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## Research Article

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# Cumulative Plastic Deformation Characteristics of Saturated Silty Sand under Variable Frequency Cyclic Loading of Subway Entrance/Exit

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1 **Abstract** The acceleration and deceleration movement of the subway near the subway station have a certain  
2 impact on the foundation soil. After the samples have been reconstituted in an inclined slope using sand rain  
3 method, undrained dynamic cyclic triaxial experiments were designed under specific variable frequency  
4 loading condition according to on-site monitoring data and theoretical calculation results. Effects of subway  
5 entrance/exit distance, subway entrance/exit acceleration, vibration amplitude, effective confining pressure  
6 on the cumulative deformation characteristics of Nanjing saturated silty sand were explored under  
7 experimental program. The results show that the cumulative plastic strain development of the Nanjing silty  
8 sand under the variable frequency cyclic loading of subway entrance/ exit can be roughly divided into three  
9 stages: explosive growth, rapid growth and gradual stability. The increase of the distance from the subway  
10 station can reduce the vibration cycles of subway entrance/exit loading to enter the gradual stabilization phase;  
11 it can also lower the shear deformation and increase the vertical deformation. Greater the vibration amplitude  
12 or lower the effective confining pressure can also have the same effect on soil deformation characteristics.  
13 Instead, greater the subway entrance/ exit acceleration, smaller the vertical deformation and larger the shear  
14 deformation. For practical engineering, the initial stage of subway line in operation is the focus of engineering  
15 geological disaster prevention. The settlement deformation of the soil in subway entrance interval, the  
16 horizontal displacement of the soil in subway exit interval are more serious. The soil closer to subway station  
17 is more prone to deformation hazard

18 **Keywords:** variable frequency cyclic loading, subway entrance/exit acceleration, cumulative deformation,  
19 undrained dynamic triaxial test

## 20 **List of symbols**

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$\sigma_d$	vertical stress caused by subway entrance/exit (kPa)
$\tau_d$	horizontal shear stress caused by subway entrance/exit (kPa)
$a_s$	subway entrance/exit acceleration ( $m/s^2$ )
$g$	the acceleration of gravity ( $m/s^2$ )
$\sigma_1$	maximum principal stress controlled by dynamic triaxial test(kPa)
$\sigma_3$	minimum principal stress controlled by dynamic triaxial test(kPa)
$\theta$	sample preparation angle ( $^\circ$ )
$\varepsilon_d$	vertical stress under the loading of subway entrance/exit
$\varepsilon_1$	axial strain of the samples under dynamic triaxial test
$\gamma$	shear strain of the samples under the loading of subway entrance/exit
$\nu$	the dynamic Poisson's ratio
$\varepsilon_p$	cumulative plastic strain
$N$	the number of cyclic vibration
$a$	the test parameter related to cumulative deformation rate

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<i>b</i>	the test parameter related to the deformation of the soil after the first cyclic loading
<i>c</i>	the test parameter related to the final deformation of the soil

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21 **Introduction**

22 Different from the condition of running with constant speed, the subway entrance/exit acceleration or  
 23 deceleration can not only cause a certain number of variable frequency cyclic loading, but also can generate  
 24 horizontal shear stress.

25 Researches on the vibration of the subway train with variable speed includes: Huang and Thambiratnam  
 26 (2001) studied the deflection response of plate on Winkler foundation to moving accelerated loads.  
 27 Michaltsos (2002) theoretically analyzed the linear dynamic response of a simply supported elastic single-  
 28 span beam subjected to a moving load of constant magnitude and variable velocity. Kim and Mccullough  
 29 (2003) studied the dynamic response of plate on viscous Winkler foundation to moving loads of varying  
 30 amplitude. Degrande et al. (2006) presented the results of in situ vibration measurements that have been  
 31 performed within the frame of the CONVURT project at a site in Regent's Park on the Bakerloo line of  
 32 London Underground during 35 passages of a test train at a speed between 20 and 50 km/h. Lu et al. (2010)  
 33 investigated the vibrations of a plate on viscoelastic foundation under moving rectangular loads with variable  
 34 speeds, and derived the general solution of dynamic deflection of the plate using the double Fourier transform;  
 35 Zhang (2011) studied the dynamic response of the vehicle-structure dynamic coupling system when the trains  
 36 of Shenzhen Metro Line 4 and Line 6 brake at Shenzhen North Station, and analyzed and evaluated the  
 37 vibration state of the key parts of the station structure. Karimi and Ziaei-Rad (2015) conducted the study  
 38 concerning with nonlinear coupled vibration analysis of a beam with moving supports under the action of a  
 39 moving mass. Zhang and Chen (2016, 2017) analyzed the cylindrical longitudinal vibration and vibration  
 40 source characteristics caused by the subway entering the station, and obtained the change law of the train's  
 41 vibration response in the direction of the station. He (2018) numerically simulated the track vibration of  
 42 moving subway under different acceleration and deceleration. Chen and Zhang (2019) used analytical  
 43 methods to analyze the difference in soil vibration and spatial vibration characteristics caused by subway  
 44 entering and leaving the station. For the vibrations of subway moving with variable speed, most of the studies  
 45 are focus on the dynamic response of the track or foundation using analytical or numerical simulation  
 46 methods. There are few studies on the cumulative strain of the foundation soil near the subway station.

47 The area near the subway station is the focus of subway engineering prevention. Researches on the  
48 cumulative plastic deformation characteristics of the foundation soil near the subway station can help subway  
49 track and foundation deformation control and ensure the safety of subway operation. The unidirectional  
50 vibrations caused by dynamic cyclic triaxial could not effectively simulate the horizontal shear stress caused  
51 by subway entrance/exit acceleration. After the sample has been reconstituted in an inclined slope using sand  
52 rain method, undrained dynamic cyclic triaxial test is conducted to explore the effects of subway entrance/exit  
53 distance, subway entrance/exit acceleration, vibration amplitude, effective confining pressure on the  
54 cumulative deformation characteristics of Nanjing saturated silty sand.

## 55 **Loading condition**

56 Subway operation along Yangtze River Delta is aimed in this paper. The speed curve in operation of  
57 Nanjing Metro Line 3# in China is shown in Fig.1:

58 Fig.1 Speed curve of Nanjing Metro in operation (a) time; (b) distance

59 The running state of a subway in a station mainly includes 7 stages of "constant acceleration-idle-  
60 variable torque traction-small level braking-idle-braking-stop". In the Yangtze River Delta region of China,  
61 the subway exit acceleration is about  $0.83-1.03\text{m/s}^2$ , and the entrance deceleration is about  $0.50-0.60\text{ m/s}^2$ .

62 Nanjing Metro is composed of 6 carriages into a group, and the size of subway carriages is shown in  
63 Fig.2. When a subway entrance or exit, it can not only cause a certain amount of variable frequency vertical  
64 cyclic loading due to its own 12 sets of wheels squeezing the sleepers, but also apply horizontal shear stress  
65 to the soil due to the acceleration. The regular variable frequency cyclic loading generated by a cycle of  
66 subway entrance/exit can be defined as a vibration cycle of subway entrance/exit.

67 Fig.2 The subway carriages size of Nanjing Metro

## 68 **Experimental Program**

### 69 **Materials**

70 Silty sand layer near the Shangyuanmen subway station of Nanjing Metro Line 3# along the Yangtze  
71 river is mainly focused. It belongs to a river typical floodplain facies soil layer, with water environment  
72 deposition (Hu et al. 2016). In this area, groundwater level is high. it is saturated. The main component of  
73 Nanjing silty sand is quartz debris. It is flaky structure and anisotropic (Chen et al. 2003). The particle  
74 characteristic of Nanjing silty sand is shown in Fig.3, and the basic physical parameters are shown in Tab.1:

75 Fig.3 Particle characteristic of Nanjing silty sand (a) grain size; (b) particle shape

76 Tab.1 Basic physical parameters of saturated Nanjing silty sand

### 77 Test plan

78 Most of the dynamic triaxial test studies (Ren, et al. 2011; Tang et al. 2018) made the soil samples  
79 vibrate under the loading in vertical direction. This type of soil loading cannot effectively simulate the  
80 horizontal shear stress generated by the acceleration of subway entrance/exit. If the silty sand sample is inclined  
81 to reconstitution, the stress state of the soil under the subway entrance/exit loading which includes the  
82 compressive stress in the vertical direction and shear stress in the horizontal direction can be equivalent  
83 simulated by controlling the principal stress of the samples. The test simulates and studies the cumulative  
84 plastic deformation characteristics of silty sand under the subway entrance/exit loading by inclined sand rain  
85 method of sample preparation and the undrained dynamic cyclic triaxial test system. Vertical stress  $\sigma_d$  and  
86 horizontal shear stress  $\tau_d$  caused by subway entrance/exit should meet:

$$87 \quad \frac{\tau_d}{\sigma_d} = \frac{a_s}{g} \quad (1)$$

88 Where:  $a_s$  is subway entrance/exit acceleration (m/s<sup>2</sup>);  $g$  is the acceleration of gravity (m/s<sup>2</sup>).

