

**FATIGUE CHARACTERIZATION OF ASPHALT MASTICS  
AND MIXTURES INCORPORATING WASTE FILLERS**

**अपशिष्ट फिलर्स को शामिल करने वाले डामर मैस्टिक्स और मिश्रणों का फटीग  
निस्पण**



*Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment for the  
Award of Degree*

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**By**

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**18061007**

**2022**

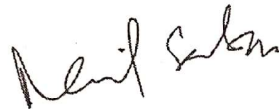
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I, **MOHIT CHAUDHARY**, certify that the work embodied in this thesis is my own bonafide work and carried out by me under the supervision of **Dr. ANKIT GUPTA** and **Dr. NIKHIL SABOO** from **JULY 2018** to **DECEMBER 2022** at the **Department of Civil Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology (BHU), Varanasi**. The matter embodied in this thesis has not been submitted for the award of any other degree/diploma. I declare that I have faithfully acknowledged and given credits to the research workers wherever their works have been cited in my work in this thesis. I further declare that I have not willfully lifted up any other's work, paragraphs, text, data, results, *etc.*, reported in journals, books, magazines, reports dissertations, thesis, *etc.*, or available at websites and included them in this thesis and cited as my own work.

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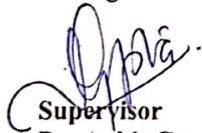
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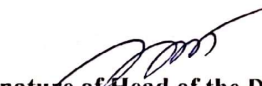
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*Dedicated to Krishna*  
*and my*  
*Family.....*

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Looking back to the starting point helps move forward in the right way. During the entire journey of my Ph.D., many people gave me guidance, encouragement, and support when I faced difficulties. Without their efforts, this research would never have been completed. I would like to express my gratitude toward many individuals who have helped in making this research possible.

First and foremost, I thank the **almighty God** who showered his blessings, without which it would not have been possible for me to complete the dissertation in the present form.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to **Dr. Nikhil Saboo**, Assistant Professor, Department of Civil Engineering, IIT Roorkee. I have gained an innumerable amount of knowledge as his student and have been exposed to areas of study that I would not have had the opportunity to examine otherwise. He always provided me with valuable guidance and encouragement throughout my Ph.D. study. I believe his advice has always been honest and unselfish and was always given in my best interest. To have someone put that much trust in me is a truly humbling experience. I hope to apply what I have observed from his humility, honesty, patience, and technical acumen to my future career. Dr. Saboo showed me the importance of attending to the details when performing experiments and interpreting the results. He also showed me the importance of the individual within the team by giving me the important tools and then allowing me to make the mistakes I needed to learn. His willingness and ability to provide guidance at the exact moment, many times when I did not realize that I needed it, is a skill that I hope to emulate someday. I sincerely appreciate his technical and professional advice.

My deepest gratitude to **Dr. Ankit Gupta**, Associate Professor, Department of Civil Engineering, IIT (BHU), whose guidance and tireless efforts to see this work to its highest

potential has been a true inspiration. Your guidance in my professional career and life has been invaluable; thank you for always looking out for me. I enjoyed the great benefit from not only his academic attainments but also his wisdom in life. His resolute efforts and constructive comments on this dissertation are highly appreciated. Simply watching him and how he manages his time and work has increased my learning and understanding of research and life itself. He always gave his patient guidance whenever I need. His careful review of my papers, reports, and dissertation is deeply appreciated. He has given me a great deal of latitude in my studies and allowed me to succeed or fail by my own hand. There is a great deal of confidence and strength in conviction that comes from this path, but I now see that Dr. Gupta has carefully guided me past many obstacles and done so in such an imperceptible way that I was unaware of his influence. In my opinion, this method makes him a truly great teacher and mentor.

I would like to especially thank **Mrs. Sonal Gupta** and **Mrs. Preeti Saboo** for making me feel at home from the beginning. I will always cherish the smiles of **Gungun** and **Ekaksh** for showing me the beauty and innocent side of life.

