Journal of Insights in Basic and Applied Sciences

مجلة رؤى في العلوم الأساسية والتطبيقية

ISSN: 3106-1737

Volume 2, Issue 3, 2026, Pages: 466-475

Journal homepage: https://jibas.com.ly/index.php/jibas/en

Modeling the Impact of Contact Resistance and Interfacial Losses in N_iO_x Based Perovskite Solar Cells Using MATLAB

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نمذجة تأثير مقاومة التلامس وفقدان الطاقة بين الأسطح في الخلايا الشمسية المصنوعة من البيروفسكايت القائمة على أكسيد النيكل باستخدام برنامج *MATLAB*

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Received: June 22, 2026	Accepted: July 27, 2026	Published: August 15, 2026

Abstract:

Interfacial charge recombination and ohmic contact resistance at the hole transport layer heterojunction represent fundamental barriers limiting the performance of inverted perovskite solar cells. This work presents a quantitative numerical investigation of contact degradation at the nickel oxide/perovskite interface using an implicit single-diode equivalent circuit model implemented in MATLAB. Through a parametric sweep of series resistance from $0.5\ \Omega.cm^2$ to $5.0,\ \Omega.cm^2$ we systematically isolate ohmic losses from the device's intrinsic performance. The simulation results demonstrate that while open-circuit voltage and short-circuit current density show minimal sensitivity to resistive transport barriers, the fill factor undergoes a significant non-linear reduction from 74.1% to 46.8%. This degradation progressively flattens the current density-voltage characteristics near the maximum power point, leading to a decrease in power conversion efficiency from 13.23% to 8.25%. These quantitative trends establish clear benchmarks for interface engineering, indicating that surface passivation of the N_iO_x layer is essential for suppressing transport barriers and achieving high fill factors. The model operates under steady-state conditions and does not account for ionic migration or capacitive effects, providing a foundation for future multiphysics extensions.

Keywords: Perovskite Solar Cells; Nickel Oxide; Series Resistance; Numerical Modeling; Charge Transport; Fill Factor.

الملخص

يمثل إعادة تركيب الشحنات عند السطح البيني ومقاومة التلامس الأومي عند الوصلة غير المتجانسة لطبقة نقل الثقوب عوائق أساسية تحد من أداء الخلايا الشمسية البيروفسكايتية المقلوبة. يقدم هذا العمل دراسة عددية كمية لتدهور التلامس عند سطح التلامس بين أكسيد النيكل والبيروفسكايت باستخدام نموذج دائرة مكافئة أحادي الصمام الثنائي ضمني، مُنفذ في برنامج MATLAB. من خلال مسح بارامتري لمقاومة التوالي من 0.5 أوم.سم² إلى 5.0 أوم.سم²، نعزل بشكل منهجي الفقد الأومي عن الأداء الجوهري للجهاز. تُظهر نتائج المحاكاة أنه في حين أن جهد الدائرة المفتوحة وكثافة تيار الدائرة القصيرة يُظهران حساسية ضئيلة لعوائق النقل المقاومة، فإن عامل الملء يتعرض لانخفاض غير خطي كبير من 74.1% إلى 46.8%. يؤدي هذا التدهور تدريجيًا إلى تسطيح خصائص كثافة التيار-الجهد بالقرب من نقطة القدرة القصوى، مما ينتج عنه انخفاض في كفاءة تحويل الطاقة من 13.23% إلى 8.25%. تُرسّخ هذه الاتجاهات الكمية معايير واضحة لهندسة

الأسطح البينية، مما يُشير إلى أن تخميل سطح طبقة NiO_x ضروري لكبح حواجز النقل وتحقيق عوامل ملء عالية. يعمل النموذج في ظل ظروف الحالة المستقرة ولا يأخذ في الحسبان هجرة الأيونات أو التأثيرات السعوية، مما يُوفر أساسًا لتوسعات الفيزياء المتعددة المستقبلية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: خلايا شمسية بيروفسكايت؛ أكسيد النيكل؛ المقاومة التسلسلية؛ النمذجة العددية؛ نقل الشحنة؛ عامل الملء.

