ENGINEERING PROPERTIES OF RUBBERISED CONCRETE INCORPORATING PALM OIL FUEL ASH

PARHAM FOROUZANI

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Civil Engineering)

> Faculty of Civil Engineering Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

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To my lovely parents

who gave me endless love, trust, constant encouragement over the years, their prayers and financial supports

And

To my lovely wife

for her love, patience, support, and for enduring the ups and downs during the completion of this thesis.

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ABSTRACT

The utilisation of waste materials and by-products is a partial solution to environmental and ecological problems. One important recent development, in the field of concrete technology, is the utilisation of waste materials and by-products in the construction industry, as aggregates in the production of various types of concrete. Agro-waste materials, such as palm oil fuel ash (POFA), show a great potential ability to be utilised as a pozzolanic material in concrete. The problem of the rising costs of construction materials, coupled with evident environmental degradation, and the need to improve concrete properties; especially in terms of acoustic properties, has stimulated the necessity to incorporate tyre-rubber aggregates (TRA) and POFA in concrete. Rubberised Concrete (RC) is produced by replacing a volume percentage of the traditional coarse and/or fine aggregate with tyre-rubber particles. TRA has been utilized in various gradations from used vehicle tyres and POFA has been replaced partially as cementitious material. This research investigates the wide range of physical, mechanical and acoustic properties of concrete containing recycled TRA and POFA to assess its suitability as a construction material. The influence of factors, such as rubber aggregate content, size, shape and type of rubber particle, was also considered. TRA is classified into three groups, namely fine fibre (R_1) , fine granular (R_2) and coarse granular (R_3) . The concrete mixture is designed based on ACI 211-91. The TRA component of the mixture is replaced in 5% to 30% by volume. The results of this study show that the best proportion of POFA is 20% with a water-binder ratio of 0.38; which improves the 28-day concrete strength. The results show that despite a great loss in strength with increasing TRA replacement, this type of concrete is acceptable for various structural applications requiring medium to low compressive strengths. It is found that for the same volume of rubber (coarse and fine TRA), coarse rubber particles increase air content, decrease compressive, indirect tensile, and flexural strengths, and improve the deformability of concrete, compared to concrete containing fine TRA. Furthermore, the modified rubberised concrete exhibits superior acoustic properties. The results of sound absorption coefficient and sound transmission loss show that the coarse aggregates have more influence on improving the soundproofing properties by up to 42.5% with 30% TRA incorporation. These attributes make rubberised POFA concrete a potential candidate for application in a promising flooring system that is cost-effective and has increased sound-proof properties. The possible quantities of concrete produced worldwide for such applications would ensure the viability of this product. Therefore, this type of concrete shows promise in becoming an additional sustainable solution for tyre-rubber waste management.

ABSTRAK

Penggunaan bahan-bahan buangan dan produk sampingan adalah penyelesaian separa kepada masalah alam sekitar dan ekologi. Satu perkembangan penting baru-baru ini dalam bidang teknologi konkrit adalah penggunaan bahan-bahan buangan dan produk sampingan dalam industri pembinaan sebagai agregat dalam pengeluaran pelbagai jenis konkrit. Bahan-bahan sisa agro, seperti abu bahan api kelapa sawit (POFA), menunjukkan potensi besar untuk digunakan sebagai bahan pozzolanic dalam konkrit. Masalah kenaikan kos bahan-bahan binaan, ditambah pula dengan pencemaran alam sekitar yang jelas, dan keperluan untuk meningkatkan sifat-sifat konkrit, terutama dari segi ciri-ciri akustik, telah merangsang keperluan untuk menggabungkan agregat tayargetah (TRA) dan POFA dalam konkrit. Konkrit Getah (RC) dihasilkan dengan menggantikan peratusan isipadu agregat kasar tradisional dan/atau agregat halus dengan zarah-zarah tayar-getah. TRA telah digunakan dalam pelbagai penggredan daripada tayar terpakai kenderaan dan POFA telah digantikan sebahagiannya sebagai bahan bersimen. Penyelidikan ini menyiasat pelbagai sifat-sifat fizikal, mekanikal dan akustik pada konkrit yang mengandungi TRA yang dikitar semula dan POFA untuk menilai kesesuaiannya sebagai bahan pembinaan. Pengaruh faktor-faktor seperti kandungan agregat getah, dan saiz, bentuk dan jenis zarah getah juga dipertimbangkan. TRA diklasifikasikan kepada tiga kumpulan, iaitu serat halus (R1), butiran halus (R2) dan butiran kasar (R₃). Campuran konkrit direka bentuk ACI 211-91. Komponen TRA dalam campuran digantikan sebanyak 5% hingga 30% mengikut isipadu. Keputusan kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa bahagian terbaik POFA adalah 20% dengan nisbah air-pengikat sebanyak 0.38, yang meningkatkan kekuatan konkrit 28 hari tersebut. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa walaupun sebahagian besar kekuatan kehilangan dengan peningkatan penggantian TRA, konkrit jenis ini boleh digunakan untuk pelbagai aplikasi struktur yang memerlukan kekuatan mampatan yang sederhana hingga rendah. Telah didapati bahawa untuk isipadu getah (TRA kasar dan halus) yang sama, zarah getah kasar meningkatkan kandungan udara, menurunkan kekuatan mampatan, tegangan tidak langsung dan lenturan, dan meningkatkan perubahan bentuk konkrit berbanding dengan konkrit yang mengandungi TRA halus. Tambahan pula, konkrit getah yang diubahsuai mempamerkan sifat-sifat akustik yang unggul. Keputusan pekali penyerapan bunyi dan kehilangan penghantaran bunyi menunjukkan bahawa agregat kasar mempunyai pengaruh yang lebih ke atas peningkatan sifat-sifat kalis bunyi sehingga 42.5% dengan penggabungan TRA sebanyak 30%. Ciri-ciri ini menjadikan konkrit getah POFA calon yang berpotensi untuk aplikasi sistem lantai yang berkesan dari segi kos dan mempunyai sifat-sifat kalis bunyi yang lebih baik. Kuantiti konkrit yang mungkin dihasilkan di seluruh dunia untuk aplikasi begini akan memastikan kebolehlaksanaan produk ini. Oleh itu, jenis konkrit ini berpotensi menjadi penyelesaian tambahan yang mampan bagi pengurusan sisa tayar-getah..

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTE	R TITLE	PAGE
	DECLARATION	ii
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
	ABSTRACT	V
	ABSTRAK	vi
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
	LIST OF TABLES	xvii
	LIST OF FIGURES	xix
	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	XXX
	LIST OF SYMBOLS	xxxii
	LIST OF APPENDICES	xxxiv
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Overview	1
	1.2 Importance of the Study	3
	1.3 Problem statement	4
	1.4 Aim and Research Objective	5
	1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Research	6
	1.6 Significance of the Research	7
	1.7 Thesis Organisation	7
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	11
	2.1 Introduction	11
	2.2 Properties of Tyre Rubber Aggregates	13
	2.3 Classification of the Scrap Tyres Using as Construction	
	Materials	14
	2.3.1 Shredded or Chipped Rubber	15

