

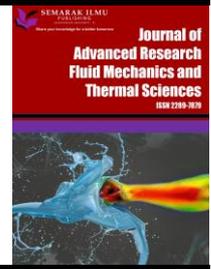


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# Investigating the Effect of Deacetylation Temperature on the Characterization of Chitosan from Crab Shells as a Candidate for Organic Nanofluids

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### ABSTRACT

Chitosan has been broadly utilized in bone scaffold production because of its antibacterial qualities, low toxicity, biodegradability, biocompatibility, and ability to aid regeneration processes in wound healing. In this work, chitosan was produced from crab shell waste through demineralization, deproteination, and deacetylation, utilizing HCl 1:7 (v/v), NaOH 3%, 1:10 (v/w), and NaOH 50%. The aim of this study is to examine the deacetylation temperature's impact towards the crystallinity index, chemical bond, degree of deacetylation, and morphology of chitosan synthesized. The deacetylation procedure was conducted for eight hours at temperatures of 100°C, 120°C, and 140°C. The synthesized chitosan was evaluated by utilizing XRD, FTIR, and SEM methods. According to the findings of this investigation, deacetylation at a temperature of 140 °C produced the highest degree of deacetylation, resulting in the highest quality chitosan. In addition, compared to other obtained chitosans, the shape of this result of synthesis is homogenous. At a deacetylation temperature of 140°C, the amounts of deacetylation degree, and crystallinity index of the chitosan were, in order, 81%, and 44%.

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## 1. Introduction

Crabs are marine invertebrates (crustaceans) that have high economic value and are an important commodity for Indonesia, especially in the fisheries sector. It is a fishery commodity with a reasonably high selling value.

Since the 1990s, crabs have become one of the export commodities that increase yearly [1]. The crab industry usually only takes the meat and discards the shell. The by-product of processing crab meat is 57% shell waste (skin and head) [2]. In Indonesia, this shell waste has not been utilized optimally, resulting in unpleasant odors and water pollution that impact the environment. The utilization of waste marine products, such as crab shell proffers environmental and financial advantages gained from waste recovery. This is because it is cheap, available in large quantities, and can be easily obtained [3-7]. The three main components of the crab shell are 15% - 20% chitin, 25% - 44% protein, 45% - 50% calcium carbonate [8]. Chitin also knowns as the homopolymer of Beta-(1,4)-N-acetyl-D-glucosamine. Its structure is very similar to cellulose, except that a hydroxyl group replaces the acetamido group on the second carbon atom. Chitin polymers are microfibrils about 3 nm in diameter stabilized by hydrogen bonds between amine and carboxyl groups [9].

Several studies have shown that crab shells contain chitin which can be converted into chitosan through deacetylation reactions. Chitosan is produced from chitin with the same chemical structure consisting of a protracted molecular chain and a hovering molecular weight [10-12]. A difference between chitin and chitosan is that in every chitin molecule's ring, there lays an acetyl group (-CH<sub>3</sub>-CO) on the secondary carbon atom, whereas, in chitosan, there is an amine group (-NH) [13]. Chitosan is solely a basic polysaccharide amongst nature, whereas the remains, such as agar, alginic acid, carrageenan, cellulose, dextran, pectin, and starch, are acidic or neutral.

Chitosan has non-toxic, odorless, biodegradable, and biocompatible characteristics. Chitosan acts as a biocompatible substance that degrades gradually into wholesome goods (amino sugars) completely engrossed in the body. Chitosan is being hydrolyzed by lysozyme to oligomers that activate macrophages to produce *N*-acetyl-*D*-glucosamide, which catalyzes the production of NAG, *D*-glucosamine, and substituted glucosamine from oligomers. The hydrolyzation happens in vivo [14]. The physical and chemical properties of chitosan rely on the molecular weight (MW), deacetylation degree (DD), degree of crystallinity, degree of ionization, free amino groups, and others. Chitosan has three different types of reactive functional groups at the locations of C-2, C-3, and C-6: amino or acetamido groups, primary and secondary hydroxyl groups, and others. Due to their intra- and intermolecular hydrogen bonds, amino groups are in charge of physicochemical qualities and structural variations.

