Performance assessment of buckling restrained brace with tubular profile

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Abstract. In recent years, there has been an upsurge for the usage of buckling restrained braces (BRB) rather than ordinary braces, as they have evidently performed better. If the overall brace buckling is ignored, BRBs are proven to have higher energy absorption capacity and flexibility. This article aims to deliberate an economically efficient yet adequate type of all-steel BRB, comprised of the main components as in traditional ones, such as : (1) a steel core that holds all axial forces and (2) a steel restrainer tube that hinders buckling to occurr in the core; there is a more practical detailing in the BRB system due to the elimination of a filling mortar. An investigation has been conducted for the proposed rectangular-tube core BRB and it is hysteric behavioral results have been compared to previous researches conducted on a structure containing a similar plate core profile that has the same cross-sectional area in its core. A loss of strength is known to occur in the BRB when the limiting condition of local buckling is not satisfied, thus causing instability. This study, a parametric investigation for BRBs with different formations has been performed to verify the effect of the design parameters such as different core section profiles, restraining member width to thickness ratio and relative cross-sectional area of the core to restrainer, on buckling load evaluation. The proposed BRB investigation results have also been presented and compared to past BRB researches with a plate profile as the core section, and the advantages and disadvantages of this configuration have been discussed, and it is concluded that BRBs with tubular core section exhibit a better seismic performance than the ones with a plate core profile.

Keywords: buckling restrained braces; hysteretic response; tubular profile; seismic performance

1. Introduction

A major asset of Buckling Restrained Braced Frames (BRBFs) is how it is able to yield under compression and tension despite the absence of global buckling, which drives the brace behavior to the asymmetric and balanced hysteretic response. There has been an increase in the usage of BRBs that contain a core encased by a restrainer mechanism. All steel BRBs with the objective to eradicate filling material have been reviewed and conferred in order to produce the most beneficial outcome. Remarkably, the most prevalent configuration used is a mortar filled tube, by which its negative points include heaviness and concrete placing difficulties. BRBs with different types of restrainers and core profiles have been tested and numerically analyzed (Safa *et al.* 2016, Shafaei *et al.* 2017, Shafieifar *et al.* 2017, Sedghi *et al.* 2018, Sajedi and Shariati 2019b). In

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2008, some authors proposed a composite restrainer, sandwiching the core by high-strength bolts (Chen et al. 2001, Toghroli et al. 2020), "By this detailing not only a better opportunity of inspection or replacing the core is provided, but also unbonded material is simply substituted by an air gap. The optimum Pe/Py ratio and the clearance between a rectangular steel tube restrainer and core plate are discussed by Watanabe et al. in 1988 (Watanabe et al. 1988). Takeuchi et al. in 2005 discussed a BRB configuration including a tube core restrained by another outer tube (Takeuchi et al. 2010, Zhong and Wille 2016, Zandi et al. 2018), The configuration, double-tube members, which is the major of the following article, was introduced in (Kuwahara et al. 1993, Yu et al. 2015, Toghroli et al. 2018c, Wei et al. 2018, Yilmaz and Fidan 2018, Zandi et al. 2018b, Ziaei-Nia et al. 2018, Chen et al. 2019, Davoodnabi et al. 2019, Katebi et al. 2019, Li et al. 2019, Luo et al. 2019, Mansouri et al. 2019, Xie et al. 2019). Takeuchi et al. (2010) also conducted experiments on the effect of mortar thickness on BRBs behaviour and showed its negligible effect, which can be omitted in numerical, analyses (Takeuchi et al. 2005). They hysteric

