Research on a New Particle Impact Damper

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Abstract. The conventional impact damper cannot completely exhaust vibration energy through momentum exchange and friction. To overcome these shortcomings, this paper proposes a new particle impact damper (PID) which for the first time introduces the fine particle plastic deformation as an irreversible energy sink. Then, the experiments of the cantilevered beam with the CID and that with the PID are respectively carried out to investigate the behaviour of PID. The experimental results indicate that the PID has a better performance in vibration damping than the CID. And the PID works well in control of the vibration with frequency lower than 50 Hz, which is absent to the non-obstructive particle damper. Thus, the PID has a bright and significant application future because most of the mechanical vibration falls in the range of low frequency.

1. Introduction
Impact damping technology has been developed and widely used for decades in manufacture of machine tool, robot, turbo machine, airplane, rocket launcher etc. At present, representative conventional impact damper (CID) includes single unit impact damper [1-5], multi-unit impact damper [6-8], bean bag impact damper [9, 10], and non-obstructive particle damper [11, 12]. All of them features momentum exchange and friction, where momentum exchange cannot exhaust vibration energy but reverberates it among impact partners [1-5], and friction is only good at the high frequency vibration but bad or even magnifying at the low frequency vibration [12]. It is well known that plastic deformation can exhaust energy as an irreversible energy sink. Many efforts have been made to use plastic deformation to absorb shock and vibration energy such as: civil engineers utilize plastic deformation of minor structures to absorb earthquake energy, so that the damage could be limited and the major structure may be kept safe [13]; ship-engineers utilize plastic deformation of ship bow to absorb collision energy between ship and pier, so that both the ship and the pier could be prevented from damage [14]; automobile technicians utilize plastic deformation of bumpers to absorb energy from collisions, so that the losses in the accidents could be alleviated [15].

WANG [16] found that plastic deformation as an irreversible energy sink is prone to occur in the plastic or fine particles, especially under the circumstance of violent vibration. Based on these findings, in this paper we propose a new particle impact damper (PID) which for the first time introduces the plastic deformation in fine particles to vibration system as perpetual energy dissipation.

2. Structure and mechanism of PID
Fine particles are enrolled as damping agents among the impact partners (larger balls as usual) in PID, as shown in Figure 1. Because the surface attraction of fine particles is greater than its gravity [17], the whole surface of impact partners is surrounded and affixed by the fine particles. The PID, in which the
plastic deformation of fine particles due to collisions of impact partners exhausts most of the vibration
energy, for the first time introduces the plastic deformation of fine particles as perpetual energy dissi-
pation and overcomes the shortcomings of momentum exchange and friction. Thus it is necessary to
investigate the performance of PID by experiments.

![Figure 1. Structure of PID](image)

### 3. Experimental descriptions

We use a damped cantilevered beam as depicted in Figure 2 in these experiments. The cantilevered
beam made of steel is 315mm in length, 45mm in width and 2.1mm in thickness. The damper contain-
er is fixed near the tip of cantilevered beam, where the largest displacement is obtained at the first
flexural mode of 12.9Hz. The damper container is in the shape of column with 12mm in diameter and
20mm in height, also made of steel. In the damper container, a 10mm diameter steel ball with 4.1g
mass and a small quantity of copper particles with 100µm in diameter are filled. The accelerometer
placed on the back of the damper measures the tip displacement of the beam which is excited near the
root through a stinger attached to an electromagnetic exciter.

![Figure 2. Schematic diagram of experimental setup](image)

To investigate the performance of PID, experiments are respectively carried out on the undamped
beam, on the beam damped by particle impact damper, on the beam damped by single unit impact
damper, and on the beam damped by PID. The contents of damper cavity in above four cases are listed
in Table 1. In these four cases, the tip displacement of cantilevered beam at free vibration and that for
the first flexible mode at harmonic excitation are measured to study the performance of PID.