Chitosan has been widely used as a non-parental drug delivery system in wound dressings because it is biodegradable and biocompatible [15]. With its cellulose-like structure, chitosan is a biopolymer that can increase wound healing ratio, support cell growth, and is effective for tissue engineering. Chitosan also exhibits bacteriostatic and fungistatic properties that prevent infection. The food industry uses chitooligosaccharides and chitosan (edible varieties with more than 83% DD) as dietary food supplements. Due to its capacity to bind fat, it also serves as a dietary supplement to prevent obesity. [16]. The chitosan fiber that is binding the fat creates a mass that the human body cannot either absorb or expel. Chitosan fiber forms a negative-charged chemical bond with fats, lipids, and bile acids. It has also been reported that chitosan lowers cholesterol (hypocholesterolemic) [17,18]. In addition to its applications in the medical field, chitosan can also be used as a surfactant and can reduce fluid viscosity so as to provide higher thermal conductivity. Modi *et al.*, [15] used chitosan as an organic nanofluid in solar water heating systems because it has better thermal properties than aluminum oxide, which is used as an inorganic nanofluid. The results

of their research showed that chitosan had the highest heat removal factor, at 0.627. Chitosan, aluminum oxide, and water had experimental efficiencies of 55.86%, 52.72%, and 41.81%, respectively. This study aims to synthesize chitosan from crab shell waste by deproteinization, demineralization, and deacetylation. It also aims at determining the effect of deacetylation temperature on the physical and morphological properties of the resulting chitosan.

## 2. Materials and Methods

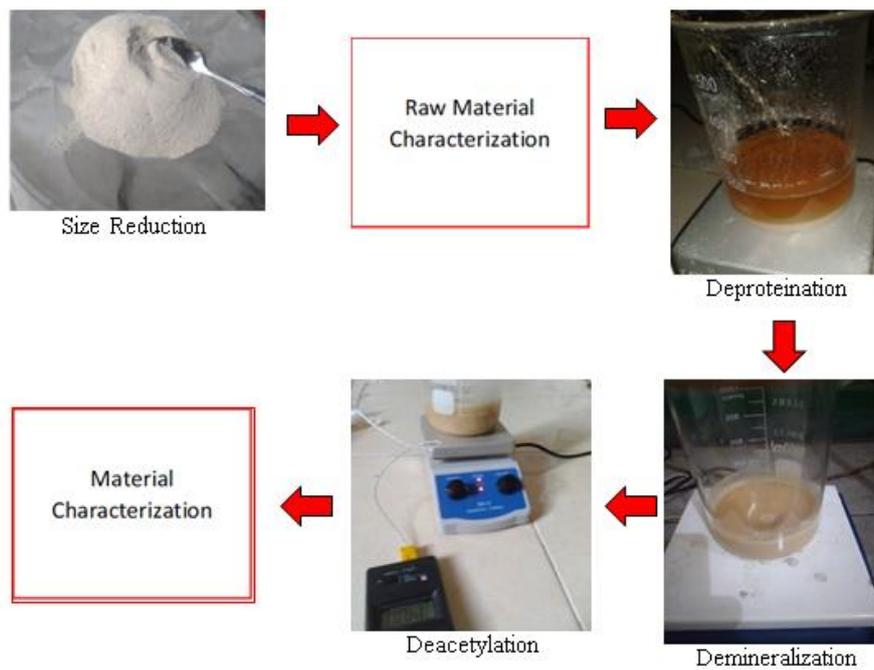
This study shows a chitosan that was synthesized from the crab shell waste (Figure 1) through demineralization, deproteinization, and deacetylation.

Figure 2 shows the experimental setup used in this research. The shells were obtained from the crab consumption waste in Semarang, Central Java. Chitosan synthesis was started by size reduction of the crab shells using a blender. The shells were crushed into powder, and then filtered using mesh 100. This process involved XRD, FTIR, and EDX tests to determine the shell powder's crystalline phase, chemical bonding, and chemical composition.



