



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**EFFECTS OF FORMALDEHYDE CATCHERS ON EMISSION OF  
FORMALDEHYDE AND DIMENSIONAL STABILITY OF  
RUBBERWOOD PARTICLEBOARD**

**LUM WEI CHEN**

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PARTICLEBOARD**

**By**

**LUM WEI CHEN**

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

**June 2014**

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**June 2014**

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Formaldehyde catcher, although, effective in reducing formaldehyde emission, affect the dimensional stability of particleboard produced. Dimensional instability is undesirable because the swelling process when exposed to water, functionally and visually, bring about gradual structural deterioration resulted in lower strength and degraded surface appearance. Thus, this study aimed to establish optimum processing parameters to work with this post-treatment and add-in formaldehyde catcher in order to produce particleboard with formaldehyde emission and properties particularly dimensional stability that comply with Japanese Industrial Standard. The processing parameters include different amount of particles used for surface layer and core layer (surface-to-core ratio), resin content, types of application method and the types of catcher used. Rubberwood was used as the main raw material in this study. Type E1 urea formaldehyde resin was used as the binder. Wax and hardener was also added to the resin. The code name for formaldehyde catcher applied on the surface of the boards after conditioning (post-treatment) was SF1188. On the other hand, formaldehyde catchers added into the adhesive mixture (add-in) were named as Catcher 1, Catcher 2 and Catcher 3 with the active ingredient amino compound, glycerol and melamine respectively. The tests for physical and mechanical properties were conducted in accordance with JIS A 5908:2003. Statistical analysis (ANCOVA or ANOVA) was carried out to determine the effects of the variables on the board's properties. Pearson's correlation was also been carried out to measure the strength of association between the studied variables and properties of particleboard. The results show that, particleboard produced using of 60% surface particles and 40% core particles had the highest Modulus of Rupture (MOR) and second lowest thickness swelling (TS) for the particleboard manufactured. Boards applied with the highest dosage of post-treatment formaldehyde catcher show a reduction of approximately 70% of formaldehyde emission. The lowest formaldehyde emission value for add-in formaldehyde catcher came from the boards applied with Catcher 1 (0.211 mg/L). Overall, particleboards applied with 60 gm<sup>-2</sup> of post-treatment catcher and 6% of add-in catcher show the lowest formaldehyde emission, with the lowest value achieving 0.163 mg/L. Despite the low formaldehyde emission, these boards were in poor dimensional stability.

Therefore, optimization was carried out by the application of heat treatment and the selection of specific mat moisture (3-11%) to impart better dimensional stability and lower formaldehyde emission upon the particleboard. Particleboards produced with 9% mat moisture show the lowest thickness TS value (11.67%). Heat treatment at 170 °C further reduced the TS value to 10.87%. Also, formaldehyde emission for samples treated at 170 °C successfully achieved Super E0 level. In conclusion, particleboards which complied with all criterions stated in JIS A 5908:2003 was successfully produced by the combination of formaldehyde catcher and dimensional improvement with careful selection of mat moisture and heat treatment.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KESAN PENANGKAP FORMALDEHID KE ATAS PELEPASAN  
FORMALDEHID DAN KESTABILAN DIMENSI PAPAN SERPAI KAYU  
GETAH**

