

**A STUDY ON STRUCTURAL LIGHTWEIGHT
CONCRETE USING OIL PALM SHELL (OPS)
AGGREGATE**



DELSYE TEO CHING LEE

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TECHNOLOGY
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**THESIS SUBMITTED TO UNIVERSITI
MALAYSIA SABAH FOR THE AWARD OF THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH
2007**

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

BORANG PENGESAHAN STATUS TESIS[@]

JUDUL: A STUDY ON STRUCTURAL LIGHTWEIGHT CONCRETE USING OIL PALM SHELL (OPS) AGGREGATE

IJAZAH: DOKTOR FALSAFAH (KEJURUTERAAN AWAM)

SESI PENGAJIAN: 2004-2007

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DECLARATION

The materials in this thesis are original except for quotations, excerpts, summaries and references, which have been duly acknowledged.



DELSYE TEO CHING LEE
PS04-008-006
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This doctoral thesis is the outcome of my research from working as a research assistant at Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) and this dissertation would not have been possible without the help and support of many individuals. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation Malaysia for their financial support from the IRPA research grant no. 03-02-10-0033-EA0031. This study would not have been possible without the availability of the abovementioned grant.

My sincere appreciation goes out to the Vice Chancellor of Universiti Malaysia Sabah, and the Dean of School of Engineering and Information Technology for providing me with the opportunity to commence this Ph.D. research project in the first instance.

I am extremely indebted to my supervisor and mentor, Associate Professor Dr. Md. Abdul Mannan for giving me an opportunity to work in his research group and for his excellent supervision and guidance throughout the thesis work. His admirable attitude in promoting research and development in his organisation is highly inspirational.

I equally thank my associate supervisor, Associate Professor Dr. Kurian V. John, for his unsparing support, direction, assistance, and guidance throughout my graduate research career. I thank him particularly for his positive attitude, extraordinary optimism and his unremitting belief in my capabilities.

I owe a great deal to Assistant Professor Dr. Ayman Ababneh from Clarkson University, New York who has provided invaluable guidance and expert assistance in my durability studies. Special thanks are also extended to Professor Dr. Kamatan Krishnaiah for his expert advice and untiring assistance, especially on the chemical analysis module.

I am very grateful to Professor Dr. N. S. V. Kameswara Rao and Associate Professor Dr. Ideris Zakaria for their fundamental critique which allowed me to improve my dissertation writing, and Associate Professor Dr. Narayanan Sambu Potty for patiently proof-reading the penultimate draft of my thesis and who had suggested many useful improvements. Thanks are also due to Pn. Hidayati Asrah for her assistance in the translation of the Abstract of my thesis.

Sincere thanks go to the numerous lab technicians, Mr. Abd. Hataf Yazed, Mr. Munap Salleh, Mr. Julius Sokodor, Mr. Jasmi Jaya, Ms. Noridah Abas, Ms. Noor Aemi Dawalih, Mr. Abdullah Tarikim, Mr. Panjiman Saidin, Mr. Seri Pali, Mr. Alexander Koong, Mr. Yohanes Paulus, Mr. Borhan Masalin, Mr. Saidin Ahmad and Mr. Irwan Baharudzaman for their help and technical support that proved essential in completing this research work. Thanks are also due to student colleagues, particularly Mr. Paramasivam Suresh Kumar for his assistance throughout my research studies. I also wish to thank all those who are not mentioned herein, but whom I have had the opportunity to work with at Universiti Malaysia Sabah for their assistance, support, suggestions, insightful discussions and friendship.

Life is not only about work. Without the love, support and encouragement of family and friends in good times as well as bad, this thesis would not have been possible. My deepest gratitude is reserved for my parents, Mr. Jeffrey Teo Seng Hui and Mdm. Florence Lee Choon Ha; and sister, Ms. Tiffany Teo Li Lee for giving me

endless encouragement and support during my scholastic endeavours and for believing in the importance of higher education. My mother and father are most directly responsible for who I am and what I have achieved today. I also thank them for their constant prayers and their many sacrifices which have enabled me to pursue this study. Their support is beyond words and I am forever grateful for everything they have done and owe them a debt that can never be repaid.

I am also greatly indebted to my uncle, Mr. Leslie Teo Ai Hui, cousin, Dr. Jason Teo Tze Wi and his wife, Mdm. Annie Liu Shan Nee who accommodated me throughout my doctoral studies, and to my nephew, Evan Teo Hao Yang, and niece, Calista Teo Jing Yi for their laughter and tears.



