

Study of the Effect of Grain Angle on the Compressive Strength of Red Meranti Timber (*Shorea spp.*)

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Abstract

The compressive strength of timber is the main parameter in designing truss system, for instance timber bridges, building roof, or column in buildings. In term of design of compression structural components according to the SNI 7973:2013, the corrected compression design value is a calculation of compressive strength parameters and correction factors, for example, wet service factors, temperature factors, column stability factors, and others. Timber as an orthotropic material has three main directions, therefore the angle of the timber grain has an influence on compressive strength. This research aims to study the effect of timber grain's angle on the compressive strength of Red Meranti wood (*Shorea spp.*) and develop an empirical equation to calculate the compressive strength of timber with the influence of the wood grain's angle. The test specimens were made based on the primary method reference for compression test namely 50mm x 50mm x 200mm (parallel to the grain type), according to ASTM D143-22 for test specimens with variations in fiber direction, namely 0°, 10°, 20° and 30°. Meanwhile, test objects with variations in fiber direction, namely 60°, 70°, 80° and 90°, were made the sizes of 50mm x 50mm x 150mm (perpendicular to the grain type). Testings were carried out using a Universal Testing Machine with test speed according to ASTM D143-22. All test objects were made in dry conditions (moisture content ranging from 14% to 16%). The conclusion obtained from this research are an empirical equation for calculating the compressive strength of Red Meranti timber with a predictor is the timber grain's angle, which are $F_{CY} = 14.01 - 0.119\theta + 0.000042\theta^2$ (in term of yield of proportional point) and $F_{CU} = 29.82 - 0.417\theta + 0.0018\theta^2$ (in term of peak or ultimate point). This equation provides benefits for academics and practitioners, especially in designing compression structural components especially with compression value as the main parameter.

Keywords: Compression Strength, grain angle of timber, Red Meranti, Compressive Design, ASTM D143.

Introduction

Compressive strength of timber is the main parameter in designing of timber bridges (truss system), building roof (truss system), or column in buildings. In term of design of compression structural components according to the SNI 7973:2013 (BSN, 2013), the corrected compression design value is a calculation of compressive strength parameters and correction factors, for example, wet service factors, temperature factors, column stability factors, and others. Timber as an orthotropic material has three main directions, thus the angle of the timber grain has an influence on compressive strength.

Previous research related to timber properties, especially the compressive strength of Meranti species wood, has been carried out several times, namely experimental research on timber compression testing with several variations in grain angles (Pranata and Suryoatmono, 2012) for 3 (three) wood species, namely Acacia, Meranti, and Keruing. The results being an alternative of von Mises-based equation for calculating the compressive strength of wood, however this study was limited to only a few grain's angles and a limited number of test objects. Another study was experimental and numerical research to study the effect of grain's angle on the compressive strength of Red Meranti wood (Pranata and Suryoatmono, 2013) with variations in fiber angles of 12°, 60°, and 80°.

Wood is generally assumed to behave as mutually perpendicular material principal axes, namely and tangential axes. Compressive strength is the compressive force that acts on a unit cross-sectional area of wood that is subjected to that force. Compressive strength of wood defines the limit of wood's ability to accept compressive loads until the wood fails. Previous study of Red Meranti (*Shorea spp.*) compression strength were conducted by Nakai (Nakai, 1985), Chik (Chik, 1988), Pranata and Suryoatmono (Pranata and Suryoatmono, 2012; Pranata and Suryoatmono, 2013), Tjondro *et al.* (Tjondro *et al.*, 2016), Azmi *et al.* (Azmi *et al.*, 2022), and wood database (Meier, 2024). Table 1 shows the summary of compression strength of Red Meranti (*Shorea spp.*) timber obtained from previous research histories.

Table 1. Compression strength of Red Meranti (*Shorea spp.*) Timber from previous research histories.

