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An Experimental Study on Geopolymer Concrete with Flyash and Metakaolin Source Materials

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Abstract: *The major problem the world is facing today is the environmental pollution. In the construction industry mainly the production of Portland cement will causes the emission of pollutants results in environmental pollution. We can reduce the pollution effect on environment, by increasing the usage of industrial by-products in our construction industry. Geo-polymer concrete is such a one and in the present study, to produce the geo-polymer concrete the Portland cement is fully replaced with GGBS (Ground granulated blast furnace slag) and Metakaolin and alkaline liquids are used for the binding of materials. The alkaline liquids used in this study for the polymerization are the solutions of Sodium hydroxide (NaOH) and sodium silicate (Na₂SiO₃). 10Molar Sodium hydroxide is taken for the preparation of different mixes by varying the percentages of GGBS (Ground granulated blast furnace slag) and Metakaolin. The cube specimens are taken of size 150mm x 150mm x 150mm for compression test. The curing was done directly by placing the specimens to direct sunlight. The geo-polymer concrete specimens are tested for their compressive strength at the age of 3, 7 and 28days and compared with conventional concrete. For this study M30 concrete mix was used for experimental work. The result shows that there is an increase in the strength of Geopolymer concrete up to 40%GGBS content and then it is decreasing. Therefore it is preferable to use 40%GGBS with metakaolin to get high strength. Metakaolin and GGBS can be used as a replacement material for cement gives an excellent result in strength aspect and quality aspect since it is better than the control concrete.*

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Geopolymer Concrete

The term “geo polymer” was first used by J. Davidovits in the late 1970sand nowadays identifies a family of amorphous alkali or alkali-silicate activated alumino silicate binders of composition $M_2O \cdot mAl_2O_3 \cdot nSiO_2$, usually with $m \approx 1$ and $2 \leq n \leq 6$ (M usually is Na or K) This is a broadly termed “inorganic polymer”. In the synthesis of geo polymer, the chemical reaction may consist of the following steps:

- 1) Dissolution of Si and Al atoms from the source material through the action of hydroxide ions,
- 2) Transportation, orientation or condensation of precursor ions into monomers,
- 3) Setting or polycondensation/polymerisation of monomers into polymeric structures

B. Metakaolin-Flyash Based Geopolymer

In this work, Metakaolin-Fly ash based geopolymer is used as the binder, instead of Portland or other hydraulic cement paste, to produce concrete. The Metakaolin-Fly ash based Geopolymer paste binds the loose coarse aggregates, fine aggregates and other un-reacted materials together to form the geopolymer concrete, with or without the presence of admixtures. The manufacture of geopolymer concrete is carried out using the usual concrete technology methods.

As in the case of OPC concrete, the aggregates occupy about 75-80 % by mass, in Geopolymer concrete. The silicon and the aluminum in the Metakaolin-Fly Ash react with an alkaline liquid that is a combination of sodium silicate(A53) and sodium hydroxide solutions of different molarities like 8M to 16M can be used but in our project we have used 8M, 10M and 12M only to form the Geopolymer paste that binds the aggregates and other un-reacted materials.

II. REVIEW ON GEOPOLYMER CONCRETE

- 1) Joseph Davidovits found that Flyash reacted with alkaline solution and formed a binding material.
- 2) Hardijito & Rangan observed that higher concentration of sodium hydroxide (molar) resulted higher compressive strength and higher the ratio of sodium silicate-to-sodium hydroxide liquid ratio by mass, showed higher compressive strength of geopolymer concrete. They also found that the increased in curing temperature in the range of 30 to 90 °C increased the compressive strength of geopolymer concrete and longer curing time also increased the compressive strength. They handled the

geopolymer concrete up to 120 minutes without any sign of setting and without any degradation in the compressive strength, resulted very little drying shrinkage and low creep.

