

Micromechanical Behaviour in Shearing of Reproduced Flat LBS Grains with Strong and Weak Artificial Bonds

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34 **Abbreviations and Notations**

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36	LBS	Leighton Buzzard sand	OPC	Ordinary Portland Cement
37	PP	Plaster of Paris	LBOC	LBS bonded with OPC
38	LBPP	LBS bonded with PP	S_q	Surface Roughness
39	F_N	Normal Load	F_T	Tangential Load
40	F_{T,PK}	Peak Tangential Load	F_{T,SS}	Steady-State Tangential Load
41	D_T	Tangential Displacement	η	Load Ratio
42	NCDT	Non-Contact Displacement Transducer	K_T	Tangential Stiffness
43	K_{T,0}	Tangential Stiffness at zero displacement	φ	Friction Angle
44	D_{cyc}	Displacement amplitude for cyclic shearing	c	Cohesion

45

46

47 **Abstract**

48 The shearing behaviour of reproduced flat LBS grains artificially bonded with ordinary Portland
49 cement (OPC) and Plaster of Paris (PP) was examined using micromechanical experiments.
50 Monotonic shearing tests showed a distinct variation in the load-displacement relationship at low,
51 medium and high normal loads and a non-linear shear strength envelope was proposed. For OPC
52 bonded sand grains, a brittle-ductile transition at 20-30 N normal load was observed and three breakage
53 mechanisms in shearing (chipping, shear cracks, and crushing) were distinguished in accordance with
54 the changes in the load-displacement curves. OPC bonded sands showed a predominant dilation at
55 lower normal loads, whereas PP bonded sands were highly compressive. Based on previously
56 published works using element-scale tests, a new mechanism for dilation under micromechanical
57 testing was proposed in the study. Cyclic shearing tests were conducted on OPC bonded sands and the
58 effects of increased displacement amplitude and normal load were highlighted.

59 **Keywords:** artificial bonding; cemented sands; micromechanics; non-linear strength, dilation.

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61

62 **1. Introduction**

63 Bonding of granular materials either natural, due to precipitation of iron oxide, calcite or silica
64 (Mitchell and Soga, 2005; Santamarina et al., 2001), or artificial, for example for soil improvement
65 purposes (Saxena and Lastrico, 1978; Clough et al., 1979; Acar and El-Tahir, 1986), alters
66 significantly the mechanical behaviour of the soil matrix. The mechanical behaviour of these bonded
67 grains is influenced by their physical properties, irrespective of being bonded naturally or artificially
68 (Leroueil and Vaughan, 1990). Leroueil and Vaughan (1990) also classified cemented sands and weak
69 rocks under the same group of “structured soils”. In cemented granular materials, various micro
70 mechanisms such as cement disaggregation and fragment rearrangement are triggered by relatively
71 small in magnitude volume changes of the grain-bond system which lead to significant changes in the
72 response of cemented granular materials and their behaviour is set between classical soil mechanics
73 and rock mechanics (Das et al. 2013). Many researchers have conducted laboratory experiments by
74 means of element-scale tests on artificially cemented soils as for example in the studies by Clough et
75 al. (1981), Lade and Overton (1989), Coop and Atkinson (1993), Haeri et al. (2005, 2006), Consoli et
76 al. (2007), Alvarado et al. (2012), Rios et al. (2014) and Cui et al. (2017). The key parameters
77 commonly taken into consideration in element-scale tests are the cement type and content, the
78 confining pressure, the porosity of the sample, the stress-strain history and strain level, which
79 collectively determine the strength, breakage mode and yielding of cemented sands.

80 The variation of peak stress ratio with confining stress for cemented sands is nonlinear i.e., peak stress
81 ratio increases with decreasing rate (Lade and Overton, 1989, Chang and Kabir, 1994) and many
82 researchers proposed non-linear strength envelope models for both cemented and uncemented soils
83 and also jointed and intact rocks (Mogi, 1966, Barton 1976, Hoek and Brown, 1980, 1988, Barton,
84 2016, Wu et al., 2017, Tian et al., 2018, Shen et al., 2018). It has been shown in the literature that the
85 classical Mohr-Coulomb failure criterion does not fit well with the failure envelopes of cemented sands
86 which are in general non-linear in shape. Shen et al. (2018) proposed a new approximate nonlinear

87 Mohr-Coulomb shear strength criterion for intact rocks. This approximation provides a piecewise
88 nonlinear envelope considering internal friction angle and cohesion parameters which are dependent
89 on factors such as the level of confinement imposed and the unconfined compressive strength (UCS)
90 of the material. Also, Shen et al. (2018) compared their new model with the classical Hoek-Brown (H-
91 B) criterion and stated that the H-B criterion overestimates the stresses at higher confinements,
92 particularly for intact rocks.

93 The failure mode changes from brittle to ductile as the confining stresses increase (Chang and Kabir,
94 1994; Schnaid et al., 2001; Wong and Baud, 2012) and a transition from brittle to ductile nature can
95 be distinctly defined. Also, the dilation tendency i.e. the stimulus of the cemented materials under low
96 confining pressures to increase in volume, makes their mechanical behaviour rather complex.
97 Laboratory experiments have demonstrated that the presence of cementation or bonding decreases the
98 dilation tendency of cemented materials (Anagnostopoulos et al., 1991; Schnaid et al., 2001; Lo et al.,
99 2003) and that the volumetric behaviour of uncemented and cemented granular materials is different
100 based on the shearing stage. The volumetric behaviour of uncemented sands i.e., their tendency in
101 dilation or compression, is dependent on the initial state of the soil which is expressed by the
102 combination of the current void ratio and magnitude of confining effective stress (Taylor, 1948;
103 Bolton, 1986). With low effective confining pressures, the post-peak softening of uncemented dense
104 sands is associated with dilation (i.e., increase in volume) (Lade and Yamamuro, 1996), while, in
105 cemented sands, the dilative behaviour is initially suppressed by the bonding (Lo et al., 2003) and
106 when the shearing reaches failure (i.e., breakage of bond), the dilation is higher and mobilizes
107 additional shear strength (Lade and Overton, 1989).

108 There have been extensive numerical studies using the discrete element method (DEM) to investigate
109 various aspects of bonded materials, including strength, bond breakage, brittle-ductile transitions, and
110 the influences of bond thickness and confining pressure. These works have revealed the evidenced
111 influence of the particle-scale mechanisms occurring at the contacts of the bonded grains on the bulk

112 behaviour of the material (e.g., Wang and Leung, 2008a, 2008b; Cheung et al., 2013; Chiu et al., 2015;
113 Shi et al., 2015, Duan et al., 2017). Li et al. (2017) compared both experimental and 3-dimensional
114 DEM simulation results under triaxial shearing aiming to investigate the effects of different bond
115 strengths on the breakage mechanism of artificially cemented sands. That study highlighted the
116 formation of shear bands due to local weakness in the sample and the consequent volumetric changes.
117 de Bono et al. (2015) conducted DEM simulations on both cemented and uncemented materials using
118 parallel bonds and stated that the cementation increased the brittleness of the numerical samples, while
119 the increase of the confining pressure decreased the influence of the cementation. Wang and Leung
120 (2008a, 2008b) highlighted the importance of bond breakage and the dilatancy of cemented materials
121 in their mechanical response by comparing the behaviour between ordinary Portland cement and
122 gypsum bonded sand (strong and weak bond, respectively) using parallel and series bonds. Using a
123 biconcave bond model, Chiu et al. (2015) provided new insights in linking micro-scale and macro-
124 scale properties of cemented soils. They found that the shape of the bond layer and its thickness are
125 very critical in the stiffness of the bond.

126 There are, however, rather limited published works performing micromechanical-based experiments
127 on bonded/cemented soils in the literature. An early study by Jiang et al. (2012) reported on the
128 response of aluminium alloy rods bonded with epoxy adhesive under combined normal force, shear
129 force and moment, with a primary focus on examining the differences in the mechanical behaviour
130 between thick and thin bonds. Jiang et al. (2015) further extended the work to three dimensional
131 contacts using aluminium hemispheres with elastic properties matching that of quartz sand. These
132 hemispheres were bonded with epoxy adhesive. The effect of normal force on the peak strengths in
133 shearing, bending and torsional modes was highlighted. Using sand grains bonded with gypsum
134 plaster, Wang et al. (2017) highlighted the cemented particle crushing behaviour by defining different
135 modes of failure. Wang et al. (2019) conducted complex loading tests by imposing shearing and
136 combined shearing and bending loads on bonded grains at 50N normal load. These studies indicated

137 that bond thickness and the morphology of the grains at the boundary with the bonding material are
138 key factors which influence the strength parameters and mechanical behaviour of the specimens.

139 In the present study, sand grains of very low curvature (or nominally flat grains) were artificially
140 bonded using ordinary Portland cement (OPC) and Plaster of Paris (PP) representing strong and weak
141 bonds, respectively, and were further tested under monotonic shearing for a wide range of normal
142 loads. Cyclic shearing tests were also conducted on these specimens at representative normal loads.
143 The experiments were performed using a newly developed micromechanical loading apparatus for
144 cemented grains, which provides high precision of force and displacement increment and so the
145 quantification of contact stiffness of cemented grains is feasible, overcoming a limitation of the
146 apparatus previously developed by Wang et al. (2019).

147

148 **2. Description of Materials and Sample Preparation**

149 Leighton Buzzard sand (LBS) grains used in the study have sub-rounded to rounded shape and yellow
150 to brown colour. These are typical quartz type grains and were extensively tested in micromechanical
151 experiments published in the literature (Senetakis et al., 2013; Wang and Coop, 2016; Sandeep and
152 Senetakis, 2018; Nardelli and Coop, 2019). The surfaces of these LBS grains were manually flattened
153 using a stainless-steel file which produced very low local curvature and rough profiles and the grains
154 were bonded in pairs using different cementing agents. The average surface roughness (S_q) of these
155 flat LBS grains was measured for an area of $20\mu\text{m}\times 20\mu\text{m}$ and it was found to be equal to $1400\mu\text{m}$
156 with a standard deviation of $\pm 200\mu\text{m}$. A typical microscopic image and a surface profile of the flat
157 surface of LBS grains used in the study are shown in Figure 1(a)-(b). The S_q values are calculated as
158 the root mean square of deviations of the asperities height with respect to the average (reference)
159 height in the considered area. Such measurements are conducted at 10 different locations for a given
160 specimen, from a set of 10 different specimens making a dataset of around 100 different measurements.

161 Two types of cementing agents, which were commercially supplied, were used for bonding the LBS
162 surfaces including Ordinary Portland Cement (OPC) and Plaster of Paris (PP), which would simulate
163 strong and weak bonds, respectively. A cement to water ratio of 0.4 was used for OPC and 0.5 for PL
164 to obtain optimum strength and these pastes were placed on the bottom flat LBS. Thereafter the top
165 LBS surface was placed on the cementing agent and subsequently the grain-cement system (specimen)
166 was allowed to bond naturally. The process was carefully monitored with a digital micro-camera so
167 that to maintain a thickness of the bond in the range of 0.6 to 0.8mm and the top grain was adjusted
168 for axial alignment within the initial setting time of the cement mortar (less than 30min). The area of
169 contact was maintained around 6 to 7.5mm² with a rectangular cross-section, measured using image
170 analysis, and any specimens beyond that range were discarded. Once the grains and bonding material
171 were set (initial setting time of 30min for OPC and 10min for PP), the OPC bonded specimens were
172 cured by immersion in water for 24±2hrs to attain full 1-day strength of cement mortar, while the PP
173 bonded specimens were only air dried at a temperature of 25⁰C for 48±2hrs. Thus, the system of LBS-
174 Portland cement (denoted as LBOC) represented strong and hard bonded specimens and the system
175 LBS-Plaster of Paris (denoted as LBPP) represented weak and soft bonded specimens.

176 Figure 1(c)-(d) shows the spectrum of elements from energy dispersive X-ray spectroscopy (EDS)
177 analysis of representative samples from the OPC and PP bonds indicating the elements present in both
178 the materials along with scanning electron microscope (SEM) images. These analyses were conducted
179 after the curing/drying period of OPC and PP. PP bonding agent had Calcium (Ca) and Oxygen (O) as
180 the primary elements with traces of Sulphur (S), Magnesium (Mg) and various other compounds. OPC
181 bonding agent had a similar composition as the PP bonding agent, with Calcium and Oxygen
182 dominance with additional small amount of Silicon (Si). Unlike the EDS test results, the SEM images
183 (inset of Figure 1(c)-(d)) showed different grain shape and size for OPC and PP materials. PP particles
184 were flaky and had clay like structures with varied sizes, whereas, OPC had angular particles and silt

185 like structures, and their particle size was larger than PP. OPC showed clusters of particles bonded
186 with matrix whereas PP had a uniformly distributed matrix of particles.

187 **3. Apparatus and Testing Program**

188 A new micromechanical apparatus for investigating the behaviour of artificially bonded sand-sized
189 grains under normal, shear and bending loads was developed by Wang et al. (2019) at City University
190 of Hong Kong. The apparatus has two loading systems in the vertical and horizontal directions with a
191 linear stepping motor and a load cell in each direction. Based on these preliminary results and the built
192 of the apparatus by Wang et al. (2019), significant modifications were required, in terms of mechanical
193 arrangement of the apparatus and the testing methodology so that the upgraded apparatus can provide
194 adequate precision of forces and displacements in order to obtain high quality data in terms of force-
195 displacement relationship and subsequently contact stiffness of the bonded specimens.

196 The frame of the apparatus was stiffened with four columns with additional brace reinforcement. The
197 effective height of the apparatus was decreased considerably by shortening the connectors at various
198 stages of the loading systems in the horizontal and vertical directions. Linear bearings were used with
199 stiffener plates to guide both the horizontal and vertical motion of the system without any sway and
200 the restraint of the loading system was improved in each direction. Linear variable differential
201 transformers (LVDTs) were replaced by non-contact displacement transducers (NCDTs) and this
202 further supported measurements of high-precision displacements which are required for calculating
203 contact stiffness. In the upgraded apparatus, a stainless-steel screw shank with lower slenderness ratio
204 was used as the loading arm with one end being fixed to the load cell with a linear bearing and the
205 other end being connected to the L-mould using a screw, making it a monolithic structure between the
206 linear actuator and the L-mould. Such an upgrade to the loading arm was needed to increase the
207 stiffness of the apparatus and also to enable the apparatus to carry out cyclic shearing tests. In the
208 previous version of the apparatus by Wang et al. (2019), the loading arm was very long (~10mm)

209 which might induce additional flexibility during shearing. Shortening the loading arm and fixing it at
210 both ends increased the tangential stiffness of the apparatus. Also, the loading arm was not connected
211 to the L-moulds in the previous version. A special frame fixed to the base of the apparatus was used
212 to hold the sensors stationery and the target for the sensors was fixed to the moving loading arm. The
213 bottom L-shaped mount was fixed to a stainless-steel platform which helped to avoid unwanted
214 movements of the moulds that could disturb the testing process. The upgraded apparatus developed in
215 the present study is schematically illustrated in Figure 2. The current upgraded version of the apparatus
216 allows the study of combined normal load – shearing, without bending forces, so that at a fundamental
217 level, the interaction of these two forces can be examined. Slight modifications of the apparatus can
218 accommodate further application of combined normal – shear – bending forces on the bonded
219 specimens.

