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Long-Term Durability of Ordinary Portland Cement and Polypropylene Fiber Stabilized Soil

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LONG-TERM DURABILITY OF ORDINARY PORTLAND CEMENT AND

POLYPROPYLENE FIBER STABILIZED CLAY

by

Suman Aryal

B.E., Tribhuvan University, 2015

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Master of Science Degree

Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

in the Graduate School

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

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THESIS APPROVAL

LONG-TERM DURABILITY OF ORDINARY PORTLAND CEMENT AND POLYPROPYLENE FIBER STABILIZED CLAY

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Approved by:

Dr. Prabir K. Kolay, Chair

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Southern Illinois University Carbondale

July 01, 2019

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

SUMAN ARYAL, for the Master of Science degree in CIVIL ENGINEERING, presented on July 01, 2019, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: LONG-TERM DURABILITY OF ORDINARY PORTLAND CEMENT AND POLYPROPYLENE FIBER STABILIZED CLAY

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Prabir K. Kolay

Soft soil stabilization frequently uses cement, lime, fly ash, etc., but very limited studies were conducted on the long-term durability of stabilized soil. The present research work deals with the long-term durability of commercially available soil (i.e., EPK clay) stabilized with ordinary Portland cement and polypropylene fiber using a realistic approach, where the effect can be noticed in each weathering cycle. In the present study, two different tests (i.e., wettingdrying and freezing-thawing) were conducted to analyze the long-term durability of stabilized soil. Cycles of higher temperature followed by rainfall, which generally occurs in southern states of the US, were analyzed by the wetting-drying test; and on the other hand, cycles of freezing temperature followed by normal temperature, which generally occurs in northern states of the US and Canada, were analyzed by the freezing-thawing test. For the mid-continental region where freezing, normal, and higher temperature followed by rainfall are expected to occur, hence both the test method i.e., wetting-drying and freezing-thawing, were suggested. Laboratory experimental investigations were conducted to find the percentage loss of stabilized soil during wetting-drying and freezing-thawing tests, which were used as a durability indicator for cement and cement-fiber stabilized soil. Stabilized samples were subjected to harsh environmental conditions in a laboratory set up, and their deterioration was observed and studied after each

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wetting-drying and freezing-thawing cycle. In the real world, stabilized soil encounters seasonal cycles of monsoon and summer in long run of its service life which was simulated in rapid weathering cycles in laboratory setup. EPK clay samples were stabilized with different percentages of cement, and a mix of cement-fiber combination and were subjected to 12 cycles of wetting-drying and freezing-thawing cycles separately to determine the percentage loss of soil in accordance with the ASTM standards. Finally, based on percentage loss of soil of those stabilized samples which survived up to 12 cycles of weathering action, the optimum content of stabilizing agent was determined for wetting-drying and freezing-thawing tests. Results of wetting-drying tests indicate that EPK clay stabilized with ordinary Portland cement and fiber combination survived up to 12 cycles, but only 10% cement $+$ 0.5% fiber was durable against wetting-drying based on percentage loss. For all the samples stabilized with 10% cement $+0.5\%$ fiber combination, the percentage loss of soil when subjected to durability test was less than 7%, which satisfy the Portland Cement Association's (PCAs) durability specification. The results of freezing-thawing tests indicate that the EPK clay stabilized with 10% cement, 5% cement + 0.5% fiber, and 10% cement $+ 0.5%$ fiber survived up to 12 cycles and were durable against freezingthawing based on percentage loss of soil i.e., less than 7% which satisfy the Portland Cement Association's durability specification.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The concept of soil stabilization has been established since long before when the shortage of aggregate and resource compelled people to think of an alternative way to stabilize the poor construction site. History begins with the chemical stabilization of soil when Mesopotamians and Romans improved the load carrying capacity of pathways by mixing the underneath soil with pulverized limestone (Ellaby, 2010). In the modern era, as the demand for soil stabilization increases, different techniques have been invented. Mechanical, hydraulic, chemical and reinforcement inclusion are some common methods that are widely used throughout the modern era for soil stabilization. Chemical stabilization is one of the major and most important methods of soil stabilization. This method can be used along with mechanical, inclusion or hydraulic methods to provide better performance. In chemical soil stabilization methods, soil is mixed with chemicals to alter their properties. Various chemicals like cement, lime, fly ash, bitumen, tar, byproducts, chemical waste or sludge, and blends of these chemicals are used for soil stabilization. Chemicals like aluminum and silicon are used as a filler product to reduce the voids. Silicatealuminates amide is used for strength improvement and water cutoff. Potassium based chemical stabilizer is effective in controlling the swelling potential of expansive soil. Similarly, sodium hydroxide improves the strength, optimum moisture content (OMC) and maximum dry density (MDD) (Kazemian et al., 2010). The major advantage of chemical soil stabilization is that setting time and curing time of chemically stabilized soil can be controlled easily. Also, chemical stabilization gives more strength and decreases permeability. Because of this significant advantages, most of the soil stabilization is performed by using chemicals, and thus, chemical

stabilization is also termed as soil stabilization (Kazemian et al., 2010; Zhao et al., 2014; Abid, 2016; Firoozi et al., 2017). Even during the Vietnam war, US military had used cement, and lime to improve the strength of poor soil and support the heavy aircraft traffic (Ellaby, 2010).

Performance measurement of stabilized soil is one of the important aspects. This is normally addressed as a durability test of stabilized soil. Stabilized soil undergoes various deteriorating factors and weathering phenomenon. Sometimes stabilized soil even may encounter flood and drought cycles. Extreme high temperature and rainfall could be another weathering phenomenon. Normally, southern states of the US like Texas, Louisiana, Florida face this phenomenon. Similarly, stabilized soil may encounter cycles of freezing temperature and normal temperature, which is a deteriorating factor. Normally, the northern part of the US like Wyoming, Dakota, Idaho encounter this situation. The temperature of Chicago reached up to 105° F in 2012 and -23° F in 2019. Based on 1971 to 2000 climate data (rssweather.com), January's average temperature of Chicago, IL was 14.3°F and July's average temperature was 83.5°F. Similarly, the average temperature of Williston, North Dakota in January was -3.3°F and in July was 83.4°F. The average temperature of Houston, Texas in the month of January was 41.2°F and July was 93.6°F. Average precipitation of Houston in June was 5.35 inches. From this data, it can be observed that cycles of lower temperature and higher temperature followed by rainfall occur in real world phenomena. Similar weathering phenomenon can be expected multiple times in the long run of stabilized soil. In general, every part of the United States encounters seasonal cycles of higher temperature and rainfall during summer and cycles of freezing temperature and normal temperature during winter, which can be simulated as deteriorating factors. Durability mainly depends on the type of chemical stabilizer, the quantity of stabilizer, nature of weathering phenomenon and number of deteriorating cycles. To represent

the different environmental conditions, stabilized soil is also subjected to different harsh condition during the test. Finally, durability is measured based on dielectric value, pulse velocity, percentage loss of soil mass, and unconfined compressive strength before and after the weathering cycles.

1.2 Scope

The present study investigates the long-term durability of EPK clay stabilized with ordinary Portland cement, and polypropylene fiber. EPK clay was stabilized with 5% and 10% ordinary Portland cement by dry weight of clay in combination with 0.5% polypropylene fiber. In total, five different combinations of EPK clay were subjected to two different durability tests. Three replicated Proctor samples were prepared at OMC (Optimum Moisture Content) for each combination resulting in a total of 30 samples. Commercially available EPK clay, ordinary Portland cement, and 0.25 inch (6 mm) long polypropylene fiber were used in this study. Physical properties of EPK clay was determined by specific gravity test, hydrometer test, Atterberg limit test, and miniature Proctor compaction test. Maximum Dry Density (MDD) and Optimum Moisture Content (OMC) for each combination were determined. X-Ray diffraction (XRD) was carried out for original EPK clay, and EPK clay mixed with 5% and 10% ordinary Portland cement. Also, Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM) and Energy Dispersive X-Ray Analysis (EDAX) were conducted for original EPK clay, and EPK clay mixed with 5% and 10% ordinary Portland cement. Wetting-Drying and Freezing-Thawing were two different tests used for the evaluation of the durability of stabilized soil. For both tests, 12 cycles of weathering action were simulated under laboratory control setup. After the durability test, a compressive strength test was carried out on survived samples.

1.3 Thesis Organization

The present work is organized into five different chapters.

Chapter 1 briefly describes the background of soil stabilization, need for soil stabilization and durability test. This chapter also includes the scope of this research work and organization of work.

Chapter 2 presents the past work conducted to stabilize the soil using different types of chemical or stabilizer. Mainly, this chapters presents the literature review of different type of durability test.

Chapter 3 discuss different types of material used for research purpose and their characterization along with the testing procedure used for durability test. This chapter also contains the various durability criteria used to analyze the result of the durability test.

Chapter 4 presents the results of soil characterization, XRD test, SEM/EDAX test, Wetting-Drying test, Freezing-Thawing test, and the discussion of result.

Chapter 5 discuss about the conclusion of this research, summarized the finding and propose the recommendation for future work of the durability test.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 General

Many studies were conducted about the durability of different types of stabilized soil and various methods of durability measurement are in practice. Some studies compared between the different types of durability measurement which are in practice. The type of method depends on the importance of projects, time, resource and economic conditions. "ASTM D4609 Standard Guide for Evaluating Effectiveness of Chemicals for Soil Stabilization" suggests the durability of stabilized soil based on Unconfined Compressive Strength (UCS). ASTM D 4609 recommends that an increase in UCS of 50 psi or more, measured after 7 days of curing due to chemical treatment to be considered effective as a stabilizing agent. However, wetting-drying and freezing-thawing are most realistic but are time-consuming methods. Freeze-thaw tests should be conducted in areas that are subject to freezing conditions, such as cold regions, while wettingdrying cycles should be conducted in all geographic areas (Zhang & Tao, 2006). When pores filled with water in stabilized soil formed ice during freezing, the volume increased and resulted in microcracks due to tensile stress around soil particles (Shang et al., 2008). Different terms and parameters were established by various authors to represent the durability test result. Kamei et al. (2013) represent the durability test results in terms of *durability index* which is defined as the ratio of ultimate compressive strength of specimen after the desired number of weathering cycles to the ultimate compressive strength of an identical specimen subjected to only 28 days curing without weathering effect. Many studies were conducted on the durability test of soil stabilized with various combinations of cement, lime, fly ash, recycled waste, fiber, bitumen, rice husk, and gypsum.

2.2 Effect of chemical stabilization on compaction of soil

Gupta and Kumar (2016) suggested that the maximum dry density (MDD) of cement stabilized soil slightly decreases from 1.78 to 1.64 gm/cc and optimum moisture content (OMC) increases slightly. Also, the effect of cement and fiber along with the curing period significantly increases the properties of cement stabilized and fiber reinforced clay-pond ash mixes. Cement decreases the maximum dry density and increases the optimum moisture content slightly. From the plasticity viewpoint, 6-8% of cement is economical and recommended for soil stabilization (Basha et al., 2005). Muhunthan and Sariosseiri (2008) studied the change in Atterberg limit of stabilized soil using different cement content as a stabilizing agent, and the authors suggested that liquid limit increases initially and decreases with the addition of cement content, while plastic limit remains constant. So, plasticity index increases initially with the increase of cement content and then decreases on further increase in cement content. Percent of cement content depends on the type of soil. Increase in cement content increases the OMC. With the increase in OMC, MDD initially decreases and then increases with further increase in cement content. Muhunthan and Sariosseiri (2008) also suggested that cement-treated soil possess more brittleness compared to non-treated samples. Due to the effect of freezing-thawing cycles, void ratio increases for the dense soil and decreases for the loose soil, whereas hydraulic permeability increases due to developed cracks and void when ice thaws (Vermeer et al., 2006).

2.3 Durability test of stabilized soil

2.3.1 Lime Treated Soil

Dempsey and Thompson (1968), Kelley (1977), Little (1998), Khattab et al. (2007), Yilmaz et al. (2015) studied the effect of lime on long-term performance of stabilized soil. Lime treatment for the stabilization of soil has been used since long ago to improve the strength and

durability of stabilized soil and decrease the swelling potential of expansive soil (Metcalf, 1977; Little, 1995; Bell, 1996; Little, 1996; Khattab et al., 2000; Lopez Lara & Castano, 2001). Very limited studies were conducted in the long-term durability of stabilized soil subjected to deterioration due to environmental factors such as wetting-drying and freezing-thawing cycles on engineering properties of soils (Khattab et al., 2007). Little (1998) suggested that soil stabilized with lime increases the structural properties of soil based on dielectric value and Unconfined Compressive Strength (UCS). Little (1998) suggests that for lime treated soil, resilient properties increase significantly compared over untreated soil. Dempsey et al. (1968) evaluated the durability properties of lime treated four Illinois representative soils. Volume change and strength loss due to freezing-thawing were evaluated and found that average loss of strength for lime treated soil with 48 hours curing is 60 kPa per cycle. Yildiz and Soganci (2012) studied the effect of freezing-thawing on permeability and strength of lime treated soil. Two types of soil, high plasticity clay and low plasticity clay, were treated with 6% lime. Yildiz and Soganci (2012) conducted the permeability test after three freezing-thawing cycles and result showed that the increase of hydraulic conductivity due to the freezing-thawing cycle. After the lime stabilization, unconfined compressive strength of high plasticity clay increased by 15 times, while the unconfined compressive strength of low plasticity clay increased by just three times. Thus, lime stabilization is more suitable for high plasticity clay rather than on low plasticity clay (Yildiz & Soganci, 2012). The addition of lime reduces the plasticity index of high plastic soil. When lime treated soil is long term exposed to water, detrimental effects of exposed conditions are not significant, and the ratio of weathered to unexposed unconfined compressive strength is high, approximately 0.7 to 0.85 (Thompson, 1970; Little, 1998; Dumbleton, 1962). This confirms the durability of lime treated soil. Yilmaz et al. (2015) studied the clay soil stabilization

using Green Bayburt Stone (GBS) and lime subjected to freezing-thawing cycles. GBS is a waste material consisting of 68% SiO₂ and have pozzolanic property. Yilmaz et al. (2015) found that with the addition of GBS without lime does not have significant change in strength before subjecting to freezing-thawing, but with the addition of 6% lime in various content of GBS, compressive strength increases more than 1000%. Also, strength of soil stabilized with GBS and lime subjected to freezing-thawing was not decreased significantly due to the effect of freezingthawing with respect to natural properties of soil. Yilmaz et al. (2015) conclude that GBS along with lime can be used for soil stabilization. Khattab et al. (2007) studied the long-term stability of lime treated bentonite soil. Wetting-drying and freezing-thawing both weathering actions were subjected to evaluate the long-term characteristics. Before applying wetting-drying action, Khattab et al. (2007) predried the soil sample at 60° C to represent the environmental effect of an arid region on swelling and strength behavior. Khattab et al. (2007) found that 4% lime is optimum for the stability of bentonite soil; further addition of lime reduces the swelling potential. The effect of predried was significantly seen on initial shrinkage. Lime treatment induces the change in pore size distribution, pore volume increases, resulting in an increase in permeability of clay soil. Khattab et al. (2007) also investigate that lime stabilized soil should not be exposed to drying too early after the curing. Lime treated soil should be protected from heat and direct sunlight during hot seasons to have a maximum efficiency of lime treatment. Puppala and Pedarla (2017) research results suggested that, for both shallow and deep expansive soil in Texas, 8% lime treated soil gave the better performance based on the vertical movement of stabilized soil.

