TRIBOLOGICAL PERFORMANCES OF JOURNAL BEARING USING PALM OIL BASED LUBRICANT

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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JANUARY 2021

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the name of Allah, the Most Benevolent and Most Merciful, praise to Allah SW.T. Thanks to Allah for giving me His blessing to complete this research on time.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Ir. Dr. Syahrullail bin Samion, for his invaluable guidance, consistent advice, sharing his valuable time, encouragement, and patience upon the completion of this research. Not forgetting to all my co-supervisors which keep giving encouragement and sharing their knowledge, Dr. William Chong Woei Fong and Dr. Mohd Kameil bin Abdul Hamid from UTM as well as Ir. Ts. Dr. Mohamad Ali bin Ahmad from Centre of Tribology, UiTM Shah Alam.

Special thanks to all technicians and staff at Tribology Lab, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Mr. Shahlan, and Mrs. Jannah for giving me permission to run the experiment there, giving their useful opinions, sharing their knowledge and skills especially in getting the results of the experiment.

Not forgotten to my beloved family, especially my dearest wife Mrs. Norhaslinda Binti A.Rahman, fellow friends, course mates, and each individual who has contributed either directly or indirectly throughout the progression of this research.

ABSTRACT

The green technology policy and strict environmental legislation have driven researchers to focus their attention to bio-based lubricants. Bio-based lubricants are known to have excellent biodegradability characteristics, but low oxidative stability and limited viscosity range. The purpose of this research was to analyze the tribological performances of journal bearing using palm oil-based lubricants. In this study, few types of palm oil-based lubricants went through a tribological test using a four-ball tribotester by following ASTM D4172B and D2783 standards accordingly. Results revealed that Palm Mid Olein (PMO) exhibited excellent performance in terms of friction coefficient and wear scar diameter (WSD) compared with other palm oil-based lubricants. The addition of 0.045 % tertiary-butyl hydroquinone (TBHQ) and 1.3 % ethylene vinyl acetate (EVA) resulted in a 4.5-fold increase in oxidative stability and 19.16 % increase in viscosity index, respectively. PMO+TBHQ+EVA also showed a 16.05 % decrease in friction coefficient and 8.89 % decrease in WSD compared with raw PMO. Furthermore, the performance of PMO+TBHQ+EVA was evaluated by using a journal bearing test rig and compared with that of raw PMO. Results revealed that PMO+TBHQ+EVA showed 72.1 % higher maximum oil film pressure, 47.5 % lower friction coefficient, and 51.2 % higher load carrying capacity when compared to PMO alone. In addition, it was observed that dimples with a spherical shape showed 6.8 % higher maximum oil film pressure, 21.5 % lower friction coefficient, 5.26 % higher load carrying capacity, and 39.6 % higher minimum oil film thickness than dimples with a conical shape. The combination of PMO+TBHQ+EVA co-acting with a spherical shape profile also resulted in optimum performance in journal bearing operation. It is suggested that the addition of TBHQ and EVA successfully improves the characteristics of base stock palm oil (PMO) and the combination of PMO+TBHQ+EVA with the spherical shape of dimple's bottom profile offers comparable performance in journal bearing operation.

