

Survey of Vibration Damping and Isolation Techniques for Piping Support Systems

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Abstract—Controlling vibration on piping support systems is a decisive consideration in enforcing security, dependability, as well as durability of industrial, commercial and residential piping networks. There are various dynamic loads experienced by piping systems due to the flow of fluids, mechanical equipment, thermal expansion, seismic phenomenon and other environmental disturbances. Uncontrolled vibrations may result in unnecessary noise, permanent damages, fatigue failures, leakages and higher maintenance expenses, so vibration reduction is crucial in any design. In this survey, the author includes a detailed review of the vibration damping and isolation methods used in piping support systems, passive, active, and semi-active, and special purpose isolation devices. Passive designs like material-based damping, viscoelastic dampers, tuned mass dampers and friction devices use vibrational energy to convert into heat or dissipation via mechanical means, whereas active designs use sensors, actuators and smart materials to suppress vibrational energy in real time. Semi-active methods, such as magnetorheological and electrorheological dampers, provide adaptive damping and need little power. Vibration isolation devices including elastomeric and spring-based isolators, flexible supports, and base isolation systems are used to reduce the transfer of dynamic loads. Industrial applications in power plants, nuclear plants, oil and gas pipelines, chemical industries, and the HVAC are discussed in the paper as well and provide practical ways of improving structural integrity, operational reliability and safety.

Keywords—Piping System, Vibration Control, Isolation Techniques, Active Control, Damping Techniques, Passive Control.

I. INTRODUCTION

The piping support systems are important in maintaining the safety and security of the working of piping networks in industrial plants, chemical processing facilities, oil and gas facilities, and building services [1]. These systems experience a number of dynamical loads at all times due to fluid flow, rotating machinery, change in pressure, thermal expansion, as well as external perturbations like wind or seismic activity. Otherwise, those vibrations may result in excessive noise, structural damages, fatigue failures, leakages, and shortened service life of piping materials. Moreover, the failures caused by vibration can be dangerous in terms of safety and result in expensive losses and repair. Hence the vibration control has turned out to be a vital design factor in the contemporary piping support framework.

The vibration in piping is highly complex and may vary in terms of frequencies and amplitude. The common sources are the vibration caused by flow, mechanical vibration caused by pumps and compressors and thermal transient during start-up and shutdown operation [2][3]. Vibration levels can often be dramatically amplified when there is a resonance between the stimulation frequencies and the natural frequencies of the pipe system. These exaggerated vibrations increase the speed of fatigue destruction at the supports, joints and welds. In addition, piping, supports, and other equipment attached to the pipes add more complexes to vibration behaviour, which is difficult to predict and control correctly.

Vibration damping and isolation technique is commonly used in piping support design in order to overcome these issues. Damping methods are used to decrease the level of vibrations by converting vibrational energy into the system

and isolation methods are used to reduce the transmission of vibrations between the piping and its support or the surrounding structure [4]. These methods can be realized by passive, active or hybrid methods based on the operating conditions and requirements of performance [5]. The ability to properly select damping methods and isolation is useful in enhancing stability in the system, improving service life and overall reliability in operations.

This survey discusses the vibration damping and isolating in piping support systems, including the basic vibration behaviour analysis, the control methods and the industrial practical cases. It also talks of passive, active and semi-active methods and emphasizes experimental and numerical research on their efficacy. The latest developments in smart materials, smart control, and smart monitoring are also described, which can be of useful information to researchers and practising engineers.

A. Structure of the Paper

The paper is divided into six parts that include: Section II introduces the basics of vibration in piping systems, Section III introduces damping and isolation strategies that include passive, active and semi-active forms of damping, Section IV covers industrial application of vibration mitigation, Section V includes a literature review of the latest development of cases, and, finally, Section VI concludes with insights, challenges, and future perspectives of vibration reduction.