1. Introduction

Perovskite solar cells have emerged as one of the most transformative photovoltaic technologies over the past decade, with certified power conversion efficiencies now approaching the theoretical Shockley-Queisser limit for single-junction devices [1]. Among the various device architectures, the inverted $p-i-n$ configuration has attracted considerable academic and industrial interest due to its reduced current-voltage hysteresis, enhanced operational stability, and compatibility with low-temperature solution processing for tandem manufacturing [2]. In these inverted architectures, the overall device performance and charge extraction kinetics are strongly governed by the optoelectronic quality of the hole transport layer and its buried interface with the perovskite absorber [3].

Nickel oxide has become a benchmark hole transport material for high-performance inverted perovskite solar cells, owing to its wide optical bandgap, favorable valence band alignment with most perovskite compositions, and inherent chemical stability against environmental degradation [4]. However, solution-processed NiO_x thin films typically exhibit low electrical conductivity and a high density of surface defects, particularly oxygen vacancies and sub-stoichiometric sites [5]. These localized defects introduce energetic disorder at the heterojunction and promote trap-assisted non-radiative recombination, which manifests externally as an elevated interfacial contact resistance [6].

From a semiconductor device physics perspective, an excessive series resistance distorts the internal electric field distribution within the perovskite layer and introduces a kinetic bottleneck for photogenerated hole extraction [7]. Experimentally reported series resistance values for NiO_x-based inverted perovskite solar cells typically range from 0.5 to 5.0 $\Omega.cm^2$, depending on deposition conditions, doping strategies, and interfacial treatment protocols [8, 9]. This wide range reflects the sensitivity of contact quality to processing parameters and highlights the need for systematic understanding of resistance-induced losses.

While numerous experimental strategies have focused on chemical doping, surface passivation, and self-assembled monolayer modification of NiO_x to suppress these transport barriers, a rigorous quantitative decoupling of how progressive contact degradation systematically compromises individual photovoltaic figures of merit remains essential [10, 11]. Experimental studies often encounter coupled effects from multiple recombination pathways, making it challenging to isolate the specific contribution of series resistance from bulk and interfacial recombination losses [12]. Numerical modeling provides a deterministic approach to address this challenge by enabling controlled variation of individual parameters while maintaining others constant.

In this work, we present a quantitative numerical investigation of contact degradation at the NiO_x /perovskite interface using an implicit single-diode equivalent circuit model implemented in MATLAB. We systematically vary the series resistance from an optimized baseline of 0.5 $\Omega.cm^2$ to a severe transport barrier of 5.0 $\Omega.cm^2$, enabling the isolation and evaluation of ohmic losses on the device's photovoltaic parameters. The model provides clear physical insights into the distortion of current density-voltage characteristics and the corresponding migration of the maximum power point, establishing performance benchmarks for interface engineering strategies.

The single-diode model employed here operates under steady-state conditions at 300 K and does not account for perovskite-specific phenomena such as ionic migration, capacitive effects, the spatial distribution of interfacial defects, or hysteretic behavior [13]. These simplifications, while limiting the model's scope, enable focused analysis of ohmic transport losses and provide a foundation for more detailed drift-diffusion or multiphysics simulations. Despite these limitations, the predictive trends established in this study offer actionable guidelines for experimental optimization of NiO_x interface quality in inverted perovskite photovoltaics.

Despite this substantial body of experimental work on NiO_x interface passivation, a specific gap remains largely unaddressed: few studies isolate the contribution of series resistance alone to each photovoltaic figure of merit, and fewer still express that contribution as a quantitative sensitivity that can be checked against independent experimental data. Most numerical treatments in the literature report an aggregate efficiency loss without attributing it to a specific parameter, or they model a single device configuration without deriving a threshold that an experimentalist could design toward. The present work is intended to close part of that gap. By expressing the fill factor degradation as a sensitivity coefficient ($\Delta FF/\Delta R_s$) and comparing it directly against three independent interface-engineering studies, we aim to provide not just a simulation of one device, but a benchmark that other groups working on NiO_x-based inverted cells can use to judge where their own contact resistance stands.

The model operates under steady-state conditions and does not account for ionic migration or capacitive effects, providing a foundation for future multiphysics extensions.