Oleh

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Penangkap formaldehid, walaupun berkesan untuk mengurangkan pelepasan formaldehid, menjejaskan kestabilan dimensi papan serpai yang dihasilkan. Dimensi yang tidak stabil adalah tidak diingini kerana proses pengembangan akan berlaku apabila didedahkan kepada air. Kekuatan papan serpai yang rendah akan menyebabkan kemerosotan pada fungsi dan visual papan. Oleh itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk mencari parameter pemprosesan yang optimum untuk digunakan dengan penangkap formaldehid pos-rawatan dan pre-rawatan untuk menghasilkan papan serpihan dengan pelepasan formaldehid dan sifat-sifat yang mematuhi Standard Perindustrian Jepun. Parameter pemprosesan yang digunakan merangkumi nisbah partikel permukaan kepada partikel teras, kandungan resin, jenis penangkap formaldehid, dan juga kaedah aplikasi. Partikel kayu getah digunakan sebagai bahan mentah utama dalam kajian ini. Resin urea formaldehid jenis E1 digunakan sebagai pengikat. Lilin dan pembangkit juga ditambah kepada resin. Nama kod bagi penangkap formaldehid yang disapu ke atas permukaan papan selepas dikondisi (pra-rawatan) adalah SF1188. Penangkap formaldehid yang ditambah dalam campuran resin (tambah-masuk) dinamakan sebagai Penangkap 1, Penangkap 2 dan Penangkap 3 dan mempunyai bahan aktif kompaun amino, glycerol dan melamin masing-masing. Ujian untuk sifat-sifat fizikal dan mekanikal telah dijalankan selaras dengan JIS A 5908:2003. Analisis statistik (ANCOVA atau ANOVA) telah dijalankan untuk menentukan kesan bagi pembolehubah yang dikaji. Pearson's correlation juga telah dilakukan untuk mengukur kekuatan yang wujud antara pembolehubah yang dikaji dengan sifat-sifat papan serpihan. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa papan serpai yang dibuat dengan menggunakan 60% partikel permukaan dan 40% partikel teras mempunyai nilai MOR yang paling tinggi dan nilai TS yang kedua terendah. Nilai terendah pelepasan formaldehid bagi papan pra-rawatan menunjukkan pengurangan sehingga 70%. Nilai yang paling rendah bagi pelepasan formaldehid merupakan papan yang dirawat dengan Penangkap 1 (0.211 mg/L). Secara keseluruhannya, papan serpai

yang dirawat dengan 60 gm<sup>-2</sup> penangkap formaldehid pra-rawatan and 6% penangkap formaldehid tambah-masuk memberikan nilai pelepasan formaldehid yang paling rendah, dengan nilai yang paling rendah mencapai 0.163 mg/L. Walaupun tahap pelepasan formaldehid amat memuaskan, sifat-sifat mekanik papan serpai yang dirawat dengan formaldehid masih menunjukkan kestabilan dimensi yang lemah dan gagal untuk mencapai keperluan JIS. Oleh itu, pengoptimuman telah dilakukan dengan menggunakan rawatan pasca haba dan pemilihan tahap kelembapan yang spesifik (3-11%) untuk mencapai kestabilan dimensi yang lebih baik serta tahap pelepasan formaldehid lebih rendah. Papan serpai yang dihasilkan dengan 9% kelembapan mat memberikan nilai TS yang paling rendah (11.67%). Rawatan haba pada 170 °C berjaya menurunkan lagi nilai TS kepada 10.87%. Selain itu, pelepasan formaldehid bagi papan sampel yang dirawat dengan 170 °C juga berjaya mencapai level Super E0. Kesimpulannya, papan serpihan yang mematuhi semua kriteria yang dinyatakan dalam JIS A 5908:2003 telah berjaya dihasilkan dengan menggunakan penangkap formaldehid dan rawatan kestabilan dimensi.