| case | damper type               | steel ball in damper cavity | copper particles in damper cavity |
|------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1    | no damper                 | none                        | none                             |
| 2    | particle impact damper    | none                        | 100µm in diameter, 4.6g mass     |
| 3    | single unit impact damper | 10mm in diameter, 4.1g mass  | none                             |
| 4    | PID                       | 10mm in diameter, 4.1g mass  | 100µm in diameter, 0.5g mass     |
In the PID, the damper cavity is filled with the fine particles and a steel ball with 10mm in diameter. As shown in Figure 1, assume that the damper cavity has a total volume of $V_c$, the steel ball has a volume of $V_b$ and the filled fine particles have a volume of $V_p$. Thus, we define the fine particles volumetric packing ratio $r_p$ in the PID as

$$r_p = \frac{V_p}{V_c - V_b}$$

(1)

To test the effect of quantity of filled fine particles on the performance of PID, the tip displacements of cantilevered beam, damped by the PID with different volumetric packing ratios of 100µm diameter copper particles, are measured at harmonic excitation. For the filled 100µm diameter copper particles in the PID-designed in this paper, the relation between volumetric packing ratio $r_p$ and mass $m$ is listed in Table 2.

**Table 2. Relation between volumetric packing ratio $r_p$ and mass $m$ for the filled copper particles in the PID**

| Volumetric Packing Ratio $r_p$ | 10% | 20% | 40% | 60% | 80% | 100% |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Mass $m$ (g)                  | 0.25g | 0.5g | 1.0g | 1.5g | 2.0g | 2.5g |

The experiments of cantilevered beam, damped by the PID with $r_p = 20\%$ of 100µm in diameter copper particles and that with $r_p = 20\%$ of 400µm in diameter zinc particles, are performed at harmonic excitation to indicate the effect of different metal particles.

### 4. Mode analysis on cantilevered beam

The mode analysis on the undamped cantilevered beam adopts the signal analysis system manufactured by the China Orient Institute of Noise and Vibration. The cantilevered beam tested is equally divided into ten parts and an accelerometer is placed on the fifth point to measure the response. A force hammer knocks each point five times and for each knocking, the force signal from the force hammer and the acceleration signal measured on the fifth point are collected by the data acquisition system. The mode analysis based on these signals is performed with the signal analysis software. The experimental scheme for the mode analysis is shown in Figure 3.

![Figure 3. Schematic diagram of experimental scheme for mode analysis](image)

The obtained top five flexural modes of cantilevered beam are shown in Figure 4.
Figure 4. Schematic diagram of the top five flexural modes of cantilevered beam (a) the first flexural mode (13.183 Hz), (b) the second flexural mode (89.889 Hz), (c) the third flexural mode (262.667 Hz), (d) the fourth flexural mode (448.979 Hz), (e) the fifth flexural mode (524.518 Hz)

5. Experimental results

Figure 5 shows the experimental results under free vibration with the same initial displacement from the four cases listed in Table 1. The particle impact damper including 4.6g copper particles in the cavity has only a little effect on the reduction of the tip displacement of cantilevered beam; The single unit impact damper even magnify the tip displacement for the violet collision between steel and cavity; The PID of rp=20% of copper particles has a good performance in the rapid attenuation of the tip displacement.

Figure 6 shows the experimental results under the same harmonic excitation from the four cases listed in Table 1. The particle impact damper only including 4.6 g copper particles in the cavity makes the tip displacement of cantilevered beam reduce approximately 20% for the first flexural mode; The single unit impact damper have the similar performance as the particle impact damper; The PID of rp=20% of copper particles is good at damping, which makes the tip displacement of cantilevered beam reduce over 65% for the first flexural mode.

These results show that the PID has significant ability to absorb vibration energy and works well in low frequency (lower than 50 Hz). Because the auxiliary masses are kept same in the last three cases (particle impact damper, single unit impact damper, PID with rp=20% of copper particles), the excellent performance of PID can be only attributed to the plastic deformation occurred in the fine particles.

Figure 5. Tip displacement histories of the cantilevered beam with (a) no damper, (b) particle impact damper, (c) single unit impact damper and (d) PID with rp=20% of copper particles, at free vibration of the same initial displacement
6. Conclusions
This paper proposes the PID which introduces the fine particles plastic deformation as an irreversible energy sink. From the experiments of the cantilevered beam damped by the PID and that by the CID, we draw the conclusions as follows:
1. The PID can make the tip displacement of cantilevered beam reduce over 65% for the first flexural mode at the harmonic excitation, which is much more excellent than that of the CID.
2. The PID works well in the frequency lower than 50 Hz, which is absent in the non-obstructive particle damper.

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8. References
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