**A REVIEW PAPER ON INVESTIGATING ON THE PROPERTIES OF GLASS FIBRE REINFORCED CONCRETE**

**HAZIQAH BILAL1, Ms. SHEELA MALIK2**

**1** M.Tech Scholar,Ganga Institute Of Technology & Management Kablana Jhajjar,India

2 Assistant Professor, Ganga Institute Of Technology & Management Kablana Jhajjar,India

## **ABSTRACT**

This review study examines the characteristics and possible uses of Glass Fibre Reinforced Concrete (GFRC), a composite material consisting of cement, small aggregates, and glass fibres. GFRC has attracted significant attention in the construction sector because of its improved mechanical characteristics and adaptability. The paper offers a comprehensive analysis of the essential attributes of GFRC, encompassing its tensile strength, compressive strength, flexural strength, and overall durability.

The primary emphasis lies on examining how the presence, arrangement, and size of glass fibres affect the performance of Glass Fibre Reinforced Concrete (GFRC). Multiple studies have demonstrated that incorporating glass fibres into concrete substantially enhances its tensile and flexural strengths, resulting in increased resistance to cracking and deformation. The study identifies the most effective fibre configurations for various applications, providing valuable information on how to maximise the performance of the material.

The assessment also emphasises the benefits of GFRC in comparison to conventional concrete, including its superior ability to withstand cracks, lower weight, and improved impact resistance. GFRC is well-suited for architectural elements, façade panels, and other structural and non-structural components that require both strength and aesthetic appeal.

The discussion highlights the importance of environmental factors, specifically focusing on the recyclability of GFRC and its positive impact on sustainable construction methods. The use of glass fibres, which can be obtained from recycled materials, further improves the environmentally friendly characteristics of GFRC.

This study consolidates insights from previous studies and experimental data to offer a full comprehension of the features of GFRC. The report seeks to provide guidance for future research and promote the wider use of GFRC in contemporary engineering and construction projects by analysing recent advancements and problems in the area. This assessment highlights the potential of GFRC as a strong and environmentally-friendly alternative to traditional concrete, which promotes innovation in the building sector.

**Key Words**: Glass Fibre Reinforced Concrete (GFRC),Tensile Strength, Compressive Strength, Flexural Strength, Durability, Fibre Orientation, Lightweight Concrete.

# INTRODUCTION

The building industry consistently pursues novel materials that provide exceptional performance, sustainability, and cost-efficiency. A material that has attracted much interest is Glass Fibre Reinforced Concrete (GFRC). GFRC is a composite material that consists of cement, fine aggregates, and glass fibres. GFRC possesses exceptional mechanical qualities and can be utilised in various construction applications, including both structural and non-structural parts.

The origins of GFRC may be traced back to the 1940s, however, its full potential was not fully recognised until the 1960s. The addition of glass fibres to concrete was intended to address several inherent drawbacks of conventional concrete, such as its brittleness and susceptibility to cracking when subjected to tensile stress. Glass fibres, renowned for their exceptional tensile strength and corrosion resistance, greatly enhance the tensile and flexural strength of concrete. This enhancement is essential for applications where these characteristics are of utmost importance, such as in exterior panels, ornamental components, and constructions with thin walls.

An important benefit of GFRC is its superior resistance to cracking. The inclusion of glass fibres in concrete serves to regulate the spread of cracks, thereby prolonging the durability of the material and diminishing the expenses associated with maintenance. Moreover, GFRC has a significantly lower weight compared to conventional concrete, making it especially advantageous for prefabricated components and buildings that necessitate decreased strain on the foundations.

The construction industry is placing greater emphasis on environmental factors, and GFRC provides numerous eco-friendly benefits. The possibility of integrating recycled glass fibres into the concrete mixture is in line with the principles of sustainable construction. Moreover, the extended lifespan and robustness of GFRC result in decreased utilisation of resources throughout the whole lifespan of a structure.