2.3.2 Ground Rubber	15
2.3.3 Granulated Rubber	15
2.3.4 Crumb Rubber	16
2.3.5 Powder Rubber	16
2.4 Rubberised Concrete	16
2.5 Mix Design of Rubberised Concrete and Procedure of	
Mixing Operation	17
2.6 Influence of the Rubber Aggregate on Fresh Properties of	of
Rubberised Concrete	18
2.6.1 Workability of Rubberised Concrete	18
2.6.2 Air Content of Rubberised Concrete	21
2.6.3 Unit weight (Fresh Density) of Rubberised Concre	te 22
2.7 Influence of the Rubber Aggregate on Hardened Property	ies
of Rubberised Concrete	24
2.7.1 Compressive Strength	24
2.7.2 Tensile Strength	26
2.7.3 Flexural Strength	28
2.8 Ductility and Deformability of Rubberised Concrete	29
2.8.1 Modulus of Elasticity	29
2.8.2 Toughness and Impact Resistance of Rubberised	
Concrete	31
2.9 Acoustic Properties of Rubberised Concrete	35
2.10 Thermal Movement of Rubberised Concrete	36
2.11 Processing for Quality Improvement of Rubber Aggrega	tes 37
2.12 Influence of the Rubber Aggregate on Durability Parame	eters
of Rubberised Concrete	38
2.12.1 Water Absorption	39
2.12.2 Chloride Permeability in Rubberised Concrete	40
2.12.3 Rubberised Concrete and Fire Exposure	40
2.12.4 Shrinkage of Rubberised Concrete	41
2.13 Pozzolanic Materials	43
2.14 Types of Pozzolanic Materials	44
2.14.1 Pulverised Fuel Ash (Fly Ash)	44
2.14.2 Ground Granulated Blast-Furnace Slag (GGBS)	44

	2.14.3 Rice Husk Ash (RHA)	45
	2.14.4 Silica Fume	46
	2.14.5 Palm Oil Fuel Ash (POFA)	46
2.15	Physical and Chemical Properties of POFA	47
2.16	Pozzolanic Reaction of POFA	48
2.17	Influence of POFA in Concrete	50
	2.17.1 Setting Time	50
	2.17.2 Workability	52
	2.17.3 Compressive Strength	52
	2.17.4 Flexural Strength	54
	2.17.5 Tensile Strength	55
2.18	Durability of POFA Concrete	55
	2.18.1 Sulfate Resistance	56
	2.18.2 Water Permeability	56
2.19	Carbonation	57
	2.19.1 Mechanisms of carbonation	58
	2.19.2 POFA Concrete in Carbonation	59
2.20	Summary of research Gap	59
		()
ME 2 1		62 62
3.1		62
3.2	Materials and Process Technology Standardisation	66
	3.2.1 Cement	67
	3.2.2 Paim Oil Fuel Ash (POFA)	67
	3.2.2.1 Preparation of POFA	0/ 70
	3.2.3 Aggregates	70
	3.2.3.2 Natural Coarse Aggregate	70
	2.2.3.2 Turo Dubbor Aggregate (TDA)	70
	3.2.3.4 Fine Fibre Ture Public Aggregate Ture P	71
	2.2.3.5 Fine Granular Ture Bubber Aggregate – Type K	12
	5.2.5.5 Fine Granular Tyle Rubber Aggregate – Type	70
	N2 2226 Coorse Granular Ture Dubber Aggregate	12
	5.2.5.0 Coarse Granular Tyre Kubber Aggregate –	72
	I ype K ₃	15

3

	3.2.4 Mixing Water	74
	3.2.5 Admixture	74
3.3	Cement and POFA Analysis	74
	3.3.1 Particle Size Analysis	75
	3.3.2 Pozzolanic Activity Index	76
3.4	Mix Design Concrete	76
3.5	Fresh Properties of Normal, POFA, and Modified	
	Rubberised Concrete	77
	3.5.1 Workability Measurement	77
	3.5.1.1 Slump	77
	3.5.1.2 Compacting Factor Test	78
	3.5.2 Fresh Density (Unit Weight)	79
	3.5.3 Air Content Test	80
3.6	Hardened Properties of Conventional and Modified	
	Rubberised Concrete	81
	3.6.1 Compressive Strength	81
	3.6.2 Indirect Tensile Strength	82
	3.6.3 Flexural Strength	83
	3.6.4 Ultrasonic Pulse Velocity (UPV) Test	85
	3.6.5 Modulus of Elasticity	87
3.7	Durability of Modified Rubberised Concrete	89
	3.7.1 Fire Endurance	90
	3.7.2 Rapid Test on Resistance to Chloride Penetration	91
	3.7.3 Density, Water Absorption and Voids	93
3.8	Microstructure	94
	3.8.1 Scanning Electron Microscopy	95
	3.8.2 X-ray Diffraction	95
3.9	Acoustic Properties	95
	3.9.1 Acoustic Determination of Sound Absorption	
	Coefficient and Impedance in Impedance Tube	96

4 MIX DESIGN FOR POFA RUBBERISED CONCRETE 100

4.1 Introduction	100
4.2 Investigation on Properties of POFA	100
4.2.1 Physical Characteristics of POFA	101
4.2.1.1 Effect of Grinding Time on POFA Particle	
Size	101
4.2.1.2 Particle Size Analysis and Physical	
Characteristics of POFA	102
4.2.2 Correlation of POFA Particle Size and Pozzolanic	
Activity Index	103
4.2.3 Chemical Composition of POFA	105
4.2.4 Morphology and Microstructure of POFA	106
4.3 Characteristics of Natural Aggregates	108
4.3.1 Natural Coarse Aggregate	108
4.3.2 Natural Fine Aggregate	109
4.4 Characteristics of Rubber Aggregates	111
4.4.1 Fiber Tyre Rubber Aggregate – Type R ₁	111
4.4.2 Granular Tyre Rubber Fine Aggregate – Type R ₂	112
4.4.3 Coarse Granular Tyre Rubber Aggregate – Type R_3	113
4.5 Trial Mix Proportion	114
4.5.1 Trial Concrete Mix Design for Optimised Level of	
POFA Replacement	115
4.6 Optimisation of Super Plasticiser in Concrete Mixtures	120
4.6.1 Concrete Mix Design for Rubberised Concrete	122
EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS AND DISCUSSION ON THE	
MECHANICAL PROPERTIES OF POFA RUBBERISED	
MODIFIED CONCRETE	126
5.1 General	126
5.2 Results and Discussion of Fresh Properties of POFA	
Rubberised Concrete	126
5.2.1 Workability of POFA Rubberised Concrete	127
5.2.1.1 Slump Measurement of Fine Fibre Rubberised	
POFA Concrete	127

5

	5.2.1.2 Slump Measurement of Fine Granular	
	Rubberised POFA Concrete	129
	5.2.1.3 Slump Measurement of Coarse Granular	
	Rubberised POFA Concrete	131
	5.2.1.4 Summary of Workability in Terms of Slump	
	Results	133
	5.2.2 Air Content Measurement of Rubberised Concrete	134
	5.2.2.1 Air Content of Concrete Incorporating Fine	
	Fibre Rubber Aggregates	135
	5.2.2.2 Air Content of Concrete Incorporating Fine	
	Granular Rubber Aggregates	136
	5.2.2.3 Air Content of Concrete Incorporating Coarse	
	Granular Rubber Aggregates	137
	5.2.2.4 Summary of Air Content Measurement in	
	Rubberised Concrete	138
	5.2.3 Compacting Factor Measurement of Rubberised	
	POFA Concrete	140
	5.2.4 Fresh Density of Rubberised Concrete	142
5.3	Results and Discussion of Mechanical Properties of POFA	
	Rubberised Concrete	145
	5.3.1 Compressive Strength of Type R1 Modified	
	Rubberised Concrete	145
	5.3.2 Compressive Strength of Type R2 Modified	
	Rubberised Concrete	148
	5.3.3 Compressive Strength of POFA Concrete Containing	
	Coarse Granular Rubber Particles	150
	5.3.4 Comparative Analysis of Compressive Strength of	
	Rubberised POFA Concrete in terms of Size, Type,	
	and Rubber Particle Content	152
	5.3.5 Splitting Tensile Strength of Modified Rubberised	
	Concrete Incorporating type R1 Rubber Particles	156
	5.3.6 Splitting Tensile Strength of Modified Rubberised	
	Concrete Containing Fine Granular Rubber Particles	
	- Type (R ₂)	158

