



**Faculty of Mechanical Engineering**

**EFFECT OF POST PROCESSING PARAMETERS AND  
COMPRESSION BEHAVIOR ON FDM 3D-PRINTED ABS  
LATTICE-STRUCTURES**

**Nur Ameelia binti Rosli**

**Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering**

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**EFFECT OF POST PROCESSING PARAMETERS AND COMPRESSION  
BEHAVIOR ON FDM 3D-PRINTED ABS LATTICE-STRUCTURES**

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**A thesis submitted  
in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science  
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**UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA**

**2019**

## DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis entitled “Effect of Post Processing Parameters and Compression Behavior of FDM 3D-printed ABS Lattice-structures” is the result of my own research except as cited in the references. The thesis has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.

Signature : .....

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Date : .....

## **APPROVAL**

I hereby declare that I have read this thesis and in my opinion this thesis is sufficient in terms of scope and quality for the award of Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering.

Signature : .....

Supervisor Name : Dr. Rafidah binti Hasan

Date : .....

## **DEDICATION**

To my beloved mother and father

## ABSTRACT

There is a growing development in lattice structure due to fundamental interest of the industries in producing parts with higher performance albeit with a low energy and cost consumption. Lattice structure is a periodic cellular structure which can serve the purpose of achieving lightweight parts with good mechanical properties. The complexity of manufacturing numerous types of lattice structures can be overcome by additive manufacturing (AM) process which offers better reliability and relatively simple procedure as compared to normal manufacturing. For the past decade, there are many studies on the lattice structure fabrication by AM. However, from literature, it is found that not many studies reported about the investigation on lattice structure by non-metallic, especially the ABS polymer. The use of ABS polymer to produce lattice structure serves as an added value for lightweight applications due to the lightweight characteristics of the ABS itself. The fused deposition modeling (FDM) 3D printed process of lattice structure is rarely reported in previous studies, hence it is difficult to confidently understand the behaviour of produced lattice structure by using combinations of FDM parameters. On top of that, there is limited information regarding the relationships between the pre-set parameters of CubePro's mid-range FDM printed lattice structure with its mechanical properties. Therefore, this study characterized and examined the manufacturability of lattice structure geometry that was produced by FDM. The effect of process parameters of mid-range FDM 3D printer on the geometry of ABS lattice-structure were then evaluated. Later, the relationships between mechanical properties of ABS FDM 3D printed lattice structure with its geometry were derived by using experimental approach to justify the material as lightweight material. The CubePro 3D printer machine was utilized to fabricate the BCC lattice structure cube specimens with dimension of 20 x 20 x 20 mm<sup>3</sup> with strut's diameter sizes of 1.2 mm, 1.4 mm and 1.6 mm. Optical microscopy was used to characterize the printed lattice structures cube specimens. Theoretical approach was performed to compare the results with previous studies. The lattice structures specimens were tested with quasi-static compression loading to examine its mechanical properties and then the relations between process-properties of FDM 3D printed lattice-structure were derived. The significant process parameters that influenced the mechanical performance as well as the geometrical properties for this particular FDM printer machine was found to be the layer thickness. The best mechanical performance of lattice structure was observed for that produced with 200  $\mu$ m layer thickness as it gave a good agreement between the theoretical approach and experimental data analysis. With respect to the deformation behavior of the lattice structure in this study, the material is found to be more suitable in energy absorption applications such as in car engine hood or arm parts of the drone due to the bending dominated behavior when subjected to loading.

