

HIBISCUS ASPER(RAMAN KOGI) FIBRE USE AS A SORBENT FOR OIL SPILL CLEAN IN WATER BODY

ABSTRACT

This research aimed at investigating the possibility of using *Imperata cylindrical* fibre as a sorbent for oil spill clean-up. The acetylation was carried out in a free solvent system under mild conditions using acetic anhydride, in the presence of calcium chloride as a catalyst, at a temperature of 100°C for 3 hour. The crude oil and the *Hibiscus asper* sorbent were characterized, the sorption behaviors studied were found to increase with increase in weight per gain percent (WPG%). The WPG% and oil sorption capacity indicated the success of acetylation. Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FT-IR) was used for the analysis of unmodified and modified *Hibiscus asper* sorbent to further examine the success of acetylation. In the spectra of FT-IR of the acetylated *Hibiscus asper* material evidence of acetylation is clearly proven by, the enhancement of 1755 cm⁻¹, as 1755.31-1715.97 cm⁻¹ which are carbonyl C=O stretching of esters, the enhancement of 1494.97 -1403.35 cm⁻¹ of (C-H bond in – O(C=O)-CH₃ and the appearance of 1154.69- 1154.43 cm⁻¹ which is a C=O stretching of acetyl group. The values for correlation coefficient (R²) showed that the model fitted the Langmuir isotherm (R² *Hibiscus asper* 0.99) better than the Freundlich isotherm, indicating that the adsorption process was monolayer. The higher oil sorption capacity shown by the modified *Hibiscus asper* sorbent compared to the lower oil sorption capacity of unmodified, indicated that the modified *Hibiscus asper* sorbent can substitute for synthetic fibres and recommended for oils spill clean-up in contaminated environments.

Key words: Adsorption, oil spill, sorbents, *Hibiscus asper*, fibre, Langmuir isotherm.

INTRODUCTION

The world major source of energy is fossil fuel which is been transported by ships and pipelines across ocean and land, hence oil spill occurrence accidentally becomes inevitable. As the production of petroleum products is at the increase from 50 to 2500 million tons from mid-1950's to 1990's which results in the massive transportation and associated oil spills (Nwilo and Badeje, 2007). Oil spills are common occurrences today because of the many uses of oil in the society. Oil spills from vessels or land based facilities can pose serious threats to shorelines, banks and other sensitive habitats. In Nigeria oil spill is a common event (Baird, 2002) and occur due to a number of causes, including corrosion of pipelines and tankers (accounting for 50% of all spills), Sabotage (28%) Oil production operators (21%) inadequate or non-functional production equipment (1%) (Nwilo and Badeje, 2001).

36 It is known that commercially available synthetic sorbent are very costly due to the facts that a lot had
37 been spent in the production unlike the natural plant sorbents which are abundantly available and
38 cheap. Agricultural waste sorbent is abundantly available around the world and several different
39 methods of development with or without catalyst have been developed. A number of natural sorbents
40 have been modified and studied for use on oil cleanup. They were observed to be excellent oil
41 sorbents because of their hydrophobic and oleophilic character, for example; cotton (Johnson *et al.*,
42 1973; Choi *et al.*, 1993, Choi, 1996), wool (Radetic *et al.*, 2003), bark (Haussardet *et al.*, 2003), barley
43 straw (Hussein *et al.*, 2008), Kenef (Lee *et al.*, 1999) and corn-cobs (Diya'udeen *et al.*, 2008).

44 The English name of the plant is River hemp or water hemp, the plant belongs to the family
45 *Malvaceae* and the botanical name is *Hibiscus asper*, the Hausa name is Ramar-raafii or Ramarruwa
46 but the common name is *Hibiscus asper* . The Fulani people called it follere (plural pole) Roger
47 Blench and MallamDendo (2006). It grows along the river bank, the bark is used as ropes and the
48 leaves is used as a vegetable in some West African delicacy soup.