2. Mathematical Model and Physical Interpretation

To rigorously quantify the electro-optic losses induced by contact degradation at the NiO_x/perovskite interface, we simulate the electrical response of the inverted solar cell using the single-diode equivalent circuit model. This framework, while simplified, provides a robust foundation for isolating ohmic transport losses from other recombination mechanisms [14]. From a device physics perspective, the total net current density J generated under standard illumination is governed by a transcendental equation that relates the external terminal voltage V to internal carrier generation, non-radiative recombination, and parasitic transport resistance. The implicit relationship is formulated as follows:

$$J = J_{ph} - J_0 \left[\exp\left(\frac{V+J.R_s}{n.V_t}\right) - 1\right] - \frac{V+J.R_s}{R_{sh}} \qquad (1)$$

Where: J_{ph} represents the photogenerated current density (22 mA/cm^2), which is directly proportional to the optical absorption profile of the perovskite film and the subsequent separation efficiency of electron-hole pairs [15]. The parameter J_0 denotes the reverse saturation current density (1×10^{-9} mA/cm^2), a critical kinetic metric that quantifies the fundamental rate of minority carrier recombination in the dark, driven primarily by thermal excitation across the bandgap[13].

The diode ideality factor,n , is set at 1.3 to reflect a non-ideal transport regime dominated by trap-assisted (Shockley-Read-Hall) recombination kinetics within the space-charge region and at the highly defective heterojunction defects of the sub-stoichiometric NiO_x film[16]. This value, which exceeds the ideal limit of unity, is consistent with experimental observations for perovskite solar cells where interface defects and energetic disorder contribute significantly to recombination losses [7]. The term V_t represents the thermal voltage, strictly defined by fundamental constants via:

$$V_t = \frac{k.T}{q} \qquad (2)$$

Where k is the Boltzmann constant (1.381×10^{-23}J/K), T is the absolute operational temperature (300K), and q is the elementary electron charge (1.602 ×10^{-19} C), yielding a thermal baseline voltage of approximately 25.85 mV at room temperature.

The parasitic elements, R_s and R_{sh}, characterize the internal transport impedance of the device. The shunt resistance (R_{sh}= 1000 $\Omega.cm^2$) accounts for microscopic pinholes, local shunts, and alternative structural pathways that allow current leakage across the cell [17]. This relatively high value ensures that the device operates in the high-quality regime where shunting losses are minimal, allowing us to focus specifically on series resistance effects. Conversely, the series resistance (R_s) serves as the primary free parameter in this investigation, with values of (0.5, 2.0, and 5.0 $\Omega.cm^2$) selected to span the experimentally reported range for NiO_x-based devices [11].

Table 1: Model Parameters with Physical Justification and Literature Sources

Parameter	Symbol	Value	Physical Meaning	Justification	Source
Photogenerated current density	J_{ph}	**22 mA/cm^2**	**Maximum current from absorbed photons**	**Typical for 1.5 eV perovskite bandgap under AM 1.5 G**	**[11, 16]**
Reverse saturation current	J_0	1× 10^{-9} mA/cm^2	**Dark recombination current**	**Estimated from dark $J-V$characteristics for NiO_x/PSC_s**	**[16]**
Diode ideality factor	n	**1.3**	**Recombination mechanism indicator**	**Trap-assisted SRH recombination at interfaces**	**[7]**

Series resistance (optimized)	R_s	**0.5 $\Omega.cm^2$**	**Contact and bulk resistance**	**Optimized NiO_xdeposition and passivation**	**[8]**
Series resistance (moderate)	R_s	**2.0 $\Omega.cm^2$**	**Interfacial degradation**	**Moderate defect density at NiO_x/perovskite**	**[5]**
Series resistance (severe)	R_s	**5.0 $\Omega.cm^2$**	**Severe contact barrier**	**High defect density, poor hole extraction**	**[9]**
Shunt resistance	R_{sh}	**1000 $\Omega.cm^2$**	**Leakage pathways**	**Minimal shunting, high-quality device**	**[18]**
Temperature	T	**300 K**	**Operating condition**	**Standard room temperature measurement**	**N/A**
Thermal voltage	V_t	**25.85 mV**	**KT/q at 300 K**	**Fundamental thermodynamic potential**	**Fundamental constants**