II. FUNDAMENTALS OF VIBRATION IN PIPING SYSTEMS

Pipe system vibration is an important subject in engineering in that it directly influences structural integrity, operation reliability, as well as service life. Piping networks

are subjected to dynamic forces of a large variety due to the flow of fluids, rotating machinery, thermal expansion, and external disturbances [6]. Unless these vibrations are well comprehended and managed, they may cause fatigue failure, leakage, generation of noise, and unexpected shut down. Thus, the basic knowledge of the vibration behavior is a key to designing and maintaining piping systems.

A. Types of Vibrations (Flow-Induced, Mechanical, Seismic, Thermal)

Piping systems face various kinds of vibrations that are subject to the operational conditions as well as the environmental conditions [7]. Vibrations caused by flow are associated with turbulence, shedding of vortices, pressure pulse and two-phase flow in the pipe. High velocity flow systems are susceptible to these vibrations which are a major factor of fatigue damage.

- Mechanical vibrations are as a result of connected equipment (pumps, compressors, turbines, and motors). Transferred via the pipe supports and connections, these vibrations might cause resonance if the stimulation frequency is equal to the natural frequency of the pipe system.
- Ground motion during earthquakes causes seismic vibrations that can cause a serious hazard to the piping systems of power plants, refineries, and chemical plants [8]. These vibrations may cause extensive movements and strains that may cause the failure of the joints or the breakage of the pipes.
- The thermal vibrations are due to the temperature change, thermal expansion and stratification of flow. Sudden changes in temperature may cause cyclic stress effects to occur particularly on systems that do not move freely resulting in fatigue problems in the long term.

B. Dynamic Characteristics of Piping Networks

A piping network's characteristic damping, mass, and stiffness define its dynamic behaviour [9]. Each of these characteristics determines the system's inherent frequencies, mode shapes, and reaction to dynamic loads. Whether the pipe is straight or curved, the type of material used, the spacing between the support and the spacing between the boundary has a great influence as far as the vibration characteristics are concerned.

Resonance, characterised by extremely large vibration amplitudes, happens when the intrinsic frequencies of the pipe system are at harmony with the excitation frequencies generated by the flow or the machinery [10]. Damping mechanisms are also important in the limitation of vibration response and these are material damping, fluid damping, and support damping. Proper dynamic analysis is then required in order to forecast vibration behavior and safe operation.

C. Failure Mechanisms Due to Vibration

Prolonged exposure to vibration can lead to several failure mechanisms in piping systems. Fatigue cracking is the most common failure mode, particularly at welded joints, bends, branch connections, and support locations. Repeated stress cycles initiate micro-cracks that gradually propagate, eventually causing leakage or rupture.

Vibration can also result in loosening of supports and fasteners, leading to misalignment and increased stress concentrations. In severe cases, excessive vibration causes

fretting wear, erosion at contact points, and damage to instrumentation and valves. These failures not only compromise system safety but also increase maintenance costs and downtime.

D. Design Codes and Standards Related to Vibration Control

To address the vibration related problems, various design codes and standards offer the information on the analysis, design and reasonable vibration levels [11]. To minimize the risks of vibration, the ASME B31 piping codes consider the stress limits and flexibility requirements. The API standards including API RP 686 provide a recommendation on the interaction of machinery and piping vibration.

Also, the ISO standards give the criteria of vibration severity and measurement standards of mechanical systems [12]. Adherence to these codes would guarantee safe design conducts, would result in increased reliability and would reduce the chances of breakdown of piping networks due to vibrations.

III. VIBRATION DAMPING AND ISOLATION TECHNIQUES FOR PIPING SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Vibration damping and isolation methods are important to the service life and structural integrity of piping support systems. These methods aim at minimizing the levels of vibration, vibrational energy, or preventing the transmission of dynamic loads to vulnerable parts [13]. Passive, active and semi-active strategies typically define the vibration control strategies depending on the complexity of the system, operating conditions and performance needs as well as dedicated vibration isolation schemes. All of these groups have unique benefits and constraints regarding their performance, price, and flexibility.

A. Passive Vibration Control Methods

Passive vibration control techniques are based on basic mechanical properties and dissipation of energy without external power or real time control. This type of piping systems is commonly used in piping systems because it is simple, reliable and requires minimum maintenance.

