

Effect of palm fronds and rice husk composition ratio on the mechanical properties of composite-based brake pad

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of biomass composition (i.e. palm frond (PF) and rice husk (RH)) on the mechanical properties of composite-based brake pad (CBP). CBP was made by mixing polyester resin matrix with PF and RH (as the reinforcing agent) using a step-growth mechanism reaction with additional methyl ethyl ketone peroxide (MEKP) as a catalyst. CBP was made by mixing polyester resin and catalyst with a ratio of 10:1 with PF and RH. The PF and RH were added with a ratio of 10/90; 30/70; 50/50; 70/30; and 90/10. To support the analysis, mechanical tests such as compressive and friction tests were carried out. The experimental results showed that the RH composition allowed the obtainment of a strong composite-based brake pad and a low wear value since RH has a high component of lignocellulose. Although PF also strengthened the brake pad, the mechanical impact is not higher than RH. The high lignocellulose content in the RH made the optimal quality of composite-based brake pad-based. This study demonstrates the effectiveness of the use of biomass as an alternative reinforcing agent in the composite-based brake pad material.

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1. Introduction

A brake pad is a part of vehicle components that serves to slow or stop land vehicles [1, 2]. Generally, the brake pad is made from blends of 40-60% of asbestos, metal, and ceramic embedded in a polymer matrix. Asbestos as the main constituent in brake pads provides high friction properties thus it functions well as a motion stopper [3]. The asbestos-based brake pad is widely available in commercials at low prices and guarantees durability of the brake pad, but the result of friction powder in the form of small particles is very dangerous for human health due to asbestos content. The use of asbestos is avoided because of its carcinogenic properties. Therefore, a brake pad supported by asbestos-free materials is inevitable [4]. Currently, natural composite materials have the potential to be used in various fields such as automotive [4,5] [5-10], aerospace [11], building and construction [11, 12], and the furniture industry[13] because of their excellent performance (such as abundance, low cost [14], biodegradable [15-17], non-toxic [18], and having good mechanical properties [6]). Therefore, biomass is a natural source of composite materials that are considered a potential raw material [B, C, D] for the production of lignocellulosic functional composites[19]. Lignocellulose from biomass has been utilized for the development of a non-asbestos-based brake pad. Apart from being environmentally friendly, this composite-based brake pad shows good performance, which is not only in mechanical behavior but also in physical and thermal properties compared to asbestos-based brake pads [20-22]. Asbestos-based brake pad survives only at 200°C, while brake pad supported by composites can withstand temperatures up to 360°C[23]. Table 1 shows some reports[5, 7, 24-32] on the development and utilization of alternative materials using biomass as natural reinforcing agents for strong substitutes for asbestos-based friction materials.

Table 1. Various types of biomass materials (as a reinforcing component) in the production of composite-based brake pad

Type of agricultural waste	Supporting components	Results	Reference
Bamboo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Aluminum oxide •MgO •Epoxy resin 	The composition of bamboo greatly affects the mechanical properties of the brake pad. Bamboo fiber-based brake pads have the potential to replace the asbestos-based brake pad. The best brake pad specimens had a wear rate of $0.9612 \times 10^{-8} \text{ g/mm}^2$, hardness of 91.8 HRR, and heat resistance at 280°C with a duration of 810 days.	[5]
Coconut and Bamboo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •MgO •Al₂O₃ •Epoxy Resin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Composite made from bamboo with a composition of 29% of coconut, 40% of epoxy, 6% of MgO, 25% of Al₂ O₃ has a temperature resistance of 251.53°C, a hardness of 37.14 HRB, a wear rate of 0.323 mm³ / N.mm, and a friction coefficient of 0.454. •The coconut fiber-reinforced composite (consisting of 20% of natural fiber, 46% of epoxy, 6% of MgO, 28% of Al₂ O₃) has a temperature resistance of 250.56°C, a hardness of 44.10 HRB, a wear rate of 0.242 mm³/N.mm, and a coefficient of friction of 0.46 •The hardness values of the two composite brake pads are lower than that of the commercial brake pad, but they have almost the same values for the wear rates and the coefficient of friction. 	[27]
Coconut Fiber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Aluminum •Graphite •Zirconium Oxide •Silicon Carbide •Titanium Oxide •Aluminum Oxide 	The brake pad has superior physical and mechanical characteristics due to the proper homogenization of the composition, the particle size of the material, the distribution of the fill material through the matrix, and the optimal proportion of the amount of metal and other components. The greater the amount of coconut husk, the higher the density and strength of the composite-based	[25]

