

A Numerical Study on the Seismic Performance of Built-Up Battened Columns

Sophia C. Alih, Mohammadreza Vafaei, Farnoud Rahimi Mansour, Nur Hajarul Falahi Abdul Halim

Abstract—Built-up columns have been widely employed by practice engineers in the design and construction of buildings and bridges. However, failures have been observed in this type of columns in previous seismic events. This study analyses the performance of built-up columns with different configurations of battens when it is subjected to seismic loads. Four columns with different size of battens were simulated and subjected to three different intensities of axial load along with a lateral cyclic load. Results indicate that the size of battens influences significantly the seismic behavior of columns. Lower shear capacity of battens results in higher ultimate strength and ductility for built-up columns. It is observed that intensity of axial load has a significant effect on the ultimate strength of columns, but it is less influential on the yield strength. For a given drift value, the stress level in the centroid of smaller size battens is significantly more than that of larger size battens signifying damage concentration in battens rather than chords. It is concluded that design of battens for shear demand lower than code specified values only slightly reduces initial stiffness of columns; however, it improves seismic performance of battened columns.

Keywords—Battened column, built-up column, cyclic behavior, seismic design, steel column.

I. INTRODUCTION

BUILT-UP columns have been widely used in construction industry worldwide. They are composed of two parallel steel profiles that are connected to each other along their length by lacings or battens. Channels and I-shape sections are the most commonly used steel profiles in built-up columns. Plates, angles, and flat bars are often employed as lacings or battens. The main advantage of built-up columns over other types of framing systems is their lower steel weight and higher moment of inertia. However, compared to solid columns, built-up columns have lower shear stiffness, and their axial resistance is significantly affected by shear deformation and compound buckling (i.e. interaction between global buckling and local buckling of individual chords). Buckling resistance of built-up columns under axial load has been addressed by many researchers, and many analytical equations have been derived for estimating their axial load capacity [1]-[3].

Sophia C. Alih is with the Institute of Noise and Vibration, Faculty of Civil Engineering, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 81310, Johor Bahru, Malaysia. (Corresponding author, phone: +07-5531684; fax: +07-5561250; e-mail: sophiacalih@utm.my).

Mohammadreza Vafaei is with the Forensic Engineering Center, Faculty of Civil Engineering, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 81310, Johor Bahru, Malaysia. (e-mail: vafaei@utm.my).

Farnoud Rahimi Mansour and Nur Hajarul Falahi are with the Faculty of Civil Engineering, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 81310, Johor Bahru, Malaysia. (e-mail: farnoud.rm@gmail.com, syajafalah@yahoo.com).

However, only few studies have been carried out on their seismic behavior. Hashemi and Bonab [4], through a series of experimental tests, showed that axial compressive load affected significantly the ductility of laced built-up columns. They also showed that the energy dissipation capacity of tested specimens was not influenced by the distance between chords. They also concluded that the tested built-up laced specimens had a good seismic performance. In another study, Razzaghi et al. [5] examined cyclic performance of concrete-filled built-up battened columns through numerical studies. It was found that the distance between battens at the bottom of examined columns has a great influence on the ultimate load capacity. They concluded that when the applied axial force was distributed between chords and concrete uniformly, the concrete-filling approach was an efficient method for strengthening the built-up columns. Sahoo and Rai [6] showed that when battens are designed for 2-2.5% of axial load, they failed to reach their expected flexural capacity under a constant axial load. By examining five half-scale double-channel battened columns, they indicated that the design of battens should be based on moment-shear interaction of chords. They also found that, when the distance of battens was closer at the plastic hinge location, columns exhibited better cyclic performance.

Despite detailed specifications provided by design codes [7]-[9], built-up battened columns have shown a poor performance when subjected to seismic actions. During past earthquakes, different failure modes have been observed for built-up battened columns among which local buckling of chords has been widely reported. In order to avoid local buckling, design codes often limit the distance between battens based on the slenderness ratio of each individual member. Many codes specify that the slenderness ratio of each member between battens should not exceed three-fourths of the governing slenderness ratio of the built-up column. In addition, the battens are often asked to be designed for a shear force that is equal to 2-2.5% of axial load in the column plus the shear force due to lateral loads.

Herein, a numerical study is performed in order to investigate seismic behavior of built-up columns that their battens have been designed for different ranges of shear capacities. The main intention of this study is to investigate the appropriateness of existing design approach that determines size of battens.

II. FINITE ELEMENT STUDY

A series of numerical studies were carried out in order to compare the cyclic performance of the built-up battened

battens with thickness of 0.8 cm and width of 2.5 cm. This indicates that initial stiffness of the studied columns has not been significantly influenced by the size of battens.

