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DEVELOPMENT AND MECHANICAL BEHAVIOUR OF  
SELF-COMPACTING GEOPOLYMER CONCRETE

I FAREED AHMED MEMON

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SELF-COMPACTING GEOPOLYMER CONCRETE

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DEVELOPMENT AND MECHANICAL BEHAVIOUR OF  
SELF-COMPACTING GEOPOLYMER CONCRETE

by

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PERAK

JANUARY 2014

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Title of thesis

DEVELOPMENT AND MECHANICAL BEHAVIOUR OF  
SELF-COMPACTING GEOPOLYMER CONCRETE

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DEDICATION

This Thesis is Dedicated

To

My Beloved Late Father

Allah Warayo Memon

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## ABSTRACT

High consumption of natural resources, environmental concern of CO<sub>2</sub> emission due to cement production and improvement on concrete performance has become a driving force behind the search for alternative materials. An effort made in this regard is the development of self-compacting geopolymer concrete (SCGC). SCGC is a novel material that involves innovation in the production and casting of concrete. It is a type of concrete that does not require compaction for placing it and can be produced by completely eliminating ordinary Portland cement. So far several studies have been done on the characteristics of self-compacting concrete and that of geopolymer concrete in both fresh and hardened state. However, no work has been conducted on SCGC. This research study was therefore aimed to explore the possibility of producing SCGC made with locally available materials by examining its basic physical and mechanical properties. This study dealt with the manufacture of fly ash-based SCGC that could achieve 28 days compressive strength of 40 MPa and fulfill the requirements of concrete in both fresh and hardened state. The essential workability properties of freshly prepared SCGC were assessed through Slump flow, V-Funnel, L-Box and J-Ring test methods. The hardened properties included compressive strength, splitting tensile and flexural strength, modulus of elasticity, Poisson's Ratio, and creep and drying shrinkage. In addition, density and water absorption characteristics of hardened SCGC were also examined. The study produced encouraging results and confirmed the production of satisfactory SCGC. The results indicated that SCGC up to 50 MPa of 28-days compressive strength could be produced. Test results showed that the mechanical properties of SCGC are competitive with those of OPC-based conventional concrete. It is anticipated that the outcomes of this study will extend the scope of SCGC and thus generate new opportunities for the construction industry.

Keywords: Geopolymer concrete, Self-compacting concrete, Self-compacting geopolymer concrete, Mechanical Properties



## ABSTRAK

Peningkatan penggunaan sumber asli, kesan keatas alam sekitar disebabkan oleh pelepasan CO<sub>2</sub> daripada pengeluaran simen dan peningkatan prestasi konkrit telah menjadi penggerak di sebalik pencarian bahan-bahan alternatif. Satu usaha yang dibuat kearah ini ialah dengan menghasilkan konkrit geopolymer terpadat sendiri (SCGC). SCGC adalah bahan unik yang melibatkan inovasi dalam pengeluaran dan pembuatan konkrit. Ia adalah sejenis konkrit yang tidak memerlukan pemadatan untuk menghasilkannya dan ianya boleh dihasilkan tanpa simen Portland biasa sepenuhnya. Setakat ini beberapa kajian telah dilakukan ke atas ciri-ciri konkrit terpadat sendiri dan konkrit geopolymer dalam kedua-dua keadaan; segar dan keras. Walaubagaimanapun, tiada kajian telah dijalankan ke atas SCGC. Oleh itu kajian penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk meneroka kemungkinan menghasilkan SCGC dibuat dengan bahan-bahan tempatan yang sedia ada dengan memeriksa sifat-sifat asas fizikal dan mekanikal. Kajian ini meliputi penghasilan SCGC menggunakan abu terbang yang boleh mencapai kekuatan mampatan 28 hari sebanyak 40 MPa dan memenuhi keperluan konkrit di kedua-dua keadaan; segar dan keras. Ciri-ciri penting keboleherjaan SCGC segar dilakukan melalui *Slump flow*, *V-Funnel*, *L-Box* dan kaedah ujian *J-Ring*. Sifat keras termasuk kekuatan mampatan, tegangan belah dan kekuatan lenturan, modulus keanjalan, Nisbah Poisson, dan rayapan dan pengecutan kering. Di samping itu, kepadatan dan penyerapan air ciri-ciri keras SCGC juga telah diperiksa. Kajian ini telah menghasilkan keputusan yang menggalakkan dan mengesahkan pengeluaran SCGC yang memuaskan. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa SCGC sehingga 50 MPa 28 hari kekuatan mampatan boleh dihasilkan. Keputusan ujian menunjukkan bahawa sifat-sifat mekanik SCGC bersaing dengan konkrit konvensional berasaskan OPC. Adalah dijangka bahawa hasil kajian ini akan meluaskan skop SCGC dan dengan itu menjana peluang-peluang baru untuk industri pembinaan.

