

**A STUDY OF DRYING CHAMBER INTEGRATED WITH SOLAR
COLLECTOR USING COMPUTATIONAL FLUID DYNAMICS**

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**A STUDY OF DRYING CHAMBER INTEGRATED WITH SOLAR COLLECTOR
USING COMPUTATIONAL FLUID DYNAMICS**

WONG SHIN FHUI

**A report is submitted
in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering**

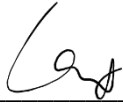
Faculty of Mechanical Engineering

UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

2020


DECLARATION

I declare that this project report entitled “A study of drying chamber integrated with solar collector using Computational Fluid Dynamics” is the result of my own work except as cited in the references.

Signature : 
Name : WONG SHIN FHUI
Date : 26 JUNE 2020

APPROVAL

I hereby declare that I have read this project and in my opinion this report is sufficient in terms of scope and quality for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering.

Signature : 
Supervisor's Name : DR MOHD AFZANIZAM BIN MOHD ROSLI
Date : 26 JUNE 2020

DEDICATION

To my beloved mother and father for the endless support.

ABSTRACT

Drying chamber integrated with solar collector has been introduced as one of the new advanced technologies and environment friendly process for drying agriculture products. To propose a proper drying chamber integrated with solar collector for specific products, uniform distribution of velocity and temperature in the chamber need to be considered. Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) Ansys Fluent 16.0 software is used to study and analyse the air flow and temperature distribution pattern within the drying chamber in order to reduce experimental time and avoid high cost. A validation results of a journal studying indirect solar food dryer is carried out using CFD. The validation is done by comparing the data experiment from the study journal with the data obtained from the CFD simulation. The results show that the maximum mean temperature difference on the symmetry plane of solar drier between the CFD Simulation in study journal and CFD validation is found to be 2.3 K. The CFD simulation shows high agreement with the results in study journal which shows that the CFD simulation's setting are correct and acceptable. With the purpose of improve the uniformity of airflow and temperature distribution in the drying chamber integrated with solar collector, three parameters are evaluated in this research which improve the weakness of the solar collector integrated drying chamber in the journal studied. The purpose of this study project is to investigate the performance of velocity and temperature distribution in drying chamber integrated with solar collector using three-dimensional (3D) CFD simulation in transient state condition. It was found that Parameter 3 (b) shows more uniform air flow velocity and temperature distribution with mean velocity 0.08m/s and mean temperature distribution 320.4K as compared to others design.

ABSTRAK

Ruang pengering yang disatukan dengan pengumpul suria telah diperkenalkan sebagai salah satu teknologi canggih dan proses mesra alam baru untuk pengeringan produk pertanian. Untuk mengusulkan ruang pengeringan yang tepat yang disatukan dengan pengumpul suria untuk produk tertentu, pengagihan kecepatan dan suhu yang seragam di dalam ruang perlu dipertimbangkan. Perisian Perkomputeran Dinamik Bendalir (CFD) Ansys Fluent 16.0 digunakan untuk mengkaji dan menganalisis aliran udara dan corak taburan suhu di dalam ruang pengeringan untuk mengurangkan masa eksperimen dan mengelakkan kos yang tinggi. Hasil pengesahan jurnal yang mengkaji pengering makanan suria tidak langsung dilakukan menggunakan CFD. Pengesahan dilakukan dengan membandingkan eksperimen data dari jurnal kajian dengan data yang diperoleh dari simulasi CFD. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa perbezaan suhu maksimum pada satah simetri suria kering antara Simulasi CFD dalam jurnal kajian dan pengesahan CFD didapati 2.3 K. Simulasi CFD menunjukkan persetujuan yang tinggi dengan hasil dalam jurnal kajian yang menunjukkan bahawa CFD tetapan simulasi betul dan boleh diterima. Dengan tujuan meningkatkan keseragaman aliran udara dan pengedaran suhu di ruang pengering yang disatukan dengan pemungut suria, tiga parameter dinilai dalam penyelidikan ini yang memperbaiki kelemahan ruang pengering terpadu pengumpul suria dalam jurnal yang dikaji. Tujuan projek kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji prestasi penyaluran halaju dan suhu di ruang pengeringan yang disatukan dengan pengumpul suria menggunakan simulasi CFD tiga dimensi (3D) dalam keadaan sementara. Didapati bahawa Reka Bentuk 3 (b) menunjukkan halaju aliran udara dan taburan suhu yang lebih seragam dengan halaju min 0.08m / s dan taburan suhu rata-rata 320.4K berbanding dengan reka bentuk yang lain.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my great appreciation to all who provided me the chances to complete my final year project and this report. This report which taken 2 semesters does help me to apply my knowledge in thermal fluids field and also trained my project management skill.

