



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

***INFLUENCE OF EXTRACTIVES ON THE POROSITY OF OIL PALM  
(*Elais guineensis* Jacq.) STEM***

**BALKIS FATOMER BINTI A. BAKAR**

**IPTPH 2014 2**



**INFLUENCE OF EXTRACTIVES ON THE POROSITY OF OIL PALM  
(*Elais guineensis* Jacq.) STEM**

By

**BALKIS FATOMER BINTI A. BAKAR**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,  
Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science**

**May 2014**

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To my beloved husband

*Nizam Hakim Md. Ishak*

My beloved parents

*Hj. A. Bakar Othman*

*Hjh. Farida Amin*

My beloved sisters and brother

*Suhailey Bakar*

*Nathrah Bakar*

*Ghazaly Bakar*

Thank you for being the people that encouraged me the most.

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

**INFLUENCE OF EXTRACTIVES ON THE POROSITY OF OIL PALM (*Elaeis guineensis* Jacq.) STEM**

By

**BALKIS FATOMER A. BAKAR**

**May 2014**

**Chairman : Professor Paridah Md. Tahir, PhD**

**Institute : Institute of Tropical Forestry and Forest Products (INTROP)**

In this study, an investigation was conducted to determine the basic properties (moisture content and density) of the oil palm stem and amount of extractives content that can be extracted from the sample. Porosity studies were also conducted on the oil palm stem in different exposure conditions (dried and green) and the influence of extractive on the porosity was examined. Oil palm trees were selected randomly from the species *Elaeis guineensis* Jacq. from Taman Pertanian Universiti located in Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Malaysia. Each of the tree were cut along the tree height into three main parts namely bottom, middle and top. Each part was further cut into three sections labelled as outer, inner and centre across the transverse direction of oil palm stem. Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industry (TAPPI) standards were employed for water extractives (cold water and hot water) and also acetone extractives. The green moisture content of the oil palm stem was found higher at the middle with average of 221.8% and lowest was at bottom with 158.4%. Across the transverse direction, centre section always had higher moisture content regardless of the tree height and the lowest was found at outer section with average of 260.7% and 115.3%, accordingly. The density of oil palm stem was found inversed with moisture content as the highest density was found at bottom with average of 0.46 g/cm<sup>3</sup> and the lowest was at middle with 0.37 g/cm<sup>3</sup>. Outer consistently gave higher density compared to centre section with 0.55 g/cm<sup>3</sup> and 0.30 g/cm<sup>3</sup>. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) obtained between moisture content and density was high with 0.83. In non-sequential method, hot water extractives gave higher results compared to other solvents with average of 26.8% of total extracted compounds. Whereas in the sequential method, cold water was found higher with average of 21.3%. Comparing the methods, sequential extraction method gave greater amount of extractives as the samples had gone through three different solvents continuously. Whilst, parenchyma cells is proven to contribute three times higher of extractives content compared than vascular bundles.

For theoretical porosity in dried and green condition, samples taken from centre section at middle part had highest average percentage of 79.4% and 78.2%, respectively and the least was found at outer section at bottom part with 71.7% and 69.0%, accordingly. Whereas, experimental porosity was found higher at centre section at top part for dried condition and at centre section of middle part along the oil palm tree height for green condition. Experimental porosity surpassed the theoretical porosity values as a result from the effects of condition exposure of the samples at the upper part of the oil palm tree (middle and top). However, there is no dependency of extractives content towards porosity found in this study. This study concluded that moisture content and density of oil palm stem was affected by the location (longitudinal and transverse direction) of the sample taken. Extractives content was found higher at sample which consist higher portion of parenchyma cells. Oil palm stem sample in green condition resulted higher experimental porosity compared to dried condition. Porosity of oil palm stem has low influence by its extractives content rather than its anatomical structure. The study suggests that oil palm stem can be treated by impregnation or preservation process in green condition.