220 The load cells used in the apparatus have a capacity of 1000N with a factory repeatability of 0.05%
221 FSO (Full Scale Output) which was further improved after using high quality signal amplifiers,
222 analogue filters and data logger. The environmental and electrical noise recorded by the load cells is
223 around $\pm 0.025\text{N}$ i.e. $\sim 0.003\%$ FSO, which provides results with adequate quality for the range of loads
224 required for tests on bonded grains. Similarly, the environmental and electrical noise of four NCDTs
225 (Non-Contact Displacement Transducers) i.e. two displacement sensors in both the vertical and
226 horizontal directions was also measured. The average value of NCDT noise varied with a maximum
227 noise of around $\pm 0.1\mu\text{m}$ in both directions.

228 The test specimens were glued to the top and bottom mounts of the apparatus using a super glue and
229 they were allowed to dry completely; after the grains were set in position, a nominal normal load was
230 applied to ensure firm contact. Then, the vertical stepper motor was moved downwards to apply the
231 required normal load. Once the normal load was reached, the shearing was applied by horizontally
232 pushing the top L-mould and consequently the top grain moved relative to the fixed bottom grain,
233 applying in this way shearing to the specimen. In monotonic shearing tests, OPC bonded grains were

234 sheared under constant normal loads ranging from 0 to 100N for about 300 μ m and PP bonded grains
235 were sheared for about 200 μ m under constant normal loads ranging from 0 to 60N, so that the effect
236 of confinement on different strength parameters of the bonded grains could be explored. Cyclic
237 shearing tests were also conducted on OPC bonded grains at 25N and 50N constant normal load at
238 different displacement amplitudes. Table 1 provides a summary of the tests.

239 **4. Results and Discussions**

240 **4.1 Monotonic Shearing**

241 **4.1.1 Tangential Load-Displacement Behaviour**

242 Monotonic shearing tests on LBOC samples were conducted in a wide range of normal loads from 0
243 N to 100 N. The shearing tests at zero normal load (without confinement) indicate the cohesion of the
244 specimens. The shear forces developed in zero normal load tests are due to the combined effect of
245 cohesion and roughness between the bounding surface and the bonding agent (Tian et al., 2018). Figure
246 3(a)-(b) shows the tangential load – displacement behaviour of both LBOC and LBPP specimens at
247 zero normal load. The LBOC specimens showed a peak tangential load ($F_{T,PK}$) of around 5.6N and a
248 steady state tangential load ($F_{T,SS}$) of around 1.85N, while, the LBPP specimens showed lower values
249 than LBOC specimens with $F_{T,PK}$ of 1.44 N and $F_{T,SS}$ of 0.62 N. The softening behaviour or the post-
250 peak force reduction indicated a force-drop (F_d) of around 57% and 67% for LBPP and LBOC
251 specimens, respectively.

252 Based on the variation of the tangential load – displacement curves, the tests on LBOC specimens
253 were divided into two classes as (i) low – medium range (0 N to 30 N) and (ii) medium – high range
254 (40 N to 100 N). This distinction of the tests was based on the linear and non-linear nature of the initial
255 part of the tangential load – displacement curves (or tangential stiffness variation), the formation of
256 post-peak force reduction, the volumetric behaviour and, the brittle-ductile transition zone. Few of
257 these parameters are interlinked and the details are explained in the subsequent discussions. A limited

258 set of monotonic shearing tests on LBPP specimens was carried out at normal loads ranging from 0 N
259 to 60 N and it was not feasible to make a distinction of the tangential load-displacement curves similar
260 to LBOC. However, an apparent classification was made into low-medium and medium-high normal
261 load cases (8N to 25N and 25N to 60N, respectively) based on the non-linearity of the tangential load-
262 displacement curves.

263 Figure 3(c)-(d) shows the tangential load – displacement curves for the low-medium normal load range
264 for LBOC and LBPP specimens, respectively. A very stiff and almost linear increase in the tangential
265 load up to the peak and then a post-peak force reduction occurred for LBOC specimens but a minor
266 post-peak reduction occurred only at 8N normal load for LBPP. At other normal loads in the low-
267 medium range of LBPP specimens, the tangential load-displacement behaviour was elasto-plastic with
268 a gradual shift into a steady-state regime. Similar to the zero normal load tests in the previous section,
269 a smooth trend was observed before the steady state and then a rough profile occurred. As the normal
270 loads increased to the medium-high range, the tangential load-displacement curves became non-linear
271 with hardening behaviour for both LBOC and LBPP specimens and the corresponding curves are
272 shown in Figure 3(e)-(f), respectively. Occasional stick-slip instability was observed for LBOC
273 specimens while all the curves for both the specimens showed a rough profile indicating a dominance
274 of friction mechanism over cohesion. Also, the tangential loads mobilized in strong LBOC specimens
275 were higher than the soft LBPP specimens.

276 **4.1.2 Tangential Load-Normal Load Variation**

277 The governing factors for the post-peak softening behaviour under low confining pressures for
278 element-scale tests have been mentioned to be the breakage of the cement bridges at lower confinement
279 and the grain crushing and pore collapse at higher confinement (Menendez et al., 1996; Das et al.,
280 2013). This behaviour can also be correlated to the brittle and ductile failures of the specimens and a
281 distinct transition between the two failure modes (brittle-ductile transition); this problem has been well

282 studied using laboratory element-scale experiments, specifically for bonded grains and rocks (Byerlee,
283 1968; Coop and Atkinson, 1993; Chang and Kabir, 1994; Coop and Wilson, 2003; Wong and Baud,
284 2012). The phenomenon of brittle-ductile transition can be understood from the strength envelopes
285 and the associated failure mechanisms observed in the specimens. Figure 4 shows the variation of the
286 peak tangential load ($F_{T,PK}$) with normal load (F_N) for LBOC and LBPP specimens. For LBOC
287 specimens, the $F_{T,PK}$ values increased with normal load, but at a decreasing rate and a polynomial
288 trendline (dashed lines in Figure 4) could fit the data with a resultant coefficient of correlation of 0.97
289 for LBOC test results, and 0.99 for LBPP test results.

290 To further understand the physical meaning of the variation of $F_{T,PK}$ with normal load, a bilinear
291 trendline (P-Q-R in Figure 4a) was fitted to the datapoints which was optimized for the highest R^2
292 values, for LBOC specimens. The datapoints at low-medium normal loads were fitted with R^2 of 0.95
293 and the datapoints at medium-high normal loads were fitted with R^2 of 0.87. This bilinear fitting helped
294 to differentiate the brittle, ductile and the transition zones as indicated in Figure 4(a). The shaded part
295 in this figure, i.e., $F_N = 20$ to 30 N, indicates the brittle-ductile transition for the current state of the
296 LBOC specimens, which would change with bond type and bond thickness. For LBPP specimens, the
297 bilinear trend could not be distinguished to define a brittle-ductile transition. The proposed range of
298 normal loads for brittle-ductile transition in LBOC specimens is substantiated also with the load ratio
299 ($\eta = F_{T,PK}/F_N$) variation as shown in Figure 4(a) on the secondary vertical axis. The datapoints of η
300 were fitted with a power function and the trend of this curve started with $\eta = 3$ at 2.5 N normal load
301 and reached a saturation level of around 0.5 to 0.6 (53% decrease) beyond the proposed brittle-ductile
302 transition. On the other hand, LBPP specimens showed a 33% decrease in η (0.56 to 0.4) over the
303 considered normal load range and a power function fitting this data indicated a load ratio saturating at
304 around 0.35 .

305 The variation of peak tangential load with normal load data shown in Figure 4 has a nonlinear trend
306 and the data within the given normal load range was fitted using an expression as shown in Eq.(1).

307 This equation was developed based on the framework of Hoek-Brown empirical model for rock
308 samples, translated in terms of loads. Eq.(1) depends on the cohesion (C_0) and crushing load (F_C) of
309 the specimens, resulting in tangential load (F_T) at a given normal load (F_N). The coefficient α in these
310 expressions is obtained from Eq.(2) using the F_C value of the given specimen type (LBPP or LBOC).

$$311 \quad F_T = C_0 \left\{ \frac{\alpha F_N}{F_C} + 1 \right\}^{0.7} \quad \text{Eq.(1)}$$

$$312 \quad \alpha = 107.4 - 0.42 * F_C \quad \text{Eq.(2)}$$

313 Appendix-1 explains the details of the crushing test results. Figure 4(c) shows the fitting of the
314 experimental data with the empirical nonlinear envelope for bonded specimens and the corresponding
315 R^2 values are also shown in this figure. In Eq.(1), the empirical parameters α and the exponent 0.7 are
316 highly dependent on the crushing loads of the current specimen type, and these both parameters can
317 be understood to be mutually dependent. The trend of strength envelope was with increasing
318 magnitude at decreasing rate, and this suggests that the exponent of the equation must be less than 1.
319 The α value becomes unstable as the crushing strength values increase and hence extra considerations
320 might be required in both α values and the exponent for different specimens with greater crushing
321 strengths.

322 **4.1.3 Tangential Stiffness Behaviour**

323 The tangential stiffness (K_T) at a given tangential displacement was obtained by numerical
324 differentiation of the tangential load-displacement datapoints. The degradation of tangential stiffness
325 with displacement is highlighted to understand the non-linearity of the F_T - D_T curves. For LBOC
326 specimens, two classes of stiffness degradation curves were identified based on the applied normal
327 load magnitude, as shown in Figure 5(a)-(b). In the low – medium normal load range, the stiffness
328 degradation curves were almost horizontal (compared to the extent of degradation in other test cases)
329 for a certain range of tangential displacement and then the curves dropped suddenly to zero stiffness.

330 In the medium – high normal load range, the stiffness degradation curves were highly non-linear from
331 early stages of the measured displacements. The stiffness degradation curves in both the classes of
332 normal loads showed a few inconsistencies due to the chipping of the bonding material and early
333 damages occurred in the specimen. However, within the scatter of the data, it was observed that the
334 maximum tangential stiffness values (or initial tangential stiffness, $K_{T,0}$; tangential stiffness value
335 defined at the lowest resolvable tangential displacements) was higher at lower normal loads. Hamidi
336 and Haeri (2008) stated that the tangential stiffness of bonded sands becomes close to that of sands
337 without bonds at higher confinements. The $K_{T,0}$ value at $F_N = 8\text{N}$ was around 1500N/mm and at $F_N =$
338 90N , the value was around 2000N/mm . In the medium range of normal loads, the initial tangential
339 stiffness values increased as high as 10000N/mm at around $F_N = 20\text{N}-25\text{N}$.

340 The tangential stiffness degradation curves for LBPP specimens did not show such distinction in shape
341 based on the normal load. However, with an increase in normal load the stiffness values decreased and
342 all the curves showed a nonlinear decrease in K_T with tangential displacement. The values of K_T for
343 LBPP specimens were around 2 to 3 times lower than that of LBOC specimens. The stiffness
344 degradation curves for LBPP specimens are shown in Figure 5(c)-(d).

345 **4.2 Cyclic Shearing: LBOC Specimens**

346 Cyclic shearing tests of five cycles were conducted on LBOC specimens with displacement amplitude
347 (D_{cyc}) of $10\ \mu\text{m}$ and $25\ \mu\text{m}$ at $25\ \text{N}$ normal load and, with D_{cyc} of $10\ \mu\text{m}$ at $50\ \text{N}$ normal load. These
348 tests give insights into the cyclic shearing behaviour of LBOC specimens at different combinations of
349 normal loads and displacement amplitudes. Figure 6(a)-(b) compares the first cycles of tangential load
350 – displacement curves at different $F_N - D_{cyc}$ combinations. Only the $25\ \text{N}-25\ \mu\text{m}$ test reached steady-
351 state and had considerable plastic displacements and energy dissipation in shearing. The $25\ \text{N}-10\ \mu\text{m}$
352 test was unloaded at peak load and hence a smaller amount of plastic displacements was observed

353 while in the case of 50 N–10 μm test, the maximum tangential load reached was prior to the occurrence
354 of the peak load resulting in predominantly elastic behaviour with much lesser energy dissipation.

355 In Figure 6(a), the 25N–25 μm test showed higher value of maximum tangential load ($F_{T,\text{max}}$) in the
356 unloading phase, whereas the $F_{T,\text{max}}$ value in the loading phase was the same as in the 25N–10 μm test.
357 This can be explained from the volumetric behaviour of the specimen in the loading and unloading
358 phases. Figure 6(c) shows the variation of δ_N with δ_T , where the curve shows dilation in the unloading
359 phase (backward shear) and compression in the loading/reloading phase (forward shear). The fracture
360 developed in the bonding of the specimen closes while unloading (backward shear) and the blocks of
361 the bonding material on either sides of fracture tend to slide against each other. The generated dilation
362 and frictional behaviour in the specimen (Video S1) leads to the excess mobilization of tangential
363 loads as shown in the Figure 6(a). In the reloading phase, the crack opens and might only propagate the
364 already existing crack, leading to peak tangential load similar to that of the 25N–10 μm test. This
365 phenomenon continues through the five cycles of shearing with decreasing amplitudes of dilation and
366 compression as shown in Figure 6(c). Figure 7(a)-(c) shows the five cycles of hysteretic loops for the
367 three classes of tests. For 10 μm tests, the hysteretic loops showed no significant plastic deformations
368 and hence the secant stiffness (slope of hysteresis) can be considerable. For the 25N–25 μm test, the
369 elastic stiffness can be approximated from the slope of loading and unloading parts of the curves as
370 indicated in Figure 7(c).