	•Phenolic resin	brake pad.	
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Table 1 (continue). Various types of biomass materials (as a reinforcing component) in the production of composite-based brake pad

Type of agricultural waste	Supporting components	Results	Reference
Banana Peel	Phenolic Resin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The brake pad has a lower wear rate as the added binder composition increases due to the strong bond between the peels and the resin due to the high microstructure of the packaging. •Increases in the resin composition in banana peel particles also increase the strength, hardness, and friction coefficient of the brake pad. 	[26]
Palm Kernel Fiber (PKF)	Epoxy Resin	The presence of PKF and a small amount of binder (epoxy resin) increases the wear rate of the sample. This means that the brake pad has a low wear rate. However, the addition of the reinforcing material composition (PKF) increases the compressive strength of the brake pad.	[32]
Maize Husk	Epoxy Resin	The addition of maize husk as a filler can increase the wear rate, hardness, compressive strength, thermal conductivity, and tensile strength.	[24]
Rice Husk	Epoxy Resin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Decreasing the CBS composition increases the compressive strength and hardness of the brake pad •The presence of epoxy resin increases compressive strength. •CBS has the potential to be used as a reinforcing material to replace asbestos in brake pad material friction. 	[7]
Cocoa Beans Shells (CBS)	Epoxy Resin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Decreasing the CBS composition increases the compressive strength and hardness of the brake pad •The presence of epoxy resin increases compressive strength •CBS has the potential to be used as a reinforcing material to replace asbestos in brake pad material friction 	[29]
Saw-Dust	Epoxy Resin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Improved sawdust composition reduces brake pad density, compressive strength, and hardness. •Saw-dust particles with sizes of 100 μm have the potential to be used as a substitute for asbestos-based brake pads. 	[28]
Groundnut Shells	Phenolic Resin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Increases in the phenolic resin composition increase the compressive strength of the brake pad •Decreasing the composition of groundnut shells increases the compressive strength density of the brake pad. 	[31]

This study aims to determine the effect of additional rice husk (RH) and palm frond (PF) as the reinforcing agents on the brake pad. The mechanical characteristics of the prepared brake pad were analyzed using the wear rate test, mass loss, friction coefficient, heat resistance, compressive strength, and puncture strength[33, 34]. The composite-based brake pad fabrication method was carried out at room temperature without the influence of pressure and involved polymerization reactions. This study provides information on how the utilization and potential of biomass, especially RH and PF as the main reinforcing material in the fabrication of brake pads that are more environmentally friendly. Although there are reports on the use of RH [35, 36] and PF, the weakness of the current research is that the main ingredient of biomass waste such as RH and PF has not been widely used as the main component for the production of the environmentally friendly non-asbestos brake pad. In fact, RH and PF are plenty and largely available in agricultural countries such as Indonesia, providing their prospects for being utilized. RH and PF are potential since

they contain lignocellulose that can improve performance[37]. The chemical composition of RH and PF is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Chemical composition of RH and PF

Type of biomass	Chemical content (%)				Reference
	Cellulose	Hemicellulose	Lignin	Silica	
RH	43.2	32.5	15.0	22.0	[38]
PF	31.5	19.2	14.0	12.3	[39]

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Materials

The main materials used in the fabrication of the composite-based brake pad are polyester resin, methyl ethyl ketone peroxide (MEKP) catalyst, as well as RH and PF. The polyester resin was used as a matrix-forming material, while RH (Bandung, Indonesia) and PF (Bangka Belitung, Indonesia) were used as matrix reinforcing materials.

2.1. Brake Pad Production Process

RH and PF were used as the main reinforcement for the brake pad. Both materials were cut into small pieces and dried in the sun for 3 days. To get the specific particle size of RH and PF, the sieving process was conducted thus particle size in the range of 250-500 μm was obtained, in which the sieving process is explained in our previous studies[40]. The brake pad was made with variations in the composition of the reinforcing ratio for PF/RH as follows: 10/90; 30/70; 50/50; 70/30. Then, 100 mL of polyester resin as a matrix and 10 mL of catalyst were added to the PF/RH mixture. The prepared brake pad mixture was then poured into a silicone mold (2 x 2 x 2 cm) and cooled at room temperature which was not exposed to sunlight for one day. After the brake pad dried, the brake pad was sanded to remove the resin effect on its surface. The flow chart of the experimental method is shown in Figure 1.