**Fig. 1.** Crab shells for synthesis chitosan

To remove the protein found in the crab shells, 100 grams of crab shell powder are deproteinized with 3% NaOH 1:10 (v/w) and swirled with a magnetic stirrer at 90°C for an hour. After being washed to a neutral pH, the powder is dried in an oven. The result of deproteinization from 100 g of crab shell powder is 89.94 g. The synthesis process is continued with demineralization to separate minerals or inorganic compounds from the crab shell powder. The process uses HCl 1:7 (w/v) with a magnetic stirrer at 90°C for 1 hour. After washing until the pH is neutral, the powder is dried using the oven. The result of demineralization from 89.94 grams of crab powder is 79.27 grams. The last process of chitosan synthesis is deacetylation using 50% NaOH with 1:20 (w/v) ratio for 8 hours at 100°C, 120°C, and 140°C. 20 grams of powder resulting from the demineralization process is utilized in the deacetylation process. Breaking the connection between the nitrogen atom and the acetyl group to convert it to an amine group is the goal of the deacetylation process (-NH<sub>2</sub>). After this process, the residue (solid particles) is cooled, filtered, washed, and dried.



**Fig. 2.** The experimental setup

After the synthesis process is complete, it is continued with the characterization of chitosan to observe the chitosan properties through XRD, SEM, and FTIR tests. The resulting chitosan's crystal phase and crystallinity index were determined using XRD analysis [19,20]. XRD samples were prepared on the plate in the concave to the brim part and then flattened using a glass before being inserted into the XRD. The surface characteristics of chitosan from crab shells were observed using SEM with 30000x magnification.

FTIR is a method for measuring the infrared spectrum of solid, liquid, and gas sample absorption, emission, and photoconductivity [19,20]. It is also able to detect various functional groups in chitosan. The deacetylation degree (DD) was analyzed using a histogram from the FTIR test [21]. The deacetylation degree measurement is based on the spectrophotometer's curve. The highest peak (P0) and lowest peak (P) were recorded and measured with the selected baseline. The following formula is used to calculate the absorbance ratio [22,23]

$$A = \log\left(\frac{P_0}{P}\right) \quad (1)$$

where,

A = Absorbance ratio

P0 = The distance between the baseline and the tangent that connects the two highest peaks with a wavelength of  $1655\text{cm}^{-1}$

P = The the distance between the baseline and the lowest valley with a wavelength of  $1655\text{cm}^{-1}$  or  $3450\text{cm}^{-1}$ .

By measuring the absorbance at the corresponding peak, the percent value of Deacetylation Degree (DD) can be calculated using the following formula [22,23]

$$DD = \left[1 - \left(\frac{A_{1655}}{A_{3450}} \times \frac{1}{1.33}\right)\right] \times 100\% \quad (2)$$

where,

DD = deacetylation degree (%)

$A_{1655}$  = Absorbance at the wavelength of  $1655\text{ cm}^{-1}$

$A_{3450}$  = Absorbance at the wavelength of  $3450\text{ cm}^{-1}$

1.33 = Constant for the perfect deacetylation degree.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Crab Shells Characterization

Figure 3 shows the FTIR test results for crab shell powder.  $\text{CaCO}_3$  compounds can be characterized based on the peaks at wave numbers  $1400 - 1500\text{ cm}^{-1}$ . This figure indicates the presence of C–O bonds, which is a typical signal for carbonate compounds [24]. In this study, the bands  $864.1 - 711.14\text{ cm}^{-1}$  and  $1473.62 - 1392.22\text{ cm}^{-1}$  in the FTIR spectrum of calcium carbonate correlate to the Ca–O and C–O bonds. This is consistent with the high  $\text{CaCO}_3$  concentration in the crab shells sample. Based on the characteristics of the resulting peak, FTIR results can also identify the type of crystal that has formed. Aragonite is responsible for the large absorption bands between  $700$  and  $900\text{ cm}^{-1}$ . Calcite is characterized by absorption bands at approximately  $1416.862$  and  $706\text{ cm}^{-1}$  [24,25].

