

# **Obtaining the Allowable Bearing Capacity From SPT Test**

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## **ABSTRACT**

A comparison of standard penetration test methods on bearing capacity analysis of shallow foundations on sand using analytical methods proposed by Peck and Terzaghi, Teng, Meyerhof and Bowles have been carried out. The results showed four limits values of net allowable bearing capacity, for isolated pad foundations placed on sand according to authors, Bowles's method gave higher values followed by the Teng's method, then modified Meyerhof's and lastly by the Peck and Terzaghi's method. Generally, allowable bearing capacity showed a decreasing trend as foundation breadth and depth increased. It was shown that the bearing capacity can be found directly from the N-Value in the absence of angle of internal friction ( $\phi$ ) and Shear parameters ( $C_u$ ). Hence, the bearing capacity of various can be investigated.

**Keywords** : Standard penetration test; Bearing capacity; shear failure; shallow foundation;

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Introductory Remarks

Standard Penetration Test (SPT) is widely used to obtain analysis and design of bearing capacity of soils. In analysis and designing of foundation, there are two basic satisfactory criteria so as to obtain bearing capacity of soils. Bearing capacity and settlement requirements are two basic criteria to be satisfied in the analysis and design of shallow foundations. The criterion on bearing capacity ensures that the foundation does not undergo shear failure under loading, while settlement requirement ensures that settlement of the structure is within the tolerance limit of the superstructure. Three types of shear failures have been identified to occur under foundation induced loading, general shear failure, punching shear failure and local shear failure. Details of these failures and their mechanisms have been reported by (Caquot, 1934, Terzaghi, 1943, De Beer and Vesic, 1968, Vesic, 1967). The use of standard penetration test in the analysis of bearing capacity and settlement has also received numerous attentions (Craig, 1987, Ambily and Gandhi, 2007, Das and Sobhan, 2013, Tomlinson and Boorman, 2001). Details of the field application of Standard Penetration Test are specified in BS 1377 and ASTM D1586-11. This study attempts to report on bearing capacity and assuming settlement in the allowable range with 20mm of shallow foundations methods based on the standard penetration test.

## 1.2 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this study is to determine the allowable bearing capacity from standard penetration test (SPT) according to empirical equation from some authors and comparing the result between each author with respect of depth and width of foundation taking N value as the main factors the variation of SPT are varied from 12-44 blows, then comparing each author with respect to variation of width and depth of foundation with the same SPT value. Assuming settlement in the allowable range 25,0 mm. Finally, graphs are drawn for each relation so as to know which author is near the others.

### **1.3 Outline of the Study**

Several steps are performed; first of all, collecting data from soil investigations of Halabja university and Samara university in order to know SPT value of them, next step from the empirical equations calculated the bearing capacity by changing variables such as width, depth of foundation and SPT value. Finally, plotted (scatter plot) the relationship to know the effect of variable parameters. The results obtained from the above procedures will be discussed thoroughly. Tables (1 to 6) summarized the results of the allowable bearing capacity.

### **1.4 Bearing capacity**

The bearing capacity is a criterion for structural stability. Any structure, unless it floats, must eventually be founded on soil. The failure criterion for foundation soil is known as the ultimate bearing capacity or simply the bearing capacity of soil and is considered as one of the corner stones of soil mechanics. For such a purpose, scientists from about many decades ago tried to establish sound bearing capacity equations, which take into account the most variables encountered. Nowadays, the available bearing capacity equations are "how we say" numerous. Some of them have succeeded to float on surface while others have not. By bearing capacity equations, here, authors mean, as well, all techniques used in field and laboratory to "estimate" the ultimate bearing stress of soil. Most of the field data available are presented as tables with boundary limits or monographs in terms of well standard tests such as the SPT (standard penetration test).

