

Computational Modeling of Graphene Based Building

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ABSTRACT

The rapid evolution of material science and computational technologies has positioned graphene as a transformative element in the future of sustainable building design. This study explores the integration of graphene-based materials—such as graphene-enhanced concrete, coatings, and insulation—into modern construction through advanced computational modeling. With its exceptional mechanical, thermal, and electrical properties, graphene significantly enhances the strength, durability, and energy efficiency of structural components. The research employs a hybrid digital framework utilizing Building Information Modeling (BIM), Finite Element Analysis (FEA), and life-cycle assessment (LCA) to simulate and optimize the structural behavior and environmental performance of graphene-integrated systems. BIM allows for virtual prototyping and interdisciplinary collaboration, while FEA enables precise simulation of graphene composites under seismic, wind, and load-bearing conditions. Life-cycle assessments quantify carbon emissions, material longevity, and sustainability impacts. A comprehensive literature review underscores the growing interest in graphene's use in construction, while also highlighting current limitations such as cost, scalability, and regulatory gaps. This study concludes that the convergence of nanotechnology and computational tools can lead to the next generation of intelligent, resilient, and low-carbon infrastructure. The future scope envisions real-time sensor integration, smart materials, and scalable green synthesis, establishing graphene as a cornerstone of high-performance, data-driven architecture.

Keywords: *Graphene-enhanced construction, computational modeling, BIM, FEA, sustainable materials, smart infrastructure.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary era of construction and material science, the demand for building materials that are not only structurally superior but also environmentally sustainable is more pressing than ever. One material that has risen to prominence in this context is graphene, a revolutionary nanomaterial composed of a single layer of carbon atoms arranged in a two-dimensional honeycomb lattice. Since its isolation in 2004 by Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov, graphene has garnered significant attention for its exceptional mechanical, electrical, thermal, and optical properties. With a tensile strength of approximately 130 GPa, a Young's modulus of around 1 TPa, and superior electrical and thermal conductivity, graphene is heralded as one of the most versatile and robust materials ever discovered. Its integration into traditional construction materials has the potential to revolutionize the built environment, offering improved performance, reduced material usage, and enhanced longevity.

The application of graphene-based materials in construction has expanded rapidly over the past decade. The global graphene market, valued at USD 1.1 billion in 2024, is projected to surpass USD 2.5 billion by 2030, with construction expected to be a major driving sector. Graphene's potential to reinforce concrete, steel, and composite materials makes it a valuable asset in improving building durability, reducing environmental degradation, and enabling the development of smart infrastructure. Examples of this include graphene-enhanced concrete, which demonstrates increased compressive and tensile strength, improved workability, and superior resistance to environmental stressors such as corrosion and cracking. Additionally, graphene's optical transparency and conductivity open new avenues in smart windows and self-regulating

building envelopes, contributing to energy efficiency and responsive architecture.

However, the integration of graphene into construction materials introduces a set of complexities that demand a rigorous understanding of its behavior at both micro and macro scales. This is where computational modeling becomes indispensable. Advanced digital tools such as Building Information Modeling (BIM), Finite Element Analysis (FEA), and Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) enable engineers, architects, and material scientists to simulate and optimize the incorporation of graphene into building designs. These tools provide a virtual environment to analyze the structural, thermal, and environmental performance of graphene-enhanced materials, allowing stakeholders to predict outcomes and make data-driven decisions.

BIM serves as a foundational platform in this modeling ecosystem, providing a digital twin of the physical building where materials like graphene can be virtually embedded and their interactions studied in a simulated environment. BIM enables seamless integration of graphene properties such as tensile strength, elasticity, and thermal conductivity into digital building components. It facilitates interdisciplinary collaboration across architecture, structural engineering, and construction management, streamlining the design and analysis of graphene-based systems. Through BIM, designers can assess the feasibility of graphene-reinforced beams, slabs, and facades, evaluating their load-bearing capacity, deformation under stress, and thermal performance under dynamic environmental conditions.