ABSTRAK

Dasar teknologi hijau dan undang-undang alam sekitar yang ketat telah mendorong para penyelidik untuk memfokuskan perhatian mereka kepada pelincir berasaskan bio. Pelincir berasaskan bio diketahui mempunyai ciri bio-degradasi yang sangat baik, tetapi mempunyai kestabilan oksidatif yang rendah dan julat kelikatan yang terhad. Tujuan penyelidikan ini adalah untuk menganalisis keupayaan tribologi galas jurnal menggunakan pelincir berasaskan minyak sawit. Dalam kajian ini, beberapa jenis pelincir berasaskan minyak sawit menjalani ujian tribologi menggunakan penguji tribo empat bola dengan mengikuti piawaian ASTM D4172B dan D2783. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa Palm Mid Olein (PMO) menunjukkan prestasi yang sangat baik dari segi pekali geseran dan diameter parut haus (WSD) berbanding dengan pelincir berasaskan minyak sawit yang lain. Penambahan 0.045 % Tertiery Butyl Hydroquinone (TBHQ) dan 1.3 % Ethyylene Vinyl-Acetate (EVA) menghasilkan 4.5 kali peningkatan dalam kestabilan oksidatif dan 19.16 % peningkatan dalam indeks kelikatan. PMO+TBHQ+EVA juga menunjukkan 16.05 % penurunan pekali geseran dan 8.89 % penurunan dalam WSD berbanding PMO mentah. Seterusnya, prestasi PMO+TBHQ+EVA dinilai dengan menggunakan penguji galas jurnal dan dibandingkan dengan PMO asli. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa PMO+TBHQ+EVA mempamerkan keputusan 72.1 % lebih tinggi tekanan maksimum minyak, 47.5 % lebih rendah pekali geseran, dan 51.2 % lebih tinggi kapasiti membawa muatan jika dibandingkan dengan PMO asli. Selain itu, didapati bahawa lompang tekstur berbentuk sfera menunjukkan 6.8 % lebih tinggi tekanan maksimum minyak, 21.5 % lebih rendah pekali geseran, 5.26 % lebih tinggi kapasiti membawa muatan, dan 39.6 % lebih tinggi ketebalan minimum filem minyak jika dibandingkan dengan bentuk kerucut. Kombinasi PMO+TBHQ+EVA dan bentuk sfera juga memberikan prestasi yang optimum dalam operasi galas jurnal. Disarankan bahawa penambahan TBHQ and EVA berjaya meningkatkan ciri-ciri minyak sawit stok asas (PMO) dan kombinasi PMO+TBHQ+EVA dengan lompang yang bertekstur sfera menawarkan prestasi yang setanding dalam operasi galas jurnal.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AISI	-	American Iron and Steel Institute
AOCS	-	American Oil Chemist Society
ASTM	-	American Society for Testing and Materials
AWS	-	Anti-wear
BHA	-	Butyl Hydroxy-Anisole
BHT	-	Butyl - Hydroxytoloune
CFD	-	Computational Fluid Dynamic
CNC	-	Computer Numerical Control
СРО	-	Crude palm oil
DC	-	Direct current
DSC	-	Differential Scanning Calorimetric
EC	-	Ethyl Cellulose
EP	-	Extreme pressure
EVA	-	Ethylene Vinyl Acetate
FAC	-	Fatty acid composition
FFA	-	Free fatty acid
GLC	-	Gas Liquid Chromatography
ISO	-	International Organization for Standardization
IV	-	Iodine value
LDPE	-	Low Density Poly-Ethylene
MPOB	-	Malaysian Palm Oil Board

NPT	-	National Pipe Thread
OIT	-	Oxidative induction time
PE	-	Pentaerythritol ester
PFAD	-	Palm fatty acid distillate
PMF	-	Palm Mid Fraction
РМО	-	Palm mid Olein
POME	-	Palm Oil Methyl Ester
ppm	-	Part per million
PV	-	Peroxide value
RBDPO	-	Refined Bleached and Deodorized Palm Oil
RBDPL	-	Refined Bleached and Deodorized Palm Olein
RBDST	-	Refined Bleached and Deodorized Palm Stearin
RBO	-	Rice Bran Oil
rpm	-	Revolution per minute
SAE	-	Society of Automotive Engineers
SFC	-	Solid fat content
SPL	-	Double Fractionated Palm Olein
TBHQ	-	Tertiery-Butyl Hydroquinone
TMP	-	Trimethylolpropane
USA	-	United States of America
UTM	-	Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
VG	-	Viscosity grade
VI	-	Viscosity Index

- WSD Wear scar diameter
- ZDTP Zinc dialkyldithiophospate

LIST OF SYMBOLS

$\eta_{\scriptscriptstyle 0}$	-	Absolute viscosity in Pa.s
h	-	Film thickness
h_{\min}	-	Minimum oil film thickness
h_{avg}	-	Average dimple depth
h_{0}	-	Local oil film thickness
е	-	Eccentricity
ε	-	Eccentricity ratio
с	-	Radial clearance
D	-	Bearing diameter
d	-	Journal diameter
b	-	Bearing width (length)
\mathcal{O}_b	-	Shaft speed
У	-	Bearing width respect to y-axis $\left(\pm \frac{b}{2}\right)$
W_r	-	Resultant load carrying capacity
р	-	Oil film pressure
P_m	-	Maximum pressure
$ heta_m$	-	Angle of maximum pressure
r _b	-	Bearing radius
r _a		
	-	Journal radius
ϕ	-	Journal radius Circumferential direction
ϕ π	- -	
	- - -	Circumferential direction

