



Effect of Particle Size on Combustion of Coconut Shell in a Bubbling Fluidized Bed Combustor

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ABSTRACT

Combustion characteristics of coconut shell (CS) samples in an experimental model bubbling fluidized bed combustor (BFBC) was investigated with special focus on effect of particle size of the CS. CS waste obtained from farm were crushed and classified into three sizes; Size X (12-50mm), Size Y (2-12mm) and Size Z (<2mm). For overbed feeding of the feedstock, the impact of the particle size on emission and combustion performance were examined in a 150mm diameter experimental model BFBC. Throughout the investigation inert bed temperature was fixed to a constant value of 750 °C by means of electronic based inert bed temperature regulating unit (ITRU). Results showed that CS particle size have pronounced impact on combustion characteristics and the pollutants emission from the BFBC. It was observed that the Pollutants' emission was within acceptable limits for Size Y at about 310ppm for CO, <200PPM for NO_x and almost zero for SO_x. The results indicate that CS could be used as combustion feedstock for environmentally energy generation in a BFBC.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

At the rate at which research is being conducted on bio-energy in general and use of biomass as fuel for combined heat and power production in particular, it is pertinent that Nigeria act appropriately and rapidly in other not to be left behind. Nigeria with estimated annual biomass turn-over of 144 million tonnes (144×10^9)/year is abundantly blessed with biomass resources. Out of this 43.4×10^9 Kg of is consumed annually as fuel-wood [1], leaving huge quantities for cheap, renewable and sustainable energy generation. Apart from firewood which is extensively employed for domestic processes other agricultural and silvicultural wastes like Coconut shell, Oil palm solid wastes, cassava sticks, maize stems, animal waste etc, are generally left wasted in the farm.

One of Nigeria notable agricultural crops is coconut trees. It is estimated that the country have over two million coconut trees occupying about 13615hectares of land [2]. With potential to put additional 1.2 million hectares of land under cultivation in different part of the country [3], a huge quantity of coconut wastes including CS will potentially be available as feedstock for renewable energy generation using appropriate conversion technology.

**NOMENCLATURE**

| | | |
|----------|-----------------------|---|
| BFBC | | Bubbling Fluidized Bed Combustor |
| FBC | | Fluidized Bed Combustion. |
| PKS | | Palm Kernel Shell |
| CS | | Coconut shell |
| ITRU | | Inert bed temperature regulating unit |
| EA | % | Excess air |
| CE | % | Combustion efficiency |
| CO | PPM | Carbon monoxide |
| CO(6) | PPM | CO reference to 6% oxygen in flue gas |
| V_o | [m/s] | fluidizing air approach velocity |
| V^o | [Nm ³ /kg] | Theoretical volume of air needed for combustion |
| f_d | [kg/hr] | Biomass feed rate |
| LHV | KJ/kg | low heating value |
| T_b | (K) | inert bed temperature |
| q_{ic} | % | heat loss due to incomplete combustion |
| q_{uc} | % | heat loss due to unburned carbon |
| V_{dg} | Nm ³ /kg | Volume of flue gas at 6% oxygen |

Greek Letters

| | | |
|--------------|-----|------------------------|
| Φ | (m) | BFBC internal diameter |
| ρ_{ref} | | Excess air coefficient |

Burning of biomass for heat energy generation predate other conversion technology, it is the oldest and most successful method of generating energy known to man. The discovery of fossil fuel however relegate its use to the background. The issue of climate change due to emission of pollutants principally from combustion of fossil fuel and concerns over energy security due to depleting fossil fuel reserve has however heightened interest in use of biomass as a renewable and sustainable feedstock for heat and electrical energy generation. Several conversion technologies are available for firing biomass, however Bubbling fluidized bed combustor has been described as the most versatile and environmentally friendly method of harnessing energy from biomass



The potential of agricultural waste as fuel for energy generation in BFBC has been investigated by many researchers. [4] reported an efficient and sustainable combustion of pre-dried Thai sugar cane bagasse when fired in a conical FBC. The combustion efficiency was found to be in the range of 96 to 99.7% for firing the pre-dried bagasse in wide ranges of the operating conditions. [5] Investigated co-firing of eucalyptus bark and rubberwood sawdust in a conical bubbling fluidized bed combustor with axial flow swirler. It was reported that by maintaining excess air between 50% and 55%, the co-combustion of high-moisture eucalyptus bark and rubberwood sawdust in the proposed combustor occurs in a stable regime with high combustion efficiency of more than 99.6%. [6] examined the characteristics of palm waste in an experimental model BFBC. The study showed that oil palm waste could be burnt successfully in a BFBC, it was discovered that the relationship between excess air and combustion efficiency is such that CE increases with EA reach a maximum value for the particular feed rate then starts to fall this was explained with the fact that beyond the maximum point the EA promotes higher elutriation of unburnt fuels particle. A maximum CE of 92.47 was achieved at 50% excess air. [7] reported that the use of air staging is beneficial to reduction of CO emission when palm waste is combusted in a BFBC, a maximum combustion efficiency of 89% was achieved for palm fibre.

There is scarcity of literature on combustion of coconut shell in a bubbling fluidized combustor, hence the importance of the current study.

Coconut shell like many other biomass varies widely in composition this attribute in conjunction with low bulk density and inconsistency character are key disadvantages of biomass as a combustion feedstock, which essentially necessitate their pre-processing before usage. As much as could be tolerated, using biomass waste 'as received' or with minimal pre-processing could be beneficial on the long run in term of lowering operational cost and reducing step to generate renewable energy especially in commercial scale fluidized bed combustor.

The objective of this investigation is to examine thermal and emission characteristics of CS in a BFBC with special focus on impact of particle size.

