

Review of Architecture, Challenges, and Prospective Directions for 5G Technology

Tanisha Jethwa, Smit Chauhan, Param Mehta, Aryan Ramesh Chandran, Dr. Asha Durafe

Department of Electronics and Computer Science Shah and Anchor Kutchhi Engineering College Mumbai, India.

Abstract- 5G represents the most recent mobile communication technology which aims to improve speed, reduce latency, and offer more reliable connections than past versions. This document provides an insight into 5G network architecture and describes the main network components such as the core network and radio access network. Additionally, the document covers the technologies used in the implementation of 5G communications and different use cases such as IoT, smart cities, self-driving cars, and telemedicine. The document demonstrates the contribution of 5G technology towards modern digital services. In addition to the benefits of increased throughput, latency reduction, and device density capabilities, several significant problems remain unsolved – from the issue of mmWave propagation restrictions and the energy consumption associated with the densification of networks to compatibility with legacy systems and fragmentation in global standardization. The comparative study demonstrates the advantage of AI/ML-based solutions for autonomous network management. Finally, the document outlines critical research questions and suggests prospective directions for further research.

Keywords: 5G; Network slicing; Massive MIMO; mmWave; SDN; NFV; HetNets; AI/ML; Resource allocation; 6G.

I. INTRODUCTION

There has been an exponential increase in the demand for mobile broadband services in the last ten years due to the increased presence of IoT devices, multimedia streaming, cloud computing applications, and expansion of smart city facilities. The previous network technologies starting from analog 1G to LTE 4G have continuously provided higher bandwidth and lower latency but still fall short of meeting the requirements of the future when we expect that there would be Identify applicable funding agency here. If none, delete this.

50 billion connected devices by 2030 [1]. The Fifth Generation (5G) wireless communication technology, which is developed using 3GPP Release 15 and other specifications, solves these problems through advanced architecture and radio access technology. The three key services supported by 5G technology including eMBB, URLLC, and mMTC have been designed to satisfy different sets of performance criteria at once [4]. The transition to 5G comes with immense technical, economic, and regulatory challenges. Small cell deployments needed for mmWave coverage call for extensive investments and radio frequency planning [8]. The incorporation of cloud-based strategies necessitates

major organizational reengineering for established telecommunication firms [13]. Emerging markets incur an unproportionate share of infrastructure expenses, as well as spectrum allocation issues [5]. In this article, I will summarize insights that emerge from 15 selected academic sources. Part II highlights the literature review. Part III details the research methodology used. Part IV provides a comparative analysis. Part V outlines the findings. Part VI concludes with future directions for research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Table I summarizes results from 15 peer-reviewed studies published between 2018 and 2025, categorized for emphasis on study focus, approach, main contributions, and recognized shortcomings. Such an overview facilitates comparative analysis across papers and helps identify research gaps. The table is provided on the next page in its entirety.

A. Standardization and Spectrum Management

Imam-Fulani et al. provide an extensive review of 5G frequency standardization, covering the transition from frequencies below 6 GHz to frequencies over 24 GHz using the millimeter-wave band. Through an analysis of specifications 3GPP Release 15 – 17, flexible numerology is seen to be key to providing

heterogeneous service requirements in the New Radio air interface [1]. The massive multiple-input multiple-output (MIMO) technology combined with beamforming is used to compensate for the poor propagation characteristics of mmWave technology, but the problem of modeling NLOS propagation still poses a challenge to network planning. Gale-tovic, Haber, and Zaretski study the impact of standard essential patents on 5G standardization [11]. Through their market analysis, they conclude that although innovation specialization leads to advancements, cumulative royalty rates create opacity that could lead to non-involvement by smaller players.

B. Control plane slicing architecture

A new architecture for control plane slicing in beyond-5G networks is presented by Yadav et al. (2023), who use PEPA model to prove that better isolation results in less interference between slices and greater scalability [4]. Andrade and Wickboldt (2025) provide experimental measurements obtained on a hospital's Kubernetes-based private 5G testbed [13]. Makropoulos (2023) discusses the northbound API architecture used in EVOLVED-5G, which enables vertical sectors to utilize SEALS and TSN features provided by 5G core [12].