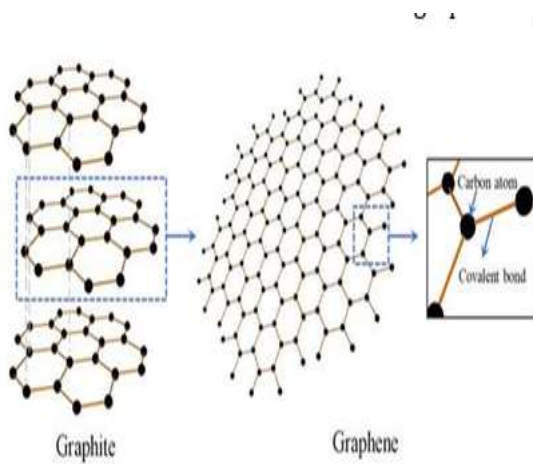


Fig 1. Graphene Single Layer

Finite Element Analysis (FEA) plays a critical role in simulating the structural behavior of graphene-enhanced composites. For instance, FEA can model stress distribution, crack propagation, and failure modes in graphene-reinforced concrete under different loading conditions. Graphene's unique atomic-level characteristics, such as its defect-free lattice and high surface-area-to-volume ratio, allow it to bridge microcracks and improve matrix continuity in concrete. Using tools like ANSYS, simulation models can incorporate elements such as SOLID186 for concrete slabs, SHELL43 for steel reinforcements, and BEAM189 for shear connectors, accurately capturing the nonlinear, anisotropic behaviors of composite systems. These simulations help in optimizing material configurations, identifying failure points, and validating design assumptions without the need for exhaustive physical prototyping.

Moreover, material optimization through computational modeling ensures efficient use of graphene in construction. Simulation software enables parametric analysis where the proportion, dispersion, and layering of graphene within a composite matrix can be adjusted to achieve maximum performance. This is particularly useful in reducing costs, as graphene remains an expensive material. By fine-tuning its integration through simulation, engineers can develop hybrid materials that strike a balance between performance and economic viability. For example, simulations can predict the improvement in flexural strength of concrete when 0.03% graphene oxide by weight is added to the mix, helping optimize design choices in real-time. Beyond structural performance, computational tools also assess environmental and sustainability outcomes. Graphene's potential to reduce material usage, extend building life cycles, and improve energy efficiency aligns with global sustainability goals. Software tools can conduct life-cycle assessments (LCA) to evaluate the carbon footprint of graphene-enhanced materials from production to demolition. They can simulate energy flows in buildings, predict long-term operational savings, and contribute to green certification standards such as LEED or BREEAM. For example, incorporating graphene in insulation can improve thermal conductivity, which can then be modeled in EnergyPlus or similar software to quantify HVAC load reductions over a building's lifespan.

In addition to material modeling and sustainability analysis, graphene's application in smart systems and sensors introduces another layer of complexity that requires computational oversight. Graphene-based sensors embedded in walls or

foundations can continuously monitor structural health, temperature, humidity, and stress levels. These sensors can feed data into integrated BIM systems, creating a responsive infrastructure where predictive maintenance and real-time performance monitoring are possible. Computational tools can simulate sensor behavior, predict failure conditions, and optimize placement for maximum coverage and efficiency.

Despite its tremendous potential, the implementation of graphene-based construction materials is not without challenges. The high cost of production, limited scalability, and lack of regulatory standards remain significant barriers. Most current graphene is produced via methods like chemical vapor deposition or exfoliation, which are not yet economical at the scale required for the construction industry. Computational modeling, however, provides a pathway to address these issues. By enabling virtual testing and optimization, it reduces the reliance on costly physical prototypes and accelerates the development of cost-effective graphene applications.

Furthermore, the lack of standardized codes and guidelines for graphene use in construction introduces uncertainty. Simulation tools can support the development of performance benchmarks and testing protocols that form the foundation for future regulatory frameworks. Through computational validation, stakeholders can build trust in graphene's performance, fostering industry-wide adoption.