2.0 EXPERIMENTAL STUDIES.

Apparatus

The experimental model BFBC employed in this article has been properly described in another technical papers [8,9]. It consist of five 150mm diameter stainless steel modules partitioned into lower and upper section, modules 1 & 2 forms the lower section while the remainder fully assembled form the upper section. See fig 1. The objective of the partitioning is to enable observation of the fluidization process and



the combustion process at start up or anytime necessary as well as to enable determination of the fuel feed rate and the bubbling regime at room temperature. The distributor plate which is sandwiched between module 1 & 2 is fabricated from 10mm thick stainless steel plate bearing 13 standpipes. Each pipe has forty 1.5mm holes drilled radially around it.

Silica sand, mean diameter of 500micron is employed as the inert bed material. Supply of the test fuel from the hopper to the inert bed is done with a conveyor-screw type biomass feeder equipped with an infinitely variable speed gear motor, the feeder discharge is located 400mm above the distributor plate. At the junction between biomass feeding pipe and the combustor body a fluidizing air pre-heater / biomass feeding pipe's cooling attachment is provided; firstly, to prevent the biomass from burning before entering the fluidized bed and secondly, to utilize the heat energy that would otherwise be wasted and consequently cut down the fuel usage per useful energy generated, this unit is shown as G in fig 1.

To prevent excessive heat loss fibre glass insulation, thickness 75mm secured by means of 0.5mm galvanized steel plate was used to cover the combustor body from the distributor plate to the last module.

The BFBC is also equipped with an inert bed temperature regulating unit (ITRU), which enable the capability to fix the inert bed temperature to any specific value during the experimental runs.

ITRU is designed to perform this function in three different modes:

- i) by switching on and off the biomass feeder and or the centrifugal blower as soon as the preset T_b is achieved.
- ii) by switching off only the biomass feeder, ensuring the centrifugal blower is constantly on during the experiment
- iii) by switching off only the centrifugal blower, ensuring the biomass feeder is constantly on.

Investigations had shown that only i and ii are practicable and likely to yield reliable results. For consistency mode i was employed in all the experimental runs in this work.

The frequency of switching off and on of the ITRU is an indications of the intensity of combustion taking place within the inert bed; the higher the intensity the higher the frequency.

Pressure Measurement

Pressure drop across the bed is a function of the fluidization air approach velocity, it therefore follows that the whole spectrum of the inert bed hydrodynamic behaviour could be monitored via adjustment of air velocity. In this experiment the pressure corresponding to different stages of inert bed (packed bed, incipient fluidization, bubbling stage, turbulent fluidization and transport condition were determined prior the experimental investigation. Four pressure taps were located along the combustor body, the first



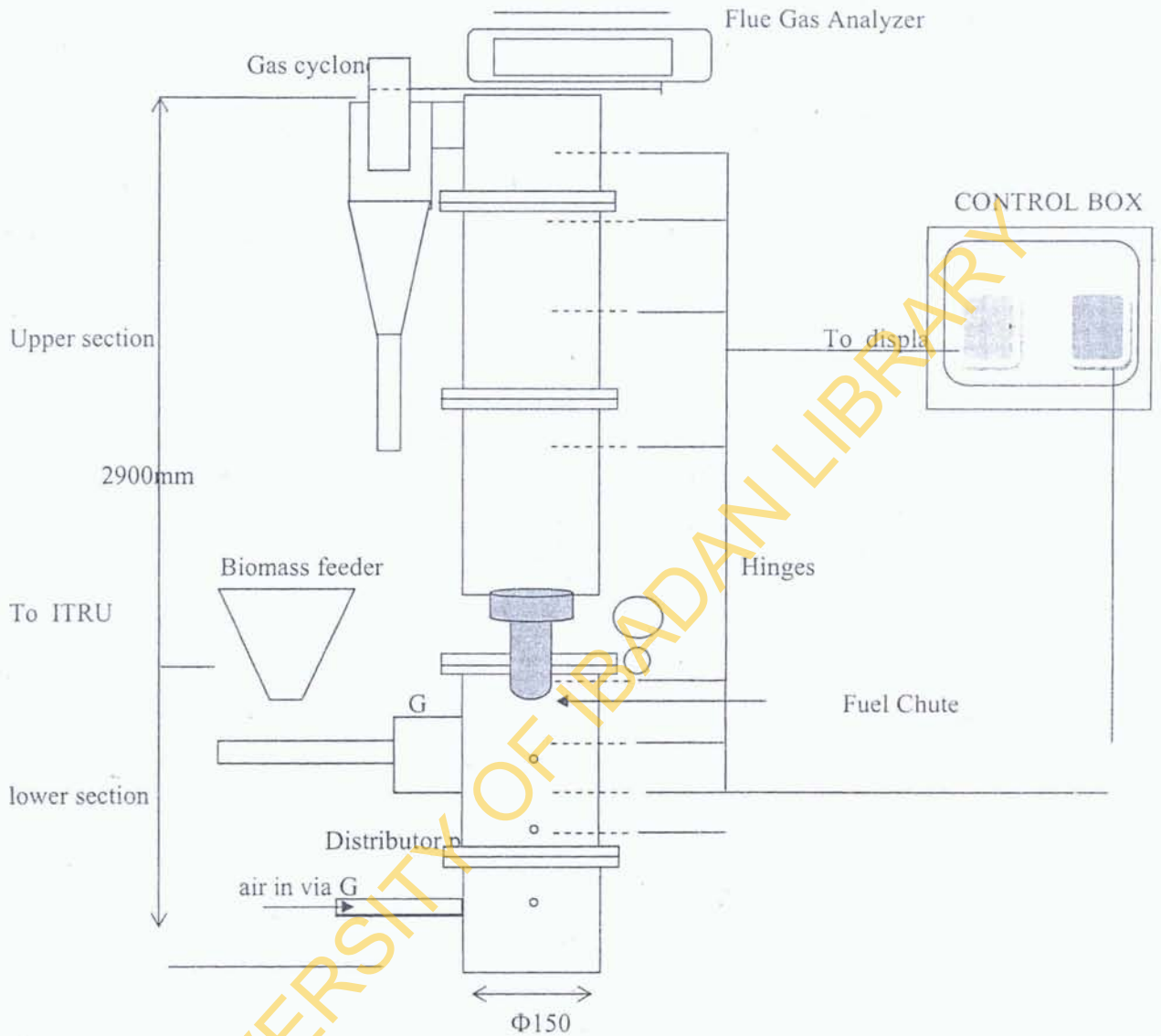
pressure tap located 60mm below the distributor plate was employed in determining the incipient, bubbling and turbulent regime.