2.3. Mechanical Properties Tests

The compressive strength and puncture strength tests were carried out to determine the mechanical properties of the composite-based brake pad that has been prepared. For the compressive test, the Screw Mount Test Instrument (Model I ALX-J, China) equipped with a digital force measuring instrument was used (Model HP-500, Serial, No H5001909262). The test was carried out by applying a constant displacement rate of 2.6 mm/minute to the brake pad. The compressive forces were recorded simultaneously resulting in a curve that shows the texture profile. The compressive strength was then obtained from the maximum point of the compressive stress-strain curve. Detailed information about mechanical properties is done in our previous studies[7, 15-17, 40-46].

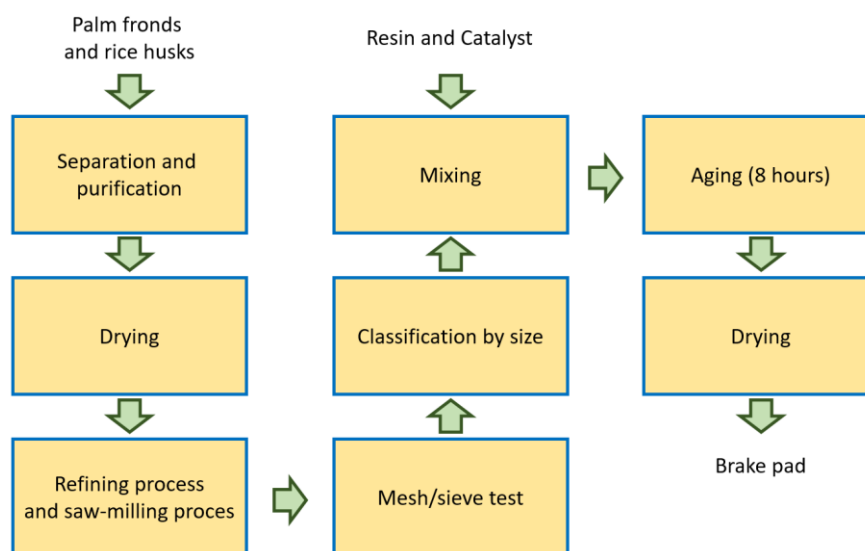


Figure 1. The Flow chart of the experimental method

Furthermore, the maximum force (in N units) was applied to assess the hardness of the sample. The Shore Durometer instrument (Shore A Hardness, In size, China) was used to test the puncture strength. During the test, a needle or probe was used to perforate the brake pad. Hardness was measured on a scale from 0 to 100. Then, the density (g/cm^3) of the brake pad was calculated by dividing the mass of the brake pad (g) by the volume of the brake pad (cm^3). The friction test was carried out by rubbing the brake pad against the sandpaper (80 grit) for 20 min at a speed of 25 cm/s. Every two minutes, the mass of the brake pad was recorded. The wear rate (M) was calculated by dividing different masses (the initial mass (M_a ; g) and the final mass (M_b ; g)) with the testing time (t) and the friction cross-sectional area (A ; mm^2)[5]. The coefficient of friction (μ) is the ratio of the friction force (f ; Newton) to the normal force applied (N ; Newton).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Reaction Mechanism Proposal of Formation Composite-Brake Pad

Polyester is made through a step-growth process involving an acid with two carboxylic and alcohol with two hydroxyl groups. The synthesis process of polyester as a matrix brake pad is carried out under room conditions. Figure 2 shows the synthesis of polyester using maleic acid anhydride, isophthalic acid, and 2-alkyl-1,3-propanediol as precursor material.

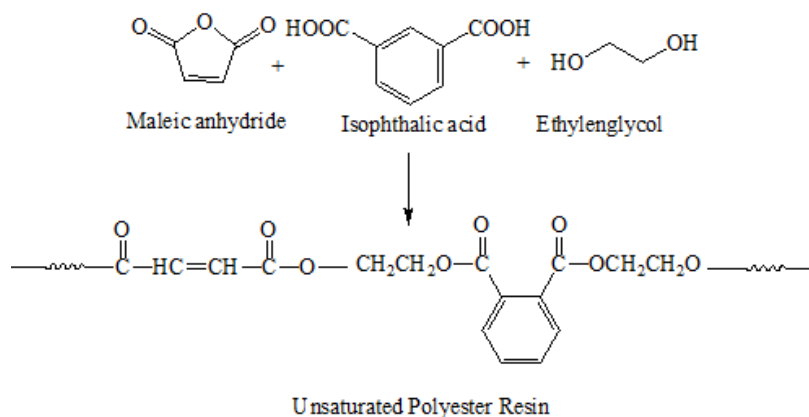


Figure 2. Synthesis of Polyester (adopted from reference[47])

