

**MULTI-AXIAL FORGING OF AA6082/B₄C_p NANOCOMPOSITE
DEVELOPED THROUGH ULTRASONIC ASSISTED STIR CASTING**

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APRIL 2024**

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**by
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Submitted

In fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
to the



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI

APRIL 2024

Dedicated to

My Lovely Wife Sakshi

and

My Beloved Parents

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**Multi-Axial Forging of AA6082/B₄C_p Nanocomposite Developed Through Ultrasonic Assisted Stir Casting**” being submitted by Mr. Srijan Prabhakar to the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Department of Mechanical Engineering is a bonafide research work carried out by him under my supervision and guidance. To the best of my knowledge, the thesis has reached the requisite standard. The research reports and the results presented in this thesis have not been submitted in parts or in full to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree or diploma.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my profound gratitude and heartfelt thanks to my esteemed supervisors, **Prof. D. Ravi Kumar** and **Prof. S. Aravindan** for providing me with the opportunity to undertake this research under their expert guidance. Their mentorship has been the bedrock of my academic and research endeavours. They have consistently offered guidance, encouragement, and scholarly insight that have significantly enriched the depth and scope of my research. Their commitment to fostering intellectual growth has left an indelible mark on my academic journey. I am grateful to them in all respects.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the eminent members of my research committee, **Prof. P. V. Rao, Prof. S. Ghosh, and Prof. S. Neelakantan**. The thoughtful critiques, constructive feedback, and probing questions during various presentations have not only refined the contours of this thesis but have also broadened my scholarly perspective. Their collective expertise has been a guiding beacon, ensuring the rigor and excellence of this research.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to the senior research scholars **Dr. Amit Kumar, Dr. Ved Prakash, Dr. Kandarp Changela** and **Dr. Sunil Kumar**. I express profound gratitude to my lab mates of Integrated Design and Manufacturing Lab (DFM Lab) **Mr. Archit Srivastava, Mr. Vinay Kumar, Mr. K. Mahesh , Mr. Reeturaj Tamuly, Mr. M. Suresh, Mr. Khanish Gupta, Mr. Salman Ansari, Mr. Subhrajit Chand and Ms. Shruti Singh**. Their camaraderie, intellectual engagement, and collective problem-solving have fostered an environment that transcends the challenges of research. The synergy within our research space has not only enhanced the quality of the work but has also made the entire journey more enriching and enjoyable.

The Central Workshop staff members **Mr. Prabhakar Biswal, Mr. Rahul Kumar Chaurasia, Mr. Madan, Ms. Mamta** and **Ms. Bharti**, with their helpful attitude and

willingness to provide their support, deserve special acknowledgment. I would also like to thank **Mr. Pankaj Sansanwal**, **Mr. Subhash Sansanwal** and **Mr. Tulsi Ram** of Mechanical Engineering Department for their help and support. Their contributions have been indispensable, equipping me with the practical skills necessary for the execution of various facets of my research.

A deeply personal note of appreciation goes to my wife, **Sakshi Singh** whose steadfast belief in me, unwavering support, and caring encouragement have been the core of my emotional resilience. Her sacrifices and understanding have been integral to maintaining focus and motivation throughout this demanding pursuit.

Lastly, I extend my gratitude to my parents, brother, sister-in-law and in-laws. Their unwavering love, encouragement, and belief in my capabilities have been a source of constant inspiration. Their enduring support has provided the foundation for my academic pursuits.

This thesis is not just an individual achievement, but a collective success shaped by the support and contributions of these remarkable individuals. I am sincerely thankful for the impact each of you has had on my academic and personal growth.

(SRIJAN PRABHAKAR)

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ABSTRACT

Aluminium matrix composites (AMCs) with nanoparticle reinforcement exhibit superior mechanical properties compared to conventional AMCs. Stir casting, a widely used fabrication method for AMCs, faces challenges like agglomeration and poor wettability of nanoparticles. This study focuses on AA6082/B₄C_p metal matrix nanocomposites developed through ultrasonic-assisted stir casting, incorporating B₄C nanoparticles and Ti-based flux (K₂TiF₆) as reinforcement. Ultrasonic vibration, applied post-mechanical stirring, ensures uniform distribution of nanoparticle using a custom-made setup. The formation of secondary phases (Al₃Ti, TiSi₂) refines the matrix microstructure and enhances B₄C wettability.