Kata Kunci: Konkrit geopolymer, Konkrit terpadat sendiri, Konkrit geopolymer terpadat sendiri, Ciri-ciri mekanikal

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

STATUS OF THESIS.....	i
APPROVAL PAGE.....	ii
TITLE PAGE.....	iii
DECLARATION OF THESIS .....	iv
DEDICATION.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vi
ABSTRACT.....	viii
ABSTRAK.....	ix
COPYRIGHT PAGE.....	x
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	xi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xvi
LIST OF TABLES .....	xxi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTATIONS .....	xxiv
LIST OF PUBLICATIONS .....	xxvii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background of Study.....	1
1.2 Problem Statement .....	4
1.3 Aims and Objectives of the Research .....	5
1.4 Scope of the Research .....	5
1.5 Disposition of Thesis.....	7
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW .....	9
2.1 Introduction .....	9
2.2 Geopolymer Concrete .....	9
2.2.1 Geopolymers: History and background .....	10
2.2.2 Geopolymer Science .....	12
2.3 Constituents of Geopolymer Concrete .....	14
2.3.1 Source Materials.....	14
2.3.1.1 Fly Ash .....	15
2.3.1.2 Silica Fume.....	20
2.3.2 Alkaline Activators .....	23

2.4 Curing of Geopolymer Concrete .....	25
2.5 Mechanical Properties of Geopolymer Concrete .....	28
2.5.1 Compressive Strength .....	29
2.5.2 Tensile and Flexural Strength .....	32
2.5.3 Modulus of Elasticity .....	36
2.5.4 Creep .....	39
2.5.5 Drying Shrinkage .....	42
2.6 Self-Compacting Concrete .....	45
2.7 Development of SCC .....	47
2.8 Composition of SCC .....	48
2.9 Fresh Properties of SCC.....	50
2.9.1 Test Methods to evaluate the Fresh properties of SCC.....	52
2.9.1.1 Slump Flow Test .....	52
2.9.1.2 T <sub>50 cm</sub> slump Flow Test .....	53
2.9.1.3 V-Funnel Test.....	54
2.9.1.4 L-Box Test.....	55
2.9.1.5 J-Ring Test .....	55
2.10 Mechanical Properties of SCC .....	57
2.10.1 Compressive Strength .....	57
2.10.2 Tensile and Flexural Strength .....	60
2.10.3 Modulus of Elasticity .....	62
2.10.4 Creep .....	63
2.10.5 Drying Shrinkage .....	66
2.11 Self-compacting Geopolymer concrete.....	68
2.12 Summary of Literature Review .....	69
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	71
3.1 Introduction .....	71
3.2 Materials.....	71
3.2.1 Fly Ash .....	73
3.2.2 Silica Fume .....	74
3.2.3 Ordinary Portland Cement .....	74
3.2.4 Aggregates.....	75
3.2.5 Alkaline Solution .....	77