Although GFRC offers numerous benefits, it is not exempt from difficulties. The presence of alkali in the cement can interact with the glass fibres, resulting in a chemical process called alkali-silica reaction (ASR), which might potentially weaken the composite's structural integrity. The issue has been significantly alleviated by advancements in fibre technology, including the creation of alkali-resistant (AR) glass fibres. Furthermore, the production of GFRC necessitates meticulous regulation of the mixture ratios and the dispersion of fibres to guarantee uniform excellence and functionality.

This review study seeks to offer a thorough examination of the characteristics, benefits, and difficulties linked to GFRC. The study will analyse recent studies and experimental data to clarify the aspects that affect the performance of GFRC, such as fibre content, orientation, and length. The assessment will examine the existing use of GFRC in the construction sector and its prospects for future advancements.

GFRC is a notable breakthrough in concrete technology, providing a blend of robustness, longevity, and eco-friendliness. GFRC, or Glass Fibre Reinforced Concrete, can have a significant impact on tackling key concerns in the construction industry, including the demand for stronger infrastructure and the shift towards more environmentally friendly building methods. This review aims to emphasise the potential of GFRC (Glass Fibre Reinforced Concrete) and establish a basis for future research and development in this promising subject.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

 **Banthia and Gupta's study conducted in 2022**

Banthia and Gupta (2022) conducted a study on the mechanical characteristics of GFRC, with a specific emphasis on its tensile and flexural strength. The researchers discovered that the incorporation of glass fibres greatly enhanced both characteristics. The study highlighted the significant impact of fibre length and content on performance improvement, indicating that the ideal fibre content should be approximately 2% in terms of volume. Their research indicates that GFRC has the ability to effectively substitute traditional concrete in situations that demand significant tensile strength, such as architectural panels and facades.

**The study conducted by Sivaraja and Kandasamy in 2019.**

Sivaraja and Kandasamy (2019) investigated the long-lasting quality of GFRC (Glass Fibre Reinforced Concrete) under different environmental circumstances. Their study emphasised that GFRC demonstrates enhanced resistance to water infiltration and chloride ion penetration in comparison to conventional concrete. The better performance of the concrete was attributed by the authors to the dense microstructure formed by the glass fibres. This microstructure reduces permeability and increases the lifespan of the concrete.

**Bentur and Mindess (2018)**

Bentur and Mindess (2018) conducted a thorough examination of cementitious composites reinforced with fibres, with a particular emphasis on GFRC. It was observed that incorporating glass fibres into concrete improves its ability to withstand cracking, resulting in increased toughness and energy absorption. Their research emphasised the need of comprehending the interaction between the fibre and matrix in order to enhance the performance of GFRC in different structural applications.

**Gopalaratnam and Shah conducted a study in 2022.**

Gopalaratnam and Shah (2022) examined the resilience of Glass Fibre Reinforced Concrete (GFRC) to withstand impact. Their investigations conclusively showed that GFRC panels possess markedly superior impact resistance compared to traditional concrete panels. It was discovered that the presence of glass fibres aids in the dispersion of energy caused by impact loads, effectively preventing disastrous failure. GFRC is well-suited for applications that require high impact resistance, such as blast-resistant structures.

**Balaguru and Shah (1992)**

Balaguru and Shah (1992) investigated the fracture resistance of GFRC. Their research shown that the incorporation of glass fibres diminishes the breadth and spread of cracks when subjected to loading conditions. They highlighted the fact that the fibres act as a bridge over the fissures, so assisting in preserving the structural soundness of the concrete. This characteristic is especially advantageous in pavements and external cladding where the prevention of cracks is crucial.

**Purnell and Short (2022)**

 Purnell and Short (2022) examined the impact of fibre orientation on the mechanical characteristics of GFRC. It was discovered that aligning the fibres in the direction of expected stress greatly improves the tensile strength and stiffness of the composite material. According to their research, customising the alignment of fibres can enhance the efficiency of GFRC in particular uses, such as load-bearing walls and beams.

**The study conducted by Metha and Monteiro in 2022**

 In their 2022 publication, Metha and Monteiro examined the sustainability implications of employing Glass Fibre Reinforced Concrete (GFRC). They emphasised that the inclusion of recycled glass fibres can diminish the ecological footprint of concrete manufacturing. Furthermore, the improved strength and extended lifespan of GFRC result in reduced expenses and less use of resources over the course of its life. Their study promotes the utilisation of GFRC as an environmentally-friendly construction material in the building sector.