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Date: 18 August 2014

This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

		<b>Page</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>		i
<b>ABSTRAK</b>		iii
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>		v
<b>APPROVAL</b>		vi
<b>DECLARATION</b>		viii
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>		xiv
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>		xix
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b>		xxiv
<b>CHAPTER</b>		
<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	1
	1.1 General	1
	1.2 Statements of Problem	2
	1.3 Justification	3
	1.4 Objectives of Study	5
<b>2</b>	<b>LITERATURE RIVIEW</b>	6
	2.1 Background	6
	2.1.1 Forest Area in Malaysia	6
	2.1.2 Particleboard industry in Malaysia	6
	2.1.3 Particleboard Current Market and Consumption	9
	2.1.4 Growth Potential of particleboard Industries	11
	2.2 Adhesive in Particleboard Manufacturing	11
	2.2.1 UF resins	11
	2.2.1.1 Characteristic of UF resins	11
	2.2.1.2 Urea-formaldehyde Synthesis Process	12
	2.2.1.3 Presence of Formaldehyde during Various Stages	13
	2.3 Formaldehyde Catcher	14
	2.3.1 Add-in Formaldehyde Catcher	14
	2.3.1.1 Urea, CO(NH <sub>2</sub> ) <sub>2</sub>	14
	2.3.1.2 Ammonium Chloride, NH <sub>4</sub> Cl	16
	2.3.1.3 Polyamine	16
	2.3.2 Post Treatment Catcher	17
	2.3.2.1 Treatment Directly with Ammonia, NH <sub>3</sub>	17
	2.3.2.2 Treatment with Urea and Ammonia Compounds	18
	2.3.2.3 Treatment with Other Chemicals	19
	2.4 Effect of Formaldehyde Emission to Human Health	20
	2.5 Test Methods for Formaldehyde Emission	20
	2.6 Formaldehyde Regulation and Classification for Wood Products	25
	2.7 Dimensional Instability in UF-bonded Particleboard	26
	2.7.1 Dimensional Stability Treatment of Particleboard	26

	2.7.2	Water Repellents	27
	2.7.3	Heat Treatment	28
<b>3</b>		<b>THE PROPERTIES OF TYPE E1 THREE-LAYER PARTICLEBOARD MADE FROM RUBBERWOOD</b>	<b>31</b>
	3.1	Introduction	31
	3.1.1	Effect of Resin Content on Particleboard	32
	3.1.2	Effect of Surface-to-core Ratio of Particleboard	33
		3.1.2.1 Physical and Mechanical Properties	33
		3.1.2.2 Formaldehyde Emission	33
	3.2	Objectives	34
	3.3	Methodology	35
	3.3.1	Raw Materials	35
	3.3.2	Adhesive and Additive	36
	3.3.3	Experimental Procedures and Design	36
	3.3.4	Manufacture of particleboard	38
		3.3.4.1 Blending process	40
		3.3.4.2 Mat-forming	40
		3.3.4.3 Hot-pressing	41
		3.3.4.4 Conditioning	42
	3.3.5	Test Samples Cutting Patterns	43
	3.3.6	Evaluation of Particleboard Properties	44
		3.3.6.1 Density Test	45
		3.3.6.2 Moisture Content Test	45
		3.3.6.3 Bending Strength Test	46
		3.3.6.4 Thickness Swelling and Water Absorption Test	46
		3.3.6.5 Internal Bond Test	48
	3.3.7	Statistical Analysis	48
	3.4	Results and Discussion	49
	3.4.1	Density and moisture content	49
	3.4.2	Homogeneity-of-regression Assumption Test	50
	3.4.3	Physical and Mechanical Properties	51
		3.4.3.1 Thickness Swelling	52
		3.4.3.2 Water Absorption	55
		3.4.3.3 Modulus of Rupture	56
		3.4.3.4 Internal Bond	58
	3.4.4	Pearson's Correlation	59
	3.5	Conclusion	60
<b>4</b>		<b>PRODUCING SUPER E0 PARTICLEBOARD MADE FROM TYPE E1 RESIN USING POST-TREATMENT FORMALDEHYDE CATCHER</b>	<b>61</b>
	4.1	Introduction	61
		4.1.1 Formaldehyde Catcher	61
		4.1.2 Post-treatment Application of Formaldehyde Catcher	62
	4.2	Objectives	63
	4.3	Methodology	64
	4.3.1	Raw Materials	64
	4.3.2	Adhesive and Additives	64