I sincerely thank **Prof. Pramod Kumar Jain**, Director, Indian Institute of Technology (BHU) Varanasi, for all the institutional support during this study. I also express my heartfelt thanks and gratitude to **Prof. Prabhat Kumar Singh Dikshit**, Former Head, **Prof. Sasankasekhar Mandal**, Head, Department of Civil Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology (BHU) Varanasi, for making available the departmental facilities every time.

I want to thank my RPEC committee members: **Dr. Abhisek Mudgal** and **Dr. Meghanshu Vashista**, who have all been tremendously helpful in providing their honest feedback and advice over my entire course of study at IIT (BHU).

I would also like to thank **Dr. Agnivesh P.** for his unfailing words of encouragement and for always motivating me to think bigger. The help and support received from **Prof. Brind Kumar**

and other faculty members of the Civil Engineering Department are also gratefully acknowledged. I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to **Mr. Roshan Bhandari** and **Mr. Amit Singh** for their unreserved and prompt help with the tremendous amount of laboratory testing. Their rich test equipment experience makes the test program smooth and efficient. Appreciation is extended to the administrative staff, especially **Mr. Rajesh, Mr. Amar, and Mr. Nitin** of the Department of Civil Engineering, for all their help and support.

I am very fortunate to have had the opportunity to collaborate with **Dr. Bernhard Hofko, Mr. Michael Steineder** from TU Wien, Austria, and **Dr. Miomir Miljković** of the University of Nis, Serbia. Your suggestions and support took this research to new heights and gave it international scope.

I also would like to take this opportunity to express gratitude for all the seniors of the Transportation engineering section **Dr. Arunabh Pandey, Dr. Satyajit Mondal, Dr. Jayvant Choudhary, and Dr. Gaurav Verma**, who have all been tremendously supportive over the past number of years, and with whom I have shared many of the joys and challenges of scholastic work. They helped me to mold into the shape of a researcher and guided me at every stepping stone. Many friends have helped me stay sane through these difficult years. Their support and care helped me overcome setbacks and stay focused on my research study. I greatly value their friendship and deeply appreciate their belief in me. A very special thank you to my inseparable friend **Dr. Mayank Sukhija** for posing thought provoking questions regarding my research. We have experienced this marathon called dissertation side by side, and I couldn't ask for a better, more supportive friend as I reach the finish line. It is joyful that people are still confused between our names. I would like to express my thanks to my 'roomie' **Anna** for being there for me always. This journey would not have been this joyful without your one-liners. Thanks for being the third partner of famous tripling rides. I greatly admire your knowledge and writing skills. It is not less than a necessity to thank **Bhau** for being my plus one in every

moment. I appreciate your knowledge and constant zeal to ask questions on different topics. Thank you for patiently listening to my presentation demonstrations and giving your critical feedback. A special thanks to my junior cum younger brother **Abhinav Kumar Thakur** for helping me with the extensive laboratory testing and innovative ideas. You never said why when I asked you to accompany me at any time. I will always remember the time we spent during the testing and analysis.

It is impossible for me to forget mentioning appreciation of my research group members **Abhinav Kumar, Sadiya Shaikh, Aakash Singh, Sourabh Kumar, Agnivesh Tiwari, Sukeerti Bansal, Naveen Balla, Abhishek Tiwari, and Akant Yadav** who were constantly my support system throughout the work. A special thanks to **Mr. Suraj Kharwar** for assisting me in the extensive laboratory testing dedicatedly. There are also special close friends in my life that have found their way into my heart and have supported me through this process. They have been a willing friend, honest critics, and, when needed, a helpful distraction. For that, I would like to acknowledge **Amit Singh, Amit Kumar Ram, Smriti, Saqib Nawaz, Aayush Saxena, Amod Kashyap, Vishal Kushwaha, Abhijeet Babar, Ashish Chouksey, Deepak Prasad, Vinamra Bansal, Saroj Kanta Behera, Sourav Sarkar, Amardeep Pandey, Namuduri Anurag, Mayank Nishant, Manish Tiwari, Pawan Ojha, Parul Rawat, and Deepak Chaudhary**. I would also like to thank my friends **Dheeraj Mehta, Harish Babu Jhallu, Muskan Verma, Bhavesh Bhambhani, Mohanshu Bhardwaj, and Manish Yadav** for making my stay at IIT Roorkee memorable.