5	5.3.7 Splitting Tensile Strength of Modified Rubberised	
	Concrete Containing Coarse Granular Rubber	
	Particles – Type (R ₃)	159
5	5.3.8 Comparative Analysis of Indirect Tensile Strength of	
	Rubberised POFA Concrete in terms of Size, Type,	
	and Rubber Particle Content	160
5	5.3.9 Flexural Strength of Modified Rubberised Concrete	
	Containing Type R1 Rubber Aggregates	165
5	5.3.10 Flexural Strength of Concrete Containing Fine	
	Granular Rubber Aggregates	166
5	5.3.11 Flexural Strength of Concrete Containing Type R ₃	
	Rubber Aggregates	167
5	5.3.12 Comparative Analysis of Flexural Strength of	
	Rubberised POFA Concrete in terms of Size, Type,	
	and Rubber Particle Content	168
5	5.3.13 Modulus of Elasticity	172
DUR	ABILITY OF MODIFIED RUBBERISED CONCRETE	180
5.1 C	General	180
5.2 F	Fire Endurance	180
6	5.2.1 Elevated temperature gradient	181
6	5.2.2 Effect of Temperature on the Physical Properties of	
	Concrete Containing Type R1 Rubber Aggregates	182
6	5.2.3 Impact of Temperature and Cooling Regime on the	
	Weight loss of Type R1 Rubberised Concrete	185
6	5.2.4 Residual Compressive Strength of Type R ₁	
	Rubberised Concrete at Elevated Temperatures under	
		100
	Different Cooling Regimes	189
6	Different Cooling Regimes 5.2.5 Ultrasonic Pulse Velocity (UPV) of R1 Rubberised	189
6	Different Cooling Regimes 5.2.5 Ultrasonic Pulse Velocity (UPV) of R1 Rubberised Concrete in Air and Water Cooling Regime	189
6	Different Cooling Regimes 5.2.5 Ultrasonic Pulse Velocity (UPV) of R1 Rubberised Concrete in Air and Water Cooling Regime 5.2.6 Relationship between UPV Values and Residual	189
6 6	 Different Cooling Regimes 5.2.5 Ultrasonic Pulse Velocity (UPV) of R1 Rubberised Concrete in Air and Water Cooling Regime 5.2.6 Relationship between UPV Values and Residual Compressive Strength of Type R1 Rubberised 	192

6.2.7 Impact of Elevated Temperatures on the Physical	
Characteristics of Concrete Containing Fine Granular	
Rubber Aggregates	199
6.2.8 Impact of Temperature and Cooling Regime on the	
Weight loss of Concrete Containing Fine Granular	
Rubber Aggregates	203
6.2.9 Residual Compressive Strength of Type R2	
Rubberised Concrete at Elevated Temperature under	
Different Cooling Regimes	205
6.2.10 Ultrasonic Pulse Velocity (UPV) of R ₂ Rubberised	
Concrete in the Air and Water Cooling Regimes	208
6.2.11 Relationship between UPV Values and Residual	
Compressive Strength of Type R ₂ Rubberised	
Concrete under Different Cooling Regimes	211
6.2.12 Impact of Elevated Temperatures on the Physical	
Characteristics of Concrete Containing Coarse	
Granular Rubber Aggregates	214
6.2.13 Impact of Temperature and Cooling Regime on the	
Weight loss of Concrete Containing Coarse Granular	
Rubber Aggregates	219
6.2.14 Residual Compressive Strength of Type R3	
Rubberised Concrete at Elevated Temperature under	
Different Cooling Regimes	222
6.2.15 Ultrasonic Pulse Velocity (UPV) of Type R3	
Rubberised Concrete in the Air and Water Cooling	
Regimes	225
6.2.16 Relationship between UPV Values and Residual	
Compressive Strength of Type R ₃ Rubberised	
Concrete under Different Cooling Regimes	228
6.2.17 Discussion on fire performance of Rubberised	
Concrete	232

xiv

	6.3	Permeability attributed to the Water Absorption of	
		Rubberised Concrete	234
	6.4	Rapid Chloride Ion Permeability	237
7	AC	OUSTIC PROPERTIES OF MODIFIED RUBBERISED	
	CO	NCRETE	239
	7.1	General	239
	7.2	Sound Absorption Properties of Rubberised Concrete	239
		7.2.1 Sound Absorption of Type R1 Modified Rubberised	
		Concrete	240
		7.2.2 Sound Absorption of Type R_2 Modified Rubberised	
		Concrete	242
		7.2.3 Sound Absorption of Type R ₃ Modify Rubberised	
		Concrete	244
	7.3	Sound Transmission Loss in Type R1 Rubberised Concrete	246
		7.3.1 Sound Transmission Loss in Type R ₁ Rubberised	
		Concrete	246
		7.3.2 Sound Transmission Loss in Type R ₂ Rubberised	
		Concrete	249
		7.3.3 Sound Transmission Loss in Type R ₃ Rubberised	
		Concrete	252
8	CO	NCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	255
	8.1	General	255
	8.2	Conclusion	255
		8.2.1 Characterisation of Waste Binder Materials (POFA)	255
		8.2.2 Concrete Mix Proportion	256
		8.2.3 Fresh Properties of Modified Rubberised Concrete	256
		8.2.4 Hardened Properties of Modified Rubberised	
		Concrete	257
		8.2.5 Durability Characterisation	258
		8.2.6 Acoustical Properties	259

8.3 Contribution of the Research	260
8.4 Recommendations	261
REFERENCES	263
Appendix A	286

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE NO	D. TITLE	PAGE
Table 1.1:	Number of scrap tyres generated in Malaysia (National Solid	
Waste Man	agement Department, 2011)	2
Table 2.1:	Typical composition of manufactured tyres by weight (RMA,	
2000)		13
Table 2.2:	Typical materials used in manufacturing tire (RMA, 2000)	14
Table 2.3:	Range of chemical composition of ASTM Type F, C, and	
POFA		48
Table 3.1:	Physical properties of rubber particles	71
Table 3.2:	Chemical properties of rubber particles	71
Table 3.3:	Specific of used super plasticiser	74
Table 3.4:	Classification of the quality of concrete on the basis of Pulse	
velocity.		87
Table 3.5:	Chloride Permeability Based on Charge Passed (ASTM	
C1202)		92
Table 4.1:	Physical properties of OPC and POFA	103
Table 4.2:	Major chemical compositions of OPC and POFA	106
Table 4.3:	properties of natural coarse aggregate	108
Table 4.4:	Physical properties of natural fine aggregate	110
Table 4.5:	Concrete mix design with 0.50 w/b ratio and different level	
of POFA re	placement	116
Table 4.6:	Concrete mix design with 0.43 w/b ratio and different level	
of POFA re	placement	116
Table 4.7:	Concrete mix design with 0.38 w/b ratio and different level	
of POFA re	placement	117
Table 4.8:	Concrete mix design with 0.35 w/b ratio and different level	
of POFA re	placement	117