3.2.5.1 Sodium hydroxide .....	77
3.2.5.2 Sodium silicate .....	77
3.2.5.3 Preparation of Alkaline solution.....	78
3.2.6 Superplasticizer .....	78
3.2.7 Water .....	79
3.3 Development of Suitable Mix Proportion for SCGC.....	79
3.3.1 Design of Mix Proportions.....	79
3.3.2 Mixing Procedure.....	82
3.3.3 Workability Test for SCGC Mixes .....	83
3.3.3.1 Slump Flow Test .....	84
3.3.3.2 V-Funnel Test.....	84
3.3.3.3 L-Box Test.....	85
3.3.3.4 J-Ring Test .....	86
3.3.4 Preparation and Casting of SCGC Mix Specimens.....	87
3.3.5 Curing of Test Specimens .....	87
3.3.6 Compressive Strength Test .....	88
3.4 Design of OPC Control Mix .....	89
3.4.1 Mix Proportion .....	89
3.4.2 Mixing Procedure.....	90
3.4.3 Workability Test.....	90
3.4.4 Casting and Curing of OPC Control Mix Specimens .....	91
3.5 Evaluation of Physical and Mechanical Properties of Selected SCGC and OPC Control Mixes .....	92
3.5.1 Physical Properties .....	92
3.5.1.1 Density.....	92
3.5.1.2 Water Absorption .....	92
3.5.2 Mechanical Properties .....	94
3.5.2.1 Compressive Strength.....	94
3.5.2.2 Splitting Tensile Strength.....	94
3.5.2.3 Flexural Strength .....	95
3.5.2.4 Modulus of Elasticity .....	97
3.5.2.5 Poisson's Ratio .....	99
3.5.2.6 Creep .....	100

3.5.2.7 Drying Shrinkage .....	104
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS.....	107
4.1 Introduction .....	107
4.2 Fresh Properties of Fly ash-based SCGC.....	107
4.3 Compressive Strength of Fly ash-based SCGC .....	109
4.4 Effect of Salient Parameters on Fresh Properties and Compressive Strength of SCGC .....	110
4.4.1 Effect of Extra water .....	110
4.4.1.1 Effect of Extra water on Fresh properties .....	111
4.4.1.2 Effect of Extra water on Compressive strength.....	116
4.4.2 Effect of Superplasticizer .....	120
4.4.2.1 Effect of Superplasticizer on Fresh properties .....	121
4.4.2.2 Effect of Superplasticizer on Compressive strength .....	125
4.4.3 Effect of Sodium hydroxide Concentration .....	127
4.4.3.1 Effect of Sodium hydroxide Concentration on Fresh properties... 127	
4.4.3.2 Effect of Sodium hydroxide Concentration on Compressive strength .....	131
4.4.4 Effect of Oven Curing Time .....	136
4.4.5 Effect of Curing Temperature .....	137
4.5 Physical and Mechanical Properties of Selected SCGC and OPC Control Mixes .....	140
4.5.1 Physical Properties .....	140
4.5.1.1 Density.....	140
4.5.1.2 Water Absorption .....	141
4.5.2 Mechanical Properties .....	144
4.5.2.1 Compressive Strength.....	144
4.5.2.2 Tensile Strength.....	146
4.5.2.3 Flexural Strength .....	150
4.6 Use of Silica fume as a Partial Replacement of Fly ash in SCGC.....	153
4.6.1 Analysis of Results.....	154
4.6.1.1 Fresh Properties .....	154
4.6.1.2 Hardened Properties .....	155
4.6.1.2.1 Compressive Strength.....	155

4.6.1.2.2 Splitting Tensile Strength .....	158
4.6.1.2.3 Flexural Strength .....	159
4.7 Modulus of Elasticity .....	160
4.8 Poisson's Ratio .....	165
4.9 Creep .....	166
4.10 Drying Shrinkage .....	174
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	177
5.1 Conclusions .....	177
5.2 Recommendations for Future work.....	179
REFERENCES .....	181
APPENDIX A: Details of Trial Mixes .....	195
APPENDIX B: Calculation of Molar Ratio of Mixtures $M_1$ to $M_4$ , $M_{15}$ to $M_{17}$ and SCGCM <sub>1</sub> to SCGCM <sub>4</sub> .....	196
APPENDIX C: Calculation of Water/Geopolymer solids Ratio of Mixtures $M_1$ to $M_4$ , and $M_{15}$ to $M_{17}$ .....	200
APPENDIX D: Modulus of Elasticity and Poisson's Ratio Data.....	202
APPENDIX E: Creep Test Data .....	211
APPENDIX F: Drying Shrinkage Test Data .....	217