Polymerization through a step-growth mechanism involves a catalyst (usually MEKP), initiating the formation of free radicals. These free radicals scatter the double bonds from the polyester chain. The reaction mechanism of the polyester chain formation is shown in Figures 3-6. To confirm the mechanism, further chemical analysis and instrument must be done[47-49]. In short, the reaction stages are as follows:

a. The peroxide catalyst breaks down into tert-butyldioxy-O* free radicals. After that, tert-butyldioxy-O* free radicals initiate a polymerization reaction.

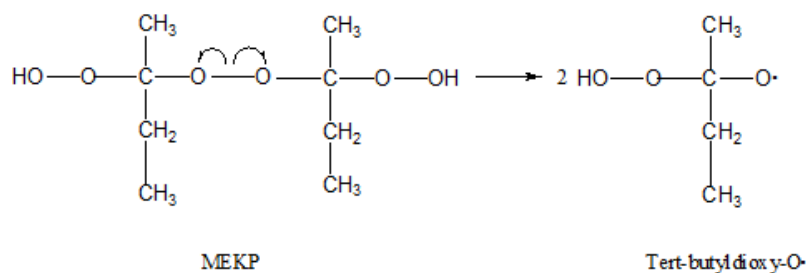


Figure 3. Free radical formation from MEKP catalyst (adopted from reference[47])

b. Tert-butyldioxy-O* free radicals attack the double bonds of the polyester chain thus polyester chain radical is formed.

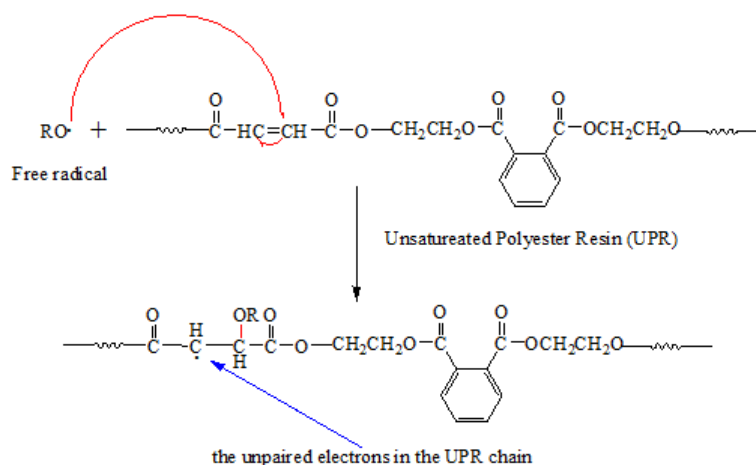


Figure 4. Tert-butyldioxy-O* free radicals attack the double bonds of the polyester chain (adopted from reference[47])

c. Polyester chain radical attacks the double bond in styrene and forms a crosslinking bond between polyester and styrene. Furthermore, since there is a crosslinking bond, styrene radical is formed.

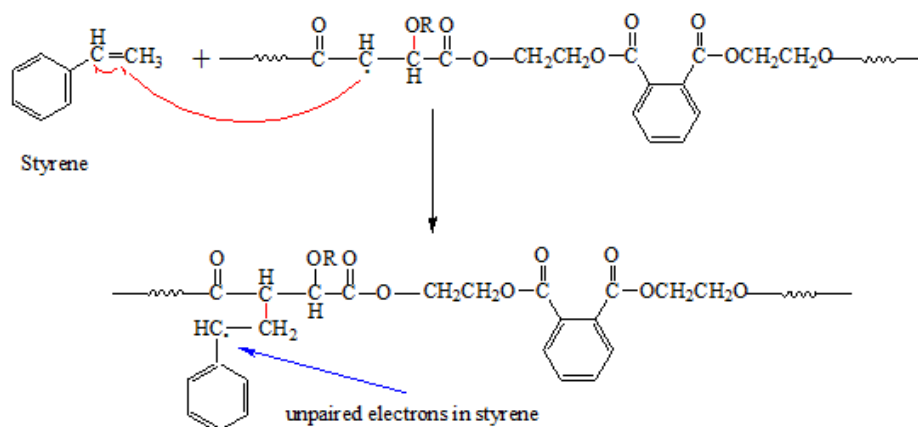


Figure 5. Formation of crosslinking bond between polyester and styrene (adopted from reference[47])

d. Furthermore, styrene radical attacks other polyester molecules over and over again and forms a long chain that traps the fibers in the brake pads. This reaction continues until the polyester that binds the fibers becomes hardened (cured), as shown in Figure 6.