The effect of processing temperature, % wt. of 'B₄C and K₂TiF₆' and vibration time and interaction of these three parameters on mechanical properties have been characterized. Box Behnken design and Response Surface Methodology optimize parameters for balanced compressive strength and failure strain. Under optimal conditions, a 22% improvement in compressive strength and a 144% increase in fracture strain are achieved, with significant grain refinement (342 µm to 78 µm).

To further enhance AMC properties, multi-axial forging (MAF), a severe plastic deformation process, is applied. MAF involves subjecting a material to a large plastic strain by application of sequential compression in all the three principal axes. A true strain of 0.1 (approx.) was imparted in each direction, leading to a total effective strain of 0.3 in each cycle. The process has also been simulated using finite element method. The strain inhomogeneity from centre to surface has been predicted by finite element simulation of multi-axial forging with Voce hardening model and it correlated well with the experimentally determined microhardness variation. The strain inhomogeneity factor (IF) was highest after cycle 1 and it decreased significantly later in 2nd and 3rd cycles for the composite. The peak load predicted through FE simulation for each pass agreed well with the experimental values for both the

alloy and the composite. In MAF experiments, it was found that a total true strain of 0.894 (three cycles) could be imparted to the composite in MAF before failure whereas only a total true strain of 0.293 (one cycle) could be imparted to the AA6082 alloy.

Microstructural changes due to MAF are examined through SEM, EDS, and EBSD. After three MAF cycles, the composite exhibits a refined grain structure (154 μm to 52 μm) and a bimodal grain distribution. B_4C nanoparticle distribution improves with more MAF cycles. Dislocation density varies with cycles, influenced by dislocation annihilation and recovery. An intermetallic phase (Al_5FeSi) with a Chinese script pattern emerges with increasing strain. Crystallographic texture evolution correlates with observed variations in yield strength during MAF.

Keywords: Aluminium Matrix Composites, Ultrasonic Assisted Stir Casting, Optimization, Ultimate Compressive Strength, Failure Strain, Multi-Axial Forging, Finite Element Simulation, Strain Inhomogeneity, Microstructure, Crystallographic Texture.

सारांश

नैनोकण सुदृढीकरण के साथ एल्यूमीनियम मैट्रिक्स कंपोजिट (एएमसी) पारंपरिक एएमसी की तुलना में बेहतर यांत्रिक गुण प्रदर्शित करते हैं। स्टिर कास्टिंग, एएमसी के लिए व्यापक रूप से उपयोग की जाने वाली निर्माण पद्धति, नैनोकणों के एकत्रीकरण और खराब अस्थिरता जैसी चुनौतियों का सामना करती है। यह अध्ययन अल्ट्रासोनिक-असिस्टेड स्टिर कास्टिंग के माध्यम से विकसित AA6082/B₄C_p धातु मैट्रिक्स नैनोकम्पोजिट पर केंद्रित है, जिसमें सुदृढीकरण के रूप में B₄C नैनोकणों और Ti-आधारित फ्लक्स (K₂TiF₆) को शामिल किया गया है। अल्ट्रासोनिक कंपन, यांत्रिक स्टिरिंग के बाद लागू, एक कस्टम-निर्मित सेटअप का उपयोग करके नैनोकणों का समान वितरण सुनिश्चित करता है। द्वितीयक फेजेज (Al₃Ti, TiSi₂) का निर्माण मैट्रिक्स माइक्रोस्ट्रक्चर को संशोधित करता है और B₄C वेटेबिलिटी को बढ़ाता है। प्रसंस्करण तापमान, 'B₄C और K₂TiF₆' का प्रतिशत भार और कंपन समय और इन तीन मापदंडों के संयोग का प्रभाव मैकेनिकल गुणों पर चरित्रित किया गया है। बॉक्स बेनकेन डिज़ाइन और रिस्पांस सरफेस मेथडोलॉजी संतुलित संपीड़न शक्ति और विफलता तनाव के लिए मापदंडों का अनुकूलन करती है। आदर्श परिस्थितियों में, संपीड़न शक्ति में 22% सुधार और फ्रैक्चर तनाव में 144% की वृद्धि हासिल की जाती है, जिसमें महत्वपूर्ण दाना शोधन (342 माइक्रोन से 78 माइक्रोन) होता है।