Table 4.9: Rubberised concrete mix design incorporating fine fibre	
rubber aggregate	124
Table 4.10: Rubberised concrete mix design incorporating fine granular	
rubber aggregate	124
Table 4.11: Rubberised concrete mix design incorporating coarse	
granular rubber aggregate	125
Table 6.1: Changing UPV values of modified rubberised concrete	
containing fine fibre rubber aggregates underwent exposed to elevated	
temperature in different cooling regime	195
Table 6.2: Changing UPV values of modified rubberised concrete	
containing fine granular rubber aggregates underwent exposed to	
elevated temperature in different cooling regime	210
Table 6.3: Changing UPV values of modified rubberised concrete	
containing coarse granular rubber aggregates underwent exposed to	
elevated temperature in different cooling regime	227

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE NO. TITLE	PAGE
Figure 1.1: Schematic summary of thesis organisation	10
Figure 2.1: Workability of rubberised concrete (Mohammed et al., 2011)	19
Figure 2.2: Density of concrete with different rubber aggregate contents	
(Pierce and Blackwell, 2003)	23
Figure 2.3: Result of compressive strength after 28 days (Ganjian et al.,	
2009)	26
Figure 2.4: Results of tensile strength test (Ganjian et al., 2009)	27
Figure 2.5: Deflection of rubberised concrete in different rubber	
proportions (Taha et al., 2009)	31
Figure 2.6: Toughness index of several rubberised concrete types	
(Khaloo et al., 2008)	32
Figure 2.7: Stress-Strain curve for different rubberised concrete types	
(Batayneh et al., 2008)	34
Figure 2.8: Ungrounded POFA (a) and grounded POFA (b)	
(Tangchirapat et al., 2009)	47
Figure 2.9: Relationship between the compressive strength of concretes	
and POFA replacement (Sata et al., 2007)	54
Figure 3.1: Diagram of representation of empirical program	63
Figure 3.2: POFA preparation process for use in concrete	68
Figure 3.3: Agro-industrial waste from palm oil	69
Figure 3.4: Fine fibre rubber aggregate – Type R ₁	72
Figure 3.5: Fine granular rubber aggregate – Type R_2	73
Figure 3.6: Coarse granular rubber aggregate – Type R ₃	73
Figure 3.7: Bruker S4 Pioneer XRF spectrometer with automatic sample	
changing system	75
Figure 3.8: CILAS 1180 particle size analyser	76

Figure 3.9: Slump Test	78
Figure 3.10: Compacting factor test	79
Figure 3.11: Apparatus used for the fresh density and air content test	81
Figure 3.12: Testing for compressive strength	82
Figure 3.13: Operational procedure for splitting tensile strength testing	83
Figure 3.14: Operational procedure for flexural strength test	84
Figure 3.15: An operational process of Ultrasonic pulse velocity (UPV)	
test	85
Figure 3.16: Modulus of elasticity test	89
Figure 3.17: The operational procedure for water cooling regime	90
Figure 3.18: Electrically controlled furnace – Carbolite Furnace 1100	91
Figure 3.19: Experimental temperature-time curve of electrically	
controlled furnace	91
Figure 3.20: Operational process for the rapid chloride penetration test	
(RCPT)	93
Figure 3.21: Impedance tube instrument	97
Figure 3.22: Impedance tube; Small size and Large size tube	97
Figure 3.23: Preparing samples for sound absorption test	98
Figure 3.24: Specimens for impedance tube test; small size disc 27×25	
mm for high frequency impedance tube test and big size disc 99×25 mm	
for low frequency	98
Figure 4.1: Relationship between grinding time and POFA particle size	102
Figure 4.2: Particle size analysis of POFA and OPC	103
Figure 4.3: Correlation of strength activity index and POFA grinding	
time	104
Figure 4.4: Scanning electron micrograph of POFA	107
Figure 4.5: X-ray diffraction pattern of ground POFA	107
Figure 4.6: Grading Curve of natural coarse aggregates in relation to	
ASTM C33 limits	109
Figure 4.7: Sieve analysis of natural fine aggregate in relation to ASTM	
C33 limits	110
Figure 4.8: Sieve analysis of type R_1 TRA in relation to fine natural	
aggregate	111
Figure 4.9: Substitution area of R ₁ TRA in relation to its grading	112

Figure 4.10: Sieve analysis of type R ₂ TRA in relation to fine natural		
aggregate	112	
Figure 4.11: Substitution area of R ₂ TRA in relation to its grading		
Figure 4.12: Sieve analysis of type R ₃ TRA in relation to natural coarse		
aggregate and substitution area of R_3 in basis on its grading	114	
Figure 4.13: Compressive strength of concrete with different percentage		
of POFA at 0.50 w/b ratio	119	
Figure 4.14: Compressive strength of concrete with different percentage		
of POFA at 0.43 w/b ratio	119	
Figure 4.15: Compressive strength of concrete with different		
percentage of POFA at 0.38 w/b ratio	119	
Figure 4.16: Compressive strength of concrete with different percentage		
of POFA at 0.35 w/b ratio	120	
Figure 4.17: Relationship between the addition of super plasticiser to		
the slump of concrete at 0.38 w/b ratio and different percentages of		
POFA	121	
Figure 5.1: Effect of fibre rubber aggregates on the slump of rubberised		
concrete	128	
Figure 5.2: Effect of fine granular rubber aggregates on the slump of		
rubberised concrete	130	
Figure 5.3: Effect of coarse granular rubber aggregates on the slump of		
rubberised concrete	133	
Figure 5.4: Effect of types and concentrations of rubber aggregates on		
slump values	134	
Figure 5.5: Air content of concrete containing 5% to 30% fine fibre		
rubber aggregate	136	
Figure 5.6: Air content of concrete containing 5% to 30% fine granular		
rubber aggregate	137	
Figure 5.7: Air content of concrete containing 5% to 30% coarse		
granular rubber aggregate	138	
Figure 5.8: Air content of rubberised concrete relative to different sizes		
and amounts of rubber particles	139	
Figure 5.9: Effect of higher air content of rubberised concrete can appear		
as small holes on the surface of specimens	139	