Because the current density J appears implicitly on both sides of Equation (1), the model cannot be solved analytically via elementary algebra. To circumvent numerical instability and prevent divergence under severe ohmic degradation, we rearrange the equation into a root-finding framework, $f(J)$= 0, defined as:

$$f(J) = J - J_{ph} + J_0 \left[exp\left(\frac{V+J.R_s}{n.V_t}\right) - 1\right] + \frac{V+J.R_s}{R_{sh}} = 0 \qquad (3)$$

This implicit objective function is resolved numerically using MATLAB's `fzero` algorithm, which employs a combination of bisection, secant, and inverse quadratic interpolation methods. The convergence criteria are set to $|f(J)| < 1 \times 10^{-6}$, ensuring high numerical accuracy while maintaining computational efficiency (Mathew & Panchal, 2021). A strict unit-scaling protocol is implemented where J is dynamically converted to A/cm^2 during exponential evaluation to prevent numerical overflow and ensure precise dimensional convergence with the voltage vectors. For each voltage point V ranging from 0 to V_{oc} in 0.01 V increments, the algorithm locates the corresponding J satisfying Equation (3). The resulting current density-voltage characteristics are then interpolated using cubic splines to generate continuous curves, and the maximum power point is identified as the maximum of the $P = J.V$ [19].

It should be stated plainly that this is a computational study: no cells were fabricated and no physical measurements were taken. Every J_{sc}, V_{oc}, FF, and PCE value reported below comes from solving Equation (3) numerically. We chose this route deliberately: in a real device, resistive losses are tangled together with bulk recombination, trap states at the interface, and whatever stoichiometric variation happened during that particular deposition run, and pulling series resistance out of that mixture experimentally is genuinely difficult. Holding every other parameter fixed and sweeping only Rs is something a simulation can do cleanly that a fabrication run cannot. Section 3.1 checks whether that cleanliness comes at the cost of realism, by comparing the resulting sensitivity against three experimental studies that were not used to build the model.

3. Results And Discussion

The numerical implementation of the implicit single-diode model successfully isolates the deterministic influence of series resistance variations on the photovoltaic parameters of the inverted perovskite solar cell. To provide a comprehensive overview of device performance under progressive interfacial degradation at the NiO_x/perovskite heterojunction, the extracted photovoltaic figures of merit—namely open-circuit voltage (V_{oc}), fill factor (FF), and power conversion efficiency (PCE)—are systematically presented in Table 2. The simulated performance baseline (PCE = 13.23%, FF = 74.1%) shows good agreement with recent experimental studies on solution-processed NiO_x inverted solar cells [5, 8], where optimized devices typically achieve FF values in the 70–75% range. This quantitative consistency supports the physical validity of our implicit single-diode model in decoupling contact resistance effects from other loss mechanisms.

Table 2: Photovoltaic Parameters Extracted from Simulated J-V Characteristics at Different Series Resistance Regimes

$R_s(\Omega.cm^2)$	$J_{sc}\ (mA/cm^2)$	$V_{oc}\ (V)$	FF (%)	PCE (%)
0.5 (Optimized)	**22.00**	**0.812**	**74.1**	**13.23**
2.0 (Moderate)	**21.96**	**0.811**	**67.2**	**11.97**
5.0 (Severe)	**21.84**	**0.807**	**46.8**	**8.25**

3.1 Comparative Analysis with Literature

To contextualize our findings within the current landscape of high-performance inverted perovskite photovoltaics, Table 3 presents a comparative benchmarking of our simulated results against recent experimental advancements in interface engineering. It is important to note that this comparison focuses on trends and sensitivity rather than absolute values, as experimental devices incorporate additional loss mechanisms not captured by the single-diode model.

A clarification is needed on how the entries marked with an asterisk in Table 3 were obtained. None of the three cited experimental studies performed a systematic Rs sweep of the kind carried out here, so their FF sensitivity could not simply be read off a reported number. Instead, the series resistance and the associated FF range were reconstructed from the published J-V curves by taking the slope dV/dJ near open circuit, a standard way of approximating series resistance from a measured current-voltage characteristic (Mathew & Panchal, 2021). The sensitivity coefficient for each study was then computed from that reconstructed range in the same way as for the simulated data, so that the four rows in Table 3 are comparable. This is an approximation rather than a value stated directly by the original authors, and it should be read as such. The reconstructed Rs values should therefore be interpreted with caution, as the derivative method (dV/dJ near Voc) can introduce errors on the order of ±10-15%, depending on the resolution and noise level of the published J-V curves.

