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LOW-VELOCITY IMPACT OF COMPOSITE SANDWICH PLATE WITH FACESHEET INDENTATION DESCRIPTION

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Composite sandwich structures are applied in many engineering fields due to their high strength and stiffness but lightweight properties. There are currently not many studies that simultaneously consider both indentation and strain failure in the composite sandwich plate especially in presence of impact loading. Such knowledge is necessary to determine the facesheet strain after impact in order to find out whether the facesheet is totally failed as a result of impact. The purpose of this study is to model numerically the impact of a fixed-end composite sandwich plate subjected to low-velocity impact at the center. The faceheets are made from Hercules AW193-PW prepreg consisting of AS4 fibers in a 3501-6 matrix (carbon/epoxy) with a stacking sequence of [0/90]. The honeycomb core is made from Nomex (Ciba-Geigy). Type of the core is Nomex 3501-6. The problem with five different honeycomb core, respectively, are considered in determining the indentation, strain failure and displacement are explored for various facesheet and core properties. It is found that the honeycomb core and ply thickness reduce the indentation on the facesheet. The indentation and strain failure parameters are improved by increasing the thickness of the core.

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Keywords: Composite sandwich plate; honeycomb core; indentation; strain failure

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Composite sandwich structures are used in many engineering fields and are becoming increasingly popular due to their high strength and stiffness as well as reduced unit mass [1, 2]. A composite sandwich structure consists of two facesheets that are separated by a core. The

facesheets are also bonded by matrix materials such as resin. The core layer is usually made of lightweight and thick but less stiff materials, such as Nomex honeycomb cores, fiberglass reinforced thermoplastic, aluminum and foam-type cores. The top and bottom facesheets are

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commonly thin but stiff material from light alloys, e.g., aluminum and fiber-reinforced composites [3].

The composite sandwich structure may expose to several high-velocity impact. Indentation and maintenance of the composite sandwich structure may experience indentation due to the low-velocity impacts of tools drop, machineries mishandling, heavy materials falls and so on [4].

Thanks to many attractive structure properties, the use of composite sandwich structure is very beneficial in engineering field especially in civil, marine, aircraft and aerospace industries. As a product, its application helps in terms of cost effectiveness and environmental friendliness. For example, a vehicle fabricated from lightweight structures and indirectly consume less energy. The use of lightweight vehicle can reduce the impact as well as in the construction field, sandwich structure is used in construction.

Thus far, there are many modeling of composite sandwich analyses. One of them is by Meidell [5], which investigated the impact with honeycomb core sandwich weight design. In this study, equations were formulated and found with errors less than 10% fraction for effective longitudinal and transverse and effective transversal Young's modulus, respectively. Abdolrahim et al. [6] carried out a research on comparison between experimental and numerical (finite element method) studies of low-velocity impact on sandwich panels with honeycomb core. Two boundary conditions were considered, which were rigidly supported and four sided clamped. The model was simulated using ANSYS. It was found that the numerical results were reliable and approximate with experimental results with error range from 3% to 12%. And, the shear failure of the core was the first failure that took place in almost all the tests. Another research regarding the low-velocity impact response of composite sandwich plate was conducted by Foo et al. [7]. Two types of plate namely square and circular aluminum sandwich plates were investigated experimentally using energy-balanced method and finite element model using ABAQUS software. It was found that in the numerical modeling, the simulation runtime for circular plate was reduced to 25% compared to square plate. In terms of energy absorption, the energy absorbed by the plates was independent of the core density. Besides that, as the density of the core increases, the impact damaged areas in both core and facesheets were reduced. Continuous core crushing, delamination and fiber fracture will occur if more loading was applied. Also, the predicted load-time and load-deflection histories were found to be more accurate by implementing the