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response of BRBs was also investigated the effect of restrainer width to thickness ratio when its core profile is a steel plate (Toghroli et al. 2018a, Truong-Thi et al. 2018, Vo-Duy et al. 2018, Cao et al. 2020, Shariati et al. 2020a, b, c, d, e, f). The following research examines and compares plate profiles cores by the effects of an inner or outer steel tube profile that constrains a rectangular steel tube core (Khorami et al. 2017b, Khorramian et al. 2017, Shariati et al. 2017, Toghroli et al. 2017, Heydari and Shariati 2018, Hosseinpour et al. 2018, Ismail et al. 2018, Nasrollahi et al. 2018, Nosrati et al. 2018, Paknahad et al. 2018, Sadeghipour Chahnasir et al. 2018, Sedghi et al. 2018, Shariat et al. 2018, Shariati et al. 2018, Toghroli et al. 2018b). The behavior of local buckling failure in the core tube and the deformation in the restrainer, as an aftereffect was reviewed. Moreover, only models that have numerous restrainer thickness ratuis are subject to cyclic loading (Jalali et al. 2012, Shariati et al. 2012a, b, c, 2013, 2014a, b, 2015, 2016, Sinaei et al. 2012, Mohammadhassani et al. 2013a, b, 2014a, b, Toghroli et al. 2014, Khorramian et al. 2015, Shah et al. 2015, 2016a, b, c, Khanouki et al. 2016, Shahabi et al. 2016a, b, Tahmasbi et al. 2016, Khorami et al. 2017a). The model performance of those with identical restrainer thickness ratios, but with varying positions of the restrainers are studied. The arrangements of the restrainers towards the inner or outer core tube are compared. Hence, a discussion for the effects of the varying distance between cores and restrainers are made (Arabnejad Khanouki et al. 2010, 2011, Daie et al. 2011, Shariati et al. 2011a, b, c, Sinaei et al. 2011, Armaghani et al. 2020, Naghipour et al. 2020, Razavian et al. 2020, Safa et al. 2020).

2. Verification

Takeuchi *et al.* (2010) conducted multiple experimental and theoretical analysis on the behaviour of BRBs with multiple restrainer thicknesses to width ratios (Takeuchi *et al.* 2010, Shariati *et al.* 2020e, f). In this article, firstly one of the same specimens is modelled and the results are verified. Subsequently, this experiment consists of varying core profiles and restrainer size and equal core section area as some new specimens.

3. Finite element analysis

The core plates buckling about the stronger axis is verified by Takeuchi et al. The effect of mortar thickness between the edge of the core plate and the restrainer wall in a finite element model is negligible. Therefore, the BRB may be modelled as a plate restrained by two other plates from bottom and top without modelling the mortar fill (Fig. 1) (Takeuchi et al. 2010). They also showed that to simplify the modelling process it would be acceptable to not simulate the connections and in return, take an additional length of 0.5Lp from each side of core plate with a rigidly fixed boundary condition (Fig. 1) (Sinaei et al. 2011, Tahmasbi et al. 2016). To verify this method of modelling, the model in Fig. 1 is firstly simulated and the response is compared to that of experimental and numerical analysis done by Takeuchi et al. and finally it is checked to verify if eliminating the concrete fill and replacing it with some boundary conditions gives correct answers or not (Suhatril et al. 2019, Trung et al. 2019a, b, Xie et al. 2019, Alabduljabbar et al. 2020, Alaskar et al. 2020a, b, Zhu et al. 2020).

3.1 Properties of specimens and required assumptions

The verification model is constructed by "ABAQUS" software. Taking the planar aspect ratio of 1 into consideration and utilising the shell element "S4R", the core plate and restrainer tube are meshed. It is important to note that the hardening rule is presumed to be fully kinematic. The connection between restrainer walls and the core plate edge must be logged in as the node to the frictionless contact surface. Initially, before conducting the experiment, an out of plane deformation of 0.5S (0.5 mm) is provided to the software as well (Milovancevic et al. 2019, Safa et al. 2019, Sajedi and Shariati 2019a, Shariati et al. 2019a, b, c, d, e, f). Table 1 shows the properties of the selected verification model equal to the boundary conditions and the properties of models mentioned in Takeuchi's article. The properties, dimensions and boundary conditions for this finite element modeling are presented in Fig. 2(a). Fig. 2(b) shows the BRB with a restrainer of a concrete-filled tube which is compared with Fig. 2(a) which is the simplfied model. The loading pattern begins from

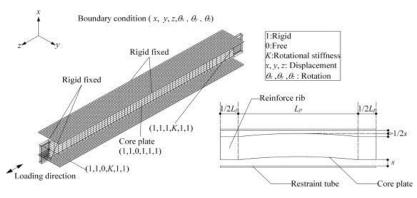


Fig. 1 Simplified modelling of BRB (Takeuchi et al. 2010)