Abstrak thesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**PENGARUH EKSTRAKTIF TERHADAP KELIANGAN BATANG KELAPA SAWIT (*Elaeis guineensis* Jacq.)**

Oleh

**BALKIS FATOMER A. BAKAR**  
**Mei 2014**

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Dalam kajian ini, satu ujikaji telah dijalankan untuk menentukan sifat-sifat asas (kandungan air dan ketumpatan) daripada batang kelapa sawit dan juga jumlah kandungan ekstraktif yang boleh diekstrak daripada sampel tersebut. Kajian keliangan juga dijalankan pada batang kelapa sawit dan pengaruh ekstraktif pada keliangan kayu dikaji. Pokok kelapa sawit telah dipilih secara rawak daripada spesies *Elaeis guineensis* Jacq. dari Taman Pertanian Universiti yang terletak di Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Malaysia. Setiap pokok dipotong kepada tiga bahagian utama iaitu bahagian bawah, tengah dan atas disepanjang ketinggian pokok. Setiap bahagian pula dipotong menjadi tiga bahagian kecil yang dilabel sebagai luar, dalam dan pusat di arah melintang batang kelapa sawit. Piawaian (Persatuan Teknikal Industri Pulpa dan Kertas) TAPPI digunakan untuk eksperimen keterlarutan air (air sejuk dan air panas) dan juga aseton ekstraktif. Kandungan lembapan hijau batang kelapa sawit didapati lebih tinggi di tengah dengan purata 221.8% dan terendah adalah di bahagian bawah dengan 158.4%. Pada arah melintang, bahagian pusat sentiasa mempunyai kandungan lembapan yang lebih tinggi tanpa mengira ketinggian pokok itu dan yang paling rendah didapati di bahagian luar dengan purata 260.7% dan 115.3%. Ketumpatan batang kelapa sawit didapati songsang dengan kandungan lembapan sebagai kepadatan paling tinggi didapati di bahagian bawah dengan purata 0.46 g/cm<sup>3</sup> dan yang paling rendah adalah di tengah dengan 0.37 g/cm<sup>3</sup>. Bahagian luar secara konsisten memberikan kepadatan yang lebih tinggi berbanding dengan bahagian tengah dengan 0.55 g/cm<sup>3</sup> dan 0.30 g/cm<sup>3</sup>. Pekali penentuan ( $R^2$ ) diperolehi antara kandungan lembapan dan ketumpatan adalah tinggi dengan 0.83. Dalam kaedah tidak berurutan, keterlarutan air panas memberikan jumlah yang lebih tinggi berbanding dengan pelarut lain dengan purata sebanyak 26.8% daripada jumlah sebatian yang diekstrak. Manakala, dalam kaedah berurutan, kelarutan air sejuk didapati lebih tinggi dengan purata 21.3%. Apabila membandingkan kaedah, kaedah pengekstrakan berurutan memberikan jumlah yang lebih besar kerana sampel batang kelapa sawit telah melalui tiga pelarut yang berbeza dalam satu proses.

Tambahan lagi, sel parenkima terbukti menyumbang tiga kali lebih tinggi kandungan ekstraktif berbanding daripada berkas vaskular.

Untuk teori keliangan dalam keadaan kering dan hijau, sampel yang diambil daripada bahagian pusat di bahagian tengah mempunyai peratusan tertinggi purata 79.4% dan 78.2% masing-masing dan yang paling didapati di bahagian luar di bahagian bawah dengan 71.7% dan 69.0%. Manakala, eksperimen keliangan didapati lebih tinggi pada bahagian tengah di bahagian atas bagi keadaan kering dan di bahagian tengah bahagian tengah di sepanjang ketinggian pokok kelapa sawit bagi keadaan hijau. Eksperimen keliangan melebihi nilai teori keliangan sebagai hasil dari kesan pendedahan keadaan sampel pada bahagian atas pokok kelapa sawit (tengah dan atas). Walau bagaimanapun, tidak ada pergantungan kandungan ekstraktif terhadap keliangan didapati dalam kajian ini. Kajian ini mendapati bahawa kandungan lembapan dan ketumpatan batang kelapa sawit berubah mengikut lokasi sampel (arah ketinggian kelapa sawit dan melintang) yang diambil. Kandungan ekstraktif didapati lebih tinggi pada sampel yang mempunyai sel parenkima yang tinggi. Sampel batang kelapa sawit dalam keadaan hijau menghasilkan bacaan keliangan experiment yang lebih tinggi berbanding keadaan sampel yang dikeringkan. Keliangan batang kelapa sawit mempunyai pengaruh yang rendah oleh jumlah ekstraktif berbanding dengan struktur anatomi. Kajian ini juga mencadangkan bahawa batang kelapa sawit boleh dirawat dalam keadaan hijau.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All praises are due to Allah SWT who had given me blessing, strength and knowledge in finishing this thesis.

