

# Chapter 6

## Underwater granular flows

### 6.1 Introduction

Avalanches, landslides, and debris flows are geophysical hazards, which involve rapid mass movement of granular solids, water, and air as a single phase system. Globally, landslides cause billions of pounds in damages, and thousands of deaths and injuries each year. Hence, it is important to understand the triggering mechanism and the flow evolution. The momentum transfer between the discrete and the continuous phases significantly affects the dynamics of the flow as a whole (Topin et al., 2012). Although certain macroscopic models are able to capture the simple mechanical behaviours (Peker and Helvacı, 2007), the complex physical mechanisms occurring at the grain scale, such as hydrodynamic instabilities, formation of clusters, collapse, and transport, (Topin et al., 2011) have largely been ignored. In particular, when the solid phase reaches a high volume fraction, the strong heterogeneity arising from the contact forces between the grains, and the hydrodynamic forces, are difficult to integrate into the homogenization process involving global averages.

In order to describe the mechanism of immersed granular flows, it is important to consider both the dynamics of the solid phase and the role of the ambient fluid (Denlinger and Iverson, 2001). The dynamics of the solid phase alone is insufficient to describe the mechanism of granular flows in fluid. It is important to consider the effect of hydrodynamic forces that reduce the weight of the solids inducing a transition from dense-compacted to dense-suspended flows, and the drag interactions which counteract the movement of the solids (Meruane et al., 2010). Transient regimes characterized by a change in the solid fraction, dilation at the onset of flow and the development of excess pore pressure, result in altering the balance between the stress carried by the fluid and that carried by the grains, thereby changing the overall behaviour of the flow.

The presence of a fluid phase in a granular medium has profound effects on its mechanical behaviour. In dry granular media, the rheology is governed by grain inertia and static stresses sustained by the contact network depending on the shear-rate and the confining pressure, respectively (Midi, 2004). As the fluid inertia and viscosity come into play, complications arise as a result of contradictory effects. On one hand, the fluid may delay the onset of granular flow or prevent the dispersion of the grains by developing negative pore pressures (Pailha et al., 2008; Topin et al., 2011). On the other hand, the fluid lubricates the contacts between grains, enhancing the rate of granular flow, but it has a retarding effect at the same time by inducing drag forces on the grains. The objective of the present study is to understand the differences in the mechanism of flow initiation and kinematics between dry and submerged granular flows. In the present study, a coupled 2D Lattice-Boltzmann and Discrete Element Method is used to model the fluid-soil interactions in underwater granular flows. The choice of a 2D geometry has the advantage of cheaper computational effort than a 3D case, making it feasible to simulate very large systems.

## 14 6.2 LBM-DEM Permeability

In a 3D granular assembly, the pore spaces between the grains are interconnected, whereas in a 2-D assembly, a non-interconnected pore-fluid space is formed as the grains are in contact with each other. This means that the fluid enclosed between the grains cannot flow to the neighbouring pore-spaces. This results in an unnatural no flow condition in a 2-D case (see figure 6.1). In order to overcome this effect, a reduction in radius is assumed only during the LBM computation (fluid and fluid – solid interaction) steps. The reduced radius of the soil grain, i.e., the *hydrodynamic radius*  $r$ , allows for interconnected pore space through which the pore-fluid can flow similar to the 3D behaviour. The reduction in the radius is assumed only during LBM computations, hence this technique has no effect on the grain – grain interactions computed using DEM.

Realistically, the hydrodynamic radius can be varied from  $r = 0.7R$  to  $0.95R$ , where  $R$  is the grain radius. Different permeabilities can be obtained for any given initial packing by varying the hydrodynamic radius of the grains, without having to change the actual granular packing. This introduces a new parameter into the system. In a physical sense, a hydrodynamic radius represents the three-dimensional permeability of a granular assembly simulated as a two-dimensional geometry. The hydrodynamic radius can also be assumed to represent the irregularities on the granular surface. The hydrodynamic radius represents asperities on the grain surface, which represents a channel for the fluid to flow between the grains.

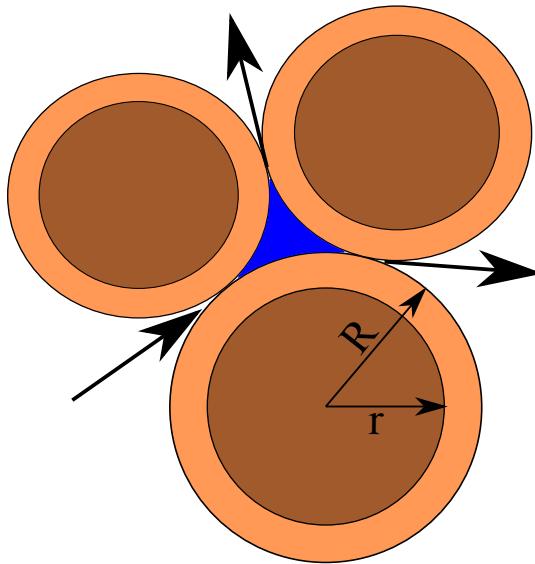


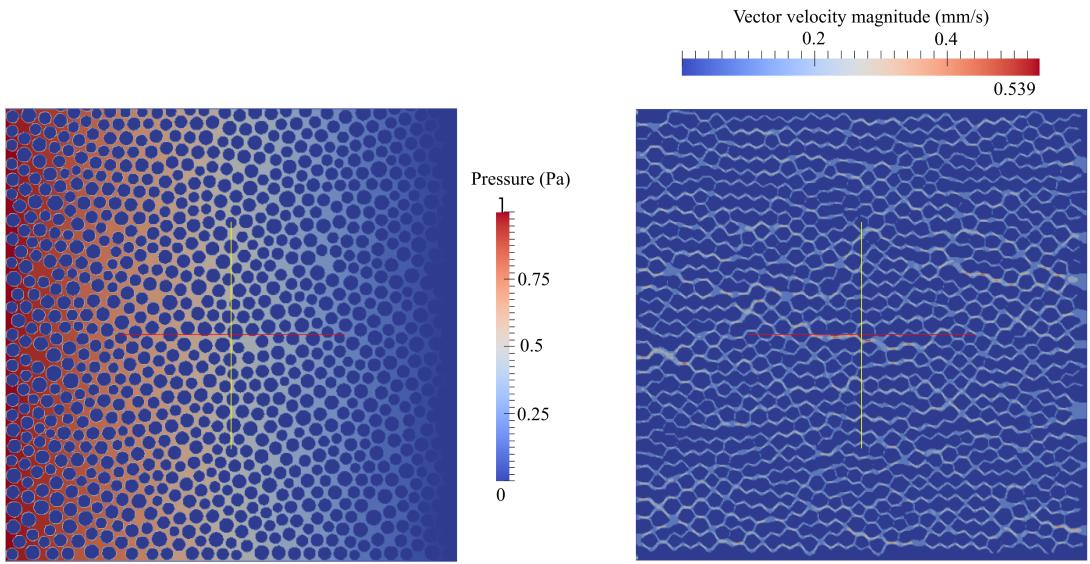
Figure 6.1 Schematic representation of the hydrodynamic radius in LBM-DEM computation

33 In order to understand the relation between the hydrodynamic radius and the permeability of  
 34 the granular assembly, horizontal permeability tests are performed by varying the hydrodynamic 1  
 radius as 0.7 R, 0.75 R, 0.8 R, 0.85 R, 0.9 R and 0.95 R. A square sample of 50 mm × 50 mm 2  
 filled with poly-disperse ( $d_{max}/d_{min} = 1.8$ ) grains having a mean diameter of 1.7 mm is used 3  
 to determine the relation between the hydrodynamic radius and the permeability. Dirichlet 4  
 boundary condition (discussed in ??), i.e., density constrain, is applied along the left and the 5  
 right boundaries of the sample. The fluid density on the left boundary is increased in small 6  
 steps ( $10^{-4} \Delta P$ ), while a constant density is maintained on the right boundary. This results in a 7  
 pressure gradient causing the fluid to flow (see figure 6.2) through the pore-space.

8 For a given hydrodynamic radius, the pressure gradient  $\Delta P$  is varied to obtain different flow  
 9 rates. Probing the fluid space showed a Poiseuille flow behaviour between the grains. The flow  
 10 is still within the Darcy's laminar flow regime, which is verified by the linear slope between the  
 11 pressure gradient and the mean flow velocity (see figure 6.3). From the mean flow velocity ( $v$ ),  
 12 the transverse permeability ( $k$ ) of the sample is computed as:

$$k = v \cdot \mu \cdot \frac{\Delta x}{\Delta P}, \quad (6.1) \quad 13$$

14 where  $\mu$  is the dynamic viscosity of the fluid (Pa s),  $\Delta x$  is the thickness of the bed of porous  
 15 medium m, and  $\Delta P$  is the applied pressure difference Pa. It can be observed that with increase  
 16 in the hydrodynamic radius the permeability decreases, i.e., the slope of the mean flow velocity  
 17 to the pressure gradient decreases. At very low pressure gradients ( $\Delta P \leq 0.1$ ), both 0.9 R and  
 18 0.95 R have no flow. Even at higher pressure gradients, a hydrodynamic radius of  $r = 0.95R$



(a) Pressure gradient in the granular assembly      (b) Horizontal flow due to pressure gradient

Figure 6.2 Evaluation of the horizontal permeability for a hydrodynamic radius of  $0.7R$ .

shows almost no flow behaviour. A high value of hydrodynamic radius  $r > 0.95R$  results in unnatural flow/no-flow behaviour. Hence in the present study, a hydrodynamic radius in the range of 0.7 to 0.95 R is adopted.

Increase in the hydrodynamic radius from 0.7 to 0.95 reduces the porosity from 0.60 to 0.27. The permeability computed from LB – DEM method is verified by comparing it with the analytical solution. One of the widely used analytical solution for permeability is the Carman – Kozeny equation (CK Model), which is based on the Poiseuille's flow through a pipe and is mainly used for 3D, homogeneous, isotropic, granular porous media at moderate porosities. In the present study, a modified Carman – Kozeny equation that takes into account of the micro-structure of the fibres and that is valid in a wide range of porosities is adopted ([Yazdchi et al., 2011](#)). The normalized permeability is defined as

$$\frac{k}{d^2} = \frac{\varepsilon}{\psi_{CK}(1-\varepsilon)^2}. \quad (6.2)$$

In the CK model, the hydraulic diameter  $D_h$ , is expressed as a function of measurable quantities: porosity and specific surface area

$$D_h = \frac{4\varepsilon V}{S_v} = \frac{\varepsilon d}{(1-\varepsilon)}, \quad (6.3)$$

$$a_v = \frac{\text{grain surface}}{\text{grain volume}} = \frac{S_v}{(1-\varepsilon V)} = \frac{4}{d}, \quad (6.4)$$

