

SETTLEMENT ASSESSMENT OF SOFT SOIL REINFORCED BY PARTIALLY
PENETRATED BY SOIL CEMENT COLUMN

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A project report submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Engineering (Geotechnics)

School of Civil Engineering
Faculty of Engineering
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

JANUARY 2018

DEDICATION

Especially dedicated to:

My Parents

Mr. Baharudin Bin Md. Yassin and Madam Nurain Ong Abdullah

For their support and love

My Family members

Nur Zalikha Binti Baharudin & Nur Liyana Binti Baharudin

For their encouragement

My respected supervisor

Mr. Muhammad Azril Bin Hezmi, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ahmad Safuan A. Rashid &

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kamaruddin Ahmad

For the consistent guidance

All my friends

Arief Ariffin Bin Muhammad Samsi

Nyemas Dewi Pramita Binti Aie

Afiqah Binti Ismail

For the help and friendship

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Assalamualaikum w.b.t.

In preparing this thesis, I was in contact with many people, researchers, academicians, and practitioners. They have contributed towards my understanding and thoughts. In particular, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to my main thesis supervisor, Mr. Muhammad Azril Bin Hezmi for encouragement, guidance, critics and friendship. I am also very thankful to my co-supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ahmad Safuan A. Rashid and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kamaruddin Ahmad for their guidance, advices and motivation. Without their continued support and interest, this thesis would not have been the same as presented here.

I would like to thank my parents, family members and friends for the continuous support to face all problems in completing this project. I sincerely appreciate it.

Thank you.

ABSTRACT

Soil cement column technique is one of a widely used technique in ground improvement over the past 50 years. The technique involve process of soft soil replacement with mixed materials in order to increase the bearing capacity and reduce the settlement. A preliminary chart of both bearing capacity and settlement of soft soil improved by floating soil cement column were developed in this study. A series of numerical modelling were performed by PLAXIS 3D with different area improvement ratio, a_p and column height, H_c . Three (3) improvement area ratio (a_p) of 20.7%, 31.0% and 41.0% and two (2) height of column were implemented which 50 mm and 100mm that is correspond to improvement depth ratio (β) of 0.25 and 0.5. Another important parameter are cohesion ratio, K_c and K. For analysis, two loading condition were applied on untreated and treated soils. The first load condition to identify ultimate bearing capacity or failure process. Firstly, condition of determined the ultimate bearing capacity. After that, the settlement analysis was performed by the used of working load of two third of ultimate load. The second load condition was conducted under design load to identify settlement and failure pattern. Then, a settlement charts were developed to predict the settlement of model treated with soil cement column. The 3D numerical results showed that the bearing capacity of soft soil increase with an increment of improvement area ratio (a_p), depth improvement ratio (β) and cohesion ratio (K_c).As well as the settlement that reduced as the improvement area ratio (a_p), depth improvement ratio (β) and cohesion ratio (K_c) increased. A non-dimensional analysis was also developed to fully understanding the behavior of soft soil improved by floating soil cement column.