References	θ (°)	F_{CY} (MPa)	F_{CU} (MPa)
Nakai, 1985	0	31.60	36.50
Azmi <i>et al.</i> , 2022	0	31.30	-
Meier, 2024	0	33.90	-
Tjondro <i>et al.</i> ,	0	30.78	41.21
	90	7.51	-
Chik, 1988	0	-	39.60
	90	-	4.14

References	θ (°)	F_{CY} (MPa)	F_{CU} (MPa)
	0	33.67	-
	5	31.16	-
Pranata and Suryoatmono, 2012; Pranata and Suryoatmono, 2013	10	28.55	-
	12	27.82	33.30
	60	8.52	9.10
	80	7.68	8.10
	90	7.17	-

Currently, the parameters for compressive strength of timber are known parallel to the grain (grain's angle of 0°) or longitudinal direction, and compressive strength perpendicular to the grain (grain angle of 90°) or radial direction. These two parameters can be obtained from experimental testing in the laboratory using testing standards including ASTM D143-22 (ASTM, 2022) with primary and secondary test methods.

This research aims to study the effect of timber grain's angle on the compressive strength of Red Meranti wood (*Shorea spp.*) and develop an empirical equation to calculate the compressive strength of timber with the influence of wood grain's angle.

Materials and Methods

The scope of the research were that:

1. The timber studied is the Red Meranti species (*Shorea spp.*).
2. The total number of test objects are 45 test objects.
3. The test specimens were made based on the primary method reference for compression test specimens reference method 50mm x 50mm x 200mm (parallel to the grain type), according to ASTM D143-22 regulations for test specimens with variations in fiber direction, namely 0°, 10°, 20° and 30°. Meanwhile, test objects with variations in fiber direction, namely 60°, 70°, 80° and 90°, were made with test object sizes of 50mm x 50mm x 150mm (perpendicular to the grain type).
4. Testings are carried out using a Universal Testing Machine with test speed according to ASTM D143-22.
5. All test objects were made in dry conditions (moisture content ranging from 14% to 16%).
6. The compressive strength referred to in this research is the compressive stress calculated under peak or ultimate load condition (F_{CU}) and proportional load condition (F_{CY}).
7. Test objects are made from timber log, with angle dimensions adjusted for testing purposes.

Compression Tests

Testing was carried out using a Universal Testing Machine (UTM) HT-9501 Electro-Hydraulic Servo (maximum load capacity 1000 kN) with output data in the form of a history curve of the relationship between compressive axial

load and axial deformation. Figure 1 shows the test equipment used in this research. Figure 2a shows a schematic history of the load vs deformation relationship curve obtained from experimental test results.

Next, the curve was then converted into a curve for the relationship between stress and strain, where stress (engineering stress) is the compressive axial force divided by the initial cross-sectional area, while strain is the change in length (in this case shortening) divided by the initial length of the test object. Figure 2b shows a schematic of the stress vs strain relationship curve resulting from the conversion of the load vs deformation relationship curve.

Stress and strain were calculated using Equation 1 and Equation 2 (Goodno and Gere, 2021).

$$\sigma = P / A \quad (1)$$

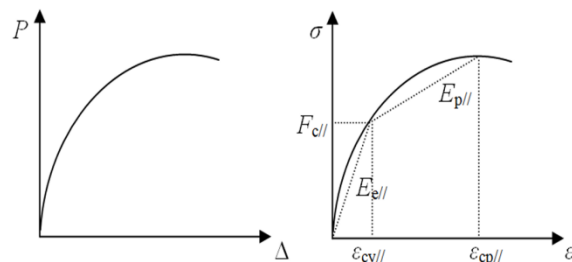
$$\varepsilon = \Delta / L_0 \quad (2)$$

with σ is engineering stress (MPa), P is axial compressive load (N), A is specimen's cross-section (mm²), ε is strain (mm/mm), Δ is the change in length of shortening (mm), and L_0 is initial length of the specimen (mm).

The testing speed (according to the ASTM D143's primary method) for the test object type parallel to the grain was a strain rate of 0.003 mm/mm per minute or a displacement rate of 0.6 mm per minute. While for the test object type perpendicular to the grain, the speed was a displacement rate of 0.305 mm per minute (ASTM, 2022).



