



# ANALYSIS OF VERY LONG COLUMNS WITH LOW BUCKLING LOAD VIA MEANS OF LAPLACE TRANSFORM

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## ABSTRACT

Columns are one of the vertical compression members of a structure used in building frames and are liable to buckle and fail under relatively small axial loads. These are considerably longer in comparison with their lateral dimensions and hence buckle when the axial load approaches a certain critical value known as critical buckling load. The Laplace transform has been used in solving initial value problems in science, engineering, and technology. In this paper, it is presented for analysis of very long columns with low buckling axial loads which is generally done by applying ordinary algebraic and calculus means.

**Keywords:** Euler's theory, Laplace transforms, Long Columns, buckling load.

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## INTRODUCTION

Buckling is one of the failures of a structure carrying the load. Columns being slender, deflect laterally when compressed, and buckle when the axial load approaches a certain critical value known as critical buckling load [1]. It has been noted that the columns fail entirely due to low buckling axial loads [2], [3]. Generally, the analysis of very long columns with low buckling axial loads is done by applying ordinary algebraic and calculus means [1], [2], [3]. The Laplace transform has been used in solving initial value problems in science, engineering and technology [4], [5], [6], [7], [8], [9], [10], [11], [12], [13]. In this paper, it is applied for the analysis of very long columns with low buckling axial loads.

## BASIC DEFINITION

The Laplace transform [4], [5], [6], [7] of  $h(x)$  is defined as  $L[h(x)] = \int_0^\infty e^{-px} h(x) dx = H(p)$ , provided that the integral is convergent for some value of real or complex parameter  $p$ .

The Laplace transform [8], [9], [10], [11], [12], [13] of some derivatives of  $h(x)$  are given by

$$L\{h'(x)\} = pH(p) - h(0),$$

$$L\{h''(x)\} = p^2H(p) - ph(0) - h'(0),$$

$$L\{h'''(x)\} = p^3H(p) - p^2h(0) - ph'(0) - h''(0),$$

and so on.

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

Considering a very long vertical column AB (with lower end B) of length 'a' and having uniform cross-section. Let 'y' be the lateral deflection of the column's section at height 'x'. Now we will discuss four different cases:

### Case-I: When both ends A and B of the column are pinned or hinged

In this case, the bending moment [14], [15] at the section is given by

$$\ddot{y}(x) + k^2 y(x) = 0 \dots \dots (1), \text{ where } k = \sqrt{\frac{P}{EI}}.$$

Taking Laplace Transform of (1), we get

$$L[\ddot{y}(x)] + k^2 L[y(x)] = 0$$

This equation gives

$$p^2 \bar{y}(p) - py(0) - \dot{y}(0) + k^2 \bar{y}(p) = 0 \dots \dots (2)$$

Put  $y(0) = 0$ , (5) becomes,

$$p^2 \bar{y}(p) - \dot{y}(0) + k^2 \bar{y}(p) = 0$$

Or

$$p^2 \bar{y}(p) + k^2 \bar{y}(p) = \dot{y}(0) \dots \dots \dots (3)$$

Put  $\dot{y}(0) = A$ , (3) becomes

$$p^2 \bar{y}(p) + k^2 \bar{y}(p) = A$$

Or

$$\bar{y}(p) = \frac{A}{(p^2 + k^2)} \dots\dots\dots (4)$$

Taking inverse Laplace transforms [4], [5], [6] of equation (4), we get

$$y(x) = \frac{A}{k} \sin(kx) \dots\dots\dots (5)$$

Put  $y(a) = 0$ , (5) gives

$$\sin(ka) = 0$$

Or

$ka = n\pi$ , where  $n$  is an integer greater than equal to zero.

Or

$$k = \frac{n\pi}{a} \dots\dots\dots (6)$$

The least practical value of  $n$  is 1, therefore considering  $n = 1$ , we have

$$k = \frac{\pi}{a}$$

Or

$$\sqrt{\frac{P}{YI}} = \frac{\pi}{a}$$

$$\text{Or } P = \frac{\pi^2 YI}{a^2} \dots\dots\dots (7)$$

This equation (7) is Euler's formula for critical buckling load for a very long column which is pinned at both ends.