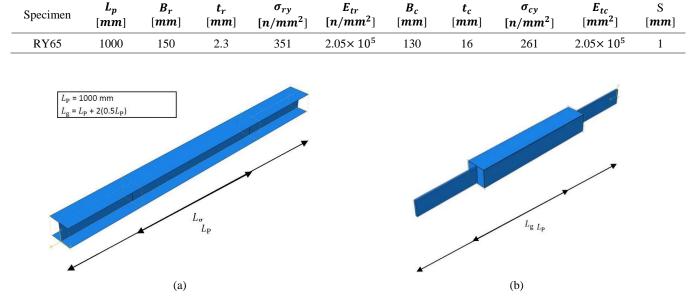


Table 1 Verification model properties

Fig. 2 Verification models with general configuration

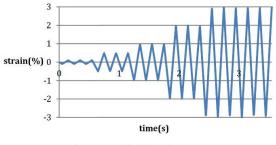


Fig. 3 Applied load pattern

0.1% strain up to the 2% strain with three trials for every step. The loading resumes until the brace failure at 3% strain. This loading pattern is shown in Fig. 3.

4. Results of analysis

The verification is successful and results are matched with hysteretic results obtained from the mentioned article until 2% strain of the core plate. This verification also indicates that the method of excluding infill concrete can be relied upon. Table 2 shows a contrast amongst the ductility capacities of the models.

To compare the effect of a restrainer tube on limiting the core global buckling, the same core plate is subjected to the introduced load pattern, and the resulted hysteretic loops are illustrated in Fig. 5. The methods verified in this section are used for modelling the computer models in this study.

4.1 Introducing analytical models

Three types of models are designed separately; each considers a certain parameter as varying-parameter so that the effect of each parameter can be studied in BRB's hysteretic behavior.

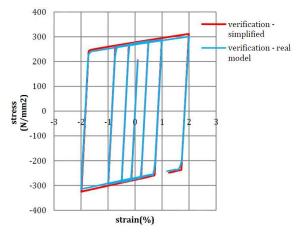


Fig. 4 Hysteretic response comparison core

Table 2 Comparison of cumulative ductility capacity

	RY65	Verification
Loading cycle	Cumulative ductility capacity	Cumulative ductility capacity
0.5% strain	33.94	31.38
1% strain	80.71	77.59
2% strain	170.39	166.43
Σ	285.04	275.4

- Geometric characteristics of the models

Group A Models

Group A consists of the effect of friction between the concrete fill and the core plate. A representation of the cross-section of this group models is shown in Fig. 6. Here in the first series of models, the concrete fill is not yet eliminated. Table 3 shows the detailed cross-section

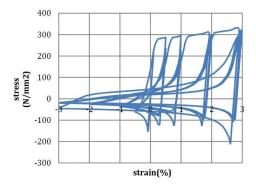


Fig. 5 Hysteretic response of the core

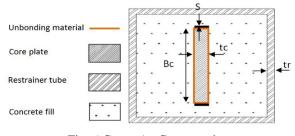


Fig. 6 Group A : Cross section

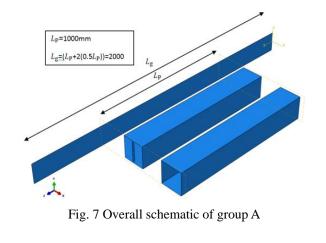
dimensions of the model illustrated in Fig. 6. all models of this group have the same structure. The friction ratio between the concrete and core plate is the only difference between the models. Therefore, friction ratios of 0, 0.1, 0.2 and 0.3 are assigned to models A1 to A4 respectively. Fig. 7 also shows an overall schematic of how the BRBs of this group are modeled.

• Group B Models

This study aims to show how short the concrete cover may get, in order to prevent the core plate to buckle about its weak axis. Group B is designed to study the behavior of the optimum cover length for BRBs. Meaning that reduction of the concrete cover length is the variable parameter. An important note should be how the core section's properties have not been altered even though the concrete cover length is shortened. Thus, the core plastic length must be considered constant. As presented in Fig. 8, models B1 to B5 indicate models with cover length ratio of 0.5 to 1.0 respectively.

• Group C Models

Group C models concentrate on studying if concrete fills



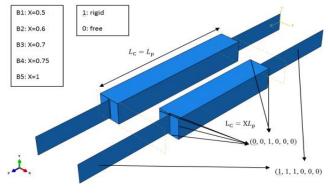


Fig. 8 Overall schematic of group B

Table 3 Details of cross-section dimensions of the model

Model No.	Br	tr	Bc	tc	S
	[mm]	[mm]	[mm]	[mm]	[mm]
A1-A2-A3-A4	152	2.3	130	16	1

can be eliminated by integrating a different core profile. In order to be able to eliminate the concrete fill, the design of the core profile must be altered. Hence, a rectangular profile is designed to be the core profile. This box profile is repressed by the outer or inner restrainer tube. The first two models are designed to be restrained using an outer restrainer tube. The varying factor between the two models are the restrainer's thickness which are shown in model C1 and C2. Fig. 9 shows models including an inner restrainer which are also represented in models C3 to C10. The behaviour of each model is analysed and discussed based on