Figure 1. Instrumen for testing using Universal Testing Machine (UTM)



(a). Load-Deformation Curve (b). Stress-Strain Curve

Figure 2. Idealization of the axial load vs axial deformation curve and normal (axial) stress vs strain (Pranata and Suryoatmono, 2013).

Proportional Load and Ultimate Load

The proportional point indicates when material behavior changes from elastic to plastic. One of the methods to calculate the proportional point is the Yasumura and Kawai Method (Munoz *et al.*, 2010). The calculated initial stiffness was between 10% and 40% of the ultimate or peak load. A straight line between 40% and 90% of the peak load and a straight-line tangent to the load-displacement curve, then parallel to the 40% and 90% second line, were determined.

In this research, this method was used to determine the proportional load divided by a cross-section's area, to calculate the compression strength in terms of yield or proportional strength. While the compression strength in terms of ultimate strength was calculated using peak load, divided by cross-section's area..

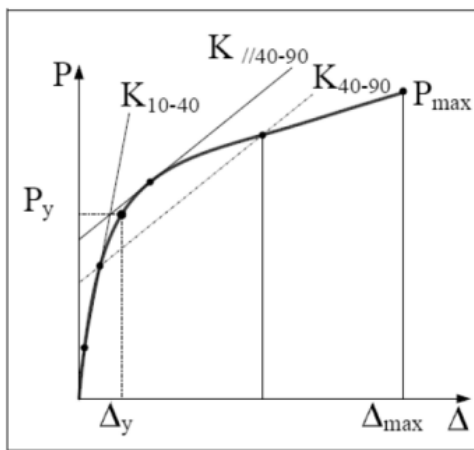


Figure 3. Yasumura and Kawai Method to determine the proportional load of timber (Munoz *et al.*, 2010).

Polynomial Regression Analysis

Several parameters for statistical data, which are mean, standard deviation, and coefficient of variation, are needed for analysis. Standard deviation measures how they are distributed around the arithmetic mean (Heumann *et al.*, 2017). A low standard deviation value indicates that the values are highly concentrated around the mean. Meanwhile, the coefficient of variation (usually expressed as a percentage) is a ratio between the standard deviation and the average value. In this research, polynomial regression analysis was carried out with Minitab software (LLC, 2023).

Results and Discussion

The test specimens with an angle of less than 45° were made and tested based on the primary method reference for compression test specimens reference method parallel to the grain type according to ASTM D143-22 regulations. This method used for test specimens with variations in fiber direction, namely 0°, 10°, 20° and 30°.

Meanwhile, test objects with an angle of more than 45° with variations in fiber direction, namely 60°, 70°, 80° and 90°, were made and tested with perpendicular to the grain type in accordance with ASTM D143-22. All test objects were made in dry conditions (moisture content ranging from 14% to 16%). Test objects are made from timber log, with angle dimensions adjusted for testing purposes.

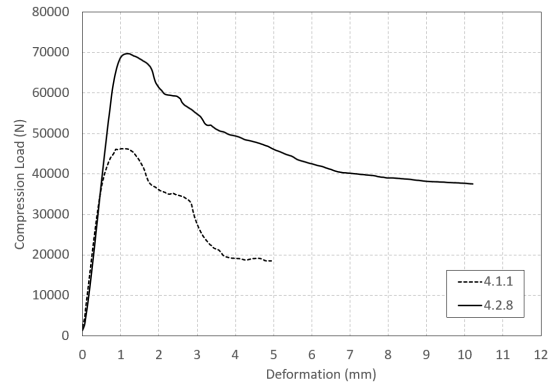


Figure 4. Tests results: Axial load vs deformation curve, obtained from experimental test for specimen 4.1.1 (grain's angle of 30°) and specimen 4.2.8 (grain's angle of 10°)