combination of energy-balanced approach and impulse-momentum equation. Williamson and Lagace [8] experimentally studied the responses of honeycomb sandwich panels under impact loading. The experiment was performed using static indentation tests. Two boundary conditions were considered in this study; fully backed and two-sided clamped. The indenter shape was hemispherical-nose tups or cylinder. It was found that the top facesheet was damaged first before the core. The core was damaged after the penetration took place on the top facesheet. In addition, for the two-sided clamped composite sandwich panels, the bottom facesheet was not damaged before the failure of both top facesheet and core because of low strain after impact. HooFatt and Park [9] studied composite sandwich panels with symmetric orthotropic facesheet that has a constant modulus under low-velocity impact. The results showed that the failure mode that would be influenced by boundary conditions of indenter as well as properties of both facesheets. The results from this study were compared with the experimental results. Ju et al. [10] analyzed the behaviors of different sandwich panels of two types of materials; aluminum and Kevlar. The single layer design showed negative degrees of delamination results. By using finite element analysis and Kueh [11] carried out the analysis on the low-velocity impact at the center of laminate composite plate with various lamination schemes. This paper only focuses on the delamination failure of the plate. It was found that an increase in the plies angles difference produce greater maximum displacement and delamination area. Hosseini and Khalili [4] studied the indentation and low-velocity impact responses of fully backed composite sandwich plates analytically, which involved nonlinear analysis. The indenter/impactor used was rigid flat-ended cylindrical. An improved contact law (contact force – indentation relation) was introduced in this study. A spring-mass-dashpot model was performed for the analysis of low-velocity impact of composite sandwich plates. It was observed that the results from this study were compatible with the experiment results from Williamson and Lagace [8]. Also, this study showed that the stacking sequence of the facesheet affects the static indentation and impact responses of the composite sandwich plate by only a little.

So far, not many researches consider indentation in the modeling of the composite sandwich plate. Although there was a study on indentation of composite sandwich plate, it did not consider the strain failure of the structure. Strain failure is related to the indentation in determining the failure of the structure in terms of strain. The occurrence of indentation on the composite sandwich plate does not necessary mean a consequent failure in strain. In this research, the main concerns include; the

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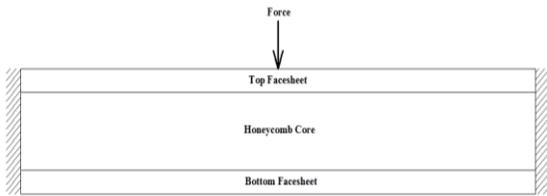
formulation for modeling the composite sandwich plate by means of finite element, investigation on strain failure, indentation and global displacement of composite sandwich plate and parametric studies on composite sandwich plate. The formulation has been limited to the core with a honeycomb configuration, loading at the center, low-velocity impact, flat-ended cylinder impactor and fixed supported plate.

2.0 MODEL DESCRIPTION

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In accordance with as shown in composite skin with fiber orientations of 0° and 90° at the top and bottom, respectively. Type of core used in this study is honeycomb core. The properties of the facesheets, honeycomb core and impactor are shown in Table 1. The plate has a square cross-section of 102×102×26.1



(a) Sideview of the composite sandwich plate

mm with a fixed-end boundary condition along all edges.

2.1 Modeling Process

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Figure 1

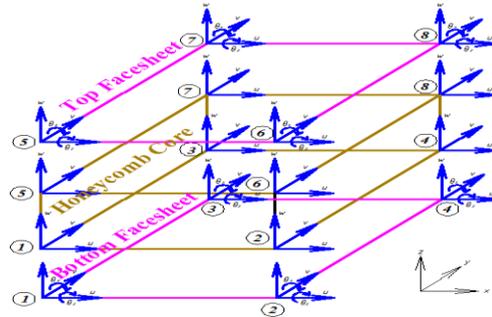
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the finite element technique

applied to the finite element technique plate under low-velocity impact. In detail, the model is described the followings.

2.2 Formulation of Stiffness Matrix

The stiffness matrix of composite sandwich plate is formed by combining the stiffness matrix of the top facesheet with the upper half of honeycomb core and the bottom facesheet with the lower half of honeycomb core.



