

# Effect of the Fines Content on How the Soil's Moisture Reacts to Wetting and Drying Cycles

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## Abstract

In order to comprehend the mechanism of a rainfall-induced landslide, it is necessary to conduct research on how soil moisture responds to climatic conditions. The purpose of this study is to investigate how fines content affects how soil moisture responds to repeated wetting and drying cycles. The dirt's were instrumented with soil dampness sensors and they were exposed to 2 patterns of wetting and drying. All of the soil samples' moisture content decreased more quickly during the second drying cycle than during the first. However, the repeated wetting and drying cycles had less of an impact on the recovery of soil moisture during wetting. The soil moisture loss during drying is significantly influenced by the fines content. The fines content had little effect on the soil moisture's response to wetting. The wetting soil moisture responses can be simulated with some degree of accuracy, as demonstrated by the numerical seepage analyses' findings. However, there were significant discrepancies between the actual measurements and the simulated drying soil moisture responses. The findings suggested that during the repeated wetting and drying cycles, the soil may have experienced changes in soil structure, void ratio, or the formation of desiccated cracks that cannot be captured by a typical finite element seepage analysis.

**Keywords:** Climatic conditions • Soil moisture • Void ratio

## Introduction

It is common knowledge that rain is one of the most common causes of landslides. Rainfall infiltration typically increases pore water pressure or decreases matric suction, lowering the soil's shear strength and making slopes more likely to fail. Numerous researchers have conducted extensive research on the mechanisms of slope failure caused by rainfall. Due to its high permeability, coarse-grained soil slopes are more likely to fail during brief and intense rainfalls, while fine-grained slopes, which have a lower permeability, are more likely to fail during prolonged rainfalls. In Malaysia, the intense weathering and tropical climate have resulted in abundant residual soils. More than three-quarter of Peninsular Malaysia's land area is covered by residual soils, which are the result of extensive in-situ weathering of parent rocks. Due to varying degrees of weathering, the soil is known to contain a variety of fine and coarse materials. Sand, silt and clay make up the bulk of the residual soil in Malaysia and their proportions vary depending on the soil's geological conditions. Rainfall-induced slope failure has been complicated by the residual soils' irregularity in soil grain sizes.

## Description

In order to investigate the engineering properties of a completely decomposed granite with fines contents ranging from 0 to 20%, local laboratory tests are the only way to determine the threshold rainfall for a potential slope failure. SEEP/W and SLOPE/W were then used to examine the seepage

condition and stability of slopes with different fines contents. They found that slopes with low fines content had a greater drop in the factor of safety during intense rainfall infiltration than slopes with high fines content. This is due to the susceptibility of low-fines soils to suction loss and the rapid advancement of a wetting front during heavy rainfall. A series of laboratory-scaled slope model experiments confirmed the findings. They said that the coarse soil's soil matric suction dropped a lot as the volumetric water content increased, which eventually led to a failure. The variations in soil moisture and consequently the stability of the slope, may be significantly affected by the wetting and drying cycles. Only a small number of studies have examined the direct effect of recurrent wetting and drying cycles on slope stability from the available literature. The effects of wetting and drying cycles on the hydraulic properties of soil have been the subject of numerous studies. Conducted a number of laboratory tests to examine the permeability of clay during multiple wetting and drying cycles. Using a pressure plate test and nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectroscopy, they investigated the unsaturated hydraulic properties of residual soil and discovered that after seven cycles of wetting and drying, the clay's permeability increased to a certain limiting value. They discovered that as the number of wetting-drying cycles increased, the residual soil's capacity to hold water decreased. This suggests that the soil's pore structure, porosity and internal water content have increased as a result of the repeated wetting-drying processes. And others X-ray micro-computed tomography (micro-CT) was used to characterize the microstructure of soil during wetting and drying cycles. They found that the dirt pore structures would in general extend and associate with one another during the wetting and drying processes. As the number of wetting-drying cycles increased, so did the soil's porosity and connectivity [1-3].

It can be deduced from the preceding literatures that rainfall infiltration affects the surface soil moisture and soil grains have a significant impact on responses. The weathering process and the composition of the parent rocks determine how the soil moisture responds to rainfall infiltration in residual soils. According to the weathering process that is involved in the formation of soil introduces varying permeabilities and other physical properties to the soil. This inhomogeneity makes it more difficult for soils to respond hydraulically to rainfall infiltration. In addition, there are still very few studies on how soil moisture reacts to repeated cycles of wetting and drying. It is still not clear how the different types of soils react to the same wetting and drying cycles, which may be made more difficult by the change in the structure of the soil [4,5].

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## Conclusion

It is the issue, for example, this that incites the on going review to be completed. It is hypothesized that the recurring climate would cause desiccated cracks to form and make the soil's hydraulic responses more complicated. The purpose of this study is to determine how soil moisture responses to repeated wetting and drying cycles are affected by the fines content of residual soil. Little scaled research centre trials are completed to screen the level of immersion of soils with fluctuating fines contents under 2 patterns of wetting and drying processes. Limited component drainage investigations are performed to give more bits of knowledge into the system of soil dampness changes during penetration and dissipation processes. The variations in the hydraulic properties of the soil that occur as a result of the soil's repeated wetting and drying processes can be better understood by using numerical seepage analyses to explain the findings from the laboratory.

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## Conflict of interest

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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