2.3.2 Cement Treated Soil

A lot of research and studies were conducted on the performance of soil stabilized with cement as a stabilizer agent. Ahmed and Ugai (2011), Shihata and Baghdadi (2001), Kamei et al. (2013), Zhang and Tao (2008), Kelley (1977) suggested cement as good stabilizing chemicals for soil. Zaman et al. (1992) investigated the effect of wetting-drying and freezing-thawing cycle for the durability cement kiln dust stabilized samples and found that significant decrease in strength due to wetting-drying and freezing-cycles. Shihata and Baghdadi (2001) studied the long-term strength and durability of soil containing high sulfate. Sulfate resistant Portland cement was used as stabilizing chemical and durability was evaluated based on wetting-drying and freezingthawing weathering action. To study the effect of long-term exposure on the wetting-drying durability, specimens were immersed in saline water for different duration 7, 90, 180, 270 and 360 days before running 12 wetting-drying cycles. For long term durability against freezingthawing, immersion period was 7, 270, and 360 days. Immersion period before wetting-drying and freezing-thawing cycles were referred as "*Exposure Period*". Shihata and Baghdadi (2001) found that if the amount of finer particles (passing through 200 mm sieve) is greater, it exhibits higher mass loss percentage in wetting-drying test whereas coarse gradation soil (smaller amount of fines) has higher mass loss percentage in the freezing-thawing test. In wetting-drying cycle, residual strength increases with the increase in exposure period up to 90 days exposure period, after which it decreases rapidly for up to 270 days exposure. But in freezing-thawing test, with the increase in weathering cycle, residual strength tends to decrease continuously from the beginning. The strength of 270 days considered as long-term strength and unbrushed residual strength was higher than brushed residual strength. In freezing-thawing action, there was a larger drop in long-term residual strength and the ratio of long-term strength (at 270 days exposure) to

the residual strength at 7 days was smaller in freezing-thawing test than in wetting-drying test. Research showed that there is a good correlation between residual strength obtained from two different durability test ($R^2 = 0.884$). Zhang and Tao (2008) studied the durability of cement stabilized low plasticity soils using various percentage of Type I Portland cement (2.5, 4.5, 6.5, 8.5, 10.5, and 12.5%). Zhang and Tao (2008) compared the durability of wetting-drying action with durability measurement by tube suction test method. Sample with molding moisture content of OMC or on wet side took longer time to reach maximum dielectric value than those molded on dry side. Maximum dielectric value decreases with increasing cement content and with increase in moisture content dielectric value increases. In the Unconfined Compressive Strength (UCS) test of Tube Suction (TS) sample, UCS increase with increase in cement content at lower moisture content. There is correlation between the UCS of TS sample and dielectric value. UCS of TS sample generally decreased with increase in maximum dielectric value. Due to long-term hydration during wetting-drying cycle, strength of cementitious materials increases (Toutanji et al., 2004; Rahman, 2007; Yaykiran, 2008).

2.3.3 Cement, Lime and Gypsum treated soil

Ahmed and Ugai (2011) have evaluated the effect of wetting-drying and freezingthawing on sandy soil, and sand silt stabilized with recycled gypsum and cement. Recycled gypsum content of 0, 5, 10, and 20% and cement of 0, 1.25, 2.5, and 5% by weight of soil were used for the research purpose. Ahmed and Ugai (2011) studied the effect of chemical stabilization on compressive strength, soil-gypsum cement loss and volume change. The compressive strength increases with the increase of the recycled gypsum content because of cementation or hardening of soil particle. Cohesion strength developed between particle and addition of cement improves the performance of soil-gypsum, whereas strength decreased with

increase in number of wetting-drying and freezing-thawing cycles. Specimen stabilized with only gypsum without solidification agent, cement, is not durable against freeze-thaw and wet-dry action for compressive strength test due to solubility of gypsum. Addition of cement decreases the weathering effect on behavior of strength. In soil-gypsum cement loss test, most of the specimen stabilized with only gypsum without cement content, collapsed after first weathering cycle except the one with 20% gypsum which collapses after fourth cycles and trend of weight loss is same for both wetting-drying and freezing-thawing process. With increase in cement content, soil loss weight decreases. Ahmed and Ugai (2011) suggested that more than 2.5% of cement is adequate to resist effect of wetting-drying and freezing-thawing weathering cycle on soil that is stabilized with gypsum. Soil-gypsum-cement has good durability for volumetric change. Further, Kamei et al. (2013) studied the durability of very soft clay stabilized with recycled basanite and furnace cement mixture. Basanite and gypsum both have same mineralogical composition- calcium sulfate. Type B furnace slag cement of 5 and 10% along with recycled basanite soil ratio (B/S) of 0, 10, 20 and 40 were used to investigate the durability of stabilized kaolin clay (65% clay and 35% silt). Kamei et. al. (2013) evaluate the durability by measuring UCS, durability index and volume change of sample subjected to wetting-drying weathering action. JHS 2001 specification was used for wetting-drying test. Research found that with increase in basanite content, UCS increases and strength decrease with increase in wettingdrying cycles. Wetting-drying cycles have no significant effect on volume change. These two findings are similar to the result obtained by Ahmed and Ugai (2011). Kamai et al. (2013) also suggested that recycled basanite achieve the acceptable durability of soft clay when used with certain cement content. Earlier wetting-drying cycle are harmful to durability than later cycle. Ahmed et al. (2014) studied the stability of clay soil with high plasticity stabilized with recycled

gypsum, cement, and lime. Ahmed et al. (2014) studied the effect of soaking condition in wet environment on the durability of soft soil treated with recycled gypsum. Cement and lime were used as solidification agent and reduced the solubility of gypsum on wet environment. Ahmed et. al. (2014) also found that effect of soaking on volume change is not significant. Ahmed and Ugai (2011) also found that increase in gypsum-cement content increases the durability whereas there is no significant improvement in durability with gypsum-lime content. Based on stability and durability, gypsum-cement admixture with 22.5% and ratio of 1:1 to 2:1 is suitable to achieve optimum durability. Cement was recommended as solidification agent as it improves the durability of soft clay stabilized with gypsum and resists the solubility of gypsum.

2.3.4 Cement, Lime and Fly-Ash treated soil

Parker (2008) studied the durability of silty sand and lean clay stabilized with four different types of chemical stabilizer- class C fly ash, lime, Portland cement, and lime-fly ash ratio (1:4). Freezing-thawing test was done for cement treated sample, vacuum saturation test was done for specimen treated with fly ash, lime and lime-fly ash. To achieve the same 7 days UCS, sand requires 4.4 times more fly ash than cement, 3.6 times more lime-fly ash than cement and 6 times more lime than cement whereas clay requires 10 times more fly ash than cement, 7.5 times more lime-fly ash than cement and 1.8 times more lime than cement. Samples with UCS less than 200 psi were not survived for freezing-thawing cycle. After both freezing-thawing and vacuum saturation test, sand specimen treated with lime-fly ash had significantly higher UCS and retained UCS than the specimen treated with Class C fly ash, lime or cement whereas clay specimen treated with lime-fly ash and class C fly ash had significantly higher UCS than treated with others. In tube suction method, lime-fly ash and cement reduce the dielectric value of sand to marginal rating while no other stabilizer reduces the moisture susceptible of clay to a

satisfactory level. Theivakularatnam and Gnanendran (2015) have studied the durability performance of granular soil subjected to wetting-drying and freezing-thawing. Theivakularatnam and Gnanendran (2015) used cement-fly ash combination in the ratio of 3:1 to stabilize the soil. Results showed that when the cement-fly ash binder content was increased from 1.5% to 3%, there was significant UCS values even after 12 cycles of wetting-drying. This result indicates the durability performance of cement-fly ash mix. Samples subjected to wettingdrying action had heavily deterioration when compared to freezing-thawing cycle. Parsons and Milburn (2003) studied the behavior of soil stabilized with lime, cement, fly ash, enzymatic and combination of them. When stabilized soil was subjected to wetting-drying cycle with saline water, there was a reduction in compressive strength due to leaching of calcium. Parsons and Milburn (2003) found that combination of lime-cement results the improvement in performance for different types of soil while fly ash treated soil has also significant improvement in performance. Result from the test showed that for many soils, combination of stabilization results in economic and durable construction of subgrade. Fly-ash treated soil has less percentage of soil loss as compared to lime treated soil when subjected to freezing-thawing. Lime is suitable for fine-grained soil and cement for coarse-grained soil whereas enzymatic soil does not significantly improve the soil properties (Parsons & Milburn, 2003). Bin-Shafique et al. (2010) stabilize both low plastic clay and high plastic clay using different percentage of fly ash and conducted durability test. Research suggested that wetting-drying cycles had insignificant deteriorating effect on soil stabilized with fly ash where as freezing-thawing cycles has some deteriorating effect on stabilized soil. Strength loss up to 40% however strength significantly increased 3 times higher than unstabilized soil and no change in plasticity due to the effect of freezing-thawing. Swelling potential was also increased by the effect of freezing-thawing cycle.

Vertical swell increased rapidly initially and then slow down with the increase in freezingthawing cycle. Vertical swelling index of stabilized expansive increased by 1% for 10% and 20% fly ash content, and 2 to 3% for unstabilized soil and 5% fly ash stabilized soil. Fly ash stabilization increased the UCS value of soil by 3 to 4 times, reduce the plasticity by 50%, and swell potential by 75%. There was no any significant effect on UCS, plasticity and swell potential due to wetting-drying cycle with tap water however wetting-drying cycle with saline water reduce the plasticity, slight decrease the swell potential but no any change in UCS (Bin-Shafique et al., 2010).

2.3.5 Lime and Fiber Treated Soil

Puppala and Pedarla (2017) studied the improvement technique for Texas expansive soil for both shallow and deep soil and found that soil treated with 8% lime $+0.15\%$ fiber gave the better performance based on the vertical movement of stabilized soil. Muntohar et al. (2012) conducted research on engineering behavior of silty soil. Muntohar et al. (2012) used lime, rice husk ash and polypropylene plastic waste material as stabilizing agent and performance were measured based on UCS test, tensile test and California bearing ratio test. Durability was evaluated by subjecting the stabilized samples to wetting-drying action. Results showed that soil stabilized with lime and rice husk ash mixture and reinforced with plastic fiber was very effective to improve the engineering property of fine-grained clayey soil. Lime and rice husk ash increase the compressive strength by 4 and 5 times, respectively. The addition of fiber increases the tensile strength. Shear strength of soil was increased by the addition of lime and rice husk ash. Cohesion of fiber reinforced lime and rice husk ash increased initially and then decreased with fiber content. Optimum value was found at fiber content of 0.4% based on cohesion between fiber and soil. Fiber reduced the brittleness behavior of stabilized soil. Based on

California Bearing Ratio (CBR), shear strength, failure characteristic, optimum amount of fiber in a mix of soil, lime, and rice husk ash was found to be 0.4% to 0.8% of dry mass. Lime stabilized soil was not resistant to wetting-drying cycle, but the soil stabilized with combination of rice husk ash and lime showed more resistant to durability than lime stabilized. Lime and rice husk ash treated sample loses its strength after 3 cycles of wetting-drying and then a slight increase in strength on further cycle. Longer fiber will be more difficult to uniformly distribute in the soil–fiber interface and resulted a slippage plane in the soil. Thus, it was suggested to limit the fiber length to be less than 50 mm in length (Al-Refei, 1991; Santoni et al., 2001; Jiang et al., 2010).

2.3.6 Cement and Fiber Treated Soil

Yang et al. (2017) found out that the combination of polypropylene fiber and cement increases the early UCS value of loess soil by 3.65 MPa to 5.99 MPa. Addition of cement results for brittle fracture which is adjusted by adding fiber content, fiber change the mode of fracture from brittle to plastic. Yang et al. (2017) suggested that optimum fiber content for reinforcing the loess soil was 0.3% to 0.45 % and optimum length of fiber was 12 mm. The fiber improves the brittle failure pattern. Ghazavi and Roustaie (2010) studied the effect of freezing-thawing cycle on fiber reinforcement kaolinite clay. Research found that with the increase in number of cycles, UCS value decreased for both unreinforced and reinforced soil sample but with the addition of 3% fiber increased the UCS value by 160% for polypropylene fiber stabilized soil before weathering action, 60% for polypropylene fiber reinforced soil after freezing-thawing cycle, 7% for steel fiber reinforced soil. Compared to steel fiber, polypropylene fiber was good to resist the change in height during the freezing-thawing cycle. Considering strength and height, most of the changes occur during the first 7 cycles and after that, the changes were not much significant.

Previous studies have indicated that the fiber content was the most controlling strength parameter (Consoli et al., 2002; Gaspard et al., 2003; Muntohar, 2009).

2.4 Summary of Literature Review

- Gypsum or lime alone cannot give long-term durability for soil, cement or fly ash is required as a solidification agent.
- Based on different available researches, the optimum content of lime for soil stabilization is 4% to 6%.
- Lime stabilization is more suitable for high plasticity clay rather than low plasticity clay. The addition of lime reduces the plasticity index of high plastic soil.
- The addition of fiber increases the tensile and shear strength and reduce the brittleness behavior of stabilized soil.
- Longer fiber length may reduce the durability of stabilized soil by resulting in slippage plane failure.
- \blacklozenge Fiber length should not be greater than 2 inches (50 mm).
- Polypropylene fiber can achieve better durability performance than steel fiber.
- The required percentage of fiber for stabilization depends on type of soil, normally 0.15% to 3% is used in combination with cement.
- The addition of cement results the brittleness of stabilized soil which can be adjusted by adding certain percentage of fiber.
- Rather than using a single chemical stabilizer, a combination of stabilizing agent might be durable and economical to stabilize the soil.

CHAPTER 3

MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

A durability test was performed on commercially available EPK clay soil stabilized with ordinary Portland cement, and polypropylene fiber. The soil was classified by both the Unified Soil Classification System (USCS) and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) soil classification system. Different combination of cement and fiber was used to stabilize the EPK clay soil. To evaluate the long-term performance in natural conditions seems impractical as it takes a very long time to get the result. So, in this research long-term durability is evaluated based on laboratory setup of wetting-drying and freezing-thawing test methods. These methods are completed based on the certain specification and following standard codes where the natural weathering action, cycles of higher temperature and rainfall during summer, and cycles of freezing temperature and normal temperature during winters are simulated in rapid way. For compaction ASTM D698 standard test method was used. Moisture content was determined based on ASTM D2216 standard. ASTM D559 and ASTM D560 were the standard test methods used for wetting-drying and freezing-thawing test, respectively. Portland Cement Association (PCA) specification was used to evaluate the longterm performance of stabilized soil. Test results were also compared to the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) durability requirement, American Concrete Institute (ACI) committee durability requirement and Highway Research Board 1961 requirements.

3.2 Materials

Primarily three different types of materials were used for research purpose. EPK clay soil, cement, fiber and their combination were tested at different laboratory conditions.

3.2.1 Soil Type

Commercially available EPK clay type of soil was used for sample preparation as shown in [Figure 3-1.](#page-32-1) The major composition of EPK clay was kaolinite. It contains 97% of Kaolinite (Al2O3, 2SiO2, 2H2O) as per suppliers' information. EPK clay contains ceramic kaolin which offers good forming characteristic and high green strength. This soil is supplied by Edgar Minerals Inc., Edgar, FL. EPK clay passed 100% from No. 200 sieve (i.e., 0.075 mm). As per USCS, EPK clay was classified as High Compressible Silty soil (MH). Based on AASHTO classification system, EPK clay falls under A-7-5 soil classification system. [Table 3-1](#page-33-1) and [Table](#page-33-2) [3-2](#page-33-2) shows the chemical properties and physical properties of EPK clay, respectively.