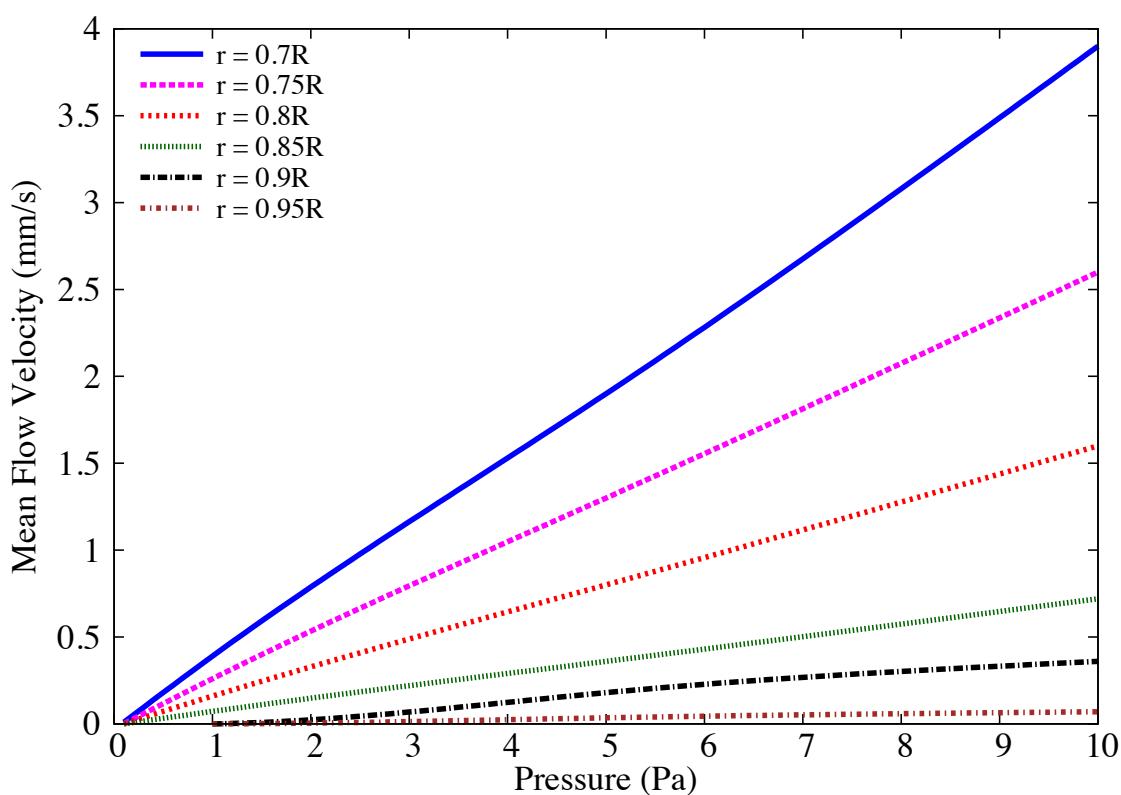


Figure 6.3 Variation of the mean flow velocity with pressure gradient for different hydrodynamic radius.

where  $S_v$  is the total wetted surface, and  $a_v$  is the specific surface area. The above value of  $a_v$  is for circles (cylinders) - for spheres  $a_v = 6/d$ .  $\psi_{CK}$  is the empirically measured CK factor, which represents both the shape factor and the deviation of flow direction from that in a duct. It is approximated for randomly packed beds of spherical grains. The variation of normalized permeability with porosity, obtained by varying the radius from 0.7 R to 0.95 R, is presented in figure 6.4. The permeability values obtained from LBM - DEM simulations are found to match the qualitative trend of the Carman-Kozeny equation. The LB – DEM permeability curve lies between the permeability curves for spherical and cylindrical grain arrangements implying a better simulation of three-dimensional permeability using a 2D granular assembly. Thus using a hydrodynamic radius, realistic 3D fluid - grain interactions can be simulated in a 2D geometry.

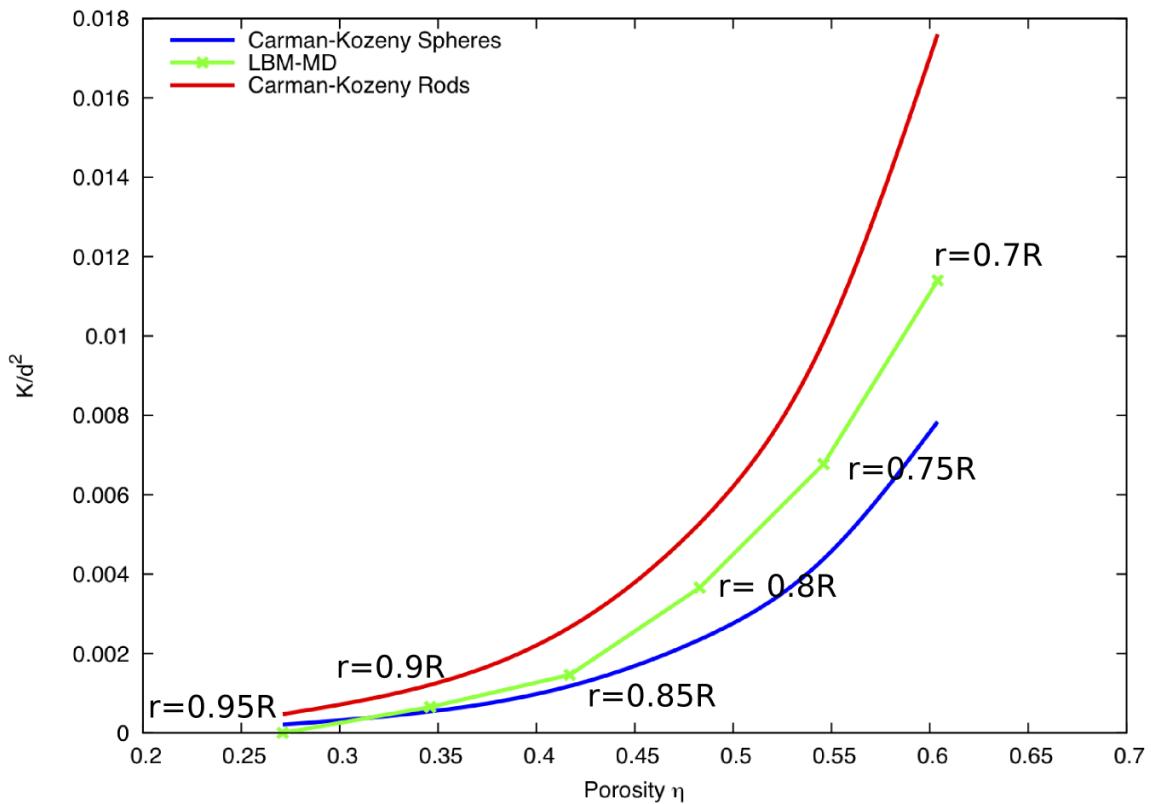


Figure 6.4 Relation between permeability and porosity for different hydrodynamic radius and comparison with the analytical solution.

## 6.3 Granular collapse in fluid

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The collapse of a granular column, which mimics the collapse of a cliff, has been extensively studied in the case of dry granular material, when the interstitial fluid plays no role (see ??). The problem of the granular collapse in a liquid, which is of importance for submarine landslides, has attracted less attention (Rondon et al., 2011). Thompson and Hupper (2007) observed that the presence of liquid dramatically changes the way a granular column collapses compared to the dry case. The destabilization of a granular pile strongly depends on the initial volume fraction. For dense packings the granular flow is localized at the free surface of the pile, whereas for loose packings the destabilization occurs in the bulk of the material and has a parabolic profile (Bonnet et al., 2010; Iverson, 2000; Topin et al., 2011).

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### 6.3.1 LBM-DEM set-up

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In the present study, the collapse of a granular column in fluid is studied using 2D LBM - DEM. The effect of initial aspect ratio on the run-out behaviour is investigated. The flow kinematics are compared with the dry and buoyant granular collapse to understand the influence of hydrodynamic forces and lubrication on the run-out. Unlike dry column, the permeability and the initial volume fraction are expected to have a significant influence on the flow dynamics. Hence the effect of these parameters on the run-out behaviour are investigated.

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The granular column collapse set-up in fluid is very similar to the dry granular column collapse. A rectangular channel of length  $L_0$  and height  $H_0$  is filled with poly-dispersed discs,  $d_{max}/d_{min} = 1.8$  (see Figure 6.5). The granular column is then placed in a fluid with a density of  $1000 \text{ kg m}^{-3}$  and a kinematic viscosity of  $1 \times 10^{-6} \text{ m}^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$ . The gate supporting the right-hand side boundary of the granular column is opened allowing the column to collapse and flow in a fluid. The final run-out distance is measured as  $L_f$  and final collapse height as  $H_f$ . The collapse takes place on a horizontal surface. The initial aspect ratio of the column is varied as 0.2, 0.4, 0.6, 0.8, 1, 2, 4 and 6.

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The cumulative  $\beta$  distribution is adopted to generate grains with  $d_{max}$  and  $d_{min}$  as 2.2 mm and 1.25 mm, respectively. The soil column is modelled using  $\sim 2000$  discs of density  $2650 \text{ kg m}^{-3}$  and a contact friction angle of  $26^\circ$ . A linear-elastic contact model is used in the

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- 1 DEM simulations. The granular assembly has a packing fraction of 83%. The critical time
- 2 step for DEM is computed based on the local contact natural frequency and damping ratio. A
- 3 sub-cycling time integration is adopted in DEM (see ??). A fluid flow (LBM) time step of
- 4  $\Delta t = 2.0E^{-5} \text{ s}$  is determined based on the viscosity and the relaxation parameter  $\tau = 0.506$ . An
- 5 integer ratio  $n_s$ , between the fluid flow time step  $\Delta t$  and the DEM time step  $\Delta t_D$  is determined
- 6 as 15, i.e., every LBM iteration involves a sub-cycle of 15 DEM iterations.

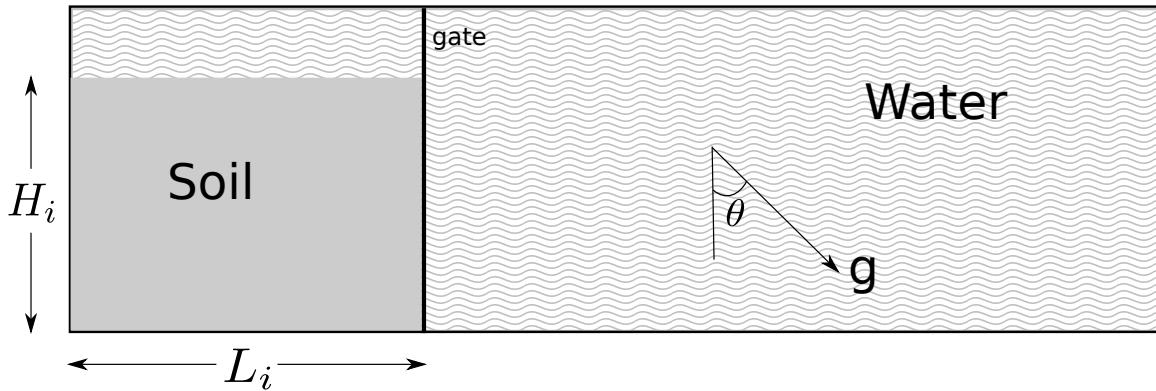


Figure 6.5 Underwater granular collapse set-up.

In order to capture the realistic physical behaviour of the fluid – grain systems, it is essential  
 to model the boundary condition between the fluid and the grain as a non-slip boundary  
 condition, i.e. the fluid near the grain should have similar velocity as the grain boundary. The  
 solid grains inside the fluid are represented by lattice nodes. The discrete nature of lattice,  
 results in a stepwise representation of the surfaces (see figure 6.6), which are otherwise circular,  
 hence sufficiently small lattice spacing  $h$  is required. The smallest DEM grain in the system  
 controls the size of the lattice. In the present study, a very fine discretisation of  $d_{min}/h = 10$  is  
 adopted, i.e., the smallest grain with a diameter  $d_{min}$  in the system is discretised into 100 lattice  
 nodes ( $10h \times 10h$ ). This provides a very accurate representation of the interaction between  
 the solid and the fluid nodes. A hydrodynamic radius of 0.7R is adopted during the LBM  
 computations.

### 6.3.2 Collapse in fluid: Flow evolution

Two-dimensional plane-strain LBM-DEM simulations of granular column collapse are performed by varying the initial aspect ratio of the column from 0.2 to 6. The normalized final run-out distance is measured as  $\Delta L = (L_f - L_0)/L_0$ . Similar to the dry granular collapse, the duration of collapse is normalised with a critical time  $\tau_c = \sqrt{H/g}$ , where  $H$  is the initial height of the granular column and  $g$  is the acceleration due to gravity. Dry and buoyant analyses of granular column collapse are also performed to understand the effect of hydrodynamic forces on the run-out distance.

