

Novel Dragonfly-assisted Black Widow Optimization Strategy to Enhance Si₃N₄ Wear Performance

Dr. Raman Batra¹, Daljeet Pal Singh², Dr. Shweta Loonkar³,
Kantharaj Inbaraj⁴

¹Executive Vice President, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Noida Institute of Engineering and Technology, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India, Email Id- ramanbatra@niet.co.in

²Assistant Professor, Maharishi School of Engineering & Technology, Maharishi University of Information Technology, Uttar Pradesh, India, Email Id- daljeetpalsingh1768@gmail.com, Orcid Id- 0009-0002-8391-7289.

³Assistant Professor, Department of ISME, ATLAS SkillTech University, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India, Email Id- , shweta.loonkar@atlasuniversity.edu.in, Orcid Id- 0000-0001-8227-5937.

⁴Assistant Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering and Technology, JAIN (Deemed-to-be University), Ramanagara District, Karnataka - 562112, India, Email Id- , kantharaj@jainuniversity.ac.in, Orcid Id-0000-0001-9497-0865.

Rebuilding injured joints with appropriate substitute materials is an important requirement for treating individuals with arthritis. Aseptic loosening is a major problem due to the wear particle production that occurs during movement in artificial joints. Finding materials with the least amount of wear volume loss is the goal of biotribology research to increase joint longevity. One ceramic material that shows promise as a substitute for hip and knee replacements is silicon nitride (Si₃N₄). As a solid lubricant additive, Hexagonal Boron Nitride (hBN) may improve Si₃N₄ wear performance. With the goal of minimizing wear volume loss (WVL), this research evaluates the ideal load and hBN volume percentage in Si₃N₄. A mathematical model is informed by the experiments, which are carried out using the Design of Experiments (DoE) - Taguchi approach. In order to find the ideal hBN % for minimising wear volume loss against an Alumina (Al₂O₃) counterface, the model is processed by Dragonfly-assisted Black Widow Optimisation (DA-BWO). Taguchi technique finds 12 N load and 6% hBN volume, but DA-BWO optimization offers 10.632% hBN volume and 9.75 N load to minimise wear volume loss of Si₃N₄.

Keywords: Si₃N₄, Hexagonal Boron Nitride (hBN), Design of Experiments (DoE), Taguchi Method, Dragonfly-assisted Black Widow Optimisation (DA-BWO).

1. Introduction

Silicon nitride (Si₃N₄) is a versatile and promising ceramic with remarkable mechanical and thermal characteristics in the field of advanced materials. Si₃N₄, which is widely used in many different sectors, has proven to be a dependable choice for applications demanding robust wear resistance (Heimann 2021). As industries strive for enhanced performance, the current emphasis in research and development endeavors is directed toward optimizing the wear performance of Si₃N₄ (Li et al 2021). Silicon nitride is widely recognized for its exceptional hardness, strength, and resistance to thermal shock, making it a material of choice for diverse applications ranging from precision bearings in industrial equipment to state-of-the-art aircraft components. Due to contemporary engineering and technology, its wear resistance must be improved (Ouyang et al 2022). Si₃N₄ wear performance is improved by integrating material science, surface engineering, and nanotechnology (Ramezani et al 2023). To increase Si₃N₄'s mechanical properties, researchers are exploring new grain boundaries and composition changes. Pressure less sintering and hot isostatic pressing need careful observation to change the material's structure for wear resistance (Benito et al 2021). To improve Si₃N₄ wear performance, surface modification approaches are becoming more common. Si₃N₄ is coated with protective material thin layers using cutting-edge PVD and CVD methods. These coatings prevent wear and extend Si₃N₄ component life in demanding circumstances (Kaloyeros et al 2020). Nanotechnology is quickly developing nanoparticle integration into Si₃N₄ matrices to create wear-resistant nanocomposites (Siripongpreda et al 2022). By including nanoscale reinforcements, such as carbides or nitrides, Si₃N₄ may gain toughness and hardness, strengthening its resistance to abrasion and wear. The pursuit of enhancing the wear performance of Si₃N₄ remains an active and evolving field, driven by continuous changes in industries and the demand for materials capable of withstanding harsh environments (Zhai et al 2021). Xing et al(2022) optimized the tribological characteristics of Si₃N₄/TiC ceramics by examining the effects of wear efficiency, adhesion, and friction through the combined use of DLC coatings and dimpled surface textures. DLC coatings are deposited used plasma-enhanced chemical vapor deposition, while surface patterns in the form of dimples are produced on Si₃N₄/TiC ceramics using a nanosecond laser. The results of the study show that Si₃N₄/TiC ceramics have much improved wear and friction characteristics; the most notable improvement is shown when DLC coatings are paired with dimpled textures.