Figure 3-1: EPK Clay sample

Chemical Composition	Percent $(\%)$
SiO ₂	45.73
Al_2O_3	37.36
Fe ₂ O ₃	0.79
TiO ₂	0.37
P ₂ O ₅	0.236
CaO	0.18
MgO	0.098
Na ₂ O	0.059
K ₂ O	0.33
Loss on Ignition (LOI)	13.91

Table 3-1: Chemical analysis of EPK clay (Edgar Minerals Inc.)

Table 3-2: Physical properties of EPK clay (Edgar Minerals Inc.)

Specific Surface Area (m^2/g)	28.52
Median Size of Particle (Microns)	1.36
Color	White fired color

3.2.2 Cement

Commercially available Quikrete Portland cement, Type I/II of specific gravity 3.14 was used as solidification agent for soil stabilization. Specific gravity of cement was determined at a laboratory using Ultra Pycnometer (Gas pycnometer). Cement was available in gray-brown powder form as shown in [Figure 3-2.](#page-34-1) The cement meets the ASTM C 150 and Portland cement requirement.

Figure 3-2: Ordinary Portland Cement

3.2.3 Fiber

Polypropylene fiber was used in combination with soil and cement for stabilization purpose. The length of fiber was 0.25 inches (6 mm). It come in lump form as shown in [Figure](#page-34-2) [3-3,](#page-34-2) so it need to be separated before mixing with soil. Uniform distribution of fiber in soilcement mix determines the efficiency of combination. For better uniform distribution, fiber needs to be separated in each piece from the lump. Specific gravity of fiber was 0.93, determined by using Ultra Pycnometer (Gas pycnometer). The properties of polypropylene fiber are shown in [Table 3-3.](#page-35-2)

Figure 3-3: Polypropylene fiber

Material	Polypropylene fiber
Form	Monofilament Fiber
Specific gravity	0.93
Tensile strength, ksi (MPa)	83-96 (570-660)
Length in. (mm)	1/4(6)
Color	White
Acid/Alkali Resistance	Excellent
Absorption	Nil
Compliance	ASTM C-1116

Table 3-3: Properties of polypropylene fiber (Dahal, 2016)

3.2.4 Soil-Cement-Fiber Mixture

EPK clay was mixed with two different proportion of cement and fiber to prepare the sample. Ordinary Portland Cement 5% and polypropylene fiber 0.5% were mixed with EPK clay to prepare one set of samples. For another set of samples, 10% cement in combination with 0.5% fiber was mixed with EPK clay. In total, five sets of samples, EPK clay, EPK clay $+ 5\%$ cement only, EPK clay + 5% cement + 0.5% fiber, EPK clay + 10% cement only, and EPK clay + 10% cement + 0.5% fiber were prepared and subjected to wetting-drying and freezing-thawing test.

3.3 Testing and Characterization of Materials

Various characterization of testing material- soil and soil-cement-fiber mixture was conducted. Soil classification, particle size distribution, and Atterberg limit were performed in original EPK clay. Based on Atterberg limit value, soil classification was done. Specific gravity test, miniature Proctor test, SEM/EDAX, and X-Ray diffraction were conducted on original soil and combination of clay, cement, and fiber at various percentage.
3.3.1 Moisture Content

Moisture content also termed as water content, of specimens was determined using ASTM D2216 'Test Method for Laboratory determination of water (moisture) content of soil and rock by mass'. For the mass of less than 200 gm, mass is measured to nearest 0.01 gm. If the mass of the specimen is over 200 gm, mass is measured to nearest 0.1 gm. Mass must be dried by at uniform temperature of $110 \pm 5^{\circ}$ C for at least 16 hours. However, the time required to oven dried depends upon the size of the specimen and oven type. If the size of specimen is large, mass must be dried until constant mass. Similarly, in this research purpose, to determine the ovendried mass of standard proctor specimens, they were dried until the constant mass. Proctor samples required more than 72 hours for constant oven-dried mass.

Moisture content is determined by the following relation:

$$
MC\left(\frac{9}{0}\right) = \frac{MM-OD}{OD} \cdot 100
$$

Where,

MC = Moisture Content of specimen, %

 $MM = Moist Mass of the specimen (original mass)$

OD = Oven Dried Mass of specimen

3.3.2 Particle Size Distribution

EPK clay passes more than 90% from No. 200 sieve so hydrometer analysis was required for particle size distribution. Hydrometer analysis was done based on ASTM D422 'Standard test method for particle size analysis of soil'. ASTM 152H hydrometer, shown in [Figure 3-4,](#page-37-0) was

used for particle size analysis. Hydrometer analysis is based on Strokes' law assuming spherical soil particle.

Figure 3-4: ASTM 152H Hydrometer

Due to the charged clay particles, floc may form during hydrometer analysis that results in the false reading. To neutralize the charge on particle, hexametaphosphate is used as a dispersing agent. Hexametaphosphate (NaPO₃) is commonly known as Calgon. The general procedure for hydrometer analysis is as described below:

- Weight out 50 gm of oven dried EPK clay passing thoroughly No. 200 US Sieve. Soil is mixed with 125 ml of 4% Calgon solution and keep it for at least 16 hours.
- Prepare the control jar by adding 125 ml of 4% Calgon, stir the solution thoroughly and add enough distilled water to make it 1000 ml. This can be done by adding 5 gm of Calgon in 1000ml distilled water. Place hydrometer in control jar and take reading for zero correction.
- After 16 hours of soaking, transfer the soil water mix to mechanical mixture [Figure 3-5,](#page-38-0) add sufficient water to make it $2/3rd$ full and mix for about 1 minute.
- Transfer all solution to sedimentation cylinder and add sufficient distilled water up to 1000 ml mark.
- Cap the sedimentation cylinder with a rubber stopper and agitate (turn upside down) the cylinder for 1 minute.

 Put the sedimentation cylinder and control jar together in firm surface and starts the stopwatch quickly [Figure 3-6.](#page-38-1)

Figure 3-5: Mechanical Mixture

Figure 3-6: Sedimentation cylinder and Control jar

- Insert the hydrometer in sedimentation cylinder and take upper meniscus reading at the cumulative time of 2 min., 5 min., 15 min., 30 min., 60 min., 250 min., 480 min., and 1440 min. After the reading, take out hydrometer from the sedimentation tank and put it into the control jar.
- Make appropriate correction for meniscus reading, zero correction (dispersing agent), specific gravity and temperature.
- Calculate the percent finer based on the following relation:

$$
Rcp = (R + MC - ZC + TC) * GC
$$

\n
$$
Rcl = R + MC
$$

\n
$$
L = 16.03 - 0.1641 * Rcl
$$

\n
$$
D = K * \sqrt{\frac{L}{T}}
$$

Percent finer = Rcp Initial Weight ∗ 100 %

Where,

L is in cm and T is in minutes

Rcp = Corrected hydrometer reading

Rcl = Corrected hydrometer reading for length

 $L =$ Distance from the surface of suspension to the level at which density is measured, cm

(effective depth)

 $D =$ Diameter of particle

K= Constant depending upon temperature and specific gravity

3.3.3 Atterberg Limit Test

Atterberg limits are the measurement of the critical water content of fine-grained cohesive soil. Solid, semi-solid, plastic and liquid are the four basic stages of soil that depend on water content. These four different stages of soil are separated by boundary water content called Atterberg Limits. Atterberg limits are also called as consistency limits. Atterberg limit test was carried to determine the Liquid Limit (LL) and Plastic Limit (PL) of EPK clay. LL and PL are in turn used to calculate Plasticity Index (PI). Plasticity index is very important geotechnical property of soil that is used in various engineering calculation and classification. The difference

between liquid limit and plastic limit is the plasticity index of soil, which is the key tool to measure the plasticity of soil.

 $PI = LL - PL$

Liquid Limit is the critical water content at which behavior of plastic state soil changes to liquid state whereas plastic limit is that water content at which soil behavior changes from semisolid state to plastic state. Shrinkage limit is also Atterberg limit, but this is not significant as liquid limit and plastic limit.

Figure 3-7: Casagrande's apparatus

Figure 3-8: Cone Penetrometer

For soil classification, Atterberg limit test was carried in according to ASTM D4318 'Standard test method for liquid limit, plastic limit and plastic index of soil' using Casagrande's apparatus [Figure 3-7.](#page-40-0) Later, to determine the relationship of MDD, OMC and cement content with plastic limit, fall cone test method was used. Cone penetrometer, [Figure 3-8](#page-40-1) was used to determine liquid limit to find out the relationships.

Based on plasticity index value, plasticity of soil can be classified as:

 $PI = 0$, Non-Plastic soil

PI < 7, Slightly Plastic soil

 $PI = (7 – 17)$, Medium Plastic soil

PI > 17, Highly Plastic soil

3.3.4 Specific Gravity

Specific gravity of original EPK clay, Cement, Fiber and their combination at two different proportion was determined by gas pycnometer method. The specimen should be oven dried before specific gravity test. Ultrapyc 1200e gas pycnometer was used for specific gravity measurement [Figure 3-9.](#page-41-0) Quantachrome Instruments manufacture the Ultrapyc 1200e which was based on ASTM D5550 'Standard test method for specific gravity of soil solids by gas pycnometer'. Oven dried EPK clay, cement, fiber, clay + 5% cement, clay + 10% cement, clay + 5% cement + 0.5% fiber and clay + 10% cement + 0.5% fiber samples were prepared, and specific gravity test was carried out.

Figure 3-9: Ultrapyc 1200e gas pycnometer

Ultra-pycnometer was initially calibrated at target pressure of 15 psi. So, for better result target pressure should be between 15 psi to 20 psi. There should minimum of 6 runs for the most accurate result (ultra-pycnometer manual). Three sizes: large, medium and small are available for test. Small sample holder was used with their adapter for the test. In Main menu, there are nine different types of operation, in which we need basically two types- RUN menu and CALIBRATE menu. Calibration menu is initially used to calibrate with specific sample holder.

Pycnometer was already calibrated for small sample holder which was used for test. So, only

RUN menu was operated for our test, which in general consists of following submenu.

RUN MENU

- 1. Run parameter
	- i. Target pressure, ii. Equilibrium Time, iii. Purge, iv. Run Mode, v. Cell Size,

vi. print/send report, vii. Set pressure unit, viii. Set Gas type

2. Sample Parameter

Manual entry $>$ sample weight gm $>$ sample ID

3. Start

Press REV to review the result, CLEAR for main menu

Step by Step procedure to calculate sample density and volume using Ultapyc 1200e

- 1. Setting RUN PARAMETER
	- ➢ Main Menu > 1-Run > 1- Run parameter > 1- Target Pressure > **15 psi** > enter (to accept new value)/clear to delete error entry
	- ➢ Main Menu > 1-Run > 1- Run parameter >2- Equilibrium Time > **Auto Mode** (enter 0) > enter/clear (Auto mode take 0 as equilibration time and once the pressure level is stable, it records the pressure value. If pressure is unstable, error will be displayed)
- \triangleright Main Menu > 1-Run > 1- Run parameter > 3- Purge > 1- Flow > 1 min. > Enter
- ➢ Main Menu > 1-Run > 1- Run parameter > 4- Run Mode > 2 Multi-Run > **6** (multiple run mode) > enter > 6 (runs to average) > 0.005 (run percent deviation) > Enter
- \triangleright Main Menu > 1-Run > 1- Run parameter > 5- Cell Size > 3 (for small cell size) > Enter
- \triangleright Main Menu > 1-Run > 1- Run parameter > 6- print/send report > 2- No
- ➢ Main Menu > 1-Run > 1- Run parameter > 7- set pressure unit > **0-psi** Main Menu > 1 -Run > 1 - Run parameter > 8 - Set gas type $>$ **He**

2. Setting SAMPLE PARAMETER

- ➢ Main Menu > 1-Run > 2- Sample parameter > Manual Entry > **enter weight (gm)** > enter sample id > Enter
- 3. START RUN
	- \triangleright Main Menu > 1-Run > 3- Start

PRINT-to print result

REV- to review the measurement

CLEAR- main menu

➢ REV > Average volume of all measurement will be displayed > REV > **AVERAGE DENSITY**, standard deviation and sample weight will be displayed

When sample weight is displayed, weight can be changed by pressing clear button and

new weight can be assigned. (Low-pressure error condition may occur, press clear and restart the

test)

3.3.5 Miniature Proctor Test

Moisture density relationship was found for five different types of soil, cement and fiber combination soil. EPK clay, clay + 5% cement, clay + 10% cement, clay + 5% cement + 0.5%

fiber and clay $+ 10\%$ cement $+ 0.5\%$ fiber were five different combination for which miniature proctor test was conducted. For one combination, at least five samples must be made to get compaction characteristic curve. Conducting standard Proctor test for five different combinations require large amount of commercial soil which is not economic. To economize the use of commercially available soil, time, and resources miniature proctor tests were conducted instead of the standard Proctor test to get compaction characteristic curve. Miniature proctor test requires only 1/15th volume of soil needed for standard Proctor test. Also, miniature proctor test is very easy to conduct and require very less time. Result of miniature proctor test for EPK clay sample was compared with the standard Proctor test. They were close enough because of which miniature test was followed for all samples. Miniature Proctor test can be used for fine-grained soil with particle size finer than 2 mm (Sridharan & Sivapullaiah, 2005).

The procedure for determining OMC and MDD from miniature Proctor test is mentioned below:

- Weigh and note down the mass of empty mold of miniature Proctor test apparatus
- Weight approximately 200 gm of fine oven dried soil and add expected water content
- Allow it to absorb moisture for sufficient time and then breakdown the particle and mix thoroughly until the soil color is uniform.
- Place the soil in mold to approximately $1/5th$ of its volume and compact by spring hammer, 5 times throughout the surface.
- Similarly, compact the soil to five different layers with five blows in each layer.
- Remove the collar, make the top surface smooth and weight the mass of mold and compacted soil. Top surface projection of soil after removing collar should not be greater than 5 mm (Sridharan & Sivapullaiah, 2005)

30

- Take small quantity of soil from mix and determine the moisture content
- Volume of mold is known; mass of compacted soil can be calculated by deducting mass of empty mold from the mass of mold and soil. Thus, wet density of soil is calculated from the mass of compacted soil and volume using mass, density and volume relationship
- Finally, dry density is calculated from wet density and moisture content relationship.
- Repeat the above procedure for at least five points, two points on dry side and two points on wet side of compaction curve
- Based on the compaction curve, determine OMC and MDD for the soil

Wet Density =
$$
\frac{Compared \ mass \ of \ soil}{Volume \ of \ mold}
$$

Dry Density =
$$
\frac{Wet \ Density}{1 + 0.01 * MC}
$$

Where, $MC = Moisture Content of soil (%)$

Mini compaction test apparatus consists of a base plate, mold, collar plate and spring hammer as shown in [Figure 3-10.](#page-45-0) The internal and external diameter of mold is 1.30 inches and

Figure 3-10: Miniature Compaction Test Apparatus

1.50 inches, respectively. The height of mold is 2.825 inches that give 0.00217 ft^3 of mold volume.

