

Assessment of Mechanical and Tribological Properties of Aluminium Hybrid Metal Matrix Composites: A Review

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ABSTRACT

Advancements in technology have put an increasing demand on the composite materials, especially in the areas of dynamic structures. A Hybrid metal matrix composite (HMMC) is the composite material with at least three constituent parts, one being a metal necessarily and others may be different metals or materials called reinforcements. The reinforcements are added to get better stiffness, strength, and high strength to weight ratio and other mechanical properties. Among several types, Aluminium based hybrid composites are a new generation of metal matrix composites that have the potentials of satisfying the demands of advanced engineering applications. Of all the reinforcements used in the Aluminium metal matrix composites (AMC's), Silicon carbide and graphite has many better properties like increase in hardness, thermal conductivity and fracture energy. This paper aims at reviewing the literature available on various Aluminium based hybrid metal matrix composites used in present day applications. The effect of different hybrid reinforcements on AMC's in terms of their mechanical properties and tribological properties like tensile strength, strain, hardness, wear and fatigue was discussed.

1. Introduction

A Composite is the material made from two or more constituent materials with significantly different physical and chemical properties. When combined produce a material with characteristics different from individual components. There are two main categories of constituent materials namely Matrix and Reinforcement. Composites are of different types such as Metal matrix composite, Polymer composites and Ceramic composites. The common application of composites includes defence and aerospace structures [1]

The metal matrix composites are combination of two or more different materials including metal, inner metallic compound or next step dispersed phase of metal matrix [2]. To achieve optimum combination of properties, the morphology of constituents is controlled. It includes the properties of constituent's phase, its relative amount, dispersed geometry including particle shape and size along with orientation in matrix. The aim involved in designing the metal matrix composites is to combine the desirable attributes of metals and ceramics. The addition of high strength, high modulus refractory particles to a ductile metal matrix produce a material whose mechanical properties are intermediate between the matrix alloy and the ceramic reinforcement [3]. Its main purpose is to transfer and distribute the load to the reinforcement or fibers. This transfer of loads depends on the type of matrix, reinforcement and the fabrication technique [4]. Generally the matrix can be selected on the basis of oxidation and corrosion resistance or other properties. Al, Ti, Mg, Ni, Cu, Pb, Fe, Ag, Zn, Sn, and Si are used as the matrix material, but Al, Ti, Mg are widely used. Hybrid composites are high tech and potential materials in the fields of automotive application due to their high strength, stiffness, low cost and weight.

Hybridization is the process of incorporating two or more reinforcements in order to yield better properties than individual components. Hybrid composites primarily consists of one matrix and two or more reinforcements [7]. Modern industry is rapidly introducing different composites due to their unique properties such as low density and very light weight with high strength, hardness, stiffness, high fatigue strength and wear resistance in order to meet the challenge of liberalization and to maintain global competitiveness in the market [8]. Modern manufacturing engineers are also trying to introduce better properties in the composite by hybridizing usually available conventional composites at same phase.

2. Aluminium Hybrid MMCs

The Aluminium Matrix composites (AMCs) represent a class of MMCs having properties like low density, high stiffness and strength, superior wear resistance, controlled coefficient of thermal expansion, higher fatigue resistance and better stability at elevated temperatures [7]. Due to this, these composites are used for the design of wide range of components for advanced applications. Aluminium MMC's are widely used in aircraft, aerospace, automobiles and various other fields [8]. Aluminium comes next to steel, when it comes to automobile body frame with 5xxx and 6xxx series on the lead. AA6111, AA6009, AA5251 are currently used aluminium alloys in automobile industry while others are under development.

The reinforcement is usually done to improve properties like strength, stiffness, conductivity, etc of the base metal [9]. The reinforcements should be stable in the given working temperature and non reactive too. The final properties of the hybrid reinforcement depend on individual properties of

reinforcements selected and the matrix alloy [10]. The different ceramic materials that are generally used to reinforce aluminium alloys in MMCs are SiC, TiC, ZrC, TiB₂, ZrB₂, AlN, Si₃N₄, Al₂O₃, B₄C, SiO₂, Al₄Mo, Al₃Ti and Al₃Zr. These reinforcements influence micro structure, physical properties, tribological properties and other desirable properties of the composite [11]. Thus the hybrid composite is characterized by greater light weight, higher strength, higher stiffness, better toughness and desired wear resistance than those of conventional materials.