## ABSTRAK

Pembangunan bahan berstruktur kekisi mendapat perhatian kerana permintaan tinggi industri untuk penghasilan produk berprestasi tinggi selain penggunaan tenaga dan kos rendah. Bahan berstruktur kekisi merupakan bahan berstruktur selular berkala yang memenuhi keperluan penghasilan bahan ringan serta mempunyai sifat mekanikal yang baik. Ia boleh ditakrifkan sebagai struktur tiga dimensi berjejari dan berpenghubung yang terjalin antara satu sama lain. Kerumitan pembuatan pelbagai bahan berstruktur kekisi boleh diatasi dengan proses pembuatan secara tambahan yang menawarkan kebolehpercayaan lebih baik dan mudah berbanding pembuatan biasa. Sepanjang dekad lalu, banyak kajian mengenai pembuatan bahan berstruktur kekisi oleh pembuatan secara tambahan. Walau bagaimanapun, daripada kajian latar belakang, didapati tidak banyak kajian melaporkan pembuatan bahan berstruktur kekisi menggunakan bahan bukan logam, terutamanya polimer ABS. Struktur kekisi yang dicetak mesin FDM jarang dilaporkan kajian terdahulu, oleh itu sukar untuk memahami perilaku bahan berstruktur kekisi dihasilkan menggunakan kombinasi penetapan parameter FDM. Selain itu, sedikit maklumat menerangkan hubungan penetapan pra-set pencetak 3D CubePro jenis pertengahan terhadap ciri mekanikal bahan berstruktur kekisi. Oleh itu, kajian ini memberi pencirian geometri serta keupayaan pembuatan bahan berstruktur kekisi oleh mesin FDM. Hubungkait antara kesan penetapan parameter pencetak 3D jenis pertengahan terhadap geometri dengan sifat mekanikal bahan berstruktur kekisi ABS dicetak pencetak 3D FDM diperolehi dengan pendekatan eksperimen bagi memenuhi justifikasi struktur kekisi sebagai bahan ringan. Mesin CubePro digunakan bagi menghasilkan spesimen kubus berstruktur kekisi BCC bersaiz  $20 \times 20 \times 20 \text{ mm}^3$  dan ukur lilit jejari bersaiz 1.2 mm, 1.4 mm dan 1.6 mm. Mikroskop optik digunakan untuk pencirian spesimen kubus berstruktur kekisi yang dicetak. Pendekatan secara teori dilakukan untuk perbandingan dengan hasil kajian terdahulu. Spesimen bahan berstruktur kekisi diuji dengan ujian mampatan kuasi-statik bagi mengetahui sifat mekanikalnya. Hubungan antara ciri proses FDM dan bahan berstruktur kekisi diperolehi. Parameter proses ketebalan lapisan dikenal pasti mempengaruhi prestasi mekanikal dan sifat geometri untuk mesin FDM. Bahan berstruktur kekisi yang dihasilkan dengan ketebalan lapisan 200  $\mu\text{m}$  memberikan prestasi mekanikal terbaik kerana perbezaan kecil antara dapatan melalui pendekatan teori dan eksperimen. Sifat ubah bentuk bahan berstruktur kekisi kajian ini menunjukkan bahan ini mempunyai ciri sesuai digunakan dalam aplikasi bahan serapan tenaga seperti penutup enjin kereta dan bahagian lengan dron kerana ia mempunyai sifat dominasi lenturan apabila dikenakan daya mampatan.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>DECLARATION</b>	
<b>APPROVAL</b>	
<b>DEDICATION</b>	
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>ABSTRAK</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>LIST OF APPENDICES</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>LIST OF SYMBOLS</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>xiv</b>
<b>LIST OF PUBLICATIONS</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>CHAPTER</b>	
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Research background	1
1.2 Problem statement	3
1.3 Objectives	4
1.4 Scopes of work	4
1.5 Thesis organisation	5
<b>2. LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 Lightweight material	7
2.3 Cellular material	10
2.4 Lattice structure	13
2.4.1 Lattice structure topology	15
2.4.2 General application of lattice structure	25
2.4.3 Lattice structure's manufacturing methods	26
2.5 Additive manufacturing for lattice structure	30
2.5.1 Selective Laser Melting (SLM) method	31
2.5.2 Electron Beam Melting (EBM) method	37
2.5.3 Selective Laser Sintering (SLS) method	39
2.5.4 Fused Deposition Modeling (FDM) method	42
2.6 Summary	47
<b>3. METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>50</b>
3.1 Introduction	50
3.2 Sample preparation	52