To fully leverage graphene's potential, a multidisciplinary approach is essential. Architects must understand how to design for materials with graphene's unique properties; engineers must simulate and analyze these designs for structural and thermal performance; and material scientists must refine compositions based on simulation feedback. This convergence of disciplines is made possible through computational modeling platforms, which act as the bridge between theory, experimentation, and application.

In conclusion, computational modeling is the linchpin in the adoption and integration of graphene-based materials in construction. It allows for accurate, efficient, and scalable exploration of material behavior, structural performance, and environmental impact. By combining BIM, FEA, and LCA tools, stakeholders can make informed decisions that maximize the benefits of graphene while mitigating its current limitations. As the construction industry continues to evolve towards more intelligent, resilient, and sustainable solutions, graphene—supported by robust computational modeling—will be at the forefront of material innovation, redefining what is possible in building design and infrastructure development.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Maria Achieng Akulu et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of sustainability in construction, particularly in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Their study focused on the use of graphene, a two-dimensional material with exceptional mechanical and chemical properties, as an additive in concrete-based composites (CBCs). Utilizing a scoping and comprehensive mixed review approach, the authors analyzed 64 relevant studies out of 576 publications. They concluded that graphene and its derivatives significantly improve the tensile and compressive strength of cement composites, enhance durability by inhibiting crack initiation at the nanoscale, and increase resistance to chloride and sulphate attacks ultimately promoting safety and sustainability in construction materials.

Salvatore Polverino et al. (2021) explored the advent of intelligent or smart concrete through the inclusion of multifunctional fillers like graphene. Their research demonstrated that the use of few-layer crystalline graphene as an additive allows cement composites to respond to external stimuli, marking a significant advancement in construction materials by enhancing their adaptability and performance.

Jesuarockiam Naveen et al. (2021) highlighted graphene's potential in defense applications, particularly in lightweight and high ballistic resistance armor systems. The material's high tensile strength, specific penetration energy, and toughness position it as a promising substitute for traditional aramid fiber composites. Inspired by natural armor systems such as nacre, the review discussed the design of graphene-based artificial nacre structures. It also examined fabrication methods, interfacial interactions, and performance evaluations through theoretical models, experiments, and simulations.

Zhiling Guo et al. (2021) addressed the environmental and health concerns associated with graphene-based materials (GBMs). While their unique structure and reactivity make GBMs valuable for diverse applications, these same features raise toxicity concerns. The study reviewed surface functionalization methods (both intentional and unintentional, such as protein corona formation), nanotoxicity mechanisms, and predictive computational tools. The paper emphasized the need for a "safe-by-design" approach to ensure sustainable and safe applications of GBMs.

Ruchi Anil Patil et al. (2024) provided an overview of graphene's multifunctional nature, highlighting its relevance across various industries including electronics, energy, biomedical engineering, and construction. Due to its strength, flexibility, conductivity, and transparency, graphene is poised to revolutionize structural materials, smart sensors, and sustainable construction through emerging technologies like 3D printing and prefabrication.

A. Mashhadani et al. (2021) explored the modification of concrete using low-layer graphene and graphene oxide derived through liquid-phase shear exfoliation. Their findings indicated significant enhancements in concrete strength. The study also pointed out the economic and environmental advantages of low-layer graphene and outlined challenges and tasks related to its industrial-scale production—such as optimizing concentration, developing high-content suspensions, and conducting large-scale trials.

Somnath Bharech et al. (2015) reviewed the fundamental properties, types, production processes, and applications of graphene as one of the "future materials." Given its exceptional mechanical, thermal, and electrical properties, graphene was identified as a revolutionary material for use in aerospace, automotive, electronics, and construction.