89 Axial pressure  $\sigma_1$ , confining pressure  $\sigma_3$  controlled by dynamic triaxial test, and sample preparation in  
90 a inclined angle  $\theta$  should meet:

$$91 \quad \sigma_1 = \frac{\sigma_d}{2} + \sqrt{\left(\frac{\sigma_d}{2}\right)^2 + \tau_d^2} \quad (2)$$

$$92 \quad \sigma_3 = \frac{\sigma_d}{2} - \sqrt{\left(\frac{\sigma_d}{2}\right)^2 + \tau_d^2} \quad (3)$$

$$93 \quad \theta = \frac{1}{2} \arctan\left(-\frac{2\tau_d}{\sigma_d}\right) \quad (4)$$

94 Fig.4 Soil stress state under the loading of subway entrance/exit

95 Nanjing silty sand is a kind of remarkable flaky structural sand under water environment sedimentary.  
96 In order to ensure the structure of the sample particle arrangement, the sand rain method is used for sample  
97 reconstitution. After drying and sieving, the silty sands were reconstituted by underwater sand rain method  
98 under control of compactness parameters. The sample preparation device for controlling inclined angle is  
99 shown as Fig.5. The water level is 1m higher than the sand accumulation device (Chen et al. 2003). The  
100 compactness of sand samples can be initially controlled by falling distance and falling amount of sand rain

101 method. Then it can be accurately controlled by soil sample compactor. The length and diameter of sand  
102 samples are 80.0mm and 38.0mm. After reconstituted samples were completely prepared, they were stored  
103 in a vacuum saturator for 24 hours to keep saturation.

104 Fig.5 Sample preparation device of underwater rain method

105 In Nanjing area, the buried depth of the subway tunnel is about 10m~15m, the groundwater level is  
106 about 0.4m~1.1m, the vertical vibration basic value of subway loading is about 30kPa, and vertical vibration  
107 amplitude is about 10kPa~20kPa (Tang and Li 2018). Since subway entrance/exit acceleration is much  
108 smaller than the acceleration of gravity, it makes the axial pressure increment caused by subway vibration is  
109 much larger than the confining pressure increment caused by subway vibration ( $\Delta\sigma_3 < 1\% \Delta\sigma_1$ ). Thus, this  
110 experimental program ignores the confining pressure increment caused by subway vibration  $\Delta\sigma_3$ . The test  
111 is carried out by means of unidirectional vibration isostatic consolidation. This paper sets 250kPa confining  
112 pressure, 125kPa back pressure, 30kPa vertical vibration basic value, and 15kPa vertical vibration amplitude  
113 as the basic test group for comparison according to the field stress condition. The whole experimental  
114 program is designed as Tab.2 to explore the effects of subway entrance/exit distance, subway entrance/exit  
115 acceleration, vibration amplitude, effective confining pressure on the cumulative deformation characteristics  
116 of the silty sand.

117 Tab.2 Experimental program

118 The motion state of the subway when entrance/exit can directly affect the loading. According to on-site  
119 monitoring data (Tang et al. 2018) and theoretical calculation results (Chen and Zhang 2019), variable  
120 frequencies combined sinusoidal wave can effectively simulate the subway entrance/exit vibration mode.  
121 Taking B4-B6 as examples, the dynamic triaxial axial stress time history curve is shown in Fig.6.

122 Fig.6 Dynamic triaxial axial compression stress time history curve (a) B4; (b) B5; (c) B6

### 123 **Test process**

124 First, control the deposition angle and make triaxial silty sand samples with height of 80mm, diameter  
125 of 38mm. Second, saturate the sample in a vacuum saturator for 24 hours, and then install it in the triaxial  
126 pressure chamber of GDS system and use the back pressure function for saturation. When the B value reaches  
127 0.98, the saturation is regarded as completion (Zhou and Tang 2018). Finally after an isostatically

128 consolidation for 24 hours, the axial dynamic loading is applied for testing. The test ends when the sample  
129 undergoes 5000 times variable cycles of subway entrance/exit or the axial strain reaches 15%.

## 130 **Test results**

### 131 **The effects of subway entrance/exit distance on the cumulative plastic deformation**

132 Different the subway entrance/exit distance, different speed the subway runs. This makes the silty sand  
133 is subjected by different vibration loading when subway runs, and resultantly further affects its deformation  
134 characteristics. Through the dynamic triaxial test results, the axial strain and shear strain of soil induced by  
135 the loading of subway entrance/ exit can be restored:

$$136 \quad \varepsilon_d = \frac{\varepsilon_1 - \nu\varepsilon_1}{2} + \frac{\varepsilon_1 + \nu\varepsilon_1}{2} \cos 2\theta \quad (5)$$

$$137 \quad \gamma = (\varepsilon_1 + \nu\varepsilon_1) \sin 2\theta \quad (6)$$

138 Where:  $\varepsilon_d$  is the axial strain of the sample under the loading of subway entrance/exit;  $\varepsilon_1$  is the axial strain  
139 of the sample under dynamic triaxial test;  $\gamma$  is the shear strain of the sample under the loading of subway  
140 entrance/exit;  $\nu$  is the dynamic Poisson's ratio which can be obtained from the wave velocity test on the  
141 engineering site.

142 Fig.7 Soil strain state under the loading of subway entrance/exit

143 Fig.8 shows the relationship between the vertical cumulative plastic strain of the silty sand with different  
144 subway entrance/exit distances and vibration cycles of subway entrance/exit loading; Fig.9 shows the  
145 relationship between the cumulative plastic shear strain of silty sand with different subway entrance/exit  
146 distances and vibration cycles of subway entrance/exit loading; Fig.8 and Fig.9 show that: under the loading  
147 of subway entrance, the maximum vertical cumulative deformation of the silty sand is about 0.7%~1.1%, and  
148 the maximum cumulative shear deformation is about 0.11%~0.15%. Under the loading of subway exit, the  
149 maximum vertical cumulative deformation is about 1.5%~2.0%, and the maximum cumulative shear  
150 deformation is about 0.17%~0.24%;

151 For different subway entrance/exit distances, the characteristics of cumulative plastic strain curves of  
152 the silty sand are roughly the same. The strain curve can be roughly divided into three stages of development:  
153 in the initial stage, the strain increased exponentially, resulting in more cumulation of plastic strain in a short  
154 time; in the middle stage, the growth rate of plastic strain decreases with vibration cycle times of subway  
155 entrance/exit. When the vibration cycle number of subway entrance/exit reaches 600-1200, the soil strain

156 enters the stable stage. In addition, the closer to the subway station, the fewer vibration cycles of subway  
157 entrance/exit loading that the soil can enter the stage of gradual stability. The soil strain in subway entrance  
158 interval can earlier enter the gradual stabilization stage, especially the shear strain. It shows that the strain of  
159 soil in subway entrance/exit interval, whether vertical strain or shear strain, have the largest growth rate in  
160 the initial stage of subway line in operation. The initial stage of subway line in operation is the focus of  
161 engineering geological disaster prevention. With the continuous application of vibration loading, the soil  
162 gradually tends to be dense and the strain rate decreases.

163 Fig.8 Cumulative vertical plastic strain time history curve

164 Fig.9 Cumulative plastic shear strain time history curve

165 Fig.10 shows the relationship between the cumulative plastic strain of the silty sand and subway  
166 entrance/exit distances; It can be seen that the cumulative plastic deformation of the silty sand at the same  
167 distance from the subway station, whether vertical strain or shear strain, is generally greater in the subway  
168 entrance interval than the exit interval. Closer to the subway station, more obvious the cumulated plastic  
169 deformation of the soil. For practical engineering, the key prevention and control stage of soil deformation  
170 in the area far from the subway station lasts for a long time. The soil near the subway station has large final  
171 deformation. Additionally, it should pay more attention to disaster prevention in subway entrance interval.

172 Fig.10 Effects of subway entrance/exit distance on cumulative plastic deformation

173 The reason for the above phenomenon is: closer to the subway station, slower the average subway speed.  
174 It takes long time for a slow train to pass through a certain point. This makes the loading of a train closer to  
175 the subway station more impulse on the soil under the same condition. The greater strain rate of the soil is  
176 conducted by large impulse, which results in a rapid development of soil deformation in the early stage.  
177 Nanjing silty sand contains a small amount of clay particles, and the silty sand has a certain viscoplasticity;  
178 the impulse can increase the plastic deformation that resulting in the cumulative plastic deformation of the  
179 soil near the subway station is large.

#### 180 **The effects of subway entrance/exit acceleration on the cumulative plastic deformation**

181 The vertical cumulative plastic strain of the silty sand conducted by 5000 times variable frequency  
182 cyclic loading under different subway entrance/exit acceleration is shown in Fig.11. It can be seen that the  
183 vertical cumulative plastic deformation conducted by high acceleration is greater. The smaller acceleration,

184 the more obvious degree of its influence on the change of deformation. The cumulative plastic shear strain  
185 of the silty sand conducted by 5000 times variable frequency cyclic loading under different subway  
186 entrance/exit acceleration is shown in Fig.12. It is easy to know that greater the subway entrance/exit  
187 acceleration, greater the shear deformation of the soil. Since the "deceleration value" of subways entrance is  
188 greater than the "acceleration value" of subways exit, this also indicates that the vertical deformation of the  
189 subway entrance interval is greater than subway exit interval, and the shear deformation of the subway  
190 entrance interval is less than subway exit interval.

191 Fig.11 Effects of the acceleration on cumulative vertical plastic deformation

192 Fig.12 Effects of the acceleration on cumulative plastic shear deformation

193 The reason for the above phenomenon is: greater the acceleration of the subway entrance/exit, faster the  
194 subway running at the same location. The high-frequency vibrations generated by the high-speed train makes  
195 the vertical deformation of soil greater. For the shear strain of soil, the shear stress produced by subway  
196 acceleration or deceleration has a more direct and deeper impact on it; the test results also show that the shear  
197 deformation of soil and the subway acceleration roughly reflect a positive correlation.