3.2.1	Design parameters and CAD	52
3.2.2	Fabrication process of lattice structure specimen	54
3.3	Characterization of lattice structure	58
3.3.1	Geometrical analysis of lattice structure	58
3.3.1.1	Dimensional accuracy of lattice structure's strut	58
3.3.1.2	Theoretical analysis of lattice structure geometry	60
3.3.2	Surface roughness analysis of struts in lattice structure	62
3.4	Compression test	63
3.5	Derivation of mechanical properties relationship	66
3.6	Summary	66
<b>4.</b>	<b>RESULT AND DISCUSSION</b>	<b>67</b>
4.1	Introduction	67
4.2	Preliminary investigation of the printing parameters effect on solid block	67
4.3	Geometrical and surface characterization of FDM ABS lattice structure	69
4.3.1	Dimensional analysis of lattice structure's strut	70
4.3.1.1	Analysis of strut diameter	71
4.3.1.2	Study on strut joining area	82
4.3.2	Relation between strut diameter size with density of lattice structure block	87
4.3.3	Surface roughness analysis	89
4.4	Compression test result	91
4.4.1	Observation on compressive failure of FDM ABS lattice structure blocks	95
4.5	Relation of lattice structure geometry with mechanical properties	97
4.6	Consideration of ABS 3D printed lattice structure for lightweight material	105
4.7	Summary	108
<b>5.</b>	<b>CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE WORKS</b>	<b>109</b>
5.1	Conclusion	109
5.2	Recommendation for future works	111
	<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>112</b>
	<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>126</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>TABLE</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
2.1	Illustrations of lattice structure topological designs	16
2.2	Conventional manufacturing methods for lattice structures fabrication	28
2.3	Advantages and disadvantages of methods that have been discussed in this study	42
2.4	Advantages and disadvantages of materials available for FDM	45
2.5	Summary of previous studies on lattice structure manufactured by AM	48
3.1	Test parameters and nomenclatures	55
3.2	List of specimens and its identification name	57
4.1	Cross section patterns of solid block specimens for different parameters combinations	68
4.2	Material properties of compressed solid ABS block from standard industrial manufacturing	69
4.3	Strut diameter result for 1.2 mm diameter of strut	76
4.4	Strut diameter result for 1.4 mm diameter of strut	77
4.5	Strut Diameter result for 1.6 mm diameter of strut	78
4.6	Data of diameter measurements by using struts' cross sections (min. and max. diameter) and measured strut diameter along effective length	86
4.7	Ra value with and without effect of node influenced area	90
4.8	Summary of the ABS lattice structure compression test results	95
4.9	Relation formulation equations for mechanical properties	103
4.10	Experimental and relation formulation comparison of Young's modulus and yield strength	104

4.11	Comparison of Young's modulus between experimental, mathematical formulation and previous study by Ushijima et al., (2010)	105
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## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>FIGURE</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
2.1	Young's modulus-density materials diagram (Ashby, 2013)	9
2.2	Classification of cellular materials (Rehme, 2010)	10
2.3	General compressive behavior of cellular solids (Rehme, 2010)	12
2.4	Application groups of cellular materials adopted from Rehme (2010)	13
2.5	Four regions for deformation history of lattice block (Gümrük and Mines, 2013)	14
2.6	Schematic representation of pyramidal lattice structure (a) single unit representative (N=1), (b) side view and (c) 4-layer example (N=4) (Hammetter, 2013)	17
2.7	Stress-strain curve of a multi-layered pyramidal lattice structure (Wadley et al., 2008)	18
2.8	SEM image of struts failure for (a) vertical strut due to compressive buckling and (b) diagonal strut due to bending (Li et al., 2018)	21
2.9	Illustrations of F2BCC unit cell (Gümrük et al., 2013)	22
2.10	Variations of specific stiffness and strength from analytic model of Ushijima et al., (2010b)	25
2.11	Lattice structure as core material in sandwich structure (Kooistra and Wadley, 2007)	26
2.12	Schematic illustrations of manufacturing methods for (a) expanded metal sheet (Wadley et al., 2008), (b) metal wire textile (Wadley et al., 2003), (c) snap fitting (Finnegan et al., 2007) and (d) investment casting (Mun et al., 2015)	29
2.13	Overview of AM process	30
2.14	Classification of printing process (Kruth, 1991)	31

2.15	Schematic illustration of SLM process (Tsopanos et al., 2010)	32
2.16	Schematic representation of EBM process (Suard, 2015)	39
2.17	Schematic representation of SLS process (Goodridge et al., 2012)	40
2.18	Schematic representation of FDM (Ahn et al., 2009)	43
2.19	Research gap of this study	49
3.1	Flow chart of the study	51
3.2	Single unit cell of BCC lattice structure	52
3.3	BCC single unit cell (5 mm × 5 mm × 5 mm dimension) and one complete lattice structure block (20 mm × 20 mm × 20 mm dimension)	53
3.4	Build setting parameters that are required for selection before parts slicing process	54
3.5	Summary of 3D printing preparation	54
3.6	Schematic representation of FDM 3D printer machine	55
3.7	Definitions of shell layer and fill spacing	56
3.8	Portable optical digital microscope	58
3.9	Definitions of diameter measurement; A is for measurement along the strut, B is for measurement from cross-section of the strut	59
3.10	Schematic of a single unit cell in a lattice structure block specimen	61
3.11	Schematic of a BCC lattice structure	61
3.12	Compression test set-up	64
3.13	(a) Standard industrial manufactured solid abs block and (b) FDM printed solid ABS block	65
3.14	Determinations of elastic modulus and yield strength values in stress-strain plot	65
4.1	Example of fabricated lattice structure specimens with various parameters combination (a) SoCr70-1.2 (b) StHc200-1.4 (c) StDi300-1.6	70
4.2	Image of failed lattice structure by using 300 μm layer thickness parameter	71
4.3	Image of strut measurement under digital optical microscope	71
4.4	Relationship of compressive strength with density for solid block specimens	72

