

**SYNTHESIS OF CARBON NANOMATERIALS USING CHEMICAL  
VAPOR DEPOSITION TECHNIQUE FOR LIQUID ADSORPTION**

**By**

**NORZILAH BINTI ABDUL HALIF**

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**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,  
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for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**September 2011**

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment  
of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**September 2011**

**Chair: Professor Fakhrul Razi Ahmadun, PhD**

**Faculty: Engineering**

The synthesis of Carbon Nanotubes (CNTs) and Helical Carbon Nanofibers (HCNFs) using Floating Catalyst-Chemical Vapor Deposition method (FC-CVD) is reported. Acetone and ethanol are used as carbon sources, hydrogen as carrier gas, argon as purging gas and ferrocene as catalyst. The effect of carbon sources (acetone and ethanol), reactor temperatures (600-1000°C), and hydrogen flow rate (50 – 400 mL/min) are investigated. The CNMs produced are characterized by Thermo Gravimetric Analysis (TGA), elemental analysis, Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM), Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) and textural analysis.

The optimum condition achieved for synthesizing high yield and high purity of CNTs and HCNFs are at reactor temperature of 700°C and hydrogen flow rate of 100 mL/min and 150 mL/min, respectively. For CNTs, the highest yield obtained is 9 g carbon produced/g catalyst with the percentage purity of 92.49%. On the other hand, the highest yield achieved for HCNFs is 7 g carbon produced/g catalyst with the percentage purity of 90.63%. Increasing of temperatures and hydrogen flow rates indicates the decreasing in the surface area and the pore volume of CNTs and HCNFs. The maximum BET specific surface area and the pore volume obtained for CNTs are 90 m<sup>2</sup>/g and 0.509 cm<sup>3</sup>/g, respectively. Meanwhile, for HCNFs, the highest BET specific surface area and the pore volume achieved for CNTs are 89 m<sup>2</sup>/g and 0.1927 cm<sup>3</sup>/g, respectively. Acid and heat modification affects the BET specific surface area negatively. Nonetheless, HNO<sub>3</sub> modification improves the oxygen functional groups but in contrary, heat modification reduces the functional groups on the surface of CNTs and HCNFs.

Performance of CNTs and HCNFs are evaluated using the Methylene Blue (MB) and phenol adsorption. The equilibrium adsorption data of MB and phenol on the as-synthesized CNTs and as-synthesized HCNFs are investigated. The as-synthesized HCNFs show the highest adsorption capacity for MB and phenol at room temperature with the value of 33.17 mg/g and 11.33 mg/g, respectively. The Redlich-Peterson isotherm model fitted the experimental data as it has the highest R<sup>2</sup> and lowest SSE value. The kinetics of MB adsorption onto CNTs and HCNFs at different initial

concentrations fitted the pseudo-second order model which provides the best correlation of the data.

The MB and phenol adsorption isotherms at room temperature show that the acid-modified CNMs has the lowest adsorption capacity, resulting from the reduction in their BET specific surface area and the existence of surface oxygen functional groups in abundance. However, heat-modified CNMs have the highest adsorption capacity for MB and phenol, contributed by the basicity surface, in spite of their low surface area. The adsorption capacity of MB and phenol onto acid-modified CNMs decreased 3-9% as compared to as-synthesized CNTs. The adsorption capacities of CNMs are as follows: **Heat-modified CNMs > As-synthesized CNMs > Acid-modified CNMs**

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai  
keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**SINTESIS BAHAN NANO KARBON MENGGUNAKAN TEKNIK  
PEMENDAPAN WAP KIMIA UNTUK PENJERAPAN CECAIR**

Oleh

**NORZILAH BINTI ABDUL HALIF**

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Sintesis tiub nanokarbon (CNTs) dan karbon heliks nanofiber (HCNFs) menggunakan teknik pemangkin terapung pemendapan wap kimia (FC-CVD) dilaporkan. Aseton dan etanol digunakan sebagai sumber karbon, hidrogen sebagai gas pembawa dan ferosea sebagai pemangkin. Kesan sumber karbon (aseton dan etanol), suhu reaktor (600-1000 °C), dan kadar aliran hidrogen (50 – 400 mL/min) telah dikaji. CNTs yang dihasilkan dicirikan dengan analisis haba gravitian (TGA), analisis unsur (EDX), mikroskop elektron imbasan (SEM), pengubah Fourier inframerah (FTIR) dan analisis tekstur.