#### 198 **The effects of vibration amplitude on the cumulative plastic deformation**

199 The vertical cumulative plastic strain and shear strain of the silty sand under 5000 times variable  
200 frequency cyclic loading with different vibration amplitude of subway entrance/exit are shown in Fig.13 and  
201 Fig.14. It can be seen that greater the vibration amplitude of subway entrance/exit loading, greater the vertical  
202 cumulative plastic deformation of soil, and also greater the cumulative plastic shear deformation. The greater  
203 vibration amplitude is more likely to cause greater plastic deformation of the soil.

204 Fig.13 Effects of vibration amplitude on cumulative vertical plastic deformation

205 Fig.14 Effects of vibration amplitude on cumulative plastic shear deformation

#### 206 **The effects of effective confining pressure on the cumulative plastic deformation**

207 Under different effective confining pressures, the vertical cumulative plastic strain and shear strain of  
208 the silty sand conducted by 5000 times variable frequency cyclic loading of subway entrance/exit are shown  
209 in Fig.15 and Fig.16. The results show that greater the effective confining pressure of the soil, smaller the  
210 vertical cumulative plastic deformation and shear deformation. The soil with greater effective confining  
211 pressure has strong resistance to deformation.

212 Fig.15 Effects of effective confining pressure on cumulative vertical plastic deformation

213 Fig.16 Effects of effective confining pressure on cumulative plastic shear deformation

## 214 **Cumulative plastic deformation model**

215 The hyperbolic exponential model (Xu 2011) is a prediction model for the long-term deformation of the  
216 soil under cyclic loading in the Yangtze River Delta. The relationship between cumulative plastic strain and  
217 the number of cyclic vibrations is:

$$218 \quad \varepsilon_p = \frac{N^c}{a+bN^c} \quad (7)$$

219 Here,  $\varepsilon_p$  is cumulative plastic strain;  $N$  is the number of cyclic vibrations;  $a$ ,  $b$ , and  $c$  are the experimental  
220 parameters that characterize cumulative deformation rate, the deformation of the soil after the first cyclic  
221 loading, and the final deformation of the soil.

222 Under subway entrance/exit loading, after replacing general cyclic loading number with vibration cycles  
223 of subway entrance/exit loading, the hyperbolic exponential model is used for fitting. The fitting results are  
224 shown in Tab.3. It can be seen that the fitting correlation coefficients are all above 0.985. The fitting result  
225 is pretty well. That is, the hyperbolic exponential model can effectively simulate the development of  
226 cumulative plastic deformation of the silty sand under variable frequency cyclic loading of subway  
227 entrance/exit.

228 Tab.3 Prediction model fitting results

## 229 **Conclusion**

230 The paper studies the cumulative plastic deformation characteristics of silty sand under variable  
231 frequency cyclic loading of subway entrance/exit, by inclined underwater sand rain reconstitution method  
232 and the undrained dynamic cyclic triaxial test. Conclusions are drawn as follows:

233 (1) The stress state of the soil under the subway entrance/exit loading which includes the compressive  
234 stress in the vertical direction and shear stress in the horizontal direction can be equivalent simulated by  
235 controlling the principal stress of the samples under a inclined reconstituted angle.

236 (2) The cumulative plastic strain curve of the silty sand under variable frequency cyclic loading of  
237 subway entrance/exit can be roughly divided into three stages: explosive growth, rapid growth, gradual

238 stability. The strain of soil in subway entrance/exit interval has the largest growth rate in the initial stage of  
239 subway line in operation. It must be the main focus of engineering geological disaster prevention.

240 (3) The closer to the subway station, fewer vibration cycles of subway entrance/exit loading the soil  
241 needs to enter the gradual stabilization phase, the greater vertical settlement, and the smaller shear  
242 deformation will occur. The soil rapid growth phase in the area far from the subway station lasts for a long  
243 time, and the soil near the subway station will quickly settle down.

244 (4) Greater the acceleration (deceleration) of subway entrance/exit, smaller the vertical deformation of  
245 soil, and greater the shear deformation. The settlement deformation of the soil in subway entrance interval  
246 and the horizontal displacement of the soil in subway exit interval are much severer.

247 (5) Greater the vibration amplitude of the subway loading, Greater the cumulative plastic deformation  
248 of the silty sand; Greater the effective stress of the silty sand, stronger its ability to resist loading deformation.

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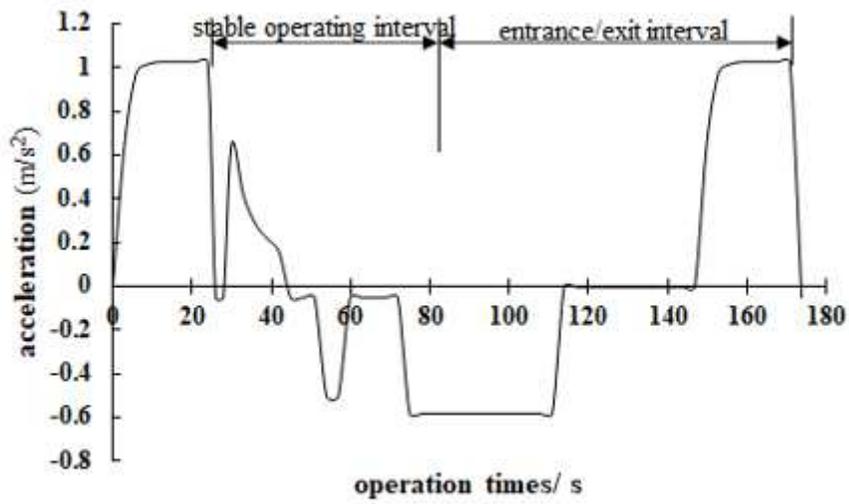
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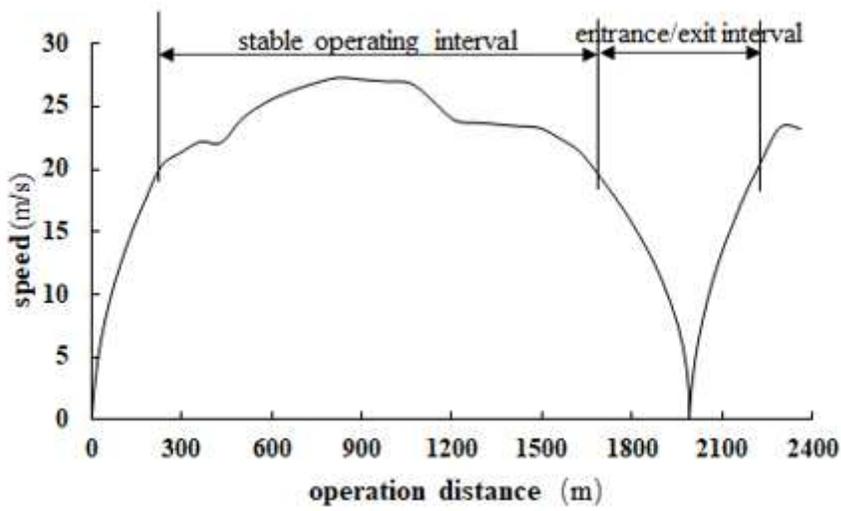
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# Figures



(a)



(b)

Figure 1

Speed curve of Nanjing Metro in operation (a) time; (b) distance

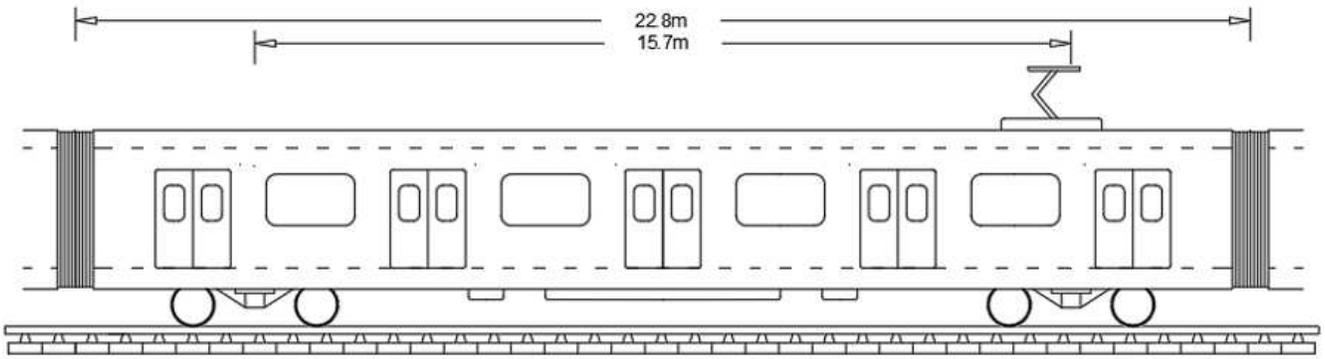
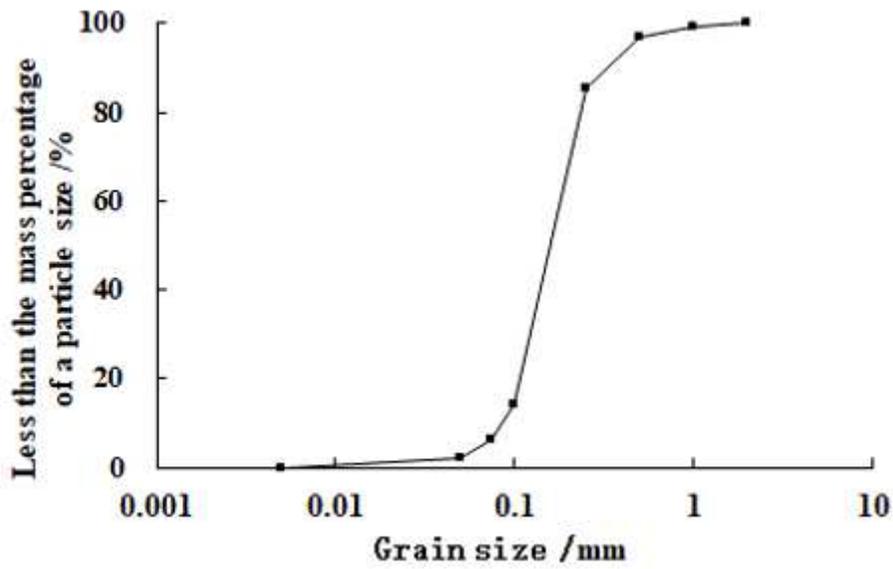