Moreover, a deepest gratitude to my final year project's supervisor, Dr. Mohd Afzanizam Bin Mohd Rosli for providing me passion guidance, expertise knowledge and stimulating advices along the project. I have received a lot of helps and encouragement from him whenever I am facing challenges in software simulating and writing report in this project. Dr. Afzanizam also patiently explained all the knowledge which beneficial a lot to me. His patience and organized plan are essential factors that lead to the successful of this project.

I would also like to show my highest appreciation to Dr. Abdul Rafeq bin Saleman and Dr. Mohamad Shukri bin Zakaria as my examiners for all the encouragement, support, and advices upon the completion of this project. Besides that, a special thanks to En. Hairul Nizam Bin Daud, the laboratory assistant of Computer-Aided Engineering Studio for assisting me in using the laboratory. The co-operation provided is highly appreciated. Million thanks to Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM) for providing me the chance to have this final year project. Furthermore, I would like to thank all my friends for providing me ideas and suggestions in software simulation in my project.

Last but not least, many thanks to my parents' endless gratitude for their sacrifices, encouragement and patience as I have faced all the challenges throughout this project.

TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION	
APPROVAL	
DEDICATION	
ABSTRACT	i
ABSTRAK	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENT	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
LIST OF ABBEREVATIONS	xiii
LIST OF SYMBOLS.....	xiv
CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background of Study	1
1.2 Problem Statement.....	6
1.3 Objectives	7
1.4 Scopes of Project	7
1.5 General Methodology	8
CHAPTER 2.....	10
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	10
2.1 Definition of Drying	10
2.2 Heat and Mass Transfer Mode.....	11
2.3 Thermal Emissivity and Radiative Heat Transfer.....	13
2.4 Parameters Affecting Drying Rates	16
2.5 Method of Drying	18
2.5.1 Traditional Drying (Open Drying).....	20
2.5.2 Industrial Drying (Drying Chamber Integrated with Solar Collector).....	22
2.5.3 Comparison Between the Different Design of Drying Chamber Integrated with Solar Collector	25
2.6 Computational Fluid Dynamics	30
2.6.1 Benefit of CFD.....	32
2.6.2 Basic Governing Equations for CFD Simulation.....	33

CHAPTER 3.....	34
METHODOLOGY	34
3.1 Introduction.....	34
3.2 Literature Review	36
3.3 Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) Simulation Process.....	36
3.4 Pre-processing of CFD Simulation	37
3.4.1 Geometry Creating	37
3.4.2 Domain Tags	42
3.4.3 Meshing.....	43
3.5 Solver of CFD Simulation	45
3.5.1 Properties Materials	46
3.5.2 Boundary Conditions	46
3.5.3 Turbulence Modelling.....	47
3.5.4 Solution	47
3.6 Post-processing of CFD Simulation	47
CHAPTER 4.....	48
RESULT ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION.....	48
4.1 Introduction.....	48
4.2 Results of Convergence Solution.....	48
4.3 CFD Simulation Verification and Validation Results	53
4.3.1 CFD Simulation Verification Results	53
4.3.2 CFD Simulation Validation Results.....	59
4.4 CFD Modelling on Drying Chamber integrated with Solar Collector.....	61
4.4.1 Modified Design on Solar Collector	61
4.4.2 Parameter 1: Different Air Inlet Area	62
4.4.3 Parameter 2: Different Gap Size Between Each Rack Shelves.....	66
4.4.4 Parameter 3: Difference Tilt Angle of Solar Collector	70
4.5 The Best Configurations of the Trays.....	74
CHAPTER 5.....	75
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	75
5.1 Conclusion	75
5.2 Recommendation for Future Work	76
REFERENCES	77

