# COCONUT SHEEL CARBONIZATION PROCESS USING SMOKELESS KILN

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### COCONUT SHEEL CARBONIZATION PROCESS USING SMOKELESS KILN

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Abstract. Coconut shells charcoal has high economic and environmental value if processed properly. Activated carbon and bricquete are the most utilization of the coconut shell. This valuable products obtained after carbonization process of the coconut shell. The traditional carbonization process uses a kiln to burn the coconut shell, but this burning process creates plenty of smoke that pollutes the environment and disturbs human activities. To solve this problem and to increace its environmental value, a carbonization kiln in which produce less smoke is required. In this research, a kiln made of a steel drum equipped with a sealer belt to keep the burning smoke trapped inside the kiln is fabricated. The result showed that the addition of this belt effectively reduce the smoke significantly and more friendly to the environment. For the production efficiency of the charcoal, a 15 kg coconut shell produces 6 kg of charcoal, a 20 kg coconut shell produces 9 kg of charcoal, and a 20 kg coconut shell produces 12 kg of charcoal in 150 minutes, with a percentage of 40%, 45% and 48% carbonization respectively. Finally, it is proved that burning with a mass of 25 kg is the optimal result yielding 48% of charcoal content.

Keywords: Smokeless kiln, coconut charcoal, carbonization

1. Introduction

Coconut (*Cocos nucifera*) is one of the most contributing plants to the local economy, where about 92 countries all around the world planted this variety on approximately 11.8 million hectares of land (Doe et al., 2022). Lies in the tropical area, Indonesia has become one of the largest coconut producers, with 3.37 million hectares of this coconut planted (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2021). The utilization of this plant is still being studied and developed to gain optimum result (Budi, 2011; Intara et al., 2021; Ahmad et al., 2022). The coconut consists of coconut water, meat, a shell and a thick coir, where the weight of the coconut shell is about 15-19% of the overall weight (Suhartana, 2006). Even though the coconut shells and coir are considered waste, all parts of this coconut still have economic value, and the shell can process as activated carbon or biofuel (Arena et al., 2016). In most Asian and African countries, the coconut is used as cooking ingredients while the shells are left unused and become waste. Coconut shell waste usually just piled up and could cause environmental issues (Ikumapayi et al., 2020; Ningsih & Hajar, 2019; Soka & Oyekola, 2020). It is considered to be essential to increase the value of coconut waste by converting it into more valuable products to help solve environmental issues especially when carbonized in a proper

way (Ahmad et al., 2022; Parshiwanikar & Handa, 2022). This effort could increase the local economy and in line with the world's SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) (Susanto et al., 2022). The charcoal also have several advantages such as can be strored for long time, high heating value and cheap (Sangsuk et al., 2020).

One of the easiest methods to increase the value of coconut waste is to process the coconut shell into charcoal. Processing coconut shells into charcoal is one of the business opportunities that can be considered because it has many functions such as fuel, beauty products, activated carbon, briquettes, water filters, and many others (Ikumapayi et al., 2020).

Coconut shells charcoal (CSC) has an excellent opportunity to produce as raw materials for activated carbon (AC) where production quantity in Indonesia alone could reach 66,200 tonnes annually, 12% of all the activated carbon raw materials source (Arena et al., 2016; Lutfi et al., 2021). The enormous application of AC for water purification and wastewater treatment has created a higher demand for this product, it is because of the excellent mechanical properties, high porosity and surface area of the AC made from CSC (Leman et al., 2021; Nyamful et al., 2021). The production of AC from CSC is relatively easy and can be produced by a small company or home industry (Lutfi et al., 2021).

Another utilization of the CSC is as raw materials for briquet. Briquet is an alternative energy in solid form by compacting process of charcoal, as an alternative source of fuel the charcoal source should have flammable elements (Setyawan & Ulfa, 2019). One of the best sources of raw materials for briquet is the CSC because it has good thermal diffusion properties (Pujasakti & Widayat, 2018). This briquet from Indonesia is known to have excellent quality and is in high demand by Turkey, Brazil and also from several Latin American and European countries (Indonesia, 2021). Because the CSC is made of natural resources then the availability of these raw materials can be planned and available locally (Sanjaya et al., 2016).

