



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**PHYSIO-CHEMICAL AND MECHANICAL PROPERTIES OF
DIFFERENT MORPHOLOGICAL PARTS OF SUGAR PALM FIBRE
REINFORCED POLYESTER COMPOSITES**

SAHARI BIN JAPAR

ITMA 2011 3

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**MASTER OF SCIENCE
UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

2011

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MORPHOLOGICAL PARTS OF SUGAR PALM FIBRE REINFORCED
POLYESTER COMPOSITES**

By

SAHARI BIN JAPAR

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

April 2011

DEDICATIONS

For all your advice and encouragement, this thesis is gratefully dedicated to my beloved parent, family and my friends. Thank you very much for your continuous support and effort towards the publication of this thesis.



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

PHYSIO-CHEMICAL AND MECHANICAL PROPERTIES OF DIFFERENT MORPHOLOGICAL PARTS OF SUGAR PALM FIBRE REINFORCED POLYESTER COMPOSITES

By

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April 2011

Chairman : Professor Mohd Sapuan Salit, PhD, P. Eng

Institute : Institute of Advanced Technology

Recently, due to increase environmental concerns, scientists and technologists have placed much importance on the application of natural fibre composites especially in biocomposites. The purpose of this research is to study the properties of single fibre from different morphological parts of sugar palm tree and properties of sugar palm fibre from different parts reinforced unsaturated polyester composites. These studies have been done in order to evaluate the potentiality of fibre from different morphological parts of sugar palm tree i.e sugar palm frond (SPF), sugar palm bunch (SPB), sugar palm trunk (SPT) and black sugar palm fibre (*ijuk*) as which is can be used as eventual raw materials for the reinforcement of polymer matrix composites which are suitable in various applications such as building, automotive, furniture and packaging.

The tensile, chemical and physical properties of single fibres from all parts were evaluated. The results showed that the highest tensile strength and tensile modulus were obtained from the SPF followed by SPB, *ijuk* and SPT. These results have been proven with the results of their chemical compositions where the highest cellulose content was obtained from SPF (66.49%) and followed by SPB (61.76%), *ijuk*

(52.29%), and SPT (40.56%).

The mechanical and physical properties of natural fibres from different parts of sugar palm tree reinforced unsaturated polyester composites which are SPF/PE, SPB/PE, SPT/PE and *ijuk*/PE have also been evaluated in this study. For tensile strength analysis, it is found that SPF/PE shared the higher value of 15.179 MPa (± 2.425) followed by SPB/PE, *ijuk*/PE and SPT/PE with 12.809 MPa (± 1.580), 11.473 MPa (± 0.536) and 9.817 MPa (± 1.890) respectively. The higher value of flexural strength and flexural modulus obtained from SPT/PE with the value of 41.906 MPa and 3.363 GPa respectively. For impact strength analysis, similar trends were found with the tensile stress and tensile strain results and SPF/PE showed the higher value of impact strength (8.091 kJ m^{-2}) followed by SPB/PE, *ijuk*/PE and SPT/PE. In cases of physical properties, it is found that SPF/PE showed the higher value of water absorption and thickness swelling with the value of 1.57%, and 1.56% followed by SPB/PE (1.35%, 1.11%), *ijuk*/PE (0.65%, 0.76%) and SPT/PE (0.39%, 0.50%). Scanning electron microscopy (SEM) test were carried out after the mechanical test to observe the interface bonding of fibre and matrix.

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

**SIFAT-SIFAT FISIO-KIMIA DAN MEKANIKAL KOMPOSIT POLIESTER
DIPERKUAT GENTIAN DARIPADA BAHAGIAN POKOK ENAU YANG
BERBEZA**

Oleh

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Baru-baru ini, disebabkan peningkatan keperihatinan terhadap alam sekitar, saintis dan teknologis menekankan terlalu banyak kepentingan terhadap penggunaan gentian semula jadi khususnya dalam biokomposit. Tujuan penyelidikan ini ialah untuk mengkaji sifat-sifat gentian tunggal daripada bahagian morfologi pokok enau yang berbeza dan sifat-sifat komposit poliester tak tepu diperkuat gentian daripada bahagian pokok enau yang berbeza. Kajian ini dilaksanakan untuk menilai potensi gentian daripada bahagian morfologi pokok enau yang berbeza iaitu pelepah pokok enau (SPF), tandan pokok enau (SPB), batang pokok enau (SPT) dan gentian hitam pokok enau (*ijuk*) sebagai bahan asas untuk memperkuatkan komposit polimer yang sesuai dalam pelbagai aplikasi seperti bangunan, automotif, perabot dan pembungkusan.

Sifat-sifat ketarikan, kimia dan fizikal bagi gentian tunggal daripada bahagian yang berlainan dinilai. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa kekuatan tarik dan modulus tarik yang paling tinggi diperolehi daripada SPF diikuti oleh SPB, *ijuk* dan SPT. Keputusan ini dibuktikan oleh keputusan komposisi kimia dimana kandungan

selulosa yang paling tinggi diperolehi daripada SPF (66.49%) dan diikuti oleh SPB (61.76%), *ijuk* (52.29%) dan SPT (40.56%).