With the upper section opened, the centrifugal blower was switched on. Air approach velocity (V_o) was gradually increased from zero using the gate valve. The appearance of the inert bed was monitored as the velocity and reading of the water manometer connected to the first tap increased. At 70mmH₂O vibration of the bed/small movement of bed particles was observed. With further increase the pressure actually dropped to 69H₂O. Further increased small occasional bubbling was noticed obtained and this transits to full scale bubbling at reading beyond 70mmH₂O. The chaotic movements get increasingly vigorous with higher pressure reading. These pressure readings was noted and on closing the upper section, this reading was used as the basic minimum setting to ensure the bed is in full scale bubbling regime at elevated temperature.

Biomass Feeding.

For this experiment, a major modification was made to the biomass supply to the inert bed primarily because of size of particles especially, Size X, which are too large for the biomass feeder.

A manual fuel feeding chute was welded to the combustor body. The port, inclined at an angle 85° to the horizontal was fabricated from 60mm diameter, 5mm thick stainless steel, welded to a location 450mm above the distributor



----- nine thermocouples (T1 - T9) arranged axially along the combustor body.

G Fluidizing air pre-heater/Biomass feeding pipe's cooling attachment.

o Pressure Tap

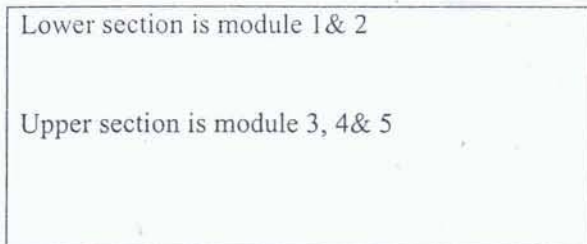


Figure 1: Schematic drawing of the developed BFBC.

plate. The attached port served two purposes as a means of viewing the bed surface directly and a batch loading chute of the biomass fuel. See Fig 1 and Fig 12. For consistency all the particles size were fed in via this method. For each size 4.5kg/hr was employed via division of the test size into 30 units. Each unit size (m=150g) is fed in at specific interval as shown in Table 1 below. This unit size is chosen to ensure compliance with percentage of fuel in the inert bed which should be between 2-10%[10].

Table 1: Batch-feeding of the Biomass

| SN | Time(mins) | Qty (g) | CS1 | CS2 | CS3 |
|----|------------|---------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1 | 0 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 |
| 2 | 2 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 |
| 3 | 4 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 |
| . | - | - | - | - | - |
| . | - | - | - | - | - |
| . | - | - | - | - | - |
| 27 | 54 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 |
| 28 | 56 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 |
| 29 | 58 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 |
| 30 | 60 | 4.5kg | 4.5kg | 4.5kg | 4.5kg |



3.0 OPERATING PROCEDURE

The Fuel

Coconut shell (CS) like other woody biomass is made up of cellulose, lignin, hemicelluloses (pentosan) and Ash [11]. Though a non-edible it has found numerous applications such as fuel for local minor processes. A number of potential uses has been proposed for it, such as raw material for activated carbon, in construction and decorative works, despite this however significant quantity CS is still left wasted in the farm hence the need to evaluate its potential as fuel for renewable energy generation.

The methods of separating the CS from the edible endosperm generally leave a CS fragments resembling hollow plates with size ranging from 4 to 15cm depending on the original size of the coconut fruit. This fragments' size is too big for the biomass feeder of the experimental model BFBC and in fact bigger than what is recommended in literature for commercial scale BFBC (fuel particle size for BFBC < 50mm). For the purpose of this investigation three sizes of CS were considered. See Figure 2.

Three different sizes of CS were employed in the investigation;

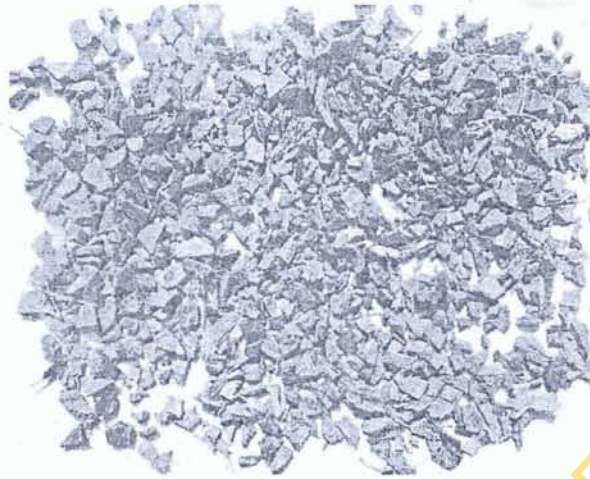
Size X: (12-50)mm

Size Y: (2mm-6mm)

Size Z: (<2mm)



(a)



(b)



(c)

Figure 2: A view of the sizes of CS employed in the experimental studies, (a) Size X: 12-50mm
b) Size Y: 2mm-12mm (c) Size Z – Pulverized : <2mm

Typical Proximate and ultimate analysis of the CS sample is shown on Table 2.