Keadaan optimum yang telah dicapai untuk mensintesis CNTs dan HCNFs yang mempunyai hasil dan berketulenan tinggi adalah pada suhu reaktor bersuhu 700°C dan kadar aliran hidrogen masing-masing sebanyak 100 mL/min dan 150 mL/min. Untuk CNTs, hasil tertinggi yang diperoleh adalah 9 g karbon termendap/g pemangkin dengan ketulenan sebanyak 92.49%. Sebaliknya, hasil maksima yang dicapai oleh HCNFs adalah 7 g karbon termendap/g pemangkin dengan ketulenan 90.63%.

Peningkatan suhu reaktor dan kadar aliran hidrogen menunjukkan pengurangan dalam luas permukaan dan isipadu liang CNTs dan HCNFs. Luas permukaan dan isipadu liang maksimum bagi CNTs adalah masing-masing sebanyak 90 m<sup>2</sup>/g and 0.509 cm<sup>3</sup>/g. Sementara itu, untuk HCNFs, luas permukaan isipadu dan liang maksimum adalah masing-masing sebanyak 89 m<sup>2</sup>/g and 0.1927 cm<sup>3</sup>/g. Pengubahsuaian asid dan haba ke atas CNTs memberi kesan negatif kepada luas permukaan. Sebaliknya, pengubahsuaian asid menggunakan HNO<sub>3</sub> meningkatkan kumpulan berfungsi oksigen pada permukaan CNTs dan HCNFs.

Prestasi CNTs dan HCNFs dinilai dengan penjerapan MB dan phenol. Data penjerapan keseimbangan pada suhu bilik menunjukkan bahawa HCNFs mempunyai keupayaan penjerapan pada MB sebanyak 33.17 mg/g dan phenol sebanyak 11.33 mg/g. Model isoterma Redlich-Peterson didapati sesuai dengan data eksperimen kerana ia mempunyai nilai pekali penentuan, R<sup>2</sup> yang tertinggi dan nilai ralat piawai kuasa dua (SSE) yang terendah. Kinetik penjerapan MB ke atas CNTs dan HCNFs

pada kepekatan awal yang berbeza didapati mematuhi model tertib *pseudo* kedua yang menyediakan data kolerasi terbaik.

Penjerapan isoterma MB dan phenol pada suhu bilik menunjukkan bahawa CNMs yang diubahsuai dengan asid mempunyai kapasiti penjerapan terendah yang disebabkan oleh pengurangan luas permukaan spesifik dan kewujudan kumpulan berfungsi oksigen di permukaannya. Walau bagaimanapun, CNMs yang diubahsuai dengan haba mempunyai kapasiti penjerapan yang tinggi untuk MB dan phenol yang disebabkan oleh permukaannya yang beralkali sekalipun mempunyai luas permukaan yang rendah. Kapasiti penjerapan MB dan phenol ke atas CNMs yang diubahsuai dengan asid berkurangan sebanyak 3-9 % dibandingkan dengan CNMs yang tidak diubahsuai. Secara keseluruhan, kapasiti penjerapan CNMs adalah seperti berikut:

**CNMs diubahsuai dengan haba > CNMs tidak diubahsuai > CNMs diubahsuai dengan asid**

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Bismillah. Verily all praise is for Allah, we praise Him and seek His aid and ask for His forgiveness, and we seek refuge with Allah from the evils of ourselves and our evil actions. Whomever Allah guides there is none who can misguide him, and whomever Allah misguides (because they do not want any guidance) there is none who can guide him, and I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah Alone, having no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and His Messenger.