M. Devasena et al. (2015) conducted an experimental investigation to determine the optimal concentration of graphene oxide in concrete for maximum strength performance. They varied graphene oxide content at 0.05%, 0.1%, and 0.2% of cement content and tested samples at 7, 14, and 28 days. Results showed improvements in compressive, tensile, and flexural strength, demonstrating the effectiveness of graphene oxide as a concrete additive.

ZHOU Ding et al. (2012) reviewed the development of graphene-based hybrid materials by integrating inorganic or

organic species. These hybrids exhibited superior performance in various applications, especially in energy storage and conversion, due to graphene's thermal, mechanical, and electrical properties.

Aungkan Sen et al. (2017) described graphene as the smartest material in materials science due to its combination of extraordinary physico-chemical properties. The review evaluated the latest trends in graphene research and various synthesis methods, aiming to identify scalable commercial techniques.

Houxuan Li et al. (2023) presented a detailed summary of experimental findings on the impact of graphene on cement-based materials. They discussed how variables such as mass ratio, curing time, and material type influence mechanical strength and durability. The paper also covered advanced applications like improving interfacial adhesion, thermal and electrical conductivity, absorption of heavy metals, and energy harvesting in buildings. It concluded by identifying existing research gaps and suggesting directions for future studies.

Abergel et.al (2010) This paper provides a theoretical perspective on the properties of graphene, discussing its unique electronic structure, strength, and potential applications in various fields. It highlights the exceptional conductivity and mechanical properties of graphene, which make it a promising material for construction and energy applications. Understanding these properties is essential for designing buildings and infrastructure that can leverage graphene's strengths, enhancing performance and sustainability. The paper emphasizes graphene's future role in the development of advanced materials for construction.

Adamu, M., Trabanpruek (2022) This study investigates the compressive behavior and durability performance of high-volume fly ash concrete incorporating plastic waste and graphene nanoplatelets. Using response-surface methodology, the research shows how graphene can improve the mechanical properties and durability of concrete, which is critical for sustainable building design. The inclusion of graphene enhances strength and extends the material's lifespan, reducing maintenance costs and environmental impact, making it an ideal material for sustainable infrastructure in the construction industry.

Asim, N. (2022) This review provides an overview of the application of graphene-based materials in developing sustainable infrastructure. The authors highlight how graphene can be integrated into various building materials, including concrete, to improve performance and contribute to environmental sustainability. The review discusses the potential of graphene to replace traditional materials, reduce energy consumption, and enhance the durability of infrastructure. It is an important resource for understanding how graphene can support the construction of sustainable, energy-efficient buildings.

Bheel, N et.al (2023) This research examines the effects of graphene oxide on the properties of engineered cementitious composites (ECC) using a multi-objective optimization technique. The study reveals that the incorporation of graphene oxide significantly enhances the mechanical properties of ECC, including tensile strength and resistance to cracking. The paper highlights the potential of graphene oxide to improve the sustainability of concrete materials, making them more durable

and resistant to environmental stress, a key aspect for constructing resilient buildings.

Table 1: Summary of Key Studies on Graphene-Based Building Design and Software Integration

