

THE EFFECT OF HIGH TEMPERATURE ON CONCRETE CONTAINING
FIBERS FROM RECYCLED PLASTIC BOTTLES

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This project report is dedicated to my Parents and my Wife

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ABSTRACT

High consumption of plastic based products has increased the volume of polymeric waste leading to several environmental problems. Utilizing plastic waste fiber is believed to offer benefits such as waste reduction and resource conservation. The properties of concrete exposed to elevated temperature are of importance in terms of structural stability and assessment of serviceability state of the structure. This study shows the behavior of concrete incorporating Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) fibers at elevated temperature. Concrete samples with PET fibers at 0%, 0.5% and 1% are thermally treated in an electric furnace for a period of 1 hour at elevated temperatures of 200, 400, 600 and 800° C. Specimen are water cured for 28 days and tested for visual inspection, ultrasonic pulse velocity (UPV) and residual compressive strength. It is found out that the workability decreases with the increment of PET fibers. Furthermore, an increment in compressive strength is witnessed for concrete incorporating PET fibers with PET-FRC (0.5% fibers) showing maximum strength gain up to temperature of 400°C. A drastic drop in residual compressive strength and UPV for all specimen is witnessed at temperatures of 600°C and 800°C. Vaporizing of PET fibers at elevated temperatures led to the formation of channels and air voids which reduced the strength of FRC more than PC. It is concluded that PET-FRC with 0.5% fiber volume increases the strength of concrete at lower temperatures however, at elevated temperatures the strength is significantly reduced.

ABSTRAK

Permintaan produk berasaskan plastik yang tinggi meningkat isipadu bahan buang polimerik yang membawa beberapa kesan buruk pada alam sekitar. Penggunaan serat dari bahan buangan berasaskan plastik dipercayai boleh menawarkan kebaikan seperti mengurangkan kadar bahan buangan dan memulihara sumber. Sifat konkrit yang terdedah pada suhu yang tinggi adalah istilah yang penting dalam ke kestabilan stuktur dan penilaian keadaan servisabiliti struktur. Kajian ini menunjukkan sifat konkrit yang mengandungi serat polyethylene terephthalate (PET) pada suhu yang tinggi. Sampel konkrit yang mengandungi serat PET sebanyak at 0%, 0.5% dan 1% telah melalui rawatan haba di dalam perapian untuk melebur elektrik selama satu jam pada ketinggian suhu 200, 400 dan 800 ° C. Spesimen dirawat dengan air selama 28 hari dan diuji secara visual, ultrasonik halaju nadi dan kekuatan mampatan. Kajian menemui bahawa keboleherjaan berkurangan dengan kenaikan jumlah serat PET. Tambahan pula, kenaikan kekuatan mampatan disaksikan untuk konkrit dengan serat PET 0.5% menunjukkan kekuatan maksimum yang diperolehi sehingga haba mencecah 400°C. Penurunan secara drastik dalam kekuatan mampatan konkrit dan ultrasonik halaju nadi untuk semua spesimen pada suhu 600°C dan 800°C. Pengewapan serat PET pada suhu yang tinggi menyebabkan pembentukan saluran dan kekosongan udara dimana mengurangkan kekuatan konkrit bertetulang lebih dari konkrit kosong. Dapat disimpulkan bahawa kekuatan mampatan konkrit bertetulang dengan isipadu serat PET sebanyak 0.5% meningkat pada suhu yang lebih rendah, berkurang secara ketara dengan suhu yang tinggi.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	TITLE	PAGE
	DECLARATION	
	Error! Bookmark not defined.	
	DEDICATION	
	Error! Bookmark not defined.	
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	vi
	ABSTRACT	vii
	ABSTRAK	viii
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	ix
	LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
	LIST OF TABLES	xiii
	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xvi
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Introduction	1
	1.2 Background of Study	2
	1.3 Problem Statement	2
	1.4 Objectives	4
	1.5 Scope of work	5
	1.6 Research Significance	5
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	7
	2.1 Overview	7
	2.2 The Plastic Industry	8
	2.2.1 Plastic Consumptions	8