**Table2: Proximate analysis (% by mass dry basis,)**

| Items | CS[12] |
|-----------------|--------|
| Fixed carbon | 6.69 |
| Volatile matter | 90.31 |
| Ash | 3.0 |

Table2: Ultimate Analysis and HHV, LHV [17] (% by mass dry basis)

| Elements | CS[12] |
|----------------|---------|
| Carbon | 46.22 |
| Hydrogen | 5.2 |
| Oxygen | 41.63 |
| Nitrogen | 0.26 |
| Sulphur | NIL |
| Ash | 3.0 |
| HHV KJ/kg | 17408 |
| LHV KJ/kg [17] | 16232.6 |

4.0 EXPERIMENTATION.

With the control switched on, fluidization air via the centrifugal blower was tuned to achieve a vigorous bubbling inert bed condition (Manometer reading 74mmH₂O); at this point propane gas passed through 8mm diameter stainless steel pipe located 10mm above the distributor plate was switched on and ignited; allowing the inert bed temperature (T_b) to rise to 600°C, this took about 29minutes. CS was fed in via feeding chute; for each sizes X, Y and Z three runs at different degree of excess air (EA) were conducted. The composition of the flue gas (CO, CO₂, NO_x, SO_x), Excess air (EA) were monitored using BACARACH PCA 3 flue gas analyser connected to a port located after cyclone separator inlet; temperatures were taken from nine zones located along the combustor height via Type K thermocouples fitted to the first 8 zones and in-built temperature sensors of the BACARACH PCA 3 records the temperature in the ninth zone. The measurements accuracy of this equipment are: ±5% of reading or ± 10 ppm for CO in the range of 0-2000 ppm, ±10% for 2000-4000PPM.. ± 10% of Reading between 2001 to 4,000 ppm for NO and SO. The thermocouple for zone 2, inert bed upper region was connected to the ITRU and this temperature 'T₂ or T_b' in all the experimental runs was set to 750°C. This temperature is taken by the thermocouple located 20cm above the distributor plate. T₁,T₂,T₃,T₄,T₅,T₆,T₇,T₈, and



T9 are located 10cm, 20cm, 35cm, 80cm, 120cm, 160cm, 200cm, 240cm and 260cm respectively above the distributor plate.

The results of the experimental runs for the particle sizes are shown on table 3.

COMBUSTION EFFICIENCY AND HEAT LOSSES

Using heat balance method combustion efficiency was estimated as [13]:

$$Q = 100 - (q_{ic} + q_{uc}) \quad (1)$$

According to [14], q_{ic} , q_{uc} may be estimated as

$$q_{ic} = 126.4 \times 10^{-4} CO(6) V_{dg} / LHV \quad (2)$$

$$q_{uc} = \frac{12286}{LHV} \cdot A \left(\frac{C_{fa}}{100 - C_{fa}} \right) \quad (3)$$

where, V_{dg} the theoretical (reference) volume of dry flue gas (Nm^3/kg , at $0^\circ C$ and 1 atm) is related to V^0 the theoretical volume of air (Nm^3/kg , at $0^\circ C$ and 1 atm) required for firing 1 kg biomass fuel under stoichiometric conditions as [13]:

$$V_{dg}(6\%) = 0.01866(C + 0.375S) + 0.79V^0 + 0.008N + (\rho_{ref} - 1)V^0 \quad (4)$$

C_{fa} and A are the unburned carbon fraction in the flue gas and the fuel ash content respectively

For the current investigation the unburnt carbon contribution was neglected, and CE was estimated as:

$$CE = 100 - q_{ic} \quad (5)$$

5.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For each of the fuel sizes, experimental runs were conducted at three EA (20%, 60%, and 100%). For solid fuel combustion, literature had shown that optimum combustion characteristics should lie within this range of excess air [3],[4],[6]. Performance characteristics of each size was evaluated, based on axial temperature profile, the composition and value of emission in the flue gases. Emission values referenced to 6% oxygen the flue gas were plotted against the EA value.

Table 3: Results of the experimental runs, note that T2 =T_b

| RUN | X(12-50mm) | | | Y (2-12mm) | | | Z (<2mm) | | |
|--------|------------|--------|--------|------------|--------|--------|----------|--------|--------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| EA | 20% | 60% | 100% | 20% | 54% | 105% | 23% | 64% | 100% |
| Temp | Deg. C | Deg. C | Deg. C | Deg. C | Deg. C | Deg. C | Deg. C | Deg. C | Deg. C |
| 10 | 720 | 722 | 775 | 691 | 709 | 710 | 698 | 675 | 620 |
| 20 | 750 | 750 | 750 | 750 | 750 | 750 | 750 | 750 | 740 |
| 35 | 723 | 735 | 726 | 805 | 718 | 721 | 717 | 735 | 691 |
| 80 | 624 | 639 | 602 | 586 | 584 | 673 | 665 | 671 | 561 |
| 120 | 639 | 678 | 575 | 498 | 531 | 608 | 614 | 605 | 510 |
| 160 | 554 | 588 | 524 | 488 | 481 | 536 | 552 | 516 | 465 |
| 200 | 515 | 535 | 490 | 428 | 448 | 490 | 509 | 462 | 442 |
| 240 | 448 | 475 | 447 | 398 | 413 | 443 | 455 | 422 | 402 |
| 260 | 308 | 279 | 211 | 262 | 265 | 278 | 269 | 267 | 253 |
| CO(6) | >4000 | 3211 | 300 | 3810 | 311 | 350 | >4000 | 3675 | 1201 |
| CO2(6) | 16.7 | 12.8 | 10.1 | 16.9 | 13.3 | 10 | 16.3 | 12.4 | 9.9 |
| NO(6) | 69 | 166 | 175 | 113 | 147 | 197 | 119 | 132 | 201 |
| O2 | 3.8 | 7.8 | 10.6 | 3.7 | 7.3 | 10.7 | 4.2 | 8.3 | 10.5 |
| SO(6) | 689 | 323 | 11 | 279 | 2 | 0 | 344 | 263 | 56 |

