

# **Performance Analysis of Simulation-based Multi-objective Optimization of Bridge Construction Processes Using High Performance Computing**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **Performance Analysis of Simulation-based Multi-objective Optimization of Bridge Construction Processes Using High Performance Computing**

Shide Salimi

Bridges constitute a crucial component of urban highways due to the complexity and uncertain nature of their construction process. Simulation is an alternative method of analyzing and planning the construction processes, especially the ones with repetitive and cyclic nature, and it helps managers to make appropriate decisions. Furthermore, there is an inverse relationship between the cost and time of a project and finding a proper trade-off between these two key elements using optimization methods is important. Thus, the integration of simulation models with optimization techniques leads to an advancement in the decision making process. In addition, the large number of resources required in complex and large scale bridge construction projects results in a very large search space. Therefore, there is a need for using parallel computing in order to reduce the computational time of the simulation-based optimization. Most of the construction simulation tools need an integration platform to be combined with optimization techniques. Also, these simulation tools are not usually compatible with Linux environment which is used in most of the massive parallel computing systems or clusters.

In this research, an integrated simulation-based optimization framework is proposed within one platform to alleviate those limitations. A master-slave (or global) parallel Genetic Algorithm (GA) is used as a parallel computing technique to decrease the computation time and to efficiently use the full capacity of the computer. In addition, sensitivity analysis is applied to identify the

promising configuration for GA and analyzing the impact of GA parameters on the overall performance of the specific simulation-based optimization problem used in this research. Finally, a case study is implemented and tested on a server machine as well as a cluster to explore the feasibility of the proposed approach.

The results of this research showed better performance of the proposed framework in comparison with other GA optimization techniques from the points of view of the quality of the optimum solutions and the computation time. Also, acceptable improvements in the computation time were achieved for both deterministic and probabilistic simulation models using master-slave parallel paradigm (8.32 and 20.3 times speedups were achieved using 12 cores, respectively). Moreover, performing the proposed framework on multiple nodes using a cluster system led to 31% saving on the computation time on average. Furthermore, the GA was tuned using sensitivity analyses which resulted in the best parameters (500 generations, population size of 200 and 0.7 as the crossover probability).

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## **DEDICATION**

To my beloved family, without whom none of my success would be possible.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
3D	Three Dimensional
ABC	Accelerated Bridge Construction
ACD	Activity Cycle Diagram
AS	Activity Scanning
ASPARAGOS	Asynchronous Parallel Genetic Algorithm Optimization Strategy
BLX- $\alpha$	Blend Crossover
COOPS	Construction Operation and Project Scheduling
CPM	Critical Path Method
CPU	Central Processing Unit
CSL	Control and Simulation Language
CYCLONE	CYCLic Operation Network
DES	Discrete Event Simulation
DSS	Decision-Support System
ES	Event Scheduling
fmGA	fast messy GA
GA	Genetic Algorithm
GSP	General Simulation Program
GSSS	Genetic State-Space Search
HA	Heuristic Algorithm
HGA	Heuristic GA
HOCUS	Hand Or Computer Universal Simulator
HPC	High Performance Computing
LOB	Line-Of-Balance
MOA	Multi-objective Optimization Algorithm
MOEA	Multi-Objective Evolutionary Algorithm
MOGA	Multi-objective GA
MOPSO	Multi-Objective Particle Swarm Optimization
MPP	Massive Parallel Processor
ND	Normal Distribution
NSGA	Non-dominated Sorting Genetic Algorithm
PCX	Parent Centric Crossover
PDL	Process Description Language
PI	Process Interaction
PMX	Partially Matched Crossover
PPX	Precedence Preservative Crossover
PT	Post Tensioned
RBM	Resource-Based Modeling
RESQUE	RESource based QUEuing
SBX	Simulated Binary Crossover
SPX	Simplex Crossover
UD	Uniform Distribution

UNDX

Unimodal Normal Distribution Crossover

# CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Highway infrastructures in North America are relatively old structures; therefore, there is a great necessity of reconstruction work on existing highways. These construction or renovation activities have great impact on traffic flow, workforces, business and other community functions (Li et al., 2010; Shan et al., 2007; Yifu, 2005; Yuan & Ren, 1999). Due to different factors, such as change orders during the construction work because of detecting conflicts between project components, economic and social activities, the costly equipment and materials needed for construction processes, highway projects usually overrun in budget and time (Wu et al., 2005; Serag et al., 2010; Vidalis & Najafi, 2002). Furthermore, traffic disruption during the construction operations results in dangerous work space for workers as well as drivers and passengers (Holt, 2008).

Roads, tunnels, and bridges form the urban highways, in which bridges part is a crucial one due to the complexity and uncertain nature of their construction process. The main factors causing uncertainties associated with bridge construction operations are the lack of knowledge and experience about different construction methods, and the spatial-temporal environment that may have potential conflicts (Zhang & Hammad, 2005).

On the other hand, construction processes become so complex and difficult to analyze and optimize recently (Martinez, 1996). Simulation is an alternative method of analyzing and planning the construction processes especially the ones with repetitive and cyclic nature (AbouRizk & Halpin, 1990). Therefore, simulation of construction processes plays an important role in the modern world and helps managers to have better understanding of the condition and different levels of the

construction processes to make appropriate decisions when it is needed (AbouRizk & Hajjar, 1998). Simulation is a procedure of imitating the behavior of some situations or a real-world processes over time by means of using simpler models. Simulation in construction can be used for different purposes such as productivity measurement, planning and resource allocation, risk analysis, site planning, and comparing the results of various construction methods (AbouRizk et al., 1992; Thomas, et al., 1990; Eshtehardian et al., 2008). Simulation of earthmoving operations (Halpin & Riggs, 1992; Marzouk & Moselhi, 2003), structural steel erection process (Al-Sudairi et al., 1999) and simulation of balanced cantilever bridges (Marzouk et al., 2008) are some examples of using simulation for construction processes. Some researchers used simulation particularly to investigate the performance of bridge construction methods. For example, Huang et al. (1994) simulated the construction of the deck of a cable-stayed bridge using balanced cantilever method, Marzouk et al. (2006) studied the simulation of the construction of concrete box girder bridge deck using cast-in place on false-work and stepping formwork, they continued their research by working on incremental launching method in 2007, and then, simulation of bridge deck construction using cast-in place on false-work and cantilever carriage methods in 2009 (Marzouk et al., 2007; Said et al., 2009). Works done by Huang et al. (1994) and Mawlana et al. (2012) are other examples in this area with focus on cable-stayed bridges and the construction of precast concrete box girder using the full-span launching gantry method, respectively.

## **1.2 Problem Definition**

Due to the large number of factors affecting the construction and rehabilitation processes of bridges, these processes are highly complex for decision makers especially in terms of minimizing the time and cost of the projects. They have to find the optimum strategy to complete the projects

successfully on time and within the budget considering all other constraints. Generally, there is an inverse relationship between the cost and time of a project; since, whenever the duration of a project is shortened, the cost of the project (i.e. the direct cost of labor, equipment, material etc.) will increase considerably. Hence, finding a proper trade-off between these two key elements using optimization methods has become a crucial issue for project managers (Feng et al., 2000).

On the other hand, as stated earlier, simulation models are more and more needed in order to model the uncertainties associated with these projects (Yang et al., 2012). Therefore, the integration of simulation models with optimization techniques leads to an advancement in the decision making process.

In addition, due to the large number of resources required in complex and large scale construction projects, such as bridge construction processes which results in a very large search space, there is a need for High Performance Computing (HPC) in order to reduce the computational time. There are several special purpose tools to implement the simulation of construction processes with different advantages, limitations, and capabilities. Although simulating construction processes using these tools is very easy to learn and to use, the combination of these tools with optimization techniques is difficult and an integration platform is needed. On the other hand, these simulation tools are not usually compatible with Linux environment which is used in most of the massive parallel computing systems or clusters. Therefore, the lack of easy interaction of simulation and optimization engines in the same integrated environment, which also supports their execution on the operating system of the clusters, is the main motivation of this research.

Finally, the values of the optimization parameters affect directly the performance of the optimization algorithm. Therefore, finding the promising configuration for optimization method and analyzing the impact of these parameter on the overall performance of a system is another challenge that researchers are facing when working with optimization algorithms.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

Given the above problems, the main objectives of this research are defined as follows:

1. Simulating different construction methods of precast box girder bridge construction projects using a new simulation tool that can be used in a HPC environment.
2. Investigating High Performance Computing of the integration of the simulation model with multi-objective optimization algorithm in a single platform in order to improve the performance of the proposed framework in HPC environment.
3. Reducing the computational effort by performing sensitivity analysis to tune the optimization algorithm and to find the best number of cores used in parallel.

### **1.4 Thesis Organization**

This thesis is organized as follows:

*Chapter 2 Literature Review:* In this chapter the different bridge construction methods are discussed with emphasis on two methods that are used in this research. The features, advantages, and limitations of general- and special-purpose simulation tools are clarified, and construction simulation tools are discussed in detail. Also, optimization techniques focusing on multi-objective



genetic algorithms (MOGAs) and parallel computing capabilities of genetic algorithms (GAs) are reviewed.

*Chapter 3 Research Methodology:* This chapter will explain the research methodology employed to develop a simulation-based multi-objective optimization model that can be used in HPC environment for the planning and scheduling of precast concrete box girder bridge construction projects.

*Chapter 4 Research Implementation and Case Study:* The implementation and applicability of the proposed simulation-based optimization framework using HPC is investigated in this chapter. Then, the feasibility of the developed models will be demonstrated by considering a case study. This is followed by applying the HPC to investigate the time saving achieved in comparison with a regular PC computation platform. Then, sensitivity analyses of the GA parameters as well as the number of cores and nodes used to run the proposed framework are performed.

*Chapter 5 Summary, Conclusions, and Future Work:* In this chapter, a summary of this research study is presented and its contributions are highlighted. Moreover, the limitations of the current work are investigated and finally the recommendations for the future research are suggested.

## **CHAPTER 2      LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the literature review of several subjects, including bridge construction techniques, Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC), construction simulation, Discrete Event Simulation (DES), optimization, and High Performance Computing (HPC). The review commences with listing the different bridge construction methods with emphasis on two methods that are used in this research. The features, advantages, and limitations of general- and special-purpose simulation tools are clarified, and construction simulation tools are discussed in detail. This is followed by the literature review of optimization techniques focusing on multi-objective genetic algorithms (MOGAs). Finally, parallel computing capabilities of genetic algorithms (GAs) are reviewed to support the proposed method in the next chapters.

### **2.2 Bridge Construction Techniques**

Concrete bridges are mainly categorized into two groups: ordinarily reinforced and pre-stressed bridges. The former type is usually used for short spans and the latter is suitable for long spans. There are six main categories for box girder concrete bridge construction methods: (1) cast-in-situ on false work, (2) stepping framework, (3) cantilever carriage, (4) launching girder, (5) pre-cast balanced cantilever, and (6) incremental launching. In the methods (4) and (5), the fabrication and casting of different bridge segments are performed at a casting yard, which is located away from the main site, and then, the segments are transferred to the main site for erection and connecting the new parts to the previously cast parts to build the bridge superstructure. However, the bridge segments' casting of the last method is performed on the construction site. Choosing each of these

construction methods depends on the experience of the designers and contractors, availability of resources, and technical restrictions. The incremental launching method has the benefits of less need for temporary false-work and other equipment required for cast-in-situ techniques (Marzouk et al. 2007).

### **2.3 Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC)**

Transportation plays an important role in the development of overall economy. Highway networks as one main part of the society infrastructure need innovative technologies to enhance their performance when they have been aging and reaching to their design life. Due to increasing traffic passing the highway networks, conventional construction methods are not anymore viable solutions to perform reconstruction works on these systems (Tang, 2014).

Use of innovating planning, design, materials, and bridge construction methods to decrease the construction, replacing, and rehabilitating impacts on society is defined as ABC (Accelerated Bridge Construction, 2014). To reduce dependency on time consuming on-site activities and weather conditions tied to conventional construction techniques, the Federal Highway Administration pushes ABC as a proper replacement of conventional construction methods (Nielsen, 2013). These two approaches can be compared from different aspects. As it is obvious from its name, ABC is much faster than conventional construction methods. On the other hand, considering the trade-off between the cost and time leads to cheaper processes for conventional methods. These costs include operational and maintenance costs of the bridges. For example, bridges constructed based on the ABC technique need more overlays through the years due to the amount of their deck joints which results in more maintenance costs for these types of bridges.

From safety point of view, ABC projects always are safer in comparison with conventional methods due to their shorter construction period which protects workforce from long periods of working on dangerous work sites which have traffic flow (Nielsen, 2013). Therefore, the main advantages of the ABC over conventional construction methods are building bridges faster and with minimum traffic disruption by shifting most construction activities into a precast yard or factory, better quality control of the bridge's elements, higher safety during construction, and less environmental impacts. These advantages can be achieved by using innovative planning, design, materials and construction methods (Federal Highway Administration, 2013; Fowler, 2006).

One of commonly used ABC methods is the use of precast concrete bridges which can be utilized for most bridge projects (WisDOT Bridge Manual, 2013). In this method, precast spans of the bridges can be erected by cranes standing on land or mounted on a barge, or by using cranes and gantries on the bridge structure (Gerwick, 1993). In this research, the focus is on the construction of concrete box girder bridges using the following construction methods: (1) precast full-span erection using launching gantry; and (2) precast segmental span erection using launching gantry.

## **2.4 Selection of Construction Methods**

The selection of construction methods for construction projects has a high effect on the project productivity, quality and cost. Ferrada et al. (2013) proposed a knowledge management approach incorporating both knowledge management techniques and technologies to enhance the decision-making process of construction methods. They generated a knowledge-based portal called Construction Methods Knowledge System (SCMC) to enable easy access and provide a decision-making support system. The proposed system focuses mainly on the most influential decision

criteria for selecting construction methods include project duration, cost, product characteristics, construction method characteristics, and environmental characteristics. Based on interviews with some experts on construction methods selection, the performance of the system was validated from different aspects. Most of the respondents believed that the system works well and helps to make more informed decisions by gathering all the information needed in one place. In addition, they highlighted that using the system leads to the increase of the productivity by time saving achieved from easy access to information and search for alternative methods of construction. This system, also, reduces the dependency on individual knowledge by storing all the information and knowledge gained in organizational databases (Ferrada et al., 2013).

#### **2.4.1 Precast Full-Span Concrete Box Girder Construction Method**

This construction method is useful for elevated bridges placed in congested areas with many obstacles, and which have spans with similar length. The advantages of this construction method are: (1) minimizing traffic disruption (Mawlana, 2013); (2) improving construction quality due to quality control at the precast yard (Erdogan, 2009); (3) decreasing in the construction cost and time (Pan et al., 2008); (4) enhance the production rate (Mawlana, 2013); and (5) better safety due to less need for onsite activities (VSL International Ltd, 2013). On the other hand, the dependency on high level of technology, high equipment cost, being inapplicable for areas with difficult access, and the need for vast areas for casting and storing are disadvantages of this method (Hewson, 2003). Figure 2-1 shows some examples of applying this construction method. Table 2-1 illustrates the properties of bridges constructed based on the precast full-span concrete box girder construction method.

**Table 2-1: Usual properties of precast full-span concrete box girder bridges (NRS Bridge Construction Equipment, 2008; Hewson, 2003)**

Properties	Span Length	Span Weight	Span Width
Value of the Properties	30-55 m	600-1500 tons	5- more than 12 m

There are two main stages in applying precast full-span concrete box girder bridge construction method, including fabrication of full-spans of concrete box girder at the pre-casting yard, and transporting prefabricated spans to the main site and erecting them using various techniques onsite.

At first, the reinforcement and stressing ducts of the bottom slab and the webs of the span are erected, and then, the inner mold is installed followed by placing the reinforcement and stressing ducts of the top slab. After finishing reinforcement work, the rebar cage is put into an outer mold to do the casting. When the concrete cured and reached an acceptable strength, the inner mold is removed. Next, the first pre-stressing procedure is performed to make the full-span ready for transportation to the storage area where the full-span is completely cured and stored. After completing concrete curing, the second stage of pre-stressing process is done (Continental Engineering Corporation, 2006). Figure 2-2 illustrates the whole process of preparing precast full-span concrete box girder.

In second stage of this construction method, the precast full-span is transported to the main site by means of trailers for erection. Then, the girder is delivered along completed deck of bridge by trolley to its launching location. After that, the full-span is lift from trolley by means of gantry's lifting frames. The girder is moved forward to reach to its right position between two piers to be placed. In next step, the launcher repositions to lift next full-span (Continental Engineering Corporation, 2006; VSL International Ltd, 2013).



(a) Taiwan High speed Rail (2000-2004)



(b) No. 2 Road Bridge – British Columbia (1993)

**Figure 2-1: Examples of precast full-span concrete box girder construction methods (VSL International Ltd, 2013)**

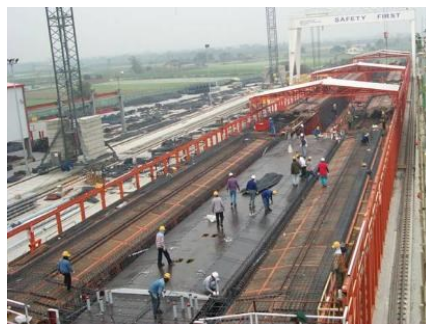
## **2.4.2 Precast Segmental Concrete Box Girder Construction**

Precast segmental concrete box girder construction method is based on casting short segments with high quality concrete which are in sizes that can be transported to the main construction site, and then erected to be connected to each other to form the full-span.

In other words, the deck of the bridge is comprised of these small segments incrementally constructed on each pier. The segments are firstly reinforced with mild steel, and then connected by post-tensioning after erection (Lacey & Breen, 1969). This method results in fast delivery of the project by having the capability of building girders and piers simultaneously. Also, using this construction method without scaffolding in situ has less disruption to the traffic flow which makes this method very useful for crowded areas. Segmental method improves the construction quality due to factory production of segments which contains quality control on the segments by skilled workers (Continental Engineering Corporation, 2006; Erdogan, 2009).



(a) Erection of reinforcement and stressing ducts of the bottom slab and the webs



(b) Inner mold installation and placing the reinforcement and stressing ducts of the top slab



(c) Putting rebar cage into outer mold



(d) Pouring concrete



(e) Curing concrete



(f) Removing inner mold



(g) First stage of pre-stressing



(h) Transporting completed span to the storage area



(i) Second stage of pre-stressing

**Figure 2-2: Steps of full-span casting procedure (Continental Engineering Corporation, 2006)**





(a) Transporting precast full-span to the main site



(b) Delivering the girder to the launcher by trolley



(c) Lifting the girder by lifting frame



(d) Moving the girder forward



(e) Locating the span in its right position



(f) Reposition launcher to the next span

**Figure 2-3: Precast full-span launching procedure steps (Continental Engineering Corporation, 2006)**

Like precast full-span box girder bridge construction method, this technique has two main stages. Firstly, concrete box girder segments should be casted at the casting yard, and then, they are transported to the main site for erection and building the full-spans. Match-casting technique is the most popular casting method in construction of the precast segmental concrete box girder bridges.

This technique is based on providing the matching face for the new segment; thus, there is always fresh concrete at the new segment to be casted against the already hardened concrete of the old segment (Hewson, 2003). The various match-casting methods used for pre-casting segments can be categorized into two basic methods, namely: short line casting and long line casting methods. Figure 2-4 shows these two methods. There is one fixed bed for all segments forming a span in long line casting method. The formwork moves along the bed for producing segments one after the other which takes place in the right position of segments on the long bed. While the casting operations proceed, the hardened segments are moved to the storage area (Figure 2-5) (Abendeh, 2006). The main benefit of the long line casting method is its simplicity, due to performing geometric control during the segments production (Abendeh, 2006). On the other hand, the long bed needed for casting the segments requires large manufacturing area, mobile equipment, and resistant foundation that can carry the load of the casting bed. These factors can be considered as shortcomings of this method (Abendeh, 2006; Moreton & Janssen, 1995).



(a) Long line casting method



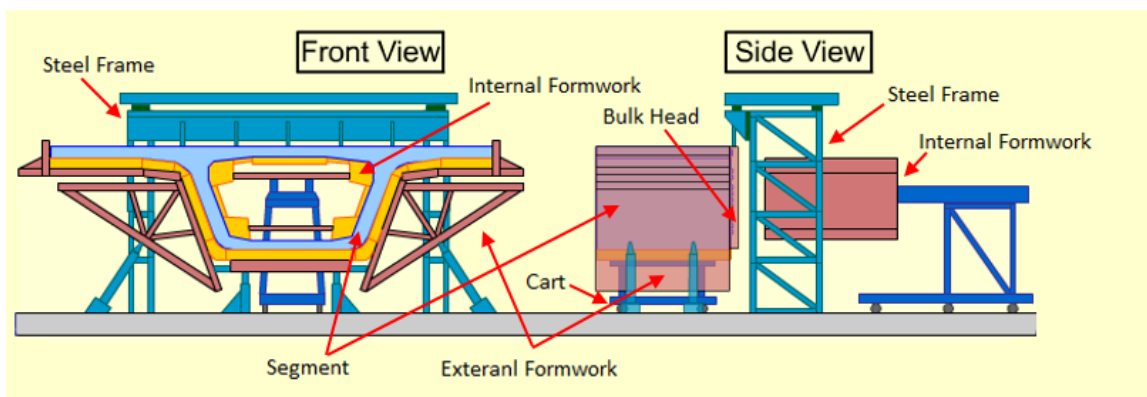
(b) Short line casting method

**Figure 2-4: Long and short line casting methods (Casseforme, 2013; Shimizu Corporation, 2013)**



**Figure 2-5: Long line casting method (Abendeh, 2006)**

Most match-cast segmental bridges use the short line method since it can be used for any shape of deck alignment (Benaim, 2008). In short line casting method, segments are casted by using fixed forms next to the previously cast segment to have complete fitting match-cast joint (Moreton & Janssen, 1995; Rotolone, 2008). This method needs smaller space in comparison with long line technique, and is more proper for horizontal and vertical curves as the long line method requires changes in soffit configuration from one span of the bridge to another (Abendeh, 2006; Moreton & Janssen, 1995). Precise adjustment of the match-cast segments is the major disadvantage of the short line match-casting technique (Abendeh, 2006). Figure 2-6 shows the front and side views of the short line match-casting method.



**Figure 2-6: Short line match-casting method (Maeda and Chun Wo Joint Venture, 1996)**

When the fresh segment is cured properly, its strength is controlled and the stripping process starts including removal of (a) the inflatable inner tubes from fresh cast connected to the match-cast, and

(b) all the top slab inserts, such as scaffold tubes, top temporary post-tensioned (PT) holes and temporary access (Figure 2-8(a) and (b)) (Maeda and Chun Wo Joint Venture, 1996). In the next Step, the internal formwork is removed (Figure 2-8(c)); then, the supporting rods on two sides and the external formwork is lowered down (Figure 2-8(d)).

**(a) Transport the match-cast to the storage area**

To transport the match-cast to the temporary storage area, the bulk head is retracted, and then the fresh cast with the bottom formwork is moved to the position of the match-cast by means of the cart. Figure 2-9 demonstrates this process.

**(b) Preparing to cast new segment**

In this step, new bottom formwork is placed, and the bulk head is moved inward again to be prepared for casting a new segment. After cleaning the whole set of formwork, the external formwork and supporting rods are raised to their position (Figure 2-10).

**(c) Production process of the new segment**

In order to produce the new segment, a steel cage, which is prepared in advance, is firstly placed inside the formwork; then, inflatable inner tubes and all the top slab inserts are installed. After that, the internal formwork is moved to its position within the external formwork. Finally, a new segment is produced after pouring and curing of concrete, and the whole process will be repeated (Figure 2-11) (Maeda and Chun Wo Joint Venture, 1996).

In the second stage of precast segmental construction method, the precast segmental concrete box girders are transferred to the construction site by means of a trailer to be erected and form the full bridge spans. There are several erection methods for segmental box girder bridges, such as span-by-span erection, balanced cantilever construction, progressive erection of precast segmental decks, and incremental launching (Benaim, 2008). The span by span erection method which is

suitable for the spans with the length of 50 m or less (Hewson, 2003) commences at one end of the bridge and continues to reach to the other end as shown in Figure 2-7. The span by span erection method can be applied by using different construction equipment including: (1) span by span erection by means of launching gantry, (2) span by span erection with false-work, (3) balanced cantilever erection with launching gantry, lifting frames, or cranes, and (4) span by span erection with under-slung girder (Figure 2-12) (VSL International Ltd, 2013). In this research, the span-by-span erection method with launching gantry is investigated. After preparing the site and piers for the erection process, the launching gantry system is installed on the pier caps. The launching gantry is comprised of fabricated steel sections, lifting beams, winch trolley, supporting hydraulic jacks, launching bracket, etc. (Erdogan, 2009; Maeda and Chun Wo Joint Venture, 1996; Bridging by Segmental Box Girder, 2008). After transporting the segments to the main site by means of trailers, each segment is lifted by a winch trolley, and then, the segments are rotated and transferred from the trolley to the lifting beams (hangers). The segments between two piers are fixed in place by applying epoxy glue and installing temporary fixing cables until all segments are erected. After that, the erected segments are aligned, jointed, and longitudinally post-tensioned together to form a complete full-span (Lucko, 1999; Hewson, 2003).

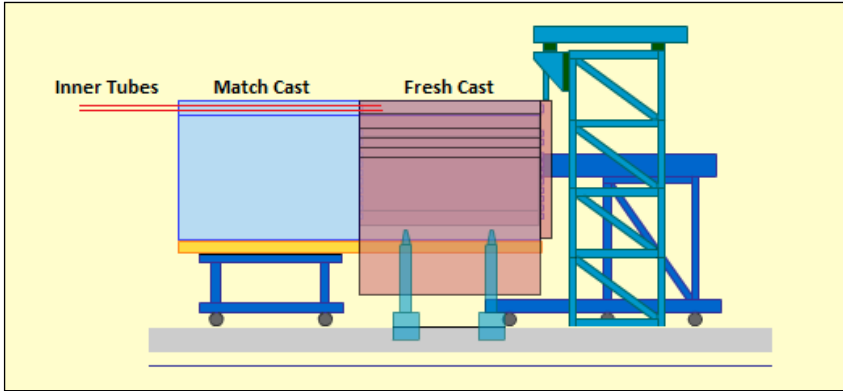


**Figure 2-7: Span by span erection method using overhead gantry (Britt et al. 2014)**

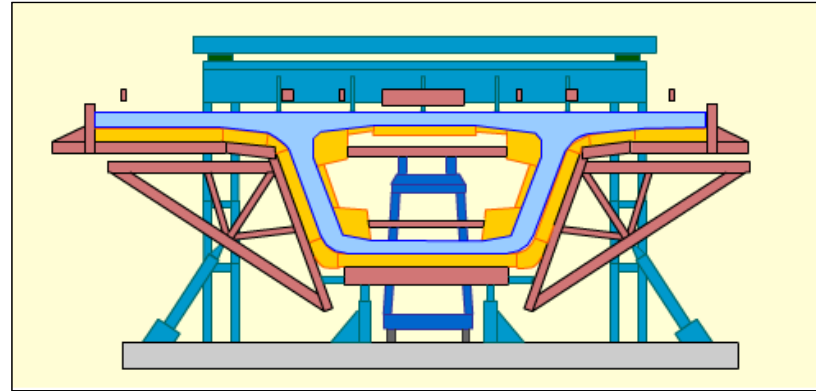
While launching gantry supports the whole segments, the span produced from connected segments is lowered down from launching girders to the pier caps to transfer load of span from gantry to caps. After this load transfer, the launching gantry moves forward to the next pier caps and a similar process is repeated to build the next span (Bridging by Segmental Box Girder, 2008; Erdogan, 2009).

There are several examples of using span-by-span erection method with launching gantry in all around the world, such as Light Rail Transit Dubai, Deep Bay Link, West Rail, Penny's Bay, Bangalore Hosur Elevated Expressway, and Bandra Worli as illustrated in Figure 2-13 (VSL International Ltd, 2013). The precast segmental bridge construction method has several advantages in comparison with cast in situ bridge construction methods. The main advantage of segmental concrete bridges is producing concrete segments in the pre-casting yard which is away from the main construction site. By pre-casting segments, the quality of products can be controlled which enhances the efficiency of bridge construction (Janssen, 1995). In addition, there is less formwork needed for this method, as well as less amount of steel and concrete due to the design criteria which leads to thin slabs and less dead load on piers (Maeda and Chun Wo Joint Venture, 1996).

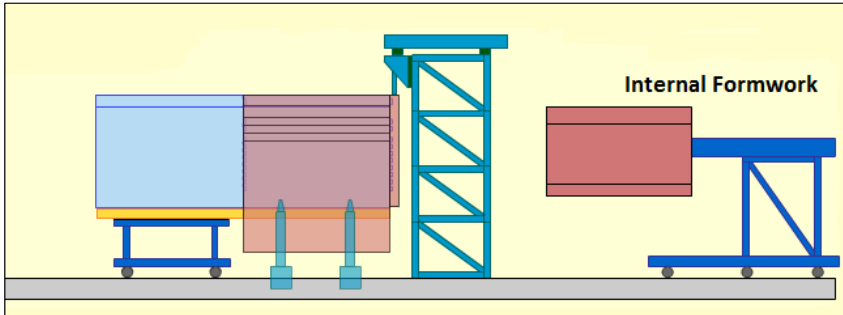
Also, it increases the speed of construction which finally results in reduction in the total construction cost. This method is based on localized workplace with limited impact on the ground, thus it would create less environment disturbance (Erdogan, 2009). However, performing this method requires expert workforce to accomplish pre-casting procedure which can make it limited for use in comparison with other methods (Maeda and Chun Wo Joint Venture, 1996).



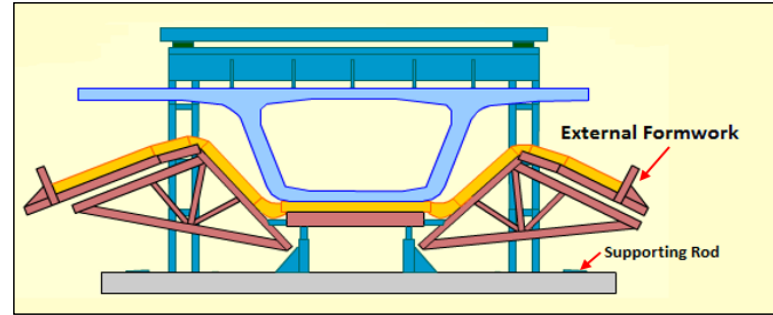
(a) Stripping inflatable inner tubes



(b) Removing all the top slab inserts



(c) Removing internal formwork



(d) Lowering down the supporting rods and external formwork

**Figure 2-8: Short line match-casting stripping process (Maeda and Chun Wo Joint Venture, 1996)**

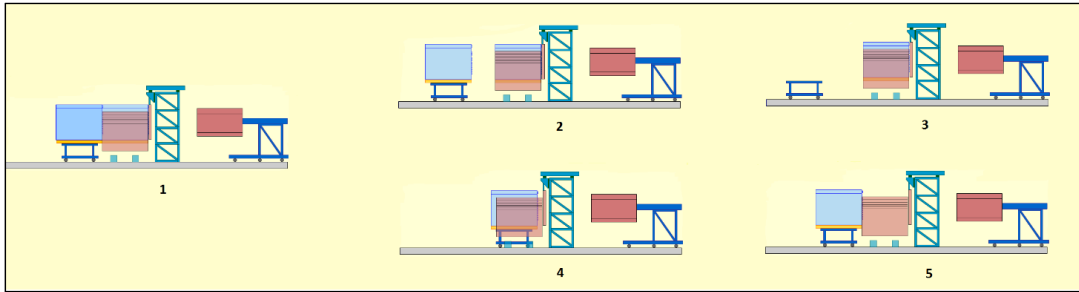


Figure 2-9: The moving process of the match-cast to the storage area and the fresh cast to the position of the match-cast (Maeda and Chun Wo Joint Venture, 1996)

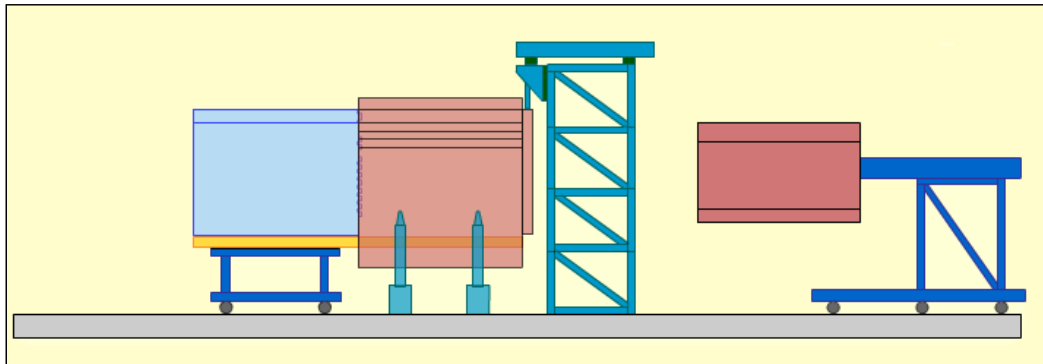


Figure 2-10: Preparing to cast new segment (Maeda and Chun Wo Joint Venture, 1996)

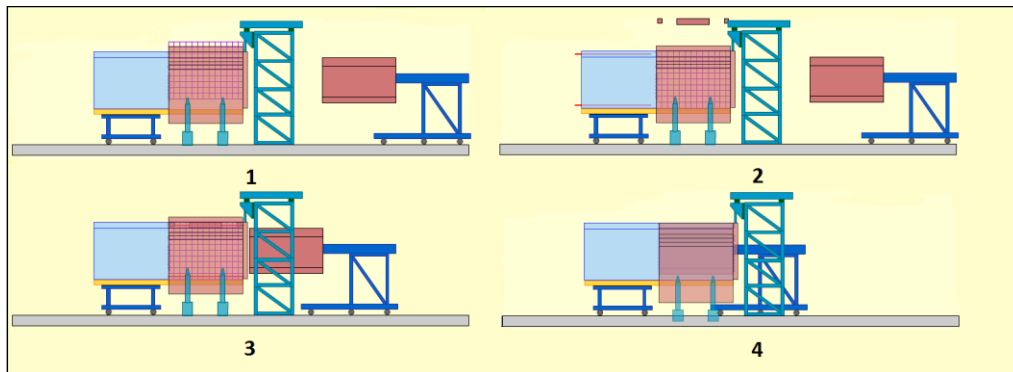


Figure 2-11: Production process of the new segment (Maeda and Chun Wo Joint Venture, 1996)



## **2.5 Construction Simulation**

### **2.5.1 Need for Construction Process Planning Tools**

The Critical Path Method (CPM) is the most popular planning tool in construction industry which mainly considers the cost/time correlations among project activities. This technique is applicable at the corporate and project levels; however, due to the fact that CPM does not consider the actual interactions between resources at the process level, other techniques are required to show all the characteristics at the process level. The selection of the construction method, resource assignment, and obtaining maximum production are the main characteristics of the process planning level (Chang & Hoque, 1989).

Mathematical or graphical methods such as equipment balancing, line-of-balance (LOB), and queuing models were used by researchers to evaluate and compare different process plans for simple construction processes (Halpin & Woodhead, 1976; Chang, 1986). However, most construction processes are very complex to be modeled using these methods. Hence, the lack of powerful construction planning tools became apparent. As a consequence, applying more sophisticated simulation methods, such a DES, which was firstly used by the manufacturing industry to imitate and analyze complex manufacturing processes, became necessary in the construction industry. General purpose simulation languages such as GPSS, SIMSCRIPT, SLAM-II, and SIMAN are used for manufacturing purposes. However, the nature of the construction processes in comparison with manufacturing systems and their complexity result in developing other specialized simulation tools for construction purposes (Chang & Hoque, 1989).



(a) Span by span erection with launching gantry



(b) Balanced cantilever erection with launching gantry



(c) Span by span erection with false-work



(d) Balanced cantilever erection with lifting frames



(e) Balanced cantilever erection with cranes



(f) Span by span erection with under-slung girder

**Figure 2-12: Different erection methods for segmental concrete box girder bridges (VSL International Ltd, 2013)**



(a) Light Rail Transit Dubai- UAE (2007-2009)



(b) Deep Bay Link- Hong Kong (2004-2005)



(c) West Rail- Hong Kong (1999-2002)



(d) Penny's Bay- Hong Kong (2003-2004)



(e) Bangalore Hosur Elevated Expressway- India (2006-2009)



(f) Bandra Worli- India (2002-2006)

**Figure 2-13: Examples of precast segmental concrete box girder construction methods (VSL International Ltd, 2013)**

## 2.5.2 Simulation of Construction Processes

Due to the large number of factors affecting the construction processes, these processes are highly complex for decision makers especially in terms of analyzing the behavior of different components within these processes. Therefore, simulation becomes a necessary solution in order to deal with

these difficulties, and it was applied to model the uncertainties associated with the construction processes (Yang et al. 2012). Also, the graphical aspect of the simulation tools aid the decision makers to test the performance of the construction processes prior to implementation and to better analyze the behavior of the whole system (Nikakhtar et al. 2011).

## **2.6 Construction Simulation Tools**

### **2.6.1 Characteristics of Simulation Tools**

Application purpose, simulation strategy, and flexibility are the main characteristics of a simulation tool which determine the capabilities of that tool in order to develop simulation models (Martinez & Ioannou, 1999).

#### **2.6.1.1 Application Purpose**

From the application purpose point of view, there are general- and special-purpose simulation tools. The former is used in a very broad domain of applications; while the latter is designed for specific processes such as ductile iron pipe installation (Martinez & Ioannou, 1999).

#### **2.6.1.2 Simulation Strategy**

Simulation strategy defines the way that the model is developed. Consequently, many researchers compared different simulation strategies to find out the power, and also, limitations of each of these strategies (Martinez & Ioannou, 1999).

Process interaction (PI) and activity scanning (AS) are two main simulation strategies used in modeling construction processes. Event scheduling (ES) is another simulation strategy which is usually integrated with two above mentioned strategies. A PI model is comprised of different

entities that are used in the construction processes and move through the system and the scarce resources needed by those entities. The way of choosing the moving entities and scarce resources has the main impact on the modeling simplicity and the effectiveness of the simulation model outputs. Many commercial simulation tools, including GPSS, SIMAN, SLAM, ProModel, SIMSCRIPT, ModSim, Extend, etc. are developed based on this type of simulation strategy which is properly used in manufacturing, and the industrial and service industries with almost fixed processing patterns. On the other hand, the main parts of modeling an AS simulation model as an activity-oriented model are the identification of various activities of the simulation model and the relationships between them, the required resources to perform the activities, the outputs of the activities, and the workflow based on the actual order of the construction process (Nikakhtar et al., 2011; Martinez & Ioannou, 1999). An activity-oriented network which is called activity cycle diagram (ACD) is usually used to represent the simulation models based on the AS simulation strategy. This networking diagram consists of rectangles and circles connected with links to represent the activities, queues, etc. In order to enhance the performance of AS modeling approach, the ES concepts are combined with AS to create three-phase AS. General Simulation Program (GSP) (Tocher & Owen, 1960), Control and Simulation Language (CSL) (Buxton & Laski, 1962), and Hand Or Computer Universal Simulator (HOCUS) (Hills, 1970) are some of the AS languages developed. When the interactions between resources increase, the selection of moving entities and scarce resources in PI simulation strategy becomes very difficult. Thus, the complexity associated with the PI tools makes the AS method more convenient for the simulation of the complex construction processes which usually contain a large number of details and interacting resources (Martinez & Ioannou, 1999).

### 2.6.1.3 Flexibility

The flexibility of a simulation system is determined based on the programmability of that system which can be defined as the ability to either change or accept a new set of instructions that alter the behavior of that system. As a result, the simulation program design and its long term success and popularity in practice strongly depend on how the flexibility and simplicity of the simulation approach are integrated properly in the same simulation tool. Another important factor in choosing a proper simulation tool for modeling construction processes, aside from programmability and simulation strategy, is the features accessible through the simulation tool, such as the graphical user interface, tracing features, quality of presentation reports, and animation (Martinez & Ioannou, 1999).

During the 1960s and 1970s, the advanced programmable AS systems were developed for construction purposes, with HOCUS as the best example of them (Halpin, 1973). Also, the advanced PI simulation tools were created since the 1960s and were widely used for manufacturing and service-oriented systems models, as well as some complex construction operations; however, it was a very time consuming procedure and large efforts were needed to develop those simulation models. Therefore, many researchers tried to use ACD-based tools for modeling complex construction processes and integrated with PI-based language to implement them and add flexibility to the simulation models. For example, Shi and AbouRizk (1997) developed a resource-based modeling (RBM), where the concepts were explained using ACDs and SLAM-II was used for the implementation part (Martinez & Ioannou, 1999).

## **2.6.2 General and Special-purposes Simulation Tools for Construction Applications**

Researchers developed general- and special-purposes simulation tools for construction processes (e.g., Mohieldin (1989) and Sagert (1995)). General-purpose simulation tools implement the simulation model of a system to investigate the feasibility of the proposed system. In the case that the project is unacceptable, a new alternative system is examined. Therefore, these tools have the capability of developing any simulation model. On the other hand, special-purpose simulation tools are used to simulate specific applications. The difference between these two approaches is that the modification in the latter is limited to the input parameters and not to the logic of the whole model (Marzouk et al., 2007). In other words, general-purpose simulation tools can be used to create a special simulation model for any particular application such as analyzing specific construction method.