Author(s) & Year	Focus / Study	Key Findings	Research Gaps / Limitations	Recommendations / Future Work
Maria Achieng Akulu et al. (2023)	Use of graphene in concrete-based composites (CBCs)	Graphene enhances tensile/compressive strength, durability, and resistance to chemical attacks	Limited scalability; scope limited to CBCs	Broader material testing and pilot projects in varied construction environments
Salvatore Polverino et al. (2021)	Smart concrete with graphene	Few-layer graphene enables cement composites to respond to external stimuli	Early-stage testing, not full-scale applications	Further real-world applications and performance validations
Jesuarockiam Naveen et al. (2021)	Graphene in defense and armor systems	High ballistic resistance; artificial nacre inspired composites	Limited to defense; no structural applications	Explore crossover into civil construction and structural composites
Zhiling Guo et al. (2021)	Toxicity and safety of graphene-based materials	Highlights potential nanotoxicity and need for surface functionalization	Lack of standardized safety protocols	Implement 'safe-by-design' guidelines for GBMs in construction
Ruchi Anil Patil et al. (2024)	Graphene applications across sectors	Graphene shows promise in 3D printing and prefabrication	Lacks focused study on construction durability metrics	Develop construction-specific graphene performance benchmarks
A. Mashhadani et al. (2021)	Concrete modification with low-layer graphene	Improved strength and economic/environmental benefits	Industrial-scale challenges	Optimize concentration and scale-up trials
Somnath Bharech et al. (2015)	Overview of graphene properties and uses	Identified graphene as a revolutionary future material	Lacks application specificity	Link material properties with use-case simulations
M. Devasena et al. (2015)	Graphene oxide concentration effects in concrete	Strength improved at 0.1% concentration	Only limited strength types studied	Expand to long-term durability and fatigue behavior
ZHOU Ding et al. (2012)	Graphene hybrid materials	Enhanced performance in energy applications	Less focus on civil engineering	Explore hybrids for thermal/conductive construction elements
Aungkan Sen et al. (2017)	Trends and synthesis of graphene	Described scalable synthesis potential	Scalability not achieved	Pursue cost-effective industrial synthesis
Houxuan Li et al. (2023)	Experimental study on graphene cement composites	Discussed influence of mix ratio and curing time	Inconsistent methodologies	Standardize experimental conditions for comparability
Abergel et al. (2010)	Theoretical perspective on graphene	Exceptional mechanical and electrical properties identified	Lacks practical validation	Correlate theory with construction trials
Adamu, M., Trabanpruek (2022)	Fly ash, plastic waste, and graphene in concrete	Improved mechanical performance and durability	Niche material combination	Broaden study to traditional and emerging concrete types
Asim, N. (2022)	Sustainable infrastructure using graphene	Graphene supports durability and energy efficiency	Broad approach; lacks quantified results	Conduct quantitative LCA and energy simulations
Bheel, N. et al. (2023)	Graphene oxide in ECC	Enhanced tensile strength and crack resistance	Focus on ECC only	Test across more cementitious systems

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a computational methodology to evaluate the integration of graphene-based materials into modern building construction. The study utilizes a hybrid digital framework involving Building Information Modeling (BIM), Finite Element Analysis (FEA), and lifecycle cost assessment to simulate and analyze the structural and sustainability performance of graphene-enhanced components. The process begins with material selection, focusing on three graphene applications: graphene-enhanced concrete (GEC), graphene-based insulation, and graphene coatings. Mechanical and

thermal properties—such as tensile strength, Young’s modulus, thermal conductivity, and strain energy—are catalogued and integrated into BIM software (e.g., Revit). BIM modeling is employed to create a digital twin of the building, incorporating these materials into load-bearing elements, facades, and thermal barriers. This model allows real-time collaboration and multi-disciplinary input during design iterations, including thermal bridge analysis and facade optimization.

Subsequently, the model is transferred to ANSYS Workbench for advanced FEA. Structural elements are meshed using SOLID186, SHELL43, BEAM189, and COMBIN39 elements,

simulating nonlinear material behaviors, contact conditions (via CONTA174 and TARGE170), and structural loading (dead, live, wind, and seismic forces). Material behavior is modeled using elastoplastic and Willam-Warnke criteria for concrete, von Mises plasticity for steel, and empirical stress-strain data for graphene composites. Optimization routines are conducted to determine the ideal placement of graphene materials for minimizing strain energy and thermal losses. Energy modeling within BIM and EnergyPlus tools simulate long-term performance and sustainability. A life-cycle assessment (LCA) and cost analysis compares concrete and graphene beams on metrics such as initial cost, maintenance, service life, and carbon emissions. Finally, validation against empirical A3 beam test data ensures accuracy.

This integrative computational approach ensures data-driven decision-making in deploying graphene-based materials, advancing sustainable and resilient construction practices.