## 2. Materials and methods

### 2.1. Bearing capacity analysis

A bearing capacity analysis for isolated pad foundation placed on sand was carried out on soil stratigraphy generally consisting of loose, silty to slightly silty sand, overlying medium-dense, slightly silty SAND formation. In computing bearing capacity, an average SPT value of 13 which was obtained up to depth B below the footing; where B is breadth of foundation was used. Subsurface information was achieved through borings to 14 meters depth below ground level. The proposed isolated pad foundations were to be placed one meter below the sand formation. Bearing capacity is analyzed for foundation breadth B, varying from 2.0-3.0 m and placed at foundation depths varying from 1.0-2.0m.

### 2.2. Analytical methods

The following in-situ SPT methods were adopted in evaluating bearing capacity of shallow foundations placed on sand;

The ultimate bearing capacity of shallow foundation placed on sand is given by the following expression;

#### 2.2.1. Peck and Terzaghi, (1948) modified method

According to Peck and Terzaghi theory, an estimated maximum foundation settlement of 25,4 mm is allowed and the net allowable bearing capacity is given by the expression;

$$q_s = 35(N_{cor} - 3) \frac{B + 0.3}{2B} R_{w2} F_d \text{ kN/m}^2$$

Where:

$q_s$  - Net allowable bearing pressure for a settlement of 25,4 mm in  $\text{kN/m}^2$

$N_{cor}$  = corrected standard penetration value ( $N_{60}$ )

$R_{w2}$  = water table correction factor.

$F_d$  = depth factor =  $(1 + D_f / B) < 1.5$ ,

B = width of footing in meters,  $D_f$  = depth of foundation in meters

### 2.2.2. Teng's modified equation

The equation proposed by Meyerhof and Teng were found to be very conservative. The equations proposed are Teng's modified equation;

$$q_s = 53 (N_{cor} - 3) \frac{B + 0.3}{2B}^2 R_{w2} F_d$$

Where:

$q_s$  - Net allowable bearing pressure for a settlement of  $\gamma \xi, \circ$  mm in  $\text{kN/m}^2$

$N_{cor}$  = corrected standard penetration value ( $N_{60}$ )

$R_{w2}$  = water table correction factor.

$F_d$  = depth factor =  $(1 + D_f / B) < \gamma, \circ$

$B$  = width of footing in meters

$D_f$  = depth of foundation in meters

### 2.2.3. Modified Meyerhof (1956) method

The modified Meyerhof (1956) correlation for bearing capacity using Standard Penetration Resistance is presented by Bowles (1997) for an allowable settlement of  $\gamma \circ, \xi$  mm as follows;

$$q_s = 20 N_{cor} R_{w2} F_d \text{ for } B \leq 1.2 \text{ m}$$

$$q_s = 12.5 N_{cor} \frac{B + 0.3}{B}^2 R_{w2} F_d \text{ for } B > 1.2 \text{ m}$$

Where:

$q_s$  - Net allowable bearing pressure for a settlement of  $\gamma \xi, \circ$  mm in  $\text{kN/m}^2$ ,

$N_{cor}$  = corrected standard penetration value ( $N_{60}$ )

$R_{w2}$  = water table correction factor.



$F_d = \text{depth factor} = 1 + 0.33(D_f / B) \leq 1.33$

$B = \text{width of footing in meters,}$

$D_f = \text{depth of foundation in meters}$

### **2.2.4. Bowles (1949) method**

$$q_{\text{all(net)}} (\text{kN/m}^2) = 19.16 N_{\text{cor}} F_d \left( \frac{S_e}{25} \right) \quad (\text{for } B \leq 1.22 \text{ m})$$

$$q_{\text{all(net)}} (\text{kN/m}^2) = 11.98 N_{\text{cor}} \left( \frac{3.28B + 1}{3.28B} \right)^4 F_d \left( \frac{S_e}{25} \right) \quad (\text{for } B > 1.22 \text{ m})$$

Where:

$q_{\text{all}}$  - Net allowable bearing pressure,  $\text{kN/m}^2$

$N_{\text{cor}}$  = corrected standard penetration value ( $\text{N}60$ ).