3.3.6 Compressive Strength Test

After 12 cycles of weathering action, compression test was done on survived samples as shown in [Figure 3-11.](#page-46-0) The specimens stabilized with 10% cement, 5% cement $+0.5%$ fiber, and 10% cement + 0.5% fiber were subjected for compression test. Failure load was recorded, final cross-section area was measured, and then compression stress was calculated. The compression test was conducted after 35 days of molding because samples need to be tested for durability test initially and then have to oven dried until constant mass before the compression test.

Figure 3-11: Compression Test

3.3.7 SEM and EDAX Test

Scanning Electron Microscope and Energy Dispersive X-ray Analysis were condcuted in original clay sample and sample mixed with cement and fiber to study the texture and chemical composition of sample. Samples were grinded into powder form and coated with gold/palladium for about 10 minutes before scanning as shown in [Figure 3-12](#page-47-0) and [Figure 3-13.](#page-47-1) Samples were

scanned at magnification factor of 100, 2500, 15000 and 30000 times. For SEM and EDAX, instrument is same but SEM deals with physical morphological aspects like shape and size of grain whereas EDAX deals with chemical composition of materials. Spatial variation in chemical composition, crystalline structure, and orientation of material can be known from the analysis. QuantaTM FEG 450 instrument was used for SEM and EDAX analysis as shown in [Figure 3-14.](#page-47-2)

Figure 3-12: Sample Preparation Figure 3-13: Sample Coating with Au/Pd

Figure 3-14: SEM/EDAX Scanning Instrument

3.3.8 X-Ray Diffraction Test

X-Ray Diffraction Test was used for the identification of unknown crystalline minerals for stabilized soil. Based on phase identification of crystalline minerals, XRD test provides information on unit cell dimension and quantification of the morphology of crystalline compound. Sample was grinded in very fine powder form and spread into the glass surface making the top face of powder sample smooth. Then the sample was mounted into the diffractometer for scanning as shown in [Figure 3-15.](#page-48-0) Scanning was done by using Cu-Kα radiation with 2ϴ ranging from 5 to 90 degree. Rigaku smart lab X-ray diffractometer as shown in [Figure 3-16,](#page-49-0) was used to analyze the mineral composition of EPK clay and clay mixed with different proportion of cement. The XRD data were analyzed with the help of MDI-Jade software.

Figure 3-15: Sample mounted in diffractometer

Figure 3-16: Rigaku XRD Test Instrument

3.4 Durability Test Procedure

Durability test was carried out following ASTM D559 and ASTM D560 standard test procedure. In addition to this, compression test was conducted to the survived samples.

3.4.1 Sample Preparation

- Approximately 5000 gm of soil was prepared in accordance with ASTM D558 Test Method A and mixed with cement confirming the ASTM C150 specification. Initially, soil and cement were dry mixed thoroughly to give a uniform color.
- Enough potable water was added to soil cement to raise the moisture content to optimum moisture content during compaction. Required amount of water was estimated based on result of miniature proctor test.
- Soil-cement was mixed and allowed to stand for time of 5 min to 10 min for complete absorption and dispersion of water by soil-cement mix.
- After the absorption, soil cement, and water mix were mixed again and break up the mixture to smaller particle without affecting the natural particle size until it passes through US No. 4 sieve (i.e., 4.76 mm).
- Standard Proctor sample, confirming ASTM D698 specification was prepared immediately after soil preparation.
- Soil was compacted in three layers with 25 blows in each layer with standard Proctor rammer effort of 12400 lbf/ft².
- Grooves at right angle with approximately 3 mm width and 3 mm depth at 6 mm apart was sacrificed on the top of first and second layers to ensure the proper bonding between the layers.
- During compaction, representative samples were taken from batch of mixed soil-cement to determine the moisture content of compacted specimen.
- Mass of compacted specimen was recorded, and dry unit of specimen was calculated.
- Obtained moisture content and calculated dry density was checked against design moisture content and designed dry density. OMC should be within tolerance limit of $\pm 1\%$ and MDD should be within the tolerance limit of ± 3 lbf/ft³. If the molded specimen is beyond the tolerance limit specified, another specimen should be compacted.
- Named this specimen as Specimen No. 1 and mold second and third specimen as rapidly as possible in the same way as No. 1 and named as Specimen No. 2 and No. 3.
- Average diameter, height and weight of Specimen No. 1 were measured after molding.
- All the three specimens were stored for a period of 7 days in moist condition protecting from free water. This was done by wrapping the samples with thin plastic, kept it inside

the Ziploc airtight bag and immersed in water. [Figure 3-17](#page-51-0) shows the samples at the end of seven days storage period.

Again diameter, height, and weight were measured after 7 days to calculate water content and volume.

Figure 3-17: Samples after 7 days storage

Two different durability tests i.e., Wetting -Drying and Freezing-Thawing were conducted in five different combinations of EPK clay, cement, and fiber. For each test, Specimen No. 1 (Sample 1) was not brushed during the test while Specimen No. 2 (Sample 2) and Specimen No. 3 (Sample 3) was brushed. These different durability test on various soil combination is shown in [Table 3-4.](#page-52-0) For each combination, miniature Proctor test was conducted, and samples were molded at OMC to get the targeted MDD.

Sample Details	Wetting-drying	Freezing-thawing
	test notation	test notation
EPK clay	WD 0C	FT 0C
EPK clay $+5\%$ Cement	WD 5C	FT 5C
EPK clay $+$ 10% Cement	WD 10C	FT 10C
EPK clay $+5\%$ Cement $+0.5\%$ fiber	WD 5C 0.5F	FT 5C 0.5F
EPK clay + 10% Cement + 0.5% fiber	WD 10C 0.5F	FT 10C 0.5F
Sample 1 (Unbrushed)	UB1 WD	UB1 FT
Sample 2 (Brushed)	B ₂ W _D	B ₂ FT
Sample 3 (Brushed)	B3 WD	B ₃ FT

Table 3-4: Durability test of different combination and their notation

3.4.2 Wetting-Drying Test (ASTM D559)

- 1. Specimens were submerged in potable water for 5 hours and then removed as shown in [Figure 3-18.](#page-53-0) In addition to mass measurement for all samples, diameter and height were measured for Specimen No. 1 for volume calculation. This represents the wetting action of the weathering cycle.
- 2. After wetting phenomenon, specimens were placed in oven at $71 \pm 3^{\circ}C (160 \pm 5^{\circ}F)$ and removed after 42 hours. Again, the mass of all specimens along with height and diameter of Specimen No. 1 were measured. This was the drying action of weathering cycle.

Figure 3-18: Samples submerged in water

3. For Specimen No. 2 and 3, 3 lbf (13 N) force stokes was given on all area with standard wire scratch brush. Two strokes should be given in all area. Generally, 18-20 stokes were required to cover the face twice, and each end requires 4 stokes to cover twice. This represents the deterioration factors that may occur in service life. To apply 3 lbf force stroke, specimen was clamped in weighing balance vertically on edge and zero set the reading [Figure 3-19.](#page-53-1) Then force was applied vertically until the reading shows 3 lbf. By

Figure 3-19: Specimen subjected to brushing

this way, calibration of individual force was done, and the same force was applied on each end of sample without clamping on weighing balance.

- 4. Mass of all specimen, and height and diameter of Specimen No. 2 and 3 were measured.
- 5. This completes the one cycle of wetting-drying process. Step 1 to step 4 were repeated 12 times to complete 12 cycles of weathering actions.
- 6. When the volume measurement of Specimen No. 1 is inaccurate due to soil-cement loss, specimen 1 can be stopped before reaching the $12th$ cycle.
- 7. At the end of 12 cycles, specimen was dried in oven at $110 \pm 5^{\circ}C (230 \pm 9^{\circ}F)$ until constant mass.
- 8. Finally, oven dried mass of all specimens was measured to calculate the soil cement percent due to weathering action.

Samples should be brushed with standard wire scratch brush. Size of brush should be according to the specification of ASTM D559 or ASTM D560. The standard brush consists of five longitudinal rows and ten transverse rows of bristles on 190 mm \times 65 mm (7.5 in. \times 2.5 in.) wood block. Brush is assembled in 50 groups of bristle. Each group of bristle consists of 10 flat wire bristle that is 50 mm (2 in.) long, 1.6 mm (0.06 in.) wide and 0.5 mm (26 gages) thick as shown in [Figure 3-20.](#page-54-0)

Figure 3-20: Standard wire Scratch Brush

3.4.3 Freezing-Thawing Test (ASTM D560)

1. Specimens were placed in freezing cabinet having temperature not warmer than -23°C (- 10°F) for 24 hours as shown in [Figure 3-21.](#page-55-0) Porous stone was placed between the carrier and specimen. After 24 hours specimens were removed from freeze and mass of all specimen along with diameter and height of Specimen No. 1 were measured. This represents the freezing action of weathering cycle.

Figure 3-21: Freezing of samples

- 2. After freezing action, specimens were placed in moist room (Ziploc tank) having temperature of 23 ± 2 ^oC (73.5 \pm 3.5^oF) and 100% relative humidity for 23 hours Figure [3-22.](#page-56-0) Free potable water was made available to porous stone to absorb water by capillary action during thawing period. In addition to the mass measurement of all samples, height and diameter measurement was done for Specimen No. 1 for volume calculation. This is simulation of thawing action.
- 3. For Specimen No. 2 and 3, 3 lbf (13 N) force stokes was given on all area with standard wire scratch brush. Two strokes on all area should be given carefully. Generally, 18-20 stokes were required to cover the face twice, and each end requires 4 strokes to cover

twice. This represents the deterioration factors that may occur in service life. To apply 3 lbf force stroke, specimen was clamped in weighing balance vertically on edge and zero set the reading. Then force was applied vertically until the reading shows 3 lbf as shown in [Figure 3-19.](#page-53-1) By this way, calibration of individual force was done, and same force was applied on each end of sample without clamping on weighing balance.

Figure 3-22: Thawing of samples

- 4. Mass of all specimen, and height and diameter of Specimen No. 2 and 3 were measured.
- 5. After brushing action, specimens were turned over end for end before starting the next cycle.
- 6. This completes the one cycle of freezing-thawing process. Step 1 to step 5 were repeated 12 times to complete 12 cycles of weathering actions.
- 7. When the volume measurement of Specimen No. 1 is inaccurate due to soil-cement loss, Specimen No. 1 can be stopped before reaching the $12th$ cycle.
- 8. At the end of 12 cycles, specimen was dried in oven at $110 \pm 5^{\circ}$ C until constant mass.
- 9. Finally, oven dried mass of all specimens was measured to calculate the soil cement percent due to weathering action.

3.5 Water of Hydration

When the standard Proctor sample of soil-cement mix is oven dried at $110 \pm 5^{\circ}$ C, there will be still some water retained within the sample. Water reacts with cement and retains in the specimen which is termed as the water of hydration. Thus, the oven dried sample must be corrected for water of hydration. For the determination of water of hydration after the $12th$ cycle, Specimen No. 1 was oven dried until constant mass. Water retained in Specimen No. 1 even after oven dried is the water of hydration, assuming that there is no loss of soil-cement of Specimen No. 1 throughout the cycle. When Specimen No. 1 is not molded or there is loss of soil cement in Specimen No. 1 during weathering action, the water retained percentage can be used from standard table of ASTM D559 or ASTM D560 as presented in [Table 3-5.](#page-57-0)

Soil Classification (AASHTO)	Avg. water retained after oven dried $(\%)$
$A-1, A-3$	1.5
$A-2$	2.5
$A-4, A-5$	2.0
$A-6, A-7$	3.5

Table 3-5: Average water retained values (ASTM D559/D560)

Water of hydration after the $12th$ cycle can be found practically as described above but for water of hydration after each cycle should be assumed logically. Water retained percentage after each cycle can be approximately calculated by PCA specification.

3.6 Calculation of Soil-Cement Loss

The result of wetting-drying test and freezing-thawing test was expressed as a percentage loss of soil-cement after the $12th$ cycle of weathering action. This calculation was based on

ASTM D559 and ASTM D560 standard. For this, oven-dried mass of all three specimens was recorded. The measured oven-dried mass of Specimen No. 2 and 3 was corrected for water of hydration that has reacted with soil-cement in the specimen. In this research, water retained in Specimen No. 1 and value of [Table 3-5](#page-57-0) were compared and higher value was taken. Soil used was A-7, thus the average water retained value based on ASTM D559 or ASTM D560 standard was 3.5%. This value was compared with water retained in Specimen 1, if applicable, and higher value was used for mass correction.

Soil-Cement loss percentage was calculated using the standard relations specified in ASTM D559/ASTM D560 standard. Calculated soil-cement loss percentage was compared with PCA specification for durability of specimen.

$$
COM = \frac{ODM}{100 + WR}
$$

Soil – Cement Loss, (%) =
$$
\frac{CaDM - CODM}{CaDM} * 100
$$

Where,

CODM = Corrected Oven Dry Mass

 $ODM =$ Final Mass Oven Dried at $110 \pm 5^{\circ}$ C after end of cycle

WR = Water of hydration Retained in specimen

CaDM = Original Calculated oven Dry Mass

3.6.1 Estimation of Soil-Cement Loss in Wetting-Drying test

Calculation of approximate soil-cement loss during wetting-drying cycle was done in accordance to the PCA specification. For the accurate estimation of cement requirement before the completion of test, it is necessary to calculate the soil-cement loss before the completion of test. During the wetting-drying test, the amount of water retained in specimen after oven dried at 71° C is higher than the amount of water retained when oven dried at 110 $^{\circ}$ C. The values of water retained in specimen after oven dried at 110° C, given in [Table 3-5](#page-57-0) is increased by 3% for the approximate calculation of soil cement loss after oven dried at 71° C. PCA suggests that sample oven dried at 71° C has 3% higher water retained than the specimen oven dried at 110° C. Once the water retained percentage is known, dry weight of sample can be calculated. This dry weight of sample is in turn used to calculate the soil cement loss percentage at any cycle.

3.6.2 Estimation of Soil-Cement Loss in Freezing-Thawing test

Estimation of oven dry mass after each cycle is necessary before calculating the soil cement loss percentage. Thus, PCA made an assumption on moisture based on initial molded moisture content for the calculation of oven-dried mass during freezing-thawing test. PCA suggest after the end of any cycle, specimen contains the moisture content higher than the initial molded moisture content. This amount of excess moisture content as per PCA is given in [Table](#page-59-0) [3-6.](#page-59-0) Based on [Table 3-6,](#page-59-0) approximate oven dried weight of sample and soil cement loss percentage can be calculated. This method gives the values in more safe side and is not accurate. For this research, moisture content after each cycle end was estimated by backward calculation, utilizing the concept of PCA specification and taking 12th cycle as reference whose oven dried weight is known. Calculated soil cement loss based on this assumption are not obviously exact.

Table 3-6: Moisture content estimation in freezing-thawing test (PCA Handbook, 1992)

3.7 Durability Criteria

3.7.1 PCA Soil Cement Laboratory Handbook Durability Requirement

The percentage loss of soil after 12 cycles of wetting-drying and freezing-thawing for durability of stabilized soil should be less than the limits of value shown in [Table 3-7](#page-60-0) as set by PCA specification.

