International Journal of Advances in Engineering and Management (IJAEM)
Volume 6, Issue 10 Oct. 2024, pp: 429-433 www.ijaem.net ISSN: 2395-5252

Design of Hydrocyclone for Efficient Classification of Clay Minerals

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Date of Submission: 20-10-2024 Date of Acceptance: 30-10-2024

ABSTRACT
A hydrocyclonefor the classification of clay minerals have been designed towards the satisfaction of Nigeria content. The work involves conceptual designing, followed by the determination of design specification variables, interpretation of design by engineering drawing using Autocard and the selection of suitable materials for fabrication. The concept developed established that the device separate value from nonvalue via the conversion of angular velocities of particles in suspension to centrifugal acceleration. The design specification variables determined include; cyclone diameter, feed inlet diameter, flow rate, cut point, length and diameter of vortex finder and spigot, expected circulating load, pressure and pulp density. For a cyclone diameter of 43.0 mm determined, the vortex finder diameter is 1.44 cm a feed, inlet diameter of 0.90 cm, a cut point of 50 µm, with pulp density of 50% of solid. The circulating load is 300% with a flow rate of 1.8 m^3/h, pressure of 13.9 psi and a feeding rate of 5 kg/h. Suitable materials for the fabrication of the cyclone have been selected to ensure, corrosion and abrasion resistant, pressure and temperature ratings, cost and availability, fabrication ease and complexity. In this work composite such as fibre-reinforced polymer, ceramic-polymer composite, cast alluminium or pyrex-glass have been recommended.

Keywords: classification, design, vortex finder, pulp density, cyclone diameter, circulating load, clay minerals, spigot, cut point.

I. INTRODUCTION

Mineral processing, also known as ore dressing, is the process of separating commercially valuable minerals from their ores. Before the advent of heavy machinery the raw ore was broken up using hammers wielded by hands, a process called ‘‘spalling’’.The simplest method of separating ore from their gangue consist of picking out individual crystals of each. This is very tedious process, particularly when the individual particles are small. Another comparatively simple methodologies on the various minerals having different densities, causing them to collecting different places; metallic mineral (being heavier) will drop out of suspension more quickly than lighters ones, which will be carried further by a stream of water.(Maurice, 2018)

Classification may be described as a method of sizing, sorting or concentration minerals on the basis of the velocity at which the particles fall through a fluid medium.If a body falls freely into a vacuum,it is subject to a constant acceleration and its velocity increases indefinitely, the velocity independent of the size and density of the body. if the body falls in a viscous medium (air, water, or anything). However, the medium offers a certain resistance which opposes the force increases,therefore when a body is allowed to fall in a viscous medium, it velocity increases until the two opposing faces balance, the body has then reached its terminal velocity and continues to settle in a uniform rate. Especially for sizing purposes, is restricted to particles of size between 2mmand 0.02mm(Wills, 2007)

A design is a plan or specification for the construction of an object or system or for the implementation of an activity or process, or the result of that plan or specification in the form of a prototype, product or process the verb to design expresses the process of developing a design. in some cases, thedirect construction of an object without an explicit prior plan (such as in craftwork, some engineering,codingand graphics design)may also be considered to be a design activity.A design usually has to satisfy certain goals and constraints, may take into account aesthetic, functional, economic, or socio-political consideration, and is expected to interact with a certain environment.(Eggert, 2020).

Hydrocyclone is a classifier that uses a rising current of water as a sorting column, it consist of an upright cylindrical section fastened above a conical section which is open at the bottom, a smaller upright cylinder is contained within the larger cylindrical section. When a pulp is fused into the cyclone tangentially,the pulp strain travels at high circle and this spinning action forms a vortex so that there is an open space extending from the bottom (spigot)of the cone of the axis of the pulp,centrifuges the suspended solid particles and they are thrown into the outside wall of the cyclone these coarser particles follow a down ward spiral path until they discharge at the bottom(spigot)of the conical section. These particles overflow with water through the central circuit (Wills, 2016).

Most engineering design can be classified as invention of devices or systems that are created by human effort or are improvement over existing devices. Operations in the minerals industry is facilitate using machines/equipment, owing to the fact that, mineral is a naturally occurring, structurally homogeneous solid with definite but may not be fixed chemical composition and a crystalline structure formed by the inorganic processes of nature. Mineral comprises of valuable and non-valuable components. To add value to minerals, liberation and concentration need to be carried out to obtain enriched portion of economic value.