एएमसी गुणों को और बढ़ाने के लिए, मल्टी-एक्सियल फोर्जिंग (एमएएफ), एक गंभीर प्लास्टिक विरूपण प्रक्रिया, लागू की जाती है। एमएएफ में सभी तीन प्रमुख अक्षों में अनुक्रमिक संपीड़न के अनुप्रयोग द्वारा एक सामग्री को बड़े प्लास्टिक तनाव के अधीन करना शामिल है। प्रत्येक दिशा में 0.1 (लगभग) का वास्तविक स्ट्रेन प्रदान किया गया, जिससे प्रत्येक चक्र में कुल प्रभावी स्ट्रेन 0.3 हो गया। इस प्रक्रिया को फाइनाइट एलिमेंट विधि का उपयोग करके भी अनुकरण किया गया है। फाइनाइट तत्व सिमुलेशन के माध्यम से केंद्र से सतह तक की विकृति असमानता का पूर्वानुमान किया गया है और यह प्रयोगात्मक रूप से निर्धारित माइक्रोहार्डनेस विविधता के साथ अच्छी तरह से संगत होता है। तनाव अमानवीयता कारक (आईएफ) चक्र 1 के बाद उच्चतम था और बाद में कम्पोजिट के लिए दूसरे और तीसरे चक्र में यह काफी कम हो गया। प्रत्येक पास के लिए एफई सिमुलेशन के माध्यम से अनुमानित अधिकतम भार मिश्र धातु और मिश्रित दोनों के लिए प्रयोगात्मक मूल्यों से अच्छी तरह सहमत है। एमएएफ प्रयोगों में, यह पाया गया कि विफलता से पहले एमएएफ में कम्पोजिट को 0.894 (तीन चक्र) का कुल वास्तविक तनाव प्रदान किया जा सकता था, जबकि AA6082 मिश्र धातु को केवल 0.293 (एक चक्र) का कुल वास्तविक तनाव प्रदान किया जा सकता था।

एमएएफ के कारण होने वाले सूक्ष्म संरचनात्मक परिवर्तनों की जांच एसईएम, ईडीएस और ईबीएसडी के माध्यम से जांचा गया है। तीन एमएएफ चक्रों के बाद, कम्पोजिट एक परिष्कृत दाना संरचना ($154\ \mu\text{m}$ से $52\ \mu\text{m}$) और एक द्विमोडल दाना वितरण प्रदर्शित करता है। अधिक एमएएफ चक्रों के साथ बी4सी नैनोकण वितरण में सुधार होता है। अव्यवस्था का घनत्व चक्रों के साथ बदलता रहता है, जो अव्यवस्था के विनाश और पुनर्प्राप्ति से प्रभावित होता है। चीनी लिपि पैटर्न के साथ एक इंटरमेटेलिक चरण (Al_5FeSi) बढ़ते तनाव के साथ उभरता है। क्रिस्टलोग्राफिक बनावट का विकास एमएएफ के दौरान उपज शक्ति में देखी गई विविधताओं से संबंधित है।

मुख्य शब्द: एल्यूमिनियम मैट्रिक्स कंपोजिट, अल्ट्रासोनिक असिस्टेड स्टिर कास्टिंग, ऑप्टिमाइजेशन, अल्टीमेट कंप्रेसिव स्ट्रेंथ, फेल्योर स्ट्रेन, मल्टी-एक्सियल फोर्जिंग, परिमित तत्व सिमुलेशन, स्ट्रेन इनहोमोजेनिटी, माइक्रोस्ट्रक्चर, क्रिस्टलोग्राफिक टेक्सचर।