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*Jazaakumullahu khayran katheera ~*

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 13 September 2011 to conduct the final examination of Norzilah binti Abdul Halif on her thesis entitled "Synthesis of carbon nanomaterials using chemical vapor deposition technique for liquid adsorption" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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Date: 20 December 2011

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or other institutions.

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**NORZILAH BINTI ABDUL HALIF**

Date: 13 September 2011

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## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table</b>		<b>Page</b>
2.1	Summary of hydrogen as carrier gas recorded in CVD system	2.25
2.2	Summary of hydrogen as reducing agent for various catalyst system	2.27
2.3	Heat treatment of CNTs at low temperatures	2.40
2.4	Heat treatment at high temperatures on CNTs	2.41
2.5	Liquid phase oxidation	2.43
2.6	List of adsorption of organic chemicals studies using CNTs	2.46
2.7	Adsorption capacities of various adsorbents for MB	2.50
2.8	Adsorption capacities of various adsorbents for phenol	2.51
2.9	Surface functioning methods on CNTs	2.64
3.1	Summary of properties of carbon sources used	3.4
3.2	Summary of properties of adsorbates used in adsorption studies	3.12
4.1	Comparison of CNM-A and CNM-E	4.58
4.2	Physical properties of CNMs	4.70
4.3	Elemental composition of CNMs	4.70
4.4	Boehm titration method	4.79
4.5	The coefficients of the Langmuir, Freundlich and Redlich-Peterson isotherms for MB system	4.84
4.6	The coefficients of the Langmuir, Freundlich and Redlich-Peterson isotherms for phenol system	4.85
4.7	Pseudo first order, pseudo second order and intraparticle diffusion rate constants values for MB adsorption on as-synthesized CNM-A at different initial concentration	4.90

4.8	Pseudo first order, pseudo second order and intraparticle diffusion rate constants values for MB adsorption on as-synthesized CNM-E at different initial concentration	4.91
4.9	Pseudo first order, pseudo second order and intraparticle diffusion rate constants values for phenol adsorption on CNM-A at different initial concentration	4.92
4.10	Pseudo first order, pseudo second order and intraparticle diffusion rate constants values for phenol adsorption on as-synthesized CNM-E at different initial concentration	4.93
4.11	Pseudo of the first order, pseudo second order and intra-particle diffusion rate constants values for MB adsorption on CNM-A-AM at different initial concentration.	4.94
4.12	Pseudo first order, pseudo second order and intra-particle diffusion rate constants values for MB adsorption on CNM-A-HM at different initial concentration.	4.95
4.13	Pseudo first order, pseudo second order and intra-particle diffusion rate constants values for phenol adsorption on CNM-A-AM at different initial concentration.	4.96
4.14	Pseudo first order, pseudo second order and intra-particle diffusion rate constants values for phenol adsorption on CNM-A-HM at different initial concentration.	4.97
4.15	Pseudo first order, pseudo second order and intra-particle diffusion rate constants values for MB adsorption on CNM-E-AM at different initial concentration.	4.98
4.16	Pseudo first order, pseudo second order and intra-particle diffusion rate constants values for MB adsorption on CNM-E-HM at different initial concentration.	4.99
4.17	Pseudo first order, pseudo second order and intra-particle diffusion rate constants values for phenol adsorption on CNM-E-AM at different initial concentration.	4.100
4.18	Pseudo first order, pseudo second order and intra-particle diffusion rate constants values for phenol adsorption on CNM-E-HM at different initial concentration.	4.101