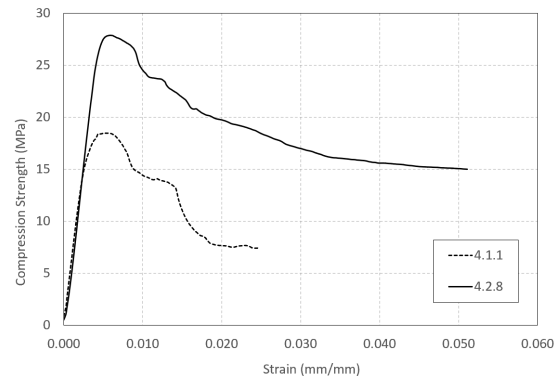


Figure 5. Conversion results: Stress vs strain curves of specimen 4.1.1 (grain's angle of 30°) and specimen 4.2.8 (grain's angle of 10°)

Figure 4 shows an example result obtained from compression test which is axial load vs deformation curve. Figure 5 shows a conversion results, which is calculation of stress and strain curves. The results above show that the test object with a lower grain angle produces a higher peak load than the test object with a larger grain angle.

Figure 6 shows an example of compression test using parallel to the grain method, while Figure 7 shows an example of compression test specimen with grain angle of 70°. Figure 8 shows some of test results of the specimens with dimension 50mm x 50mm x 200mm, while Figure 9 shows some of test results of the specimens with dimension 50mm x 50mm x 200mm.

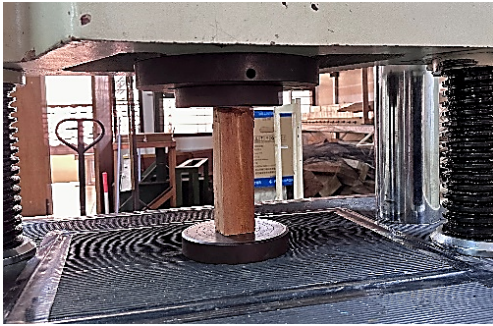


Figure 6. Experimental tests for 50 x 50 x 200mm specimen, using test method of compression parallel to the grain

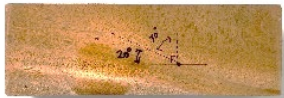


Figure 7. Example of 70° grain angle of Red Meranti timber specimen



Figure 8. Results of failure mode for some 50 x 50 x 200mm specimens (compression parallel to the grain method of test)



Figure 9. Results of failure mode for some 50 x 50 x 150mm specimens (compression perpendicular to the grain method of test)

In this research, the compression strength were calculated in term of proportional load. The method to determine the yield point were carried out by using Yasumura and Kawai method (Munoz et al., 2010), and in term of peak of ultimate load. Table 1 shows the results of calculation of the proportional load, peak load, deformation at proportional load, deformation at peak load, and the grain's angle for all 45 specimens. Table 2 shows the results of calculation of the stress and strain in term of proportional stress and peak stress using Equation 1 and Equation 2.

Table 2. Tests results: Load and deformation obtained from experimental tests and calculation using Yasumura and Kawai Method

