



**Faculty of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering
Technology**

**NATURAL FIBER / SYNTHETIC FIBER HYBRID LAMINATE FOR
AUTOMOTIVE RUBBER COMPONENTS**

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**NATURAL FIBER / SYNTHETIC FIBER HYBRID LAMINATE FOR
AUTMOTIVE RUBBER COMPONENTS**

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This report is submitted to the Faculty of Engineering Technology of UTeM as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Manufacturing Engineering Technology (Process & Technology) with Honours. The member of supervisory is as follow:

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ABSTRAK

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ABSTRACT

Fiber metal laminates (FMLs) is a class of metallic materials that consist of few thin layers of metal stacking with layers of composite based natural / synthetic fiber materials. This FMLs have drawn a wide attention towards variety of application in the industry. The study conducted to investigate the tensile, flexural and fatigue strength of fiber metal laminates (FMLs) which hybrid kenaf / glass fiber were flanked with 1mm mild steel. These FMLs were formed by using hot press compression machine. ASTM E8 was used to perform flexural and tensile testing with 2mm/min rate of speed. Fatigue testing was run based on ASTM E466 where 10,000 cycle of cyclic load was examined. Result showed that improvement in tensile, flexural and fatigue were observed in natural fiber based fiber metal laminate compared to synthetic fiber. Overall, the thickness of fiber and strong bonding of adhesive play an important role to determine the strength of hybrid laminate composite.

DEDICATIONS

To my parents and family members,

Mohd Fadzil Bin Abdul Majid

Hazlina Binti Muda,

Muhammad Bukhari Bin Mohd Fadzil

&

Muhammad Ikhbar bin Mohd Fadzil

That gives me unconditional loves and support towards completing this report,

To my supporting friends,

That gives help to me along this journey,

Also,

The most important person, my supervisor for the guidance, time and patience,

And last,

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TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION	iv
APPROVAL	v
ABSTRAK	vi
ABSTRACT	vii
DEDICATIONS	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ix
TABLE OF CONTENT	x
LIST OF TABLES	xiv
LIST OF FIGURES	xv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS, SYMBOLS AND NOMENCLATURE	xviii
CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background of Study	1
1.2 Problem Statement	3
1.3 Significance of Study	4
1.4 Objectives	5
1.5 Scope	5
1.6 Organizations of the Project Study	6
CHAPTER 2	8
LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.0 Introduction	8
2.1 Composite	8
2.1.1 Types of Composite	10

2.2	Reinforcement of Composite	11
2.3	Matrix of Composite	12
2.3.1	Thermoset	13
2.3.2	Thermoplastic	15
2.4	Orientation of Fiber	16
2.4.1	Woven	16
2.4.2	Non-woven	17
2.5	Natural Fiber	18
2.5.1	Kenaf	20
2.6	Synthetic Fiber	22
2.6.1	Natural-Glass Fiber Reinforced Polymers	25
2.7	Mild Steel	25
2.8	Fiber Metal Laminate	27
2.9	Automotive Part	28
CHAPTER 3		31
METHODOLOGY		31
3.0	Introduction	31
3.1	Methodology	31
3.1.1	Research Design Flowchart	32
3.2	Gantt Chart	34
3.3	Raw Materials	37
3.3.1	Mild Steel	37
3.3.2	Glass Fiber	38
3.3.3	Kenaf	38
3.3.4	Epoxy and Hardener	39
3.3.5	Adhesive	39
3.4	Raw Materials Preparation	40
3.4.1	Preparation of Mild Steel	40