$F_d = \text{depth factor} = 1 + 0.33(D_f / B) \leq 1.33$

$B = \text{width of footing in meters}$

$S_e = \text{Settlement (mm)}$

**Table 2. 1:** Represent variation of width of foundation with constant SPT, Df=1.0m

B	Df	Rw	Fd = depth factor = $(1 + D_f / B) < 2,0$	Fd = depth factor = $(1 + 0,33(D_f / B)) \leq 0,33$	$N^{1,5}$	(Peck & Terzaghi, 1948) ,kN/m <sup>2</sup>	Teng's equation ,kN/m <sup>2</sup>	Meyerhof 's equation (modified) ,kN/m <sup>2</sup>	Bowel's equation, kN/m <sup>2</sup>
2,0	1	0,0	1,40	1,13	13	76,83	116,30	110,37	221,92
3	1	0,0	1,33	1,11	13	70,08	106,88	109,13	209,79
3,0	1	0,0	1,29	1,09	13	66,31	100,41	104,81	201,41
4	1	0,0	1,20	1,08	13	63,20	90,70	101,64	190,27
4,0	1	0,0	1,22	1,07	13	60,84	92,13	99,22	190,08
5	1	0,0	1,20	1,07	13	58,99	89,33	97,32	186,88
5,0	1	0,0	1,18	1,06	13	57,00	87,07	90,78	183,89
6	1	0,0	1,17	1,06	13	56,27	80,21	94,00	181,43
6,0	1	0,0	1,10	1,00	13	50,20	83,66	93,44	179,36
7	1	0,0	1,14	1,00	13	54,38	82,34	92,03	177,60
7,0	1	0,0	1,13	1,04	13	53,63	81,21	91,70	176,08
8	1	0,0	1,13	1,04	13	52,98	80,23	91,07	174,76
8,0	1	0,0	1,12	1,04	13	52,41	79,36	90,47	173,60
9	1	0,0	1,11	1,04	13	51,91	78,60	89,94	172,07

**Table 2. 2: Represent variation of width of foundation with constant SPT, Df=1.50m**

B	Df	Rw	Fd = depth factor = $(1 + 0.33(D_f/B)) <= 2.0$	Fd = depth factor = $(1 + 0.33(D_f/B)) <= 1.33$	N <sub>60</sub>	(Peck & Terzaghi, 1948), kN/m <sup>2</sup>	Teng's equation, kN/m <sup>2</sup>	Meyerhof's equation (modified), kN/m <sup>2</sup>	Bowel's equation, kN/m <sup>2</sup>
2.0	1.0	0.0	1.60	1.20	13	87,81	132,97	122,10	234,86
3	1.0	0.0	1.50	1.17	13	79,41	120,24	114,03	220,19
3.0	1.0	0.0	1.43	1.14	13	73,77	111,06	109,32	210,08
4	1.0	0.0	1.38	1.12	13	69,02	100,27	100,01	202,71
4.0	1.0	0.0	1.33	1.11	13	66,37	100,00	102,71	197,09
5	1.0	0.0	1.30	1.10	13	63,90	96,77	100,33	192,77
5.0	1.0	0.0	1.27	1.09	13	61,92	93,77	98,49	189,10
6	1.0	0.0	1.20	1.08	13	60,29	91,30	96,97	186,16
6.0	1.0	0.0	1.23	1.08	13	58,93	89,24	90,69	183,69
7	1.0	0.0	1.21	1.07	13	57,78	87,49	94,71	181,09
7.0	1.0	0.0	1.20	1.07	13	56,78	80,99	93,68	179,79
8	1.0	0.0	1.19	1.06	13	50,92	84,68	92,87	178,22
8.0	1.0	0.0	1.18	1.06	13	50,17	83,04	92,16	176,84
9	1.0	0.0	1.17	1.06	13	54,00	82,03	91,03	170,63