Specimens	P_y (N)	P_{peak} (N)	D_y (mm)	D_{peak} (mm)	θ (°)
1	14313.0	26650.6	0.3	5.0	70
2	7932.0	18839.9	0.7	6.0	80
3	18834.1	32409.2	0.4	6.2	60
4	13788.4	25203.8	1.5	6.0	70
5	15479.0	25547.9	0.5	6.0	70
6	29603.0	46987.6	0.3	0.8	30
7	28950.5	46224.6	0.4	1.0	30
8	24203.2	43516.9	0.3	0.8	30
9	123246.1	69692.6	1.6	1.2	10
10	5906.3	14661.3	0.7	6.0	90
11	17531.7	39520.9	0.8	6.1	30
12	16969.8	32393.3	0.5	6.0	60
13	10581.1	21456.7	0.5	6.0	80
14	6994.9	13948.3	1.5	6.0	90
15	37925.6	62397.2	0.4	0.8	10
16	38100.2	53651.3	0.5	0.9	20
17	32993.8	53975.8	0.3	0.8	20
18	56268.3	62644.0	0.7	1.1	10
19	16092.7	33444.2	0.4	6.1	60
20	6041.2	14045.7	1.3	6.1	90
21	5608.1	13160.7	1.2	6.1	90
22	18349.4	27524.6	1.2	6.1	70
23	36903.4	73806.8	0.3	0.8	0
24	39992.2	79984.5	0.8	1.7	0
25	29505.0	77361.8	0.8	1.6	0
26	26908.8	70598.3	0.4	1.1	10
27	28731.6	78258.5	0.5	1.3	0
28	29826.7	80297.5	0.5	1.3	0
29	21269.1	48193.7	0.4	6.1	30
30	24211.4	53836.4	0.5	6.1	20
31	44493.6	74663.0	0.4	0.7	0
32	32710.6	65421.2	0.5	14.5	10
33	40336.6	52428.3	0.4	0.9	20
34	35617.8	71235.7	5.3	1.1	10
35	12995.6	32007.6	0.5	6.1	60
36	6229.3	11832.2	1.4	6.1	90
37	15569.4	27696.7	0.5	6.1	70
38	13269.9	25523.0	0.4	6.2	70
39	11873.1	21078.7	0.7	6.1	80
40	9391.3	17105.2	0.5	6.1	90
41	11103.5	19313.0	0.4	6.1	80

Specimens	P_y (N)	P_{peak} (N)	D_y (mm)	D_{peak} (mm)	θ (°)
42	18469.9	44526.6	0.6	2.2	30
43	79513.1	46903.8	1.6	1.2	20
44	15292.9	30585.8	0.3	0.9	60
45	19199.5	31501.1	0.3	1.0	60

Table 3. Conversion results: Stress and Strain at proportional and ultimate limit conditions

Specimens	F_{CY} (MPa)	F_{CU} (MPa)	ϵ_y (mm/mm)	ϵ_U (mm/mm)	θ (°)
1	5.6	10.4	0.002	0.025	70
2	3.1	7.4	0.003	0.030	80
3	7.4	12.7	0.002	0.031	60
4	5.4	9.9	0.008	0.030	70
5	6.1	10.1	0.002	0.030	70
6	11.6	18.4	0.002	0.005	30
7	11.3	18.0	0.002	0.007	30
8	9.6	17.2	0.002	0.006	30
9	13.9	27.8	0.010	0.008	10
10	2.3	5.8	0.004	0.030	90
11	7.0	15.7	0.004	0.031	30
12	6.8	12.9	0.003	0.030	60
13	4.2	8.4	0.003	0.030	80
14	2.7	5.5	0.007	0.030	90
15	14.8	24.4	0.003	0.005	10
16	15.2	21.4	0.003	0.006	20
17	13.2	21.7	0.002	0.006	20
18	12.1	24.6	0.005	0.008	10
19	6.6	13.7	0.002	0.030	60
20	2.5	5.7	0.007	0.030	90
21	2.2	5.2	0.006	0.031	90
22	7.2	10.8	0.006	0.030	70
23	15.0	29.9	0.002	0.005	0
24	15.7	31.4	0.005	0.012	0
25	11.7	30.6	0.005	0.011	0
26	10.6	27.9	0.003	0.007	10
27	11.5	31.3	0.003	0.009	0
28	12.0	32.4	0.003	0.009	0
29	8.8	19.2	0.002	0.030	30
30	9.4	20.9	0.002	0.030	20
31	17.4	29.1	0.002	0.005	0
32	12.8	25.5	0.003	0.096	10
33	15.4	20.1	0.002	0.006	20
34	13.6	27.2	0.035	0.008	10
35	5.3	13.1	0.002	0.030	60