4.5	Measured diameter of lattice structure	73
4.6	Measured strut diameter under digital optical microscope	74
4.7	Percentage of difference for 1.2 mm diameter of strut obtained by various methods for layer thickness of (a) 70 $\mu\text{m}$ (b) 200 $\mu\text{m}$ (c) 300 $\mu\text{m}$	79
4.8	Percentage of difference for 1.4 mm diameter of strut obtained by various methods for layer thickness of (a) 70 $\mu\text{m}$ (b) 200 $\mu\text{m}$ (c) 300 $\mu\text{m}$	80
4.9	Percentage of difference for 1.6 mm diameter of strut obtained by various methods for layer thickness of (a) 70 $\mu\text{m}$ (b) 200 $\mu\text{m}$ (c) 300 $\mu\text{m}$	81
4.10	Closed-up view of strut with layer thickness of (a) 70 $\mu\text{m}$ (AsCr70-1.6), (b) 200 $\mu\text{m}$ (AsCr200-1.6) and (c) 300 $\mu\text{m}$ (AsCr300-1.6)	83
4.11	Schematic diagram of staircase effect with layer thickness of (a) 70 $\mu\text{m}$ , (b) 200 $\mu\text{m}$ and (c) 300 $\mu\text{m}$	83
4.12	Node areas in lattice structure with layer thickness of (a) 70 $\mu\text{m}$ , (b) 200 $\mu\text{m}$ and (c) 300 $\mu\text{m}$	84
4.13	Strut effective length of lattice structure with layer thickness of (a) 70 $\mu\text{m}$ , (b) 200 $\mu\text{m}$ and (c) 300 $\mu\text{m}$	84
4.14	Minimum (D1) and maximum (D2) diameters of lattice structures' cross sections for layer thickness (a) 70 $\mu\text{m}$ , (b) 200 $\mu\text{m}$ and (c) 300 $\mu\text{m}$	85
4.15	Single strut diameters of lattice structures measured along effective strut length for layer thickness (a) 70 $\mu\text{m}$ , (b) 200 $\mu\text{m}$ and (c) 300 $\mu\text{m}$	85
4.16	Effect of diameters of struts to lattice structures' densities for layer thickness of (a) 70 $\mu\text{m}$ (b) 200 $\mu\text{m}$ (c) 300 $\mu\text{m}$	88
4.17	Effect of layer thickness to density of lattice structure materials (1.6 mm strut diameter)	89
4.18	Layer thickness effect on surface roughness of lattice structures' struts	90
4.19	Stress-strain curves for (a) 1.2 mm diameter of strut (b) 1.4 mm diameter of strut and (c) 1.6 mm diameter of strut	92

4.20	Summary of stress-strain graphs for different layer thicknesses	94
4.21	Crush behaviour of FDM ABS lattice structure	96
4.22	Close up image of failed lattice structure block	97
4.23	Schematic representation of a failed lattice structure unit cell at the node area under compression loading	97
4.24	Graph of density against diameter (linear-best fit)	98
4.25	Graph of density against diameter (nonlinear-exponential)	99
4.26	Graph of density against diameter (nonlinear-power)	99
4.27	Graph of elastic modulus against diameter (linear-best fit)	100
4.28	Graph of elastic modulus against diameter (nonlinear-exponential)	100
4.29	Graph of elastic modulus against diameter (nonlinear-power)	101
4.30	Graph of yield strength against diameter (linear-best fit)	101
4.31	Graph of yield strength against diameter (nonlinear-exponential)	102
4.32	Graph of yield strength against diameter (nonlinear-power)	102
4.33	Young's modulus-density space materials diagram (Ashby,2013)	106
4.34	Relative modulus against relative density graph (Ashby, 2006)	107
4.35	Relative strength against relative density graph (Ashby, 2006)	107