**Table 2. 3: Represent variation of width of foundation with constant SPT, Df=2.00m**

B	Df	Rw	Fd = depth factor = (1 + D <sub>f</sub> / B) < 2,0	Fd = depth factor = (1 + 0,33(D <sub>f</sub> / B)) <= 1,33	N <sub>70</sub>	(Peck & Terzaghi, 1948) ,kN/m <sup>2</sup>	Teng's equation ,kN/m <sup>2</sup>	Meyerhof 's equation (modified) ,kN/m <sup>2</sup>	Bowel's equation, kN/m <sup>2</sup>
2,0	2	0,0	1,80	1,26	13	98,78	149,09	128,83	247,80
3	2	0,0	1,67	1,22	13	88,23	133,70	119,94	230,08
3,0	2	0,0	1,07	1,19	13	81,04	122,72	113,84	218,76
4	2	0,0	1,00	1,17	13	70,84	114,84	109,39	210,10
4,0	2	0,0	1,44	1,10	13	71,90	108,88	107,00	203,70
5	2	0,0	1,40	1,13	13	68,82	104,21	103,34	198,40
5,0	2	0,0	1,36	1,12	13	66,34	100,47	101,20	194,30
6	2	0,0	1,33	1,11	13	64,31	97,39	99,43	190,89
6,0	2	0,0	1,31	1,10	13	62,71	94,82	97,90	188,02
7	2	0,0	1,29	1,09	13	61,17	92,74	96,79	180,09
7,0	2	0,0	1,27	1,09	13	09,94	90,76	90,71	183,00
8	2	0,0	1,20	1,08	13	08,87	89,14	94,77	181,78
8,0	2	0,0	1,24	1,08	13	07,93	87,72	93,80	180,09
9	2	0,0	1,22	1,07	13	07,10	86,46	93,12	178,78

**Table 2. 4: Represent variation of width of foundation with constant SPT, Df=2.50m**

B	Df	Rw	Fd = depth factor = (1 + D <sub>f</sub> /B) < 2,0	Fd = depth factor = (1 + 0,33(D <sub>f</sub> /B)) <= 1,33	N <sub>60</sub> (Peck & Terzaghi, 1948), kN/m <sup>2</sup>	Teng's equation ,kN/m <sup>2</sup>	Meyerhof 's equation (modified) ,kN/m <sup>2</sup>	Bowel's equation, kN/m <sup>2</sup>	
2,0	2,0	0,0	2,00	1,33	13	109,76	177,21	130,00	270,74
3	2,0	0,0	1,83	1,28	13	97,00	147,97	120,30	240,98
3,0	2,0	0,0	1,71	1,24	13	88,41	133,88	118,30	227,44
4	2,0	0,0	1,73	1,21	13	82,17	124,41	113,27	217,09
4,0	2,0	0,0	1,07	1,18	13	77,43	117,20	109,39	210,11
5	2,0	0,0	1,00	1,17	13	73,74	111,77	107,37	204,24
5,0	2,0	0,0	1,40	1,10	13	70,77	107,17	103,91	199,01
6	2,0	0,0	1,42	1,14	13	68,33	103,47	101,90	190,72
6,0	2,0	0,0	1,38	1,13	13	67,30	100,39	100,21	192,37
7	2,0	0,0	1,37	1,12	13	64,07	97,78	98,78	189,09
7,0	2,0	0,0	1,33	1,11	13	63,09	90,04	97,00	187,21
8	2,0	0,0	1,31	1,10	13	61,81	93,70	97,48	180,14
8,0	2,0	0,0	1,29	1,10	13	60,78	91,89	90,04	183,33
9	2,0	0,0	1,28	1,09	13	09,79	90,39	94,71	181,73