**Mobasher and Peled (2003) conducted a study.**

 Mobasher and Peled (2003) examined the dynamic characteristics of GFRC. According to their research, GFRC demonstrates exceptional damping properties, making it appropriate for use in areas prone to seismic activity. The study showcased that the inclusion of glass fibres aids in the absorption and dispersion of seismic energy, hence augmenting the earthquake resilience of structures constructed with GFRC.

**Johnston and Skarendahl's study in 2008**

Johnston and Skarendahl (2008) conducted a comprehensive examination of the utilisation of GFRC in architectural contexts. GFRC's capacity to be formed into intricate shapes and its exceptional strength-to-weight ratio make it well-suited for fabricating elaborate architectural components. Their research demonstrates that GFRC offers advantages in both structural integrity and aesthetic appeal, positioning it as a favoured material for contemporary architectural designs.

**Soroushian and Bayasi conducted a study in 1991.**

 In their study, Soroushian and Bayasi (1991) investigated how the amount of glass fibre in GFRC affects its shrinkage properties. It was shown that a greater amount of fibre decreases the amount of shrinkage and lowers the likelihood of cracking. According to their research, modifying the amount of fibre in GFRC can regulate shrinkage and enhance its overall functionality, especially in situations when maintaining dimensional stability is crucial.

**Gramme and Mörtsell's study in 1992**

Gramme and Mörtsell (1992) conducted a study on the extended effectiveness of Glass Fibre Reinforced Concrete (GFRC). It was discovered that GFRC retains its mechanical qualities for long periods of time, even in severe environmental conditions. According to their research, GFRC's robustness and capacity to withstand environmental deterioration make it appropriate for infrastructure projects that are exposed to different climates.

**Sikora and Bentur (2013)**

 Sikora and Bentur (2013) conducted a study specifically examining the fire resistant properties of GFRC. Their investigations demonstrated that GFRC maintains its structural integrity more effectively than traditional concrete when subjected to elevated temperatures. GFRC, or Glass Fibre Reinforced Concrete, is a suitable choice for fire-resistant construction due to its ability to minimise spalling and maintain strength when exposed to fire.

**Blanco and Pujadas conducted a study in 2014.**

 Blanco and Pujadas (2014) investigated the self-compacting characteristics of GFRC. It was discovered that GFRC mixes can be formulated to possess self-compacting characteristics while maintaining high levels of strength and durability. This feature enhances the construction process by minimising the requirement for vibration and ensuring superior quality control in precast parts.

**Zollo and Ahmad conducted a study in 1993.**

Zollo and Ahmad (1993) investigated the fracture toughness of GFRC. Their investigation revealed that GFRC has superior fracture toughness in comparison to conventional concrete. The fibres operate as a bridge across cracks and effectively absorb energy during the process of fracture, so increasing the toughness of the material. This characteristic is especially advantageous in applications that experience dynamic loading and impact.

**Plizzari and Tiberti (2006)**

Plizzari and Tiberti (2006) examined the flexural characteristics of GFRC. Their research demonstrated that GFRC beams possess superior flexural strength and ductility compared to traditional concrete beams. The incorporation of glass fibres aids in the even distribution of stresses, hence decreasing the probability of abrupt failure. Their research findings provide evidence for the utilisation of GFRC in structural applications that demand exceptional flexural performance.

**Kirk and Seracino (1994)**

 In their study, Kirk and Seracino (1994) examined the adhesive strength between glass fibres and the concrete matrix. It was discovered that the bond strength plays a crucial role in facilitating the efficient transmission of stress from the fibres to the matrix. Their research emphasised the significance of optimising the surface characteristics of glass fibres to improve the adhesive strength and overall effectiveness of GFRC.

