

# Aging Mechanisms and AI-Based Lifetime Prediction of Integrated Circuits

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**Abstract.** Modern electronics use integrated circuits as their fundamental component to enable operations of autonomous vehicles, high-performance servers, and edge AI devices. The chips experience degradation through time because of stress-induced aging mechanisms, including Bias Temperature Instability (BTI), Hot Carrier Injection (HCI), and Electromigration (EM). Accurate prediction of chip lifespan stands as a strategic necessity for long-term deployment because reliability has become the main bottleneck. This paper investigates the physical mechanisms of chip aging while examining how artificial intelligence techniques predict device operational lifespan. A research examines conventional forecasting approaches starting with High Temperature Operating Life (HTOL) assessment and a physics-of-failure analysis. It compares them to recent deep learning models with Recurrent Neural Networks (RNN) and Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) implementation systems. The paper presents the effectiveness of the AI model through engineering cases and the latest research data by showing its ability to track nonlinear age progression under different operational settings. LSTM-based frameworks achieve superior accuracy, speed, and adaptability according to results from the literature after receiving appropriate time-series sensor data training. The research demonstrates that predictive maintenance and reliability management will become more data-based, which leads to better lifecycle decisions for essential electronic systems.

**Keywords:** Recurrent Neural Networks; Long Short-Term Memory; predictive maintenance ; reliability management.

## 1. Introduction

Every electronic system in modern use depends on integrated circuits (ICs) to function because they power applications ranging from autonomous vehicles to data centers, aerospace control modules, and portable medical devices. Organizations face an essential engineering challenge because these complex systems operate in damaging settings <sup>[1, 2]</sup>. The failure of automotive or aerospace ICs produces catastrophic results, and server environment degradation causes extensive downtime, data loss, and elevated maintenance expenses <sup>[3]</sup>.

This research combines two goals: understanding hardware aging mechanisms and examining whether deep learning methodology can enhance remaining functional life estimation for integrated circuits. These models train with sensor data obtained from real-life implementation, enabling them to recognize patterns of wear that traditional assessment methods find challenging to identify <sup>[4]</sup>.

## 2. Literature Review & Research Background

### 2.1 Physical Mechanisms of Chip Aging

MOSFETs experience threshold voltage shifts under gate bias conditions at elevated temperatures, which defines Bias Temperature Instability (BTI).<sup>[5,6]</sup> Negative BTI (NBTI) specifically damages PMOS transistors by causing their switching speed to decrease with time. The trapping of interface charges at silicon dioxide leads to BTI, which degrades transistor electrical properties <sup>[7]</sup>.

High-energy carriers known as electrons or holes experience Hot Carrier Injection when they acquire enough kinetic energy to become “hot” before they enter the gate oxide. The gate oxide and interface states sustain damage, which degrades the performance of short-channel devices operating

under high electric fields. The occurrence of HCI primarily affects NMOS transistors and shows increasing frequency as technology nodes become smaller [8].

Metal interconnects experience electromigration (EM) as a failure mechanism because electron momentum transfers to metal atoms, resulting in progressive atomic displacement. The conductive path develops voids and hillocks through time, which can cause open circuits or shorts. The failure mechanism EM depends on current density and temperature levels to cause damage in power-intensive circuits, which stands as a primary interconnect failure source [9].

Gate dielectrics experience Time-Dependent Dielectric Breakdown (TDDB) when electric field stress leads to their progressive weakening until they finally break.

## 2.2 Traditional Lifetime Prediction Techniques

Manufacturers use accelerated aging experiments to test products at condensed periods using extreme thermal, electrical, and mechanical conditions for faster testing and reduced costs. Combining temperature-humidity-bias testing (THB) with thermal shock testing helps engineers create failure modes that only emerge after several years in the field. The main difficulty with these methods involves obtaining accurate predictions of normal-use performance from accelerated test results through models such as the Arrhenius equation or the Coffin-Manson law. The reliability prediction becomes unreliable when stress conditions in testing do not align with real-world operation [10].

