

Effect of frame size, frame type, and clamping pressure on the ballistic performance of soft body armor

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In memory of Professor Kevin Granata who was killed on 16 April 2007 during the massacre in Norris Hall, Virginia Tech.

Abstract

We analyze, with the computer code LS-DYNA, three-dimensional (3D) transient deformations of a 10-layer woven Kevlar armor held in a square steel frame and impacted at normal incidence by a 9 mm FMJ (full metal jacket), 124 grain projectile. The composite armor is discretized into weft and warp yarns to simulate its woven structure. The yarn is modeled as a 3D continuum. We consider failure of the yarn, and friction between adjoining layers and between the armor and the frame bars. For the armor perfectly bonded to the rigid frame bars, the computed residual speed and the residual kinetic energy of the projectile are found to increase with a decrease in the frame size implying thereby that the armor fixed in a smaller frame will have lower V_{50} than that of the same armor clamped in a larger frame. (The V_{50} of an armor equals the speed of a standard projectile that upon normal impact has 50% probability of just perforating the armor). For the armor allowed to slide between the frame bars, we have studied the effect of the pressure applied to the bars of the two- and the four-bar frames on the speed and the kinetic energy of the residual projectile. For both the two- and the four-bar frames, the speed of the residual projectile is found to increase with an increase in the applied pressure. Computed results also show that the armor fixed in the two-bar frame exhibits higher impact resistance than that held in the four-bar frame. The V_{50} is found to be ~ 270 m/s when the woven armor is held in a four-bar frame with a clamping pressure of 200 MPa. The V_{50} decreases with an increase in the pressure applied to either the two-bar or the four-bar frames.

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1. Introduction

Composite materials have been widely used in many high-performance structures such as protective clothing, bullet-proof vests and helmets due to their high-specific strength and stiffness. The ballistic performance of soft body armor is characterized by V_{50} , which is usually determined experimentally, and equals the velocity of the projectile that upon normal impact on the armor has 50% probability of penetrating it.

Parameters affecting the ballistic performance of composite armor include material properties of the yarn, woven structure of the armor, projectile geometry, projectile velocity and its material, boundary conditions imposed on the armor, friction between the yarns, and friction between the yarn and the projectile. Duan et al. [1] used LS-DYNA to delineate effects of frictional forces on the ballistic performance of one-layer woven rectangular composite with all four edges either clamped or only two opposite edges clamped. However, they did not consider the failure of the projectile and the composite. A recent review paper [2] has discussed the effect of different material and geometric parameters on the ballistic performance of soft body armor.

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Generally in ballistic experiments the boundary of the armor system is held in a rectangular frame with pressure applied to the frame bars to hold the armor in place. Two different frames, namely, two-bar and four-bar, are employed. Also frame size can be varied by adjusting the distance between the opposite bars of the frame. Shockey et al. [3] experimentally ascertained the effect of boundary conditions on the ballistic performance of the armor and found that for both the 25 g blunt and the 26 g sharp fragment simulating projectile (FSP), the armor fixed on two opposite edges rather than on all four edges was more effective in reducing the kinetic energy of the projectile. Since experiments are very expensive to perform, it will be more economical if one could accurately delineate computationally the effect of the frame size and the pressure applied to its bars on the V_{50} . We note that small values of the applied pressure may not hold the armor well, and when impacted it will slide between the frame bars. However, very large values of this pressure may fracture the armor within the frame bars. Thus the ballistic performance of the armor is likely to depend upon the pressure applied to the frame bars and the frictional force between the yarn and the frame bars. Lee et al. [4] have studied experimentally the effect of the clamping pressure on the penetration resistance of a 5-ply composite laminate and found that the loss of the kinetic energy of the projectile decreased with an increase in the clamping pressure.

Hundreds of parallel high-strength and high-modulus fibers are grouped together to form a yarn and yarns are woven to form a single-ply fabric. It is still not possible to consider each fiber individually because of enormous computational resources required. A possibility is to model woven armor as an assembly of one-dimensional (1D) bar elements [5,6]. Tan and Ching [7] replaced the one-layer composite with a network of viscoelastic bars. For suitable values of material parameters, they found that computed results agreed very well with the ballistic test data. Barauskas and Abraitiene [8] simulated the armor with thin shell elements of thickness equal to that of the yarn. A more realistic discretization of the composite is obtained by using 3D solid elements that can account for orthotropic material properties, inter-yarn and inter-layer friction, material failure and undulations in the woven yarns. Gu [9] considered the actual structure of plain-woven fabrics and developed 3D finite element discretization of the woven composite into weft and warp yarns. The multi-layered woven composite was impacted by a steel projectile and the computed results were compared with the experimental data. However, the failure of the projectile was not considered.

There are three methods to determine the ballistic limit of a soft armor. An accurate but very expensive method is to carry out a large number of ballistic experiments. However, it is tedious to experimentally characterize the effect on V_{50} of each parameter, such as the projectile shape and material, armor material, armor thickness, and armor architecture. An alternative is to employ an

approximate model [10] of the armor system, analyze the problem analytically and establish scaling laws. The success in this case depends upon our understanding of the mechanisms involved in the penetration process and how well they can be incorporated in the analytical model. The third possibility is to use a numerical method such as the finite element method that finds an approximate solution of the pertinent initial-boundary-value problem but can incorporate realistic material behavior, complex geometries, friction effects, and material failure. The analysis can be easily modified when additional information on the material response and failure becomes available. After the mathematical model and the computational algorithm have been validated one can perform parametric studies, determine the V_{50} , and also delineate parameters to which it is most sensitive. In this case V_{50} equals the minimum projectile velocity with which the target when impacted at normal incidence is penetrated completely. A few experiments are needed to validate this technique.

Sun and Potti [11] proposed the following relation

$$E_{DP} = \frac{1}{2}m(V_s^2 - V_R^2)$$

among the initial velocity V_s , the residual velocity V_R of the projectile of mass m , and the energy E_{DP} required to completely perforate a target. Here E_{DP} is assumed to be constant, and the projectile not to fail during the penetration process. This relation does not account for the energy required to deform the armor, and that dissipated due to friction effects. Lim et al.'s [12] simulation of ballistic impact of fabric armor with LS-DYNA showed that the energy absorbed during the penetration process increased with an increase in the incident speed when it is between the V_{50} and a critical value. For an initial speed greater than the critical value, the energy absorbed decreased suddenly. Zeng et al.'s [13] simulations of ballistic impact of woven fabric armor gave similar results.

Here we have used the commercial software LS-DYNA to numerically simulate 3D deformations of a woven Kevlar armor held in a rectangular frame and impacted at normal incidence by a hemispherical nosed cylindrical lead projectile coated with a thin layer of copper with the goal of finding the effect on the V_{50} of the frame size, the clamping pressure applied to the frame bars, and whether the frame has four-bars or only two opposite bars. We account for the failure of the projectile and the target during the penetration process, simulate the relative movement between the adjacent yarns, assume the Kevlar armor to be an orthotropic material, regard each layer of the woven composite as made of weft and warp yarns, and divide each yarn into 3D solid elements. It is found that the frame type and the pressure applied to its bars influence the ballistic performance of the armor and its V_{50} . This information should be useful to armor designers, and to those involved in certifying acceptable armor performance.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 describes the material and the geometric parameters of the armor and the projectile, constitutive relations and failure criteria used in LS-DYNA, and values assigned to different parameters. Results are described in Section 3, where effects of different material and geometric parameters on deformations of the armor and the projectile are also delineated.

2. Material and geometric parameters

The hemispherical nosed projectile is the Remington 9 mm full metal jacket (FMJ), 124 grain (8.0 g), 13.3 mm long, comprised of 0.5 mm thick outer copper layer coated on the inner solid lead part. The bullet, its section through the centroidal axis, and their discretizations into 8-node brick elements are exhibited in Fig. 1. The total number of nodes and elements equal 37,885 and 35,376, respectively. We use the Johnson–Cook (JC) relation to simulate the thermoviscoplastic response of copper, and model lead as an elastic perfectly plastic material; each material is assumed to be isotropic. We also use the JC relation to compute damage induced in copper, and have listed in Tables 1–3 values assigned to material parameters. A material point of copper is taken to have failed when the damage parameter for it equals 1.0.

