

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**THE MECHANICAL  
PERFORMANCE OF NATURAL  
RUBBER LATEX FILLED CARBON  
NANOTUBES (CNT) COATED  
KEVLAR FABRIC**

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Thesis submitted in fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
**Master of Science**

**Faculty of Applied Sciences**

September 2016

## ABSTRACT

Coated fabrics are widely used for technical textiles of late and there have been some interests in coating high strength fabrics with natural rubber (NR) latex. However, the addition of fillers in the form of carbon nanotube (CNT) and its relation with the mechanical properties of fabrics are not fully understood. The purpose of fillers addition is to get the desired properties of the NR latex as fillers have various functions that can modify the properties of latex. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to investigate the effects of nanofillers on the mechanical properties of high strength woven coated fabric. Kevlar fabrics were single-dipped coated with pre-vulcanized NR latex and CNT filled NR latex. The content of multi-walled (MW) CNT in liquid dispersion was varied at 1 phr, 3 phr and 5 phr. The neat, NR latex coated and CNT added NR latex coated samples were tested for puncture resistance, tensile strength and tearing strength. For the puncture resistance test, three different puncture probe shapes were used to test the fabrics which were in the form of conical, ogival and hemispherical shapes. The results suggest that the NR latex coated fabric have higher puncture resistance for about 5 to 25% in comparison with the neat fabric. The result also showed that the CNT filled influenced the properties of the coated fabric by increasing the tensile strength and tearing strength by about 8 to 21% in comparisons with the neat fabric.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful and Most Compassionate, I am gratefully thankful to Him as without His bless I will not be able to complete this project.

This report is finally completed with those who have willingly been involved in supervising me from the beginning until the end. I would like to sincerely express my deep thanks to my project supervisors, Prof. Dr. Jamil Bin Salleh and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohd. Rozi Bin Ahmad for their insightful opinions, guidance and support.

I would also like to thank Prof. Dr. Mohamad. Rusop bin Mahmood, Prof. Dr. Azemi bin Samsuri and other individuals who had assisted me through my research. All their valuable information and precious ideas and comments are very much appreciated.

My deepest appreciation and thanks also goes to my lovely parents, Abu Bakar Bin Sumadi and who had given me continuous support and motivation for me to complete this research project. My deepest gratitude and love goes to my husband, Hafizul Bin Hassan and my daughter Hana Ariqah Binti Hafizul. They are my inspiration and guiding light for me to accomplish this work is greatly appreciated. I have been motivated to finish this project successfully for the loves and encouragement that they gave. Alhamdulillah.

Last but not least, to those who had been involved in the project, directly or indirectly, thank you so much.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Since the twenty first century, new millennium fibres are being created for various applications. These fibres are categorized into several classes such as high performance, high function, high Kansei and high-tech fibre (Hongu et. al, 2005). The uses of these advanced fibres are for the civil engineering, agricultural, medical and personal protective clothing applications. High performance fibres or sometimes called, super fibres are fibres with improved performance such as strength and heat resistance. These fibres have been improved to possess strength more than 20 g/den and modulus of more than 500 g/den (Hongu et. al, 2005). These properties are absolutely too high compared to other general-purpose fibres. Kevlar, Twaron and Technora are examples of fibres categorized as high performance fibres. Each of the fibres today has their own function in specific applications. For example, Kevlar fibre is used for bullet proof protection while carbon fibre is used for high performance composites.

Numerous researches are done to increase the quality and performance of the fibres. Some of the ways are by impregnating Kevlar fibre with shear thickening fluid (STF), thermoplastic film and polyamide (Rosen et. al, 2007) (Mayo et. al, 2009) (Varelidis et. al, 2000) while Twaron fabric is coated with NR latex (Ahmad et. al, 2007, 2012). Recently, many researches associated their works to NR latex for wide end-uses. The flexibility and durability of NR latex are the reasons why it is used rather than for cost reason. Previously, the performance of NR latex added with fillers has been investigated such as with carbon black, kaolins, and silica (Bellinghen et. al, 2004) (Hancock, 2004) (Bertrand et. al, 2004). The purpose of these fillers addition is to get the desired properties of the NR latex as fillers have various functions towards properties of latex. As nanotechnology emerges, NR latex is also being added with nanomaterials such as nanoclay, carbon nanotube (CNT) and nanosilica (Ansarifar et. al, 2004).