## LIST OF APPENDICES

<b>APPENDIX</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
A	List of materials ID	126
B	Standard material properties (Polyetherimide, PEI)	130
C	Standard material properties (Acrylonitrile Butadiene Styrene, ABS)	131
D	FDM ABS lattice block compression test results	132
E	Data for Figure 4.34	138
F	Data for Figure 4.35	139

## LIST OF SYMBOLS

$d$	- Diameter
$E$	- Young's modulus
$\varepsilon$	- Strain
$\rho$	- Density
$\rho_s$	- Density of base material
$\sigma$	- Yield stress

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

3D	- Three-dimensional
ABS	- Acrylonitrile butadiene styrene
AM	- Additive manufacturing
BCC	- Body-centred-cubic
CAD	- Computer aided drawing
EBM	- Electron beam melting
FDM	- Fused deposition modeling
FEA	- Finite element analysis
LOM	- Laminated object manufacturing
PEI	- Polyetherimide
PLA	- Polylactic acid
PP	- Polypropylene
SEM	- Scanning electron microscope
SLA	- Stereolithography
SLM	- Selective laser melting
SLS	- Selective laser sintering
STL	- Standard tessellation language
TPU	- Thermoplastic polyurethane

## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

### Journal Articles

Rosli, N. A., Hasan, R., Ng, W. H., Baharudin, M. K. and Alkahari, M. R., 2018. Investigation on process-properties relationship with mechanical properties of lattice-structured cellular material for lightweight application. *International Journal of Engineering and Technology*, 7, pp.1-4.

Azmi, M.S., Hasan, R., Ismail, R., Rosli, N.A. and Alkahari, M.R., 2018. Static and dynamic analysis of FDM printed lattice structures for sustainable lightweight material application. *Progress in Industrial Ecology, an International Journal*, 12(3), pp.247-259.

### Conference papers

Rosli, N. A., Hasan, R. and Alkahari, M. R., 2018. *Proceedings of 5<sup>th</sup> Mechanical Engineering Research Day, Melaka*. pp. 230-232.

Rosli, N. A., Hasan, R. and Alkahari, M. R., 2017. Investigation on Compression Load Response of Polymer Lattice-structured Cellular Material. *Proceedings of 4<sup>th</sup> Mechanical Engineering Research Day, Melaka, 2017*, pp. 1-2.

Rosli, N. A., Hasan, R. and Alkahari, M. R. and Tokoroyama, T., 2017. Effect of process parameters on the geometrical quality of ABS polymer lattice structure. *Proceedings of SAKURA Symposium Mechanical Science and Engineering 2017*, pp.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research background

There is a growing body of literature that recognizes the importance of additive manufacturing in fulfilling demanding needs of lightweight materials utilization in the industry (Eichenhofer et al., 2017; Jin et al., 2017; You et al., 2018). This is due to the fact that lightweight materials contribute to the reduction of energy consumption, reduction of manufacturing cost and lower the hazardous emissions to the environment (Helms and Lambrecht, 2007; Soo et al., 2015; Tisza and Czinege, 2018). Besides that, lightweight materials which are produced using additive manufacturing route can be formed from various types of materials such as magnesium alloy, fiber-reinforced plastics and even cellular materials with vast manufacturing potential (Rehme, 2010; Abbott, 2014; Zaiß et al., 2017). The increasing applications of additive layer manufacturing or 3D printing in producing lightweight materials can be seen in recent years (Eichenhofer et al., 2017; Jin et al., 2017; You et al., 2018). The 3D printing machine with default parameters such as the CubePro (3D Systems Inc, 2014) can be one of the future affordable manufacturing machine for substitution of low-cost daily equipment. It is reported that 3D printing has been developed by Charles Hull in the 1980s and it is one of the various techniques of additive manufacturing that can fabricate three-dimensional objects by printing successive layers of materials on top of one another from Computer Aided Design (CAD) file (Ngo et al., 2018). The capability of fabricating complex geometry with high precision, material savings and design flexibility are the main advantages of 3D printing (Ivanova et al., 2013).