The woven Kevlar armor comprised of 28 uniform 0.25 mm thick layers is modeled as an orthotropic material. Even though the woven composite armor is made of yarns and each yarn is made of fibers, we could not consider each fiber individually, because of the enormous computational resources required. Instead, each yarn is considered as a continuum; a typical yarn and its discretization into 8-node brick elements is shown in Fig. 2a where the sine-wave shape of the yarn has been approximated by a rectangular-wave. Orthogonal yarns constitute one layer depicted in Fig. 2b of the armor. The yarns along the x - and the y -directions are called warp and weft, respectively. In our simulations the yarns at crossovers have an initial gap of

Table 1

Values of material parameters for copper in the JC thermoviscoplastic relation

Parameter	Value
A (GPa)	0.09
B (GPa)	0.292
C	0.025
n	0.31
m	1.09
Density (kg/m^3)	8950
Specific heat (J/kg K)	385
Shear modulus (GPa)	47.27
Bulk modulus (GPa)	102.4

Table 2

Values of material parameters for copper in the JC damage relation

Parameter	Value
D_1	1.0
D_2	0
D_3	0
D_4	0
D_5	0
T_m (K)	1356
σ_{spall} (GPa)	1.9

Table 3

Values of material parameters for lead

Mass density (kg/m^3)	Young's modulus (GPa)	Poisson's ratio	Yield stress (GPa)	Failure strain
11,340	16	0.44	0.383	0.3

0.01 mm between them. The length and the width of a horizontal element equal 0.75 mm, and the projection of an oblique element on a horizontal plane equals 0.25 mm. In order to reduce computer memory requirements, we replaced the 28 uniform 0.25 mm thick layers by 10 uniform 0.70 mm thick layers.

We used the *Mat_composite_damage model in LS-DYNA [14] to simulate the mechanical response of

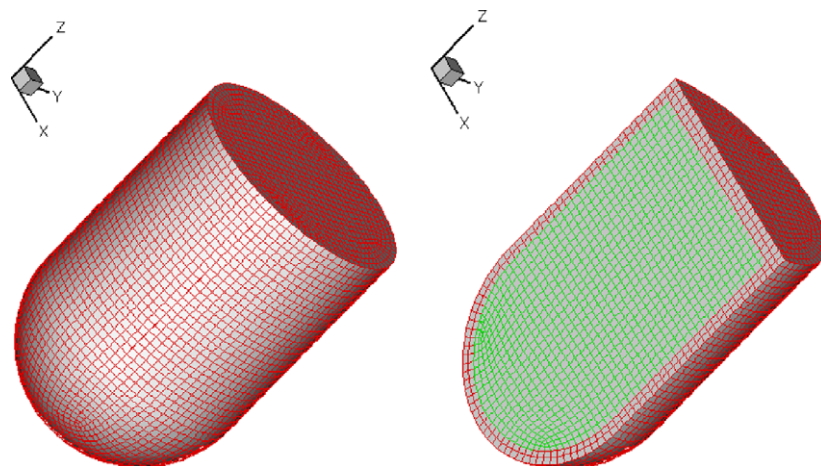


Fig. 1. The discretization of the projectile/bullet into finite elements.

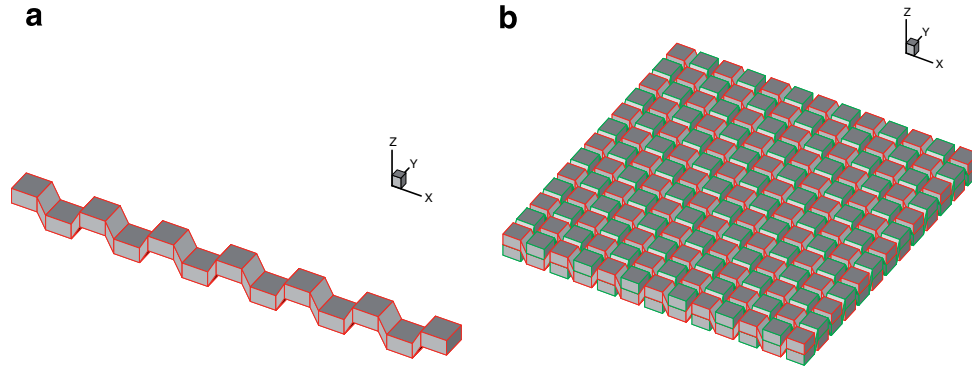


Fig. 2. The discretization into finite elements of (a) one yarn, and (b) one woven layer.

composite yarns with following values assigned to different material parameters:

$$\begin{aligned}\rho &= 1440 \text{ kg/m}^3, E_a = 164.00 \text{ GPa}, E_b = E_c = 3.28 \text{ GPa}, \\ v_{ba} &= v_{ca} = v_{cb} = 0.0, \\ G_{ab} &= G_{bc} = G_{ca} = 3.28 \text{ GPa},\end{aligned}$$

Shear strength in the ab plane = 1.886 GPa;
Longitudinal tensile strength along a -axis = 2.886 GPa;
Transverse tensile strength along b -axis = 1.486 GPa;
Transverse compressive strength along b -axis = 1.7 GPa;
Normal tensile strength along c -axis = 1.486 GPa;
Transverse shear strength in ca -plane = 1.586 GPa;
Transverse shear strength in cb -plane = 1.886 GPa.

Here a -axis is aligned along the direction of the yarn, the b -axis is the transverse direction in the plane of the layer, and the c -axis is along the normal to the ab -plane.

We note that in the *Mat_composite_damage model failed elements are not deleted from the computation. Thus severe distortions due to large deformations of even one element will drastically reduce the time step size needed to find a stable solution of the governing equations that will either stop computations completely or make them progress extremely slowly. This is overcome by also using the failure model *Mat_add_erosion, regarding the material in an element to have failed when the maximum principal strain at its centroid equals 0.2, and deleting the failed element from the analysis.

A small 0.01 mm gap is initially assumed between two adjoining layers of the 10-layer composite with the *Contact_automatic_surface_to_surface algorithm employed to simulate contact between them and prevent their interpenetration during the deformation process. The Coulomb friction force between adjacent layers, between adjoining yarns, and between the composite armor and the frame, is modeled by taking the coefficient of friction to be 0.3. The coefficient of Coulomb friction between the projectile and the composite armor is also set equal to 0.3.

3. Results

3.1. Effect of frame size

In ballistic experiments designed to find the V_{50} of an armor, the armor is often held in a $2a \times 2a$ steel frame with flat bars of width h that are pressed together with a pressure P applied to the bars; a typical frame is shown in Fig. 3. We ascertain the effect of the frame size on deformations of the armor by finding the residual velocity of the projectile moving at 400 m/s and impacting at normal incidence the armor held in the frame with $2a$ equal to 30.75 mm, 40.75, 50.75, 60.75, 70.75 and 80.75 mm, and a/r = 3.42, 4.53, 5.64, 6.75, 7.86 and 8.97, respectively. Here r equals the radius of the bullet. One expects that the effect of boundary conditions on deformations of the armor will diminish with an increase in the value of a/r .

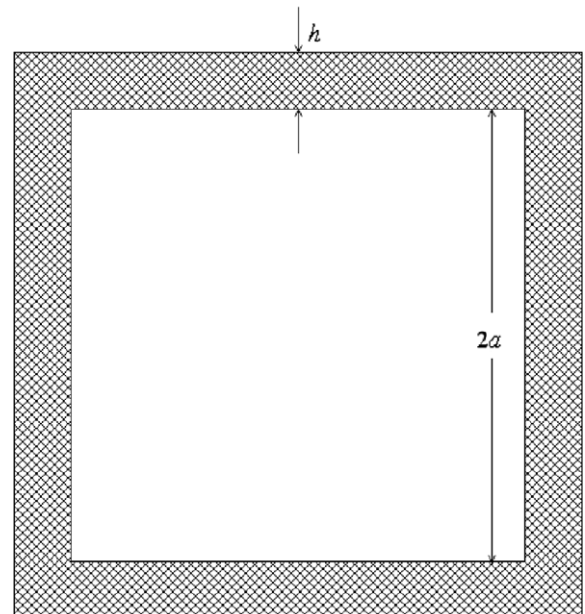


Fig. 3. The sketch of a typical square frame.

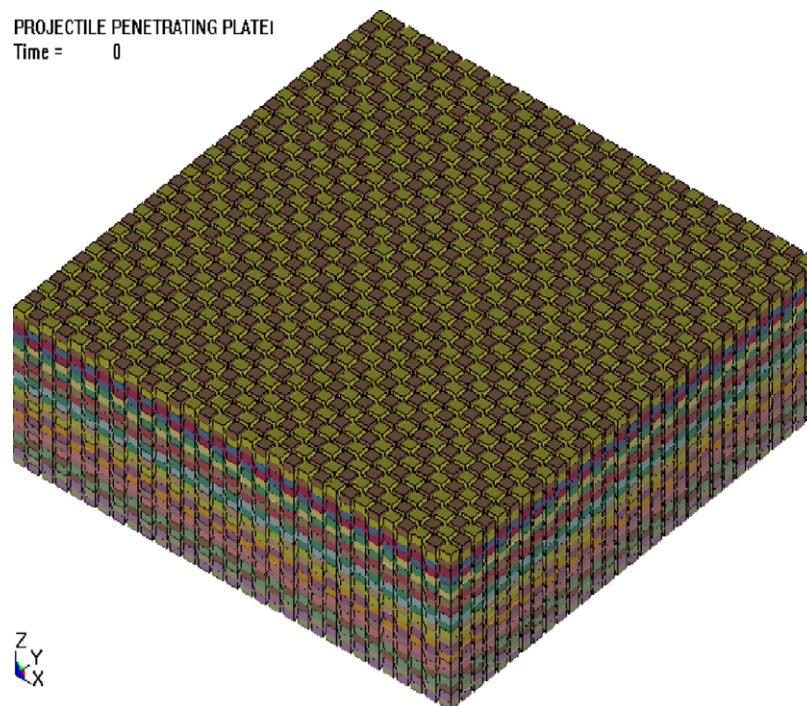


Fig. 4. Discretization of the 30.75 mm $\times$ 30.75 mm composite armor into finite elements.