Figure 5.10: Compacting factor of concrete containing 5% to 30% fine	
fibre rubber aggregate	141
Figure 5.11: Compacting factor of concrete containing 5% to 30%	
fine granular rubber aggregate	142
Figure 5.12: Compacting factor of concrete containing 5% to 30%	
coarse granular rubber aggregate	142
Figure 5.13: Fresh density of rubberised POFA concrete	145
Figure 5.14: Compressive strength of rubberised POFA concrete	
containing fibre rubber aggregates; (a) normal concrete; (b) 20% POFA	
concrete; (c) 5% R_1 rubberised POFA concrete; (d) 10% R_1 rubberised	
POFA concrete; (e) R_1 20% rubberised POFA concrete; (f) R_1 30%	
rubberised POFA concrete	147
Figure 5.15: Compressive strength of rubberised POFA concrete	
containing fine granular rubber aggregates; (a) normal concrete; (b) 20%	
POFA concrete; (c) 5% R_2 rubberised POFA concrete; (d) 10% R_2	
rubberised POFA concrete; (e) R_2 20% rubberised POFA concrete; (f) R_2	
30% rubberised POFA concrete	149
Figure 5.16: Compressive strength of rubberised POFA concrete	
containing coarse granular rubber aggregates; (a) normal concrete; (b)	
20% POFA concrete; (c) 5% R_3 rubberised POFA concrete; (d) 10% R_3	
rubberised POFA concrete; (e) 20% R3 rubberised POFA concrete; (f)	
30% R ₃ rubberised POFA concrete	151
Figure 5.17: Compressive strength of rubberised POFA concrete	
containing 5% fine fibre, fine granular and coarse granular rubber	
aggregates 152	
Figure 5.18: Compressive strength of rubberised POFA concrete	
containing 10% fine fibre, fine granular and coarse granular rubber	
aggregates	153
Figure 5.19: Compressive strength of rubberised POFA concrete	
containing 20% fine fibre, fine granular and coarse granular rubber	
aggregates	153
Figure 5.20: Compressive strength of rubberised POFA concrete	
containing 30% fine fibre, fine granular and coarse granular rubber	
aggregates	154

xxii

Figure 5.21: Splitting tensile strength of rubberised POFA concrete	
containing fine fiber rubber aggregates	157
Figure 5.22: Splitting tensile strength of rubberised POFA concrete	
containing fine granular rubber aggregates	159
Figure 5.23: Splitting tensile strength of rubberised POFA concrete	
containing coarse granular rubber aggregates	160
Figure 5.24: Splitting tensile strength of rubberised POFA concrete	
containing 5% R ₁ , R ₂ and R ₃ rubber aggregates	161
Figure 5.25: Splitting tensile strength of rubberised POFA concrete	
containing 10% R1, R2 and R3 rubber aggregates	161
Figure 5.26: Splitting tensile strength of rubberised POFA concrete	
containing 20% R ₁ , R ₂ and R ₃ rubber aggregates	162
Figure 5.27: Splitting tensile strength of rubberised POFA concrete	
containing 30% R_1 , R_2 and R_3 rubber aggregates	163
Figure 5.28: Rubberised concrete sample showing large deformation	
without disintegration by increasing the level of rubber particles in	
mixture 164	
Figure 5.29: Flexural of rubberised POFA concrete containing fine	
fibre rubber aggregates (R ₁)	165
Figure 5.30: Flexural of rubberised POFA concrete containing fine	
granular rubber aggregates (R ₂)	167
Figure 5.31: Flexural of rubberised POFA concrete containing coarse	
granular rubber aggregates	168
Figure 5.32: Flexural strength of rubberised POFA concrete containing	
5% R ₁ , R ₂ and R ₃ rubber aggregates	170
Figure 5.33: Flexural strength of rubberised POFA concrete containing	
10% R ₁ , R ₂ and R ₃ rubber aggregates	170
Figure 5.34: Flexural strength of rubberised POFA concrete containing	
20% R ₁ , R ₂ and R ₃ rubber aggregates	171
Figure 5.35: Flexural strength of rubberised POFA concrete containing	
30% R ₁ , R ₂ and R ₃ rubber aggregates	171
Figure 5.36: Failure mode of concrete under flexural test of rubberised	
POFA concrete containing high (20% and 30%) and low (5% and 10%)	
volume rubber aggregates	172

Figure 5.37: Modulus of elasticity of concrete containing various	
concentration "R ₁ " rubber aggregates	173
Figure 5.38: Modulus of elasticity of concrete containing various	
concentration "R ₂ " rubber aggregates	174
Figure 5.39: Modulus of elasticity of concrete containing various	
concentration "R ₃ " rubber aggregates	174
Figure 5.40: Stress-Strain behaviour of concrete containing 10%,	
20% and 30% type R ₁ aggregates	177
Figure 5.41: Failure mode of various concrete containing type R_1	
rubber particles and the control concrete during Stress-Strain test	177
Figure 5.42: Stress-Strain behaviour of concrete containing 10%, 20%	
and 30% type R ₂ aggregates	178
Figure 5.43: Failure mode of various concrete containing type R ₂ rubber	
particles and the control concrete during Stress-Strain test	178
Figure 5.44: Stress-Strain behaviour of concrete containing 10%, 20%	
and 30% type R ₃ aggregates	179
Figure 5.45: Failure mode of various concrete containing type R ₃	
rubber particles and the control concrete during Stress-Strain test	179
Figure 6.1: Actual time – temperature curves for various thermal	
exposure and the standard curve of ISO 834	181
Figure 6.2: Type R_1 rubberised concrete specimens after exposure to 150	
°C	183
Figure 6.3: Type R_1 rubberised concrete specimens after exposure to 300	
°C	184
Figure 6.4: R ₁ rubberised concrete specimens after exposure to 500	
°C. 184	
Figure 6.5: Ignition of rubberised concrete containing fine fibre rubber	
aggregates after exposure to 500 °C	184
Figure 6.6: Retaining ash of rubber particles on surface, cracks and	
wide voids on the surface of specimens after exposure to 800 °C	185
Figure 6.7: Rate of mass loss for R ₁ 5CP20 in various elevated	
temperature regarding to different cooling regime	187
I	101

Figure 6.8: Rate of mass loss for R ₁ 10CP20 in various elevated	
temperature regarding to different cooling regime	187
Figure 6.9: Rate of mass loss for R ₁ 20CP20 in various elevated	
temperature regarding to different cooling regime	188
Figure 6.10:Rate of mass loss for $R_130CP20$ in various	
elevated temperature regarding to different cooling regime	188
Figure 6.11:Residual compressive strength of normal and 20%	
POFA in various elevated temperature regarding to different cooling	
regime 191	
Figure 6.12:Residual compressive strength of R1 rubberised	
concrete 150 °C under different cooling regime	191
Figure 6.13:Residual compressive strength of R1 rubberised	
concrete 300 °C under different cooling regime	191
Figure 6.14: Residual compressive strength of R ₁ rubberised	
concrete 500 °C under different cooling regime	192
Figure 6.15: Residual compressive strength of R ₁ rubberised	
concrete 800 °C under different cooling regime	192
Figure 6.16: Correlation between UPV values and residual compressive	
strength of type R1 rubberised concrete under air cooling regime	198
Figure 6.17: Correlation between UPV values and residual compressive	
strength of type R_1 rubberised concrete under water cooling regime	199
Figure 6.18: Hairy cracks on the surface due to water cooling after	
sample exposed to 150 °C	201
Figure 6.19: Craze cracks on the surface after exposed to 300 °C	201
Figure 6.20: Physical characteristics of type R2 rubberised concrete	
after exposed to 500 °C, leakage of melted rubber highlighted with red	
circles 201	
Figure 6.21: Ignition of concrete containing fine granular rubber	
aggregates and leakage of melted rubber aggregates after exposure to 500	
°C	202
Figure 6.22: Physical characteristics of type R2 rubberised concrete	
after exposed to 800 °C; cracks indicates with red eclipse	202

