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Advancements in Facade Systems: A Comprehensive Review and Analysis

Rahul Shrivastava, D L Sahu
Civil Engineering Department, SAM Global University, Bhopal, India

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Abstract- The facade system serves as the external face of any structure and plays a crucial role in enhancing its aesthetic appeal. Modern designers are increasingly exploring diverse materials for facade construction to achieve unique and visually appealing architectural designs. Developing sustainable facade materials that protect environmental elements such as heat, wind, and rain drives the demand for innovative solutions. The choice of facade material significantly influences the overall appearance and functionality of a building. Given the increasing emphasis on safety and ambience in corporate and hospitality sectors, the demand for facade products in commercial buildings is expected to remain high in the foreseeable future. This paper reviews articles discussing facade systems under various conditions and analyses relevant tools for evaluation.

Keywords- Structural Façade, Wind Analysis, Façade, Energy, Esthetic appearance

1. INTRODUCTION

The exterior facade of any structure serves as its face to the world, playing a pivotal role in enhancing its aesthetic appeal and architectural identity. In recent years, there has been a growing trend among modern designers to explore diverse materials for facade construction, aiming to achieve distinctive and visually striking architectural designs. This facade design evolution is driven by aesthetic considerations and the need to develop sustainable facade materials capable of withstanding environmental elements such as heat, wind, and rain. The choice of facade material is paramount as it significantly influences both the appearance and functionality of a building. With increasing emphasis on safety and ambience, particularly in corporate and hospitality sectors, there is a sustained demand for innovative facade solutions in commercial buildings. This paper examines facade structures' significance in scientific and construction industries. We will explore the evolution of facade materials, focusing on the prominent role of glass, which has undergone significant advancements over time, transitioning from a mere transparent filler to a structural component in its own right. Technological innovations such as float glass and thermal fortification processes have expanded the architectural applications of glass, making it a preferred choice for large transparent windows, floors, and roofs.

Moreover, we will discuss the challenges of glass regarding structural connections and the various solutions available to address them. The emergence of alternative materials, such as aluminium composite panels (ACP) in curtain wall systems, will also be examined, highlighting their lightweight nature and excellent insulation properties. In India, facade systems are typically designed using ASTM/Euro Codes due to the lack of comprehensive concept information in Indian codes. Hence, there is a need for further research to study the structural performance of facade materials, particularly aluminium composite panels, in the context of Indian applications. Furthermore, this paper will review articles discussing facade systems under various conditions and analyse relevant tools used for evaluation. By examining the literature, we aim to provide insights into the current state of facade analysis and identify areas for future research and development. In the subsequent sections, we will delve into the overview of facade systems, the importance of analysis tools in facade structure analysis, a comprehensive literature review, case studies of facade structure analysis, research findings, a comparative analysis of analysis tools, challenges and limitations, future trends in facade structure analysis, and finally, conclude with reflections on the significance of facade systems in contemporary architecture. Through this exploration, we hope to shed light on the multifaceted aspects of facade structures and their critical role in shaping the built environment of the future.

2. OVERVIEW OF FAÇADE SYSTEMS

Façade systems are pivotal in building design as the interface between a structure's interior and the external environment. Comprising structural elements that resist forces like wind and weather and building envelope components that protect against heat, rain, and noise, façade systems play a multifaceted role in defining a building's appearance, performance, and functionality. Traditionally, façades have been constructed using glass, cladding, and stone, each offering unique properties and aesthetic qualities. Among these materials, glass has emerged as a dominant choice, evolving from a mere filler to a structural component, thanks to advancements like float glass production and thermal fortification processes. Despite its brittle nature, glass offers numerous benefits, including solar energy absorption, thermal insulation, and fire protection. However, challenges persist in ensuring robust structural connections, which have been addressed through innovative solutions available in the market. In addition to glass, materials like aluminium composite panels (ACP) have gained popularity, particularly in curtain wall systems, owing to their lightweight nature and excellent insulation properties. However, in regions like India, where codes for façade design lack comprehensive information, further research is essential to understand the structural performance of materials like ACP in local applications. Façade systems contribute to a building's aesthetic appeal and play a vital role in its overall performance and functionality.