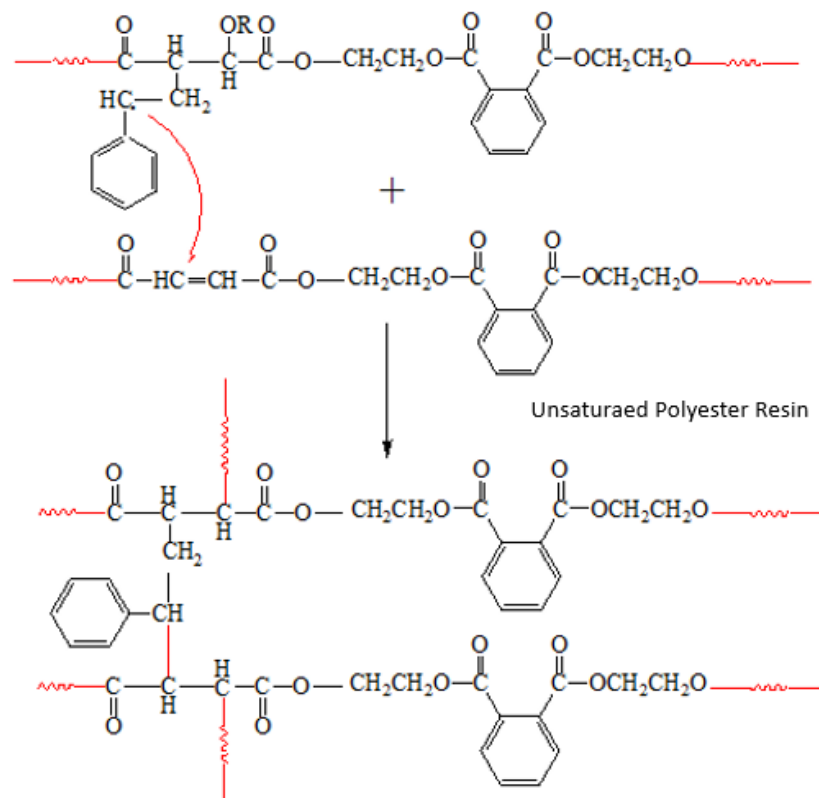


Figure 6. A hardening process in which the polyester binds the fibers (adopted from reference[47])

3.2. Physical Properties of Composite-Based Brake Pad

Figure 7 shows a photograph of the composite-based brake pads that were prepared. Based on Figure 7 physically, the composite-based brake pads that were prepared seemed similar but there is a color difference starting from lightest brown to darkest brown. The existence of this color difference is mainly due to the difference in the ratio of the composition of PF and RH. In the composition ratio of PF/RH at 10/90, the lightest brown composite-based brake pad was formed. Meanwhile, the darkest color was produced by the PF/RH with a composition ratio of 90/10. All composite-based brake pads had a rough and tough texture.

