

A Theoretical Review on Enhancing Waste Heat Recovery Through Thermoelectric Energy Conversion

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Abstract – The growing demand for energy, coupled with the need for sustainable practices, has increased focus on efficient energy utilization, especially in waste heat recovery (WHR) systems. Waste heat, generated as a byproduct of industrial processes, remains an underutilized resource despite its potential to contribute significantly to energy savings and environmental sustainability. Thermoelectric energy conversion, through the Seebeck effect, presents a promising solution for converting low- and medium-grade waste heat into electricity. This review explores the theoretical principles behind thermoelectric materials and their application in waste heat recovery systems, focusing on advancements in material science, system design, and emerging technologies. Challenges such as material costs, limited efficiency at low-grade heat, and scalability for industrial applications remain. Furthermore, machine learning techniques are being integrated into thermoelectric systems to optimize material properties, enhance system performance, and enable predictive maintenance. Ongoing research into cost-effective, high-performance thermoelectrics and smart technologies promises to significantly improve waste heat recovery, contributing to more sustainable and efficient energy systems in various industries.

Keywords – Additive Manufacturing, Alloying, Doping, Efficiency, Machine Learning, Predictive Maintenance, Seebeck Effect, Thermoelectric Materials, Waste Heat Recovery.