- 3) *Suresh Thokchom et al* reported that the Geopolymer mortar specimens manufactured from fly ash with alkaline activators were structurally intact and did not show any recognizable change in colour after 18 weeks exposure in 10% sulfuric acid solution and the Geopolymer Concrete was high resistance against sulfuric acid.
- 4) *D. Bondar et al* indicated that the strength of geopolymer concrete decreased as the ratio of water to geopolymer solids by mass increased. Anuar et al revealed that the concentration (in term of molarity) of NaOH influenced the strength characteristic of geopolymer concrete.
- 5) *S. Vaidya et al* examined that uniform temperature was developed throughout the mass and Elastic Modulus and Poission’s ratio were within the acceptable limits.
- 6) *Raijiwala et al* noticed that the Compressive strength of GPC increased over controlled concrete by 1.5 times (M-25 achieves M-45), Split Tensile Strength of GPC increased over controlled concrete by 1.45 times and Flexural Strength of GPC increased over controlled concrete by 1.6 times.
- 7) *Muhd An Fadhil Nuruddin et al* recommended that cast in-situ application in Geopolymer concrete is a viable one.
- 8) *Douglas et al* successfully used Geopolymer Concrete in waste stabilization. Geopolymer Concrete immobilized chemical toxins and reduced leachate level concentrations.

III. THE MOST COMMONLY USED POZZOLANIC MATERIALS

A. Metakaolin

Metakaolin is a calcined product of the clay mineral kaolinite. The Particle size of Metakaolin is smaller than cement particles, but not as fine as silica fume. When kaolinite, a layered silicate mineral with a distance of 7,13 A between the layers of SiO₂ and Al₂O₃ is heated, the water contained between the layers is evaporated and the kaolinite is activated for reaction with cement.

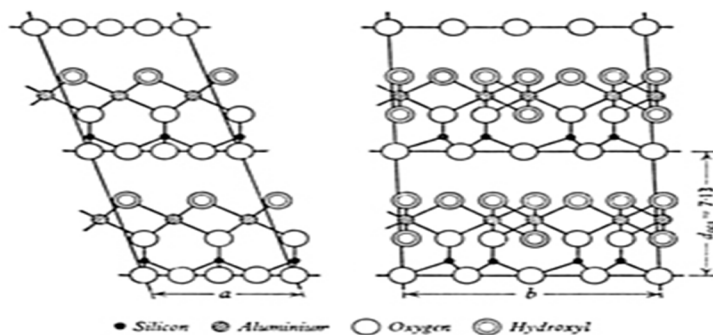


Figure 1. Metakaolin structure

B. Chemical And Physical Properties Of Pozzolanic Materials

The following table gives the chemical properties of the above Materials. However, the values given here are only to appreciate the range and percentage of each of the elements contained in them.

Chemical composition	Fly Ash (%)	GGBFS (%)	Silica Fume (%)
SiO ₂	35.8-42.83	32.6	90.11
Al ₂ O ₃	18.0-26.9	12.8	1.63
Fe ₂ O ₃	6.5-8.2	1.3	1.98
MgO	3.5-4.1	7.2	0.78
SO ₃	2.2-3.5	0.03	--
Na ₂ O+K ₂ O	--	--	1.97
P ₂ O ₅	--	0.05	1.18
CaO	18.8-19.8	41.0	--
Moisture(H ₂ O)	0.2-1.9	--	--

Table 1: Chemical and physical properties of Pozzolanic Materials

Physical property	Silica Fume	Fly Ash	Cement
SiO ₂ Content	85-97	35-48	20-25
Surface Area m ² /kg	17,000-30,000	400-700	300-500
Pozzolanic activity(with cement%)	120-210	85-110	n/a
Pozzolanic activity(with lime%)	1,200-1,660	800-1,000	n/a
(MPa)	(8.3-11.4)	(5.5-6.9)	

Table 2: Comparison of Chemical and Physical Characteristics - Silica Fume, Fly Ash and Cement.

