

ADVANCES IN MATERIALS ENGINEERING

Volume 1

Edited By:
Zahurin Halim
Iskandar Idris Yaacob
Md Abdul Maleque



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Table of Content

Chapter 1 Preparation and Characterization of Thermoplastic Natural Rubber (TPNR) Nanocomposites <i>Noor Azlina Hassan, Sahrim Hj. Ahmad, Rozaidi Rasid and Norita Hassan</i>	1
Chapter 2 Polymer Clay Nanocomposites: Part I <i>Noor Azlina Hassan and Norita Hassan</i>	6
Chapter 3 Effect of Processing Parameters on the Tensile Properties of TPNR Reinforced Short Carbon Fibre Composite <i>Hazleen Anuar, Sahrim Hj. Ahmad and Rozaidi Rasid</i>	11
Chapter 4 Effect of Maleic Anhydride Polyethylene on Damping Properties of HDPE/EPDM Nanocomposite <i>Hazleen Anuar, Nur Ayuni Jama, and Shamsul Bahri Abdul Razak</i>	16
Chapter 5 Comparative Study on the Effect of Plasticizer on Thermal Properties of Polylactic Acid <i>Hazleen Anuar and Muhammad Rejaul Kaiser</i>	22
Chapter 6 Quality of Copper Film Electroplated on Silicon Wafer Using Different Current Densities <i>Shahjahan Mridha</i>	28
Chapter 7 Laser Nitriding of Titanium <i>Shahjahan Mridha</i>	39
Chapter 8 Composite Coating on Titanium Alloy Using High Power Laser <i>Shahjahan Mridha</i>	45

Chapter 9		
Measurement of Moisture Absorption in Borophosphosilicate Glass (BPGS) Films		50
	<i>Shahjahan Mridha and Shiau Khee Tang</i>	
Chapter 10		58
The Effect of Processing Parameter on Tensile Properties of Thermoplastic Natural Rubber Nanocomposites		
	<i>Noor Azlina Hassan, Sahrim Hj. Ahmad, Rozaidi Rasid and Norita Hassan</i>	
Chapter 11		64
Comparison of Mechanical Properties Between Untreated and Sulphuric Acid Treated Short Carbon Fiber Reinforced Thermoplastic Natural Rubber (TPNR) Composite		
	<i>Noor Azlina Hassan, Norita Hassan, Sahrim Hj. Ahmad and Rozaidi Rasid</i>	
Chapter 12		69
Water Absorption of TPNR Reinforced Short Carbon Fibre Composite		
	<i>Hazleen Anuar, Sahrim Hj. Ahmad and Rozaidi Rasid</i>	
Chapter 13		74
Enhanced Tensile Strength with Sulphuric Treated Short Carbon Fibre		
	<i>Hazleen Anuar, Sahrim Hj. Ahmad and Rozaidi Rasid</i>	
Chapter 14		79
Effect of Fibre Length on Tensile Properties of TPNR-Kenaf Fibre Composite		
	<i>Hazleen Anuar, Sahrim Hj. Ahmad and Rozaidi Rasid</i>	
Chapter 15		84
Effect of Nanoclay on Mechanical Properties of PLA-Clay Nanocomposite		
	<i>Hazleen Anuar and Muhammad Rejaul Kaiser</i>	
Chapter 16		90
Extraction of Glucose From Kenaf Core by Using Chemical Pre – Treatment Process		
	<i>Nurhafizah Seeni Mohamed, Hazleen Anuar, Maizirwan Mel, Rashidi Othman, Nur Aisyah Mohd Norddin, Nur Aimi Mohd Nasir, Mohd Adlan Mustafa Kamalbhryn</i>	
Chapter 17		96
Wear of Nitride Coating Produced by Ti-Al Melt Synthesis in Nitrogen Environment		
	<i>Shahjahan Mridha</i>	
Chapter 18		103
Effect of Dispersant on Protein Foaming-Consolidation Porous Alumina Containing Hydrothermal Derived Hydroxyapatite Nanopowder		
	<i>Iis Sopyan and Ahmad Fadli</i>	