Sifat-sifat mekanikal dan fizikal komposit polyester tak tepu diperkuat gentian daripada bahagian pokok enau yang berbeza iaitu SPF/PE, SPB/PE, *ijuk*/PE dan SPT/PE juga dinilai dalam penyelidikan ini. Untuk analisis kekuatan tarik, didapati bahawa SPF/PE menunjukkan nilai yang tertinggi iaitu 15.179 (± 2.425) diikuti oleh SPB/PE, *ijuk*/PE dan SPT/PE dengan masing-masing bernilai 12.809 MPa (± 1.580), 11.473 MPa (± 0.536) dan 9.817 MPa (± 1.890). Nilai kekuatan lentur dan modulus lentur yang tertinggi diperolehi daripada SPT/PE iaitu 41.906 MPa and 3.363 GPa. Bagi analisis kekuatan tumbuk, urutan yang sama diperolehi daripada keputusan tekanan tarik dan renggangan tarik iaitu SPF/PE menunjukkan nilai yang paling tinggi dengan nilai 8.091 kJ m⁻² diikuti oleh SPB/PE, *ijuk*/PE dan SPT/PE. Sementara untuk sifat fizikal, didapati bahawa SPF/PE menunjukkan nilai penyerapan air dan pembengkakkan tebal yang paling tinggi iaitu 1.57%, dan 1.56% diikuti oleh SPB/PE (1.35%, 1.11%), *ijuk*/PE (0.65%, 0.76%) dan SPT/PE (0.39%, 0.50%). Ujian imbasan mikroskop elektron (SEM) dilakukan selepas ujian mekanikal untuk melihat antara muka gentian dan matriks.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on **04 April 2011** to conduct the final examination of **Sahari Japar** on his thesis entitled "**Physio-chemical and mechanical properties of different morphological parts of sugar palm fibre reinforced polyester composites**" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Master of Science.

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.



SAHARI BIN JAPAR

Date: 4 April 2011

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
2.1 Some properties of plant and synthetic fibres	11
2.2 Chemical composition and moisture content of plant fibres	13
2.3 A Comparision on properties of polyester, epoxy, and vinylester resin	22
2.4 A comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of thermosetting matrices	23
4.1 Diameter of fibres	51
4.2 Density of fibres	51
4.3 Water absorption of fibres	52
4.4 The mechanical of sugar palm fibre and some other fibres	55
4.5 Chemical composition of fibres	57
4.6 Celluloses content and water absorption of single fibres	72
4.7 Water absorption and thickness swelling of some natural fibre-composites	72

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
2.1	Classifications scheme for natural fibres	9
2.2	Unit structure of polyethylene terephthalate (PET)	21
2.3	Materials hierarchy of natural fibre composites	26
3.1	Flow process of the methodology	30
3.2	Sugar palm tree	31
3.3a	Trunk (SPT)	32
3.3b	Bunch (SPB)	32
3.3c	Frond (SPF)	32
3.3d	<i>ijuk</i>	32
3.4	Specimen for single tensile test	35
3.5	Fibres from different parts of sugar palm tree	35
3.6	Extraction process for determine of alcohol-acetone soluble	37
3.7	Heating process using water bath at 70 °C for determine holocellulose	40
3.8	Muffle furnace for determine ash content	42
3.9	Schematic diagram of mould	43
3.10	Universal testing machine	46
4.1a	Tensile stress-strain curve of fibres at 1 mm/min	53
4.1b	Tensile stress-strain curve of fibres at 2 mm/min	53
4.2	FT-IR spectra of sugar palm fibres	58
4.3	The tensile stress-strain of sugar palm fibres reinforced unsaturated polyester composites	60

4.4	The tensile strength of sugar palm fibres reinforced unsaturated polyester composites	61
4.5a	The SEM micrograph of tensile fracture surface of SPF/PE composites at 30X magnification	62
4.5b	The SEM micrograph of tensile fracture surface of SPB/PE composites at 30X magnification	62
4.5c	The SEM micrograph of tensile fracture surface of <i>ijuk</i> /PE composites at 30X magnification	63
4.5d	The SEM micrograph of tensile fracture surface of SPT/PE composites at 30X magnification	63
4.6	Tensile modulus of sugar palm fibres reinforced unsaturated polyester composites	64
4.7	Elongation at break of sugar palm fibres reinforced unsaturated polyester composites	65
4.8	Flexural load-extension curve of sugar palm fibres reinforced unsaturated polyester composites	66
4.9	Flexural strength of sugar palm fibres reinforced unsaturated polyester composites	67
4.10	Flexural modulus of sugar palm fibres reinforced unsaturated polyester composites	68
4.11	Impact strength of sugar palm fibres reinforced unsaturated polyester composites	69
4.12	Water absorption of sugar palm fibre from different parts reinforced unsaturated polyester composites	70
4.13	Thickness swelling of sugar palm fibre from different parts reinforced unsaturated polyester composites	71
4.14a	The SEM micrograph of SPF/PE composites at 1000X magnification	73
4.14b	The SEM micrograph of SPB/PE composites at 1000X magnification	73
4.14c	The SEM micrograph of <i>ijuk</i> /PE composites at 1000X magnification	74
4.14d	The SEM micrograph of SPT/PE composites at 1000X magnification	74