Rondinella et al(2019) surface pre-oxidation affects silicon nitride (Si₃N₄) ceramic wear in prosthetic femoral heads made of “ultra-high molecular weight polyethylene (UHMWPE)” in dry and moist settings. Held controlled studies on Si₃N₄ceramic heads and UHMWPE spherical pins to investigate how surface pre-oxidation impacts wear and degradation. Pre-oxidizing Si₃N₄heads form a silica and orthosilicate layer in the lubricated tribolayer, enhancing Si₃N₄/UHMWPE couple performance and reducing UHMWPE oxidation under wet conditions. Since it was conditional, the study may not fully reflect prosthetic hip joint application issues. Wang et al(2022) Si₃N₄ceramics with tungsten particles (0 and 5 vol%) wear resistance. Gas pressure sintering produced commercial Si₃N₄ceramic balls for wear testing. The tribo-film is formed by rubbing exfoliated and oxidized tungsten particles. Tungsten particles cut abrasive, oxidative, and surface fatigue better than monolithic Si₃N₄. Wear rate decreased tenfold, from 4.70×10^{-6} to 3.78×10^{-7} mm³ N⁻¹•m⁻¹. Tungsten

particles cut abrasive, oxidative, and surface fatigue better than monolithic Si₃N₄. Oguntuyi et al (2022) investigated the silicon nitride affects the mechanical properties, sinterability, densification, & wear behavior of composites made of (TiB₂-10%SiC) and (TiB₂-80%SiC). Adjust the Si₃N₄ percentages, examine the microstructure, and take measurements of the hardness, fracture toughness, and density. Examine the resultant composites' wear characteristics. With 2.5% Si₃N₄, TiB₂-20SiC composite reached its ideal characteristics, showing increased wear resistance. Density and hardness were decreased in composites with higher Si₃N₄(5%). Lin et al (2021) effort aimed to add a Si₃N₄@MoS₂ core-shell structure to epoxy resin/polyacrylate interpenetrating polymer network (IPN) composite coating to increase its resilience to abuse and corrosion. A composite coating, including the Si₃N₄@MoS₂ core-shell structure, was applied. Experiments were conducted to assess corrosion resistance and wear. Si₃N₄@MoS₂ core-shell structure efficacy was shown by the composite coating, which offered improved wear and corrosion resistance. Tan et al (2020) explored optimizing phase composition and microstructure leads to the creation of a high-performance silicon nitride (Si₃N₄) ceramic cutting tool. 4.9 wt% to 49.7 wt% of varying α -Si₃N₄ concentration in the Si₃N₄ ceramic tool tested cast iron for continuous cutting and evaluated its hardness. Tool life increased from around 1200 m to approximately 2400 m when the α - Si₃N₄ concentration was greater, which is explained by better adhesive and abrasive wear resistance. Reduced fracture toughness caused by a higher α - Si₃N₄ concentration increased the likelihood of chipping. Enhanced performance is achieved by reinforcing with an elongated β - Si₃N₄ phase.

Liu et al (2022) improved high-temperature ceramic tribological characteristics to reduce wear and friction in operating mechanical systems. At 800 °C, SEM, TEM, and Raman spectra on worn surfaces studied the tribological properties of a Sn-containing Si₃N₄-based composite. At 800 °C in air, the composite exhibits outstanding tribological characteristics, with friction coefficient as well as wear rate decreased to 0.27 and 4.88×10^{-6} mm³ N⁻¹ m⁻¹. Also identified the wear process at different temperatures and tribo-driven graphitization on worn surfaces and debris with carbon. Pulse-current electroplating Ni-Co-P/ Si₃N₄ composite coatings on Al-Si substrates improves adhesion (Li et al 2022). Measure microstructure, mechanical, and tribology. Rapid Ni-Co intermediate layer deposition via pulse-current electroplating. Assessed mechanical and tribological properties and microstructure. Highly crystalline Ni-Co solid, P, and 7.65% Si₃N₄ composite coating. Doubled Al-Si hardness. Very good anti-wear performance in dry and lubricated circumstances. Limited to electroplated coatings; need further research for particular applications and durability. Li et al (2021) examined how silicon nanoparticles affected the time water-lubricated Si₃N₄ ceramics required to operate. Using a scanning electron microscope and an optical microscope, examine ceramic wear surfaces at various phases of experimentation. Examine running-in “coefficient of friction (COF)” patterns. On the worn surface, nanoparticles produce a homogenous layer that dynamically covers and balances it. Despite considerable successes, there is a lack of knowledge of the nanoparticle running-in period reduction process. Llorente et al (2020) tribological behaviour of Si₃N₄ ceramics utilising a two-step method that includes SiCn composites and graphene-based fillers. Create Si₃N₄/SiC composites with different SiCn concentrations and then add 11 vol.% of GNPs or rGOs. Conduct testing using isooctane lubricant and in dry circumstances. Si₃N₄/SiCn composites may lower friction coefficient and wear rate up to 22% and 40%, respectively.