The CSC is made by using a carbonization process by gradually heating the CSC until 400°C to 600°C temperature reached (Jamilatun & Setyawan, 2014; Nurdin & Nurdiana, 2017; Parshiwanikar & Handa, 2022). The first process in this carbonization is the preparation of the coconut shell, this step is to clean up the impurity materials such as coconut fibres, sand, ashes and soil (Maryono et al., 2013). This cleaning process is vital because excessive impurity materials may block pores and produce low-quality CSC materials especially to make AC (Schröder et al., 2006).

The traditional carbonization process is using a kiln to burn the coconut shell. The kiln may be made of a brick furnace (Budi, 2011; Nurdin & Nurdiana, 2017), or a steel drum (Ekalinda, 2001; Hudaya & Hartoyo, 1990). A proper carbonization kiln could produce high yield and better quality chalcoal (Intara et al., 2021). The coconut shells burned out for 4 to 6 hours with the upper kiln Author et al.,

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left to be open until the smoke starts to clear. After being burnt out the shell is cooled down for 1 hour and then sorted to separate the charcoal and the half-burned shell (Hudaya & Hartoyo, 1990; Khambali *et al.*, 2022; Maryono *et al.*, 2013; Nurdin & Nurdiana, 2017). Not all 100% of raw coconut shells could be processed to become charcoal, most of them became ashes (Table 1). The disadvantage of this process is the smoke produced from the burning process of the coconut shell (Figure 1). The burning process created a lot of smoke that pollutes the air and disturbs human activities, therefore a new design of charcoal carbonization with less smoke is still required. This research aimed to develop a carbonization kiln using a steel drum that could reduce smoke produced by the process and produce maximum amount of charcoal from coconut shell by trapping the smoke inside of the kiln and examined the carbonization result.

Table 1. Percentage of charcoal produced from coconut shell

No	Researchers	Klin type	Char percentage
1	(Maryono et al., 2013)	Steel Drum	30%
2	(Hudaya & Hartoyo, 1990)	Steel Drum	37.2%
3	(Budi, 2011)	Brick Furnace	35%
4	(Soolany, 2017)	Steel Drum	21.4%
5	(Nurdin & Nurdiana, 2017)	Brick Furnace	30%
6	(Manatura, 2021)	Large Scale	35% -45%
		Industrial Steel Drum	





Figure 1. The carbonization process created a lot of smoke that pollutes the air

# 2. Methods

The kiln is designed based on previous research using a steel drum (Table 1) with modifications to keep the burning smoke trapped inside the kiln, this type already developed by Manatura *et al*. in industrial scale that might be too expensive for the home industry (Manatura, 2021).

Table 2. Comparison of kiln specifications

No	Configuration	Design by Manatura et. al.	Current Design
1	Insulator	Ceramic	No Insulation
2	Capacity	200 liter	200 liter
3	Kiln Material	Rolled steel sheet	Used lubricant drum

This kiln uses a used steel drum which is modified to add a combustion chamber system and the reactor lid (Figure 2). The combustion chamber uses two channels for better heat distribution, a small and short pipe used as the combustion channel and a big pipe to release the smoke from the combustion chamber. A closing lid was added to isolate the smoke and an additional sealer belt was also prepared for tighter smoke sealing. This sealer belt is made of steel plate coated with asbestos and tightened using 2 bolts to ensure no smoke escapes from the kiln when burned.

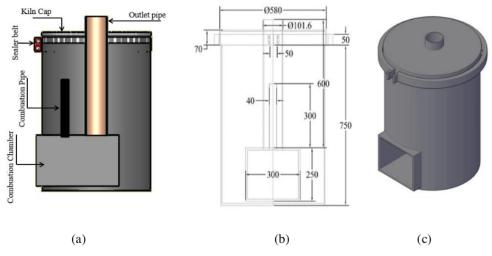


Figure 2. Smokeless carbonization kiln design

The kiln was tested by neatly arranging the coconut shell and then burning it to observe the amount of charcoal produced for 150 minutes (Figure 3). The smoke produced by the kiln during the process was also observed visually. The loss of heat is calculated by retrieval of data on the initial wall temperature and wall temperature during the burning process using equation (1) and the response data is taken every 15 minutes (Belu, 2020).

$$Q_{t} = U \cdot A(T_{d} - T_{link}) \tag{1}$$

The experiment was conducted 3 times using the capacity of 15kg, 20kg and 25kg using the coconut shells and the percentage of charcoal produced was calculated using equation (2).

$$P = \frac{\text{output}}{\text{input}} \times 100 \tag{2}$$



Figure 3. The coconut shells were arranged neatly to fill up the kiln.