APPENDIX A: Full 3D Schematic Diagram of Solar Collector Integrated with Solar Collector	86
APPENDIX B: Full 3D Schematic Diagram of Solar Collector Integrated with Solar Collector	87
APPENDIX C: 3D Drawing of Modified Design on Solar Collector.....	88
APPENDIX D: Parameter considered in Drying Chamber Integrated with Solar Collector at different air inlet area (a), (b), (c).....	89
APPENDIX E: Parameter considered in Drying Chamber Integrated with Solar Collector at different gap size (a), (b), (c).....	90
APPENDIX F: Parameter considered in Drying Chamber Integrated with Solar Collector at Different Solar Collector Angle (a), (b), (c).....	91
APPENDIX G: 8 Points on the Symmetry Plane within Drying Chamber Integrated with Solar Collector.....	92
APPENDIX H: 4 Rack Shelves Studies in Drying Chamber Integrated with Solar Collector	93
APPENDIX I: 4 Points on Each Rack Shelves in Drying Chamber Integrated with Solar Collector	94
APPENDIX J: GANTT CHART OF FINAL YEAR PROJECT I	95
APPENDIX K: GANTT CHART OF FINAL YEAR PROJECT II.....	96

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	Surface properties involved in radiative heat transfer	15
2.2	Previous study in drying chamber	26
3.1	Geometrical parameters and dimension of solar drier	39
3.2	Geometrical parameters considered in the drying chamber integrated with solar collector	40
3.3	Parameters of grid independence test for drying chamber integrated with solar collector from journal	44
3.4	Mesh sizing parameters	45
3.5	The properties of material used in CFD simulation	46
3.6	Boundary conditions set-up	46
3.7	Run calculation of the drying chamber integrated with solar collector in the simulation	47
4.1	Comparison data results of temperature distributions on four rack shelves between the experiment and CFD modelling from journal and CFD simulation.	59
4.2	Comparison data results of temperature distributions on symmetry plane between the experiment and CFD modelling from journal and CFD simulation.	60
4.3	Temperature distributions on the symmetry plane of the modified enhancement on solar collector	61
4.4	Velocity distributions on four rack shelves of modified design of solar collector	61
4.5	Temperature distributions on parameter 1 at different air inlet area (a), (b), (c)	64

4.6	Velocity distributions on parameter 1 different air inlet area (a), (b), (c)	64
4.7	Temperature Distributions on parameter 2 at different gap size (a), (b), (c)	68
4.8	Velocity Distributions on parameter 2 at different gap size (a), (b), (c)	68
4.9	Temperature Distributions on parameter 3 at different tilt angle of solar collector (a), (b), (c)	72
4.10	Velocity Distributions parameter 3 at different tilt angle of solar collector (a), (b), (c)	72

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	TITLE	PAGE
1.1	Indirect active solar dryer	3
1.2	Behaviour of any parameter as predicted from a two-fluid transient simulation	5
2.1	Convective drying of a fruit example	12
2.2	The absorption, reflection, and transmission of incident radiation by a semitransparent material	14
2.3	a) Drying curves of apple slices at different air temperatures and velocities of $v= 0.6\text{m/s}$; b) Drying curves of apple slices at different air temperatures and velocities of $v= 1.2\text{m/s}$; c) Drying curves of apple slices at different air temperatures and velocities of $v= 1.8\text{m/s}$	17
2.4	Method of drying	19
2.5	Open sun drying	21
2.6	Typical solar air collector	22
2.7	a) Contour plot of total velocity distribution flow in solar drying chamber on the symmetry plane; b) Air flow velocity distribution on the four rack shelves in 3D	25
2.8	Solar dryer	26
2.9	Schematic drawing of indirect cabinet model	27
2.10	Assembled biomass stove heat exchanger system	28
2.11	Side-view diagram of dryer	39
3.1	Flow chart of the methodology	35
3.2	Steps in fluid flow (fluent)	36
3.3	Computational flow domain for CFD simulation	37