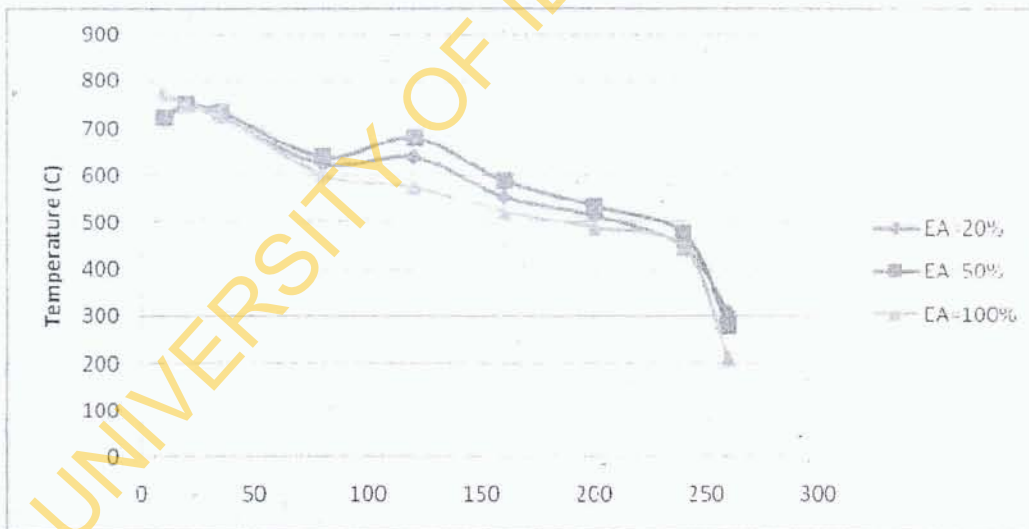


Figure 3: Temperature profile for combustion of particle size X at different percentage of excess air

Temperature profile for SIZE X is shown in fig 2. A sustained combustion was achieved when firing this size. The effect of excess air was rather mild, from Fig 3, the value of the temperature in all the zone appear quite close for all the EA. Higher T1 temperature noted for EA =100% could be attributed to



increase heat transfer rate due to higher turbulence of the inert bed and burning char mixture at this EA. It was also observed that frequency of switching on and off of ITRU was noticeably higher for this size than for Z. but about the same for Y. This might be due to weight effect. The fact that X particle are comparatively heavier than both X and Z promote burning within the dense phase therefore higher combustion intensity. The rate was highest about 5 times per minute with EA=30%, and lowest (about 2 times per minute) with EA=101%, as stated earlier this is an indication of intensity of combustion in the inert bed furthermore it was noted that preset T_b of 750C was maintained at all EA examined when SIZE A was burnt.

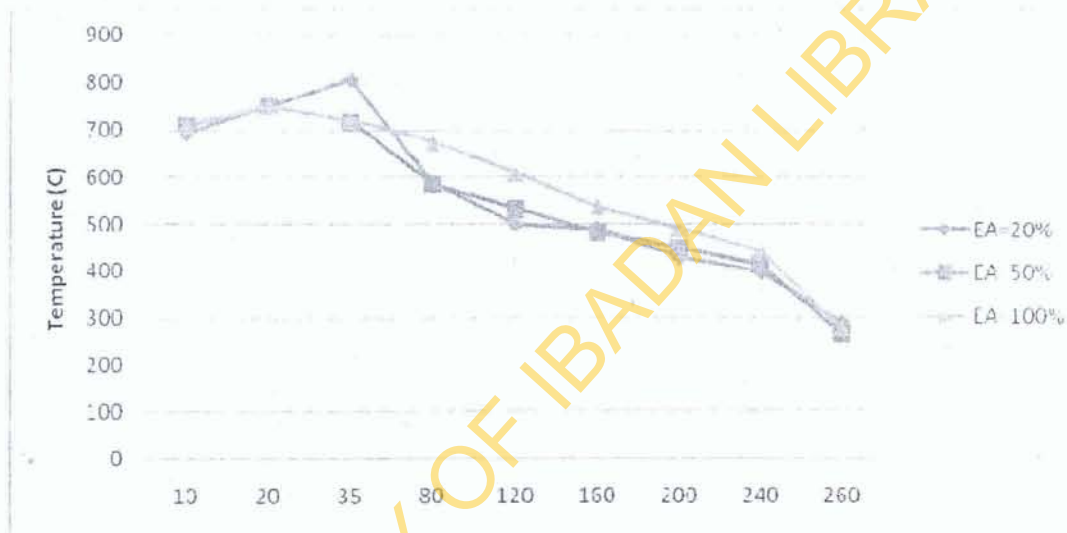


Figure 4: Temperature profile for combustion of Size Y at different percentage of excess air

Temperature profile for Y indicate that this particle size could be fired for sustainable energy generation in BFBC. At all EA stable combustion occur in the inert bed.