Special notes of gratitude to my main supervisor, Professor Dr Paridah Md Tahir, without whom my research would not have been possible and completed. I would also like to thank her for all the guidance and encouragement that she has shown me throughout the period of this research as a supervisor. To all my committee members Professor Dr Alinaghi Karimi, and Associate Professor Dr Edi Suhaimi Bakar, I extend to you my warmest thanks for being patient, understanding and providing me invaluable guidance. I would like to also say thank you to Professor Dr Zaidon Ashaari, Professor Dr Salim Hiziroglu and Dr Mohd Khairun Anwar Uyup for your willingness to spend some time to sharing knowledge with me and guiding me in writing this thesis.

Special thanks to my Head of Department of Forest Production, Dr. Rasmina Halis and Dean of Faculty of Forestry, Prof. Datin Dr. Faridah Hanum Ibrahim for the approval of my study leave and all the assistance and advice given. I would also like to extend my appreciation to all the staff of the Faculty of Forestry and the Institute of Tropical Forestry and Forest Products, especially Mr Azam, Mr Fakhruddin, Mr Zamani for all their help during my labwork.

To my fellow researchers, Dr Adrian Choo Cheng Yong, Dr. Juliana Halip, Aisyah Humaira, Norul Izani, Nor Hafizah, Husna, Lukman, all my ex-UiTM comrades and other colleagues, I sincerely appreciate all the help that you guys have given to me and I truly cherish our friendship.

My greatest and deepest gratitude goes to my parents, my parents in law and siblings for being understanding and supportive through the years. To my husband Hakim, thank you for always being there for me, being a good listener and encouraging me through the trials I faced in completing this thesis. I dedicate this thesis to all of you.

Balkis

I certify that an Examination Committee has met on **27<sup>th</sup> May 2014** to conduct the final examination of **BALKIS FATOMER A. BAKAR** on her **MASTER IN SCIENCE** thesis entitled “**INFLUENCE OF EXTRACTIVES ON THE POROSITY OF OIL PALM (*Elaeis guineensis* Jacq.) STEM**” in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the relevant degree.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

(-OH)	hydroxyl groups
ANOVA	Analysis of variance
CPO	Crude palm oil
EFB	Empty fruit bunch
EMC	Equilibrium moisture content
FSP	Fibre saturation point
GBP	Gypsum-bonded particleboard
ha	hectares
Lmw PF	Low molecular weight phenol formaldehyde
LSD	Least significant difference
LVL	Laminated veneer lumber
MDF	Medium-density fibreboard
MF	Mesocarp fibre
MIDA	Malaysian Industrial Development Authority
MPOB	Malaysian Palm Oil Board
PKO	Palm kernel oil
PKS	Palm kernel shells
POME	Palm oil mill effluent
R <sup>2</sup>	Coefficient of determination
SAS	Statistical analysis variance
TAPPI	Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industry
TPU	Taman Pertanian Universiti

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 General View

Since early 1960's, the cultivation of oil palm plantation increased at a fast pace in line with the government's agricultural diversification program, which was introduced to reduce the country's economic dependence on rubber and tin (Rasiah and Shahrin, 2004). Later in the 1960's, the government introduced land settlement schemes for planting oil palm tree to eliminate poverty for the landless farmers and smallholders. Initially, oil palm tree was planted to harvest the palm oil from its fruits. The latest statistical data extracted from MPOB (2014) had reported that there was 5.23 million ha of oil palm plantation in 2013 compared to 5.08 million ha in 2012. The largest oil palm plantation was dominated by Peninsular Malaysia with 2.59 million ha, followed by Sabah (1.48 million ha) and Sarawak (1.16 million ha) (MPOB, 2014).

In spite of substantial plantation, ample oil palm stems are available during replanting process which happens after the trees reach 25 to 30 years. The stems generated approximately 15.39 million tonnes of lignocellulosic materials annually (Hartono, 2012). Previously, the discarded stems were burnt in the field as disposal of the wastes (Lim and Gan, 2005) or were left at the oil palm plantation as natural compost.