#### Case-II: When lower end B of the column is fixed and the other end A is free

In this case, the bending moment [15], [16] at the section is given by

$$\bar{y}(x) + k^2[d - y(x)] = 0 \dots\dots (8), \text{ where 'd' is the deflection at the free end A due to buckling load.}$$

Taking Laplace Transform [7], [8], [9] of (8), we get

$$L[\bar{y}(x)] + k^2 L[y(x) - d] = 0$$

This equation gives

$$p^2 \bar{y}(p) - py(0) - \dot{y}(0) + k^2 \bar{y}(p) = \frac{k^2 d}{p} \dots\dots (9)$$

Put  $y(0) = 0$  and  $\dot{y}(0) = 0$  as the slope at  $x = 0$  is zero, (9) becomes,

$$p^2 \bar{y}(p) + k^2 \bar{y}(p) = \frac{k^2 d}{p}$$

Or

$$p^2 \bar{y}(p) + k^2 \bar{y}(p) = \frac{k^2 d}{p}$$

Or

$$\bar{y}(p) = \frac{k^2 d}{p(p^2 + k^2)}$$

Or

$$\bar{y}(p) = \frac{d}{p} - \frac{dp}{(p^2 + k^2)} \dots\dots\dots (10)$$

Taking inverse Laplace transforms [10], [11] of (10), we get

$$y(x) = d - d \cos(kx) \dots\dots\dots (11)$$

Applying the condition:  $y(a) = d$ , (11) gives

$$d = d - d \cos(ka)$$

Or

$$\cos(ka) = 0$$

Or

$$ka = \frac{(2n-1)\pi}{2}, \text{ where } n \text{ is an integer greater than equal to zero.}$$

Or

$$k = \frac{(2n-1)\pi}{2a}$$

The least practical value of  $n$  is 1, therefore considering  $n = 1$ , we have

$$k = \frac{\pi}{2a}$$

Or

$$\sqrt{\frac{P}{YI}} = \frac{\pi}{2a}$$

Or

$$P = \frac{\pi^2 YI}{4a^2} \dots\dots\dots (12)$$

This equation (12) is the Euler's formula for critical buckling load for the very long column whose lower end is fixed and the upper end is free.

#### Case-III: When both the ends A and B of the column are fixed

In this case, the bending moment [1, 2] at the section is given by

$$\bar{y}(x) + k^2 y(x) = M \dots\dots (13),$$

where  $M = \frac{M_0}{EI}$ ,  $M_0$  is the restraint moment at each end.

Taking Laplace Transform of equation (13), we get

$$L[\bar{y}(x)] + k^2 L[y(x)] = \frac{M}{p}$$

This equation gives

$$p^2 \bar{y}(p) - py(0) - \dot{y}(0) + k^2 \bar{y}(p) = \frac{M}{p} \dots\dots (14)$$

Put  $y(0) = 0$  and  $\dot{y}(0) = 0$  as the slope at  $x = 0$  is zero, equation (14) becomes,

$$p^2 \bar{y}(p) + k^2 \bar{y}(p) = \frac{M}{p}$$

Or

$$p^2 \bar{y}(p) + k^2 \bar{y}(p) = \frac{M}{p}$$

Or

$$\bar{y}(p) = \frac{M}{p(p^2 + k^2)}$$

Or

$$\bar{y}(p) = \frac{M}{k^2 p} - \frac{Mp}{k^2(p^2 + k^2)} \dots\dots (15)$$

Taking inverse Laplace transform [12], [13] of (15), we get

$$y(x) = \frac{M}{k^2} - \frac{M}{k^2} \cos(kx) \dots\dots\dots (16)$$

Applying the condition:  $y(a) = 0$ , (16) gives  $\frac{M}{k^2} - \frac{M}{k^2} \cos(ka) = 0$