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1 Schematic Diagram of Experimental Work .....	7
Figure 2.1 Three Basic Forms of Geopolymer [15].....	11
Figure 2.2 Reaction Mechanism of Geopolymer and Cement-based Concretes [15]..	12
Figure 2.3 SEM Image of Fly ash.....	17
Figure 2.4 SEM Image of Silica fume .....	21
Figure 2.5 Effect of Activator/Fly ash Ratio on Compressive Strength [51] .....	30
Figure 2.6 Effect of Water/Geopolymer solids Ratio on Compressive Strength [51].	30
Figure 2.7 Effect of Curing Time on Compressive Strength [63] .....	31
Figure 2.8 Effect of Curing Temperature on Compressive Strength [63] .....	31
Figure 2.9 Compressive Strength Development of Geopolymer Concrete with Age [1] .....	32
Figure 2.10 Splitting Tensile Strength of Fly ash-based IPC Mixes [61].....	34
Figure 2.11 Flexural Strength of Fly ash-based IPC Mixes [61].....	34
Figure 2.12 Splitting Tensile Strength of OPC and Geopolymer Concrete Mixes [48].....	35
Figure 2.13 Flexural Strength of OPC and Geopolymer Concrete Mixes [48] .....	35
Figure 2.14 Flexural Strength of Alkali-activated Mortars [66].....	36
Figure 2.15 Modulus of Elasticity of IPC Mixes [61] .....	37
Figure 2.16 Poisson's Ratio of IPC Mixes [61].....	38
Figure 2.17 MOE of Alkali-activated Natural Pozzolan Concrete Mixes [70] .....	39
Figure 2.18 Total Strain and Drying Shrinkage Strain of Geopolymer Concrete [13].....	40
Figure 2.19 Specific Creep of Fly ash-based Geopolymer Concrete [13].....	41
Figure 2.20 Creep Coefficient of Fly ash-based Geopolymer Concrete [13] .....	41
Figure 2.21 Creep Coefficient of Steam-cured OPC and Geopolymer Concrete [71] .....	42
Figure 2.22 Drying Shrinkage of Heat-cured Fly ash-based Geopolymer Concrete [13] .....	43
Figure 2.23 Drying Shrinkage of Heat-cured and Ambient-cured GC [13] .....	43
Figure 2.24 Drying Shrinkage for 40-MPa GP and OPC Concretes [71].....	44



Figure 2.25 Drying shrinkage of OPC and Three Optimal Geopolymer Concretes [48] .....	45
Figure 2.26 Mix Composition of SCC in Comparison with NVC [83] .....	48
Figure 2.27 Slump Flow Test Apparatus .....	53
Figure 2.28 V-Funnel Apparatus .....	54
Figure 2.29 L-Box Test Apparatus .....	55
Figure 2.30 J-Ring Test Apparatus .....	56
Figure 3.1 Sodium hydroxide Pellets .....	77
Figure 3.2 Sodium silicate Solution .....	78
Figure 3.3 Superplasticizer .....	79
Figure 3.4 Pan Mixer .....	82
Figure 3.5 Liquid Mixture .....	83
Figure 3.6 Self-Compacting Geopolymer Concrete .....	83
Figure 3.7 Slump Flow Test .....	84
Figure 3.8 V-Funnel Test .....	85
Figure 3.9 L-Box Test .....	86
Figure 3.10 J-Ring Test .....	86
Figure 3.11 Casting of SCGC Mix Specimens .....	87
Figure 3.12 Oven Curing .....	88
Figure 3.13 Air-dry Curing .....	88
Figure 3.14 Compressive Strength Test .....	89
Figure 3.15 Drum Mixer .....	90
Figure 3.16 Workability Test for OPC-based Control Concrete .....	91
Figure 3.17 Casting of OPC Control Mix Specimens .....	91
Figure 3.18 Curing of OPC Control Mix Specimens .....	92
Figure 3.19 Concrete Specimens placed in the Oven .....	93
Figure 3.20 Specimens soaked in Water bath .....	93
Figure 3.21 Specimen in the Jig .....	95
Figure 3.22 Splitting Tensile Strength Test .....	95
Figure 3.23 Flexural Strength Test Methods .....	96
Figure 3.24 Flexural Strength Test .....	96
Figure 3.25 Modulus of Elasticity Test .....	99
Figure 3.26 Location of Demec Gauge Points on Test Cylinders .....	101