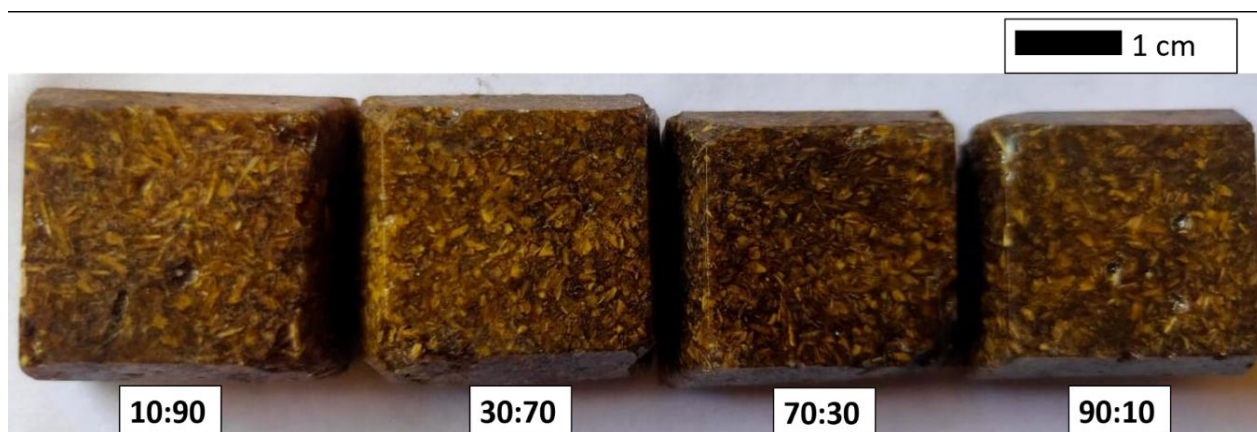


Figure 7. The photograph of prepared composite-based brake pads

Figure 8 shows microscope images of the surface of the composite-based brake pads. All composite-based brake pads surface show similar surface textures. Figure 8 shows a photograph of the composite brake pad surface. All composite-based brake pad surfaces exhibited a similar surface. All composite-based brake pads had a relatively large size of PF and RH reinforcement material.

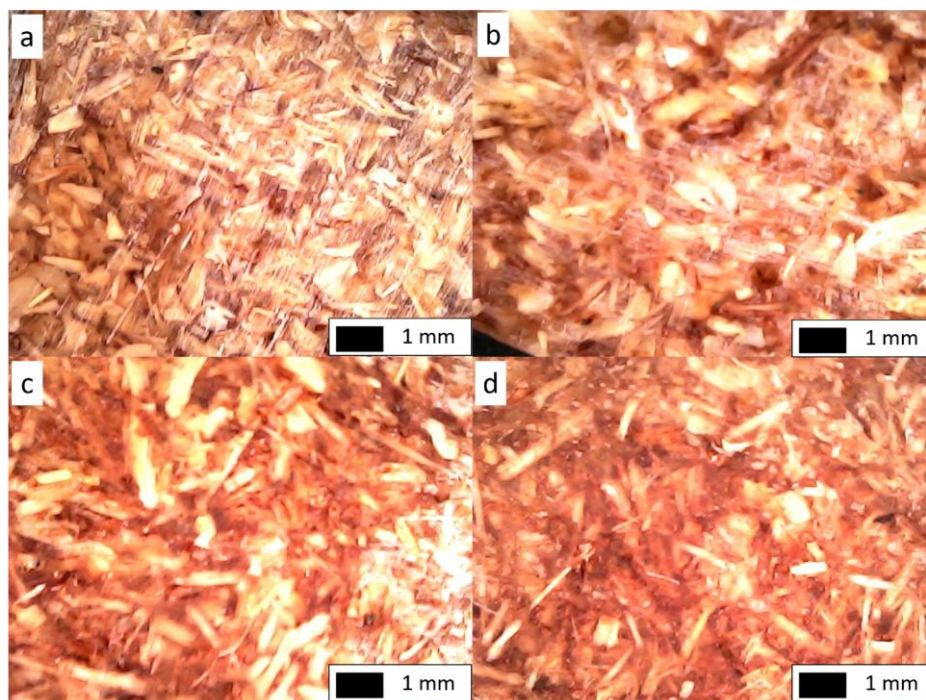


Figure 8. Composite-based brake pads surface for 10/90 (a), 30/70 (b), 70/30 (c), and 90/10 (d) composition ratio of PF/RH

3.3. Mechanical Properties of Composite-Based Brake Pads

Figure 9 shows the compression test of composite-based brake pads. This compression test aims to see the ability of a material to withstand the pressure exerted by another hard object. In a compression test, a force is applied. The amount of force applied is proportional to the hardness of the composite-based brake pads. A higher compression test value indicates that the sample is getting harder. Based on Figure 9, the composite-based brake pad with a composition ratio of PF/RH at 10/90 showed excellent performance because it had a high compression test result value compared to other specimens. Meanwhile, the composite-based brake pad with a composition ratio of PF/RH at 90/10 shows the lowest compression endurance value. Table 3 shows the results of the composite-based brake pad puncture test. Table 3 shows that the composite-based brake pad with a ratio composition of PF and RH at 10/90 shows better hardness properties than other specimens. Composite-based brake pad specimens with a composition ratio of PF and RH at 90/10 have the lowest hardness characteristics. This puncture test confirms the compression test results where there is a match between the puncture test and the compression test. Based on these two tests (compression and puncture tests), the order of the best composite-based brake pad specimens in terms of best mechanical properties are 10/90; 30/70; 70/30; and 90/10. Figure 10 and Table 4 show the results of the friction test. This friction test includes the level of mass loss, wear rate, and friction coefficient of composite-based brake pads. The level of mass loss occurs due to surface contact or friction between the brake pad specimens with the sandpaper which occurs repeatedly. When friction occurs, there is a change in kinetic energy into heat energy. The rate of mass loss has a positive correlation with wear rate[50, 51]. Based on the mass loss values, the hardness level of the composite-based brake pads can be