3.1.1. Armor perfectly bonded to a rigid frame

In the first set of simulations, we regard frame bars as rigid, stationary and perfectly bonded to the armor. For the 30.75 mm $\times$ 30.75 mm armor, Fig. 4 shows the discretization of the woven armor into finite elements with one element along the thickness of each yarn. The number of elements increases quadratically with an increase in the value of $2a$, and is listed in Table 4 for the above-stated six values of $2a$. For $2a = 80.75$ mm, the number of nodes exceeds one million with over 3 million degrees of freedom. Accordingly, larger frames are not considered here.

For $2a = 40.75, 60.75$ and 80.75 mm, Fig. 5 exhibits deformed shapes of the armor and the bullet at $t = 50$ and $95 \mu\text{s}$. Results for every other frame size are exhibited in order to reduce the length of the paper. At $t = 50 \mu\text{s}$, the frame size has very little effect on deformations of the projectile and the armor, and the material near peripheries of the larger-size frame stays essentially undeformed. However, at $t = 95 \mu\text{s}$, deformations in the armor have propagated to the frame edges for $2a = 40.75$ and 60.75 mm, but for $2a = 80.75$ mm, a small portion of the armor near the frame edges has undergone very little deformations signifying that the frame size considered is sufficient. Whereas

the bullet has perforated the armor for $2a = 40.75$ and 60.75 mm, it is still piercing the armor for $2a = 80.75$ mm signifying that the tail-end velocity depends upon the frame size. For smaller size frames and thus armor, there is less armor material to absorb the kinetic energy of the projectile, and a larger volume fraction of the armor material enclosed in the frame is severely deformed and fails. For the same lateral deflection of the armor in front of the bullet nose larger axial strains are induced in yarns of the small size frame than those in the large size frame.

Time histories of the speed of the tail-end of the projectile for different frame sizes are exhibited in Fig. 6. When the elastic wave induced by the impact of the projectile with the armor reaches the tail-end of the projectile the speed of the tail-end begins to drop. Up to $50 \mu\text{s}$ after impact, there is not much difference among the tail-end velocities for different frame sizes. It is obvious that the speed of the residual projectile increases with a decrease in the frame size signifying that smaller size armors either cause less of the bullet material to fail or the armor in front of the bullet quickly fails thereby reducing resistance offered to the bullet. Oscillations occur in the velocity of the tail-end of the projectile due to the back and forth propagation of the stress wave in the projectile. For the largest size armor considered here, the tail-end speed decreases affinely with time for $t > 32 \mu\text{s}$. Results documented in Fig. 6 confirm those included in Fig. 5 in that the lateral dimensions or the size of the armor strongly influence its deformations and hence the computed V_{50} of the projectile.

For the six frame sizes considered, Fig. 7a and b exhibit time histories of the projectile kinetic energy and its

Table 4
Number of nodes and elements for different frame sizes

Size $2a$ (mm)	30.75	40.75	50.75	60.75	70.75	80.75
Nodes	153,760	268,960	416,160	595,360	806,560	1,049,760
Elements	37,820	66,420	103,020	147,620	200,220	260,820

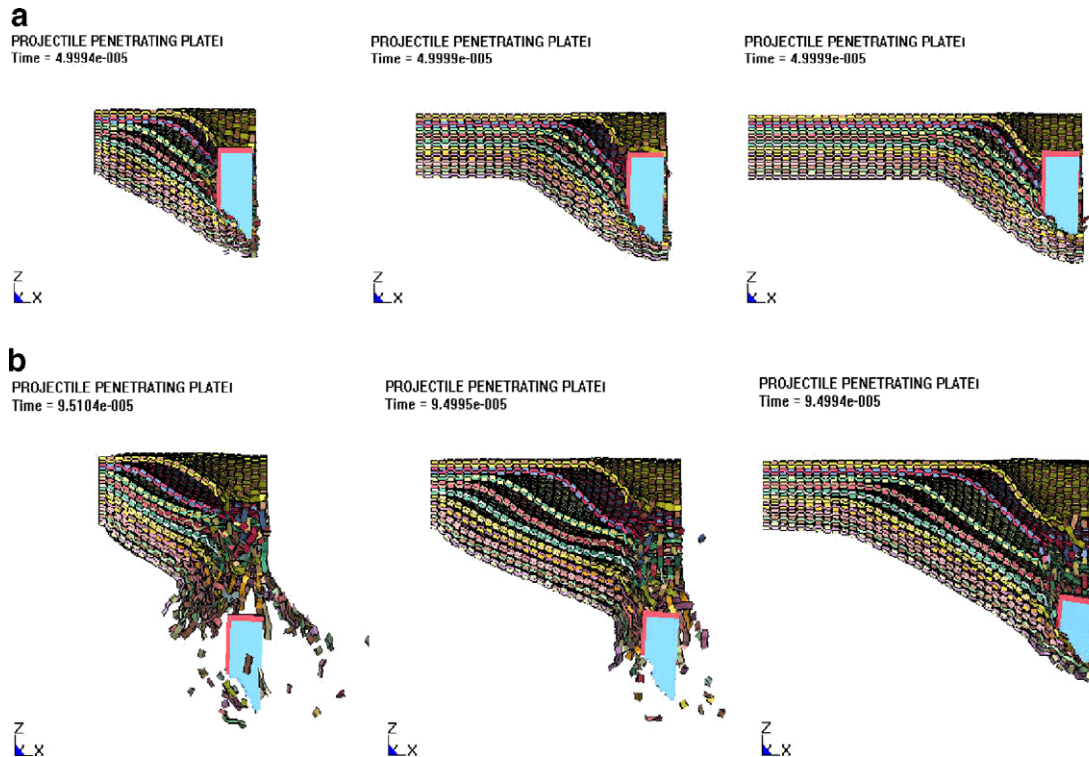


Fig. 5. Deformed shapes of the armor and the projectile at (a) 50 μ s and (b) 95 μ s for three different frame sizes (from left to right) 40.75 mm, 60.75 mm and 80.75 mm.

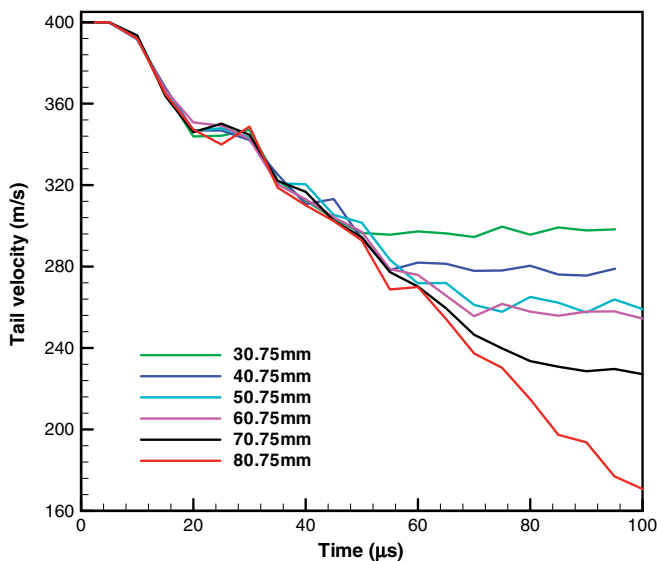


Fig. 6. Time histories of the speed of the tail-end of the projectile for different frame sizes.

residual mass. For $t > 50 \mu$ s both the projectile mass and the projectile kinetic energy decrease with an increase in the frame size. Assuming that projectile's average speed is nearly the same as that of its tail-end, the projectile kinetic energy decreases with an increase in the frame size due to both a decrease in the projectile mass and its speed. That is, the volume of the failed projectile increases with an increase in the frame size. Note that there are no oscillations

in these curves, and the kinetic energy of the residual projectile for the 50.75 mm frame is greater than that for the 60.75 mm frame.

Fig. 8 depicts the relation between the kinetic energy of the projectile that is used up during the penetration process and the frame size. The horizontal solid line represents the initial kinetic energy of the projectile. Nearly 62.5% of the kinetic energy is dissipated during the penetration process for the 30.75 mm frame and this number increases to 92.6% for the 80.75 mm frame. Thus the frame size noticeably affects the kinetic energy of the residual projectile.