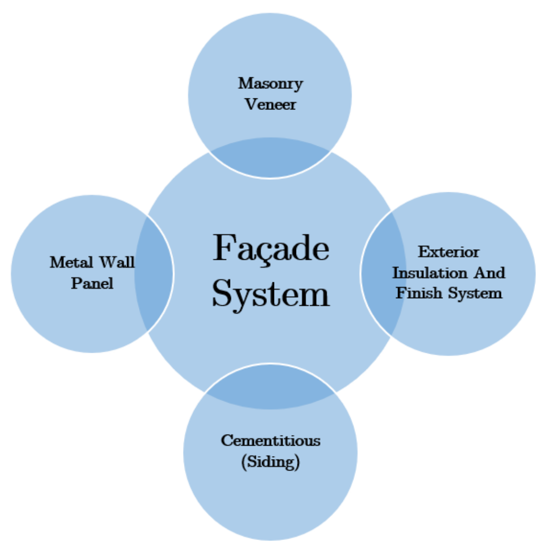

Figure 1. Façade System

They set the tone for the building's design and are crucial in achieving energy efficiency and indoor comfort conditions. The various forms of façades, ranging from masonry veneer to metal wall panels and exterior insulation and finish systems (EIFS), offer diverse solutions to meet the unique requirements of different architectural designs and environmental conditions. As technology advances, there is a growing emphasis on developing energy-saving façade materials that harness solar energy and contribute to electricity generation.

Figure 2. Masonry Veneer

Figure 3. Metal Wall Panel

Responsive façade systems, both passive and active, are also gaining traction, allowing for greater control over factors like movement and visibility. Façade systems represent a critical component of building design, blending aesthetic appeal with performance and functionality. They bridge a building's interior and exterior environments, providing protection, comfort, and visual identity. Figures 1 to 5 illustrating various forms of façades for building constructions, such as masonry veneer, metal wall panels, EIFS (Exterior Insulation and Finish System), and cementitious siding, are provided to offer a visual reference for the diverse solutions available in façade design. As the demand for sustainable and innovative building solutions grows, façade systems will continue to evolve, shaping the architecture of the future.

Figure 4. EIFS (Exterior Insulation and Finish System)

Figure 5. Cementitious siding

3. IMPORTANCE OF ANALYSIS TOOLS IN FAÇADE STRUCTURE ANALYSIS

In the realm of façade structure analysis, advanced analysis tools are indispensable for several reasons. These tools are powerful aids in comprehensively assessing the performance, durability, and safety aspects of façade systems. Here's an exploration of why these analysis tools hold such significance:

1. Comprehensive Evaluation: Analysis tools enable a comprehensive evaluation of façade structures, allowing engineers and designers to assess various parameters such as structural integrity, thermal performance, wind resistance, and energy efficiency. By simulating different scenarios and conditions, these tools provide insights into how façade systems will perform in real-world situations.
2. Performance Prediction: Through analysis tools, it becomes possible to predict the performance of façade systems under different loads and environmental conditions. This predictive capability is invaluable during the design phase, as it allows for adjustments to enhance performance and address potential vulnerabilities.
3. Optimisation of Design: Analysis tools facilitate optimising façade design by enabling iterative testing and refinement. Designers can experiment with different materials, configurations, and structural elements to balance aesthetics, functionality, and performance.
4. Safety Assurance: Safety is paramount in building design, particularly regarding façade structures exposed to various external forces such as wind, seismic activity, and environmental degradation. Analysis tools help ensure the structural integrity of façade systems, minimising the risk of failures or collapses that could compromise the safety of occupants and the public.
5. Cost-Effectiveness: By identifying potential issues and performance deficiencies early in the design phase, analysis tools contribute to cost-effective design solutions. Addressing issues proactively during the design stage can prevent costly retrofitting or remediation efforts later.
6. Innovation and Advancement: These tools encourage the development of sustainable, energy-efficient, and aesthetically pleasing façade solutions that meet the evolving needs of the built environment.
7. Regulatory Compliance: Analysis tools ensure regulatory compliance by enabling designers to evaluate façade systems against relevant building codes, standards, and regulations. This helps ensure that façade structures meet minimum safety requirements and performance criteria mandated by authorities.

Analysis tools are indispensable assets in the analysis and design of façade structures, providing engineers and designers with the capabilities to assess performance, optimise design, ensure safety, and drive innovation in building construction. Their importance will only continue to grow as the demand for high-performance, sustainable building solutions increases in the future.