1) Material-Based Damping Techniques

Material-based damping methods entail the utilization of the materials that have high internal damping properties in order to absorb vibrational energy [14]. Damping is improved in piping supports by the choice of material, as rubber composite, polymer coating or laminated structures. The materials absorb the vibrational energy as heat via internal friction, and thus, the amplitude of vibrations is lowered. Such methods are usually used in pipe clamps, shoes, and support pads.

2) Viscoelastic Dampers

Viscoelastic dampers make use of substances that are either elastic or viscous given dynamic loading. Under vibration, such materials creep and shed off their energy as a result of shear deformation [15]. Viscoelastic dampers are frequently incorporated into the supports or restraints in piping systems to restrain low- to mid-frequency vibrations. The effectiveness is determined by temperature, loading frequency and material properties.

3) Tuned Mass Dampers (TMDs)

Tuned Mass Dampers are secondary masses that are connected to the piping system by means of springs and

damping agents. The TMD is adjusted to resonate at a certain frequency of the piping system so that they can vibrate out of phase to eliminate resonance. TMDs have been found to be very helpful in restraining dominant vibration modes due to flow induced or mechanical excitation.

4) Friction and Energy-Dissipating Devices

The damping devices operated on friction convert vibrational energy by controlled sliding or rubbing on the contact surfaces [16]. They are often applied in pipe supports and snubbers, where relative motion between parts creates frictional resistance. Energy-dissipating equipment can be used to reduce unwanted excessive vibration and finds application in high-load or seismic prone environments.

B. Active Vibration Control Methods

Active vibration control techniques involve the use of external sources of power, sensors, and actuators to actively neutralize vibration forces. The systems can adjust to the varying operating conditions and can offer greater control precision than passive approaches.

1) Sensor-Actuator Based Systems

The sensor -actuator systems constantly check vibration responses via sensors, typically accelerators or strain gauges. A controller works with the measured signals and commands actuators to generate counteracting forces [17]. Actuators can be incorporated into the supports or clamps of piping systems to actively suppress the vibrations in real-time.

2) Feedback and Feedforward Control Strategies

Feedback control methods modify responses at actuators according to measured vibration signals, allowing real time response to correct the system behavior [18]. However, feedforward control predicts disturbances in vibration by applying known inputs that cause them (like operating frequencies of the pumps). Feedback and feedforward control when combined provides a better vibration suppression capability of complex piping networks.

3) Smart Materials for Active Control

In active vibration control Smart materials like piezoelectric ceramics and shape memory alloys are finding increased application [19]. The materials are able to produce mechanical strain under the influence of electrical signals, and it is therefore possible to control the response to vibration accurately. They are small in size and quick in response hence they can be used in localized vibration control in piping supports.

C. Semi-Active Vibration Control Techniques

A semi-active vibration control system combines the passive system's stability with the active control's adaptability,

minimal input (from external power sources), and variable dampening characteristics.

1) Magnetorheological and Electrorheological Dampers

Magnetorheological (MR), electrorheological (ER) dampers make use of fluids whose rheological characteristics vary in reaction to magnetic or electric fields. The damping force may be adjusted in real time by regulating the applied field. Such dampers are good when dealing with changing vibration levels in the piping systems that would undergo changing loads.

2) Adaptive Control Mechanisms

Adaptive control mechanisms automatically adjust damping parameters based on system response and operating conditions. These mechanisms improve vibration control performance under uncertain or time-varying excitations, making them suitable for complex industrial piping systems.

D. Vibration Isolation Techniques

Vibration isolation methods are to ensure that vibrational energy generated in the source does not find its way to the piping system or the surrounding facilities [20]. It is important that isolation is especially in systems that are linked with rotating equipment or are hit by external disturbances.

1) Elastomeric and Spring-Based Isolators

Elastomeric isolators involve the use of rubber materials or polymer materials to absorb and isolate vibrations, whereas spring-based isolators offer flexibility and limit the transfer of forces. These isolators are usually provided between the piping supports and structural foundations to restrain the vibrations propagation.

