy these issues. Eco Phi Energy IoT Focusing on boiler specific applications, several studies have demonstrated prototype or pilot systems delivering IoT based monitoring and control. In one project, an ESP32 based microcontroller combined with sensors (ambient temperature, humidity, water level) and cloud/IoT dashboard (Blink) was used to remotely monitor and control a small boiler setup. The authors show that such a system improves boiler safety and operational convenience. Parallel to these prototype efforts, more advanced research delves into data analytics and predictive maintenance in boiler and related systems. For example, a study on predictive maintenance of boiler feed water pumps used SCADA data from a coal fired power plant to build regression based models to detect deviations from normal operation. MDPI+1 While this research focuses on pumps rather than the boiler drum itself, it exemplifies how IoT/SCADA data can be leveraged for early fault detection, thus reducing unplanned downtime and maintenance costs. This suggests a trend toward more intelligent boiler monitoring systems, beyond simple parameter tracking. Another important dimension, often less visible in prototype reports but critical for industrial deployment, is the integration of IoT monitoring systems with industrial grade infrastructures and cyber security concerns. For instance, a paper on cyber security in industrial IoT systems (ICS/SCADA) underscores that monitoring/control systems deployed in industrial contexts are exposed to cyber threats, and need defensible architectures, secure remote access, network visibility and vulnerability management.

Science Publishing Group In the context of boiler monitoring, where high temperature/high pressure systems are involved, safety and security are paramount thus any IoT system must address both operational monitoring and robust security. Finally, from an application/implementation viewpoint, there are practical considerations regarding which sensors, parameters and data points are critical for effective boiler monitoring. For example, an article on key sensors in boiler/water heater remote monitoring identifies pressure monitoring, flow monitoring, gas leak detection and energy-consumption tracking as central data points. IoT platform In addition, a commercial case study describing a remote monitoring gateway used in boiler monitoring illustrates that real time data collection, alarms/notifications and remote control (valves, pumps) are feasible via 4G/SMS gateways integrated with IoT platforms. Gaps and opportunities emerge from this body of work: most academic prototypes focus on one or two boiler parameters (e.g., temperature or water level) rather than the full parameter suite (temperature, pressure, level, flow, emissions). Integration with existing industrial control systems (PLC/SCADA) is often only lightly treated or remains an implementation challenge. Analytics or predictive maintenance for the entire boiler system is less common compared to support systems (e.g., feed pumps). Security and industrial grade robustness (environment, reliability, redundancy) are discussed conceptually but less often implemented in full prototypes. From a design perspective, these gaps suggest that a comprehensive IoT based industrial boiler monitoring and control system should span multiple sensors/parameters, incorporate control loops (actuators), integrate with plant control infrastructure, and consider analytics and security from the outset. In summary, the literature accords strong support for using IoT in boiler monitoring and control: the technologies (sensors, connectivity, cloud/edge, dashboards) are mature enough for manual/remote monitoring; research shows added value in analytics and automation; and deployment challenges (integration, full parameter coverage, security, robustness) are visible and tractable. For our project's Phase 1, this body of work helps define requirements (what sensors, connectivity, dashboards), design architecture (sensor node → gateway → cloud → UI), and identify future enhancements (analytics, plant integration, security). As we move through design, the insights from the literature will guide component selection, system structure and risk mitigation.