3. Results and Discussion

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## 3.1. Result

The temperatures during the process are recorded every 15 minutes during the carbonization process. The temperatures collected from the 3 experiments were then calculated to obtain the heat loss data (Table 3).

Table 3. Heat loss data

Heating Response Time (minute)	Capacity 1 (15 kg)	Capacity 2 (20 kg)	Capacity 3 (25 k2g)
0	1,707.5	1,707.5	<del>127</del> 426.8
15	3,415.0	2,134.4	
30	5,547.4	2,561.2	2,347.8 128 3,628.4
45	6,189.7	3,628.4	4.482.2
60	6,404.2	4,268.8	5,122.5
75	7,256.9	5,549.4	5,976.3
90	8,751.1	8,110.7	7 <del>,47</del> 0.4
105	9,177.9	5,976.3	7,897.2
120	9,604.8	5,122.5	8 <b>,324</b> .1
135	9,391.3	5,122.5	7,683.8
150	8,751.1	5,122.5	7 <del>,47</del> 0.4
Total	76,196.9	49,304.2	60,829.9

The smoke was observed during the burning process with the kiln equipped with and without sealer. In the first experiment, the kiln without sealer still produces a large amount of smoke (Figure 4). For the second experiment, the sealer belt is installed, and very thin smoke still appears but is significantly reduced from the first attempt (Figure 5). Full kiln capacity of 25 kg yielding 48% of the charcoal (Table 4, Figure 6)



Figure 4. Thick smoke produced by kiln without sealer



Figure 5. Very thin smoke appears at the kiln with sealer





Figure 6. Kiln capacity before and after the carbonization process

Table 4. Result of the carbonization process

Experiment	Capacity	Result	Percentage	
	(kg)	(kg)	(%)	
1	15	6	40	
2	20	9	45	

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### 3.3. Discussion

Observation during the burning process shows that the kiln with a kiln cap to close the upper side is not enough to reduce the amount of smoke released to the environment (Figure 4). Therefore the sealer belt needs to be installed. Figure 5 shows that the significance of smoke reduced during the process after the sealer belt was installed. Very thin smoke still appears as the effect of the wood used as burning fuel. Compared to other methods (Figure 1, Figure 4), the kiln with a sealer belt successfully reduces the smoke that pollutes the environment. This design is suitable to use by the home industry that does their production in the settlement, whereas before, they have to bring and burn the coconut shell far away from the settlement.

Table 1 shows that the more coconut shell burned, the less loss of heat value obtained. An anomaly was found in the 2nd data where heat loss decreased after minutes of 100, this oddity was caused by the wood fuel that ran out and no stock available to add. In the 3rd experiment, everything is maintained back to normal. The full capacity of a 25 kg coconut shell yields the lowest heat loss, which means that the heat produced could be utilized effectively to burn the coconut shell inside.

During the carbonization process, a 15 kg coconut shell produces 6 kg of charcoal, a 20 kg coconut shell produces 9 kg of charcoal, and a 20 kg coconut shell produces 12 kg of charcoal in 150 minutes, with a percentage of 40%, 45% and 48% respectively. Based on the test, it was found that burning with a mass of 25 kg is the optimal result yielding 48% of charcoal content (Table 3). This result set the highest production rate among other methods (Table 1).

### 4. Conclusions

Based on the observation, this kiln design shown significant reduction of the smoke produced during the coconut shell carbonization process. The smoke can not completely remove because of the effect of wood burning as fuel but highly reduce compared to other methods. Using the kiln to its maximum capacity of 25 kg was the best choice for having the lowest heat loss in the system and producing the most coconut charcoal after the carbonization process. This kiln could produce 48% coconut charcoal from 25 kg of coconut shell. Based on these results, this kiln is suitable to be used by homes and small industries located in the settlement area to help the industry to improve its productivity, reduce costs and be environmentally friendly. Further research requires to measure this result using air pollution measuring devices.

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