A big salute to all the frontline corona warriors for all the sacrifices and resilience during the tough time. A warm thanks to all the staff of IIT (BHU) including mess, cleaning, MTS, maintenance, and office employees for all the services throughout the Ph.D. duration.

Finally, my deepest gratitude goes to my parents, **Mr. Pradeep Kumar Yadav and Mrs. Radha Yadav**, for their endless love and continuous support. This effort and dissertation directly result from your commitment to being the best parents possible. Thank you for your kind words of encouragement and support as I chose what may have seemed an unconventional path. They have never complained about how less time I have spent with them since I left home for my study. A special mention to my mother, who has always been my source of inspiration and courage throughout my life. She gave me strength when I was weak and always believed in me. I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my brother **Mr. Ankit Chaudhary**, who has taken my responsibilities, along with his own, to serve our parents in my absence. A big shout out to him for his continuous support, patience, and optimistic attitude. No matter what happens, he always stands firm behind me and takes good care of the family, even while busy with his studies. A special tribute to '**Baba**', '**Nani**', and '**Mausi**' for always believing in me and motivating me to dream big. Last but certainly not least, I am most grateful for my entire family, who delivered endless encouraging voices through the telephone, which have been instrumental in this journey.

I highly appreciate the financial support provided by the **Ministry of Education**, Government of India, in the form of a research fellowship and contingency grant to accomplish this study. Also, I would like to thank Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) for providing the asphalt binder to carry out my research work.

This section is incomplete until I acknowledge the beautiful campus of IIT (BHU) and the pleasant places of Varanasi city where I spent most memorable moments of my life. I will miss these places, especially the Vishwanath ji Temple and Ganga ji ghat.

And to the rest, I am extremely thankful to those whose names have been unknowingly left; thank you very much for your support and prayers. It really helped me a lot.

**Mohit Chaudhary**



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# ABSTRACT

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The transportation sector is the backbone of the country's economy as it facilitates the movement of people and commodities. The rapid growth in vehicular traffic demands superior performing pavements owing to which the consistent advancement in conventional road construction practices is the need of the hour. The stride rate of construction requires a massive amount of pavement materials, including fillers that constitute up to 12% of the total aggregates. This demand can be fulfilled by the exhaustive mining of reserves which causes the depletion of natural resources along with different environmental problems. In addition, strict restrictions on mining activities have made access to natural fillers a very challenging task. Also, the generation of waste from various sectors is enormous, which immediately requires an efficient disposal solution that can be tackled by utilizing waste in the form of fillers. The asphalt layer in the pavement is subjected to several types of distress, out of which fatigue is also one of the most common and severe pavement distress. It deteriorates the pavement's structural capacity and acts as a deteriorating medium for the ingress of water and other aggressive agents. The combination of filler and binder, i.e., asphalt mastic, is often acknowledged as the actual binder which coats the aggregate skeleton in an asphalt mix as it affects the performance of mixtures against various distresses. Hence, the rheological characterization of asphalt mastics can better represent the performance of asphalt mixtures.

This study is focused on the fatigue characterization of the asphalt mastics and asphalt mixtures prepared with different fillers. A total of six different waste fillers, namely red mud (RM), marble dust (MD), limestone (LS), granite (GR), basalt (BA), and quartz (QZ) from different sectors and two types of binders viscosity graded (VG-30), polymer modified (PMB-40) were used to prepare the asphalt mastics. The fillers were characterized by different physical, chemical, and morphological tests such as Rigden voids (RV), specific gravity, particle size

distribution, specific surface area (SSA), X-ray diffraction, scanning electron microscope, etc. The mastics were fabricated at three filler volume concentrations of 10, 20, and 30%, followed by long term aging in the draft oven as per the western research institute (WRI) method. The rheological testing was done at three intermediate temperatures, 5, 15, and 25°C. The preliminary testing involves determining linear viscoelastic (LVE) limits corresponding to 95% of the initial complex shear modulus ( $|G^*|$ ). The obtained LVE limits were compared with the Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP) LVE criteria which were found to be inapplicable to the results of asphalt mastics.