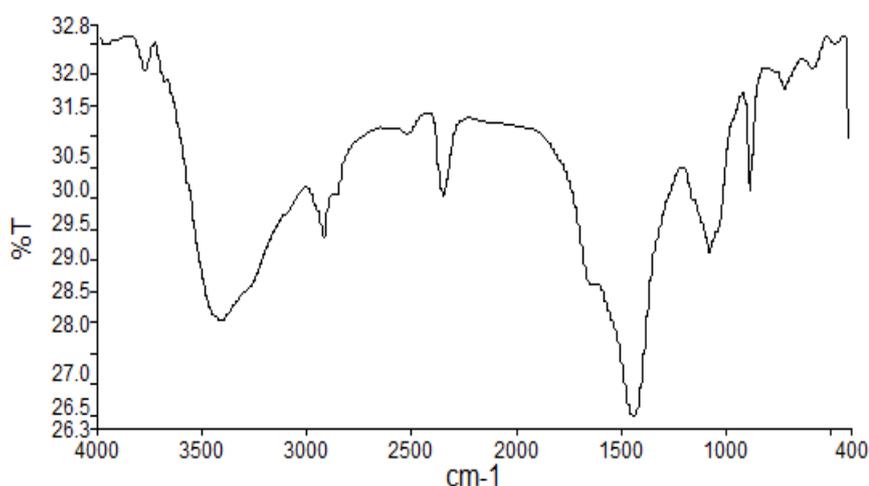
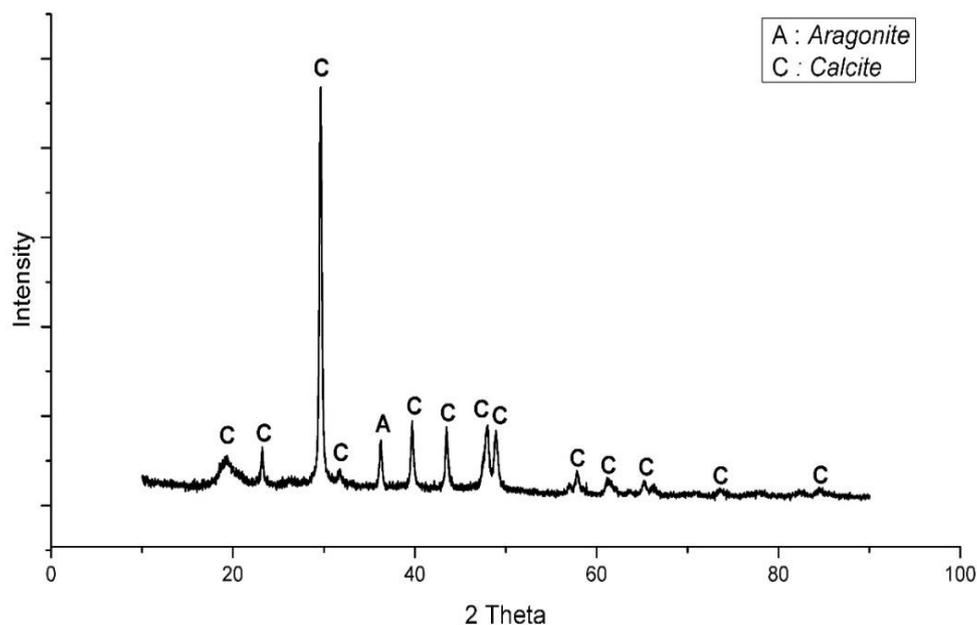


Fig. 3. FTIR spectra of crab shell powder

The FTIR test results are consistent with the XRD test results. XRD data were analyzed qualitatively for the purpose of examining crab shell powder samples. As a result, the standard powder diffraction database from the International Centre for Diffraction Data was used to match intensity lines seen in XRD spectra with the mineral database (ICDD). Figure 4 displays XRD patterns of crystalline phases in crab shell powder samples. The calcium carbonate peak spectra in the powdered crab mussel shells have intensities at  $2\theta$  of  $26.233^\circ$ ,  $27.238^\circ$ , and  $45.881^\circ$ , and they connect with aragonite peak intensities that match ICDD#PDF760606 [24].



**Fig. 4.** X-ray diffractograms of Crab Shell powder

EDS, EDAX, or Energy Dispersive X-Ray Analysis (EDX) are further names for the x-ray technique that may identify the elements that make up a material. From the results of the EDX test, there are impurities of Na, Mg, P, and Zr of 0.38%, 1.40%, 3.33%, and 1.99%, respectively. Impurities such as Na, Mg, P, and Zr probably came from the content of the shell itself. Table 1 lists the elements that make up the crab shell powder. From the results of the EDX test, there are impurities of Na, Mg, P, and Zr of 0.38%, 1.40%, 3.33%, and 1.99%, respectively. Impurities such as Na, Mg, P, and Zr probably came from the content of the shell itself.