ABSTRAK

Teknik tiang campuran tanah dan simen merupakan salah satu teknik perbaikan tanah yang paling banyak diaplikasikan sejak 50 tahun yang lalu. Teknik ini melibatkan penggantian tanah lembut dengan bahan-bahan campuran tanah dan simen bagi meningkatkan keupayaan galas dan mengurangkan enapan. Kajian ini melibatkan penghasilan beberapa carta awalan bagi keupayaan galas dan carta enapan bagi tanah lembut menggunakan perisian asas *PLAXIS 3D* dengan nisbah penggantian luas dan panjang tiang yang berbeza. Tiga (3) nisbah penggantian luas iaitu 20.7%, 31% dan 41% dan dua (2) panjang tiang yang berbeza iaitu 50 mm dan 100 mm. Panjang tiang 50mm dan 100mm mewakili nisbah penggantian kedalaman 0.25 dan 0.5. Parameter penting yang terlibat dalam kajian ini adalah nisbah kejeleketan dan nilai tiada dimensi. Dua keadaan beban dikenakan ke atas tanah lembut yang tidak melalui perbaikan dan tanah lembut yang telah melalui perbaikan. Keadaan beban yang pertama adalah bagi mengenalpasti keupayaan galas tertinggi dan proses kegagalan bagi tanah lembut tersebut. Kemudian, analisis bagi enapan dijalankan dengan menggunakan dua per tiga daripada keupayaan galas tertinggi. Keadaan beban yang kedua dijalankan menggunakan beban tersebut bagi mengenalpasti enapan dan bentuk konsolidasi. Seterusnya, sebuah carta enapan dibentuk bagi mendapatkan jumlah enapan bagi tanah lembut yang tidak melalui perbaikan dan tanah lembut yang telah melalui perbaikan. Analisis berangka tiga dimensi menunjukkan bahawa peningkatan nisbah penggantian luas, nisbah penggantian kedalaman dan nisbah kejeleketan meningkatkan keupayaan galas bagi tanah lembut. Selain itu, analisis ini juga menunjukkan pengurangan enapan jika nisbah penggantian luas, nisbah penggantian kedalaman dan nisbah kejeleketan meningkat. Satu analisis berkaitan dimensi dijalankan bagi meningkatkan pemahaman tentang sifat tanah lembut ditambah baik melalui proses teknik tiang campuran tanah dan simen.

TABLE OF CONTENT

CHAPTER	CONTENT	PAGE
	TITLE	i
	DECLARATION	ii
	DEDICATIONS	iii
	ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
	ABSTRACT	v
	ABSTRAK	vi
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
	LIST OF TABLES	x
	LIST OF FIGURES	xi
	LIST OF SYMBOLS	xiv
	LIST OF APPENDICES	xv
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Background of the Study	1
	1.2 Problem Statement	2
	1.3 Aim and Objective of Study	3
	1.4 Scope of Study	3
	1.5 Limitation of Study	4
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	5
	2.1 Introduction	5
	2.2 Overview of soft soil properties and behaviour	5
	2.3 Settlement of soft soil	7
	2.3.1 Settlement Analysis on Soft Soil	8
	2.4 Soft Soil Improvement Method	12
	2.4.1 Drainage method	13
	2.4.1.1 Plastic Board Drain Method	13
	2.4.1.2 Sand Drain Method	13

2.4.2	Compaction Method	14
2.4.2.1	Sand Compaction Pile (SCP) Method	14
2.4.2.2	Ram-Drop Compaction Method	18
2.4.3	Solidification Treatment	19
2.4.3.1	Pre-mixing method	19
2.4.3.2	Deep Mixing (DM) Method	20
2.5	The Design and Installation of DM Method	23
2.6	Research on DM Method	26
2.6.1	Bearing Capacity: Application of DM under Rigid Loading (Centrifuge Model Test)	26
2.6.2	Full Scale Test	28
2.6.3	Analytical model: Bearing Capacity of Single Cement Column	29
2.6.4	Numerical Modelling Analysis	29
2.6.4.1	Quake/W (Geo-Studio)	30
2.6.4.2	FLAC	31
2.6.4.3	PLAXIS	32
2.7	Conclusion	33
3	METHODOLOGY	34
3.1	Introduction	34
3.2	Numerical Modelling	36
3.2.1	Geometry	36
3.2.1.1	Soil Profile	37
3.2.1.2	Model Height	38
3.2.1.3	Boundary Condition / Model Width	38
3.2.1.4	Dimensional Parameter for Modelling	39
3.3	Numerical Analysis by PLAXIS 3D	40
3.3.1	Material Properties and Material Model	41
3.3.2	Geometry Input for 3D Analysis	42
3.4	Calculation	46
3.5	Development of Design Chart	46

4	RESULT AND ANALYSIS	47
4.1	Introduction	47
4.2	3D Modelling Results	47
4.2.1	Ultimate Bearing Capacity (q_{ult}) Analysis	48
4.2.1.1	Cohesion Ratio (K_c)	48
4.2.1.2	Improvement Area Ratio (a_p)	51
4.2.2	Settlement Analysis	57
4.2.2.1	Cohesion Ratio (K_c)	61
4.2.2.2	Improvement area ratio (a_p)	66
4.3	Bearing Capacity Chart	68
4.4	Settlement Chart	69
5	CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	70
5.1	Introduction	70
5.2	Findings	70
5.3	Recommendations for Future Research	71
	REFERENCES	
	APPENDIX A	
	APPENDIX B	
	APPENDIX C	