2.2.2	Plastic Wastage and Environmental Pollution	10
2.3	Fiber Reinforced Concrete	13
2.4	Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET)	16
2.4.1	Performance of Concrete Incorporating PET Fiber	17
2.4.1.1	Previous work on Fresh-State Properties of Concrete Incorporating PET Fiber	17
2.4.1.2	Previous work on Hard-State Properties of Concrete Incorporating PET Fiber	19
2.5	Reinforced Concrete at Elevated Temperature	22
2.5.1	Fiber Reinforced Concrete at Elevated Temperature	25
3	RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	28
3.1	Introduction	28
3.2	Experimental Works	28
3.3	Materials	30
3.3.1	Cement	31
3.3.2	Coarse Aggregate	32
3.3.3	Fine Aggregate	32
3.3.4	Water	33
3.3.5	PET Fibers	33
3.4	Sieving	34
3.4.1	Concrete Mix Design	35
3.4.2	Experimental Program	35
3.5	Preparation of Specimen	35
3.5.1	Mixing Process	36
3.5.2	Casting and Curing	37
3.6	Laboratory Testing	39
3.6.1	Workability Test	39
3.6.2	Density Test	39

3.6.3	Compressive Strength	40
3.6.3.1	Test Procedure	41
3.6.4	Fire Resistance Test	42
3.6.5	Measurement of Residual Weight and Strength	43
3.6.6	Ultrasonic Pulse Velocity (UPV)	43
3.6.6.1	Applications of Ultrasonic Pulse Velocity Test	44
3.6.6.2	Working Principle	44
3.6.6.3	Test Procedure	45
3.6.6.4	Interpretation of Results	46
4	RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS	47
4.1	Introduction	47
4.2	Fresh State Properties of Concrete	47
4.2.1	Workability	47
4.3	Physical Properties of PET Fiber Reinforced Concrete	49
4.3.1	Density	49
4.4	Mechanical Properties of PET Fiber Reinforced Concrete	50
4.4.1	Compressive Strength	50
4.5	Fire Resistance	51
4.5.1	Effect on Physical Characteristics of Concrete	51
4.5.1.1	Visual Effects at Room Temperature of 27°C	52
4.5.1.2	Visual Effects at Temperature of 200°C	52
4.5.1.3	Visual Effects at Temperature of 400°C	53
4.5.1.4	Visual Effects at Temperature of 600°C	53
4.5.1.5	Visual Effects at Temperature of 800°C	54
4.5.2	Ultrasonic Pulse Velocity	54
4.5.3	Influence of Temperature on Concrete Weight	56

4.5.4	Residual Compressive Strength of Concrete	58
5	CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS	61
5.1	Conclusion	61
5.2	Recommendations	62
	REFERENCES	64
	APPENDICES	71

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	Fiber reinforcement before and after the creation of a Macro-crack (left) and crack bridging by fibers (right)	16
2.2	Slump of concrete with two different aspect ratio of PET fibers	19
2.3	Relationship of compressive strength and fiber content	21
2.4	Void left after melting PP fiber in HSC matrix	26
3.1	Flow chart of laboratory process	30
3.2	Ordinary Portland Cement used in this experiment	31
3.3	The fine aggregate (sand)	32
3.4	Recycled plastic bottles and manually cut PET fibers	33
3.5	Sieve analysis machine	34
3.6	Drum type concrete mixer	37
3.7	Cube preparation and casting	38
3.8	Water curing of test specimens	38
3.9	Slump test	39
3.10	Compressive strength test of cube specimen	41
3.11	Electric furnace showing concrete specimens	43
3.12	Ultrasonic Pulse Velocity (UPV) testing apparatus	44
4.1	Relationship between concrete slump and PET fiber percentage	48
4.2	Compressive strength test of PET-FRC at room temperature	50

4.3	Compressive strength values of PET-FRC at room temperature	51
4.4	Surface texture of the PET fiber reinforced concrete Samples with 0%, 0.5% and 1.0% fiber content at room temperature	52
4.5	Surface texture of the PET fiber reinforced concrete samples with 0%, 0.5% and 1.0% fiber content exposed to 200°C	52
4.6	Surface texture of the PET fiber reinforced concrete samples with 0%, 0.5% and 1.0% fiber content exposed to 400°C	53
4.7	Surface texture of the PET fiber reinforced concrete samples with 0%, 0.5% and 1.0% fiber content exposed to 600°C	53
4.8	Surface texture of the PET fiber reinforced concrete samples with 0%, 0.5% and 1.0% fiber content exposed to 800°C	54
4.9	Average UPV values for PET fiber reinforced concrete	56
4.10	Weight of PC and PET-FEC at elevated room temperature	57
4.11	Weight loss of PET fiber reinforced at elevated and room temperature	58
4.12	Residual strength of PET fiber reinforced concrete at elevated and room temperature	60
4.13	strength loss of PET fiber reinforced concrete at elevated temperature	60