4. LITERATURE SURVEY

Ke Wang et al. (2022) conducted a numerical study on composite shear walls with stiffened steel plates and infilled concrete (CWSC) using ABAQUS. Their research delved into the mechanical mechanisms of the web plate and concrete, employing parametric analysis with FE models to discern the parameters' effects on seismic behaviour. The FE model aptly represented hysteresis curves, failure phenomena, ultimate strength, initial stiffness, and ductility. They found that the web plate and concrete are key components for resisting lateral forces, with the web plate contributing 55-85% of the wall's lateral force. Increasing wall thickness, steel ratio, axial compression ratio, and channel length-to-width ratio enhanced elastic stiffness and ultimate strength, while rising shear span ratio decreased these capacities. The Steel and shear span ratios positively influenced ductility, contrasting with the negative effects of axial compression and channel length-to-width ratios. Anish Lakhera et al. (2021) explored the seismic response of an unreinforced masonry building with an arched geometry using non-linear and linear analysis methodologies. They employed the equivalent frame technique (EFM) and finite element method to assess seismic effects and stress concentrations. The developed hinges correlated strongly with observed damage patterns, and a good correlation was found between demand and experimental curves. Their approach improved the capturing of arcade system reactions while reducing computational effort, which is beneficial for pushover analysis of brick façades with arched openings. Ecenur Kızılörenli and Dr Feray Maden (2021) aimed to systematically analyse and compare responsive façade systems based on system types, movements, functionalities, control systems, response time, and visibility. They highlighted passive and active systems, noting that passive ones are commonly used for pavilions or show constructions. The study identified various types of movement among responsive facades and emphasised the importance of controlling each element independently. Hardik Mandwe et al. (2021) investigated the behaviour of multi-story buildings with shear walls to assess the impact of building height on earthquake performance. Their analysis using STAAD Pro software demonstrated that shear walls reduced maximum displacement against earthquakes compared to bare frames, indicating increased stiffness and reduced lateral deflection. Manjushree Shrikant Shinde and Dr. Mrudula. S. Kulkarni (2021) studied the behaviour of a high-rise building's façade system under wind load, employing STAAD Pro V8i for structural analysis and design. Their energy analysis revealed a significant reduction in energy consumption compared to RCC buildings without facades, emphasising the energy efficiency benefits of effective façade design. Muammer Yaman (2021) explored the impact of design and application determinants in building façade types on energy efficiency across various climate classes. Their investigation of different façade types highlighted novel construction solutions for achieving energy efficiency. It emphasised the importance of façades in indoor comfort conditions and climate analysis for future architectural designs.

5. CASE STUDIES OF FAÇADE STRUCTURE ANALYSIS

In order to illustrate the practical application and effectiveness of analysis tools in evaluating façade structures, researchers and engineers have conducted several case studies. These case studies offer valuable insights into the performance, behaviour, and optimisation of façade systems under different conditions. Here are some notable examples:

1. Numerical Study on Composite Shear Walls (CWSC): Ke Wang et al. (2022) conducted a case study using ABAQUS to analyse composite shear walls with stiffened steel plates and infilled concrete. Through

parametric analysis with finite element models, they investigated the mechanical mechanisms of various components and their effects on seismic behaviour. This study provided crucial insights into the structural performance of composite shear walls, including lateral force resistance, ultimate strength, and ductility.

2. Seismic Response of Unreinforced Masonry Building: Anish Lakhera et al. (2021) conducted a case study on the seismic response of an unreinforced masonry building with an arched geometry. They employed non-linear and linear analysis methodologies, including the equivalent frame technique and finite element method, to assess seismic effects and stress concentrations. This study demonstrated the effectiveness of analysis tools in predicting seismic behaviour and identifying potential vulnerabilities in masonry façade structures.
3. Analysis of Responsive Façade Systems: Ecenur Kızılörenli and Dr Feray Maden (2021) systematically analysed and compared responsive façade systems based on various parameters such as system types, movements, and control systems. By employing analysis tools to assess the performance and functionality of passive and active façade systems, they highlighted the importance of controlling each element independently for optimal performance. This case study emphasised the role of analysis tools in evaluating innovative façade solutions.
4. Behaviour of High-Rise Building's Façade System Under Wind Load: Manjushree Shrikant Shinde and Dr Mrudula. S. Kulkarni (2021) investigated the behaviour of a high-rise building's façade system under wind load using STAAD Pro V8i for structural analysis and design. Through energy analysis, they demonstrated the significant reduction in energy consumption achieved by effective façade design. This case study underscored the importance of analysis tools in optimising façade systems for energy efficiency and performance.
5. Impact of Design and Application Determinants in Building Façade Types: Muammer Yaman (2021) explored the impact of design and application determinants in building façade types on energy efficiency across various climate classes. By investigating different façade types and their performance under different climatic conditions, this study provided valuable insights into novel construction solutions for achieving energy efficiency. It highlighted the role of analysis tools in guiding sustainable design decisions.