371 The dissipated energy is generally an indicator of the frictional losses in the contact of two bodies and
372 is calculated from the area of the closed loop in a cyclic loading process. In the case of bonded grains,
373 the adhesive forces also compensate for the energy losses in cyclic shearing. These losses include the
374 elastic or plastic nature of opening and closure of microcracks in the process of cyclic loading. The
375 difference of dissipated energy (ΔE) values in the three test cases, as shown in Figure 7, is more than
376 one order of magnitude. The trend of dissipated energy is similar to the trend of slope of hysteresis
377 with the 25 N–25 μm case dissipating the maximum and the 50 N–10 μm case dissipating the

378 minimum. However, there were observed differences with increasing number of cycles within each
379 test case and this variation is shown in Figure 8(a). Bar graphs in this figure indicate the ratio of the
380 dissipated energy in each cycle to the first cycle of shearing and their numerical values are shown in
381 Table 2. At a given normal load of 25N, the two displacement amplitude cases showed significant
382 differences in the dissipated energy values. In cycle 1 of shearing, the dissipated energy for 25N-10 μ m
383 case was around 0.16N-mm while the 25N-25 μ m case had a corresponding value of 1.12N-mm, which
384 is around 7 times higher than the former case. With 10 μ m of D_{cyc} , the curves are still in the elastic
385 region of behaviour and hence the values of dissipated energy are smaller than the 25 μ m case where
386 the curves entered the plastic deformation stage. Also with the number of shearing cycles the trend
387 was different for lower and higher displacement amplitudes. With 10 μ m of D_{cyc} , at both 25N and 50N
388 normal load, the ΔE values increased by around 1.3 times (30% increase) from cycle 1 to cycle 5,
389 which can be understood as increased frictional losses incurred by the damage of the bonding agent
390 (discussed later in this section). On the other hand, with 25 μ m of D_{cyc} , the ΔE values decreased by
391 around 0.1 times (10% decrease) from cycle 1 to cycle 5, as the specimens are well within the elastic
392 region and so no damage was propagated with the increase in shearing cycles.

393 The hysteretic damping ratio values are calculated based on the elastic energy stored in each cycle and
394 the variation for three test cases and five cycles of loading are shown in Figure 8b. The damping ratio
395 values are also shown in Table 2. The variation of damping ratio was similar to the variation of
396 dissipated energy values as shown in Figure 8a and Table 2 with 25N-25 μ m case showing the
397 maximum damping due to the induced plastic deformations.

398 From one cycle to another, the slope of hysteresis showed a decreasing trend, but the variation was
399 smaller in all the test cases. As the loading cycles increased, micro cracks in the cemented specimens
400 were generated and this decreased the load carrying capacity (combined stiffness in loading and
401 unloading) of the specimens. The tangential load amplitude ($F_{T,Amp}$) is the summation of the maximum

402 tangential loads attained in loading and unloading phases of each cycle. The variation of $F_{T,Amp}$ is
403 shown in Figure 8(b) with bar graphs. The 25 N–25 μm test showed the maximum value and the 50
404 N–10 μm test showed the least. This is expected since the 50 N–10 μm test did not reach its peak load
405 in the loading phase, and thus it remained in a relatively elastic state unlike the 25 N normal load test.
406 Also, the attenuation of $F_{T,Amp}$ with increasing cycles was higher for the cases where ductile behaviour
407 was the dominant, i.e., at 25 N normal load. The 25 N–10 μm and 25 N–25 μm tests showed an
408 attenuation of 10% to 13% of $F_{T,Amp}$. The consequences of this damage were explained in terms of
409 energy dissipation using Figure 8a. Also, the tangential load values reflect the damage developed in
410 the bonding agent. During the first cycle of shearing under 25N-25 μm case, the $F_{T,Amp}$ value was
411 highest at 47.8N where the major damage (or shear crack) was observed. In the consecutive cycles,
412 lower $F_{T,Amp}$ values (\sim 43.5N) were recorded as either the existing crack/damage was propagating or
413 new cracks (only minor) were developing during shearing.

414 After the first cycle of tangential loading and unloading, a macroscopic failure was observed in the 25
415 N–25 μm test (Video S1). Opening and closure of the crack(s) allowed the specimen to dissipate the
416 energy through this process, leading to a maximum energy dissipation and tangential load amplitude
417 and, a minimum hysteresis slope. In other tests at lower displacement amplitude (10 μm), no visible
418 cracks/failure were observed. However, decreasing stiffness and tangential load amplitude imply that
419 some microcracks were developed in the cementation of the specimens. With the number of shearing
420 cycles, the damage was induced in the cementation by either propagation of microcracks and/or
421 formation of new microscopic cracks.

422 **4.3 Dilatancy and Breakage Mechanisms**

423 **4.3.1. Influence of normal load on dilatancy**

424 After Rowe (1962) and Rowe et al. (1963), the relation between stress and dilatancy for cemented
425 sands has been studied extensively in the literature (Coop and Atkinson, 1993; Cuccovillo and Coop,

426 1999; Schnaid et al., 2001; Yu et al., 2007; Trivedi, 2010; Terzis and Laloui, 2019). The breakage
427 mechanism also depends on the magnitude of the normal load. Since the bonding is brittle, cohesion
428 dominates at lower normal loads and the specimen will have brittle breakage. At higher normal loads,
429 the cohesion between the grains becomes a less influential factor and friction carries the tangential
430 loads leading to ductile breakage of the specimen.

431 Similar to the expected macroscopic behaviour of granular materials (e.g., Atkinson, 1993, Muir
432 Wood, 2007, Cuccovillo and Coop, 1999), the present micromechanical experiments also showed
433 dilative behaviour at lower normal loads and compressive behaviour at higher normal loads for bonded
434 sand grains. The rigid loading arm for shearing is connected to a linear bearing at the farther end to
435 accommodate the vertical movements (Figure 2b) and the measurement of vertical displacements
436 during shearing is feasible. The dilative or compressive behaviour of LBOC specimens reciprocated
437 with their breakage mechanism based on the magnitude of the applied confinement.

438 Figure 9(a) shows the variation of vertical displacement i.e., dilation (-ve) or compression (+ve), with
439 shearing displacement for LBOC specimens at different normal loads. It is evident that as the
440 confinement (or normal load) increases, the behaviour is shifting from pure dilation to pure
441 compression. The tests with normal load lower than 20 N showed pure dilative behaviour with
442 maximum dilation of around 72 μm at 0 N normal load (note that the terms “dilation” and
443 “compression” are discussed in the study by means of vertical displacement with positive values
444 denoting compression). The maximum compression was around 140 μm at 100 N normal load test. At
445 the normal load range of the proposed brittle-ductile transition (i.e., 20 to 25 N), the tests showed
446 minimum change in the vertical displacement. The inset of Figure 9(a) shows the vertical displacement
447 variation for 20 N normal load case. The curve showed pure dilative behaviour in the beginning and
448 later started to show compressive behaviour. This is related to the breakage of the bonding between
449 the LBS grains as it will be discussed later in this section.

450 Figure 9(b) shows a representative test at $F_N = 8 \text{ N}$ comparing the variation of tangential load, normal
451 load and normal displacement with shearing displacement. The normal displacement curve showed a
452 dilative behaviour apart from a small initial compressive stage and the slope of the curve (rate of
453 dilation) changed at the start of the steady state. The rate of volumetric change (i.e., slope of the volume
454 change versus tangential displacement) is also maximum at a tangential displacement where the
455 corresponding tangential loads started to decrease from their peak value. Similar observation was
456 reported by Wang and Leung (2008b) from triaxial compression tests on Ottawa sand mixed with
457 cement slurry. Figure 9(c) shows the variation of the rate of dilation with tangential displacement for
458 representative tests at low, medium and high normal loads. At lower normal loads, the rate of dilation
459 was negative and was maximum during the peak load and then it tended to reduce to zero during the
460 later stages of shearing. At medium normal loads, the curves showed almost zero dilation rate until
461 breakage occurred in the cementation and then they showed compressive behaviour (i.e., positive rate
462 of dilation). The higher normal load tests showed purely compressive behaviour with a constant value
463 of positive rate of dilation.

464 **4.3.2 Breakage mechanisms**

465 Three modes of breakage were observed in the specimens (i) chipping and specimen separation (at
466 lower normal loads), (ii) shear cracks and splitting (at medium normal loads), and (iii) crushing (at
467 higher normal loads). All these three phenomena were observed only in the bonding material and the
468 sand grains showed no signs of failure. Wang et al. (2019) stated that shearing tests of LBS grains
469 bonded with gypsum plaster at $F_N = 50\text{N}$ showed yielding at 21N and the failure was attributed to the
470 rotation of the whole specimen about the bottom sand particle without any visible cracks.

471 *Mode-1: Chipping and specimen separation* type of failure was observed in specimens sheared at
472 lower normal loads ($F_N < 20\text{N}$). Figure 10(a) shows the three stages of a specimen sheared at $F_N = 8$
473 N i.e., the initial stage after the application of normal load, chipping during shearing and clean

474 separation of specimen after the removal of the normal load. The high dilatancy at low normal loads
475 in the current set of specimens indicated the mechanism of failure and energy dissipation. During
476 shearing, the specimens with low confinement tended to dissipate energy by bond splitting rather than
477 shearing along the bond (weakest link in the specimens). In the process of bond splitting/specimen
478 separation, the specimens showed significant dilation while shearing due to uplift tendency (i.e.,
479 termed as dilation) of the top grain. At the interface of the bonding material and the grain, a slight
480 chipping was observed while shearing and this is shown in Video S2. Once the complete separation
481 occurred, the dilation rate reached zero and the friction became the dominant mechanism of shear
482 strength, overtaking cohesion and dilation counterparts.

483 *Mode-2: Shear cracks and splitting* type of failure was observed in specimens sheared at the medium
484 range of normal loads ($F_N = 20 \text{ N} - 30 \text{ N}$). Video S3 shows the failure of a specimen with shear cracks
485 and splitting occurring in the bonding material. These are only the visible failures observed in the
486 specimens, but many microscopic cracks are expected in the sample which would lead to the failure
487 of the specimen. This type of failure is a special case since the normal load pertaining to this class was
488 proposed to be brittle-ductile transition in the previous sections. In these specimens, the dilation rate
489 was almost zero and the shear cracks in the specimen showed a distinctive phenomenon in the
490 tangential load – displacement curves. Figure S1 shows the tangential load – displacement curves at
491 20 N and 25 N normal loads. During the peak tangential load, no cracks were visible in the specimen
492 but during the steady state shearing the cracks started to expand and later a sudden drop in tangential
493 load was observed (as indicated in Figure S1). This is the point where the specimen started to show
494 compressive behaviour from zero dilation condition as indicated in the subset of Figure 9(a). These
495 shear cracks were always inclined in the direction of shearing at an angle of 50° to 60° with respect to
496 the horizontal.

497 *Mode-3: Crushing* type of failure was observed in the specimens sheared at higher normal loads (F_N
498 $> 50 \text{ N}$). Crushing was observed only in the bonding material and the crushing behaviour of the

499 specimens at 90 N is shown in Video S4. At this high normal load, the stresses created in the specimen
500 are almost nearing to one-day crushing strength of cement mortar and due to the imposition of shearing
501 the bonding material loses its strength to resist. In this stage, the specimens showed pure compression
502 in the normal displacement against tangential displacement curves. However, the crushing failure
503 mechanism was not reflected in the tangential load – displacement curves as in the shear cracks mode,
504 except for the delayed stiffness degradation and highly nonlinear curves.

505 The LBPP specimens showed purely compressive behaviour except for zero normal load shearing.
506 Figure 9(d) shows the variation of normal displacement with shearing displacement at different normal
507 loads. The damage occurred on the specimens was crushing type with no proper shear cracks on the
508 bonding material and the material appeared to be squeezed out from the specimen due to the soft nature
509 of the plaster. Wang and Leung (2008a) observed a similar behaviour for gypsum plaster with great
510 volumetric contraction and bulging type of failure. Figure 10(b) shows representative images of
511 specimen breakage at different normal loads for LBPP specimens.

512 Relating dilatancy with stress is a general mode of understanding the strength characteristics of both
513 uncemented and cemented soils (Taylor, 1948; Rowe, 1962; Bolton, 1986; Been and Jefferies, 2004).
514 Figure 11 shows the effects of confinement on the strength (load ratio, η) and dilatancy ($d\delta_v/d\delta_t$)
515 behaviour on LBOC specimens. At three ranges of normal loads (i.e. low, medium and high) the curves
516 showed a decreasing load ratio while the dilatancy rate was shifting from negative to positive values
517 (i.e. from dilation to compression). In all the three cases, the curves ultimately reached zero dilation
518 rate (though oscillating) but the time required to reach this condition increased at higher normal loads.
519 At lower normal loads in pure dilation, the specimen required less time to reach zero dilation rate
520 compared with the medium normal load range (based on the density of data points on the curve). At
521 higher normal loads the rate of dilation was almost constant with small fluctuations. The strength (or
522 load ratio) of bonded sands is contributed by cohesion, dilatancy and friction components (Lambe,
523 1960). Cuccovillo and Coop (1999) indicated that the energy dissipated in frictional loss and bond

524 breakage comprise the total work done by the stresses. The frictional loss includes the steady-state and
525 the dilation components. However, in element-scale cemented samples, dilatancy develops under
526 shearing after the breakage of cohesion between the grains. In the current micromechanical tests,
527 dilatancy was observed as a consequence of breakage of the cohesion through the process of shearing
528 as a simpler mode of energy dissipation. As the top grain is moved horizontally for shearing, the
529 specimen tends to separate from the bonding material by breaking the bond. Since the normal load is
530 maintained at a given constant value in a force-controlled manner, as the specimen dilates (or separates
531 from bonding) it exerts an additional force on the loading system making the micro-stepper motors to
532 move upwards to resume the normal load to its original values. Also, the bond does not break
533 completely at the peak tangential load, but some bond clusters are formed (Wang and Leung, 2008b).
534 These phenomena make the dilation to continue beyond the start of the steady-state unlike element-
535 scale tests. However, this occurs at lower normal loads only. At higher normal loads, the top grain will
536 be more partial to shearing along the bond and hence dilation it not observed. This mechanism of
537 consequent bond breakage, energy dissipation and dilation is distinct for micromechanical
538 experiments when compared to element-scale testing. Further investigation on the interaction of shear
539 load – normal load (and perhaps shear load – normal load – bending load) would be useful taking into
540 account different types of bonds and bond thickness.

541 **5. Conclusions**

542 The study presented micromechanical tests on bonded sand-size grains investigating the tangential
543 load-displacement behaviour in monotonic and cyclic shearing, providing insights into the failure
544 mechanisms of the specimens and proposing an empirical expression for the failure envelope of
545 bonded grains. The experiments were performed by upgrading and stiffening an existing
546 micromechanical apparatus providing in this way higher precision of forces and displacements so that
547 contact stiffness can be measured reliably. The stiffness of the apparatus was improved, and non-
548 contact displacement transducers were used for high precision measurements of displacements.

