



Faculty of Engineering

**ANALYSIS OF SLOPE STABILITY USING
FINITE ELEMENT METHOD**

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**ANALYSIS OF SLOPE STABILITY USING
FINITE ELEMENT METHOD**

MOHD YUSRI BIN SURATMAN

**This thesis is submitted to
Faculty of Engineering, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Bachelor of Engineering with Honours
(Civil Engineering)**

2009

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I declare that this thesis entitled “Flow Lines Analysis” is the result of my own research except as cited in the references. The thesis has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.

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To my beloved mother and father
Thanks for everything

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ABSTRACT

Slope can be defined as an exposed ground surface that stands at an angle with the horizontal surface. There is several traditional limit equilibrium methods developed for checking safety factor of a slope. These methods, in general, require the soil mass to be divided into slices. The directions of the forces acting on each slice in the slope are assumed. This assumption is a key role in distinguishing one limit equilibrium method from another. Finite element method has been increasingly used in slope stability analysis nowadays. A finite element program namely PLAXIS has been chosen for this parametric study. Analysis was conducted using two-dimensional finite element program, PLAXIS. The safety factors are evaluated using gravity loading and phi-c reduction procedure. Mohr-Coulomb soil parameters and levels of global coarseness are examined to know its effect to the computed factor of safety. From the present parametric study, factor of safety remains unchanged with increasing Young's modulus and Poisson's ratio. Next, factor of safety is directly proportional with angle of internal friction and cohesion. Moreover, factor of safety changed with a given level of global coarseness.

ABSTRAK

Cerun merupakan permukaan yang berada dalam keadaan bersudut dengan permukaan garis mengufuk. Terdapat beberapa kaedah keseimbangan tradisional terhad yang dicipta untuk memeriksa faktor keselamatan bagi sesuatu cerun. Kaedah ini, secara amnya, memerlukan jisim tanah dibahagi kepada beberapa hirisan. Haluan bagi daya yang bertindak ke atas setiap hirisan diandaikan. Andaian ini merupakan kunci utama yang membezakan satu kaedah keseimbangan terhad daripada yang lain. Kaedah elemen terhad telah meningkat penggunaannya dalam analisis kestabilan cerun pada masa kini. Sebuah program unsur terhingga dinamakan PLAXIS telah di pilih untuk kajian parametrik ini. Analisis telah dijalankan menggunakan program elemen terhad dua dimensi, PLAXIS. Faktor keselamatan diperolehi menggunakan kaedah beban graviti dan pengurangan ϕ - c . Parameter-parameter tanah Mohr-Coulomb dan tingkat kekasaran global dikaji untuk mengetahui kesannya terhadap pengiraan faktor keselamatan. Bagi kajian parametrik ini, faktor keselamatan tidak berubah dengan peningkatan *Young's modulus* dan *Poisson's ratio*. Kemudian, faktor keselamatan berkadar secara langsung dengan *angle of internal friction* dan *cohesion*. Tambahan, faktor keselamatan berubah dengan penggunaan setiap tingkat kekasaran global.

TABLE OF CONTENT

CONTENT	PAGE
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ABSTRAK	v
TABLE OF CONTENT	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
LIST OF SYMBOLS	xvi
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	
1.1 General	1
1.2 Problems statement	3
1.3 Objectives of study	5
1.4 Scope of study	6
CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 Types of slope	8
2.2.1 Natural slope	8
2.2.2 Engineered slope	9
2.3 Classification of slope	11

2.4 Modes of slope failure	14
2.4.1 Falls	14
2.4.2 Slides	15
2.4.3 Spreads	18
2.4.4 Flows	19
2.5 Factors affecting slope failure	20
2.5.1 Erosion	21
2.5.2 Natural slope movement	21
2.5.3 Rapid drawdown	21
2.5.4 Construction activities	22
2.5.5 Rainfall	22
2.5.6 Geological features	23
2.5.7 Earthquake	23
2.6 Slope stability analysis	25
2.6.1 Factor of safety (FOS)	25
2.6.2 Shear strength of soil	29
2.6.3 Groundwater flow	35
2.7 Infinite and Finite slope	36
2.8 Method of analysis	38
2.8.1 Mass procedure	39
2.8.2 Method of slices	42
2.9 Finite Element Method	45

CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

3.1 General	47
3.2 Description of Finite Element Program	49
3.3 General modelling aspects	50
3.3.1 Types of element	50
3.3.2 Nodes	51
3.3.3 Stress points	51
3.4 Mohr-Coulomb soil model	52
3.5 Ph-c-reduction	53
3.6 Slope stability design example	52
3.6.1 $\alpha = 0^\circ$ -Limit equilibrium method method of slices	57
3.6.2 $\alpha = 0^\circ$ -Finite element method (PLAXIS)	60
3.6.3 Input data	60
3.6.4 Material Input	60
3.6.5 Mesh Generation	63
3.6.6 initial conditions	64
3.6.7 Safety analysis	65
3.6.8 Performing calculations	66
3.6.9 Output	68
3.7 Plotting Curve	69

CHAPTER IV	RESULTS AND ANALYSIS	
4.1	General	71
4.2	Types of stability analysis	72
4.3	Generation of initial stresses	72
4.4	Case study one- Homogenous slope with Different Mohr-Coulomb soil parameters	74
4.5	Case study two- Homogenous slope with a Foundation layer	79
4.6	Case study three- Non-Homogenous slope With three different soil layers	83
4.7	Case study four- An undrained clay slope Failure with a thin weal layer	87
CHAPTER 5	CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	
5.1	General	93
5.2	Conclusions	94
5.3	Recommendations	95
REFERENCES		96

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A	Case study one: Homogenous slope with different Mohr-Coulomb soil parameter values	100
APPENDIX B	Case study two: Homogenous slope with a Foundation layer	104
APPENDIX C	Case study three: Non-Homogenous slope with three different soil layers	108
APPENDIX D	Case study four: An undrained clay slope failure with a thin weak layer	111

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	Classification of risk of landslide on hill- side development (IEM, 2000)	13
2.2	Classification of slope failure (Varnes, 1978)	20
2.3	Factor of safety which related to detail of slope	29
2.4	Assumption concerning interslice force for different method of slices	44
3.1	Slice data for calculated limit equilibrium method of slices	58
3.2	Mohr-Coulomb soil parameters	62
4.1	Different values for Mohr-Coulomb soil parameter	75
4.2	Computed factor of safety for homogenous slope with different parameters	76
4.3	Slope material properties	80
4.4	Factor of safety result from several limit equilibrium method of slices compared with finite element program, PLAXIS	82
4.5	Three different material for non- homogenous slope	84

TABLE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
4.6	Material properties for homogenous slope with increasing of cohesion values	84
4.7	Material properties for homogenous slope with reduction of friction angle values	84
4.8	Factor of safety results from several limit equilibrium method of slices compared with finite element program, PLAXIS	86
4.9	Slope material properties	88
4.10	Ratio and strength values for the thin layer	88
4.11	Computed factor of safety by PLAXIS	89

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	Geometries of slope	10
2.2	Topple stability: before and after failure (Varnes, 1978)	15
2.3	Rotational slides (Varnes, 1978)	16
2.4	Block-glide translational slide (Varnes, 1978)	17
2.5	Complex slide that includes some flow characteristics (Varnes, 1978)	17
2.6	Lateral spread (Varnes, 1978)	18
2.7	Flow failure (Varnes, 1978)	19
2.8	Causes of slope failure	24
2.9	Principle of Mohr's Circle (Das, 2000)	33
2.10	Mohr-Coulomb failure criterion (Das, 2000)	33
2.11	Inclination of failure plane in soil with major principle plane (Das, 2000)	34
2.12	Geometry for infinite slope analysis (Das, 2000)	37
2.13	Geometry for finite slope analysis (Das, 2000)	37
2.14	Stability of slope in homogenous saturated clay soil ($\phi = 0$) (Das, 2000)	39
2.15	Stability analysis of slope in homogenous $c'-\phi'$ soil (Das, 2000)	41

FIGURE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.16	Division of potential sliding mass into slices and force acting on a typical slice (Das, 2000)	43
3.1	Flow chart of study	48
3.2	15-node triangular element	51
3.3	6-node triangular element	52
3.4	General application used in PLAXIS	55
3.5	Analysis of slope by limit equilibrium method of slices	57
3.6	Forces acting on a typical slice	57
3.7	Geometry model in Input window (PLAXIS)	61
3.8	<i>General</i> tab sheet for material data sets window (PLAXIS)	61
3.9	<i>Parameter</i> tab sheet for material data sets window (PLAXIS)	62
3.10	Finite element mesh of the geometry model (PLAXIS)	63
3.11	Calculation scheme for Initial stresses due to soil weight	64
3.12	Calculation windows with the <i>General</i> tab sheet (PLAXIS)	66
3.13	Calculations windows with the <i>Parameters</i> tab sheet (PLAXIS)	67
3.14	Calculations Info window (PLAXIS)	68
3.15	Evaluation of safety factor for the slope	69