AASHTO Soil Group	USCS Soil Group	Mass loss $(\%)$
$A-1, A-2-4, A-2-5, A-3$	GW, GP, SW, SP, SM, GM, SC	\leq 14
$A-2-6$, $A-2-7$, $A-4$, $A-5$	CL, ML, MH, CH	≤ 10
$A-6, A-7$	CL, CH, OH, MH	-1

Table 3-7: PCA specification for durability test (PCA Handbook, 1992)

In addition to the above percentage mass loss criteria, PCA handbook mentioned the following additional criteria-

- i. Maximum water content should always be less than the water content required for saturation at time of molding.
- ii. Compressive strength should increase with age and cement content.
- iii. The above cement content is enough for pavement as per PCA criteria.

3.7.2 Highway Research Board 1961

Highway Research Board 1961 gave the range of UCS for moist cured 7 days and 28

days specimen as shown in [Table 3-8.](#page-61-0) The specimen was soaked in water before test.

Soil Type	7 days wet Compressive	28 days wet Compressive
	Strength MPa (psi)	Strength MPa (psi)
Sandy and gravelly soils	2.07-4.14	$2.8 - 6.9$
$A-1$, $A-2$ and $A-3$ (GW,	$(300-600)$	$(400-1000)$
GC, GP, GF, SW, SC, SP		
and SF)		
Silty soils	$1.7 - 3.45$	$2.07 - 6.21$
A-4 and A-5 (ML and CL)	$(250-500)$	$(300-900)$
Clayey soils	$1.4 - 2.8$	$1.7 - 4.14$
A-6 and A-7 (MH and CH)	$(200-400)$	$(250-600)$

Table 3-8: Range of UCS cement stabilized soil (Highway Research Board 1961)

3.7.3 USACE durability requirement

USACE proposed the durability requirement in "Soil Stabilization for Pavement

Mobilization and Construction manual". USACE durability requirement is shown in [Table 3-9.](#page-61-1)

Table 3-9: Durability criteria for durability test (USACE, 1984)

In addition to the durability requirement for wetting-drying and freezing-thawing test,

USACE proposed the following initial cement content for stabilization of soil as shown in [Table](#page-62-0)

[3-10.](#page-62-0)

Soil Type	Cement Requirement by Dry Weight $(\%)$
GW-SW	5
GP, SW-SM, SW-SC, SW-GM, SW-GC	6
GM, SM, GC, SC, SP-SM, SP-SC, GP-GM,	7
GP-GC, SM-SC, GM-GC	
SP, CL, ML, ML-CL	10
MH, OH	11
CН	10

Table 3-10: Initial cement content requirement for different types of soil (USACE, 1984)

3.7.4 ACI committee durability requirement

ACI committee 230 report provides the basic information and guidelines about mixing the cement with soil for soil stabilization. Like other methods, this method also estimates the initial cement requirement for various types of soil as presented in [Table 3-11.](#page-62-1) Also, ACI report provided the range of cement content for the wetting-drying and freezing-thawing durability test.

AASHTO	USCS	Cement	Cement contents
soil group	soil group	requirement $(\%)$	for durability test
$A-1-a$	GW, GP, GM, SW, SP, SM	$3 - 5$	$3 - 5 - 7$
$A-1-b$	GM, GP, SM, SP	$5 - 8$	$4 - 6 - 8$
$A-2$	GM, GC, SM, SC	$5-9$	$5 - 7 - 9$
$A-3$	SP	$7 - 11$	$7-9-11$
$A-4$	CL, ML	$7 - 12$	$8-10-12$
$A-5$	ML, MH, CH	$8-13$	$8-10-12$
$A-6$	CL, CH	$9 - 15$	$10-12-14$
$A-7$	MH, CH	$10-16$	$11 - 13 - 15$

Table 3-11: Cement requirement for various soil type (ACI committee report, 2009)

3.7.5 Packard (1962) Methods

Packard (1962) experimentally found out the minimum cement requirement for wettingdrying and freezing-thawing test weight loss criteria. For different types of soil, different cement content was proposed as shown in [Table 3-12.](#page-63-0)

Table 3-12: Minimum cement content for durability test (Packard, 1962)

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 General

This chapter mainly discusses the results of the characterization of materials and durability tests. Characterization such as hydrometer test, specific gravity, Atterberg limit and soil type based on value of LL and PI, compaction characteristics i.e., OMC and MDD of different combination are presented in this chapter. SEM/EDAX results and XRD plot are also presented in this chapter. This chapter mainly focuses on result and discussion of two main durability test i.e., Wetting-Drying test and Freezing-Thawing test. Result of compressive strength test on weathered samples is also presented along with percent loss of soil.

4.2 Particle Size Distribution

As EPK clay passes more than 90% from US No. 200 sieve (i.e., 0.075 mm), hydrometer test was conducted for particle size distribution. The result of hydrometer test is presented in [Figure 4-1.](#page-64-0)

Figure 4-1: Hydrometer Analysis of EPK Clay

From [Figure 4-1,](#page-64-0) it can be observed that 74% of particle is less than 0.002 mm. That means EPK clay contains 74% of clay-sized particle and 26% of silt-sized particle (ranging from 0.002 mm to 0.075 mm).

4.3 Atterberg Limit Test

Atterberg limit was performed to obtain liquid limit (LL) and plastic limit (PL) of EPK clay. From [Figure 4-2,](#page-65-0) it can be observed that the moisture content at 25 number of drops was 58.5%. So, the liquid limit of EPK clay was approximately 58.5 and from the experiment, plastic limit was found to be 33.3. Hence, the plasticity index of clay was calculated as 25.2.

Figure 4-2: Liquid Limit Test of EPK Clay

4.4 Soil Classification

For fine-grained EPK clay, based on result of particle size distribution test and Atterberg limit test, soil was classified in accordance with Unified Soil Classification System (USCS) and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) classification system. Based on USCS plasticity chart, for liquid limit (LL) of 58.5 and plasticity index (PI) of 25.2, soil was classified as High Compressible Silty Soil (MH). Result of Atterberg limit shows

that $LL > 41$ and $PI > 11$. Hence, the soil is classified as A-7 as per AASHTO soil classification system. Further, $PI < LL - 30$, confirms that soil was A-7-5.

4.5 Specific Gravity

Specific gravity was calculated for EPK clay, Cement, Fiber, EPK clay $+ 5\%$ Cement,

EPK Clay + 10% Cement, EPK clay + 5% Cement + 0.5% Fiber and EPK clay + 10% Cement +

0.5% Fiber. The result of specific gravity test is tabulated in [Table 4-1.](#page-66-0)

S.N.	Soil Combination	Specific Gravity
1	EPK Clay	2.590
$\overline{2}$	Cement	3.135
3	Fiber	0.930
4	$EPK + 5\%$ Cement	2.638
5	$EPK + 10\%$ Cement	2.647
6	$EPK + 5\%$ Cement + 0.5% Fiber	2.624
7	$EPK + 10\%$ Cement + 0.5% Fiber	2.635

Table 4-1: Specific gravity of different test materials

From [Table 4-1,](#page-66-0) it can be observed that the fiber has the lowest specific gravity and cement has highest, so the addition of cement in soil increases the specific gravity of soil-cement while the addition of fiber in soil decreases the specific gravity of soil-fiber mix. With addition of 10% cement, specific gravity of EPK clay increases from 2.59 to 2.647 and further addition of 0.5% fiber on EPK clay + 10% cement decreases the specific gravity from 2.647 to 2.635. As the percentage use of fiber was small so there was small variation in specific gravity value.

4.6 Miniature Proctor Test

Miniature compaction test was conducted for five different combinations of soil i.e., EPK clay, cement, and fiber combination. Result of miniature compaction test for EPK clay compared with standard Proctor test and obtained approximately similar value of MDD and OMC from both miniature compaction test and standard Proctor compaction test. Thus, for further compaction test of combination, miniature compaction test was conducted. Result of miniature Proctor test for EPK clay, EPK clay + 5% Cement, EPK Clay + 10% Cement, EPK clay + 5% Cement $+ 0.5\%$ Fiber and EPK clay $+ 10\%$ Cement $+0.5\%$ Fiber are plotted in [Figure 4-3.](#page-67-0) MDD and OMC for different combination of soil-cement-fiber, based on miniature Proctor test are tabulated in [Table 4-2.](#page-67-1)

Figure 4-3: Miniature Proctor Test Result

Combination	MDD (lb/ft ³)	OMC (%)
EPK Clay	83.8	35.0
$Soil+5\%$ Cement	80.3	36.5
$Soil + 10\%$ Cement	81.8	36.0
$Soil + 5\%$ Cement + 0.5% Fiber	80.1	37.0
$Soil + 10\%$ Cement + 0.5% Fiber	82.0	36.5

Table 4-2: OMC and MDD for different combination

The variation of MDD and OMC with the addition cement were plotted in Figures 4-4 and 4-5. From [Figure 4-4](#page-68-0) and [Figure 4-5,](#page-68-1) it can be noticed that MDD is maximum and OMC is minimum for EPK clay only (0% cement content) than any other combination. While MDD is minimum and OMC is maximum for EPK clay + 5% Cement.

Figure 4-5: Variation of OMC with cement content

The specific gravity of cement is higher than that of clay. Hence, with the addition of cement in EPK clay, it was expected to get the higher density than that of EPK clay, but the results were different than the expected. Even with the addition of different content of cement percentage, behavior is not uniform. With the addition of 5% cement, MDD decreases and OMC increases compared to original EPK clay. With the increase in cement content from 5% to 10%, the behavior is again different i.e., MDD increases and OMC decreases as compared to 5% cement addition. Similar results i.e., initially decrease in MDD with the addition of cement content in soil and further increase the cement content shows the increase of MDD were obtained by Rahman (1987), Muhunthan and Sariosseiri (2008), and Ashraf et al. (2018). Rahman (1987) explained that the variation of MDD with cement content is due to alteration in particle size distribution and specific gravity of soil. Basha et al. (2005) also found that for cement-treated soil MDD is lesser and OMC is higher as compared to untreated soil. The increase in OMC is due to additional water held with flocculant soil structure resulting from cement interaction (Zhang et al., 1996). Sarkar et al. (2012) and Ayininuola et al. (2017) performed the compaction test and obtained the similar results i.e., dry density of cement treated soil decreases than that of untreated soil and OMC of soil increases after cement treatment. Sarkar et al. (2012) explained that for cement treated clay, reduction in dry density was observed because of flocculation and agglomeration of fine-grained soil particles which have higher volume as clay changed to silt because of cement coating thereby forming bigger size particle which occupies larger volume. Ayininuola et al. (2017) also mentioned that cementation and agglomeration of particles of stabilized soil occupy the larger spaces with increase in volume. Ranaivomanana et al. (2018) performed compaction test for natural and cement treated soil and found that dry density decreases after cement treatment. Ranaivomanana et al. (2018) explained the reasons behind the decrease in dry density as cement uses water from the soil for hydration due to which more water is needed to reach sufficient compaction level. For the constant volume of materials, the addition of water increases the water phase volume and decrease the solid phase volume due to which dry

density decreases. However, in the current research, it was observed that MDD decreased initially at 5% cement content and again increased at 10% cement content. The cause for this non-uniform variation of MDD with cement content was explained clearly by Chew et al. (2004). Chew et al. (2004) concluded that: "For cement content below 10%, there is only hydration effect and pozzolanic reaction is not supported. Because of hydration reaction, there is formation of large clay-cement cluster thereby resulting larger amount of void and entrapped water which increases liquid limit (LL). Addition of 10% or higher cement content initiates the slower pozzolanic reaction which leads to the attack of Kaolinite. Because of Kaolinite driven pozzolanic reaction, secondary cementitious products deposited around the clay cluster surface thereby increases the particle size but decreases the pore size. Because of the deposition of secondary cementitious products on clay cluster, void sizes and surface activity of clay decreases as a result LL also decreases at higher cement content". Therefore, based on Chew et al. (2004) at lower cement content there is only hydration reaction that results in the larger sizes of voids. As the void spaces increases, maximum dry density (MDD) decreases. However, at higher cement content, because of the deposition of secondary cementitious products around the clay cluster, void space decreases and the dry density increases. Higher cement content act as a filler agent in flocculated clay particles. The addition of 0.5% fiber has no significant change in MDD and OMC.

4.7 Variation of Plasticity with Cement Content

To study the variation of plasticity with cement content of EPK clay liquid limit (LL) and plastic limit (PL) were carried out and then plasticity index (PI) was plotted with cement content. Liquid limit test was carried out by using cone penetration (fall cone test) method for this study. The result of EPK clay plasticity properties with different cement content is shown in [Table 4-3.](#page-71-0)

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The result of LL from Casagrande methods and cone penetration methods for EPK clay is in close range. A similar result was obtained by Muhunthan and Sariosseiri (2008) while calculating LL by Casagrande method and cone penetration method for different types of soil. Table 4-3: Variation of EPK clay properties with cement content (Fall cone test method)

Based on the result of LL and PL; PI for EPK clay with various percentages of cement was calculated and plotted as shown in [Figure 4-6.](#page-72-0) From [Figure 4-6](#page-72-0) it can be observed that, initially LL increases with the increase in cement content and with the further addition of cement, LL decreases; while PL increases initially and remains relatively constant with the addition of cement content. Initially with the increase in cement content, PI increases and with the further addition of cement PI decreases slightly. Thus, for EPK clay plasticity of soil increases initially with cement content and decreases with the further addition of cement. Chew et al. (2004), and Muhunthan and Sariosseiri (2008) also got a similar result i.e., initially increase in LL and PI with cement content, and then decrease in LL and PI with the further addition of cement while PL increases initially and remains relatively constant with the further addition of cement. Chew et al. (2004) have explained that at lower cement content, larger voids spaces form entrapping the larger water content which is responsible for higher LL whereas at higher cement content void sizes decreases and less water entrapped as a result LL decreases.

Figure 4-6: Variation of plastic index with cement content

4.8 SEM/EDAX Test

SEM/EDAX test was conducted for the EPK clay and clay mixed with 5% and 10% cement. Results of SEM shows that morphology of EPK clay was a flaky structure. Average particle size was approximately 0.4 micron (400 nm) and particles were conglomerations and randomly oriented. [Figure 4-7](#page-72-0) shows the SEM scanning result of EPK clay at 15000 times magnification. [Figure 4-8](#page-73-0) shows the EDAX result of EPK clay only. EDAX result shows that

Figure 4-7: SEM image of EPK clay

major compositions of EPK clay are Alumina and Silica. Titanium and Iron were also present in

a small percentage.

Figure 4-8: EDAX result of EPK clay

[Figure 4-9](#page-74-0) shows the SEM image of EPK clay mixed with 5% cement, captured at 15000 times magnification. The addition of 5% cement does not have a significant change in morphological aspects of soil-cement. Structure of EPK clay with 5% cement also has randomly oriented flaky type of structure. [Figure 4-10](#page-74-1) shows the chemical composition of EPK clay mixed with cement and fiber. Alumina and Silica were the major components of the soil-cement mixture. The addition of cement results in the presence of calcium in the soil-cement.

Figure 4-9: SEM image for EPK clay + 5% Cement

Figure 4-10: EDAX result of EPK clay mixed with 5% cement and 0.5% fiber

[Figure 4-11](#page-75-0) shows the SEM image of EPK clay mixed with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber, captured at 100 times magnification. [Figure 4-12](#page-75-1) shows the elemental composition of EPK clay mixed with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber. The result shows that with the increase in cement

percentage, the calcium content increases in mixture of soil-cement. Alumina and silica were the major component of soil mixed with 10% cement and fiber.