**Table 2. 5: Represent variation of SPT with constant of foundation width, Df=1.0m**

B	Df	Rw	Fd = depth factor = $(1 + \frac{D_f}{B}) < 2,0$	Fd = depth factor = $(1 + 0,33(D_f / B)) \leq 1,33$	N <sub>60</sub>	(Peck & Terzaghi, 1948), kN/m <sup>2</sup>	Teng's equation, kN/m <sup>2</sup>	Meyerhof 's equation (modified), kN/m <sup>2</sup>	Bowel's equation, kN/m <sup>2</sup>
3	1	0,0	1,33	1,11	10	84,70	128,26	120,92	242,07
3	1	0,0	1,33	1,11	17	98,82	149,64	142,70	274,30
3	1	0,0	1,33	1,11	19	112,93	171,01	109,49	307,62
3	1	0,0	1,33	1,11	21	127,00	192,39	176,28	338,90
3	1	0,0	1,33	1,11	23	141,17	213,77	193,07	371,17
3	1	0,0	1,33	1,11	20	100,28	230,14	209,86	403,40
3	1	0,0	1,33	1,11	27	169,40	256,02	226,60	430,72
3	1	0,0	1,33	1,11	29	183,02	277,90	243,44	468,00
3	1	0,0	1,33	1,11	31	197,63	299,27	260,23	500,28
3	1	0,0	1,33	1,11	33	211,70	320,60	277,01	532,00
3	1	0,0	1,33	1,11	30	220,87	342,03	293,80	564,83
3	1	0,0	1,33	1,11	37	239,98	363,40	310,09	597,10
3	1	0,0	1,33	1,11	39	204,10	384,78	327,38	629,38
3	1	0,0	1,33	1,11	41	268,22	406,16	344,17	661,66

## 3. Results and discussions

The results of net allowable bearing capacity,  $q_n(a)$ , of shallow foundations on sand based on Peck and Terzaghi, Teng's modified, Modified Meyerhof and Bowle's method Standard penetration test models for footing width,  $B$ , and  $D_f$  varying from (1,0 – 2,0) m are depicted in Figs. 1- 4. Generally,  $q_n(a)$  showed an increasing of footing width lead to decreasing  $q_n$  and  $q_n$  increase with depth increased. At  $D_f = 1,0$  m and foundation breadth,  $B$ , varying from 2,0 – 4,0 m, the net allowable capacity  $q_n(a)$  ranged from 76- 81 kN/m<sup>2</sup> respectively for Peck and Terzaghi model. The Teng's modified model had  $q_n(a)$  values ranging from 116 - 124 kN/m<sup>2</sup> for  $B$  ranging from 2,0 - 4,0 m respectively. The modified Meyerhof model had a range of bearing capacity from 110-129 kN/m<sup>2</sup> correspondingly with variations of footing width  $B$  from 2,0 - 4,0 m respectively. At  $D_f = 1,0$  m and foundation breadth,  $B$ , varying from 2,0 – 4,0 m, the net allowable capacity  $q_n(a)$  ranged from 221- 179 kN/m<sup>2</sup> respectively for Bowle's model. Similarly, Peck and Terzaghi's model had  $q_n(a)$  values ranging from 109 - 89 kN/m<sup>2</sup> for same range of foundation breadth respectively. At  $D_f = 2,0$ , the  $q_n(a)$  for Teng's model had same values ranging from 166 – 90 kN/m<sup>2</sup> but results of the modified Meyerhof model had  $q_n(a)$  varying from 133 - 94 kN/m<sup>2</sup> while bowle's model had  $q_n(a)$  ranging from 260 – 181 kN/m<sup>2</sup> for  $B$  varying from 2,0 – 4,0 m respectively. As  $D_f$  increases, the values of  $q_n$  for all authors model were increased dramatically because when  $D_f$  increase shear resistance increased. similarly, when  $B$  increased the allowable bearing capacity decreased because of the effect of settlement of footing. It can be seen from Fig. 5 for the same width and depth of footing increase in  $N$  value dramatically increased allowable bearing capacity for mentioned authors.