IV. MATERIALS

A. Cement

Ordinary Portland Cement of “BHARATHI” brand 53 GRADE confirming to Indian standards is used in the present investigation. The cement is tested for its various properties as per IS: 4031-1988 and found to be confirming to the requirements as per IS: 8122-1989.

B. Fine Aggregate

The sand obtained from Krishna River near Vijayawada is used as fine aggregate in this project investigation. The sand is free from clayey matter, silt and organic impurities etc. The sand is tested for specific gravity, in accordance with IS: 2386-1963 and it is 2.719, where as its fineness modulus is 2.31. The sieve analysis results are presented in table. The sand confirms to zone-II.

C. Metakaolin

Metakaolin is obtained from the Kaomine industries PVT LTD at Vadodara on Gujarat state. The specific gravity of Metakaolin is 2.6 and the size of particle is less than 90 microns. The colour of metakaolin is pink.

Chemical formula of Metakaolin is Al₂O₃·2SiO₂·2H₂O.

Table:5 shows the Chemical compositions of Metakaolin. The chemical composition of Metakaolin is similar to Portland Cement.

Chemicals	Percentage (%)
SiO ₂	62.62
Al ₂ O ₃	28.63
Fe ₂ O ₃	1.07
MgO	0.15
CaO	0.06
Na ₂ O	1.57
K ₂ O	3.46
TiO ₂	0.36
LOI	2.00

Table 5: Chemical composition of Metakaolin



Figure 1. Buff colored Metakaolin

CERTIFICATE OF ANALYSIS

METAKAOLIN

+/- 300 MESH W/W	3.0 % MAX
-2 MICRON W/W	50.0% MIN.
MOISTURE W/W	0.5 – 1.0%% (MAX.)
METAKAOLIN CONTENT	97.0 % MIN.
REACTIVE WITH LIME (MgCa(OH) ₂ /gm)	1000

TYPICAL ANALYSIS:	
PHYSICAL:	
APPEARANCE	OFF – WHITE
PH (10% SOLIDS)	4.5 – 5.5
BULK DENSITY (Kg/Lit)	0.4 – 0.5
SPECIFIC SURFACE AREA m ² /g (BET)	19 – 20
SPECIFIC GRAVITY	2.6

CHEMICAL (MASS%)	
SiO ₂	52.0
Al ₂ O ₃	46.0
Fe ₂ O ₃	0.60 (MAX.)
TiO ₂	0.65 (MAX.)
CaO	0.09 (MAX.)
MgO	0.03 (MAX.)
Na ₂ O	0.10 (MAX.)
K ₂ O	0.03 (MAX.)
LOSS ON IGNITION	1.00

Table 6: Properties of White Metakaoline obtained from the astra chemicals, MOORES ROAD, THOUSAND LIGHTS, CHENNAI - 600 006

D. Fly Ash

Fly ash, also known as flue-ash, is one of the residues generated in combustion, and comprises the fine particles that rise with the flue gases. Ash that does not rise is called bottom ash. In an industrial context, fly ash usually refers to ash produced during combustion of coal. Fly ash is generally captured by electrostatic precipitators or other particle filtration equipment before the flue gases reach the chimneys of coal-fired power plants, and together with bottom ash removed from the bottom of the furnace is in this case jointly known as coal ash. Depending upon the source and makeup of the coal being burned, the components of fly ash vary considerably, but all fly ash includes substantial amounts of silicon dioxide (SiO₂) (both amorphous and crystalline) and calcium oxide(CaO), both being endemic ingredients in many coal-bearing rock strata.

Content of the component, %							
SiO ₂	Al ₂ O ₃	Fe ₂ O ₃	CaO	MgO	SO ₃	K ₂ O +Na ₂ O	LOI
60.5	30.8	3.6	1.4	0.91	0.14	1.1	0.8

LOI – Loss of ignition

Table 7: Properties of the fly ash obtained from Vijayawada Thermal Power Station

E. Alkaline Solution

The most common alkaline liquid used in geopolymerisation is a combination of

- 1) sodium hydroxide (NaOH) and
- 2) sodium silicate (Na₂SiO₃).