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ABSTRACT

An experimental investigation using waste oil palm shell (OPS) as renewable coarse aggregate in structural lightweight concrete was conducted. An optimum OPS concrete mix with slump of 50 to 70 mm, 28-day air-dry density of about 1965 kg/m³ and 28-day compressive strength of more than 28 MPa was developed. The basic engineering properties which include the compressive strength, splitting tensile strength, modulus of rupture and modulus of elasticity of OPS concrete were compared with that of granite concrete (normal weight concrete). Four types of curing conditions were employed to determine its effect on the structural and durability properties of OPS concrete. The structural bond properties of OPS concrete were determined through the pull-out test incorporating different sizes and types of steel reinforcement up to an age of 180 days. The experimental ultimate bond strengths were compared with the theoretical values as per BS 8110. The flexural behaviour of OPS concrete beams was examined by testing 9 under-reinforced prototype beams under two-point loads. The experimental flexural properties such as the bending moment, deflection and cracking characteristics were compared with the design code provisions of BS 8110 and ACI 318, and these codes gave reasonable estimates of the experimental values. Other flexural properties namely the ductility, end rotation and strain development were compared to that of other lightweight concretes. In terms of durability, the water permeability, water absorption, volume of permeable voids (VPV), sorptivity, 90-day salt ponding, cyclic wetting and drying, and rapid chloride penetration test (RCPT) of OPS concrete were investigated. These durability properties were also compared with the work of other researchers. This experimental investigation confirmed that OPS concrete performed similarly to other structural lightweight concretes. The results obtained from this investigation provided a critical understanding on the performance of OPS concrete, thereby confirming that OPS can be used as coarse aggregates for structural lightweight concrete.

ABSTRAK

KAJIAN KE ATAS KONKRIT STRUKTUR RINGAN MENGGUNAKAN AGREGAT TEMPURUNG KELAPA SAWIT (OPS)

Satu penyiasatan experimen telah dijalankan ke atas konkrit struktur ringan menggunakan tempurung kelapa sawit (OPS) terbuang sebagai agregat kasar yang boleh diperbaharui. Nisbah bancuhan optimum untuk konkrit OPS yang diperolehi mempunyai nilai kejatuhan dalam lingkungan 50 hingga 70 mm, ketumpatan kering udara konkrit keras pada 28 hari sebanyak kira-kira 1965 kg/m^3 dan kekuatan mampatan pada 28 hari melebihi 28 MPa. Sifat-sifat kejuruteraan asas seperti kekuatan mampatan, kekuatan tegangan pemisahan, modulus perpecahan dan modulus keelastikan konkrit OPS telah dibandingkan dengan konkrit batu granit (konkrit berat biasa). Empat keadaan pengawetan telah digunakan untuk mengenalpasti kesannya ke atas sifat-sifat yang berkaitan dengan struktur dan ketahananlasakan konkrit OPS. Sifat ikatan struktur konkrit OPS telah ditentukan melalui ujian "pull-out" menggunakan pelbagai jenis and saiz tetulang besi, dan kajian in dijalankan sehingga 180 hari. Keputusan ujian kekuatan ikatan muktamad dibandingkan dengan nilai teoritis yang disyorkan oleh BS 8110. Sifat kelenturan konkrit OPS telah diuji melalui ujian ke atas 9 prototaip rasuk konkrit OPS bertetulang kurang pada beban dua titik. Sifat-sifat kelenturan yang diperolehi dari experimen seperti kapasiti kelenturan, ciri-ciri pembengkokan dan keretakan telah dibandingkan dengan syarat-syarat kod rekabentuk dari BS 8110 dan ACI 318, dan didapati bahawa kod-kod ini memberi anggaran nilai ujian yang agak munasabah. Sifat-sifat kelenturan lain seperti keelengkungan, peputaran hujung dan perkembangan terikan telah dibandingkan dengan konkrit ringan yang lain. Dari segi ketahananlasakan seperti penusukan air, penyerapan air, liang kosong telap, "sorptivity", resapan klorida pada 90 hari perendaman garam, kitar basah dan kering, dan penusukan klorida cepat (RCPT) telah disiasati. Perbandingan prestasi ketahananlasakan OPS konkrit juga telah dibuat dengan penyiasatan penyelidikan-penyelidikan lain. Penyiasatan ini mengesahkan bahawa konkrit OPS mempunyai sifat-sifat yang serupa dengan konkrit struktur ringan yang lain. Keputusan yang diperolehi dari penyiasatan ini memberi pengertian kritikal dalam prestasi konkrit OPS dan dengan demikian, mengesahkan bahawa OPS boleh digunakan sebagai agregat kasar untuk penghasilan konkrit struktur ringan.