These case studies collectively demonstrate the crucial role of analysis tools in evaluating the performance, safety, and sustainability of façade structures. By leveraging advanced computational techniques and simulation methods, engineers and designers can make informed decisions and optimise façade designs to meet evolving challenges and requirements in the built environment.

6. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ANALYSIS TOOLS

In the realm of façade structure analysis, various analysis tools have been developed to assess the performance, behaviour, and sustainability of façade systems. These tools encompass a range of computational methods, software platforms, and simulation techniques. A comparative analysis of these tools sheds light on their respective strengths, limitations, and applicability in evaluating different aspects of façade structures:

1. Finite Element Analysis (FEA): Finite Element Analysis (FEA) stands as a cornerstone in the analysis of facade structures, frequently employed through software platforms such as ABAQUS and STAAD Pro. This method enables engineers and designers to conduct detailed numerical simulations of complex structural systems, providing invaluable insights into the mechanical behaviour of facade components under diverse loading conditions, including wind, seismic, and thermal stress. FEA facilitates parametric analysis, assessing various design parameters' effects on structural performance, such as stiffness, strength, and ductility. Despite its advantages, FEA demands a high level of expertise in model setup, boundary conditions, and material properties. Additionally, it can pose computational challenges, particularly for large-scale simulations, due to its inherent complexity and computational intensity. Nonetheless, the comprehensive understanding and detailed analysis provided by FEA make it indispensable in evaluating and optimising facade structures.
2. Equivalent Frame Technique (EFM): The Equivalent Frame Technique (EFM) is a valuable approach to analysing facade structures employed across linear and non-linear analysis methodologies. It offers a simplified method to model complex structural systems, providing engineers with a practical means to assess seismic effects, stress concentrations, and response characteristics of facade elements. EFM balances computational efficiency and accuracy, making it particularly suitable for analysing masonry facades and other systems exhibiting non-linear behaviour. However, it's worth noting that while EFM offers advantages in terms of efficiency, it may lack the precision of detailed finite element models, especially when it comes to capturing localised effects and intricate geometries. Despite this limitation, EFM remains a valuable tool for engineers and designers seeking a practical yet effective method for analysing facade structures.
3. Energy Analysis Tools: Energy Analysis Tools, including software like STAAD Pro V8i and specialised energy simulation tools, are crucial in evaluating facade designs for energy efficiency and environmental performance. These tools assess factors such as solar radiation, thermal conductivity, and air infiltration to optimise building envelope design and minimise energy consumption. By providing valuable insights into the impact of facades on indoor comfort conditions, climate analysis, and sustainable design strategies, energy analysis tools aid architects and engineers in making informed decisions. However, they may require extensive input data and calibration to predict real-world energy performance accurately, and their effectiveness relies on the quality of input assumptions and weather data.
4. Comparative Studies: Comparative Studies, exemplified by research conducted by scholars like Ecenur Kızılörenli and Dr. Feray Maden, systematically analyse and compare different facade systems based on their performance criteria. These studies offer valuable insights into the relative advantages and disadvantages of various facade types,

materials, and design strategies. By highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches, they inform design decisions and identify opportunities for innovation and improvement. However, comparative studies may be limited by factors such as the scope of analysis, selection of performance metrics, and availability of empirical data for validation. Despite these limitations, they remain essential tools for advancing our understanding of facade structures and driving improvements in architectural design and construction practices.

Each analysis tool offers unique capabilities and advantages for evaluating façade structures. Engineers and designers can comprehensively understand façade performance and optimise designs for safety, sustainability, and aesthetic appeal by leveraging computational methods, simulation techniques, and empirical studies. Collaborative efforts between researchers, practitioners, and software developers are crucial in advancing analysis tools and enhancing their applicability to real-world façade engineering challenges.

7. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, analysing façade structures using various tools and methodologies underscores their critical role in modern construction. Facades enhance aesthetic appeal and contribute significantly to building functionality, energy efficiency, and environmental sustainability. The literature review demonstrates the diverse approaches employed in analysing façade systems, ranging from numerical simulations to empirical studies. Researchers have investigated different aspects of façade performance, including structural behaviour under seismic and wind loads, energy efficiency, and indoor comfort conditions. The findings highlight the importance of developing innovative façade solutions to meet evolving architectural demands while addressing environmental concerns. Moving forward, advancements in analysis tools and technologies are expected to enhance our understanding of façade systems further and optimise their performance. By integrating findings from research studies and leveraging advanced analysis tools, designers and engineers can create façade designs that meet structural and functional requirements and contribute positively to the built environment, promoting occupant well-being and sustainability in architectural practices.

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