**Table 1**  
 Elemental composition of  
 crab shell powder

Element	Mass (%)
C	29.44
O	38.97
Na	0.38
Ca	24.49
Mg	1.40
P	3.33
Zr	1.99
Total	100.00

### 3.2 Chitosan Characterization

There is shown the material characterization data by the X-Ray Diffraction method with intensity and angle  $2\theta$  (Figure 4). Meanwhile, the X-Ray Diffraction data are read and analyzed by matching the data with X-ray diffraction patterns in JCPDS-ICDD and literature. Chitosan peak data was compared with JCPDS data number 39-1894, which stated that the highest peaks of chitosan were shown at  $2\theta$  of 15.18, 20.3, 21.2, 23.9, and 29.9.

Using the origin program, the crystallinity index is determined as the ratio of the total area under the XRD peaks to the area of the crystal contribution [26]. The following formula is used to calculate the crystallinity index [26,27]

$$\text{Crystallinity Index (\%)} = \frac{\text{area of crystalline peak}}{\text{area of all peak}} \times 100\% \quad (3)$$

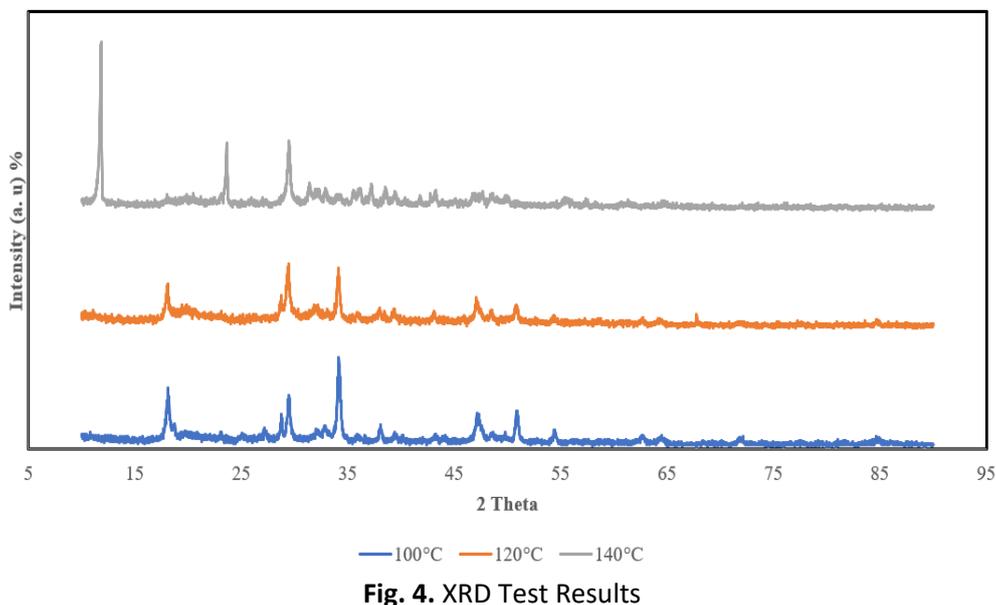


Fig. 4. XRD Test Results

The high deacetylation temperature decreases the chitosan crystallinity index (Figure 5). Deacetylation induces heterogeneity in the molecular chain, hence decreasing crystallinity [28]. The peak enlargement on XRD graphs is influenced by heterogeneous polymer chain structure, macromolecular regularity level, and crystallinity levels [29]. This research produced chitosan in which the amorphous phase predominated over the crystalline phase. The amorphous structure can lower the melting point of pharmaceutical substances, hence requiring less energy to dissolve them than the crystal structure with a regular lattice [30]. The simplest explanation for the aforementioned difference in the degree of crystallinity is different distribution patterns of residual acetamide groups in macromolecules of the two examined polysaccharides [31]. On the grounds that the random distribution of acetamido and amino groups, amorphous chitosan has weaker intermolecular interactions and is, therefore, easier to dissolve [32,33].