Physics-of-Failure (PoF) modeling is the third primary method that develops mathematical descriptions to link material deterioration to device functional breakdown. The Black's equation enables the calculation of electromigration lifetime by connecting failure time to current density and temperature values. The breakdown time of oxide layers can be predicted through TDDB-based mathematical models. PoF models provide engineers with design-time applicability and strong interpretability to simulate design-level changes. System integrators face challenges when working with these models because they need extensive knowledge of material properties and process parameters, which might be inaccessible [11].

Traditional methods retain value, but the semiconductor industry is shifting to adaptive data-driven solutions since devices have become more diverse and function in diverse environments. The subsequent part analyzes how deep learning models within artificial intelligence systems remedy the limitations found in this section.

## 3. The Rise of Data-Driven Chip Lifetime Prediction

The established traditional methods of testing chip reliability through HTOL testing and physics-of-failure modeling continue in qualification procedures because their physical mechanisms remain well understood. These techniques provide limited benefits when workloads change rapidly, integration systems are diverse, and operating conditions shift frequently. A strong development rationale exists for new testing methods since laboratory experiments have become unnecessarily prolonged.

Deep learning under artificial intelligence technology has revolutionized the field of chip reliability research. AI systems extract failure patterns directly from empirical data that sensors collect by monitoring voltage, temperature, clock frequency, and timing behavior during operation. Scientific investigation of vast data enables researchers to develop computational models for nonlinear aging processes [20].

This family of predictive tools, represented by RNNs and LSTMs, proves successful in lifetime estimation. These elements excel at processing sequential information through various domains, from power electronics to rotating machinery condition monitoring. These models provide predictive functions while accepting multiple input features regardless of failure mechanism characteristics.

The research examines AI-based prediction system operations by analyzing leading chip aging study architectures and their practical application effectiveness. The research evaluates classic methods and AI-based systems by measuring their scalability, accuracy, and deployment features.

### 3.1 Deep Learning Architectures for Predicting Chip Lifespan

Special attention is needed for integrated circuits to remain useful in life (RUL) prediction because degradation happens gradually through complex nonlinear patterns resulting from internal processes and external environmental factors. Modern ICs face challenges with traditional modeling approaches when used for their actual workload situations, although these methods rely on physics-of-failure theory principles. Sequence modeling networks combined with deep learning architecture networks demonstrate effective capability to process degradation patterns between various chip types under different usage scenarios<sup>[13]</sup>.

The models are strengthened by extracting operational history data knowledge without needing specific failure mechanism equations. Embedded sensors in chip systems transmit telemetry data, including temperature measurements and voltage fluctuations, clock frequency drift, leakage current, and timing slack data for continuous monitoring. The presence of series variables in any number of times enables predictive models to identify hidden patterns that indicate product breakage<sup>[30]</sup>.

LSTM networks from deep learning have gained widespread popularity because they successfully handle long-term dependencies in sequential information. Compared to linear regression and shallow neural networks, LSTM is a better model for showing the development of aging processes throughout many thousands of operating cycles. The reliability prediction of IGBT modules, power MOSFETs, and microcontroller-based embedded systems utilizes LSTM-based frameworks, which outperform traditional statistical methods for end-of-life incident detection<sup>[14, 15]</sup>. According to Zheng et al.<sup>[16]</sup>, LSTM models perform better than support vector regression and autoregressive models when predicting device failure through telemetry data analysis.

The operational effectiveness of LSTM relies on three core factors: sensor data quality, resolution, and the range of operating conditions within training data, as well as the methods for failure identification. Research-based degradation labels emerge from three sources: when timing margin deviations surpass threshold values, or leakage current measurements increase, or when failure timestamps are extracted from HTOL testing records. The predictive models exhibit established capabilities, although they require significant data processing procedures and detailed model recalibrations before achieving operational readiness for critical settings.

Nevertheless, the capacity of deep learning architectures to model real-world chip behavior without predefined failure equations marks a significant shift in reliability engineering. Designers can develop predictive systems tailored to specific domains by implementing operational data collection at certain locations, which replaces conventional device modeling procedures.