3.2. Armor held by uniform pressure applied to the four-bar frame

As mentioned above, in ballistic experiments, the armor is usually held between the frame bars by uniform pressure applied to them. The applied pressure should be below the compressive strength of the bar material and of the armor, otherwise one of these two will fail prior to the start of the test. Upon impact of the bullet with the armor, the relative movement of the armor between the frame bars will depend upon the applied pressure and the coefficient of friction between the armor and the material of the frame bars. Since steel used for the frame bars has much higher Young's modulus and compressive strength than the yarn, it is reasonable to regard the frame bars as rigid. We now investigate the effect of the relative sliding of the armor between the frame bars on armor's deformations.

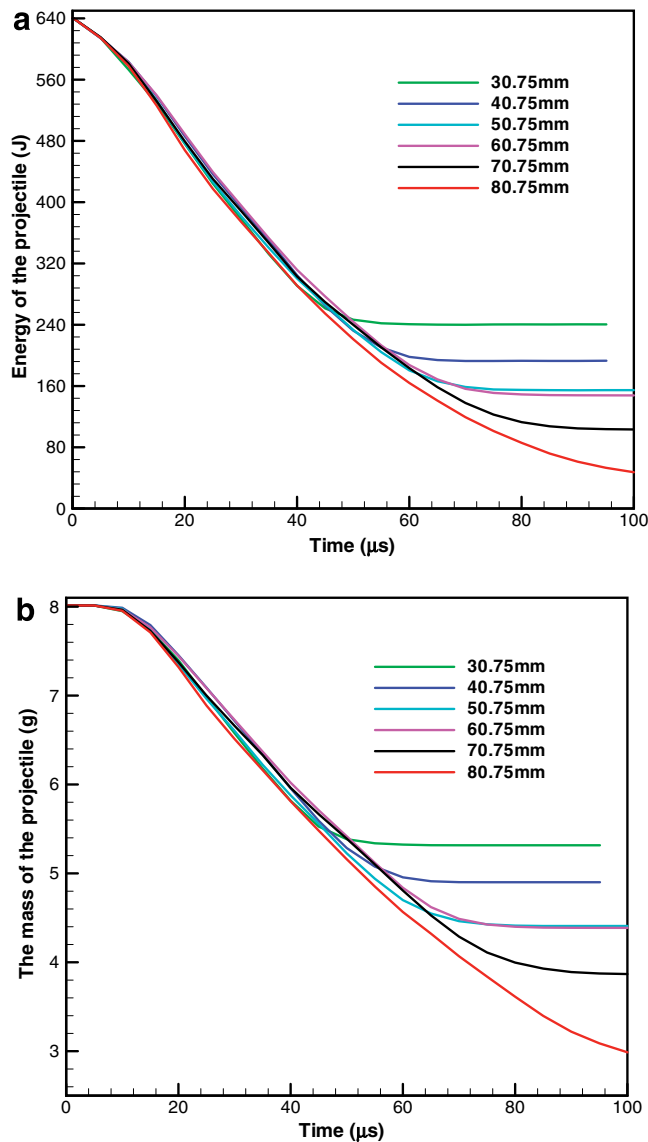


Fig. 7. For different frame sizes, time histories of the (a) kinetic energy, and (b) mass of the projectile.

A typical system comprised of a four-bar steel frame, the armor and the bullet employed during ballistic tests is shown in Fig. 9. Each 42 mm long, 6 mm wide and 0.5 mm thick frame bar is divided into uniform $0.5 \text{ mm} \times 0.5 \text{ mm} \times 0.5 \text{ mm}$ solid elements. A uniform clamping pressure $P = 10, 25, 100, 200$ or 300 MPa is applied to the frame bars. Note that the frictional force between the frame bars and the armor will not necessarily be uniformly distributed since deformations of the armor between the bars may be inhomogeneous. The finite element mesh in the frame bars will help simulate this variation in the frictional force.

Deformed configurations at $t = 20, 50, 80$ and $95 \mu\text{s}$ and for $P = 10, 25, 100$ and 200 MPa (results for $P = 300 \text{ MPa}$ are not depicted since they are very similar to those for $P = 200 \text{ MPa}$) of the projectile and the armor are shown in Fig. 10 for initial bullet speed of 400 m/s . For each one of the four values of the pressure, deformations of

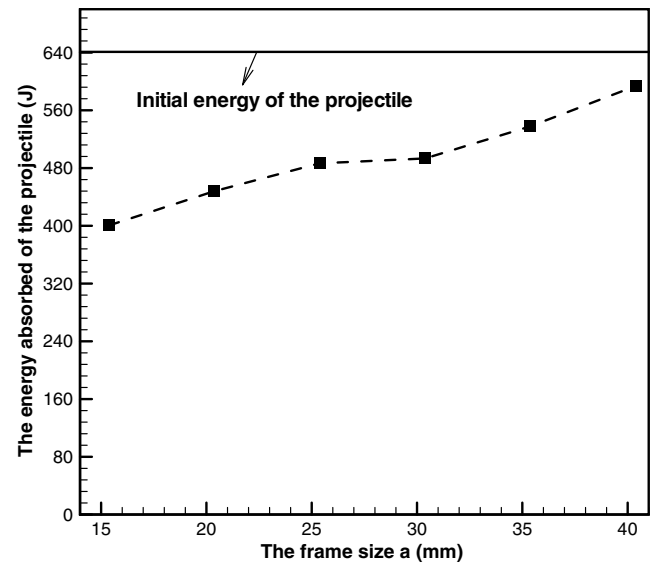


Fig. 8. The variation with the frame size of the reduction in the kinetic energy of the projectile.

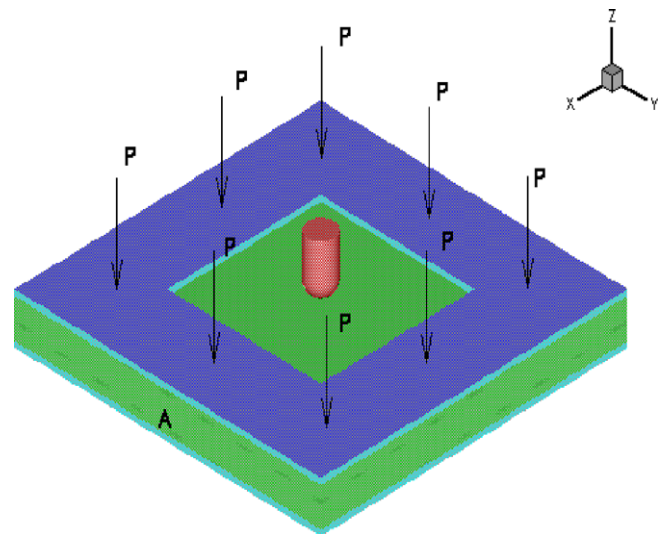


Fig. 9. Schematic sketch of the system comprised of the armor, the four-bar frame, and the bullet.

the system are essentially identical at $20 \mu\text{s}$, but are different at later times in the following two respects. First, the thickness of the composite armor ahead of the bullet is different. With an increase in the pressure applied to the frame bars, more of the armor ahead of the bullet fails. At $t = 80 \mu\text{s}$, the bullet has not perforated the armor for $P = 10 \text{ MPa}$, but the bullet nose has come out of the armor for $P = 100$ and 200 MPa . The second difference is that for smaller values of the clamping pressure P more of the armor material moves towards the center of the frame; this becomes transparent for $t > 50 \mu\text{s}$. This inward motion of the armor facilitates the transverse displacement of the composite ahead of the bullet. At $t = 95 \mu\text{s}$, the z -displacements of the tip of the projectile equal $21.15, 22.63, 24.63, 25.03$ and 26.67 mm for $P = 10, 25, 100, 200$ and