Figure 2

The subway carriages size of Nanjing Metro



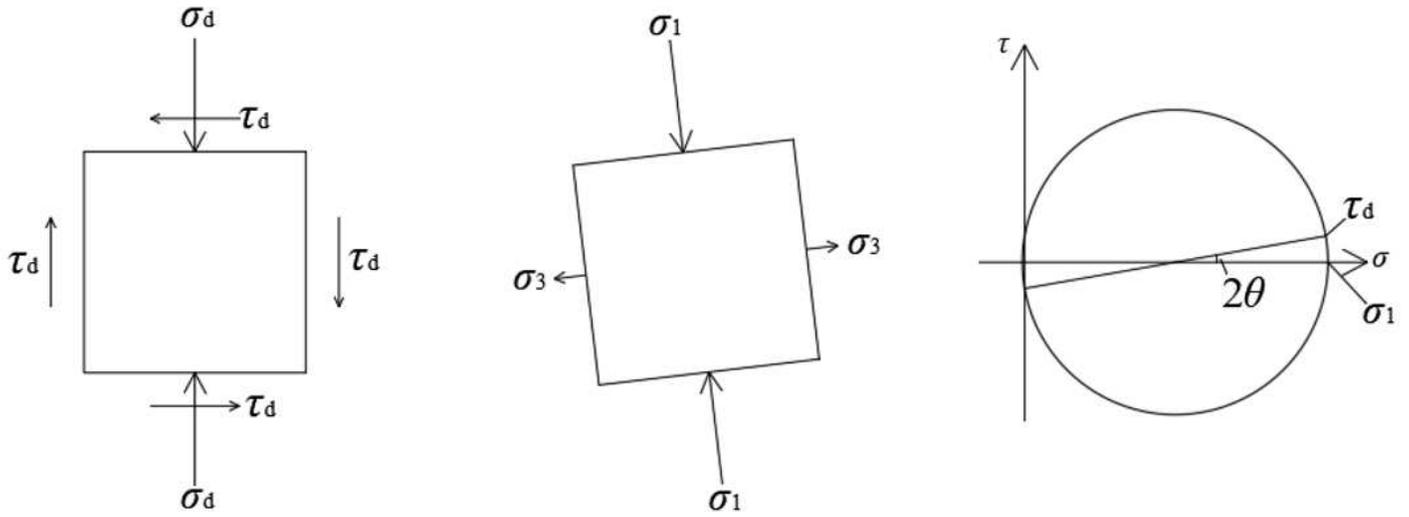
(a)



(b)

**Figure 3**

Particle characteristics of Nanjing silty sand (a) grain size; (b) particle shape



**Figure 4**

Soil stress state under the loading of subway entrance/exit

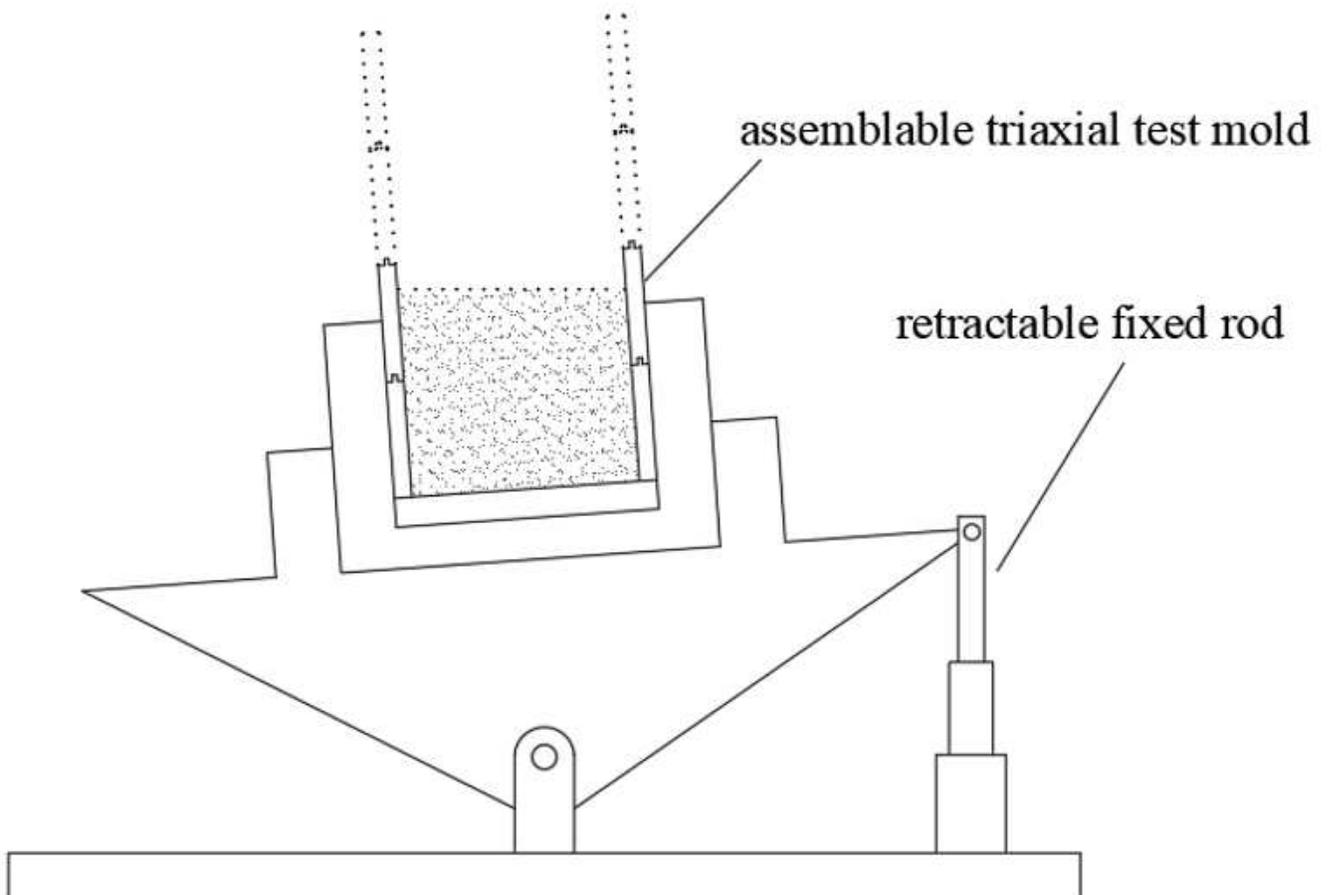


Figure 5

Sample preparation device of underwater rain method

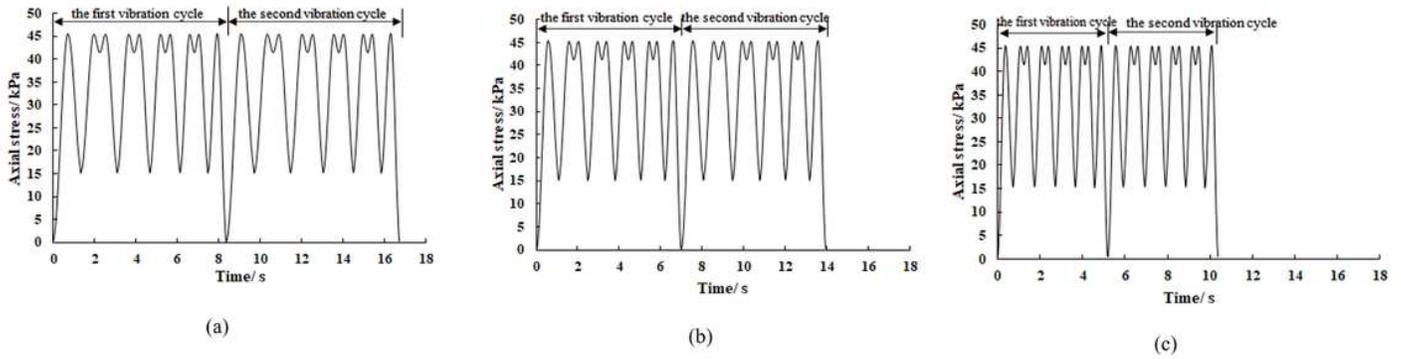


Figure 6

Dynamic triaxial axial compression stress time history curve (a) B4; (b)B5; (c)B6