549 Reproduced flat LBS grains which represent granular material with low curvature were artificially
550 bonded with ordinary Portland cement (LBOC) and plaster of Paris (LBPP). Table 3 gives a qualitative
551 summary of the behaviour of the bonded grains from the micromechanical tests. Monotonic shearing
552 tests were conducted on these two classes of bonded grains in a wide range of normal loads. LBOC
553 specimens showed higher shear strength compared to LBPP specimens, both having a non-linear
554 strength envelope. A new empirical non-linear strength envelope was proposed in which the tangential
555 load increased with decreasing rate as the normal load increased. At lower normal loads ($F_N < 20$ N),
556 the LBOC specimens showed predominantly dilative behaviour leading to post-peak force reduction.
557 Such specimens had brittle failure with chipping and bond separation. At higher normal loads ($F_N >$
558 40 N), the LBOC specimens had compressive behaviour and the specimen failed due to crushing of
559 the bonding material. A brittle-ductile transition was proposed to be at $F_N = 20 - 25$ N based on the
560 curvature of the strength envelope, failure type and dilatant behaviour. Such distinction was not
561 observed for LBPP specimens and all the specimens showed compressive behaviour except for zero
562 normal load test. The tangential stiffness also showed decreasing trend as the normal load increased,
563 with LBOC specimen showing 2 to 3 times higher values than LBPP. The shape of stiffness
564 degradation curves was different for LBOC specimens at lower and higher normal loads following the
565 tangential load – displacement curves. Cyclic shearing tests on LBOC specimens showed higher
566 energy dissipation and lower stiffness with increased displacement amplitude at a given normal load.
567 It was observed that the energy dissipation is higher if the maximum tangential load reached in cyclic
568 shearing is equal to the peak tangential load at a given normal load and the damage is higher in such
569 cases if the displacement amplitude is also larger. An attempt was made to apply stress-dilatancy
570 theory to the current micromechanical tests on LBOC specimens. The dilatancy rate was maximum at
571 the peak tangential load and the rate reduced as the shearing continued. From the current
572 micromechanical tests, a mechanism of continuous mobilization of cohesion through shearing is
573 suggested owing to the increasing dilation after steady state sliding for bonded specimens.

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575

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587 **APPENDIX**

588 **(A) Crushing Load Tests**

589 Crushing tests were conducted on both LBOC and LBPP specimens using a modified CBR apparatus
590 available at City University of Hong Kong. This apparatus was used for single particle crushing tests
591 on various natural geological materials like LBS and CDG (Wang and Coop, 2016). A representative
592 set of 15 samples of each LBOC and LBPP specimens were tested for crushing load. From the method
593 of specimen preparation, it is expected that the LBOC specimens have strong and hard bond while the
594 LBPP specimens have weak and soft bond, and this distinct bond nature influences their crushing loads
595 and behaviour.

596 Figure S2 shows the comparison of load-displacement curves between LBOC and LBPP specimens.
597 The crushing phenomenon was straightforward for LBOC specimens where they showed brittle mode
598 of crushing and there was a sudden drop in the normal load after the first crack was observed, whereas,
599 the LBPP particles showed ductile behaviour with hardening to be observed even after the formation
600 of cracks. A squeezing phenomenon was observed in the plaster as the specimen was compressed and
601 in both the bonding types, it was the bonding material that failed the specimen but not the LBS grains.
602 Wang et al. (2019) also observed a similar phenomenon in crushing artificially bonded LBS gains. The
603 normal load at which the first crack occurred on the OPC bonded particles ($F_N = 220N$) is almost 2
604 times that of PP bonded particles ($F_N = 114N$) but for a given normal load below the crushing load,
605 the displacement is always higher for LBPP than LBOC. The higher strength and stiffness for OPC
606 bonded particles qualifies them to be ‘strong and hard cementation’ while the lower strength and
607 stiffness for PP bonded particles qualifies them to be ‘weak and soft cementation’.

608 **(B) Tensile Load Tests**

609 Tensile load tests were conducted on the new micromechanical loading apparatus (Section 3). The top
610 and bottom grains of the specimen were glued to the respective mounts on the apparatus with a

611 minimum normal load applied (around 0.1N) to ensure firm contact between the specimen and the
612 mounts. After the preparation of the cemented samples, the extension tests were conducted to measure
613 the tensile strength of the specimens. In general, these tests showed a brittle behavior with a sudden
614 drop of the load after reaching a peak value. The average tensile load at which the bond breakage
615 occurred for LBOC specimens was 1.71N and the breakage occurred at a very low extension of around
616 1.25 μ m indicating the brittle nature of the bond. The normal load-extension curve for a representative
617 specimen is shown in Figure S3. While, the LBPP particles did not show any recordable tensile load
618 during the separation of the bonding.