49 Chemical modification of plant or wood materials to improve their dimensional stability has been the
50 subject of research for many years. A wide variety of chemicals have been studied including
51 anhydrides, acid chlorides, carboxylic acids isocyanates, acetals, esters, acetyl chloride, B-
52 propiolactone, acrylonitrile and exosides. Cellulose sorbents have been chemically treated (Sun *et*
53 *al.*, 2004) and research into the use of their modified products as absorbents for the removal of crude
54 oil from aqueous solutions have been on the increase. A lot of research is being carried out to develop
55 natural plants materials for oil spill cleanup. Modified natural plants have shown very high capacity to
56 sorbs oil from sites, Rice Husks (Nwankwera, et al, 2011), Barley Straw (Hussein, et al, 2008).

57 The aim of this research work is to investigate the possibility of using *Hibiscus asper* fibre as a sorbent
58 for oil spill clean-up due to fact its abundantly availability and cheap.

59

60 MATERIALS AND METHODS

61 Sample Collection and Preparation

62 The plant sample *Hibiscus asper*(Figure 1), was collected from a farm land located in Girei Local
63 Government Area, Adamawa State, Nigeria and identified by a Botanist from ModibboAdama
64 University of Technology, Yola .

65 The sample obtained was cut from the stem with a knife, the bark was removed, washed with distilled
66 water and was spread on a clean polyethene and allowed to dry in the laboratory for one week at room
67 temperature. It was crushed using piston and mortar and then sieved using improvise mesh(0.841 mm
68 in size) and left to dried at 65°C in the oven which was stored in a labeled polyethene bags. The crude
69 oil sample was collected in a sample bottle from Port-Harcourt Refinery in River State, Nigeria (the
70 chemical composition of the crude oil is shown in Table 2)

71



72

73 Figure 1: Picture of *Hibiscus asper* (Raman Kogi) plant at sample location in Girei Local Government
74 area of Adamawa State

75 **Extraction Procedure**

76 5g of the bark *Hibiscus asper* was extracted with the mixture of ethanol-toulene (2:1 v/v) for 3hours.
77 After extraction the samples was rinsed with ethanol followed by hot water and oven dried at 105°C
78 for 24 hours to reach a constant weight. The extractible content was calculated as a percentage of
79 oven dried test samples.

80 **Chemical Modification**

81 The acetylation was carried out in mild conditions in the presence of calcium chloride using acetic
82 anhydride by Sun *et al* (2004) in a free solvent system. 5g of sample was placed in a 500ml flat
83 bottom flask containing 300cm³ of the acetic anhydride and 30g of calcium chloride. The flask was
84 placed into a thermostatic water bath set at 100°C under atmospheric pressure, with a reflux condenser
85 fitted, the flask was removed from the water bath and the hot reagent was decanted off. The sample
86 material was thoroughly washed with ethanol and acetone to removed unreacted acetic acid by-
87 product. The new product was oven dried at 60°C for 8 hours. The dried modified *Hibiscus asper* fibre
88 was re-weighed to determine the weight gain on the basis of initial oven dry measurement, weight
89 percent gain % (WPG) of the *Hibiscus asper* fibre due to acetylation was calculated from the formula:

90
$$\text{WPG (\%)} = [(W_{\text{mod}} - W_{\text{unmod}}) / W_{\text{unmod}}] \times 100$$

91 Where W_{mod} is the oven dried weight of the modified *Hibiscus asper* and W_{unmod} is the weight of the
92 *Hibiscus asper* prior to reaction.

93 **Characterization of the sorbents**

94 The moisture content was determined according to the method of Rengarajet *et al.*, (2000). Ash content
95 was determined using the methods employed by Aloko& Adebayo (2007). The Volatile content was
96 determined according to the method of Fapetu (2000). The fixed carbon was determined as adopted
97 by Fapetu (2000). The method described by Ekpete and Horsfall (2011) was adopted. Porosity was
98 determined by the method adopted by Ekpete and Horsfall (2011). Specific gravity was determined
99 by the method adopted by Ekpete and Horsfall (2011). Swellability (S) and Anti- swelling efficiency
100 (ASE) tests were determined as adopted by Termiz (2006)

101 **Characterization of Crude Oil Sample**

102 The following physico-chemical properties were used to characterize the crude oil sample from Port-
103 Harcourt.

104 The density of the crude oil was determined using a specific gravity bottle as adopted by Nwankwere
105 (2011). The viscosity of the crude oil was obtained using a viscometer at 25°C. The specific gravity
106 (s.g) of the crude oil was calculated using the result obtained for density. The specific gravity being a
107 more standard measurement was obtained by multiplying the density obtained with the density of
108 water 0.998g/dm³. The American Petroleum Institute (API) was obtained using the method describe
109 by Nwankwere (2011)

110 **Crude oil sample weathering**

111 The crude oil contains low boiling fractions that evaporates after a spill and is often before significant
112 cleanup operations can take place. Therefore in order to simulate the situation of the oil spill and to
113 minimize experimental variation, the crude oil samples was placed in beakers in a laboratory at room
114 temperature for one day in an open air to released volatile hydrocarbons contents.