(b) Global assembly of composite sandwich plate sub-element

Figure 1 Fixed-end composite sandwich plate model under an impact

Table 1 The properties of the facesheets, honeycomb core and impactor

Properties	Details
The Properties of the Facesheets:	
Material	Hercules AW193-PW prepreg consisting (carbon/epoxy)
Fiber Orientation	Cross-ply laminates – [0/90]
Ply Thickness, t_f	0.175 mm
Density	1.6173×10^{-6} kg/mm ³
Longitudinal Extensional Modulus, E_1	1.42×10^5 N/mm ²
Transverse Extensional Modulus, E_2	9.8×10^3 N/mm ²
	0.3
	7.1×10^3 N/mm ²
	0.0112
The Properties of the honeycomb Core:	
Material	HRH 10 1/8-3.0 Nomex honeycomb (Ciba-Geigy)
Geometry	Honeycomb (Hexagonal)
Thickness	25.4 mm
Density	4.8×10^{-8} kg/mm ³
Young's modulus, E_c	3500 N/mm ²
Cell diameter	3.2 mm
Wall thickness	0.063 mm
Crushing resistance	1.389 N/mm ²
The Properties of the Impactor:	
Material	Case-hardened steel
Shape of Indenter	flat-ended cylinder
Mass	1.612 kg
Diameter	25.4 mm
Initial Velocity	1.2 m/s
Impact duration	0.06

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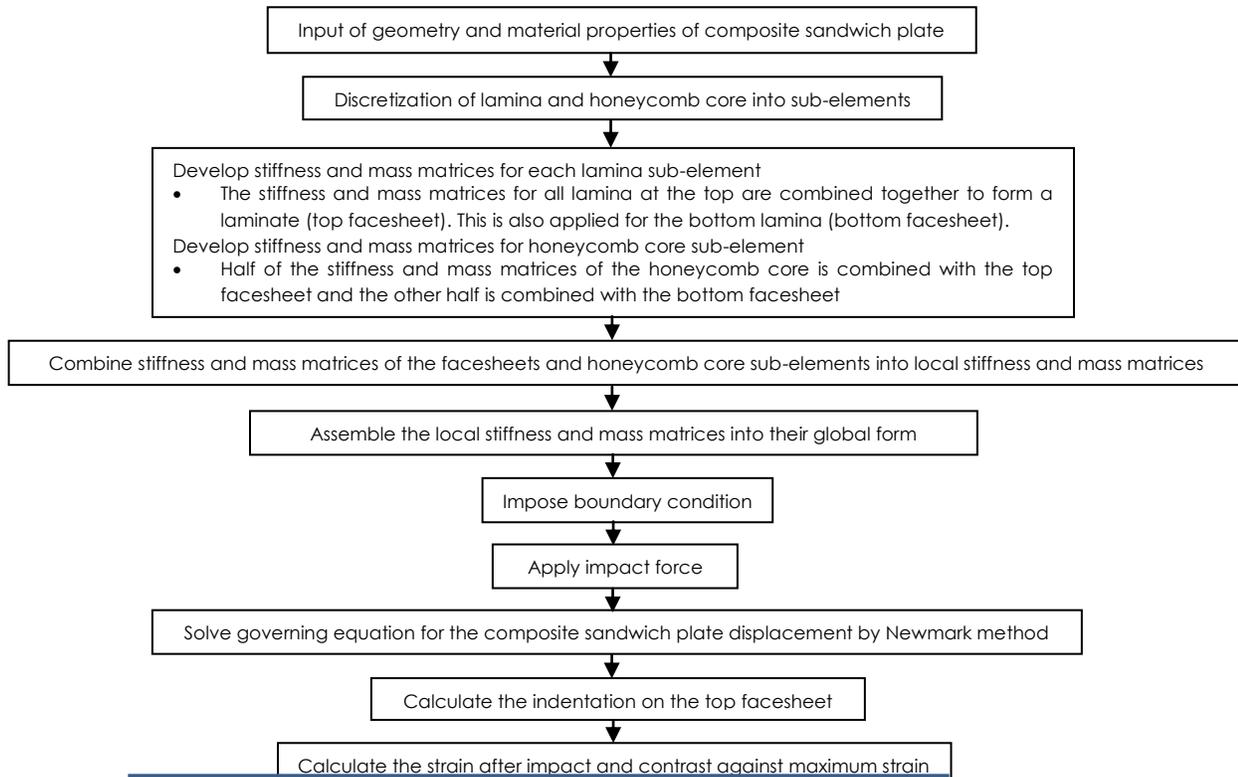