The frequency of switching on and off of the ITRU is as high as X, however the period of deactivation is shorter. These were not accurately measured in this experiment

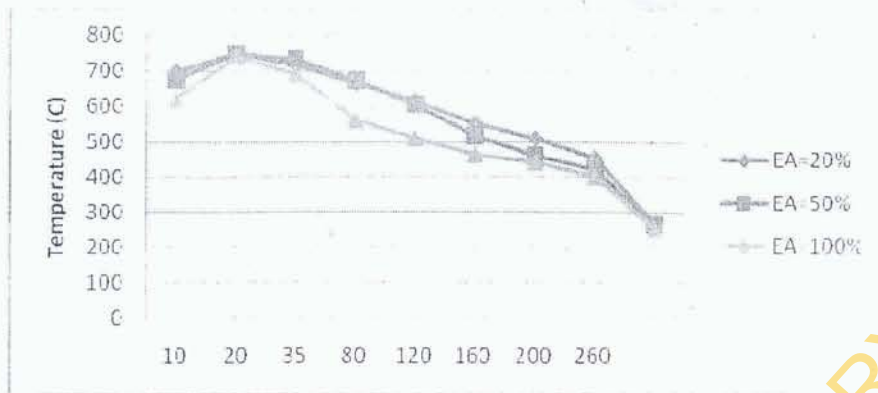


Figure 5 : Temperature profile for the combustion of Size Z (Fine particles) at different percentage of EA.

For particle Z, sustained combustion was obtained at lower EA (20% and 60%). Noticeable drop in temperature was observed within the inert bed region, for instance T₁ for this size was comparatively lower than for Y and Z. Also at EA = 100%, it was observed that the ITRU did not switched off and the temperature progressively drop to 740C. This is a confirmation of pronounced effect of the particle size. This also indicate that heat generation from combustion of fuel in the inert bed was not enough to achieve preset T_b. An explanation for this is that Z (<2mm) is too light and since over-bed feeding of the fuel was employed, as EA approaches 100% (increase fluidization velocity) the particles being light a significant percentage of it are easily blown to the freeboard region, this give rise to two actions simultaneously. Firstly, the fuel supply to the inert bed gradually reduced thereby lower char oxidation in this region resulting in a lower bed (T₁ and T_b). and consequently lower freeboard temperature due to reduced pyrolysis. Also according to [10], because biomass are reactive and of low bulk density it tends to float on the inert bed surface, small particle size (like size Z) will therefore implies greater concentrations of the CS in upper region of the inert bed with consequent effect of lower dense phase temperature, as observed above.

Figures 4 and 5 provide a clearer picture of the difference in the combustion characteristics of the fuel sizes. It should be noted that X is bigger and heavy therefore it falls inside the bubbling bed where it gradually burn. At all percentage of EA, most of X fixed carbon and fraction of its volatile burn within the bubbling bed thereby ensuring T_b is maintained at the preset value of 750°C without any problem. Contrarily bulk density of Z is low and most of it is blown to the freeboard zone where it burnt hence comparatively higher freeboard temperature (T₃-T₈) and lower dense phase temperature (T₁ and T_b) (fig



4). At higher excess air EA=100% under the influence of higher fluidization air minimal quantities of the Z get to the inert bed thereby lower T_b and T3-T8, Figure 8.

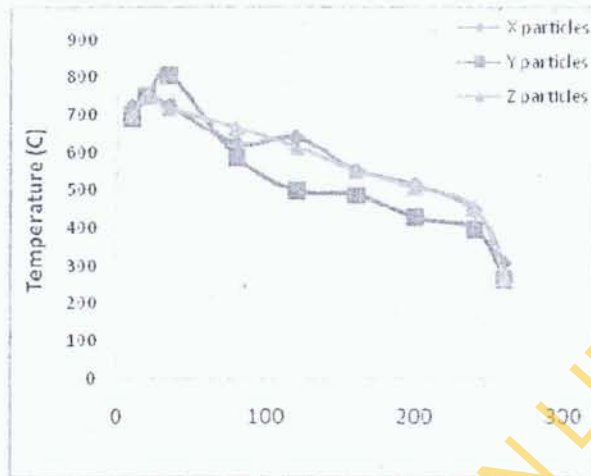


Figure 6: A comparison of the temperature profile for all the particle size at EA=20%

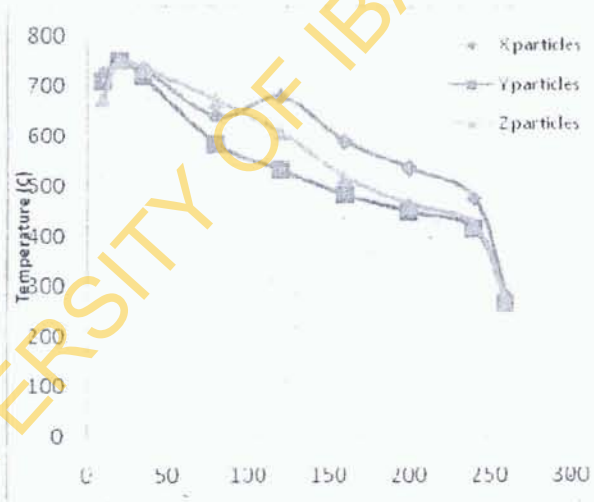


Figure 7: A comparison of the temperature profile for all the particle size at EA=60%

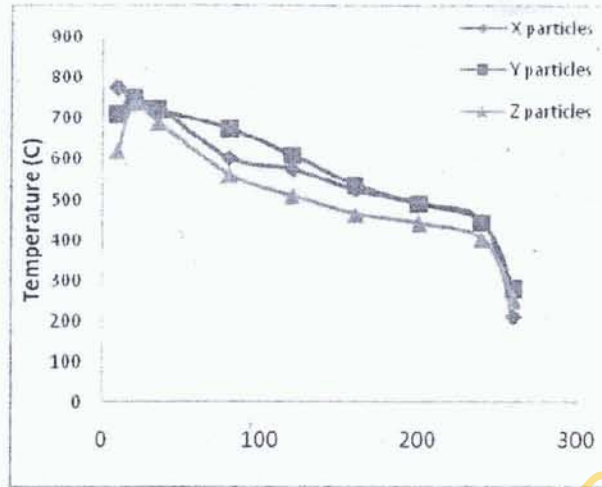


Figure 8: A comparison of the temperature profile for all the particle size at EA=100%

POLLUTANTS EMISSION.