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
Table 2.1	Soil Properties for soft clay	6
Table 2.2	Geotechnical forensic cases carried out by PWD	7
Table 2.3	Project record of PBD	14
Table 2.4	Project record of Sand Drain method	15
Table 2.5	Project Record for SCP method	17
Table 2.6	Project Record for Ram-Drop Compaction method	18
Table 2.7	Completed Project record	20
Table 2.8	Summary of typical project of DM method	22
Table 3.1	Dimension of the model for the analysis	38
Table 3.2	Summary of values for analysis	40
Table 3.3	Basic Properties of Kaolin Clay	42
Table 3.4	Model Dimension	43
Table 3.5	Soil Properties for 3D analysis	43
Table 3.6	Floor Properties for 3D analysis	44
Table 4.1	Summary of ultimate bearing capacity for all treated soft soil model	56
Table 4.2	Summary of settlement for all treated cases	65

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
Figure 2.1	The Conceptual view of JICE method	12
Figure 2.2	PBD Installation Machine	14
Figure 2.3	Successful ground improvement in Tatsumi area	17
Figure 2.4	Application od DM Technology	21
Figure 2.5	Examples of Deep Mixing pattern	23
Figure 2.6	Column installation process	24
Figure 2.7	Arrangement of soil cement column	25
Figure 2.8	Vertical stress – displacement/width curve	27
Figure 2.9	Horizontal stress - normalised horizontal displacement/width curves	27
Figure 2.10	Treatment with a group of DM columns on the Bagna-Bangkapong Highway in Thailand	27 28
Figure 2.11	Mesh generation of the body and foundation of the dam cross-section C	31
Figure 2.12	Vertical settlement (m) distribution soil model in FLAC 3D	32
Figure 3.1	Research Methodology Flow Chart	35
Figure 3.2	Geometry of soft soil improved by floating soil cement column	37
Figure 3.3	Failure zone	39
Figure 3.4	Arrangement of model columns	40
Figure 3.5	Steps in PLAXIS 3D	41
Figure 3.6	Flowchart of modelling procedure in PLAXIS 3D	45
Figure 3.7	Flowchart of calculation procedure in PLAXIS 3D	46
Figure 4.1	Bearing capacity-displacement curve for all model of $\alpha_p= 20.7\%$ and $\beta = 0.25$ for different cohesion ratio (K_c)	48
Figure 4.2	Bearing capacity-displacement curve for all model of $\alpha_p= 20.7\%$ and $\beta = 0.5$ for different cohesion ratio (K_c)	49
Figure 4.3	Bearing capacity-displacement curve for all model of $\alpha_p= 31\%$ and $\beta = 0.25$ for different cohesion ratio (K_c)	49