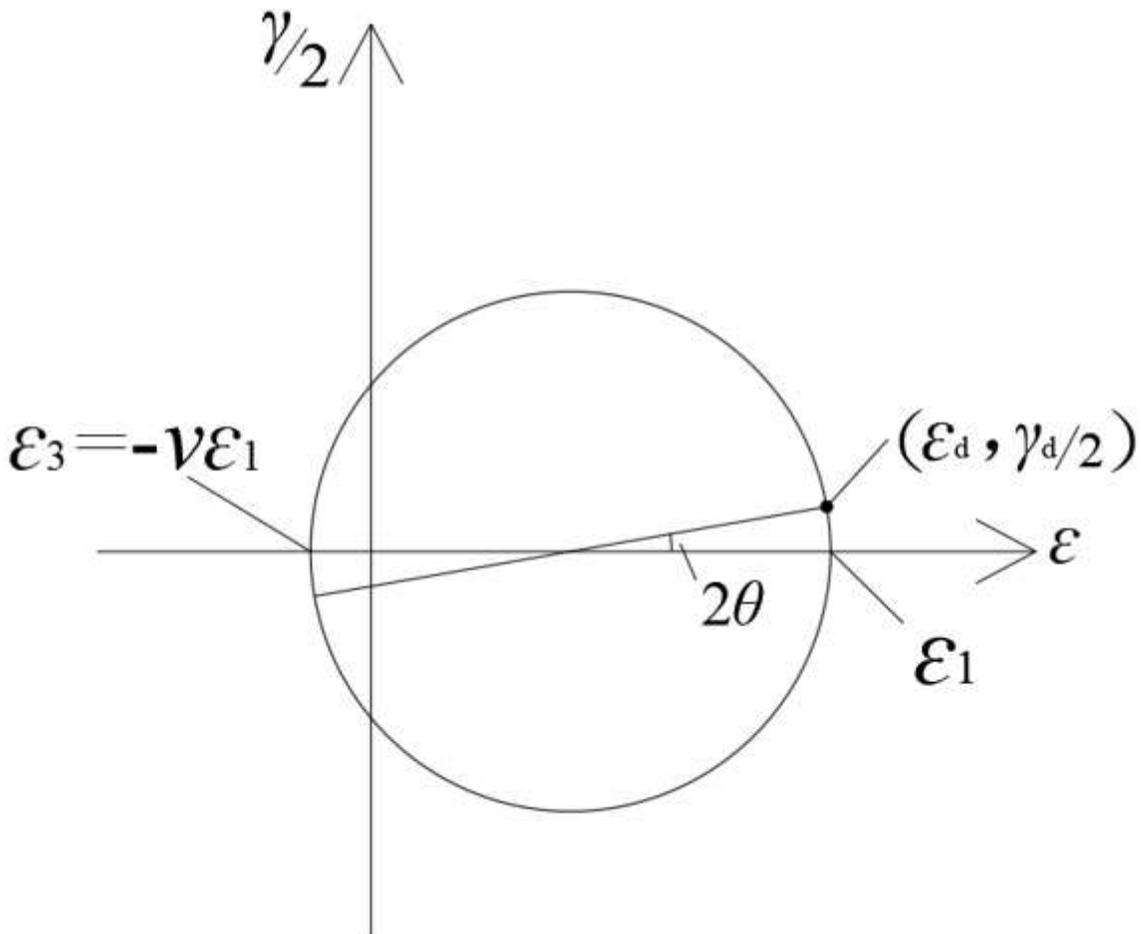


Figure 7

Soil strain state under the loading of subway entrance/exit

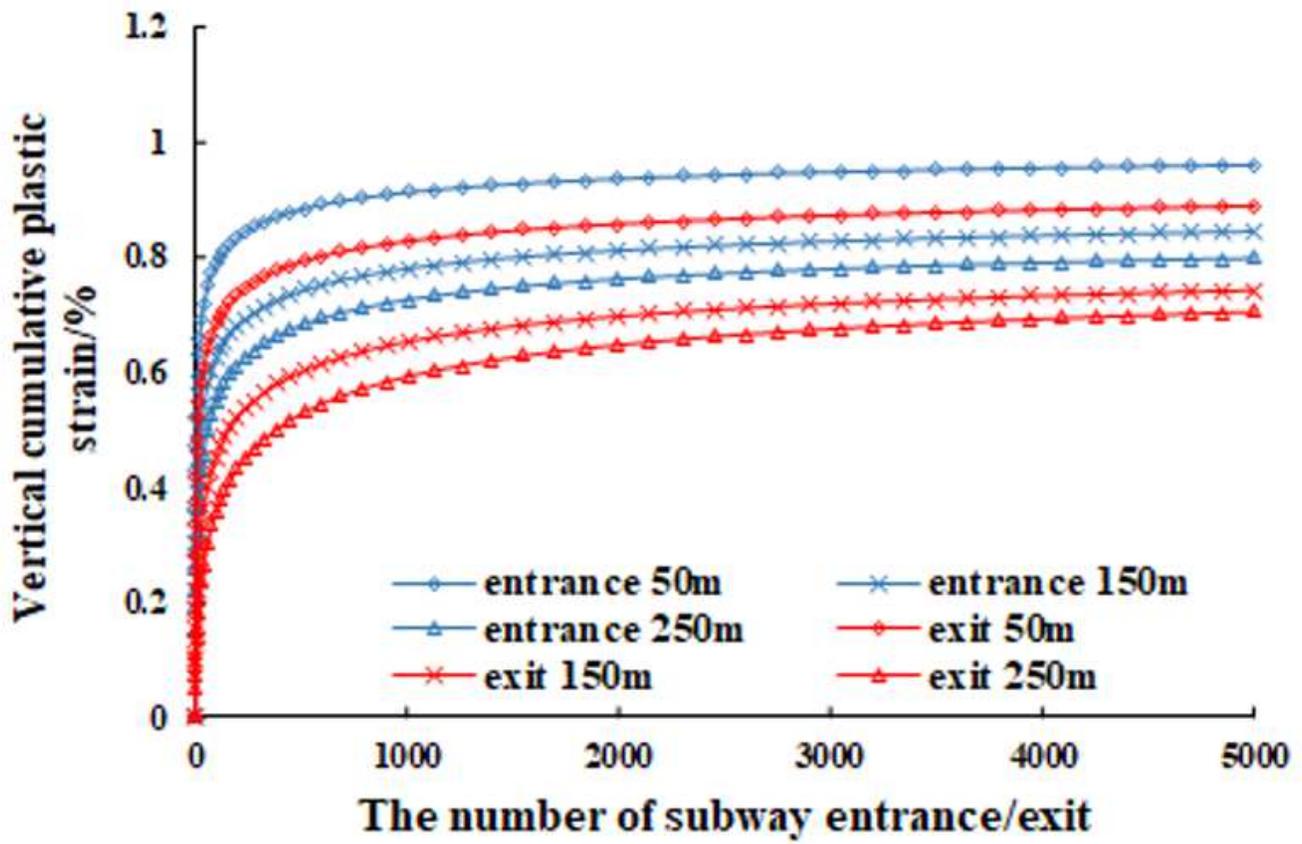


Figure 8

Cumulative vertical plastic strain time history curve

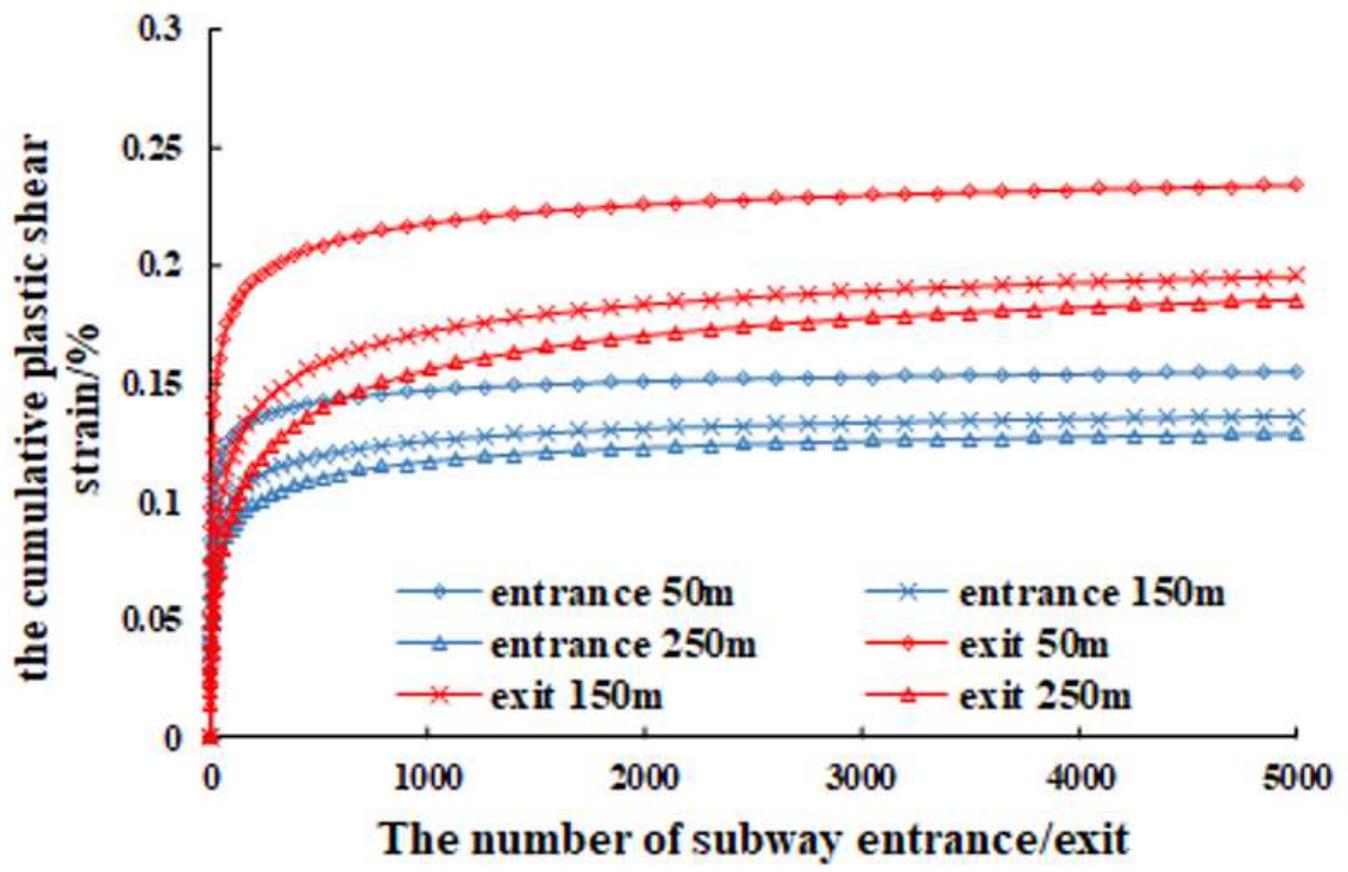


Figure 9

Cumulative plastic shear strain time history curve