3. Review on AMCs

In this section, there is a review on the aluminium and its alloys as base metal and taking hybrid metal matrix composites. From the Table 1, it is clear that both the Mechanical and tribological properties of the hybrid composites were better than that of unreinforced alloy and in most of the cases the tribological properties like wear resistance of hybrid composites increased by using different reinforcements.

4. Conclusions

1. The current literature review reveals that more extensive work has been done and reported to improve the properties of different aluminium based

metal matrix composites by forming their composites being reinforced with various materials such as Al₂O₃, TiB₂, SiC, Graphite, B₄C, also by taking natural fibers like rice husk, fly ash, Eggshells etc.

2. Many researchers prepared the composites by using different methods like stir casting, Squeeze casting, Double stir casting, Powder metallurgy, Friction stir processing, Vortex method, ARB etc.
3. It is better to take two reinforcements instead of one, i.e., Hybrid metal matrix composites gives good properties of Mechanical and tribological, when compared to single reinforced or unreinforced composites.
4. Most of the work of fabrication of composites is done in stir casting and limited amount of work was observed in Squeeze process because stir casting process is easily available.
5. It is observed that among all the other reinforcements used in the Al MMC's SiC and graphite has better Mechanical and Tribological properties.

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Appendix

Table 1: Literature review on aluminium Hybrid metal matrix composite

S No	Matrix	Reinforcement	Manufacturing process	Mechanical properties	Tribological properties	Result	Ref
1	Al7075	SiC, TiO ₂	Stir casting	Hardness, Impact, Tensile	----	Hardness increases when compared to unreinforced.	12
2	Al6061	Zircon sand, graphite	Stir casting	Hardness	Wear	When compared to untreated composites, the heat treated composites showed reasonable improvement in their properties.	13
3	Pure Al	SiC, Al ₂ O ₃ , C	Squeeze casting	Hardness, Impact test	-----	It is found that the results from squeeze formed Al, reinforced with SiC/Al ₂ O ₃ /C particle is having superior properties in comparison of impact strength and hardness.	14
4	Al6061	SiC, Al ₂ O ₃	Stir casting	-----	Wear	The results indicated that the wear resistance of the 15% hybrid composite is better than that of the 5% composite. The results also concluded that the applied load has the highest influence on the wear rate followed by sliding speed and sliding distance.	15, 18
5	Al	Al ₂ O ₃ , SiC	Anodizing and Accumulative roll bonding	Tensile strength, % elongation	---	Tensile strength was 3.1 times higher than that of pure aluminium matrix while tensile strength and % elongation improved with increased number of ARB cycles.	16
6	A356.2	RHA, SiC	Vortex method	--	Wear	Hybrid composites had better wear resistance than that of pure aluminum matrix and it increased with increase in the content of reinforcement.	17
7	Al	SiC, Al ₂ O ₃	Powder metallurgy	Hardness	Wear	The incorporation of SiC and Al ₂ O ₃ particles into the Al improves the sliding wear resistance as compared to the unreinforced alloy. And the hardness of the composite is also increased when compared to unreinforced alloy.	19
8	Al6061	SiC, Al ₂ O ₃	Stir casting	Hardness, Tensile, Impact strength	-----	Density found increasing with increased SiC and Al ₂ O ₃ content. With increase in ceramic particulates, the hardness of the SiC & Al ₂ O ₃ filled Al6061 alloy composites also increases.	20
9	Al6351	SiC, Al ₂ O ₃	Stir casting	Hardness	Wear	The overall wear rate increases with load in all the specimens. However, at higher loads the breakdown of (SiC+Al ₂ O ₃) particle clusters results in a high wear rate in the hybrid composite.	21
10	Al6061	SiC, Al ₂ O ₃	Stir casting	Hardness, Tensile and Impact test		Hardness, Tensile, yield strength of hybrid composites increases by increasing the reinforcements when compared to base alloy.	22
11	Al6061	Flyash, SiC	Stir casting	Hardness, tensile strength	---	The macro hardness and tensile strength of the composite increased with increase in weight percent of the SiC particles.	23
12	Al	TiC, B ₄ C	Squeeze casting	Hardness, tensile	Wear	The maximum hardness occurs at Al-5%TiC-5%B ₄ C composite, maximum yield and tensile strength had belonged to Al-10%B ₄ C composite and maximum elongation had belonged to Al-10%TiC composite. The wear properties of composites revealed the better behavior for Al-B ₄ C composite.	24
13	Al6061	SiC, B ₄ C	Ultrasonic cavitation based solidification process	Hardness, Tensile and Impact test	----	Hardness and tensile strength of the hybrid composites increased quite significantly while the ductility and impact strength reduced marginally when compared to unreinforced alloy.	25
14	Al	SiC, B ₄ C	Powder Metallurgy	Hardness	---	The increase in percentage of B ₄ C, the micro hardness of the metal matrix composite has increased significantly.	26
15	Al2024	Blast furnace slag	Stir casting	Hardness, Compressive strength		It is found that hardness value 5% fine particles of slag is more when compared to the base metal and 5% coarse particles of slag is more. Compressive properties of synthesized. The compressive strength increases with increase in size of slag particle and then decreases.	27
16	Al6351	SiC, B ₄ C	Stir casting	----	Wear	It is observed that the dry sliding friction and wear behaviour of the composites are influenced by the applied load, sliding velocity and weight % of B ₄ C.	28