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	Prediction of MSW in Kuala Lumpur	9
2.2	Solid waste composition of selected locations in KL	12
2.3	Solid waste composition in South East Asia countries	11
2.4	Composition of plastic packaging waste in Asian 2007	13
2.5	Description of common fiber used based on (Mindess)	14
3.1	Chemical and physical properties of OPC	31
3.2	Characteristics of various concrete mixes	35
3.3	Number of specimen per batch	36
3.4	Velocity criterion for concrete quality	46
4.1	Slump values of different concrete mixes	48
4.2	Density of various concrete mixes	49
4.3	Compressive strength of different concrete mixes at room Temperature (27°C)	51
4.4	Average UPV values for PET fiber reinforced concrete	55
4.5	Average residual compressive strength of fiber reinforced concrete at elevated temperature	59

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACI	-	American Concrete Institute
ASTM	-	American Standard Testing Materials
BS	-	British Standard
FRC	-	Fiber reinforced concrete
PET	-	Polyethylene Terephthalate
M30	-	Concrete grade of 30N/mm ²
PC	-	Plain concrete
PET-FRC	-	Fiber reinforced concrete with Polyethylene Terephthalate fiber
OPC	-	Ordinary Portland Cement
W/C	-	Water Cement
PET-FRC0.5	-	Fiber reinforced concrete with 0.5% Polyethylene Terephthalate fibers
PET-FRC1.0	-	Fiber reinforced concrete with 1.0% Polyethylene Terephthalate fibers

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Concrete is a composite material, primarily consisting of three basic elements which are cement, aggregate and water. Concrete is relatively good in compression but weak in tension. Concrete tends to fail in a brittle manner due to its low tension resistance. To overcome some of the bitter properties of the concrete, reinforced concrete was introduced. Steel reinforcement bars are added into the concrete as an improvement to the tensile strength and to make it more ductile. However, steel reinforcement are prone to corrosion which greatly reduces the strength and durability of concrete. Thus, the attempts to improve the properties of concrete have never stopped. Besides steel reinforced concrete, a new invention of construction material called fiber reinforced concrete (FRC) has been introduced. In FRC, discrete fibers are added into a cement base matrix with an ordered or random distribution manner. In construction technology, there are many types of fibers like steel, carbon, aluminum, wood, plastic, glass, and others that can be introduced into concrete mix. Such type of concrete has wide varieties of applications in civil engineering field.

1.2 Background of Study

The development in the construction industry all over the world has increased (Ganiron, 2012). Attempts have also been made by various researchers to reduce the cost of its constituents and hence total construction cost by investigating and ascertaining the usefulness of recycled material like plastic bottles which are usually discarded. As a result of the increase in the cost of construction materials, especially cement, crushed stone (coarse aggregate), fine sand (fine aggregate), there is the need to investigate the use of alternate building materials which are locally available (Ganiron, 2013).

Polyethylene terephthalate (PET) is a member of the polyester family of polymers and it plays an important role as synthetic fiber in industrial production. PET gains its popularity due to its physical characteristics which are lightweight, colourless in natural state, semi-crystalline resin, excellent water and moisture barrier and impact-resistant where it is less breakable than other materials. Due to these characteristics, PET has become increasingly paramount among the manufacturers and consumers. The world's PET production rate is relatively high, resulting in high volume of waste production in which its annual consumption rate represents more than 300,000 million units and most of the waste is discarded to landfill. PET waste is a non-biodegradable material which does not undergo decay process and thus remains in nature for hundreds of years (Irwan *et al.*, 2013).

1.3 Problem Statement

Environmental pollution has become the main concern of the society. This is because the problem of environmental pollution has become worse. Among all the types of wastes generated, plastic wastes need to be given more attention as it cannot biodegrade.

In 2008, global plastic consumption worldwide has been estimated at 260 million tons and, according to a 2012 report by Global Industry Analysts, plastic consumption is to reach 297.5 million tons by 2015 (Claire, 2009).

From the statement above, it is empirical that the quantity of plastic waste is increasing substantially. This is due to its characteristic of being lightweight, functional, durable, and inexpensive (Putatunda, 2011). Thus, people like to use it and just simply throw it away as it is cheap.