3.4.2	Preparation of Composite	41
3.4.3	Vacuum Bagging Process	42
3.5	Sample Fabrication	43
3.5.1	Application of Adhesive	43
3.5.2	Hot Press Compressing Machine	44
3.5.3	Water Jet Machine	45
3.6	Material Testing	45
3.6.1	Fatigue Testing Machine	46
3.6.2	Universal Testing Machine (UTM)	47
3.7	Analysis	49
3.7.1	Optical Microscope	50
CHAPTER 4		51
RESULT & DISCUSSION		51
4.0	Introduction	51
4.1	Fabrication of Fiber Metal Laminate (FML)	51
4.2	Analysis of Fiber Metal Laminate (FML)	54
4.3	Tensile Testing Analysis	55
4.3.1	Tensile Stress - Strain	55
4.3.2	Maximum Load	60
4.3.3	Ultimate Tensile Strength	61
4.4	Flexural Testing Analysis	62
4.4.1	Stress-strain curve of Fiber metal laminate (FML)	62
4.5	Fatigue Testing Analysis	67
4.5.1	Peak Force of the Fiber Metal Laminate with Mild Steel	68
4.5.2	Crack of The Fiber Metal Laminate	70
4.6	Optical Microscope (OM) Analysis After Tensile Testing	72
4.6.1	Optical Microscope Surface Structure Analysis	73

CHAPTER 5	77
CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	77
5.0 Introduction	77
5.1 Summary of The Research	77
5.2 Recommendations	79
REFERENCES	81
APPENDIX A1	87
APPENDIX A2	88
APPENDIX A3	89

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2. 1: Characteristics of composite resin matrices, Atiqah (2004)	14
Table 2. 2: Physical properties of the selected natural fibers, Sanjay et al. (2015)	19
Table 2. 3: Properties of kenaf bast and core fibers, Villar et al. (2009)	22
Table 2. 4: Mechanical properties of mild steel based on CES EduPack 2013 Software	26
Table 3. 1: Gantt Chart for PSM 1	34
Table 3. 2: Gantt Chart for PSM 2	36
Table 4. 1: Explanation of Code of Sample	53
Table 4. 2: Tensile result for sample 1 of MKGKM	56
Table 4. 3: Tensile result for sample 2 of MKGKM	57
Table 4. 4: Tensile result for sample 1 of MKKKM	58
Table 4. 5: Tensile result for sample 2 of MKKKM	59
Table 4. 6: Flexural properties of sample MKGKM	63
Table 4. 7: Flexural properties of sample MKKKM	64
Table 4. 8: Length of crack for each fiber metal laminate	70
Table 5. 1: Suggestion for layup sequence of fiber metal laminate	79

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2. 1: Classification of composite according to reinforcement (Srinivasan, 2009)	9
Figure 2. 2: Types of reinforcement in composites, (a) continuous fibers, (b) discontinuous fiber/whisker, (c) particle and (d) fabric/braid	12
Figure 2. 3: Cross-linking structure of thermoset, Campbell (2004)	13
Figure 2. 4 : Stages of cure for thermoset resin, Campbell (2004)	14
Figure 2. 5: Structure of thermoplastic, Biron (2018)	15
Figure 2. 6: Schematic diagram of different type of woven mats, (a) plain, (b) basket, (c) stain, (d) twill and (e) huckaback (Rajesh et al., 2016)	16
Figure 2. 7: Examples of (a) woven kenaf (b) non-woven kenaf	18
Figure 2. 8: Sources of natural fiber, Ahmad et al. (2015)	19
Figure 2. 9: Parts of kenaf	21
Figure 2. 10: Source of synthetic fiber, Rahman et al. (2019)	23
Figure 2. 11: Examples of organic fiber (a) aramid/ kevlar, (b) carbon fiber and (c) glass fiber	24
Figure 2.12: Mild steel	26
Figure 2. 13: Typical fiber metal laminate, Sadighi et al. (2012)	28
Figure 2. 14: Market segmentation of automotive sector, Biron et al. (2018)	29
Figure 2. 15: Usage of natural fibers for door panel	30
Figure 3.1: Flowchart	33
Figure 3.2: Mild steel sheet	37
Figure 3.3: Woven glass fiber	38