determined. The less mass loss indicates a high level of hardness [52]. Based on Figure 10 and Table 4, the mass loss and wear rate of the composition ratio of PF/RH at 10/90 is relatively higher than other specimens which shows that a large amount of PF content is not too significant in the improvement of the mechanical characteristics of the composite-based brake pads. At a composition ratio of PF/RH at 90/10, composite-based brake pads have the most fragile mechanical characteristics and are not durable or it can be said that the specimens with a PF/RH ratio of 90/10 have the lowest strength properties than other specimens. Meanwhile, the composite-based brake pad with a PF/RH composition ratio of 10/90 shows the best mechanical characteristics because it has the smallest mass loss and wear-rate value. RH component plays a major role in improving the hardness properties of the brake pad. The order of the brake pad specimens starting from the hardest is in the composition ratio PF/RH at 10/90; 30/70; 70/30; and 90/10 sequentially.

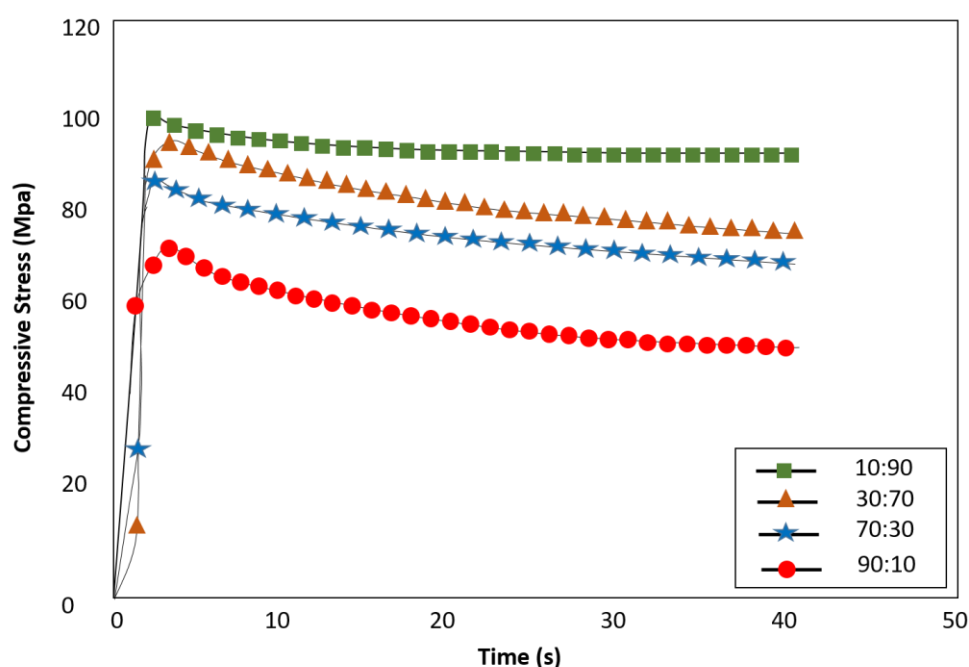


Figure 9. The compressive test curve of composite-based brake pads

Table 3. *The puncture test of composite-based brake pads*

Ratio composition of PF/RHs	10:90	30:70	70:30	90:10
Bulk density (g/cm ³)	0.7089	1.0418	0.6957	0.7492
Durometer Shore Hardness Scale	94.1111	93.555	91.7778	87.1111

Table 4 confirms the mass loss test results in Figure 5. Based on Table 4, the composition of the PF/RH ratio at 90/10 shows the highest friction coefficient than other specimens. Meanwhile, the composition of the PF/RH ratio at 10/90 showed the smallest friction coefficient compared to other specimens. The values of mass loss and wear rate are inversely related to the friction coefficient (see Table 2). The higher mass loss and the higher wear-rate value resulted in a lower friction coefficient. The lower friction coefficient, thus, allowed the lower material to resist friction. The order of the composite-based brake pad specimens that have the highest level of friction is in the composition ratio of PF/RH at 10/90; 30/70; 70/30; and 10/90. Again, the specimens with the highest RH content had the best mechanical characteristics among other specimens. The study results indicated that composite-based brake pads have good mechanical characteristics if they contain high RH content. There are variations in the composition of cellulose and hemicellulose and lignin in RH and PF that affect the mechanical properties of composite-based brake pads. The

content of cellulose, hemicellulose, and lignin which is the highest in the reinforcing agent contributes most to the improvement of the mechanical properties of composite-based brake pads.