F	-	Load measured by load cell
L	-	Length of lever arm
μ	-	Friction coefficient
F_{f}	-	Frictional force
N	-	Applied load
$V_{cylindrical}$	-	Cylindrical volume
$V_{\it spherical}$	-	Spherical volume
$V_{conical}$	-	Conical volume
<i>r</i> _d	-	Dimple's radius
h_{d}	-	Dimple's height
ρ	-	Density
$u_{a/b}$	-	Velocity component respect to x-axis (fixed/moving) surface
$v_{a/b}$	-	Velocity component respect to y-axis (fixed/moving) surface
$W_{a/b}$	-	Velocity component respect to z-axis (fixed/moving) surface
q_x	-	Volume flow rate in x-direction
q_y	-	Volume flow rate in y-direction
q_z	-	Volume flow rate in z-direction
$q_{ heta}$	-	Volume flow rate in circumferential direction
$W_{x/y/z}$	-	Load component respect to x,y and z axis
τ	-	Shear stress
Р	-	Pressure acted on projected area
S	-	Sommerfeld number

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research background

The global market size for lubricants is expected to reach USD 182.6 billion in 2025, approximately a 15% increase compared to the year 2020. This is contributed by the rapid growth of industrialization in the Asia Pacific, the Middle East, and Africa, increasing demand in automotive industries, and process automation in most of the industries (*Lubricants market*, 2020). It shows that the demand for lubricant oil is grown exponentially with the technology revolution. Lubricant oil is largely consumed as engine oil, followed by hydraulic oil, metalworking fluid, gear oil, turbine oil, and many more. Meanwhile, mineral-based resources remain the largest base stock that produces most of the lubricant oil in the world, followed by synthetic based and bio-based oil.

Basically, lubricant is used to ease the motion between two surfaces by reducing the friction and minimize the wear occurrence. On top of that, lubricant is also functioned to reduce the operating temperature and simultaneously remove the wear debris and particles. The good lubricant led to less friction, minimum power losses, prolong the shelf life of the material and wear reduction (Panchal et al., 2017). It might come either in solid or liquid form with different properties. Few justifications need to be considered during selecting the lubricant. The different working conditions requires different properties of the lubricant. Usually, the lubricant viscosity, oxidative stability, cold flow properties, and fluidity behavior are some of the main criteria in selecting the lubricant. The established lubricant oil in the market is commonly based on mineral resources which are derived from petroleum-based oil (Kucera et al., 2013). Mineral oil-based lubricant was having excellent characteristics in any application. Moreover, nowadays the lubricant

technologies are enhanced and improved with the addition of nanotechnologies that makes mineral oil-based lubricant become more reliable especially in industrial application.

Other approaches were also introduced such as adding the anti-friction and anti-wear additives to improve the lubricant capability. These additives were commonly originated from in-organic based. Even though the mineral-based oil has promising excellent performance, but it has also raised concerns on the environmental issues as the oil is toxic to the environment and not readily biodegradable (Panchal et al., 2017; Omrani et al., 2016). This is a grounded statement as, over the years, the total oil consumption in the world keeps increasing tremendously. On top of that, the remaining mineral-based oil resources are also concerned as it takes million years to recover the stock naturally. This situation urges the researchers to improve the bio-degrade ability of mineral-based oil. Simultaneously, researchers also working on finding alternative resources including plants, animal and even chemically formulated like synthetic oil. Out of these alternative resources, bio-based oil which is derived from the plant is gaining high popularity as it is readily bio-degradable, easily harvested, and needless processing cost compared to synthetic oil. Bio-based lubricant shows big potential as most of the study revealed that their long polar fatty acid chain and molecules are able to provide protection on the contact surface, thus resulted in less wear and friction (Jain and Suhane, 2012). Even bio-based lubricant is showing good adaptability to the environment, but in technical point of view, it has few weaknesses that need to be addressed to perform as perfect lubricant as mineral-based oil. Bio-based lubricant has poor low temperature characteristics, poor hydrolytic stability, low oxidative stability and exhibit poor resistance to foaming (Panchal et al., 2014). Since biobased lubricant possess the long polar of saturated and unsaturated fatty acid chain, thereby the chemical structure modification can be executed in order to improve their performances.