3.4	Full 3D schematic representation of various components of the solar drier in Ansys software	38
3.5	3D Drawing of modified design on solar collector	38
3.6	(a) Front view of drying chamber integrated with solar collector from journal (b) Front view of modified design on solar collector	39
3.7	Parameter considered at different (a) air inlet area, (b) gap size between each rack shelves, (c) tilting angle of solar collector	41
3.8	Domain Tags and Names Selection of the drying chamber integrated with solar collector from The Journal	42
3.9	Domain Tags and Names Selection of the Enhance Solar Collector	43
3.10	Meshing of drying chamber integrated with solar collector	44
4.1	Convergence Solution for Validation Design in Journal	49
4.2	Convergence Solution for Modified Design of Solar Collector	49
4.3	Convergence Solution for Parameter 1 at Different Air Inlet Area (a), (b), (c)	50
4.4	Convergence Solution of Parameter 2 at Different Gap Size between Rack Shelves (d), (e), (f)	51
4.5	Convergence Solution of Parameter 3 at Different Tilt Angle of Solar Collector Angle (g), (h), (i)	52
4.6	Validated results of contour profile of total velocity distribution on the symmetry plane of the solar dryer	53
4.7	Validated results of contour profile of air flow velocity distribution on the four rack shelves in 3D representation	53
4.8	Comparison of the result of simulation velocity and CFD simulation velocity from the journal and simulation	54
4.9	Validated results of contour profile of temperature distribution on the four rack shelves	55
4.10	Comparison of the result of simulation temperature on four points on each of the rack shelves from the journal and simulation	56
4.11	Validated results of contour profile of temperature distribution on the symmetry plane dividing the two halves of the drying chamber	57

4.12	Comparison of the result of simulation temperature on the symmetry plane of the drying chamber from the journal and simulation	57
4.13	The analysis of streamline by using ANSYS Fluent	58
4.14	Contour Plot of Modified Design of Solar Collector	61
4.15	Contour Plot of temperature distribution on parameter 1 of Drying Chamber Integrated with Solar Collector at different air inlet area (a), (b), (c)	62
4.16	Contour plot of velocity distribution on parameter 1 of drying chamber integrated with solar collector at different air inlet area (a), (b), (c)	63
4.17	Predicted temperature by CFD simulation of parameter 1 against 8 points located on the symmetry plane.	64
4.18	Predicted air velocity by CFD simulation of parameter 1 against the four shelves rack on the symmetry plane	65
4.19	Contour plot of temperature distribution on parameter 2 of drying chamber integrated with solar collector at different gap size (a), (b), (c)	66
4.20	Contour plot of velocity distribution on parameter 2 of drying chamber integrated with solar collector at different gap size (a), (b), (c)	67
4.21	Predicted temperature by CFD simulation of parameter 2 against 8 points located on the symmetry plane.	68
4.22	Predicted air velocity by CFD simulation of parameter 2 against the four shelves rack on the symmetry plane.	69
4.23	Contour Plot of temperature distribution on parameter 3 of Drying Chamber Integrated with Solar Collector at different Angle (a), (b), (c)	70
4.24	Contour Plot of velocity distribution on parameter 3 of Drying Chamber Integrated with Solar Collector at different tilt angle of solar collector (a), (b), (c)	71

4.25	Predicted Temperature by CFD Simulation of parameter 3 against 8 points located on the symmetry plane.	72
4.26	Predicted Air Velocity by CFD Simulation of parameter 3 against the four shelves rack on the symmetry plane.	73
4.27	Propose Design for The Best Performance in Term Uniformity Distribution	74