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CERTIFICATE.....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
सारांश	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xi
LIST OF TABLES	xvi
ABBREVIATIONS.....	xvii
NOMENCLATURE	xix
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Aluminium Matrix Composites (AMCs)	1
1.2 Advantages and Applications.....	2
1.3 Processing Techniques to Develop Aluminium Matrix Composites	3
1.3.1 Liquid State Techniques	4
1.3.2 Solid-State Processing Techniques.....	8
1.3.3 Two-Phase Technique	10
1.4 Limitations of AMCs	11
1.5 Enhancement of Mechanical Properties by Severe Plastic Deformation (SPD).....	12
1.5.1 Equal Channel Angular Pressing (ECAP).....	14
1.5.2 High-Pressure Torsion (HPT).....	15
1.5.3 Multi-Axial Forging (MAF).....	16
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT WORK	19
2.1 Processing Methods of Aluminium Matrix Composites	19
2.2 Multi-axial Forging (MAF) of Aluminium Alloys	33
2.3 Severe Plastic Deformation (SPD) of AMCs.....	43
2.4 Multidirectional Forging of Aluminium Matrix Composites.....	44
2.5 Research Gaps, Motivation and Objectives	44
CHAPTER 3: MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY	47
3.1 Selection of Materials.....	47
3.2 Development of Setup for Ultrasonic Assisted Stir Casting	48

3.3	Development of AA6082/B ₄ C _p Composite through Ultrasonic-assisted Stir Casting	55
3.3.1	Design of Experiments	56
3.4	Multi-Axial Forging	59
3.4.1	FE Simulation of Multi-Axial Forging.....	59
3.4.2	Multi-Axial Forging Setup	61
3.4.3	Multi-Axial Forging Experiments	65
3.5	Material Characterization	66
3.5.1	Dynamic Light Scattering.....	66
3.5.2	Microstructural Analysis	68
3.5.3	Mechanical Properties	71
CHAPTER 4: OPTIMIZATION OF PROCESS PARAMETERS IN ULTRASONIC-ASSISTED STIR CASTING OF AA6082/B ₄ C _p COMPOSITES.....		75
4.1	Mechanical Properties.....	75
4.2	ANOVA Analysis	77
4.3	Effect of Process Parameters on UCS and Failure Strain	79
4.3.1	Effect of Processing Temperature	82
4.3.2	Effect of Ultrasonic Vibration Time.....	83
4.3.3	Effect of wt% of B ₄ C/Ti.....	85
4.4	Optimization of Process Parameters	88
4.5	Microstructural Characterization at Optimized Parameters	90
4.6	Summary	92
CHAPTER 5: MULTI-AXIAL FORGING OF AA6082 ALLOY AND AA6082/B ₄ C _p COMPOSITE.....		95
5.1	Material Model for FE Simulation of MAF	95
5.2	Prediction of Strain Distribution in MAF Samples of AA6082 and AA6082/B ₄ C Composite.....	99
5.2.1	AA6082 Alloy	99
5.2.2	AA6082/B ₄ C Composite	101
5.3	Inhomogeneity Factor	103
5.4	Experimental Validation of Plastic Strain and Peak Load in MAF	105
5.4.1	AA6082 Alloy	105
5.4.2	AA6082/B ₄ C Composite	107
5.5	Summary	110

CHAPTER 6: MICROSTRUCTURAL EVOLUTION AND MECHANICAL PROPERTIES DURING MULTI-AXIAL FORGING OF AA6082/B ₄ C COMPOSITE	113
6.1 Microstructural Evolution During Multi-Axial Forging	113
6.2 Distribution of B ₄ C Nanoparticles During MAF	117
6.3 Dislocation Density through Kernel Average Misorientation (KAM) Map	118
6.4 Evolution of Secondary Phases During MAF	121
6.5 Effect of MAF on Compressive Properties of AA6082 /B ₄ C Composite	122
6.6 Crystallographic Texture Evolution During MAF	124
6.7 Summary	126
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND SCOPE FOR THE FUTURE WORK	129
7.1 Conclusions	129
7.2 Scope of Future Work	131
REFERENCES	133