With the development of 3D printing in the manufacturing industry, the production of lattice structure materials has become feasible. Lattice structure material is a periodic cellular structure material which can serve the purpose of achieving lightweight parts with good mechanical properties (Azman, 2017). It can be defined as a three-dimensional structure with struts and joints interconnected with each other. Lattice structure can be utilized in various applications with its diversity of part designs incorporated in its various cellular approaches within available manufacturing processes (Rehme, 2010). These designs are based on the design parameters that are available in the cellular design classifications which are associated with single unit sizes and shapes of the lattice structures, or also known as topological design. These topological designs can be classified into bending dominated or stretch dominated in which often associated with having greater relative strength. Bending dominated structure is suitable to be utilized in an energy absorbing application (Rehme, 2010). Some of the famous topological designs that have been studied so far are body-centred-cubic (BCC) or octahedral, two-faced body-centred-cubic (F2BCC), tetrahedral, pyramidal, octet-truss, diamond, gyroid and many more (Deshpande et al., 2001b; Ushijima et al., 2010a; Hammett, 2013; Suard, 2015; Al-Saedi et al., 2018). These topological designs will be further discussed in the next Chapter 2.

There were many researches that have been done to identify the characteristics and mechanical properties of various types of lattice structures which were predominantly associated with additive manufacturing methods and processes such as Selective Laser Melting (SLM), Selective Laser Sintering (SLS), Electron Beam Melting (EBM), Stereolithography (SLA) and Fused Deposition Modeling (FDM) (Rehme, 2010). It was reported that the FDM 3D printing technique provides high speed printing with low cost of manufacturing. Materials available by this technique are thermoplastics such as acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS), polylactic acid (PLA), thermoplastic polyurethane (TPU) and

many more. Due to higher strength produced, ABS is one of the frequently used materials in production of parts by using the FDM (Teixera and Santini, 2005; Skelly, 2008; Tang et al., 2008; Sukwisute et al., 2017).

However, the relationship between manufacturing properties with ABS material's load-bearing behavior which is produced by using the 3D printer has not yet been fully understood especially when dealing with pre-set parameter combinations, as available in CubePro machine (3D Systems Inc, 2014). Hence, this study is carried out to focus in details on the effects of FDM pre-set manufacturing parameter toward the properties of the produced ABS lattice structure material. This study aims to come out with concrete relationships of properties-strength for the lattice structure material, based on experimental analysis. The scientifically proven properties-strength relationships can become a strong foundation for the FDM 3D-printed lattice-structure material to be categorized as one of a reliable future lightweight material, with the advantages of easy reproducibility and user friendly.

## **1.2 Problem statement**

Fabrications of lattice structure from numerous types of materials are able to be done by utilizing various additive manufacturing methods such as SLM, SLS, EBM and FDM. From literature, it is found that not many studies have reported about the investigation on lattice structure by non-metallic material, especially the ABS polymer. The use of ABS polymer to produce lattice structure material serves as an added value for lightweight applications due to the lightweight characteristics of the ABS itself. FDM 3D printed process of lattice structure are rarely reported in previous studies, hence it is hard to confidently understand the behaviour of produced lattice structure by using combinations of FDM parameters. On top of that, there are limited information provided regarding the relationships

between the pre-set parameters of CubePro's mid-range FDM printed lattice structure with its mechanical properties. This is the loophole in this increasingly used additive layer manufacturing, in which the mechanical properties of its produced material can be greatly affected by relatively small changes in parameters combination. Thus, this study investigates the details of these properties-strength relationships of CubePro FDM 3D-printed ABS lattice-structure material.

### **1.3 Objectives**

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- i. To identify lattice structure geometry that can be produced from FDM 3D printer.
- ii. To evaluate the effect of layer thickness, print strength and print pattern of mid-range FDM 3D printer on the geometry of ABS polymer lattice-structure material.
- iii. To obtain relation formulation between mechanical properties of FDM 3D printed ABS lattice structure material with its geometry by using experimental approach and to justify the material as lightweight material.

### **1.4 Scopes of work**

In this research, a mid-range FDM machine, the CubePro 3D printer machine was utilized to fabricate the BCC lattice structure cube specimens with specific dimension of 20 x 20 x 20 mm<sup>3</sup>. The pre-set parameter settings which are layer thickness, print strength and print pattern from the CubePro 3D printer machine were used to print all of lattice-structure specimens. The test parameters used in this study are limited to the pre-set parameter settings of the FDM printer machine as mentioned earlier. The lattice-structure specimens were designed with strut's diameter sizes of 1.2 mm, 1.4 mm and 1.6 mm. Characterizations of the printed lattice-structure cube specimens were performed by using optical microscopy as