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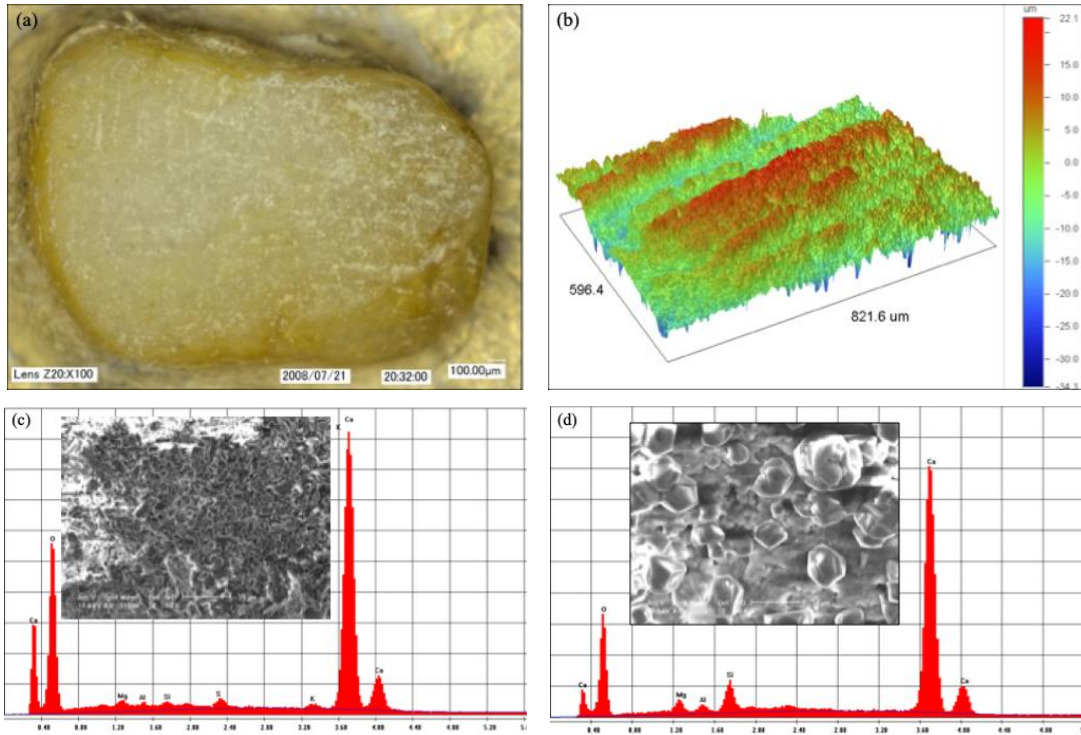
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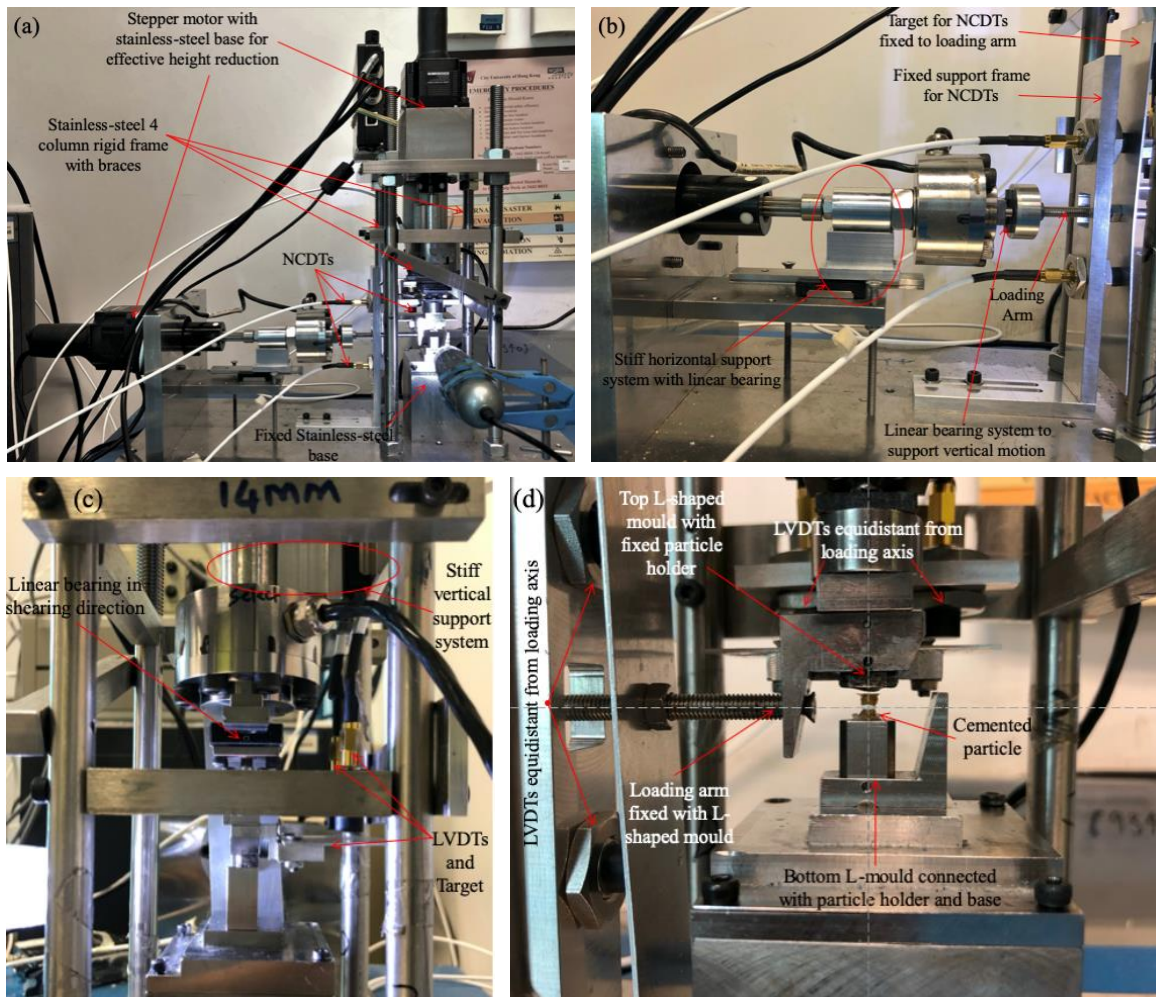
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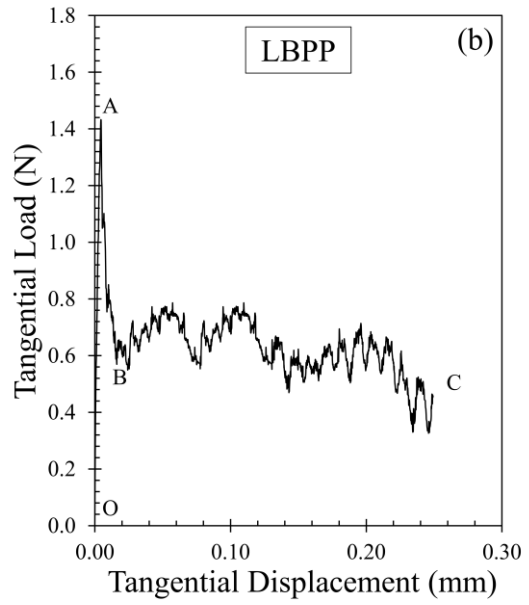
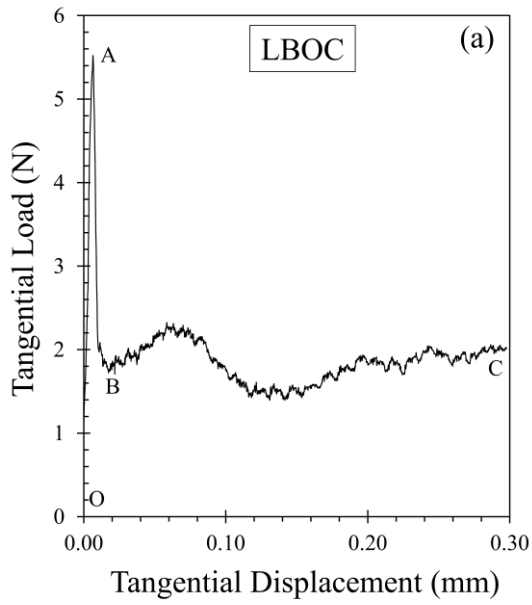
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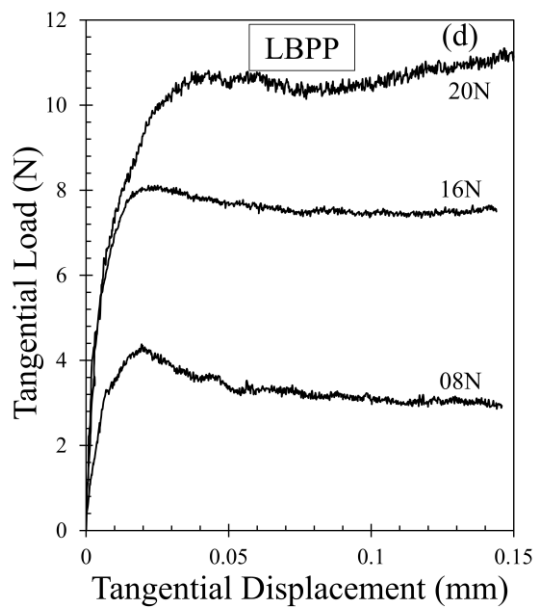
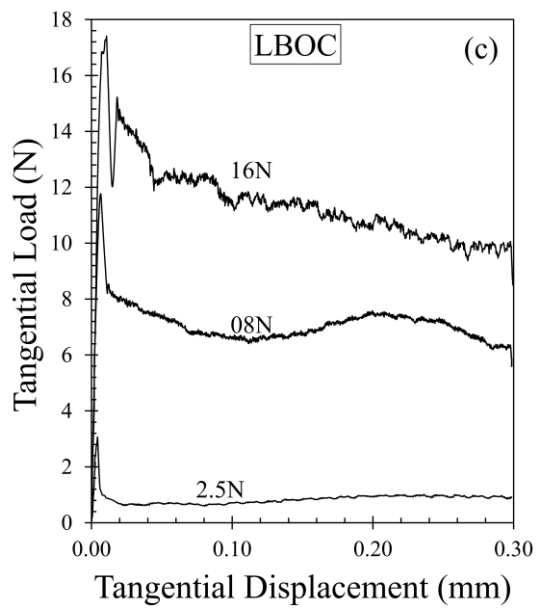
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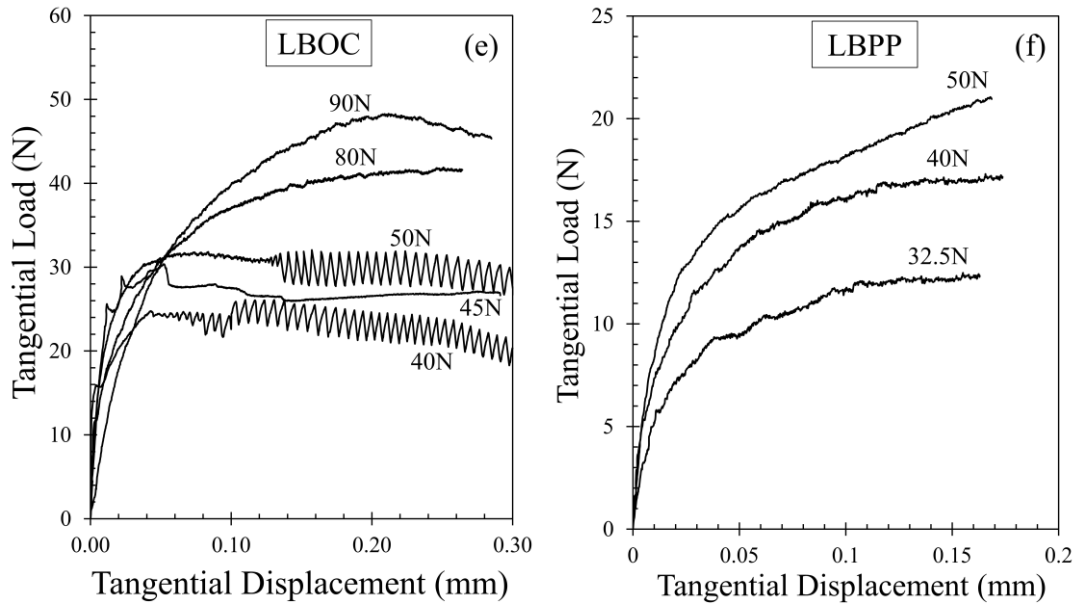
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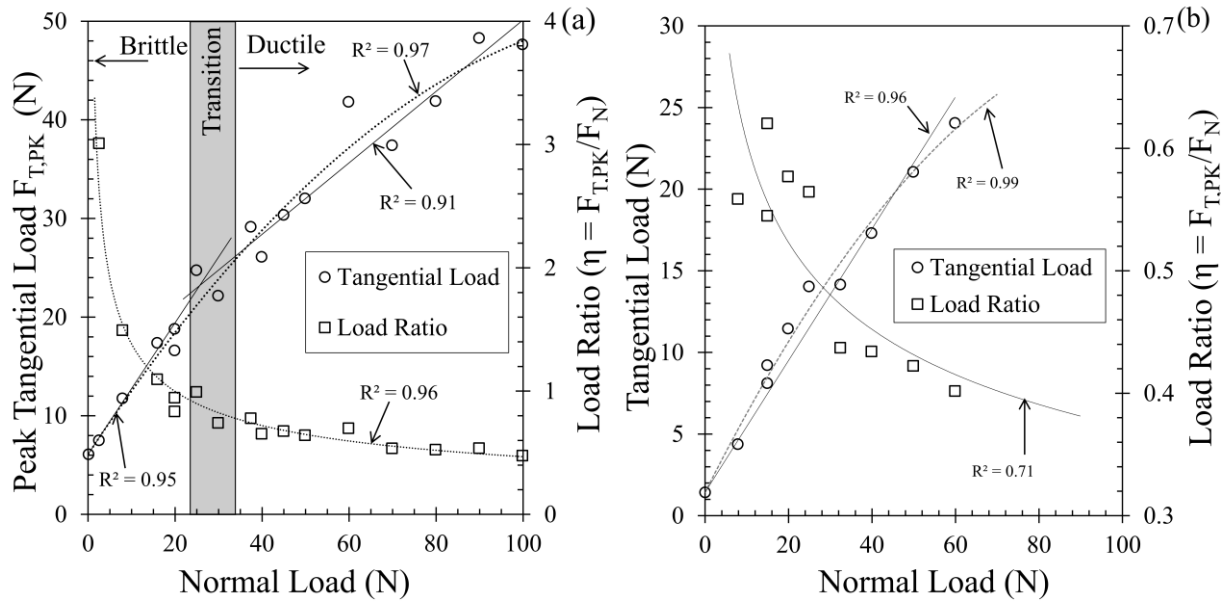
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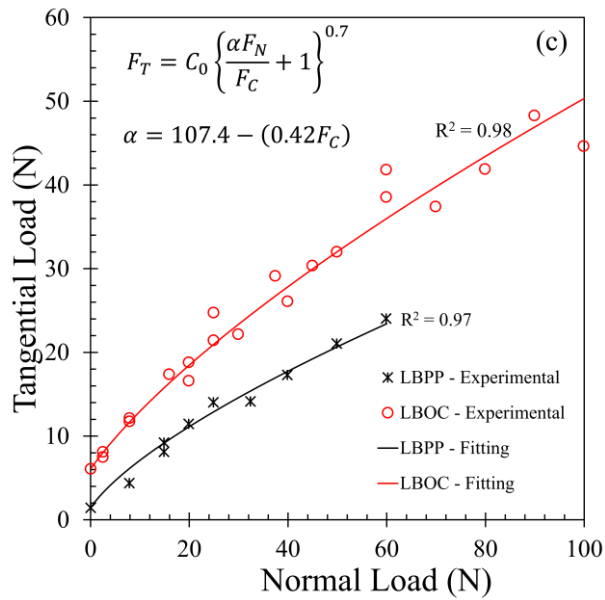
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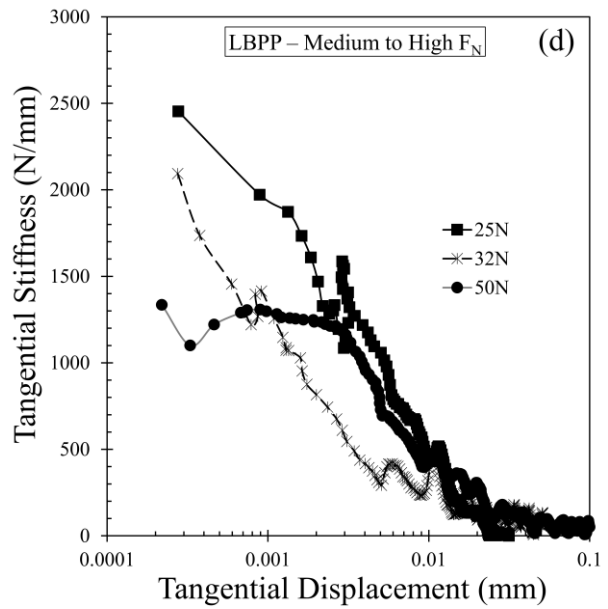
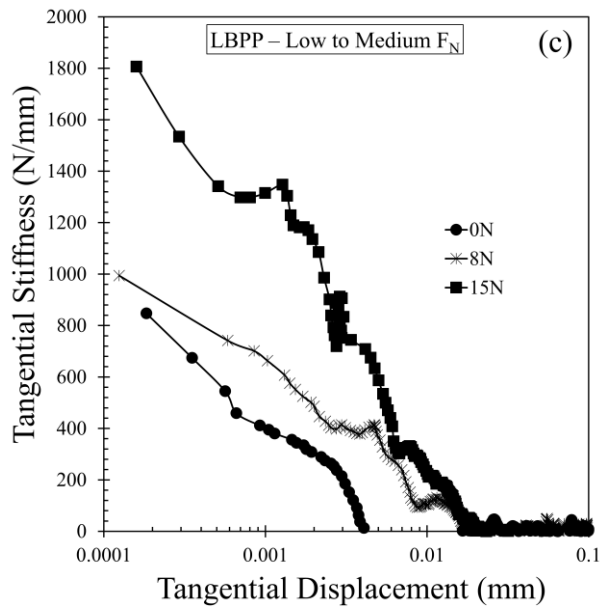
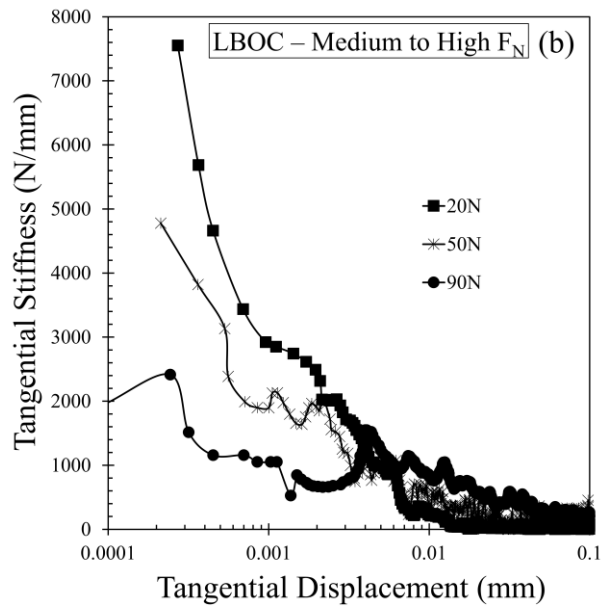
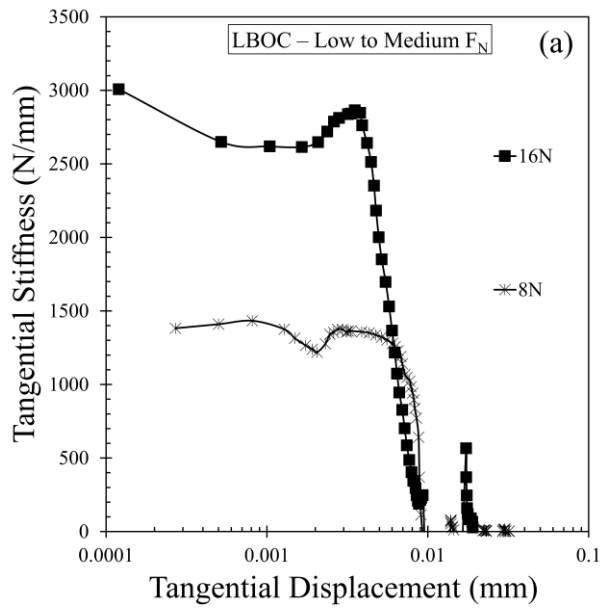
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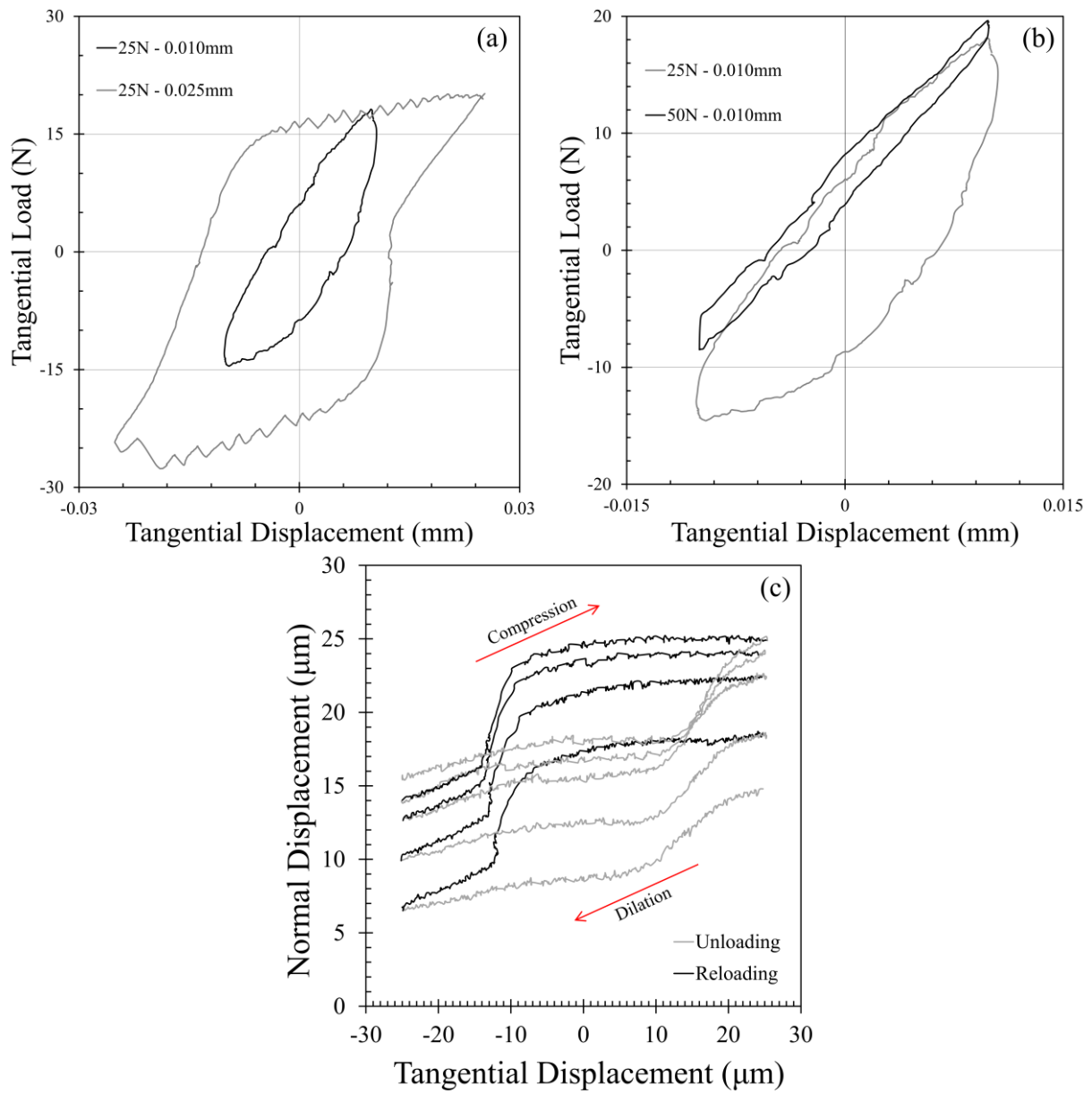
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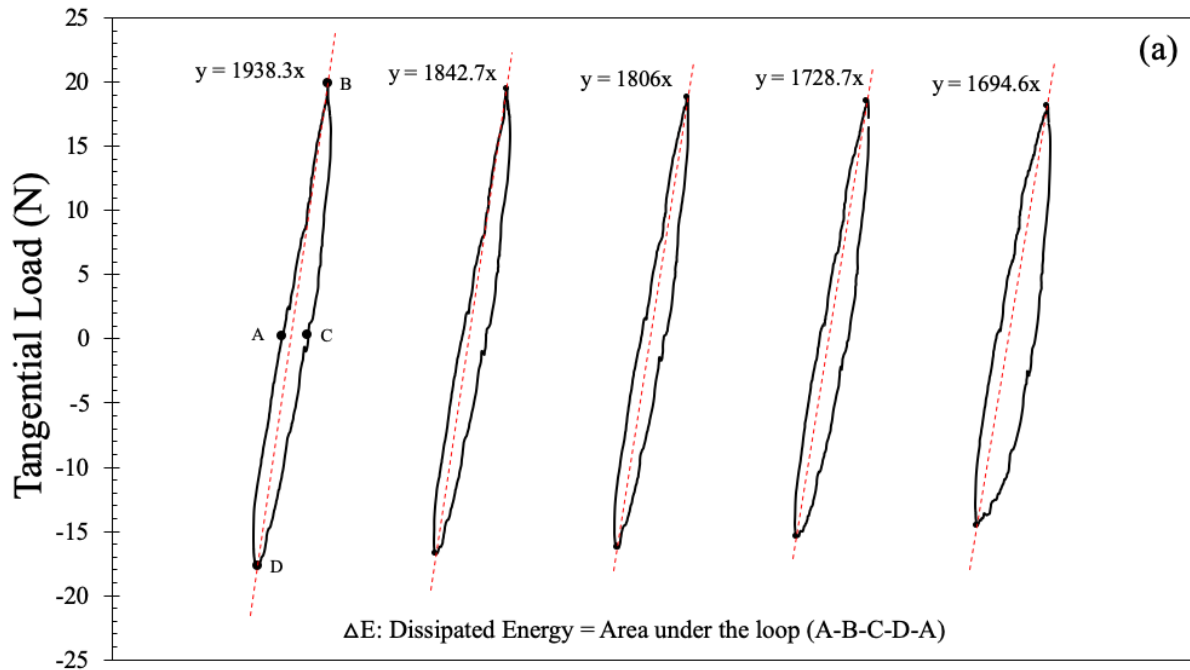
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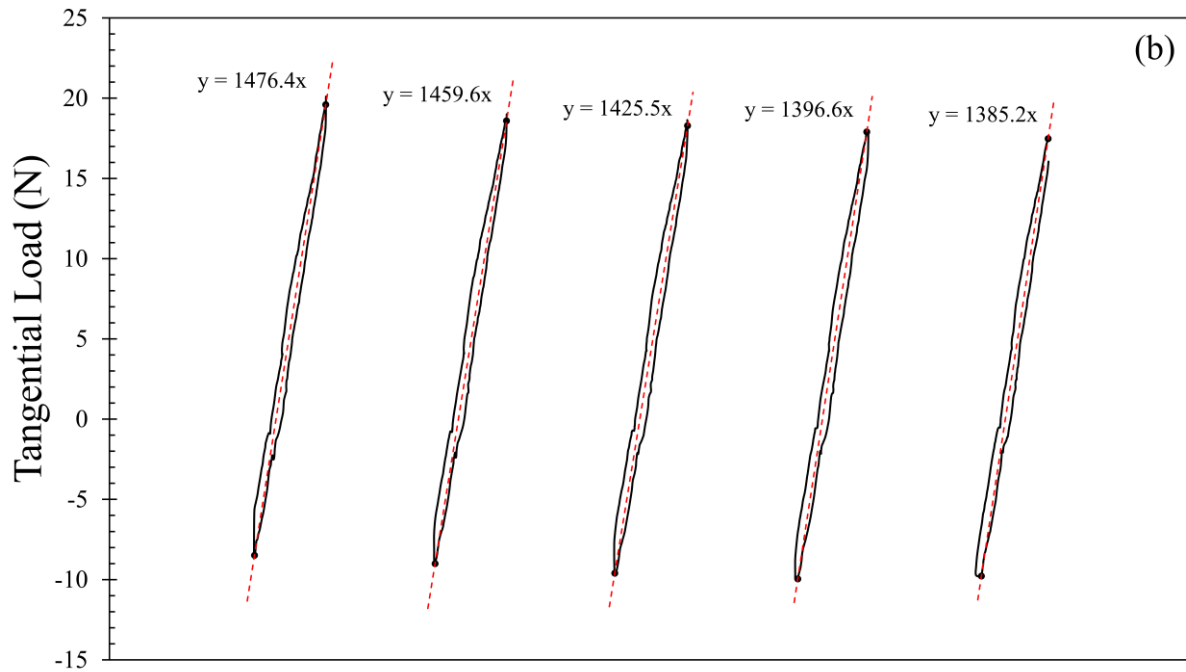
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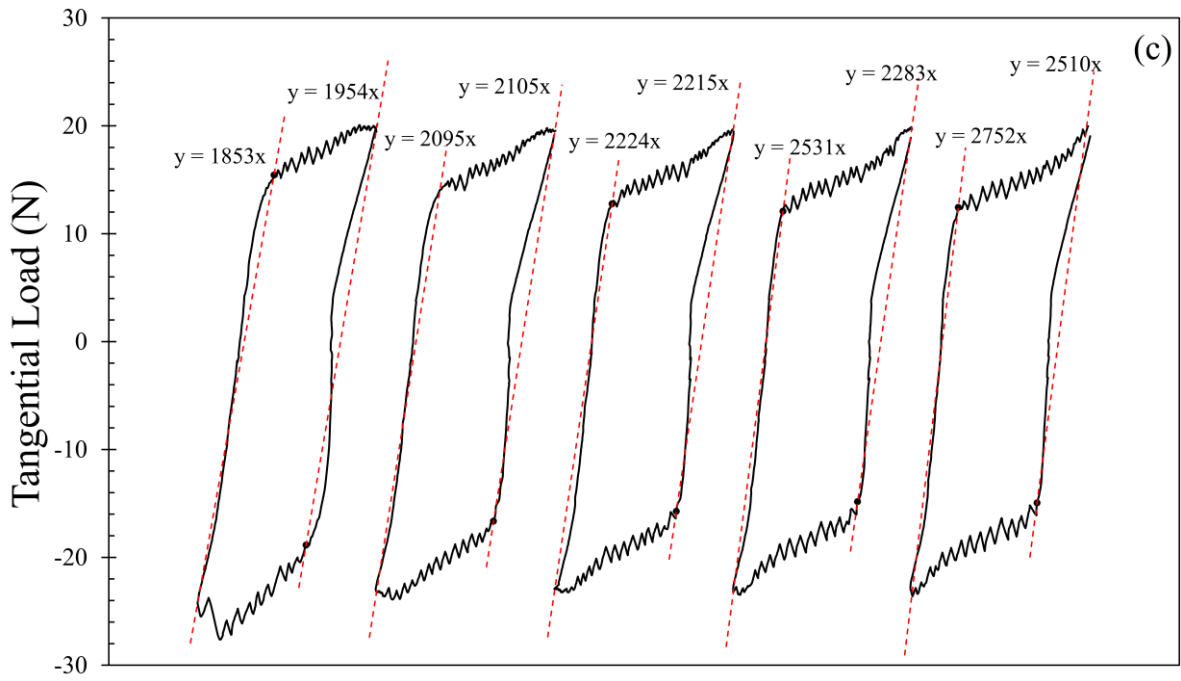
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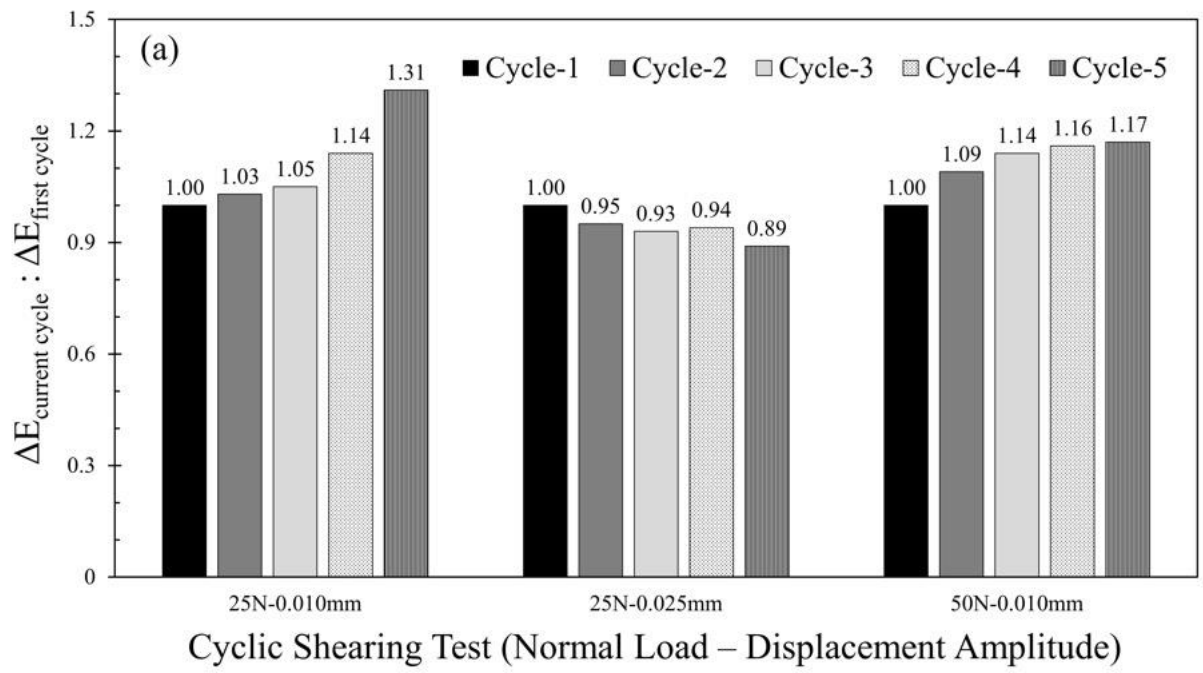
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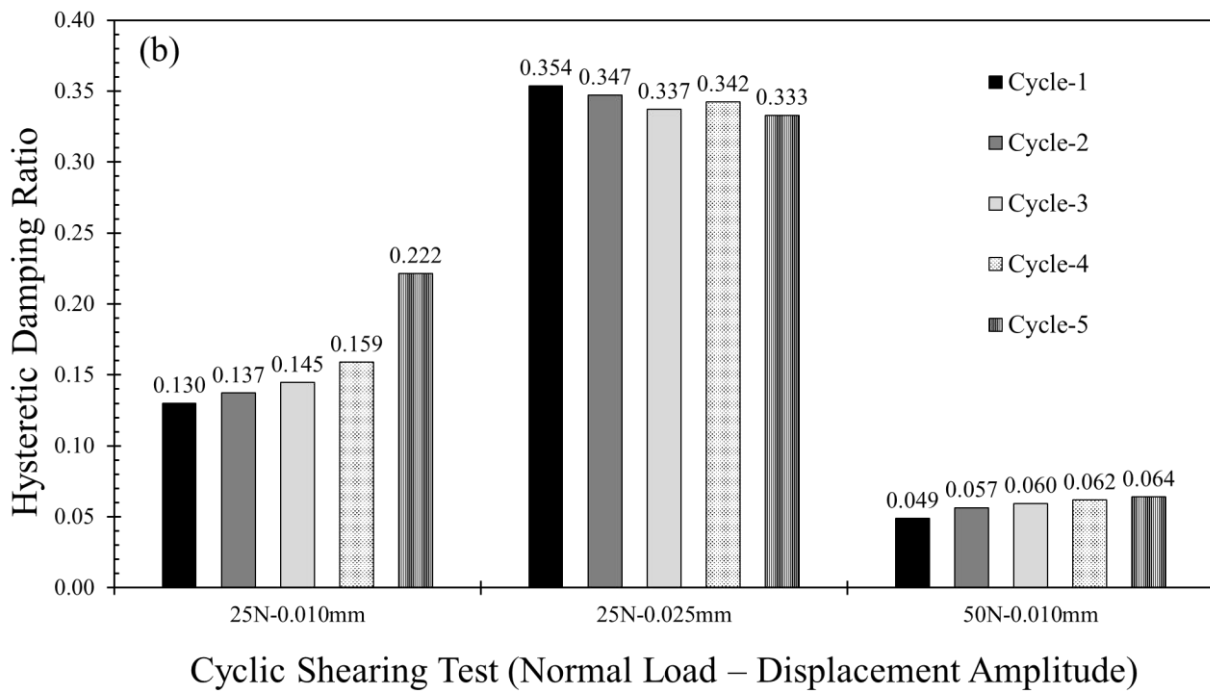
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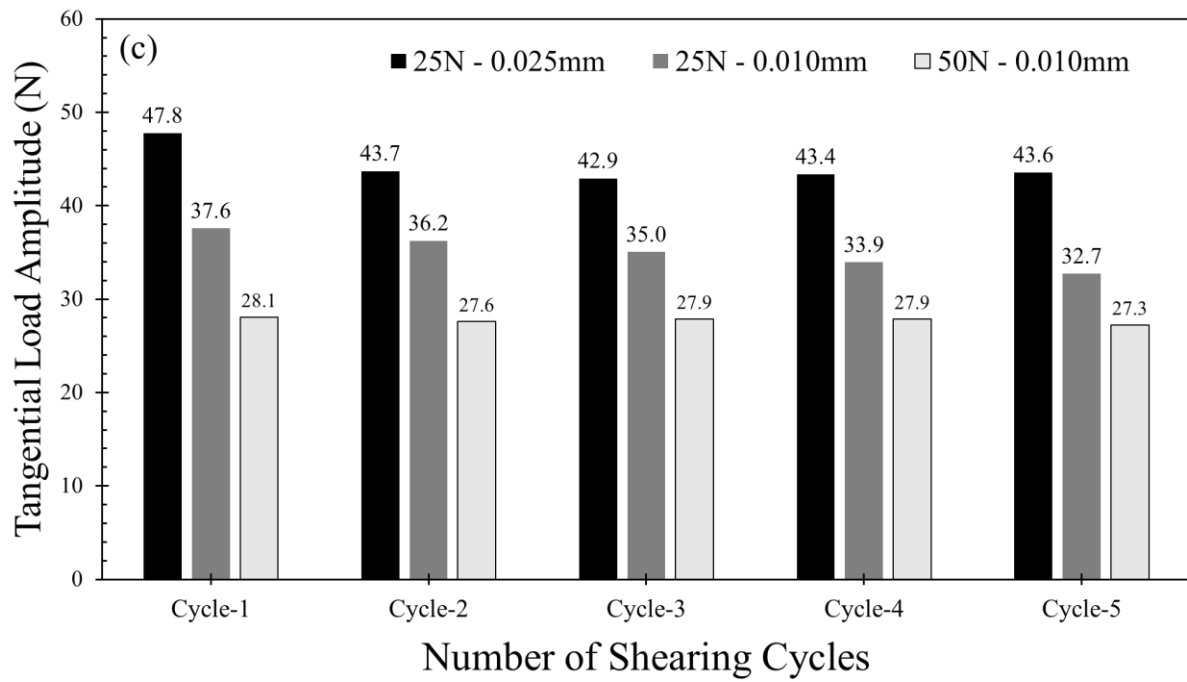
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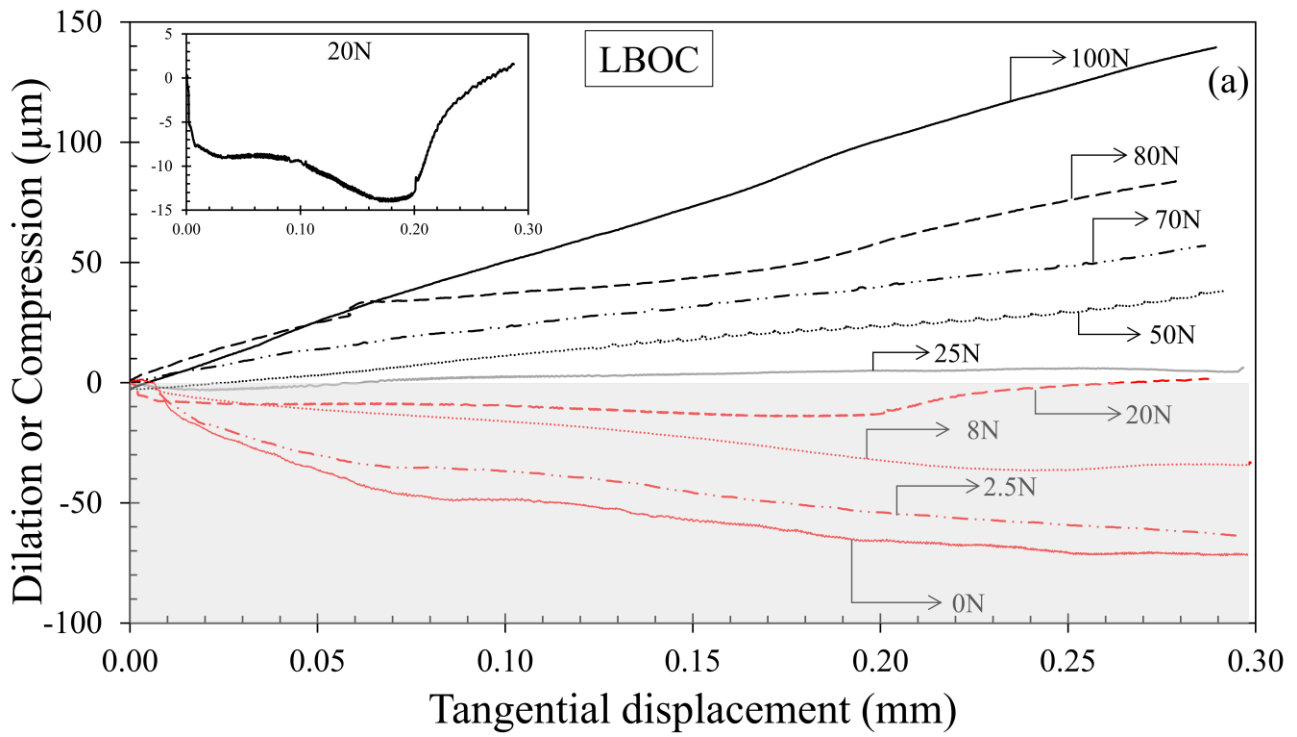
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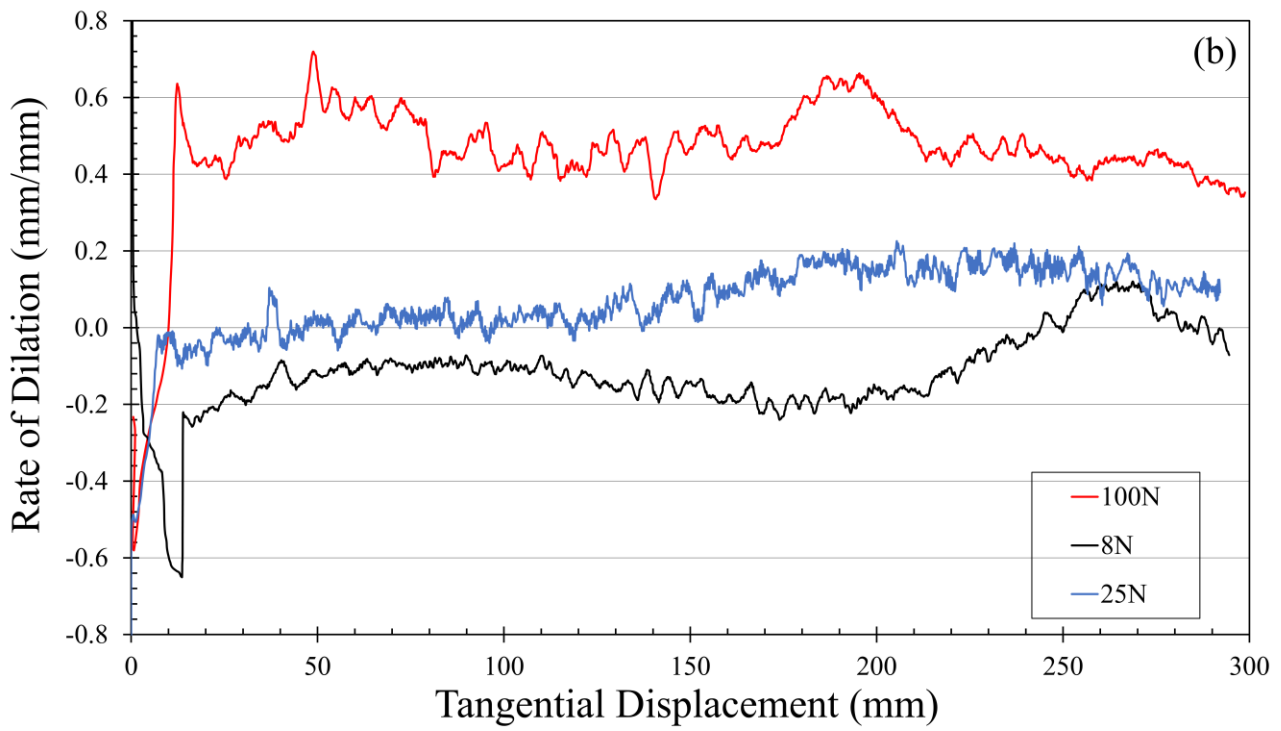