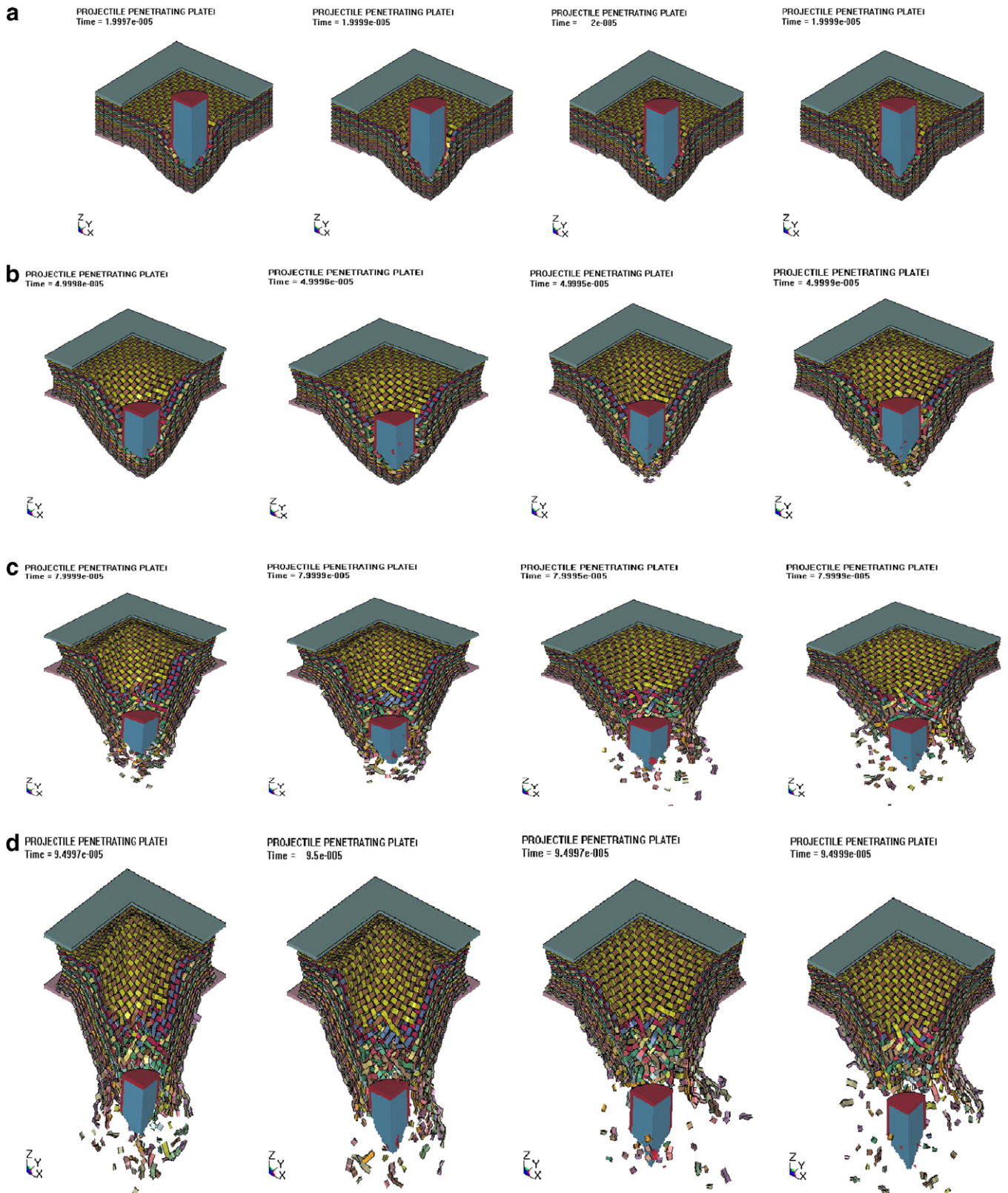


Fig. 10. For pressure (from left to right) $P = 10, 25, 100$ and 200 MPa deformed shapes of the armor and the bullet at $t =$ (a) $20 \mu\text{s}$, (b) $50 \mu\text{s}$, (c) $80 \mu\text{s}$, and (d) $95 \mu\text{s}$.

300 MPa, respectively. Thus the axial displacement of the projectile increases with an increase in the clamping pressure applied to the frame bars.

Time histories of the axial velocity of the tail-end of the projectile are illustrated in Fig. 11. It can be seen that with an increase in the clamping pressure applied to the frame

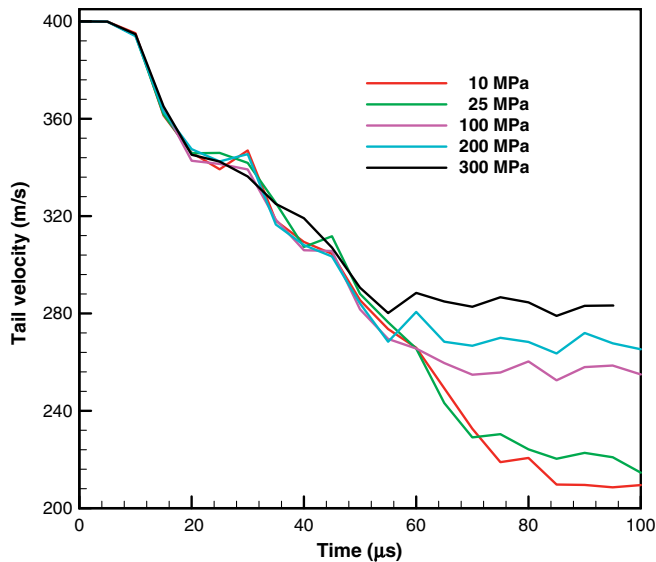


Fig. 11. For different clamping pressures applied to the frame bars time histories of the speed of the tail-end of the projectile.

bars, the speed of the residual projectile increases. Time histories of the kinetic energy and of the mass of the projectile are plotted in Fig. 12a and b. For a fixed value of time t the kinetic energy of the projectile increases noticeably with an increase in the clamping pressure. For $P = 300$ and 10 MPa, the kinetic energies of the residual projectile equal 206.84 and 80 J which, respectively, are 32.27% and 13.26% of the initial kinetic energy. The time history of the mass of the projectile, shown in Fig. 12b, suggests that more of the projectile has failed for smaller values of the applied pressure. Note that the speed of the residual bullet is also smaller for the lower value of the clamping pressure. Thus both the reduction in the mass and the reduction in the speed decrease the kinetic energy of the residual bullet when the clamping pressure is decreased. As mentioned above, for lower values of P , the armor held between the frames can move more easily towards the center of the frame and hence towards the bullet.

From the plot, shown in Fig. 13, of the time history of the x -displacement of the node A located at the center of the bottom left side of the armor enclosed in the frame bars (see Fig. 10), we conclude that for $P \geq 200$ MPa, this node does not move due to the large frictional force between the armor and the frame. However, for smaller values of the pressure P , the frictional force is not large enough to prevent the armor from sliding between the frame bars and it moves toward the center more readily. For $P = 10$ MPa, the maximum x -displacement of this node is ~ 2.7 mm.

Not only the armor enclosed in the frame bars moves towards the center, it is also compressed by the clamping pressure. Fig. 14 depicts the variation in the thickness of the armor between the frame bars versus time. For a fixed value of time, the change in the thickness of the armor is

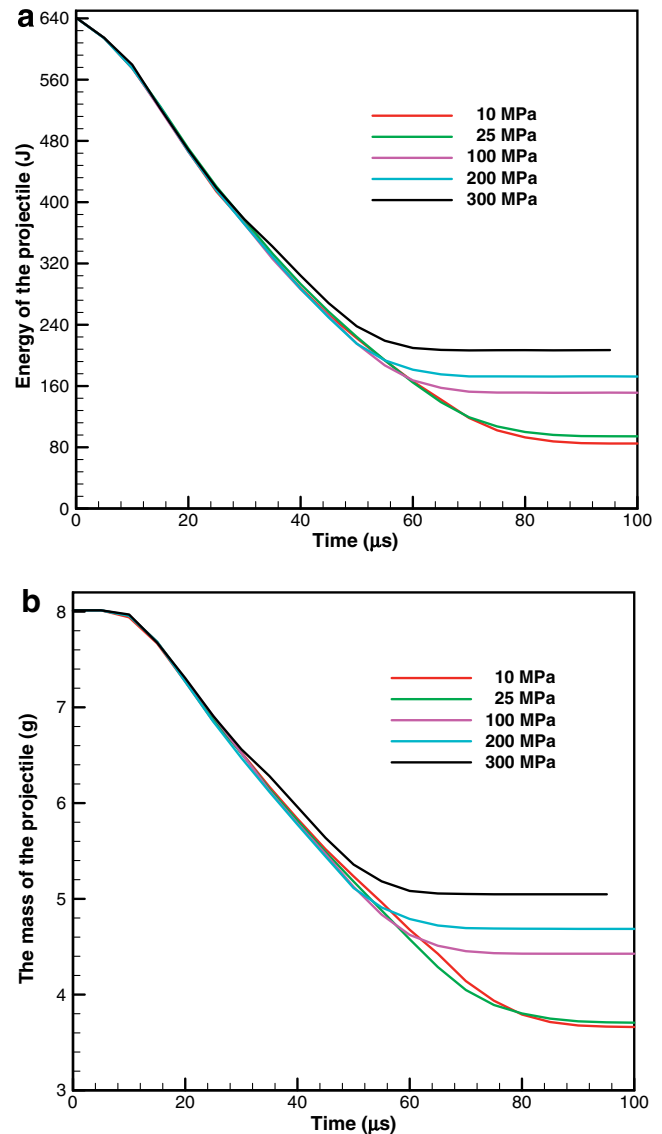


Fig. 12. For different values of the clamping pressures applied to the frame bars, time histories of the (a) kinetic energy, and (b) the mass of the residual bullet.

not directly proportional to the applied pressure implying thereby that it undergoes both elastic and plastic deformations.

For the woven armor held in a four-bar frame with the clamping pressure of 200 MPa applied on it, Fig. 15 compares time histories of the tail-end speed and kinetic energy of the bullet when coefficients of friction between the frame bars and the armor, and that between any two adjacent layers are 0.3 and 0.2, respectively. With a decrease in the value of the coefficient of friction, the frictional force between the armor and the frame bars decreases causing the armor to move more easily towards the center. This consumes more of the kinetic energy of the bullet. Thus the effect of decreasing the coefficient of friction is similar to that of decreasing the clamping pressure applied to the frame bars.