Journal bearing is one of the applications that uses lubricant as a main element on its operation. Journal bearing consists of two major parts known as shaft or journal and bearing or bushing. As a fundamental, the shaft is freely moving inside the bearing and transmits the power to the other machines in the system for various purposes. Commonly journal bearing is operated in the hydrodynamic lubrication regime. This is the condition where the load-carrying surface of the bearing is separated by the thick film lubricant to avoid metal to metal contact thus reduce the friction. Generally, the pressure profile distribution of the fluid film is one of the main criteria to evaluate the bearing performance. A lot of research was also conducted to improve the bearing performance in order to achieve optimum output, less friction, longer material shelf life, minimum wear and tear, less power consumption and minimum handling mechanism. There were a lot of bearing geometry design developed and introduced (Muzakkir et al., 2015). Some researchers studied various operating conditions that impacted the bearing performances such as the fed lubricant oil pressure (Ahmad et al., 2013a), the location of fed oil (Ahmad et al., 2014), the lubricant oil temperature (Singla et al., 2014), the design of oil groove (Adatepe et al., 2011; Asral et al., 2013) and so on. On top of that, surface texturing on the bearing or shaft surface also has gaining its popularity since this approach tends to provide positive impact to the journal bearing performances to some extent.

1.2 Problem statement

A good lubricant is not about simply providing excellent tribological performances, but it has to be environmentally friendly. The usage of mineral-based lubricant oil arises an environmental issue as it is known to have a high level of toxicity and hardly dissolved to the environment naturally (Luther, 2000). Vegetable oil has a big potential as it is highly bio-degradable, non-toxic, and the resources are renewable. In recent years, there are lots of researches were conducted in utilizing vegetable-based oil as a lubricant. Even there is still no major application that used vegetable oil as the main lubricant, but some of the established mineral-based oil lubricants use vegetable oil as additives to improve friction and wear behaviors

(Aiman et al., 2017). In fact, it has been commercially used in certain countries as hydraulic fluid, gear oil, refrigeration oil, chainsaw oil, metalworking fluid, and many more.

Palm oil is one of the most consumed vegetable oil in the world. It is commonly consumed in the form of cooking oil or known as palm olein. From a lubrication point of view, palm oil has a long polar fatty acid chain that provided better boundary lubrication. However, palm oil has low oxidative stability (Zainal et al., 2018) and a limited range of viscosity (Quincha et al., 2010). The oxidative stability of palm oil is mainly influenced by its fatty acid molecules. Palm oil has a double bond on its ninth and tenth molecules chain that is unstable and actively reacted with oxygen molecules to form primary and secondary oxidation products. These compounds are corrosive and affected the wear behaviors and viscosity of the oil. Besides, the viscosity of the palm oil is also influenced by the length of the fatty acid chain as well as the degree of unsaturation fatty acid. This resulted in poor lubricity performance as some palm oil shows good lubricity at low temperatures and some might be not. These issues are affecting the lubricant performances and limiting their range of application. There are many studies conducted to improve the palm oil capabilities, but most of the research was limited to the oil that is produced up to a single fractionation process like palm olein and palm stearin. There are many types of palm oil being produced at a higher degree of fractionation including Super olein (SPL), palm mid olein (PMO), and palm mid fraction (PMF). Indeed, the tribological performance data of these oil is extremely limited. In this study, the tribological investigations covered all common palm oil products up to third-degree of fractionation.

