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DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING

**EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE OF REINFORCED
CONCRETE FRAMES
WITH MASONRY INFILL PANELS**

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CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	i
ABSTRACT	iv
STATEMENT	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW	3
2.1. GENERAL REVIEW	3
2.2. THE DIAGONAL STRUT CONCEPT	3
2.2.1. <i>Simple one diagonal strut analogy</i>	3
2.2.2. <i>Types of loading - diagonal or lateral</i>	4
2.2.3. <i>Investigations on factors determining the response of infilled frames</i>	5
2.2.4. <i>The diagonal strut analogy at high load</i>	5
2.2.5. <i>Effective diagonal area</i>	9
2.3. FINITE ELEMENT METHOD SIMULATIONS.....	10
2.3.1. <i>Type of elements used for the infill wall</i>	10
2.3.2. <i>Type of elements used for the frame members</i>	11
2.3.3. <i>Modelling of the frame-wall interface</i>	12
2.3.4. <i>Lack of initial fit between the frame and the wall</i>	12
2.4. DYNAMIC SIMULATIONS AND DYNAMIC BEHAVIOUR.....	14
2.4.1. <i>Hysteresis rule for masonry infilled frames</i>	14
2.4.2. <i>Damping and natural frequencies</i>	16
2.5. CLAY BRICK MASONRY PROPERTIES.....	17
2.5.1. <i>Young's modulus of masonry</i>	17
2.5.2. <i>Failure modes and failure surfaces of brick masonry</i>	18
2.6. BEHAVIOUR OF THE FRAME MEMBERS	19
2.7. RETROFIT	20

2.8 CONCLUSION	20
CHAPTER 3 - AIMS AND BASIC DEFINITIONS	22
3.1. AIMS OF THIS RESEARCH.....	22
3.2. DEFINITIONS OF THE GEOMETRY AND DESIGN OF THE INFILLED FRAMES	22
CHAPTER 4 - STATIC ANALYSIS	26
4.1. INTRODUCTION	26
4.2. DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODELS FOR STATIC ANALYSIS BASED ON THE FINITE ELEMENT METHOD	26
4.2.1. <i>The wall elements - type and minimum number</i>	27
4.2.2. <i>The beam elements</i>	29
4.2.3. <i>The non-linear spring elements</i>	29
4.2.4. <i>Linear spring elements</i>	30
4.2.5. <i>Further improvement of the model - increasing the number of elements in the loaded corner and diagonally opposite corner</i>	31
4.2.6. <i>Assumptions and restrictions of the finite element model</i>	32
4.3. RESULTS FROM THE STATIC ANALYSIS	33
4.3.1. <i>Stress distribution within the panel</i>	33
4.3.2. <i>Analysis of the loaded springs</i>	36
4.3.3. <i>Effective diagonal area</i>	39
4.3.4. <i>Moment and shear force distribution in the columns</i>	41
4.4. BEHAVIOUR OF THE INFILLED FRAME IN THE CASE OF AN EXISTING CONSTRUCTION GAP	42
4.5. STIFFNESS AND STRENGTH OF THE MASONRY INFILL WALL	44
4.6. COMPARISON WITH RESULTS FROM PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS	48
4.7. CONCLUSION	49
CHAPTER 5 - DYNAMIC ANALYSIS - MODEL	50
5.1. INTRODUCTION	50
5.2. DEVELOPMENT OF THE DYNAMIC MODEL	51
5.2.1. <i>Parameters governing the solution</i>	51
5.2.2. <i>Member type</i>	51
5.2.3. <i>The reinforced concrete frame</i>	52
5.2.4. <i>The diagonals</i>	53
5.2.5. <i>Relation between the static finite element model and the dynamic diagonal strut model</i>	54
5.2.6. <i>Hysteresis rules</i>	58
5.2.7. <i>Hysteresis rules used for the frame members</i>	58

5.2.8. Hysteresis rules used for the spring members	60
5.2.9. Values of the parameters for Wayne Stewart degrading hysteresis for the case of no gap	63
5.2.10. Values of the parameters for Wayne Stewart Degrading hysteresis for the case of a gap between the frame and the wall	67
5.2.11. Overall hysteresis rule for an infilled frame	69
5.2.12. Applied loads and lumped weights.....	70
5.3. IMPROVEMENT OF THE MODEL AND COMPARISON WITH EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS OF INFILLED FRAMES TESTS	72
5.3.1. Lateral resistance of a single storey single bay frame	72
5.3.2. Lateral resistance of an infilled frame with 5 mm gap between the frame and the wall	75
5.3.3. Lateral resistance of an infilled frame with 15 mm gap between the frame and the wall	79
5.3.4. Adequacy of the analytical models	82
CHAPTER 6 - DYNAMIC ANALYSIS - RESULTS.....	84
6.1. MODEL M1.....	84
6.2. MODELS M2, M3, M6 AND M7 - CONSTANT I_0 AND VARYING L/H RATIO	87
6.2.1. Model M2	87
6.2.2. Model M3	87
6.2.3. Model M6	87
6.2.4. Model M7	88
6.3. MODELS M3, M4 AND M5 - VARYING I_0 AND CONSTANT L/H RATIO	96
6.3.1. Model M4	96
6.3.2. Model M5	96
6.4. MODEL M8A.....	102
6.5. COMPARISON OF MODEL M8A WITH MODEL M8.....	104
6.6. COMPARISON OF PARAMETERS USED IN THE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS FROM THE ANALYSIS.....	107
6.7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	109
CHAPTER 7 - CONCLUSION	110
7.1. SUMMARY	110
7.2. RECOMMENDATIONS	111
REFERENCES.....	112

ABSTRACT

Infill walls substantially influence the strength and stiffness characteristics of framed structures, their energy dissipating capacity and considerably reduce the period of oscillation. If frames are designed taking into account the presence of infill walls, the walls might have a beneficial effect on their performance during earthquakes. This research is a theoretical investigation into the lateral response of reinforced concrete frames with brick masonry infill panels. A review of the literature describes the main trends in the solution of the problem of infilled frames. This research made use of the two main approaches: the finite element method for static analysis and the diagonal strut analogy for dynamic analysis. Eight models were investigated to qualitatively assess the influence of the relative stiffness of the frame and the wall, the length to height ratio and the presence of a construction gap on the overall response of the frame-wall system.

The static analysis was performed using the finite element program "Images - 3D" to investigate the behaviour of the frame-wall system in the elastic range of the masonry material. However, non-linear spring elements modelled the frame-wall interface. Strength and stiffness values of the wall panel at yield were derived from the results of the static analysis and were later used in the non-linear dynamic analysis.

The dynamic analysis was carried out using the non-linear analysis program "Ruaumoko". A model of a reinforced concrete frame braced with one diagonal was developed. The frame elements and the diagonal elements were able to develop non-linear deformations thanks to the variety of non-linear hysteresis rules available in "Ruaumoko". Two generalised types of models were developed: one for the case of perfect fit (which was assumed to correspond to the realistic situation of a gap equal to or less than 5mm) and one for the case of presence of a construction gap (which was assumed to correspond to any gap size more than 5mm). The response of these models under cyclic loading was verified by comparison with experimental results by other researchers.

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due references have been made in the text.

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