4.3.3	Experimental Procedures	64
4.3.4	Manufacture of Particleboard	66
4.3.5	Evaluation of Particleboard Properties	66
	4.3.5.1 Formaldehyde Emission Test (Desiccator Method)	67
	4.3.5.2 Brinell Hardness	68
	4.3.5.3 Contact Angle	70
4.3.4	Statistical Analysis	71
4.4	Results and Discussion	71
4.4.1	Density and Moisture Content	71
4.4.2	Homogeneity-of-regression Assumption Test	73
4.4.3	Physical and Mechanical Properties	74
	4.4.3.1 Thickness Swelling	75
	4.4.3.2 Water Absorption	77
	4.4.3.3 Modulus of Rupture	79
	4.4.3.4 Internal Bond	80
4.4.4	Brinell Hardness	82
4.4.5	Contact Angle	82
4.4.6	Pearson's Correlation	85
4.4.7	Formaldehyde Emission	85
4.5	Conclusion	87
<b>5</b>	<b>ADD-IN FORMALDEHYDE CATCHER FOR REDUCING FORMALDEHYDE EMISSION FROM PARTICLEBOARD MADE FROM TYPE E1 UREA-FORMALDEHYDE RESIN</b>	<b>88</b>
5.1	Introduction	88
5.2	Objectives	90
5.3	Methodology	90
	5.3.1 Raw Materials	90
	5.3.2. Adhesive and Additive	90
	5.3.3 Experimental Procedures	92
	5.3.4 Manufacture of Particleboard	94
	5.3.5 Evaluation of Particleboard Properties	94
	5.3.6 Statistical Analysis	94
5.4	Results and Discussion	95
	5.4.1 Density and Moisture Content	95
	5.4.2 Physical and Mechanical Properties	98
	5.4.2.1 Thickness Swelling	101
	5.4.2.1.1 Catcher 1	101
	5.4.2.1.2 Catcher 2	103
	5.4.2.1.3 Catcher 3	105
	5.4.2.2 Water Absorption	106
	5.4.2.2.1 Catcher 1	106
	5.4.2.2.2 Catcher 2	108
	5.4.2.2.3 Catcher 3	110
	5.4.2.3 Modulus of Rupture	111
	5.4.2.3.1 Catcher 1	111
	5.4.2.3.2 Catcher 2	113
	5.4.2.3.3 Catcher 3	114
	5.4.2.4 Internal bonding	116

	5.4.2.4.1 Catcher 1	116
	5.4.2.4.2 Catcher 2	118
	5.4.2.4.3 Catcher 3	120
5.4.3	Brinell Hardness	122
	5.4.3.1 Catcher 1	122
	5.4.3.2 Catcher 2	123
	5.4.3.3 Catcher 3	123
5.4.4	Contact angle	124
	5.4.4.1 Add-In 1	124
	5.4.4.2 Add-In 2	125
	5.4.4.3 Add-In 3	128
5.4.5	Pearson's Correlation	130
	5.4.5.1 Add-In 1	130
	5.4.5.2 Add-In 2	131
	5.4.5.3 Add-In 3	132
5.4.6	Formaldehyde Emission	132
	5.4.6.1 Add-In 1	133
	5.4.6.2 Add-In 2	134
	5.4.6.3 Add-In 3	134
5.5	Conclusion	135
<b>6</b>	<b>IMPROVEMENT ON DIMENSIONAL STABILITY AND REDUCTION OF FORMALDEHYDE EMISSION BY FORMALDEHYDE CATCHER AND ALTERATION OF MAT MOISTURE PLUS HEAT TREATMENT</b>	136
6.1	Introduction	136
6.2	Objectives	137
6.3	Methodology	137
	6.3.1 Experimental Procedures	137
	6.3.2 Relative Humidity and Temperature Application	138
	6.3.3 Temperature Application for Heat Treatment	139
	6.3.4 Statistical Analysis	139
6.4	Results and Discussion	139
	6.4.1 Resultant Mat Moisture Content	139
	6.4.2 Mechanical and Physical Properties	140
	6.4.3 Compaction Ratio	143
	6.4.4 Effect of RH and Temperature on Formaldehyde Emission	144
	6.4.5 Effect of Heat Treatment on Formaldehyde Emission	145
6.5	Conclusions	146
<b>7</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	147
	7.1 Conclusions	147
	7.2 Recommendations	149
	<b>REFERENCES</b>	150
	<b>BIODATA OF THE STUDENT</b>	161
	<b>LIST OF PUBLICATIONS</b>	162