Figure 3.4: Non-woven kenaf	38
Figure 3.5: Epoxy resin, (a) Auto-Fix 1786-A, (b) Auto-Fix 5105-B	39
Figure 3.6: Hardex	40
Figure 3.7: Laser Cutting Machine	41
Figure 3.8: Sample of (a) K/K/K and (b) K/G/K	41
Figure 3.9: Dry oven	43
Figure 3.10: Area of application of hardex	44
Figure 3.11: Hot press compressing machine	44
Figure 3.12: Water jet machine	45
Figure 3.13: Fatigue testing machine	46
Figure 3.14: Standard dimension of a specimen (ASTM E466)	47
Figure 3.15: Universal Tensile Machine (UTM)	49
Figure 3.16: Optical microscope	50
Figure 4. 1: Non-woven mat kenaf	52
Figure 4. 2: Layup sequence of fiber	53
Figure 4. 3: Dimension for ASTM E8	54
Figure 4. 4: Dimension for ASTM E466	55
Figure 4. 5: Direction of pull for the tensile testing	55
Figure 4. 6: Stress-strain graph for sample 1 of MKGKM	56
Figure 4. 7: Stress-strain graph for sample 2 of MKGKM	57
Figure 4. 8: Stress-strain graph for sample 1 of MKKKM	58
Figure 4. 9: Stress-strain graph for sample 2 of MKKKM	59
Figure 4. 10: Graph of maximum load with difference layup sequence	60

Figure 4. 11: Graph of ultimate tensile strength with difference layup sequence	61
Figure 4. 12: Direction of force applied to the sample	62
Figure 4.13: Graph of load-extension for sample MKGKM	63
Figure 4.14: Graph of load-extension for sample MKKKM	63
Figure 4. 15: Stress-strain graph for sample MKKKM & MKGKM	64
Figure 4. 16: Maximum load with difference sequence layup	65
Figure 4.17: Modulus with difference sequence layup	65
Figure 4.18: Sample MKGKM after testing	66
Figure 4.19: Sample of MKGKM after testing	66
Figure 4.20: Direction of pull for the fatigue testing	68
Figure 4.21: Graph of peak force versus number of cycles for sample MKGKM	68
Figure 4.22: Graph of peak force versus number of cycles for sample MKKKM	69
Figure 4.23: Average peak force of difference sample layup	69
Figure 4.24: Sample of MKGKM after testing	71
Figure 4.25: Sample of MKKKM after testing	71
Figure 4.26: Metal part for MKGKM with (i) 50x, (ii) 200x and (iii) 1000x	73
Figure 4.27: Fiber part for MKGKM with (i) 50x, (ii) 200x and (iii) 1000x	74
Figure 4.28: Metal part for MKKKM with (i) 50x, (ii) 200x and (iii) 1000x	75
Figure 4.29: Fiber part for MKKKM with (i) 50x, (ii) 200x and (iii) 1000x	75

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS, SYMBOLS AND NOMENCLATURE

ASTM	-	American Society for Testing and Material
ARALL	-	Aramid Reinforced Aluminum Laminate
CFRP	-	Carbon-Fiber Reinforced Polymer
CMC	-	Ceramic Matrix Composites
°C	-	Degree Celcius
FTK	-	Fakulti teknologi Kejuruteraan
FMLs	-	Fiber Metal Laminates
GFRP	-	Glass-Fiber Reinforced Polymer
GLARE	-	Glass Reinforced Aluminum Laminate
MMC	-	Metal Matrix Composite
M/K/G/K/M	-	Mild Steel / Kenaf / Glass Fiber / Kenaf / Mild Steel
M/K/K/K/M	-	Mild Steel / Kenaf / Kenaf / Kenaf / Mild Steel
NFRPCs	-	Natural Fiber Reinforced Polymer Composites
OM	-	Optical Microscope
PMC	-	Polymer Matric Composite
UTeM		Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka
UTM	-	Universal Testing Machine

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter will explain the overview and the purpose of this project. The chapter includes the background of the study, problem statement, significant of study, objectives that are expected to be achieved and the scope of the study that is going to be conducted.