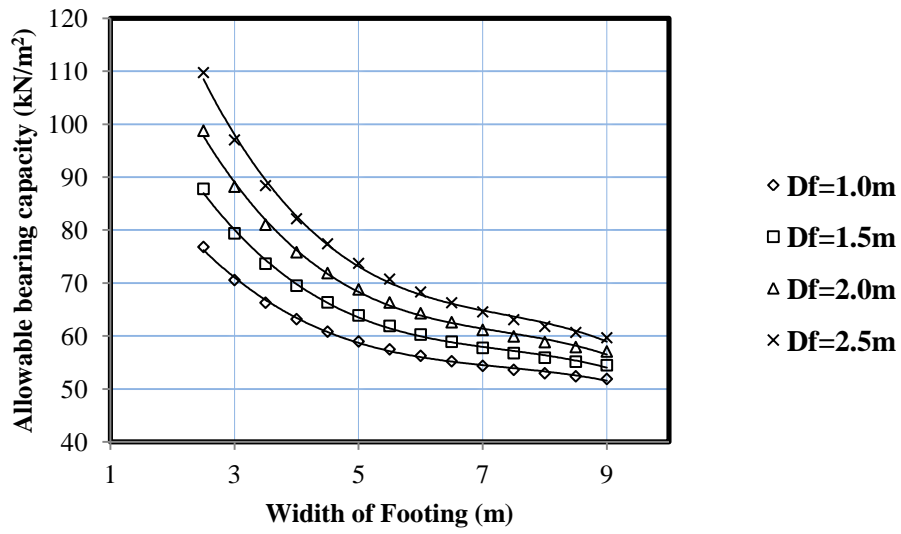


Fig. 1 Variation of Pad foundation breadth vs Allowable bearing capacity Peck and Terzaghi's model