With proper treatment against bio-deteriorating agents, the oil palm stems have been proven to be used in various applications such as laminated veneer lumber (LVL) and plywood (Loh et al., 2011; Sulaiman et al., 2008; Nordin et al., 2004) are used as the core materials to produce framing materials for the manufacture of furniture. Oil palm stem usage is extended as well as to other composite panels, such as particleboard, medium-density fibreboard (MDF) and wood cement board. Rahim and Khozirah (1991) had introduced gypsum-bonded particleboard (GBP) by using fresh oil palm stem chips. Additionally, recent works done by several authors (Hoong et al., 2013; Nor Hafizah et al., 2012; Loh et al., 2011) had produced high grade oil palm plywood and veneers by impregnated low molecular weight phenol formaldehyde (LmwPF) into the samples.

However, there is no economic value of oil palm stem from structural point of view (Abdul Khalil, 2006), and the maximum utilization of oil palm stem still constrained with several factors such as variation in density (Loh et al., 2011; Choo et al., 2010; Bakar et al., 2008; Lim et al., 2003), high moisture content (Bakar et al., 2008; Shirley, 2002), high extractives content (Darmawan, 2006) and low dimensional stability (Bakar et al., 2008; Ibrahim, 1989). Therefore, various techniques have been implemented to enhance the properties of oil palm stem end products through polymer injection (Zugenmaier, 2006; Ibrahim, 1989), thermal treatment (Fukuta, 2008; Higashihara et al., 2000), chemical modification (Mahlberg et al., 2001; Xie et al., 2007) and resin impregnation (Nor Hafizah et al., 2014; Bakar et al., 2013 and

2008; Hoong et al., 2012; Loh et al., 2011; Irshad et al., 2010). In general, such processes aim to improve the weather and decay resistance, dimensional stability, strength, colour and paintability properties of materials (Herajarvi, 2009).

Most of the treatments particularly using chemical treatments are related to the basic properties of the woody or lignocellulose such as porosity and permeability value. Like wood, oil palm stem is a porous material (Kollmann and Cote, 1968) which composed of cell wall substances and cavities containing air and extractives (Tsoumis, 1991). The specific gravity of the cell wall practically constant for all woody material with value of  $1.53 \text{ g/cm}^3$  on an oven dry mass and volume basis, and the cell wall materials are completely non-porous (Dinwoodie, 1981). What make oil palm stem differ from other wood such as rubberwood is it belongs to monocotyledon plants which means oil palm stem does not possess any vascular cambium, secondary growth, growth rings, ray cells, sapwood and heartwood, branches and knots (Killmann and Lim, 1985) compared to dicotyledon plants. Flow of fluid in oil palm stem is mainly through metaxylem vessels in vascular bundles (Shirley, 2002) and several researchers also found that parenchyma contributes to absorb more liquid as it have thin walled and high absorbency rate (Nordin, 2012; Paridah et al., 2006).

Moreover, oil palm stem is a much more porous, cellular and anisotropic in nature. Thus liquid such as water and low molecular weight compounds can rapidly absorbed and flow into the cell wall and lumen (Loh et al., 2011). Basically, wood porosity can ranged from 46 to 80% of total wood volume which can give significant effect to the depth and direction of fluid flows like preservatives and adhesives in treatment process (Vick, 1999). During the treatment process, penetration of liquid in wood pores depends on surface roughness, density, extractives content and properties of the liquid itself (Nor Hafizah et al., 2012). Oil palm stem also has been reported to contain high extractives content (10%) compared to other wood (Darmawan, 2006), and Olsson et al. (2001) believed that extractives are one of the main reasons for reduced transverse permeability of pine heartwood.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Lignocellulosic material is chemically heterogeneous and its components can be divided into two groups; structural components of high molecular weight which includes cellulose, hemicellulose and lignin that contributes to the major cell wall components; and non-structural components of low molecular weight (extractives and inorganic components). The extractives are non-polymeric and may be separated from the insoluble cell wall materials by solving them in water or organic solvents (Vaicklenionis and Vaickelioniene, 2006). In general, the overall percent of the extractives in wood varies from 2 to 10% and oil palm stem consists the highest extractives content among other monocotyledon plants (Darmawan, 2006). The effects of extractives resulted in corrosion of metals in contact with wood, inhibition of setting of concrete, glue and finishes (David and Nobuo, 2001). During the drying process, extractives that presence in wood are transported to the surface in a heterogeneous distribution and deposited as solids when the water evaporates causing the interference with absorption and curing process of the substances.

Contamination of wood surface by having heavy deposits of extractives may reduce bonding strength by blocking the reaction sites and prevent true wetting by the adhesives (Hse and Kuo, 1988).