Figure 6 shows a graphical comparison of the FTIR test results of chitosan synthesis with temperature variations in the deacetylation process. The FTIR characterization results were compared with the wavelengths from the research by Pambudi *et al.*, [34] and Rumengan *et al.*, [35] as a reference in determining the functional groups of the resulting chitosan. The FTIR spectra of chitosan exhibit many peaks, according to Pambudi. Wave numbers 2920, 2891, 2992, 2882, and 2924  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  imply aliphatic (CH)(-CH<sub>2</sub>) vibration, while wave numbers 3449, 3447, 3445, 3462, and 3430  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  denote vibrations of the hydroxyl (-OH) group. Wave numbers 1381, 1383, 1400, 1414  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  represent methyl group (-CH<sub>3</sub>) vibration, wave numbers 1076, 1082, 1080, 1076, and 1059  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  indicate vibrations of (-COC-) group, and wave numbers 1643, 1635, 1641, 1640, and 1651  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  reveal a bending vibration of the amide group (NH<sub>2</sub>). The comparison of the peaks of the FTIR test findings is shown in Table 2.

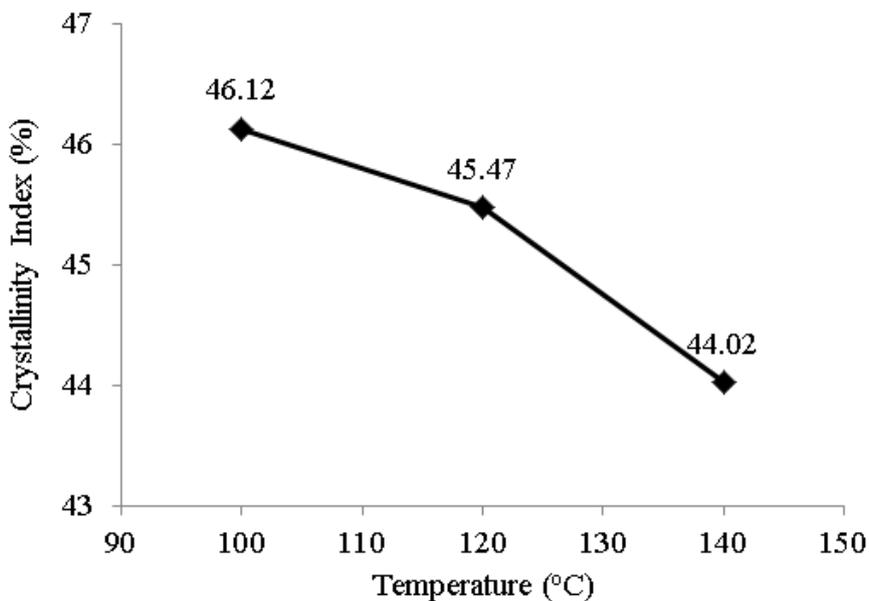


Fig. 5. The influence of the deacetylation temperature on the crystallinity index of obtained chitosans