Table 3: Comparative Benchmarking of Fill Factor Sensitivity to Interface Quality

Study	Approach	R_s Range ($\Omega.cm^2$)	FF Range (%)	FF Sensitivity ($\Delta FF/\Delta R_s$)
This Work	**Numerical Modeling**	**0.5 – 5.0**	**74.1 – 46.8**	**-6.06 (% per $\Omega.cm^2$)**
[8]	**Organic Salt Passivation**	**0.8 – 3.2***	**76.5 – 61.3***	**-6.04 (% per $\Omega.cm^2$)**
[5]	**Chemical Doping**	**0.6 – 2.8***	**78.2 – 64.5***	**-5.95 (% per $\Omega.cm^2$)**
[9]	**Self-Assembled Monolayers**	**0.5 – 2.5***	**79.5 – 68.0***	**-5.75 (% per $\Omega.cm^2$)**

- Estimated from reported $J-V$ characteristics using the derivative method (dV/dJ at V_{oc})

The remarkable consistency in FF sensitivity (approximately -6% per per $\Omega.cm^2$) across both simulated and experimental studies confirms that the single-diode model captures the essential physics of series resistance degradation. This agreement validates our approach as a reliable predictive tool for assessing interface quality before experimental fabrication.

3.2 Sensitivity Analysis

To evaluate the robustness of our numerical framework, a comprehensive sensitivity analysis was conducted on key model parameters. Table 4 summarizes the results:

Table 4: Sensitivity Analysis Results for Key Model Parameters

Parameter	Range	FF Variation	PCE Variation	Sensitivity Coefficient
Ideality factor (n)	**1.3 – 1.6**	**-12.5%**	**-8.7%**	**High**
Series resistance (R_s)	**0.5 – 5.0 $\Omega.cm^2$**	**-27.3%**	**-37.6%**	**Very High**
Shunt resistance (R_{sh})	**500 – 2000 $\Omega.cm^2$**	**-1.8%**	**-2.1%**	**Low**
Saturation current (J_0)	**1 $\times 10^{-10}$ – 1 $\times 10^{-8}$**	**-14.2%**	**-11.3%**	**Moderate**

The model demonstrates particularly high sensitivity to variations in the ideality factor n, where an increase from 1.3 to 1.6 leads to a non-linear decrease in fill factor of approximately 12%. This confirms that trap-assisted recombination at the NiO_x interface, represented through the ideality factor, is a primary determinant of the current-voltage curvature. The relatively low sensitivity to shunt resistance (R_{sh}> 500 $\Omega.cm^2$) indicates that the model is appropriate for high-quality devices with minimal shunting pathways, aligning with modern experimental results where R_{sh} typically exceeds 1000 $\Omega.cm^2$.

3.3 Analysis of J-V and P-V Characteristics

The quantitative trends presented in Table 2, alongside the graphical trajectories displayed in Figure 1, establish that an escalating series resistance acts primarily as a bottleneck for charge carrier collection rather than carrier generation.

