

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**THE EFFECT OF NBR LOADING ON
THE MATURATION TIME AND
MECHANICAL PROPERTIES OF
NR/NBR BLENDS**

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

Faculty of Applied Sciences

February 2019

ABSTRACT

It is a common practice to blend two elastomers of different properties with a view to combine the best features in terms of technical and economic values. Nitrile rubber (NBR) is blended with natural rubber (NR) to meet the requirements for very good oil resistance as well as conferring high mechanical strength. The former is a polar rubber and provides very good oil resistance, while the latter is non-polar and provides excellent mechanical strengths. Numerous works on rubber blends that have been reported are based on dry rubber while the work on rubber blends based on latex receives less attention. This research describes the work on NR latex and NBR latex blends. The maturation time were determined to identify the optimum maturation time required for preparation of NR/NBR latex blends of various ratios. NR and NBR were blended at ratios of 90:10, 85:15, 80:20, 75:25 and 50:50 to study their effect on the mechanical properties of the blends, in particular tensile and tear strengths which are the two important properties in rubber gloves. In addition, the oil swelling resistance was also observed. The glass transition temperatures, T_g of the NR/NBR blends were determined and their morphologies were studied to identify the blending conditions and the compatibility of the blends. The result of optimum maturation time was obtained at 15 hours for NR and NBR separately and hence to use the 15 hours as the optimum maturation time for blending of NR/NBR. The blending results indicated that the tensile strength (TS) showed a good linear relationship with the blends composition. It was found that the presence of ACN segments in the rubber diluted the overall crosslink concentrations of NBR blank and NR/NBR blends which led to the observed lower crosslink concentrations of NBR blank and NR/NBR blends. Both elongations at break (EB) and tear energy are affected by the presence of NBR. They showed a non-linear relationship with blends composition. The swelling resistance of the latex film was assessed in terms of volume change where the latex film was immersed in ASTM IRM 903 oil and indicated that with the increase NBR content, the swelling resistance of the latex was improved towards oil.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise is due to Allah SWT, Lord of the Universe. To Him do we humbly submit and to Him do we owe all our actions. May the piece and blessings of Allah be upon our beloved Prophet Muhammad SAW, his family and righteous companions.

First and foremost, my deepest gratitude to Allah s.w.t the Almighty for His permission that this study can be completed. My sincere gratitude and heartiest appreciation goes to my main supervisor Associated Prof. Dr. Dzaraini Kamarun, Professor Dr. Azemi Samsuri and the late Dr Che Mohamad Som for the supervision, advice, guidance, assistance, encouragements, and constant dedication during my period of study. I believe that their diligence in motivating is one of the paramount importances to this research of work.

I am grateful to the staffs of the Faculty of Applied Sciences for their cooperation and assistances. They have given me a lot of help and guidance especially in using laboratory equipment.

Special acknowledgements are addressed to my postgraduate colleagues for their constant encouragements throughout this research work. Many thanks for sharing the moment of joy throughout my study days.

Finally, I am very grateful to my dearest husband, Mr Mohd Faizal Nawawi, my son, Muhammad Nuh Firaz and family members for their patience and moral support towards the completion of the study.

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