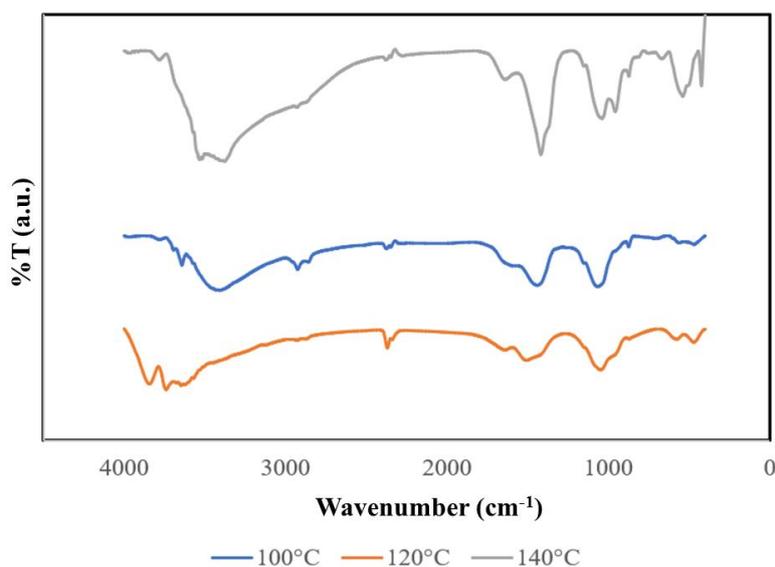


Fig. 6. FTIR test results on obtained chitosan

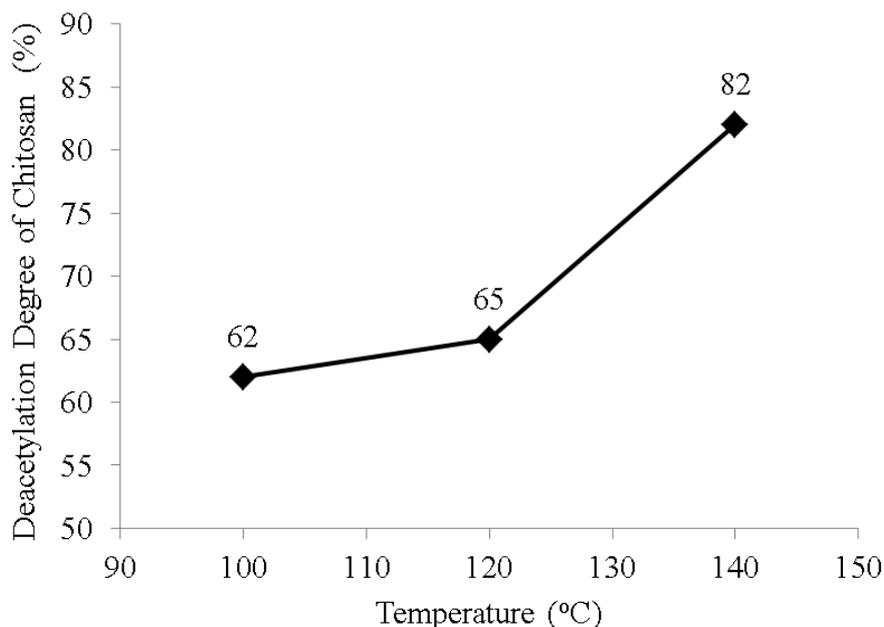
There are absorption peaks in the range of  $3432\text{ cm}^{-1}$  (chitosan O-H stretching vibration),  $2924\text{ cm}^{-1}$  (chitosan C-H bending vibration),  $1650\text{ cm}^{-1}$  (bending vibration of  $\text{NH}_2$  cutting),  $1439\text{ cm}^{-1}$  ( $\text{CH}_3$  stretching vibration), and  $1069\text{ cm}^{-1}$  in the FTIR spectra of chitosan at  $100^\circ\text{C}$  (C-O-C stretching vibration). Chitosan exhibits absorption peaks in the region of  $3455\text{ cm}^{-1}$  (O-H stretching vibration of chitosan),  $2882\text{ cm}^{-1}$  (C-H stretching vibration),  $1648\text{ cm}^{-1}$  ( $\text{NH}_2$  bending vibration),  $1277\text{ cm}^{-1}$  ( $\text{CH}_3$  bending vibration), and  $1051\text{ cm}^{-1}$  in the FTIR spectrum at  $120^\circ\text{C}$  (C-O-C stretching vibration). Additionally, there are absorption peaks in the range of  $3451\text{ cm}^{-1}$  (chitosan O-H stretching vibration),  $2891\text{ cm}^{-1}$  (chitosan C-H stretching vibration),  $1642\text{ cm}^{-1}$  ( $\text{NH}_2$  bending vibration),  $1419\text{ cm}^{-1}$  ( $\text{CH}_3$  bending vibration), and  $1151\text{ cm}^{-1}$  in the FTIR spectra of chitosan at  $140^\circ\text{C}$  (C-O-C stretching vibration).

**Table 2**  
The comparison of FTIR test results

Functional Group	Deacetylation Product		
	100°C	120°C	140°C
-OH	3432	3455	3451
-CH stretching	2924	2882	2891
-NH2 cutting	1650	1648	1642
-CH3	1439	1277	1419
-C-O-C-	1069	1051	1151