Moreover, Behr et al. (2011) stated that in Scots pine, extractives are believed to be one of the main reason for the reduced transverse permeability of pine heartwood. A small amount of distributed extractives is enough to encrust the bordered pits permanently and block them for liquids as extractives were related to reduce wood treatability (Zimmer et al., 2009). A vast number of experimental results have shown that the removal of extractives increases the dimensional changes of wood (Adamopoulos and Voulgaridis, 2012; Stamm and Loughborough, 1942). In study done by Adamopoulos and Voulgaridis (2012) on Black Locust wood had found that removal of extractives also resulted to a slight gradual increase in radial and tangential dimensional changes of the wood. Furthermore, Darmawan et al. (2012) reported that wood extractives and silica have a potential adverse effect on tool wear.

As in wood, the most crucial properties determining the ease of drying and treatment in oil palm stem is its porosity. Porosity is the fractional of void volume of wood and to be a permeable, a solid must be porous (Siau, 1984). However, having high porosity values does not mean that the material will have higher permeability values as a result from blockage or cell ruptured. The knowledge of porosity is important as a factor influencing the amount of liquid that can be absorbed in a given block volume and influenced the way preservative retention is expressed (Usta, 2006). For instance, the maximum amount of treating solution that can be injected into wood can be determined. Research on porosity has always been highlighted on the hardwoods and softwoods as compared to monocotyledons (Nordin, 2012; Plotze and Niemz, 2011). Only limit information has been found for porosity of oil palm stem and it is not sufficient to help boost the effect of the treatment that using liquid. Thus, hypothesis for this study is wood extractives that are presence in oil palm stem may block the voids in liquid absorption of oil palm stem.

### **1.3 Objectives**

The main objective of this study was to evaluate the influence of extractives on the porosity of oil palm stem.

Specific objectives of the work were:

- a) To determine the moisture content and density of oil palm stem along the tree height and transverse section.
- b) To evaluate the extractives content in longitudinal and transverse section of oil palm stem.
- c) To determine the porosity relationships with extractives content of oil palm stem along the tree height and transverse direction.

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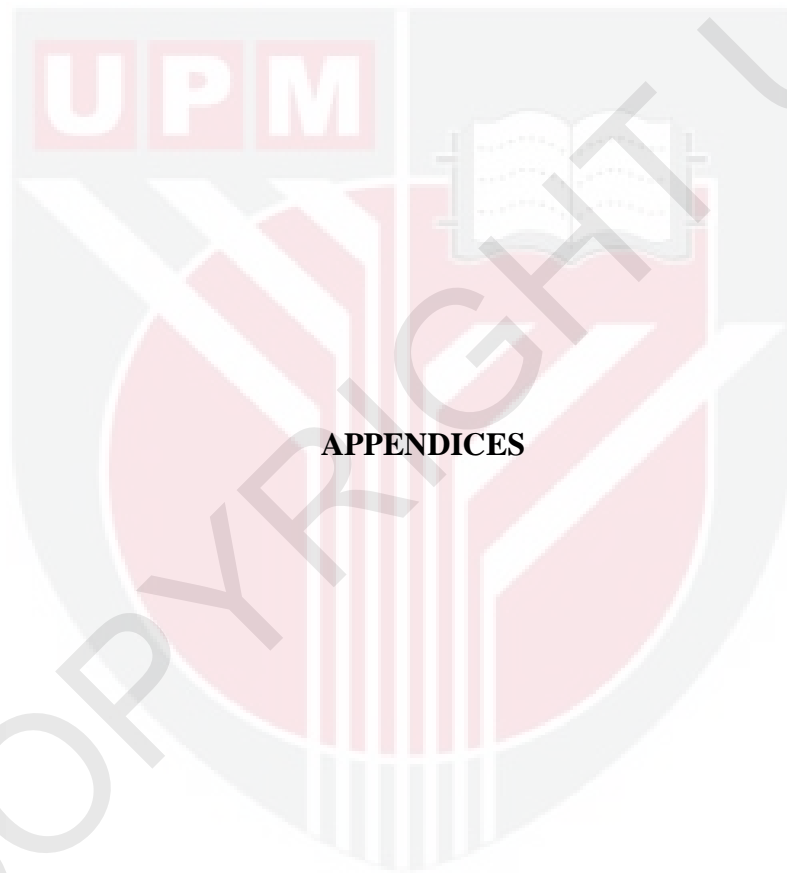
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**APPENDICES**