Figure 2

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core under low-velocity impact

2.2.1 Stiffness Expression for Facesheets

The stiffness using the A isoparametric formulation.

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$$K_f = \iint [B_i^T (A)_{ABD} B_i + B_i^T (B)_{ABD} B_o + B_o^T (B)_{ABD} B_i + B_o^T (D)_{ABD} B_o] |J| d\zeta d\eta \quad (1)$$

where B_i is the in-plane strain-displacement matrix, B_o is the out-of-plane strain-displacement matrix, $(A)_{ABD}$ is the extensional stiffness, $(B)_{ABD}$ is the coupling stiffness, $(D)_{ABD}$ is the bending stiffness and J is the Jacobian matrix.

2.2.2 Stiffness Expression for Honeycomb Core

The stiffness matrix for the honeycomb core, K_{core} , is

$$K_{core} = \frac{1}{h} \iint B_{core}^T D_{core} B_{core} |J| d\zeta d\eta \quad (2)$$

$$D_{core} = \begin{bmatrix} G_{xz} & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & G_{yz} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & E_z \end{bmatrix} \quad (3)$$

where h is the thickness of honeycomb core, B_{core} is the element strain-displacement matrix, D_{core} is the constitutive matrix of honeycomb core and J is the Jacobian matrix.

2.2.3 Mass Matrix

The mass matrix of composite sandwich plate is formed by combining the mass matrix of the top facesheet with the upper half of honeycomb core and the bottom facesheet with the lower half of honeycomb core. The consistent mass method is used.

$$M_i = \rho_i t_i \iint N_i^T N_i |J| d\zeta d\eta \quad ; j = f \text{ for facesheet and } i = c \text{ for honeycomb core} \quad (4)$$

where ρ is the density of material, t is the material thickness, N_i is the element shape function and J is the Jacobian matrix.

2.2.4 Impact Force

The approximate impact force formula, $F(t)$, is described as

$$F(t) = \frac{mv_o\pi}{t_o} \sin \frac{\pi t}{t_o} \quad (5)$$

where m is the impactor mass, v_o is the initial velocity, t is the time taken and t_o is the impact duration.

2.2.5 Contact Force – Indentation Relation

To describe contact force – indentation relation, we have [4]

$$P = \frac{8\sqrt{E_1 q \delta^{3/2}}}{3} + \pi q R^2 + \frac{1}{15} \delta (16N_{xx} + 16N_{yy} + 16N_{xy}) \quad (6)$$

$$E_1 = \frac{8}{45} A_{11} + \frac{8}{45} A_{22} + \frac{32}{49} A_{66} + \frac{16}{49} A_{12} + \frac{2}{3} A_{16} + \frac{2}{3} A_{26} \quad (7)$$

where P is the contact force, q is the crushing resistance of honeycomb core, δ is the indentation, R is the radius of the indenter, N is the initial in-plane forces acting on the edge of the composite sandwich plate and A is the extensional stiffness of ABD matrix of the facesheet.

2.2.6 Strain Failure

Strain failure analysis is only carried out for the top facesheet. The strain after impact is compared with the maximum strain. If the strain after impact is more than the maximum strain, the lamina is considered damaged and vice versa. The formulation of the strain after impact, ϵ , is

$$\epsilon = \epsilon_o + z\kappa \quad (8)$$

Where ϵ_o is the mid-plane strain of laminate, z is the through thickness direction of laminate and κ is the mid-plane curvature of laminate.