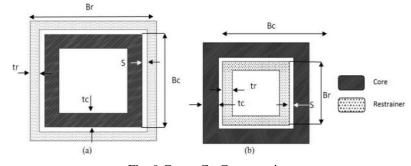


Fig. 9 Group C : Cross section

		Ľ	5			
Model No	Br [mm]	tr [mm]	Bc [mm]	tc [mm]	S [mm]	$\frac{P_e}{P_y}$
D1	77.6	1.3	73	8	1	1.337
D2	79	2	73	8	1	2.11
D3	55	1.3	73	8	1	0.466
D4	55	2	73	8	1	0.689
D5	55.6	1.3	73	8	0.7	0.481
D6	56	1.3	73	8	0.5	0.492
D7	57	1.3	73	8	0	0.520
D8	56	2.3	73	8	0.7	0.824
D9	55	1.4	73	8	1	0.499
D10	56	1.4	73	8	0.5	0.527

Table 4 Details of dimensions shown in Fig. 9

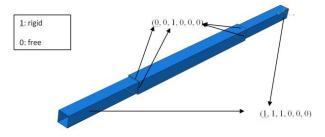


Fig. 10 Group C Models : Overall schematic

Table 5 The steel properties

	Plastic behaviour			Elastic behaviour		
	F _y [Mpa]	F _u [Mpa]	ε_u	E [Gpa]	ν	
Core	280	480	10	205	0.3	
Restrainer	351	510	15	205	0.3	

their restrainer thickness as well as the gap between core and restrainer. Table 4 provides dimensions of the models in Fig. 9. It is noted that the core tube has constant dimensions in all models of the group. Fig. 10 provides the overall structure and boundary conditions of the proposed BRB.

4.2 Material properties

The introduced models are made up of steel (Table 5) for restrainer and core profile, concrete for restrainer infill and the debonding material which is not modelled as an

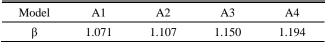
independent material; this is introduced as a contact element which will be described in following section.

4.3 Finite element analysis (Results)

A dynamic explicit method was used and it applied concrete damaged plasticity property for the concrete. Thus, provided a more thorough analysis on Group A and Group B models respectively. The hysteric results of BRB's overall stability of models from Group A are shown in Fig. 11, meaning that overall buckling does not occur when the friction is increased up to 0.3. However, additional strength is evident in the compressive region for models with a higher friction ratio. In order to avoid an asymmetric hysteretiic curve, the AISC has set a limit for additional compressive strength. Equation 4.1 describes the ratio of maximum compressive stength to maximum tensile strength in every individual cycle, the β ratio. This is an upper limit for the increase of compressive strength. The previsions of this ratio are not permitted to exceed 1.3 in any of the cycles (AISC 2005). Table 6 provides β for the BRBs of group A during cyclic loading.

$$\beta = \frac{P_{\text{compression}}}{P_{\text{tension}}} \tag{1}$$

Table 6 β values



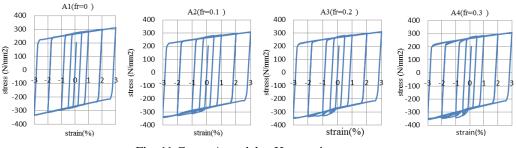


Fig. 11 Group A models : Hysteretic response

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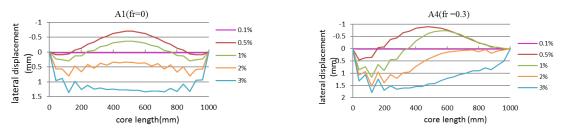


Fig. 12 Lateral displacement of core plate

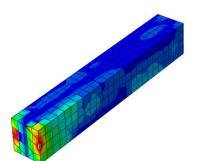


Fig. 13 Excessive pressure in concrete fill

In addition to hysteretic curves, another notable curve about the models of this group is the lateral displacement of the core plate, illustrated in Fig. 12. In model A1 the lateral displacement of core plate has a symmetric shape during the core length while by increasing the friction ratio in models A2 to A4 the curves are pulled to the fixed support side which leads to excessive pressure in concrete fill near the support (Fig. 13), and this is not a desirable matter and should be considered.