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## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure</b>		<b>Page</b>
2.1	Types types of CNTs and CNFs	2.2
2.2	Examples of different possibilities of functionalization of CNTs	2.4
2.3	(a) Schematic diagram of a porous carbon sorbent and diffusion into pores. (b) Sorption of analytes on CNTs.	2.6
2.4	(a) Set-up of arc-discharge apparatus; (b) SEM images of CNTs produced	2.8
2.5	(a) Set-up of laser ablation apparatus; (b) SEM images of CNTs produced	2.9
2.6.	(a) Set-up of CVD apparatus; (b) SEM images of CNTs produced	2.10
2.7.	CNTs or CNFs formation mechanism	2.11
2.8.	The growth of CNTs and CNFs	2.13
2.9	The growth mechanisms for CNTs: (a) tip-growth model, (b) base-growth model	2.14
2.10	Bidirectional (a) and Multidirectional (b) growth model of CNFs	2.15
2.11	Typical TEM pictures of the two main growth products. (a) HCNFs (b) straight hollow CNFs	2.16
2.12.	Schematic and simplified growth model in 2D	2.29
2.13	Hydrogen atoms satisfying valences at the edge of a graphite plane	2.30
2.14	SEM images of CNTs a) arrays and b) agglomerates	2.57
2.15	Different adsorption sites on a homogeneous bundle of partially open-ended CNTs: 1) Internal; 2) Interstitial channel; 3) External groove site; and 4) external surface	2.58

2.16	Desorption of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons from carbon nanomaterials in water	2.59
2.17	Typical defects in SWCNTs	2.60
2.18	HRTEM images of different deformed large-diameter DWNTs because of the existing congenital defects: e) bent; f) buckled; g) sharp diameter; i) curved	2.60
2.19	Acid treated CNTs using HNO <sub>3</sub> acid for 0.5 h	2.61
2.20	Defect sites on the sidewalls on SWCNT after microwave treatment	2.61
2.21	Schematic illustration of hydrogen storage in defects of activated CNTs	2.62
2.22	The as-synthesized CNTs were annealed isothermally for 120 min in flowing argon at temperature at the range 1700-2200°C. Although their crystallization is not perfect, graphene sheet in the annealed CNTs becomes stiff and continuous after heat treatment	2.62
2.23	The IUPAC Classification for adsorption isotherm	2.69
3.1	Block diagram of the research work	3.3
3.2	Experimental set-up of FC-CVD reactor	3.5
3.3	Parameters varied in adsorption experiment	3.14
4.1	Effect of reactor temperature on amount of carbon yield (Hydrogen flow rate = 150 mL/min)	4.1
4.2	SEM images of CNM-A	4.4
4.2	SEM images of CNM-E	4.6
4.4	Outer diameter (OD) distribution of (a) CNM-A and (b) CNM-E synthesized at temperatures of 700 – 950°C	4.8
4.5	TEM images of CNM-A synthesized at (a) 700°C; (b) 750°C; (c) 800°C; (d) 850°C; (e) 900°C; (f) 950°C	4.10

4.6	TEM images of CNM-E synthesized at (a) 700°C (b) 750°C (c) 800°C (d) 850°C (e) 900°C (f) 950°C	4.12
4.7	TG (a) and DTG (b) curves for CNM-A synthesized at 700°C, 750°C, 950°C	4.14
4.8	TG (a) and DTG (b) curves for CNM-E synthesized at 700°C, 850°C, and 950°C	4.15
4.9	Purity of CNM-A and CNM-E synthesized at reactor temperature of 700 - 950°C	4.16
4.10	XRD Pattern of (a) CNM-A and (b) CNM-E	4.18
4.11	Interlayer spacing $d_{002}$ and $FHWM$ of CNM-A and CNM-E synthesized at temperatures of 700- 950 °C	4.20
4.12	BET specific surface area and total pore volume of (a) CNM-A and (b) CNM-E synthesized at reactor temperatures of 700 – 950 °C	4.21
4.13	N <sub>2</sub> adsorption isotherm for the (a) CNM-A and (b) CNM-E synthesized at different reactor temperatures of 700 – 950°C	4.24
4.14	Expanded view of low pressure region of N <sub>2</sub> adsorption of (a) CNM-A and (b) CNM-E	4.26
4.15	Pore size distribution of (a) CNM-A and (b) CNM-E	4.29
4.16	Amount of carbon yield at different hydrogen flow rate (Reactor temperature = 700°C)	4.33
4.17	SEM images of CNM-A synthesized at hydrogen flow rate of (a) 50 mL/min; (b) 100 mL/min; (c) 150 mL/min; (d) 200 mL/min; (e) 250 mL/min; (f) 300 mL/min; (g) 350 mL/min; and (h) 400 mL/min	4.34
4.18	SEM images of CNM-E synthesized at hydrogen flow rate of (a) 50 mL/min; (b) 100 mL/min; (c) 150 mL/min; (d) 200 mL/min; (e) 250 mL/min; (f) 300 mL/min;(g) 350 mL/min; (h) 400 mL/min	4.36
4.19	TEM images of CNM-A synthesized at hydrogen flow rate of (a) 100 mL/min; (b) 150 mL/min; (c) 200 mL/min	4.38