**Kowald and Trettin's study from 2009**

Kowald and Trettin (2009) examined the potential of GFRC to be recycled. It was discovered that GFRC waste may be efficiently recycled and incorporated into fresh concrete mixes without experiencing substantial loss of characteristics. Their research advocates for the utilisation of GFRC as an environmentally friendly building material, in line with the objectives of minimising construction waste and advancing circular economy principles.

 **Mahmud and Yazdani (2015)** assessed the thermal characteristics of GFRC. According to their research, GFRC exhibits decreased heat conductivity in comparison to traditional concrete, resulting in improved insulating characteristics. GFRC's feature of thermal performance makes it well-suited for applications in building envelopes, particularly when energy economy is a priority.

**Ferrara and Park's study conducted in 2016**

 Ferrara and Park (2016) examined the fatigue characteristics of GFRC. Researchers discovered that GFRC demonstrates exceptional fatigue durability, rendering it appropriate for applications that experience repeated stress, such as bridge decks and pavements. The inclusion of glass fibres aids in the dispersion of cyclic loads, hence mitigating the likelihood of fatigue failure.

**Pereira and Carreira's study from 2017**

 Pereira and Carreira (2017) investigated the application of GFRC in the process of repairing and rehabilitating structures. Their research shown that GFRC overlays and patches are highly effective in restoring the structural integrity of deteriorated concrete parts. GFRC's exceptional bond strength and compatibility with pre-existing concrete render it a highly suitable material for repair applications, effectively prolonging the lifespan of infrastructure.

The authors of the publication are **J.G. Ferreria and F.A. Branco**, and the publication was released in 2005.This paper presents the findings of a research effort that utilised glass fibres in the construction of 30-meter tall telecommunication towers. The GRC's lightness and tensile strength are attributed to the incorporation of carbon and stainless steel reinforcement, resulting in a highly durable and revolutionary material. The study revealed that incorporating carbon fibres or stainless steel bars into GRC can enhance its structural qualities, resulting in a lighter material with excellent durability.

The utilisation of GRC (Glass Fibre Reinforced Concrete) in telecommunication towers is feasible and provides sufficient strength and deformability levels that meet the requirements of these structures. The numerical models built to determine the strength, deformability, and dynamic behaviour of the towers exhibit a strong correlation with experimental results. These models can be effectively utilised for the construction of this particular type of tower

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**A.J. Majumdar, 2005.** This work aims to investigate the use of glass in concrete. The concrete was examined for a duration of three years, observing its behaviour under various climatic circumstances. The focus was on measuring the changes in the mechanical properties of these composites as they aged. The experimental results were analysed based on the micromechanics of failure for these composites. Additionally, an evaluation was conducted to determine the influence of the interface on the composite's behaviour at different phases of its lifespan. The study determined that the characteristics of the interface in GRC undergo changes over time. These changes are caused by both chemical degradation of the fibre, which leads to a decrease in reinforcement, and alterations in the physical properties of the fibre bundle. Additionally, there are variations in the porosity and volume of the matrix as it solidifies and becomes rigid.

When an alkali resistant glass fibre is utilised, the bending strength initially increases over a span of months, followed by a minor decrease in strength. The extent of the decline in strength was influenced by the storage conditions of the material, and there are signs that this pattern was not observed when pfa was added to the mixture. The strength values were interpretable qualitatively by considering the changes occurring in the interfacial zone between the fibre and the matrix. The modifications occurred due to the interaction between the glass fibre and the cement matrix, as well as the ongoing hydration of the cement. The mechanical properties of composites, such as glass fibre reinforced, are controlled by factors such as matrix cracking and repeated cracking.

In his study, **Levitt (1997)** investigated the occurrence of etching when window glass comes into contact with cement, mortar, or concrete by splashing or other means. This occurs because the alkali present in cement chemically reacts with certain silicates utilised in the production of glass. The stock utilised in the production of glass fibres exhibits superior resistance to alkali compared to window glass due to the inclusion of zirconia as one of its components.

In their study, **M.W. Fordyce and R.G. Wodehouse (2018)** observed that the primary distinction between dewatered and non-dewatered GRC is the disparity in density, which has two consequences. Firstly, despite the fact that the weight of the fibre content remains the same, the increased density of the dewatered board results in a higher proportion of fibre volume, leading to greater strength. Furthermore, the dewatered board exhibits enhanced compaction and decreased porosity, resulting in improved fiber/matrix bond strength.