The oldest, simplest, and widely used general-purpose simulation tool is CYCLic Operation Network (CYCLONE) (Halpin & Woodhead, 1976) which is designed specifically for simulating cyclic and mostly simple construction processes based on AS simulation strategy. INSIGHT (Kalk & Douglas, 1980), RESource based QUEuing (RESQUE) (Chang, 1986), INSIGHT extension (Paulson Jr et al., 1987), UM-CYCLONE (Ioannou, 1989), Micro-CYCLONE (Halpin, 1990), Construction Operation and Project Scheduling (COOPS) (Liu, 1991), COST (Cheng et al., 2000), CIPROS (Odeh, 1992), and STROBOSCOPE (Martinez, 1996) are different implementations of CYCLONE. However, CYCLONE has a simple modeling methodology and is easy to learn, many simplifying assumptions should be made in order to simulate complex operations (Martinez & Ioannou, 1999). The main advantages of using CYCLONE are the simplicity of developing simulation models and the capability to assess different process configurations in order to find a

good balance between resources. On the other hand, the lack of proper control structure and resource representations are the major limitations of this simulation tool (Chang & Hoque, 1989).

In order to alleviate these limitations, RESQUE simulation system is developed as an extension of CYCLONE. In this software, the complex interactions among resources are defined using the RESQUE's Process Description Language (PDL) without making the graphical model very complicated. In spite of the RESQUE's strength in modeling resource interactions and evaluating various control strategies, it is very prone to errors due to the need to use PDL statements which are batch oriented. Moreover, all the definitions are embedded within the batch definition which makes it difficult to reuse them for construction purposes (Chang & Hoque, 1989). Therefore, a knowledge-based simulation framework which uses object-oriented knowledge representation was developed by Chang and Hoque (1989). They reviewed the previous researches regarding the simulation tools for different purposes, and tried to develop a new system to simplify and enhance construction process planning simulation. There are two types of knowledge modules, namely construction process and construction resources in their proposed framework which were developed by some experts. The user, then, can select the process and the required resources based on her/his project from the predefined modules. Finally, the graphical simulation model is built using symbols similar to CYCLONE and RESQUE (Chang & Hoque, 1989). STROBOSCOPE is another widely used general-purpose simulation programming language designed for detailed development of complex construction processes (Martinez & Ioannou, 1999).

On the other hand, simulation software systems developed by McCahill and Bernold (1993), Shi and AbouRizk (1997), Oloufa and Ikeda (1997), and Martinez (1997, 1998) are some examples of the special-purpose simulation tools (Martinez & Ioannou, 1999).



SIMPHONY, SDESA, ARENA 13, WITNESS 2004 Manufacturing Edition, etc. are other examples of useful simulation tools. Many researchers investigated the performance of these tools and compared their applicability. For example, Nikakhtar et al. (2011) compared two simulation software systems, namely ARENA 13 and WITNESS 2004 Manufacturing Edition, by developing a concrete pouring operation of beams and slabs using these tools. Their study showed that these tools produce very similar results for a given construction process. Also, they investigated different features and reports available via these systems.

## **2.7 Discrete Event Simulation (DES)**

From the construction point of view, the simulation model contains a number of blocks indicating the required resources and activities with their durations to perform different tasks. Monte-Carlo simulation and DES are two popular methods to simulate construction processes. Monte-Carlo simulation is based on assigning random distributions to the activities' durations based on the network diagram of activities required in a project. It generates the cost and time of the project without considering the interaction between activities and resources. Therefore, in order to consider the relationships between activities and resources DES is used. DES technique is used to model the behavior of a complex system by defining a sequence of events. By using this technique, an appropriate selection of resources can be determined by considering an acceptable level of details of the real system. While there is no change in the system between successive events, events progress at discrete points in time by assigning fixed durations or random distributions to the activities' durations to consider uncertainty associated with the process; therefore, it is called "Discrete Event Simulation" (Halpin & Riggs, 1992). The contrast of DES with continuous simulation in which the system is continuously tracked over time makes this type of simulation

much faster than the continuous simulation models since there is no change in the system from one event to another (Robinson, 2004). Entities, queues, and events form DES models. Entities wait in queues to perform activities which may have durations with probability distributions. Therefore, the generation, movement, and processing of entities in the system cause events.

DES is used by construction engineers to analyze and design different construction processes (Cheng et al., 2006). DES models are mainly categorized in two modes, namely deterministic and probabilistic modes, based on the definition of the activities' durations, which are fixed for the former, while the latter is built by assigning random distributions to the activities' durations to consider the uncertainty associated with the process. Thus, every time the probabilistic model is run, a different set of outputs will be obtained due to the distinct seed numbers used in the simulation. In order to assess the risk associated with the model, replications are performed for probabilistic simulation models. The concept of replications aims to run the simulation model for a large number of times (e.g., 1000 times); and therefore, each replication will have different performance outcomes. After having done the number of replications required, the means of the simulation outcomes are calculated (Nelson et al. 2001).

Martinez and Ioannou (1999) reviewed the main characteristics of DES software systems in terms of application purpose, simulation strategy, and flexibility with emphasize on CYCLONE and STROBOSCOPE due to their wide range usage. By developing a simulation model of a simple earth moving operation using these tools, they found that AS simulation strategy is more natural and effective simulation strategy in comparison with PI for modeling construction processes.

Marzouk et al. (2007) developed a special purpose DES model to mimic bridge construction processes using incremental launching technique in presence of uncertainties. Single form and multiple forms methods were examined as segments fabrication execution methods. They used STROBOSCOPE as a simulation tool and Visual Basic 6.0 for coding purposes. They validated the proposed model considering probabilistic distributions for real bridge activities' durations. The results of a sensitivity analysis on the performance of the system demonstrated that this construction technique for bridges' deck is very sensitive to the number of rebar crews.

Lee et al. (2010) developed an integrated simulation system called (COOPS) to automate and integrate two separate DES-based operation model and DES-based project scheduling. Different kinds of information pertinent to resources, operation, and schedule (i.e., number of resources, time and cost associated with different operation models, timing and delay information related to various activities, respectively) are accessible via COOPS. This system can be easily used in large projects with large number of activities by providing a user friendly tool which integrates two different levels in the construction projects.

Mawlana et al. (2012) developed a modeling approach to plan reconstruction processes of elevated highways. They used DES to simulate demolition and construction operations of a box girder elevated highway and to determine the project duration and productivity rates. They also created the 4D model of the project to resolve constructability issues associated with the project.

## **2.8 Optimization**

The process of making a solution or a set of solutions as fully perfect, functional, or as effective as possible is called optimization. This procedure is done based on the satisfaction of all specified

constraints and maximizing (or minimizing) one or more determined objective functions (Gen & Cheng, 2000). Optimization problems can be mainly categorized as single objective optimization problems or multi-objective optimization problems, where the former have only one objective function and the latter have more than one or multiple objective functions. These objective functions are usually in conflict with each other in engineering optimization problems, so that the improvement of one of them leads to worsening the others. Therefore, multi objective optimization offers the optimal set of solutions which are called *Pareto* points or *Pareto* front, rather than a single optimal solution. In this set, there is not any answer which dominates the others (Deb, 2001). Most of engineering problems are posed as problems with multiple objectives that should be considered simultaneously. In multi-objective optimization problems, the aim is to find an optimal vector  $X^* = [X_1^*, X_2^*, \dots, X_n^*]^T$  which can optimize  $k$  objective functions,  $f_i$ , under  $m$  inequality constraints and  $p$  equality constraints, respectively. The multi objective optimization can be briefly expressed as:

$$\begin{array}{ll}
 \text{find} & X^* \\
 \text{optimize} & F(X) \\
 \text{subject to} & \begin{cases} g_i(X) \leq 0 & (i = 1, 2, \dots, m) \\ h_j(X) = 0 & (j = 1, 2, \dots, p) \end{cases}
 \end{array} \tag{2.1}$$

Where  $X^* \in R^n$  is the optimal variables vector,  $F(X) = [f_1(X), f_2(X), \dots, f_k(X)]^T$  is the vector of objective functions, so that,  $F(X) \in R^k$ ,  $g_i(X)$  and  $h_j(X)$  are inequality and equality constraints, respectively (Nakayama et al., 2009).

### **2.8.1 Genetic Algorithms for Multi-objective Optimization**

Most of the engineering optimization problems are often very complex and difficult to solve without considering many simplifications. In recent years, the use of evolutionary algorithms is considered by many researchers in different optimization fields. Evolutionary algorithms as one of the most promising global optimizers comprise of three population based heuristic methodologies, namely GAs, evolutionary programming, and evolutionary strategies. GAs are the most popular one among these evolutionary algorithms (Deep & Thakur, 2007). GAs, as metaheuristic methods, have been widely used in different research areas to mimic the process of natural selection genetic mechanisms in order to find proper solutions of optimization problems based on the ideas and techniques from genetic and evolutionary theory laid by Charles Darwin (Mitchell, 1998; Lin et al., 2003; Deep & Thakur, 2007). They can be used for solving a variety of optimization problems that are not well suited for standard optimization algorithms, including problems in which the objective function is discontinuous, non-differentiable, stochastic or highly nonlinear (Niknam, 2010). GAs are very different from the traditional optimization methods; one of these differences is that GAs work with a population or a set of points at a certain moment, while traditional optimization methods use only a special point. This means that the GAs will be processing a large number of schemes at one time. Unlike conventional optimization methods that use derivative of function, GAs just use objective function values (Srinivas & Patnaik, 1994). In these algorithms, the design space should be converted to the genetic space; therefore, GAs work with a series of coded variables. The advantage of working with coded variables is that the codes have basically the capability to convert the continuous space to a discrete space. Another interesting point is that the GAs divide the search space to several zones and compare them randomly based on the performance of the system to eliminate the weak parts and dominate the

good solutions over the worse ones to get to the convergence. GAs firstly begin with random generation of initial population (individuals) based on the creation function specified in the optimization process. Then, the fitness value of each individual (solution) in the generated population is calculated based on the specified fitness function which determines the rank of that individual (Mitchell, 1998). The ranking procedure is followed by a series of operations including a selection, crossover, mutation, and replacement (Gen & Cheng, 2000). In each generation, specified number of children (offspring) which is equal to the initial population should be created. Selection is about the random choice of individuals within the population based on their fitness values. Based on Darwin's theory of evolution, the best individuals are selected in order to have children; which means that the probability of the selection of the individuals with higher fitness values is more than the solutions with lower fitness values (Sivanandam & Deepa, 2008). Also, the same solution can be selected more than once as a parent, which is called *replacement* in the selection process (Mitchell, 1998; Deep & Thakur, 2007).

Roulette wheel, random, rank, tournament, Boltzmann, and stochastic universal sampling are different methods of selection used in GAs. Although the selection enriches the population with better individuals, it does not create new solutions. Therefore, the crossover operator is carried out in the next step in order to create a new child (individual) from two parents (two individuals) for the next generation based on the crossover function defined in the optimization process. The simplest way to perform the crossover is by randomly selecting some crossover points of the two selected parents and the genes before these points are copied from the first parent and those after the points are copied from the other parent. There are various types of crossover functions such as the single point, two point, multi-point, uniform, three parent, shuffle, precedence preservative

(PPX), ordered, partially matched (PMX), and crossover with reduced surrogate (Sivanandam & Deepa, 2008).

The crossover probability ( $P_c$ ) is the basic parameter in crossover operations which indicates the frequency of performing the crossover. The offspring are the precise copies of the parents when there is no crossover in the GA process (i.e., the crossover probability is equal zero). On the other hand, all children are created by crossover operation when the crossover probability is 100%. Crossover is usually used to increase the probability of having new individuals made from good parts of the old candidates. Since it is good to maintain some members of the old population in the new created population, it is better to have the crossover operator with the probability of less than 100% (Sivanandam & Deepa, 2008).

After performing the crossover function, the mutation operator takes place. The mutation operators randomly alter individuals in the population to provide genetic diversity, and also, to explore the whole search space in order to prevent being trapped in a local minimum (Deep & Thakur, 2007; Sivanandam & Deepa, 2008). It acts as a recover for lost genetic materials and creates new genetic structures by random modification of the generation's building blocks. Flipping, interchanging, and reversing are three kinds of mutation operators usually used in the optimization procedure (Sivanandam & Deepa, 2008).

Two important parameters in the mutation operators are the mutation probability ( $P_m$ ), and the strength of the mutation. The former defines the frequency of applying the mutation and the latter determines the disturbance produced in a chromosome (Deep & Thakur, 2007; Sivanandam & Deepa, 2008). One or more parts of a chromosome are changed by performing the mutation; thus,

if the mutation probability is 0%, nothing is changed. Similarly, all the members of the population are changed when there is a mutation operation with 100% probability. The frequency of applying the mutation should not be very often in order to distinguish the GA from random search methods (Sivanandam & Deepa, 2008). Therefore, the probability of the crossover occurrence is very often in comparison with that of the mutation (Cantú-Paz E. , 1997).

In order to have a fixed size of population for each generation, the replacement operator determines which of the current individuals in the population, if any, should be replaced by newly created offspring. Generational updates and steady state updates are two methods of maintaining the population (Sivanandam & Deepa, 2008). The new created population of size  $N$  is completely replaced with the current population of the same size in the basic generational update method (Mitchell, 1998).  $(\lambda+\mu)$ -update and  $(\lambda, \mu)$ -update are two extension forms of this scheme. In these updates, children of size  $\lambda$  are produced from a parent population of size  $\mu$  (i.e.,  $\lambda \geq \mu$ ). The  $\mu$  best individuals are then selected either from the both parent and children population or the children population for  $(\lambda+\mu)$ -update and  $(\lambda, \mu)$ -update, respectively. In a steady state update, newly produced offspring are replaced by another population members as they are created. The selection of eliminated individuals can be based on the rank of the population members, which means the lower the fitness value of a member, the higher the likelihood for deleting the member. Tournament, random, weak parent, and both parents are some examples of replacement methods (Sivanandam & Deepa, 2008). Finally, these steps are repeated until the termination criterion (e.g., a specified number of generations) is reached.

In optimization studies that include multi-objective optimization problems, the main objective is to find the global Pareto optimal solutions, representing the best possible objective values due to



the conflicts between the objective functions (Deb, 2005). In recent years, the application of GAs is increasing with more and more capability, flexibility and speed up. Routine methods in solving multi-objective optimization problems are conversion of the multiple objective functions into one objective function. For this purpose, different methods are presented in scientific reports, from which  $\varepsilon$ -perturbation (Douglas & Kosmas, 1989), weighted sum approach (Kim & De Weck, 2005), Min-Max (Aissi et al., 2009), and non-sorting genetic algorithm (Guerra-Gómez et al., 2009) are the most widely used methods. Practically, finding a good solution within an acceptable time frame is the main goal of applying optimization; hence, searching for convergence is critical mainly for multi-objective optimization problems which seek for Pareto solutions. On the other hand, the need to have faster convergence may result in being trapped in a local optimum instead of finding the global one (Wu et al., 2012). Therefore, new solution techniques are needed to solve multi-objective optimization problems. Various multi-objective evolutionary algorithms (MOEAs) have been addressed in related research works during the past decade (Fonseca & Fleming, 1993; Srinivas & Deb, 1994; Horn et al., 1994; Zitzler & Thiele, 1999). One of the first MOEAs was the Non-dominated Sorting Genetic Algorithm (NSGA) (Srinivas & Patnaik, 1994). In spite of the strength of this method in solving multi-objective optimization problems, its computational complexity, lack of elitism, and the need for sharing parameters are the main problems of the NSGA. Therefore, a modified algorithm called NSGA-II was introduced a few years later to alleviate some of these problems. The new algorithm performs better and faster to find the non-dominated solutions by providing a better distribution of the population (Deb et al. 2002).

Optimizing construction operations has been important for decision makers during the last decades, and significant research works are done in this area to develop optimization models using various methods, such as linear programming, integer programming, dynamic programming, simulation techniques, and GAs (El-Rayes & Kandil, 2005). Among these methods GAs have become more popular recently. For example, Orabi et al. (2009 and 2010) developed a recovery planning model to optimize the post disaster reconstruction planning work for damaged transportation networks during the recovery efforts by simultaneously minimizing both the network performance loss and reconstruction costs. The proposed model, also, consists of a new resource allocation model which assigns the limited available reconstruction resources to the competing recovery projects based on the project prioritization, contractor assignment, and overtime policy. They used the NSGA-II, proposed by Deb et al. (2002), as their multi-objective optimization engine.

Eshtehardian et al. (2008) employed fuzzy logic theory in order to consider uncertainties effect the time and cost of the projects. They used multi-objective optimization GA to find non-dominated solutions for the time-cost trade-off problems based on the amount of risk considered using  $\alpha$ -cuts methods in fuzzy logic theory. The results illustrated that higher cost and time are required in order to minimize the risk and vice versa. Another benefit of their model is that the direct and indirect costs are separated from each other; thus, different risk levels can be considered for the direct and indirect costs, separately.

## **2.9 Simulation-based Optimization of Construction Processes**

Due to the large number of factors affecting the construction processes, these processes are highly complex for decision makers especially in terms of minimizing the total time and cost of the projects. They have to find the optimum strategy to complete the projects successfully on time and within the budget considering all other constraints. Generally, there is an inverse relationship between the cost and time of a project; since, whenever the duration of a project is shortened, the cost of the project (i.e. the direct cost of labor, equipment, material etc.) will increase considerably. Hence, finding a proper trade-off between these two key elements has become a crucial issue for the project managers (Feng et al., 2000). Simulation can be used to perform sensitivity analysis on different resources used in a project in order to find how the resources interact with each other and how changes in the resources affect the performance of the simulation model. However, it cannot explore the whole search space of complex construction projects; therefore, optimization methods are required to fully investigate all possible different combinations of resources.

The goal of the time- cost trade-off analysis of a project is finding the most economical solution of completing the project within its contractual time limits. Thus, according to the conflict between the time and cost in the construction processes, they cannot be simply combined with each other to form one objective function as it was done by researchers previously to reduce the complexity of optimization problems (single objective optimization). Therefore, the time-cost trade-off analysis is categorized as a multi-objective optimization problem.

Considering various combinations of resources assigned to the activities lead to different options for the accomplishment of a project; therefore, finding the optimal resource assignments is

classified as a combinatorial search problem for decision makers in the construction industry. Traditionally, the duration and cost of the construction processes are assumed to be deterministic. In reality, however, construction processes are associated with many uncertainties (Feng et al., 2000). Design changes in different phases of the project, inflation, execution mistakes of contractors, economic and social stresses, and natural problems like climate changes are some examples of those uncertainties (Eshtehardian et al., 2008). Therefore, the time and cost of the construction processes follow a probabilistic distribution obtained based on historical data, which adds more complexity to the above mentioned combinatorial problem (Feng et al., 2000).

Assuming deterministic values for the time and cost of activities, which are usually the mean values of the activities' time and cost distributions, does not reflect the overlap between the distributions of activities' cost and time, the relationship between cost and time, and also, the relationship between activities that require the same resources at both the activity and project levels (Feng et al., 2000). As a result, the traditional methods become insufficient when considering the distributions of the activities' time and cost, which results in the recognition of the risk associated with different solutions (Feng et al., 2000).

Heuristic, mathematical programming, and simulation-based optimization techniques are three main techniques for solving the construction time-cost trade-off problems. Heuristic methods, which are categorized into two types, namely serial heuristics and parallel heuristics, use rules of thumb to find good solutions with small computational effort. But, there is no guarantee that the solutions are the optimum ones in this method. Mathematical programming methods utilize linear programming, integer programming, or dynamic programming to solve mathematical models of the time-cost trade-off problems. Unlike the heuristic techniques, these methods require a great

computational effort, especially for complex systems (Feng, Liu, & Burns, 2000). According to Section 2.5.2, computer simulation as a powerful tool for modeling the construction processes is used in the construction industry in order to analyze, evaluate, and optimize the performance of construction processes (AbouRizk & Shi, 1994). Simulation is used for several purposes including the assessment the performance of a given system, comparison of different alternatives, sensitivity analysis to find the best combination of different factors affecting the system performance, finding the factors that lead to delays in the system, optimization to reach to the optimal response of the system, and recognition of correlations among the system factors (Marzouk et al., 2007).

Each of these three techniques has its strengths and weaknesses. Heuristic methods are not very complex and need little computational efforts. Mathematical approaches, in contrast, suffer from complexity and high computational effort, and they cannot guarantee the optimal solutions for large-scale networks. Thus, considering the limitations of these methods, simulation techniques show promising behavior to find the optimal solutions for the construction processes; however, the need to develop more efficient algorithms to solve the time-cost trade-off problems with uncertainties is still a remaining challenge (Feng et al., 2000).

### **2.9.1 Related Research**

Conventionally, the performance of simulation models was optimized by examining all possible resource combinations to find the best resource utilization which results in the best values for the outputs of the simulation model. On the other hand, if there are more than one option for a construction process which come from different configurations of shared queues within the simulation models for complex and large scale projects, the evaluation of all these available options based on different possible resource combinations is a very costly and time consuming

procedure due to the large number of iterations required to achieve the optimal resource combination. This also requires powerful computers with large memory capacity. Therefore, these limitations make this procedure not applicable for complex and large projects (Cheng et al., 2006). In order to overcome these difficulties, AbouRizk and Shi (1994) developed a heuristic algorithm (HA) to guide the simulation model in its search for the local optimal resource allocation to attain some particular construction simulation objectives. They introduced the term “DELAY” as a representation of the usage degree of a resource in a system to evaluate the performance of the system. Their research demonstrated that the HA helped to optimize the performance by selecting the optimum resource allocation. Applying the proposed algorithm on only one model and specifying the objective functions separately are the main limitations of their research. In addition, they showed that the HA can improve the performance of the simulation model by finding the local optimum solutions.

Parmer et al. (1996) used computer simulation and GA to optimize peanut farm machinery selection. The simulation model determined the net returns above machinery costs for a given machinery set, but did not find an optimum machinery set. The optimum machinery set was determined using two search schemes: (1) an exhaustive search and (2) an artificially intelligent search. The exhaustive search scheme involved running the simulation model with all possible machinery sets, and then selecting the machinery set that produced the highest returns. Alternatively, GA was used as an intelligent search scheme to generate machinery sets for the simulation model. The GA found a near-optimal solution in 10% of the total time required by the exhaustive search. They concluded that modifications in the GA not only reduce the search time by half, but also improve the quality of the solutions.

Ugwa and Tah (1998) developed a hybrid GA as a Decision-Support System (DSS) component for the construction resource assignment problems by considering the physical characteristics of the resources in integration with the project database. They assumed that each resource combination results in a construction method. The resource allocation problem is defined as a single objective optimization to minimize the project cost which is constrained by project duration using Genetic State-Space Search (GSSS). Applying combinatorial optimization yields to not losing the information due to implementation of GA operators. The results showed the high capability of GAs in resource optimization, and also, integrating the GA with the project database, which is always accessible during the decision-making process, increases the robustness of the GA. Similarly, Feng et al. (2000) developed a hybrid system of the combination of simulation methods with GAs to find the optimal solutions of the construction time-cost trade-off problems considering uncertainties. Also, they considered the stochastic distributions at the project level (i.e., distributions of the total duration and cost of the project).

Hegazy and Kassab (2003) developed a flowchart based simulation tool called Process V3 combined with a commercial GA-based tool (Evolver DLL Routines) as the GA engine within Microsoft Project platform to optimize resource allocation while minimizing the unit cost of large-scale projects. The results of their case studies revealed that the developed integration method can find optimum resource assignments which result in the best benefit/cost ratio. Also, the GA-optimized simulation models were integrated with the lower elements of the work breakdown structure (construction operations) to form a hierarchical planning environment in order to improve the planning and resource management in large-scale projects with large number of operations.

Cheng and Feng (2003) developed a simulation/GA-integrated mechanism to find the optimal resource combination leads to the best performance of the construction operations. They used CYCLONE to simulate the construction operations; and then, integrated that simulation model with a single objective GA to eliminate the resource assignments resulting in poor performance of the system. The proposed model showed very good performance for both objective functions (i.e., minimizing the unit cost and maximizing the production rate). They also provided a user interface called GACOST to assist the construction planner in analyzing and optimizing the construction operations.

Cheng et al. (2005) combined the proposed HA algorithm by AbouRizk and Shi (1994) with GA, named heuristic GA (HGA), in order to take advantage of both algorithms and reach to the global optimum results. HGA outperformed the HA and GA for both objective functions (i.e., maximizing production rate and minimizing the unit cost). Cheng et al. (2006) proposed a similar GA-based modeling mechanism to optimize the resource allocation process as well as the modeling scheme which is mainly focused on the shared queue distribution within the simulation model. They concluded that their integrated model makes the resource allocation process fast and easy; and also enhances the performance of the simulation model by selecting the optimum modeling scheme.

New efficiency methods which emphasize the quality of the construction processes lead to the development of a new multi-objective genetic algorithm model by El-Rayes and Kandil (2005) that quantified and considered the quality of the project as another objective function in addition to the traditionally two-dimensional time-cost trade-off analysis. They also visualized the three-dimensional time-cost-quality tradeoff of the problem.



Mawlana and Hammad (2013a) presented a simulation based optimization framework for planning and scheduling the bridge construction projects. The proposed framework provides the evaluation of different construction methods and related decision variables. Project information input, database, optimization engine, simulation engine, and reporting and visualization are the main modules of their framework. They also modeled a precast box girder concrete bridge construction process using STROBOSCOPE and developed a module in order to combine the simulation model with the fast messy GA (fmGA) to optimize the construction cost and duration (Mawlana & Hammad, 2013b). However, the interoperability issues between the simulation and optimization tools make the integration procedure difficult and time consuming.

## **2.10 High Performance Computing (HPC)**

While GAs are generally capable of finding optimal or near optimal solutions in acceptable time period, as the problem becomes more complex and bigger, such as complex or large-scale construction processes, the run time of the GAs will increase accordingly. Thus, there are many efforts to improve the GAs' performance. Among these efforts, using parallel implementation is one of the most promising attempt (Cantú-Paz, 1997). The concept of using parallel programs is about dividing a problem into some discrete parts and solve them simultaneously using multiple processors to save time by reducing the processing time of the program, and also to take advantage of the large amount of memory that comes with them (Cantú-Paz, 1997). Parallel computing can be executed on a computer with multiple processors or a network of connected computers or a combination of both (Barney, 2013).

Global single-population master-slave GAs, multiple-population coarse-grained GAs, single-population fine-grained, and hierarchical parallel GAs are categorized as four main types of

parallel GAs. Either cluster or Massive Parallel Processor (MPP) are used in most of the implementation of the parallel GAs. Based on the statistics, about 74.6% and 21.4% of the world supercomputers are clusters and MPPs, respectively (Munawar et al., 2008).

The efficiency of the parallel algorithms and the quality of solutions are strongly dependent to the parallel parameter settings. However, lots of empirical researches have been done to determine these parameters, but there is no generally acceptance on how to choose them (Li & Kirley, 2002).

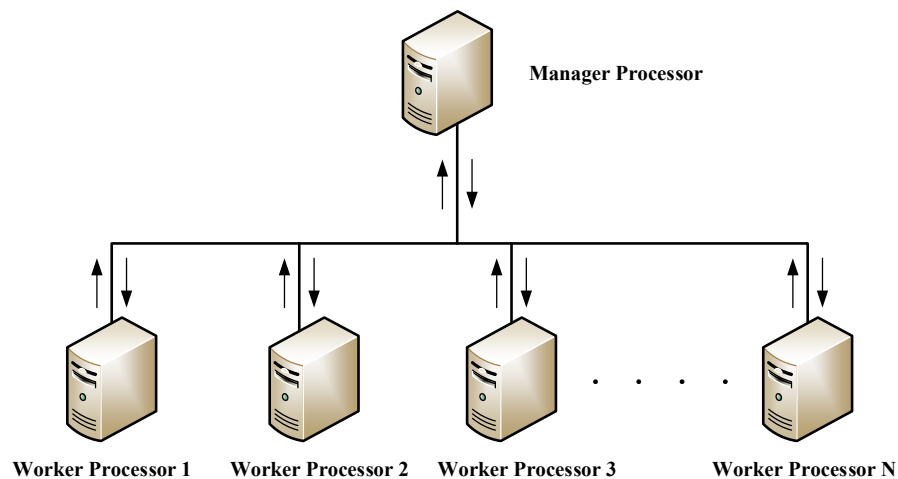
### **2.10.1 Global Single-population Master-slave GAs**

Global single population master-slave GAs work like simple GAs, as one processor called the master (manager) processor generates the initial population and performs GA operations on all population members. Then, the generated population of solutions will be broken down into subpopulations distributed equally among all other processors (slave processors) to be evaluated. The evaluated solutions will be back to the manager processor, and the next generation of solutions is generated by performing generation evolution by the manager processor. This procedure is repeated until the convergence criteria are met (Kandil & El-Rayes, 2006). Figure 2-14 illustrates this type of parallel GAs. Master-slave parallel GAs are also named *global parallel GAs* due to the implementation of crossover and mutation on the whole population by the master processor. Communication is necessary during receiving of the individuals by the slaves and returning them back to the master processor (Cantú-Paz, 1997).

There are two types of master-slave GAs: synchronous and asynchronous. The former works similarly to the simple GA but faster. In this type of master-slave GAs, each population will be generated when the previous one is totally evaluated. On the contrary, the asynchronous master-

slave GAs have some differences in their performance with the simple GA and synchronous master-slave GA, since they prevent impediment to the progress of the faster processors by the slower ones (Cantú-Paz, 1997; Kandil & El-Rayes, 2006).

The effect of the configuration of the network of processors on the performance of the master-slave GAs was examined by Fogarty and Huang (1991). They found that there is no considerable change in performance by changing the specification of the network. Although they improved the speed of the algorithm, they demonstrated that the communication overhead prevents more increase in speed.



**Figure 2-14: Master-slave parallel GA (Kandil & El-Rayes, 2006)**

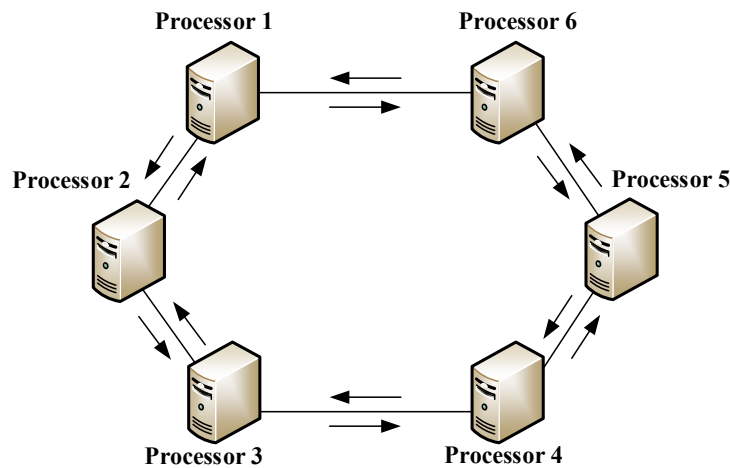
However, the research of Abramson and Abela (1992) showed limited improvement in speed of the GA by using a shared-memory computer. Abramson et al. (1993) made a significant speed-up by adding a distributed-memory machine with 16 processors to their tests. They also illustrated that any additional processors will lead to a significant degradation in speed because of the growth in communication overhead. Hauser and Männer (1994) compared the performance of three parallel computers with different number of processors and found that the computer with very low

communication overhead (6 processors) had the best speed (Cantú-Paz, 1997). The GA operators can be also paralyzed by dividing the population and distributing them among processors to implement crossover and mutation on them. However, sending and receiving individuals may take more time than performing these operations without using parallel processors due to the simplicity of their implementation (Cantú-Paz, 1997). The main advantages of these algorithms are the similarity with the simple GA, the easy implementation, and a major improvement in performance in many cases (Cantú-Paz & Goldberg, 2000).

### **2.10.2 Multiple-deme Parallel GAs**

The most popular parallel GAs are multi-deme (or multiple population) parallel GAs which were firstly studied by Grosso (1985). In this type of parallel GAs the population is divided into subpopulations called *demes*, and each processor works independently in a nonhierarchical fashion to generate these subpopulations, then to evaluate and evolve them. Thus, there is no need for synchronized communications as they are important in the case of synchronous global parallel GAs, which results in more time saving by elimination of delay caused by slower processors that impede the progress of the faster processors. Figure 2-15 shows the multiple-deme parallel GAs paradigm. By sharing the best solutions in each deme with other neighboring processors, the independent evolution of the demes will be compensated, which is called *migration* process. The migration rate and the migration interval are two setup parameters of this process. The former determines what percentage of the top ranked solutions in each subpopulation should be exchanged with remaining processors, and the latter defines the frequency of the migration process (Kandil & El-Rayes, 2006).

Migration is used to keep diversity in demes to prevent early convergence; hence, the solutions generated by the algorithm are mature and with high quality. There are two types of migration in multi-deme parallel GAs, synchronous which determines the constant intervals for exchanging individuals between demes, and asynchronous to apply migration when some changes, such as convergence, occur.



**Figure 2-15: Multiple-deme/population parallel GA (Cantú-Paz, 1997)**

The main three factors that affect the migration of individuals, and thus the performance of the parallel GAs are: the number and size of the subpopulations, the connectivity between demes which is called *topology* that affects the performance of the algorithm by defining the speed of broadcasting of good individuals among demes, the migration rate, and the frequency of migrations (Cantú-Paz, 1997). Grosso's finding (1985) demonstrated that smaller demes spread good traits (better fitness values) faster than the larger ones. On the other hand, he found that the isolated demes produce low quality solutions in comparison with the single large panmictic population, which is a population with random mating within it, with no evidence of the selection for better fitness values. In the case that the migration rate is low, the demes behave like isolated islands and

probe independently all regions of the search space; thus, the quality of the solutions is same as the isolated demes. At intermediate migration rates, the solutions are similar to that of the panmictic population; therefore, all the individuals are potential recombination parents. Hence, there is a critical migration rate below which the isolation of demes block the performance of the algorithm, and above which the solutions will be the same as the panmictic population. These results were also confirmed by Tanese (1987). As a result, it is important to find this critical rate for the migration.

Petty et al. (1987) examined a parallel GA which copied the best individuals of each deme to all other neighbor demes to have a good mixture of individuals. They reached to the same results of Grosso (1985) that a high level of communication results in generating solutions of the same quality of the GA with the panmictic population. Tanese (1989) performed exhaustive tests to compare the performance of a serial GA and parallel GAs with and without communication. She concluded that the multi-deme GAs produce solutions with the same quality as a serial GA when there is no communication between demes. She also found that communication can considerably improve the quality of the final population, and even better performance than a serial GA in some cases. Her findings were confirmed by the research of Belding (1995), which showed the impact of migration on better finding of the global optimum solutions in comparison with the completely isolated demes without any communication (Cantú-Paz, 1997).

There are various names of the multiple-deme parallel GAs such as *distributed* that shows the distribution of the population on several processors, *coarse-grained* due to their high demand for communication, and *island* parallel GAs which refers to the usage of isolated demes (Munawar et al., 2008).

### **2.10.2.1 Multiple-population Coarse-grained GAs**

The coarse-grained parallel GA uses number of processors to perform the multi-objective optimization simultaneously without any need for the manager processor to manage them (Cantú-Paz, 1997). Mühlenbein et al. (1991) matured the coarse-grained parallel GAs by using a local optimizer in these algorithms to find the global optimum solutions of very large problems and complex functions. Davis et al. (1994) found that the performance of the parallel GAs can be measured more accurately if the speed-up is to be measured based on the time required to reach a certain fixed quality rather than the time needed to hit a specified number of generations (Cantú-Paz, 1997).

The similarity and simplicity of converting serial (conventional) GAs to multi-deme GAs, and the availability of coarse-grained parallel computers are the main reasons of the popularity of these parallel algorithms. While the speed of these parallel GAs is higher than the simple GAs due to the fact that smaller demes converge faster, they generate less quality solutions (Cantú-Paz, 1997).

### **2.10.3 Single Population Fine-grained Parallel GAs**

Fine-grained parallel GAs generate only one spatially-distributed population with limited interactions among individuals. The fitness evaluation is performed in parallel in discrete time steps. The GAs operations are limited to overlapping neighbors, subsequently, the good solutions are slowly shared within the entire population (Li & Kirley, 2002). One example of this type of parallel GAs is called ASPARAGOS (Asynchronous Parallel Genetic Algorithm Optimization Strategy) which was introduced by Gorges-Schleuter (1989a, 1989b) and Mühlenbein (1989a, 1989b). ASPARAGOS was accepted as an effective optimization tool which was successful to

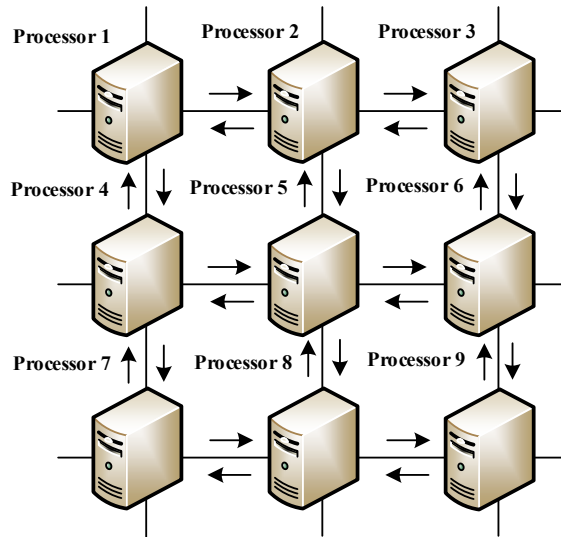
solve some difficult combinatorial optimization problems. Since most of parallel computers have the processing elements connected within a 2-Dimensional grid, it is usual to use this topology for placing individuals in fine-grained parallel GAs. Therefore, Manderick and Spiessens (1989) developed a fine-grained parallel GA with the 2-D grid topology. They discovered that the performance of the algorithm decreases by increasing the size of the neighborhood. This paradigm is shown in Figure 2-16.

Different structures of the individuals of the fine-grained parallel GAs were tested by Schwehm (1992) and Andersson and Ferris (1994). Tamaki and Nishikawa (1992) used fine-grained parallel GAs to solve a very popular problem in GAs literature, the job shop scheduling problem, in order to examine the performance of these parallel algorithms in difficult application problems. In addition, some papers compared the fine- and coarse-grained parallel GAs. In some cases the former showed a better performance and in others the latter outperformed the fine-grained parallel GAs. This contradiction is due to the fact that the comparisons cannot be done under completely the same terms; hence, the two parallel algorithms should be compared for particular criteria such as the quality of the solutions or the processing time (Cantú-Paz, 1997).

#### **2.10.4 Hierarchical Parallel GAs**

The last type of the parallel GAs is called *hierarchical* parallel GAs which combines two methods of parallelizing GAs. One method increases the complexity of the already complicated parallel GAs and the other one maintains the same degree of complexity as one of their components. Multiple-population algorithms form the upper level of most of these parallel GAs, and, fine-grained or master-slave GAs are used at the lower level of the hierarchical parallel GAs to take advantage of each of these parallel GAs in order to have better performance.





**Figure 2-16: Fine-grained parallel GAs paradigm (Sivanandam & Deepa, 2008)**

For instance, the mixed parallel GA developed by Gruau (1994) has multiple demes; each of them works as a fine-grained parallel GA with 2-D grid topology. Lin et al. (1997) compared their proposed hybrid parallel GA with the simple GA, a fine-grained GA, and some multi-deme GAs. The hierarchical parallel GA outperformed all the other types of GA for the job shop scheduling problem (Cantú-Paz, 1997). Also, for complex applications that need a great amount of computation time, the hybrid parallel GAs with master-slave GAs at their lower level result in less computation time in comparison with a master-slave parallel GA or a multi-deme GA (Bianchini & Brown, 1993).

A third method of developing hybrid parallel GAs is based on using multi-deme GAs at both the upper and the lower levels (Sivanandam & Deepa, 2008). Cantú-Paz (1997) pointed out that the execution time needed for the hierarchical parallel GAs is less than any of their components alone. He mentioned that the speed-up reached by the hybrid parallel GAs is equivalent to the multiplication of the speed-up of each of their components when work separately.

## 2.11 Parallel and Distributed Simulation

The main issue regarding the use of parallel and distributed simulation is about the execution distribution of the simulation program over multiple computers. In parallel simulation, the simulation program is executed on multiprocessor computing platforms with multiple Central Processing Units (CPUs) with frequent interaction between them. On the other hand, loosely coupled systems (i.e., geographically distributed computers which are interconnected by a wide area network such as the Internet) are used for simulation execution in distributed simulation; and in this case the interactions between systems are much slower than the parallel simulation method. These simulation systems are mainly used in two areas: first for analysis purposes such as assessing alternative design options or control policies of a complex system like air traffic network. The second use of these systems is for the creation of virtual environments with embedded humans and/or hardware devices. Training, entertainment (e.g., video games), and device evaluation tests are some examples of using distributed virtual environments. The main advantages of parallel and distributed simulation systems are (Perumalla, 2006; Nicol & Fujimoto, 1994): (1) Reduction of the execution time of analytic simulations by the simultaneous execution of many sub-computations created of a large simulation computation division; (2) Real-time execution of simulations used for virtual environments to have realistic representation of the actual system; (3) Convenience in the creation and reduction in travel costs due to ability of humans and/or device interactions as they actually act via distributed virtual environments; (4) Easy interaction of simulators executing on machines from different companies; and (5) Increase in failures tolerance due to performing simulation on multi processors rather than only one processor in traditional simulation tools.