115 **Oil sorption studies**

116 Oil sample 20ml was suspended in 150ml of water in a 250ml beaker, different weights of the plant
117 material was spread on the surface of the mixture, the procedure was repeated at room temperature,
118 after 20 minutes the plant material was collected with a net and left to drained by hanging the net
119 suspended by retort and clamp over the beaker for 15 minutes. The entire procedure was carried out at
120 various conditions to test the effect of sorbent weight, reusability and time of acetylation. The oil
121 sorption capacity was calculated from the formula:

122 Sorption capacity = new weight gain/ original weight x100

123 **Determination of the amount of water sorption**

124 The water content of the sorbent was determined in the laboratory using the method of centrifuge
125 technique as carried out by Hussein *et al* (2008). The absorbent was subjected to pressing to desorb
126 the crude oil. During the pressing stage petroleum ether (10-20ml) was added to help extract the oil in
127 the sorbent, the extracted liquid was collected in a centrifuge tube. The centrifuge tube was put in a
128 water bath to break emulsion present and then centrifuge for 20 minutes. The amount of water sorbed
129 was weighed and recorded.

130 **Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy Analysis (FT-IR)**

131 The modified and unmodified properties of *Hibiscus asper* samples were characterized using FT-IR,
132 Perkin-ELMER-8000S Spectrophotometer. Samples were run using the KBr pellet technique at the
133 National Research Institute for Chemical Technology (NARICT), Zaria, Kaduna-Nigeria.

134 **Statistical data analysis**

135 The data obtained was analyzed using the method for calculating mean and standard deviation
136 expressed as estimate standard deviation S of a finite set of experimental data (N< 30) at 95%
137 confidence level and two degrees of freedom.

138

139
$$S = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(x_i - \bar{x})^2}{N - 1}}$$

140

141

142 **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

143 The results of the physical properties of the unmodified and modified plant materials shown that
144 during the course of the modification the ash contents which is the reflection of the inorganic
145 composition is within the range of the general ash content (1%-20%) of the fibrous raw material.
146 After modification *Hibiscus asper* has the ash content of 13%, moisture content reduced by 11%,
147 hence the plant materials will have low water intake and become more hydrophobic. The swellability
148 was decreased from 680%-407%, making the plant materials a better sorbent for oil retention as
149 swellability influences competition between oil and water for sorption sites in the sorbent. The oil
150 sorption capacity also increases from 320%- 449%, this shows that the acetylation of the plant
151 materials makes it a possible sorbent for oil spill application Nwankere et al. (2010). The
152 improvement and changes in the physical properties of the plant materials after acetylation is an
153 indication of a successful acetylation, the WPG of *Hibiscus asper* was 224%.

154 The results of the physical properties of the unmodified and modified plant materials were reported as
155 seen in the Table 1.

156 Table 1 Characterization properties of *Hibiscus asper*

| 157 Characterizing properties | unmodified | modified |
|---|------------|------------|
| 158 Ash Content (%) | 6.00±0.01 | 13.00±0.01 |
| 159 Moisture content (%) | 4.00±0.01 | 11.00±0.03 |
| 160 Volatile content (%) | 98.00±0.05 | 50.00±0.01 |
| 161 Bulk Density (g/cm ³) | 1.24±0.01 | 1.14±0.01 |
| 162 Fixed Carbon (%) | 4.00±0.01 | 37.00±0.01 |
| 163 Specific Gravity (g/cm ³) | 0.017±0.01 | 0.018±0.01 |
| 164 Swellability (Absorption) | 608±0.01 | 407±0.02 |
| 165 Oil Sorption Capacity (%) | 320±0.01 | 449±0.02 |

166

167 The properties of the crude oil characterized were the density, specific density, API gravity, viscosity
168 and the ash content. The results obtained are shown in Table 2.