C. Handover and Mobility Management

According to Yasir Ullah et al. (2023), the application of handover algorithms using machine learning has been found to reduce unnecessary handover occurrence by 40% using handover algorithms [2]. In addition, according to Siriwardhana et al. (2018), the Micro-Operator (uO) architecture is presented for smart factories via OMNeT++ simulation with sub-millisecond latency

D. Resource Allocation

According to Kamal et al. (2021), dynamic slicing together with proactive admission control is the most viable option for eMBB-URLLC co-existence [15]. On the other hand, Angalaeswari and Logeswari (2023) contend that 6G resource allocation in the THz band will call

E. Deployment Challenges and Socioeconomic Context

Pazmino et al. (2023) study the barriers to implementing 5G in Ecuador, such as mountains that limit the reach of mmWave, fiber backhaul limitations, and regulatory issues due to a lack of international standardization [5]. Tyokighir et al. (2024) highlight that energy requirements for 5G infrastructure are three times those of 4G [6].

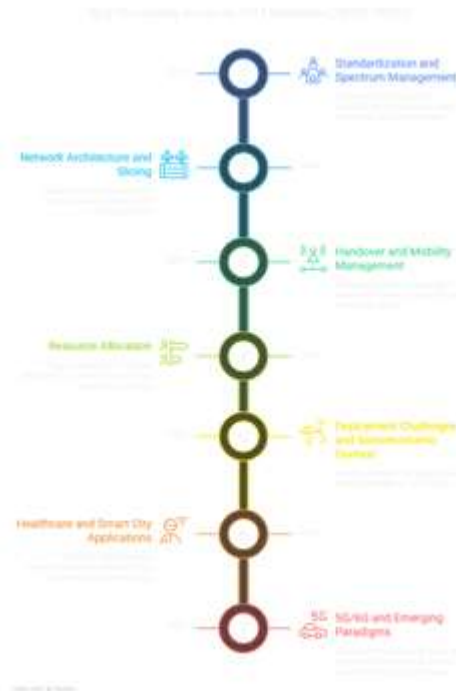


Fig. 1. Thematically organized discussion of the literature surveyed, with an emphasis on the evolution from network architecture considerations to socioeconomic implications and 5G/6G interoperability.

F. Healthcare and Smart City Applications

In one study by Chrysikos et al. (2022), RF coverage design in a smart city is discussed for healthcare applications, with a focus on remote monitoring of patients, whereby the challenge is indoor signal penetration losses [8]. According to Omar and Ong (2024), in South Korea, Japan, and America, ultra-low latency in 5G technology has enabled robotic surgery and high-definition images [7].

G. 5G/6G and Emerging Paradigms

Adil et al. (2023) develop a classification of threats related to security and privacy issues in brain-computer interfaces and extended reality in Metaverse [10]. Bibi et al. (2024) contend that next-generation 5G networks need to be designed in a user-centric manner to ensure unique quality of service [9].

III. METHODOLOGIES USED

The 15 papers analyzed above use four different methodological approaches: systematic review, architectural modeling, and simulation, empirical testing, and market/policy study

Systematic Literature Reviews and Surveys

Seven papers (papers 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 11, 15) use systematic review and/or survey methodologies. Kamal et al. (2021) use PRISMA for resource allocation frameworks identification and classification, thus providing for replication and reducing selection bias [15]. The use of surveys is well justified in fast-growing areas such as 5G



Fig. 2. Introduction of the four main types of methodologies utilized for analyzing the efficiency and possibility of deploying 5G network technology.

B. Architectural Modeling and Simulation

Four papers (Papers 4, 8, 12, 14) describe architectures which have been tested using simulations. Yadav et al. (2023) use the PEPA stochastic modeling formalism in the PEPA Eclipse Plugin to prove isolation and scalability properties [4]. Siriwardhana et al. (2018) utilize OMNeT++ together with the INET Framework to simulate the

behavior of Micro-Operator networks under factory automation traffic [14]. such as 5G

C. Empirical Experimentation

Andrade Wickboldt (2025) perform experiments with live testing in the hospital environment using a 5G testbed built on the Kubernetes private framework for the evaluation of CPU and memory limitations in slicing isolation [13]. Makropoulos (2023) integrates the SEAL and TSN Northbound APIs into the EVOLVED-5G platform, confirming API call flow for vertical applications [12].

D. Market and Policy Analysis

Galetovic et al. (2023) apply concepts from economic competition theory and patent licensing to examine the payment trends for SEPs [11]. Pazmiño et al. (2023) integrate regional data with infrastructure analysis to assess the feasibility of adopting 5G technology in Ecuador [5].