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1 Building blocks of metal matrix composite.....	1
Figure 1.2 Some examples of products made using AMCs: (a) Rotating blade sleeves used in a helicopter [2], (b) Car disk brake [4], (c) Diesel engine piston [4], and (d) Recreational products [2]	3
Figure 1.3 Classification of processing techniques to develop aluminium matrix composites	4
Figure 1.4 Schematic diagram of (a) stir casting [13], (b) squeeze casting [14], and (c) spray casting [15].....	8
Figure 1.5 Process steps in powder metallurgy [17]	9
Figure 1.6 Schematic diagram of friction stir processing [22]	10
Figure 1.7 Schematic diagram of compocasting [24]	11
Figure 1.8 Schematic diagram of equal channel angular pressing process [54]	15
Figure 1.9 Schematic diagram of high-pressure torsion [56]	16
Figure 1.10 Schematic diagram of multi-axial forging.....	16
Figure 2.1 Fractured surfaces of (a) Al–20 vol.% SiC, (b) Al–20 vol.% Al ₂ O ₃ and (c) Al–13 vol.% B ₄ C [68].....	22
Figure 2.2 Stress–strain curves from compression tests on nanocomposite samples with 1% (S1n) , 2% (S2n) and 3% (S3n) nano Al ₂ O ₃ particles [72]	23
Figure 2.3 SEM micrographs of 5wt.% composite sample fabricated by different processes: (a) untreated; (b) stirred at 200 rpm and gravity die cast; (c) stirred at 200 rpm and injection molded; (d) stirred at 200 rpm with heat treated powder and injection molded; (e) stirred at 300 rpm heat treated powder and injection molded; and (f) stirred at 450 rpm heat treated powder and injection molded [72]	26
Figure 2.4 (a) Schematic of an ultrasonic vibration-assisted stir casting system and (b) Impeller attachment [81]	27
Figure 2.5 Model of a spherical particle in molten metal [84]	32
Figure 2.6 Tensile stress-strain curves of Al–B ₄ C microcomposites and Al–B ₄ C	33
Figure 2.7 Stress-strain curves of (a) solution treated, and (b) over-aged specimens of Al–Cu–Mg alloy during forging. Each segment is one hit/pass of MDF [97]	34
Figure 2.8 Schematic diagram showing three deformation zones in a free forging process [100]	36

Figure 2.9 (a) Variation of hardness and (b) tensile stress strain curves at room temperature forging (RTF) and warm forming (WF) of an Al-Mg-Si alloy [59]	38
Figure 2.10 (a) Image quality map, (b) Inverse poles figure map, (c) Image quality map superimposed with grain boundary map of RTF-AlMgSi alloy processed at 2 cycles [59]	38
Figure 2.11 (a) Image quality map, (b) Inverse poles figure map, (c) Image quality map superimposed with grain boundary map of RTF-AlMgSi alloy processed at 6 cycles [59]	39
Figure 2.12 (a) Image quality map, (b) Inverse poles figure map, (c) Image quality map superimposed with grain boundary map of RTF-AlMgSi alloy processed at 2 cycles [59]	39
Figure 2.13 (a) Image quality map, (b) Inverse poles figure map, (c) Image quality map superimposed with grain boundary map of RTF-AlMgSi alloy processed at 6 cycles [59]	40
Figure 2.14 (a) Variation of Vickers hardness for the RTF-1 to RTF-6 samples and (b) Stress-strain curves for the RTF-1(center) and RTF-6 (surface) sample [28]	40
Figure 2.15 Orientation distribution function (ODF) maps showing standard texture components in FCC metals with $\phi_2 = 0^\circ$, 45° , and 65° sections [28]	42
Figure 2.16 ϕ_2 at 0° , 45° , and 65° sections of orientation distribution function (ODF) maps of (a) RTF-6, (b) RTF-5, (c) RTF-4, (d) RTF-3, (e) RTF-2, and (f) RTF- 1 samples [28]	42
Figure 3.1 Experimental setup for ultrasonic-assisted stir casting	49
Figure 3.2 Design of stepped horn.....	51
Figure 3.3 Modal analysis of stepped horn at 20 kHz frequency at three different instances in FE simulation: (a) start, (b) intermediate, and (c) end.....	52
Figure 3.4 Modal analysis of stepped horn at 18.63 kHz frequency at three different instances in FE simulation: (a) start, (b) intermediate, and (c) end.....	53
Figure 3.5 (a) Metallic mold used for casting (b) Heating system used in mold.....	54
Figure 3.6 Process steps in ultrasonic assisted stir casting	56
Figure 3.7 Cast samples of AA6082 alloy and AA6082/B ₄ C composite	56
Figure 3.8 (a) Central composite design, and (b) Box-Behnken design, for three factors [107]	58
Figure 3.9 FE model used for MAF simulation in QFORM.....	61
Figure 3.10 Setup used for multi-axial forging.....	62