3.0 RESULTS AND

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3.1 Verification

Figure 3 shows the verification of contact force – indentation relation. From the graph, the indentation from the analytical prediction by Hosseini and Khalili [4] is present in the graph. It is evident that the applicability of the present model.

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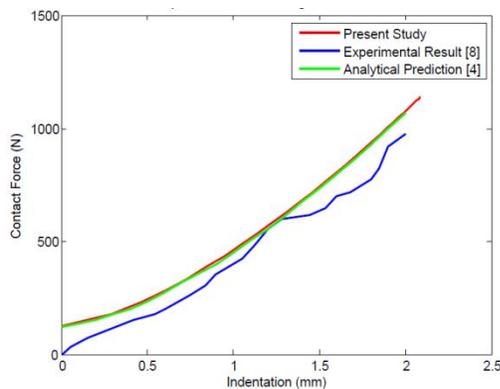


Figure 3 Verification of contact force – indentation relation

3.2 Strain Failure

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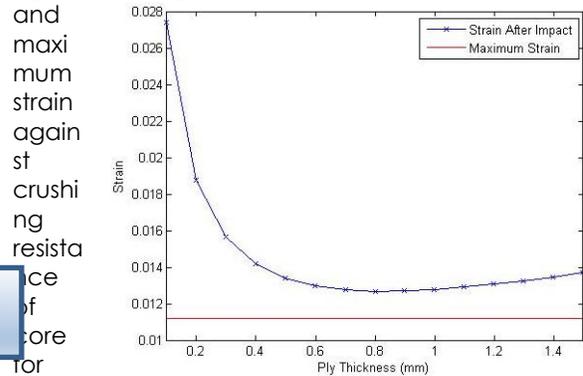
For currently considered case, Table 2 shows the strain failure of lamina of the top facesheet. Both laminas (0° and 90°) exceed the maximum strain of 0.0112. Therefore, both laminas cannot withstand the impact and fail.

Table 2 Strain failure of lamina of the top facesheet

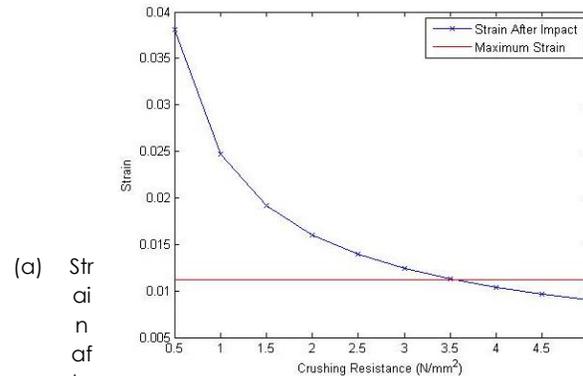
Lamina	Fiber Orientation	Strain	Maximum Strain Exceeded?
1	0°	0.020068	Yes
2	90°	0.015663	Yes

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Several improve the lamina from severe failure due to the impact, including the number of ply, ply thickness of top facesheet and crushing strength of core. Strain after impact for first ply (0°) is plotted as shown in Figure 4(a). Figure 4(b) shows the strain after impact and maximum strain against crushing resistance.



Strain after impact against crushing resistance for first ply (0°).



Strain after impact against crushing resistance for first ply (0°).

- (b) Strain after impact against crushing resistance of core for first ply (0°)

Figure 4 Ply thickness and crushing resistance effects on strain failure analysis

It is obvious that ply thickness improves the experienced strain after impact although all thicknesses produce strain higher than that of maximum. The most effective parameter that can improve the strain failure of sandwich composite plate is the crushing strength of the core. The minimum crushing strength that can be used to avoid strain failure is approximately equal to 3.557 N/mm² limited to the model configuration studied in this study.