There are three separate research communities working in the parallel and distributed simulation systems area which are the HPC community, the defense community, and the Internet and computer gaming community. The goal of HPC community is to speed-up the simulation programs execution time by using multiple CPUs which can be achieved by performing synchronization algorithms. Conservative synchronization algorithms were proposed firstly by Bryant (1977), and Chandy and Misra (1979), and optimistic synchronization techniques such as the *Time Wrap* algorithm (Jefferson, 1985) are the main synchronization algorithms used in this area (Fujimoto, 2001).

### **2.11.1 Parallel Simulation of Construction Processes**

Little work is done regarding using parallel or distributed simulation techniques for construction processes. Kartam and Flood (2000) compared the impact of using different alternative approaches, including entity oriented parallel algorithm, recursive neural network method, and the conventional activity oriented serial algorithm, in order to speed-up the simulation procedure of construction processes within a multiprocessor computing environment. They investigated the performance of the above mentioned approaches by measuring the average time required to advance a construction simulation model from one state to the next state. The results showed that the neural network approach reached the maximum reduction in the simulation computation time among the alternatives. Although, the neural network implementation illustrated the best performance, 2100 parallel processors were needed to perform this method in comparison with only 9 processors used in the parallel-algorithmic approach. Therefore, they concluded that the parallel-algorithmic approach provides acceptable trade-off between expediting the simulation procedure of construction processes and the number of processors required.

### **2.11.2 Parallel Optimization of Construction Processes**

Kandil and El-Rayes (2006) investigated the efficiency and effectiveness of resource utilization optimization in large-scale construction projects by using parallel multi-objective GA. The proposed method contains four main modules, namely: (1) multi-objective optimization module, (2) global parallel GA module, (3) coarse-grained parallel GA module, and (4) performance evaluation module. The performance of the method was examined using the elapsed time and quality of solutions metrics. Their search demonstrated that the framework can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the GA and significantly reduce the processing time achieved by using limited number of processors.

In order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the multi-objective optimization algorithms (MOAs), Kandil et al. (2010) recommended some methods to enhance the robustness of MOAs by reviewing the work of other researchers in the field of construction multi-objective optimization. NSGA-II as a multi-objective optimization GA and weighted integer programming as analytical optimization technique were compared in the first case study. The results illustrated the better performance of the weighted integer programming in comparison with the NSGA-II in terms of efficiency (computation time) and quality of the optimal solutions. In the second case study of construction resource optimization for large-scale infrastructure projects, NSGA-II was integrated with parallel computing paradigms including global and coarse-grained parallelization approaches. The effect of these parallel platforms on the performance of MOGA were analyzed for different number of processors (1 to 50 with an increment of 5 processors). Total computation time and the number of obtained optimum solutions are defined as efficiency and effectiveness of the parallel computing paradigms, respectively. However, the coarse-grained approach achieved a higher

efficiency in comparison with the global parallel paradigm. The research outcomes demonstrated a tradeoff between the efficiency and effectiveness of the global parallel approach when the number of parallel processors increases. On the other hand, the global parallel method showed constant effectiveness while increasing its efficiency.

### **2.11.3 Parallel Simulation-based Optimization of Construction Processes**

Yang et al. (2012) combined Multi-Objective Particle Swarm Optimization (MOPSO) algorithm with Monte-Carlo simulation for the bridge maintenance planning and implemented the proposed framework in a parallel computing platform in order to reduce the computational burden associated with the problem. Master-slave, island, and diffusion are the three parallel programming paradigms used in their research. They created a stochastic simulation model of the bridge maintenance project and validated the proposed method by comparing the results obtained from the MOPSO algorithm with the NSGA-II in terms of convergence and diversity of the Pareto front solutions by considering the *hypervolume* indicator. Research findings illustrated better performance for the proposed MOPOS algorithm over the NSGA-II for all five independent runs. Also, they used 40-core cluster to evaluate their parallel platforms. Super-linear speedups were attained using island and diffusion paradigms. In addition, all three parallel paradigms improved the solution quality when the number of cores was increased; however, the island platform outperformed the other two from the solution quality point of view within restricted time.

## **2.12 Summary and Conclusions**

This chapter reviewed the concepts, techniques, and the main construction methods that are used in the current research. The literature review included details of two bridge construction methods,

and the information about several simulation tools and optimization techniques. Furthermore, the basics of HPC, including details about different parallel GAs paradigms were discussed.

Based on the literature, the integration of simulation models with optimization techniques leads to an advancement in the decision making process. Therefore, DES is selected in this research as a simulation method due to its emerging popularity in the construction industry. Moreover, NSGA-II is selected as the optimization engine for the calculation of the optimal values of the decision variables in the proposed method due to its capability to estimate the near optimum solutions. In addition, HPC is adopted to decrease the computational efforts required in the simulation-based optimization problems for bridge construction methods which is missing in previous research works.

## CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

As mentioned in Chapter 2, there are several special purpose tools to implement the simulation of construction processes with different advantages, limitations, and capabilities. Although simulating construction processes using these tools is very easy to learn and to use, the combination of these tools with optimization techniques is difficult and an integration platform is needed. For example, Stroboscope as a Windows-based simulation tool needs developing a module to be combined with the optimization tools in order to solve simulation-based optimization problems. On the other hand, these simulation tools are not usually compatible with Linux environment which is used in most of the massive parallel computing systems or clusters. Therefore, the lack of easy interaction of simulation and optimization engines in the same integrated environment, which also supports their execution on the operating system of the clusters, is the main motivation of this research.

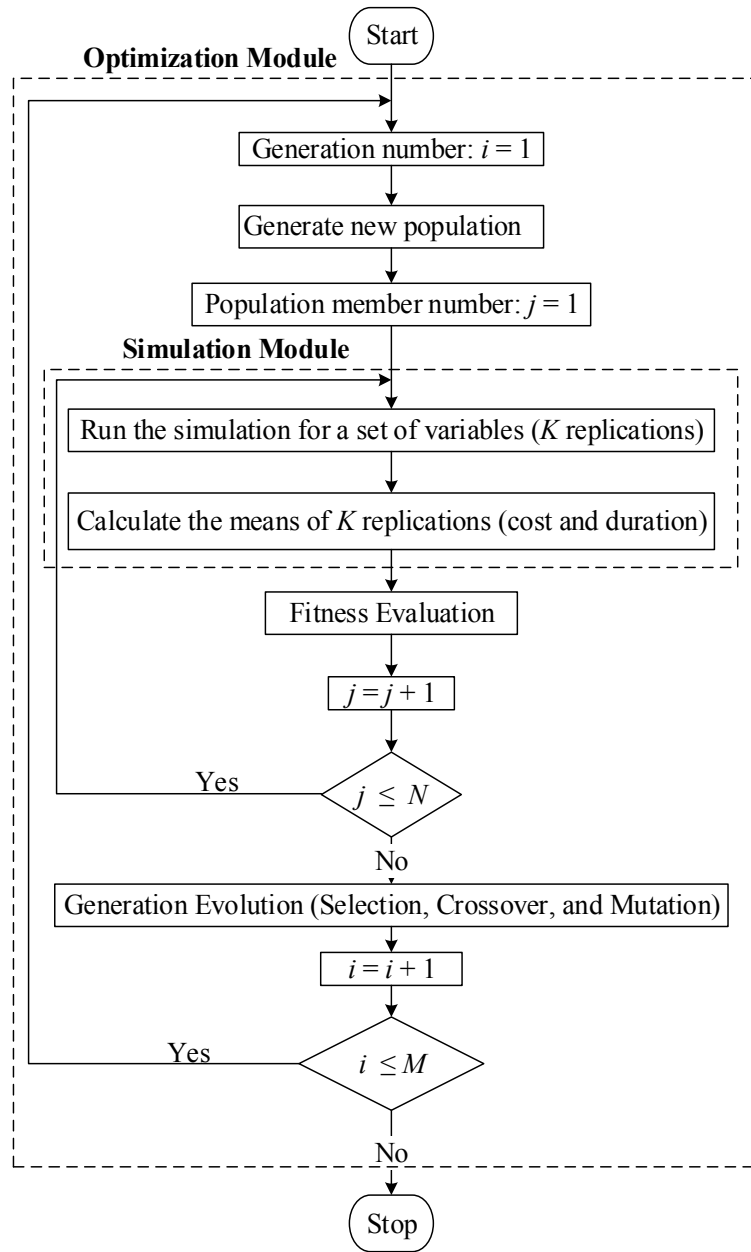
In this chapter, the research methodology employed to develop a simulation-based multi-objective optimization model for precast concrete box girder bridge construction projects is presented. As discussed in the literature review, a multitude of studies have been conducted on the simulation of different bridge construction methods. This study focuses on two of those methods which are precast full span concrete box girder and precast segmental concrete box girder construction methods. The simulation models are created using SimEvents module of MATLAB *Simulink Library* which is a general purpose simulation tool. The integration procedure of the DES models with an optimization algorithm (NSGA-II), and finally, the application of HPC are discussed in

the following sections. One of advantages of using MATLAB is its capability in parallel computing, which is not applicable in most of the special-purpose simulation tools. This parallel computing results in reducing the processing time in comparison with conventional integration solutions. The proposed model is also validated by comparing the optimal solutions obtained from NSGA-II optimization algorithm with those obtained from fmGA which is another type of GAs (Mawlana & Hammad, 2013b).

### **3.2 The Proposed Simulation-based Optimization Framework**

Decision makers are usually concerned with both the modeling methodology and finding the most appropriate way of resource usage to complete a project successfully within the budget and time constraints. Therefore, the integration of simulation and optimization is very important factor in the construction processes. Figure 3-1 depicts the integration procedure of the DES and NSGA-II. The combination procedure is done by defining the simulation model's resources as decision variables for the optimization program which selects the optimum value for each resource considering an acceptable range for the variables. The optimization algorithm starts with creating the initial population of size  $N$  in the first generation. Each member of the population goes through the simulation model. In the probabilistic mode of the simulation model,  $K$  replications are performed for each set of variables, and the mean values of the objective functions (i.e., the total cost and duration of the bridge construction processes) are calculated based on the results obtained from  $K$  replications.





**Figure 3-1: Integration of DES and NSGA-II**

Direct and indirect costs of the equipment and crews, and mobilization cost are the main elements of the total cost of the project (Eq. 3.1). Eqs. 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 calculate these factors. The total duration of the construction process is equal to the time required for casting either the bridge spans or segments and erecting them to their final positions. The total number of working days and the

total project duration are estimated using Eq. 3.6 and Eq. 3.7, respectively (Mawlana & Hammad, 2013b).

$$\text{Total cost of the project} = \text{Direct cost} + \text{Indirect cost} + \text{Mobilization cost} \quad (3.1)$$

$$\text{Mobilization cost} = 2 \times \sum_{i=1}^n E_i \times N_i + \sum_{k=1}^m C_k \times M_k \quad (3.2)$$

$$\text{Direct cost of Crews} = \sum_{k=1}^m RC_k \times C_k \times TC_k \times \text{Cost adjustment factor} \quad (3.3)$$

$$\text{Direct cost of Equipment} = \sum_{i=1}^n RE_i \times E_i \times TE_i \quad (3.4)$$

$$\text{Indirect cost} = \text{Total project duration} \times \text{Daily indirect cost} \quad (3.5)$$

$$\text{Total Working Days} = \frac{\text{Total simulation time}}{\text{Working hours per day} \times 60} \quad (3.6)$$

$$\text{Total Project Duration} = \text{Total Working Days} + \left\lfloor \frac{\text{Total working days}}{\text{Working days per week}} \right\rfloor \times (7 - \text{Working Days per Week}) \quad (3.7)$$

where  $n$  shows the total number of different equipment types used in the project;  $E_i$  is the number of equipment of type  $i$  used in the project;  $N_i$  is the mobilization cost of an equipment of type  $i$ ;  $m$  shows the total number of different crew types used in the project;  $C_k$  is the number of crews of type  $k$  used in the project;  $M_k$  is the mobilization cost of a crew of type  $k$ ; the hourly cost of an equipment of type  $i$  and a crew of type  $k$  are represented by  $RE_i$  and  $RC_k$ , respectively; Also, the number of working hours of equipment of type  $i$  and crew of type  $k$  in the project are shown by  $TE_i$  and  $TC_k$ , respectively.  $\left\lfloor \frac{\text{Total working days}}{\text{Working days per week}} \right\rfloor$  demonstrates the floor brackets which rounds number to the lower integer (Mawlana & Hammad, 2013b).

Table 3-1 shows the overtime policy (OP) used in the simulation models adapted from (Orabi et al., 2009; RSMMeans Engineering Department, 2011). These policies differ from each other based

on the number of working days per week and number of shifts per day. Working overtime affects the productivity and this effect is measured based on the average loss of productivity for a four-week period (i.e., productivity adjustment factor). Also, working overtime has impact on the regular wages of the workers (i.e., cost adjustment factor). These factors are used to adjust the durations of different tasks and their associated cost based on the selected overtime policy (Golden, 1998; Mawlana & Hammad, 2013b).

**Table 3-1: Overtime Policy (Mawlana & Hammad, 2013b; RSMMeans Engineering Department, 2011)**

Policy	Working Calendar	Shifts/Day	Productivity Adjustment Factor (%)	Cost Adjustment Factor (%)
1	8 hours/5days	1	100.00	100.00
2	9 hours/5days	1	96.25	111.10
3	10 hours/5days	1	91.25	120.00
4	11 hours/5days	1	81.25	127.30
5	12 hours/5days	1	76.25	133.30
6	8 hours/6days	1	96.25	116.70
7	9 hours/6days	1	92.50	125.90
8	10 hours/6days	1	87.50	133.30
9	11 hours/6days	1	78.75	139.4
10	12 hours/6days	1	73.75	144.40
11	8 hours/7days	1	88.75	128.60
12	9 hours/7days	1	83.75	136.50
13	10 hours/7days	1	78.75	142.90
14	11 hours/7days	1	72.50	148.10
15	12 hours/7days	1	68.75	152.40

After calculating the fitness values of all members of the population, the selection, crossover, and mutation operations are performed on the entire population. This procedure is repeated for all the members of the population in all generations until the convergence criterion is met (i.e., the specified number of generations,  $M$ ). After that, the optimization terminates and the optimal solutions as a Pareto front are obtained. The same process is applicable in the deterministic mode with the difference that due to the nature of the deterministic mode, there are no replications in this mode.

### **3.3 Using DES within SimEvents**

As mentioned in Section 2.5.2, the need for simulation models is felt more and more in order to model the uncertainties associated with the construction projects (Yang et al. 2012). As a result, simulation-based optimization framework is developed in this study to enhance the decision making process of the bridge construction projects. According to Section 2.7, Monte-Carlo and DES simulations are two popular methods used for the simulation of construction processes. DES models can be either deterministic or probabilistic based on the definition of the activities' durations within the simulation model. In this study, the simulation models are created using DES technique and both deterministic and probabilistic modes of the models are investigated.

As stated in Section 2.5.2, there are several simulation tools to implement the simulation of construction processes with different advantages, limitations, and capabilities for a variety of purposes. In this research study, the simulation models are created by using the SimEvents module of the Simulink toolbox of MATLAB R2014a which is based on DES method.

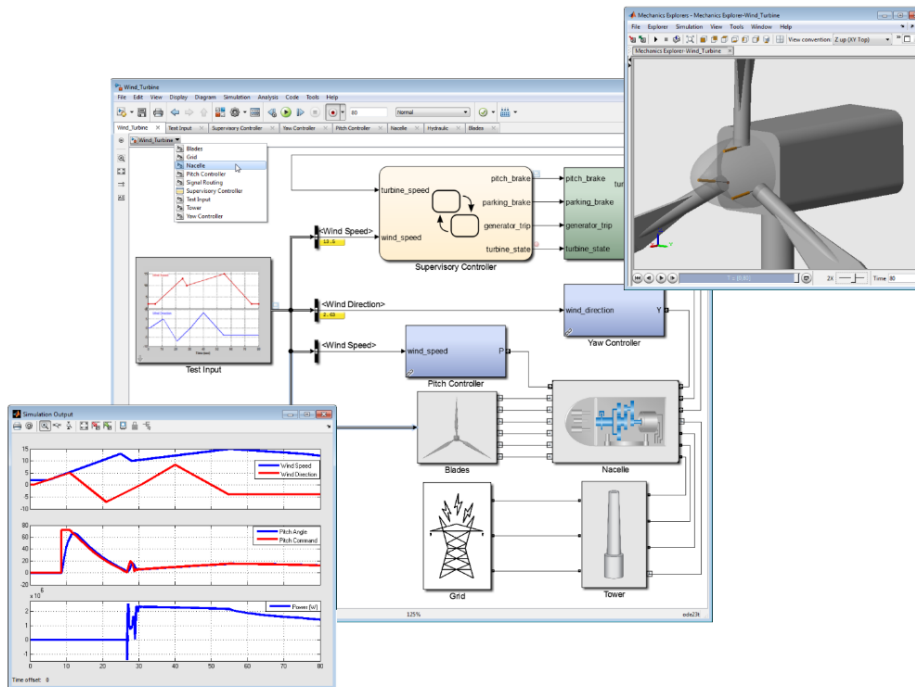
Simulink (MathWorks, 2014d) is a graphical block diagramming tool for modeling, simulating, and analyzing multi-domain systems. It consists of a set of customizable block libraries and solvers for modeling and simulating dynamic systems based on the required purposes (Reedy & Lunzman, 2011). The main capabilities of Simulink are building models for different purposes, simulating the model, analyzing simulation results by debugging the simulation, managing projects, and connecting the model to the hardware for real-time testing. This tool is embedded within MATLAB which makes the integration with the rest of MATLAB environment easy in order to incorporate MATLAB algorithms into the Simulink models and export simulation results to the

MATLAB workspace for further analysis, such as optimization. Simulink is widely used for designing control systems and digital signal processing, simulating communications systems, image processing, modeling and simulating embedded systems, and designing/optimizing mechatronics systems. For instance, Figure 3-2 shows a wind turbine modeling using the SimPowerSystem tool in Simulink (MathWorks, 2014c).

The SimEvents module of the Simulink toolbox (MathWorks, 2013b) is used as a DES engine to model event-driven communications between model components in order to analyze and optimize different characteristics of the system's performance. This simulation tool is usually used for designing distributed control systems, hardware architectures, manufacturing systems, and communication networks for aerospace or transport systems, and electronics applications. Event-driven processes, such as different stages of a manufacturing process, are also simulated using SimEvents to find the required resources and determine shortcomings (MathWorks, 2014b). Entities are used to represent discrete items within a SimEvents model, such as trains in a rail network. Data carried by entities are known as attributes which include various information about the entities, such as the number of the trucks, truck speed, etc. for an earthmoving simulation example. The generation, movement, and processing of entities cause events, such as the arrival of a truck to the dumping area (Valigura et al., 2009).

SimEvents can be also used for simulating construction processes since it has the components required to model different elements of these processes (e.g., queues, activities, servers, etc.). The integration between SimEvents and Simulink/MATLAB enables SimEvents to take advantage of the wide capabilities of Simulink and MATAB such as visualization capabilities, optimization techniques, data processing, and computation tools (Clune et al., 2006). SimEvents libraries

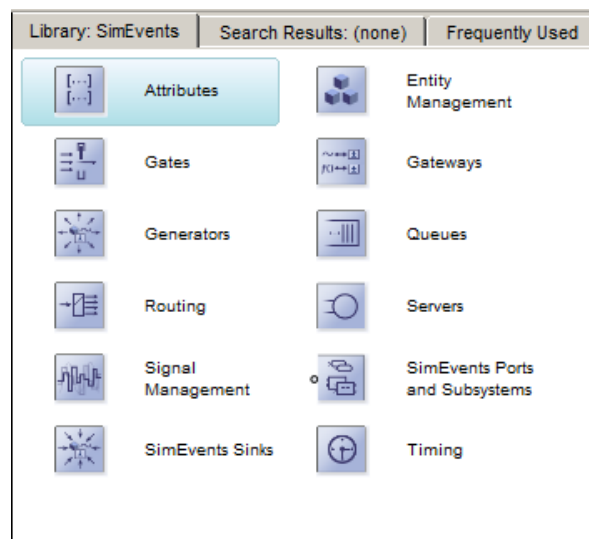
include several predefined and customizable blocks with different functionalities which are used to precisely model various systems (MathWorks, 2013b). The communication among blocks is based on signals in Simulink, while it is based on both entities and signals in SimEvents (Clune et al., 2006). Figure 3-3 depicts the SimEvents components which are (Clune et al., 2006; MathWorks, 2013b):



**Figure 3-2: Simulink model of a wind turbine (MathWorks, 2014c)**

**(1) Attributes:** Blocks that assign data to the entities. Each attribute has its specified name and value; **(2) Entity Management:** Blocks that are used to create one entity of several entities arriving concurrently to the *Entity Combiner* block or to divide a composite entity to its components by *Entity Splitter* block; **(3) Gates:** Blocks that control the flow of the entities to certain blocks by enabling or disabling the entities' access; **(4) Gateways:** Blocks that convert the event-based function call or signal to the time-based function call or signal and vice versa; **(5) Generators:**

Blocks that generate the entities, signals (random numbers form specified distributions), or function-calls (i.e., events that call Simulink blocks). The latter enables the communication between SimEvents and Simulink; **(6) Queues:** Blocks that store the entities in sequence until accessing to a resource; **(7) Routing:** Blocks that control the movement of the entities while accessing to the queues and servers; **(8) Servers:** Blocks that delay any number of entities, serve up to  $N$  entities, or serve one entity for a period of time using *Infinite Server*, *N-Server*, or *Single Server* blocks, respectively. In other words, they model different types of resources; **(9) Signal Management:** Blocks that manipulate the event-based signals to delay or resample them based on the events, not time; **(10) SimEvents Ports and Subsystems:** Blocks that represent a system containing a subset of blocks or code within another system; **(11) SimEvents Sinks:** Blocks that plot data from the attribute of entities, transfer event-based signal to the MATLAB workspace, terminate an entity path, and plot data from signals; and **(12) Timing:** Blocks that measure the elapsed time between events or events happening times by assigning *Start Timer* and *Read Timer* blocks to the entities.



**Figure 3-3: SimEvents components**

### 3.3.1 Comparison of SimEvents and Stroboscope Simulation Tools

Stroboscope is a general-purpose simulation system with high programming ability used for the detailed modeling of complex construction processes. This simulation language can also be used to develop special-purpose simulation tools. Stroboscope supports ACD and AS modeling paradigms, and creates simulation models at the conceptual level. Then, the details of the model are determined using its programming capabilities (Martinez & Ioannou, 1999). Stroboscope is one of the CYCLONE's extensions, but it is not based on the assumptions considered for simplifying purposes in CYCLONE. In addition, there are five new nodes and four special types of links in Stroboscope in comparison with CYCLONE (Martinez & Ioannou, 1999).










Simulation models created by Stroboscope consist of nodes connected by links which show the flow and the type of the resources in the model. There are two types of nodes, “*Activities*” and “*Queues*” where resources spend their time actively and passively, respectively. *Queues* are modeled as a circle with a slash. They store inactive resources to be used by activities. The building blocks used in creating the simulation models via Stroboscope and SimEvents are shown in Table 3-2.

*Combi*, *normal*, and *consolidator* are the three types of activities which need resources for a period of time (i.e., the durations of activities) to accomplish their tasks. *Combi* activities are activated when the required resources are available in the preceding *queues*; therefore, *combi* activities are preceded only by the *queues*. However, the *normal* activities start immediately after finishing other tasks by obtaining resources from the preceding tasks. The former is represented by a trapezoidal shape and the latter by a rectangular shape in Stroboscope. When certain conditions are met, the



*consolidators* are used to accumulate resources or block resources flow (Martinez, 1996; Martinez & Ioannou, 1994).

**Table 3-2: Building blocks used for modeling simulation models by Stroboscope and SimEvents (Martinez, 1996; Lee et al., 2010)**

Name	Symbol		Function
	SimEvents	Stroboscope	
Normal activity	 Normal		Normal activity is activated immediately without any delay after finishing the preceding task.
Combi activity	 Combi		Combi activity is started when all required resources are available in the preceding queues.
Queue	 Queue		Stores inactive resources to be used by the Combi activities.
Consolidator activity	N.A.		Either accumulate or block the resources flow.
Link			Links connect the network elements and show the logic of the entities flow.

Each modeling element used in Stroboscope has attributes to define the behaviour of the element. The default implementation of each attribute specifies the most common behaviour of that element, which can be redefine by the user as a number or complex equations for special purposes. It also supports writing codes to tailor variables, arrays, and modeling elements. The programming capabilities of Stroboscope makes it possible to be integrated with other tools within a multi-tool decision support framework. This is done by embedding an interface which is written in high-level programming languages such as C++ (Martinez & Ioannou, 1999).

### 3.3.2 Stroboscope Simulation Model for Earthmoving Operation

A simple earthmoving operation model is developed in both Stroboscope and SimEvents to compare the modeling process in these two tools. This model was derived from the Stroboscope

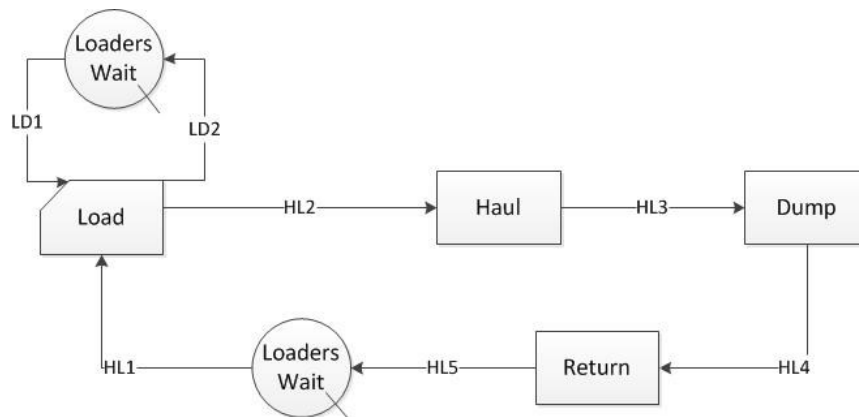
quick reference manual (Loannou & Martinez, 2006) which is shown in Figure 3-4. The loaders are loaded with soil based on their capacity, haul for the specified distance, dump the soil in a specific location, and then return to be loaded again. This cyclic procedure continues until a specified amount of soil is transported.

**Table 3-3: Input entities of the simulation model with their corresponding values**

<b>Input Entities</b>	<b>Value</b>
Quantities of Soil	100,000 m <sup>3</sup>
Number of Loaders	3
Number of Haulers	11

### 3.3.3 SimEvents Model of Earthmoving Operation

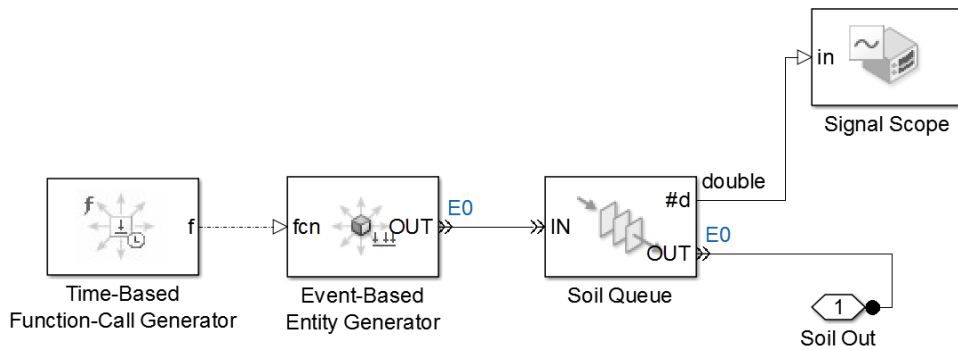
An earthmoving operation was selected to be created using SimEvents because of the simplicity of the model which helps to be familiar with the modeling procedure and capabilities of the SimEvents toolbox.



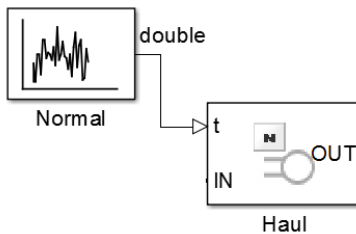
**Figure 3-4: Earth-moving operation model in Stroboscope (Adopted from Loannou & Martinez, 2006)**

In this process, loaders and haulers are used to move a certain amount of soil from one place to another; therefore, soil, loaders, and haulers are the three input entities to be defined. These entities should wait in the queues to be used when they are needed. The way of defining queues in

SimEvents is totally different from other common simulation tools such as Stroboscope. For example, there is no need to have the soil queue in Stroboscope. However, every resources has to be defined clearly in SimEvents. Queues are subsystems which contain subsets of blocks to create the entities and reserve them in the queues. Figure 3-5 illustrates how to define the soil queue subsystem in the simulation model. After modeling these queues, the main activities (i.e., load, haul, dump, and return) are created using *N-Server* blocks. To simulate the durations of each activity, *Event-Based Random Number Generator* block is used to generate random numbers based on the distribution function of the activity duration. Figure 3-6 shows the *N-Server* block for the hauling activity and its associated random number generator of the normal distribution for its duration.



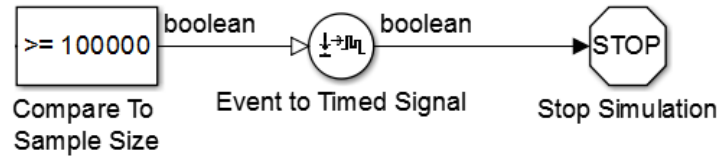
**Figure 3-5: Soil queue subsystem**



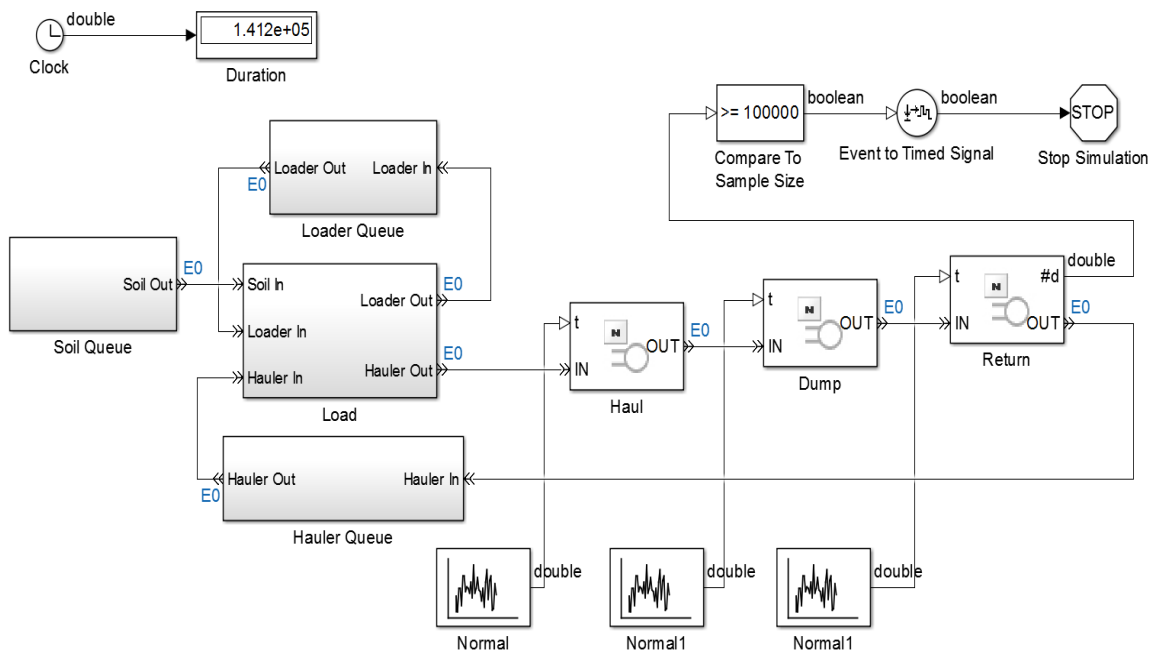
**Figure 3-6: Hauling activity and its duration distribution**

Finally, the stopping criteria which is the specified amount of soil to be moved should be modeled to stop the simulation when it reaches to that number which is done as shown in Figure 3-7. Where

the amount of soils that should be moved is 100,000 m<sup>3</sup>. Figure 3-8 demonstrates the complete model of the earth-moving operation in SimEvents.



**Figure 3-7: Stopping criteria of the earth-moving operation model**



**Figure 3-8: Complete simulation model of the earth-moving operation in SimEvent**

### 3.3.4 Comparison of SimEvents and Stroboscope Simulation Models

As mentioned in the previous section, the earthmoving operation was also modeled in the SimEvents to compare the developing procedure of the simulation process in SimEvents and Stroboscope and to compare the final results of two models to show the validity of the created model in SimEvents.

The following difficulties were faced in developing the earthmoving operation in SimEvents.

### **(1) Defining resources**

As mention in Section 3.3.3, every resources should be completely defined in SimEvents which makes the modeling process complicated and detailed-oriented; however, Stroboscope has capability to consider some resources such as soil with no need to specify queues for them.

### **(2) Access to the total duration of the construction process**

The simulation model does not automatically show the total duration of the process. This problem was solved by using the *clock* block to display the final duration and linking it to the *Discrete Event Signal to Workspace* block to export the final duration to the MATLAB workspace in order to be used in the optimization procedure. This information can be also gathered by running the simulation model in the debugging mode. However, the time of the simulation process is kept by *simulation clock* in Stroboscope. As the simulation process commences the *simulation clock* records the time automatically (Martinez, 1996).

### **(3) Retrieving information of the activities' durations**

Retrieving information related to the activities' durations is not a straightforward procedure in SimEvents. The statistics tab of the *N-server* block has "*average wait time*" to give the average time an entity spends in that particular process (e.g., load, haul, dump, and return). But for more detailed information, there is a need to define the *Timer* blocks (*Start Timer* and *Read Timer*) before and after each activity to determine how long each entity spends in a region of the model and linking them to the *Discrete Event Signal to Workspace* block which establishes numerical

values of the durations in the MATLAB workspace. Then, interpreting of extracted data is required based on what is needed in the next steps of the process for linking the simulation model to the optimization engine. On the other hand, Stroboscope has predefined command (i.e., REPORT command) in order to get various statistics about the simulated process (Martinez, 1996).

#### **(4) Defining the stopping criteria**

Defining the stopping criteria for the DES model was another challenge in the SimEvents environment. In this case, the lack of resources (soil) was considered as the stopping criteria. To stop the simulation once the resources are used up, a signal from the pool of resources (number of entities) is used to feed an appropriate signal to the *STOP* block to terminate the simulation.

For the input entities shown in Table 3-3, the results of the total duration of simulating the earthmoving operation using SimEvents and Stroboscope are 141,204 and 141,211 minutes, respectively. The results show that the created model in SimEvents is correct.

Also, other issues and the suggested solutions regarding the development of the simulation models using SimEvents as well as applying the parallel computing are discussed in Appendix G. In order to identify the most critical parts of a system which have high impact on the system's performance, profiling can be applied to optimize the performance of a system by determining the system behavior, calculating the time spent on each portion of the system (such as simulation and optimization parts), resolving the bugs of the system and optimizing the configuration of different elements of the system (Appendix F).

### **3.4 Real-valued NSGA-II**

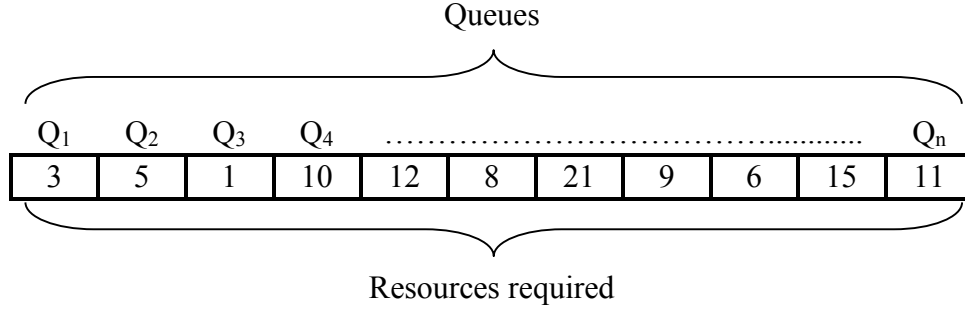
Time and cost are the most critical issues in the construction processes, which are related to each other and the success of each project depends on these two important elements. Therefore, the time-cost trade-off analysis is one of the most challenging problems for project managers, since they have to find the optimum strategy to complete the projects successfully on time and within the budget considering all other constraints.

As mentioned in Sections 2.8 and 2.9, optimization techniques are one of the popular methods for solving the construction time-cost trade-off problems. There are different encoding procedures such as binary, permutation, real, tree encoding, etc. used for converting the engineering problem into a language which can be used in optimization techniques. Therefore, choosing the encoding procedure used in the multi-objective optimization problems is one of the first challenges that the designers are faced with (Gaffney et al., 2010). The traditional GAs use a binary encoding; however, real encoding is used in many recent engineering applications due to the fact that considerable effort is required to convert a complex engineering problem into a binary representation (Gaffney et al., 2010; Michalewicz, 1996). Since real-valued GAs work directly with the real values of the variables, there is no problem with genotype-phenotype mapping which is required in the binary encoding. The former represents the binary string and the latter is the actual value of the problem variables (Deb & Kumar, 1995). Therefore, the fact that there is no need of applying any modifications on the variables vector makes this type of GAs more efficient for real functions optimization (Iba & Noman, 2012).

Real-valued GAs were proposed by Wright (1991) by using the real-valued representation for chromosomes in the GAs instead of the bit strings to take advantage of the numerical function optimization in comparison with the binary encoding (Köksoy & Yalcinoz, 2008). Therefore, unlike standard GAs which use binary strings, real numbers are used as genes in the real-valued GAs; thus, the solution of the optimization problem is represented as a real vector  $\{x_1, x_2, x_3, \dots, x_n\}$ . There are two basic approaches in order to deal with this type of GAs. In first approach, real numbers are mapped to the binary strings of fixed length, and then, standard binary-string GAs are used to solve the problem. In the second approach, which is used in this study according to the previous paragraphs, the GA's standard operators (i.e., crossover and mutation) should be modified to be used in real-valued GAs (Iba & Noman, 2012).

In this study, by specifying the upper and lower ranges of the design variables, the GA may choose any number within these ranges. For example, for the number of trailers with the range of one to 20, any number between 1 and 20 (e.g., 2.56) could be selected by GA which is not applicable in reality. On the other words, the search space is continuous which makes the optimization procedure more time consuming. In order to enhance the performance of the MOGA from time and logic points of view, only integer numbers within the specified bound range, which are represented in the queues, should be chosen by the algorithm since they are the required resources for performing the bridge construction method. Therefore, real-valued GA is used in this research to apply this constraint. The number of queues within the simulation model that are going to be optimized specifies the length of the chromosomes, and the value of each gene represents the number of required resources. Figure 3-9 illustrates the structure of the chromosomes in the GA used in this study.





**Figure 3-9: Chromosome structure of the real-valued GA**

Since crossover is the fundamental operator for creating new children in real-valued GAs, various crossover operators are developed for this kind of GAs, including the blend crossover (BLX- $\alpha$ ) (Eshelman & Schaffer, 1993), the arithmetic crossover (Michalewicz, 1994), the simulated binary crossover (SBX) (Deb & Agrawal, 1995), the unimodal normal distribution crossover (UNDX) (Ono & Kobayashi, 1997), the simplex crossover (SPX) (Tsutsui et al., 1999), the parent centric crossover (PCX) (Deb et al., 2002), etc. (Iba & Noman, 2012).

Arithmetic crossover is selected in this research because of its simplicity to perform. This crossover operator linearly combines two parents' chromosomes to produce two new children. If  $\lambda_1$ , and  $\lambda_2$  are random numbers generated during the crossover operation, two new children are created according to Eq. 3.8 and Eq. 3.9:

$$Child_1 = \lambda_1 Parent_1 + \lambda_2 Parent_2 \tag{3.8}$$

$$Child_2 = \lambda_1 Parent_2 + \lambda_2 Parent_1 \tag{3.9}$$

Where  $\lambda_1 + \lambda_2 = 1$  and  $\lambda_1, \lambda_2 > 0$ . These restrictions result in a *convex* combination, on the other hand, *affine* combination would arise if there are no restrictions on  $\lambda$ 's (Venkataraman, 2009). In this method, two real-valued individuals are taken from the population and the arithmetic crossover is carried out to create new candidates (Michalewicz, 1996).

As mentioned before, the design variables in this study are the number of different resources used in the bridge construction method. Table 3-4 shows the list of these variables for the precast full-span concrete box girder bridge construction method, along with their minimum and maximum values.

**Table 3-4: List of decision variables in multi-objective optimization problem (Mawlana & Hammad, 2013b)**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Decision Variables</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Increment</b>
1	Number of trailers (NT)	1	20	1
2	Precast yard distance (PYD)	10	100	10
3	Number of cage mold (NCM)	1	20	1
4	Number of inner molds (NIM)	1	20	1
5	Number of outer molds (NOM)	1	20	1
6	Number of preparation crews (NPPCr)	1	20	1
7	Number of pre-stressing crews (NPRCr)	1	20	1
8	Number of steel crews (NSCr)	1	20	1
9	Number of casting crews (NCC)	1	20	1
10	Number of storage capacity (NSC)	1	50	5
11	Number of storage time (hr) (NST)	1	84	1

Also, the overtime policy and the type of cure method that are used in the project are selected by the optimization algorithm. In this study, 15 overtime policies (Table 3-1) and two cure methods are considered. The two cure methods have durations of 600 and 1200 minutes.