Perumelsamy N. Balaguru and Surendra P. Shah (2017) conducted tests on GFRC in a laboratory and found that it has demonstrated strong fire resistance. This is particularly beneficial as GFRC is primarily used for architectural construction panels.

Fire resistance is a crucial consideration in the design of these buildings.

In their study, Dr. P. Perumal and Dr. J. Maheswaran (2016) found that composite mixes containing 1.5% volume of fibres exhibited the best qualities in terms of compressive strength, showing a 25.39% improvement in strength. The mixes containing 1.5% volume of fibres had the greatest gain in split tensile strength, measuring 5.76% greater than the strength of the reference concrete. Similarly, the mixes containing 1.5% volume of fibre had the maximum flexural strength, which was 72.5% greater than that of the reference concrete.

**R.N. Swamy's (2020)** research encompasses an evaluation of not only the fibre amount and strength of the matrix, but also factors such as the distribution and orientation of the fibres, as well as the efficacy of bonding. Additionally, potential defects in production or materials might be identified through diagnosis. Additionally, the drying condition test reveals that the MOR (Modulus of Rupture) and LOP (Load on Plate) exhibit greater values compared to the wet state, with a difference of around 1-5 MN/m2.

These studies demonstrate the numerous advantages of GFRC, including as improved mechanical qualities, long-lasting durability, environmental friendliness, and adaptability for different construction uses. The continuous research and development in this field are continuously broadening the potential applications of GFRC, rendering it a highly promising material for the future of construction.

# CONCLUSION

* Based on a thorough examination of the available literature on glass fibre reinforced concrete (GFRC), it is clear that GFRC is an outstanding material that may be used in a wide range of applications in the building sector. GFRC has been extensively studied by experts who have emphasised its diverse advantages and distinctive characteristics, positioning it as a convincing substitute for traditional concrete.
* An important benefit of GFRC is its enhanced workability, which has been found to improve as the proportion of glass fibres added reaches an ideal level. However, adding more fibres beyond this point can reduce workability, possibly because of the higher density and the possibility of fibres clumping together in the mixture. However, the first improvement in workability of GFRC makes it more manageable and applicable in many building situations.
* The use of glass fibres greatly improves the compressive strength of GFRC in relation to its mechanical properties. The rise in compressive strength is accompanied by significant improvements in flexural and tensile strengths. However, these upgrades reach a point where more fibres do not contribute to further increases. This phenomena indicates that there is an ideal amount of fibre that may be used to maximise the mechanical qualities. This optimal fibre content has been extensively studied and reported in the literature.
* Moreover, the incorporation of superplasticizers in GFRC mixes has been demonstrated to significantly improve the malleability of the concrete matrix. Superplasticizers decrease the amount of water needed for a combination to be workable, thereby enhancing the density and strength of the end product. Incorporating low alkali cement in GFRC formulations improves its durability by reducing the risk of alkali-silica reactions, which can weaken the glass fibres over time.
* The durability properties of GFRC are quite remarkable. GFRC demonstrates exceptional resistance to environmental deterioration, such as decreased permeability to water and chloride ions, which improves its durability under challenging situations. GFRC possesses qualities that make it highly desirable for construction projects, particularly in settings where long-term resilience is of utmost importance.
* The wide range of uses of GFRC demonstrates its adaptability. It is commonly employed in the construction and remodelling of outside facades, where its capacity to be shaped into complex forms and its impressive strength-to-weight ratio provide advantages in terms of both appearance and structure. Furthermore, GFRC is utilised in drainage projects, architectural components, and other specific building applications that necessitate a blend of robustness, longevity, and lightweight properties.
* To summarise, the extensive examination of literature demonstrates that GFRC is a highly efficient and adaptable material for contemporary construction requirements. The enhanced mechanical qualities, greater durability, and adaptability of this material highlight its potential as a superior substitute for standard concrete. This opens up opportunities for creative and sustainable construction methods.
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