17	Al6063	SiC, B ₄ C	Vacuum assisted mould investment	Hardness, Image analysis	--	As increase in percentage of B ₄ C the micro hardness of the metal matrix composite has increased significantly.	29
18	Al7075	SiC, B ₄ C	Liquid metallurgy	Hardness	Wear	The wear rate is dominated by the order of percentage of reinforcement, applied load, sliding speed, and sliding time. ANOVA test concluded that as percentage of reinforcement increases the wear rate also decreases significantly.	30
19	A-356.2	RHA, SiC	Double stir casting	Hardness, UTS, and Yield strength	---	The hardness, UTS and yield strength was better than that of pure matrix and single-reinforced composites.	31
20	Al	SiC, B ₄ C	Stir Casting	Hardness, Impact Tensile, Compression	---	It is found that the strain value increases proportionally as the stress value increases for a maximum limit and further as the stress increases the strain drops.	32
21	Al	SiC, Rice husk	Liquid metallurgical	Tensile, Impact hardness	---	While increasing Rice husk content we get higher tensile strength. By increasing the SiC we get higher impact strength and hardness of the hybrid composite.	33
22	Al	Si-Fe, Rice husk	Double stir casting	Hardness, Tensile Strength, Yield Strength	---	By keeping SiC and iron constant and varying the rice husk particles to Al-Si-Fe alloy increases both the yield strength, Ultimate tensile strength and hardness values up to a maximum values.	34
23	A356.2	SiC, Rice husk	Two stage stir casting	Density	--	Dislocation density results from the thermal mismatch between the reinforcement and the matrix, the porosity of composites has a great influence on the damping capacity of hybrid composites.	35
24	Al-Mg-Si	Rice husk ash, SiC	Two step stir process	Porosity, Density measurement, tensile	Fracture toughness	The results show that the composites were of good quality as the estimated porosity values are less than 2.5% in all grades produced.	36
25	Al-Mg-Si	RHA, SiC	Double stir casting	--	Corrosion, Wear	The effect of RHA/SiC weight ratio on the corrosion behaviour of the composites in 3.5% NaCl solution was not consistent for the different weight percent of reinforcements used in developing the Al-Mg-Si based composites. In most cases the use of hybrid reinforcement of RHA and SiC resulted in improved corrosion resistance of the composites in 3.5% NaCl solution.	37
26	Al6440	SiC, RHA	Liquid metallurgy	Hardness, Tensile strength & Structural properties	---	RHA can be used as reinforcement material to synthesize light weight composites with increased hardness, tensile strength, Young's modulus for various industrial applications.	38
27	Al7075	Al ₂ O ₃ , Graphite	Liquid Metallurgy	Hardness, Tensile strength, Flexural strength, compression strength	Wear	By increasing the reinforcement of ceramic phase, hardness, Tensile strength, Flexural strength and compressive strength also increases. The wear properties of the hybrid composites containing graphite exhibited the superior wear-resistance properties.	39
28	Al6061	(SiC+Gr) (SiC+Al ₂ O ₃)	Friction stir processing	Hardness, Tensile	Wear	Hardness and wear resistance of hybrid composites were better than that of base matrix but better result obtained in SiC + Al ₂ O ₃ -reinforced hybrid composites.	40
29	Al6063	Al ₂ O ₃ , Graphite	Stir casting	Hardness, Tensile strength	--	Tensile strength, hardness increases	41
30	Al6061	Al ₂ O ₃ , Graphite	Stir casting	Hardness	--	By addition of Al ₂ O ₃ the hardness increases while addition of graphite particles with varying combinations ductility decreases.	42
31	Al6061	Al ₂ O ₃ , Graphite	Stir casting	Hardness, Tensile strength	--	It is observed that the hardness of Al6061/Al ₂ O ₃ /Graphite hybrid composites decreased by increasing the content of graphite particulates.	43
32	Al	Al ₂ O ₃ , Graphite	Powder Metallurgy	Apparent, Tap densities	---	With increasing the graphite content in the mixture and milling time the apparent and tap density increases.	44
33	Al5083	Al ₂ O ₃ , Graphite	Stir casting	Hardness		By increasing the hard reinforcements in the hybrid composites the micro hardness also	45