Snapshots of the flow evolution of a granular column collapse with an initial aspect ratio of 0.4 are shown in figure 6.7. The failure begins at the toe end of the column, and the fracture surface propagates into the column at an angle of about 50°, similar to the dry column collapse. For the short column, the failure is due to collapse of the flank. Once the material is destabilised, the granular mass interacts with the surrounding fluid resulting in formation of

## 6.3 Granular collapse in fluid

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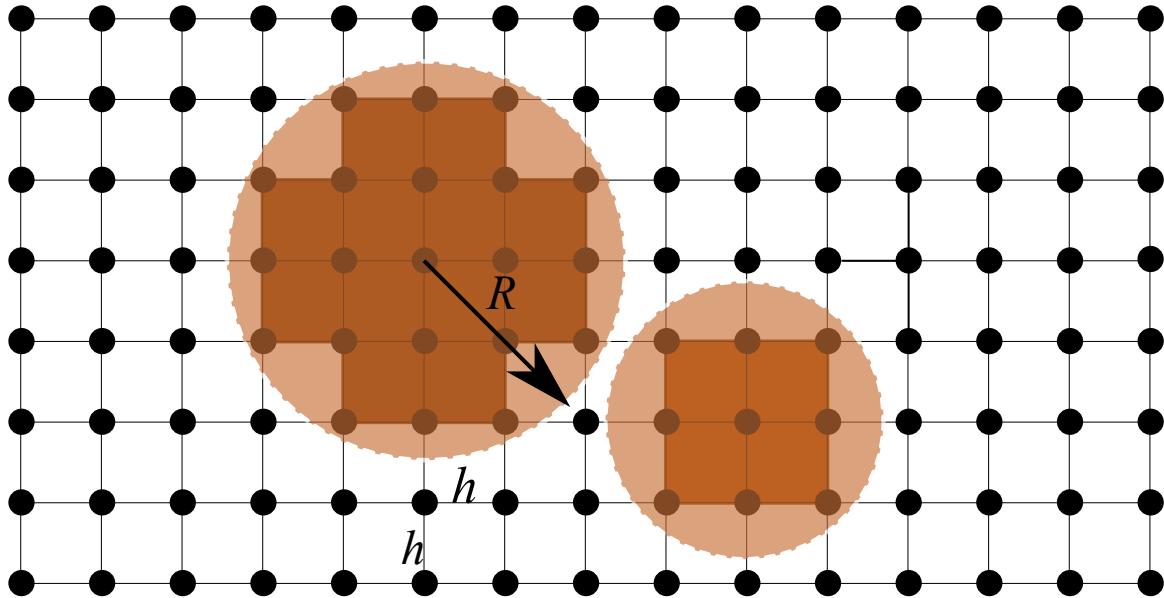


Figure 6.6 Discretisation of solid grains in LBM grid. Shows the step-wise representation of circular disks in the lattice.

turbulent vortices. These vortices interact with the grains at the surface resulting in irregularities on the free surface. Force chains can be observed in the static region of collapse, which indicates the flow can be described using a continuum theory. As the granular material ceases to flow, force chains develop at the flow front, revealing consolidation of the granular mass resulting in an increase in the shear strength.

The evolution of run-out with time for a short column ( $a = 0.4$ ) is presented in figure 6.8a. The dry column exhibits longer run-out distance in comparison to the submerged column. The collapse of a dry column using DEM represents a collapse in vacuum, without any influence of drag forces or viscosity of air. A LBM-DEM simulation of a granular column collapse using the kinematic viscosity of air is performed to compare the dry column with the collapse in air. Although the effect of viscous drag can be observed in the collapse in air condition, both the “dry” condition and the collapse in air show almost the same run-out behaviour. However, the collapse in fluid (water) results in a much shorter run-out distance. The granular mass in fluid has the buoyant mass, in contrast to the dry density. A dry granular collapse with the buoyant unit weight also exhibits longer run-out behaviour than the collapse in fluid. However, due to decrease in the initial potential energy, the run-out observed in the buoyant condition is shorter than the dry condition. The column collapse in fluid takes longer to evolve, which might be due to the development of large negative pore water pressure that is generated during the shear failure along the fracture surface. This large negative pore pressure has to be dissipated before the granular mass, above the fracture surface, can collapse and flow. The shorter run-out

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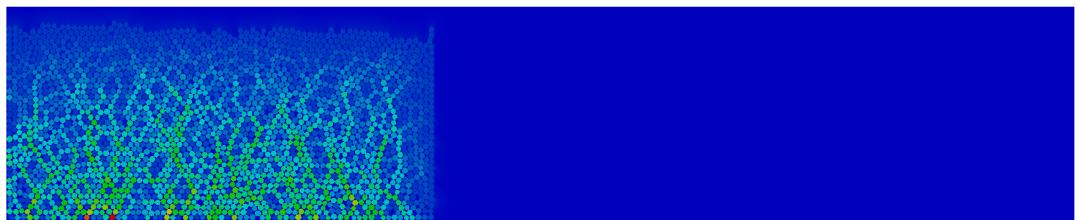
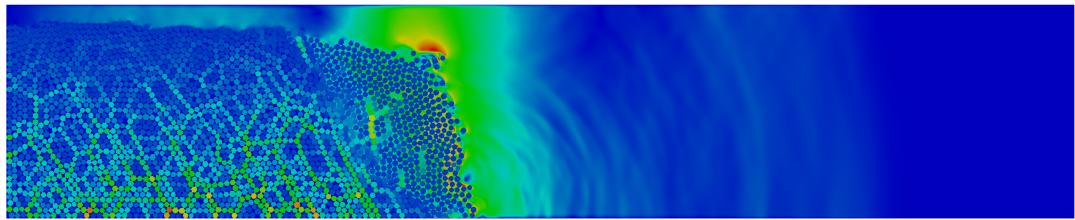
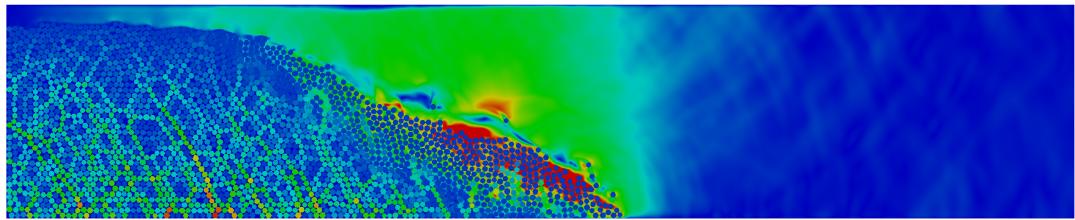
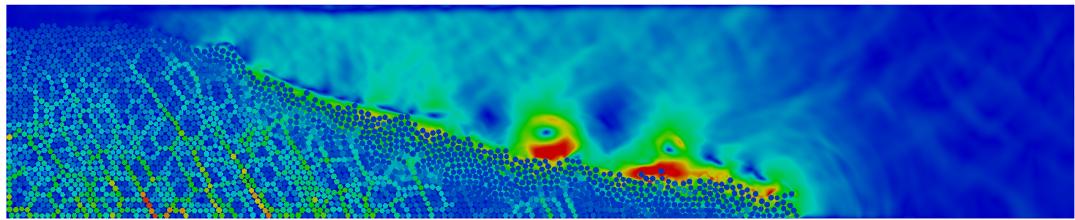
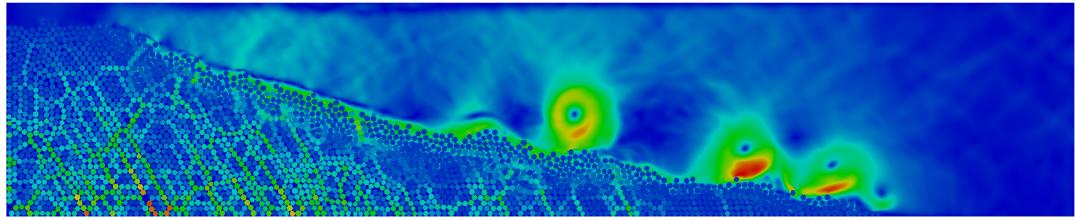
(a)  $t = 0\tau_c$ (b)  $t = 1\tau_c$ (c)  $t = 3\tau_c$ (d)  $t = 6\tau_c$ (e)  $t = 8\tau_c$ 

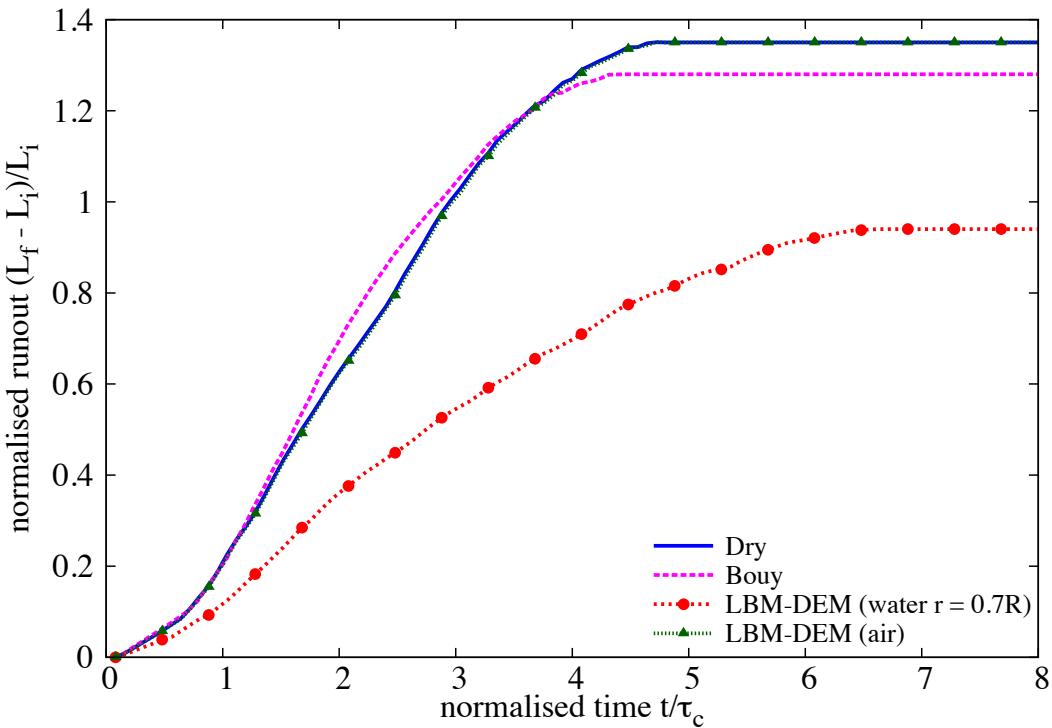
Figure 6.7 Flow evolution of a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.4$ ). Shows the velocity profile of fluid due to interaction with the grains (red - higher velocity).

distance in the fluid case, in comparison with the dry and buoyant conditions, shows that the  
 33 collapse in fluid is significantly affected by the hydrodynamic drag forces acting on the soil  
 grains. The evolution of height  $H/L$  is presented in ???. Since the failure of the column is only  
 34 at the flank, the central static region remains unaffected. Hence, the final height of the column  
 35 is the same in dry and submerged conditions.  
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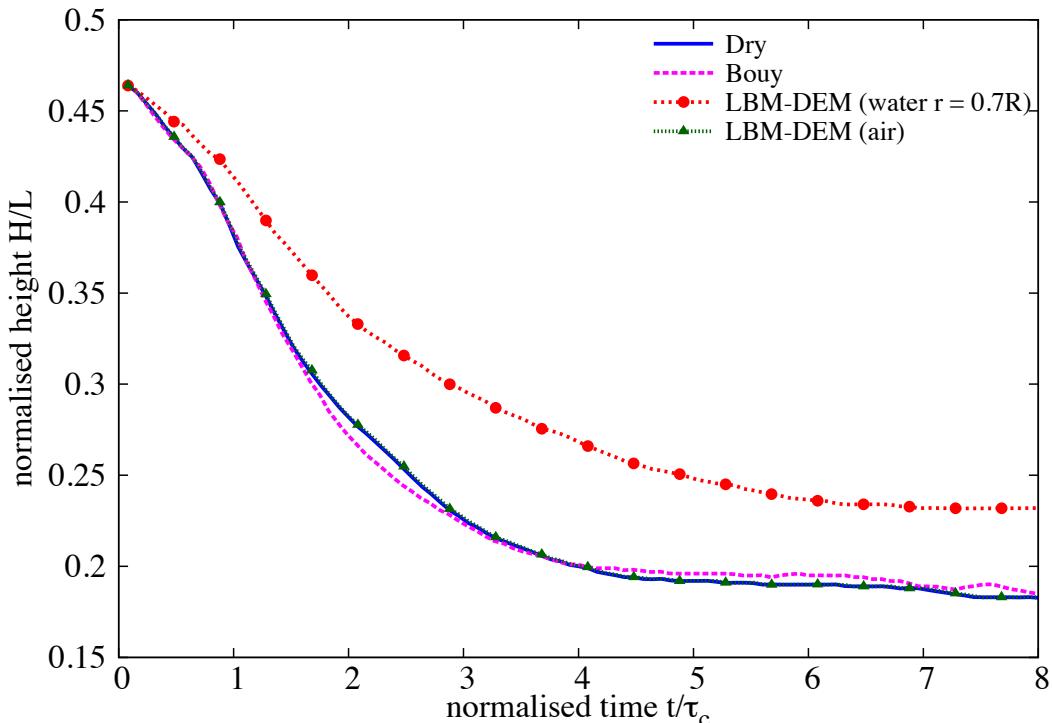
2 The evolution of the normalised kinetic energy with time for a column with an initial aspect  
 3 ratio of 0.4 is shown in figure 6.9. It can be observed that the peak kinetic energy is attained later  
 4 in the submerged condition than the dry collapse. This can be attributed to the time required  
 5 to overcome the negative pore pressure generated during the shear along the fracture surface.  
 6 For short columns the critical time  $\tau_c$  is controlled by the vertical kinetic energy. The amount  
 7 of kinetic energy in submerged case is significantly lower than the dry condition. Also, the  
 8 potential energy evolution (see figure 6.10) shows a significant influence of the hydrodynamic  
 9 forces on the amount of material destabilised during the collapse. The drag forces on the soil  
 10 grains reduce and slow down the amount of material that undergo collapse resulting in a shorter  
 11 run-out distance for short columns.