LIST OF ABBEREVATIONS

2 D	2-Dimensional
3 D	3-Dimensional
ANSYS	Analysis System
CAD	Computer-Aided Design
CFD	Computational Fluid Dynamics
CFX	Computational Fluid Xerography
ETSC	Evacuated Tube Solar Collectors
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas or Liquid Petroleum Gas
UV	Ultraviolet

LIST OF SYMBOLS

C	Concentration of Water within the Material
C_p	Specific Heat Capacity
D	Diffusion Coefficient of the Material
E	Total Enthalpy
\vec{F}	Momentum Sink Term
g	Gravity
k_{eff}	Effective Conductivity
p	Pressure
ρ	Density
S_h	Volumetric Heat Source
t	Time
v	Flow Velocity/ Drying Time
$\vec{\tau}$	Stress Tensor
ρ	Concentration of Water within the Material

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Drying is a widely used process in industrial area to reduce moisture or removing water from a product or material, with a consequent weight reduction by evaporating from the product (Oluwasanmi and Obayopo, 2019; Al-Busoul, M. 2017). There are various sources that can supplied for food drying process, which is fossil fuel, natural gas and solar. Nowadays, due to certain reasons such as speedy exhaustion of natural fuel resources, environmental damages and increasing fossil fuel costs, solar energy is being given much attention in food drying process (Misha et al. 2019 and Demissie et al., 2019). This is because solar energy is abundant available and renewable around the world (Al-Neama et al., 2018). Drying process is important in industrial process in order to preserves the foods for longer period (Al-Busoul, M. 2017 and Al-Neama et al., 2018). It uses to dry various food products, for instance fruits, vegetables, meats, and fishes (Al-Busoul, M. 2017). Free excess water will cause the food materials corrupt if there is no drying process. Therefore, drying process plays an important role to removing the free water from food or agricultural products so as to extend shelf life of food, make them easier for packing, retailing and transport (Iranmanesh et al., 2019).

Open sun drying is considered as a traditional method of drying that had practice widely around the world. Open sun drying dries foods directly under the sun where exposed to the open air without any shielding or cover. This will eventually lead to low hygiene level of the dried product (Iranmanesh et al., 2019). Solar drying also facing some natural

limitation such as rainy weather, winds, moisture and dusts that will fail or interrupting the drying process (Alqadhi et al., 2017) Also, the food products may be contaminated by dust, pollutant, rodents, insects or other animals. Thus, the drying process should be done in closed systems which provided shielding and covers to the food products, in order to maintain its best quality and hygiene (Al-Neama et al., 2018). In the early 1980s, high power, electrical dryers were introduced to the market (Gavelin, 1982). The purpose of drying chamber is to supply the heat to foods by convection and conduction from the surrounding air more than that available under ambient conditions at temperatures above the foods, or conduction from heated surfaces in contact with the foods in a closed system (Aissa et al., 2014). Electrical drying chamber has brought a lot of advantages to industry instead of using open sun drying process as it can cover the food from being polluted during the drying process. However, various electrical drying chamber in the industries also have some limitations such as those drying systems in the market require the use of electricity to motorize fan or pump in the drying chamber. Thus, it will increase the consumption of energy and also increase the cost on electricity. Nowadays, the device of drying chamber integrated with solar collector has been designed to conquer the disadvantage of traditional open sun drying and also the electrical drying chamber.