Figure 3.11 Details of die design used for multi-axial forging.....	63
Figure 3.12 Circuit design for data acquisition system in LabVIEW	64
Figure 3.13 User interface of LabVIEW for data acquisition.....	64
Figure 3.14 (a) as-cast AA6082 sample, (b) as-cast composite sample, (c) MAFed AA6082 sample after 2 nd pass of 2 nd cycle, and (d) MAFed composite sample after 1st pass of 4 th cycle.....	66
Figure 3.15 Size distribution of B ₄ C particles from DLS test	68
Figure 3.16 SEM image and EDS mapping of B ₄ C particles.....	70
Figure 3.17 (a) Universal testing machine (UTM) and (b) Fixture used for uniaxial compression tests	72
Figure 3.18 Samples used in uniaxial compression tests- (a) before the test, and (b) after the test	73
Figure 4.1 (a) Main effects plot, (b) Contour plots of interaction, and (c) Contribution of each parameter for UCS	80
Figure 4.2 (a) Main effects plots, (b) Contour plots of interaction, and (c) Contribution of each parameter for ϵ_f	81
Figure 4.3 Schematic diagram showing wettability of a solid in liquid	83
Figure 4.4 Comparison of SEM images of AA6082/B ₄ C composite processed at two different (a,b) temperatures (a,c) vibration time (d,e) wt% of B ₄ C/Ti	86
Figure 4.5 XRD pattern showing different phases formed after.....	87
Figure 4.6 Optimization plots showing the variation of objective functions with change in process parameters	89
Figure 4.7 Engg. stress- engg. strain curve of the AMC fabricated with the optimum set of process parameters	90
Figure 4.8 SEM image of AA6082 alloy sample.....	91
Figure 4.9 XRD patterns of samples of AA6082 alloy and the nanocomposite fabricated with optimized parameters	91
Figure 4.10 SEM images and elemental mapping (through EDS) of AA6082/B ₄ C nanocomposite sample fabricated with optimized parameters	92
Figure 5.1 Comparison of flow curves predicted by different hardening models with experimental data for (a) AA6082 and (b) AA6082/B ₄ C	98