Chapter 19	109
Effect of Yolk Addition on Protein Foaming-Consolidation Porous Alumina-Calcium Phosphate Composites	
	<i>Iis Sopyan and Ahmad Fadli</i>
Chapter 20	115
Investigation of the Effect of Starch Addition on Protein Foaming-Consolidation Porous Alumina Containing Hydroxyapatite Nanopowder	
	<i>Ahmad Fadli', Iis Sopyan, Nur Syahidah and Nur Nadia</i>
Chapter 21	120
The Influence of Hydroxyapatite Loading on Protein Foaming-Consolidation Porous Alumina Sintered at 1300°C	
	<i>Ahmad Fadli 'and Iis Sopyan</i>
Chapter 22	126
High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) as an Alternative Material in Fuel Tank Production	
	<i>Afiqah Afdzahuddin and Md Abdul Maleque</i>
Chapter 23	132
Porous Alumina-Hydroxyapatite Composites via Protein Foaming-Consolidation Method: Effect of HA Loading on Physical Properties	
	<i>Iis Sopyan, Ahmad Fadli and Nur Izzati Zulkifli</i>
Chapter 24	137
Preparation and Characterisation of Low Density Polyethylene/Layered Silicate Nanocomposites	
	<i>Salina Sharifuddin , Iskandar Idris Yaacob</i>
Chapter 25	144
Effects of Sodium Dodecyl Benzene Sulphonate (NaDBs) on Li Imide-PMMA Based Solid Polymer Electrolyte	
	<i>Fauziah Mohd Yusof and Iskandar Idris Yaacob</i>
Chapter 26	149
Effect of Milling Time on Mechanochemically Synthesized Nanohydroxyapatite Bioceramics	
	<i>Iis Sopyan, S. Adzila and M. Hamdi</i>
Chapter 27	
Morphological Analysis of Mechanochemically Synthesized Nanohydroxyapatite Bioceramics	155
	<i>Iis Sopyan, S. Adzila and M. Hamdi</i>
Chapter 28	160
Sodium Doped Nanohydroxyapatite Bioceramics through Mechanochemical Synthesis	
	<i>S. Adzila, Iis Sopyan and M. Hamdi</i>

Chapter 29	165
Thermal Profile Analysis of Composite Brake Rotor	
<i>Md Abdul Maleque and Abdul Mu'min Adebisi</i>	
Chapter 30	172
The Effect of Fibre Content on Thermal Property of Coir Fibre Reinforced Cement-Albumen Composite	
<i>Faridatul Faezah Razali, Nur Humairah Abdul Razak and Zuraida Ahmad</i>	
Chapter 31	178
Pulsed Electrodeposition	
<i>Suryanto</i>	
Chapter 32	184
Electroless Nickel Based Coatings From Solution Containing Sodium Hypophosphite	
<i>Suryanto</i>	
Chapter 33	189
Characterization and Utilization of Fly Ash	
<i>Suryanto</i>	
Chapter 34	195
Workability of Coir Fibre- Reinforced Cement-Albumen Composite	
<i>Nur Humairah Abdul Razak and Zuraida Ahmad</i>	
Chapter 35	201
Preparation of Rice Husk for Raw Material of Silicon	
<i>Hadi Purwanto and Nor Fazilah Mohd Selamat</i>	

Enhanced Tensile Strength with Sulphuric Treated Short Carbon Fibre

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Abstract. Synthetic carbon fibres have long been available for various applications. For optimum performance in-service, surface treatment of carbon fibre is essential. This study was undertaken to investigate the effect of short carbon fibre (CF) loading and oxidative treatment employed on the tensile strength of thermoplastic natural rubber (TPNR) composites. Scanning electron micrograph (SEM) revealed the rough surface of sulphuric acid treated carbon fibre. The enhanced surface area of carbon fibre promotes mechanical interlocking between treated carbon fibre and TPNR matrix, thus supporting the increment in tensile strength.

Introduction

In reinforced short carbon fibre, physical properties that include surface area and porosity are important parameters as it determines the extent of the interface in the composite. The surface of untreated carbon fibres can be generally described as smooth. The smooth surface was due to annealing of surface defects and closure of pores at high temperature during production of carbon fibre.

Chemical properties of carbon fibre surface also affect the interface with matrix. The carbon atoms of a carbonaceous material are in hexagonal rings, which are polycondensed and form aromatic carbon lamellae. The structure for aromatic layer and basal planes are imperfect and contains some defects like stacking faults, single and multiple atom vacancies, and dislocation. The carbon atoms, which located at grain boundaries or edges of lamellae are more reactive than the basal plane carbon atoms and contain the active sites. This active site is an important characteristic for carbon reactivity [1].

The interlaminar shear strength of carbon fibre reinforced composites is related to the fibre-matrix interfacial bonding. The bond can be in the form of physical which is due to mechanical interlocking between the fibre-matrix or chemical bonds between the matrix and the active sites on the fibre surface. The active sites are located at the edges of the crystallite basal planes emerging at the surface, structural defects such as vacancies, dislocations or steps in the basal planes oriented parallel to the fibre axis [3]. Mechanical interlocking is determined by fibre surface area, the surface porosity and surface roughness. The fibre surface morphology is dependent on the precursor material where PAN-based fibres exhibited smaller surface area with smooth surface and circular cross section.