As mentioned in the research background, the aim of this study is to improve the capability of palm oil to be used as a lubricant in journal bearing applications. In the journal bearing operation, the main function of a lubricant is to create hydrodynamic pressure and provide load-carrying capacity. Thus, the sufficient supply of lubricant and the capability to sustain their properties is crucial to ensure the efficacy. During the operation, there is a possibility to experience a shortage of lubricant supply. This led to the destruction of journal bearing and caused severe damage. One of the methods used by researchers to overcome this problem is by introducing textures on the contact surfaces. The surface irregularities help in maintaining a certain amount of lubricant oil in the event of a shortage. On top of that, the presence of a textured surface is able to improve the journal bearing capability to some extent. But it totally depended on various factors including its geometry design. Most of the research was conducted numerically and fewer studies were carried out experimentally. This is due to the complex design of the dimples that lead to difficulties in fabrication and machining. Simultaneously, most of the dimples were fabricated on the stationary part (bearing) either fully or partially textured rather than the rotating part (journal). Apparently, the experimental study of using palm oil-based lubricants in journal bearing was also rarely conducted and resulted in limited data and findings.

In this study, a few types of palm oil-based were used as a lubricant at the beginning stage. Each type was undergoing basic tribological testing. After a few consideration, the one that has shown the most excellent lubricant behavior was further improved by adding some additives and the impact was investigated. This 'treated' palm oil was further applied in journal bearing and the performance was observed. Furthermore, the surface texturing was also introduced to improve the journal bearing capability in this study. The performance of 'treated' palm oil-based lubricant co-acting with a textured surface in journal bearing was also investigated.

1.3 Objectives

Based on the problems and aims that has been described in Chapter 1.2, it can be achieved through the following objectives:

- i. To investigate the most suitable palm oil based lubricant in term of their physical, chemical, and tribological characteristics for journal bearing applications..
- ii. To optimize the effect of adding antioxidant and viscosity improver on improving the oxidative stability and viscosity behaviors of palm oil-based lubricant.
- iii. To establish the tribological performances of palm oil-based lubricant in journal bearing application in comparison to the established mineral based oil lubricant.

1.4 Scope of work

This study covers the following scopes:

1. Selection of bio-based lubricant

The bio-based lubricant that is being used in this study is from a palm oilbased group. The main reason is because of the availability of the resources. Here in Southeast Asia, Malaysia is the second-largest palm oil producer in the world behind Indonesia. In addition, palm oil has a wide range of products that started from its crude oil until downstream products in the oleochemical plant. On top of that, most of the products derived from palm oil have significant physico-chemical characteristics to be developed as lubricant oil. Since the downstream process of palm oil required higher cost and not much produced, the selection of palm oil types to be used at the beginning of this study is within the common refining and fractionation practices only.

- 2. Experimental condition for each experiment
 - a) For the basic tribological testing using a four-ball tribotester, the experimental condition is basically following the ASTM standard and on some occasion, the temperature, speed, and load are varied to observe the behaviors of the lubricant in that particular conditions. All parameters are considered to be static and there is no dynamic mechanism involved.
 - b) Similarly to the test conducted in a pin-on-disc machine, the rotational speed and applied load are considered as fixed for every experiment and no dynamic motion involved. The material for pin and disc is made of Stainless steel SS 304 and similar material was applied to the journal and bearing test rig.
 - c) In journal bearing test rig, short journal bearing made of SS304 with length to diameter ratio of 0.5 was used. The test was conducted at a rotational speed range of 200 rpm to 1000 rpm and a radial load of 10 N to 100 N. This condition is considered as steadily low load and medium speed journal bearing. This is well suited as the intention of this study is to enhance the palm oil-based lubricant to be used in that condition. The bearing is statically loaded and no dynamic load involved.
 - d) For the surface texturing, the dimples are fabricated on the shaft surface by the drilling process. There are two types of dimple's bottom shape being studied which is conical and spherical. Both dimple shapes have similar dimple density, arrangement and aspect ratio. A similar experimental condition is applied as conducted on a smooth shaft surface.