Figure 5.2 Plastic strain distribution at the mid-plane after (a) pass 1, (b) pass 2, and (c) pass 3 and along the line from the centre to surface in vertical, horizontal and diagonal directions after (d) pass 1, (e) pass 2, and (f) pass 3 for AA6082.....	100
Figure 5.3 Correlation of strain and hardness after pass 3 in MAF of AA6082.....	101
Figure 5.4 Plastic strain distribution at the mid-plane after (a) cycle 1, (b) cycle 2, and (c) cycle 3 and along the line from the centre to surface in vertical, horizontal, and diagonal directions after (d) cycle 1, (e) cycle 2, and (f) cycle 3 for AA6082/B ₄ C composite	102
Figure 5.5 Strain and hardness distribution from the centre to surface in the last compression direction after (a) cycle 1, (b) cycle 2, and (c) cycle 3	103
Figure 5.6 Variation of inhomogeneity factor for hardness and strain with number of cycles	104
Figure 5.7 Undeformed sample and MAFed sample after cycle 1 of AA6082 alloy	105
Figure 5.8 Load- displacement curves in different passes of MAF for AA6082 obtained from (a) simulation, and (b) experiments	106
Figure 5.9 Undeformed sample and MAFed samples after each cycle of AA6082/B ₄ C composite	107
Figure 5.10 Load- displacement curves for AA6082/B ₄ C composite in different passes of MAF:.....	109
Figure 6.1 Image quality (IQ) map of AA6082/B ₄ C composite: (a) the undeformed sample, and MAFed samples after (b) cycle 1, (c) cycle 2, and (d) cycle 3	115
Figure 6.2 Distribution of misorientation angle in AA6082/B ₄ C composite: (a) the undeformed sample, and MAFed sample after (b) cycle 1, (c) cycle 2, and (d) cycle 3	116
Figure 6.3 Grain structure evolution of AA6082/B ₄ C composite: (a) the undeformed sample, and MAFed sample after (b) cycle 1, (c) cycle 2, and (d) cycle 3	117
Figure 6.4 Distribution of B ₄ C nano particles in AA6082/B ₄ C composite: (a) the undeformed sample, and MAFed sample after (b) cycle 1, (c) cycle 2, and (d) cycle 3.....	118
Figure 6.5 Kernel average misorientation maps of the undeformed sample and MAFed samples after each cycle.....	119
Figure 6.6 Kernel Average Misorientation (KAM) fraction distribution in (a) undeformed sample, MAFed sample after (b) cycle 1, (c) cycle 2, and (d) cycle 3	120

Figure 6.7 SEM image of the composite (a) in undeformed condition, (b) after cycle 3 (at surface), (c) after cycle 3 (at centre), and (d) EDS line mapping of the precipitate pattern formed after 3 cycles of MAF.....	122
Figure 6.8 Engg. stress- strain curves of AA6082 /B ₄ C composite (a) before MAF, (b) after cycle 1 of MAF, (b) after cycle 2 of MAF, and (b) after cycle 3 of MAF.....	123
Figure 6.9 Crystal orientations and fiber texture in an FCC material in (111) pole figure [139]	124
Figure 6.10 (001), (111), (110) pole figures of AA6082/B ₄ C composite after (a) 0, (b) 1, (c) 2, and (d) 3 cycles of MAF	126

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1 Contact angle between liquid aluminium and particles of various ceramic materials	30
Table 3.1 Chemical composition of AA6082	47
Table 3.2 Material properties of titanium	51
Table 3.3 Levels of process parameters used in the design of ultrasonic-assisted stir-casting experiments	58
Table 4.1 Responses obtained from uniaxial compression tests of AA6082/B ₄ C nanocomposites.....	76
Table 4.2 Analysis of variance (ANOVA) for UCS of AA6082/B ₄ C nanocomposites	77
Table 4.3 Analysis of variance (ANOVA) for failure strain of AA6082/B ₄ C nanocomposites	78
Table 4.4 ASTM average grain size at different process parameters (processing temp.+ %wt B ₄ C/K ₂ TiF ₆ + vib. time)	82
Table 4.5 Optimum process parameters obtained to maximize UCS and failure strain	89
Table 5.1 Flow stress models and the material constants	96
Table 5.2 Minimum SSE and corresponding R ² for different flow stress models.....	97
Table 5.3 Calculation of true strain in each pass of MAF of AA6082	105
Table 5.4 Peak load after each pass of MAF of AA6082 obtained from simulation and experiment.....	107
Table 5.5 Calculation of true strain in each pass of MAF of AA6082/B ₄ C composite.....	108
Table 5.6 Peak load in the last pass of each cycle for AA6082/B ₄ C composite.....	110
Table 6.1 Variation of microstructural parameters during MAF	121
Table 6.2 Variation of mechanical properties during MAF	124