### 3.2 Strengths and Limitations of AI-Based Lifetime Prediction

Using artificial intelligence-based chips for lifespan forecasting provides essential benefits that surpass traditional reliability assessment methods. The ability of AI models to work with real-time operational data is their primary benefit, as it enables them to find degradation patterns that emerge during different deployment situations and workload scenarios. Received models perform better than physics-based models because they adapt their functionality to specific stresses, including intermittent work cycles, dynamic voltage control, and workload spikes in edge computing and cloud environments<sup>[17]</sup>.

A wide range of investigations has proven that LSTM networks and other deep learning networks produce better predictive results than traditional statistical methods for both temporal prediction and accuracy. The multi-nodal degradation mechanism installed in these systems lets them detect subtle indications of system failure that traditional threshold detection cannot identify. AI systems maintain superior data-related performance through their training and fine-tuning abilities, which create a lasting learning mechanism<sup>[18]</sup>.

In the operation field, AI-based approaches encounter the most significant challenges since their practical and methodological aspects need improvement. These techniques face their primary limitation because they require continuous sensor data throughout the entire operational period of a device, yet acquiring this data proves challenging, especially for rare failure types and new chip designs. Organizing datasets requires synthetic simulations and time-intensive accelerated testing, yet produces domain shift issues and questions about generalization capabilities [19].

The inability to understand model interpretations represents a significant problem. Tarini Jha and her research team recognized that deep learning operating principles behave like black boxes since they reduce the semiconductors' physics foundation, which underlies traditional cause-and-effect models. Security-critical applications face challenges due to this system's unexplained nature because regulatory compliance and the trust of engineers are necessary [20].

Implementing AI-based models adds intensive processing demands, resulting in elevated maintenance needs, especially when training and validating these models. Expert knowledge and complex technical challenges are needed to select proper parameters and avoid overfitting when deploying real-time embedded systems because these systems have limited memory storage and execution delay requirements.

Future reliability work shows AI promise. However, it cannot eliminate traditional methods from the approach. Reliability engineering issues are solved by combining domain expertise with data-based prediction systems, which have emerged as the leading approach. The following section employs this groundwork to perform comparative research.

## 4. Towards a Comparative Chip Lifespan Evaluation

The exposition until this point assessed two distinct life prediction methods: traditional semiconductor physics assessments coupled with stress testing practices and machine learning-based approaches with deep learning frameworks. The two strong components of each approach present unique benefits, but both handle predictions through different foundations and sustain varying platform requirements. Engineering teams with system designers must determine proper trade-offs among other options, depending on their operational requirements, risk management criteria, and resource capabilities.

This part offers a framework that lets users evaluate AI-based and traditional prediction methods through multi-faceted criteria. Overall predictive efficiency is a central aspect, along with infrastructure needs, data requirements, interpretability power, systems scalability, and operational deployability. The analysis aims to establish clear guidelines for selecting appropriate prediction methods instead of determining a final winner.

The analysis identifies the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches to advocate for future combined physical modeling and AI-operated inference reliability systems, representing a current trend in reliability research. Each dimension is discussed in detail throughout the succeeding subsections.

### 4.1 Evaluation Dimensions and Comparative Framework

The absence of a single superior method to predict integrated circuit lifespan exists because different techniques perform best under specific conditions. The evaluation methods present varying strengths and weaknesses according to established standards and operational environments.

Deep learning models maintain their high prediction accuracy levels when they can operate with large training datasets. LSTM networks used in degradation data evaluation produce more precise predictions than statistical models and rule-based techniques, particularly when degradation tracks show nonlinear characteristics [21]. Deep learning models function best with sufficiently high-quality time-series data that accurately displays the operational characteristics of the chip. Traditional physics-of-failure models produce reliable performance under limited data availability if operating conditions match their assumptions [22].

Data collection standards and building infrastructure requirements create significant distinctions in this field of research. Software deployment of AI systems demands extensive data collection, precise telemetry measurements, and GPU processing for training models. Legacy systems prevent AI applications from functioning because sensors remain underutilized in these systems. Traditional testing methods through simulation and stress-based testing functions during design time continue to provide value in early-stage qualification programs [23].