12 Snapshots of the flow evolution of a granular column collapse with an initial aspect ratio  
 13 of 4 is shown in figure 6.11. For a tall column, the collapse mechanism changes. The entire  
 14 column is involved in the collapse. The height of the static region, which is below the fracture  
 15 surface, is shorter than the total height of the column. This results in a free-fall of grains above  
 16 the fracture surface. As the grains experience free-fall they interact with the surrounding fluid.  
 17 However, no vortices are observed during the initial stage of collapse. In the second phase,  
 18 when the grains reach the base, the vertical acceleration gained during the free-fall is converted  
 19 into horizontal velocity. As the grains are ejected horizontally, the free surface of the granular  
 20 mass interacts with the fluid resulting in the formation of turbulent vortices. Unlike short  
 21 columns, these vortices have significant influence on the mass distribution along the run-out.  
 22 Heaps of granular material can be observed in front of each vortex. The number of vortices  
 23 formed during a collapse is found to be proportional to the amount of material destabilised, i.e.,  
 24 the length of free-surface interacting with the fluid influences the number of vortices generated  
 25 during the collapse. The reappearance of force chains at  $t = 6\tau_c$  and  $8\tau_c$  indicates the granular  
 26 mass is consolidating resulting in an increase in the shear strength.

27 The time evolution of the run-out and the height of a tall column ( $a = 4$ ) is presented  
 28 in figure 6.12a and figure 6.12b, respectively. Similar to the short column, the run-out observed  
 29 in the dry condition is much longer than that observed in the submerged condition. Also, the  
 30 evolution of run-out is slower in the case of submerged condition, which indicates the influence  
 31 of drag force on the run-out evolution. The height of the column is strongly influenced by

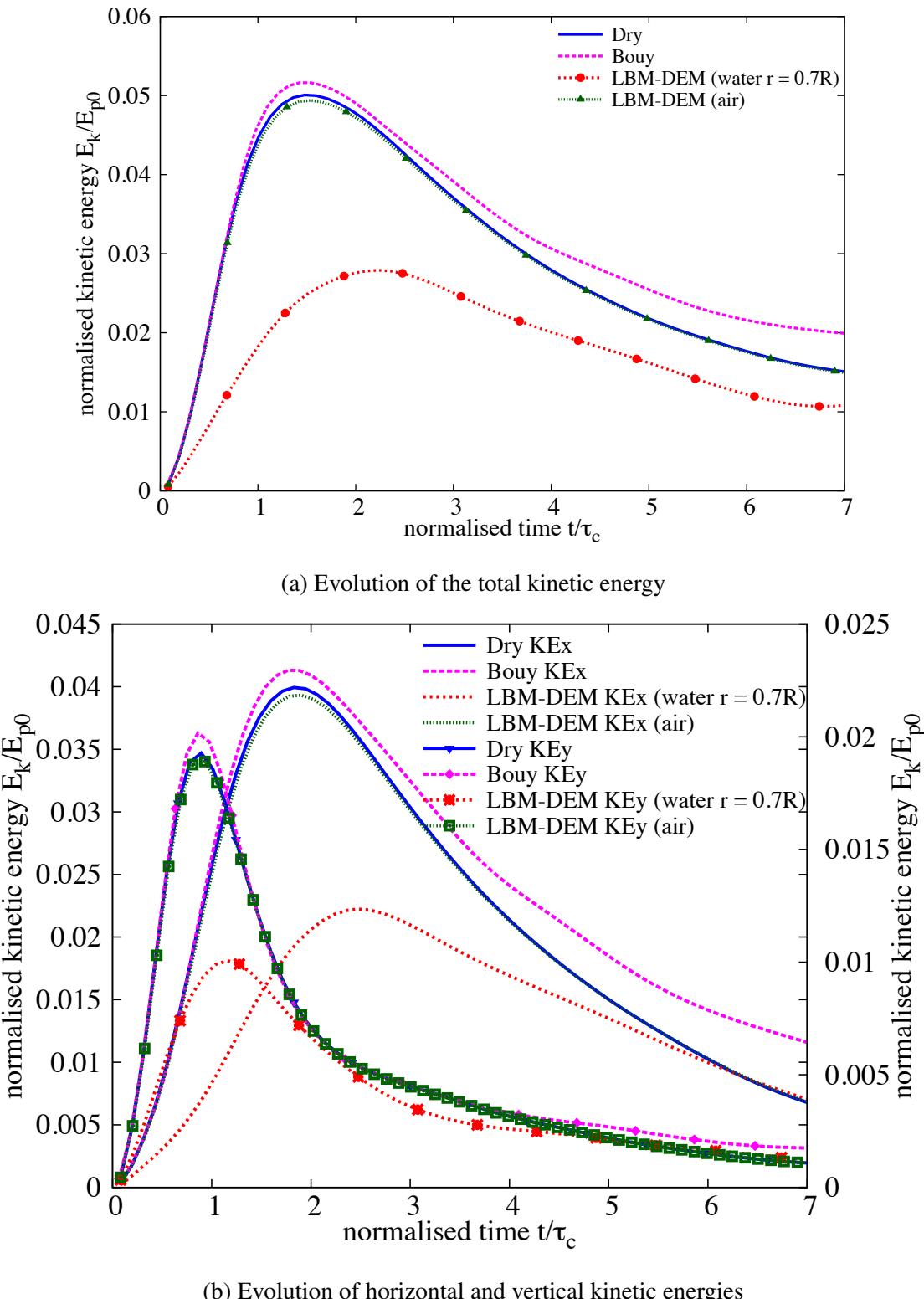


(a) Evolution of run-out with time



(b) Evolution of height with time

Figure 6.8 Evolution of height and run-out with time for a column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.4$ )

Figure 6.9 Evolution of kinetic energies with time for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.4$ )

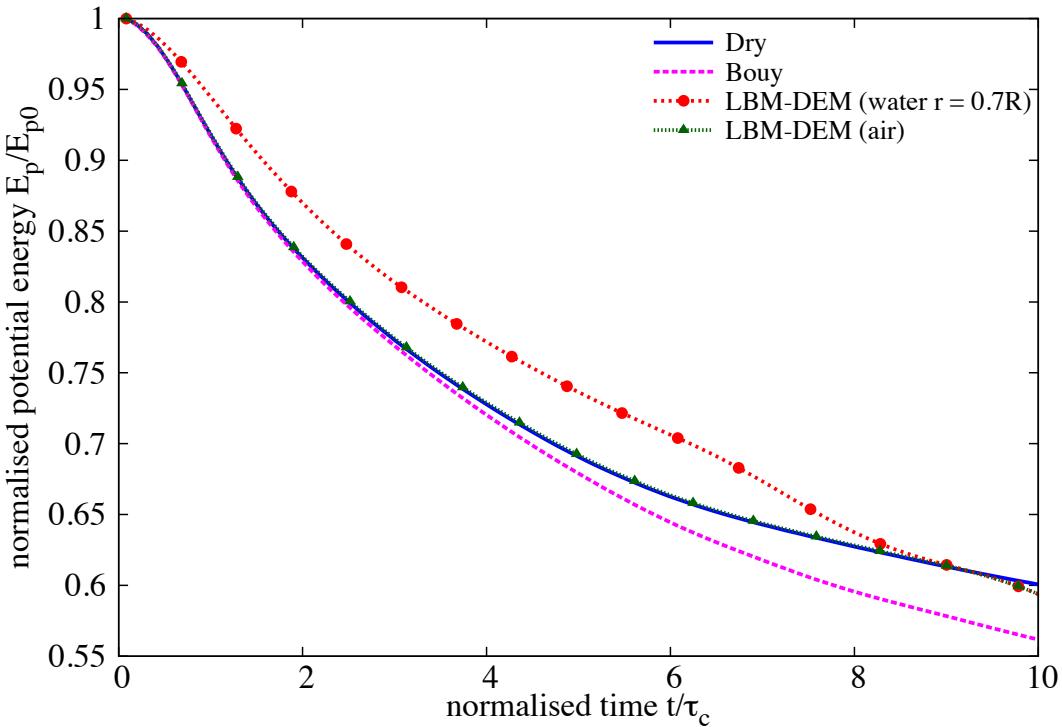


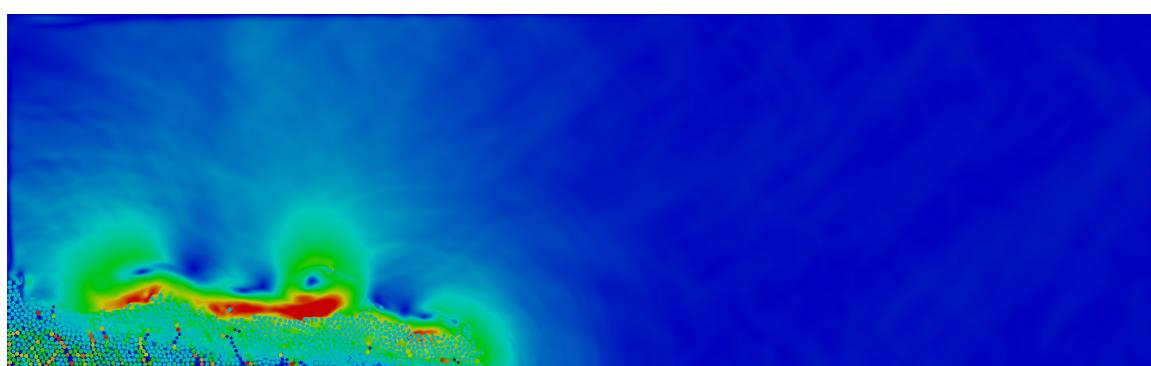
Figure 6.10 Evolution of the potential energy with time for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.4$ )

the hydrodynamic forces (see figures 6.12b and 6.13), which reduces the amount of material destabilised during the collapse.

The evolution of kinetic energies with time for an initial aspect ratio 4 is presented in figure 6.14. Even during the free-fall stage, the peak vertical kinetic energy is delayed in the case of fluid, which shows the influence of viscosity on the flow evolution. Almost half of the kinetic energy that is available in the case of dry granular collapse is dissipated through the drag forces experienced by the grains. This shows that the influence of viscous drag on the run-out evolution is significantly higher than the effect of lubrication.

