

**COMPARISON BETWEEN EMPIRICAL, NUMERICAL  
AND PRACTICAL COMPRESSION CAPACITY OF  
ROCK SOCKETED BORED AND CAST IN-SITU PILE:  
A CASE STUDY**

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August 2020

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Engineering  
in Foundation Engineering and Earth Retaining Systems

Supervised by

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## DECLARATION

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Date

The above candidate has carried out research for the Master's thesis under my supervision.

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Prof. U. G. A. Puswewala

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Date

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

First and foremost, I am deeply indebted to my research supervisor Professor U. G. A. Puswewala for his immense support throughout my study with his patience and knowledge. His challenging questions and critical suggestions were beneficial for me to remain on the correct path till towards the completion. Without his encouragement and motivation with continuous guidance, it would have not been possible to complete this study. It is a real privilege and honour for me to study under the supervision of an extraordinary teacher like you.

I also would like to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. S. A. S. Kulathilaka and Dr. L. I. N. De. Silva – course coordinators for the support and guidance extended in terms of academic to pursue my goals. Their sincere and consistent encouragement is greatly appreciated. Further I am grateful to the staff of University of Moratuwa for their support in different ways during this research period.

I specially thank to Eng. Shiromal Fernando – Managing Director and my colleagues in CSEC (Pvt) Ltd, who helped me to obtain the project data and test reports use in this research.

I also extend my sincere thanks to all my batchmates and friends for their support in numerous ways whenever I needed it. The assistance extended in the difficult times are highly appreciated.

Last but not least, I would like share my heartfelt thanks to my wife Dinithi Perera and my parents for their unconditional support, encouragement and love throughout this study. It would have not been possible to come this far without them.

H. Ayesh Malintha Silva

20<sup>th</sup> August 2020

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## **Abstract**

The development of tall structures as a rapidly developing trend in Colombo-Sri Lanka is evident during the recent past due to the high land prices. These tall structures require to be founded on strong substrata and piling is the most popular method that has been used as the foundation for these tall buildings. In Colombo area having found bed rock at shallow depth around 15m to 20m, always design engineers tend to specify the rock socketed end bearing piles without much considering the load carrying mechanism of the pile. It is evident that Sri Lankan design engineering community has a tendency to disregard the pile shaft skin friction resistance, mostly due to the existence of bentonite slurry within borehole during concreting. Therefore, load carrying capacity of such piles is determined completely based on the end bearing from the bed rock. In addition to that in most standards and codes of practice, the pile load carrying capacity correlations are given for specific soil types i.e. sand, clay, gravel. However in local context it is hard to find such conditions and almost all the soils are residual soils having both  $c, \phi$  values.

In this research, different correlations for pile load capacity and its variations are evaluated. A detail comparison is conducted between the compression capacity of piles obtained from different empirical/semi-empirical methods, numerical methods such as FEM and in-situ testing i.e. MLT and HSDLT against the code of practices and local guide lines.

**KEY WORDS:** Empirical, Semi-empirical, Correlations, FEM, Pile load capacity, Skin friction, End bearing, Rock socket, MLT, HSDLT.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

$c$	-	Cohesion or Cohesive Strength (kPa)
$E_m$	-	Elastic modulus of rock mass
$g$	-	Gravitational acceleration ( $\sim 9.81 \text{ mS}^{-2}$ )
$f_s$	-	Unit soil skin friction capacity of pile shaft
$f_r$	-	Unit rock socket skin friction capacity of pile shaft
$j$	-	Rock mass factor
$q_b$	-	End bearing capacity of pile
$m_i$	-	Hoek-Brown constant for intact rock
$m_b$	-	Hoek-Brown constant for broken rock mass
$N_{corr.}$	-	Corrected SPT N value.
$N_{uncorr.}$ Or $N_{field.}$	-	Uncorrected field SPT N value.
$p_a$	-	Atmospheric pressure (101 kPa)
$\sigma'_{vm}$	-	Vertical effective overburden pressure.
$\nu$	-	Poisson's ratio
$\psi$	-	Dilatancy angle
$\phi$	-	Friction angle
$\gamma'$	-	Effective unit weight
$\gamma_w$	-	Unit weight of water
CR	-	Core Recovery
DVL	-	Design Verification Load
SWL	-	Specified Working Load
MLT	-	Maintained Load Test
HSDLT	-	High Strain Dynamic Load Test
MSL	-	Mean Sea Level
RQD	-	Rock Quality Designation
RMR	-	Rock Mass Rating
UCS Or $q_c$ Or $\sigma_c$	-	Uni-axial Compressive Strength of rock(=Unconfined Compressive Strength of intact rock)
HK	-	Hong Kong
BS	-	British Standards
CIDA	-	Construction Industry Development Authority
GSI	-	Geological Strength Index