rGOs composite has a 50% decrease in friction and a 44% increase in wear resistance. The study's focus was restricted to Si₃N₄ ceramics, and more research may be required for wider applications and materials.

The goal is to improve the wear performance of Si₃N₄ materials by creating a new Black Widow Optimisation Strategy with the help of Dragonflies. This novel method achieves exceptional durability by combining black widow and dragonfly biomimicry, offering a special and practical way to maximise Si₃N₄ wear resistance.

2. Methodology

Experiments were conducted utilizing the DoE - Taguchi method then a model based on mathematics was established. Subsequently, Dragonfly-Assisted Black Widow Optimization (DA-BWO) was applied to the developed model to determine the ideal hBN content in Si₃N₄, with the goal of reducing wear volume loss in comparison to an Al₂O₃ (alumina) counterface.

2.1 Dragonfly-assisted Black Widow Optimization (DA-BWO)

The study uses Dragonfly-assisted Black Widow Optimization to examine the wear performance of Si₃N₄, a silicon nitride ceramic. This novel method optimizes the wear properties of Si₃N₄ by integrating bio-inspired algorithms that imitate the hunting habits of dragonflies and black widows. The study intends to improve the wear resistance and durability of the material by utilizing the synergies between biological inspiration and computer optimization. Dragonfly-assisted Black Widow Optimization presents a new and possibly useful approach to improve Si₃N₄ wear performance in various industrial settings. Dragonfly Algorithm (DA) is a population-based metaheuristic algorithm that simulates dragonfly hunting and migration. Dragonflies hunt in tiny groups in a static swarm that mimics nature. The algorithm's optimization process is reflected in bigger dragonfly groups' coordinated movement, forming a dynamic swarm.

2.1.1 Dragonflies swarm using five operators

Separation makes search agents apart throughout the neighborhood. The mathematical model of separation behavior is provided in Equation (1).

$$S_j = \sum_{i=1}^n y - y_i \quad (1)$$

Alignment compares the velocity of a search agent to peers in the vicinity. Mathematical modeling of alignment behavior is illustrated in Equation (2).

$$A_j = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n V_i}{n} \quad (2)$$

Cohesion refers to the movement of persons from the neighborhood to the center of mass. Individuals tend to gravitate towards the nearby center of mass. Cohesion is modeled mathematically in Equation (3).

$$C_j = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n y_i}{n} - y \quad (3)$$

The term "attraction" refers to how the food supply draws the individuals who fly towards it. Equation (4) depicts the mathematical description of this phenomenon.

$$F_j = F_{loc} - y \tag{4}$$

where F_{loc} denotes the location of the food supply.

Individuals' tendency to flee from an enemy is referred to as distraction. Equation (5) mathematically models the diversion between the j^{th} solution and the adversary.

$$E_j = E_{loc} - y \tag{5}$$

Where E_{loc} represents the enemy's location.

Using the candidate with the greatest fitness, the fitness of the food source and location are updated throughout the search process in DA. Furthermore, the poorest candidate updates the opponent's fitness and location. This causes a shift toward good search locations and away from bad search areas.

A novel and fascinating meta-heuristic technique for complex numerical optimization problems is Black Widow Optimization (BWO). BWO is an evolutionary algorithm like Genetic Algorithms. BWO follows selection, reproduction, and mutation but adds criteria inspired by black widow spider mating behavior. BWO, inspired by Darwin's theory of natural selection and stressing descent with modification, outperforms evolutionary algorithms in difficult tasks. BWO is a powerful approach for handling optimization problems with many local optima due to its fast convergence and local optima avoidance. Figure 1 flowchart shows the algorithm's careful mix of exploration and exploitation.