Plastic pollution involves the accumulation of plastic products on the environment which leads to affecting the wildlife, the wildlife habitat and human beings (Reddy *et al.*, 2014). Plastic products if incinerated release harmful chemicals into the soil which slowly seeps into ground. The chemical will mix in the ground water and affect the quality of ground water. Ground water is one of the sources of human drinking water. This can affect the human health if the polluted water is consumed.

Waste plastic is among the most abundant non-biodegradable solid waste present in our environment. Among all different form of plastics, PET is a well-known material used in food and beverage packing products and majority of these products end up being discarded to at a landfill. These PET products such as PET bottles will not decay and remain in the environment for a very long duration of time which may trigger air watered ground pollution.

In the field of civil engineering, concrete is considered as a miraculous man made material which is widely used in developed and developing country. Concrete is the backbone of the whole world's infrastructural development (Nibudey *et al.*, 2014). Concrete possesses a lot of good properties such as relatively high compressive strength, durability, low coefficient of thermal expansion and versatility. However, there is an inherent weakness found in the concrete that is low tensile strength. Concrete tends to experience a sudden failure in brittle manner due to its inherent low tension resistance. Such kind of failure is extremely unfavorable in structural design as it does not indicate any prior sign of failure.

The increasing trend in plastic waste generation, the search for a cost-effective construction material and the problem of corrosion in reinforcement bar has made PET reinforced concrete a favourable material. The above-mentioned problems can be minimized by using concrete incorporating PET fibers.

The major problem nowadays in this world is global warming and green materials are in priority aspects for material use consideration. As a result of environmental impact associated with the increase in the general awareness of waste management, the construction industry is encouraging the use of recycled waste materials to be added as a supplement to increase the desired properties of concrete. Researchers are putting much effort and attempts to investigate the utilization of waste fibers into the concrete mass to sustain and protect the ecosystem. The addition of recycled PET fiber reinforced concrete has attracted widespread attention. The development of new PET fiber construction materials in concrete is still considerably new and is in doubt as the physical and mechanical properties are still under preliminary study. It is still a major challenge to produce recycled plastic reinforced concrete with sufficient mechanical properties. As such, the use of recycled PET as short fibers reinforcement in structural concrete is ought to be further investigated.

1.4 Objectives

The following are the main objectives of the research:

- To investigate the fresh properties of PET fiber reinforced concrete (FRC).
- To investigate the fire endurance of PET fiber reinforced concrete exposed to high temperature in terms of visual inspection, residual weight, ultrasonic pulse velocity and residual compressive strength.
- To compare the properties of PET fiber reinforced concrete with ordinary Portland cement for the same exposure condition.

1.5 Scope of work

This study is focused on the use of PET fibers in normal Portland cement concrete, to determine its workability, density, compressive strength and fire resistance of PET- FRC at different temperatures.

The research scope will focus on:

- The percentage of PET fibers studied in this research are limited to 0%, 0.5% and 1%.
- The length of fiber is 20mm.
- The temperature in which the concrete will be tested are (27, 200, 400, 600 and 800) °C.
- The tests are conducted after 28 days of water curing.

1.6 Research Significance

Corrosion of steel reinforcement in concrete is an issue that is faced commonly in the construction industry. Corrosion reduces the strength and durability of concrete making the structure susceptible to failure. However, PET fiber reinforced concrete can be the solution to the problem of steel bar reinforcement in concrete. In this study, PET fiber as the mixture material are added to the cementitious material. This is to make sure the corrosion of steel reinforcement would not be the main reason in the deterioration of concrete strength.

Secondly, the usage of PET plastic is increasing rapidly. The plastic cannot biodegrade, thus becoming a source of environmental pollution. By adding PET plastic fiber into concrete, we can reduce the number of plastic bottles being thrown at landfill. At the same time, we can also address the corrosion problem of steel reinforcement.

Lastly with the increase in building activities, more and more structures are prone to damage from fire. Fire in a building may reach above 1000° C inflicting serious damage to the structure and questioning its structural integrity. There are many occasions where concrete is exposed to elevated temperatures like fire exposure from thermal processor, exposure from furnaces, nuclear exposure, etc. In such cases, understanding of the behaviour of concrete and structural members exposed to elevated temperatures is vital.

This study is thus useful as it addresses the above-mentioned problems of corrosion of steel bars in concrete, environmental pollution and damage incurring to structures at elevated temperatures.

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