3.3 Relationship between Thickness and Young's Modulus of Core

Figure 5 shows the relationship of d/L against $(E_c/A_{11})h$ where d is the length of ply thickness, E_c is the modulus of core, A_{11} is the extensional stiffness matrix, and h is the thickness of core. It can be seen that as the crushing resistance of core increases, the displacement of composite sandwich plate is and vice versa.

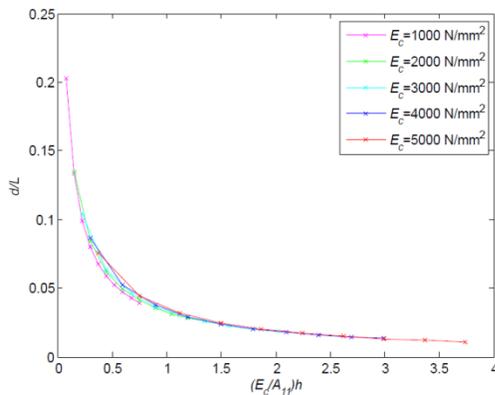


Figure 5 d/L against $(E_c/A_{11})h$

3.4 Relationship between Thickness of Core

Figure 6 shows the non-dimensional graph of δ/L against $(q/A_{11})h$, where δ is the indentation and q is the crushing resistance.

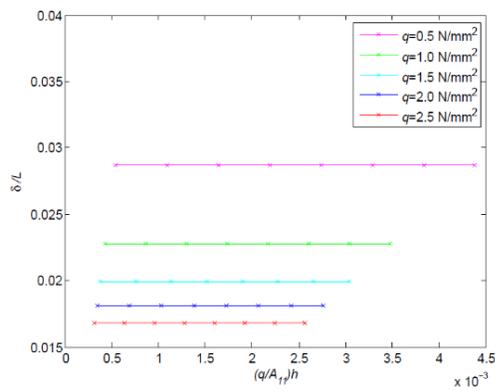


Figure 6 δ/L against $(q/A_{11})h$

Based on the thickness of the core is not affecting the indentation on the composite sandwich plate. Only the crushing resistance of core affects the indentation performance. It can be clearly seen that as the crushing resistance increases, the indentation will decrease and vice versa.

3.5 Relationship between Crushing Resistance and Ply Thickness

Figure 7 shows the relationship of δ/L against $(q/A_{11})t_f$, where t_f is the ply thickness. By increasing the ply thickness of the top facesheet, the extensional stiffness matrix, A_{11} , will also increase, which results in smaller $(q/A_{11})t_f$ and this indirectly leads to a smaller indentation. For currently considered case, the relationship of indentation with respect to core crushing resistance, top facesheet thickness, and top facesheet extensional modulus is found to be

$$\delta = \frac{1497.5q}{A_{11}} t_f L \tag{9}$$

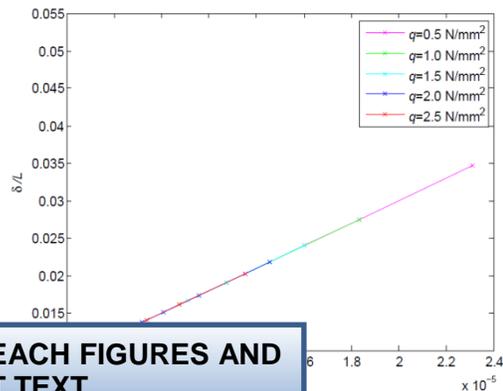


Figure 7 δ/L against $(q/A_{11})t_f$

4.0 CONCLUSION

- From the concluded:
- (a) The formulation for composite honeycomb core sandwich plate under low-velocity impact with the indentation and strain failure descriptions are developed.
 - (b) The validity of the present formulation is verified with existing modeled and experimental results.

- (c) The indentation on the top facesheet can be reduced by increasing the number of ply, ply thickness as well as crushing resistance of core.
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