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.D	air dry
ASTM	American Society for Testing and Material
CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
FTIR	Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy
INTROP	Tropical Forestry and Forest Products
KBr	Potassium bromide
KFUPC	Kenaf fibre unsaturated polyester composites
MEKP	Methyl ethyl ketone peroxide
NaOH	Sodium hydroxide
OW	Oven dry weight
PE	Unsaturated polyester
PET	Polyethylene terephthalate
PP	Polypropelyne
PVC	Polyvinyl chloride
SEM	Scanning electron microscope
SPB	Sugar palm bunch
SPF	Sugar palm frond
SPT	Sugar palm trunk
TAPPI	Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industry.
WA	Water absorbed
WW	Wet weight

NOMENCLATURE

ρ	density of fibre (g/cm ³)
m	mass of fibre (g)
V	volume of water (cm ³)
S_{τ}	tensile strength of test specimen (MPa)
F	pulling force applied on test specimen (kN)
A	cross section area of test specimen (mm ²)
E	tensile modulus of test specimen (MPa)
σ	stress applied on test specimen (MPa)
ε	strain of test specimen (mm/mm)
σ_{\max}	flexural strength (MPa)
E_H	flexural modulus (MPa)
R	rate of crosshead motion, mm/mm
L	support span, mm
Z	rate of straining of the outer fibre, mm/mm/min; Z shall equal 0.01
P	load at yield (maximum load)
L	support span (mm)
b	width (mm)
d	thickness (mm)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ABSTRAK	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
APPROVAL	vii
DECLARATION	ix
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xiii
NOMENCLATURE	xiv
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background of study	1
1.2 Problem statements	3
1.3 Research Objectives	5
1.4 Significance of Study	5
1.5 Scope and Limitation of Study	6
1.6 Structure of thesis	6
2 LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Introduction to Natural Fibre	
2.1.1 History of the Use of Natural Fibres	8
2.1.2 Tensile Properties of Natural Fibres	10
2.1.3 Chemical Composition of Natural Fibres	11
2.1.4 Advantages Natural Fibres	13
2.2 Introduction to Sugar Palm Tree	
2.2.1 History of Sugar Palm Tree	15
2.2.2 Application of Sugar Palm Tree	16
2.2.3 Black Sugar Palm Fibre	17
2.2.4 Black Sugar Palm Fibre Reinforced Polymer Composites	19
2.3 Unsaturated Polyester	21
2.4 Composite Materials	23
2.5 Natural Fibre Reinforced Unsaturated Polyester Composites	26
3 METHODOLOGY	
3.1 Introduction	29
3.2 Preparation of Fibres	31
3.3 Physical Properties Study	33
3.3.1 Measurement of Diameter	33
3.3.2 Measurement of Density	33

3.3.3	Water Absorption Test	34
3.4	Tensile Testing of Fibres	34
3.5	Chemical Composition of Fibres	35
3.5.1	Determination of Moisture Content	36
3.5.2	Determination Alcohol-Acetone of Solubility	36
3.5.3	Determination of Lignin	38
3.5.4	Determination of Holocellulose	39
3.5.5	Determination of Alpha- Cellulose	40
3.5.6	Determination of Ash	41
3.6	Characterization of Fibres using FT-IR	43
3.7	Fabrication of Composites	43
3.8	Mechanical Testing of Composites	45
3.8.1	Tensile Test	45
3.8.2	Flexural Test	47
3.8.1	Impact Test	48
3.9	Physical Properties of Composites	48
3.10	Morphological Study	49
4	RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	
4.1	Introduction	50
4.2	Diameter of Fibres	51
4.3	Density of Fibres	51
4.4	Water Absorption of Fibres	51
4.5	Tensile Properties of Fibre	
4.5.1	Tensile Stress-Strain Behaviour	52
4.5.2	Tensile Strength	54
4.6	Chemical Properties of Fibre	
4.6.1	Chemical Composition	56
4.6.2	Fourier transform infrared (FT-IR) spectroscopy	57
4.7	Mechanical Properties of Composites	
4.7.1	Tensile Properties	59
4.7.2	Flexural Properties	66
4.7.3	Impact Strength	69
4.8	Physical Properties of Composites	70
5	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
5.1	Conclusions	75
5.2	Recommendations	76
	REFERENCES	78
	BIODATA OF STUDENT	87
	LIST OF PUBLICATIONS	88