XXV

Figure 6.23: Rate of weight loss for R ₂ 5CP20 in various elevated	
temperature regarding to different cooling regime	204
Figure 6.24: Rate of weight loss for R ₂ 10CP20 in various elevated	
temperature regarding to different cooling regime	204
Figure 6.25: Rate of weight loss for R ₂ 20CP20 in various elevated	
temperature regarding to different cooling regime	204
Figure 6.26: Rate of weight loss for R ₂ 30CP20 in various elevated	
temperature regarding to different cooling regime	205
Figure 6.27: Residual compressive strength of R ₂ rubberised concrete	
at 150 °C under different cooling regime	206
Figure 6.28: Residual compressive strength of R ₂ rubberised concrete at	
300 °C under different cooling regime	207
Figure 6.29: Residual compressive strength of R ₂ rubberised concrete	
at 500 °C under different cooling regime	207
Figure 6.30: Residual compressive strength of R ₂ rubberised concrete at	
800 °C under different cooling regime	207
Figure 6.31: Correlation between UPV values and residual compressive	
strength of type R2 rubberised concrete under air cooling regime	213
Figure 6.32: Correlation between UPV values and residual	
compressive strength of type R ₂ rubberised concrete under water cooling	
regime 214	
Figure 6.33: Hair line cracks on the surface after exposed to 300 °C;	
popouts occurred in the environs of rubber aggregates	217
Figure 6.34: Physical characteristics of type R ₂ rubberised concrete after	
exposed to 500 °C, leakage of melted rubber highlighted with red	
circles	218
Figure 6.35: Physical characteristics of type R ₂ rubberised concrete after	
exposed to 800 °C; popouts and cracks indicate with red eclipse	218
Figure 6.36: Rate of weight loss for R ₃ 5CP20 in various elevated	
temperature regarding to different cooling regime	220
Figure 6.37: Rate of weight loss for R ₃ 10CP20 in various elevated	
temperature regarding to different cooling regime	220

Figure 6.38: Rate of weight loss for R ₃ 20CP20 in various elevated				
temperature regarding to different cooling regime	221			
Figure 6.39: Rate of weight loss for R ₃ 30CP20 in various elevated				
temperature regarding to different cooling regime	221			
Figure 6.40: Residual compressive strength of R ₂ rubberised concrete at				
150 °C under different cooling regime	223			
Figure 6.41: Residual compressive strength of R ₃ rubberised concrete at				
300 °C under different cooling regime	224			
Figure 6.42: Residual compressive strength of R ₃ rubberised concrete at				
500 °C under different cooling regime	224			
Figure 6.43: Residual compressive strength of R ₃ rubberised concrete at				
800 °C under different cooling regime	224			
Figure 6.44: Correlation between UPV values and residual compressive				
strength of type R_3 rubberised concrete under air cooling regime				
Figure 6.45: Correlation between UPV values and residual compressive				
strength of type R_3 rubberised concrete under water cooling regime	231			
Figure 6.46: Water absorption of various R ₁ rubberised concrete at 28				
and 90 days 236				
Figure 6.47: Water absorption of various R ₂ rubberised concrete at 28				
and 90 days 236				
Figure 6.48: Water absorption of various R ₃ rubberised concrete at 28				
and 90 days	236			
Figure 6.49: Effect of TRA replacement on modified rubberised				
concrete resistance to chloride-ion penetration at 28 and 90 days	238			
Figure 7.1: Sound absorption coefficient of type R ₁ rubberised concrete;				
(a) Sound absorption of concrete with 5% type R_1 particles; (b) Sound				
absorption of concrete with 10% type R_1 particles; (c) Sound absorption				
of concrete with 20% type R_1 particles; (d) Sound absorption of concrete				
with 30% type R ₁ particles	241			
Figure 7.2: Noise reduction coefficient (NRC) versus type R ₁ rubber				
particles	242			
Figure 7.3: Sound absorption coefficient of type R ₂ rubberised concrete;				
(a) Sound absorption of concrete with 5% type R_2 particles; (b) Sound				

absorption of concrete with 10% type R_2 particles; (c) Sound absorption	
of concrete with 20% type R_2 particles; (d) Sound absorption of concrete	
with 30% type R ₂ particles	243
Figure 7.4: Noise reduction coefficient (NRC) versus type R2 rubber	
particles	244
Figure 7.5: Sound absorption coefficient of type R ₃ rubberised concrete;	
(a) Sound absorption of concrete with 5% type R_3 particles; (b) Sound	
absorption of concrete with 10% type R_3 particles; (c) Sound absorption	
of concrete with 20% type R_3 particles; (d) Sound absorption of concrete	
with 30% type R ₃ particles	245
Figure 7.6: Noise reduction coefficient (NRC) versus type R ₃ rubber	
particles	246
Figure 7.7: Sound transmission loss versus frequency for type R_1	
rubberised concrete; (a) Sound transmission loss for concrete with 5%	
type R_1 particles; (b) Sound transmission loss for concrete with 10% type	
R_1 particles; (c) Sound transmission loss for concrete with 20% type R_1	
particles; (d) Sound transmission loss for concrete with 30% type $R_{\rm 1}$	
particles	248
Figure 7.8: Sound transmission coefficient (STC) versus type R ₁ rubber	
particles	249
Figure 7.9: Sound transmission loss versus frequency for type R_2	
rubberised concrete; (a) Sound transmission loss for concrete with 5%	
type R_2 particles; (b) Sound transmission loss for concrete with 10% type	
R_2 particles; (c) Sound transmission loss for concrete with 20% type R_2	
particles; (d) Sound transmission loss for concrete with 30% type $R_{\rm 2}$	
particles	251
Figure 7.10: Sound transmission coefficient (STC) versus type R ₂	
rubber particles	251
Figure 7.11: Sound transmission loss versus frequency for type R_3	
rubberised concrete; (a) Sound transmission loss for concrete with 5%	
type R_3 particles; (b) Sound transmission loss for concrete with 10% type	
R_3 particles; (c) Sound transmission loss for concrete with 20% type R_3	
particles; (d) Sound transmission loss for concrete with 30% type $R_{\rm 3}$	
particles	253

Figure 7.12: Sound transmission coefficient (STC) versus type R₃ rubber particle

254

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACI	-	American Concrete Institute
AEA	-	Air Entraining Admixture
ASCE	-	American Society Civil Engineers
ASHTTO	-	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
ASR	-	Alkali Silica Reaction
ASTM	-	American Society for Testing and Materials
EDX	-	Energy Dispersive X-ray
FESEM	-	Field Emission Scanning Electron Micrograph
GGBS	-	Ground Granulated Blast Furnace Slag
LOI	-	Loss on Ignition
LVDT	-	Linear Variable Displacement Transducer
MOE	-	Modulus of Elasticity
NRC	-	Noise Reduction Coefficient
OPC	-	Ordinary Portland Cement
POFA	-	Palm Oil Fuel Ash
PRC	-	Plain Rubberized Concrete
RCPT	-	Rapid Chloride Penetration Test
RHA	-	Rise Husk Ash
RILEM	-	International Union of Testing and Research Laboratory for Materials and structures
SBR	-	Styrene Butadiene Rubber

xxxi	

SEM	-	Scanning Electron Micrograph
SP	-	Supper Plasticiser
SSD	-	Saturated Surface Dry
STC	-	Sound Transmission Loss
TRA	-	Tire Rubber Aggregate
UPV	-	Ultrasonic Pulse Velocity
VDC	-	Volts of Direct Current
XRD	-	X-ray Diffraction