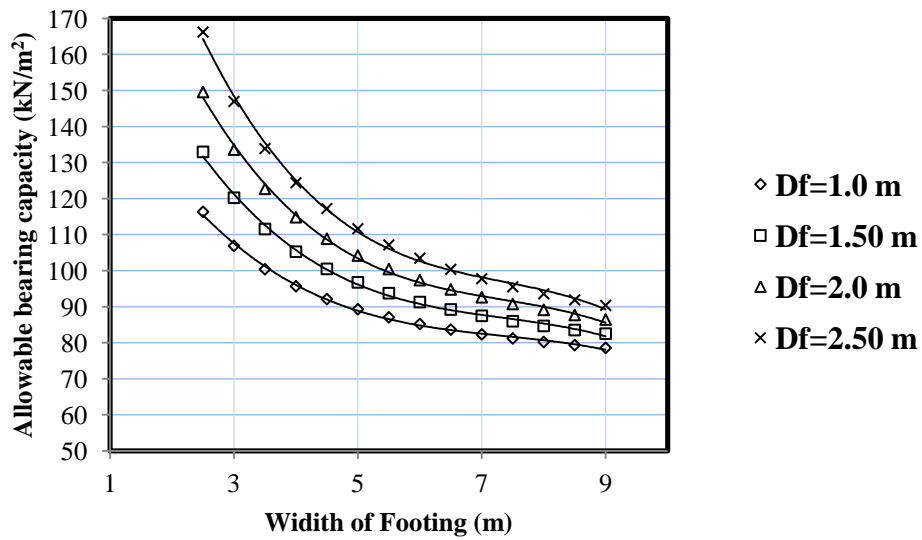


Fig. 2 Variation of Pad foundation breadth vs Allowable bearing Teng's model



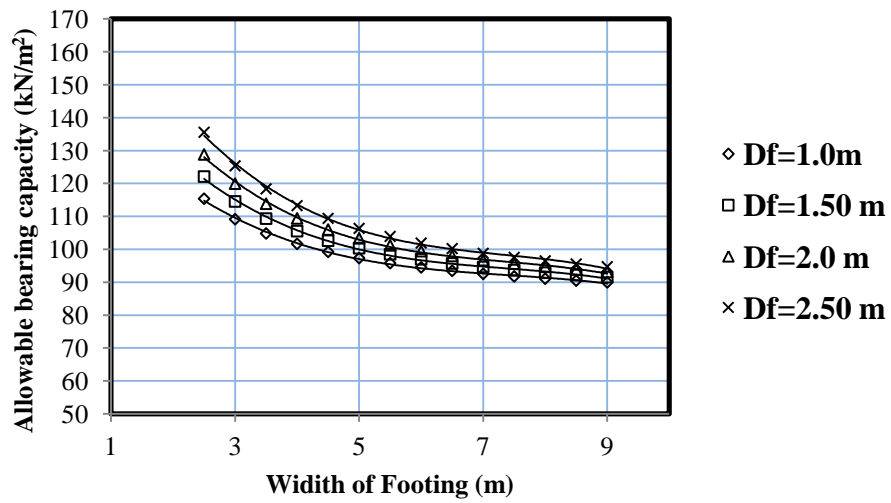


Fig. 3 Variation of Pad foundation breadth vs Allowable bearing Meyerhof's model

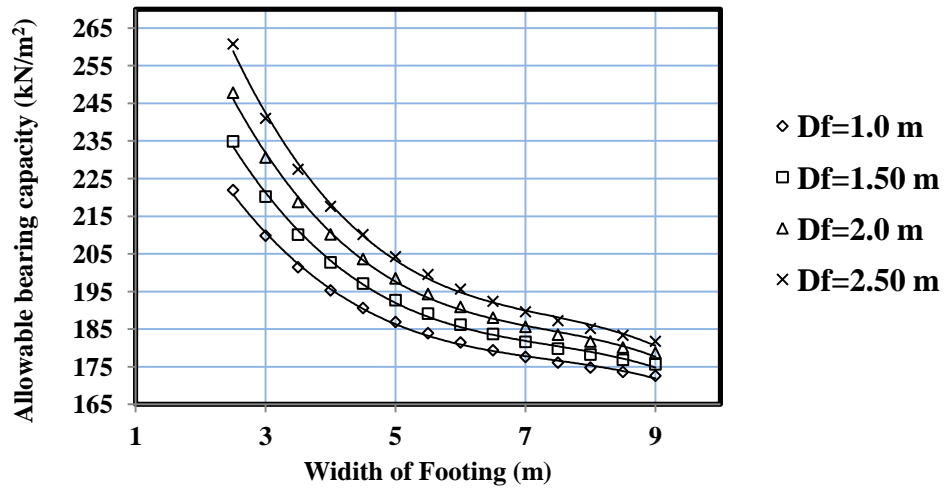


Fig. 4 Variation of Pad foundation breadth vs Allowable bearing Bowles model

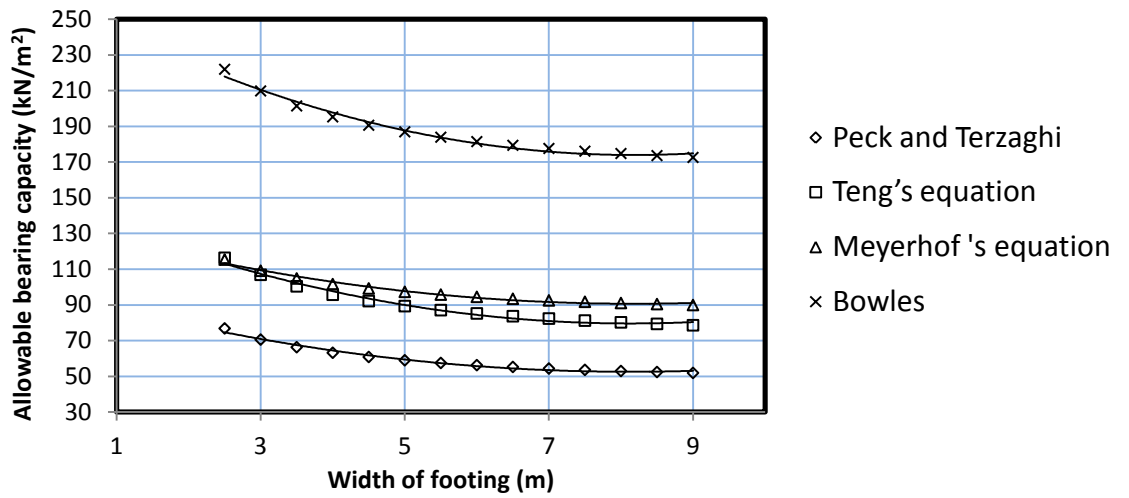


Fig. 5 Variation of Pad foundation breadth and allowable bearing capacity at Df=1.0m.

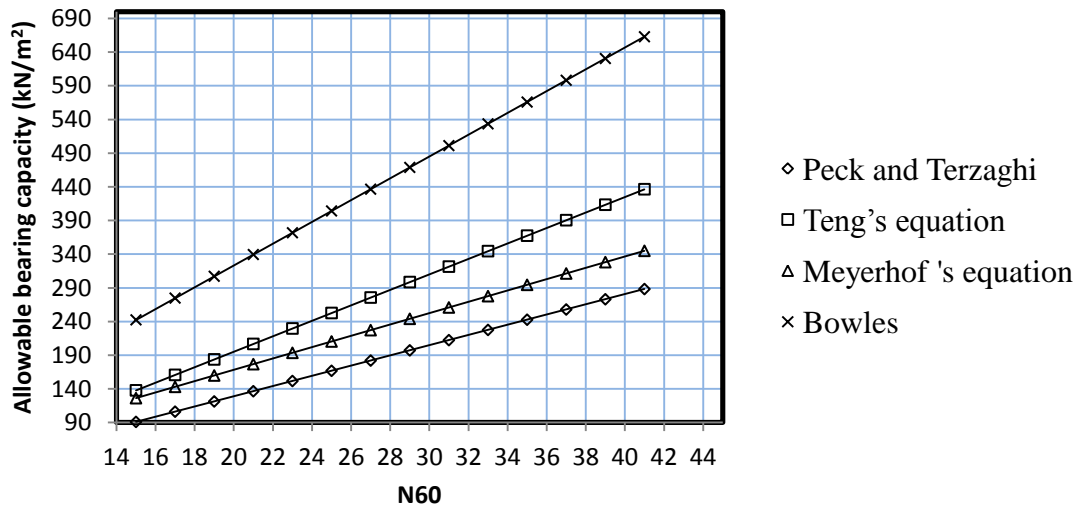


Fig. 6 Variation of N value vs allowable bearing capacity

## 4. Conclusions:

In this Study, the effect of standard penetration test for obtaining allowable bearing capacity was conducted. Based on experimental and analytical data from soil investigation report, the following conclusion was reached.

1. Foundation depth ( $D_f$ ) had influential effect on allowable bearing capacity. Increasing footing width lead to decreasing allowable bearing capacity. whereas, for the same footing width the allowable bearing capacity increasing with increasing ( $D_f$ ).
2. Decreasing the footing depth ratio ( $D_f$ ) to footing width ratio (B) ( $D_f/B$ ) resulted in decreasing allowable bearing capacity.
3. Water table location had a great impact to obtain allowable bearing capacity when water table with base footing level the value of  $R_w$  change to 1,0 this lead to decreasing allowable bearing capacity
4. Water table level had no effect to obtain allowable bearing capacity when width of footing greater than depth of water table
5. In all cases of  $D_f$  and B, Bowles model had higher allowable bearing capacity compared to the other models.

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