Value of CO obtained for each particle size is graphically shown in Figure 9. Being so hazardous, low emission of CO is not only a prerequisite to high combustion efficiency but critical to safety and well being of personnel using the combustion equipment. The results obtained show good agreement with what is available in the literature [5],[6],[7],[9] (not shown). However CO reading seems very high compare with equivalent condition when PKS was used as feedstock. CO emission was rather high at EA=20%; several values obtained exceeded the maximum measurable by the Bacharach flue gas analyzer (≤ 4000 PPM) and a theoretical method was used to determine such CO values.

According to [15], a good approximation for excess air (EA) can be calculated from equation 6. This calculation as noted by [15] is often used to automatically calculate % Excess Air in electronic combustion analyzers, like TSI's CA-CALC Combustion Analyzer.

Therefore with EA, O_2 known (from flue gas analyser results) one can estimate CO concentration. This method was employed in calculating CO value in 2 cases where Bacharach gas analyzer could not give value for the reason that CO exceeded maximum measurable values of 4000ppm. See fig 7

$$EA = \frac{O_2 - 0.500}{20.9 - O_2 - 0.500} \quad (6)$$

and therefore, we may write:

$$CO = \frac{O_2 - EA \cdot O_2 - 20.9}{0.9 (EA - 1)} \quad (7)$$

Equation 7 was used to calculate approximate value for CO that could not be displayed by Bacharach for being above 4000ppm.

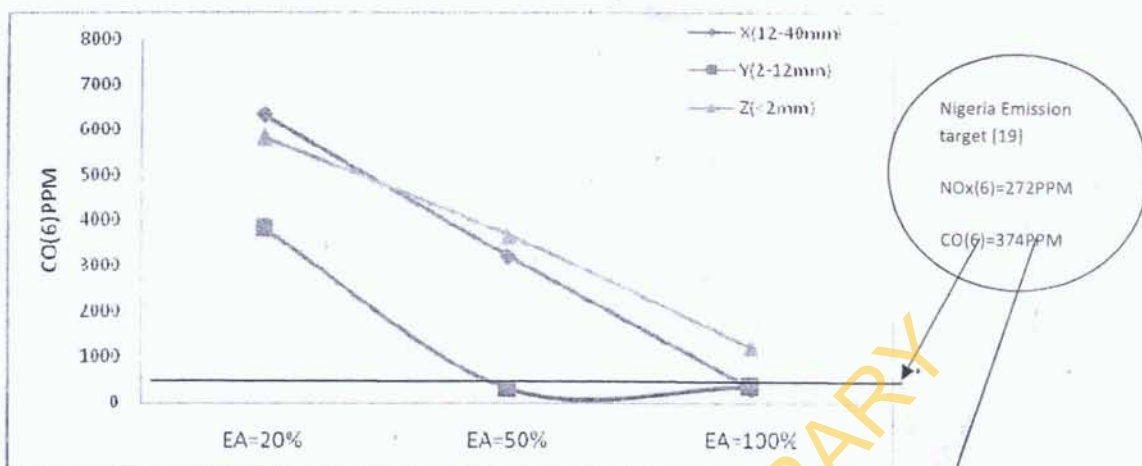


Figure 9: A plot of CO concentration at different degree of EA

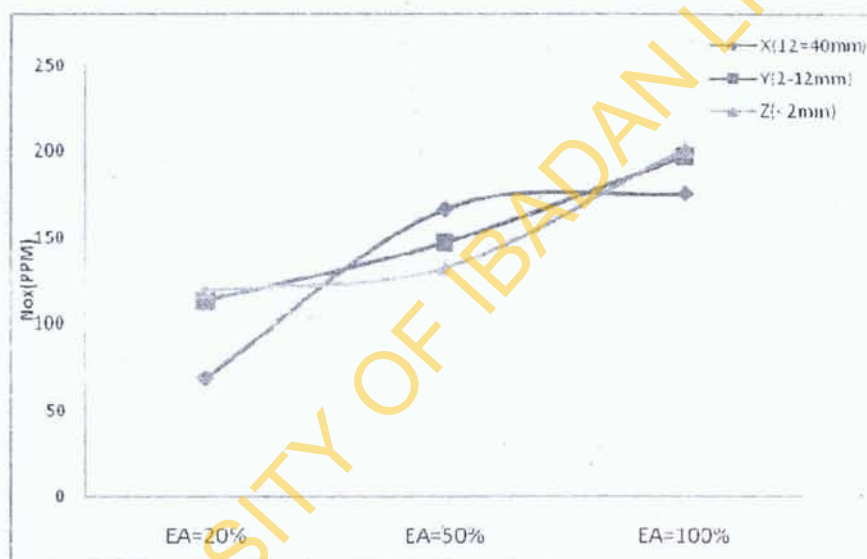


Figure 10: A plot of NO_x against the percentage excess air for each of the fuel particle size

From Figure 10, it could be seen that EA has pronounced effect on NO_x formation. The value were observed to increase progressively for all the sizes as EA increases.

It should be noted also that the complete control of inert bed temperature, with the aid of ITRU, such that the temperature within combustor is ensured below 900°C implies insignificant thermal and prompt NO_x formation which indicate that NO_x obtained were principally through oxidation of fuel Nitrogen compounds via these routes [10]



1. homogenous oxidation / gaseous compound reduction involving NCO,HCN and NH₃(NO_x precursors).[16] released as volatiles which may be represented by following equations [10]



2. heterogeneous oxidation of nitrogen in char particles or nitrogen reduction on char surfaces.