FIGURE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
4.1	Geometry of homogenous slope	74
4.2	Factor of safety vs increasing Young's modulus with two different of Poisson's ratio values	78
4.3	Factor of safety vs increasing dilation angle with two different of Poisson's ratio values	78
4.4	Slope geometry model	79
4.5	Curve generation by PLAXIS	81
4.6	Factor of safety vs five levels of global coarseness	81
4.7	Non-homogenous slope	83
4.8	Computed factor of safety for case study three	85
4.9	Undrained clay slope with a foundation layer including a thin weak layer	87
4.10	FOS for different values of c_{u2}/c_{u1} (Griffiths, 1999)	90
4.11	FOS for different values of c_{u2}/c_{u1} (PLAXIS)	90

LIST OF SYMBOLS

	-	Angle of internal friction
c	-	Cohesion
ψ	-	Dilatancy angle
c'	-	Effective (drained) strength parameter
c'	-	Effective (drained) strength parameter
σ	-	Normal stress
ν	-	Poisson's ratio
τ	-	Shear strength of the soil
γ	-	Unit weight of soil
c_u	-	Undrained (total) strength parameter
c_u	-	Undrained (total) strength parameter
H	-	Height of slope
Fs	-	Factor of safety
E	-	Young's modulus
K_0	-	Ratio of the horizontal and vertical effective stresses
N_r	-	Normal component of the reaction R
P_n	-	Normal force that act on the sides of the slices
T_n	-	Shearing force that act on the sides of the slices
T_r	-	Tangential component of reaction R

LIST OF SYMBOLS

a°	-	Inclination angle of slice at base
b	-	Width of slice
W_n	-	Weight of slice

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

Malaysia has grown up with a rapid infrastructure development over the last few decades. As a result, slope stability issue has become one of the main problems in construction industry due to the nature of Malaysian topography. There has been a tremendous increase in construction on sloped area over the last 15 years due to reduction of available flat land. Nowadays, the requirements for housing, commercial and industrial building are still increasing and more sloped areas are being developed. Thus, the safety of building on hill site is often a topic of discussion among government authorities, engineers and public.

The collapse of Block 1 Highland Tower in 1993, loss of 20 lives in the tragedy of Genting Sempah Tunnel in 1995, collapsed bungalow in Taman Hillview, Ampang in November 2002 and the latest tragedy at Taman Bukit Mewah which lead to Bukit Antarabangsa landslide in Hulu Klang, Selangor in December 2008 was the evidence for the problems created by the slope's instability.

Gravitational forces are always acting on a mass of soil or rock beneath a slope. As long as the strength of the mass is equal to or greater than the gravitational forces, the forces are in balance and movement does not occur.

Before any construction works begin, proper site investigations have to be carried out to identify the characteristic of the soil prior to design. However, the stability of the slope cannot be determined perfectly because there are many factors that can influence its stability from time to time. Therefore, the stability of the slope should be analyzed with various approaches such as infinite slope analysis, planar surface analysis, circular surface analysis and finite element analysis, so that the most critical situation can be determined. The truth is hill site development is safe with proper planning, design, construction and maintenance. Engineers with good expertise on soil rock in slope and foundation stability design are usually engaged in construction projects. The main priority is to safeguard the safety of the public from landslide hazards.

There are lots of things that are related with slope. Civil engineers and geologists have to carry out an investigation and research about slope stability and followed with analysis of slope stability. They have found out the reasons that affect the slope stability most likely caused by different type of soils, properties of soil, and modelling error in implementing analytical methods. An understanding of geology, hydrology, and soil properties is central to applying slope stability principles properly. Analyses must be based upon a model that accurately represent site subsurface conditions, ground behavior, and applied loads. Judgments regarding acceptable risk or safety factors must be made to assess the result of analyses.

1.2 Problems statement

The stability analysis of slopes plays an important role in civil engineering. Slope stability analysis is used in the design of highways, railroads, canals, surface mining, earth embankments and dams, as well as many other human activities involving construction and excavations. The earlier researches have recognized a need for consistent understanding and application of slope stability analysis for construction and remediation projects. These analyses are generally carried out at the beginning, and sometimes throughout the life, of projects during planning, design, construction, improvement, rehabilitation and maintenance.