Despite being acknowledged as one of the most accurate fatigue tests, the unpredicted testing durations during a time sweep (TS) test make it a non-feasible laboratory test method. Therefore, an alternate accelerated fatigue test known as the linear amplitude sweep (LAS) test was utilized to check its efficacy in simulating the TS test results. The dissipated energy ratio (DER) method was used as the fatigue failure criterion in the TS test, whereas the dissipated energy (DE) and pseudo strain (PSE) energy approach were used for defining the fatigue failure in the LAS test. In addition, the Superpave fatigue parameter ( $|G^*| \cdot \sin\delta$ ) was also compared with the results of the TS test. The TS and LAS test results were examined using correlational and ranking analysis. The power law regression was used to model the fatigue life from the TS test and the other three variables. The strong correlation and lowest discrepancy proved that the LAS test could effectively replace the conventional TS test with the PSE approach.

The drawbacks associated with conventional cylindrical parallel plate geometry motivate the researchers to search for a new geometry, due to which various alternate geometries have experimented to date. The hyperbolic geometry having a predefined failure location has been used in this study to assess its applicability as a superior alternative to cylindrical geometry. The evolution of pseudostiffness was used to examine the discrepancy in test results obtained from both geometries. The results obtained from hyperbolic geometry were more consistent,

whereas abnormalities were observed in many cases with cylindrical geometry hence was adopted for the fatigue testing in this study.

This study integrated eight different variables to comprehensively understand the effect of the majority of possible factors on the fatigue performance of asphalt mastics. These factors include the type of filler, binder, filler-binder (F-B) ratio, testing geometry, temperature, type of test, analysis procedures, applied strain, etc. In addition, the efficacy of popular cracking resistance parameters known as the Glover-Rowe (G-R) parameter was also investigated. The effect of temperature was obvious because greater temperatures, regardless of any other variable, improved fatigue performance. With unmodified mastics, the influence of the filler-binder ratio was found to depend on the kind of filler, whereas the binder predominated in PMB based mastics. The filler ranking was roughly the same for both types of mastics except for RM filler. The magnitude of the applied strain significantly impacted the mastics' relative ranking since the materials' performance varied depending on the strain in the LVE, non-linear viscoelastic (NLVE), and failure region. The polymer modified binder outperformed the neat binder in terms of performance. The fatigue performance of asphalt mastics was primarily influenced by the three filler parameters fineness modulus (FM), SSA, and RV. The G-R parameter was found to be insufficient to describe the fatigue behavior.

The asphalt mixtures were prepared in accordance with Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH-13) recommendations using dense bituminous macadam (DBM-2) gradation with the nominal maximum aggregate size (NMAS) of 26.5 mm. To avoid discrepancies in the filler content caused by the job mix formula or stockpiling method, the fractionation method was employed for the gradation. The DBM-2 recommends the filler content in the range of 2-8%; hence three filler contents, namely 3, 5, and 7%, were employed, representing low, average, and high filler content. Prior to the preparation of the mixture, the mixing and compaction temperatures of the virgin and polymer-modified binders were

measured using rotational viscometers and dynamic shear rheometer (DSR), respectively. The performance testing of the asphalt mixtures was done using the semi-circular bending (SCB) apparatus at two notch depths of 15 mm and 30 mm. The cracking resistance of the materials was quantified using the critical strain energy release rate ( $J_c$ ) with a higher value referring to better performance. The similar ranking of the fillers obtained from the fatigue testing of mastics as well as mixes shows that the relative fatigue performance of the asphalt mixtures prepared with different fillers can be predicted from the LAS testing results of corresponding asphalt mastics using hyperbolic geometry. Also, the correlational analysis between the optimum filler dosage and the parameter  $FSR/|G^*|. \sin \delta$  showed that the filler dosage in the asphalt mixtures could be obtained from the properties of fillers and binders, which may result in superior fatigue performance and lower optimum binder content.

**Keywords:** Asphalt mastic, Fatigue, Waste filler, Sustainability, Hyperbolic geometry, Dynamic shear rheometer, Linear amplitude sweep, Viscoelastic continuum damage, Semi-circular bending.