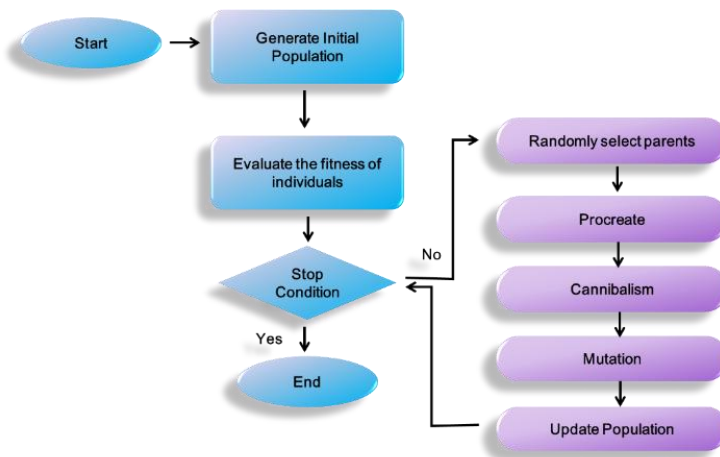


Figure 1 Structure of BWO [Source: Author]

2.1.2 Description of BWO key steps

Initializing: The population in this phase consists of widows, each represented as a $1 \times N_{var}$ array (widow = $(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_{N_{var}})$), where N_{var} is the optimization problem dimension. The procedure requires N_{var} threshold values, and x_i is the i -th candidate solution. Our suggested technique evaluates the fitness function (fitness = $f(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_{N_{var}})$) to

calculate each widow's fitness. Otsu Equation 6 or Kapur Equation 7 can be substituted. To start the optimization process, a spider population is randomly initialized in a $N_{pop} \times N_{var}$ matrix. Then, pairs of parents are randomly picked for reproduction, and the female black widow consumes the male during or after mating.

$$f_{Otsu} (TH) = \max (\sigma_b^2(th)) \quad (6)$$

$$f_{Kapur} (TH) = \sum_{j=1}^k h_j \quad (7)$$

Pro-Create: A random widow array with numerical values and an alpha (α) array are formed during the procreation process. The offspring is formed using α and Equation 8, with parents A_1 and A_2 and offspring B_1 and B_2 . For subsequent study, the crossover result is analyzed and stored.

$$B_1 = \alpha \times A_1 + (1 - \alpha) \times A_2 \text{ and } B_2 = \alpha \times A_2 + (1 - \alpha) \times A_1 \quad (8)$$

Cannibalization: Spiders consume their mothers, although cannibalism can be sexual, sibling, or other. A variable named pop2 stores the new population after cannibalism.

Mutations: The mutation process is carried out by selecting the Mutepop number of individuals from the population that will be modified. Each of the solutions suggested swaps two array members at random. Following the application of mutation, the new population is assessed and stored in the new population, pop3. Finally, the new population may be produced by combining pop3 and pop2, which is sorted to yield the best widow of threshold values with Nvar dimension.

Dragonfly-assisted Black Widow Optimization (DA-BWO) is a hybrid metaheuristic algorithm that combines the capabilities of the Dragonfly Algorithm (DA) and Black Widow Optimization (BWO) to improve the optimization process. The coordinated movement of dragonfly swarms from DA is included in this hybrid technique to direct the exploration and exploitation stages of BWO. Separation, alignment, cohesion, attraction, and distraction operators from DA impact the creation and behavior of the black widow population in BWO. The synergistic combination of these algorithms takes the use of dragonfly exploring skills and black widow spider convergence and local optima avoidance, resulting in a robust and efficient optimization process. The hybrid method's mathematical formulation Equation 9 is follows:

$$w_j^{(t+1)} = \beta \times DA (w_j^{(t)}) + (1 - \beta) \times BWO(w_j^{(t)}) \quad (9)$$

Where $w_j^{(t+1)}$ reflects the modified solution for the i -th widow at iteration $t + 1$, $DA (w_j^{(t)})$ and $BWO(w_j^{(t)})$ are the solutions given by the Dragonfly method and Black Widow Optimization for widow i at iteration t , respectively, and β is a weighting parameter that specifies the effect of each method on the hybrid solution. This method seeks to use the complementary qualities of DA and BWO to enhance optimization performance across a wide variety of complicated numerical problems. Table 1 illustrates the best values for each component in the DA-BWO simulation, demonstrating the effectiveness of the method. Meanwhile, the optimum fitness plot is shown in Figure 2, which provides a graphic depiction of the optimization process and demonstrates the algorithm's effectiveness in

identifying the best options. Table 1 and 2 illustrates the optimal force and % volume of hBN, DA-BWO and Taguchi analysis minimise Si₃N₄ wear volume loss against an aluminium counter face.