The following tabular column shows the physical Tests results of Bharathi opccement

S.NO	PHYSICAL TESTS	OBTAINED RESULTS	REQUIREMENTS AS PER IS CODES
1	Fineness	2.6%	Not>10% as per IS 4031 part 1
2	Standard Consistency	27.5%	IS 4031 part 4
2	Initial Setting time	47min11sec	Not less than 30 mins as per IS 4031 part 5
3	Final setting time	498 min	Not more than 600 minutes as per IS 4031 part 5
4	Soundness	5mm	Not>10mm as per IS 4031 part 3
5	Specific gravity	3.01	IS 2720 part 3(3.15isgeneral value)

Table 11: physical Tests results of Bharathi opccement

The following tabular column shows the physical Tests of Aggregates which were used in Geopolymer concrete.

Sl. No	Physical Tests	Obtained results	Requirements as per IS 383
1	Crushing Test	38%	Not more than 45% (other than wearing surfaces)
2	Impact Test	32.95%	Not more than 45% (other than wearing surfaces)
3	Los Angeles Abrasion Test	28.5%	Not more than 50% (other than wearing surfaces)
4	Flakiness Index	20.12%	Not > 35% as per MORTH
5	Specific gravity		
	a) Coarse Aggregates	2.8	
	b) Fine Aggregates	2.6	
6	Water absorption		Not>2% as per IS:2386-Part 3
	a) Coarse Aggregates	0.2%	
	b) Fine Aggregates	0.5%	

Table 12: Tests Results of aggregate

F. Compressive Strength For Conventional And Geopolymer Concrete Mixes

The following are the various results obtained for concrete and the values are tabulated as below.

S. No	Time(Days)	Compressive Load Kn	Compressive Strength N/Mm2	Average Strength N/Mm2
1	3	345	15.1	15.11
		350	15.2	
		355	15.26	
2	7	470	20.81	20.87
		480	21.11	
		475	21.1	
3	28	870	38.28	38.28
		870	38.28	
		860	38.22	

Table15: Compressive Strength Of Concrete Form30 Control Mix For 3,7,And 28 Days

S.No	Percentage Of Metakaolin And Flyash In Mixture	3days N/Mm2	7days N/Mm2
1	100% Fly Ash	Fail	Fail
2	100% White Mk	Fail	Fail
3	80% White Mk+20%Flyash	Fail	Fail
4	70% White Mk+30%Flyash	Fail	Fail
5	60% White Mk+40%Flyash	Fail	Fail
6	50% White Mk+50%Flyash	Fail	Fail

Table16: Compressive Strength Of Concrete For Different % Of Fly Ash And White Metakaolin For 3 And 7 Days At Air Dry Curing

S.No	Percentage Of Metakaolin And Flyash In Mixture	3days N/Mm2	7days N/Mm2
1	100% Fly Ash	Fail	Fail
2	100% White Mk	Fail	Fail
3	80% White Mk+20%Flyash	Fail	Fail
4	70% White Mk+30%Flyash	Fail	Fail
5	60% White Mk+40%Flyash	Fail	Fail
6	50% White Mk+50%Flyash	Fail	Fail

Table17: Flexural Strength Of Concrete For Different % Of Fly Ash And White Metakaolin

For 3 And 7 Days At Air Dry Curing

S.No	Percentage Of Metakaolin And Flyash In Mixture	3days N/Mm2	7days N/Mm2
1	100% Fly Ash	Fail	Fail
2	100% Buff Mk	45.12	48.56
3	80% Buff Mk+20% Flyash	46.12	49.67
4	70% Buff Mk+30% Flyash	39.37	42.56
5	60% Buff Mk+40% Flyash	33.65	35.72
6	50% Buff Mk+50% Flyash	30.37	32.86