169 The results of the characterized oil show its lightness in the recorded density of less than 1 and
170 specific gravity which makes a promising sorbent, the viscosity at 30°C is 3.06 mpa.s, these properties
171 tend to affect the way oil samples are being absorbed by the sorbents.

172

173 Table 2.Characterization of the crude oil sample

| Parameters | Values |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| Density (g/cm ³) | 0.91±0.01 |
| Specific gravity (g/cm ³) | 0.85±0.02 |
| *API (30°C) | 35.07±0.01 |
| Viscosity (30°C, mpa.s) | 3.06±0.01 |
| Ash content (%) @ 700°C | 11.80±0.01 |

180 *API – American Petroleum Institute, PHCO-Port-Harcourt crude oils

181

182 In this research the weight per gain (WPG) increased as the temperature increases which are an
183 indication of effective Acetylation. The relationship between the temperature of acetylation of
184 Hibiscus asperand the weight per gain is illustrated in Table 3. This result agreed with the work done
185 by Nwankwere (2010), where acetylated rice husk showed increased in weight per gain with increased
186 temperature during modification.

187

188 Table 3.Effect of Temperature and time on the natural plant sorbents

| | Temperature (°C) | | | | |
|------------|------------------|------|------|------|------|
| | 10°C | 20°C | 30°C | 40°C | 60°C |
| Time (min) | WPG (%) | | | | |
| 10 | 1.7 | 2.0 | 2.3 | 2.5 | 2.7 |
| 20 | 1.9 | 2.1 | 2.5 | 2.7 | 2.9 |
| 30 | 2.0 | 2.4 | 2.7 | 3.0 | 3.6 |
| 40 | 2.4 | 2.6 | 3.0 | 3.2 | 3.9 |
| 50 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 3.2 | 3.5 | 4.1 |
| 60 | 3.0 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 3.9 | 4.5 |
| 80 | 2.7 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 3.6 | 3.9 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 202 | 100 | 2.5 | 2.7 | 2.8 | 3.4 | 3.7 |
| 203 | 120 | 2.2 | 2.5 | 2.1 | 3.2 | 3.5 |

204

205 The oil/water sorption ability of the natural plant materials was examined in order to understand the
 206 sorption capacity of the sorbents Table 4. There was an increase in sorption capacity for oil/water with
 207 increase in sorbent weight for the natural plant materials. The modified plant materials showed higher
 208 sorption capacity than the unmodified. The oil/water sorption by unmodified *Hibiscus asper* increased
 209 from 10.62g/g to 34.20g/g,

210

211 Table 4. Oil and water sorbed by unmodified and modified *Hibiscus asper*

| 212 | Weight | | | |
|-----|------------|---------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 213 | Of Sorbent | Sorption time | Oil and water sorbed | Oil and water sorbed |
| 214 | (g) | (mins) | (Unmodified) (g/g) | (Modified) (g/g) |
| 215 | 0.5 | 60 | 10.62 | 14.4 |
| 216 | 1.0 | 60 | 16.26 | 18.06 |
| 217 | 1.5 | 60 | 18.78 | 21.96 |
| 218 | 2.0 | 60 | 27.24 | 31.68 |
| 219 | 2.5 | 60 | 34.20 | 36.42 |

220

221 The oil sorption capacity recorded by the natural plant materials as shown in Table 5. The unmodified
 222 oil sorption of *Hibiscus asper* was 13.14g/g and it increased to 24.09g/g. The higher oil sorption
 223 capacity shown by modified plant materials is an evidence of successful replacement of the water
 224 attracting hydroxyl group by acetic anhydride, thus chemical modification has improved water
 225 absorption due to acetylation.