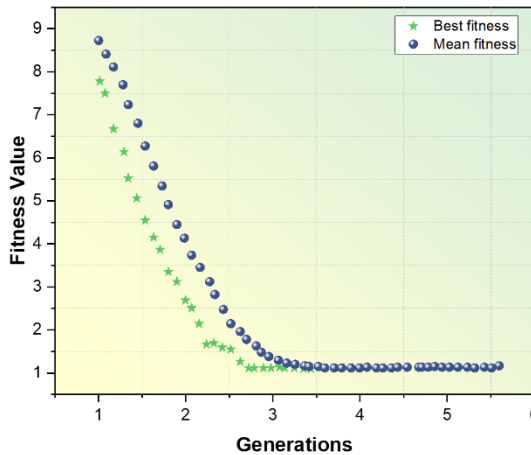


Figure 2 Optimal performance graph [Source: Author]

Table 1 Optimal parameter setting and Performance measure [Source: Author]

Force(N)	Volume of hBN %	Performance Metric-WVL (mm ³ /m)
9.75	10.632	0.00752

Table 2 Optimal settings and associated Wear Volume Loss (WVL) [Source: Author]

Parameter	Taguchi Analysis	DA-BWO
Force(N)	15	14.932
% Vol. of hBN	8	10.705
WVL (mm ³ /m)	0.0111	0.00915

2.2 Experiment

Experiments were conducted in accordance with the Design of Experiments (DoE) using the Taguchi method, assuring a methodical approach. Following that, a mathematical model was created to assess and interpret the experimental data, offering significant insights into the aspects under examination.

2.3. Method DoE-Taguchi

Genichi Taguchi invented the Taguchi method, an instance of DoE, to facilitate experiment design and study the impact of factors on process performance variability. Taguchi developed the orthogonal array experimental design, which includes considering process factors and their degrees of variation. It enables data collecting to identify product quality

variables with little trial, saving time and money. Selecting the right orthogonal array requires knowledge about the number of parameters and levels. Table 3 displays the level of parameters and factors selected for the experiment.

Table 3 Optimal settings and associated Wear Volume Loss (WVL) [Source: Author]

F (factors)	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The volume of hBN %	3	6	9	12	0
Force(N)	4	8	12	16	20

Table 3 shows five force and volume levels of hBN. A well-designed L25 orthogonal array was chosen to perform an efficient experiment, reducing the number of needed experimental runs while allowing a full and systematic investigation of the parameter space.

2.4 Sample preparation

Using a ball mill, Si₃N₄-hBN composites were created with different hBN volume percentages (3%, 6%, 9%, and 12%) combined with Si₃N₄. Following the mixing procedure, the material is subjected to uniaxial hot-pressing at 30 MPa and then heated to 1600°C. Following this, a one-hour break is included into the procedure. In hot-pressing, polyvinyl alcohol was an adjuvant. It produced 10.5 mm diameter and 14.5 mm length samples. Figure 3 and 4 show the final samples as well as the alumina disc used for wear testing. Tables 4 and 5 provide a detailed overview of the material's density and disc-specific properties by displaying the parameters of alumina discs and the density characteristics of sintered samples.



Figure 3 Sintered samples of Si₃N₄-hBN [Source: <https://www.ijrte.org/wp-content/uploads/papers/v7i5/E1959017519.pdf>]



Figure 4 Alumina frictional plate [Source: <https://i.ebayimg.com/images/g/W9AAAOSwuShjzHBI/s-11600.png>]

Table 4 Sintered sample volumetric mass [Source: Author]

Sampling	1 (The Volume hBN- 3%)	2(The Volume hBN- 6%)	3 (The Volume hBN- 9%)	4 (The Volume hBN- 12%)	5 (The Volume hBN- 0%)
Density g/cm ³	1.87	1.87	1.82	1.73	2.08

Table 5 Common characteristics of alumina disc [Source: Author]

Nomination	Percentage of purity	Density g/cm ³	Maximum Service Temperature (°C)	Average surface roughness measured in micrometers (µm).
aluminium oxide (Al ₂ O ₃)	98.6%	2.98 × 10 ³	1600	1.582