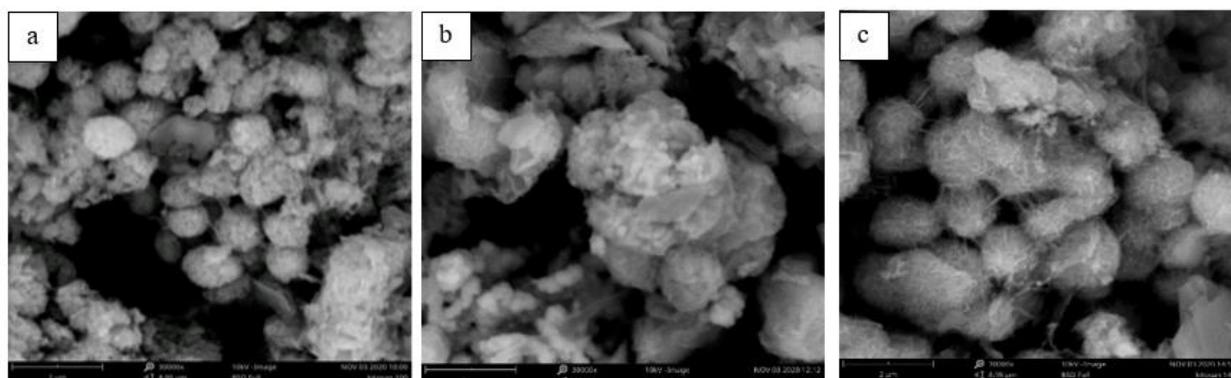
The deacetylation temperature influences the degree of deacetylation of the obtained chitosan. As seen in Figure 7, the degree of deacetylation raises as the deacetylation temperature rises. The deacetylation reaction rate is proportional to the deacetylation temperature because intermolecular mobility is increased by increasing the deacetylation temperature, hence accelerating the acetyl group termination reaction [36]. Chitosan produced at deacetylated temperatures of 100 and 120°C is categorized as the low deacetylated degree of chitosan because it has a DD in the range of 55-77%. Meanwhile, chitosan produced at a deacetylated temperature of 140°C is categorized as a middle deacetylated degree of chitosan because it has a DD in the range of 70-85%. At a low deacetylated degree of chitosan, it is almost completely insoluble in water. However, at the middle deacetylated degree of chitosan may be partially dissolved in water [36,37].

The quantity of acetyl groups removed from the polysaccharide, leaving free amino groups, is indicated by the deacetylation degree (DD) of chitosan. The more accessible amine groups there are, the more potential there is for them to act as binding sites for contaminants. The DD of synthesized chitosan is significantly influenced by temperature, the length of the reaction, and the amount of NaOH. In 6 hours, Kumari *et al.*, [38] synthesized chitosan from fish scales, shrimp shells, and crab shells using 40% KOH at various temperatures. At the 80, 100, and 120 °C, the DD was reported to be 73.05, 95.97, and 90.17 %. Mathaba *et al.*, [39] synthesized chitosan with reaction duration was held constant at 6 hours, while temperature (80 °C, 100 °C, and 120 °C) and NaOH concentration (20 percent, 40 percent, and 60 percent) were altered to synthesize chitosan samples with varying DD. In the current investigation, when the temperature was increased from 100°C to 140°C, the DD increased from 62% to 82% while the NaOH concentration stayed constant at 50%. The following is a result of the increased kinetic energy caused by higher temperatures, which degrades acetyl groups as more reactions occur. More amine groups are exposed when more acetyl groups are removed, increasing the DD of the chitosan [38-40]. The deacetylation degree also correlated with the particle size of chitosan. A higher % DD produces chitosan with larger particle size [41].



**Fig. 7.** The influence of the deacetylation temperature on the crystallinity index of obtained chitosans

Characterization by Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM) is required in this study to determine the synthesized chitosan's morphology. Figure 8 presents the morphology of the SEM results of deacetylated chitosan. A variety of large and small, spherical, cube-like objects with a hazy appearance were visible in the crab chitosan SEM images. Chitosan formed a rough, needle-like structure after being deacetylated at a temperature of 140°C, where uneven granules vanished.



**Fig. 8.** SEM Results with 30000x magnification of surface morphology of deacetylated chitosan at 100°C (a), 120°C (b), 140°C (c)

#### 4. Conclusion

Chitosan as a whole was successfully synthesized using crab shells. The best chitosan was produced by deacetylation at 140°C for 8 hours with a deacetylation degree of 82%. The temperature of the deacetylation influences the synthesis of chitosan. A higher deacetylation temperature will produce a lower crystallinity index and a higher deacetylation degree. Temperature affects the deacetylation degree because with a higher deacetylation temperature, the reaction rate gets higher either. Temperature can increase the intermolecular motion, so the acetyl group termination reaction will run faster.

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