226

227 Table 5. Oil sorbed by unmodified and modified *Hibiscus asper*

| 228 | Weight of | Sorption time | oil sorbed | oil sorbed |
|-----|--------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 229 | Sorbent (g/) | (mins) | unmodified(g/g) | modified (g/g) |
| 230 | 0.5 | 60 | 13.14 | 18.96 |
| 231 | 1.0 | 60 | 17.88 | 23.82 |
| 232 | 1.5 | 60 | 19.29 | 25.32 |
| 233 | 2.0 | 60 | 22.02 | 28.23 |
| 234 | 2.5 | 60 | 24.09 | 31.08 |

235

236 Water sorption capacity of *Hibiscus asper* was examined to understand the water sorption ability of the
 237 sorbent (Table 6). The unmodified plant materials showed higher water uptake at 60 minutes
 238 compared to water uptake by the modified.

239 Water uptake by unmodified *Hibiscus asper* was 6.33g/g and it increased to 18.39g/g. Modification
 240 was achieved by acetylation which resulted in less water uptake by the modified plant materials.

241 Table 6. water uptake capacity by unmodified and modified *Hibiscus asper*

| 242 | Weight of | Sorption time | water uptake | water uptake |
|-----|-------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|
| 243 | Sorbent (g) | (mins) | unmodified (g/g) | modified (g/g) |
| 244 | 0.5 | 60 | 6.33 | 3.33 |
| 245 | 1.0 | 60 | 9.06 | 6.99 |
| 246 | 1.5 | 60 | 12.99 | 10.02 |
| 247 | 2.0 | 60 | 16.23 | 13.59 |
| 248 | 2.5 | 60 | 18.39 | 16.03 |

249

250 The effect of reusability of *Hibiscus asper* was carried on crude oil as shown in Table 7. The result
 251 showed that the acetylated *Hibiscus asper* was reused three times before it reached 50% of the original
 252 sorption capacity. This could be due to the irreversible deformation of the natural plant materials as a
 253 result of tearing, crushing and other deterioration during squeezing. It's evident that the acetylated
 254 sorbents could be efficient in recycling as seen practically in its stable floatability with much cycles
 255 carried out.

256

257

258

259 Table 7. Effect of 1g acetylated reusability of *Hibiscus asper*

| Weight | No. of | Sorption time(min) | Oil sorbed (g/g) |
|---------------|--------|--------------------|------------------|
| ofsorbent (g) | Cycles | | |
| 1 | 1 | 60 | 11.25 |
| 1 | 2 | 60 | 11.70 |
| 1 | 3 | 60 | 12.60 |
| 1 | 4 | 60 | 12.30 |
| 1 | 5 | 60 | 12.00 |

260

261 The results of the acetylation of the natural plant materials using different concentrations of acetic
 262 anhydride and catalyst are shown in Table 8. The solid to liquid ratio of *Hibiscus asper* observed at
 263 1.20 and 1.60 of sorbent to acetic anhydride mixture resulted to the increased of WPG from 3.67±

264 0.01 to 7.61 ± 0.01 respectively. The structural modification by introducing the acetyl groups in place of
 265 the hydrogen of the hydroxyl group is evident with increased in the WPG. The catalyst (Calcium
 266 Chloride) dosage from 1-3% have shown efficient Acetylation and the use of catalyst in Acetylation
 267 does not only speed the rate of hydroxyl group bond breaking by chlorinating mediated analysis, but
 268 also its an advantage of removing hemicelluloses components of the organic material, which is highly
 269 responsible for the sorbent hydrophilicity is significant. This work unfolded a new modified fibre
 270 product that could have sorbent oleophilicity needed for cleaning of an environment contaminated.

271

272 Table 8. Effect of acetic anhydride and catalyst on *Hibiscus asper*

| 273 | Solid/liquid | Temperature (°C) | Reaction time (1hours) | Catalyst (%) | WPG(%) |
|-----|--------------|------------------|------------------------|--------------|--------|
| 274 | 1.20 | 60 | 11.0 | 3.67 | |
| 275 | 1.30 | 60 | 1 | 1.5 | 4.81 |
| 276 | 1.40 | 60 | 1 | 2.0 | 5.77 |
| 277 | 1.50 | 60 | 1 | 2.5 | 6.05 |
| 278 | 1.60 | 60 | 1 | 3.0 | 7.61 |

279

280 The sorption studies obtained for the sorbents in water, oil and both oil and water indicated increased
 281 sorption with increased weight of the sorbent as reported similarly by Hussein, *et al.*, (2008), there
 282 was low water pick up by the modified natural plant materials as compared to the unmodified
 283 samples.