Figure 4-11: SEM result of EPK clay mixed with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber

Figure 4-12: EDAX result of EPK clay mixed with 10% cement and fiber

4.9 X-Ray Diffraction (XRD) Test

XRD test was performed on original EPK clay, clay $+5\%$ cement, and clay $+10\%$ cement. [Figure 4-13](#page-77-0) shows the XRD plot for three different combinations of clay with various percentage of cement. From [Figure 4-13,](#page-77-0) it can be observed that with the addition of 10% cement results in the new intensity peak at $2\Theta = 29.5^{\circ}$. Rest of the intensity peak of EPK clay matches exactly with intensity peak of EPK clay $+ 5\%$ cement and EPK clay $+ 10\%$ cement. Kaolinite-Al2Si2O5(OH)⁴ is the dominant minerals in all three combinations of soil-cement mixture. Approximately 97% of mineralogical composition of EPK clay and clay mixed with cement is of Kaolinite. [Figure 4-14](#page-78-0) shows the XRD test result analysis for mineral identification using MDI Jade software. Based on MDI Jade analysis of XRD result, new minerals formed with the addition of 10% cement was identified as Calcite- $CaCO₃$. The new peak seen in EPK + 10% cement at $2\Theta = 29.5^{\circ}$ is of Calcite whereas common mineral in all combination is Kaolinite.

Figure 4-13: XRD plot of EPK clay mixed with various proportion of cement

Figure 4-14: XRD result analysis using MDI Jade

4.10 Durability Test Result

Result of two main durability test i.e., wetting-drying and freezing-thawing are presented in terms of percentage loss of soil-cement-fiber after 12 weathering cycle. Also, the compressive strength test of survived samples was carried out at the end of test. Finally, results of the wettingdrying test and freezing-thawing test are compared by plotting results on same graph. Durability was measured based on Portland Cement Association (PCA) soil-cement loss criteria for all combination.

4.10.1 Wetting-Drying Test

4.10.1.a EPK clay (WD_0C)

Three standard Proctor samples of EPK clay were subjected to wetting-drying test. Sample 1 was unbrushed (UB1) and Sample 2 (B2), and Sample 3 (B3) was brushed after drying action. The percentage loss after the end of first cycle was significantly higher and all the samples collapsed completely in the beginning stage of second cycle as shown in [Figure 4-15.](#page-80-0) As the sample collapsed completely, percentage loss of soil and compressive strength of test sample cannot be found. EPK clay (without cement or fiber) is not durable against wetting-drying action. Thus, 5% cement is added and wetting-drying test was carried out to check the durability of 5% cement stabilized soil.

During 2nd cycle (After 5 hrs. immersion)

Figure 4-15: Effect of Wetting-Drying on EPK clay (WD_0C)

4.10.1.b EPK clay stabilized with 5% Cement (WD_5C)

With the addition of 5% cement, Sample 2 collapsed in 3rd cycle, and Sample 1 and Sample 3 was stopped after $4th$ cycle. Due to heavy deterioration of samples, compressive strength test was not conducted. Percentage loss of soil for unbrushed Sample 1 was 16% and for brushed Sample 3 was 26.67% after $4th$ cycle. The result confirms that EPK clay stabilized with only 5% cement is not durable against wetting-drying test. [Figure 4-16](#page-81-0) shows the mass of all three samples after each cycle ends. [Figure 4-17](#page-81-1) shows the volume of the unbrushed sample during wetting-drying test. The increase in volume is due to immersion in water and decrease in volume is due to drying action. [Figure 4-18](#page-82-0) shows the deterioration condition at various stage of durability test.

Figure 4-16: Mass change with cycle for WD_5C

Figure 4-17: Volume change with cycle for WD_5C (UB1)

Before subjecting to cycle 1

Immersion in water during cycle 4

At the end of cycle 4 Figure 4-18: Various stage of wetting-test of WD_5C

4.10.1.c EPK clay stabilized with 10% Cement (WD_10C)

Samples were not durable with 5% cement only, thus cement content was increased to 10% and wetting-drying durability test was carried out. Sample 1 and Sample 2 survived for all 12 cycles of weathering action and Sample 3 collapsed in $10th$ cycle during brushing operation. Percentage loss of soil for Sample 1 and Sample 2 was 1.63% and 8.68%, respectively. Compressive strength on oven-dried samples at the end of wetting-drying cycles for Sample 1 and Sample 2 was 500 psi and 323 psi, respectively. Percentage loss of soil and compressive strength of collapsed sample cannot be found. [Figure 4-19](#page-83-0) shows the mass of all three samples after each cycle ends. [Figure 4-20](#page-83-1) shows the volume of unbrushed sample during wetting-drying test. [Figure 4-21](#page-84-0) shows the deterioration condition at various stage of durability test for EPK clay sample stabilized with 10% cement.

Figure 4-19: Mass change with cycle for WD_10C

Figure 4-20: Volume change with cycle for WD_10C (UB1)

During 1st cycle

Sample 3 during 10th cycle

Sample 1 and sample 2 after 12th cycle

Figure 4-21: Various stage of wetting-drying test of WD_10C

Combining PCA concept and final oven-dried mass of sample after $12th$ cycle as reference, approximate moisture content of samples in each cycle was estimated. By using this moisture content, approximate soil-cement loss percentage was calculated as shown in [Figure](#page-85-0) [4-22.](#page-85-0) The soil-cement loss percentage value in each cycle is only an approximate value. Referencing the PCA criteria, the percentage loss of soil-cement of brushed samples should be less than 7% for the durability. In this case, one sample collapsed before the cycle completion, and another sample has percentage loss higher than 7%. Thus, EPK clay stabilized with only 10% is not durable against wetting-drying test.

Figure 4-22: Percentage loss of stabilized soil in each cycle for WD_10C

4.10.1.d EPK clay stabilized with 5% Cement and 0.5% Fiber (WD_5C_0.5F)

To increase the tensile strength and durability, cement stabilized samples were reinforced with small percentage of fiber. Addition of fiber results in the survivable of all three samples up to 12 cycles of wetting-drying weathering action. Percentage loss of stabilized soil-cement-fiber of unbrushed Sample 1 was 6.84%, Sample 2 was 20.89% and Sample 3 was 16.20%. Compressive strength of oven dried samples after $12th$ wetting-drying cycle for Sample 1, Sample 2 and Sample 3 were 737.2 psi, 347.1 psi, and 561.4 psi, respectively. [Figure 4-23](#page-86-0) shows the mass of all three samples after each cycle ends. [Figure 4-24](#page-86-1) shows the volume of unbrushed sample during wetting-drying test. [Figure 4-25](#page-87-0) shows the deterioration condition at various stage of durability test for EPK clay sample stabilized with 5% cement and 0.5% fiber.

Figure 4-23: Mass change with cycle for WD_5C_0.5F

Figure 4-24: Volume change with cycle for WD_5C_0.5F (UB1)

Before Cycle 1

Cycle 6

Cycle 12

Figure 4-25: Various stage of wetting-drying test of WD_5C_0.5F

Using the concept of PCA moisture content estimation and backward calculation referencing the oven-dried mass after 12th cycle as standard, the approximate percentage loss of stabilized soil was calculated and shown in [Figure 4-26.](#page-88-0) Although all the three samples survived 12 cycle of weathering action, percentage loss due to weathering action is greater than 7%. Thus, EPK clay stabilized with 5% cement and 0.5% fiber is not durable against the wetting-drying test.

Figure 4-26: Percentage loss of stabilized soil in each cycle for WD_5C_0.5F

4.10.1.e EPK clay stabilized with 10% Cement and 0.5% Fiber (WD_10C_0.5F)

Neither the soil stabilized with 5% cement $+0.5\%$ fiber nor with 10% cement gives the durability of EPK clay against wetting-drying test. So, soil is stabilized with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber and durability test is carried out. Percentage loss of soil-cement-fiber combination of the clay stabilized with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber is 1.61% for unbrushed Sample 1, 6.55% for Sample 2 and 6.39% for Sample 3. Similarly, compressive strength at the end of 12 cycles of weathering action was 1396 psi for Sample 1, 1080 psi for Sample 2 and 1153 psi for Sample 3. [Figure 4-27](#page-89-0) shows the mass of all three samples after each cycle ends, [Figure 4-28](#page-89-1) shows the volume of unbrushed sample during wetting-drying test and [Figure 4-29](#page-90-0) shows the deterioration condition at various stage of durability test of EPK clay sample stabilized with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber.

Figure 4-27: Mass change with cycle for WD_10C_0.5F

Before Cycle 1

Cycle 12

Figure 4-29: Various stage of wetting-drying test of WD_10C_0.5F

Using the same procedure used for EPK clay stabilized with 5% cement and 0.5% fiber, approximate percentage loss of soil-cement-fiber after each cycle end was calculated and shown in [Figure 4-30.](#page-91-0) In this case, percentage loss of soil-cement-fiber for both unbrushed and brushed samples is less than 7% after $12th$ cycle. Thus, based on PCA criteria, EPK clay stabilized with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber is durable against the wetting-drying cycle.

Figure 4-30: Percentage loss of stabilized soil in each cycle for WD_10C_0.5F

4.10.2 Result comparison of different combination for wetting-drying test

The overall result of the wetting-drying test for different condition is summarized in a graphical form [Figure 4-31](#page-92-0) and [Figure 4-32,](#page-93-0) and in tabular form as shown in [Table 4-4.](#page-94-0) From [Figure 4-31,](#page-92-0) it can be observed that percentage loss of stabilized soil is less than 7% in only one combination of stabilizer. For the clay stabilized with 10% cement only and with 5% cement $+$ 0.5% fiber, only the unbrushed sample has soil loss less than 7%. For the clay stabilized with 10% cement + 0.5% fiber, all samples survived and have soil loss less than 7%. Percentage loss of soil for brushed samples is in marginal range so we can say that 10% with 0.5% fiber is the optimum amount of stabilizer for EPK clay against wetting-drying action. Increase of cement content will be uneconomical as well as sample will be brittle. The addition of more fiber may affect the density and permeability of sample. Thus, 10% cement $+0.5\%$ fiber is the optimum content of stabilizer for EPK clay against wetting-drying test. Further, the compressive strength of sample stabilized with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber is significantly higher as shown in [Figure](#page-93-0) [4-32.](#page-93-0) Also, this combination has compressive strength significantly higher than the 28 days wet

UCS set by Highway Research Board (1961). Also, 10% cement + 0.5% fiber combination satisfied the durability criteria for wetting-drying test set by PCA and minimum cement content requirement criteria set by ACI committee and Packard (1962). USACE suggested that maximum allowable weight loss after 12 wet-dry cycles for clay should be less than 6%, and for silt should be less than 8%. Soil used for this research is Silty Clay (MH) and USACE has not specified the weight loss criteria for a particular soil type. Considering the average weight loss of clay and silt requirement, this combination also fulfills the maximum allowable weight loss criteria of USACE durability requirement. The cement content requirement for durability test as per ACI committee for A-7 type of soil is between 10-16%. Packard (1962) also suggested that minimum cement content for wetting-drying test should be at least 5%. The combination used for this research has 10% cement along with 0.5% fiber, thus it fulfills the cement requirement criteria set by ACI committee and Packard (1962).

Figure 4-31: Percentage of soil loss during wetting-drying test for different combination

Figure 4-32: Compressive strength after wetting-drying test for different combination

Sample Details	Test Sample	Soil Loss	Compressive	Remarks	Durability Result
		(%)	Strength (psi)		
EPK Clay	Unbrushed			Collapsed in $2nd$ cycle	Not Durable against
	Brushed				WD
	-Sample 2			Collapsed in $2nd$ cycle	
	-Sample 3		$\overline{}$	Collapsed in 2 nd cycle	
EPK+5% Cement	Unbrushed	16.06	$\overline{}$	Stopped at $4th$ cycle	Not Durable against
	Brushed				WD
	-Sample 2	$\qquad \qquad -$	$\overline{}$	Collapsed in $4th$ cycle	
	-Sample 3	26.67		Stopped at $4th$ cycle	
$EPK+10\%$ Cement	Unbrushed	1.63	500.08	Completed all cycle	Not Durable against
	Brushed				WD
	-Sample 2	8.68	322.84	Completed all cycle	
	-Sample 3			Collapsed in $10th$ cycle	
$EPK+5%$	Unbrushed	6.84	737.1544	Completed all cycle	Survived all 12 cycle
$Cement+0.5\%$ fiber	Brushed				but fail to meet
	-Sample 2	20.89	347.70	Completed all cycle	durability criteria
	-Sample 3	16.20	561.37	Completed all cycle	
$EPK+10%$	Unbrushed	1.61	1396.42	Completed all cycle	Durable against WD,
Cement+0.5% fiber	Brushed				all sample meet
	-Sample 2	6.55	1079.69	Completed all cycle	durability criteria and
	-Sample 3	6.39	1153.44	Completed all cycle	high CS

Table 4-4: Summary of wetting-drying test results

4.10.3 Freezing-Thawing Test

4.10.3.a EPK clay (FT_0C)

Three standard Proctor samples of EPK clay were subjected to freezing-thawing test. Similar to wetting-drying test, Sample 1 was unbrushed, and Sample 2 and Sample 3 were brushed. The percentage loss of soil at the end of first and second cycle was significantly higher and all the samples collapsed completely during third cycle as shown in [Figure 4-33.](#page-95-0) Volume change of unbrushed sample is shown in [Figure 4-34.](#page-96-0) As the sample collapsed completely, percentage loss of soil and compressive strength of test sample cannot be found. Thus, EPK clay (with no cement and fiber) was not durable against freezing-thawing action. Five percent cement was added on EPK clay and again freezing-thawing durability test was carried out.

Before subjecting to cycle 1

After freezing during cycle 1

All samples collapsed during thawing of cycle 3

Figure 4-33: Freezing-Thawing effect on EPK clay (FT_0C)

Figure 4-34: Volume change with cycle for FT_0C (UB1)

4.10.3.b EPK clay stabilized with 5% Cement (FT_5C)

With the addition of 5% cement, Sample 1 and Sample 3 collapsed in $3rd$ cycle, and Sample 2 was stopped after $4th$ cycle. Due to heavy deterioration of samples, compressive strength test of Sample 2 was not carried out. The percentage loss of soil for unbrushed Sample 2 was 19.4% after 4th cycle. This result confirms that EPK clay stabilized with only 5% cement was not durable against freezing-thawing test. [Figure 4-35](#page-97-0) shows the deterioration condition at various stage of durability test. [Figure 4-36](#page-97-1) shows the volume of unbrushed sample during the freezing-thawing test. The increase in volume was due to freezing action which leads to the collapse of samples.

After freezing cycle 1

After thawing cycle 2

Collapse of samples during cycle 4

Figure 4-35: Various stage of freezing-thawing test of FT_5C

Figure 4-36: Volume change with cycle for FT_5C (UB1)

4.10.3.c EPK clay stabilized with 10% Cement (FT_10C)

Cement content was increased to 10% and freezing-thawing test was conducted. With the increase in cement content, all the samples survived up to 12 cycles of weathering action against freezing-thawing test. Percentage loss of soil for Sample 1, Sample 2 and Sample 3 was 0%, 6.94%, and 8.79%, respectively. No any percent loss of soil for unbrushed samples while marginal loss of soil loss for the brushed sample. Compressive strength of oven-dried samples at the end of freezing-thawing cycles for Sample 1, Sample 2 and Sample 3 was 398.44 psi, 400.72 psi, and 263.02 psi, respectively. [Figure 4-37](#page-98-0) shows the mass of all three samples after each cycle ends. [Figure 4-38](#page-99-0) shows the volume of unbrushed sample during wetting-drying test. [Figure 4-39](#page-99-1) shows the deterioration condition at various stage of durability test for EPK clay sample stabilized with 10% cement. All the three samples survived up to 12 weathering cycle and have percent loss of soil less than 7%.