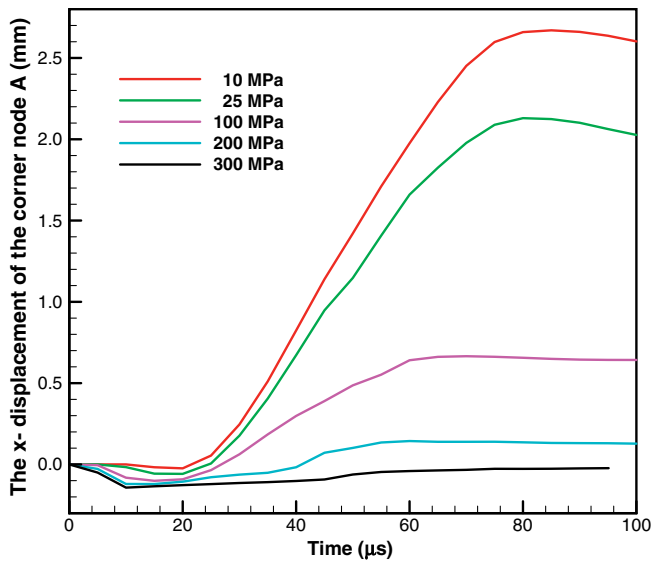


Fig. 13. For different values of the clamping pressure time histories of the x-displacement of node A.

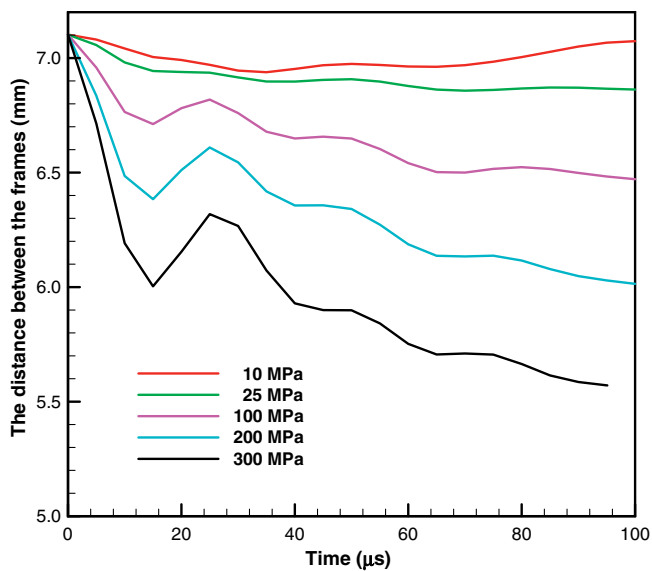


Fig. 14. For different values of the clamping pressure time histories of the distance between two opposite bars of the frame.

3.3. Armor held by uniform pressure applied to the two-bar frame

We now analyze deformations of the armor held in a two-bar frame; e.g. see Fig. 16. A uniform pressure is applied to the frame bars to hold the armor. Fig. 17 exhibits deformed configurations of the armor and the penetrator at $t = 20, 50, 80$ and $95 \mu\text{s}$. These results are similar to those for the four-bar frame. The two free boundaries facilitate movement of the armor towards the frame center, and for $t > 80 \mu\text{s}$, yarns adjacent to one of the frame bars slip out of the frame bars; this slippage was not observed for the armor held in the four-bar frame.

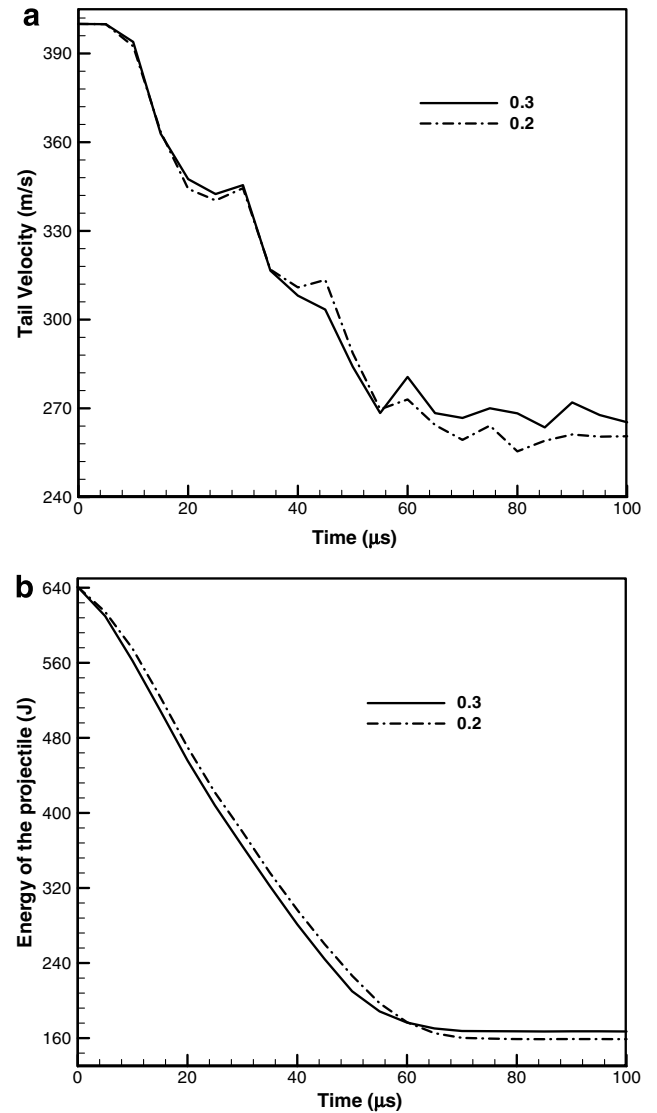


Fig. 15. For the coefficients of friction equal to 0.2 and 0.3, time histories of the (a) speed of the tail-end, and (b) kinetic energy of the bullet. (The clamping pressure is 200 MPa.)

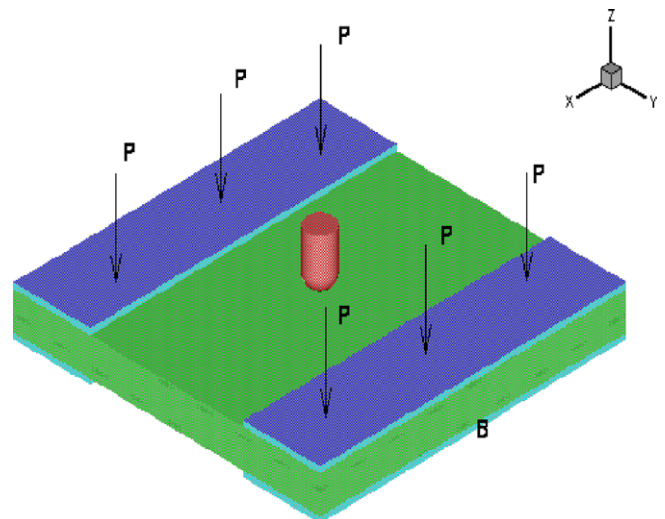


Fig. 16. A schematic sketch of the armor held in a two-bar frame.