Figure 4.4	Bearing capacity-displacement curve for all model of $a_p= 31\%$ and $\beta = 0.5$ for different cohesion ratio (K_c)	50
Figure 4.5	Bearing capacity-displacement curve for all model of $a_p= 41\%$ and $\beta = 0.25$ for different cohesion ratio (K_c)	50
Figure 4.6	Bearing capacity-displacement curve for all model of $a_p= 41\%$ and $\beta = 0.5$ for different cohesion ratio (K_c)	51
Figure 4.7	Bearing Capacity-displacement curve of $K_c= 5$ and $\beta = 0.25$ of different improvement area ratio (a_p)	52
Figure 4.8	Bearing capacity-displacement curve of $K_c= 10$ and $\beta = 0.25$ of different improvement area ratio (a_p)	52
Figure 4.9	Bearing capacity-displacement curve of $K_c= 20$ and $\beta = 0.25$ of different improvement area ratio (a_p)	53
Figure 4.10	Bearing capacity-displacement curve of $K_c= 40$ and $\beta = 0.25$ of different improvement area ratio (a_p)	53
Figure 4.11	Bearing Capacity-displacement curve of $K_c= 5$ and $\beta = 0.5$ of different improvement area ratio (a_p)	54
Figure 4.12	Bearing capacity-displacement curve of $K_c= 10$ and $\beta = 0.5$ of different improvement area ratio (a_p)	54
Figure 4.13	Bearing Capacity-displacement curve of $K_c= 20$ and $\beta = 0.5$ of different improvement area ratio (a_p)	55
Figure 4.14	Bearing capacity-displacement curve of $K_c= 40$ and $\beta = 0.5$ of different improvement area ratio (a_p)	55
Figure 4.15	Summary of Ultimate Bearing Capacity for all treated model	57
Figure 4.16	Settlement-time curve of $a_p=$ of 20.7% and $\beta=0.25$ with different cohesion ratio	58
Figure 4.17	Settlement-time curve of $a_p= 31\%$ and $\beta=0.25$ with different cohesion ratio.	58
Figure 4.18	Settlement-time curve of $a_p= 41\%$ and $\beta=0.25$ with different c cohesion ratio.	59
Figure 4.19	Settlement-time curve of $a_p= 20.7\% \%$ and $\beta=0.5$ with different cohesion ratio	59

Figure 4.20	Settlement-time curve of $a_p= 31\%$ and $\beta=0.5$ with different cohesion ratio.	60
Figure 4.21	Settlement-time curve of $a_p= 41\%$ and $\beta=0.5$ with different cohesion ratio.	60
Figure 4.22	Settlement-time curve of $K_c= 5$ and $\beta=0.25$ with different improvement area ratio (a_p).	61
Figure 4.23	Settlement-time curve of $K_c= 10$ and $\beta=0.25$ with different improvement area ratio (a_p)	61
Figure 4.24	Settlement-time curve of $K_c= 20$ and $\beta=0.25$ with different improvement area ratio (a_p)	62
Figure 4.25	Settlement-time curve of $K_c= 40$ and $\beta=0.25$ with different improvement area ratio (a_p)	62
Figure 4.26	Settlement-time curve of $K_c= 5$ and $\beta=0.25$ with different improvement area ratio (a_p)	63
Figure 4.27	Settlement-time curve of $K_c= 10$ and $\beta=0.5$ with different improvement area ratio (a_p)	63
Figure 4.28	Settlement-time curve of $K_c= 20$ and $\beta=0.5$ with different improvement area ratio (a_p)	64
Figure 4.29	Settlement-time curve of $K_c= 40$ and $\beta=0.25$ with different improvement area ratio (a_p).	64
Figure 4.30	Summary of settlement for all cases	65
Figure 4.31	Relationship of bearing capacity factor (N_c) variation and normalized shear strength.	67
Figure 4.32	Relation between $\sigma_T/\sigma_U \times (1 - a_p)^{10}$ and S_T/S_U obtained from the settlement test.	69

LIST OF SYMBOLS

a_p	-	Improvement area ratio
B, d_1	-	Width of footing
c_{ua}	-	Average undrained shear strength of improved ground
c_{uao}	-	Average undrained shear strength of improved ground on the top
c_{uc}	-	Undrained shear strength of soil cement column
c_{us}	-	Undrained shear strength of surrounding soil
c_{usb}	-	Undrained shear strength of the native soil at the bottom of the improvement area
c_{uso}	-	Undrained shear strength of the native soil at the top of the improvement area
D	-	Depth of improvement area
K_c	-	Relative cohesion ratio of the column to the soft soil
L, d_2	-	Length of the footing
N	-	Number of measurements (sample)
N_c	-	Bearing capacity factor
q_{ult}	-	Ultimate bearing capacity
z	-	Depth below the soil surface

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX	TITLE	PAGE
Appendix A	Summary of mechanical properties,ultimate bearing capacity and measured settlement	77
Appendix B	Summary of mechanical properties for bearing capacity chart	78
Appendix C	Summary of mechanical properties for settlement chart	79

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Malaysia is working towards achieving a high-income status by 2020. This involves development of the economic structure. Construction industry is one of factors contribute to the development. There are several studies have shown the significant impact of construction industry to the national economic development (Myers, 2013). The heavy and civil engineering construction include the construction of road systems, railways, sewers, bridges and tunnel. The availability of stable soil in Malaysia is one of the main problem for any construction especially in the urban area. The demand for engineering profession especially in geotechnical engineering is increasing to overcome the problem. The common study before any construction are soil properties, cost effective and environmental aspects.