Drying chamber integrated with solar collector is a device that absorbs the incoming solar radiation, converts it into heat and transfer the heat to fluid such as air, water or oil flowing through the solar collector (Kalagirou, 2014). There are many advantages of using drying chamber integrated with solar collector such as fastening the drying speed due to the possibility of continuous batch operation (Abdullah et al.2020 and Dina et al.2015). As the food is in a separate and covered chamber, foods can be protected from animals, insects, and insect larvae. Thus, it has better dried product quality and hygiene due to controlled drying environment (Sotocinal, 1992). In addition, the food is not subject to direct radiation that can

be harmful to some foods, particularly those that are UV-sensitive. The low capital and utility costs make solar drying attractive in poorer countries (Kerr, 2013). Besides that, drying chamber integrated with solar collector was operated in two drying modes, which is daytime and night time. In the daytime, the foods are dried inside the drying chamber by using hot air flow from the solar collector. At the same time, the solar collector is heated using direct solar energy in order to store the heat and release the moisture. Whereas at the night time, the solar collector is placed inside the drying chamber along with foods and the drying chamber was isolated from the ambient air. Thus, the drying process will be continued, although the temperature is relatively low. The meaning of continuous term here is that during sunshine hours and off-sunshine hours which is rainy day and also night time, the drying process is uninterrupted (Dina et al., 2015).

The main components in the solar collector integrated drying chamber including solar flat plat air collector, drying chamber, drying trays, centrifugal type blower, chimney, inlet, and outlet as shown in Figure 1.1.

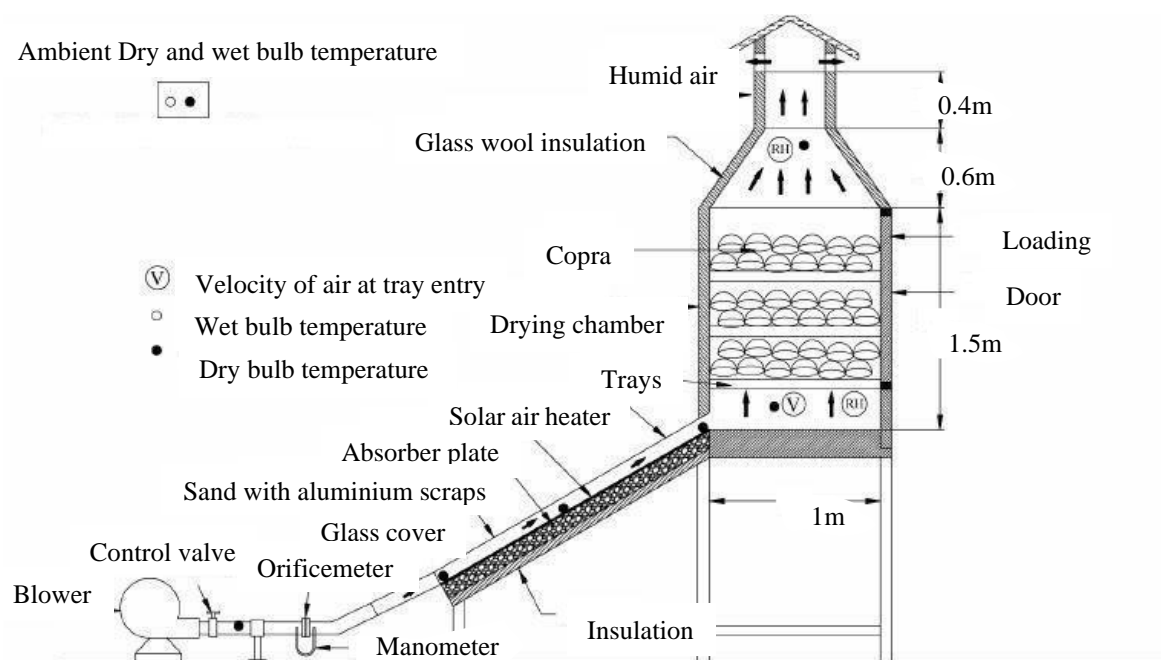


Figure 1.1 Indirect active solar dryer (Al-Neama and Farkas 2018).

In solar dryers, the radiant energy from sun penetrates on a glass cover and is collected on flat plate air collector, which heats air moving pass through it as shown in Figure 1.1. Air moves in by natural convection or may force in by blower or powered fan. (Kerr, 2013). When heat is added, the drying rate will increases based on the selected air velocity and drying temperature (Jayas and Sohkansanj, 1989). The function of a chimney is used to control the residency period of drying air in the drying chamber, increase overall efficiency of the dryer and maintain the optimum temperature inside the chamber with a better circulation of air. This component in drying chamber can prevent the excessive increase of temperature inside the chamber and adverse effects on the quality of the dried product (Aissa et al., 2014). Generally, the drying rate for solar collector drying chamber will be faster than direct sun drying (Kerr, 2013).