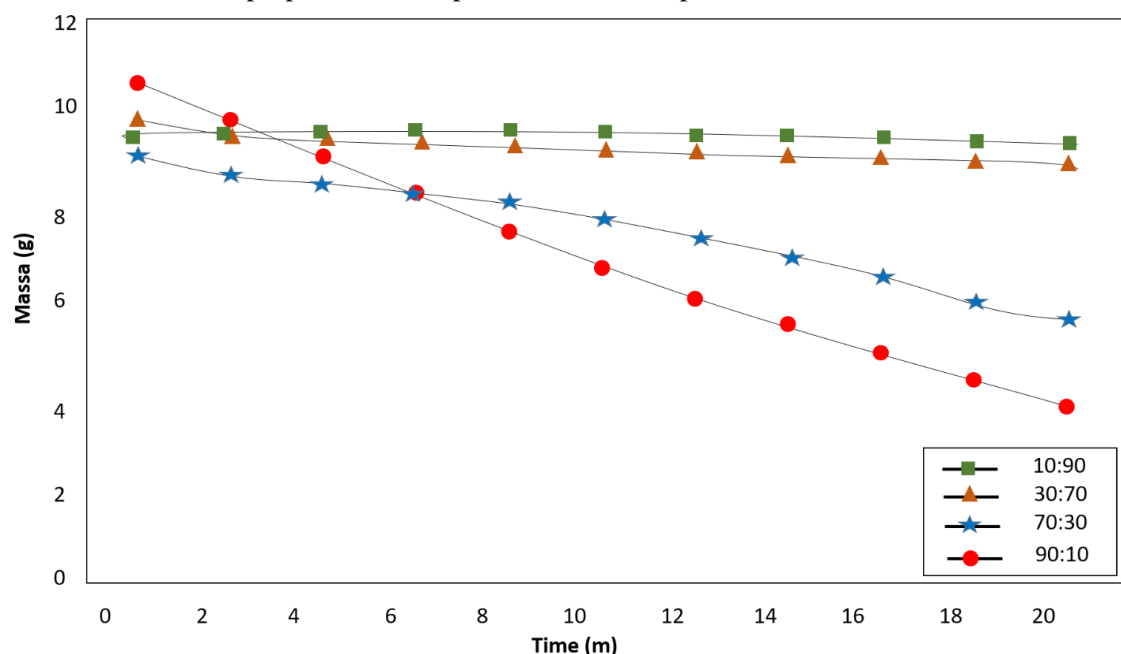


Figure 10. Mass loss of composite-based brake pad as a function of time

Table 4. Mass loss, wear rate, and friction coefficient of prepared composite-based brake pads. M_a is the initial weight of the brake lining (g), M_b is the final weight of the brake lining (g), t is the testing time (s), A is the friction cross-sectional area (mm^2), and M is the wear rate (g/s.mm^2)

Composition of PF/RH	M_a (g)	M_b (g)	Mass loss rate (g/min)	t (s)	A (mm^2)	M (g/s.mm^2)	Friction coefficient
10/90	9.75	9.26	0.0245	1200	0.0230	9.39×10^{-6}	0.558974
30/70	9.92	9.09	0.0415	1200	0.0414	2.86×10^{-5}	0.314516
70/30	9.20	5.80	0.17	1200	0.0575	1.62×10^{-4}	0.163043
90/10	10.77	4.01	0.338	1200	0.0200	1.12×10^{-4}	0.285051

Apart from the different contents of cellulose, hemicellulose, and lignin, the contribution of other components in RH and PF also affects the mechanical properties of the material. Based on Table 2, RH and PF contain other components, namely silica[19]. RH contains an extraordinary amount of silica than PF. A high percentage of silica in a material is more blended with cellulose, hemicellulose, and lignin; therefore, RH becomes resistant to biodegradation, pressure, and friction[47]. This study informs the possibility for the alternative problem solver in the usage of organic waste material. Indeed, this can help creating problem solving for current issues in the waste management and waste treatment[53-65].

4. Conclusion

The effect of RH and PF amount on the quality of composite-based brake pads has been carried out. Composite-based brake pads with more RH contents have the best strength, which is durable, having the lowest wear value. This is because of the high content of cellulose, hemicellulose, lignin, and silica which is the major influence on the mechanical characteristics of composite-based brake pads.

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