The interpretability spectrum exists between two opposing points representing explainability and flexibility. Traditional models enable engineers to obtain direct physical understanding of current density-electromigration failure relationships, thus making them suitable for safety-critical applications in aviation and automotive industries. AI models, intense learning systems, function as black box systems because their natural design does not include interpretability features. According to [41], hardware reliability workflows do not use the post-hoc techniques SHAP and LIME despite their ability to improve model explainability.

CPU generations, deployment systems, and operational environments can be better adapted through AI techniques and methods. The LSTM model can operate across multiple devices after training because of its proper training process, while transfer learning methods enable model updates. Traditional models require complete recalibration whenever designers introduce new variations to their designs. The main determining elements are deployment capabilities and financial costs. The initial costs of AI system implementation cover training, data engineering, and validation processes, yet produce real-time predictions that minimize maintenance requirements and unplanned equipment failures during device operation.

AI-based methodology applications create the most effective outcomes when applied to cases that need abundant data and operational flexibility, together with long-term maintenance characteristics. Standard methods remain vital for safety-related validation, early-stage reliability design, and situations requiring low data. The two reliability paradigms operate as complementary components that create a combined framework rather than being mutually exclusive.

## 4.2 Hybrid Reliability Frameworks: Bridging AI and Traditional Models

The field now seeks hybrid reliability frameworks that integrate beneficial elements from traditional and AI-based methods because their weaknesses have become apparent. These systems combine the interpretability and theoretical grounding of physics-based models with the adaptability and precision of data-driven techniques, offering a path toward more robust and trustworthy lifespan prediction.

Integrating known degradation equations like Black's law for electromigration and Coffin-Manson relation for fatigue cracking occurs within deep learning models through their architecture or loss function framework in physics-informed machine learning (PIML). The system facilitates restriction maintenance to discover elaborate remaining information within entered data patterns. Incorporating thermomechanical stress functions into neural network architecture enables researchers to predict solder fatigue in BGA packages [24] successfully. Predictions for automotive-grade microcontrollers achieved higher reliability by implementing thermal cycling acceleration in LSTM frameworks developed by Liu et al. [25].

The new architectural method combines residual learning fusion with a physics-based computed TDDB lifetime calculator that generates an initial estimation before machine learning corrects it using field data telemetry. The technique delivers advantages to large-scale heterogeneous computing environments, including GPU-accelerated data centers and high-density SoCs, because it operates effectively under conditions that deviate significantly from design assumptions [26].

Industrial applications now use dual-domain hybrid approaches to implement industrial dual-domain systems. The server lifespan monitoring of Cloud infrastructure maintenance services from Intel and Nvidia depends on design-stage modeling systems that link with real-time server telemetry data to enable automated tracking operations. AI systems detect failure risks by monitoring deviations

or increases beyond pre-established degradation envelopes defined through pre-characterized wear-out models [27].

Hybrid models serve as an appealing choice since they enable the combination of transparency functions with flexibility elements. Safety-critical sectors involving aerospace and defense and medical electronics ask for modeling approaches that understand their product specifications as well as the management of operational flexibility. Hybrid models establish a solution when implemented through physics-based modules, which deliver audit functions while AI elements provide adaptable upgrading capabilities. Future reliability engineering deployments will standardize hybrid systems as primitives because of AI explanation tools and advancements in compatible hardware.

Deploying hybrid models faces substantial obstacles for organizations that want to implement them. Organizations must deploy domain experts from different fields and test their systems through strict validation mechanisms. Keeping the symbolic and statistical model reasoning components integrated continuously is challenging. Hybrid systems generate technological advancement pathways because future processors require improved complexity and higher reliability.

## 5. Policy and Engineering Recommendations

Modern integrated circuits pose practical challenges to engineers because they have become complex, and deployment variables keep changing. While AI-based models and hybrid frameworks have demonstrated technical feasibility, their widespread adoption in reliability-critical applications will require algorithmic advances and coordinated efforts across policy, infrastructure, education, and industry standards.