2) Base Isolation Systems for Piping

Base isolation systems are used to isolate piping networks by isolating them in a base motion or structural vibration environment by including flexible interfaces. These are popular systems used in seismic areas to save important piping infrastructure by minimizing the dynamic loading during earthquakes.

3) Flexible Supports and Expansion Joints

Thermal expansion and dynamic loading of pipes are controlled by flexible supports and expansion joints [21][22]. These components allow to reduce the level of damage caused by vibrations and increase the durability of the system through the accommodation of displacement and the elimination of stress concentrations. The table I provides the comparison between Damping and Isolation techniques for piping support systems.

TABLE I. COMPARATIVE TABLE: DAMPING AND ISOLATION TECHNIQUES FOR PIPING SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Technique	Control Type	Adaptability	Power Requirement	Cost	Maintenance	Typical Applications
Material-based damping	Passive	Low	None	Low	Very low	Pipe supports, clamps
Viscoelastic dampers	Passive	Low-Medium	None	Low-Medium	Low	Low-mid frequency vibration
Tuned Mass Dampers	Passive	Low	None	Medium	Low	Resonance control
Friction devices	Passive	Low	None	Low	Medium	Seismic and high-load systems
Active control systems	Active	Very high	Continuous	High	High	Precision vibration control
MR/ER dampers	Semi-active	High	Low	Medium	Medium	Variable operating conditions
Elastomeric isolators	Isolation	Low	None	Low	Low	Machinery-induced vibration
Base isolation systems	Isolation	Medium	None	Medium-High	Medium	Seismic protection
Flexible supports & joints	Isolation	Medium	None	Medium	Medium	Thermal and dynamic movement

IV. APPLICATIONS IN INDUSTRIAL PIPING SYSTEMS

The industrial piping systems are designed to work in a variety of conditions, which include mechanical, thermal, and environmental, so vibration control and structural integrity are important design elements. High vibration may all cause fatigue failure, joint leakage, raise the noise level and increase the maintenance cost [23]. In order to deal with the challenges, industries use appropriate piping arrangements, supports, damping, and vibration isolation methods. The practical use of such systems in major industries and their operation challenges and mitigation methods are discussed in this section.

A. Power Plants and Nuclear Facilities

Piping systems in power plants and nuclear plants are tasked with the responsibility of transporting high-pressure steam, water and coolant fluids under high temperatures. Such systems are continually exposed to thermal expansion, pressure changes and vibrations caused by flow which may result in material fatigue and structural degradation unless well managed [24]. Strong mechanical support systems are then needed in order to keep the piping in a straight line and to carry the weight.

In high-temperature piping networks, rigid pipe supports and clamps are usually employed to ensure the structural stability and reduce the extraneous motion of piping systems [25]. These aids in ensuring correct positioning of the pipes and minimizing the stress levels at the joints and connections. One of the most common rigid pipe supports that are used in power generation and nuclear piping systems to provide structural safety is shown in Figure 1.



Fig. 1. Structural support of High-Temperature Industrial Piping Systems with Rigid Pipe Support

Controlling vibration is particularly an issue in nuclear plants, where safety requirements are such that high levels of reliability are required. Other applications of spring hangers, snubbers and dampers are used to absorb the dynamic loads that occur during the operation of pumps, turbulence, and seismic events [26]. Spring hangers enable the vertical movement to be controlled by thermal growth and minimizing the transfer of vibration to the adjacent structures. Figure 2 demonstrates that spring-based vibration isolators are very crucial in ensuring the overall reliability of the system in the long term, and avoiding crack propagation in key system components, including heat exchangers, reactors, and turbines.



Fig. 2. Spring Hanger Used for Vibration Isolation and Thermal Expansion Accommodation In Industrial Piping Systems.

B. Oil and Gas Pipelines

Additionally, oil and gas pipelines are engineered to transport refined products, natural gas, and crude oil across extensive distances, often through challenging terrains and harsh climatic conditions. Turbulence in the fluid flow, pressure surges, compressor stations, as well as external forces that include wind and ground motion result in vibration of these pipelines.