LIST OF SYMBOLS

A _c	-	The cross section of specimen
A _c	-	Design air content
A_s	-	Air content of the sample tested
GS_R	-	Specific gravity of rubber aggregate
L_r	-	Distance between the lower roller
M _c	-	Mass of container filled with concrete
M_m	-	Mass of container
$V_{N.F}$	-	Solid volume of fine aggregate
V_m	-	Volume of container
W_R	-	Weight of rubber aggregates in concrete mixture
f_c	-	The compressive strength in mega Pascal
f_c'	-	Compressive Strength
f _{ct}	-	Flexural strength in mega Pascal
g_1	-	Bulk density, dry
g_2	-	Apparent density
γ_{w}	-	Density of water
Al	-	Almina
Al_2O_3	-	Aluminium oxide
с	-	Mass of surface
С	-	Carbon
C_2S	-	Calcium silicate
C ₃ Al	-	Tricalcium aluminate
Ca(OH) ₂	-	Calcium hydroxide
CaO	-	Calcium oxide
C-A-S-H	-	Calcium silicate hydrate
Cl	-	Chloride
CO_2	-	Carbon dioxide

xxxiii

C-S-H	-	Calcium silicate hydrate
Ε	-	Dynamic modulus of elasticity
E_s	-	Modulus of Elasticity
Fe	-	Iron
Fe_2O_3	-	Iron oxide
\mathbf{f}_{r}	-	Flexural Strength
K_2O	-	Potassium oxide
MgO	-	Magnesium oxide or magnesia
P_2O_5	-	Phosphorus oxide
R	-	Percentage of rubber aggregate replacement
SG_c	-	Specific gravity of cement
SG_{ca}	-	Specific gravity of coarse aggregate on saturated surface dry basis
SiO ₂	-	Silicon oxide
SO_3	-	Sulphur trioxide
TiO_2	-	Titanium oxide
<i>W/B</i>	-	Water to binder ratio (by weight)
D	-	Density of concrete
Ε	-	Modulus of elasticity
G	-	Aggregate correction factor
L	-	Distance between transducers (m)
Т	-	Effective transit time
V	-	Pulse velocity
ε	-	Longitudinal strain
μ	-	Dynamic poison's ratio
ρ	-	density of water

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX.	TITLE	PAGE
А	List of Publications	286

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Concrete has been the most commonly used manufactured material in the world since its invention. Concrete is a composite material comprising three major fractions, namely aggregate, cement, or binder (supplementary cement materials), and water, in suitable proportions, thus allowing the resulting mixture to set and harden over time. It is common knowledge that aggregates are the inert materials in concrete; however, being the major constituent, the proper selection of aggregates is very important to accomplish innovation in concrete production (de Brito and Saikia, 2013). In fact, the proper selection of aggregates and the manipulation of their size distribution are very important steps in the development of almost all types of special concrete. The aggregate fraction in concrete is about 60% to 80% of its total volume (Neville, 2011). Moreover, the preparation of some types of concrete, such as light and heavyweight concrete, as well as concrete resistant to sound or vibration, can only be achieved through the proper selection of aggregates.

Recently, the worldwide growth of the automobile industry and the increase in car use has tremendously boosted tyre production. For example, in the United States alone, around 233.3 million scrap tyres were generated in 2013; this is approximately equal to 3,824.3 thousand tonnes (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2013). The European Union countries discarded 3.2 million tonnes of scrap tyres in 2009 (Bravo and de Brito, 2012). In Malaysia, the estimated number of waste tyres is 8.2 million annually (Thiruvangodan, 2006). Furthermore, the quantity of scrap tyres generated in Malaysia for various years is presented in Table 1.1. Therefore, large quantities of waste materials and by-products are generated from manufacturing processes, service industries, and municipal solid wastes. As a result, solid waste management has become one of the major environmental concerns in the world. The increase in public awareness about the environment, the scarcity of landfill space, and the ever-increasing cost of goods, the utilisation of waste materials and by-products has become an attractive alternative to disposal. The high consumption of natural sources, extreme quantities of industrial wastes produced, and environmental pollution require the delineation of new solutions for sustainable development.

Year	Quantity of Scrap Tyres (Tonne/Year)
2007	208.911
2008	211.209
2009	232.325
2010	245.087

Table 1.1: Number of scrap tyres generated in Malaysia (National Solid WasteManagement Department, 2011)

Another important recent development in the field of concrete science is the utilisation of waste materials and by-products in the construction industry, as well as the use of these materials as aggregates in the production of various types of concrete. The utilisation of waste materials and by-products is a partial solution to environmental and ecological problems. The use of these materials helps not only in having them utilised in cement, concrete, and other construction materials but also in reducing the cost of cement and concrete manufacturing. It also has numerous indirect benefits, such as reduction in landfill costs, energy savings, and environmental protection from possible pollution effects. Furthermore, the utilisation of these materials may improve the microstructure, durability, and mechanical properties of mortar and concrete, which may be difficult to achieve using only ordinary Portland cement.

Meanwhile, palm oil fuel ash is known as an agricultural by-product, and such waste material is simply disposed in landfills without any commercial returns. However, this may have a mal-effect role in the environment and landfills areas. In fact, Malaysia is the second largest producer of palm oil in the world. According to a report on the Malaysian palm oil industry (2009), palm oil production reached 17.7 million tonnes. There are more than 200 palm oil mills operating in the country. On average, 43 tonnes or more of empty fruit bunches, husks, and shells are generated per 100 tonnes of fresh fruit bunches processed. The total solid waste generated by this industry has been estimated to amount to more than 8.1 million tonnes a year. These wastes are mostly used in boilers as fuel to generate power for the mill. After this process, the waste becomes ash. This ash is known as palm oil fuel ash (POFA) (Shafigh et al., 2014; Foo and Hameed, 2009)

Significant research on the use of by-products in cement-based materials has been on-going, and the results show that POFA has the great potential to serve as a partial replacement binder material in concrete mixtures.

1.2 Importance of the Study

The disposal of rubber tyre waste has become a serious problem because of the generation of huge amounts of tyres, which are non-biodegradable by nature. Over the past decades, millions of scrap tyres have been disposed into open land fields. These stockpiles seriously threaten both the environment and public health because of their potential to serve as suitable breeding fields for mosquitoes, particularly because scrap tyres oftentimes retain water, which provides enough humidity and a warm place for mosquito breeding. Mosquitoes are one of the major public health threats that increase the likelihood of spreading disease. Moreover, these stockpiles create a fire danger because tyre components contain flammable content. Some researchers reported that tyre fires had continued for several months. Moreover, under the high temperatures of tyre fires, the tyres melt and release hydrocarbons and other pollutants to the ground and, in some cases, even to the ground water. In addition, tyre fires have produced black smoke, which causes serious air pollution (Guneyisi et al., 2004; Eldin and Senouci 1994; Hernandez– Oliveras et al., 2002; Li et al., 2004-b; Topcu 1995; Khaloo et al., 2008; Siddique and Naik, 2004; Khatib and Bayomy 1999; Ghaly and Cahill, 2005).

Although concrete is the most commonly used construction material, it does not always fulfil some requirements, especially in service. Portland cement concrete (PCC) is a composite material that is well-known for its mechanical properties, with including adequate compressive strength, acceptable tensile strength, and low toughness, which resulted in brittleness and low deformability (Gunevisi et al., 2004; Khaloo et al., 2008). An ideal PCC is expected to have such properties as high tensile strength and light weight. Moreover, the prompted demand for the modification of the brittle property of concrete resulted in the utilisation and application of alternative materials with deformable property, such rubber tyres, as coarse or fine aggregates or as a filler materials for the preparation of various types of concrete (Kumaran et al. 2012; Siddique and Naik 2004; Fattuhi and Clark, 1996; Chiu, 2008; Khaloo et al., 2008; Li et al., 2004-a). Elastic and deformable of tyrerubber particles could improve concrete properties, especially in terms of brittleness and sound insulation properties. Therefore, the addition of proper materials to concrete is one of the most popular fields in the concrete modification research area, and a large number of studies have been conducted to identify and introduce new materials as additives or replacements to improve or modify concrete properties (Hall et al., 2012; Khaloo et. al 2008; Pelisser et al., 2011; Sunthonpagasit and Duffey, 2004).