2.4 Mathematical formulation

The statistical program Minitab 17 was utilized to fit experimental data using a second-order polynomial equation. The final equations characterize wear volume loss and are represented in terms of control variables, determined via Taguchi orthogonal array experiments, Equation (10).

$$WVL \left(\frac{\text{mm}^3}{\text{m}} \right) = 0.526 - 0.038 \times \text{load}(n) - 0.059\% * \text{valume of hBN} + 0.00373 \times \text{load}(n) \times \text{load}(n) + 0.00368 \times \% \text{volume of hBN} \times \% \text{volume of hBN} - 0.00401 \times \text{load}(n) \times \% \text{volume of hBN} \tag{10}$$

2.5 ANOVA

“Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)” is a numerical method that divides dataset variance into components linked with various sources of variation to evaluate model parameter hypotheses. The ANOVA results for a model run with a 90.5% confidence level are shown

in Table 6. Notably, the relevance of the model is shown by its P-Value, which is 0.031 (below 0.005). When the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is 1, it indicates that the predictors are associated and that multicollinearity is not present in the model.

Table 6 ANOVA Results for Wear Volume Loss [Source: Author]

Source's	Degrees of freedom	Adjusted mean squares	Contribution (%)	Sequential sums of squares	p	F	Adjusted sums of squares
Force(N)	4	1.5525	28.76	6.210	0.031	2.75	3.987
% hBN	4	1.223	22.63	4.892	0.048	3.15	4.589
Force(N)	16	0.6554	48.61	10.486	0.017	1.51	8.812
% hBN							
Total	24	-	100	21.588	-	-	-

Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for all factors =1

3. Results

Use of the “Ducom TRLE-PMH400 pin-on-disc tribometer for ASTM F732” wear testing with a 200 N normal force capacity (ASTM 2017). One alumina disk, revolving at 200 rpm, served as the counterface in the experiments, whereas the pin specimen was a composite. As the applied stress increased, the pin maintained stationary and slid against the alumina. The atmosphere was maintained throughout the trials, which were carried out in a dry, lubricant-free setting.

3.1 Analysis of Signal-to-Noise (S/N) Ratio

Two input parameters were used on a Pin-on-Disc tribometer to evaluate wear volume loss. Based on the wear track diameter, wear volume loss was computed for 25 minutes of sliding and 200 rpm disc speed. Table 7 displays an average wear loss of volume from 25 twice-repeated exams. Optimisation goal function Taguchi's logarithmic ratios were used to convert experimental data into S/N ratios. The conventional S/N ratios were SB, NB, and HB. Controllable factors were evaluated using the S/N ratio approach to reduce wear loss of volume for longer joint life. In this research, the S/N ratio was computed using the "Smaller the Better" technique for wear volume loss.

Note : “Smaller is Better (SB), Nominal is Better (NB), & Higher is Better (HB)”

$$(S/N)_{SB} = -10 \cdot \log_{10} \left(\frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n y_i^2 \right) \quad (11)$$

y_i represents individual observations in this Eq (11). The total number of observations is given by n.

A greater S/N ratio value implies better performance, regardless of the performance characteristic category. Examining the response table of S/N ratios in this research, where the aim is to reduce wear volume loss, provide the best input parameters for the output feature. The optimal configuration with 12 N force and 6% hBN volume has 0.0098 mm³/m

wear volume loss and 38.42755 dB S/N ratios, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Outcomes regarding wear volume loss and Signal-to-Noise (S/N) ratio [Source: Author]

Experiment. No.	Force(N)	Volume of hBN%	Average Wear Volume Loss	S/N ratio in decibels (dB)
1.	4	3	0.2543	11.54826
2.	4	6	0.1732	15.07148
3.	4	12	0.2147	13.28019
4.	4	16	0.0296	30.47519
5.	4	0	0.3912	8.65449
6.	8	3	0.1763	14.95592
7.	8	6	0.0137	36.44238
8.	8	12	0.1251	18.72212
9.	8	16	0.0177	35.77262
10.	8	0	0.9413	1.258194
11.	12	3	0.2876	10.30591
12.	12	6	0.0098	38.42755
13.	12	12	0.0907	20.06939
14.	12	16	0.0842	20.73399
15.	12	0	1.1185	-2.67561
16.	16	3	0.1836	14.37635
17.	16	6	0.4467	7.78675
18.	16	12	2.0321	-5.34432
19.	16	16	0.1814	14.49355
20.	16	0	0.2987	10.58239
21.	20	3	0.5874	5.44617
22.	20	6	1.9102	-4.71998
23.	20	12	0.3756	8.88483
24.	20	16	0.1404	17.42099
25.	20	0	3.6782	-10.19665