Fig. 2 (a) shows that increase in the thickness of battens from 0.8 cm to 1.6 cm has negligible change in the initial stiffness. Similarly, such increase in the thickness of battens has slightly altered the yield and ultimate strength of the column. A positive post-yield stiffness can be observed for columns having smaller size of battens (i.e. 5 cm and 2.5 cm widths). This matter is more pronounced when larger axial force is imposed to columns. In general, increase in the axial load has slightly reduced the yield strength of columns. However, it has significantly reduced the ultimate strength of columns. Regardless of imposed axial force, the column having battens with 2.5 cm width shows higher ductility compared to other columns. In addition, regardless of the intensity of axial load, the highest ultimate strength is obtained for the column having battens with 5 cm width. Moreover, the column having the largest size of battens shows the lowest ultimate strength compared to other columns.

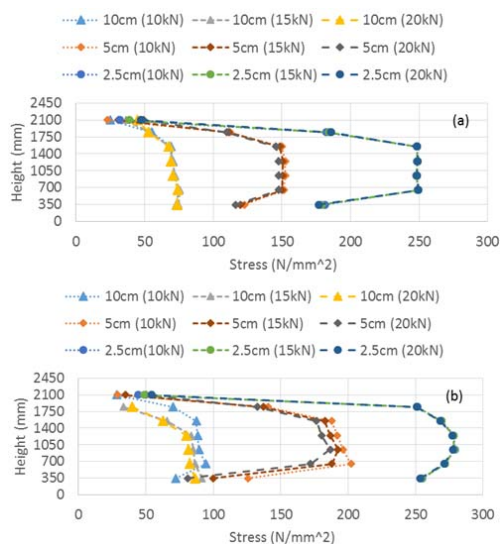
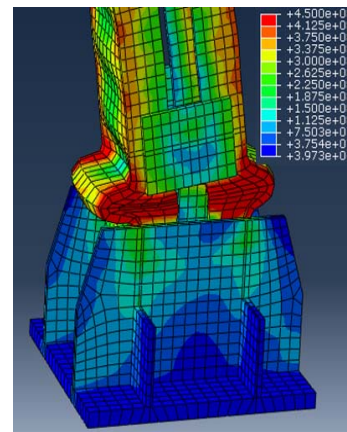


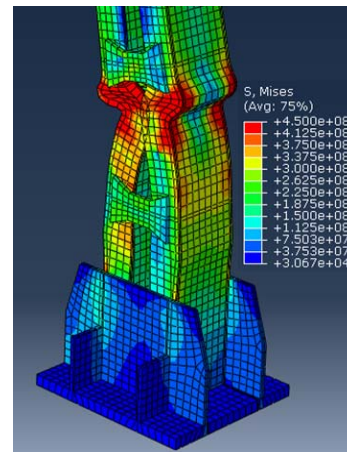
Fig. 3 Von Mises stress at the centroid of battens; (a) 1% drift (b) 2% drift

Fig. 3 displays the von Mises stress at the centroid of battens along the height of columns for 1% and 2% drifts. It can be seen that the larger is the size of battens, the smaller is the stress level of battens. Fig. 3 also shows that increase in the axial force has negligible effect on the stress level of battens in all columns. It can be also seen that stress level in battens is not uniformly distributed along the height of columns. In general, battens located closer to the middle of columns have higher level of von Mises stress compared to those located at the bottom or top of columns. Fig. 3 (b) shows that, as the drift increase from 1% to 2%, stress level in battens with smaller size (i.e. 2.5 cm and 5 cm) increases significantly. However, only a small increase in the stress level of 10 cm width battens is observed. This indicates that, smaller size battens have undergone more deformation

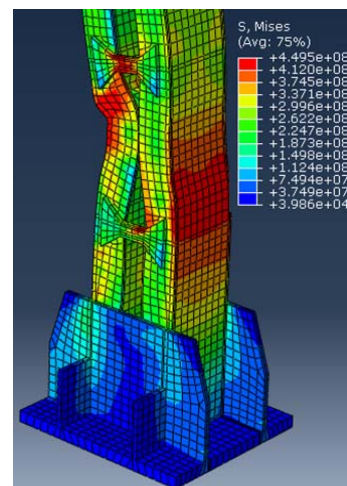
compared to larger size battens. Therefore, as it was seen in Fig. 1, they have been able to dissipate more energy.



(a)



(b)



(c)

Fig. 4 Failure mode of columns under 15 kN of axial load; (a) 10 cm width (b) 5 cm width (c) 2.5 cm width

Fig. 4 shows the failure mode of columns with different size of battens under axial load of 15 kN. It is evident that size of battens has significantly influenced the failure mode of columns. Damage in the column with 10 cm width battens occurs at base of column where chords connect to the stiffener of the base plat. However, for 2.5 cm and 5 cm width battens, damage concentrates above the first batten located at the bottom of columns. It can be seen that von Mises stresses for 2.5 cm width battens have reached to the ultimate strength of employed steel before local buckling is occurred. These observations indicate that design of battens for a lower shear demand compared to code specified values results in better seismic performance.