Figure 3.27 Creep Test Specimens .....	101
Figure 3.28 Schematic Diagram of Creep Test Frame .....	102
Figure 3.29 Creep Frames with Specimens .....	103
Figure 3.30 Strain Measuring Device .....	104
Figure 3.31 Creep Test Set up.....	104
Figure 3.32 Specimens for Drying Shrinkage Test.....	105
Figure 3.33 Mechanical Dial Guage Comparator .....	105
Figure 3.34 Drying Shrinkage Test Set up.....	106
Figure 4.1 Effect of Extra water on Slump flow.....	112
Figure 4.2 Effect of Extra water on T <sub>50</sub> Slump flow.....	113
Figure 4.3 Effect of Extra water on V-Funnel flow time.....	114
Figure 4.4 Effect of Extra water on L-Box (H <sub>2</sub> /H <sub>1</sub> ) ratio .....	115
Figure 4.5 Effect of Extra water on J-Ring Blocking step value .....	116
Figure 4.6 Effect of Extra water on Compressive strength.....	119
Figure 4.7 Effect of Water/Geopolymer solids Ratio on Compressive strength .....	120
Figure 4.8 Effect of Superplasticizer on Slump flow .....	122
Figure 4.9 Effect of Superplasticizer on T <sub>50</sub> Slump flow .....	123
Figure 4.10 Effect of Superplasticizer on V-Funnel flow time .....	124
Figure 4.11 Effect of Superplasticizer on L-Box (H <sub>2</sub> /H <sub>1</sub> ) ratio .....	124
Figure 4.12 Effect of Superplasticizer on J-Ring Blocking step value.....	125
Figure 4.13 Effect of Superplasticizer on Compressive strength .....	126
Figure 4.14 Effect of Sodium hydroxide Concentration on Slump flow.....	128
Figure 4.15 Effect of Sodium hydroxide Concentration on T <sub>50</sub> Slump flow.....	129
Figure 4.16 Effect of Sodium hydroxide Concentration on V-Funnel flow time.....	130
Figure 4.17 Effect of Sodium hydroxide Concentration on L-Box (H <sub>2</sub> /H <sub>1</sub> ) ratio.....	130
Figure 4.18 Effect of Sodium hydroxide Concentration on J-Ring Blocking step value .....	131
Figure 4.19 Effect of Sodium hydroxide Concentration on Compressive strength...	133
Figure 4.20 Effect of Curing Time on Compressive strength.....	137
Figure 4.21 Effect of Curing Temperature on Compressive strength.....	139
Figure 4.22 Densities of SCGC and OPC Mix Specimens.....	141
Figure 4.23 Strength Development of SCGC and OPC Mixes with Time .....	146
Figure 4.24 Conceptual Model for Geopolymerization [18] .....	146