284 The effect of WPG on oil absorptivity of the sorbent showed that because of the small hydroxyl
 285 groups are substituted with larger acetyl groups, the sorbent will remain in a permanently swollen
 286 state and thus become heavier. A higher WPG showed a higher degree of Acetylation, because the
 287 acetyl groups added are responsible for increased oil sorption by the acetylated sorbent, therefore it is
 288 expected that the WPG increases, the sorption capacity of the sorbent would increase simultaneously.

289 Sorption qualities of barley strands, both revealed increased time with increased sorption time. Table
 290 9 showed that the oil sorbed by *Hibiscus asper* increased from 4.12g/g to 5.90g/g,

291

292 Table 9. Effect of sorption time on 1g of *Hibiscus asper*

| 293 | WOS (g) | Time (min) | Oil Sorbed (g/g) |
|-----|---------|------------|------------------|
| 294 | 1 | 20 | 4.12 |
| 295 | 1 | 30 | 4.93 |
| 296 | 1 | 40 | 5.11 |
| 297 | 1 | 50 | 5.54 |

293
 294 Correlation coefficient (R^2) is an important indicator to determine which isotherm fit the system and
 295 the highest (R^2) will fit the system The Freundlich value for *Hibiscus asper* was $k = 2.52$, $n = 1.28$
 296 and R^2 was 0.27. For Langmuir value $a = 0.02$, $b = 0.02$ and $R^2 = 0.99$. These results (Table 12)
 297 showed that acetylated plant materials fitted Langmuir model isotherm for it has the highest R^2 value
 298 the adsorption can be described as monolayer. The values of R^2 for the plant material sorbents
 299 indicated that it is an excellent sorbents to clean-up oil spilled in a contaminated area.

300

301 Table 10. Langmuir isotherm of *Hibiscus asper*

| Ce/Qe | Ce |
|-------|-----|
| 0.03 | 0.5 |
| 0.04 | 1.0 |
| 0.06 | 1.5 |
| 0.07 | 2.0 |
| 0.08 | 2.5 |

309

310 Table 11. Freundlich isotherm of *Hibiscus asper*

| Log Ce | log Qe |
|--------|--------|
| - 0.03 | 1.28 |
| 1.00 | 1.38 |
| 0.18 | 1.40 |
| 0.30 | 1.45 |
| 0.40 | 1.50 |

318

319 Table 12: Langmuir and Freundlich isotherms model constant

| Langmuir model | Freundlich model | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|-------|------|------|-------|------|
| a | b | R^2 | k | n | R^2 | |
| <i>Hibiscus asper</i> | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.99 | 2.52 | 1.28 | 0.27 |