The optimum cover length is discussed in Models of Group B. Meanwhile, the hysteretic response of Models of Group B are represented in Fig. 14.

Notably, the depreciation in concrete cover length has no effect on the BRBs hysteretic response down to the cover length of 0.7 times of core length, but in shorter cover lengths in models B1 and B2 buckling about weak axis of core plate happens (Fig. 15) and causes instability in hysteretic response. Fig. 16 provides a comparison between compressive and tensile maximum load in each cycle of these models, which shows a considerable decrease in compressive load of model B1 from 4th cycle, and B2 from 10th cycle.

Models of group C are analysed by a static general method. Firstly, the ultimate strength is determined by a uniform compressive load that has been practiced on all the models. Fig. 17 illustrates the maximum compressive strength in front of the $\frac{P_e}{P_y}$ Ratio. It shows that the maximum tolerable load does not directly depend on the $\frac{P_e}{P_y}$ Ratio. The distance between the core and the restrainer tube is another affecting factor. The hysteretic curve improves when the "S" gap is reduced, within a restrainer that is used as an inner tube.

Models with $\frac{P_e}{P_y}$ ratios of less than 0.52, have experienced overall buckling, in accordance to the results in Fig. 18 for models with an inner restrainer.

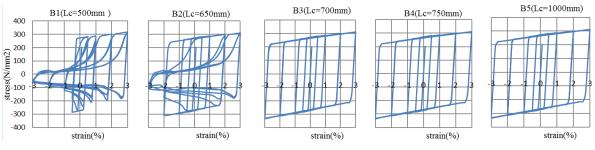


Fig. 14 Group B models : Hysteretic responses

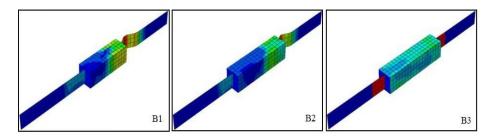


Fig. 15 Core buckling in models of group B

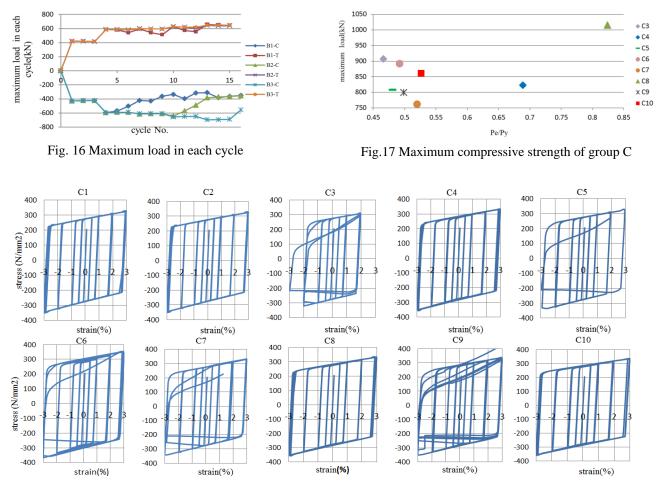


Fig. 18 Models of Group C : Hysteretic responses

5. Conclusions

The obtained results are classified for each group of models as follow:

• Group A

In models of this group, if the friction ratio is increased up to 0.3 it causes the β ratio to grow to 1.2 which is in a permissible range according to AISC provisions. Even the model with highest friction ratio did not experience global buckling but in such cases, the lateral displacement of core plate should be considered because of the overpressure applied to concrete fill due to asymmetric lateral displacement.

Group B

The restrainer length of a BRB can be shortened without any change in core plastic length. The estimated optimum length in models of this group is 0.7 times as long as core plastic length that means in shorter lengths, the objections in two sides of restrainer will experience global buckling.

Group C

Applying profiles with the equal moment of inertia in both directions, eliminating the concrete fill will be possible due to eliminating the need for lateral support in one direction. This may transfer the buckling process from elastic to plastic range which means to benefit from the maximum load resisting capacity of core profile.

Using the inner tube as the restrainer results in a stable hysteretic response in $\frac{P_e}{P_y}$ ratios of 0.52 and higher, which is much less, than figure 1.5 specified by AISC provisions. About models with inner restrainer, reducing the gap size down to zero results in better hysteretic responses which are different from what happens about models with outer restrainer. When the restrainer element is the inner tube, core tube can freely expand outside the restrainer, and the need to gap element is eliminated in this group of models.

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