IV. CONCLUSION

Built-up batted columns have been widely used in the construction industry. However, their seismic behavior has not been well researched. Experience from past earthquakes has demonstrated a poor performance for built-up batted columns. In this study, seismic performance of built-up batted columns with different size of battens was investigated. Four built-up batted columns were simulated and were subjected to three different intensities of axial forces along with a cyclic loading. The column having the largest size of battens showed the lowest ultimate strength compared to other columns. The larger was the size of battens the smaller was the stress level in battens. Increase in the axial force had negligible effect on the stress level of battens for all columns. As the drift increased from 1% to 2%, stress level in battens with smaller size (i.e. 2.5 cm and 5 cm) increased significantly. However, only a small increase in the stress level of largest batten was observed. Size of battens influenced significantly the failure mode of columns.

It was concluded that, when battens were designed for lower shear demand compared to requirements of building codes, a better performance in terms of ductility and ultimate strength was observed. Findings of this study showed that more researches need to be conducted in order to develop seismic design specifications for built-up batted columns.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to acknowledge the financial support from Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation of Malaysia under research grant number 4S125.

REFERENCES

- [1] Duan L, Reno M, Uang C. Effect of compound buckling on compression strength of built-up members. *Eng J AISC*. (2002); 39(1):30–7.
- [2] Hashemi, Behrokh Hosseini, and Mohammad Ali Jafari. "Evaluation of Ayrton–Perry formula to predict the compressive strength of batten columns. *Journal of Constructional Steel Research*. 68, no. 1 (2012): 89–96.
- [3] El Aghoury, M. A., A. H. Salem, M. T. Hanna, and E. A. Amoush. "Strength of cold formed batted columns subjected to eccentric axial compressive force. *Journal of Constructional Steel Research*. 113 (2015): 58–70.
- [4] Hashemi, Behrokh Hosseini, and Alireza Poursamad Bonab. "Experimental investigation of the behavior of laced columns under constant axial load and cyclic lateral load." *Engineering Structures* 57 (2013): 536–543.
- [5] Razzaghi, M. S., M. Khalkhaliha, and A. Aziminejad. "Cyclic performance of concrete-filled steel batten built-up columns." *International Journal of Advanced Structural Engineering (IJASE)* 8, no. 1 (2016): 45–51.
- [6] Sahoo, Dipti R., and Durgesh C. Rai. Built-up batted columns under lateral cyclic loading. *Thin-walled structures* 45, no. 5 (2007): 552–562.
- [7] AISC. Load and resistance factor design specification for structural steel buildings. Chicago (IL): American Institute of Steel Construction, Inc.; 2005.
- [8] AS-4100. Steel structures. Homebush (NSW, Australia): Standards Association of Australia; 1998.
- [9] CSA S16-01. Limit states design of steel structures. Toronto (Canada): Canadian Standards Association; 2001.
- [10] Interim Testing Protocols for Determining the Seismic Performance Characteristics of Structural and Nonstructural Components, FEMA 461. Applied Technology Council, California, 2007.

Sophia C. Alih (PhD, MACI) is currently a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Structure and Materials, Faculty of Civil Engineering, UTM JB and a research fellow of Institute of Noise and Vibration, UTM. Apart from her academic profession, she has been involved in several consultancy projects for bridge and building inspection in East and West Malaysia since 2004. Her expertise includes structural dynamic analysis and design, structural inspection for seismic induced damages, structural retrofit, steel structures, and material sciences. She has been also supervising research works of five PhD and four Master candidates. Dr. Alih has received several recognitions in her works including research grants and innovation awards.

Mohammadreza Vafaei (PhD, P.Eng., M.ASCE, M.EERI, M.SSA, M.EWB,USA) is currently a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Civil Engineering, UTM, JB, and a research associate of Forensic Engineering Center, UTM. As a Professional Engineer previously serving a consultant company in Iran, he has led seismic design of many structures including tall residential and office buildings, airport terminals, air traffic control towers, lattice telecommunication towers, bridges, water reservoirs and monumental structures. In addition to many publications in refereed journals and conferences, Dr. Vafaei is professional in seismic design using international seismic codes like UBC, ASCE/SEI 7-10 and Eurocode 8. His expertise includes seismic design of special structures, seismic retrofit, damage identification and nonlinear structural analysis.

Farnoud Rahimi Mansour is a student undergoing Doctor of Philosophy Program in Civil Engineering in the Faculty of Civil Engineering, UTM. His research areas include earthquake engineering, dynamic analysis, non-linear modelling, damper, and vibration control in structures and infrastructures. Mr. Mansour has been active in participating in innovation exhibition and has received many awards for his works.

Nur Hajarul Falahi Abdul Halim is a student undergoing Master (Research) Program in Civil Engineering in the Faculty of Civil Engineering, UTM. Her research areas include seismic risk assessment, seismic retrofit, and non-linear modelling.