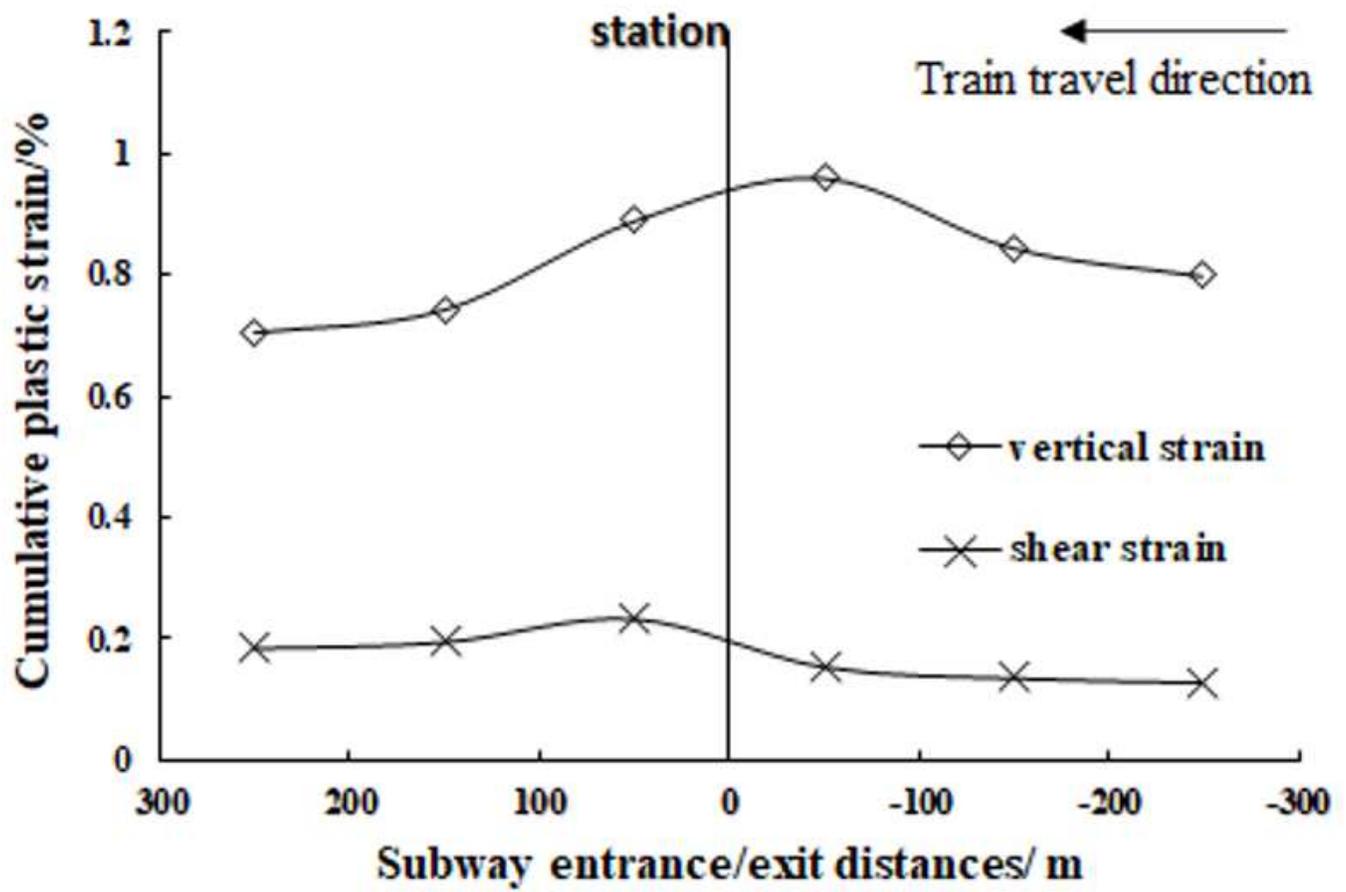


Figure 10

Effects of subway entrance/ exit distance on cumulative plastic deformation

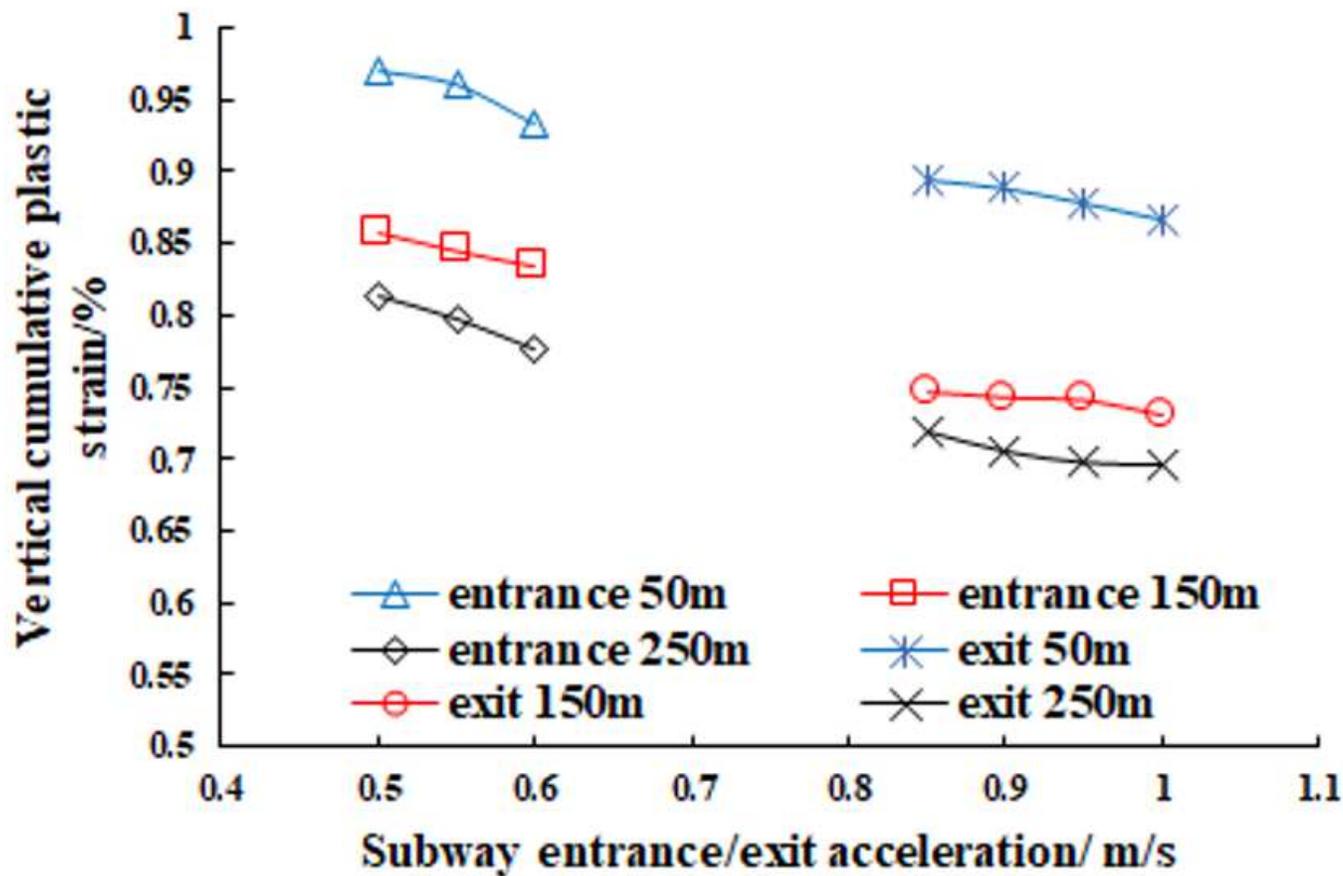


Figure 11

Effects of the acceleration on cumulative vertical plastic deformation

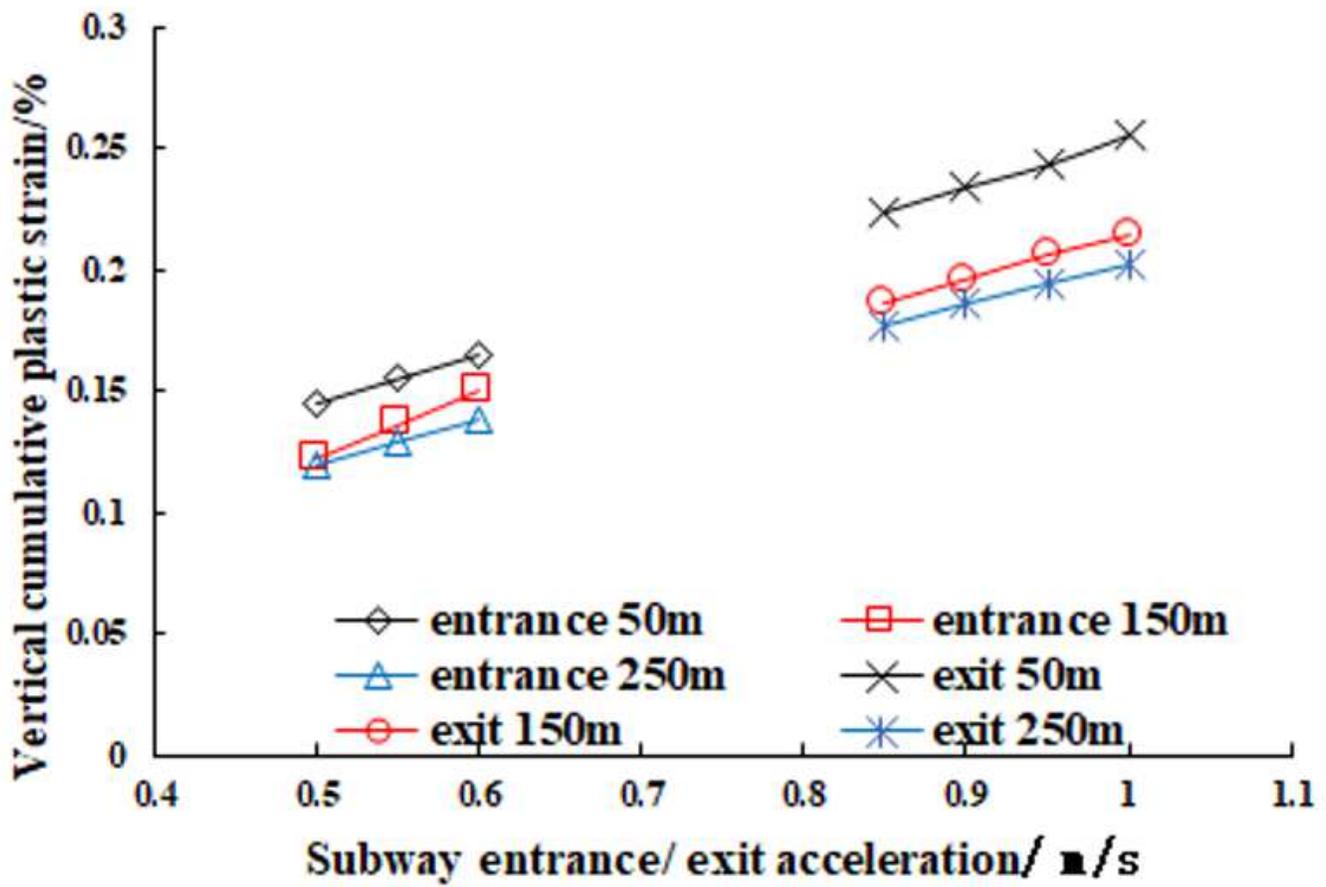


Figure 12

Effects of the acceleration on cumulative plastic shear deformation

