MUD BUILDING PRACTICES IN CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN THE GAZA STRIP

Nabil Ibrahim EL-SAWALHI¹ and Hamed E. Abu AJWA²

¹Deputy Dean Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, The Islamic University- Gaza. Email: nsawalhi@iugaza.edu.ps
²Master degree, The Islamic University- Gaza

Abstract
The need to use Mud in building works resulted from the shortage of construction materials in the Gaza Strip. This study investigates the applicability of using mud materials in construction projects in the Gaza Strip. The factors affecting the using of mud buildings were investigated. Techniques encountering the construction with earth materials were studied. A questionnaire survey was used which targeted the contractors that participated in the mud building practices.

Two mud-building techniques were used; the Compressed Stabilized Earth Blocks (CSEB) and Adobe techniques. The practice of using mud in building houses is very limited and comes to defy the blockade at the Gaza Strip. The idea of building houses of mud was not accepted by most surveyed contractors due to cultural aspects. The spread of building of mud was mainly affected by “needs for high maintenance, no possibility for future vertical extension, the need for intensive labors and poor resistance to weather conditions.”

Keywords
Mud Building, Compressed Earth Blocks, Adobe Building, Compressed Stabilized Earth Block, Gaza Strip

INTRODUCTION
After the war on the Gaza Strip (December 2008) and the huge mass destruction of the buildings all over the Gaza Strip, the siege, in addition, prevented construction materials from entering Gaza. There was an urgent need to think thoroughly about alternative materials and techniques for construction. Moreover, because of the global and local shortage of resources, constructing with substitute materials such as packed sand, mud, wood and other natural materials became a crucial and important matter in our lives. Construction with mud was shown as one alternative to cement buildings. There was no recent research available about techniques that are suitable to the local market. In addition, there was a need to know the opinions of householders about accepting the notion of living in mud houses. Some organizations such as the United Nations and Ministry of Public Works and Housing (MPWH) started working with mud materials. This research investigated the practices and techniques used and the possibility of future use of mud buildings.