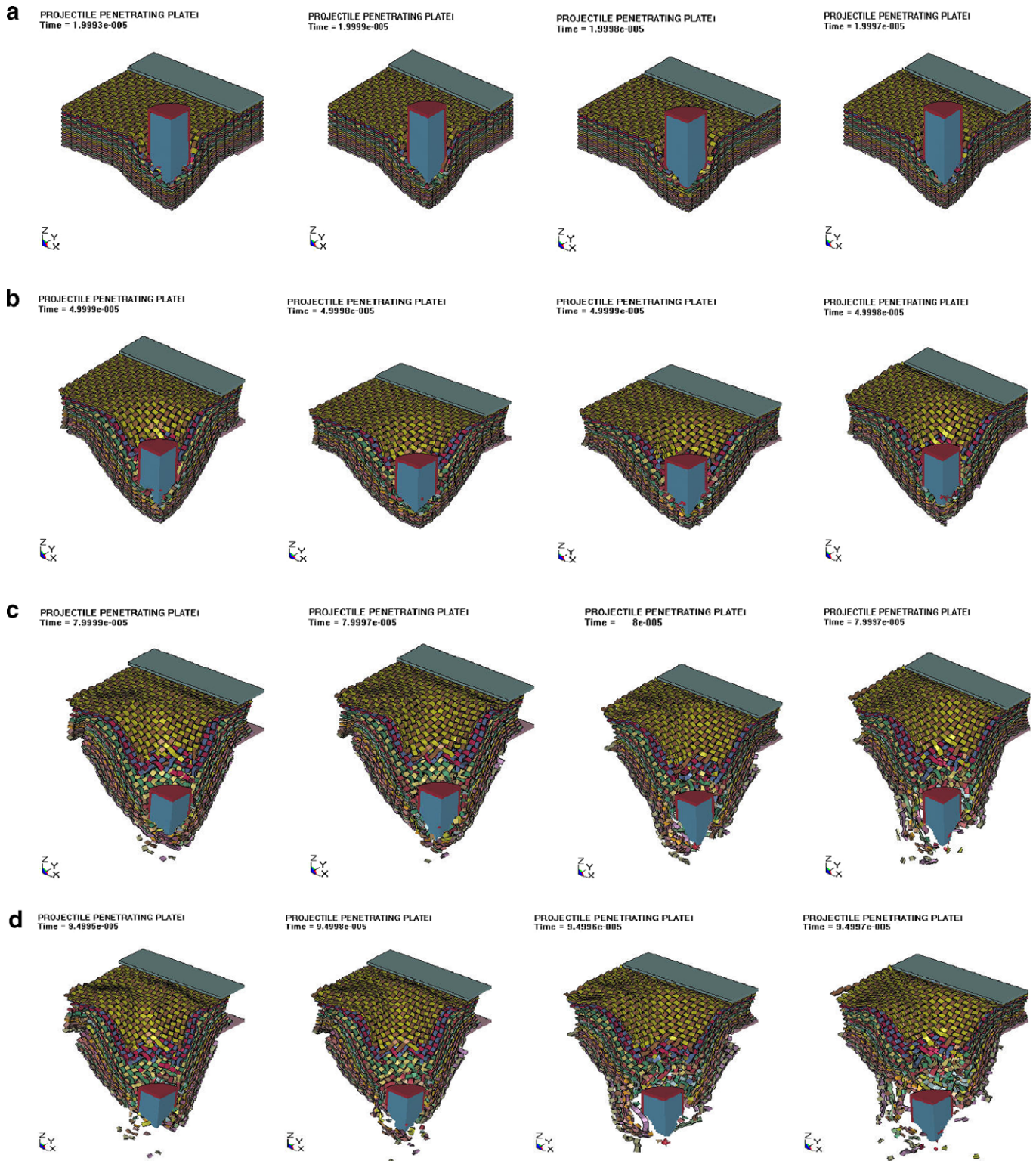


Fig. 17. For pressure $P = 10, 25, 100$ and 200 MPa (From left to right) deformed shapes of the armor and the bullet at (a) $t = 20 \mu\text{s}$, (b) $50 \mu\text{s}$, (c) $80 \mu\text{s}$, and (d) $95 \mu\text{s}$.

For different values of the applied pressure, time histories of the speed of the tail-end of the projectile are depicted in Fig. 18. As for the armor held in the four-bar frame, the speed of the residual bullet increases with an increase in the applied pressure, and it equals $\sim 211, 232, 253, 280$ and 192 m/s, for $P = 10, 25, 100, 200$ and 300 MPa, respectively.

We have plotted time histories of the kinetic energy and the mass of the projectile in Fig. 19a and b. The kinetic energy of the residual bullet increases significantly with an increase in the clamping pressure; nearly 18% more of the initial kinetic energy is consumed during the penetration process when the applied pressure is decreased from

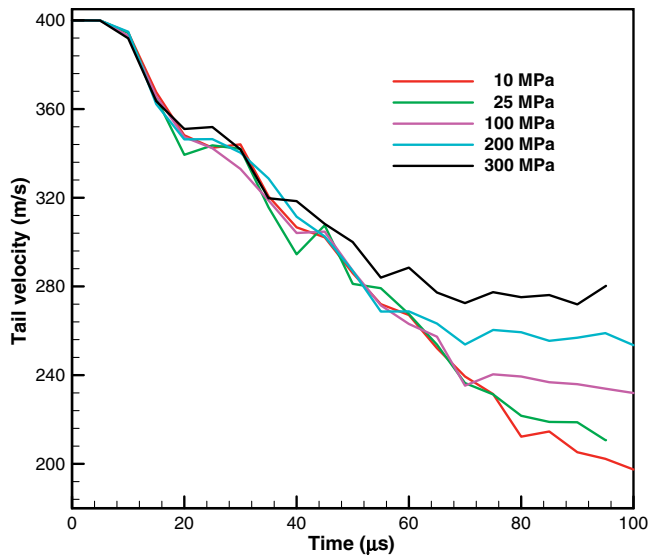


Fig. 18. For a two-bar frame time histories of the speed of the tail-end of the projectile.

300 to 10 MPa. The time history of the y -coordinate of the bottom middle node B on armor's front surface (shown in Fig. 16) is given in Fig. 20. For P less than 200 MPa, the frictional force between the composite and the frame bars is not large enough to prevent sliding of the armor between the frame bars.

3.4. Comparison of results for the two frames

We have compared in Table 5 the speed and the kinetic energy of the residual projectile for different pressures applied to a frame, and also for the same pressure imposed on the two-bar and the four-bar frames. It is clear that for a given value of the clamping pressure, the speed and the kinetic energy of the residual projectile are less when the armor is held in the two-bar frame than those for the four-bar frame. These trends become more vivid from the plots of Fig. 21a and b.

3.5. Computation of the ballistic limit, V_{50}

We find V_{50} of the woven composite armor for the following four cases: 10 and 200 MPa clamping pressure applied to the two-bar and the four-bar frames. Table 6 gives the kinetic energy of the residual projectile for different initial speeds when the clamping pressure is 200 MPa and the armor is held in the four-bar frame. It is evident that for initial speeds greater than 275 m/s, the projectile penetrates the target completely. However, for initial speeds less than 270 m/s, the projectile is arrested in the target. Thus the ballistic limit, V_{50} , of the woven armor held in the four-bar frame with a clamping pressure of 200 MPa is between 270 and 275 m/s. We have listed in Table 7 V_{50} for the four cases. For both the two-bar and the four-bar frames, the V_{50} decreases by about 30–45 m/s with a decrease in the clamping pressure from 200 to 10 MPa.

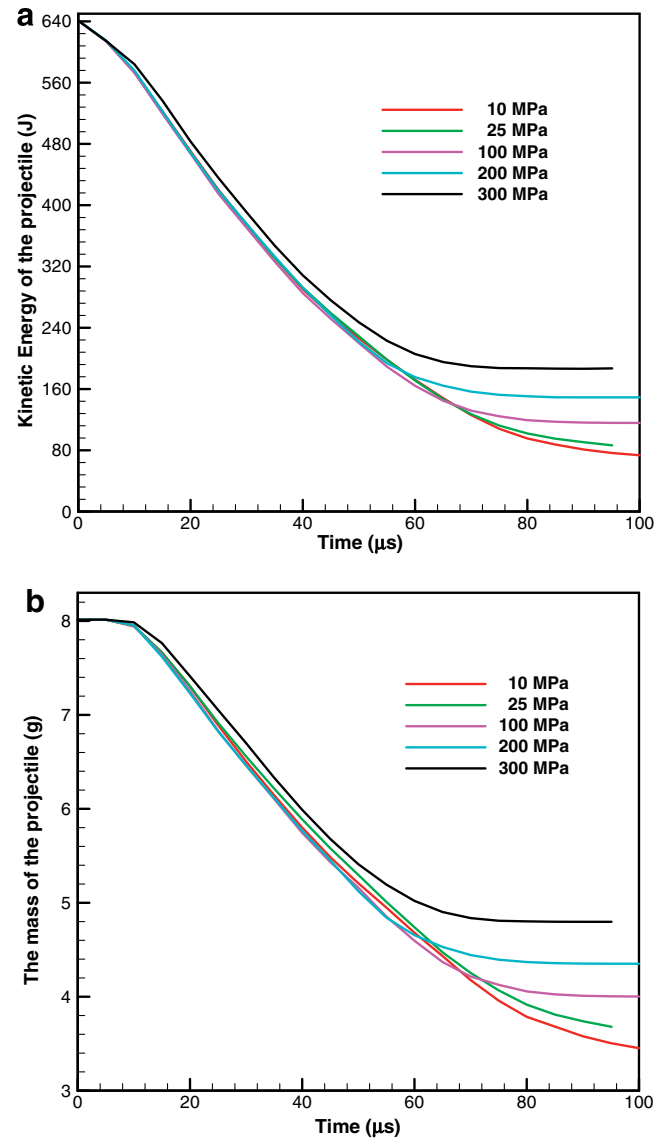


Fig. 19. For different values of the clamping pressure applied to the two-bar frame, time histories of the (a) kinetic energy, and (b) mass of the projectile.

Fig. 22 evinces the reduction in the kinetic energy of the projectile versus its initial kinetic energy. For initial bullet speeds greater than the V_{50} , the kinetic energy absorbed increases almost linearly with an increase in the initial kinetic energy of the projectile, which agrees with Lim's [12] and Zeng's [13] result. However, for initial bullet speed less than 1.5 km/s our computations did not give a sudden additional reduction in the kinetic energy for initial bullet speeds greater than a critical value. It is possible that the critical speed of the bullet is greater than 1.5 km/s.