The final run-out distance as a function of the initial aspect ratio of the column is presented in figure 6.15a. For all aspect ratios, the run-out observed in the dry case is significantly higher than the submerged condition. For short columns, the run-out distance is found to have a linear relationship with the initial aspect ratio of the column. A power law relation is observed between the run-out and the initial aspect ratio of the column.

$$\frac{L_f - L_0}{L_0} \propto \begin{cases} a, & a \lesssim 2.7 \\ a^{2/3}, & a \gtrsim 2.7 \end{cases} \quad (6.5)$$

 $t = 0\tau_c$  $t = 1\tau_c$  $t = 3\tau_c$

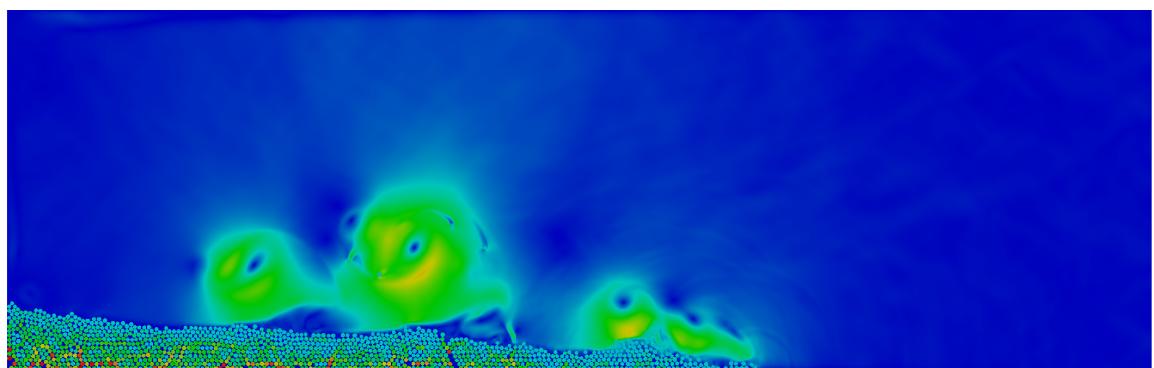
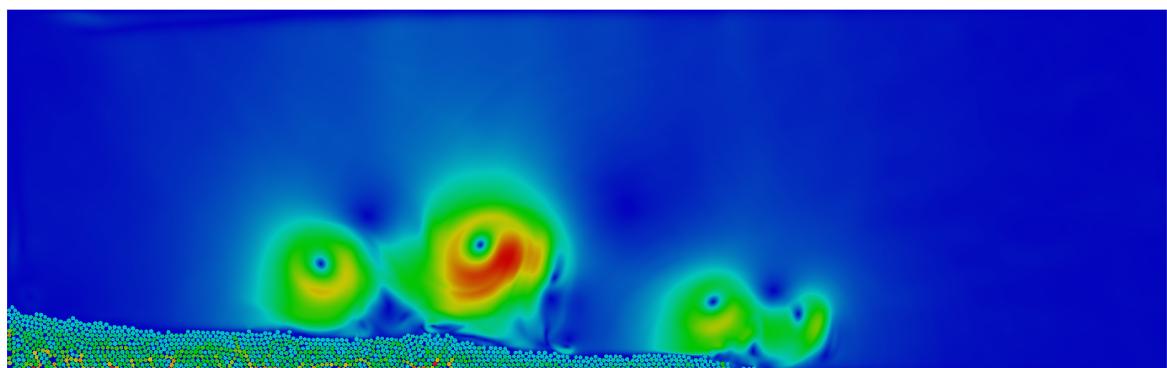
 $t = 6\tau_c$  $t = 8\tau_c$ 

Figure 6.11 Flow evolution of a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 4$ ). Shows the velocity profile of fluid due to interaction with the grains (red - higher velocity).

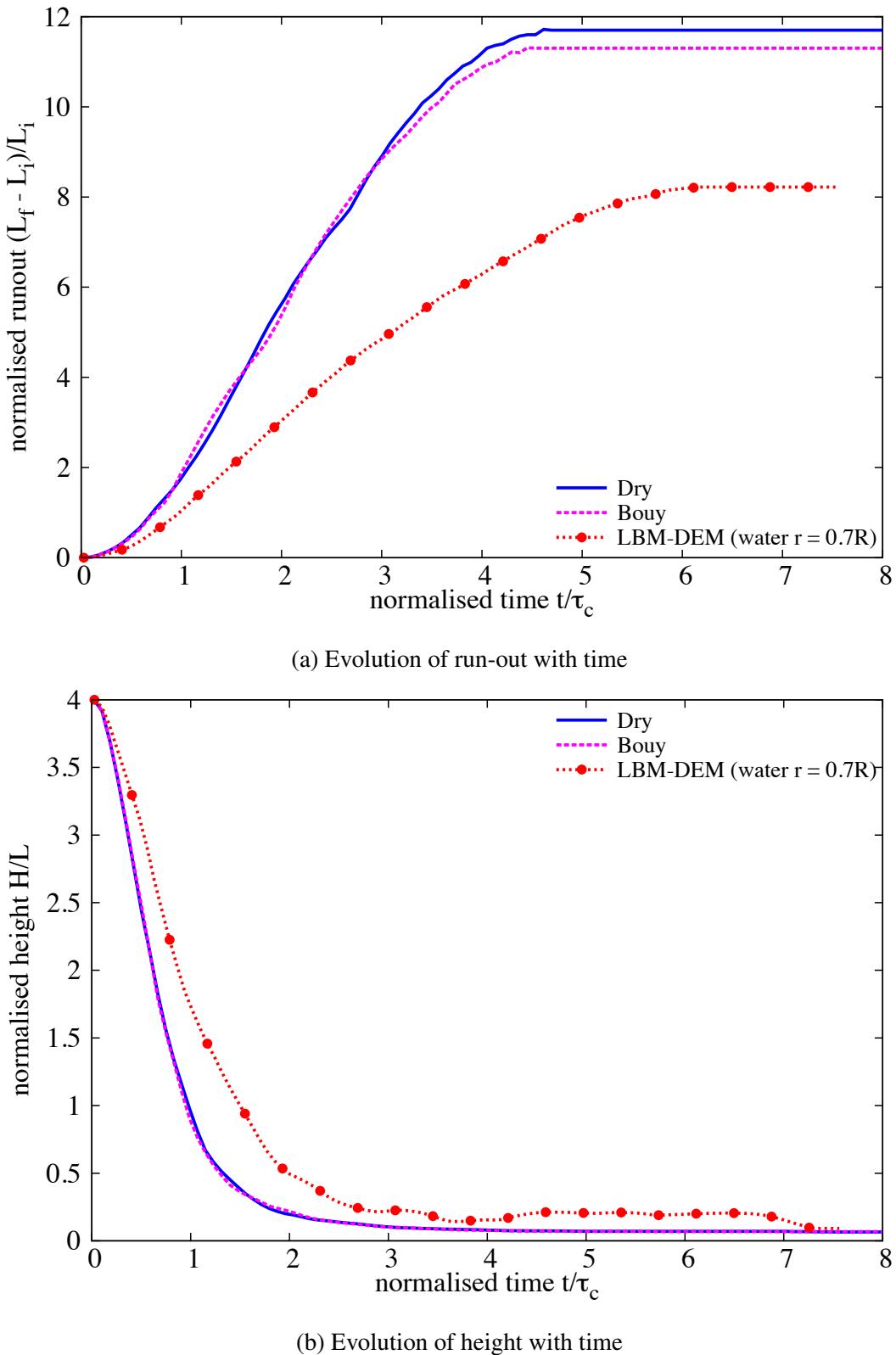


Figure 6.12 Evolution of run-out and height with time for a column collapse in fluid ( $a = 4$ )

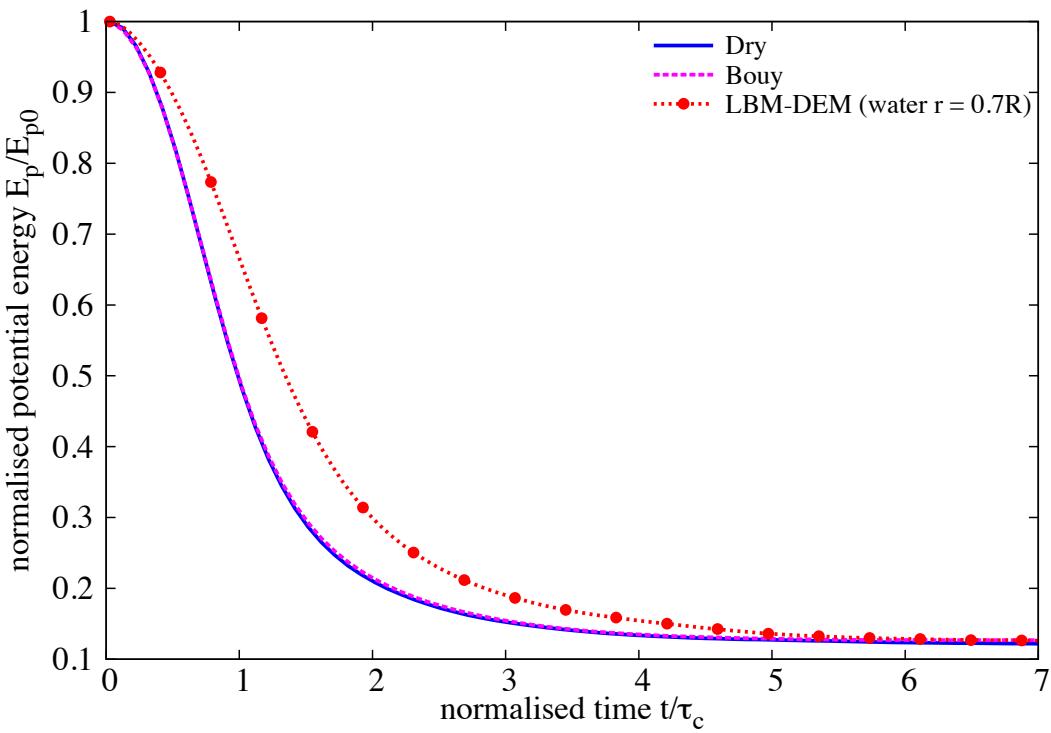


Figure 6.13 Evolution of the potential energy with time for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 4$ )

- 12 The normalised final height as a function of the initial aspect ratio of the column is presented  
in figure 6.15b. It can be observed that the final collapse height is much higher in the submerged  
condition than the dry condition. The drag force on the granular column reduces the amount of  
collapse, resulting in a shorter run-out distance. The drag force seems to have a predominant  
influence on the run-out behaviour than the lubrication effect in fluid.