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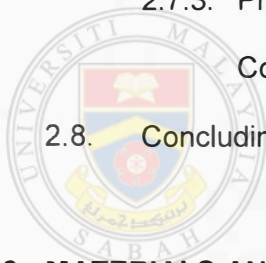
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INTRODUCTION

1.1. Lightweight Concrete

The use of lightweight concrete has been gaining increased popularity in the past few decades in the construction industry. Lightweight concrete generally has a density of less than 2000 kg/m^3 and with compressive strength of more than 20 MPa (BS 8110), it is known as structural lightweight concrete. As its name implies, lightweight concrete is used to reduce the self-weight. With lower self-weights, substantial cost savings can be achieved as a result of smaller structural members, thinner sections, decreased storey height, lesser amount of reinforcing steel and lower foundation costs (Chandra & Berntsson, 2002; Pankhurst, 1993; Short & Kinniburgh, 1978). In addition, as total amount of materials to be handled is reduced, a subsequent reduction in labour costs and an increase in productivity can be expected (Neville & Brooks, 1990).

Lightweight concrete, especially those made from lightweight aggregates are most commonly used for structural purposes and has found applications in a variety of constructions worldwide such as bridges, precast members, buildings and also offshore structures construction (Chandra & Berntsson, 2002; Raithby & Lydon, 1981). In general, these lightweight concretes made from aggregates such as Leca (expanded clay), Lytag (sintered pulverised fuel ash) and Liapor (expanded shale), to name a few, are mostly utilised in the Western countries and are not extensively used in developing countries, which may be due to the limited supply and high production cost of the aggregates.

The use of lightweight concrete for structural applications is not popular in Malaysia. In Malaysia, the application of lightweight concrete is mostly limited to non-structural elements such as wall panels.

1.2. Renewable Resources for Construction Materials

Nearly 80% of the resources used today are non-renewable. Due to the scarcity of conventional raw materials, researchers are focusing more on developing construction materials with renewable resources. As a consequence, special attention is drawn towards the utilisation of solid wastes and by-products as aggregates, especially for lightweight concrete production in both developed and developing nations.

Where agriculture is widespread, the wastes generated from the agro-based industries provide a valuable alternative to the conventional concrete materials. Depending on the properties of each material, there is a possibility of incorporating these wastes either as cement replacement, fibres or aggregates in concrete. Table 1.1 further illustrates this.

Table 1.1: Different applications of agricultural waste in concrete

Application	Type of agricultural waste
Cement replacement	Palm-oil fuel ash, rice husk ash
Fibres	Rice husk, straw, bagasse (waste from sugarcane), coir (fibrous outer shell of coconut), jute fibre
Aggregates	Coconut shell, oil palm boiler clinker (OPBC), oil palm shell (OPS)

1.3. Waste Selection Criteria in Concrete Production

The most important consideration in the selection of waste for use in the concrete industry is the cost/benefit criteria. Taking the workability, strength and durability requirements of concrete into consideration, the optimum economic benefit will be achieved when the wastes meet the following criteria (Mannan, 2001; Nontananandh, 1990):

- i) Locally available in plentiful amounts
- ii) Low unit cost but of high quality
- iii) No additional processing cost or minimum cost if processing is involved
- iv) Does not cause any health hazards during handling
- v) Easy to handle and store
- vi) Does not cause degradation to the resulting product

1.4. Oil Palm Industry in Malaysia and Waste Generation

The African oil palm tree or scientifically known as *Elaeis guineensis* was brought to Malaysia in the early 1900s and is currently used in commercial agriculture for the production of palm oil. The Malaysian oil palm industry has seen an unprecedented growth in the last four decades to emerge as one of the major agricultural industry in the country. Today, Malaysia has become the world's largest producer and exporter of palm oil, with oil palm planted in over 4.05 million hectares of land (MPOB, 2006). Sabah is the largest oil palm planted state, with a coverage of about 1.2 million hectares (Wahid, 2006).

The oil palm yields about 18.88 tonnes/hectare of fresh fruit bunch (FFB) (MPOB, 2006). At the mills where the fresh fruit bunches (FFB) are processed and oil extraction takes place, solid residues and liquid wastes are generated. These wastes include empty fruit bunches (EFB), fibre, shell and effluent. The species of oil palm