Therefore,  $\cos(ka) = 1$

Or  $ka = 2n\pi$ , where  $n$  is an integer greater than equal to zero.

$$\text{Or } k = \frac{2n\pi}{a} \dots\dots (17)$$

The least practical value of  $n$  is 1, therefore considering  $n = 1$ , we have

$$k = \frac{2\pi}{a}$$

Or

$$\sqrt{\frac{P}{YI}} = \frac{2\pi}{a}$$

Or

$$P = \frac{4\pi^2 YI}{a^2} \dots\dots\dots (18)$$

This equation (18) is Euler's formula for critical buckling load for the very long column whose both ends are fixed.

### Case-IV: When lower end B of the column is fixed and the upper-end A is hinged or pinned

In this case, the bending moment [1], [16] at the section is given by

$$\bar{y}(x) + \frac{H_0}{EI} k^2 y(x) = H(a-x) \dots (19),$$

where  $H = \frac{H_0}{EI}$ ,  $H_0$  is horizontal force at the fixed end B.

Taking Laplace Transform of (19), we get

$$L[\bar{y}(x)] + k^2 L[y(x)] = HL[(a-x)]$$

This equation gives

$$p^2 \bar{y}(p) - py(0) - \dot{y}(0) + k^2 \bar{y}(p) = H \left[ \left( \frac{a}{p} - \frac{1}{p^2} \right) \right] \dots (20)$$

Put  $y(0) = 0$  and  $\dot{y}(0) = 0$  as the slope at  $x = 0$  is zero, (20) becomes,

$$p^2 \bar{y}(p) + k^2 \bar{y}(p) = H \left[ \left( \frac{a}{p} - \frac{1}{p^2} \right) \right]$$

Or

$$\bar{y}(p) = H \left[ \frac{a}{p(p^2 + k^2)} - \frac{1}{p^2(p^2 + k^2)} \right]$$

Or

$$\bar{y}(p) = H \left[ \frac{a}{k^2 p} - \frac{ap}{k^2(p^2 + k^2)} - \frac{1}{k^2 p^2} + \frac{k}{k^3(p^2 + k^2)} \right] \dots (21)$$

Taking inverse Laplace transform [11], [12], [13] of (21), we get

$$y(x) = H \left[ \frac{a}{k^2} - \frac{a}{k^2} \cos(kx) - \frac{x}{k^2} + \frac{\sin kx}{k^3} \right] \dots (22)$$

Applying the condition:  $y(a) = 0$ , (22) gives

$$H \left[ \frac{a}{k^2} - \frac{a}{k^2} \cos(ka) - \frac{a}{k^2} + \frac{\sin ka}{k^3} \right] = 0$$

Or

$$\left[ -\frac{a}{k^2} \cos(ka) + \frac{\sin ka}{k^3} \right] = 0$$

Or

$$\frac{a}{k^2} \cos(ka) = \frac{\sin ka}{k^3}$$

Or

$$\tan(ka) = ka$$

On expanding  $\tan ka$  upto 5<sup>th</sup> power of  $ka$  and solving, we get

Or

$$ka = 4.5 \text{ radians}$$

Or

$$\sqrt{\frac{p}{YI}} a = 4.5 \text{ radians}$$

$$\text{Or } P = \frac{20.25 YI}{a^2}$$

$$\text{Or } P = \frac{2\pi^2 YI}{a^2} \dots (23)$$

This equation (23) is Euler's formula for critical buckling load for a very long column whose lower end is fixed and the upper end is pinned.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This paper analyzes the very long columns with low buckling axial load by applying the Laplace transform tool. A successful attempt has been made to exemplify

the Laplace transform method for analyzing the very long columns with low buckling axial loads for obtaining the Euler's formula of buckling load. In all the cases discussed, we found that the critical buckling load for very long columns which are subjected to axial loads is inversely proportional to the square of the length of the column. The results obtained are the same as obtained with ordinary and calculus algebraic methods [1-3], [14-16].

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