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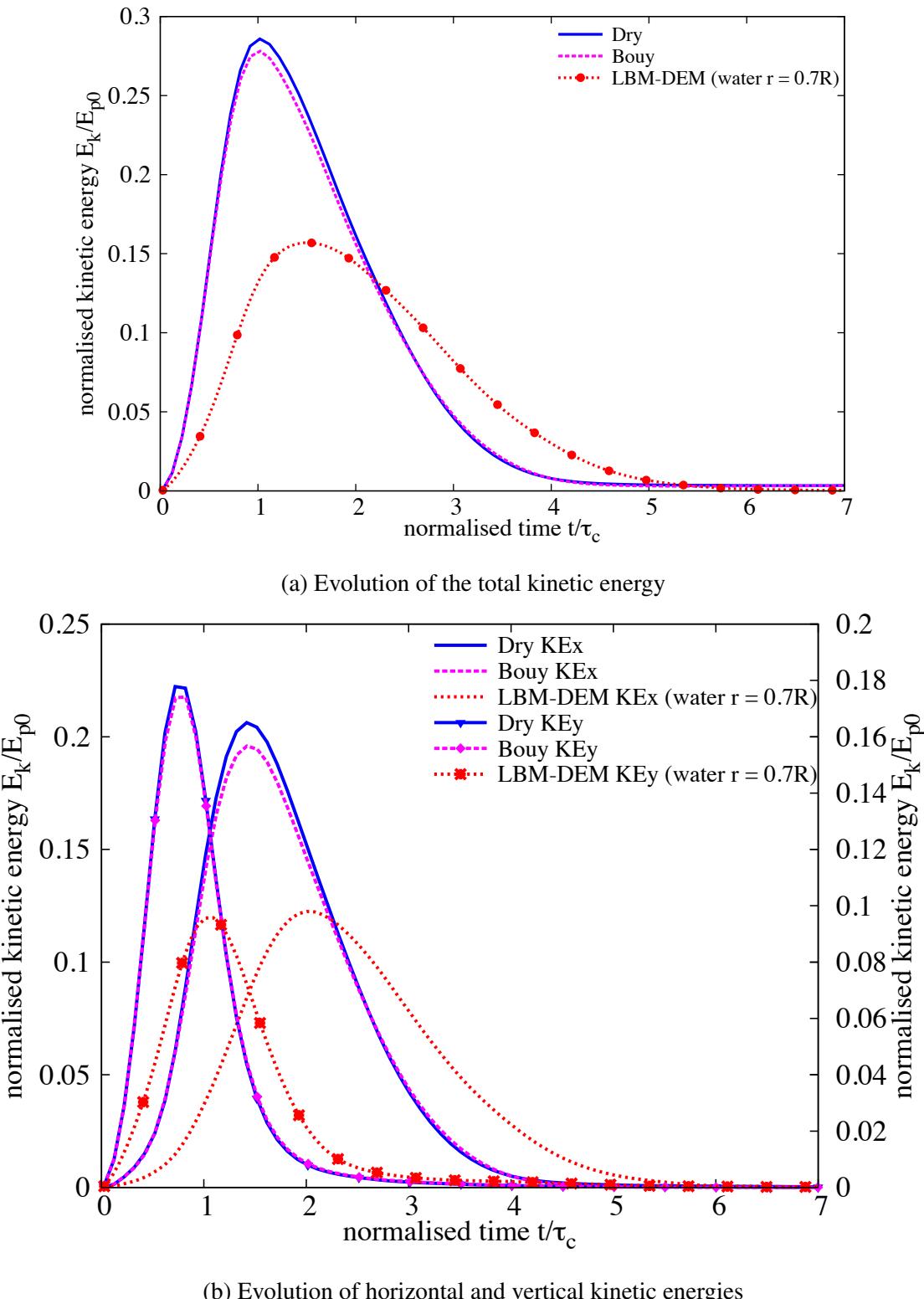
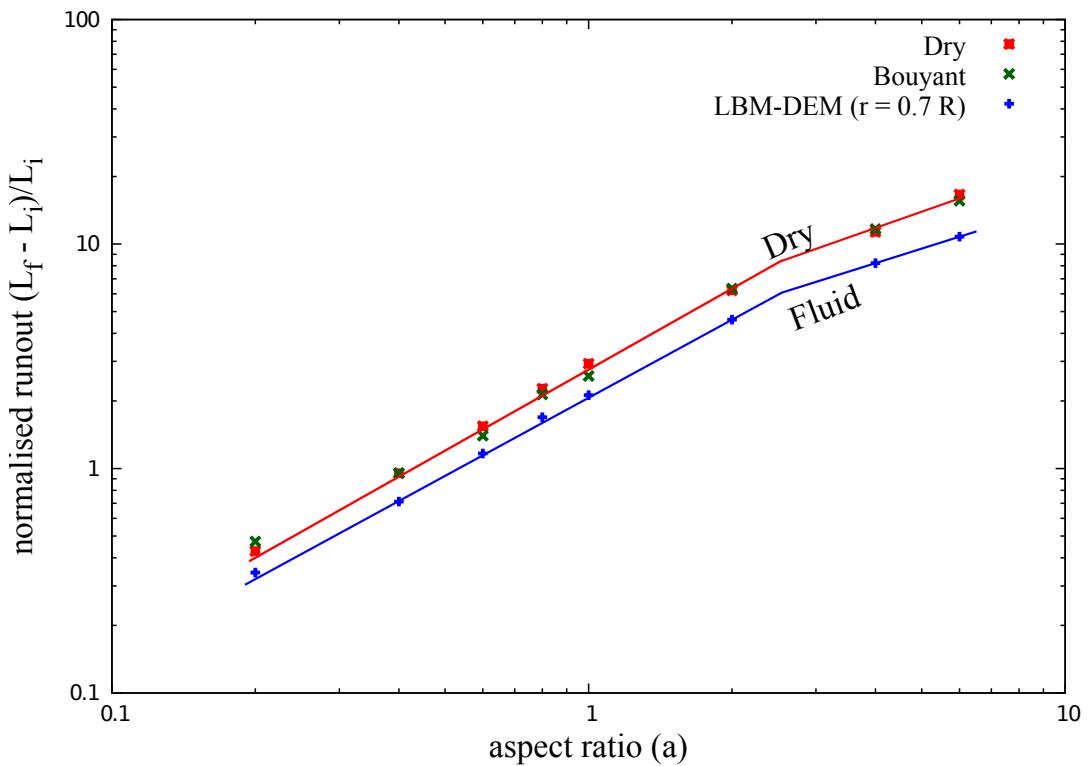
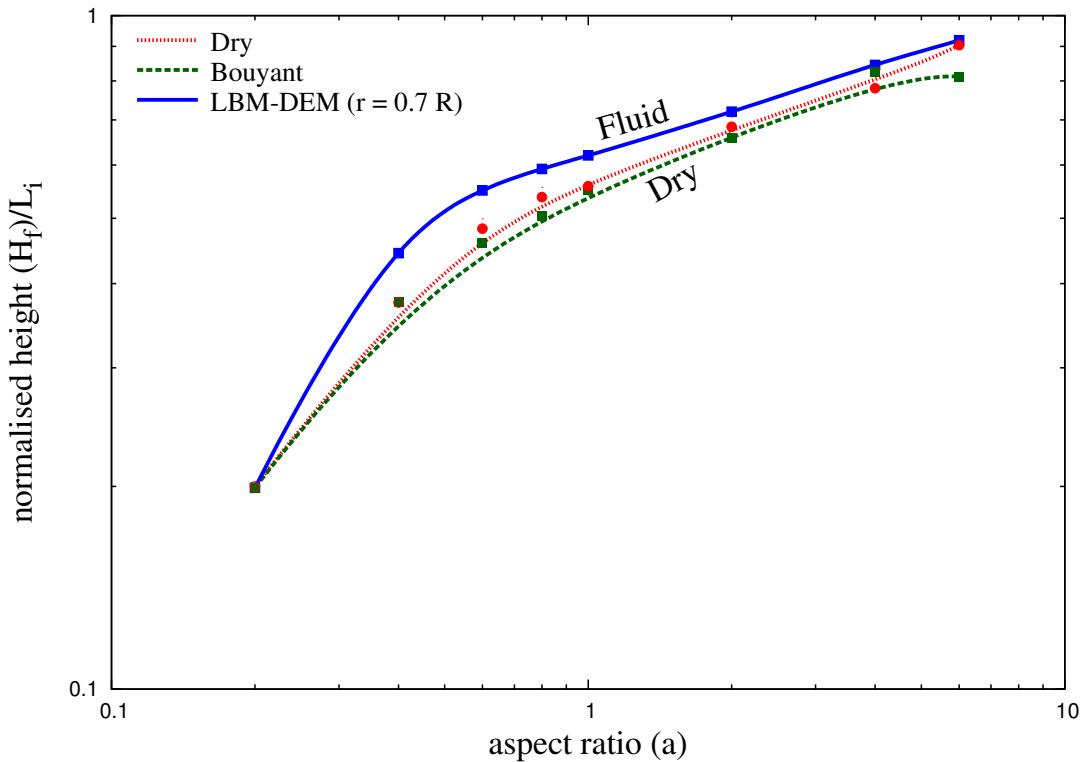


Figure 6.14 Evolution of kinetic energies with time for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 4$ )



(a) Normalised final run-out distance for columns with different initial aspect ratios. Comparison of dry and submerged granular column collapse.



(b) Normalised final collapse height for columns with different initial aspect ratios. Comparison of dry and submerged granular column collapse.

Figure 6.15 Normalised final collapse run-out and height for columns with different initial aspect ratios.

### 6.3.3 Effect of permeability

Topin et al. (2011) observed development of large negative pore pressure during dispersion of grains. The rate of dissipation of the negative pore pressure is directly proportional to the permeability of the granular assembly. In the previous section, the evolution of run-out with the initial aspect ratio is studied using a constant hydrodynamic radius  $r = 0.7 R$ . In order to understand the effect of permeability on the run-out behaviour, the hydrodynamic radius  $r$  is varied from 0.7  $R$  through 0.95  $R$  for all aspect ratios. Increase in the hydrodynamic radius decreases the permeability of the granular assembly resulting in a longer duration for the dissipation of negative pore pressure.

The normalised run-out for different hydrodynamic radii for a granular column with an initial aspect ratio of 0.8 are presented in figure 6.16. The run-out increases with decrease in the permeability, which is equivalent to an increase in the hydrodynamic radius. An increase in the hydrodynamic radius from 0.7 to 0.95  $R$  increases the normalised run-out by 25%. However,

- <sup>1</sup> even under a very low permeability condition ( $r = 0.95 R$ ), the run-out observed in fluid is
- <sup>2</sup> shorter than the dry and the buoyant conditions.

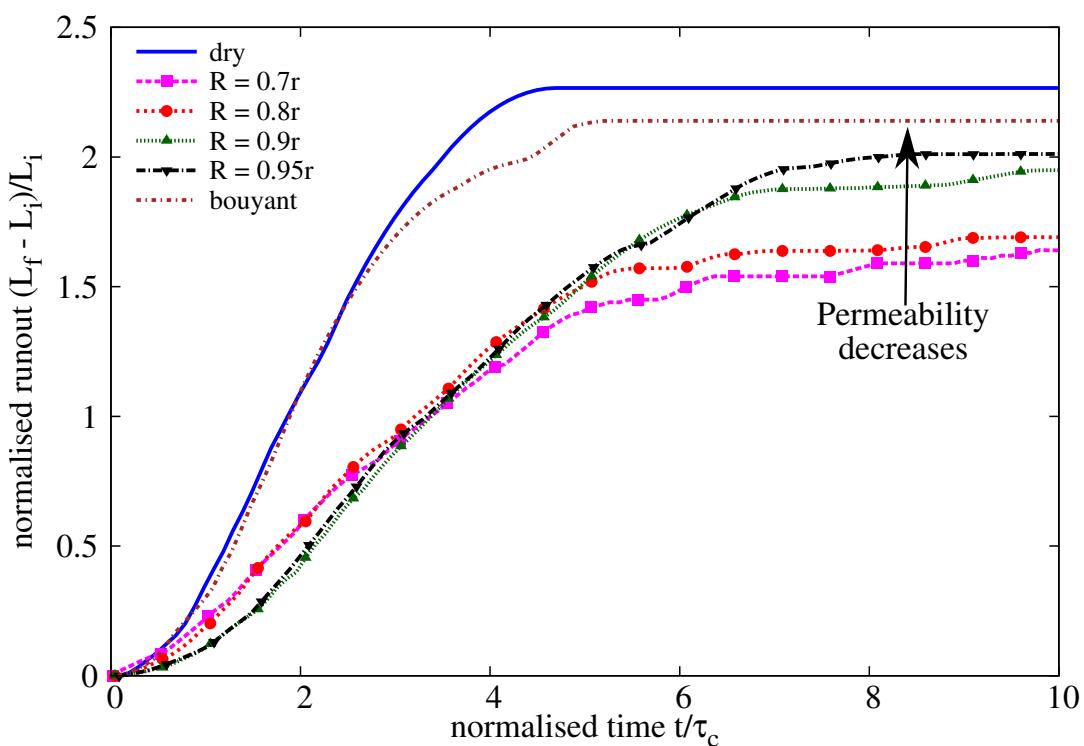


Figure 6.16 Effect of permeability on the evolution of run-out for a column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.8$ )

- <sup>3</sup> At a high permeability ( $r = 0.7 R$ ), the evolution of run-out at the initial stage is quicker,
- <sup>4</sup> which means that the negative pore-pressure that is developed during the shearing along the

fracture surface is dissipated faster. Even though the negative pore-pressure is dissipated, due to the development of negative pore-pressure the evolution of run-out in fluid is slower than its dry counterpart. The rate of dissipation decreases with decrease in the permeability. This can be observed by a flatter slope in the run-out evolution with decrease in permeability. Figure 6.17 shows the distribution of pore-pressure in high and low permeable granular media. At the same time  $t = \tau_c$ , the high permeable ( $r = 0.7 R$ ) granular column shows smaller negative pore-pressure in comparison to large negative pore-pressures observed in the shearing zone of a low permeable column ( $r = 0.9 R$ ). This shows that not only does it take longer for the pore-pressure to dissipate with decrease in permeability, but also results in almost twice the negative pore-pressure than what is observed in the high permeable case (see figure 6.17b).