Machines are employed to effect concentration of minerals. They concentrate by utilizing some physical and or physico-chemical properties difference between value and non-valuable minerals. Clays are usually classified/concentrated using classifiers such as; hydro-sizer, siphon-sizer, hydrocyclone etc. most of which are only available in developed countries. The developing countries depends on them for their technical and machineries to add value to mineral/material resources. There is the need to embrace local content satisfaction by promoting the development of such facilities locally. The design of available hydrocyclone did not take into consideration control of pulp density to take care of both hindered and free settling of minerals particles as well as the provision for flow control. Also, that locally source materials will be used for fabrication will result in economy in production, since importation is no longer a well come idea owing to the rapidly increasing exchange rate of dollar. This will result in generation of employment and revenue as well as promoting mining activities in Nigeria, hence improving balance of trade. Such facilities will be beneficial to small scale miners.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The design and development of hydrocyclone for efficient classification of clay minerals was achieved via concept development and determination of design variables which covered cyclone diameter of inlet, vortex finder and under flow/spigot, length of the cyclone, pressure drop, centrifugal force on particle and cut diameter. The design was interpreted by engineering drawings followed by suggestion of suitable materials for the fabrication.

For the classification of clay minerals in the rate of 2.6g/m^3 in a hydrocyclone operating at a pressure of 15psi, with a circulating load of 200% I the feed to the cyclone contains 50% solid by weight the following consideration were made.

Cyclone diameter

According to Mular and Jull expression for the cut size $d_{50,}$ from results obtain on Kerbs cyclone.

$$d_{50,} = \frac{12.67DC\ 0.67 \exp(-0.301 = 0.09454 - 0.003564V^2 = 0.0000684V^3}{P^{0.3}(5-1)^{0.5}}$$

Where:
DC = Cyclone Diameter
V = Volumetric % of solid in the feed
S = Density (Specific gravity)
P = Pressure

Flow Rate

The feed flow rate was determined From

$Q = 9.4 \text{ x } 10^{-3}\ P\frac{1}{2}DC^2$ (Mular and Jull 1978)

Determination of Vortex Finder

According to Mular and Julls from results obtain from Crebs cyclone

Vortex finder = $\frac{\text{cyclone diameter}}{3}$

Determination of Feed Inlet Diameter

According to Dashlsotrom (1949)

$$\frac{Q^{0.5}}{P} = K^1(v.f\,X\,\text{inlet})^{0.9}$$

Where K^1 is a function of the included angel of the cone and the minor design variables. According to paper presented by N. Suresh, venugopal and T. C. Rao, to the institution of mining and metallurgy on 6 may, 1993.

$Q\ 0.32dv.f^{0.94}\ X\ dspp^{0.11}\ X\ pff^{0.11}$

Where dv.f = diameter of vortex finder
Dspp = diameter of spigot
Pff = percentage of fines in the feed
Q = flow rate (through put)

The values of the exponents in equation (vi) indicates that the diameter of the vortex finder exerts a significant influence on the throughput.

III. FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

This study investigated the design parameters of a hydrocyclone with a cyclone diameter of 43.0 mm, achieving optimal performance through strategic configurations. Key findings include an optimal vortex finder diameter of 1.44 cm and feed inlet diameter of 0.90 cm, efficiently separating particles at a 50 µm cut point. Stable operation was maintained at 50% pulp density, 300% circulating load, 1.8 m3/h flow rate, 13.9 psi pressure, and 5 kg/h feeding rate. These results provide valuable insights into hydrocyclone design, highlighting the importance of carefully selected parameters to maximize separation efficiency. The findings have significant implications for mineral processing industries, offering guidelines for designing efficient hydrocyclones tailored to specific applications.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study investigated the design parameters of a hydrocyclone with a cyclone diameter of 43.0 mm, achieving optimal performance through strategic configurations. Key findings include an optimal vortex finder diameter of 1.44 cm and feed inlet diameter of 0.90 cm, efficiently separating particles at a 50 µm cut point. Stable operation was maintained at 50% pulp density, 300% circulating load, 1.8 m3/h flow rate, 13.9 psi pressure, and 5 kg/h feeding rate. These results provide valuable insights into hydrocyclone design, highlighting the importance of carefully selected parameters to maximize separation efficiency. The findings have significant implications for mineral processing industries, offering guidelines for designing efficient hydrocyclones tailored to specific applications.

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APPENDIX I

Determination of cyclone diameter

$$\frac{12.67DC\ .0.675\ \exp[-0.301\ +\ 0.0945 \text{ x } 0.278 - 0.00356 \text{ x } (0.278)^2 + 0.0000684 \text{ x } (0.278)^{3]}}{(103.43)^{0.3}(2.6-1)^{0.5}}$$

d_{50} = Cut size = 50 microns

To Determine the Flow Rate

$Q = 0.0094 \text{ x } \sqrt{103.23 \text{ X } 0.04315^2}$

= 0.00017782 = 1.7782

$Q = 1.8m^3$

Determination of Vortex Finder

Vortex finder diameter (v. f) -= $\frac{DC}{3} = \frac{43.15}{3}$ = 14.4mm

Determination of Feed Inlet Diameter

$\frac{1.8}{103.43^{0.5}} = \frac{20}{1.4}^{0} (1.4 \text{ X inlet})^{0.9}$

$\frac{1.8}{10.170} = \frac{0.209}{1.4} (1.4 \text{ X inlet})^{0.9}$

Inlet = 0.86 cm

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APPENDIX II

AUTOCARD DRAWING OF THE HYDROCYCLONE