The soft soil has become a threat to the construction industry due to the incapability of the soil to sustain huge load and lead to failure. Construction foundations need to be on stable and strong soil. The usual issues involve in this type of soil are unsatisfactory bearing capacity, extra post construction settlement, instability on soil removal and embankment forming. In geotechnical engineering, the adequate soil engineering characteristics play a major role. Engineer's responsibility is to make sure sufficient properties of the soil by solve the mechanical and chemical problem of local soil. There are variety of methods such as displacement, replacement, reinforcement and stabilization are the approaches practiced to enhance the properties of soft soils. (Shahin *et al.*, 2011). The common practice in Malaysia for soil improvement are surface reinforcement, sand or stone column, preloading, prefabricated vertical drain, piles and chemical stabilization.

Generally, numerical analysis is related to mathematics and computer science that creates, analyse and implement algorithms for solving problems of continuous mathematics (Atkinson). Scientific computing and computational science has develop during 1980s and 1990s as parallel to the growth in the importance of using computer to carry out numerical procedure to solve problems. Numerical analysis is believed as a reliable method and excited field that offers the tools for solving geotechnical challenges according to Riahi (2009). Finite element analysis may be conducted to study the elastic settlement behaviour of foundation (Michael *et al.*, 2014). Finite element can be carried out by using PLAXIS for the settlement analysis. The development of charts can be used to aid prediction in construction design.

1.2 Problem Statement

The rapid development of Malaysia with strong economic performance has led to massive infrastructure development (Zainorabidin & Wijeyesekera,2007). Roads, housing, drainage are considered as the infrastructure construction. These developments are delayed by a limited suitable land for engineering construction which is area with adverse ground condition such as soft soil and problematic soils. Generally, soft soil in Malaysia can be categorized in quaternary sediments consist of alluvial deposits and organic peat soil (Kaniraj & Joseph, 2006). Soft soils can be characterized as a soil with low strength, highly compressible and low permeability (Mohamad, *et al.*, 2015) (Mohammed Al-Bared & Marto, 2017), (Ozdemir, 2016). There are many problems may occur during or after the construction phase such as slope instability, bearing capacity failure or excessive settlement due to low shear strength and high compressibility of the soil. Due to restricted usage of land used had forced for ground improvement such as preloading, preloading associated with vertical drains, reinforcement by columns or deep mixing technique. Deep mixing technique was introduced as new alternative to improve soft soils which are combination of low weight percentage of lime, cement or combination of both which is mixed in depth by specific equipment (Boussida, 2009).

Previous works on bearing capacity has been done related to deep mixing (DM) in the area of soil improvement include laboratory work, full-scale field test and analytical and numerical analysis. All prior research had focused on determination on ultimate bearing capacity of soft clay under vertical load. The behaviour of fully and partially penetrated columns with different improvement area (a_p) and soil cement undrained shear strength(c_{uc}) has not been focused in previous study. Moreover, there are limited study on preliminary assessment technique for the feasibility of DM construction for a particular site. Therefore, this study aim to establish settlement design charts for soil reinforced by DM method using partially penetrated soil-cement columns.

1.3 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to evaluate the preliminary assessment and establish the design charts settlement of partially penetrated soil cement column by considering several practical guidelines of DM construction. The following objectives are set to achieve the aim of the study:

- i. To evaluate the effect of improvement area ratio (a_p), improvement depth ratio (β) and cohesion ratio (K_c) on bearing capacity and settlement of soft soil.
- ii. To establish the preliminary design charts for settlement prediction of partially penetrated soil cement column of soft soil.

1.4 Scope of Study

In order to establish settlement design chart, numerical simulation will be perform using finite element analysis in PLAXIS 3D. Series of analyses will be completed from previous studies as a comparison template to validate the implementation of the finite element analysis.

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