In Table 3-5, the first and second parents (solutions) represent two combinations of resources. Considering  $\lambda_1$  and  $\lambda_2$  as 0.6 and 0.4, respectively, the results of producing new children with different resource combinations as illustrated in Table 3-5.

Applying a normal distribution of changes to genes (Gaussian noise) is one of the most straightforward ways of operating the real-valued GA's mutation. In Gaussian mutation, a random number generated from a Gaussian distribution (which is centered on zero with a predefined

standard deviation) is added to each gene (real number). The new mutated gene is then replaced in the chromosome (Hinterding, 1995). The uniform distribution (UD) is another mutation method used in real-valued GAs (Iba & Noman, 2012).

**Table 3-5: Arithmetic crossover operator for real-valued GAs**

<b>Decision Variables</b>	<b>Parent 1</b>	<b>Parent 2</b>	<b>Child 1</b>	<b>Child 2</b>
Number of trailers (NT)	2	4	3	3
Precast yard distance (PYD)	20	60	36	44
Number of cage mold (NCM)	6	15	10	11
Number of inner molds (NIM)	6	8	7	7
Number of outer molds (NOM)	5	15	9	11
Number of preparation crews (NPPCr)	1	1	1	1
Number of pre-stressing crews (NPRCr)	1	1	1	1
Number of steel crews (NSCr)	5	8	6	7
Number of casting crews (NCC)	2	2	2	2
Number of storage capacity (NSC)	25	40	31	34
Number of storage time (hr) (NST)	15	13	14	14

$\lambda_1 = 0.6$  &  $\lambda_2 = 0.4$

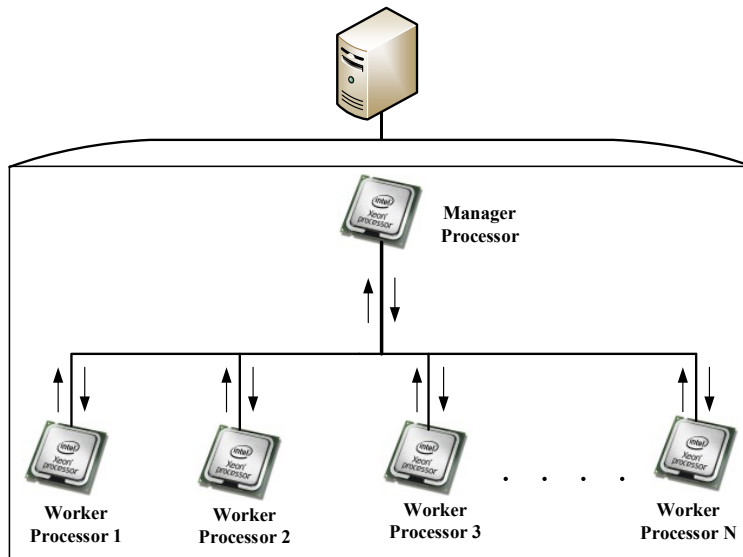
### 3.5 Parallel Computing Approach

Large number of resources required in complex and large scale construction projects, such as bridge construction processes results in a very large search space. Therefore, due to the huge number of calculations resulting from this large search space, multiple objective functions, large number of replications performed in the stochastic simulation model, and the lack of the GA ability in fast convergence to the optimum results in complex and large scale construction projects, there is a need for parallel computing in order to reduce the computational time. According to the Section 2.10, the master-slave (or global) parallelization and coarse-grained parallel GAs are two main parallel paradigms usually used when solving an optimization problem in order to improve the performance of the solver. In this research, the former is used as a parallel computing technique to decrease the computation time and to efficiently use the full capacity of the computer as shown in Figure 3-10.

There are basically three important terms in parallel computing that should be defined and distinguished carefully. These terms are node, CPU, and core. A node is an object within a network, such as several nodes available within a cluster system. CPU is an execution part of a computer that performs software programs. Cluster systems may have many CPUs in each node. An individual processor of a computer that actually performs programs called core. Usually, each CPU has one core in desktop computers; however, in a cluster each CPU may contains many cores which is called as a multiprocessor system (Tennessee, 2014). The last two terms are interchangeable; however, in this research the usage of these terms are based on the above mentioned definitions.

The proposed parallel platform is implemented on two different machines: the first one is a Server/Intel Xeon CPU E5540 @ 2.53 GHz, 48 GB Random Access Memory (RAM), running Windows 2010 Dell computer with 12 cores and the second one is a cluster of McGill University (Figure 3-11) with properties shown in Table 3-6. There are several number of nodes available in this cluster that each node usually has two CPUs and each CPU contains either six or eight cores.

As mentioned in Section 2.9.1, in the global parallel GA, one of the cores works as manager processor to create the initial population of the GA; and then, this population is divided into subpopulations which are distributed among the remaining workers (cores).



**Figure 3-10: Global parallel computing paradigm**



**Figure 3-11: McGill cluster (Guillimin) environment (McGill-HPC, 2014)**

The variables (members) of each subpopulation are sent from the manager core to the slaves. Each slave core then runs the simulation model and calculates the objective functions of the MOGA (e.g., the total cost and duration of the process). Thus, the evaluation of the subpopulations is the only parallelized operation in this parallel paradigm due to the fact that there is no dependency of the fitness evaluation of each individual on the rest of the population (Cantú-Paz, 1998). The communications between the workers are necessary only when the cores receive a fraction of the

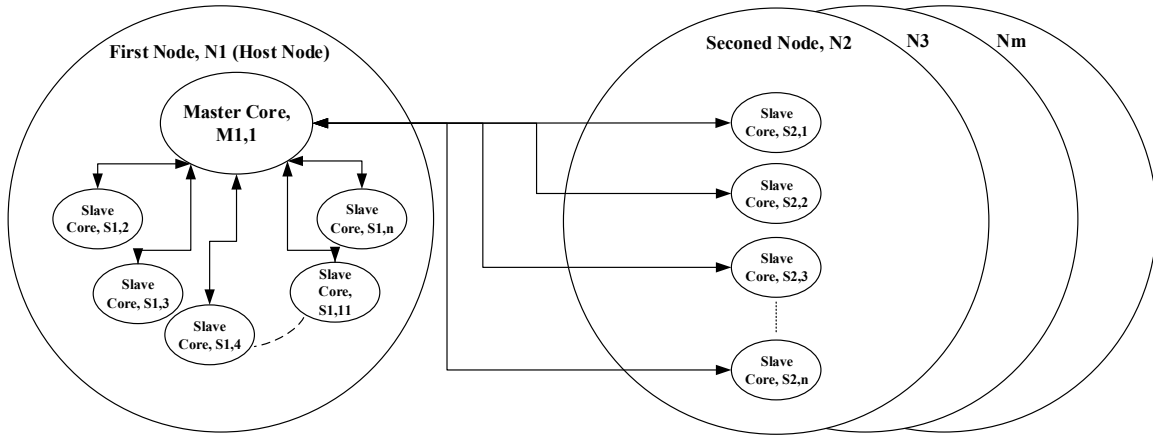
population and after calculating the fitness values of individuals (Cantú-Paz, 1998). After gathering the fitness values of the individuals based on the simulation model, the manager worker accomplishes the remaining parts of the MOGA (e.g., crossover and mutation operations) and finally select the Pareto set of each generation.

**Table 3-6: Specifications of cluster nodes (McGill-HPC, 2014)**

Phase	Node Type	Count	Processors	Total cores	Memory (GB/core)	Total memory (GB)
Phase 1	<b>SW</b>	600	Dual Intel Westmere EP Xeon X5650 (6-core, 2.66 GHz, 12MB Cache, 95W)	7200	3	21,600
	<b>HB</b>	400		4800	2	9,600
	<b>LM</b>	188		2256	6	13,536
Phase 2	<b>SW2</b>	216	Dual Intel Sandy Bridge EP E5-2670 (8-core, 2.6 GHz, 20MB Cache, 115W)	3456	4	13,824
	<b>LM2</b>	146		2304	8	18,432
	<b>XL</b>	6	Quad Intel Sandy Bridge EP E5-4620 (8-core, 2.2 GHz, 16MB Cache, 95W)	96	16	1,536
	<b>M2</b>	1		32	12	384
		1		32	32	1024
Total or Average	-	1556	-	20,176	3.96	79,936

### 3.6 Simulation and Optimization Engines Interface

In the case of working with more than one node (multiple nodes), the whole system works with one master core in one node (the host node,  $N_1$ ) and all other cores in the host node (e.g.,  $S_{1,2}$  to  $S_{1,n}$  where  $n$  is the maximum number of cores available for the host node) plus all existing cores in other nodes (e.g.,  $N_2, N_3, \dots, N_m$  where  $m$  is the maximum number of nodes available by the cluster) are slaves of that master core ( $M_{1,1}$ ) as demonstrated in Figure 3-12. In this case the master core starts with MOGA and generates the first set of population in the first generation.



**Figure 3-12: Schematic communication between multiple nodes**

Then, this population will be divided into subpopulations based on the number of available slave cores. The variables of the members of each subpopulation are sent from the master core to the slaves and each slave core runs the simulation model to calculate the objective functions of the MOGA (e.g., the total cost and duration of the process). The output results of the simulations (i.e., the fitness values of the members of the subpopulations) are sent back to the master core in order to perform crossover and mutation operations and finally select the Pareto set of the first generation. Therefore, both interactions between cores (represented by bidirectional arrows in the above figure) are through MATLAB variables. In the second generation, the master core generates a new set of population and the whole procedure is repeated again until the maximum number of generations is reached.

### 3.7 Sensitivity Analyses

#### 3.7.1 Effect of GA Parameters

Translating a problem to the GA, defining the fitness function(s) for the problem, and setting the GA parameters are the three main components in the design procedure of the GAs (Wu et al.,

2012). The focus of this part of the research is on the third component. Population size, number of generations, the operators' parameters (i.e., crossover probability, mutation probability, etc.), stopping criteria, etc. are some instances of the GA parameters.

The main goal of applying sensitivity analysis is to identify the most and less influential input parameters on the GA performance for the specific simulation-based optimization problem used in this research. In order to achieve this goal, the effect of three main parameters of NSGA-II are investigated by varying one parameter each time while fixing the others. Population size, number of generations, and crossover probability are the three main parameters for checking the sensitivity of the final outputs (i.e., quality of the objective functions) against the variations in their values. The GA is then tuned based on the best obtained parameters which maximize the GA's performance (Sugihara, 1997).

The number of individuals created randomly for exploring the whole search space as much as possible in each generation is called the population size (Sivanandam & Deepa, 2008). The GA ability to find the global optimum results instead of local ones mainly depends on the population size of the GA (Iba & Noman, 2012). However, the complexity of each problem determines the population size of the GA, the larger population size results in more diversity of points in the search space which leads to better and more optimized results. On the other hand, when the size of population increases, it takes more time and memory for the GA to converge. Practically, the population size of around 100 is common for different purposes which can be changed based on the required balance between the time and memory of the computer and the quality of the final solutions (Sivanandam & Deepa, 2008; Kamil et al., 2013).



The number of generations is another important factor when using the GA. The number of generations can vary for each problem; however, the range of 50 to 500 generations is typically used for the GA optimization problems (Mitchell, 1998).

According to Section 3.4, the crossover probability ( $P_c$ ) in each generation specifies the percentage of the total population which goes through the crossover operation to produce new children from the parents of the previous generation. There are different ranges suggested for this parameter by researchers. For example, Roeva (2008) used the range of [0.5, 1] with an interval of 0.1 for her experiments. Several researches demonstrated that the best crossover probability suggested values are between 0.7 and 1 (mostly around either 0.7 or 0.8) (Sugihara, 1997; Kamil et al., 2013; Roeva et al., 2013).

### **3.7.2 Effect of Number of Cores**

The performance of the proposed parallel platform is compared with respect to the computation time. The time which is needed to reach to the final near optimum results using the proposed framework is calculated for different numbers of cores. For this purpose, all tests took place on the above mentioned server machine with Windows 2010 Professional operating system and the McGill University cluster (Guillimin) within the MATLAB R2014a environment. The calculation is done for both the deterministic and probabilistic simulation-based optimization models by assigning deterministic and random distributions to the activities' durations, respectively.

### **3.8 Comparison of Different Pareto Fronts**

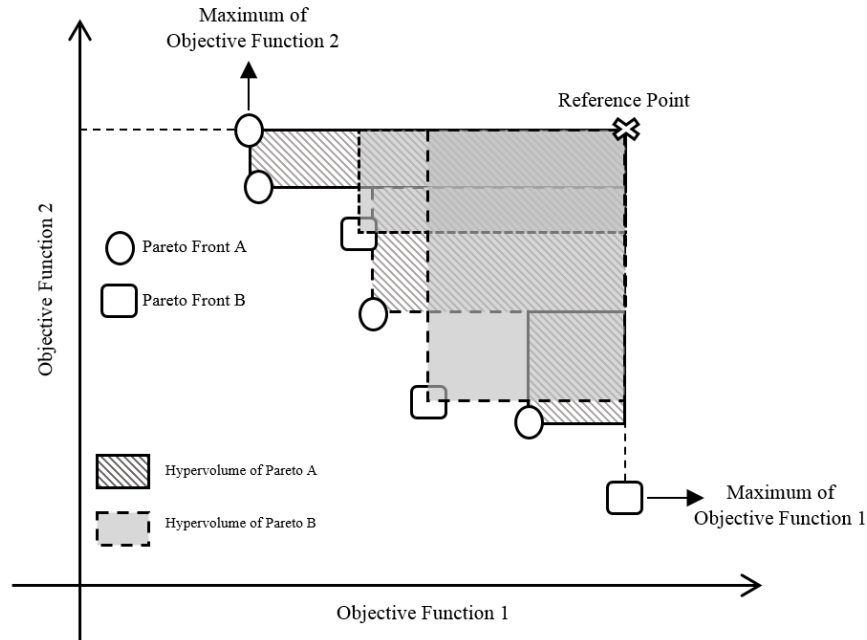
As mentioned in Section 2.8, MOGAs generate a set of optimum solutions instead of one optimal answer as in the case of single objective optimization methods. This causes decision makers to

face with some troubles finding the best optimum set of solutions when there are more than one Pareto front for a problem, since it is difficult to compare the Pareto fronts that are not definitely dominated by one of them; especially when they intersect with each other (Figure 3-13). In order to alleviate this limitation, many indicators have been introduced which enable easy comparison of Pareto fronts from the point of view of the quality of the optimum solutions, by converting a set of optimum solutions to a single value (Bradstreet, 2011; Zitzler et al., 2003).

The hypervolume indicator (also known as Lebesgue measure (Laumanns et al., 2000) or S-metric (Fleischer, 2003; Purshouse, 2003; Zitzler, 1999) is one of the most popular indicators for multi-objective evolutionary algorithms. The hypervolume indicates the dominated space (i.e., area or volume for two objectives and three objectives optimization problems, respectively) between the optimum sets and a reference point. The larger the hypervolume, the better the set of optimum solutions, since it indicates that either the Pareto front is more toward the origin or it has more diversity in optimum solutions in comparison with the other Pareto fronts (Bradstreet, 2011). Thus, the hypervolume indicator factors in both the distance of the Pareto fronts from the best set of optimum solutions and the diversity of the optimal solutions (Zitzler et al., 2003).

This indicator is measured relative to a selected reference point. There are different ways to choose the proper reference point. One of the most common methods is to select the worst existing solution among all optimal solutions (Naujoks et al., 2005; Bradstreet, 2011). Therefore, the maximum values of each objective function (e.g., maximum cost and maximum total duration of the project in this study) form the coordinates of the reference point in a minimization problem. For the multi-objective optimization problems with two objective functions, the hypervolume is defined as the

area bounded by the selected reference point and the Pareto front's points. Figure 3-13 shows this dominated area.



**Figure 3-13: Comparison of two intersecting Pareto fronts using Hypervolume Indicator (Adopted from Zitzler et al., 2003)**

The hypervolume indicator quantifies the performance of a set of optimum solutions in different ways. It is used to compare the Pareto fronts after finishing the optimization procedure or it can be used as part of the selection function within the optimization procedure to guide the search and improve the quality of optimum solutions (Auger et al., 2009; Naujoks et al., 2005).

### 3.9 Summary and Conclusions

The needs, motivations and benefits of using the SimEvents tool to simulate the precast box girder bridge construction processes were investigated in this chapter. Although simulating construction processes using special purpose simulation tools is much easier to build and understand than using SimEvents, the combination of those tools with optimization tools is difficult and an integration

platform is needed. The benefits reached by combining the simulation models with the optimization technique in the same MATLAB environment were discussed, and the simulation-based optimization framework was proposed.

The following conclusions can be stated: (1) The integration of SimEvents and NSGA-II in MATLAB made it possible to export the simulation results of the simulation-based MOGA for precast box girder bridge construction processes to a shared workspace and linking them with the optimization module without the need for developing an interface or integration programming; (2) integrating the simulation-based optimization in a single environment, that supports parallel computing and runs on a cluster, results in reducing the computation time in comparison with the conventional integration solutions; and (3) The factors that affect the performance of the simulation-based MOGA were identified along with the hypervolume method for comparing the Pareto fronts as will be discussed in Chapter 4.

## **CHAPTER 4      IMPLEMENTATION AND CASE STUDY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The implementation of the proposed HPC parallel simulation-based optimization framework is investigated in this chapter to highlight the strengths of the proposed method. Also, a hypothetical case study is considered to demonstrate the feasibility of the developed models, and to analyze the performance of the simulation model outputs in the probabilistic and deterministic modes. Finally, HPC is applied to investigate the time saving achieved in comparison with the regular computation methods.

### **4.2 Simulation Models Using SimEvents**

In this research, the precast full-span concrete box girder construction method with launching gantry which is developed before in Stroboscope in (Mawlana & Hammad, 2013b) will be used to validate the developed MATLAB SimEvents simulation model. In addition, the precast segmental concrete box girder construction method with launching gantry will be modeled in the simulation tool.

#### **4.2.1 Precast Full Span Concrete Box Girder Construction Method**

##### **4.2.1.1 SimEvents Simulation Model**

The concrete bridge consists of 500 spans with identical length of 25 m. The simulation process starts by using the resources needed for commencing the first task which is the erection of the reinforcement and stressing ducts of the bottom slab and the webs of the full-span, and then; the

inner mold is installed followed by placing the reinforcement and stressing ducts of the top slab by steel crews.

After finishing the reinforcement work, the rebar cage is put into an outer mold and the casting is done by the casting crews. When the concrete cured and reached an acceptable strength, the inner mold is removed. Next, the first pre-stressing procedure is performed by the pre-stressing crews to make the full-span ready for transportation to the storage area where the full-span is completely cured and stored (the second stage of pre-stressing process). After that, the precast full-span girder is transported to the site by means of a trailer for erection. The trailer hauls to the position where the onsite crane unloads the precast span from the trailer and loads it to a trolley. The trailer, then, returns to the storage area to load another span. The girder is simultaneously delivered along the completed part of the bridge by the trolley to its launching location where launching gantry repositions to the location of new span.

Afterwards, the full-span is lifted from the trolley by means of the gantry's lifting frames, and the trolley returns to be loaded again. The girder is moved forward to reach to its right position to be placed between two piers. Then, the permanent bearings are installed to undertake the load of the span which is transferred from the temporary bearings to the permanent bearings. In the next step, the launcher repositions to lift the next full-span (Mawlana & Hammad, 2013b). Figure 4-1 illustrates the developed SimEvents simulation model of bridge construction using precast full-span launching method.

#### **4.2.1.2 Stroboscope Simulation Model**

The Stroboscope simulation model of the bridge construction using precast full span launching method is developed in (Mawlana & Hammad, 2013b) and is shown in Figure 4-2.

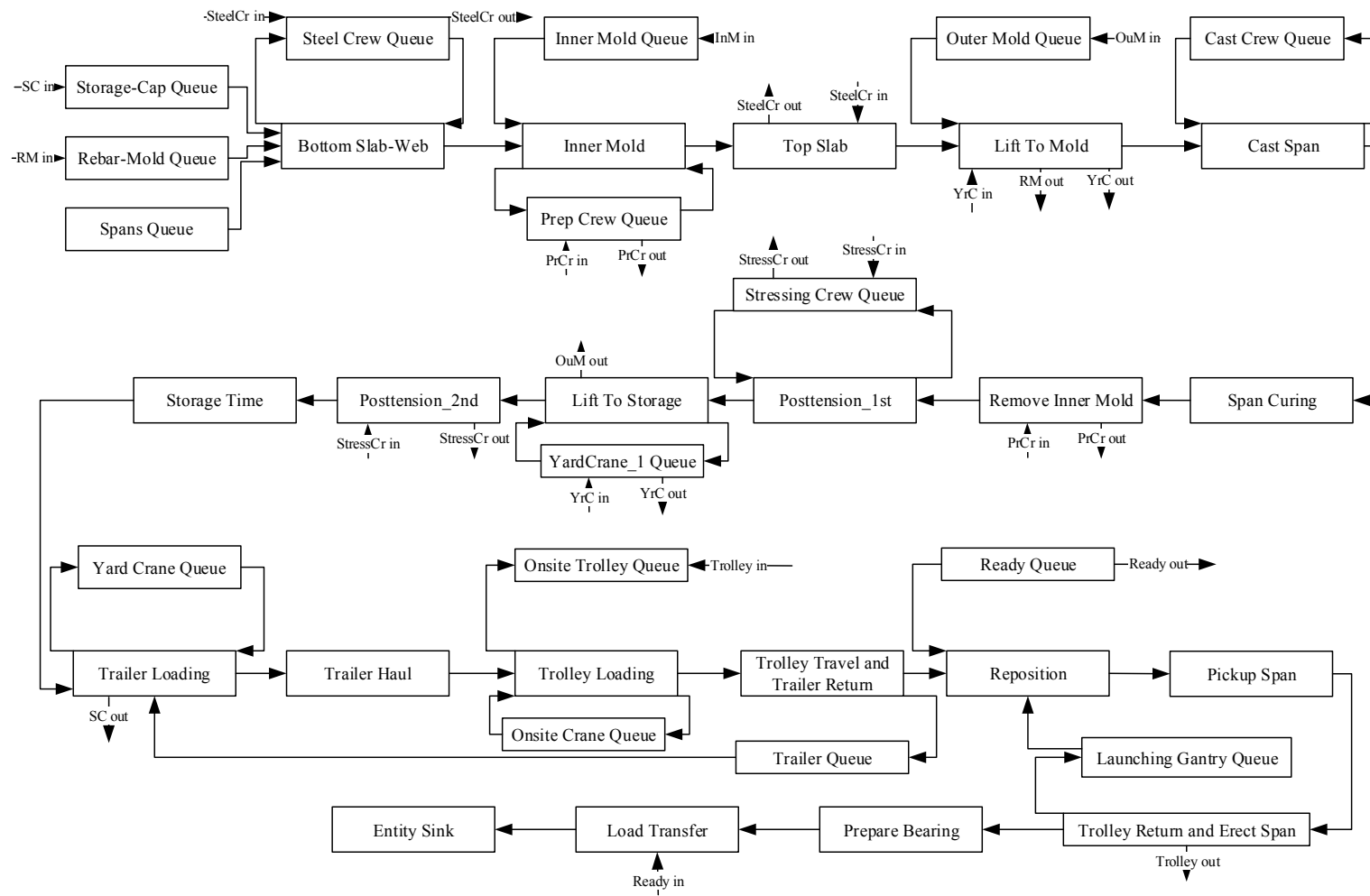
#### **4.2.2 Validation of Full Span Simulation Model (Deterministic Mode)**

In order to validate the deterministic SimEvents simulation model of the precast full-span concrete box girder construction method with launching gantry, the durations of different activities of the simulation model are considered deterministic (fixed numbers) since the deterministic model is easier to build to approximate the reality (Appendix A).

Table 4-1 illustrates the fixed durations of the deterministic simulation model's activities. For different combinations of resources, simulation models are run with SimEvents and Stroboscope, and in the next step the results of the two models are compared as shown in Table 4-2. As obvious from this table, there is no difference between the results of two models for all considered combinations of the resources.

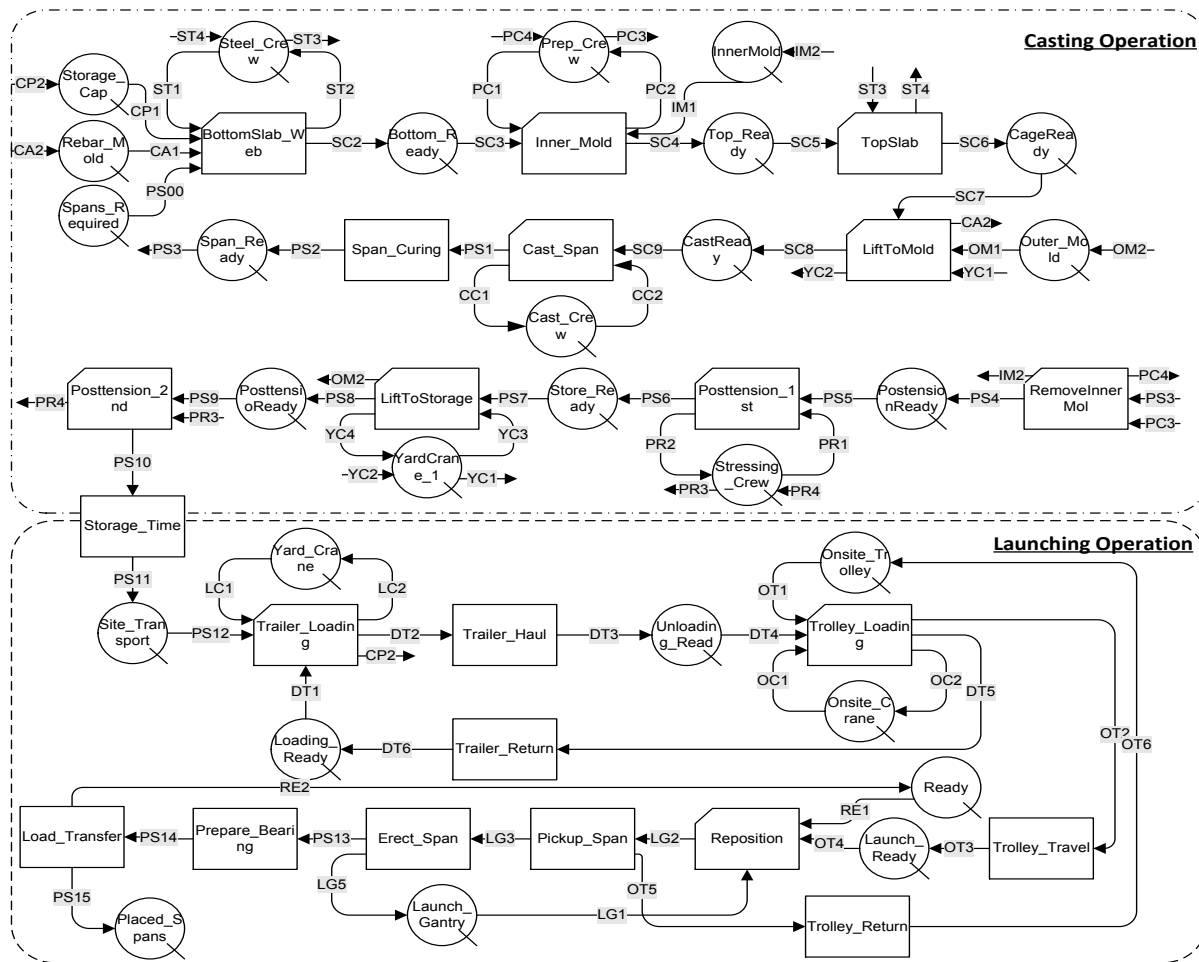
#### **4.2.3 Validation of Full Span Simulation Model (Probabilistic Mode)**

In the next step, the probabilistic simulation model was built by assigning random distributions to the activities' durations to consider uncertainty associated with the construction processes. The random distributions of activities durations are presented in Table 4-3. Thus, every time the model is run, a different set of outputs is obtained due to distinct seed numbers generated for each run of the simulation model.



**Figure 4-1: Simulation model of bridge construction using precast full-span launching method**





**Figure 4-2: Simulation Model of Bridge Construction Using Full Span Launching Method (Mawlana & Hammad, 2013b)**

**Table 4-1: Activities durations for deterministic simulation model**

Activity	Duration (minutes)	Activity	Duration (minutes)
BottomSlab_Web	1673 *	Trailer>Loading	60 **
Inner_Mold	300 *	Trailer Haul	F (Distance, Speed)
TopSlab	1979 *	Trolley>Loading	60 **
LiftToMold	45	Trailer_Return	F (Distance, Speed)
Cast_Span	1544*	Trolley_Travel	F (Distance, Speed)
Span_Curing	(600 or 1200) *	Reposition	240 **
RemoveInnerMol	255 *	Erection_Span	240 **
Posttension_1st	240 *	Trolley_Return	F (Distance, Speed)
LiftToStorage	60 **	Prepare_Bearing	240 **
Posttension_2nd	240 *	Load_Transfer	60 **

\* Adapted from (Marzouk, El-Dein, & El-Said, 2007)

\*\* Adapted from (VSL International Ltd, 2013)

**Table 4-2: Comparison of the total duration and cost of the deterministic simulation models with SimEvents and Stroboscope**

<b>Decision Variables</b>	<b>First Set</b>	<b>Second Set</b>	<b>Third Set</b>
Number of trailers (NT)	1	2	4
Precast yard distance (km) (PYD)	10	10	60
Number of cage mold (NCM)	1	2	1
Number of inner molds (NIM)	1	2	1
Number of outer molds (NOM)	1	2	2
Number of preparation crews (NPPCr)	1	4	6
Number of pre-stressing crews (NPRCr)	1	4	6
Number of steel crews (NSCr)	1	4	6
Number of casting crews (NCC)	1	4	6
Number of storage capacity (NSC)	1	10	50
Number of storage time (hr) (NST)	1	10	50
Overtime Policy (OP)	1	2	4
Duration of cure method (DCM)	1	2	2
<b>Objective Functions</b>			
Duration (days) (SimEvents)	1751.67	487.31	627.92
Duration (days) (Stroboscope)	1751.67	487.31	627.92
Cost (M\$) (SimEvents)	1462.86	1568.44	2650.31
Cost (M\$) (Stroboscope)	1462.86	1568.44	2650.31

Also, in order to assess the risk associated with the construction processes, replications were performed. The concept of replications is based on running the simulation model for a large number of times (for example 1000 times); and therefore, each replication will have different performance outcomes (in this case, total duration and cost of the project) (Nelson et al., 2013).

For different combinations of resources, simulation models are run with SimEvents (Appendix B) and Stroboscope, and in the next step the results of the two models are compared as shown in Table 4-4. As obvious from this table, there are either very small or no differences between the results of two models for all three combinations of the resources. Selection of different seed numbers by two simulation tools for each run of the simulation models in the probabilistic mode results in small differences in some set of resources combinations.

**Table 4-3: Activities durations for stochastic simulation model (Mawlana & Hammad, 2013b)**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Duration (minutes)</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Duration (minutes)</b>
BottomSlab_Web	Normal [1673, 165.84] *	Trailer_Loading	Triangular[45, 60, 75] **
Inner_Mold	Uniform[120, 480] *	Trailer Haul	F (Distance, Speed)
TopSlab	Normal[1979, 281.69] *	Trolley_Loading	Triangular[45, 60, 75] **
LiftToMold	Triangular[30, 45, 60]	Trailer_Return	F (Distance, Speed)
Cast_Span	Normal[1544, 75.24] *	Trolley_Travel	F (Distance, Speed)
Span_Curing	(1200 or 600) *	Reposition	Triangular[180, 240, 300]
RemoveInnerMol	Uniform [90,240] *	Erection_Span	Triangular[180, 240, 300] **
Posttension_1st	Uniform[120,360] *	Trolley_Return	F (Distance, Speed)
LiftToStorage	Triangular[45, 60, 75] **	Prepare_Bearing	Triangular[180, 240, 300] **
Posttension_2nd	Uniform[120,360] *	Load_Transfer	Triangular[45,60, 75] **

\* Adapted from (Marzouk et al., 2007)

\*\* Adapted from (VSL International Ltd, 2013)

#### **4.2.4 Simulation of Precast Segmental Concrete Box Girder Construction Method using SimEvents**

This bridge construction method is also modeled from scratch using SimEvents to show the ability of developing different simulation models within this simulation tool.

Like the previous construction method, the simulation process starts by using the resources needed for commencing the first task which is erection of the rebar cage. After finishing the reinforcement work, the rebar cage is put into a mold to do the casting by the casting crews. When the concrete cured and reached an acceptable strength, the match cast is transferred to the temporary storage area. At the same time, the fresh segment repositions to the location of the match cast to be cast and cured. After that, the segments in the storage area are transported to the main site by means of trailers for erection. The trailer hauls to the position where the winch trolley of the launching gantry will lift the precast segment from the trailer. The trailer, then, returns to the storage area to load another segment. Segments are rotated and transferred one by one along the two piers in order to

place them in their right position. After reaching to the adequate number of segments to form a full span, pre-stressing crews fix the segments by using temporary fixing materials. When a full span is made from connected segments, post tensioning is applied by pre-stressing crews. The temporary fixing bars are removed simultaneously. Then, the load of the span is transferred from the launching girder to the piers. In the next step, the launcher repositions to lift the next set of segments, and the process repeats again. The developed simulation model of bridge construction using precast segmental launching method is shown in Figure 4-3.

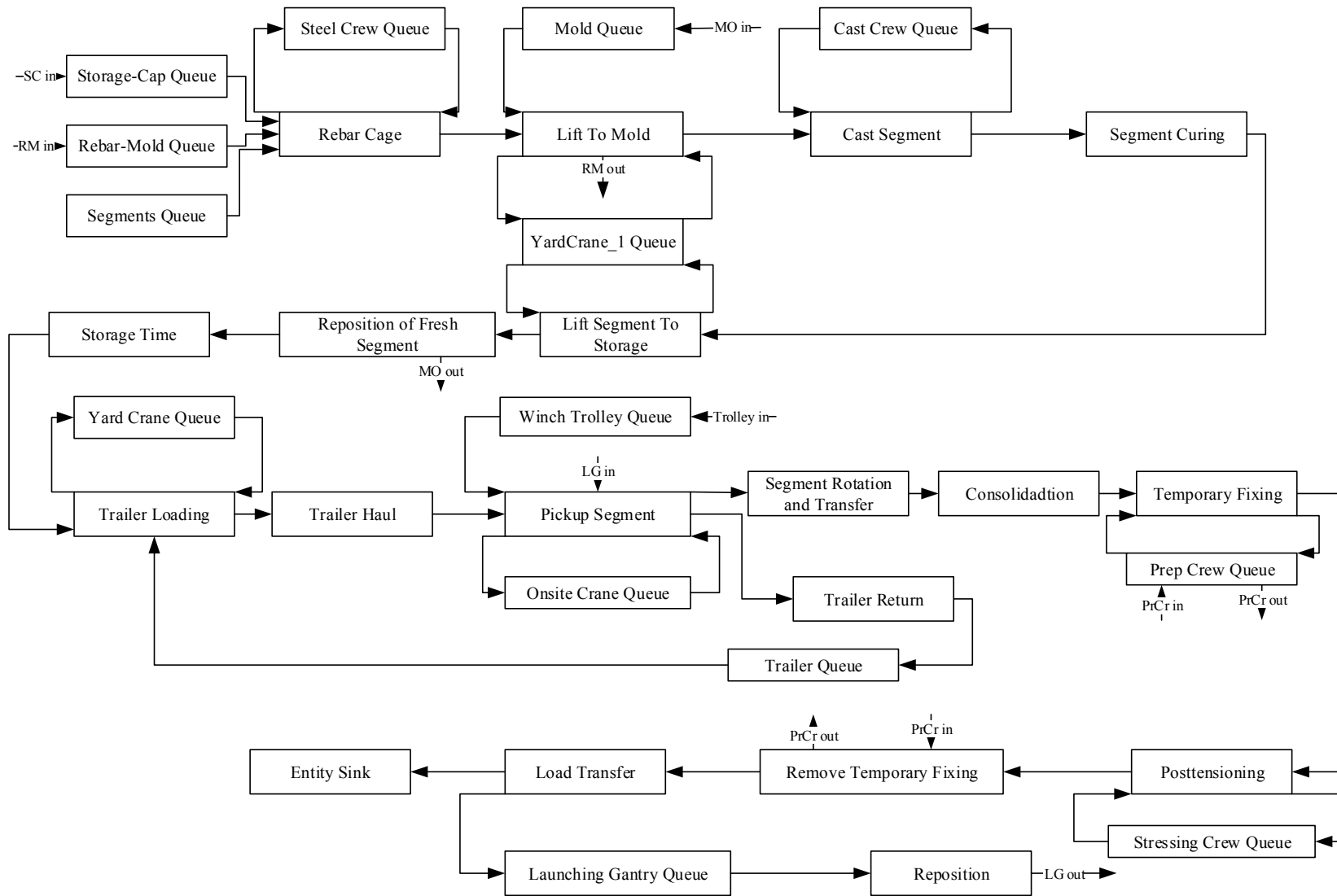
### **4.3 Integration of MATLAB MOGA Optimization Tool and SimEvents Simulation Model**

The MOGA optimization initializes by generating the first set of population using the default defined function in MATLAB using a uniform random number generator. The variables' upper and lower bounds are defined as a matrix with two rows and the number of columns equals to the number of variables. If the defined matrix has one row and two columns, then all the variables have the same range. The default values for the upper and lower bounds are zero and one, respectively.

This means that the maximum and minimum values for the all variables are one and zero, respectively. As shown in Table 3-4, the bounding matrix in this study is defined as follow:

$$\text{Bounding Matrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 10 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 20 & 100 & 20 & 20 & 20 & 20 & 20 & 20 & 20 & 20 & 50 & 84 & 15 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$$

The main code of applying NSGA-II within the integrated proposed framework as well as all other required functions within the optimization algorithm are shown in Appendices C and D, respectively.



**Figure 4-3: Simulation model of bridge construction using precast segmental launching method**

**Table 4-4: Comparison of the total duration and cost of the probabilistic simulation models with SimEvents and Stroboscope**

<b>Decision Variables</b>	<b>First Set</b>	<b>Second Set</b>	<b>Third Set</b>			
Number of trailers (NT)	9	7	8			
Precast yard distance (km) (PYD)	28	30	34			
Number of cage mold (NCM)	11	8	10			
Number of inner molds (NIM)	12	10	11			
Number of outer molds (NOM)	9	9	8			
Number of preparation crews (NPPCr)	3	2	3			
Number of pre-stressing crews (NPRCr)	10	2	3			
Number of steel crews (NSCr)	11	5	7			
Number of casting crews (NCC)	7	4	5			
Number of storage capacity (NSC)	31	27	23			
Number of storage time (hr) (NST)	85	47	44			
Overtime Policy (OP)	6	1	6			
Duration of cure method (DCM)	2	1	2			
<b>Objective Functions</b>	<b>Differences</b>		<b>Differences</b>		<b>Differences</b>	
Duration (days) (SimEvents)	<b>482</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1261</b>	<b>0.32%</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>0%</b>
Duration (days) (Stroboscope)	<b>482</b>		<b>1257</b>		<b>484</b>	
Cost (M\$) (SimEvents)	<b>17810</b>	<b>0.067%</b>	<b>2200</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>11883</b>	<b>0.03%</b>
Cost (M\$) (Stroboscope)	<b>17798</b>		<b>2200</b>		<b>11887</b>	

According to Section 3.6, the simulation-based optimization framework works with one master core in one node (the host node) and all other cores in the host node and other nodes are slaves of that master core. After dividing the population into subpopulations based on the number of available slave cores, there is a need to transfer the variables of each subpopulation from the master core to the slaves. In MATLAB environment, this transition is performed using “*set\_param*” command (Appendices A and B). This command sets the selected values of the simulation model variables (resource combinations) by the GA within the simulation model. Each slave core then runs the simulation model and calculates the objective functions of the MOGA (i.e., the total cost and duration of the process).

The output results of the simulations (the fitness values of the members of the subpopulations) are sent to the master core in order to perform crossover and mutation operations. The non-dominated rank and distance measure of the individuals are used to produce the next generation of population to finally reach to the set of optimal trade-off solutions known as the Pareto front. The relative fitness of each individual determines the non-dominated rank of that individual. When solution  $p$  has better value in at least one objective function in comparison with solution  $q$ , it has lower rank than  $q$  and it dominates solution  $q$ . The distance measure of a solution is used when two solutions have equal ranks; thus, neither one dominates the other (Bradstreet, 2011; Zitzler et al., 2003).

As mentioned in Section 3.5, global parallel GA is used in this research to decrease the computation time and to efficiently use the full capacity of the computer due to the huge number of calculations resulting from the large search space, multiple objective functions, and large number of replications performed in the stochastic simulation model. Regarding running SimEvents simulation model in the parallel mode, the *SIM* command is used to run the simulation

model, and enclose this command within a *PARFOR* loop to perform the replications. A *PARFOR* loop is useful in situations where there are many loop iterations of a simple calculation, such as a Monte-Carlo simulation, DES or doing replications. *PARFOR* divides the group of loop iterations into subgroups, so that each worker (core) executes a portion of the total number of iterations. *PARFOR* loops are also useful when there are loop iterations that take a long time to execute, because the workers can execute iterations simultaneously (Appendices A and B). After having done the number of replications required, the mean values of the objective functions are calculated as final solutions.