Specimens	F_{CY} (MPa)	F_{CU} (MPa)	ϵ_y (mm/mm)	ϵ_U (mm/mm)	θ (°)
36	2.6	4.9	0.007	0.030	90
37	6.4	11.4	0.002	0.031	70
38	5.4	10.4	0.002	0.031	70
39	4.9	8.6	0.003	0.030	80
40	3.9	7.0	0.002	0.030	90
41	4.5	7.9	0.002	0.031	80
42	7.6	18.2	0.004	0.015	30
43	9.6	19.2	0.011	0.008	20
44	6.3	12.6	0.002	0.006	60
45	7.8	12.8	0.002	0.007	60

Figure 10 shows the result obtained experimentally (F_{CY}) and the equation-curve obtained from the polynomial regression analysis to predict the value of compression strength of Red Meranti timber in term of proportional or yield point, this empirical equation result shows the relationship between the compression strength (unit in MPa) and the grain angle θ (unit in degrees). The coefficient of R^2 is generally it is relatively near 100%, for timber this is considered normal because timber is a material that comes from nature. The regression equation for the curve in Figure 10 is shown in Equation 3 and Equation 4.

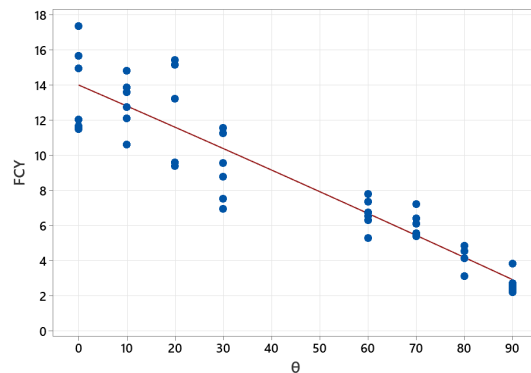


Figure 10. Results obtained from polynomial regression analysis.

$$F_{CY} = 14.01 - 0.119\theta + 0.000042\theta^2 \quad (3)$$

$$R^2 = 85.52\% \quad (4)$$

Figure 11 shows the result obtained experimentally (F_{CU}) and the equation-curve obtained from the polynomial regression analysis to predict the value of compression strength of Red Meranti timber in term of peak or ultimate point, this empirical equation result shows the relationship between the compression strength (unit in MPa) and the grain angle θ (unit in degrees). The coefficient of R^2 is generally it is relatively near 100%, for timber this is considered normal because timber is a material that comes from nature. The regression equation for the curve in Figure 10 is shown in Equation 5 and Equation 6.

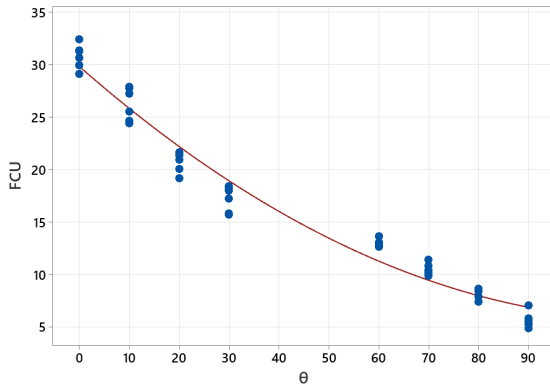


Figure 11. Results obtained from polynomial regression analysis.

$$F_{CU} = 29.82 - 0.417\theta + 0.0018\theta^2 \quad (5)$$

$$R^2 = 96.56\% \quad (6)$$

Conclusions

The conclusion obtained from this research is an empirical equation for calculating the compressive strength of Red Meranti timber (*Shorea spp.*) with a predictor, namely the wood grain's angle, namely $F_{CY} = 14.01 - 0.119\theta + 0.000042\theta^2$ with $R^2 = 85.52\%$ in term of yield or proportional point. While in term of peak or ultimate load, an empirical equation is $F_{CU} = 29.82 - 0.417\theta + 0.0018\theta^2$ with $R^2 = 96.56\%$.

F_{CY} or compression strength in term of proportional load value is an useful parameter for design of column or compression member in timber building, timber bridge truss, or timber roof truss in accordance with SNI 7973:2013. This equation provides benefits for academics and practitioners, especially in designing compression structural components, which is the compression design value parameter.

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