Although the low permeable granular columns take longer duration for the run-out to evolve, the final run-out distance is found to be much longer than the high permeable condition. Figure 6.18 shows that the potential energy available for the flow of a low permeable column is 20 % smaller than the collapse of a high permeable granular column. The kinetic energy evolution (see figure 6.19) shows that the low permeable column has a wider peak kinetic energy distribution in comparison to a sharp peak observed in the high permeable condition. This indicates the influence of lubrication, i.e., hydroplaning of the granular flow in low permeable conditions. The evolution of the horizontal kinetic energy with time reveals that the peak kinetic energy is sustained longer as the permeability of the granular material decreases (see figure 6.19b). Although, the peak kinetic energy is smaller in the low permeability case, the hydroplaning of the flowing granular mass results in longer run-out distance. A high positive pore-pressure is observed at the base of the granular flow in low permeability condition (figure 6.20b) indicating the occurrence of hydroplaning. The evolution of local packing density shows a drop in the packing density at low permeability (see figure 6.21). This drop in the value of packing density between  $t = 2\tau_c$  and  $t = 3\tau_c$  corroborates with the duration of hydroplaning during which large amount of water is entrained at the flow front.

High permeable granular column shows lower water entrainment, which indicates that for highly permeable flows the drag force acting on the soil grains predominates over the lubrication effect on the run-out behaviour. In both the low and high permeable granular flows, the granular material consolidates at the final stage of the flow. This can be observed by the increase in the packing density at the final stage due to settlement of grains and expulsion of entrained water. The final deposit profile for both low and high permeability conditions are shown in figure 6.22. The high permeable collapse show a more parabolic (convex) deposit profile in contrast to the more concave profile observed in the low permeability condition. The observation of hydroplaning in the low permeable condition may be due to the difference in the distribution of granular mass at the flow front. Instigation of hydroplaning is controlled by

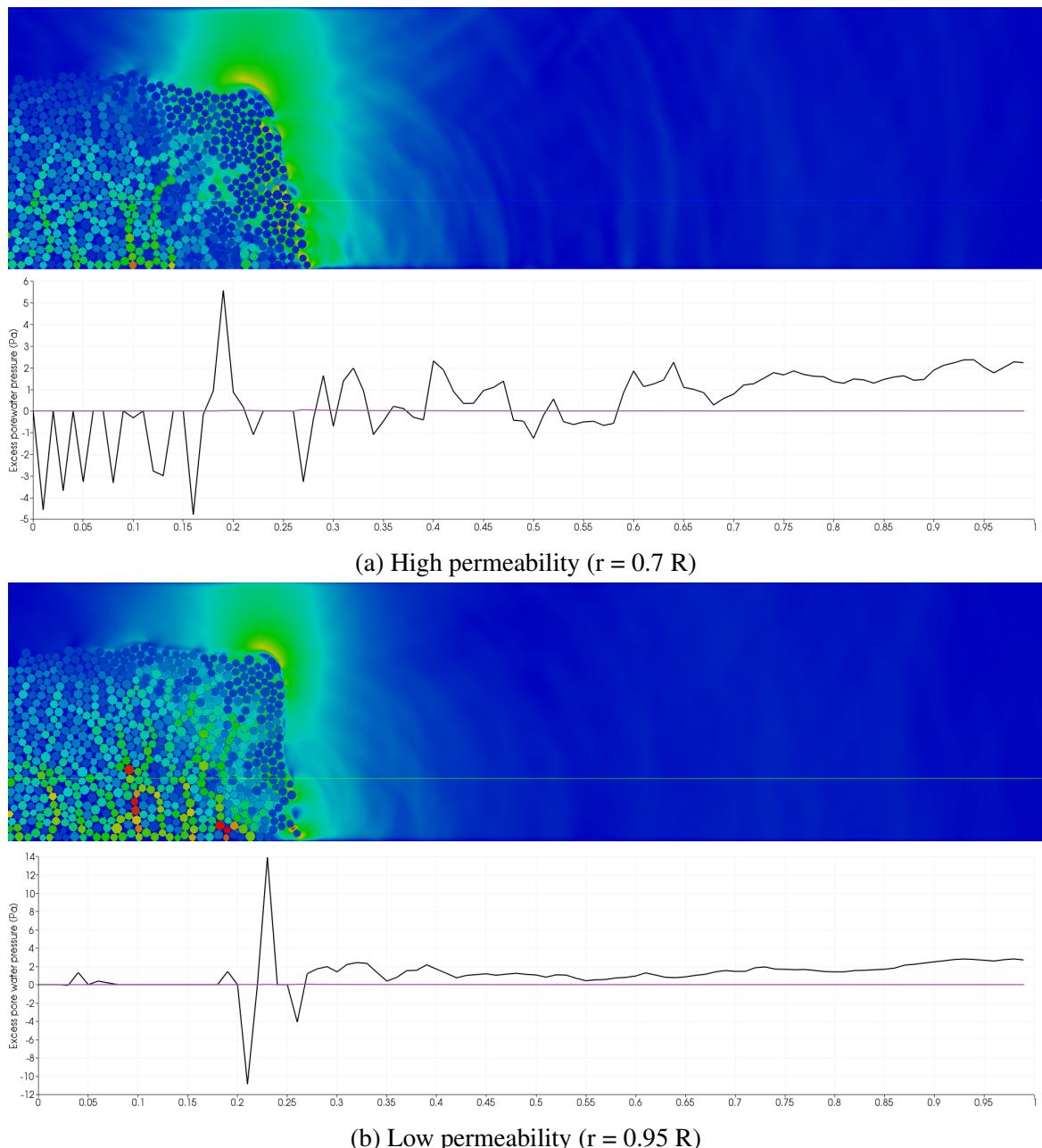


Figure 6.17 Effect of permeability on the excess pore water pressure distribution for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.8$  & dense packing) at  $t = \tau_c$

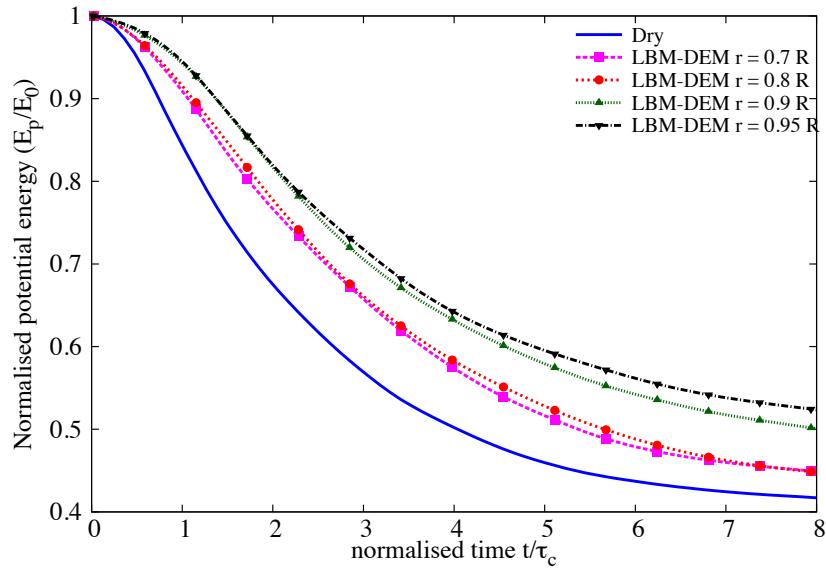


Figure 6.18 Effect of permeability on the evolution of the potential energy with time for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.8$ )

the balance of gravity and inertia forces at the debris front and is suitably characterized by the densimetric Froude's number:

$$Fr_d = \frac{U}{\sqrt{(\frac{\rho_d}{\rho_w} - 1)gH \cos \theta}} \quad (6.6)$$

where  $U$  is the average velocity of sliding mass,  $\rho_d$  and  $\rho_w$  are the densities of soil and water, respectively,  $H$  is the thickness of the sliding mass,  $g$  is acceleration due to gravity and  $\theta$  represents the slope angle. Harbitz (2003) observed hydroplaning above a critical value of densimetric Froude's number of 0.4. A Froude's  $Fr_d$  value of 0.427 is observed for the low permeable flow ( $r = 0.95 R$ ), which indicates the occurrence of hydroplaning. Whereas, a  $Fr_d = 0.273$  is observed for the high permeable granular flow indicating absence of hydroplaning, the low permeable collapse is predominated by the viscous drag force resulting in a parabolic profile and shorter run-out distance.

The normalised final run-out distance as a function of the initial aspect ratio of the column is presented in figure 6.23. For all aspect ratios, the dry condition yields the longest run-out distance. For a given aspect ratio, the dry collapse acquires the highest peak kinetic energy due to the lack of viscous dissipation during vertical collapse. This extra kinetic energy is high enough to propel the heap, in-spite of a high frictional dissipation, over a distance that is longer than the run-out distance in the fluid regime. In the submerged condition, for the same aspect

## 6.3 Granular collapse in fluid

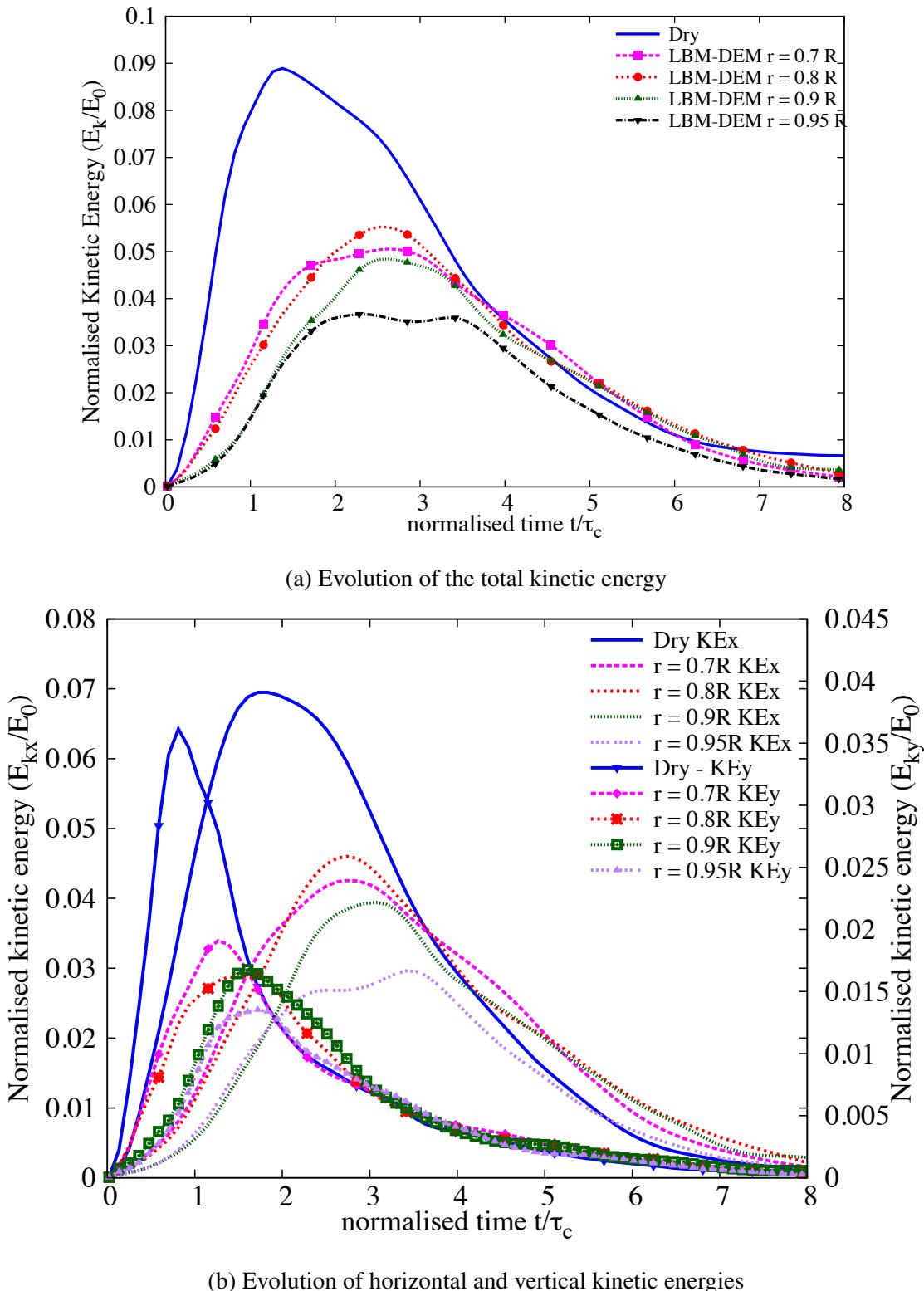


Figure 6.19 Effect of permeability on the evolution of kinetic energies with time for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.8$ )