#### **4.4 Validation of the Proposed Optimization Model using Full Span Construction Method**

The proposed integrated simulation-based optimization model is validated by comparing the optimal solutions obtained from NSGA-II optimization algorithm with those obtained from fast messy GA (fmGA) which is another type of GAs (Mawlana & Hammad, 2013b).

Like the proposed MOGA, fmGA works based on the main principles of the simple GA with some modifications to alliviate the shortcomings of the messy GA and the simple GA. The fmGA consists of two loops called the inner and outer loops. Each outer loop, which is also called an *era*, performs an inner loop. The optimization starts with the random generation of the initial population within the inner loop. Then, the optimal solutions are evaluated based on their fitness values and some selection and filtering processes (i.e., cut and splice, mutation) are applied on these solutions to increase the probability of finding the better solutions in the next generation. Finally, the optimization procedure stops when the termination criteria are reached (Goldberg et al. 1993).



Figure 4-4 compares the Pareto solutions attained by the proposed multi-objective NSGA-II and by the fmGA (Mawlana & Hammad, 2013b). In order to compare under the same main parameters, the number of generations and the size of the population are set to 2000 and 100, respectively, for both algorithms. In some cases, the two optimization algorithms produce almost close optimum solutions in terms of the project cost and duration as shown in Figure 4-4. However, the fmGA overall generates more costly and more time consuming optimum solutions in comparison with NSGA-II. For example, there are 5% and less than 1% differences between the best optimum solutions obtained by the fmGA and NSGA-II from cost and time points of view, respectively. Also, there are almost 11% and 1% decrement in terms of the average project cost and duration in the solutions generated by NSGA-II in comparison with those generated by fmGA, respectively.

The hypervolume indicator is also used to compare the two Pareto sets by measuring the dominated area of each Pareto set according to a selected reference point (Zitzler & Thiele, 1999). This comparison results in 19.41% and 18.72% of the hypervolume indicator for the fronts generated by NSGA-II and fmGA, respectively. The larger hypervolume indicator of NSGA-II indicates the better performance of this optimization algorithm in comparison with the fmGA from quality of solutions point of view. In addition, the total time required to complete the run of the proposed framework using NSGA-II and fmGA was 5.33 and 11.2 hours, respectively. These results demonstrate the better performance of NSGA-II in comparison with the fmGA from computation time point of view. However, it is important to note that two mentioned algorithms were run on two different machines with different properties (i.e., different number and type of cores). Integrated simulation model with NSGA-II algorithm was run on one node of a cluster system with 12 cores and Dual Intel Westmere EP Xeon X5650 property; however, 4-core machine with Intel

Core (TM) i7-2600 was used to run the fmGA. These differences affect the required computation time.

#### 4.5 Sensitivity Analyses on the Server Machine

As stated in Section 3.7, the main goal of applying sensitivity analysis is to identify the most and less influential input parameters on the GA performance. Population size, number of generations, and crossover probability are the three main parameters for checking the sensitivity of the final outputs (i.e., quality of the objective functions) against the variations in their values. The outcome of this analysis is expected to provide a better understanding of how changes in the various parameters of GA affect the total cost and duration of the construction project.

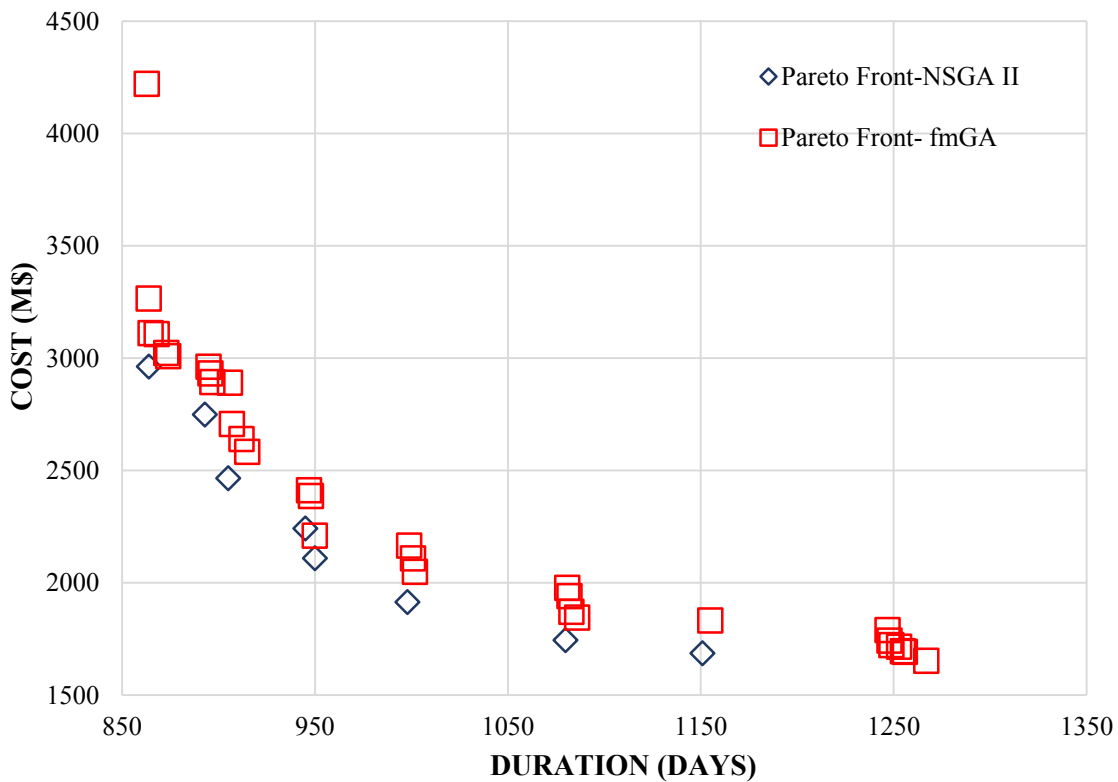


Figure 4-4: Comparison of Pareto solutions obtained from NSGA-II and fmGA (results of fmGA are adapted from (Mawlana & Hammad, 2013b))

In order to perform the sensitivity analysis, uniform random number generator, arithmetic crossover, and Gaussian mutation are considered as the creation, crossover, and mutation functions, respectively. In the first phase of performing sensitivity analysis (phase I), the configuration ranges considered for the number of generations and size of the population of optimization algorithm are given in Table 4-5.

Also, according to the random nature of the used MOGA algorithm five runs of NSGA-II are performed for each case of the sensitivity analysis to ensure the consistency of the results. The final results are the average values of solutions obtained from those five runs. Considering these ranges, phase I results in 80 combinations.

**Table 4-5: List of NSGA-II Parameters (Phase I)**

<b>NSGA-II Parameters</b>	<b>Range</b>			
Number of Generations	500	1000	2000	4000
Size of Population	50	100	200	400

After determining the best number of generations and the best size of population based on the results from the phase I of the sensitivity analysis (considering both the quality of the optimal solutions and the time required to reach to those solutions), the second phase of sensitivity analysis (phase II) is conducted. Table 4-6 shows the ranges considered for the remaining parameter of NSGA-II (e.g., crossover probability).

**Table 4-6: List of NSGA-II Parameters (Phase II)**

<b>NSGA-II Parameters</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Increment</b>
Crossover Probability	0.5	1	0.1

The crossover and mutation probabilities are depended on each other in NSGA-II which means the summation of these two probabilities is always equal to one. For example, if the crossover probability is selected as 0.7, the mutation probability is automatically set as 0.3. Therefore, finding the best crossover probability results in determination of the best mutation probability as well.

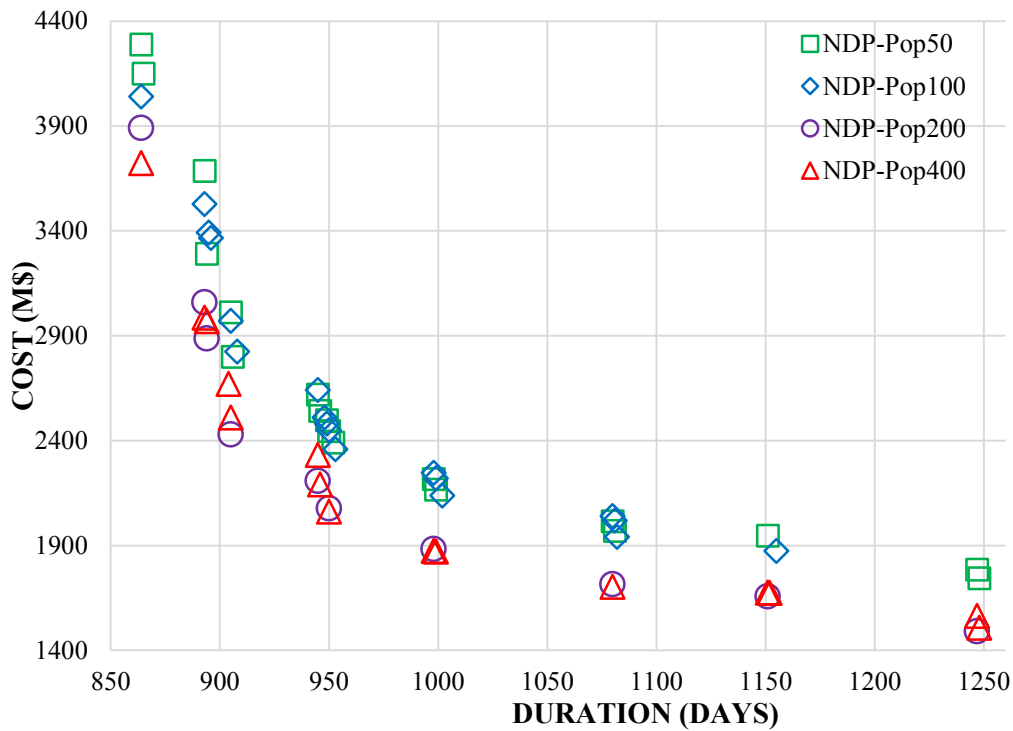
#### **4.5.1 Effect of GA Parameters**

##### **4.5.1.1 Effect of Population Size**

The MOGA used by MATLAB considers '*15\*numberOfVariables*' as a default value for the population size which may not be very accurate for problems with large number of variables (MathWorks, 2013a). Note that there are 13 decision variables defined in the proposed framework, the default value for the population size is 195. This number can be changed and specified within either the MOGA script (command line) or the *Optimization app* in *Global Optimization Toolbox* of MATAB. In this study, the number of generations are fixed to 500, 1000, 2000 and 4000 for each set of population size of 50, 100, 200 and 400.

As shown in Figure 4-5, for the number of generations of 500, almost the same optimal solutions are produced by population size of 50 and 100. However, by increasing the population size to either 200 or 400 the quality of solutions is improved; hence, the best optimum solutions are obtained for higher size of population. According to Section 3.8, the hypervolume of the Pareto fronts is calculated to show the dominated area bounded between the Pareto front points and the reference point (Table 4-7). In order to calculate the hypervolume for these four Pareto fronts, the reference point is selected based on the maximum value of both objective functions in all fronts.

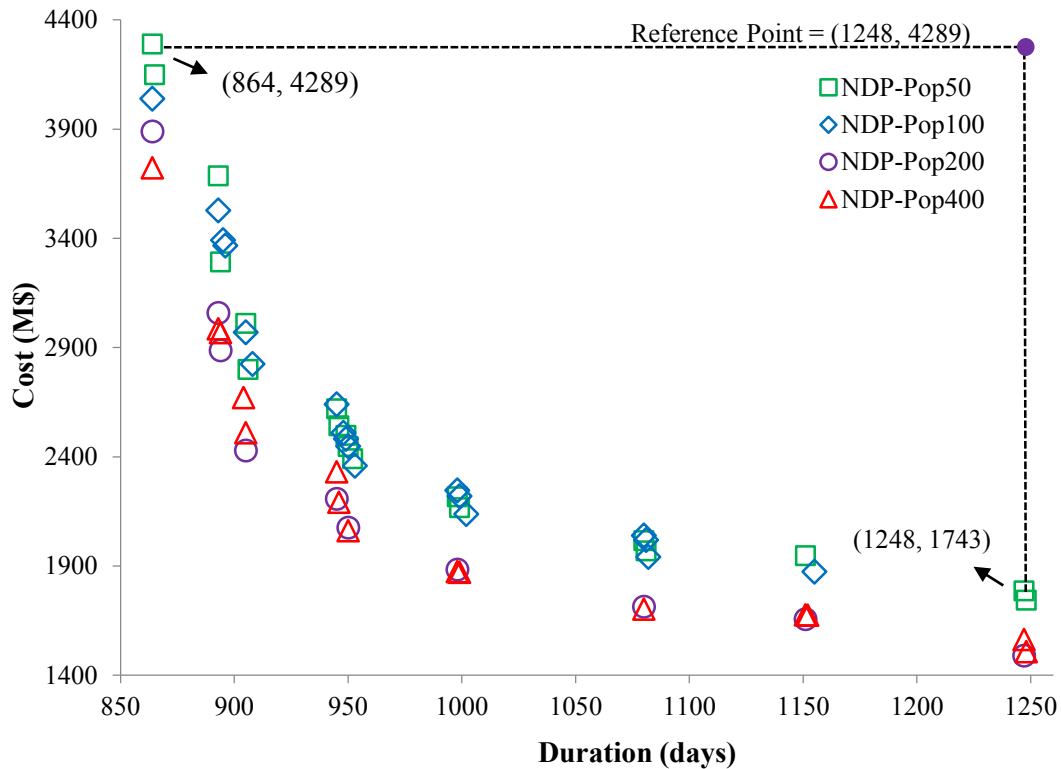
This results in the reference point with the coordinates of 1248 (days) and 4289 (M\$). These coordinates belong to the Pareto front with the population size of 50 which has the highest total duration and cost of the project among the remaining Pareto fronts. All the hypervolumes are calculated based on the area dominated between this reference point and the Pareto front's points and are shown in percentage (Appendix E).



**Figure 4-5: Non-Dominated Pareto solutions for different population sizes with 500 generations**

These percentages indicate the ratio of the dominated area between the reference point and each Pareto front to the area bounded between the reference point and the origin (Figure 3-13). In order to compare the hypervolume percentages, the normalized value of those are also calculated by dividing each hypervolume percentage by the maximum hypervolume percentage (Table 4-7). As demonstrated in this table, population sizes of 200 and 400 generate the Pareto fronts with the hypervolume of 16.11% and 15.87%, respectively. This means that the optimum solutions

generated by 400 population are very similar to those obtained from population size of 200. Therefore, considering the extra computational burden imposed to the system by doubling the size of population, 200 seems to be the promising population size for the fixed 500 generations. The larger hypervolume indicates that either the Pareto front is closer to the origin (better convergence) or has more diversity of the optimum solutions (wider Pareto front).



**Figure 4-6: Reference point for average Pareto solutions for different population sizes with 500 generations**

The proposed framework is also tested for various population sizes when the number of generations is fixed to 1000, 2000 and 4000. The results are illustrated in Figure 4-7, Figure 4-8 and Figure 4-9, respectively. For the number of generations to 1000 (Figure 4-7), the optimum results are close to each other for various sizes of population. While, considering the results of the hypervolume calculation (Table 4-7) indicates that the best optimum solutions generated by 200

population with the hypervolume of 15.89%. The same results are achieved for the 2000 generations with the highest hypervolume for population size of 200 (20.92%) in comparison with other sizes of population.

**Table 4-7: Hypervolume percentage of the Pareto fronts produced by the fixed number of generations (Normalized values in the lower rows)**

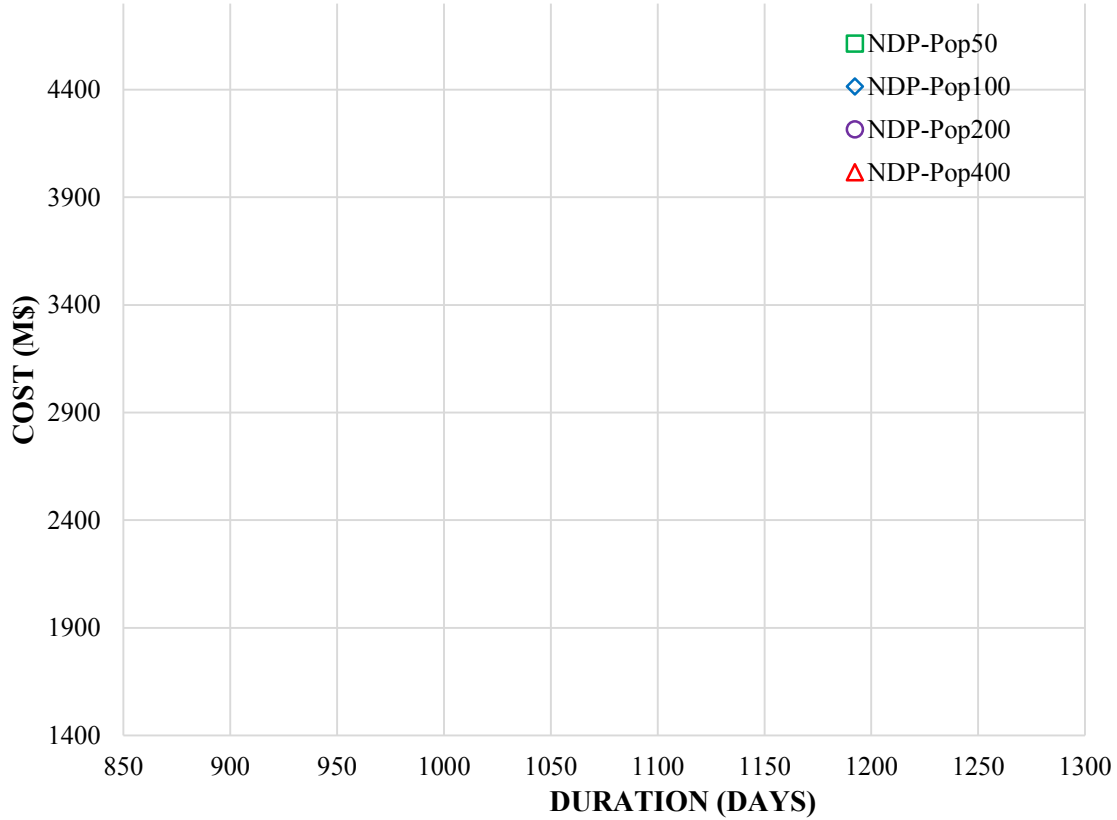
Number of Generations	Size of Population			
	50	100	200	400
500	13.87	14.12	<b>16.11</b>	15.87
	86.10	87.67	<b>100</b>	98.51
1000	15.36	14.73	<b>15.89</b>	15.88
	96.66	92.70	<b>100</b>	99.92
2000	19.72	19.00	<b>20.92</b>	20.76
	94.27	90.85	<b>100</b>	99.28
4000	18.47	<b>20.09</b>	19.51	19.72
	91.92	<b>100</b>	97.08	98.17

According to Table 4-7 and Figure 4-9, the quality of optimum solutions improve by almost 8% from population size of 50 to 100 for 4000 generations. However, increasing the size of population to 200 and 400 does not enhance the optimum solutions since the Pareto front of the population size of 100 has the highest hypervolume among other population sizes. Thus, the 100 population size is selected as the best size of population for the number of generations to 4000.

#### 4.5.1.2 Effect of Number of Generations

There are three different stopping criteria in MATLAB NSGA-II and the occurrence of any of them results in stopping the GA algorithm. These criteria are the maximum number of generations which has a default value of  $100 * \text{numberOfVariables}$ , the average change in the spread of the Pareto front with a default value of 100 (convergence criterion), and the maximum time limit in seconds which is defined as infinity. When the value of the convergence criterion is less than the

specified tolerance, it means there is no improvement in the optimum solutions and the optimization will stop since the Pareto fronts are converged (MathWorks, 2014e).



**Figure 4-7: Non-Dominated Pareto solutions for different population sizes with 1000 generations**

Considering 13 variables defined in the proposed framework, the default value for the number of generations is 2600. Therefore, in order to investigate the effect of this parameter on the values of the objective functions, this number is set to 500, 1000, 2000, and 4000. The sensitivity analysis is performed four times by fixing the population size to 50, 100, 200 and 400.

Figure 4-10 shows the Pareto fronts obtained for the fixed population size of 50 and different number of generations. The dominated areas between these Pareto fronts and the selected reference point are calculated and the normalized values are shown in Table 4-8.



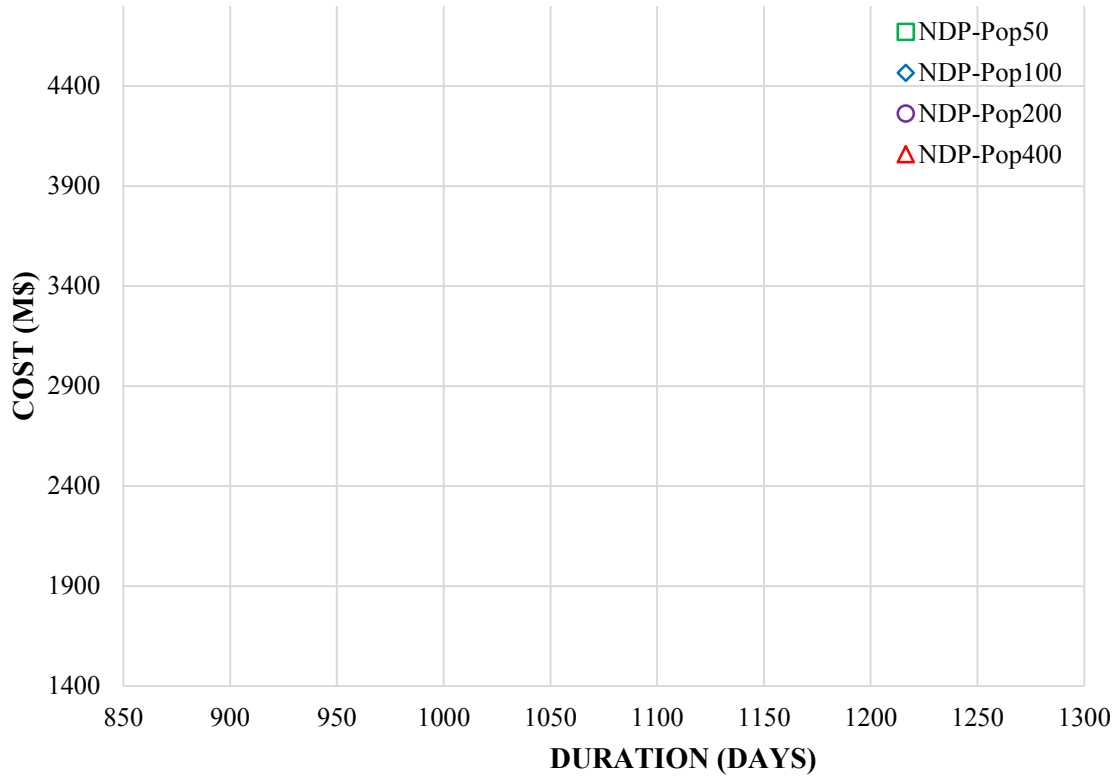


Figure 4-8: Average Pareto solutions for different population sizes with 2000 generations

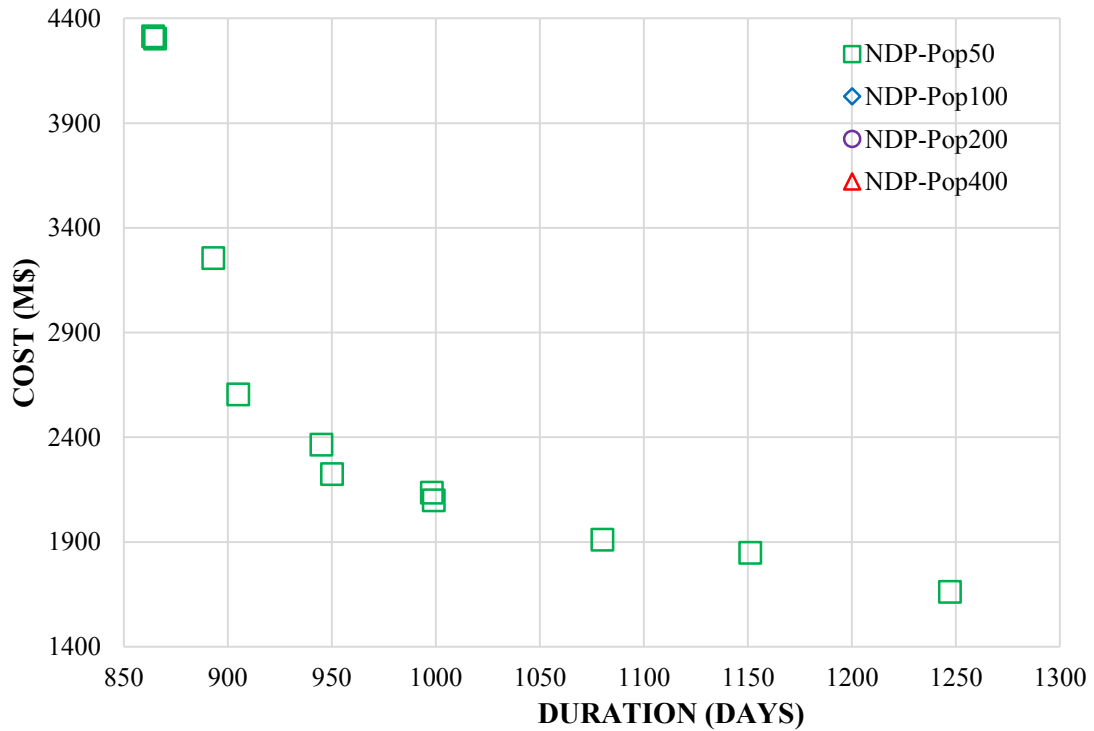
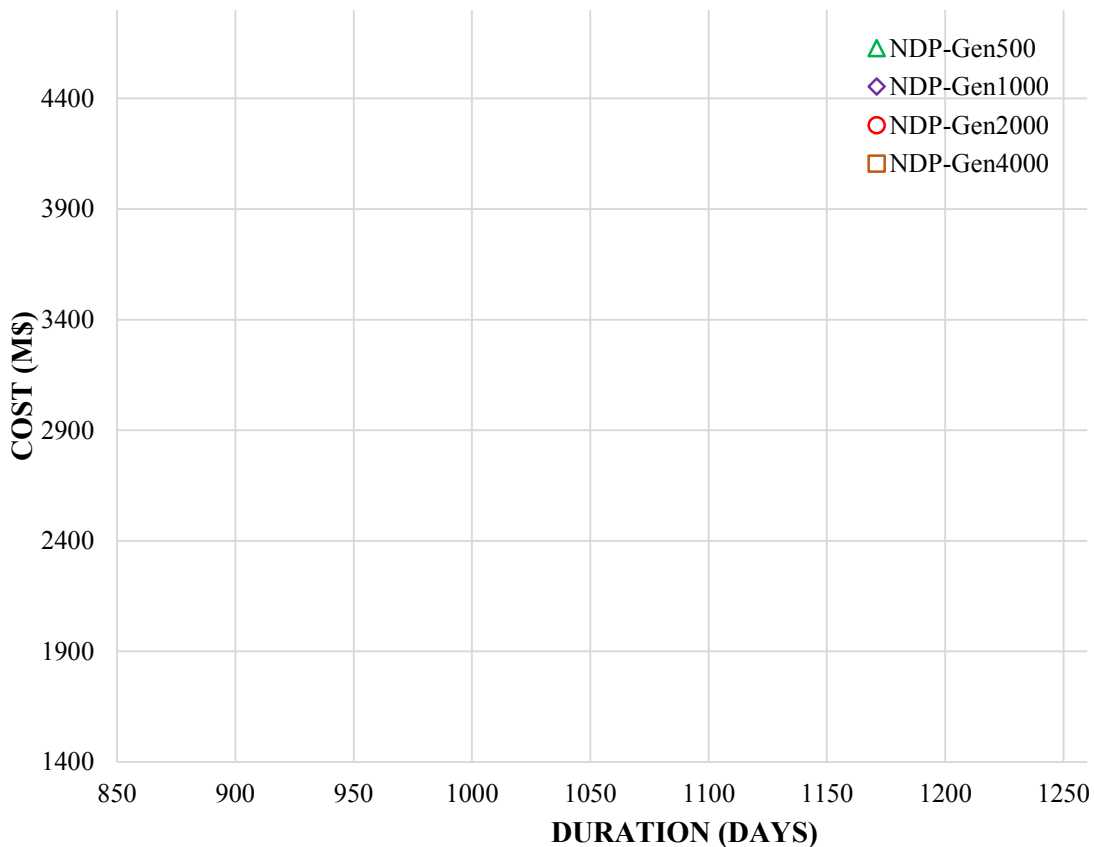


Figure 4-9: Average Pareto solutions for different population sizes with 4000 generations

According to Figure 4-10 and Table 4-8, there is almost 6% improvement in the quality of optimal solutions by increasing the number of generations from 500 to 2000 for population size of 50; however, more increase to 4000 generations make the solutions worse in most of the cases. Therefore, 2000 generations is the best number of generations for the population size of 50 to create optimal solutions with the hypervolume of 18.98% (the highest hypervolume among other options).

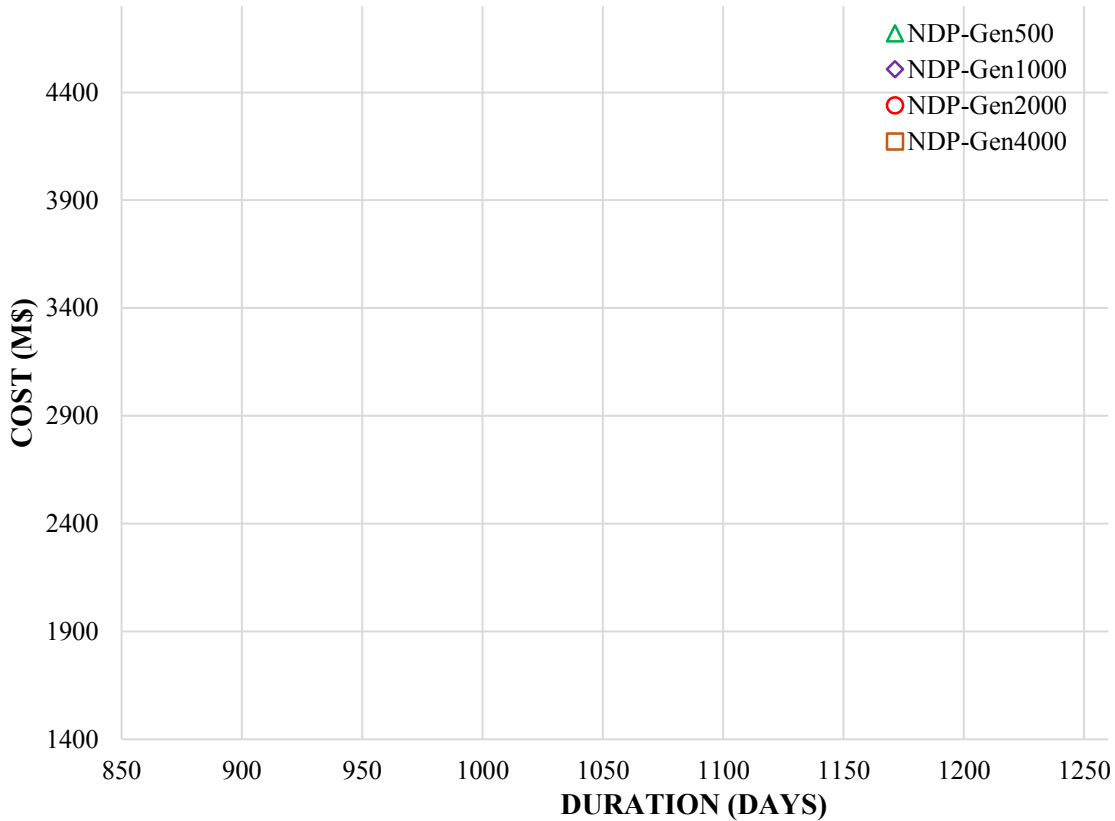
As shown in Figure 4-11 and Table 4-8, for the fixed population size of 100, the optimum solutions improve by increasing the number of generations to 4000 generations with more diversity of solutions (the highest hypervolume equal to 20.72%).



**Figure 4-10: Non-Dominated Pareto solutions for different number of generations with population size of 50**

**Table 4-8: Hypervolume percentage of the Pareto fronts produced by the fixed size of population (Normalized values in the lower rows)**

Size of Population	Number of Generations			
	500	1000	2000	4000
50	17.93	18.95	<b>18.98</b>	18.80
	94.46	99.85	<b>100</b>	99.06
100	18.75	19.20	19.10	<b>20.72</b>
	90.53	92.70	92.18	<b>100</b>
200	<b>19.73</b>	18.57	19.69	19.14
	<b>100</b>	94.14	99.78	97.02
400	<b>14.59</b>	13.65	14.36	14.12
	<b>100</b>	93.51	98.42	96.80

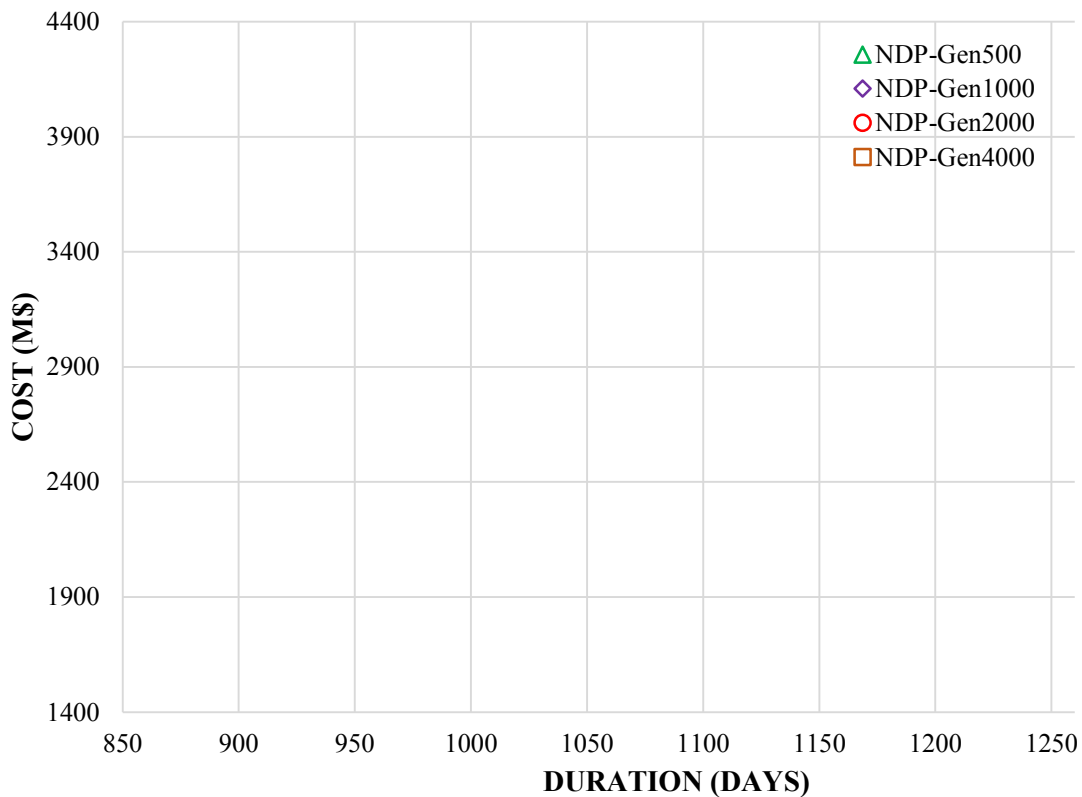


**Figure 4-11: Non-dominated Pareto solutions for different number of generations with population size of 100**

Unlike the population size of 100, the quality of optimal solutions did not improve by increasing the number of generations for population sizes of 200 and 400. Thus, as illustrated in Figure 4-12 and Figure 4-13 and based on the dominated areas between the Pareto fronts and the reference

points calculated in Table 4-8 the best answers are found for 500 generations. Therefore, there is no need to increase the number of generations and impose more computation time and cost to the system in these cases.

Table 4-9 shows the computation time needed to run the simulation-based optimization model in deterministic mode for five times as well as the average computation time for all considered number of generations and population sizes. These results are also illustrated in Figure 4-15 and Figure 4-16 for fixed number of generations and fixed population sizes, respectively.



**Figure 4-12: Non-dominated Pareto solutions for different number of generations with population size of 200**

According to these two figures, the required computation time is almost doubled by either making the number of generations or the size of population double in all cases.

## 4.6 Sensitivity Analyses on the Cluster

The same sensitivity analysis is performed on the McGill cluster (Guillimin) to investigate the effect of changing in the GA parameters as well as the number of cores used to run the integrated simulation-based optimization model on performance of the proposed framework.

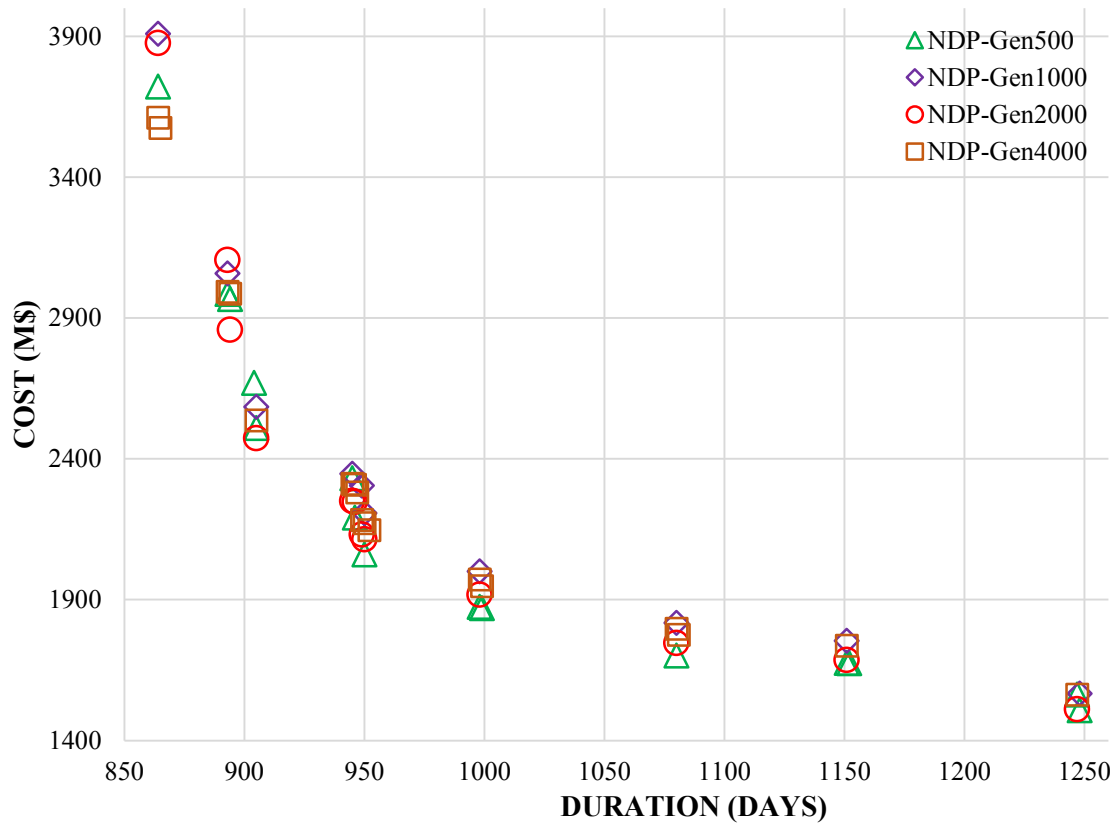


Figure 4-13: Non-dominated Pareto solutions for different number of generations with population size of 400

### 4.6.1 Effect of GA Parameters

All tests of this part of the sensitivity analysis took place on the cluster with one node containing 12 cores.

#### 4.6.1.1 Effect of Population Size

The hypervolume of the Pareto fronts by fixing the number of generations and varying the population size is shown in Table 4-10. Also, Figure 4-14 shows the Pareto fronts obtained for the fixed 500 generations and different sizes of population.