Table18: Compressive Strength Of Concrete For Different % Of Fly Ash And Buff

Metakaolin With 12m Solution For 3 And 7 Days At Air Dry Curing

S.No	Percentage Of Metakaolin And Fly Ash In Mixture	3days N/Mm2	7days N/Mm2
1	100% Fly Ash	Fail	Fail
2	100% Buff Mk	Fail	Fail
3	80% Buff Mk+20% Flyash	Fail	Fail
4	70% Buff Mk+30% Flyash	Fail	Fail
5	60% Buff Mk+40% Flyash	Fail	Fail
6	50% Buff Mk+50% Flyash	Fail	Fail

Table19: Flexural Strength Of Concrete For Different % Of Fly Ash And Buff Metakaolin

With 12m Solution For 3 And 7 Days At Air Dry Curing

S.No	Molarity of solution	3days N/Mm2	7days N/Mm2
1	8M	Fail	Fail
2	10M	Fail	Fail
3	12M	Fail	Fail

Table 20: Compressive Strength Of Concrete For 100 % white Metakaolin For 3 And 7 Days

At Air Dry Curing

S.No	Molarity of solution	3days N/Mm2	7days N/Mm2
1	8M	Fail	Fail
2	10M	Fail	Fail
3	12M	Fail	Fail

Table:21 Compressive Strength Of Concrete For 100 % white Metakaolin For 3 And 7 Days

At Air Dry Curing

S.No	Molarity of solution	3days N/Mm2	7days N/Mm2
1	8M	Fail	Fail
2	10M	Fail	Fail
3	12M	Fail	Fail

Table:22 flexural Strength Of Concrete For 100 % white Metakaolin For 3 And 7 Days At Air

Dry Curing

S.No	Molarity of solution	3days N/Mm2	7days N/Mm2
1	8M	43.59	44.67
2	10M	45.12	48.56
3	12M	48.97	49.89

Table:23 Compressive Strength Of Concrete For 100 % buff Metakaolin For 3 And 7 Days

At Air Dry Curing

S.No	Molarity of solution	3days N/Mm2	7days N/Mm2
1	8M	Fail	Fail
2	10M	Fail	Fail
3	12M	Fail	Fail

Table:24 flexural Strength Of Concrete For 100 % buff Metakaolin For 3 And 7 Days At Air Dry Curing

V. CONCLUSIONS

- A. From the above results it is apparent that the alkaline solution is not showing any positive results on Geopolymer concrete based on flyash and white metakaoline
- B. The alkaline solutions with 8M, 10M and 12M also not showing positive results on geopolymer concrete with 100% white metakaoline
- C. Buff colored metakaoline was actively participating in the formation of polymerization when it is used as a binding material with alkaline solution and fly ash in the preparation of geopolymer concrete
- D. The compressive strength of the geopolymer concrete with metakaoline and fly ash is good when the percentage of fly ash is upto 20% beyond that the strength is decreasing
- E. The compressive strength of geopolymer concretewith 100% buff colored metakaoline is increasing with increasing in the molarity of the solution
- F. Combination of different percentages white metakaoline and flyash, buff metakaoline and flyash are failed in flexural strength point
- G. Both white and buff colored metakaoline with 8M, 10M and 12M are very week in flexural strength
- H. The strength of the Geopolymer concrete is increasing with the increase in fly ash content upto 20% and then reduces, so it is preferable to use flyash upto 20% in the mixesin air dry curing, this is happening because if we use flyash we should go for oven or steam curing
- I. The strength of the Geopolymer concrete increases with 2%-4% from 7 to 28 days that means there is no much increase in the strength after 4 days.
- J. By using the Metakaolin and flyash as a filler or replacement in cement will reduce environmental pollution.

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