NOMENCLATURE

Hv- Vicker's hardness

T_m- Melting Temperature

σ_y - Yield Strength

σ_0 - Overall lattice resistance to dislocation movement

K_{hp} - Hall-Petch Constant

d - Grain Size

Φ - Inner Die Angle

Ψ - Outer Die Angle

ε - Strain applied in each pass

vol.%- Volume Percentage

wt.%- Weight Percentage

θ - Contact Angle

K_h - Mass Matrix

M_h - Mass Matrix

ω_i - Natural Frequency of Ith Mode Shape

u_i - ith Eigenvector (Mode Shape)

k- Number of Factors/ Variables

Y- Response Variable

n- Number of Variables

β_i , β_{ii} and β_{ij} - Coefficients of Linear, Square, and Interacting terms

X_i and X_j- Independent Variables or Factors

ε - Random Error

m- Interface Friction Factor

τ - Shear Stress

σ_T - Flow Stress

σ_n - Normal Contact Pressure

ε_1 - True Strain in Height for 1st Pass

ε_2 - True Strain in Height for 2nd Pass

ε_3 - True Strain in Height for 3rd Pass

h_f and h_0 - Final and Initial Dimensions of the Sample in the Direction of Compression

$\bar{\varepsilon}$ - Effective Strain

ε_f - Failure Strain

σ_{lv} - Surface Energy of Al Melt in Vapour Phase

σ_{sv} - Surface Energy of Reinforcement Particles in Vapour Phase

σ_{sl} - Surface Energy of The Particle in Liquid

u - Maximum Velocity of Acoustic Streaming

f - Frequency of Ultrasonic Vibration

a - Amplitude of Vibration

σ - True Stress

K - Strength Coefficient

ϵ - True Strain

n - Strain Hardening Index

A, B, C, K, ϵ_0 - Material Constants

h_i - Initial Thickness

h_f - Final Thickness

Δh - Change in Thickness

e - Engineering Strain

ρ_{GND} - Dislocation Density

μ - Step Size of EBSD Acquisition Process

b - Burgers Vector of the Material

ABBREVIATIONS

AMCs- Aluminium Matrix Composites

ANOVA- Analysis of Variance

ARB- Accumulative Roll Bonding

BBD- Box Behnken Design

CCD- Central Composite Design

CG- Coarse-grained

CNT- Containing Carbon Nanotubes

DLS- Dynamic Light Scattering

DoE- Design of Experiment

DRX- Dynamic Recrystallization

EBSD- Electron Backscatter Diffraction

ECAP- Equal Channel Angular Pressing

ECAP- Equal Channel Angular Pressing

ECAP- Equal Channel Angular Pressing

EDS- Energy-Dispersive X-Ray Spectroscopy

EDX- Energy Dispersive X-ray

FCC- Face Centered Cubic

FE- Finite Element

GPB- Guinier–Preston–Bagaryatsky

GRG- Generalized Reduced Gradient

HAGBs- High-Angle Grain Boundaries

HIP- Hot Isostatic Pressing

HMI- Human Machine Interface

HPT- High-Pressure Torsion

HPT- High-Pressure Torsion

IF- Inhomogeneity Factor

IPF- Inverse Pole Figure

IQ- Image Quality

KAM- Kernel Average Misorientation

LAGBs- Low Angle Grain Boundaries

MAF- Multi-axial Forging

MAF- Multi-Axial Forging

MCC- Multiple Constrained Compression

MDF- Multi-Directional Forging

MMCs- Metal Matrix Composites

NI- National Instruments

ODF- Orientation Distribution Function

ODF- orientation distribution function

PCS- Photon Correlation Spectroscopy

PDI- Polydispersity Index

PID- Proportional–Integral–Derivative

PM- Powder Metallurgy

QELS- Quasi-Elastic Light Scattering

RPRF- Repetitive Press Roll Forming

RSM- Response Surface Methodology

RTF- Room Temperature Forging

SEM- Scanning Electron Microscope

SFE- Stacking Fault Energy

SL- Semisolid-liquid

SPD- Severe Plastic Deformation

SS- Semisolid-semisolid

SSE- Sum of Square of Errors

TEM- Transmission Electron Microscope

UCS- Ultimate Compressive Strength

UFG- Ultrafine-grained

UTM- Universal Testing Machine

UTS- Ultimate Tensile Strength

UV- Ultrasonic Vibration

WF- Warm Forging

XRD- X-Ray Diffraction

YS- Yield Strength