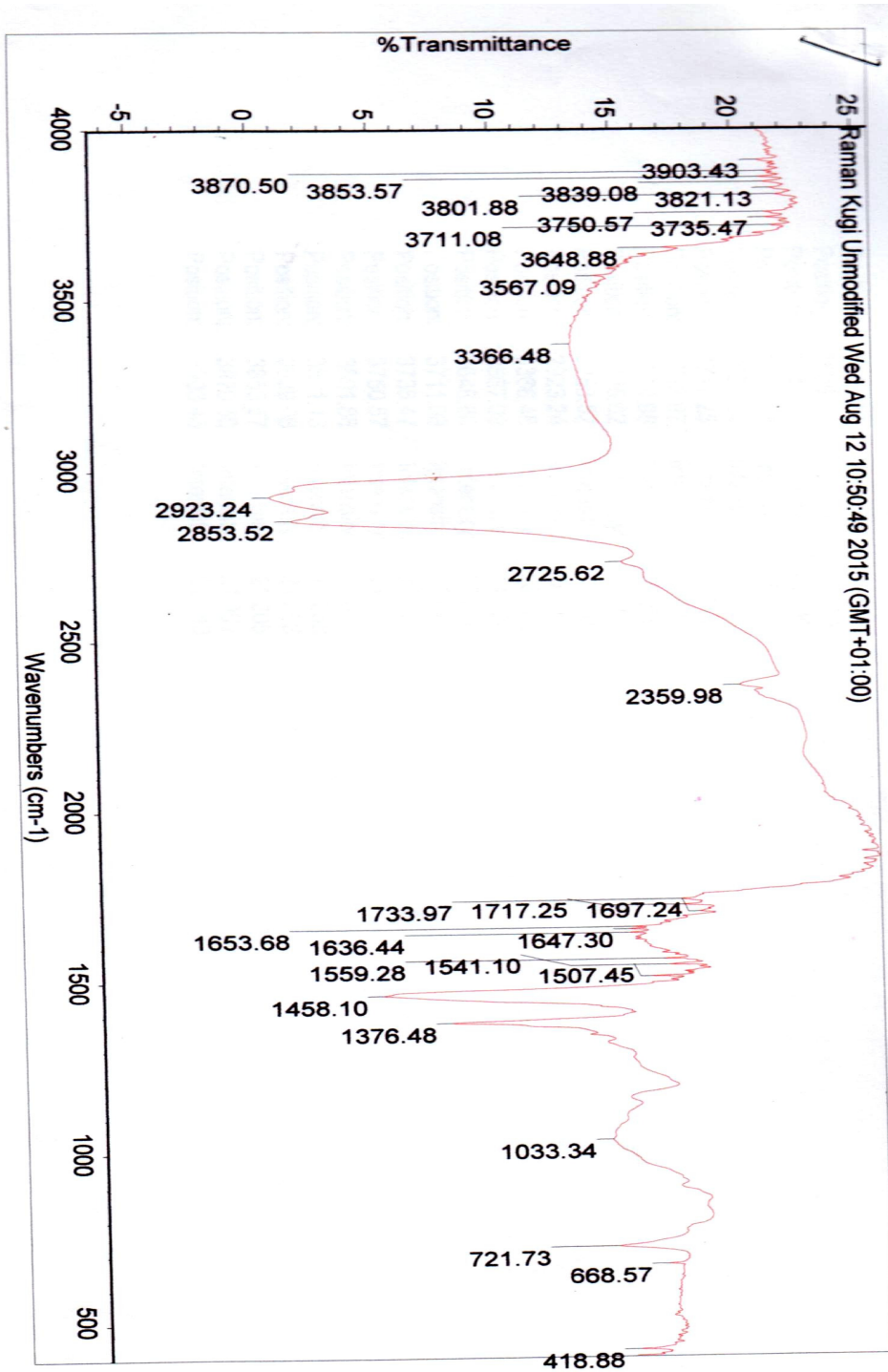
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324 The characteristics of a particular functional group in a molecule in general are shown by the
 325 vibrational frequencies. A distinct O-H stretching in the region of 3390.62 cm^{-1} to 3175.99 cm^{-1} and

326 C-H stretching in methyl and methylene groups (2923.23 cm^{-1}) and absorptions in the region from
327 1030.22 cm^{-1} to 1755.31 cm^{-1} (Owen and Thomas, 1989) are characteristics of these plant
328 materials. The most dominant functional group present that react and selectively attached the crude oil
329 to the sorbent for its removal is O-H ($3748.05\text{-}3176.02\text{ cm}^{-1}$).

330 Structural units that undergo various changes are the functional groups located on the glucose
331 monomer in the cellulose as observed in the FTIR spectra (Bodirlau and Teaca, 2009). The peaks
332 observed at 418.88 , 418.25 , 721.48 and 1031.22 cm^{-1} are associated with the unmodified plant
333 materials while those absorbed at 3755.78 , 3353.64 , 3673.61 and 3626.76 cm^{-1} in the spectra of the
334 acetylated plant materials provided some evidence of Acetylation in the modified plant materials.