Vibration damping and isolation are necessary to avoid fatigue damage, cracking, and leakage of the welds. Elastomeric pad, vibration pad, and expansion loop supports are usually used in order to accommodate dynamic loading and thermal expansion [27]. Vibration control is also of great significance in offshore and subsea pipelines to minimize vortex-induced vibration and to stabilize the structure in the continuous flow conditions.

C. Chemical and Process Industries

The chemical and process industries have extensive use of complex piping networks to convey reactive, corrosive and hazardous fluids [28]. These systems are usable in variable pressures and temperatures, which means that they are vulnerable to the vibration and mechanical pressure caused by flow.

The issue of vibration control in the chemical plant is essential to avoid the leaks of dangerous chemicals, which may cause environmental losses and risks to others [29]. It uses flexible joints, dampers, and supports that are spaced properly to reduce vibration transmission, and also to allow misalignment of the equipment. Also, in addition to vibration mitigation remedies, material choice and corrosion mitigation surfaces are integrated with the material choice and corrosion-resistant coating to increase the overall reliability and safety of process piping systems.

D. HVAC and Building Services Piping

HVAC and building services piping systems: This is a vastly used piping system in residential, commercial and industrial buildings to circulate chilled water, hot water and refrigerants. Vibration and noise are the major issues though the operating pressures and temperatures are comparatively lesser than those of heavy industries.

Pumps, compressors, and fans cause vibrations that may spread through the piping systems and the building systems causing discomfort to the occupants and long-term damage [30]. In order to solve these problems vibration isolation mounts, flexible connectors, and acoustic dampers are usually employed. The correct routing of pipes and support location can minimize noise transmission, enhance efficiency of the system and comfort of occupants besides extending the lives of building service piping systems.

V. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to recent researches, there is a significant progress towards vibration damping and isolation of piping systems. These methods, their uses, and their main findings are summarized in Table II.

Yang et al. (2025) Results showed that the friction damper significantly reduced acceleration amplitude and arrester stress levels compared to other dampers. As a result, lightning arresters installed in areas with very strong, soft soil function better during earthquake events. The results of the study demonstrate that the friction damper can ensure the safe operation of arrester machinery in the event of an earthquake. Optimising seismic safety in substations can be approached holistically through an integrated strategy that incorporates experimental testing, numerical simulations, and machine learning. Critical electrical infrastructures in earthquake-prone areas can benefit from the study by making them more resilient [31].

He et al. (2025) According to the test results, it was proved that the pipeline vibration was reduced by 12.8 dB when the control was switched that confirmed the effectiveness of the EACL to vibration reduction of the pipeline. Other effects as well were also discussed which included the effect of the thickness of the viscoelastic layer, the position and area covered by the active constraint layer and control voltage on the effect of damping vibration. A very interesting fact was found concerning pipeline vibration stress. The stress of vibration decreases considerably in the centre of the pipeline; it also rises near the actuator. This phenomenon must be considered in the engineering of pipeline systems for this reason. These results are profound and can offer effective design principles of the vibration control which is active in the pipeline systems [32].

Lu et al. (2024) the investigation of a novel sliding-rolling friction composite seismic isolation bearing the primary focus. Configuring the structure's dynamic equilibrium equation is the first step. Following this, the article provides a model for seismic isolation bearing calculations using sliding-rolling friction composites, drawing on both the fundamental principles of structural dynamic response analysis and numerical solution techniques. By utilising the finite element analysis program ABAQUS (2021), the mechanical properties of the seismic isolation bearing are thoroughly assessed. An optimal set of seismic isolation bearing characteristics is determined by this investigation [33].

Zhu and Chai (2024) analyses the many designs of MNS isolators, such as the linear spring, bending beam, level spring-link, and cam-roller systems, and elucidates the conceptual underpinning of quasi-zero stiffness (QZS). Their analysis takes it a step further by optimising and applying these systems to different areas of engineering, where they play a crucial role in enhancing the isolation of low-frequency vibrations. Through a combination of experimental verifications and theoretical knowledge, this paper highlights the potential revolution of MNS devices in the re-conceptualization of vibration isolation capacity especially in widening the band of frequency of isolation yet maintaining the load-bearing performances [34].