3.2 Outcome graph

In Minitab 17, the graph of interactions shows the minimum Wear Volume Loss (WVL) at Figure 5 shows the greatest S/N ratio at 12 N Force and 6% hBN volume, whereas Figure 6

shows the same combination at its highest point. The graph shows that load and the distribution of hBN volume have a substantial impact on WVL. Furthermore, Figure 6 shows an ideal combination of a 12 N load and a 6% volume of hBN, resulting in a wear volume loss of 0.0098 mm³/m.

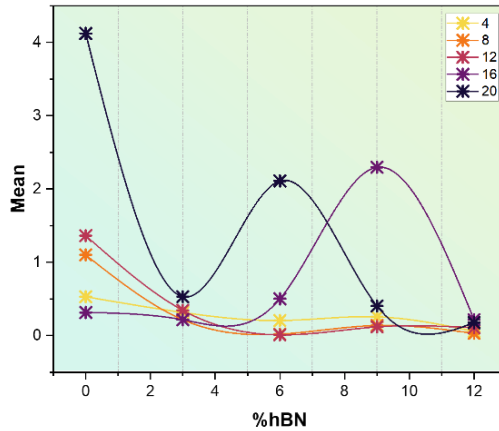


Figure 5 Interaction Graph for WVL(mm³/m) [Source: Author]

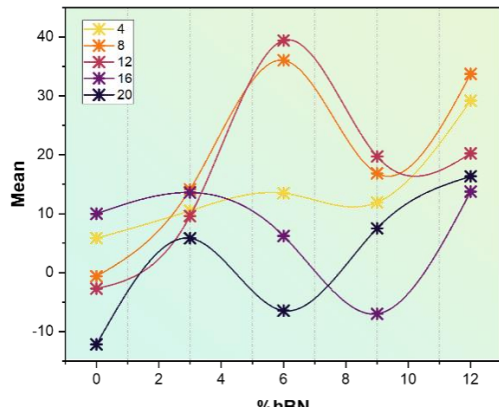


Figure 6 S/N Ratio Interaction Graph for WVL [Source: Author]

4. Conclusions

This research underscores the critical need for effective substitutes in rebuilding injured joints, particularly for arthritis patients. Aseptic loosening, a significant challenge in artificial joints, is addressed by focusing on minimizing Wear Volume Loss (WVL) through bio-tribology research. Silicon nitride (Si₃N₄) emerges as a promising ceramic material for hip and knee replacements, and the addition of Hexagonal Boron Nitride (hBN) enhances its wear performance. DoE-Taguchi-informed experimental findings guide a mathematical model. DA-BWO refines this model to find optimum parameters: 10.632% hBN volume and 9.75 N Force minimise Si₃N₄ wear volume loss against Alumina (Al₂O₃). These discoveries improve joint lifespan and resolve joint replacement therapy problems. The study's

concentration on Si₃N₄ wear volume loss against Alumina (Al₂O₃) counterface may restrict conclusions to other materials and counterface combinations. Investigating the combined effects of multiple parameters, such as surface finish, lubrication, and implant design, could provide a more holistic approach to joint replacement optimization.