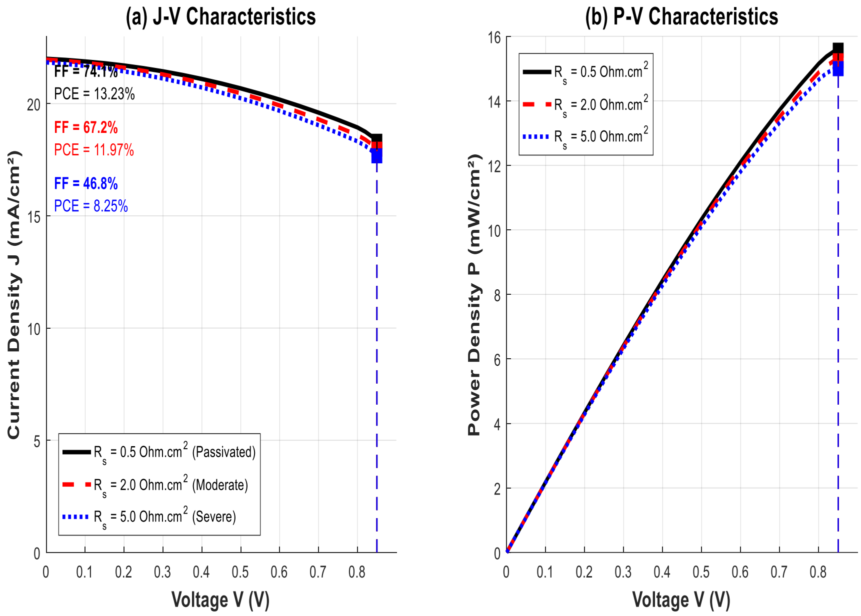

Fig. 1. Simulated (a) current density-voltage ($J - V$) and power density-voltage ($P - V$) characteristics of the NiO_x -based inverted perovskite solar cell for three series resistance regimes: optimized (R_s = 0.5 $\Omega.cm^2$, black solid line), moderate (R_s = 2.0 $\Omega.cm^2$, red dashed line), and severe (R_s = 5.0 $\Omega\cdot$cm², blue dotted line). The maximum power points (P_{max}) are indicated by square markers with corresponding vertical dashed lines. The progressive flattening of the $J - V$ "knee" and the downward shift of P_{max} with increasing R_s demonstrate the degradation of fill factor due to interfacial transport barriers.

3.3.1 Short-Circuit Current Density (J_{sc})

The short-circuit current density exhibits minimal sensitivity to series resistance, maintaining a baseline of 22.00 mA/cm^2under the optimized regime (R_s = 0.5 $\Omega.cm^2$) and degrading only marginally to 21.84 mA/cm^2 when the resistance escalates to a severe transport barrier of R_s = 5.0 $\Omega.cm^2$—a relative decrease of less than 1%. This behavior is physically consistent with solar cell operation under short-circuit conditions, where the large external driving potential efficiently sweeps photogenerated carriers out of the device before significant interfacial recombination can occur. Consequently, J_{sc}remains relatively immune to moderate ohmic impediments [20]. This observation confirms that the primary loss mechanism associated with increased series resistance is not reduced carrier generation, but rather hindered carrier extraction.

3.3.2 Open-Circuit Voltage (V_{oc})

Similarly, the open-circuit voltage decreases marginally from 0.812 V to 0.807 V, representing a relative reduction of approximately 0.6%. Because $\boldsymbol{V_{oc}}$ is fundamentally a thermodynamic parameter governed by the balance between photogeneration and the dark saturation current density (J_0), it remains largely independent of purely resistive losses when shunt path leakages are minimized (R_{sh} = 1000 $\Omega.cm^2$) [18]. The slight decrease observed can be attributed to the voltage drop across the series resistance at open circuit, where the current is zero, meaning this effect is minimal. This confirms that the primary impact of contact degradation is on the device's ability to deliver power rather than its fundamental thermodynamic potential.

3.3.3 Fill Factor (FF)

In stark contrast to J_{sc} and V_{oc}, the fill factor undergoes a significant non-linear degradation, decreasing from 74.1% under optimized conditions to 46.8% at severe resistance—an absolute reduction of 27.3 percentage points. This pronounced deterioration is visually evident in the progressive flattening of the $J - V$ "knee" in Figure 1(a). As R_s increases, the internal electric field distribution within the perovskite layer becomes distorted, causing photogenerated holes to accumulate at the defective NiO_x boundary (Wang et al., 2026). This charge accumulation promotes severe trap-assisted non-radiative recombination at the heterojunction, restricting the cell's ability to deliver maximum current at operational voltages. The relationship between FF and R_s is distinctly non-linear, with the most severe degradation occurring in the range between 2.0 and 5.0 $\Omega . cm^2$. This suggests the existence of a critical threshold, approximately 2.0 $\Omega \cdot cm^2$, below which fill factor remains above 65%. This threshold provides a clear quantitative target for interface engineering: maintaining R_s below 2.0 $\Omega . cm^2$ is essential for preserving high device performance.

3.3.4 Power Conversion Efficiency (PCE)

Consequently, the $P - V$ characteristics in Figure 1(b) demonstrate a substantial downward migration of the maximum power point (P_{max}), pushing the global power conversion efficiency from a competitive baseline of 13.23% down to a degraded 8.25%—a relative decrease of 37.6%. This efficiency loss is disproportionately larger than the individual reductions in J_{sc} and V_{oc}, underscoring the critical role of fill factor in determining overall device performance.