Figure 4.25 Splitting Tensile Strength of SCGC and OPC Mixes at Various Ages..	148
Figure 4.26 Comparison of Experimentally Determined Tensile Strength Values of SCGC with Analytical Models .....	150
Figure 4.27 Flexural Strength of SCGC and OPC Mixes at Various Ages .....	152
Figure 4.28 Comparison of Experimentally Determined Flexural Strength Values of SCGC with Analytical Models .....	153
Figure 4.29 Effect of Silica fume content on Compressive Strength .....	158
Figure 4.30 Effect of Silica fume content on Splitting Tensile Strength.....	159
Figure 4.31 Effect of Silica fume content on Flexural Strength .....	160
Figure 4.32 Modulus of Elasticity of SCGC and OPC Control Mixes at Various Ages .....	162
Figure 4.33 Comparison of Experimentally Determined Elastic Modulus of SCGC with Analytical Models .....	165
Figure 4.34 Total Creep and Drying shrinkage strain of SCGC-1 Mix.....	167
Figure 4.35 Total Creep and Drying shrinkage strain of SCGC-2 Mix.....	167
Figure 4.36 Total Creep and Drying shrinkage strain of OPC Control Mix.....	168
Figure 4.37 Creep strain of SCGC-1 Mix .....	168
Figure 4.38 Creep strain of SCGC-2 Mix .....	169
Figure 4.39 Creep strain of OPC Control Mix.....	169
Figure 4.40 Creep Coefficient of SCGC-1 Mix.....	170
Figure 4.41 Creep Coefficient of SCGC-2 Mix.....	170
Figure 4.42 Creep Coefficient of OPC Control Mix.....	171
Figure 4.43 Creep Coefficient of SCGC and OPC Control Mixes .....	171
Figure 4.44 Specific Creep of SCGC-1 Mix.....	171
Figure 4.45 Specific Creep of SCGC-2 Mix.....	172
Figure 4.46 Specific Creep of OPC Control Mix .....	172
Figure 4.47 Specific Creep of SCGC and OPC Control Mixes.....	172
Figure 4.48 Drying shrinkage of SCGC-1 Mix .....	175
Figure 4.49 Drying shrinkage of SCGC-2 Mix .....	175
Figure 4.50 Drying shrinkage of OPC Control Mix .....	176
Figure 4.51 Drying shrinkage of SCGC and OPC Control Mixes.....	176

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1 Davidovits’s proposed Geopolymer Designations [14].....	11
Table 2.2 Requirements for Class F and Class C Fly ashes for use in Portland cement Concrete as per ASTM C 618-05 [28].....	16
Table 2.3 Normal Range of Chemical Composition for Fly ash produced from different Coal types (expressed as percent by weight).....	18
Table 2.4 Chemical Composition of Silica fume [41] .....	21
Table 2.5 Splitting Tensile Strength of Geopolymer Concrete [1].....	33
Table 2.6 MOE and Poisson’s Ratio of Geopolymer Concrete at 90 Days [1] .....	37
Table 2.7 MOE and Poisson’s Ratio of OPC and Fly ash-based GC Mixes [48] .....	38
Table 2.8 Test Methods for Evaluating the Fresh Properties of SCC [92].....	52
Table 2.9 Visual Block Index Ratings [95] .....	56
Table 3.1 Experimental Details of Concrete Tests .....	72
Table 3.2 Chemical Composition of Fly ash as determined by XRF .....	73
Table 3.3 Physical Characteristics and Chemical Composition of Silica fume.....	74
Table 3.4 Chemical Composition of Ordinary Portland Cement.....	75
Table 3.5 Physical Properties of Coarse and Fine aggregate.....	76
Table 3.6 Sieve Analysis of Coarse aggregate.....	76
Table 3.7 Sieve Analysis of Fine aggregate.....	76
Table 3.8 Details of Mix Proportions .....	81
Table 3.9 Mix Proportions .....	89
Table 3.10 Mix Proportions of SCGC and OPC Control Mixes.....	97
Table 4.1 Fresh Properties Test Results.....	108
Table 4.2 Compressive Strength Test Results .....	109
Table 4.3 Composition Characteristics and Compressive strengths of SCGC Mixes produced with Different Contents of Extra water .....	118
Table 4.4 Composition Characteristics and Compressive strengths of SCGC Mixes produced with Different Sodium hydroxide Concentrations .....	134
Table 4.5 Densities of SCGC and OPC Mix Specimens .....	140
Table 4.6 Water Absorption of SCGC Mix (Cubical Specimens).....	142
Table 4.7 Water Absorption of SCGC Mix (Cylindrical Specimens) .....	143