However, there are some problems that may encounter by using drying chamber, the problems are over drying and quick drying of food. Over drying on food will cause increase in energy value or cost. Fast drying will prevent the chemical processes started throughout the fermentation to be completed and thus reduces the dry matter of food (Arinze et al., 1996; Ndukwu, 2009). Therefore, correct prediction of the drying time is incredibly vital. Drying rate and drying consistent have the strong relationship with the drying temperature and air velocity. This is incredibly vital as these are the factors that lead to the good drying rate process (Ndukwu, 2009).

Computational fluid dynamics (CFD) is known as a of fluid mechanics that use numerical analysis and algorithm to solve and analyze the problem that involve fluid flows. CFD provides a qualitative and sometimes even quantitative prediction of fluid flows by means of mathematical modeling, numerical methods and also software tools (Ambesange and Kusekar, 2017). Recently, it has been used in multitudes of food drying applications, because of its promising design and modeling tool as a substitute to pricey experimental

trials. The technique is successfully utilizing in predicting distribution of air flow and temperature distribution within drying chambers. It is also used to predict drying uniformity of a new design of the commercial tray dryer for agricultural products by analyzing temperature and velocity distribution. The usefulness of CFD for performance assessment of food processing applications is highlighted by predicting the air velocity field for drying chamber (Demissie et al., 2018).

The CFD simulations consist two method either steady or transient state as shown in Figure 1.2. From an initial condition, the simulation goes through an early stage which is transient state, and finally reaches the steady state regime. Owing to the fact of flow instabilities, the risers cannot consider in the real steady state conditions (Christian and Fernando, 2009).

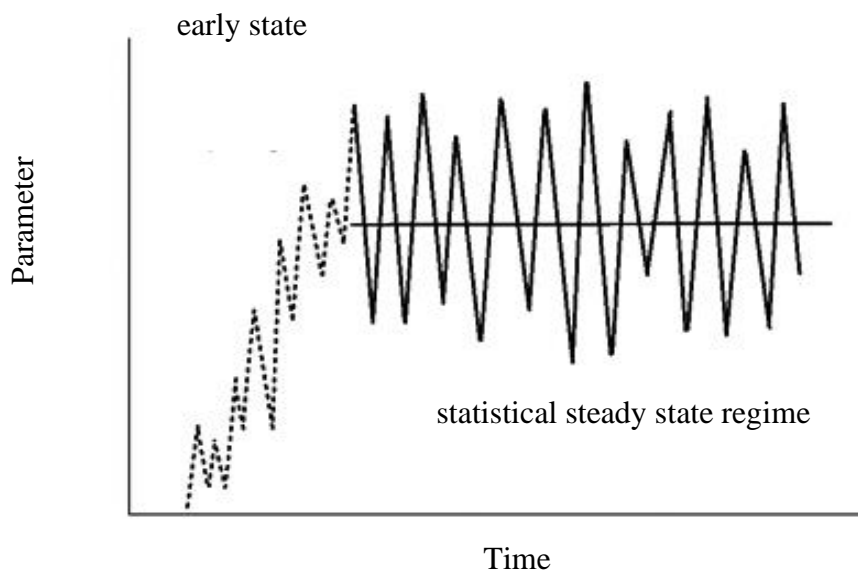


Figure 1.2: Behaviour of any parameter as predicted from a two-fluid transient simulation (Christian and Fernando, 2009)

The transient state is basically between the beginning of the event and the steady state. It refers to a process, which variables are changing in a particular time period. Basically, the transient period is a processed duration which shows unstable changes in variable, which also known as unsteady state (Chegg.com, 2009). However, steady state is the state that