**Table 4-9: Computation time (min) for deterministic mode on the server machine with 12 cores**

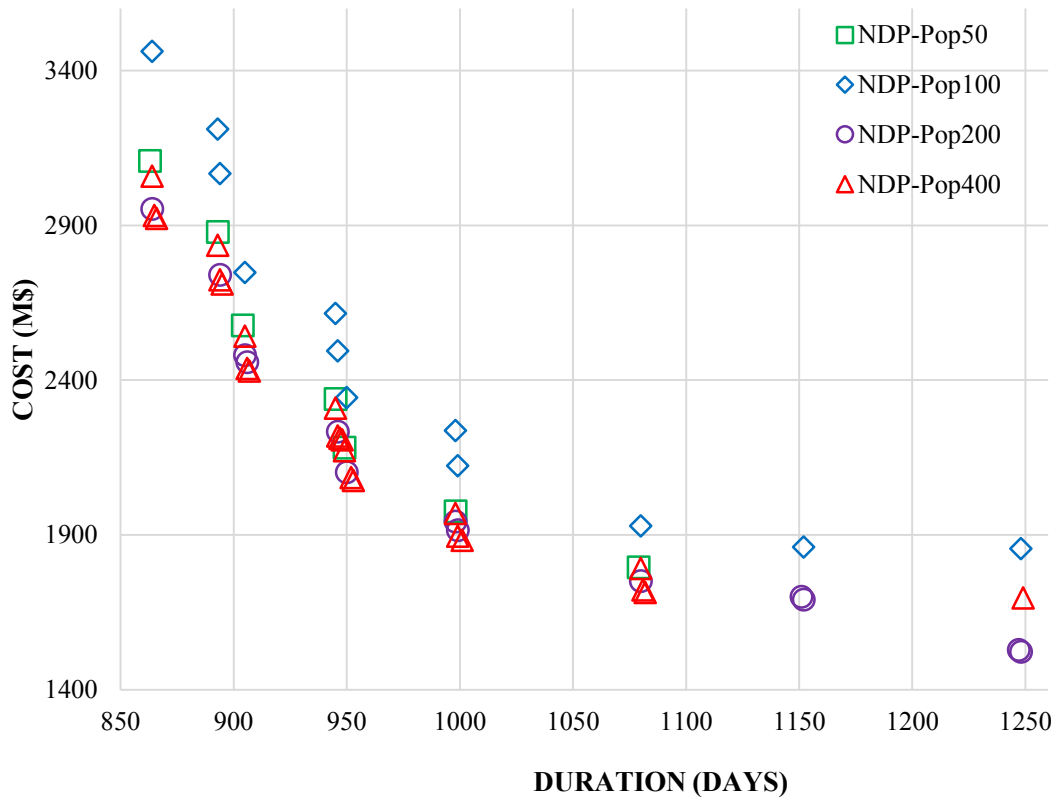
Size of Population	Number of Generations	Run No.					Average
		1	2	3	4	5	
<b>50</b>	<b>500</b>	63.55	58.24	63.89	58.73	64.10	<b>61.10</b>
	<b>1000</b>	119.91	118.67	118.75	118.07	117.94	<b>118.67</b>
	<b>2000</b>	237.75	238.11	237.06	237.22	237.08	<b>237.41</b>
	<b>4000</b>	474.18	472.82	473.38	474.61	471.78	<b>473.35</b>
<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	110.40	109.30	110.10	109.31	110.15	<b>109.85</b>
	<b>1000</b>	219.65	219.37	220.91	221.15	221.12	<b>220.44</b>
	<b>2000</b>	443.92	441.42	446.12	441.66	440.56	<b>442.74</b>
	<b>4000</b>	885.65	886.41	879.99	885.69	886.96	<b>884.94</b>
<b>200</b>	<b>500</b>	218.10	220.68	219.12	220.11	221.09	<b>219.82</b>
	<b>1000</b>	435.65	439.83	435.91	440.50	440.43	<b>438.46</b>
	<b>2000</b>	884.85	875.38	878.75	879.11	878.69	<b>879.36</b>
	<b>4000</b>	1741.84	1755.78	1759.11	1756.63	1749.21	<b>1752.51</b>
<b>400</b>	<b>500</b>	440.37	434.62	438.51	440.02	435.90	<b>437.88</b>
	<b>1000</b>	883.12	879.36	878.24	880.15	870.85	<b>878.34</b>
	<b>2000</b>	1726.64	1729.73	1714.87	1718.26	1728.06	<b>1723.51</b>
	<b>4000</b>	3452.94	3497.58	3451.13	3443.78	3463.69	<b>3461.82</b>

The population size of 400 gives the best optimum solutions which are not dominated by other sets of optimum solutions obtained from other sizes of population based on the results shown in Figure 4-14 and Table 4-10. The same behavior is observed for the 1000 and 2000 generations (Figure 4-17 and Figure 4-18). Figure 4-19 illustrates the four Pareto fronts generated by 4000 generations and different number of population sizes. All the population sizes produce very similar optimum solutions; however, the population size of 200 is the best based on the hypervolume of the Pareto fronts calculated in Table 4-10.

According to the small difference between the optimum solutions generated by population sizes of 200 and 400 for 4000 generations (0.62%) and the results obtained and interpreted for other number of generations, it is concluded that the population size of 400 perform well for all number of generations.

**Table 4-10: Hypervolume percentage of the Pareto fronts produced by fixed number of generations (Normalized values in the lower rows)**

Number of Generations	Size of Population			
	50	100	200	400
500	12.07	10.82	12.77	<b>12.92</b>
	93.42	83.73	98.84	<b>100</b>
1000	11.09	12.67	13.03	<b>13.42</b>
	82.64	94.43	97.07	<b>100</b>
2000	13.80	13.72	13.09	<b>14.77</b>
	93.43	92.86	88.57	<b>100</b>
4000	13.49	13.27	<b>13.76</b>	13.68
	97.99	96.42	<b>100</b>	99.38



**Figure 4-14: Non-Dominated Pareto solutions with 500 generations**

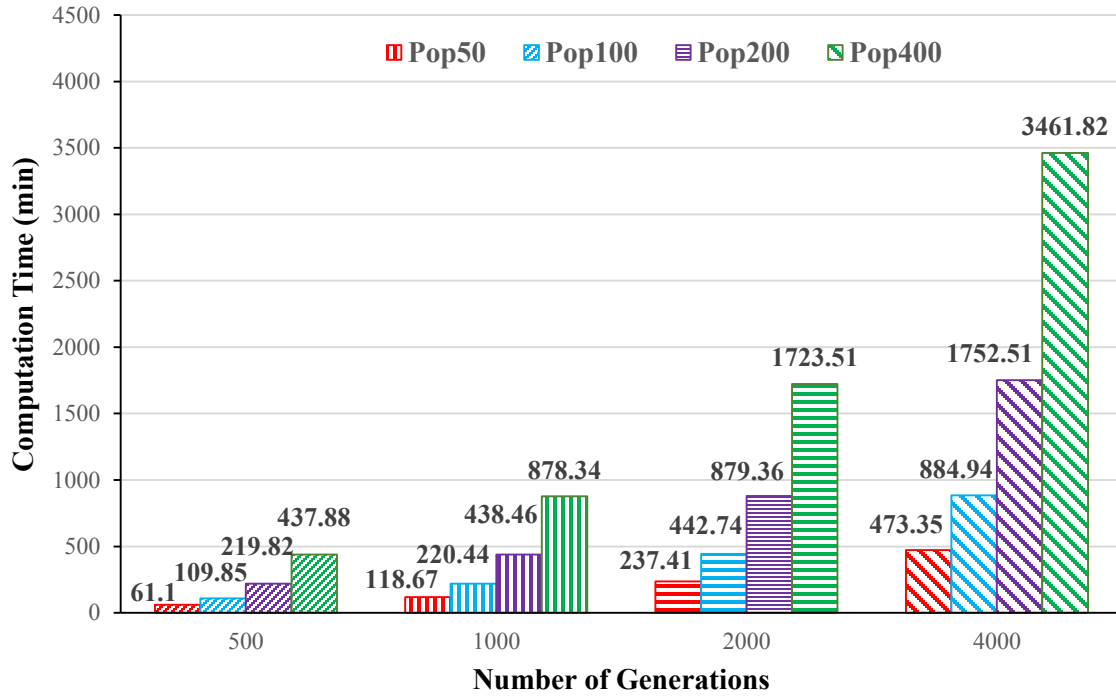


Figure 4-15: Comparison of deterministic computation time for fixed number of generations (Server)

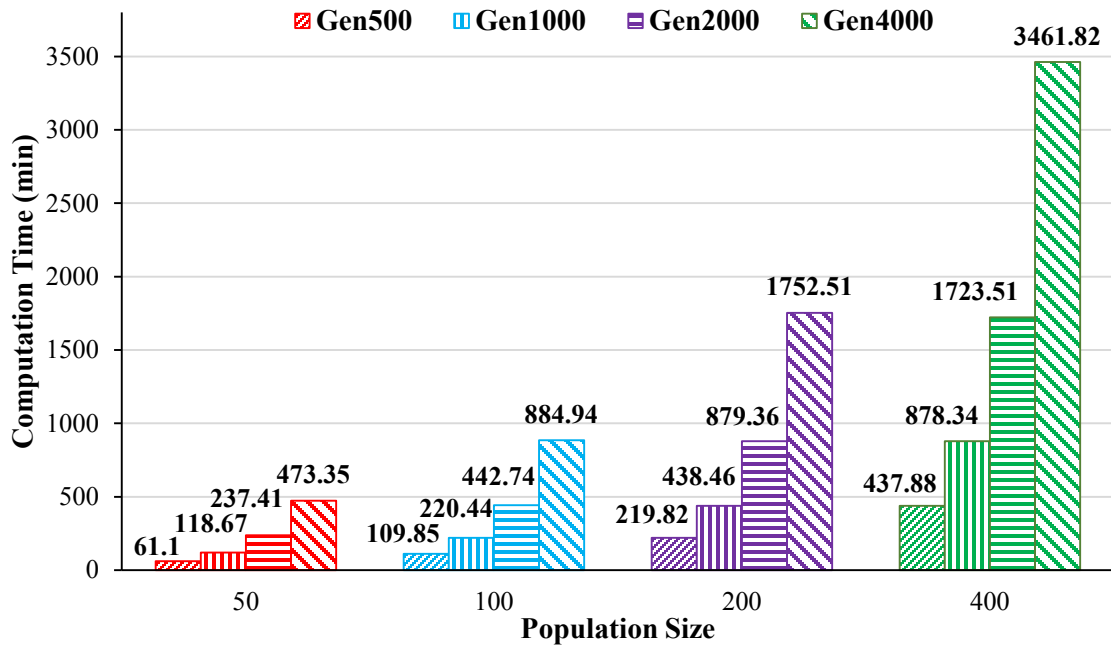


Figure 4-16: Comparison of deterministic computation time for fixed population sizes (Server)



#### 4.6.1.2 Effect of Number of Generations

Like what was discussed in previous sections, the effect of changing the number of generations to 500, 1000, 2000, and 4000 while fixing the size of population is investigated in this section. Figure 4-20, Figure 4-21, Figure 4-22, and Figure 4-23 demonstrate the Pareto fronts obtained for different number of generations and the fixed population size of 50, 100, 200, and 400, respectively. Also, the dominated areas between these Pareto fronts and the selected reference points for each set of four fronts are calculated in Table 4-11. Based on the obtained results, 2000 generations produce the best optimum solutions for population sizes of 50, 100, and 400. Whereas, the combination of 500 generations and population size of 200 is the best combination for fixed 200 population size.

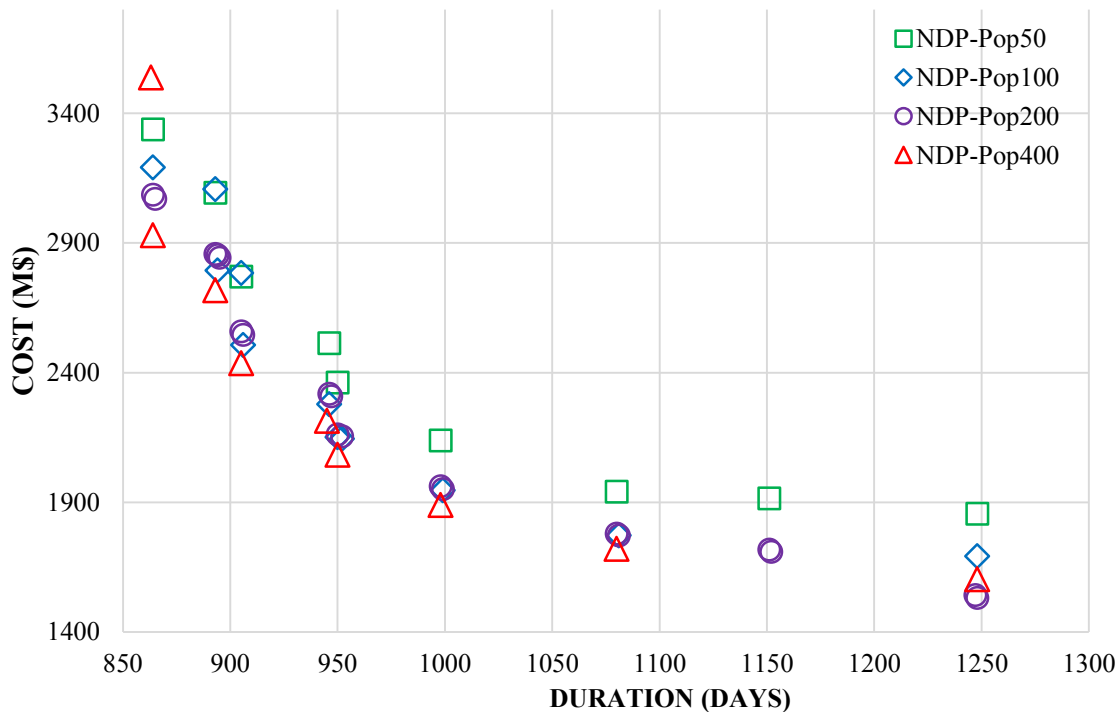
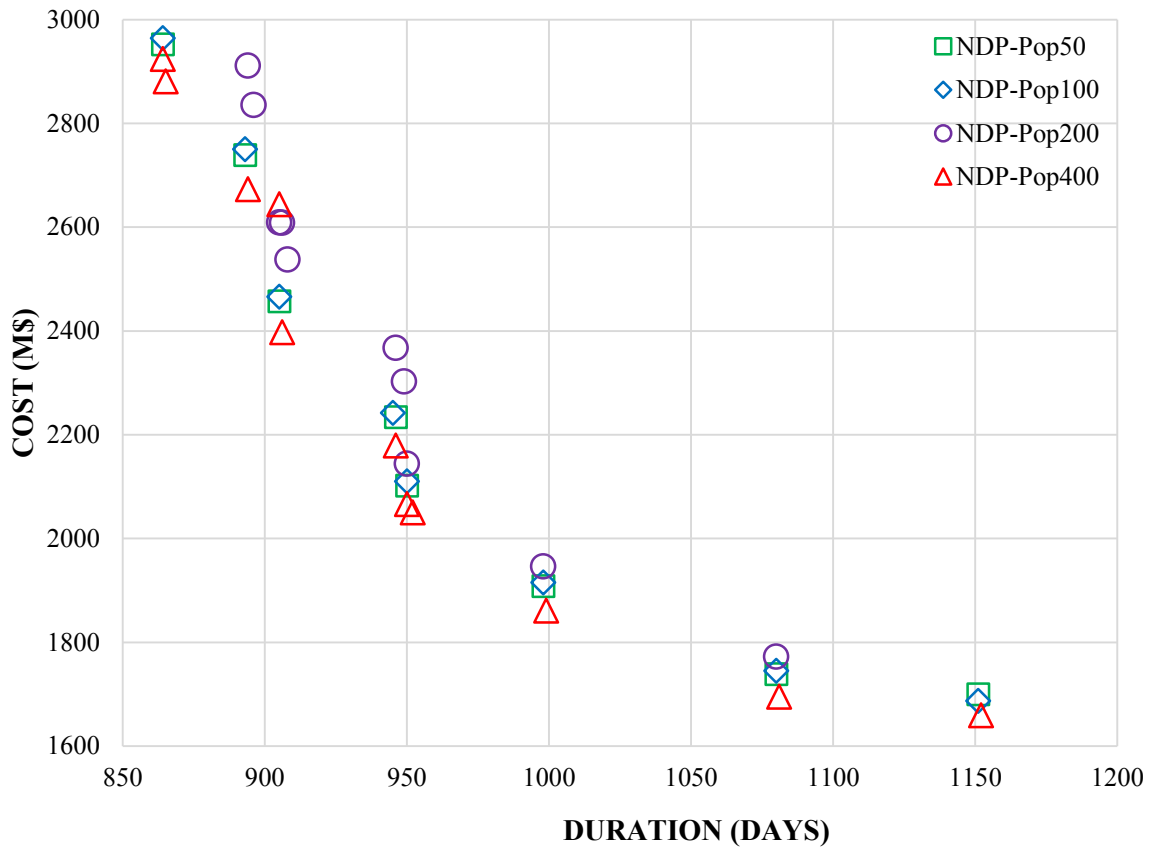


Figure 4-17: Non-Dominated Pareto solutions for different population sizes with 1000 generations

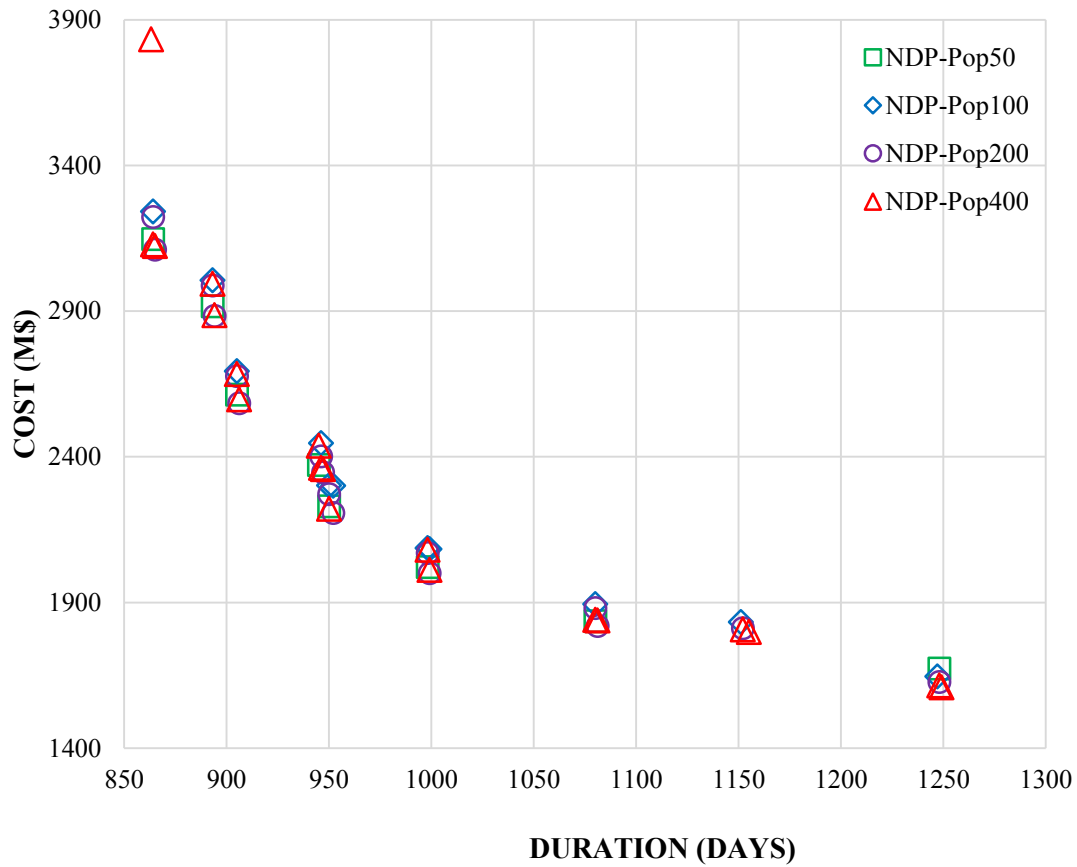
The computation time for five deterministic runs of proposed integrated framework along with the average computation time of those five runs are illustrated in Table 4-12. These results are also illustrated in Figure 4-25 and Figure 4-26 for fixed number of generations and fixed population sizes, respectively. According to these two figures, the required computation time is almost doubled by either making the number of generations or the size of population double in all cases.



**Figure 4-18: Non-Dominated Pareto solutions for different population sizes with 2000 generations**

**Table 4-11: Hypervolume percentage of the Pareto fronts produced by fixed size of population (Normalized values in the lower rows)**

Number of Generations	Size of Population			
	500	1000	2000	4000
50	14.16	12.52	<b>15.18</b>	14.09
	93.28	82.49	<b>100</b>	92.82
100	13.50	15.33	<b>15.82</b>	14.5
	85.37	96.95	<b>100</b>	91.67
200	<b>11.57</b>	11.09	10.94	10.53
	<b>100</b>	95.83	94.51	90.97
400	14.77	14.66	<b>15.07</b>	13.84
	97.97	97.26	<b>100</b>	91.81

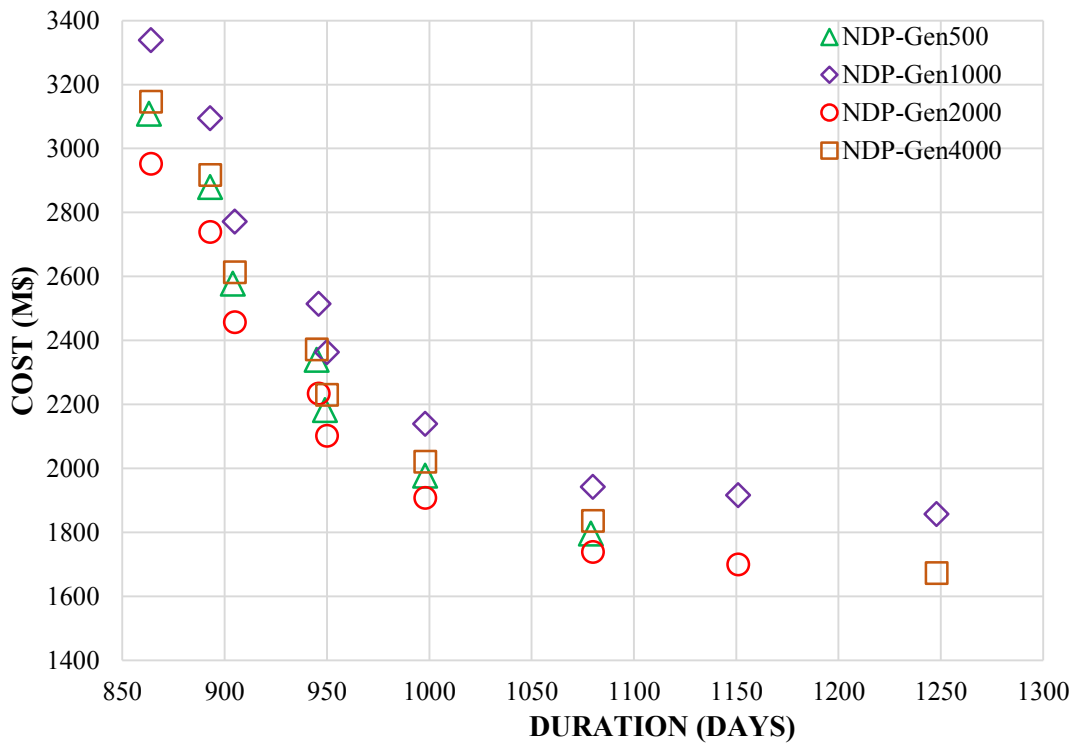


**Figure 4-19: Non-Dominated Pareto solutions for different population sizes with 4000 generations**

#### 4.7 Overall comparison of solutions obtained on server and cluster

In order to further investigation on the effect of GA parameters on the values of the objective functions, the most effective number of generations and size of population are selected based on the sensitivity analysis performed so far.

To do so, one reference point is considered for all 32 cases of sensitivity analysis based on the worst condition from both total cost and duration points of view (e.g., the maximum values of the total cost and total duration of the project among all 32 Pareto fronts). Then, the hypervolume percentages of all those Pareto fronts are calculated.



**Figure 4-20: Non-Dominated Pareto solutions for different number of generations, with population size of 50**

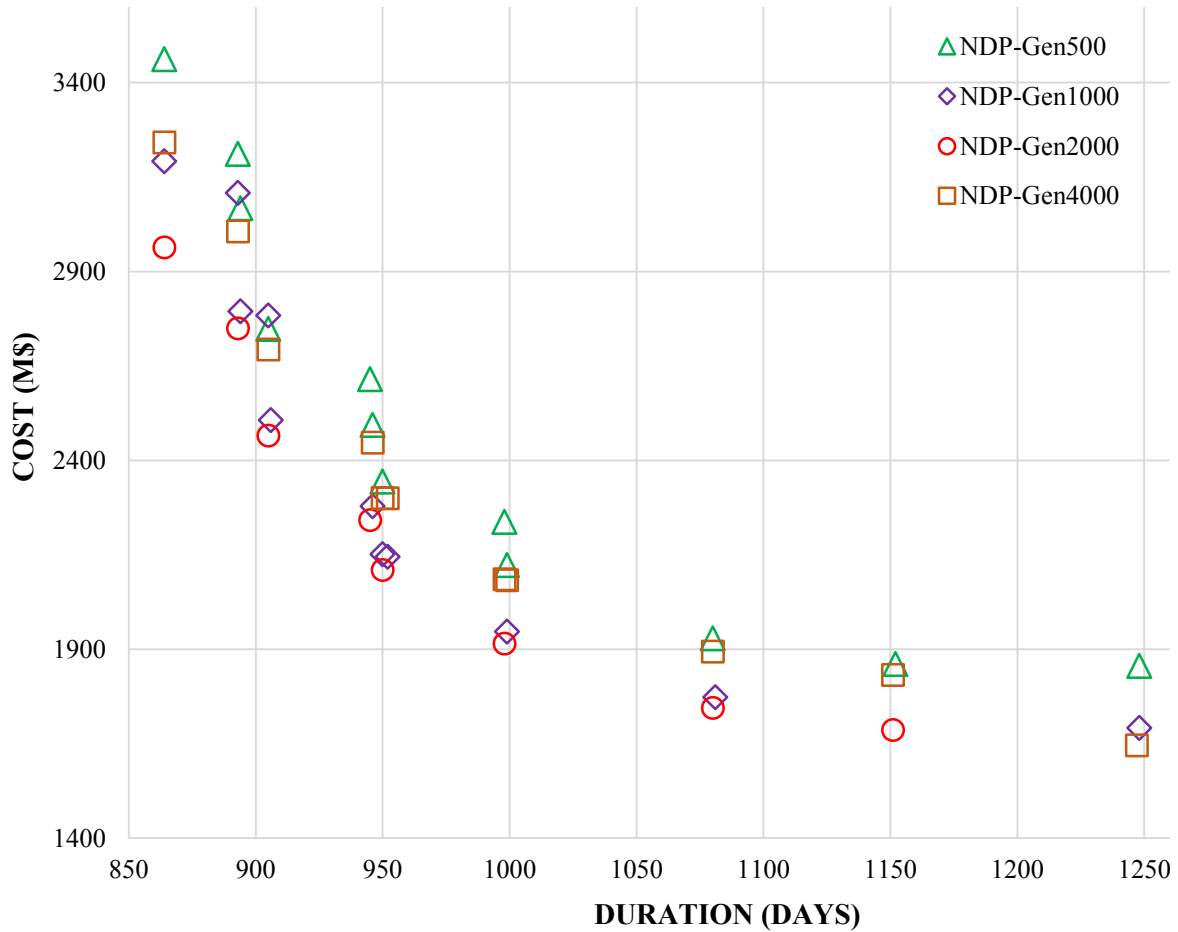
Table 4-13 and Table 4-14 show the results obtained by the server machine and the cluster, respectively. In these cases, the normalized values of the hypervolume percentages are calculated by dividing each hypervolume by the maximum hypervolume percentage of the whole table since they are all calculated based on the same reference point.

**Table 4-12: Computation time (min) for deterministic runs on one node of the cluster with 12 cores**

Size of Population	Number of Generations	Run No.					Average
		1	2	3	4	5	
<b>50</b>	<b>500</b>	43.94	42.25	42.88	43.90	42.43	<b>43.08</b>
	<b>1000</b>	84.80	87.05	84.71	84.66	84.62	<b>85.17</b>
	<b>2000</b>	164.15	173.60	163.66	163.96	164.03	<b>165.88</b>
	<b>4000</b>	326.03	327.07	328.16	329.33	323.26	<b>326.77</b>
<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	77.65	82.13	82.07	82.28	83.29	<b>81.48</b>
	<b>1000</b>	163.48	164.17	163.21	165.31	165.49	<b>164.33</b>
	<b>2000</b>	318.56	319.21	360.45	318.09	282.06	<b>319.67</b>
	<b>4000</b>	634.71	634.39	635.03	634.09	636.96	<b>635.04</b>
<b>200</b>	<b>500</b>	158.74	160.51	158.61	159.44	158.54	<b>159.17</b>
	<b>1000</b>	311.84	311.29	311.32	316.39	310.64	<b>312.30</b>
	<b>2000</b>	622.26	620.69	616.70	622.24	616.08	<b>619.59</b>
	<b>4000</b>	1230.41	1232.25	1244.96	1262.71	1244.12	<b>1242.89</b>
<b>400</b>	<b>500</b>	309.39	311.30	314.46	311.61	309.39	<b>311.23</b>
	<b>1000</b>	627.72	622.50	626.36	624.09	623.17	<b>624.77</b>
	<b>2000</b>	1245.42	1243.19	1247.68	1353.75	1248.40	<b>1267.69</b>
	<b>4000</b>	2510.93	2513.77	2522.82	2517.04	2500.89	<b>2513.09</b>

As shown in these tables, the simulation-based multi-objective optimization model is more sensitive to the size of population since the hypervolume changes less when the number of generations vary in comparison with the changes made by varying the size of population. As a result, the number of generations is fixed to 500 generations. Also, considering the fact that the hypervolume percentage of 200 and 400 population sizes are close to each other and the significant amount of the computation time and cost imposed to the system by doubling the size of population,

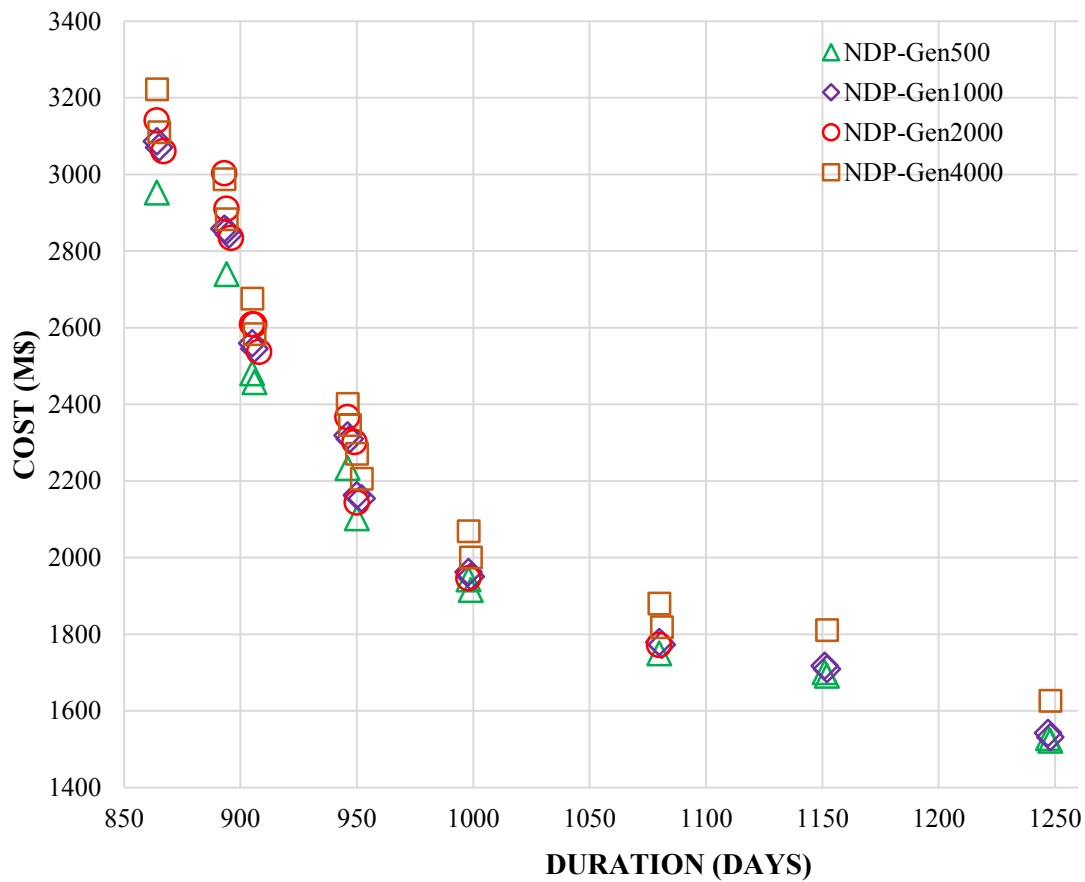
the population size of 200 is chosen to continue the sensitivity analysis by varying the crossover probability of the MOGA. However, if the computation time and cost can be ignored the population size of 400 is a proper selection as the MOGA's population size.



**Figure 4-21: Non-Dominated Pareto solutions for different number of generations, with population size of 100**

**Table 4-13: Hypervolume percentage of the all Pareto fronts generated by server machine considering one reference point (Normalized values in the lower rows)**

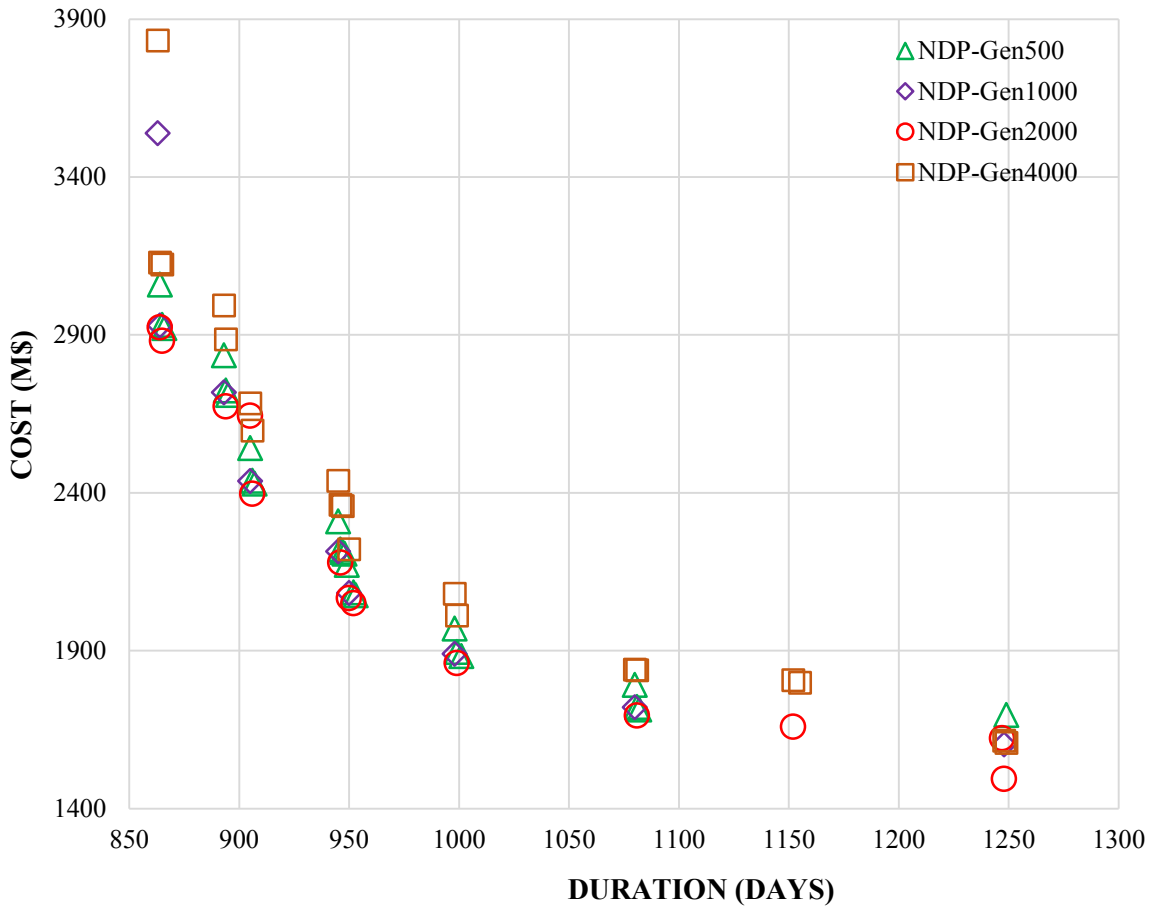
Number of Generations	Size of Population			
	50	100	200	400
500	18.80	18.96	21.21	<b>21.29</b>
	88.30	89.02	99.63	<b>100</b>
1000	19.73	19.31	20.37	<b>20.54</b>
	92.64	90.68	95.64	<b>96.64</b>
2000	19.90	19.28	<b>21.02</b>	20.93
	93.46	90.52	<b>98.73</b>	98.28
4000	19.67	<b>20.89</b>	20.60	20.79
	92.35	<b>98.09</b>	96.73	97.65



**Figure 4-22: Non-Dominated Pareto solutions for different number of generations, with population size of 200**

**Table 4-14: Hypervolume percentage of the all Pareto fronts generated by cluster considering one reference point (Normalized values in the lower rows)**

Number of Generations	Size of Population			
	50	100	200	400
500	16.93	15.68	<b>18.19</b>	18.02
	91.51	84.73	<b>98.34</b>	97.40
1000	15.65	17.41	17.75	<b>18.07</b>
	84.57	94.10	95.94	<b>97.69</b>
2000	17.88	17.81	17.19	<b>18.50</b>
	96.63	96.28	92.94	<b>100</b>
4000	16.93	16.45	17.20	<b>17.24</b>
	91.52	88.94	92.98	<b>93.19</b>



**Figure 4-23: Non-Dominated Pareto solutions for different number of generations, with population size of 400**



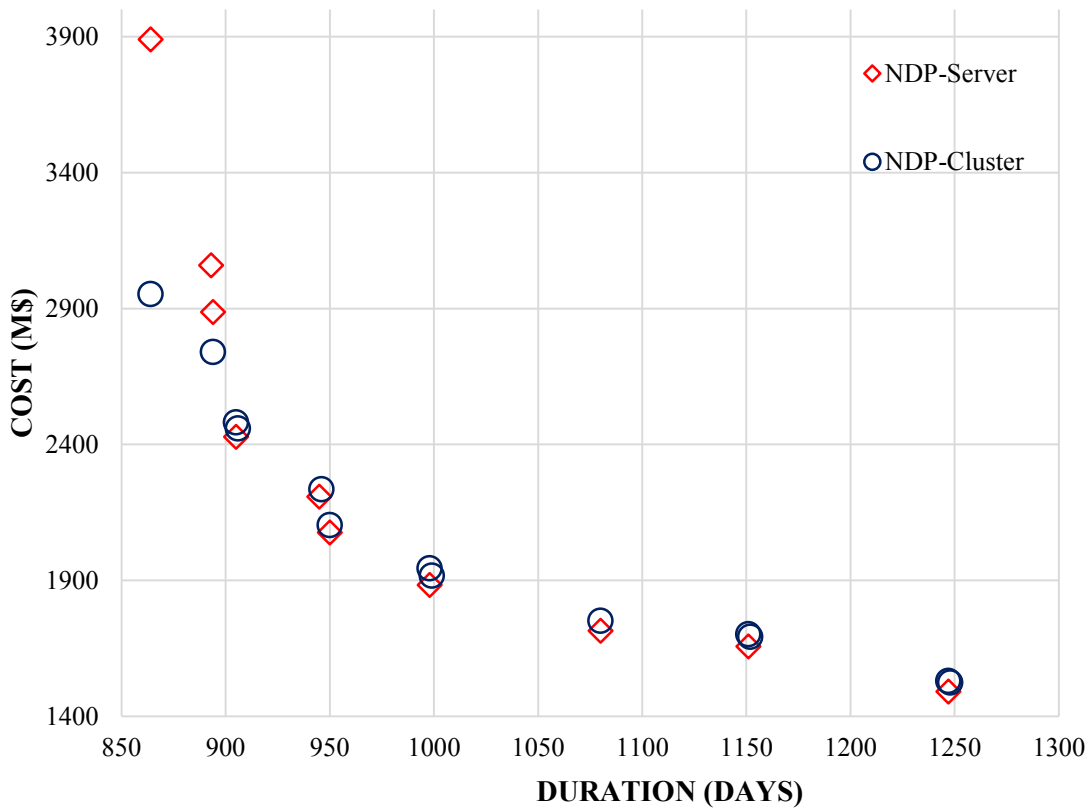
## 4.8 Performance Comparison of the Server and Cluster

The performances of the server machine and the cluster are compared from quality of the solutions as well as the speed points of view. As shown in Table 4-9 and Table 4-12, the average run time is calculated for performing the simulation-based optimization model of the precast full span concrete bridge construction technique in deterministic mode. Figure 4-27 and Figure 4-28 illustrate the comparison between the average run times obtained from the server and the cluster while both systems use 12 cores for fixed population sizes and fixed number of generations, respectively.

According to Table 4-16, the computation time required for running the proposed integrated framework has on average decreased by 28.30% for both cases of fixing the number of generations while varying the population sizes and vice versa. From the quality point of view, the best optimum sets of solutions obtained from performing different runs on the server machine and on the cluster are compared. These best sets of optimum solutions are selected based on the results achieved by the comparison of the Pareto fronts and the value of the hypervolume calculated for each Pareto front in Sections 4.5 and 4.6.

According to discussion presented in Section 4.7, the most promising optimum solutions from both the quality of generated solutions and the computational effort points of view are obtained from 500 generations and 200 population size. Figure 4-24 shows the comparison between the Pareto fronts created based on the suggested combination of population size and number of generations by the server machine and the cluster. The hypervolume percentages are 14.51% and 14.82% for

the Pareto fronts generated by the server and the cluster, respectively. Based on these values and Figure 4-24, both machines produce very close optimum solutions in most of the cases; however, the cluster shows the better performance overall. Obtaining different set of optimum solutions by two different machines but with the same settings for solving one problem is because of the random nature of the optimization problem. Each time that the MOGA is run it starts from different point in search space which leads to producing different optimum solutions at the end of the optimization procedure.