- 3. Results and analysis of each experiment
 - a) For the tribological test using a four-ball tribotester, the analysis is focusing on friction, surface roughness, wear scar diameter and physical wear observation. Wear scar diameter (WSD) measurement and wear observation was carried out by using high and low definition optical microscope equipped with I-Lite Solution software.
 - b) Similarly, for the experiment conducted in a pin-on-disc machine, the analysis is involving friction coefficient and wear scar diameter (WSD) behavior.
 - c) In the journal bearing test rig, there are two main parameters value that is directly obtained from the experiment which is pressure distribution as well as the friction coefficient. The other parameters including eccentricity ratio, maximum pressure, attitude angle, load-carrying capacity, and minimum oil film thickness were determined by using an analytical solution. The analytical solution is derived from standard reduced form of Reynolds Equation in tangential motion by Dubois and Ocvirk (1953) for short journal bearing with the following assumptions:
 - i. Fluid properties does not vary significantly throughout the bearing and considered constant
 - ii. The motion is pure sliding
 - iii. Side leakages is taken into consideration
 - iv. The pressure-induced flow in circumferential direction is very small relative to Coutte flow term. Then it is neglected
 - v. There is no misalignment
 - vi. Film thickness is varied in the circumferential direction only
 - vii. Half Sommerfeld assumptions is applied
 - viii. Oil viscosity is constant

Experiment used low radial load and lead to minimum effect to the temperature and vicosity. Maximum speed of journal bearing during experiment was 1000 rpm while maximum speed of the machine was 1500 rpm. This lead to less potential of vibration. Furthermore, the rig used rubber coupling that suggested the system is self-aligned. Meanwhile, in the experiment that involving textured surface, similar journal bearing parameters were analyzed but the concern was on the performance of each type of dimple's bottom shape co-acting with different lubricant oil.

4. Targeted application

The development of palm oil based lubricant in this study is basically designed for the journal bearing operating in turbocharge, small pump or any machine element which has operating condition in the following range:

Shaft speed : 200 rpm to 1500 rpm

Radial load: 10 N to 100 N

Operating temperature: 35°C to 40°C

1.5 Research significance

In bigger perspectives, the main intention of this research is providing alternative lubricants that can perform better or at least equivalent to the mineral oilbased. This surely benefits our environment especially in supporting green technology development. Simultaneously the dependency on the mineral-based oil is reduced. From the economic point of view, since Malaysia is one of the biggest palm oil producers in the world, the success of this research could contribute to the Malaysian economy directly. If previously Malaysia was known as one of the biggest palm oil exporters in the world, it is not possible Malaysia could be the biggest biolubricant exporter. It has big potential and Malaysian should take these advantages to be a giant market leader in the bio-lubricant industry. In addition, it could be the most cost-effective product as Malaysia is dominating the resources. In another point of view, the findings in this research can also be applied in other engineering applications extensively, not only for journal bearing. It could be the starting point to achieve a more beneficial and significant impact in the future.

Meanwhile, for surface texturing, it opens a new conception that texturing was not only applicable on the stationary surface, but it does in moving surface. Moreover, having a different type of bottom dimple profile incorporated with biobased lubricant give more option to engineers and offer variety in designing the journal bearing to achieve optimum performances.

1.6 Thesis layout

In Chapter 1, some research background was presented which consists of the elements involved in this research including bio-based lubricant, additives, journal bearing as well as surface texturing on the contact surface. The problem statement was highlighted and the current development of the research area was clarified. To overcome the issues, three (3) objectives have been identified to execute the solution. All scopes that covered this study were extensively verified and the targeted application was mentioned. In Chapter 2, the related literature from the previous study was reviewed and the knowledge gap was identified. It included the study of palm oil-based lubricant, journal bearing design, operating condition, surface texturing, oxidative stability, additives, journal bearing parameters, and many more. This chapter also illustrated the derivation of the analytical solution for journal bearings.

In Chapter 3, all related research methods were explained in detail. It began with the selection of palm oil-based lubricants based on their physical and chemical properties. The machine and specification that was used in this study including fourball tribotester, pin on disc machine, and journal bearing test rig was also elaborated in detail. The chemical composition of additives was also tabulated and the method of blending was clearly explained. Furthermore, the detail of dimple geometry was illustrated and justified accordingly. In Chapter 4, all results, findings and discussions were presented according to the objectives being set in Chapter 1. The palm oil type that showed excellent tribological characteristics was selected to be further enhanced by adding additives and applied in journal bearing application. The most beneficial combination of palm oil-based lubricant was compared to established mineral-based oil mutually.

In Chapter 5, the findings were summarized and some concluding remarks were given. Few recommendations were also proposed that created research interest for future works.

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