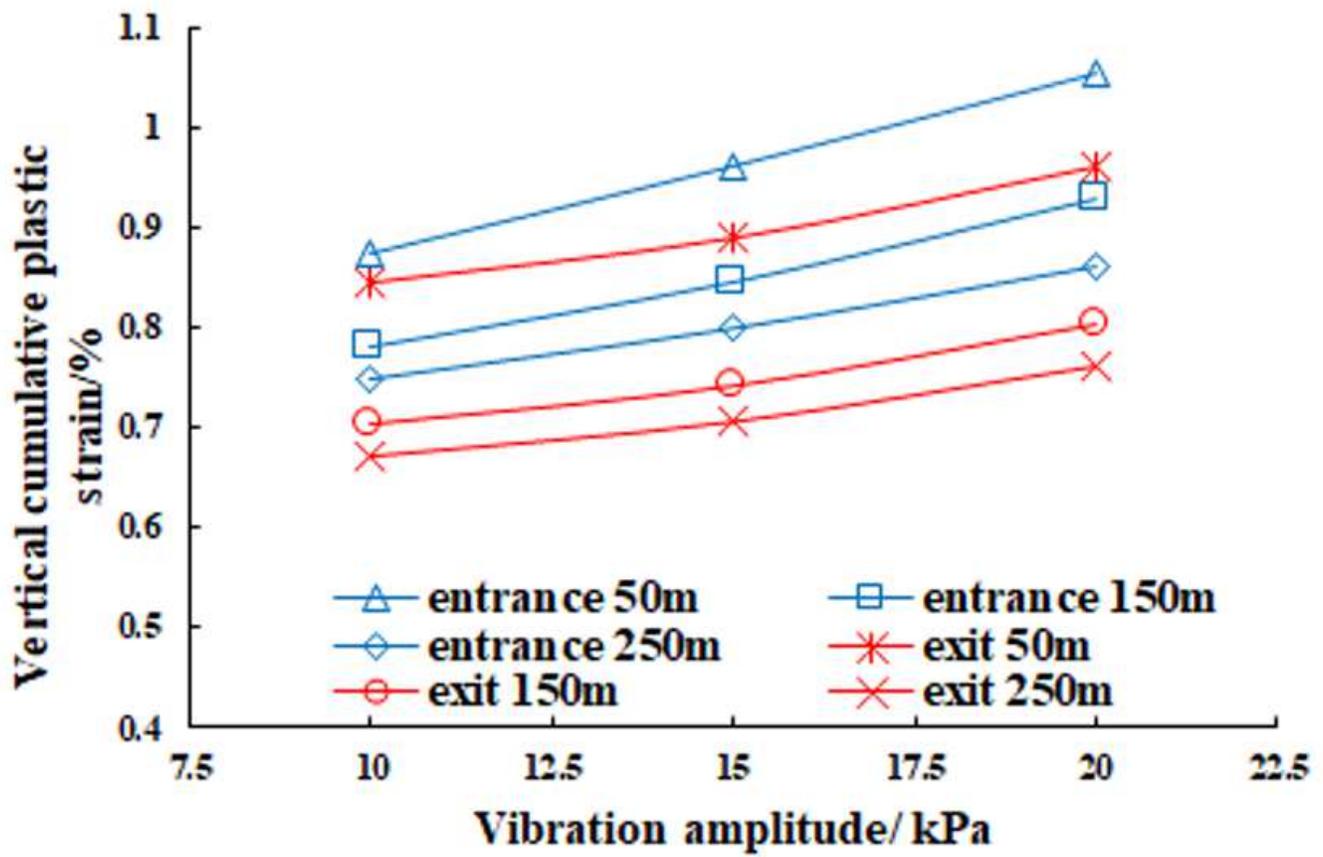


Figure 13

Effects of vibration amplitude on cumulative vertical plastic deformation

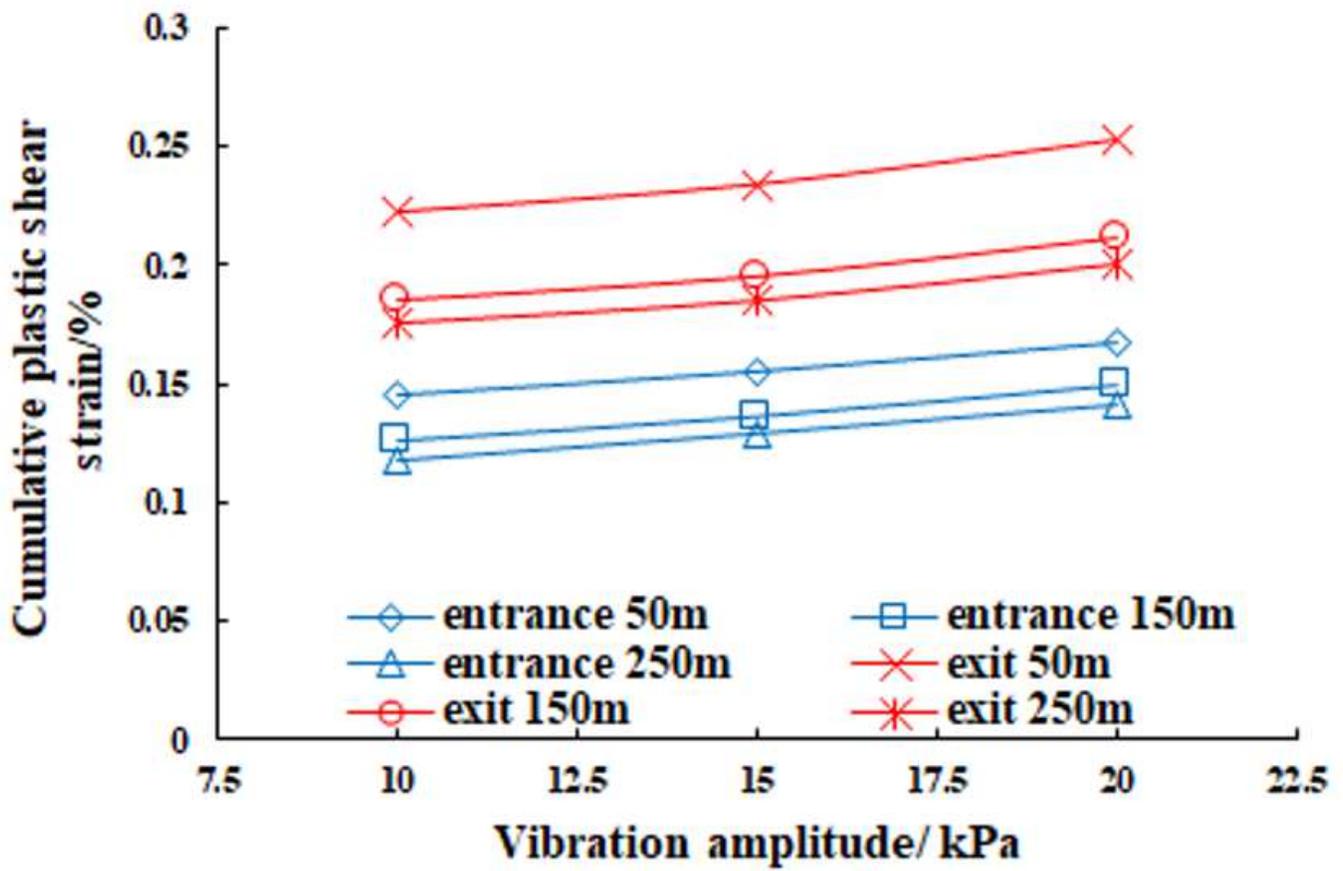


Figure 14

Effects of vibration amplitude on cumulative plastic shear deformation

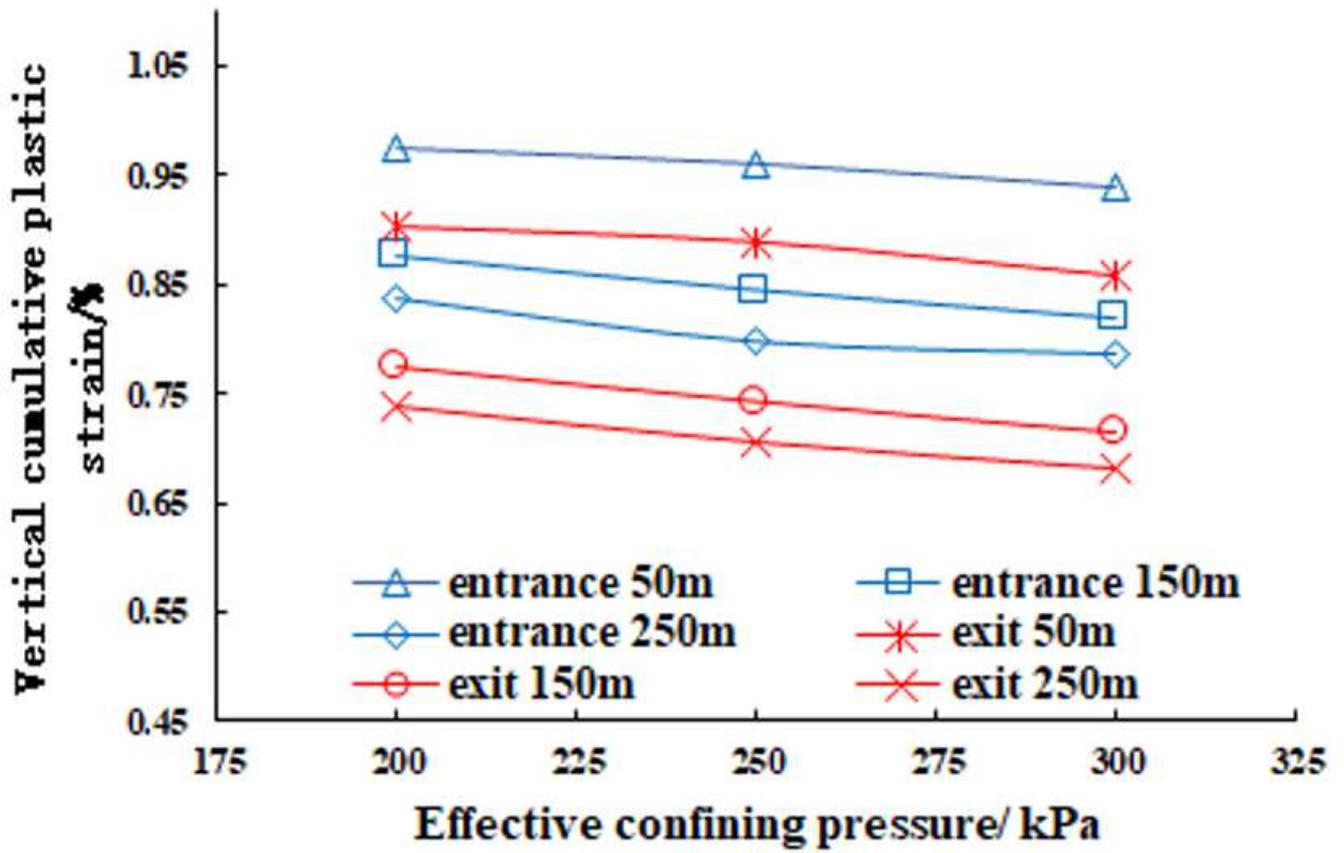


Figure 15

