**VISCOELASTIC BEHAVIOUR OF POLYMERS**

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**ABSTRACT**

In Polymeric materials mechanical properties exhibit two ideal special cases hence these are known as viscoelastic materials. The property of stress is a function of strain and function of time for viscoelastic material. The very common characteristic features of viscoelastic materials are a time dependent strain response to a constant stress and a constant strain response to a time dependent stress. When the applied stress is less or zero to the materials, the material recovers slowly with a time. This type of effects also observed in metals at very high temperatures whereas in plastics they show this type of behaviour at room temperature.

**Keyword**: Photo-plastic effect, Deformation, Photo-mechanical effect

1. **Introduction**

The photo-plastic effect is a very effective method to simulate the transparent polymers and also for elastic-plastic behaviour of prototype materials [1]. The behaviour of optical and mechanical in polymer basically depends on their viscous feature. Photo-plasticity is a phenomenon to determine stress and strain distribution in plastically deformed materials, where a similar stress- strain behaviour exhibit in transparent polymers. The theory of viscosity is based upon the molecular theory of liquids. According to which the potential energy of two adjoining molecules of the liquid and their molecular configurations are related. The theory of the movement of liquids considers the resulting displacement of the molecules relative to their structure, which impedes movement and thus influences the extent of that displacement.

1. **Theory of Viscoelastic Deformation**

Viscoelastic deformation can be assumed wherever the resistance to stress in the medium depends upon the velocity of the process mostly in creep and relaxation or generally wherever large deformation occurs, but viscoelastic deformation can also be presumed when the deformation process is influenced by residual or thermal stresses. The theory is based upon Boltzmann’s principle of superposition which states that the resultant strain is a function of loading. This means that each contribution towards the resultant strain which is then simply the sum of all the contributions. The linear theory requires strain for every arbitrary time interval to be reasonably proportional to stress. With non-linear relationships the mathematical description becomes complicated therefore the non-linear theory of viscoelasticity is more complex. The knowledge of deformation behaviour of macromolecular substances plays a subsequently role in the determination of their chemical and physical nature. The structure of an amorphous, linear polymer is formed by a skeleton of molecular nuclei loosely interlocked by rather long chains of the same length. The molecular nuclei are affected, on the one hand by the Vander Waals mass forces, the dipole interactions, the hydrogen bonds and stable covalent bonds etc. and on the other hand, by force that arise from the tendency of the chains to return after deformation to a state of maximum entropy by means of Brownian or thermal motion. The presence of bonds of different strength serves as a pointer to the viscoelastic properties of polymers.

1. **Viscoelastic Behaviour for Polymers**

In a pure elastic material, the stress and strain are directly proportional to each other. For example, stress σ and strain ε for any uniaxial cay be represented as

σ α ε

σ = ηε (1)

Where η is the modulus constant of the material.

In a pure viscous fluid, the shear stress τ and rate of strain is related with each other as follows

τ α

τ = υ (2)

Where the υ is the viscosity constant of the fluid.

Polymer materials shows mechanical properties which exhibit between these two ideal cases and hence they are known as viscoelastic. A viscoelastic material in which strain and time is the function of stress and represented by an equation [2]

σ = f (ε, t) (3)

Equation (3) is referred to as non-linear viscoelastic and may be reduced to the form.

σ = ε f (t) (4)

Equation (4) is the basis of linear viscoelasticity and indicates the Hook’s law.

Polymers are molecular materials and in generally non crystalline solids at ordinary temperature. When shaping is carried out it gets a viscous stage in course of their formation. Polymers exhibit viscoelastic behaviour that they act to an applied force by recoverable and time dependent permanent deformations. Using combinations of macroscopic models, the entire spectrum from the purely elastic to fully viscous behaviour of polymers can be obtained and described. Polymers being viscoelastic exhibit deformation which are very sensitive to such properties of materials like rate of extension, stress level, temperature etc.

1. **Results**

Temperature influences the mechanical behaviour of thermoplastic through its effect on the strength of the Vander waals bonding between the chains. At high temperature, the bonds are so weak and viscous flow occurs easily at less or no applied stress. As the temperature decreases, viscoelastic behaviour becomes pronounced as the strong bonds form chain sliding more difficult and complex materials. At very low temperatures, the polymers may be so viscous that no chain sliding occurs and the polymers behave as rigid [3,4,5].

The covalent bonds between the atoms in the linear chain may be destroyed at very high temperatures and the polymer burns or chars. The limits of degradation temperature for the polymer is usefulness and the polymer can be formed into a useful shape at the upper temperature.

1. **Conclusions**

The theory of the movement of liquids considers the displacement of the molecules relative to their structure, which impedes movement and thus influences the extent of that displacement. Long chain molecules, especially the double bonded ones play an important role in the restriction of movement. It transpires the greatest significance rests with the possibility of movement of the free end or of several free ends of the macromolecule and in polymers with the degree of polymerization.

**6. References**

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