4.20	TEM images of CNM-E synthesized at hydrogen flow rate of (a) 250 mL/min; (b) 300 mL/min; (c) 400 mL/min	4.39
4.21	Outer diameter (OD) distribution of (a) CNM-A and (b) CNM-E synthesized at temperatures of 100 – 350 mL/min	4.40
4.22	TG (a) and DTG (b) curves for CNM-A synthesized at 100 mL/min, 300 mL/min and 350 mL/min.	4.42
4.23	TG (a) and DTG (b) curves for CNM-E synthesized at 150 mL/min, 250 mL/min, and 300 mL/min	4.43
4.24	Purity of CNM-A and CNM-E synthesized at different hydrogen flow rates	4.44
4.25	XRD Patterns of (a) CNM-A and (b) CNM-E	4.45
4.26	Interlayer spacing $d_{002}$ and $FHWM$ of CNM-A and CNM-E synthesized at hydrogen flow rate of 100- 350 mL/min	4.47
4.27	BET specific surface and pore volume of (a) CNM-A and (b) CNM-E synthesized at hydrogen flow rates of 100 – 350 mL/min.	4.48
4.28	$N_2$ adsorption isotherms for the (a) CNM-A and (b) CNM-E synthesized at different hydrogen flow rates of 100 – 350 mL/min	4.50
4.29	Expanded view of low pressure region of $N_2$ adsorption of (a) CNM-A and (b) CNM-E	4.52
4.30	Pore size distribution of (a) CNM-A and (b) CNM-E	4.53
4.31	SEM images of (a) CNM-A and (b) CNM-E	4.57
4.32	(a) TEM images of CNM-A with a very fine tubes (b) oval-shape catalyst	4.58
4.33	(a) TEM images of CNM-E. (b) straight CNF and (c) Helical CNF contains no catalyst at the end of the tube (d) helical CNF	4.59
4.34	(a) SEM and (b) TEM images of CNM-E	4.60
4.35	Adsorption capacity of (a) MB and (b) Phenol measured at	4.62

initial concentration of 5, 25 and 50 mg/L on the CNM-E synthesized at 700-950°C of reactor temperatures.