This section introduces strategic recommendations to help semiconductor industry operations adopt AI-enhanced lifetime prediction models. Recommendations directed to developers, engineers, and regulators, together with research institutions, promote hybrid model standards and data infrastructure development using a focus on interdisciplinary work, worker training, and regulatory management.

The main goal for developing sophisticated intelligent reliability systems with trustworthy technical soundness and trustworthiness is to improve the system for AI-driven reliability forecasting integration.

### 5.1 Promote Hybrid Reliability Frameworks in Industry Standards

As AI-based models gain traction in chip lifespan prediction, their lack of standardization and limited regulatory integration remain key barriers to adoption, especially in aerospace, automotive electronics, and medical devices, where reliability certifications are mandatory. The formation of standardized hybrid reliability frameworks should begin through joint efforts between physics-of-failure models and AI-based inference techniques according to recommendations from JEDEC, IEC, IPC, and other analogous organizations [28] [29].

Reliability qualification procedures need an update to include parallel model validation, enabling AI models to work alongside traditional stress-testing methods instead of operating independently. The combined method delivers auditability and interpretability requirements to regulators while allowing adaptive deployment environments. Standards bodies must create basic AI model documentation requirements that detail training data origins and explainable parameters and confidence assessment standards that follow IEC SC 42 proposals [30]. AI diagnostic systems need these provisions to gain users' trust while establishing semiconductor supply chain interoperability.

The ISO 26262 functional safety framework for automotive electronics includes machine learning system development guidelines in its perception and decision-making modules as an existing precedent [31]. The advancement of AI adoption in safe conditions requires equivalent developments in reliability modeling at the chip level. Modern research on power electronics and system-on-chip designs proves that uniting physics models with artificial intelligence leads to shorter validation times while growing the evaluated region [32]. Implementing AI within reliability standards allows

developers to step up their system development while obtaining structured guidelines for building trustworthy computational models.

## 5.2 Invest in Data Infrastructure for In-Field Reliability Monitoring

The performance of AI-based reliability prediction systems hinges not on algorithmic complexity alone, but on the availability, resolution, and quality of in-field operational data. Modern semiconductor systems lack in-built sensing features and telemetry systems needed for tracking device degradation during operation. To develop scalable intelligent lifespan forecasting requires three united investments in sensor technology for chips alongside monitoring platforms and protected data transfer systems.

Standard high-reliability designs must incorporate sensors that monitor voltage, temperature, leakage current, and timing margins. Embedded sensors transmit telemetry data, which proves effective for predicting component failure at its initial stages according to analysis results [33]. Texas Instruments and Intel now include telemetry modules in their automotive and server-grade SoCs for commercial manufacturing [34].

We endorse the development of de-identified failure and degradation databases that adopt NASA's Prognostics Center of Excellence (PCoE) structure [43] to enable institutions to exchange reliability data across vendors and use cases. The combination of collaborative datasets would boost AI model training because failure events occur infrequently during the early lifecycle stages of safety-critical applications with limited synthetic data.

Reliability monitoring requires transformation into an end-to-end lifecycle system following a feedback model. Field operation data should not remain isolated inside deployment systems since it involves return transmission to chip design, qualification, and verification processes. The Design-Test-Monitor (DTM) architectural approach should be used because it enables design assumptions to evolve by continuously monitoring actual system performance feedback. Lifelong Learning Machines from DARPA and the Integrated Diagnostics program share similar approaches [35].

SEMI and IIC should develop standardized data schemas and anonymization protocols to resolve valid data privacy and proprietary issues. Once the essential bases are established, data-driven reliability engineering methods will move from laboratory activities to product life management.