Table 4.8 Water Absorption of OPC Control Mix (Cubical Specimens) .....	143
Table 4.9 Water Absorption of OPC Control Mix (Cylindrical Specimens).....	143
Table 4.10 Assessment Criteria for Absorption as per CEB-FIP [154].....	143
Table 4.11 Compressive Strength of SCGC and OPC Mix Specimens at Various Ages.....	145
Table 4.12 Splitting Tensile Strength of SCGC and OPC Mix Specimens at Different Ages .....	147
Table 4.13 Correlation between Compressive Strength and Tensile Strength of SCGC and OPC Mix .....	148
Table 4.14 Comparison between Calculated Values using Equations 4.1-4.6 and Measured Splitting Tensile Strength of SCGC .....	149
Table 4.15 Flexural Strength of SCGC and OPC Mix Specimens at Different Ages .....	151
Table 4.16 Co-efficient of MOR for SCGC and OPC Mix .....	151
Table 4.17 Comparison between Calculated Values using Equations 4.7 and 4.8 and Measured Flexural Strength of SCGC.....	153
Table 4.18 Mix Proportions .....	154
Table 4.19 Fresh Properties of various SCGC Mixes with the different contents of Silica fume.....	155
Table 4.20 Compressive Strength Test Results .....	157
Table 4.21 Splitting Tensile Strength Test Results.....	159
Table 4.22 Flexural Strength Test Results .....	160
Table 4.23 Modulus of Elasticity of SCGC and OPC Mix Concretes at Different Ages.....	162
Table 4.24 Comparison between Calculated Values using Equations 4.9-4.13 and Measured Values of Modulus of Elasticity .....	164
Table 4.25 Test-to-Predicted Static Elastic Modulus Ratios .....	164
Table 4.26 Poisson's Ratio of SCGC and OPC Mixes at Different Ages .....	166
Table 4.27 Instantaneous Strain and Instantaneous Elastic Modulus .....	166
Table 4.28 Creep Coefficient and Specific Creep of SCGC and OPC Mix Concretes .....	170
Table A.1 Details of Trial Mixes .....	195

Table D.1 Modulus of Elasticity and Poisson’s Ratio Measurements for SCGC-1 Mixture @ 3-Days .....	202
Table D.2 Modulus of Elasticity and Poisson’s Ratio Measurements for SCGC-1 Mixture @ 7-Days .....	203
Table D.3 Modulus of Elasticity and Poisson’s Ratio Measurements for SCGC-1 Mixture @ 28-Days .....	204
Table D.4 Modulus of Elasticity and Poisson’s Ratio Measurements for SCGC-2 Mixture @ 3-Days .....	205
Table D.5 Modulus of Elasticity and Poisson’s Ratio Measurements for SCGC-2 Mixture @ 7-Days .....	206
Table D.6 Modulus of Elasticity and Poisson’s Ratio Measurements for SCGC-2 Mixture @ 28-Days .....	207
Table D.7 Modulus of Elasticity and Poisson’s Ratio Measurements for OPC Control Mixture @ 3-Days .....	208
Table D.8 Modulus of Elasticity and Poisson’s Ratio Measurements for OPC Control Mixture @ 7-Days .....	209
Table D.9 Modulus of Elasticity and Poisson’s Ratio Measurements for OPC Control Mixture @ 28-Days .....	210
Table E.1 Creep strain Measurements for SCGC-1 Mixture .....	211
Table E.2 Creep strain Measurements for SCGC-2 Mixture .....	213
Table E.3 Creep strain Measurements for OPC Control Mixture .....	215
Table F.1 Drying Shrinkage Measurements for SCGC-1 Mixture .....	217
Table F.2 Drying Shrinkage Measurements for SCGC-2 Mixture .....	218
Table F.3 Drying Shrinkage Measurements for OPC Control Mixture .....	219

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTATIONS

### Abbreviations

ACI	American Concrete Institute
ASTM	American Society for Testing Materials
BET	Brunauer Emmer Teller
BS	British Standard
BTU	British Thermal Unit
CSH	Calcium Silicate Hydrate
DEMEC	Demountable Mechanical
EFNARC	European Federation of National Associations Representing Producers and Applicators of Specialist Building Products for Concrete
GGBS	Ground Granulated Blast-Furnace Slag
HRWR	High Range Water Reducer
IPC	Inorganic Polymer Concrete
JSCE	Japan Society of Civil engineers
LOI	Loss on Ignition
LVDT	Linear Voltage Differential Transducer
MOR	Modulus of Rupture
NVC	Normal Vibrated Concrete
OPC	Ordinary Portland cement
SCC	Self-Compacting Concrete
SCGC	Self-Compacting Geopolymer Concrete
SEM	Scanning Electron Microscopy
SSD	Saturated Surface Dry
VBI	Visual Blocking Index
VMA	Viscosity Modifying Admixture
XRD	X-Ray Diffraction
XRF	X-Ray Fluorescence