						increases.	
34	Al2024	SiC, Graphite	Powder Metallurgy	Hardness	Wear	The composite with Al2024 and 5wt. % SiC and 10wt% Gr. shows the greatest improvement by having the highest strength and wear resistance.	46
35	Al6061	SiC, Graphite	Semi solid powder densification	Hardness, Fracture energy	Wear	Fracture energy decreases monotonously as the amount of graphite addition increases. Wear rate of the counterpart increases as the amount of graphite addition in the composites increases up to 8% Gr addition.	47
36	Al	SiC, Graphite, Sb ₂ S ₃	Powder metallurgy	-	Wear	Incorporation of graphite particles in the aluminium matrix as a second reinforcement decreases the wear rates of the composite compared to SiCp reinforced composite.	48
37	Al (LM2)	SiC, Graphite	Vortex method	----	Surface finish	Surface finish is poor at drilling of Al/20%SiC/10%Gr composite compared to Al/20%SiC/5%Gr composite	49
38	Al6061	SiC, Graphite	Powder metallurgy	Hardness, Density	Wear	While 9 vol.% graphite addition to Al6061 powder resulted in deterioration of the wear properties of the sintered composite as compared to the base alloy, the wear rate of Al/9%Gr/20%SiC hybrid composite was 10 times lower than of the unreinforced alloy.	50
39	Al6061 (LM5)	SiC, Gr	Gravity Die casting	Hardness, Tensile strength, Ultimate tensile strength	Fatigue	Mechanical properties were observed. The fatigue resistance of Hybrid Al-SiC-Gr composite is superior to that of the matrix alloy.	51
40	Al2219	SiC, Graphite	Liquid metallurgy	----	Wear	The wear rate has been increased with the increasing load and decreased with increasing speed up to 4.6m/s and then increased. The incorporation of graphite particles in the Al matrix as a second reinforcement decreases the wear rate of the composite when compared to SiC reinforced composite.	52
41	Al6061	SiC, Graphite	Pressure die casting	Ultimate Tensile strength	---	An increase in the percentage of graphite & SiC reinforcements in aluminium alloy increases the ultimate tensile strength and young's modulus.	53
42	A356	SiC, Graphite	Liquid metallurgy	Hardness, tensile strength	--	The hardness of composites increased significantly with addition of SiCp, while maximum hardness was obtained for 9% of SiCp. The addition of low weight percentage of SiCp to A356 leads to increase in tensile strength and decrease in percentage elongation.	54
43	AA2024	SiC, Flyash	Two step stir casting	Density, Hardness, Tensile strength	---	Density of composites decreases with increasing in reinforcement. Al-SiC-fly ash composites show better performance when compared to the Al-SiC and Al-flyash.	55
44	Al-Mg	SiC, Al ₂ O ₃	Pressure infiltration	Hardness, Compression strength, Impact	Wear	Dry sliding wear improved with increased amount of magnesium in the matrix which also resulted in increased mechanical properties	56
45	Al-Si-10Mg	Al ₂ O ₃ , Gr.	Stir Casting	--	Wear	Wear resistance was better than that single reinforced composites and matrix.	57
46	Al5083	SiC, MoS ₂	FSP		Wear	Wear resistance was better than that single reinforced composites and matrix.	58
47	Al	Al ₂ O ₃ , SiC	Stir casting	Hardness	Wear	Both the hardness and wear properties were improved as compared to pure aluminum matrix and the wear resistance of hybrid composite was better than that of single-reinforced composites	59
48	Al356	SiC, Gr	Stir casting	Hardness, Tensile	-	Hardness of alloy increases with increase in reinforcement.	60
49	A356	SiC, MoS ₂	Friction stir processing	Hardness	Wear	Hybrid composite had better wear resistance as compared to that of cast alloy and had higher hardness compared to base metal, the incorporation of MoS ₂ reinforcement in A356-SiC composite as a second reinforcement further increased the wear resistance of composites.	61
50	A332	SiC, Al ₂ O ₃	Stir casting	Tensile strength	---	Tensile strength of hybrid composite increased as compared to pure matrix.	62
51	AA7075	SiC, B ₄ C	Stir casting	--	Wear	Wear resistance of hybrid composite was better	63