Figure 4-37: Mass change with cycle for FT_10C

Figure 4-38: Volume change with cycle for FT_10C (UB1)

Cycle 6

After oven dried (end of cycle)

Figure 4-39: Various stage of freezing-thawing test of FT_10C

Using the concept of PCA moisture content estimation method and backward calculation referencing the oven-dried mass after $12th$ cycle as standard, the approximate percentage loss of stabilized soil was calculated and shown in [Figure 4-40.](#page-100-0)There was no soil loss in unbrushed sample. Result shows that EPK clay stabilized with 10% cement was durable against the freezing-thawing test.

Figure 4-40: Percentage loss of stabilized soil in each cycle for FT_10C

4.10.3.d EPK clay stabilized with 5% Cement and 0.5% Fiber (FT_5C_0.5F)

To increase the tensile strength and durability against freezing-thawing, cement stabilized samples were reinforced with a small percentage of fiber. Addition of fiber results in the survivable of all three samples up to 12 cycles of weathering action. Percentage loss of stabilized soil-cement-fiber of Sample 1 was 1.99%, Sample 2 was 6.5% and Sample 3 was 6.5%. Compressive strength of oven dried samples after $12th$ wetting-drying cycle for Sample 1, Sample 2 and Sample 3 was 455.5 psi, 462.4 psi, and 509.92 psi, respectively. [Figure 4-41](#page-101-0) shows the mass of all three samples after each cycle ends. [Figure 4-42](#page-101-1) shows the volume of unbrushed

sample during wetting-drying test. [Figure 4-43](#page-102-0) shows the deterioration condition at various stage of durability test for EPK clay sample stabilized with 5% cement and 0.5% fiber. All the three samples survived up to 12 weathering cycle and have percent loss less than 7%. Thus, EPK clay stabilized with 5% cement and 0.5% fiber is durable against freezing-thawing test.

Figure 4-41: Mass change with cycle for FT_5C_0.5F

Figure 4-42: Volume change with cycle for FT_5C_0.5F (UB1)

Cycle 12

Figure 4-43: Various stage of freezing-thawing test of FT_5C_0.5F

Using PCA approximate moisture content estimation method and backward calculation referencing the final oven-dried mass as standard, the percentage loss of soil was calculated at each cycle end, which is shown in [Figure 4-44.](#page-102-1)

Figure 4-44: Percentage loss of stabilized soil in each cycle for FT_5C_0.5F

4.10.3.e EPK clay stabilized with 10% Cement and 0.5% Fiber (FT_10C_0.5F)

Although the EPK clay stabilized with 10% cement or 5% cement with 0.5% fiber was durable against freezing-thawing action, addition test, 10% cement + 0.5% fiber was performed to- compare the result with wetting-drying test, check the increase in compressive strength, and ductility behavior. All the samples stabilized with 10% cement and 0.5% survived up to 12 weathering cycle and very less percentage loss of soil when compared with other tests. Percentage loss of stabilized soil-cement-fiber of Sample 1 was 0%, Sample 2 was 3.81% and Sample 3 was 3.47% . Compressive strength of oven dried samples after $12th$ wetting-drying cycle for Sample 1, Sample 2 and Sample 3 was 502.5 psi, 541.14 psi, and 583.23 psi, respectively. [Figure 4-45](#page-103-0) shows the mass of all three samples after each cycle ends. [Figure 4-46](#page-104-0) shows the volume of unbrushed sample during wetting-drying test. [Figure 4-47](#page-104-1) shows the deterioration condition at various stage of durability test for EPK clay sample stabilized with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber. EPK clay stabilized with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber is durable against freezingthawing test.

Figure 4-45: Mass change with cycle for FT_10C_0.5F

Figure 4-46: Volume change with cycle for FT_10C_0.5F (UB1)

Cycle 1

Cycle 6

Cycle 12

Figure 4-47: Various stage of freezing-thawing test of FT_10C_0.5F

Approximately percentage loss of soil after each cycle was estimated which is shown in [Figure 4-48.](#page-105-0)

Figure 4-48: Percentage loss of stabilized soil in each cycle for FT_10C_0.5F

4.10.4 Result comparison of different combination for freezing-thawing test

The summary result of freezing-thawing test for different combination is presented in graphical form [Figure 4-49](#page-107-0) and [Figure 4-50,](#page-107-1) and tabular form as shown in [Table 4-5.](#page-108-0) From [Figure 4-49](#page-107-0) it can be observed that percentage loss of soil is less than 7% for three different combination- 10% cement only, 5% cement $+ 0.5%$ fiber, and 10% cement $+ 0.5%$ fiber. For the combination with 10% cement, percent loss of soil for unbrushed sample was 0%. Percent loss of soil for 10% cement only and 5% cement $+0.5%$ fiber was in marginal range for brushed sample while for 10% cement $+ 0.5%$ fiber, percent loss of soil is almost half than the previous two combinations of soil cement. EPK clay, and clay stabilized with 5% cement only is not durable against freezing-thawing test. From [Figure 4-34](#page-96-0) and [Figure 4-36](#page-97-1) it can be seen that there was great increase in volume during freezing action of early cycle which lead to complete collapse of

samples while for other combination with cement or fiber, volume during freezing was decreased or remain constant in most of the cycles and ultimately samples survived throughout the whole weathering action.

According to Highway Research Board (1961) range of wet UCS for cement stabilized clay soil (A-7) after 28 days is 250-600 psi. Similar range of compressive strength was observed in the present study after the end of the cycle, after $12th$ cycle of freezing-thawing, compressive strength for survived sample range from 263 psi to 583 psi. Maximum allowable weight loss after 6 freezing-thawing cycles proposed by USACE was 6%. In this research, the percent loss of soil after 12 cycles of freezing-thawing was less than 7% for clay stabilized with 10% cement, 5% cement + 0.5% fiber and 10% cement + 0.5% fiber. From [Figure 4-40,](#page-100-0) [Figure 4-44](#page-102-1) and [Figure 4-48](#page-105-0) it can be observed that percent loss of soil after 6 freeze-thaw cycle was less than 4.8% for all. Thus, all three combinations fulfill the durability criteria of percent loss set by both PCA and USACE. Cement content required for stabilization proposed by USACE and Packard (1962) is 10%. In addition, ACI committee also suggested a range of cement content was 10% to 16% for the durability of stabilized clay (A-7 type of soil). This research also finds the exactly similar result, when cement only was used for stabilization, 10% cement of dry wet of soil was required for the durability of stabilized soil. In addition to cement, 0.5% fiber was used to check the durability and found that 5% cement $+0.5\%$ fiber also provide the durability of stabilized clay against freezing-thawing. Soil stabilization with 10% cement or 10% cement $+ 0.5%$ fiber may be uneconomical and results in the brittle failure pattern due to higher cement content. Thus, 5% cement + 0.5% is suggested as the optimum content of stabilizer for durability against the freezing-thawing test.

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Figure 4-49: Percentage soil loss during freezing-thawing test for different combination

Figure 4-50: Compressive strength after freezing-thawing test for different combination

Table 4-5: Summary of freezing-thawing test results

4.10.5 Comparison of Wetting-Drying Test and Freezing-Thawing Test

Samples without any cement content and with 5% cement content collapsed completely during the early weathering cycle of both wetting-drying and freezing-thawing durability test. So, their comparison based on soil loss percentage and compressive strength was not done. Result of wetting-drying test and freezing-thawing test for those samples which survived all cycles was plotted in same graph and comparison was made.

4.10.5.a Clay stabilized with 10% cement

For the EPK clay stabilized with 10% cement, both the durability test- wetting-drying and freezing-thawing was conducted. The result shows that clay stabilized with 10% cement was not durable against wetting-drying test but durable against freezing-thawing test as shown in [Figure](#page-110-0) [4-51.](#page-110-0) In wetting-drying test, one sample collapsed before the complete cycle and another brushed sample has soil loss higher than 7%. On the other hand, for freezing-thawing test, all samples survived all weathering cycles and have soil loss of less than 7%. There is not much significant difference in compressive strength of samples subjected to wetting-drying and freezing-thawing test as shown in [Figure 4-52.](#page-110-1) [Figure 4-53](#page-111-0) shows the estimated soil-cement loss percentage of brushed samples after each cycle for both wetting-drying and freezing-thawing test. For both the samples, soil-cement loss is higher at the end of cycle in wetting-drying test when compared to freezing-thawing test.

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Figure 4-51: Soil loss for clay stabilized with 10% cement

Figure 4-52: Compressive strength (CS) for clay stabilized with 10% cement

Figure 4-53: Durability test result for clay stabilized with 10% cement

4.10.5.b Clay stabilized with 5% cement and 0.5% fiber

Result of wetting-drying and freezing-thawing indicate that clay stabilized with 5% cement and 0.5% fiber survived all the weathering cycles, but the samples are durable against freezing-thawing action only. [Figure 4-54](#page-112-0) shows the percentage of soil loss for both wettingdrying and freezing-thawing in same plot. There was no significant difference in compressive strength of samples subjected to wetting-drying and freezing-thawing test [Figure 4-55,](#page-112-1) all the samples have compressive strength in same range. [Figure 4-56](#page-113-0) shows the estimated soil-cement loss percentage of brushed samples after each cycle for both wetting-drying and freezingthawing test. For both the samples, soil-cement loss is higher from the beginning of cycle in wetting-drying test when compared to freezing-thawing test. Percent soil loss in freezingthawing test is almost half than the loss in wetting-drying test.

Figure 4-54: Soil loss for clay stabilized with 5% cement and 0.5% fiber

Figure 4-55: Compressive strength for clay stabilized with 5% cement and 0.5% fiber

Figure 4-56: Durability test result for clay stabilized with 5% cement and 0.5% fiber

4.10.5.c Clay stabilized with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber

EPK clay stabilized with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber is durable against both weathering action- wetting-drying and freezing-thawing test. [Figure 4-57](#page-114-0) shows the percentage of soil loss during the durability test which indicates that all the samples have soil-cement loss percentage less than 7%. Soil loss percentage in wetting-drying test in marginal range whereas soil loss percentage in freezing-thawing test is almost half of the value of wetting-drying test. In this test condition, there is a significant difference in compressive strength of samples subjected to wetting-drying and freezing-thawing test as shown in [Figure 4-58.](#page-115-0) Samples subjected to wettingdrying test have significantly higher compressive strength compared to freezing-thawing test. Compressive strength of wetting-drying cycle is greater than 1050 psi while the compressive strength of freezing-thawing sample is less than 600 psi. [Figure 4-59](#page-115-1) shows the estimated soilcement loss percentage of brushed samples after each cycle for both wetting-drying and freezingthawing test. For both the samples, soil-cement loss is higher towards the end of cycle in

wetting-drying test when compared to freezing-thawing test. For the samples stabilized with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber, one interesting result has been observed. Although the soil cement loss percentage is higher in wetting-drying test, even the compressive strength is also higher for the same test. Generally, it is expected that higher the soil loss, lowers the compressive strength, but while comparing the result of wetting-drying and freezing-thawing, we get just the opposite result than our expectation. This may be due to full hydration of cement during the wetting phase, significant bond strength develops and results in the higher compressive strength of wetting-drying test.

Figure 4-57: Soil loss for clay stabilized with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber

Figure 4-58: Compressive strength (CS) for clay stabilized with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber

Figure 4-59: Durability test result for clay stabilized with 10% cement and 0.5% fiber

4.10.5.d Summary of comparison between wetting-drying and freezing-thawing test

Soil-cement loss percentage and compressive strength of all survived samples for both durability test are plotted in same graph as shown in [Figure 4-60](#page-117-0) and [Figure 4-61,](#page-118-0) respectively. From this plot, it can be visualized the effect of different proportion of cement content on each wetting-drying and freezing-thawing test. The parameters used for analysis are soil-cement loss percentage and compressive strength after $12th$ cycle.

From [Figure 4-60,](#page-117-0) it can be observed that there was least percentage loss of soil for unbrushed samples for both durability test. Soil loss percentage for the sample stabilized with 10% cement or 10% cement + 0.5% fiber during freezing-thawing test was zero. For both wetting-drying and freezing-thawing test, sample stabilized with 10% cement $+0.5\%$ fiber has the least value of soil-cement loss. For all the case shown in plot, percentage soil loss in freezing-thawing is less than 7% while only the samples stabilized with 10% cement $+0.5\%$ fiber has soil loss less than 7% during wetting-drying test. From [Figure 4-60,](#page-117-0) it is clear that wetting-drying test has significantly higher soil-cement loss percent for all combination of stabilizer when compared to freezing-thawing test. Based on this result we can conclude that wetting-drying durability test is more severe than freezing-thawing test for EPK clay stabilized with cement or cement-fiber combination. Theivakularatnam and Gnanendran (2015) also found that result of wetting-drying test was more heavily deterioration than freezing-thawing test for granular soil stabilized with cement and fly ash combination.

Figure 4-60: Soil loss for of all survived samples during durability test

Figure 4-61: Compressive strength for of all survived samples during durability test

[Figure 4-61](#page-118-0) shows the compressive strength of all survived samples stabilized with different proportion of cement and fiber and subjected to wetting-drying and freezing-thawing test. From Figure 4-61, it can be observed that compressive strength of clay stabilized with 5% cement $+0.5\%$ fiber was higher by a little margin only than the compressive strength of clay stabilized with 10% cement, for both freezing-thawing and wetting-drying test. For freezingthawing test there was no significant increase in compressive strength with the addition of additional 5% cement on 5% cement $+ 0.5%$ fiber combination but for wetting-drying test compressive strength increases significantly for 10% cement + 0.5% fiber compared to 5% cement $+0.5\%$ fiber. For 10% cement only and 5% cement $+0.5\%$ fiber stabilization, range of compressive strength for both wetting-drying and freezing-thawing test is close. In overall, for freezing-thawing test, there was no vast differences in compressive strength for all three combinations but for wetting-dying test, compressive strength of 10% cement $+0.5\%$ fiber was significantly higher than other two combinations, almost double.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The present research investigates the long-term durability of cement and fiber stabilized EPK clay. Before running the durability test of EPK clay, various characterization of EPK clay and EPK clay mixed with cement and fiber were conducted. Based on the laboratory setup of durability test and characterization of EPK clay, the following conclusions were drawn:

- 1. EPK clay is classified as High Compressible Silty Clay (MH) or A-7-5 that consists of 74% clay-sized particle and 26% silt-sized particle.
- 2. EPK clay has specific gravity of 2.59; when cement having specific gravity of 3.135 was added on EPK clay, overall specific gravity increases and when fiber having specific gravity of 0.93 was added, specific gravity of EPK clay decreases. The increase or decrease in specific gravity depends on the amount of cement and fiber, respectively.
- 3. EPK clay has the Maximum Dry Density (MDD) and minimum Optimum Moisture Content (OMC) as compared to EPK clay mixed with cement or fiber. When 5% cement content was added in EPK clay, MDD decreases, and OMC increases. Further increase in cement content results in the increase in MDD and decrease in OMC due to decrease in plasticity of soil than with 5% cement content.
- 4. From SEM test it can be concluded that EPK clay has flaky structure with randomly oriented conglomerated particles. Alumina and Silica are the major components of EPK clay. The addition of cement in clay adds the presence of calcium in the soil-cement mixture.
- 5. From the result of XRD test on EPK clay and EPK clay mixed with cement, it can be concluded that Kaolinite is the main minerals presents in EPK clay and EPK clay mixed with cement. Addition of 5% cement forms new Calcite minerals. When 10% cement was added, Calcite forms which is responsible for the durability of stabilized soil.
- 6. EPK clay stabilized with 10% cement $+0.5%$ fiber was only durable against wettingdrying test. Sample stabilized with 5% cement $+0.5\%$ fiber survived the complete wetting-drying weathering cycle but exceed the soil-cement percent loss than specified durability criteria. Also, 10% cement $+0.5\%$ fiber combination was the optimum content of stabilizer for durability of EPK clay against wetting-drying.
- 7. EPK clay stabilized with 10% cement, 5% cement + 0.5% fiber, and 10% cement + 0.5% fiber were durable against freezing-thawing combination. EPK clay stabilized with 5% cement + 0.5% cement was considered as the optimum amount for stabilizer for the durability of EPK clay against freezing-thawing.
- 8. Addition of fiber increases the tensile strength of sample. During the compression test, sample without fiber crumbled whereas sample with fiber cracks from many points but it didn't crumble during the compression test. Thus, fiber improves the brittle failure pattern as well.
- 9. Rather than using only 10% cement for freezing-thawing test, 5% cement + 0.5% fiber may be economical and durable. Fiber improves the tensile strength and brittle failure pattern. Parsons and Milburn (2003) also suggest that combination of stabilizing agent may be economical and durable.
- 10. For the region with extreme cold and extreme hot temperature followed by rainfall, both wetting-drying and freezing-thawing test are recommended.