**Figure 4-24: Final performance comparison between the server and the cluster from quality of solutions point of view**

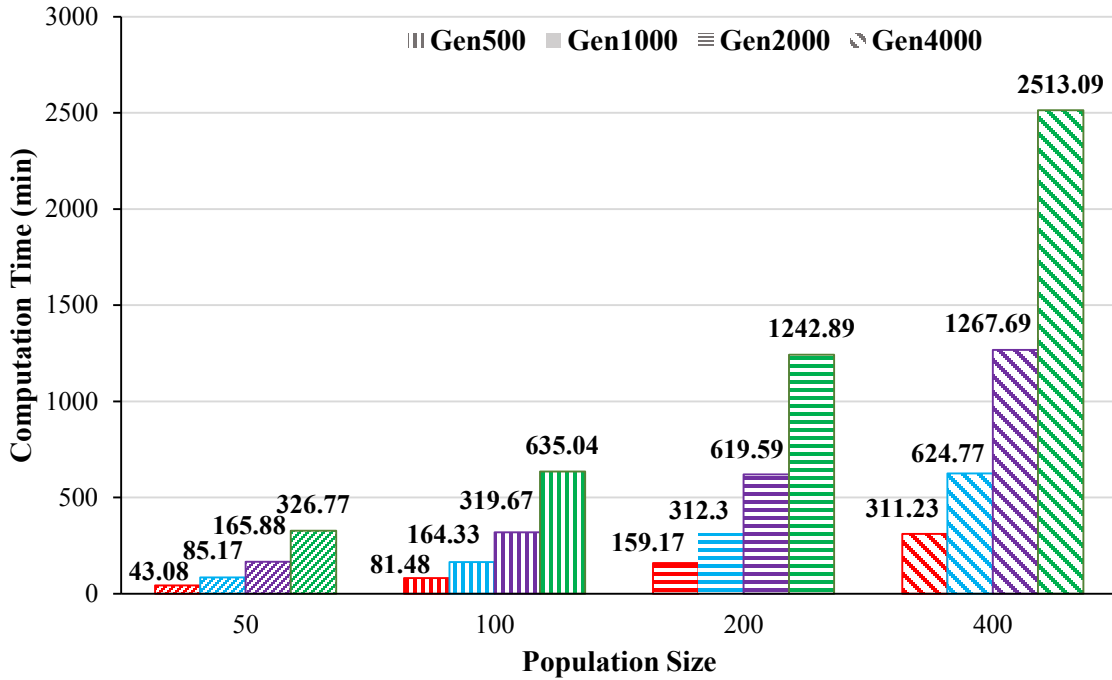


Figure 4-25: Comparison of deterministic computation time for fixed population sizes (Cluster)

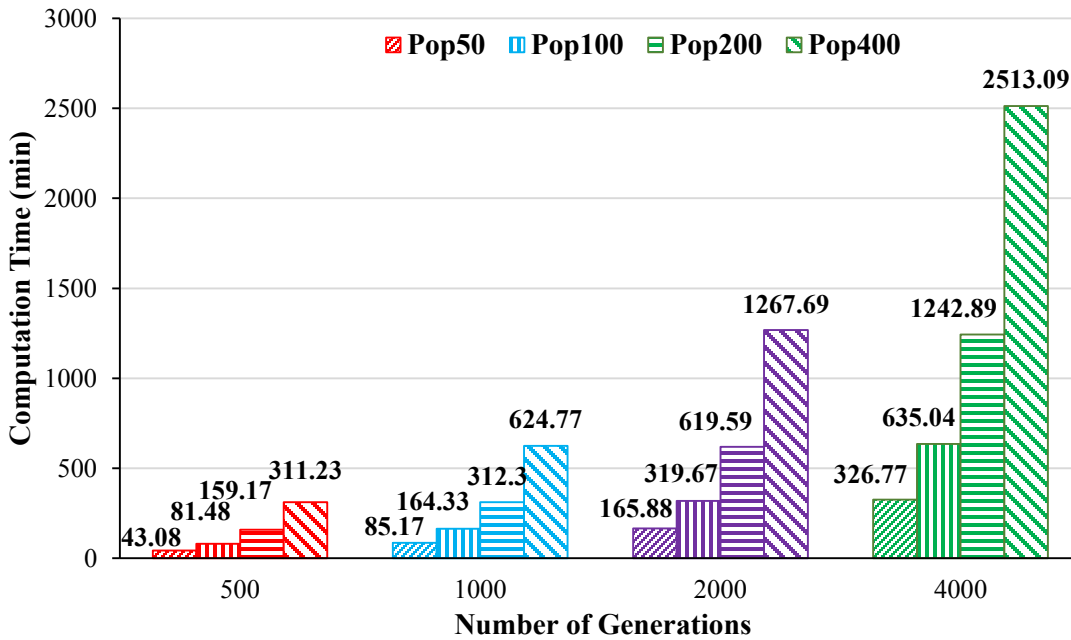


Figure 4-26: Comparison of deterministic computation time for fixed number of generations (Cluster)

#### 4.9 Effect of Crossover Probability ( $P_c$ )

According to Section 3.7.1, there are different ranges suggested for crossover probability ( $P_c$ ) by researchers. Several researches demonstrated that the best crossover probability suggested values is between 0.7 and 1 (mostly around either 0.7 or 0.8) (Sugihara, 1997; Kamil et al., 2013; Roeva et al., 2013). Therefore, the value of crossover probability is incremented at 0.1 within the range of 0.5 to 1 in this study. Also, based on the discussion presented in Section 4.6.1.2, the number of generations and population size are fixed to 500 and 200, respectively.

Considering the fixed crossover probability equal to 0.5 leads to generation of half of the population in each generation by applying the crossover function and creation of the remaining using mutation function. The Pareto fronts generated by setting the above-mentioned fixed values as crossover probability and the hypervolume percentage of those fronts are illustrated in Figure 4-29 and Table 4-15, respectively.

**Table 4-15: Hypervolume percentage for fixed crossover probability (500 generations and population size of 200)**

	Crossover Probability ( $P_c$ )					
	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.9	1
Hypervolume Percentage	12.21	12.53	<b>13.62</b>	13.05	13.35	9.90

As obvious from the results, the best crossover probability is 0.7 which is compatible with the outcome of the previous researches.

#### 4.10 Effect of Number of Cores

In accordance with Section 3.7.2, the computation time which is needed to reach to the final optimum results is calculated for different numbers of cores in order to investigate the ability of parallel platform to improve the performance of the whole proposed framework. The performance of the problem is measured using the number of cores set from 1 to 12. In order to omit the effect of the uncertainty of the stochastic distribution of activities durations, all the durations are assumed to be deterministic as given in Table 4-1. Table 4-17 and Figure 4-30 illustrate the computation time needed to complete the simulation-based optimization based on 1000 generations and population size of 100. The speedup achieved by increasing the number of cores is also illustrated in Table 4-17. The speedup is calculated as  $S(1, n) = T_1/T_n$ , where  $n$ ,  $T_1$ , and  $T_n$  are the number of the cores, computation time obtained by using one core, and parallel computation time obtained by using  $n$  cores, respectively (Yang et al., 2012). As shown in Table 4-17, using two and three CPUs results in superliner speedup which means using these numbers of cores reduces the computation time less than 1/2, and 1/3, respectively.

By increasing the number of cores more than three, the near linear speedup is achieved. For instance, using 12 cores decreases the execution time of the proposed method to almost 1/8 of that needed when using a single core. Also, there is less improvement in the computation time when the number of cores exceed seven. These results show that the proposed method better uses the computer capacity to reach to the optimal solutions by saving time.

**Table 4-16: Improvement in the speed of running the integrated framework by the cluster while fixing the population size**

Population Size	No. of Generations	Difference Percentage (%)
50	500	29.49
	1000	28.23
	2000	30.13
	4000	30.97
100	500	25.83
	1000	25.45
	2000	27.80
	4000	28.24
200	500	27.59
	1000	28.77
	2000	29.54
	4000	29.08
400	500	28.92
	1000	28.87
	2000	26.45
	4000	27.41

The parallel performance of the probabilistic simulation-based optimization procedure is also investigated by assigning random distributions to the activities' durations (Table 4-3). In this case, the number of cores is also set from 1 to 12. For 100 generations, the size of population of 100 and 100 replications, the results are shown in Figure 4-31. The results indicate that there is a significant improvement in the computation time by increasing the number of cores.

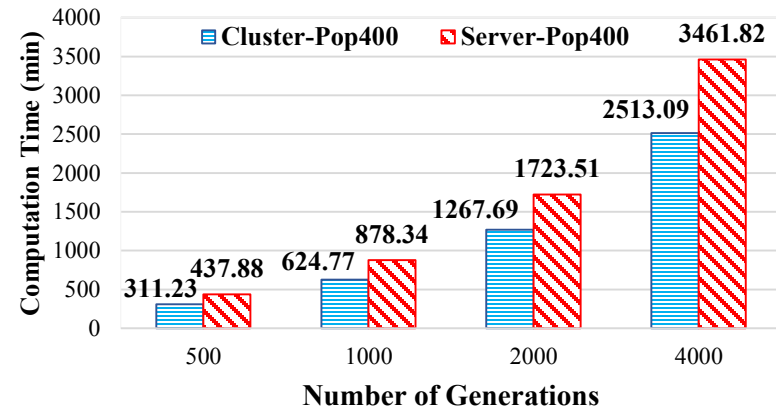
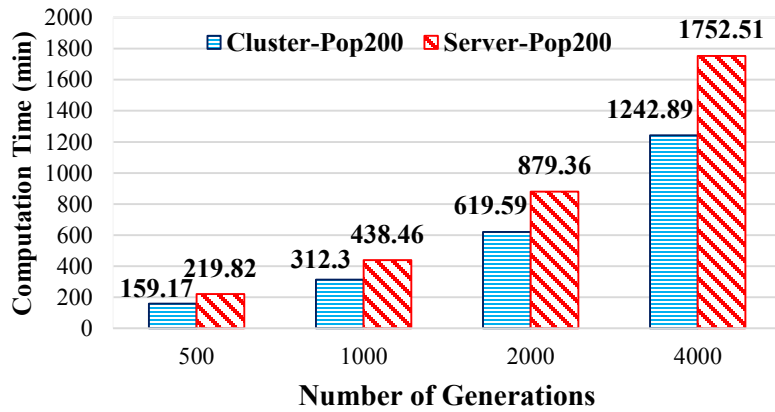
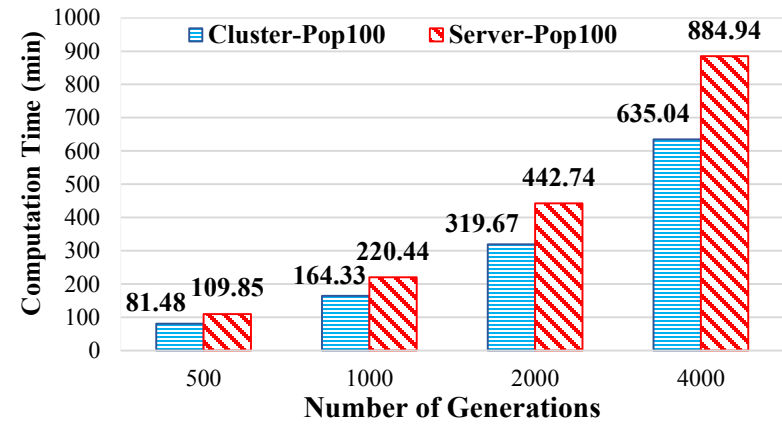
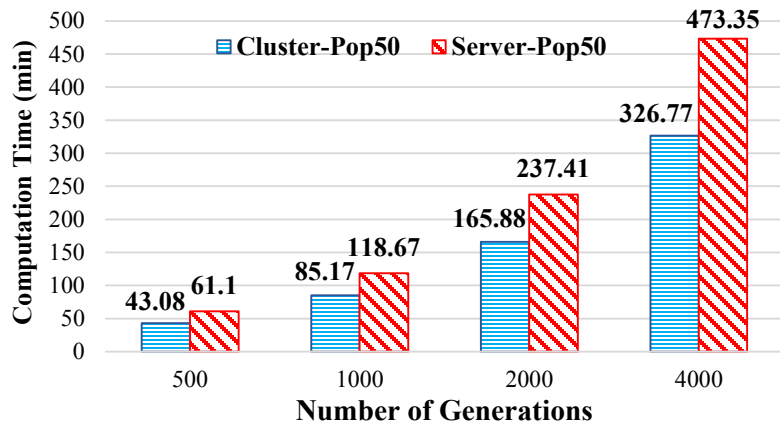


Figure 4-27: Time comparison between the performance of the Server machine and the cluster for the fixed population sizes

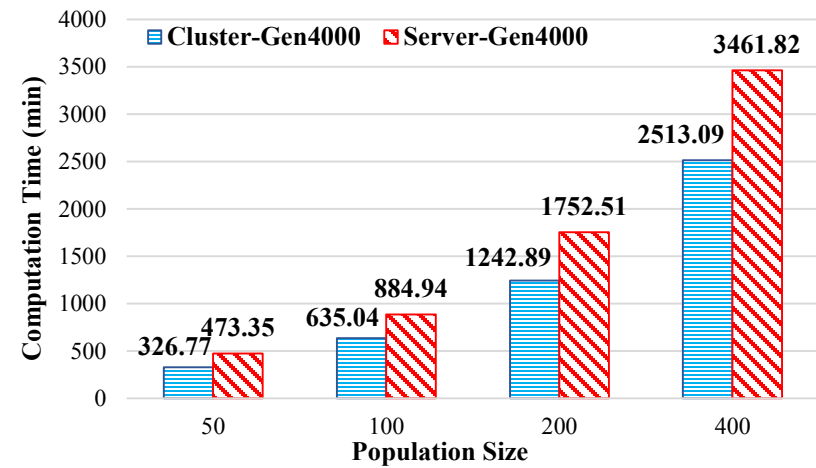
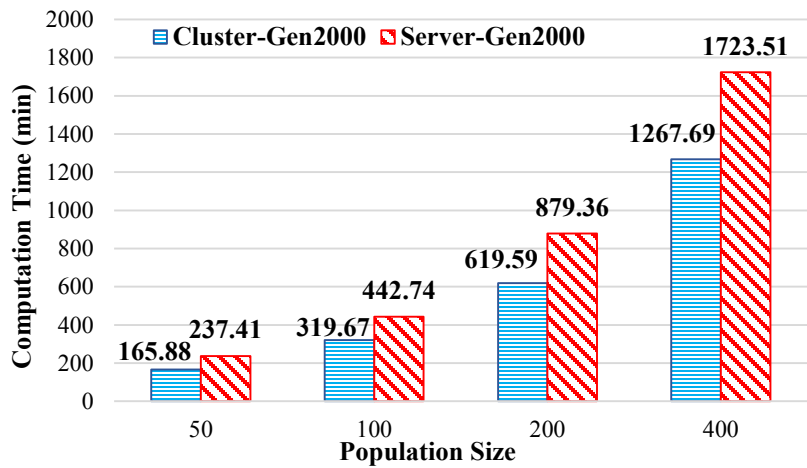
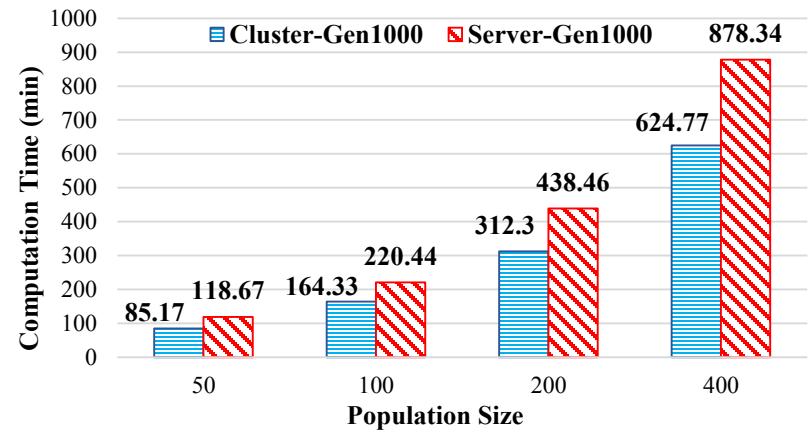
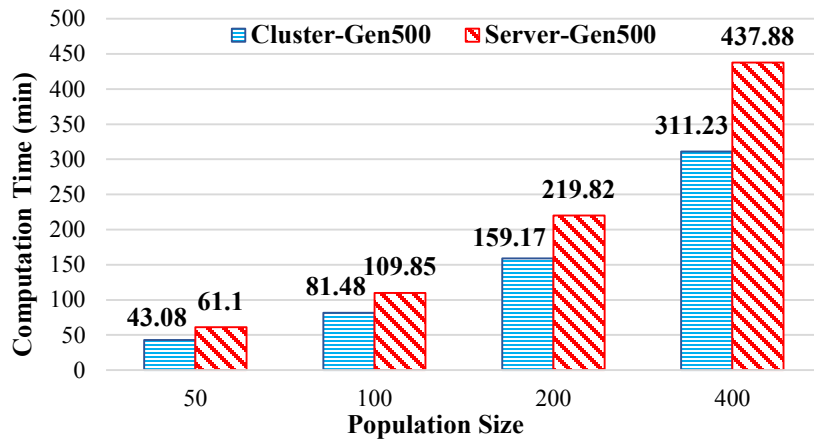
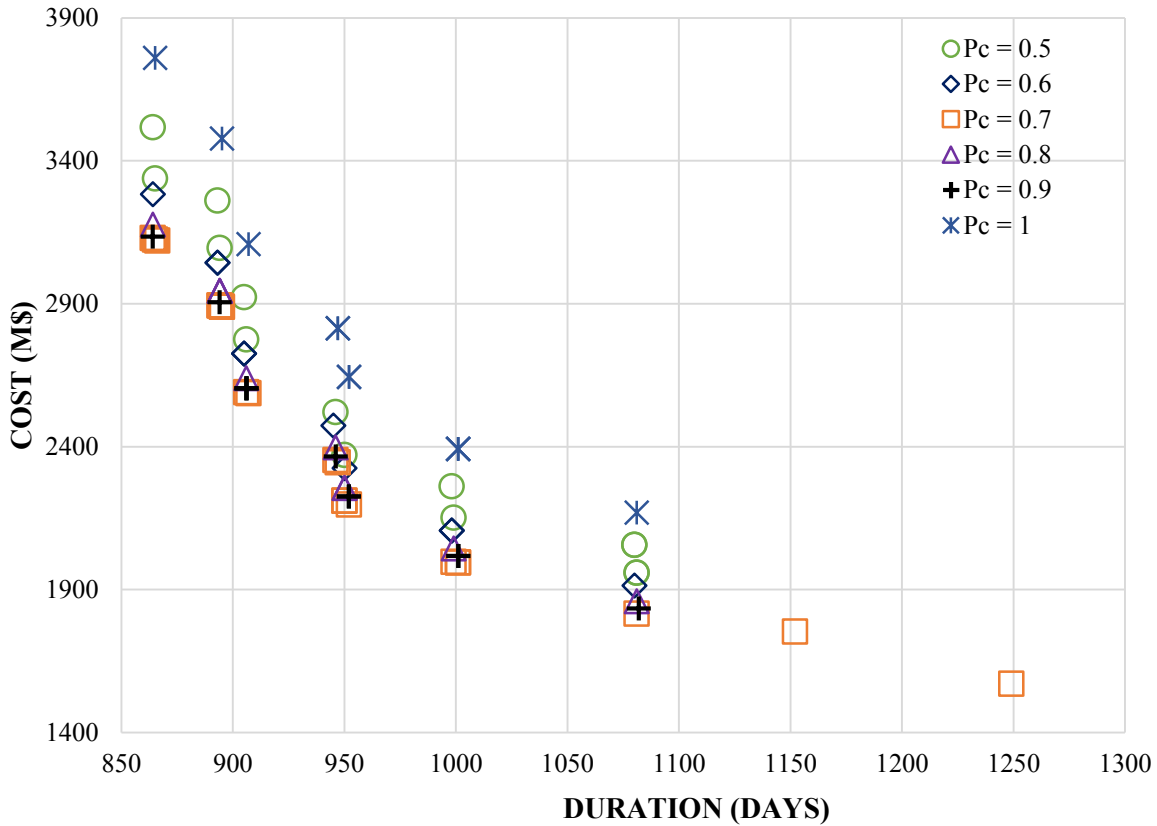


Figure 4-28: Time comparison between the performance of the Server machine and the cluster for the fixed number of generations





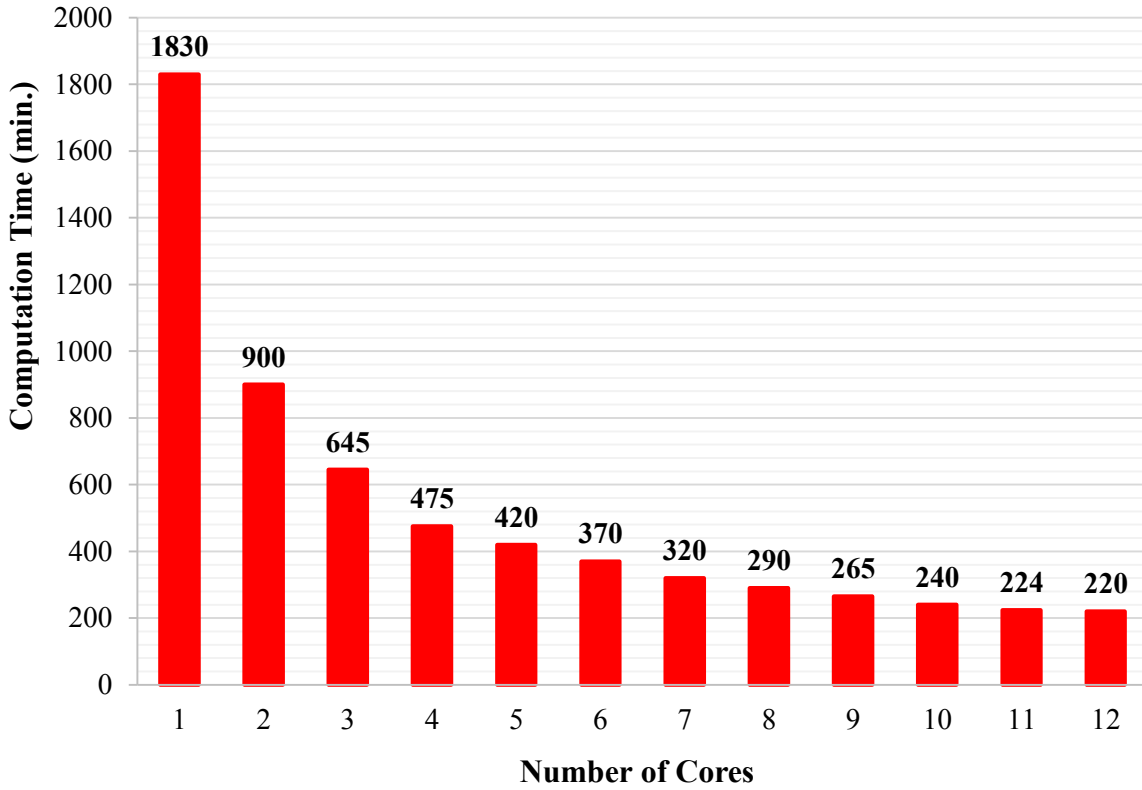
**Figure 4-29: Set of optimum solutions for different values as crossover probability**

According to the number of replications that should be applied for the probabilistic mode, the values of the computation time are much bigger than the deterministic mode; therefore, these values are shown in hours instead of minutes in Table 4-18.

According to Section 3.6, the cluster has the ability to perform the proposed framework on multiple nodes to take advantage of parallel execution of the model in more than one node in order to save the computation time as much as possible. There are two types of nodes available in the McGill University cluster with 12 cores and 16 cores. The core's specifications are shown in Table 3-6. In that table, phases 1 and 2 indicate the specification of nodes with 12 and 16 cores, respectively.

**Table 4-17: Parallel computation time for deterministic mode (Server)**

	Number of Cores											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Time (min)	1830	900	645	475	420	370	320	290	265	240	224	220
Speedup	1	2.03	2.84	3.85	4.36	4.95	5.72	6.31	6.91	7.63	8.17	8.32



**Figure 4-30: Saving in Computation time by increasing the number of cores in deterministic mode (Server)**

**Table 4-18: Parallel computation time for probabilistic mode (Server)**

	Number of Cores											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Time (hrs.)	1015	398	245	151	121	102	87	77	69	61.02	58	50
Speedup	1	2.55	4.14	6.73	8.41	9.96	11.65	13.23	14.74	16.64	17.51	20.3

Each core needs a unique license to run a model in MATLAB environment and based on the availability of 64 licenses for the McGill cluster, the proposed model is run on four nodes with 16 cores in each node and also five nodes of 12 cores in each node which results in 64 and 60 as the total number of cores, respectively.

As shown in Figure 4-32 and Table 4-19, the computation time required to complete the simulation-based optimization model decreases on average by 31% by adding more nodes; however, the rate of saving time also decreases by using more nodes. That is because of the extra time needed for communication between different nodes which is added to the computation time of the problem.

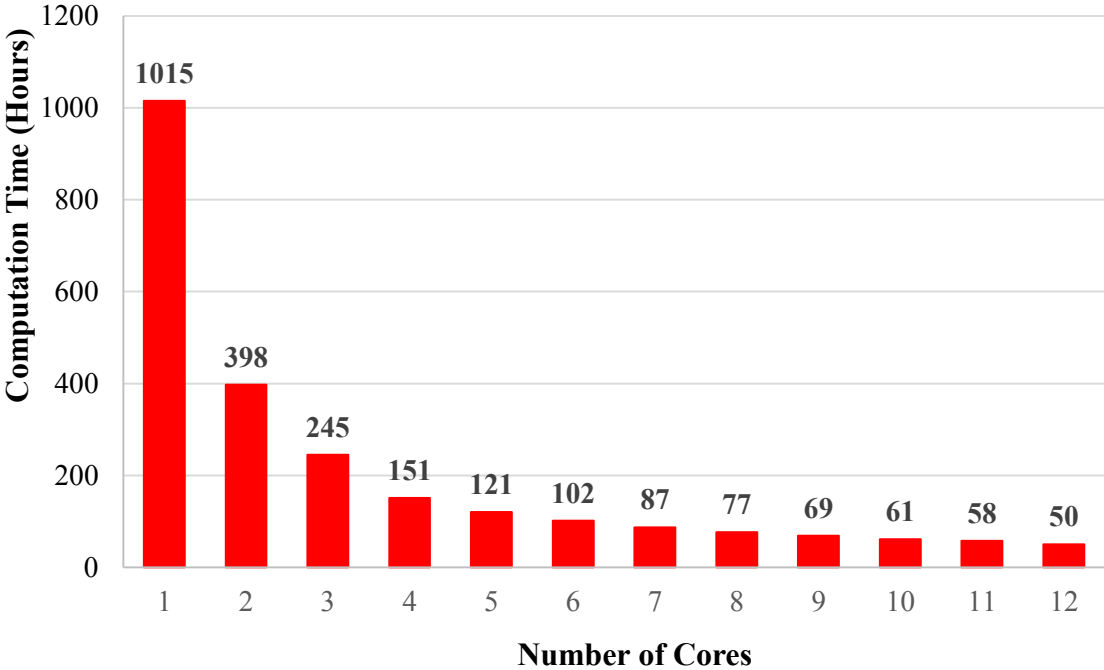
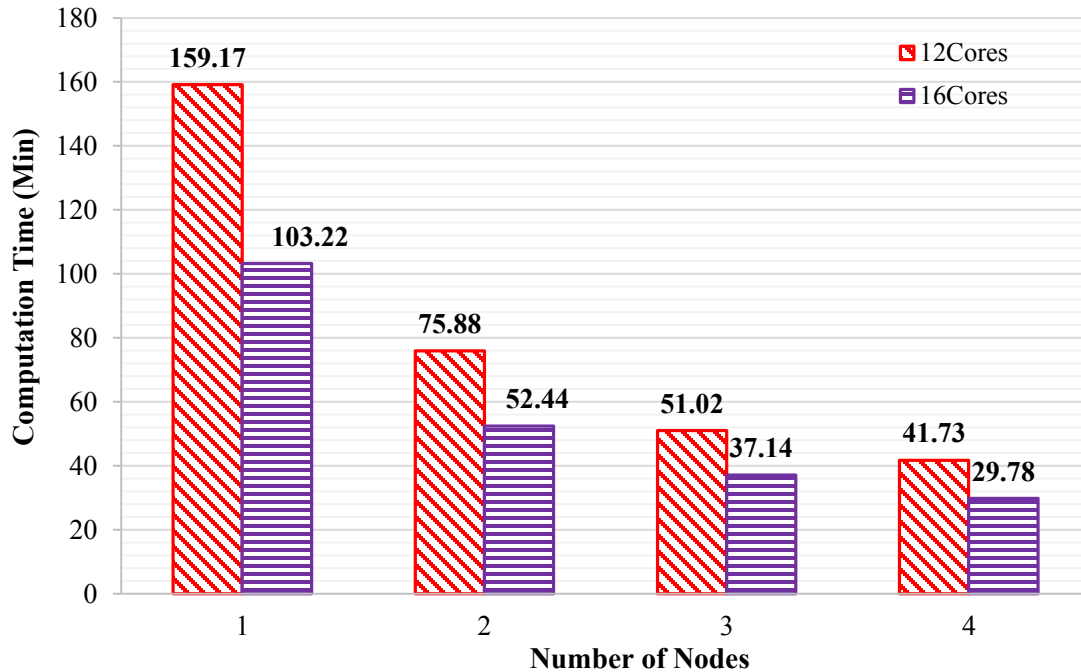


Figure 4-31: Saving in computation time by increasing the number of cores (Server)



**Figure 4-32: Saving in computation time by increasing the number of nodes for 500 generations and 200 population size in deterministic mode (Cluster)**

**Table 4-19: Parallel computation time using multiple nodes (Cluster)**

No. of Nodes	Time (min)		Decrease Percentage
	12 cores / Node	16 cores / Node	
1	159	103	35.22
2	76	52	31.58
3	51	37	27.45
4	42	30	28.57
5	34	---	---

#### 4.11 Summary and Conclusions

This chapter investigated the procedure of developing different simulation models using SimEvents along with the validation of the developed models by comparing the obtained results of the simulation models with those obtained by Stroboscope in both deterministic and probabilistic modes. It also discussed the integration of MATLAB optimization engine with the

developed SimEvents simulation model within a parallel environment. The proposed framework is then validated by comparing the generated optimum solution with those obtained using another type of GAs (fmGA). It discussed how changes in the various GA parameters affect the outcome of the proposed system applying the sensitivity analysis on those parameters. Moreover, the sensitivity analysis was performed by varying the number of cores in order to investigate the ability of the parallel platform to improve the performance of the whole proposed framework. The proposed parallel platform is implemented on two different systems: a server machine and the cluster of McGill University.

The results of the comparison between the NSGA-II and fmGA showed that the NSGA-II resulted in 4% better Pareto front compared with the results of fmGA. The outcomes of performing sensitivity analysis on GA parameters such as the number of generations, size of population, and crossover probability are used to tune the NSGA-II based on the population size of 200, 500 generations, and crossover probability of 0.7. This GA configuration results in the most promising optimal solutions considering the quality of solutions and computational efforts.

The parallel execution of the proposed framework on the server machine by using 12 cores results in 8.32 and 20.3 times speedup compared with a single core for the deterministic and probabilistic modes, respectively. Furthermore, running the parallel system on multiple nodes available at the cluster improved the computation time by almost 31% using four nodes with 16 cores per node in comparison with the same number of nodes and 12 cores per node. Moreover, the overall comparison between the server machine and the cluster showed that both machines produce very

close optimum solutions in most of the cases; however, the cluster showed better performance from the points of views of the quality of optimum solutions and computation time.

## **CHAPTER 5      SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK**

### **5.1   Summary of research**

The research proposed the usage of NSGA-II as the optimization engine integrated with SimEvents DES to model different bridge construction processes. The parallel computing platform is then applied to reduce the computation time necessary to deal with multiple objective functions and the large search space.

Furthermore, it developed in detail the simulation modeling procedure using relatively new simulation tool in the construction industry. It also elaborated on the needs, motivations and benefits of performing the proposed framework within a parallel environment. Moreover, this research proposed a comprehensive approach for investigating the effect of different GA parameters on the performance of the proposed framework by performing sensitivity analysis. The variation in the values of population size, number of generations, and crossover probability were taken into account to identify the best configuration of GA parameters. The possible combinations of GA parameters within the defined ranges and their impact on the system's performance were investigated. Furthermore, the sensitivity analysis is also performed by varying the number of cores and nodes using two different machines including a server machine and the cluster of McGill University.

The main advantages of the proposed framework are that it helps to find the best resource combination among a large number of possible options by comparing sets of Pareto fronts, it

improves the computation time for both deterministic and stochastic simulation models using HPC, and it suggests the most promising configuration of GA parameters in order to reach reliable and optimum solutions.

## **5.2 Research contributions and conclusions**

The conclusions of this research are as follows: (1) DES and multi-objective NSGA-II are integrated within a parallel environment to find the optimum solutions (i.e., the best resource combinations) for a bridge construction method based on the objective functions' values obtained from the simulation. The optimal solutions obtained from the NSGA-II optimization algorithm are compared with those obtained from fmGA to validate the applicability of the proposed model. The results showed that the NSGA-II resulted in a Pareto front 4% better than that obtained from fmGA; (2) 8.32 and 20.3 times speedup were achieved using master-slave parallel paradigm by the server machine with 12 cores in deterministic and probabilistic modes, respectively; (3) Furthermore, the NSGA-II algorithm was tuned based on the best parameters which maximize its performance by performing sensitivity analysis. The hypervolume indicator was used to compare different Pareto fronts from the quality of optimum solutions point of view. The comparison of 32 sets of optimum solutions generate separately by both the server machine and the cluster results in identification of the best settings of GA parameters as 500 generations, population size of 200 and crossover probability of 0.7. In addition, performing the proposed framework on multiple nodes using the cluster resulted in 31% saving on average in the computation time; (4) The overall



comparison between the performance of the server and the cluster showed 28.30% improvement on average in computation time required by the cluster in comparison with the server.

### **5.3 Limitations and future work**

Developing the simulation models in SimEvents as a relatively new simulation tool for construction purposes has many difficulties and limitations since it is a graphical based simulation tool which makes it difficult to either define common functions and concepts for construction simulation models, and also to trace the simulation model. In addition, performing the proposed framework on multiple nodes of the cluster has several limitations from the availability of the nodes, license issues, and priority of submitted jobs by other users, which results in waiting in a queue for long time in some cases.

The future research includes investigating the usage of different types of nodes on a cluster. Also, according to the fact that by increasing the number of nodes the communication between the nodes will increase as well, new solutions should be found to reduce the required communication between nodes in order to improve the performance of the system from the computation time point of view and to take full advantage of the capacity of multiple nodes for performing parallel jobs.

The hypervolume indicator can be used within the selection function as a selection criterion to improve the performance of the optimization algorithm. Moreover, the sensitivity analysis of other parameters of the GA, such as parameters within the creation and selection functions, is another

future work. In addition, the computational power of the proposed framework can be further improved by testing other parallel computing approaches.

Finally, since the SimEvents is a relatively new emerging simulation tool for construction purposes, improvements are expected in this tool to make it faster for simulating large-scale and complex construction projects.