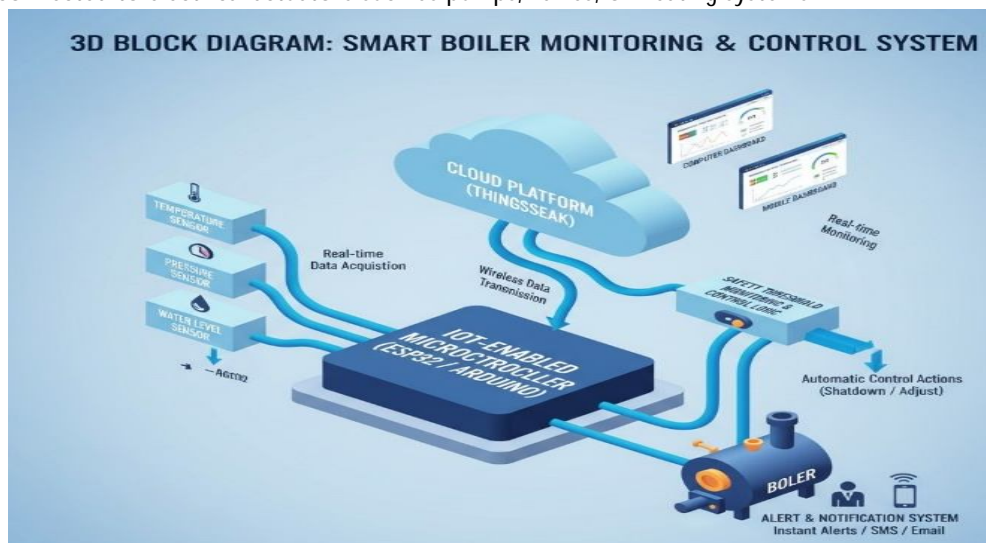
IV. WORKING METHODOLOGY

EXISTING SYSTEM

In traditional boiler systems, monitoring and control are performed using analog instruments such as pressure gauges, thermometers, and water level indicators. Operators physically inspect these instruments at regular intervals. Control actions such as opening or closing valves and switching off the boiler are performed manually. Some modern systems use PLC-based automation, but they are often expensive and limited to local control rooms. These systems lack cloud connectivity, remote access, and real-time alerts on mobile devices. Data logging is minimal and often stored locally without long-term analytics.

VI. WORKING PRINCIPLE

The system operates on the principle of continuous sensing, decision-making, and control. Sensors continuously measure boiler temperature, pressure, and water level. These signals are processed by the microcontroller, which compares the values with predefined safe limits. If all parameters remain within safe limits, the boiler operates normally. If any parameter exceeds the threshold, the controller activates protective actions such as cutting off power to the boiler and triggering alerts. Simultaneously, data is uploaded to the cloud for monitoring and analysis. The IoT-based industrial boiler monitoring and control system operates by continuously sensing important boiler parameters and transmitting the data to a central monitoring system through the Internet. In this system, sensors such as temperature sensors, pressure sensors, and water level sensors are installed on the boiler to measure critical operating conditions. These sensors convert the physical parameters into electrical signals and send them to a microcontroller such as Arduino or ESP32. The microcontroller processes the received data and compares it with predefined safety threshold values programmed into the system. If the measured parameters remain within the safe operating range, the system continues normal operation while transmitting real-time data to a cloud-based IoT platform through a Wi-Fi or GSM communication module. This allows operators to monitor the boiler status remotely using a web dashboard or mobile application. If any parameter exceeds the safe limit, the system automatically performs control actions to prevent hazardous situations. For example, if the water level drops below the minimum level, the microcontroller activates the feed water pump through a relay module to refill the boiler. Similarly, if the temperature or pressure exceeds the allowable limit, the system can trigger alarms, shut down the burner, or activate safety mechanisms. At the same time, alert notifications such as SMS, email, or mobile alerts are sent to the operators to inform them about the abnormal condition. By integrating sensing, processing, communication, and control functions, the IoT-based industrial boiler monitoring system ensures continuous supervision, improves operational safety, reduces manual monitoring, and enhances the overall efficiency and reliability of industrial boiler operations. The collected sensor data is then sent to a microcontroller such as the Arduino Uno or ESP8266 Node MCU, which acts as the central processing unit of the system. The microcontroller reads the incoming data from each sensor and processes it using a programmed algorithm. The measured values are compared with predefined threshold limits stored in the program. If the parameters remain within the safe operating range, the system continues normal monitoring. However, if any parameter exceeds the set limit, the controller automatically initiates appropriate control actions. For example, if the boiler temperature or pressure rises beyond the safe limit, the system can turn off the heating element or activate a cooling mechanism. Similarly, if the water level in the boiler drops below the required level, the controller automatically switches on the water pump to refill the tank. These control operations are performed through relay modules connected to electrical actuators such as pumps, valves, or heating systems.



To enable remote monitoring and data analysis, the system uses an IoT communication module such as the ESP8266 Wi-Fi Module to transmit the processed data to a cloud platform. The data is uploaded to an IoT service such as the Thing Speak IoT Platform, where it is stored and displayed in graphical form. This allows operators or maintenance engineers to monitor the boiler's operating conditions in real time from anywhere using a computer, smartphone, or tablet connected to the internet. The cloud platform also provides data logging features that help in analyzing system performance and predicting potential faults in advance. In addition to monitoring and control, the system includes an alert mechanism to enhance safety. If any abnormal condition such as excessive pressure, high temperature, low water level, or gas leakage is detected, the system immediately sends alerts or notifications to the operator through the IoT platform. A buzzer or alarm can also be activated locally to warn nearby workers. This early warning capability helps prevent dangerous accidents such as boiler explosions, overheating, or equipment damage.