- 4.36 Adsorption capacity of (a) MB and (b) Phenol measured at initial concentration of 5, 25 and 50 mg/L on the CNM-E synthesized at 100 – 350 mL/min of hydrogen flow rate. 4.64
- 4.37 Adsorption capacity of CNM-E synthesized at different reactor temperatures with BET specific surface area for MB and phenol in various concentrations (5, 25 and 50 mg/L). 4.66
- 4.38 Adsorption capacity of CNM-E synthesized at different hydrogen flow rates with BET specific surface area for MB and phenol in various concentrations (5, 25 and 50 mg/L). 4.66
- 4.39 Adsorption capacity of CNM-E synthesized at different reactor temperatures with total pore volume for MB and phenol in various concentrations (5, 25 and 50 mg/L). 4.67
- 4.40 Adsorption capacity of CNM-E synthesized at different hydrogen flow rates with total pore volume for MB and phenol in various concentrations (5, 25 and 50 mg/L). 4.67
- 4.41 TEM images of (a) CNM-A-HM and (b) CNM-A –AM (c) CNM-E-HM (d) CNM-E-AM 4.69
- 4.42 N<sub>2</sub> adsorption isotherms of (a) CNM-A and (b) CNM-E at 77K 4.72
- 4.43 Extended region of low  $P/P_0 < 0.1$ ; (a) CNM-A; (b) CNM-E 4.74
- 4.44 Pore size distributions of (a) CNM-A and (b) CNM-E 4.75
- 4.45 FTIR Spectra of (a) CNM-A 4.78
- 4.46 Zeta potential of modified and as-synthesized CNMs 4.80
- 4.47 Effect of pH on (a) MB and (b) Phenol adsorption capacity onto CNMs 4.81
- 4.48 Plot of adsorption isotherm of (a) MB and (b) Phenol onto CNMs 4.83
- 4.49 Plot of (a) pseudo-first-order kinetic model; (b) pseudo-second-order-kinetic model; and (c) intraparticle diffusion model for the adsorption of 50 mg/L of MB onto CNMs 4.86

4.50	Plot of (a) pseudo-first-order kinetic model; (b) pseudo-second-order-kinetic model; and (c) intraparticle diffusion model for the adsorption of 50 mg/L of phenol onto CNMs	4.88
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BET	Brunauer, Emmett, Teller
FC-CVD	Floating Catalyst Chemical Vapor Deposition
FTIR	Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy
IUPAC	International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry
MB	Methylene Blue
SEM	Scanning Electron Microscopy
TGA	Thermo Gravimetric Analyzer
TEM	Transmission Electron Microscopy
CNTs	Carbon Nanotubes
CNFs	Carbon Nanofibers
HCNFs	Helical Carbon Nanofibers
CNMs	Carbon Nanomaterials
HCNCs	Helical Carbon Nanocoils
CNM-A	Carbon Nanomaterials synthesized from Acetone
CNM-E	Carbon Nanomaterials synthesized from Ethanol
HM	Heat Modification
AM	Acid Modification
BJH	Barrett, Joyner and Halenda
MWCNTs	Multi-Walled Carbon Nanotubes
SWCNTs	Single-Walled Carbon Nanotubes
HNO <sub>3</sub>	Nitric acid
MCVD	Microwave Chemical Vapor Deposition
LPTCVD	Low-Pressure Thermal Chemical Vapor Deposition
HFCVD	Hot Filament Chemical Vapor Deposition
DWCNT	Double-Walled Carbon Nanotubes
XRD	X-Ray Diffraction
N <sub>2</sub>	Nitrogen
H <sub>2</sub>	Hydrogen
PmPV	<i>poly(m-phenylenevinylene-co-2,5-dioctyloxyp-phenylenevinylene)</i>
PMA	phosphomolybdic acid
H <sub>2</sub> SO <sub>4</sub>	Sulphuric acid
Fe	Ferum
NOM	Natural Organic Matter
SSE	Sum of Squares Error

## TABLE OF CONTENT

Page

<b>ABSTRACT</b>	ii
<b>ABSTRAK</b>	v
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	viii
<b>APPROVAL</b>	x
<b>DECLARATION</b>	xii
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	xvi
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	xix
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATION</b>	xxiv

### CHAPTER

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	
1.0 Background of study	1.1
1.1 Problem statement	1.3
1.2 Justification	1.5
1.3 Objectives of the study	1.6
1.4 Scope of the study	1.7
1.5 Thesis outline	1.8
<b>2. LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	
2.0 Introduction	2.1
2.1 Advantages of CNTs in adsorption	2.3
2.1.1 Structure	2.3
2.1.2 Interaction of CNT-adsorbate	2.4
2.1.3 Regeneration	2.6
2.2 Synthesis of CNTs and CNFs	2.7