1.1 Background of Study

Nowadays the usage of natural fiber or synthetic fiber in the automotive sector has become a trend that has been increasingly growth over the years. Currently, the automotive industry has implemented natural fiber and synthetic fiber in some parts of the automotive industry. This is due to their advantages that natural and synthetic fiber are widely known as lightweight and exhibit outstanding mechanical properties.

Based on Juliana et al. (2018), natural fiber such as kenaf which consist of bast and core have suitable for composite applications such wood plastic composite, non-woven materials and pultruded products. Kenaf bast fibers with high density and mechanical strength have the potential to be used in materials requiring high strength, such as composite, automotive and reinforcement applications. In different industries, glass fiber that comes from synthetic fiber

were widely used due to their excellent properties of strong, robust and lightweight material (Ramesh, Palanikumar and Reddy, 2013). Due to the advantages of the glass fiber itself, which are low cost, high tensile strength, high chemical resistance and exhibit excellent insulating properties glass fiber has commonly used in polymeric composites (Sanjay and Yogesha, 2017).

Composite consist of fiber, reinforcement and matrix. These reinforcement and matrix bind together to make sure the fiber attach to one another. There are few types of composite such as Polymer Matrix Composite (PMC), Metal Matrix Composite (MMC) and Ceramic Matrix Composite (CMC). Composite also come as hybrid and non-hybrid, which due to their layer of composite. Research by Oliver-Borrachero *et al.*, (2019) stated that when comparing their specific modulus of elasticity and resistance, the advantages of composite materials appear.

Fiber metal laminate is the most common type of hybrid composite used in the industry. A fiber metal laminates (FMLs) is one of a class of metal materials consisting of a multi-thin metal layer laminate bonded with composite material layers. The material then will behave like a simple structure of metal, but with considerable specific advantages in terms of properties such as metal fatigue, tensile strength, corrosion resistance and special strength properties. Fiber metal laminates are usually known as Aramid Reinforced Aluminum Laminate (ARALL) which based on aramid fibers and Glass Reinforced Aluminum Laminate (GLARE) which based on high-strength glass fiber. In automotive and aerospace industry, the demand for more efficient and lightweight materials cause emerged of new types of FMLs (Carrillo and Cantwell, 2009).

Mechanical testing of polymer composites that has been standardize includes flexural, tensile, shear, compression and impact with open and closed holes, meanwhile physical testing involves voiding content, water absorption, density, scratch resistance and hardness. Mechanical and physical testing are runs to ensure that the material meets the performance requirements of

industrial specifications, mainly in the aerospace, automotive, consumer, medical and defense industries (Saba, Jawaid and Sultan, 2018).

This project is about the natural fiber and synthetic fiber hybrid metal laminate for automotive rubber component. So, this study focusses on the mechanical properties of tensile strength and fatigue strength of the material. These fatigue and tensile strength are important to understand the endurance of the material.

1.2 Problem Statement

In the automotive industry, some of their components are usually made up from a solid metal. The characteristics of solid metal are known as glossy in their appearance, well conductor of heat and electricity but somehow solid metal is heavy. This is due to the thickness of the metal material itself. Weight of material gives effects to the fuel consumption as reducing weight can reduce the amount of fuel. Light weight is a key factor in the rapid expansion of the global automotive composite market today. Brooks, (2004) explained that, the use of composites in automotive applications has steadily increased in recent years and expected to increase further in the future. Hybrid composite such as fiber metal laminates are frequently used because of their light-weight feature and known to have superior mechanical properties. There are several researchers agreed that fiber metal laminates (FMLs) based composite are lighter than other conventional aluminum and steel and because of their amazing fatigue and impact properties, FMLs were used extensively (Subramaniam *et al.*,(2019), Dhar Malingam *et al.*, (2018), Feng *et al.*, (2017)).