3.6. Remarks

The element deletion technique used to simulate material failure may not realistically model material failure. Whereas numerical simulations indicate the Kevlar fiber

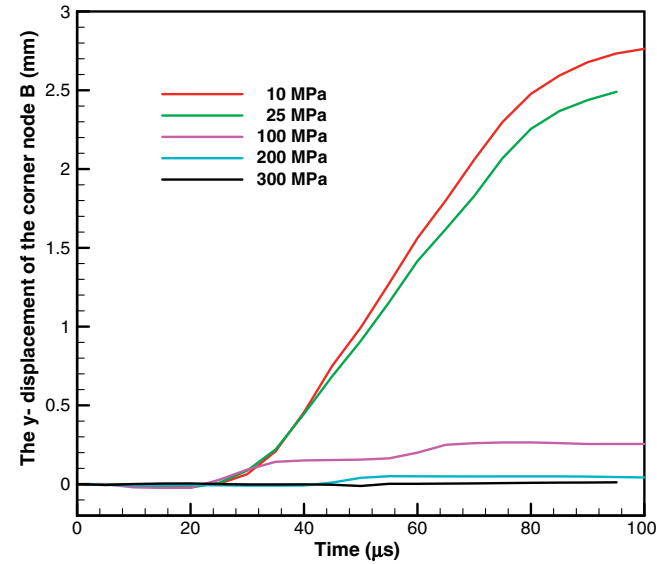


Fig. 20. For the two-bar frame, time histories of the *y*-displacement of node B for different values of the clamping pressure.

being broken into pieces that can act as projectiles, experimental observations suggest this not to be the case. Rather a Kevlar fiber is cut into two pieces in front of the projectile nose resulting in the formation of a pathway for the bullet. It seems that the node splitting technique such as that employed in [15,16] or the use of cohesive zones may be more appropriate for modeling the breakage of Kevlar fiber into two parts.

4. Conclusions

We have numerically simulated three-dimensional deformations occurring during the penetration of a 9 mm FMJ, 124 grain projectile into soft body woven armor with the commercial finite element software, LS-DYNA. The projectile core is made of lead and is covered with a thin layer of copper. The geometry of the woven fabric is approximated by discretizing it into weft and warp yarns each of which is taken to be an orthotropic material. Frictional forces between adjoining layers and that between the armor and the frame bars are considered. Failed elements are deleted from the analysis.

We have delineated the effect of the frame size on the speed and the mass of the residual bullet, or equivalently on the fraction of the initial kinetic energy of the projectile dissipated during the penetration process. The effect of the frame size on the deformations of the projectile and the

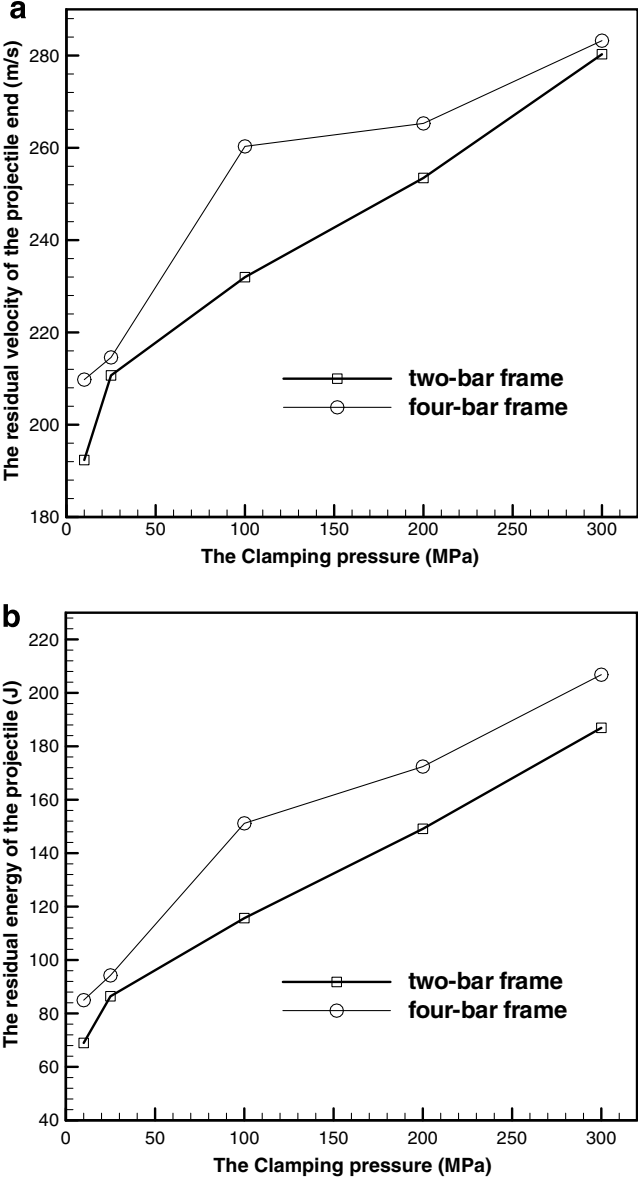


Fig. 21. For the two-bar and the four-bar frames, the (a) speed and (b) kinetic energy of the residual projectile versus the clamping pressure.

armor has been ascertained by first regarding the frame bars to be rigid and the armor perfectly bonded to the square frame. Computed results reveal that for up to 80.75 mm × 80.75 mm frames the V_{50} decreases with an increase in the frame size. However, we have not determined the minimum frame size so that for frame sizes greater than this value, the V_{50} will be independent of the frame size.

Table 5
For different values of the clamping pressure, comparison of the speed and the kinetic energy of the residual bullet for the two-bar and the four-bar frames

Pressure (MPa)		10	25	100	200	300
Residual velocity (m/s)	Two-bar	192.36	210.69	231.98	253.47	280.28
	Four-bar	209.78	214.59	260.31	265.29	283.22
Residual kinetic energy (J)	Two-bar	68.96	86.44	115.68	149.11	186.91
	Four-bar	84.98	94.25	151.17	172.41	206.84

Table 6
The residual kinetic energy of the projectile for different initial velocity

Initial speed (m/s)	Initial kinetic energy (J)	Residual kinetic energy (J)	Perforation
600	1,442.17	759.73	Yes
400	640.97	167.02	Yes
350	490.74	96.43	Yes
300	360.55	15.95	Yes
280	314.07	10.03	Yes
275	302.96	1.25	Yes
270	292.04	0.00	No
260	270.81	0.00	No
250	250.38	0.00	No

Table 7
The ballistic limit for the four cases

Clamping pressure (MPa)		10	200
Ballistic limit, V_{50} (m/s)	Two-bar frame	315–320	285–290
	Four-bar frame	315–320	270–275

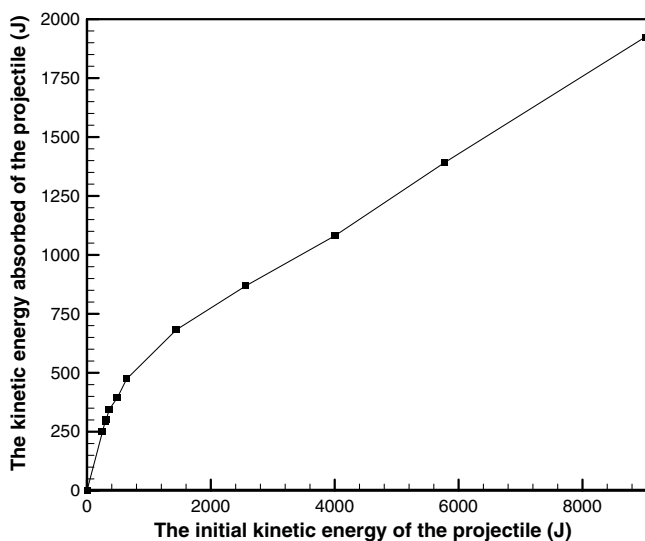


Fig. 22. The reduction in the kinetic energy of the projectile versus its initial kinetic energy.

We have also studied the effect on deformations of the armor and the projectile of the clamping pressure applied to the entire surfaces of the two- and the four-bar frames. It is found that an increase in the applied pressure reduces the kinetic energy of the bullet consumed during the deformation process. For the same applied pressure the two-bar frame is more effective in resisting the bullet than the four-bar frame.

The speed and the kinetic energy of the residual bullet decrease with a decrease in the coefficient of friction

between the frame bars and the armor, and between adjacent layers of the armor. This effect is similar to decreasing the clamping pressure applied to the frame bars.

For the four-bar 42 mm $\times$ 42 mm frame clamped with a pressure of 200 MPa the V_{50} is found to be ~ 270 m/s, and it decreases with an increase in the clamping pressure.

Disclaimer: Views expressed herein are those of authors and neither of the US Army nor of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

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