11. For EPK clay, wetting-drying test seems harsher compared to freezing-thawing test. But this may not be the case for all type of soil. Result of durability depends on the type of soil and stabilizer used. Ahmed and Ugai (2011) stabilized the sandy soil using gypsum and cement and found that the effect of freezing-thawing on stabilized sandy soil was more negative compared to wetting-drying.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the experience after conducted the durability test of EPK clay, following recommendations have been proposed for the future research work:

- 1. EPK clay samples were stabilized using cement and fiber. Due to limited resources, manual mixing method was used. For more precise result, mechanical mixing method of cement and fiber in the soil is recommended. Because of manual hand mixing, some lumps of fiber were found, which can be dispersed well by using mechanical mixing method.
- 2. Another main and most important step that needs to be carried out for future research is humidity control. For this research, humidity chamber was made by using thick plastic ziplock tank and humidifier. But for the propose of thawing of sample during freezingthawing, humidity and temperature control humidity chamber is strongly recommended.
- 3. Also, during the 7 days curing of samples, temperature and humidity control chamber is suggested.
- 4. If possible, brushing standardization during the wetting-drying test is suggested.
- 5. Percent of soil loss after each cycle was calculated based on PCA approximate method and referencing the oven dried result after $12th$ cycle. The result obtained is very

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approximate. Detail research and further experiment must be carried out for an accurate estimate of percent soil loss after each cycle.

- 6. Before making conclusion on the severity of test, both wetting-drying and freezingthawing test should be conducted on various types of soil using different combination of stabilizer.
- 7. Due to availability of resources, only one unbrushed sample was casted for this resource. More numbers of unbrushed sample can be casted for accurate estimation of water of hydration.
- 8. In addition to cement and fiber, other types of stabilizer like fly ash, lime, etc. can be added and durability test can be conducted.
- 9. Based on literature review, 0.5% amount of fiber was used for this research, optimization of fiber using different percentage of fiber can be done. Also, different fiber length can be used to see the effect of fiber length on durability performance.
- 10. Unconfined Compressive Strength (UCS) can be done on same stabilized soil and their result can be correlated to the percent loss of soil-cement.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

HYDROMETER TEST

Date: 08/29/2018

APPENDIX B

ATTERBERG LIMIT TEST

Date: 28/08/2018

Soil Type: EPK

Liquid Limit Calculation

Method 1: Multiple Point Method

APPENDIX C

MINIATURE PROCTOR TEST

Table C-1-a Miniature Proctor Test Data of EPK clay

Table C-1-b Miniature Proctor Test Data of EPK clay

Table C-2-a Miniature Proctor Test Data of EPK clay + 5% Cement

Table C-2-b Miniature Proctor Test Data of EPK clay + 5% Cement

Table C-3-b Miniature Proctor Test Data of EPK clay + 10% Cement

Table C-4-a Miniature Proctor Test Data of EPK clay + 5% Cement + 0.5% Fiber

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Table C-4-b Miniature Proctor Test Data of EPK clay + 5% Cement + 0.5% Fiber

Table C-5-a Miniature Proctor Test Data of EPK clay + 10% Cement + 0.5% Fiber

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Table C-5-b Miniature Proctor Test Data of EPK clay + 10% Cement + 0.5% Fiber

				Soil + 10%		Soil + 5% Cement +		Soil + 10% Cement	
EPK Clay		Soil + 5% Cement		Cement		0.5% Fiber		$+0.5\%$ Fiber	
MC	Υ_d (lb/ft ³)	MC	Υ_d (lb/ft ³)	MC	Υ_d (lb/ft ³)	MC	Υ_d (lb/ft ³)	MC	Υ_d (lb/ft ³)
29.513	79.86	30.63	75.40	30.81	74.96	29.34	73.65	30.29	74.86
32.831	82.66	34.84	79.41	34.52	79.98	34.71	78.73	34.33	79.35
35.105	83.80	36.24	80.23	35.95	81.70	36.63	79.94	36.38	81.95
36.783	81.69	38.35	79.55	37.92	81.07	37.51	79.99	37.72	80.93
40.773	76.64	40.82	77.15	42.79	75.45	42.26	75.98	40.21	78.53

Table C-6 Miniature Proctor Test Data: Summary

APPENDIX D

PLASTICITY TEST

Test D-1 Plasticity Test Data of EPK Clay

Calibration factor: 10 division = 1 mm

Liquid Limit Test

Plastic Limit Test

From Moisture Content Vs. Penetration graph, moisture

Test D-2 Plasticity Test Data of EPK Clay + 5% Cement

Calibration factor: 10 division = 1 mm

Liquid Limit Test

Plastic Limit Test

From moisture content Vs. penetration graph, moisture

Test D-3 Plasticity Test Data of EPK Clay + 10% Cement

Calibration factor: 10 division = 1 mm

Liquid Limit Test

Plastic Limit Test

From moisture content Vs. penetration graph, moisture

APPENDIX E

WETTING-DRYING TEST

Test E-1 Wetting-Drying Test Data of EPK Clay (WD_0C)

Molding Data (WD_0C)

Test Start Date: $10/6/2018$

Molding Data Continue (WD_0C)

Difference between OMC and moisture content of specimen < 1%, OK

Difference between MDD and dry density of specimen < 3 lb/ft³, OK

Wetting-Drying Cycle Data of EPK clay sample (WD_0C)

Test E-2 Wetting-Drying Test Data of EPK Clay + 5% Cement (WD_5C)

Molding Data (WD_5C)

Test Start Date: 11/16/2018

Molding Data Continue (WD_5C)

Difference between OMC and moisture content of specimen < 1%, OK

Wetting-Drying Cycle Data of EPK clay + 5% Cement (WD_5C)

Test E-3 Wetting-Drying Test Data of EPK Clay + 10% Cement (WD_10C)

Molding Data (WD_10C)

Test Start Date: 2/22/2019

Molding Data Continue (WD_10C)

Difference between OMC and moisture content of specimen < 1%, OK

Difference between MDD and dry density of specimen < 3 lb/ft^3 , OK

		Sample No.			Sample 1		Sample 2	Sample 3			
Cycles	Procedure	Parameter	Mass/diameter/height		Avg. Vol. in^3	Mass	Mass				
Cycle 1	After 5 hrs	1679.880 Mass (gm) =			57.448	1686.930	1689.400				
		Mass (lb) =	3.703				3.719	3.724			
	immersion	Diameter $(in)=$	3.996 3.996 3.993								
		Height $(in)=$	4.585	4.6	4.564						
	After 42 hrs	Mass (gm) =	1300.000			53.484	1321.370	1316.630			
	oven dried at	Mass $(lb)=$	2.866				2.913	2.903			
	71° C	Diameter $(in)=$	3.905	3.903	3.901						
		Height $(in)=$	4.474	4.481	4.456						
	After giving	Mass (gm) =					1318.850	1314.660			
	firm strokes	Mass $(lb)=$					2.908	2.898			
End of 1 st Cycle											
Cycle $\overline{2}$		Mass (gm) =	1623.230			54.233	1630.900	1632.720			
	After 5 hrs	Mass $(lb)=$	3.579				3.596	3.600			
	immersion	Diameter $(in)=$	3.919	3.914	3.914						
		Height $(in)=$	4.478	4.528	4.505						
	After 42 hrs	Mass (gm) =	1299.320			53.463	1312.720	1303.410			
	oven dried at	Mass $(lb)=$	2.865				2.894	2.874			
	71° C	Diameter $(in)=$	3.901	3.900	3.900						
		Height $(in)=$	4.461	4.492	4.471						
	After giving	Mass $(gm)=$					1307.690	1300.050			
	firm strokes				2.883	2.866					
End of 2 nd Cycle											

Wetting-Drying Cycle Data of EPK clay + 10% Cement (WD_10C)

Percent Loss of Soil Calculation for WD_10C

Compressive Strength Calculation for WD_10C

Test E-4 Wetting-Drying Test Data of EPK Clay + 5% Cement + 0.5% Fiber (WD_5C_0.5F)

Molding Data (WD_5C_0.5F)

Test Start Date: 10/29/2018

Molding Data Continue (WD_5C_0.5F)

Difference between OMC and moisture content of specimen < 1%, OK

Difference between MDD and dry density of specimen < 3 lb/ft³, OK

Wetting-Drying Cycle Data of EPK clay + 5% Cement Sample + 0.5% Fiber (WD_5C_0.5F)

Percent Loss of Soil Calculation for WD_5C_0.5F

Compressive Strength Calculation for WD_5C_0.5F

Test E-5 Wetting-Drying Test Data of EPK Clay + 10% Cement + 0.5% Fiber (WD_10C_0.5F)

Molding Data (WD_10C_0.5F)

Test Start Date: 10/31/2018

Molding Data Continue (WD_10C_0.5F)

Difference between OMC and moisture content of specimen < 1%, OK

Difference between MDD and dry density of specimen $<$ 3 lb/ft³, OK

Percent Loss of Soil Calculation for WD_10C_0.5F

Compressive Strength Calculation for WD_10C_0.5F

APPENDIX F

FREEZING-THAWING TEST

Test F-1 Freezing-Thawing Test Data of EPK Clay (FT_0C)

Molding Data (FT_0C)

Test Start Date: 1/16/2019

Molding Data Continue (FT_0C)

Difference between OMC and moisture content of specimen < 1%, OK Difference between MDD and dry density of specimen $\langle 3 \text{ lb/ft}^3, \text{OK} \rangle$

Freezing-Thawing Cycle Data of EPK clay Sample (FT_0C)

Test F-2 Freezing-Thawing Test Data of EPK Clay + 5% Cement (FT_5C)

Molding Data (FT_5C)

Test Start Date: 1/30/2019

Molding Data Continue (FT_5C)

Difference between OMC and moisture content of specimen < 1%, OK

Difference between MDD and dry density of specimen $\langle 3 \text{ lb/ft}^3, \text{OK} \rangle$

Freezing-Thawing Cycle Data of EPK clay + 5% Cement (FT_5C)

Test F-3 Freezing-Thawing Test Data of EPK Clay + 10% Cement (FT_10C)

Molding Data (FT_10C)

Test Start Date: 1/30/2019

Molding Data Continue (FT_10C)

Difference between OMC and moisture content of specimen < 1%, OK

Difference between MDD and dry density of specimen < 3 lb/ft³, OK

Freezing-Thawing Cycle Data of EPK clay + 10% Cement (FT_10C)

Percent Loss of Soil Calculation for FT_10C

Compressive Strength Calculation for FT_10C

Test F-4 Freezing-Thawing Test Data of EPK Clay + 5% Cement + 0.5% Fiber (FT_5C_0.5F)

Molding Data (FT_5C_0.5F)

Test Start Date: 3/1/2019

Molding Data Continue (FT_5C_0.5F)

Difference between OMC and moisture content of specimen < 1%, OK

Difference between MDD and dry density of specimen < 3 lb/ft³, OK

Freezing-Thawing Cycle Data of EPK clay + 5% Cement Sample + 0.5% Fiber (FT_5C_0.5F)

Percent Loss of Soil Calculation for FT_5C_0.5F

Compressive Strength Calculation for FT_5C_0.5F

Test F-5 Freezing-Thawing Test Data of EPK Clay + 10% Cement + 0.5% Fiber (FT_10C_0.5F)

Molding Data (FT_10C_0.5F)

Test Start Date: 3/3/2019

Molding Data Continue (FT_10C_0.5F)

Difference between OMC and moisture content of specimen < 1%, OK

Difference between MDD and dry density of specimen < 3 lb/ft³, OK

	Sample No.	Sample 1				Sample 2	Sample 3
Initial Procedure	Parameter	Mass/diameter/height			Avg. Vol. in^3	Mass	Mass
	Mass (gm) =	1667.360				1675.280	1660.120
After Molding	Mass $(lb)=$	3.676			57.165	3.693	3.660
Date: 10/06/2018	Diameter $(in)=$	3.994	3.993	3.996			
	Height $(in)=$	4.544	4.579	4.563			
	Mass $(gm)=$	1665.490				1674.580	1656.700
After 7 days	Mass $(lb)=$	3.672			57.057	3.692	3.652
storage period	Diameter $(in)=$	3.984	3.985	3.983			
	Height $(in)=$	4.564	4.568	4.599			
Original Dry Mass (gm)		1229.067				1235.843	1222.544
Original Dry Mass (lb)		2.710				2.725	2.695

Freezing-Thawing Cycle Data of EPK clay + 10% Cement Sample + 0.5% Fiber (FT_10C_0.5F)

Percent Loss of Soil Calculation for FT_10C_0.5F

Compressive Strength Calculation for FT_10C_0.5F

APPENDIX G

DURABILITY TEST PHOTOGRAPH

Figure F-1: Drying Temperature setup for Wetting-Drying Test

Figure F-2: Sample drying at 71°C

Figure F-3: Sample ready for Brushing

Figure F-4: Sample subjected to brushing

Figure F-5: Sample immersed in water during wetting process

Figure F-6: Samples inside freezing chamber during freezing process

Figure F-7: Samples after freezing

Figure F-8: Samples under thawing (inside humidity control chamber)

Figure F-9: Hygrometer reading inside humidity chamber

Figure F-10: EPK sample with cement only (without fiber)

crumbled completely during compression test

Figure F-11: EPK sample with cement + fiber during compression test, improves the brittle failure pattern

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Thesis Paper Title:

Long-Term Durability of Ordinary Portland Cement and Polypropylene Fiber Stabilized Clay

Major Professor: Dr. Prabir K. Kolay