IV. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

A. Centralized Versus Distributed Control

The literature on centralized control schemes based on SDN [2, 4] provides full network visibility but suffers from control plane latencies, which are not acceptable for URLLC applications. The distributed architecture [13, 14], however, achieves lower latencies but poses challenges to global optimization. Hybrid schemes appear to be the best course forward.

B. AI/ML Integration Maturity



Fig. 3. Exploring the world of 5G: From architectural design considerations and AI/ML readiness to energy efficiency and security concerns prove that slice improvements can be achieved even without

ML, implying that determinism could work in the present context [13].

Whereas Angalaeswari Logeswari (2023), along with Ullah et al. (2023), claim considerable performance enhancements using reinforcement and federated learning approaches [2, 3], evidence for these claims is only available in simple simulations. On the other hand, Andrade Wickboldt (2025)

C. Coverage vs. Capacity Trade-offs

Imam-Fulani et al. (2023) document that mmWave bands offer orders-of-magnitude capacity improvements but exhibit penetration losses of 20-40 dB through building materials [1]. Chryssikos et al. (2022) quantify the indoor penetration challenge and identify hybrid macro/small-cell architectures as the practical solution [8].

D. Energy Efficiency Considerations

According to Tyokighir et al. (2024), energy usage for 5G base stations is reported to be three times more than 4G due to the implementation of massive MIMO technology and digital signal processing continuously [6]. Siriwardhana et al. (2018) suggest that micro-operators can help lower energy consumption per bit by traffic localization [14].

E. Security and Privacy Posture

As found by Adil et al. (2023) and Makropoulos (2023), 5G programmability and openness lead to an enlarged attack surface [10, 12]. Currently, there exists no well-established framework in the existing literature for the purpose of threat modeling for 5G service-based systems.

Table I
Summary Of Technical Trade-Offs In 5g Literature

Metric	Advantage	Critical Limitation
mmWave [1, 8]	High Capacity	20-40 dB Penetration Loss
Massive MIMO [6]	Spectral Efficiency	3x Energy Consumption vs. 4G
SDN/NFV [10, 12]	Programmability	Expanded Attack Surface
Edge Nodes [14]	Lower Per-bit Energy	Management Complexity



Fig. 4. Enter Caption

V. RESULTS

A. Technical Performance Achievements

Peak downlink data rates exceeding 10 Gbps have been recorded in mmWave deployments [1, 7], and end-to-end URLLC latencies below 2 ms are reported in factory automation testbeds [14]. Massive MIMO configurations with 64-256 antenna elements delivered 5-10x spectral efficiency improvements over 4G LTE-A [1]. CPU-constrained slices maintained 99.9

B. Persistent Challenges

mmWave outdoor-to-indoor penetration losses of 25-40 dB necessitate indoor distributed antenna systems, substantially increasing deployment costs [1, 8]. Handover failure rates in dense HetNets remain above 0.1

C. Socioeconomic Disparities

High income countries have been able to provide nation-wide coverage below 6 GHz 5G while deploying selective mmWave deployment in dense urban regions [7]. Middle income countries like Ecuador suffer from infrastructural difficulties including lack of backhaul connectivity using fiber optics, complexities in spectrum allocation, and lack of funds, thereby delaying implementation by at least 5-10 years [5].

D. Convergence with Emerging Technologies

Metaverse requires latency of less than 10 ms along with multi-Gbps throughput capabilities provided by 5G/6G networks while introducing new security threats [10]. Deployment of 6G networks will involve

managing Terahertz bands for communication along with developing air interfaces native to AI systems [3].

VI. CONCLUSION

The present paper offers an exhaustive overview of 5G technology by summarizing findings of 15 scientific articles devoted to aspects ranging from standardization issues, network architecture, mobility management techniques, resource allocation, economic factors of deployment, and application areas. 5G is a revolutionary inflection point that introduces Gbps-level speeds, sub-millisecond latency, and huge connectivity capacity necessary for the emergence of new generations of smart interconnected systems.

Among the remaining challenges related to technical aspects, there can be mentioned reliable propagation modeling at mmWave frequencies, efficient designs of energy consumption-aware massive MIMO transceivers, scalable handovers for ultra-dense HetNets, and network slice isolation. Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning integration into operational networks necessitates standardization of training data sets, explainability of models, and efficient inference mechanisms meeting low latency requirements. As regards policy-related challenges, it will be necessary for governments, regulators, and consortia to take concerted action for aligning spectrum policies and securing financial resources for deploying 5G in developing countries. Licensing reforms concerning SEPs might also be required. Lessons learned from 5G must be considered in the process of designing 6G technology.

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