VII. ADVANTAGES

The proposed IoT-based industrial boiler monitoring and control system offers several advantages over traditional manual monitoring systems. These advantages improve operational efficiency, safety, and maintenance in industrial environments.

A. Real-Time Monitoring

The system enables continuous real-time monitoring of critical boiler parameters such as temperature, pressure, and water level through IoT sensors. The collected data is transmitted to a cloud platform, allowing operators to monitor boiler conditions remotely and take immediate action when abnormal values are detected.

B. Improved Safety

Industrial boilers operate under high pressure and temperature conditions, which can lead to hazardous situations if not properly monitored. The proposed system provides automatic alerts and notifications when parameters exceed predefined thresholds, thereby reducing the risk of boiler accidents and ensuring safer operation.

C. Remote Accessibility

Using IoT technology, authorized personnel can access the boiler status from anywhere through mobile or web applications. This remote accessibility minimizes the need for constant physical presence in the plant and enables quick decision-making.

D. Predictive Maintenance

Continuous data collection allows the system to analyze performance trends and detect early signs of faults or inefficiencies. This helps in scheduling predictive maintenance, reducing unexpected breakdowns and maintenance costs.

E. Energy Efficiency

The monitoring system helps maintain optimal operating conditions for the boiler. By controlling fuel consumption and maintaining proper temperature and pressure levels, the system contributes to improved energy efficiency and reduced operational costs.

F. Data Logging and Analysis

The IoT platform stores historical data for analysis and reporting. Engineers can analyze long-term trends to improve system performance, optimize fuel usage, and enhance the overall efficiency of industrial operations.

G. Reduced Human Error

Manual monitoring is prone to human errors such as incorrect readings or delayed responses. Automation through IoT sensors and control mechanisms minimizes these errors and ensures reliable system performance.

VIII. APPLICATION

The IoT-based industrial boiler monitoring and control system is widely applicable in industries where boilers are used for steam generation and heating processes. Industries such as power plants, textile manufacturing units, chemical processing plants, food processing industries, and pharmaceutical production facilities rely heavily on boilers for continuous operations. In these environments, maintaining safe operating conditions for parameters such as temperature, pressure, and water level is critical to prevent system failure and hazardous accidents. The proposed IoT-based system enables real-time monitoring of these parameters using sensors connected to a microcontroller, which transmits the collected data to a cloud platform through wireless communication. Operators and engineers can remotely access this data through mobile devices or web dashboards, allowing them to supervise boiler performance from any location. The system also provides automatic alerts and notifications when parameters exceed predefined safety limits, enabling quick corrective action. Additionally, automatic control mechanisms such as activating pumps, valves, or shutdown procedures can be implemented to maintain safe operation. This reduces the need for continuous manual supervision, improves operational efficiency, enhances industrial safety, and supports predictive maintenance by analyzing historical data trends. As a result, the system helps industries reduce downtime, optimize energy usage, and extend the lifespan of boiler equipment.

This system can be applied in various industries such as

- Power plants
- Textile industries
- Chemical industries
- Food processing industries
- Pharmaceutical manufacturing

The proposed IoT-based industrial boiler monitoring and control system introduces several new innovations that enhance the safety, efficiency, and reliability of industrial boiler operations. One of the key innovations is the integration of multiple smart sensors with IoT technology to continuously monitor critical parameters such as temperature, pressure, and water level in real time. Unlike conventional boiler systems that rely on manual supervision or local control panels, this system allows remote monitoring through cloud platforms and mobile applications. This enables plant operators and maintenance engineers to access real-time data and system status from any location, improving operational control and reducing the risk of accidents. Another innovative aspect is the implementation of automated safety mechanisms. When the system detects abnormal conditions such as excessive pressure or low water level, it automatically activates safety controls such as pumps, valves, or alarms through relay modules. This rapid automated response helps prevent boiler damage, explosions, or production downtime. Additionally, the system stores operational data on cloud servers, allowing industries to analyze historical trends and perform predictive maintenance to detect potential failures before they occur.

X. CONCLUSION

The Smart Boiler Monitoring and Control System effectively improves boiler safety, automation, and efficiency using IoT technology. Real-time cloud monitoring, automatic control actions, and alert mechanisms significantly reduce the risk of accidents and operational downtime. The system successfully monitored boiler parameters in real time and displayed them on cloud dashboards. Automatic shutdown was triggered accurately during abnormal conditions. Alerts were delivered instantly, ensuring operator awareness.

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