335

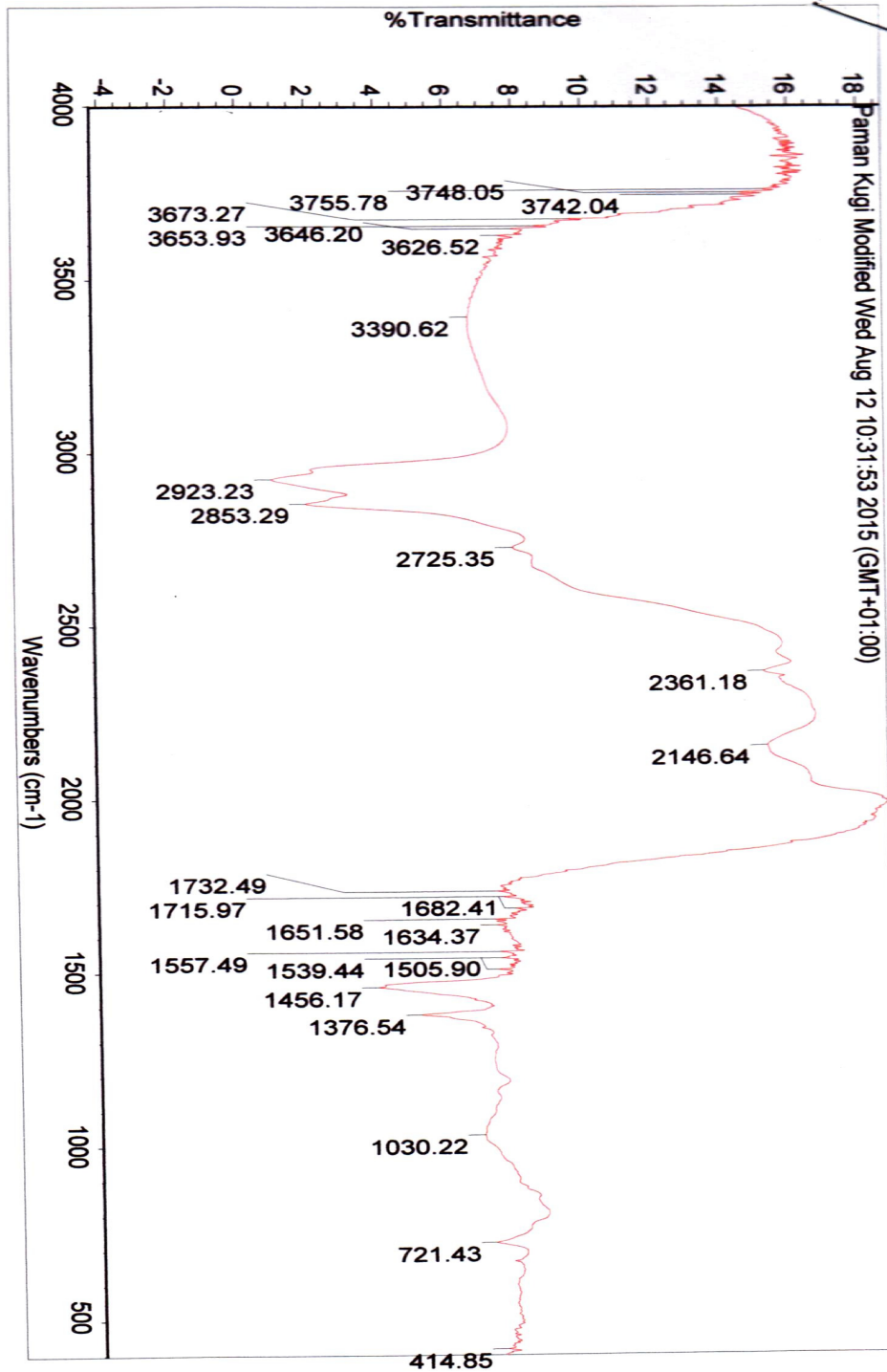


336

337

Figure 2. FT IR spectra of unmodified *Hibiscus asper*

338



339

340

Figure 3. FT IR spectra of modified *Hibiscus asper*

341

342

343 **CONCLUSION**

344 In these research work the use of acetylated natural plant materials (*Hibiscus asper*), as sorbents for
345 eliminating spilled oil from water bodies has been studied, the sorption behavior of the acetylated
346 natural plant materials has indicated the hydrophobic status of the modified sample. Acetylation of the
347 natural plant materials in the presence acetic anhydride using calcium chloride as catalyst in a solvent
348 free system has proven to be successful.

349 The sorbents fitted the Langmuir model best the isotherms produced the highest correlation
350 coefficient (R^2). That means the model assumed monolayer coverage of the oil over the acetylated
351 plant materials. The quick uptake and high absorption capacity makes the acetylated natural plant
352 materials a good alternative sorbent for crude oil spill clean-up.

353

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