## Notations

Al	Aluminum
Al <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	Aluminum Oxide
CaO	Calcium Oxide
CO <sub>2</sub>	Carbon dioxide
Fe <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	Iron Oxide
K <sub>2</sub> O	Potassium Oxide
MgO	Magnesium Oxide
Na <sub>2</sub> O	Sodium Oxide
NaOH	Sodium Hydroxide
O	Oxygen
P <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub>	Phosphorus pentoxide
Si	Silicon
SiO <sub>2</sub>	Silica
SO <sub>3</sub>	Sulphur trioxide
TiO <sub>2</sub>	Titanium dioxide
OH <sup>-</sup>	Hydroxide
L	Liters
M	Molarity
GPa	Giga Pascal
MPa	Mega Pascal
Max.	Maximum
Min.	Minimum
Temp.	Temperature
cm	Centimeter
cm <sup>2</sup> /g	Square centimeter per gram
°C	Degree centigrade
dia.	Diameter
ft <sup>3</sup>	Cubic feet
gm	Gram
g/cm <sup>3</sup>	Gram per cubic centimeter
hrs	Hours
in.	inch



kg	Kilogram
kg/m <sup>3</sup>	Kilogram per cubic meter
m	Meter
m <sup>2</sup> /g	Square meter per gram
m <sup>2</sup> /kg	Square meter per kilogram
mm	Millimeter
min.	Minutes
sec.	Seconds
μm	Micron meter
με	Microstrain
%	Percentage
<	Less than
>	Greater than

## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

### Publications (Journal)

1. **F. A. Memon**, M. F. Nuruddin, N. Shafiq, “Compressive strength and workability characteristics of Low-calcium Fly ash-based Self-compacting geopolymer concrete,” *International Journal of Civil and Environmental Engineering*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2011, pp. 72-78.
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3. **F. A. Memon**, M. F. Nuruddin, S. Demie, and N. Shafiq, “Effect of curing conditions on strength of Fly ash-based Self-compacting geopolymer concrete,” *International Journal of Civil and Environmental Engineering*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2011, pp. 183-186.
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2. S. Demie, M. F. Nuruddin, **F. A. Memon**, and N. Shafiq, “Effects of curing temperature and superplasticizer on workability and compressive strength of Self-compacting geopolymer concrete,” *Proceedings of the National Postgraduate Conference 2011 Energy & sustainability: Exploring the Innovative Minds (NPC 2011)*, 19-20 September 2011, University Teknologi PETRONAS, Malaysia. 978-1-4577-1884-7/11/\$26.00 ©2011 IEEE
3. **F. A. Memon**, M. F. Nuruddin, S. Demie, and N. Shafiq, “Development of Fly ash-based Self-compacting geopolymer concrete,” in: *International Conference on Civil, Offshore & Environmental Engineeringfor (ICCOEE2012)*, 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> June 2012, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
4. M. F. Nuruddin, S. Demie, **F. A. Memon**, and N. Shafiq, “Investigation about the effect of water-to-geopolymer solids ratio and curing time on Properties of Self-compacting geopolymer concrete,” in: *International Conference on Civil, Offshore & Environmental Engineeringfor (ICCOEE2012)*, 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> June 2012, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
5. **F. A. Memon**, M. F. Nuruddin, and N. Shafiq, “Factors affecting the compressive strength Self-compacting geopolymer concrete,” *Proceedings of the Annual Postgraduate Conference 2013 Energy & sustainability: Exploring the Innovative Minds (APC 2013)*, 3-5 July 2013, University Teknologi PETRONAS, Malaysia.