SO_x Emission

The result indicates strong influence of EA on SO_x reduction during combustion of CS. The manner of formation and decomposition of this pollutant also suggest a possible influence of particle size and reaction of SO_x with the ash in the inert bed, From Fig 11, it could be seen that decomposition of SO_x is more pronounced with size X and Y, where SO_x dropped from 689ppm and 279ppm at EA=20% to 11ppm and 0ppm respectively at EA=100%.

Since combustion intensity is high for these two sizes for all the excess air, it might be appropriate to suggest that the ash from the CS fuel is somehow responsible for phenomenon drop in SO_x concentration. This may be buttressed with the observation that Size Z still have reasonably higher SO_x value and lower inert bed combustion intensity at EA =100%. Possibility of ash reacting with SO_x has been mentioned in literature [18]

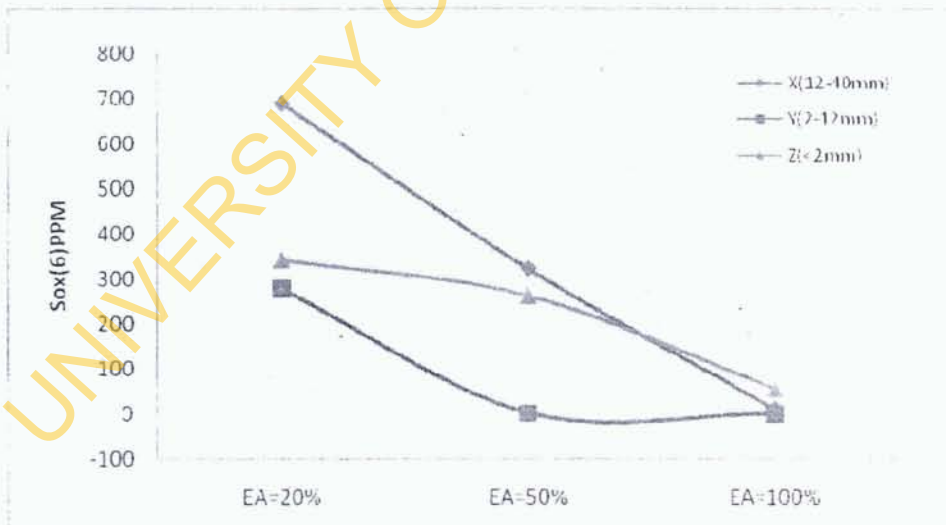


Figure 11: A plot of SO₂ against the percentage excess air for each of the fuel particle size



Combustion Efficiency

Using equation 6, CE was calculated as.

| | Size X | Size Y |
|---------------|--------|--------|
| CE (EA=20%)= | 97.2% | 98.2% |
| CE (EA=60%)= | 98.5% | 99.8% |
| CE (EA=100%)= | 99.8% | 99.8% |

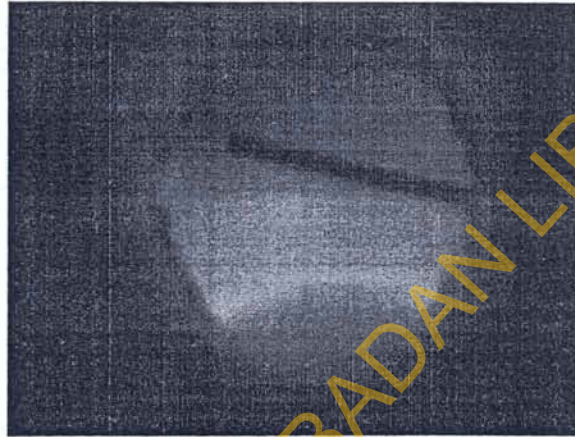


Figure 12: a view (through fuel chute) of the inert bed during the experimental run. Temperature = 750°C

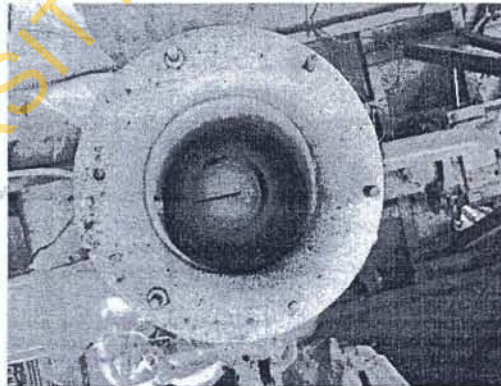


Figure 13: a view (through the partition) of the inert bed during experimental run. Temperature=801°C



6.0 CONCLUSION

The effect of particle size on combustion of Coconut shell in an experimental model bubbling fluidized bed combustor has been investigated.

The results indicate that efficient and environmentally friendly combustion of Coconut shell could be strongly influenced by the size of the particles employed.

It was found that Size Z (fine particle) could not be used in the BFBC for extended period at $EA > 60\%$ since beyond this point the result indicate reduced combustion intensity (manifested as ITRU not switching off) and subsequent drop of T_b below the preset value. This indicates that with continual firing, temperature will drop to a level where combustion may no longer be sustainable.

Size X (12-50mm) and Size Y (2-12 mm) however gave stable combustion and acceptable axial temperature distribution. Combustion efficiency was noted to be above 98% for both sizes at $EA \geq 60\%$.

At $EA = 60\%$, which seems to be the optimum excess air for combustion of this fuel, pollutants emission value (CO, NO_x and SO_x) and combustion efficiency for size Y appear to be better than for size X and Z. In view of this, it may be suggested that acceptable combustion and emission characteristics may be obtained if coconut Shell is classified in the range of 2-12mm prior usage as fuel in a Bubbling Fluidized bed Combustor.

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