Effects of effective confining pressure on cumulative vertical plastic deformation

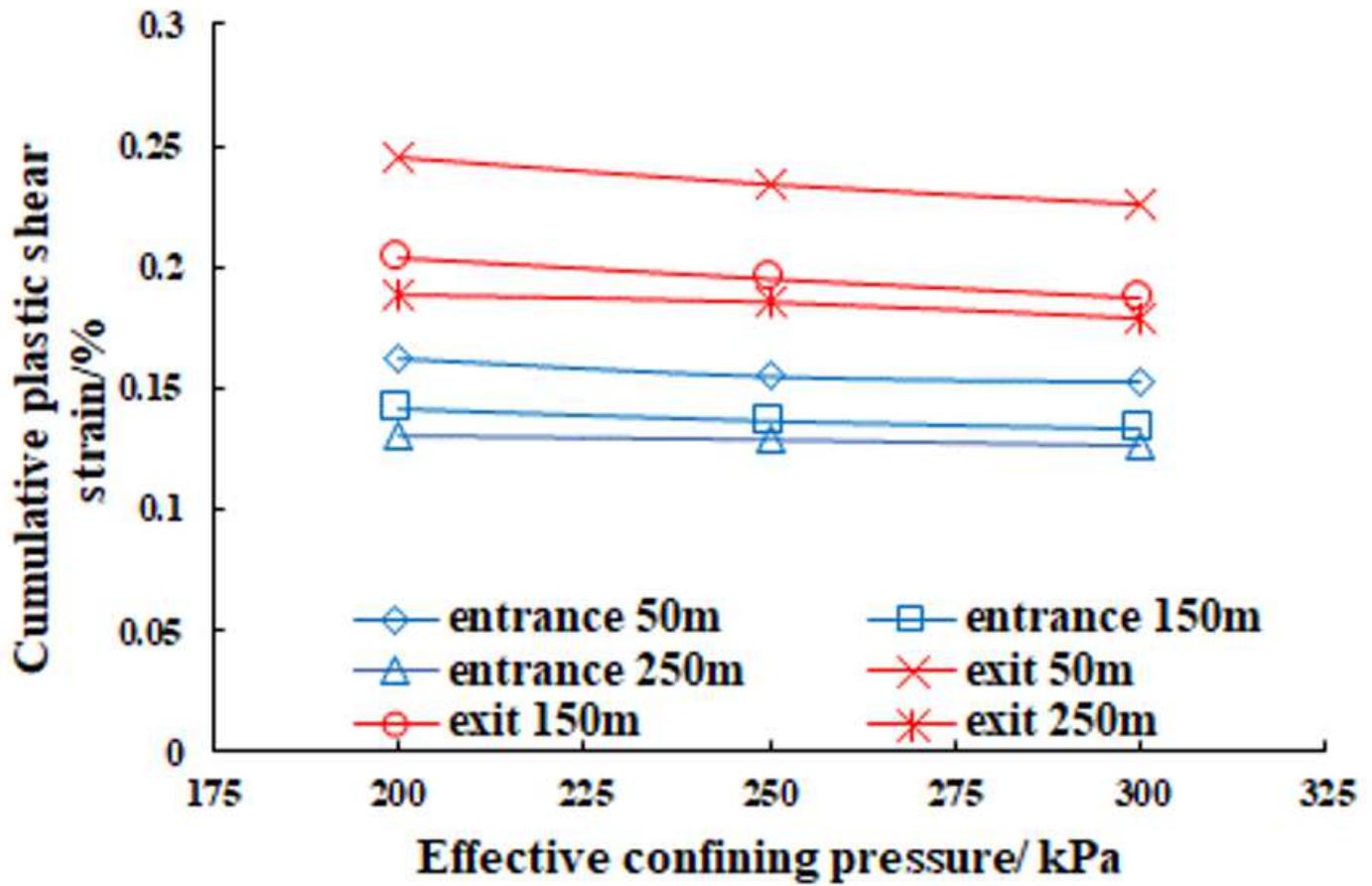


Figure 16

Effects of effective confining pressure on cumulative plastic shear deformation

## Supplementary Files

This is a list of supplementary files associated with this preprint. Click to download.

- [Tables.docx](#)