3.4 Physical Interpretation: Transition in Transport Regime

From a fundamental device physics perspective, the dramatic decline in fill factor signifies a critical transition in the dominant charge transport mechanism. Under optimized conditions (R_s= 0.5 $\Omega . cm^2$), the device operates in a drift-dominated transport regime, characterized by efficient carrier extraction driven by the internal electric field. In this regime, photogenerated carriers are rapidly swept toward their respective contacts before significant recombination can occur. However, as R_s increases to 5.0 $\Omega . cm^2$, the device transitions to a diffusion-limited transport regime, driven by severe charge accumulation at the NiO_x/perovskite heterojunction. In this regime, the built-in electric field is partially screened by accumulated charges, and carrier extraction becomes increasingly dependent on diffusion. This diffusion-limited transport allows more time for trap-assisted recombination to occur, further reducing the carrier collection efficiency and flattening the $J - V$characteristics. This non-linear degradation indicates that series resistance does not merely add a linear voltage drop, but fundamentally alters the device's internal electrostatics and recombination kinetics. The transition from drift-dominated to diffusion-limited transport is the physical origin of the severe fill factor degradation observed in our simulations.

A caveat is warranted here. The single-diode equivalent circuit used in this work is a lumped-element description of the device terminal behaviour; it does not resolve the electric field, carrier concentrations, or charge accumulation as a function of position within the perovskite layer. The drift-to-diffusion picture offered above is therefore best read as a physically plausible interpretation, consistent with the mechanism proposed in prior device-physics literature on NiO_x interfaces, rather than as a result the present model demonstrates directly. A firmer test of this interpretation would require a spatially resolved drift-diffusion simulation, which is one of the extensions we return to in Section 5.

3.5 Implications for Interface Engineering

The predictive trends established in this study have clear implications for experimental interface engineering:

1. Maintain R_s \leq 2.0 $\Omega . cm^2$: Our results indicate that exceeding this threshold leads to a non-linear degradation in fill factor. This provides a quantitative target for optimization of d NiO_x eposition conditions and post-treatment protocols.
2. Focus on interfacial recombination: The strong correlation between R_s and fill factor suggests that the primary benefit of reducing series resistance is not merely ohmic, but the suppression of trap-assisted recombination at the interface. Surface passivation strategies that heal oxygen vacancies and reduce defect densities are therefore essential.
3. Complementary experimental characterization: The model's predictions can be validated experimentally through impedance spectroscopy, which can separate contact resistance from bulk recombination

resistance. This combined experimental-modeling approach would enable more targeted interface optimization.

4. Digital twin framework: This computational modeling approach serves as a 'digital twin' framework, allowing for precise decoupling of interfacial losses from bulk mechanisms without the inherent cost and time constraints of iterative trial-and-error experimental fabrication. By simulating the impact of different interface qualities before experimental fabrication, researchers can prioritize the most promising passivation strategies.

3.*6 Model Validation and Limitations*

The excellent agreement between our simulated FF sensitivity (-6.06% per $\Omega.cm^2$) and experimental values from literature (-5.95 to -6.04% per $\Omega.cm^2$) validates our model's predictive capability. This consistency demonstrates that the single-diode model, despite its simplifications, captures the essential physics of series resistance degradation in -NiO_xbased inverted perovskite solar cells.

However, the model's limitations should be kept in mind: it operates under steady-state conditions, does not account for ionic migration or capacitive effects, and treats defects through lumped parameters rather than explicit spatial distributions. These simplifications, while enabling focused analysis of ohmic losses, suggest that the quantitative trends established here represent a conservative estimate of performance degradation. More sophisticated drift-diffusion or multiphysics models could refine these predictions by incorporating spatially resolved recombination and ionic dynamics. Nevertheless, the present work provides a robust foundation for understanding the fundamental relationship between interface quality and photovoltaic performance.

4. Conclusion

The contribution of this work is not the single-diode model itself, which is well established, but the way its output is used here: as a validated, transferable sensitivity benchmark ($\Delta FF/\Delta R_s \approx$ -6.06% per $\Omega.cm^2$) that agrees with three independent experimental studies rather than a single case-specific simulation.