IV. CONCLUSION

The integration of graphene into construction materials represents a transformative step toward creating high-performance, sustainable, and intelligent buildings. As highlighted in this study, graphene's exceptional properties—such as its high tensile strength, thermal and electrical conductivity, and nanoscale crack resistance—offer significant advantages when incorporated into concrete, insulation, coatings, and structural composites. These enhancements improve structural integrity, extend material lifespan, and reduce maintenance needs, all of which contribute to more resilient and energy-efficient buildings. Computational modeling plays a central role in realizing the potential of graphene in construction. Through tools such as Building Information Modeling (BIM) and Finite Element Analysis (FEA), the behavior of graphene-enhanced materials can be accurately simulated under various conditions, enabling performance optimization before physical implementation. These simulations assist in selecting optimal material compositions, evaluating thermal performance, and predicting long-term durability. Furthermore, the inclusion of Life-Cycle Assessment (LCA) and energy modeling allows for a comprehensive understanding of the environmental and economic impacts, supporting sustainability goals.

The literature underscores both the promise and the challenges of graphene adoption. While multiple studies confirm graphene's ability to enhance mechanical properties and promote sustainability, key limitations remain, including high production costs, scalability issues, and the absence of ANSYS, EnergyPlus, and BIM environments will allow for more cohesive workflows and better-informed design decisions across disciplines.

On the material science front, future research is likely to focus on improving the scalability and cost-effectiveness of graphene production methods such as green synthesis or 3D-printed graphene composites. As production challenges are addressed, graphene-enhanced components may become viable for mainstream applications, including affordable housing, large-scale commercial buildings, and public infrastructure. In terms of sustainability, future developments will see greater emphasis on the life-cycle assessment (LCA) of graphene materials, encompassing end-of-life strategies,

standardized construction protocols. Nevertheless, ongoing research and simulation-driven design approaches provide a strong foundation for overcoming these barriers. In conclusion, the convergence of graphene-based material science with advanced computational tools establishes a forward-thinking framework for next-generation construction. This integrative methodology not only supports more efficient and durable building systems but also aligns with global objectives for sustainability, safety, and innovation in infrastructure development. As technological and regulatory landscapes evolve, graphene is poised to become a cornerstone of smart, green, and structurally optimized construction.

The lifecycle and cost analysis reveals that while graphene composites are significantly more expensive than concrete initially, they offer superior long-term value through reduced strain energy, lower maintenance needs, and extended service life. Graphene beams demonstrate 60–70% less deformation, enhancing structural integrity and reducing failure risks. Over time, the total cost of ownership may rival or surpass that of concrete, especially in high-value or critical infrastructure. Graphene also offers potential environmental benefits by reducing material usage and carbon emissions. Strategic use in key structural elements, supported by computational modeling, can optimize performance while paving the way for broader adoption as costs decline.

V. FUTURE SCOPE

The future of computational modeling in graphene-based building design holds immense potential, promising to transform how infrastructure is conceived, constructed, and maintained. As computational tools become more sophisticated and accessible, they will increasingly enable the precise integration of graphene into various building systems. Future advancements are expected in multi-scale modeling, where simulations can seamlessly bridge the atomic-level behavior of graphene with macro-level structural responses. This will allow for highly accurate predictions of performance under complex loading conditions such as seismic events, wind loads, and dynamic thermal cycles. Another promising direction is the incorporation of real-time data from embedded graphene-based sensors into Building Information Modeling (BIM) platforms. These smart materials will facilitate continuous structural health monitoring, predictive maintenance, and adaptive building systems, aligning closely with the vision of smart and responsive infrastructure. Enhanced interoperability between simulation software like

recyclability, and embodied carbon analysis. With global pressure mounting to reduce the carbon footprint of the construction industry, graphene's role in achieving net-zero buildings will become increasingly critical. Ultimately, the fusion of advanced nanomaterials like graphene with intelligent computational modeling will shape a new era of resilient, efficient, and sustainable built environments, paving the way for next-generation architectural and engineering innovations.

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