1.3 Problem statement

At present, the rapid growth of the automobile industry increased not only automobile production, but also the amount of industrial waste materials, such as scrap tyres. Industrial waste materials, such as waste tyres, should be handled properly to reduce the mal-effect on the environment and the rate of wastage. Moreover, the economic situation in developing countries demands for cost reduction in construction projects. Therefore, cutting costs related to concrete has a major role in this goal, given that concrete is the most commonly used material in construction projects. The utilisation of pozzolanic materials, polymers, fibres, and waste materials in concrete has been studied many years ago because shortcomings in the performance of concrete, either in the fresh or hardened state, motivated engineers to seek improvements. The inclusion of all these materials is a typical approach. Over the past decades, numerous research works have been conducted on the use of agrowaste ashes as supplementary cementing material in concrete construction. Among others, palm oil fuel ash (POFA) played a tremendous role in this regard.

In addition, in the application of concrete, desirable concrete properties include lighter weight, higher toughness, better sound absorption, and higher impact resistance. Although concrete is the most commonly used construction material, it does not always fulfil these requirements. New applications for recycling waste materials have recently been realised to improve the properties of concrete. One of these applications is the utilisation of scrap tyres to replace aggregates partially. The major weakness of using rubber in concrete is the low compression strength of rubberised concrete. It remains a problem in the use of rubberised concrete as a structural component. Thus, it is recommended for use as a non-loading member in construction. Utilising tyre-rubber aggregates in concrete has great potential to produce acoustic material. However, the low strength of rubberised concrete prevents engineers from fully benefiting from this attribute.

Therefore, this research endeavours to find a way to utilise rubberised POFA concrete in structural application, especially in the floor component for lowcost buildings, as concrete with high potential in terms of acoustic and soundproofing properties.

1.4 Aim and Research Objective

The aim of this research is to investigate the effect of incorporating palm oil fuel ash (POFA) for the partial substitution of cementitious material, with tyre-rubber aggregate replacement utilised as the aggregate in concrete to achieve green and sustainable concrete production.

- i. The main objectives of this research are as follows:
- i. To determine the optimum mix design for rubberised concrete with different types, sizes, and amounts of tyre-rubber particles incorporating POFA for application to structural concrete.
- To identify the engineering properties of concrete with different types, shapes, and sizes of tyre-rubber aggregate in terms of physical and mechanical qualities.
- iii. To evaluate the durability of POFA-rubberised concrete, this study was based on such parameters as fire endurance, water absorption, chloride penetration, and carbonation of modified-rubberised concrete.
- iv. To determine the property-improvement of POFA-rubberised concrete in terms of acoustic properties. The properties to be evaluated include: sound absorption and sound transmission properties of POFArubberised concrete in the corporation and different types, shapes, amounts, and sizes of tyre-rubber aggregates.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Research

In general, this research focused on the impact of tyre-rubber aggregate on the engineering properties of concrete. However, this research work was concerned with the development of the utilization palm oil fuel ash (POFA) concrete. Primarily, POFA replaced cement partially at a range from 15% to 30%. Then, the amount of replacement was optimised based on the compressive strength. Tyrerubber aggregates were categorised in three groups, namely fine fibre crumb rubber (0.8 to 3.3 mm), fine granular crumb rubber (1 to 4 mm), and coarse granular crumb rubber (5 to 8 mm). The range of replacement level of natural aggregate with the tyre-rubber aggregate was from 5% to 30%. The experimental study focused on the engineering properties of modified rubberised concrete, particularly, compressive strength, as well as the acoustic properties, durability, and fire safety performance of rubberised POFA concrete.

1.6 Significance of the Research

The disposal of rubber tyre waste has become a serious problem because of the generation of huge amounts of tyres, which are non-biodegradable by nature. The extensive references, including excellent reviews, are available on the use of tyre-rubber as coarse or fine aggregates or as a filler material for the preparation of various types of concrete (Kumaran et al. 2012; Kumaran et al. 2011; Siddique and Naik 2004). Meanwhile, studies are on-going to identify a balance between reutilising scrap tyres and the mechanical properties of rubberised concrete, especially in terms of compressive strength.

Furthermore, previous research found that POFA exhibited a satisfactory performance when introduced to the concrete as a pozzolanic material. Therefore, reusing of by-products from the agro-industry, such as POFA, may help decrease the threats of disposal hazard materials and save nature by reducing the CO₂ emissions associated with reduction in the demand manufacturing of Portland cement.

The outcome of this research can prepare supportive information for utilising POFA as a binder replacement and tyre-rubber particles as aggregates. Furthermore, this research work aim to provide a soundproof concrete with the used of the tyre aggregates with proper compressive strength, which is accepted as a property of structural concrete that may be deemed as strength of this research.

1.7 Thesis Organisation

The thesis is organised and presented in several chapters as follows:

Chapter One: This chapter presents a general appraisal and overview of the study. It includes the introduction, importance of the study, problem statement, aim of the study, objectives of the research, as well as the scope and significance of research in this field. Furthermore, the layout of the thesis is briefly described in this chapter.

Chapter Two: This chapter provides a comprehensive description of the properties of rubberised concrete and explains the recent research works on the use of POFA as pozzolanic material. An in-depth review of the effects of the application of POFA as pozzolanic material on the properties of concrete is discussed. The contribution of rubber aggregate utilisation to the concrete properties, specifically both fresh and hardened properties, is described.

Chapter Three: The use of the proper materials and the methodology for the use of the appropriate standard and modification are necessary when conducting the tests described in this chapter.

Chapter Four: The procedures for the modification of the mixture proportion of concrete in terms of POFA utilisation in concrete as pozzolanic material to enhance concrete strength and rubber aggregate to serve as a partial replacement for natural aggregates. This chapter reveals the results of POFA and its effect on concrete properties. It also presents the methods of substitution for rubber aggregates and why this method was chosen.

Chapter Five: This chapter reveals the properties of rubberised POFA concrete in the fresh and hardened states in long-term studies. The parameters studied in this chapter include workability in terms of the slump of concrete, fresh density, and air content. In addition, the relationship between some data is developed in order to establish a correlation. For the investigation on hardened properties, tests falling in this category include compressive, flexural, and tensile strength. It also presents the results obtained and discussion made on the evaluation of mechanical properties. The deformability and conductivity of modified rubberised concrete is discussed in this chapter. Tests conducted in this category include modulus of elasticity and ultrasonic wave transmit of concrete containing different amounts and sizes of rubber aggregates.

Chapter Six: The aspects of durability performance considered in this chapter are permeability (water absorption and total porosity), chloride content (rapid chloride penetration test), carbonation, and fire endurance.

Chapter Seven: The acoustic properties of rubberised concrete in the highand low-frequency sound wave study are outlined in this chapter. Furthermore, the soundproofing properties of rubberised concrete with different types and amounts of rubber aggregates are discussed.

Chapter Eight: This chapter concludes this dissertation by stating the findings and achievements of the study and the contribution of the research to the existing knowledge. Recommendations are presented for further research in related areas as well.

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