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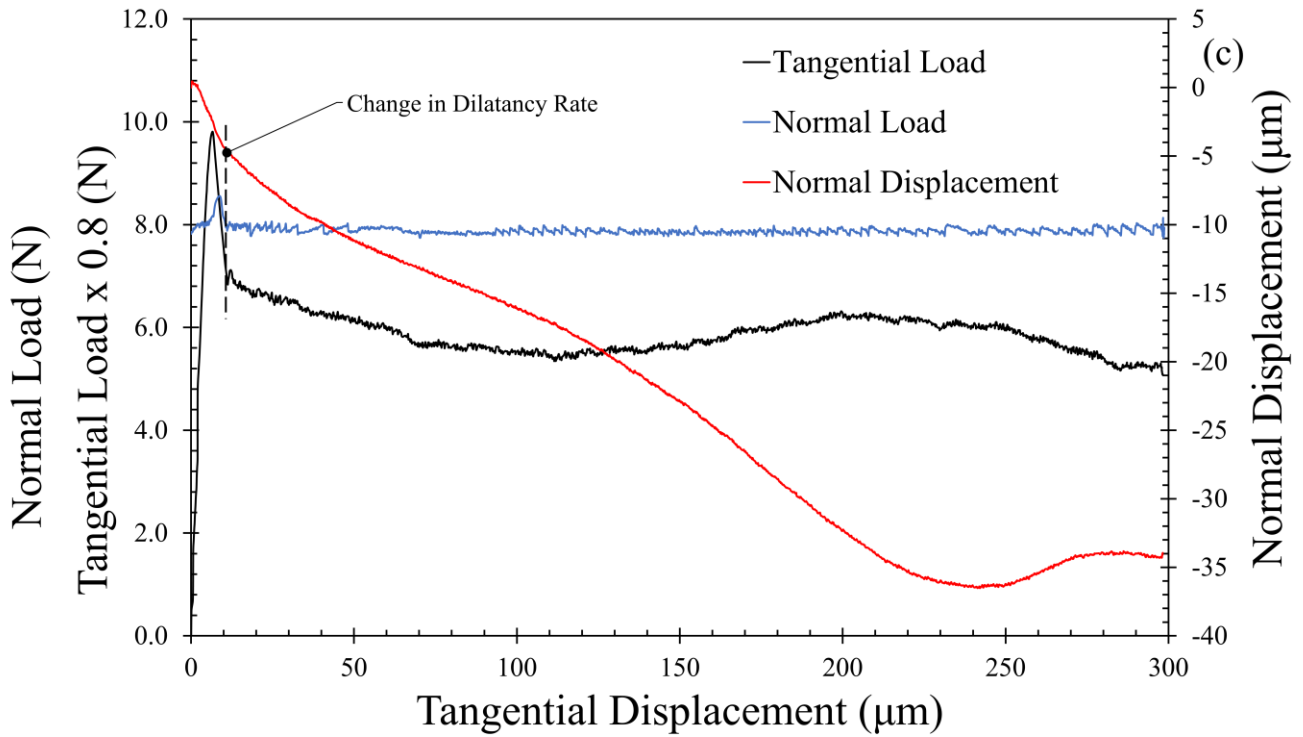
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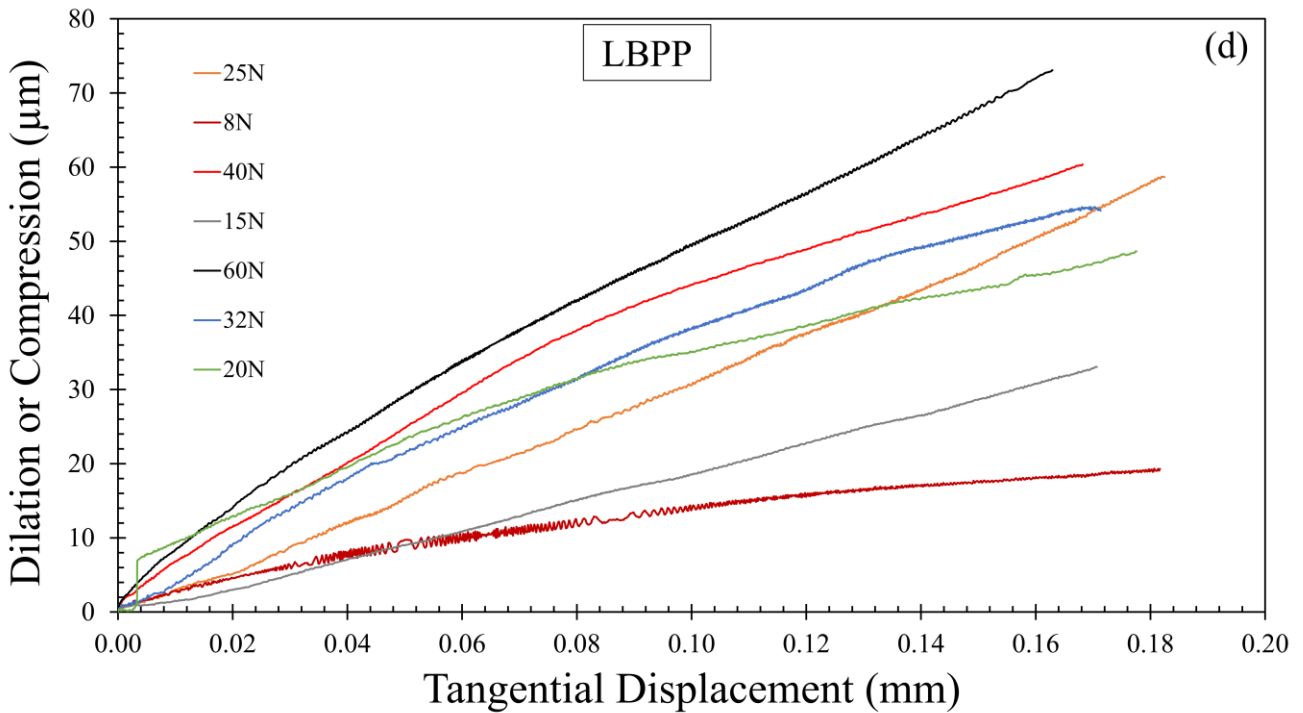
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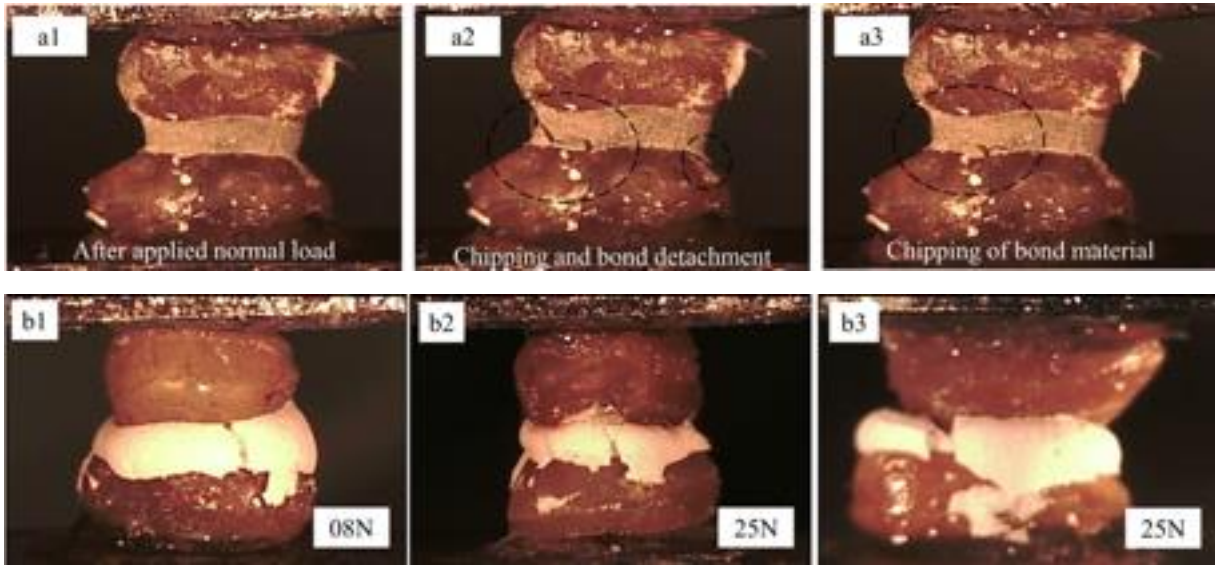
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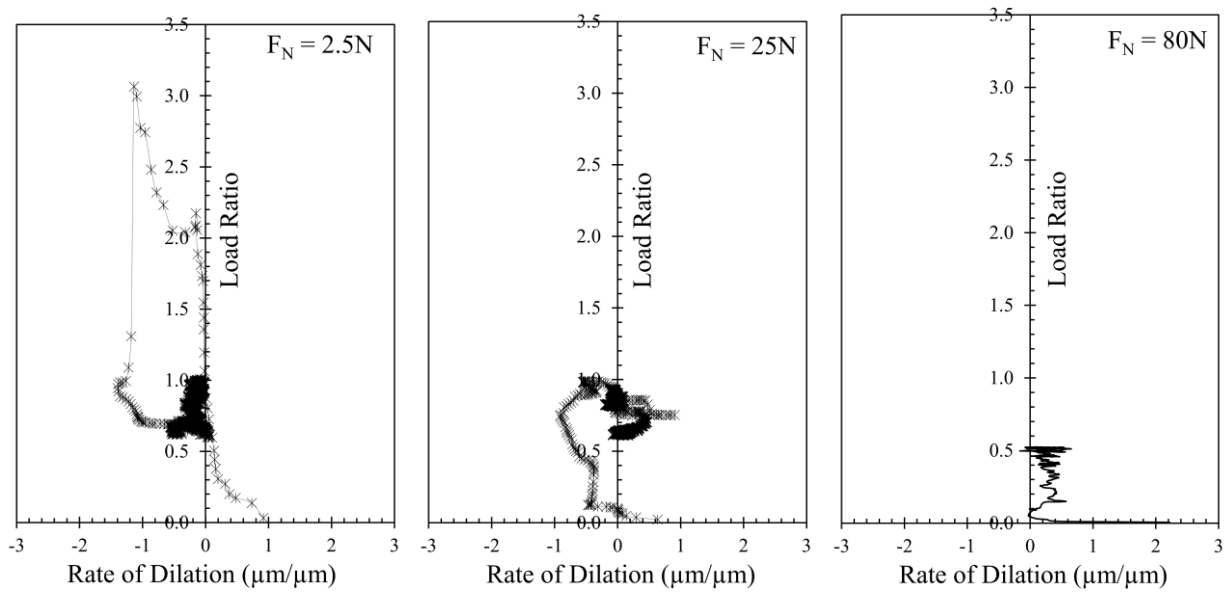
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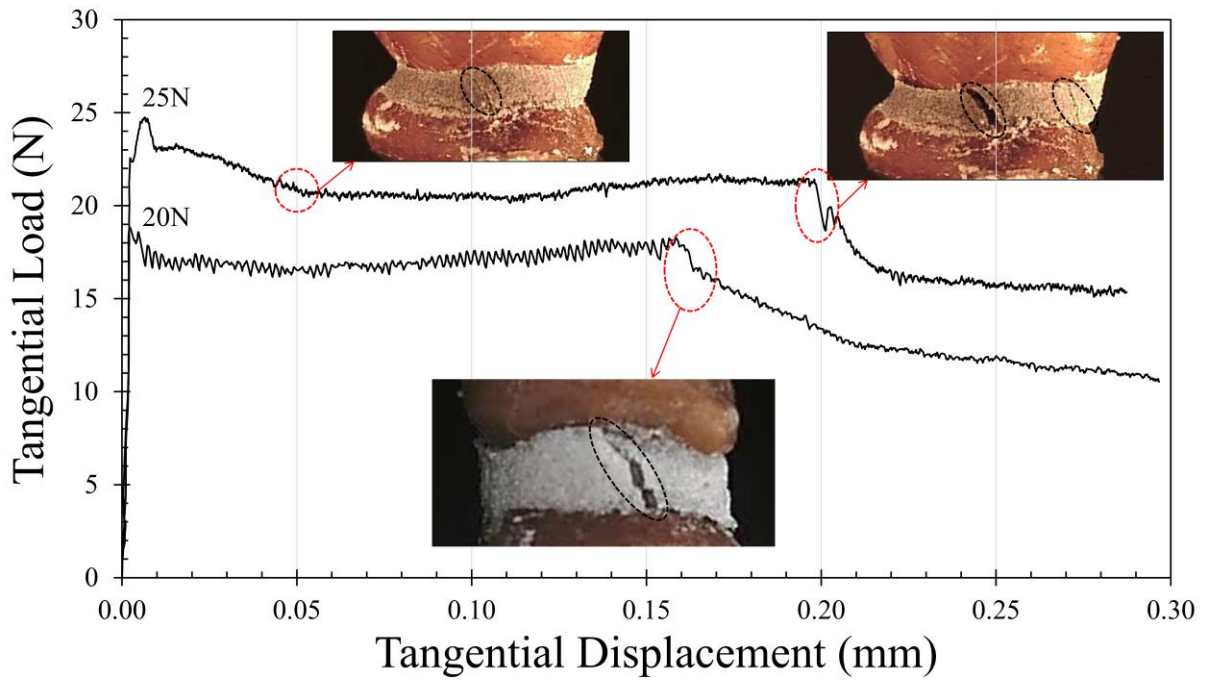