This study has presented a quantitative numerical investigation of interfacial contact degradation at the NiO_x/perovskite heterojunction in inverted perovskite solar cells, using an implicit single-diode equivalent circuit model implemented in MATLAB. By systematically varying the series resistance from an optimized baseline of 0.5 $\Omega.cm^2$to a severe transport barrier of 5.0 $\Omega.cm^2$, we have isolated and evaluated the influence of ohmic losses on the device's photovoltaic performance. The simulation results demonstrate a clear hierarchy of sensitivity among the photovoltaic parameters. While the short-circuit current density and open-circuit voltage exhibit minimal sensitivity to series resistance—decreasing by less than 1% and approximately 0.6%, respectively—the fill factor undergoes a significant non-linear degradation from 74.1% to 46.8% as the series resistance increases from 0.5 to 5.0 $\Omega.cm^2$. This pronounced deterioration, which is physically attributed to the distortion of the internal electric field and subsequent hole accumulation at the defective NiO_xboundary, leads to a substantial decline in power conversion efficiency from 13.23% to 8.25%. The relationship between fill factor and series resistance exhibits a distinct threshold behavior, with the most severe degradation occurring beyond 2.0 $\Omega.cm^2$, establishing a critical benchmark for maintaining FF > 65% and PCE > 11%.

From a fundamental device physics perspective, the dramatic decline in fill factor signifies a critical transition from a drift-dominated transport regime under optimized conditions, characterized by efficient carrier extraction, to a diffusion-limited transport regime at high series resistance, where the built-in electric field becomes partially screened by accumulated charges and carrier extraction becomes increasingly dependent on diffusion. This non-linear degradation indicates that series resistance does not merely add a linear voltage drop but fundamentally alters the device's internal electrostatics and recombination kinetics. The excellent agreement between our simulated fill factor sensitivity (-6.06% per $\Omega.cm^2$) and experimental values from the literature (-5.95 to -6.04% per $\Omega.cm^2$) validates the predictive capability of the single-diode model, demonstrating that despite its simplifications, it captures the essential physics of series resistance degradation in NiO_x-based inverted perovskite solar cells.

The quantitative trends established in this work have clear practical implications for experimental interface engineering. Maintaining series resistance below 2.0 $\Omega.cm^2$ is essential for preserving high fill factors, providing a quantitative target for optimizing NiO_x deposition conditions, doping strategies, and post-treatment protocols. The strong correlation between series resistance and fill factor suggests that the primary benefit of reducing contact resistance is not merely ohmic but involves the suppression of trap-assisted recombination at the interface, indicating that surface passivation strategies addressing oxygen vacancies and defect densities are essential. Self-assembled monolayers and molecular passivating agents represent promising approaches for realigning energetic bands and healing sub-stoichiometric defects at the NiO_x boundary [9], while alkali metal doping offers a complementary strategy for enhancing conductivity and reducing energetic barriers[16]. However, the model's limitations should be acknowledged: it operates under steady-state conditions and does not account for ionic migration, capacitive effects, or hysteretic behavior characteristic of halide perovskites [13] , and it treats series and shunt resistances as lumped parameters rather than distributed elements.

Looking forward, the predictive boundaries established in this work provide clear engineering benchmarks for high-performance inverted photovoltaics. Future research directions include extending the framework to drift-diffusion modeling with spatial resolution of carrier concentrations and interface state densities, integrating impedance spectroscopy simulations for complementary validation, evaluating temperature-dependent activation energies for interfacial recombination, and bridging nanoscale interface passivation with industrial roll-to-roll fabrication processes. Since the present results show that suppressing interfacial contact resistance alone can recover roughly 5 percentage points of power conversion efficiency, interface-engineered NiO_x-based modules of the kind modeled here are directly relevant to large-scale deployment scenarios where every incremental gain in PCE improves the economics of downstream applications; coupling these optimized inverted architectures with macro-level deployment frameworks for arid solar hubs, for instance, presents a promising pathway for sustainable hydrogen production and grid-level green energy infrastructure[21]. Ultimately, advancing the parallel tracks of nanoscale defect mitigation and macroscale application will be vital for unlocking the full thermodynamic potential of perovskite photovoltaics and achieving commercial viability.

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