Furthermore, solid metal is a recyclable resource but also gives problem to the industry as it is a non-renewable. The manufacturing of solid metal requires a new virgin raw material to produce them. Besides that, solid metal is expensive as compared to the natural fiber. Based on Elanchezhian *et al.*, (2018), natural fibers are renewable, can be recycled and low in density and price. Synthetic fibers that is man-made fibers also being implemented in composite as they offer user-friendly functions such as waterproofing and dirt resistance. Even though synthetic fiber like glass fiber is expensive, the mechanical properties of them are outstanding (Shahinur and Hasan, 2019). Moreover, they have a satisfactory mechanical property that make them attractive in industry.

1.3 Significance of Study

The significance of the study are as follows:

- i) In industry, automotive components are usually fabricated with solid steel which known as heavy. Hence, this study is aimed to investigate the capability of natural fiber / synthetic fiber hybrid laminate to be replace of solid metal.
- ii) Gives relevant information for better understanding of natural fiber / synthetic fiber hybrid laminate to be used in automotive component in the industry.
- iii) Fiber metal laminate of hybrid composite has more benefits in physical and mechanical properties as natural fiber / synthetic fiber itself have advantages compared to solid metal. Hence, this study focused on their fatigue strength and tensile strength of fiber metal laminates which stacking of kenaf / kenaf / kenaf (K/K/K) and kenaf / glass / kenaf (K/G/K).

1.4 Objectives

The objectives of the project are to: -

- i) To fabricate hybrid mild steel / kenaf / glass fiber reinforce composite.
- ii) To investigate the mechanical properties of hybrid mild steel / kenaf / glass fiber reinforce composite.
- iii) To propose a preferred configuration of hybrid fiber metal laminates.

1.5 Scope

This project is about natural fiber / synthetic fiber hybrid laminate for automotive rubber components. This involves the fabrication of metal (mild steel) laminates with layered composites contain hybrid and non-hybrid composites such stacking of kenaf / kenaf / kenaf (K/K/K) and kenaf / glass / kenaf (K/G/K). Besides, non-woven kenaf, and woven glass fiber are used. Hot press compression molding, adhesive and epoxy are used to make sure the stacking of metal and composites are strong enough to attach each other. The mechanical properties of tensile strength and fatigue strength of this hybrid and non-hybrid composite metal laminates are studying. Towards this fabrication, a new hybrid natural fiber / synthetic fiber laminate for automotive rubber component has been assumed to have a higher mechanical strength and longer fatigue life.

1.6 Organizations of the Project Study

This project was divided into five chapters that describe the analytical and experimental research that have been performed. The effect of the usage of natural fiber and synthetic fiber for composite in hybrid metal laminate for automotive rubber component have been studied to view the physical and mechanical properties of the hybrid mild steel / kenaf / glass fiber reinforce composite. The organization of this project study is as follows.

The first chapter begins with an introduction towards the study of this project that includes background of the study, stated problem statement towards this project, objectives, scope and an overview of this project.

Next chapter, which is chapter two is about the literature review that has gathered. This chapter starts with a discussion on the history of composite which includes the reinforcement and matrix of the composite, the type of fibers which briefly explained specifically on natural and synthetic fiber that have been used. Comprehensive review about fiber metal laminates are also included.

Chapter three includes detailed explanation of the methodology used for overall research work, raw materials, process where the hot press method uses to fabricate fiber metal laminates and procedure property analysis that had been done.

Chapter 4 explained the result of this study. The result of various studies and test which the specimens are cut according to their standard ASTM which for tensile and flexural test is ASTM E8 and for fatigue test is ASTM E466 are revealed in this chapter. The data from tensile, flexural and fatigue test of both sample mild steel / kenaf / kenaf / kenaf / mild steel