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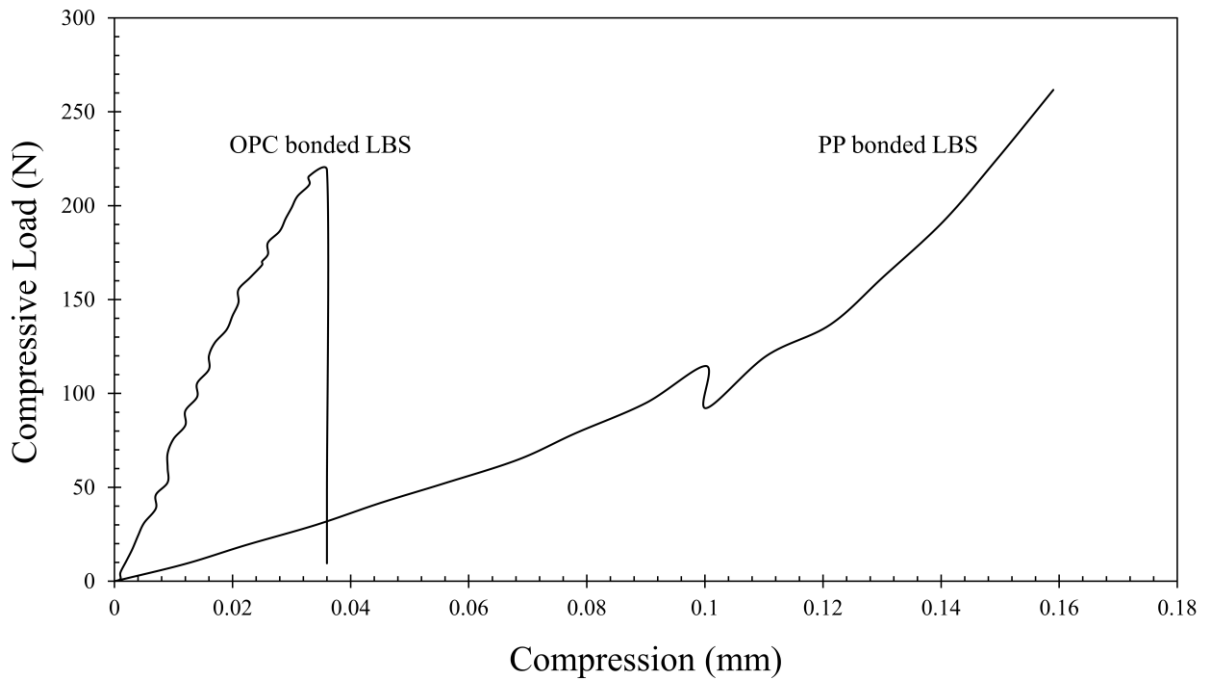
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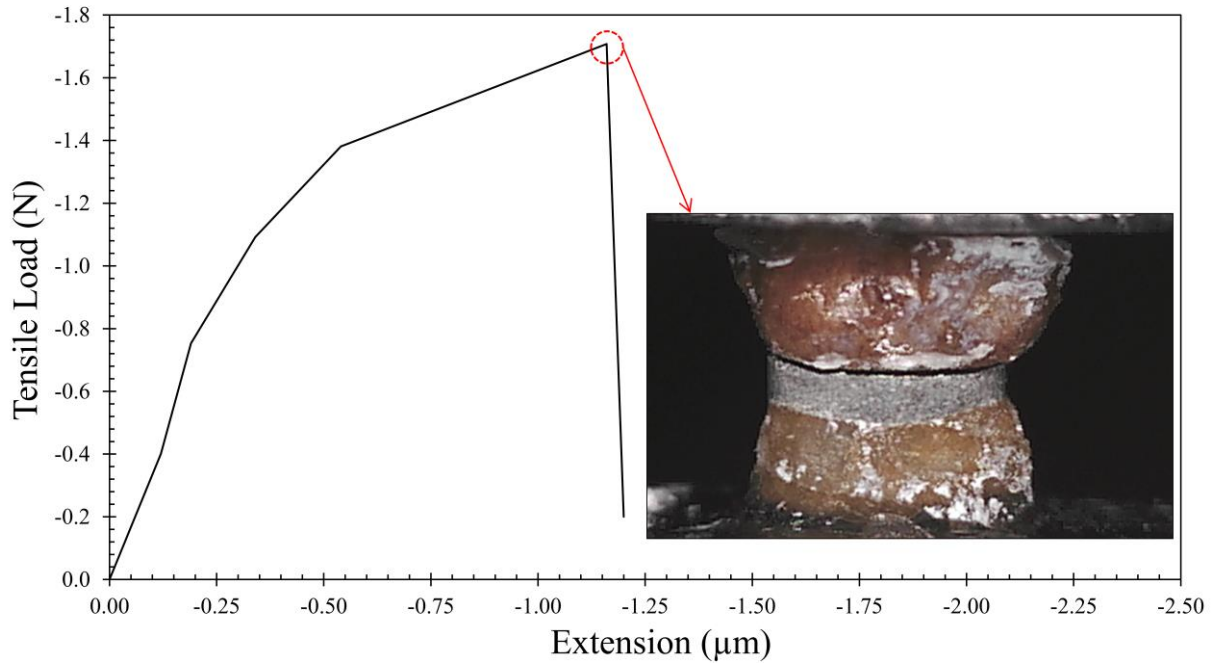