References

1. ASTM, A. (2017). F732-17, Standard test method for wear testing of polymeric materials used in total joint prostheses. ASTM International.
2. Benito S, Boes J, Matsuo M, Weber S and Theisen W (2021) Uncovering process-structure relationships associated to the hot isostatic pressing of the high-speed steel PMHS 3-3-4 through novel microstructural characterization methods. *Materials & Design*208:109925. DOI: 10.1016/j.matdes.2021.109925
3. Heimann R.B (2021) Silicon nitride, a close to ideal ceramic material for medical application. *Ceramics*04:02:208-223. DOI: 10.3390/ceramics4020016
4. Kaloyeros A.E, Pan Y, Goff J and Arkles B (2020) Silicon nitride and silicon nitride-rich thin film technologies: state-of-the-art processing technologies, properties, and applications. *ECS Journal of Solid State Science and Technology*9:6:063006. DOI: 10.1149/2162-8777/aba447
5. Li L, Ding M, Lin B, Zhang B, Zhang Y and Sui T (2021) Influence of silica nanoparticles on running-in performance of aqueous lubricated Si₃N₄ ceramics. *Tribology International*159:106968. DOI: 10.1016/j.triboint.2021.106968.
6. Li S, Wei C and Wang Y (2021) Fabrication and service of all-ceramic ball bearings for extreme conditions applications. In *IOP conference series: materials science and engineering*. IOP Publishing1009:1:012032. DOI: 10.1088/1757-899X/1009/1/012032
7. Li Z, Ma F, Li D, Wan S, Yi G, Geng G and Guo L(2022)Enhanced Mechanical and Tribological Capabilities of a Silicon Aluminum Alloy with an Electroplated Ni-Co-P/Si₃N₄ Composite Coating. *Metals*12:1:120. DOI: 10.3390/met12010120 .
8. Lin Q, Wang X, Cai M, Yan H, Zhao Z, Fan X and Zhu M (2021) Enhancement of Si₃N₄@MoS₂ core-shell structure on wear/corrosion resistance of epoxy resin/polyacrylate IPN composite coating. *Applied Surface Science*568:150938. DOI: 10.1016/j.apsusc.2021.150938.
9. Liu J, Dong C, Lu X, Qiao Z, Zhou F, Liu W and Riedel R (2022) Sn-containing Si₃N₄-based composites for adaptive excellent friction and wear in a wide temperature range. *Journal of the European Ceramic Society*42:3:913-920. DOI: 1016/j.jeurceramsoc.2021.10.047.
10. Llorente J, Ramírez C and Belmonte M (2020) Two-step strategy for improving the tribological performance of Si₃N₄ ceramics: controlled addition of SiC nanoparticles and graphene-based nanostructures, *Journal of the European Ceramic Society*40:15:5298-5304. DOI: 10.1016/j.jeurceramsoc.2020.06.053.
11. Oguntuyi S.D, Malatji N, Shongwe M.B, Johnson O.T, Khoathane C and Tshabalala L (2022) The influence of Si₃N₄ on the microstructure, mechanical properties and the wear performance of TiB₂-SiC synthesized via spark plasma sintering. *International Journal of Lightweight Materials and Manufacture*5:3:326-338. DOI: 10.1016/j.ijlmm.2022.04.004.
12. Ouyang J.H, Li Y.F, Zhang Y.Z, Wang Y.M and Wang Y.J (2022) High-temperature solid lubricants and self-lubricating composites: A critical review. *Lubricants*10:8:177. DOI: 10.3390/lubricants10080177
13. Ramezani M, Ripin Z.M, Jiang C.P and Pasang T (2023) Superlubricity of Materials:

- Progress, Potential, and Challenges. *Materials*16:14:5145. DOI: 10.3390/ma16145145
14. Rondinella, E. Marin, M. Zanocco, F. Boschetto and G. Pezzotti (2019) Surface pre-oxidation improves the wear performance of Si₃N₄ against UHMWPE. *Applied Surface Science*463:1037-1045. DOI: 10.1016/j.apsusc.2018.09.016 .
 15. Siripongpreda T, Hoven V.P, Narupai B and Rodthongku N (2022) Emerging 3D printing based on polymers and nanomaterial additives: Enhancement of properties and potential applications. *European Polymer Journal*111806. DOI: 10.1016/j.eurpolymj.2022.111806.
 16. Tan D.W, Zhu L.L, Wei W.X, Yu J.J, Zhou Y.Z, Guo W.M and Lin H.T (2020) Performance improvement of Si₃N₄ ceramic cutting tools by tailoring of phase composition and microstructure. *Ceramics International*46:16:26182-26189. DOI: 10.1016/j.ceramint.2020.07.116.
 17. Wang L, Qiao Z, Qi Q, Yu Y, Li T, Liu X, Huang Z, Tang H and Liu W (2022) Improving abrasive wear resistance of Si₃N₄ ceramics with self-matching through tungsten induced tribochemical wear. *Wear*494:204254. DOI: 10.1016/j.wear.2022.204254
 18. Xing Y, Wang X, Du Z, Zhu Z, Wu Z and Liu L (2022) Synergistic effect of surface textures and DLC coatings for enhancing friction and wear performances of Si₃N₄/TiC ceramic. *Ceramics International*48:1:514-524. DOI: 10.1016/j.ceramint.2021.09.128
 19. Zhai W, Bai L, Zhou R, Fan X, Kang G, Liu Y and Zhou K (2021) Recent progress on wear-resistant materials: designs, properties, and applications. *Advanced Science*8:11:2003739. DOI: 10.1002/advs.202003739.