Ding and Ji (2023) The purpose of this paper is to provide a synopsis of recent studies concerning the regulation of vibration in pipes used to transport fluids. In this short article, touch on the topic of fluid-conveying pipe vibration analysis and try to highlight some of the key issues with this method. After that, there is a four-pronged review of recent studies that aim to lessen vibration in fluid-carrying pipes: passive control, active control, semi-active control, and structural optimisation design. Also included are the most important takeaways from the existing literature on the topic of vibration control of fluid-transporting pipes, as well as suggestions for future studies that could fill this knowledge gap. This article helps readers better understand vibration management of fluid-conveying pipes and perhaps draw additional researchers to this area of study [35].

Xu et al. (2022) The results show that when the lift load increases, the natural frequency and stiffness of the system decrease, while the attenuation coefficient and damping increase. What's more, the traction system's damping is related to the initial running direction. When subjected to the same stress, downward damping has a greater value than upward damping. An approach to quantifying damping during lift operation is provided by the study, which also establishes the association between vibration, load, and the lift's upward direction. Findings from this research provide a foundation for future lift vibration investigation [36].

TABLE II. COMPARATIVE SUMMARY OF STUDIES ON VIBRATION DAMPING AND ISOLATION

Authors & Year	Application Domain	Vibration Control Approach	Type of Control	Main Outcomes	Key Contribution to the Field
Yang et al., 2025	Substation lightning arresters	Friction damper	Passive damping	Significant reduction in acceleration and stress under seismic loading	Demonstrates effectiveness of friction dampers for seismic protection in soft soil regions
He et al., 2025	Pipeline systems	Active constrained layer with viscoelastic material	Active damping	Pipeline vibration reduced by 12.8 dB; stress variation along pipe length observed	Provides design insights for active vibration control in pipelines
Lu et al., 2024	Seismic isolation bearings	Sliding-rolling friction composite bearing	Passive isolation	Improved seismic response and optimized bearing parameters	Advances design of composite isolation bearings for structural systems

Zhu and Chai, 2024	Low-frequency isolation systems	Quasi-zero stiffness (QZS) isolators	Passive isolation	Expanded isolation frequency range with stable load-bearing capacity	Enhances low-frequency vibration isolation performance
Ding and Ji, 2023	Fluid-conveying pipes	Passive, active, and semi-active vibration control	Hybrid overview	Identified key trends, challenges, and research gaps	Establishes a comprehensive reference for vibration control research
Xu et al., 2022	Elevator traction systems	Load-dependent damping analysis	Passive damping	Damping increases with load and varies with motion direction	Offers quantitative understanding of damping behaviour in elevators

VI. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

Vibration damping and isolation in piping support systems study shows that proper vibration control is critical to the structural integrity, operational reliability, and safety of piping systems and various structural and building contexts. Developments in passive, active, and semi-active methods have demonstrated great capacity in the reduction of vibrations that are generated by fluid flow, mechanical equipment, thermal expansion, and seismic wave. Passive approaches offer easy and cost-effective solutions whereas the active and semi-active systems bring flexibility and improved functionality in changing operation conditions. Vibration isolation plans also play a bigger role in eliminating the dynamic forces relayed across the delicate parts, decreasing fatigue, leakage as well as maintenance needs. In spite of these developments, there are still issues in streamlining system design of intricate piping networks, especially in situations where loads vary, where there are high temperature conditions or even in harsh environment. Further development of the research may be done on the incorporation of smart materials, real time monitoring, and adaptive control algorithms to develop intelligent vibration mitigation systems that have the ability to self-tune and evoke predictive action. Furthermore, the integration of experimental research with high-fidelity numerical modelling and digital twin technology may give a better understanding of dynamic behavior, better predictive maintenance and help in the creation of more robust and economical piping infrastructure.

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