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783 Figure S2: Representative normal load-displacement curves for LBOC and LBPP specimens in
 784 crushing.

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Figure S3: Representative normal load-displacement curve for LBOC specimen under extension (tensile load)

Table 1: Monotonic shearing test details and preliminary results

Bonding Material (Code)	Normal Load (N)	Tangential Load (N)		Load Ratio (F_T/F_N)		Dilation (or) Compression
		Peak	Steady-state	Peak	Steady-state	
Ordinary Portland Cement (LBOC)	0	5.5	1.8	-	-	Dilation
	2.5	7.5	2.1	3.00	0.84	
	8	11.8	6.5	1.48	0.81	
	16	17.4	9.9	1.09	0.62	
	20	18.8	16.1	0.94	0.81	
	25	24.5	21.5	0.98	0.86	Post-fracture compression
	30		22.2		0.74	Compression
	37.5		29.2		0.78	
	40		26.1		0.65	
	45		30.4		0.68	
	50		32.0		0.64	
	60		42.5		0.71	
70		37.4		0.53		
80		41.9		0.52		
90		48.3		0.54		
100		44.7		0.45		
Plaster of Paris (LBPP)	0	1.4	0.6	-	-	Dilation
	8	4.4	3.1	0.55	0.39	Compression
	15	8.1	7.4	0.54	0.49	
	20		11.5		0.58	
	25		14.0		0.56	
	32.5		14.2		0.44	
	40		17.3		0.43	
	50		21.1		0.42	
60		28.5		0.48		

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Table 2: Observations from cyclic shearing tests on LBOC specimens.

Normal Load (N)	Displacement Amplitude (mm)	Cycle	Energy Dissipated (N-mm)	Damping Ratio	Stiffness (N/mm)	Load Amplitude (N)
25N	0.010	1	0.1628	0.130	1938.3	37.56
		2	0.1678	0.137	1842.7	36.24
		3	0.1708	0.145	1806	35.03
		4	0.1851	0.159	1728.7	33.93
		5	0.2526	0.222	1694.6	32.71
25N	0.025	1	1.1193	0.345	1903.5	47.8
		2	1.0661	0.347	2100	43.7
		3	1.0420	0.337	2219.5	42.9
		4	1.0466	0.362	2407	43.4
		5	0.9962	0.333	2631	43.6
50N	0.010	1	0.0602	0.049	1476.4	28.08
		2	0.0660	0.057	1459.6	27.6
		3	0.0684	0.060	1425.5	27.88
		4	0.0696	0.062	1396.6	27.87
		5	0.0703	0.064	1385.2	27.25

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Table 3: Qualitative summary of bonded grain behaviour

Specimen	Normal Load (N)	Volumetric Behaviour	Breakage Mode		Tangential Behaviour	
					Mode	Reference
LBOC (Hard and strong bond)	0-16	Dilation	Chipping and specimen separation	Brittle	Softening	Figure 3a & Figure 3c
	20-30	Zero dilation and Post-fracture compression	Shear cracks and Splitting	Brittle – Ductile Transition	Minor softening	Figure S1
	40-100	Compression	Crushing	Ductile	Hardening	Figure 3e
LBPP (Soft and weak bond)	0	Dilation	No damage to bonding material		Softening	Figure 3b
	8-15	Compression	Crushing and squeezing of soft bonding material.		Minor softening	Figure 3d
	20-60				Hardening	Figure 3f

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