						than that if the pure matrix.	
52	Al-Mg-Si	RHA, Al ₂ O ₃	Double stir casting	--	Wear	Wear resistance of Al ₂ O ₃ -reinforced composite increased with increase in RHA content.	64
53	LM25	SiC, TiO ₂	Stir casting	Hardness, Tensile strength	Wear	Hardness, strength and wear resistance were better than that of base matrix and increased by increasing the amount of both reinforcement or keeping one constant and increasing the other.	65
54	Al	TiC, B ₄ C	Stir casting	Hardness	--	Hybrid composites had better hardness than single reinforced composites.	66
55	AA1100	SiC, B ₄ C	Stir casting	--	Wear	Wear resistance was better than that of base matrix.	67
56	AA6061	FA, SiC	Stir casting	Tensile strength, Hardness	--	Tensile strength and hardness increased with increase in volume fraction of SiC particulates with constant volume fraction of FA.	68
57	LM25	Al ₂ O ₃ , B ₄ C	Stir casting	Hardness	--	Hardness was better than that pure aluminum matrix and increased with increased content of reinforcement.	69
58	AA6061 and AA7075	B ₄ C, Gr	Stir casting	Hardness	Wear	Hardness and wear resistance was better than that of pure metal in both hybrid composite, but hardness and ductility was better in case of AA7075 while wear resistance was better in AA6061 case.	70
59	AA1050	Al ₂ O ₃ , SiC	Accumulative roll bonding	Hardness, tensile Strength	--	Hardness and tensile strength was better than that of pure matrix and increased with increasing the ARB cycle	71
60	AA6061	TiB ₂ , Gr	Stir casting	Hardness, Tensile strength	---	Hardness and tensile strength was better than that of pure matrix and increased with increasing the content of reinforcement.	72
61	Al	Cu, Ti	Insitu process	Hardness, yield ultimate strength	--	Hardness, Yield strength, tensile strength increases.	73
62	Al-Mg-Si	RHA+SiC	Double Stir casting	--	Wear	Use of RHA with SiC has a significant effect in reducing the wear rates of hybrid composite	74
63	Al8011	Fly ash, E-Glass	Stir casting		Corrosion	The composite specimen showed better corrosion resistance than that the unreinforced matrix alloy.	75
64	LM25	SiC, Al ₂ O ₃	Liquid processing technique	Tensile, hardness	Wear	As the reinforcement of Al ₂ O ₃ and SiC content increases, the depth and number of grooves on the surface of the pin decreases, thus increasing the wear resistance.	76