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## **APPENDICES**

## Appendix A – MATLAB code of deterministic simulation (DES)

```
% Functions to be minimized

function y = ObjectivFunctions_Det(x)

%% Initial Setting

% OP = Overtime policy
% Rep= Number of replications

OP=[1      1      1      8      5
     1  1.039  1.111  9      5
     1  1.096  1.200 10      5
     1  1.231  1.273 11      5
     1  1.311  1.333 12      5
     1  1.039  1.167  8      6
     1  1.081  1.259  9      6
     1  1.143  1.333 10      6
     1  1.269  1.394 11      6
     1  1.356  1.444 12      6
     1  1.127  1.286  8      7
     1  1.194  1.365  9      7
     1  1.270  1.429 10      7
     1  1.379  1.481 11      7
     1  1.455  1.524 12      7];

Rep=1;
TruckDriverHrCost=50;
YardCraneDriverHrCost=100;
OnsiteCraneDriverHrCost=100;
TrolleyDriverHrCost=100;
GantryDriverHrCost=200;
OtherDailyCost=500;
YardCraneHrCost=50;
DelTruckHrCost=50;
GantryInitCost=9000;
GantryHrCost=500;
TrolleyInitCost=900;
TrolleyHrCost=150;
OnsiteCraneInitCost=900;
OnsiteCraneHrCost=150;
CageInitCost=500;
CageHrCost=10;
InnerMouldInitCost=1000;
InnerMouldHrCost=10;
OuterMouldInitCost=1000;
OuterMouldHrCost=10;
PrepCrewInitCost=200;
PrepCrewHrCost=200;
```

```

PrestressCrewInitCost=200;
PrestressCrewHrCost=200;
SteelCrewInitCost=200;
SteelCrewHrCost=200;
CastCrewInitCost=200;
CastCrewHrCost=200;
StorageHourlyCost=10;
NPrecastSpans=4;
NGantry=1;
NOnsiteCrane=1;
NYardCrane=1;
NYardCrane1=1;
NOnsiteTrolley=1;
CureMethodDuration=[600 1200];
CureMethodCost=[200 0];
NTrailer=x(1);
PrecastYardDistance=x(2);
NRebarCageMold=x(3);
NInnerMold=x(4);
NOuterMold=x(5);
NPreparationCrew=x(6);
NStressingCrew=x(7);
NSteelCrew=x(8);
NCastingCrew=x(9);
CureMethodD=x(10);
F=x(11);
NStorageCapacity=x(12);
StorageTime=x(13);

% Parallel execution of simulation model
parfor i = 1:Rep;
% Input variables from MOGA to Discrete Event Simulation (DES)
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Trailer
Queue/Time-Based Function-Call Generator2','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',
num2str(NTrailer));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Rebar-
Mold Queue/Time-Based Function-Call Generator1','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',
num2str(NRebarCageMold));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/InnerM
old Queue/Time-Based Function-Call Generator','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',
num2str(NInnerMold));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Outer_
Mold Queue/Time-Based Function-Call Generator','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',
num2str(NOuterMold));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Prep_C
rew Queue/Time-Based Function-Call Generator2','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',
num2str(NPreparationCrew));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Stress
ing_Crew Queue/Time-Based Function-Call Generator2','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',
num2str(NStressingCrew));

```

```

set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Steel_Crew_Queue/Time-Based_Function-Call_Generator2','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',num2str(NSteelCrew));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Cast_Crew_Queue/Time-Based_Function-Call_Generator2','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',num2str(NCastingCrew));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Storage-Cap_Queue/Time-Based_Function-Call_Generator','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',num2str(NStorageCapacity*5));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Bottom_Slab-Web/BottomSlab_Web','ServiceTime', num2str(1673*OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Inner_Mold/Inner_Mold','ServiceTime', num2str(300*OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/TopSlab/TopSlab','ServiceTime', num2str(1979*OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/LiftToMold/LiftToMold','ServiceTime', num2str(45*OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Cast_Span/Cast_Span','ServiceTime', num2str(1544*OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Span_Curing/Span_Curing','ServiceTime', num2str(CureMethodDuration(CureMethodD)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/RemoveInnerMol/RemoveInnerMol','ServiceTime', num2str(255*OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Posttension_1st/Posttension_1st','ServiceTime', num2str(240*OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/LiftToStorage/LiftToStorage','ServiceTime', num2str(60*OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Posttension_2nd/Posttension_2nd','ServiceTime', num2str(240*OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Storage_Time/Storage_Time','ServiceTime', num2str(StorageTime*60));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Trailer_Loading/Trailer_Loading','ServiceTime', num2str(60*OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Trailer_Haul/Trailer_Haul','ServiceTime', num2str(PrecastYardDistance*10*0.67));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Trolley_Loading/Trolley_Loading','ServiceTime', num2str(60*OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Trolley_Travel and Trailer_Return/Trailer_Return','ServiceTime', num2str(PrecastYardDistance*10*0.67));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Reposition/Reposition','ServiceTime', num2str(240*OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Pickup_Span/Pickup_Span','ServiceTime', num2str(60*OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Trolley_Return and Erect_Span/Erect_Span','ServiceTime', num2str(240*OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Prepare_Bearing/Prepare_Bearing','ServiceTime', num2str(240*OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet/Load_Transfer/Load_Transfer','ServiceTime', num2str(60*OP(F,2)));
% Run DES

```

```

simOut{i} =
sim('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Deterministic_BMDet','SaveOutput
','on','OutputSaveName','tout','OutputSaveName','BottomSlab_Web','OutputSaveN
ame','BottomSlab_Web1'...
,'OutputSaveName','Inner_Mold','OutputSaveName','TopSlab','OutputSaveName','L
iftToMold','OutputSaveName','Cast_Span','OutputSaveName','Span_Curing'...
,'OutputSaveName','RemoveInnerMol','OutputSaveName','Posttension_1st','Output
SaveName','LiftToStorage','OutputSaveName','Posttension_2nd','OutputSaveName
','Storage_Time'...
,'OutputSaveName','Trailer_Loading','OutputSaveName','Trailer_Haul','OutputSa
veName','Trolley_Loading','OutputSaveName','Trailer_Return','OutputSaveName',
'Trolley_Travel'...
,'OutputSaveName','Reposition','OutputSaveName','Pickup_Span','OutputSaveName
','Trolley_Return','OutputSaveName','Erect_Span'...
,'OutputSaveName','Prepare_Bearing','OutputSaveName','Load_Transfer');
end
% Get outputs from DES to MOGA
output = cell(Rep,23);

for i=1:Rep
output{i,1}=simOut{i}.get('tout');
output{i,2}= simOut{i}.get('BottomSlab_Web1');
output{i,3}= simOut{i}.get('BottomSlab_Web');
output{i,4}= simOut{i}.get('Inner_Mold');
output{i,5}= simOut{i}.get('TopSlab');
output{i,6}= simOut{i}.get('LiftToMold');
output{i,7}= simOut{i}.get('Cast_Span');
output{i,8}= simOut{i}.get('Span_Curing');
output{i,9}= simOut{i}.get('RemoveInnerMol');
output{i,10}= simOut{i}.get('Posttension_1st');
output{i,11}= simOut{i}.get('LiftToStorage');
output{i,12}= simOut{i}.get('Posttension_2nd');
output{i,13}= simOut{i}.get('Storage_Time');
output{i,14}= simOut{i}.get('Trailer_Loading');
output{i,15}= simOut{i}.get('Trailer_Haul');
output{i,16}= simOut{i}.get('Trolley_Loading');
output{i,17}= simOut{i}.get('Trailer_Return');
output{i,18}= simOut{i}.get('Trolley_Travel');
output{i,19}= simOut{i}.get('Reposition');
output{i,20}= simOut{i}.get('Pickup_Span');
output{i,21}= simOut{i}.get('Trolley_Return');
output{i,22}= simOut{i}.get('Erect_Span');
output{i,23}= simOut{i}.get('Prepare_Bearing');
% First objective function (total duration of the process) calculations
Nt=(cell2mat(output(i,1)));

TWorkingDays=round(Nt/(60*OP(F,4))+0.49);
TProjectDuration=TWorkingDays+ floor(TWorkingDays/OP(F,5))*(7-OP(F,5));

% Second objective function (total cost of the process) calculations

```

```

TSetupCost=
2* (NCastingCrew*CastCrewInitCost*OP (F,1)+NRebarCageMold*CageInitCost+NInnerMo
ld*InnerMouldInitCost+NOuterMold*OuterMouldInitCost...
+NPreperationCrew*PrepCrewInitCost*OP (F,1)+NStressingCrew*PrestressCrewInitCo
st*OP (F,1)+NSteelCrew*SteelCrewInitCost*OP (F,1)+NGantry*GantryInitCost+NOnsit
eTrolley*TrolleyInitCost+NOnsiteCrane*OnsiteCraneInitCost);

TIndirectCost=TProjectDuration*OtherDailyCost;
TCuringCost=CureMethodCost (CureMethodD) *NPrecastSpans;

TDirectCost=(NCastingCrew*CastCrewHrCost*OP (F,1) *OP (F,3) * (output{i,7}.time (50
1)+( (output{i,7}.time (2)) - (output{i,6}.time (2)) ) -
(output{i,7}.time (2)))+(NRebarCageMold*CageHrCost* (output{i,6}.time (501)-
output{i,2}.time (2)))+(NInnerMold*InnerMouldHrCost* (output{i,9}.time (501)-
(output{i,4}.time (2) - (output{i,4}.time (2) - output{i,3}.time (2))))) ...
+ (NOuterMold*OuterMouldHrCost* (output{i,11}.time (501)-
(output{i,6}.time (2) - (output{i,6}.time (2) - output{i,5}.time (2))))) ...
+ (NPreperationCrew*PrepCrewHrCost*OP (F,1) *OP (F,3) * (output{i,9}.time (501)-
(output{i,4}.time (2) - (output{i,4}.time (2) - output{i,3}.time (2))))) ...
+ (NStressingCrew*PrestressCrewHrCost*OP (F,1) *OP (F,3) * (output{i,12}.time (501)-
(output{i,10}.time (2) - (output{i,10}.time (2) - output{i,9}.time (2))))) ...
+ (NSteelCrew*SteelCrewHrCost*OP (F,1) *OP (F,3) * (output{i,5}.time (501)-
output{i,2}.time (2))))) ...
+ (NTrailer*DelTruckHrCost* (output{i,17}.time (501) - (output{i,14}.time (2) -
(output{i,14}.time (2) - output{i,13}.time (2))))) ...
+ (NYardCrane*YardCraneHrCost* (output{i,14}.time (501) + ( (output{i,14}.time (2)) -
(output{i,13}.time (2)) ) - (output{i,14}.time (2)) ) ) ...
+ (NYardCrane1*YardCraneHrCost* (output{i,11}.time (501) -
(output{i,6}.time (2) - (output{i,6}.time (2) - output{i,5}.time (2))))) ...
+ (NGantry*GantryHrCost* (output{i,22}.time (501) - (output{i,19}.time (2) -
(output{i,19}.time (2) - output{i,18}.time (2))))) ...
+ (NOnsiteTrolley*TrolleyHrCost* (output{i,21}.time (501) -
(output{i,16}.time (2) - (output{i,16}.time (2) - output{i,15}.time (2))))) ...
+ (NOnsiteCrane*OnsiteCraneHrCost* (output{i,16}.time (501) + ( (output{i,16}.time (
2)) - (output{i,15}.time (2)) ) - (output{i,16}.time (2)) ) ) ...
+ (NTrailer*TruckDriverHrCost*OP (F,1) *OP (F,3) * (output{i,17}.time (501)-
(output{i,14}.time (2) - (output{i,14}.time (2) - output{i,13}.time (2))))) ...
+ (NYardCrane*YardCraneDriverHrCost*OP (F,1) *OP (F,3) * (output{i,14}.time (501) + ( (
output{i,14}.time (2)) - (output{i,13}.time (2)) ) - (output{i,14}.time (2)) ) ) ...
+ (NYardCrane1*YardCraneDriverHrCost*OP (F,1) *OP (F,3) * (output{i,11}.time (501)-
(output{i,6}.time (2) - (output{i,6}.time (2) - output{i,5}.time (2))))) ...
+ (NGantry*GantryDriverHrCost*OP (F,1) *OP (F,3) * (output{i,22}.time (501)-
(output{i,19}.time (2) - (output{i,19}.time (2) - output{i,18}.time (2))))) ...
+ (NOnsiteTrolley*TrolleyDriverHrCost*OP (F,1) *OP (F,3) * (output{i,21}.time (501)-
(output{i,16}.time (2) - (output{i,16}.time (2) - output{i,15}.time (2))))) ...
+ (NOnsiteCrane*OnsiteCraneDriverHrCost*OP (F,1) *OP (F,3) * (output{i,16}.time (501)
) + ( (output{i,16}.time (2)) - (output{i,15}.time (2)) ) - (output{i,16}.time (2)) ) ) ...
+ (NStorageCapacity*5* (StorageHourlyCost/ (PrecastYardDistance*10)) * (output{i,1
3}.time (501) + ( (output{i,13}.time (2)) - (output{i,12}.time (2)) ) -
(output{i,13}.time (2)) ) ) );

```

```

TotalCost=round(((TSetupCost+TCuringCost+TDirectCost+TIndirectCost)/1000000)+
0.49);
end

% Mean values of objective functions
y(1)=mean(TProjectDuration);
y(2)=mean(TotalCost);

```

## Appendix B – MATLAB code of probabilistic simulation (DES)

```

% Functions to be minimized

function y = ObjectivFunctions_Prob(x)

%% Initial Setting

% OP = Overtime policy
% Rep= Number of replications

OP=[1      1      1      8      5
     1  1.039  1.111  9      5
     1  1.096  1.200  10     5
     1  1.231  1.273  11     5
     1  1.311  1.333  12     5
     1  1.039  1.167  8      6
     1  1.081  1.259  9      6
     1  1.143  1.333  10     6
     1  1.269  1.394  11     6
     1  1.356  1.444  12     6
     1  1.127  1.286  8      7
     1  1.194  1.365  9      7
     1  1.270  1.429  10     7
     1  1.379  1.481  11     7
     1  1.455  1.524  12     7];

Rep=100;
TruckDriverHrCost=50;
YardCraneDriverHrCost=100;
OnsiteCraneDriverHrCost=100;
TrolleyDriverHrCost=100;
GantryDriverHrCost=200;
OtherDailyCost=500;
YardCraneHrCost=50;
DelTruckHrCost=50;
GantryInitCost=9000;
GantryHrCost=500;
TrolleyInitCost=900;
TrolleyHrCost=150;
OnsiteCraneInitCost=900;

```



```

OnsiteCraneHrCost=150;
CageInitCost=500;
CageHrCost=10;
InnerMouldInitCost=1000;
InnerMouldHrCost=10;
OuterMouldInitCost=1000;
OuterMouldHrCost=10;
PrepCrewInitCost=200;
PrepCrewHrCost=200;
PrestressCrewInitCost=200;
PrestressCrewHrCost=200;
SteelCrewInitCost=200;
SteelCrewHrCost=200;
CastCrewInitCost=200;
CastCrewHrCost=200;
StorageHourlyCost=10;
NPrecastSpans=4;
NGantry=1;
NOnsiteCrane=1;
NYardCrane=1;
NYardCrane1=1;
NOnsiteTrolley=1;
CureMethodDuration=[600 1200];
CureMethodCost=[200 0];
NTrailer=x(1);
PrecastYardDistance=x(2);
NRebarCageMold=x(3);
NInnerMold=x(4);
NOuterMold=x(5);
NPreparationCrew=x(6);
NStressingCrew=x(7);
NSteelCrew=x(8);
NCastingCrew=x(9);
CureMethodD=x(10);
F=x(11);
NStorageCapacity=x(12);
StorageTime=x(13);

% Parallel execution of simulation model
parfor i = 1:Rep;
    seed = mod(floor((i/Rep) * now * 8640000),2^31-1);
    se_randomize_seeds('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Trailer_Queue/Time-Based_Function-Call_Generator2', 'GlobalSeed', seed);
    set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Trailer_Queue/Time-Based_Function-Call_Generator2', 'NumberOfEventsPerPeriod', num2str(NTrailer));
    set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Trailer_Haul/Subsystem/Atomic_Subsystem/Bias', 'Bias', num2str((0.67)*10*PrecastYardDistance));

```

```

set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Trolley_Travel_and_Trailer_Return/Subsystem1/Atomic_Subsystem/Bias','Bias',num2str((0.67)*10*PrecastYardDistance));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Rebar-Mold_Queue/Time-Based_Function-Call_Generator1','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',num2str(NRebarCageMold));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/InnerMold_Queue/Time-Based_Function-Call_Generator','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',num2str(NInnerMold));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/OuterMold_Queue/Time-Based_Function-Call_Generator','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',num2str(NOuterMold));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Prep_Crew_Queue/Time-Based_Function-Call_Generator2','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',num2str(NPreperationCrew));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Stressing_Crew_Queue/Time-Based_Function-Call_Generator2','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',num2str(NStressingCrew));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Steel_Crew_Queue/Time-Based_Function-Call_Generator2','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',num2str(NSteelCrew));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Cast_Crew_Queue/Time-Based_Function-Call_Generator2','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',num2str(NCastingCrew));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Storage-Cap_Queue/Time-Based_Function-Call_Generator','NumberOfEventsPerPeriod',num2str(5*NStorageCapacity));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Storage_Time/Storage_Time','ServiceTime',num2str(StorageTime));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Span_Curing/Span_Curing','ServiceTime',num2str(CureMethodDuration(CureMethodD)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/BottomSlab-Web/Gain','Gain',num2str(OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/InnerMold/Gain','Gain',num2str(OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/TopSlab/Gain','Gain',num2str(OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/LiftToMold/Gain','Gain',num2str(OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/CastSpan/Gain','Gain',num2str(OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/RemoveInnerMol/Gain','Gain',num2str(OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Posttension_1st/Gain','Gain',num2str(OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/LiftToStorage/Gain','Gain',num2str(OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Posttension_2nd/Gain','Gain',num2str(OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Trolley_Loading/Gain','Gain',num2str(OP(F,2)));

```

```

set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Repos
ition/Gain','Gain', num2str(OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Picku
p_Span/Gain','Gain', num2str(OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Troll
ey_Return and Erect_Span/Gain','Gain', num2str(OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Prepa
re_Bearing/Gain','Gain', num2str(OP(F,2)));
set_param('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb/Load_
Transfer/Gain','Gain', num2str(OP(F,2)));

simOut{i}
sim('CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Probabilistic_BMProb','SaveOutpu
t','on','OutputSaveName','tout','OutputSaveName','BottomSlab_Web','OutputSave
Name','BottomSlab_Web1'...

,'OutputSaveName','Inner_Mold','OutputSaveName','TopSlab','OutputSaveName','L
iftToMold','OutputSaveName','Cast_Span','OutputSaveName','Span_Curing'...

,'OutputSaveName','RemoveInnerMol','OutputSaveName','Posttension_1st','Output
SaveName','LiftToStorage','OutputSaveName','Posttension_2nd','OutputSaveName'
,'Storage_Time'...

,'OutputSaveName','Trailer_Loading','OutputSaveName','Trailer_Haul','OutputSa
veName','Trolley_Loading','OutputSaveName','Trailer_Return','OutputSaveName',
'Trolley_Travel'...

,'OutputSaveName','Reposition','OutputSaveName','Pickup_Span','OutputSaveName
','Trolley_Return','OutputSaveName','Erect_Span'...
,'OutputSaveName','Prepare_Bearing','OutputSaveName','Load_Transfer');
end
% Get outputs from DES to MOGA
output = cell(Rep,23);

for i=1:Rep
output{i,1}=simOut{i}.get('tout');
output{i,2}= simOut{i}.get('BottomSlab_Web1');
output{i,3}= simOut{i}.get('BottomSlab_Web');
output{i,4}= simOut{i}.get('Inner_Mold');
output{i,5}= simOut{i}.get('TopSlab');
output{i,6}= simOut{i}.get('LiftToMold');
output{i,7}= simOut{i}.get('Cast_Span');
output{i,8}= simOut{i}.get('Span_Curing');
output{i,9}= simOut{i}.get('RemoveInnerMol');
output{i,10}= simOut{i}.get('Posttension_1st');
output{i,11}= simOut{i}.get('LiftToStorage');
output{i,12}= simOut{i}.get('Posttension_2nd');
output{i,13}= simOut{i}.get('Storage_Time');
output{i,14}= simOut{i}.get('Trailer_Loading');
output{i,15}= simOut{i}.get('Trailer_Haul');
output{i,16}= simOut{i}.get('Trolley_Loading');

```

```

output{i,17}= simOut{i}.get('Trailer_Return');
output{i,18}= simOut{i}.get('Trolley_Travel');
output{i,19}= simOut{i}.get('Reposition');
output{i,20}= simOut{i}.get('Pickup_Span');
output{i,21}= simOut{i}.get('Trolley_Return');
output{i,22}= simOut{i}.get('Erect_Span');
output{i,23}= simOut{i}.get('Prepare_Bearing');
% First objective function (total duration of the process) calculations
Nt=(cell2mat(output(i,1)));

TWorkingDays=round(Nt/(60*OP(F,4))+0.49);
TProjectDuration=TWorkingDays+ floor(TWorkingDays/OP(F,5))*(7-OP(F,5));

% Second objective function (total cost of the process) calculations
TSetupCost=
2*(NCastingCrew*CastCrewInitCost*OP(F,1)+NRebarCageMold*CageInitCost+NInnerMo
ld*InnerMouldInitCost+NOuterMold*OuterMouldInitCost...
+NPreparationCrew*PrepCrewInitCost*OP(F,1)+NStressingCrew*PrestressCrewInitCo
st*OP(F,1)+NSteelCrew*SteelCrewInitCost*OP(F,1)+NGantry*GantryInitCost+NOnsit
eTrolley*TrolleyInitCost+NOnsiteCrane*OnsiteCraneInitCost);

TIndirectCost=TProjectDuration*OtherDailyCost;
TCuringCost=CureMethodCost(CureMethodD)*NPrecastSpans;

TDirectCost=(NCastingCrew*CastCrewHrCost*OP(F,1)*OP(F,3)*(output{i,7}.time(50
1)+(output{i,7}.time(2)-(output{i,6}.time(2)))-
(output{i,7}.time(2)))+(NRebarCageMold*CageHrCost*(output{i,6}.time(501)-
output{i,2}.time(2)))+(NInnerMold*InnerMouldHrCost*(output{i,9}.time(501)-
(output{i,4}.time(2)-(output{i,4}.time(2)-output{i,3}.time(2)))))...
+(NOuterMold*OuterMouldHrCost*(output{i,11}.time(501)-
(output{i,6}.time(2)-(output{i,6}.time(2)-output{i,5}.time(2)))))...
+(NPreparationCrew*PrepCrewHrCost*OP(F,1)*OP(F,3)*(output{i,9}.time(501)-
(output{i,4}.time(2)-(output{i,4}.time(2)-output{i,3}.time(2)))))...
+(NStressingCrew*PrestressCrewHrCost*OP(F,1)*OP(F,3)*(output{i,12}.time(501)-
(output{i,10}.time(2)-(output{i,10}.time(2)-output{i,9}.time(2)))))...
+(NSteelCrew*SteelCrewHrCost*OP(F,1)*OP(F,3)*(output{i,5}.time(501)-
output{i,2}.time(2)))...
+(NTrailer*DelTruckHrCost*(output{i,17}.time(501)-(output{i,14}.time(2)-
(output{i,14}.time(2)-output{i,13}.time(2)))))...
+(NYardCrane*YardCraneHrCost*(output{i,14}.time(501)+(output{i,14}.time(2))-
(output{i,13}.time(2)))-(output{i,14}.time(2)))...
+(NYardCrane1*YardCraneHrCost*(output{i,11}.time(501)-
(output{i,6}.time(2)-(output{i,6}.time(2)-output{i,5}.time(2)))))...
+(NGantry*GantryHrCost*(output{i,22}.time(501)-(output{i,19}.time(2)-
(output{i,19}.time(2)-output{i,18}.time(2)))))...
+(NOnsiteTrolley*TrolleyHrCost*(output{i,21}.time(501)-
(output{i,16}.time(2)-(output{i,16}.time(2)-output{i,15}.time(2)))))...
+(NOnsiteCrane*OnsiteCraneHrCost*(output{i,16}.time(501)+(output{i,16}.time(
2))-(output{i,15}.time(2)))-(output{i,16}.time(2)))...
+(NTrailer*TruckDriverHrCost*OP(F,1)*OP(F,3)*(output{i,17}.time(501)-
(output{i,14}.time(2)-(output{i,14}.time(2)-output{i,13}.time(2)))))...

```

```

+ (NYardCrane*YardCraneDriverHrCost*OP(F,1)*OP(F,3)*(output{i,14}.time(501)+((
output{i,14}.time(2))-(output{i,13}.time(2))-(output{i,14}.time(2))))...
+ (NYardCrane1*YardCraneDriverHrCost*OP(F,1)*OP(F,3)*(output{i,11}.time(501)-
(output{i,6}.time(2)-(output{i,6}.time(2)-output{i,5}.time(2))))...
+ (NGantry*GantryDriverHrCost*OP(F,1)*OP(F,3)*(output{i,22}.time(501)-
(output{i,19}.time(2)-(output{i,19}.time(2)-output{i,18}.time(2))))...
+ (NOnsiteTrolley*TrolleyDriverHrCost*OP(F,1)*OP(F,3)*(output{i,21}.time(501)-
(output{i,16}.time(2)-(output{i,16}.time(2)-output{i,15}.time(2))))...
+ (NOnsiteCrane*OnsiteCraneDriverHrCost*OP(F,1)*OP(F,3)*(output{i,16}.time(501)
)+(output{i,16}.time(2)-(output{i,15}.time(2))-(output{i,16}.time(2))))...
+ (NStorageCapacity*5*(StorageHourlyCost/(PrecastYardDistance*10))*(output{i,1
3}.time(501)+(output{i,13}.time(2))-(output{i,12}.time(2)))-
(output{i,13}.time(2)));
TotalCost=round(((TSetupCost+TCuringCost+TDirectCost+TIndirectCost)/1000000)+
0.49);
end

```

```

% Mean values of objective functions

```

```

y(1)=mean(TProjectDuration);

```

```

y(2)=mean(TotalCost);

```

## Appendix C – MATLAB code of multi-objective optimization (NSGA-II)

```

% GAMULTIOBJ with integer constraints
% Specify # of Cores in a script or in the MATLAB Command Window
% Function handle to the fitness function
fitnessFunction = @ObjectivFunctions_Det;
numberOfVariables = 13; % Number of decision variables
populationSize = 200; % Size of population
stallGenLimit = 20000000;
generations = 500; % Number of generations
% Bound Constraints
lb=[1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1]; % Lower bound
ub=[20 10 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 2 15 10 84]; % Upper bound

Bound = [lb; ub];
% Run command (Simulation Model) on client and all workers in parallel pool
pctRunOnAll('load_system(''CastingOperation_withoptimization_final_Determinis
tic_BMDet'')');

% Seed the random number generator based on the current time
rng('shuffle')

```

```

% Specify the multiobjective GA (MOGA) options run on the master core
options = gaoptimset('PlotFcns',@gaplotpareto,...
    'PopulationSize',populationSize,...
    'CreationFcn', @Int_Pop_Det,...
    'MutationFcn', @Int_Mutation_Det,...
    'CrossoverFcn',@Int_Crossoverarithmetic_Det,...
    'StallGenLimit', stallGenLimit,...
    'Generations', generations,...
    'PopulationSize',populationSize,...
    'PopInitRange', Bound,...
    'TolFun',1e-118,...
    'Display','iter',...
'OutputFcns',@outfun_Det,... % Final output file on Hard Disk
'UseParallel','always',...
'ParetoFraction',0.35);

% Run MOGA
tic;
[x, f, exitflag, population, score] = gamultiobj(fitnessFunction,...
    numberOfVariables, [], [], [], [], lb, ub, options);
toc;

stateData = getappdata(0,'stateData');
writingfile

```

## Appendix D – MATLAB codes of different functions used in MOGA

- Creation Function

```

% INT_POP Function that creates an initial population satisfying bounds and
integer constraints

```

```

function Population = Int_Pop_Det(GenomeLength, ~, options)

totalPopulation = sum(options.PopulationSize);

% IntCon constraints
IntCon = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13];

range = options.PopInitRange;
lower = range(1,:);
span = range(2,:) - lower;

Population = repmat(lower,totalPopulation,1) + ...
    repmat(span,totalPopulation,1) .* rand(totalPopulation, GenomeLength);

```

```

x = rand;
if x>=0.5
    Population(:,IntCon) = floor(Population(:, IntCon));
else
    Population(:,IntCon) = ceil(Population(:, IntCon));
end
Population = CheckFeasibleBounds_Det(Population, range);

```

- Crossover Function

```

% Int_Crossoverarithmetic_Det Function that creates crossover kids satisfying
integer constraints

```

```

function xoverKids =
Int_Crossoverarithmetic_Det541(parents,options,GenomeLength,...
    ~,~,thisPopulation)

```

```

%IntCon constraints
IntCon = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13];

```

```

% How many children to produce?
nKids = length(parents)/2;
% Allocate space for the kids
xoverKids = zeros(nKids,GenomeLength);
% To move through the parents twice as fast as the kids are
% being produced, a separate index for the parents is needed
index = 1;
% for each kid...
for i=1:nKids
    % get parents
    r1 = parents(index);
    index = index + 1;
    r2 = parents(index);
    index = index + 1;
    % Children are arithmetic mean of two parents
    % ROUND will guarantee that they are integer.
    alpha = rand;
    xoverKids(i,:) = alpha*thisPopulation(r1,:) + ...
        (1-alpha)*thisPopulation(r2,:);
end

```

```

Crossover.alpha = alpha;
Crossover.nKids = nKids;

```

```

CrossoverData = getappdata(0,'CrossoverData');
%In the above code, the first input argument 0 is the handle to the root
MATLAB application.

```

```

% If this is the first run, stateData will be empty, so set it
if isempty(CrossoverData)

```

```

CrossoverData = Crossover;

% If this is not the first run, stateData already has previous information,
append the current state data to this information
else
    CrossoverData = [CrossoverData;Crossover];
end
% Save the new stateData as application data
setappdata(0, 'CrossoverData',CrossoverData);

x = rand;
if x>=0.5
    xoverKids(:, IntCon) = floor(xoverKids(:, IntCon));
else
    xoverKids(:, IntCon) = ceil(xoverKids(:, IntCon));
end
range = options.PopInitRange;
xoverKids = CheckFeasibleBounds_Det (xoverKids, range);

```

- Mutation Function

```

% Int_Mutation_Det Function that creates mutation kids satisfying integer
constraints
function mutationChildren = Int_Mutation_Det(parents, options, GenomeLength,
...
    ~, state, ~, ~)

% Function that creates the mutated children using the Gaussian
% distribution. It does not satisfy linear constraints!

%IntCon constraints
IntCon = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13];

shrink = 0.01;
scale = 1;
scale = scale - shrink * scale * state.Generation/options.Generations;
range = options.PopInitRange;
lower = range(1,:);
upper = range(2,:);
scale = scale * (upper - lower);
mutationPop = length(parents);

mutationChildren = repmat(lower,mutationPop,1) + ...
    repmat(scale, mutationPop,1) .* rand(mutationPop, GenomeLength);

x = rand;
if x>=0.5
    mutationChildren(:, IntCon) = floor(mutationChildren(:,IntCon));

```



```

else
    mutationChildren(:, IntCon) = ceil(mutationChildren(:,IntCon));
end

mutationChildren = CheckFeasibleBounds_Det(mutationChildren, range);

```

- Output Function

```

% Outfun_Det Function that creates outputs
function [state, options,optchanged] = outfun_Det(options,state,~)

% Get previous state data which is stored as appdata
stateData = getappdata(0,'stateData');
%In the above code, the first input argument 0 is the handle to the root
MATLAB application.

% If this is the first run, stateData will be empty, so set it
if isempty(stateData)
    stateData = state;

% If this is not the first run, stateData already has previous
information,append the current state data to this information
else
    stateData = [stateData;state];
end
% Save the new stateData as application data
setappdata(0,'stateData',stateData);

% Changing the optchanged flag to true since the options structure was
% changed.
optchanged = true;

```

- Feasibility Function

```

% CHECKBOUNDS adds a subtracts 1 to the variables that are not inside the
bounds to make them fall inside the bounds
function x = CheckFeasibleBounds_Det(x, range)
    [~, m] = size(range);

for k = 1:m
x(x(:, k)<range(1, k), k)=x(x(:, k)<range(1, k), k)+1;
x(x(:, k)>range(2, k), k)=x(x(:, k)>range(2, k), k)-1;
end

```

## Appendix E – MATLAB codes for calculating the Hypervolume indicator (Adapted from (Kruisselbrink, 2011))

```

function hv = hypervolume_ approximation (P, r, samples)

```

```

% Computes the hypervolume (or Lebesgue measure) of the N x 1
% matrix P of l vectors of N objective function values by means
% of a Monte-Carlo approximation method.
% Input:
% - P: An N x l matrix where each of the l columns represents a vector of N
objective function values
% - r: Reference point (the boundary point containing the maximum of P for
each objective).
% - samples: The number of samples used for the Monte-Carlo approximation
(default: 100000).

% Output:
% - hv: The hypervolume (or Lebesgue measure) of P.
%
if nargin < 2
    r = (max(P, [], 2));
end
if nargin < 3
    samples = 10000;
end

[N, l] = size(P);
% samples = 100000;
lb = min(P)';
P_samples = repmat(lb, 1, samples) + rand(N, samples) .* repmat((r -
lb), 1, samples);
is_dominated_count = 0;
for i = 1:samples
    for j = 1:l
        if (dominates(P(:,j), P_samples(:,i)))
            is_dominated_count = is_dominated_count + 1;
            break;
        end
    end
end
hv = prod(r - lb) * (is_dominated_count / samples);

end

```

## Appendix F – Profiling MATLAB codes

The time or memory complexity of a program can be measured dynamically through applying profiling. Profiling helps to optimize the program by understanding the program behavior and determining which part of the program needs to be modified to improve its performance. The

output of profiling is a profile including a statistical summary of the events happened which shows where the program spends more time. The program is almost fully optimized when profiling calls a few built-in functions most of the time (Mathworks, 2014a).

A graphical user interface (GUI) called the *Profiler* is provided by MATLAB to apply the profile function. Also, profiling parallel code is used to profile parallel jobs (Mathworks, 2014a).

All the profiling reports should be saved in order to compare the program performance based on the first saved report. This report includes statistics regarding the program performance mainly from execution time point of view which are classified in five columns. *Function Name*, *Calls*, *Total Time*, *Self Time*, and *Total Time Plot*. List of all the functions called by the profiler and the number of their calls are presented under the *Function Name* and *Calls* columns, respectively. The total time spent in a function considering the time spent in all child functions is shown in *Total Time* column, also the total time excluding the time spent in all child functions is illustrated as *Self Time* column. Finally, the comparison between the total and self time is graphically shown in the last column of the report. Figure F-1 shows an example of a summary report.

<b>Profile Summary</b>				
Generated 13-Aug-2014 18:03:03 using cpu time.				
Function Name	Calls	Total Time	Self Time*	Total Time Plot (dark band = self time)
<a href="#">IntGAMULTIOBJ_Det</a>	1	191.369 s	0.007 s	
<a href="#">gamultiobj</a>	1	186.064 s	0.003 s	
<a href="#">globaloptim\private\gamultiobjsolve</a>	1	186.014 s	0.010 s	
<a href="#">parallel_function</a>	10	185.574 s	0.166 s	
<a href="#">parallel_function&gt;distributed_execution</a>	10	185.258 s	0.038 s	
<a href="#">...for&gt;remoteparfor.getCompleteIntervals</a>	29	185.116 s	0.082 s	
<a href="#">java.util.concurrent.LinkedBlockingQueue</a> (Java method)	194	184.948 s	184.948 s	
<a href="#">globaloptim\private\fcnvectorizer</a>	9	180.962 s	0.002 s	
<a href="#">globaloptim\private\steppgamultiobj</a>	7	140.523 s	0.004 s	
<a href="#">globaloptim\private\gamultiobjMakeState</a>	1	45.130 s	0.009 s	
<a href="#">pctRunOnAll</a>	1	5.263 s	0.003 s	
<a href="#">...comp_pmode.RunOnAllCompletionObserver</a> (Java method)	8	5.252 s	5.252 s	
<a href="#">...ateAnonymousFcn&gt;@(x)fcn(x.FcnArgs{:})</a>	1	4.621 s	0.000 s	
<a href="#">ObjectivFunctions_Det</a>	1	4.621 s	0.004 s	

**Figure F-1: Summary report generated by MATLAB profile function**

There is also a *Profile Detail* report for each function called during the profiling which contains six sections. These sections are illustrated in Figure F-2. There are parent and child functions sections that show information related to these functions with their detailed reports (Figure F-2(a) and (b)). In order to highlight the parts of a code which used the highest percentage of the execution time, the busy lines section should be selected (Figure F-2(c)). The performance issues and the potential troubleshooting suggestions are found under Code Analyzer results section (Figure F-2(d)). The Coverage results section provides information about the number of the executed lines during the profiling procedure (Figure F-2(e)). For a MATLAB code, the execution time of each line of a code, how many time the line is called, and the source code for the function are gathered in Function listing part of the *Profile Detail* report (Figure F-2(f)).

Running the profile function instead of using the GUI (*Profiler*) provides more information regarding the program performance.

Refresh

Show parent functions   
  Show busy lines   
  Show child functions  
 Show Code Analyzer results   
  Show file coverage   
  Show function listing

**Parents** (calling functions)


Function Name	Function Type	Calls
<a href="#">IntGAMULTIOBJ_Det</a>	script	1

(a) Parent functions section

Refresh

Show parent functions   
  Show busy lines   
  Show child functions  
 Show Code Analyzer results   
  Show file coverage   
  Show function listing

**Children** (called functions)


Function Name	Function Type	Calls	Total Time	% Time	Time Plot
<a href="#">globaloptim\private\gamultiobjsolve</a>	function	1	163.947 s	99.8%	
<a href="#">globaloptim\private\gacommon</a>	function	1	0.213 s	0.1%	
<a href="#">gaoptimset</a>	function	1	0.011 s	0.0%	
<a href="#">isoptimargdbl</a>	function	1	0.002 s	0.0%	
Self time (built-ins, overhead, etc.)			0.064 s	0.0%	
<b>Totals</b>			164.237 s	100%	

(b) Child functions section

Refresh

Show parent functions     Show busy lines     Show child functions  
 Show Code Analyzer results     Show file coverage     Show function listing

**Lines where the most time was spent**

Line Number	Code	Calls	Total Time	% Time	Time Plot
246	[x, fval, exitFlag, output, popula...	1	163.958 s	99.8%	
238	[x, fval, exitFlag, output, popula...	1	0.247 s	0.2%	
228	msg = isoptimargdbl('GAMULTIOB...	1	0.015 s	0.0%	
218	options = gaoptimset(defaultop...	1	0.011 s	0.0%	
241	if exitFlag < 0 % Infeasibi...	1	0.001 s	0.0%	
All other lines			0.005 s	0.0%	
Totals			164.237 s	100%	

(c) Busy lines section

Refresh

Show parent functions     Show busy lines     Show child functions  
 Show Code Analyzer results     Show file coverage     Show function listing

**Code Analyzer results**  
No Code Analyzer messages.

(d) Code analyzer results section

Refresh

Show parent functions     Show busy lines     Show child functions  
 Show Code Analyzer results     Show file coverage     Show function listing

**Coverage results**  
[Show coverage for parent directory](#)

Total lines in function	247
Non-code lines (comments, blank lines)	182
Code lines (lines that can run)	65
Code lines that did run	27
Code lines that did not run	38
Coverage (did run/can run)	41.54 %

(e) File coverage section

```

Refresh
 Show parent functions    Show busy lines    Show child functions
 Show Code Analyzer results  Show file coverage  Show function listing

Function listing
Color highlight code according to time
time calls line
1 function [x,fval,exitFlag,output,population,scores] = gamultiobj(fun,nvars,A
2 %GAMULTIOBJ Multiobjective optimization using genetic algorithm.
3 %   GAMULTIOBJ attempts to solve multiobjective problems of the form:
4 %       min F(X)   subject to:  A*X <= b, Aeq*X = beq (linear constraints)
5 %       X           lb <= X <= ub (bound constraints)
6 %
7 %   X = GAMULTIOBJ(FITNESSFCN,NVARS) finds a local Pareto set X of the
8 %   objective functions defined in FITNESSFCN. NVARS is the dimension of
9 %   the optimization problem (number of decision variables). FITNESSFCN
10 %   accepts a vector X of size 1-by-NVARS and returns a vector of
11 %   size 1-by-numberOfObjectives evaluated at a decision variable. X is
12 %   a matrix with NVARS columns. The number of rows in X is the same as the
13 %   number of Pareto solutions. All solutions in a Pareto set are equally
14 %   optimal, and it is up to the designer to select a solution in the Pareto
15 %   set depending on the application.

```

(f) Function listing section

**Figure F-2: Different sections of the Profile Detail report**

One extension of the profile function is parallel profiler (*mpiprofile*) which is useful for parallel jobs. This profiler determines the amount of time that each worker spends in order to perform its task, and the time needed for communication between workers. Unfortunately, this type of profiler does not support parfor-loops which is the parallel part used in this research.

## Appendix G – Problem Faced Using SimEvents Simulation Tool and Parallel Computing

There were two main issues in performing parallel computing pertinent to memory leakage and speed problem.

### G.1 Memory leakage

Once the model was run on the server machine, an error regarding the memory of the computer appeared in MATLAB after some generations causing the failure of the program. One limitation

of using this machine was the relatively small size of its available RAM (48 GB). In this model, the simOut data was appended into a cell array to save output data of the simulation for the specified number of iterations where each iteration increases its size by about 380KB. For example, over 1000 iterations that sums to 380MB which can be a sizeable amount of memory topped with the memory of MATLAB for the 6 GB machine. To solve this problem, virtual memory of the computer was increased to a very large number (like 100 GB) to use its capability of saving more data.

Memory leakage can be produced due to use of *Time-Based Function-Call Generator* blocks in the simulation model. Each block is configured to generate a certain number of function-calls only at the beginning of the simulation. This block is usually connected to an Event-Based Entity Generator which senses the function-call and generates that many entities when the simulation starts. Such a scheme is usually used to preload a queue at the start of simulation.

In order to prevent memory leakage during the program progress, this pattern can be replaced with an Event-Based Sequence block connected to a Time-Based Entity Generator block which is configured to read inter-generation times from signal port. In this case, if  $n$  entities should be generated at the start of the simulation (e.g., number of crews = 1 to  $n$ ), then the intergeneration time sequence should be entered as below:

$$\underbrace{[0 \ 0 \ 0 \ 0 \ \dots \ 0 \ \text{inf}]}_n$$



When intergeneration time is inf, the generation will stop.

## **G.2 Speed Problem**

One main difference between Simulink and other platforms is that Simulink checks if any updates are made to the model before every iteration which takes some time. If updates are made, it rebuilds the model for efficiency. As this may accumulate some overhead, it is not good in the long run, since any changes made between iterations will be taken into consideration by Simulink.

Thus, the run time of the proposed simulation model was significantly long which shows that some modifications are needed to fix this problem and increase the simulation speed to maximum. These modifications are listed below:

1. Eliminate Timed to Event and Event to Timed Signal Gateway blocks

This model is purely a discrete event model with no continuous dynamics. Hence the use of these gateway blocks should be avoided. If an event-based signal is converted to a time-based signal using such a block then this causes extra time hits during the simulation because Simulink assumes that the value of the signal could be continuously changing and tries to simulate these changes. However, the signal will never change between events because its source is an event, and as such, blocks connected to this signal need only be run when an event occurs, not at each time step of the simulation. The motivation for inserting this gateway block in the first place was because after running the model an error appeared asking for converting the signal from event-based to time-based in order to use the Stop Simulation block. But instead of inserting the gateway, the Stop

Simulation block can be placed inside of an Atomic Subsystem and then SimEvents will run the Atomic Subsystem only when an event occurs.

## 2. Eliminate some Discrete Event To Workspace blocks

All Discrete Event to Workspace blocks commented out except the ones that are needed to observe the simulation output because every additional logging block introduces some overhead. Also, any logging blocks that were inserted for debugging can be kept commented out during the test.

## 3. Eliminate all Attribute Function blocks

All of the Attribute Function blocks in the model are removed and replaced with equivalent Simulink and SimEvents blocks. The Attribute Function block uses another MATLAB Function block in which a MATLAB code has been written to compute attribute values. During compilation, this block generates a MEX (MATLAB executable) file (Dynamic Link Library (DLL)) and during simulation it calls that DLL at each time step. This greatly increases compilation time. Depending on what the MATLAB code does, this could increase simulation time also.

In this case, the MATLAB code was only doing some basic arithmetic operations. So the cost of calling a DLL is comparable to the cost of running the MATLAB code and this slows down the simulation. If there is a more complicated MATLAB function then perhaps it would have been worth the cost of calling a DLL at each time step. Replacing such blocks with equivalent Simulink interpretations will reduce model run-time greatly.

#### 4. Turning off all debugging-related options

Also, all debugging-related options were turned off from the Simulation Target pane of the model's Configuration Parameters dialog to save more time. Using these changes, the maximum possible efficiency can be obtained in Simulink.

#### 5. Defining integer decision variables

In addition, the variables of the multi-objective optimization problem are defined to be only integers by creating custom creation, mutation and crossover functions that generate only integer outputs for the required variables.

The general idea here is to take an approach based on a continuous parameter space strategy and make it discrete, based on well-placed calls to the rounding functions, FLOOR and CEIL.

### **G.3 Problem with C-compiler:**

After running the proposed model on 4-core desktop machine, the model was run on the server machine with properties as: Server/Intel Xeon CPU E5540 @ 2.53 GHz, 48 GB Random Access Memory (RAM), and running Windows 2010 Dell computer with 12 cores.

The first problem in this case was an error about the non-existence of the C-compiler of the Simulink Toolbox which means that the server machine on which MATLAB is running, either does not have a supported C-compiler installed on it, or MATLAB has not been set-up to use the relevant compiler. In order to set MATLAB up to use a supported compiler, the “*mex-setup*”

command was run at the command line which showed that there was not any supported C-compiler installed on the server machine. Therefore, “*Microsoft Visual C++ 2010 Professional*” compiler (Table G-1) was installed to resolve the issue.

**Table G-1: Simulink Product Family – Release 2012b (Support, n.d.)**

	<b>Simulink</b>	<b>Simulink</b>	<b>Stateflow</b>	<b>Simulink Coder</b>	<b>Embedded Coder</b>	<b>xPC Target</b>	<b>Simulink Code Inspector</b>
Compiler	For S-Function compilation	For Model Referencing, Accelerator mode, Rapid Accelerator mode, and MATLAB Function blocks	For all features	For all features	When targeting the host OS	For all features	For all features
<b>Microsoft Windows SDK 7.1</b>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<b>Microsoft Visual C++ 2010 Professional</b>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<b>Microsoft Visual C++ 2008 Professional SP1 and Windows SDK 6.1</b>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<b>Intel C++ Composer XE 2011</b>	x						x
<b>Intel Visual Fortran Composer XE 2011</b>	x					x	