## 5.3 Support Cross-Disciplinary R&D Programs

The prediction of chip lifespan requires knowledge from multiple scientific disciplines. The achievement of this operation depends on combining semantics from semiconductor physics with thermal and mechanical reliability approaches to machine learning technologies, sensor development practices, and systems engineering principles. Modern research practices remain divided because AI model developers work independently from reliability engineers, and chip manufacturers lack essential data and predictive framework requirements to implement predictive tools. A solution to the current situation requires creating cross-field research organizations that specifically work on uniting physical modeling with AI applications in electronic systems.

National science foundations and research councils should provide institutional funding to develop joint programs that unite electrical engineering departments with computer science labs and industrial reliability groups. The EU-funded RELIANCE project under Horizon 2020 used its funding to create a framework for machine learning alongside embedded electronics reliability testing through aged simulation and online monitoring [45]. DARPA IDEA is a program that enables the joint development of AI design tools that integrate physics rulesets to create predictive design-to-failure models [36].

The National Natural Science Foundation (NSFC) in China supports initial proposals that combine machine learning methods with materials degradation prediction. Still, the country needs better institutional coordination between integrated circuit design, packaging reliability, and AI methodology research [37].

Creating research platforms with standard tools becomes essential for physical modelers and AI developers to work together on joint development projects. The development of modular simulation

interfaces represents one possible collaboration opportunity, which would entail physics simulators that work with TensorFlow backends and shared labeled datasets for failure modeling and API bridges that connect reliability analysis software with AI pipelines, including ANSYS and COMSOL. Successful precedents exist in other fields: the fusion of fluid dynamics and neural nets in aerospace engineering, or the integration of quantum simulations into ML pipelines for materials discovery.

These initiatives will help educational programs produce engineers who link human intuition to automated processing methods for future technology development while accelerating technical advancements.

## 6. Policy and Engineering Recommendations

The research examined two essential questions connecting semiconductor aging processes to artificial intelligence technology by understanding major failure causes and exploring AI's potential in lifespan predictions. The paper organized an assessment of physical aging models with industrial reliability practices and presents-day data-driven prognostic approaches to create a mapping between technical, operational, and regulatory aspects of chip lifespan prediction.

The research indicates that traditional and AI approaches fail to solve all the problems arising from contemporary chip degradation. The testing procedures of High Temperature Operating Life (HTOL) and physics-of-failure (PoF) models maintain their essential role for product qualification at early stages and high-assurance validation purposes. These models remain appropriate for critical applications because they provide clear interpretations, standardized methods, and low data requirements. The technique shows reduced effectiveness when used in field environments where stress complexity combines workload variations and operational shifts.

In contrast, AI-based methods—especially those leveraging LSTM architectures trained on high-resolution telemetry data—have demonstrated strong performance in capturing dynamic aging trends. Model performance during inference and temporal generalization tasks becomes optimal as it takes multiple sensor time-series data from actual deployment settings. A drawback of these models is their requirement for large labeled datasets and their unclear decision-making systems. The emergence of hybrid reliability frameworks presents a promising third path: by fusing physical insight with machine learning flexibility, these systems offer interpretable yet adaptive prediction strategies that can scale across diverse chip architectures and usage scenarios.

This research presents a policy and engineering recommendation that serves as a path for practically implementing an AI-enhanced reliability framework. Standard hybrid model certification protocols must be established. At the same time, investments must focus on telemetry hardware and centralized data systems, and there should be interdisciplinary research collaboration, trained personnel, and controlled regulations. These elements establish a systematic method to link predictive modeling research advancements to the constraints involved in designing chips and their qualification testing, deployment requirements, and maintenance protocols. The semiconductor industry should adopt emerging AI validation frameworks from standards bodies, including ISO, IEC, and FDA, because these organizations are now integrating AI validation mechanisms into their frameworks.

Research benefiting the industry should focus on specific microchip groups, such as automotive-grade MCUs, AI accelerators, and 3D-stacked SoCs, by collecting unified data exhibiting chip degradation patterns across multiple operating conditions. The design automation connection with predictive AI models requires further research because it would help designers develop optimized architectures for long-term reliability, power, and performance capabilities. Intelligent lifespan prediction will shift from an observational tool to a key design principle that will transform future electronic systems development from validation to design through trust.

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