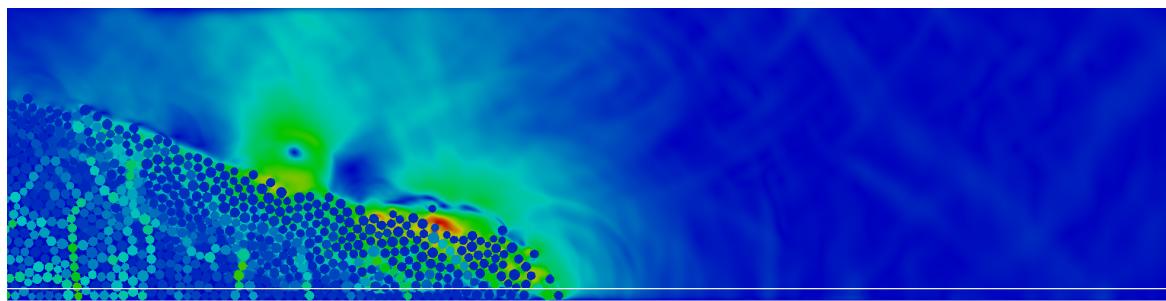
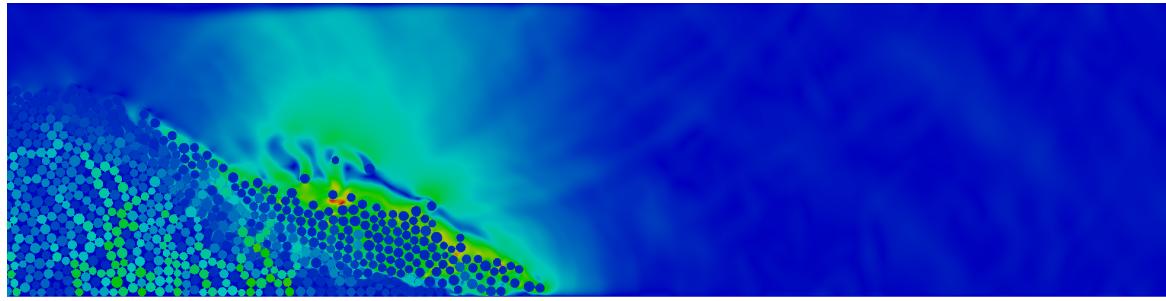
(a) High permeability ( $r = 0.7 R$ )(b) Low permeability ( $r = 0.95 R$ )

Figure 6.20 Effect of permeability on the excess pore water pressure distribution for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.8$  & dense packing) at  $t = 2\tau_c$

## 6.3 Granular collapse in fluid

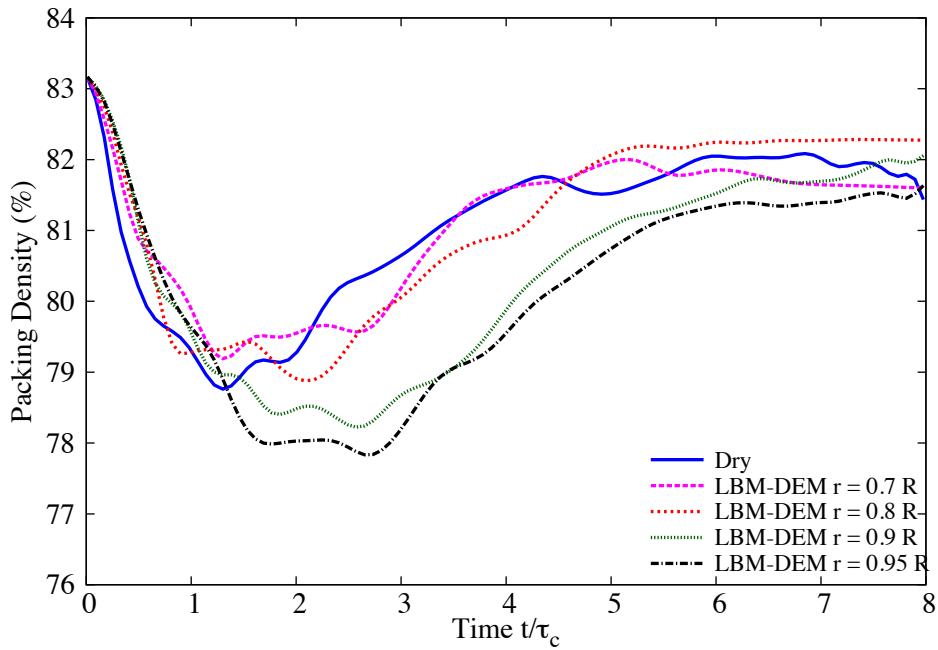
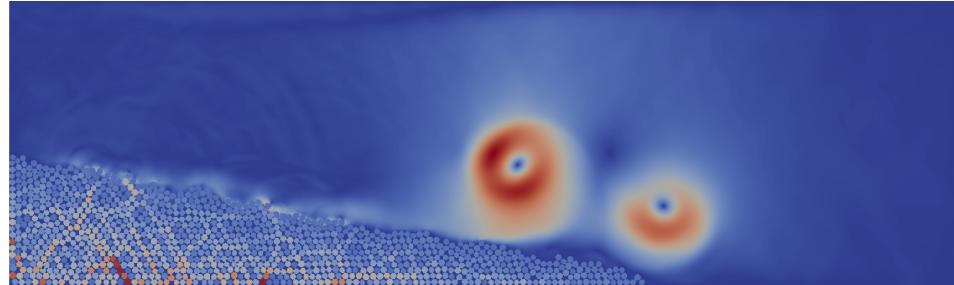
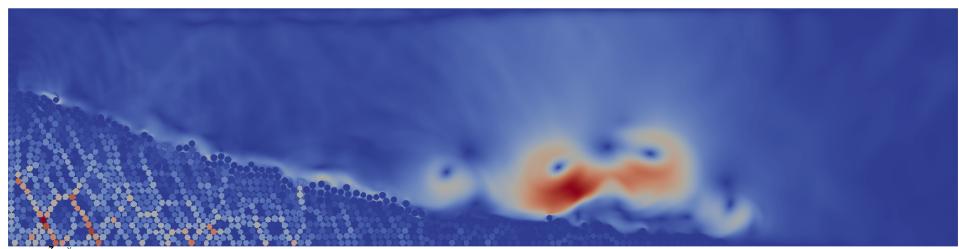


Figure 6.21 Effect of permeability on the evolution of packing density for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.8$  & dense initial packing)



(a) High permeability ( $r = 0.7 R$ )



(b) Low permeability ( $r = 0.95 R$ )

Figure 6.22 Effect of permeability on the deposit morphology of a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.8$ )

ratio, the kinetic energy available for spreading is lower and the dissipation due to viscous drag is higher, thus leading to a much shorter run-out distance.

For short columns, with decrease in permeability the run-out distance increases, however, the run-out distance is not higher than the dry condition. At higher aspect ratios, decrease in permeability from  $r = 0.8 R$  to  $r = 0.9 R$  does not have a significant influence on the run-out behaviour. This can be attributed to the turbulent nature of the granular flows for tall columns. The run-out behaviour is a result of transformation of (part of) the initial potential energy to the peak kinetic energy, which in turn controls the subsequent run-out along the plane. The run-out distance is plotted as a function of the normalised peak kinetic energy in figure 6.24. For the same aspect ratio, the peak kinetic energy is higher in the case of dry column. This represents grain inertial regime in dry granular collapse, which indicates that a part of the potential energy, in the presence of the fluid, is dissipated during the vertical collapse due to viscous friction. In all regimes, the run-out distance increases as a power law  $L_f \propto KE_{max}^\gamma$ . For the same value of peak kinetic energy, the run-out distance in fluid is longer than the dry column collapse. Also, with decrease in permeability the run-out distance increases for the same peak kinetic energy.

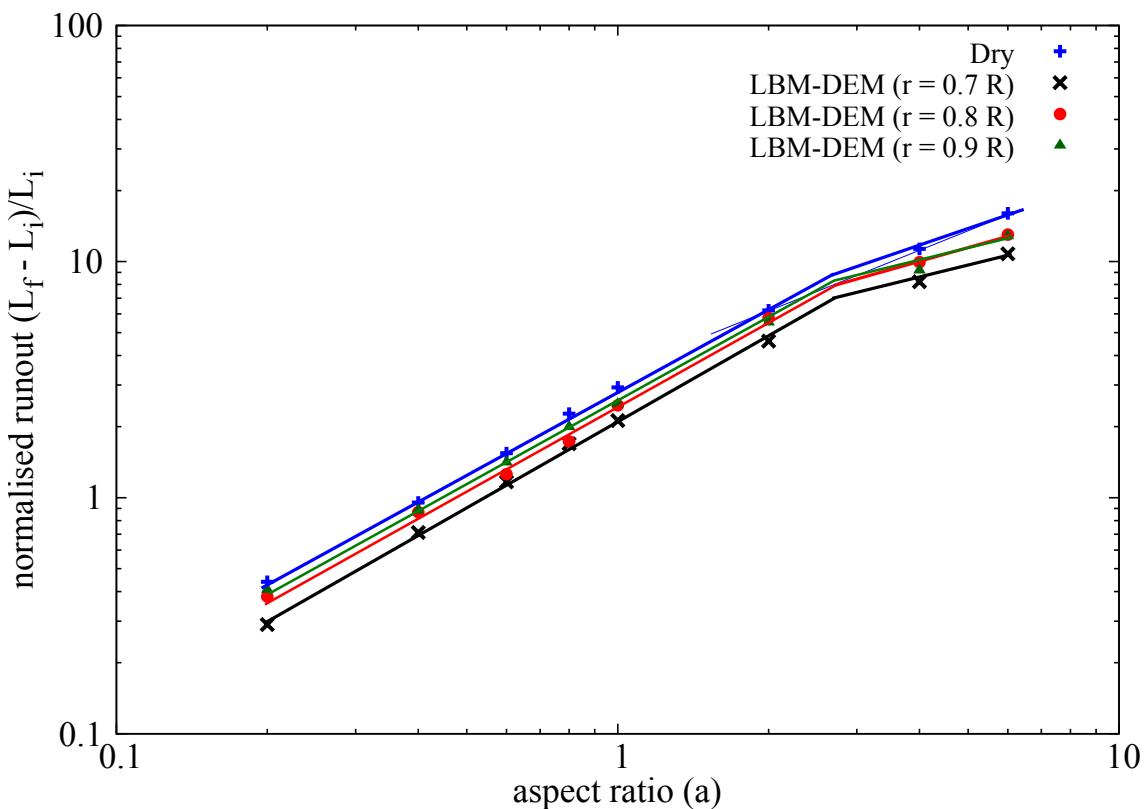


Figure 6.23 Normalised final run-out distance for columns with different initial aspect ratios. Comparison of dry and submerged granular column collapse for different hydrodynamic radius ( $0.7R$ ,  $0.8R$  and  $0.9R$ ).

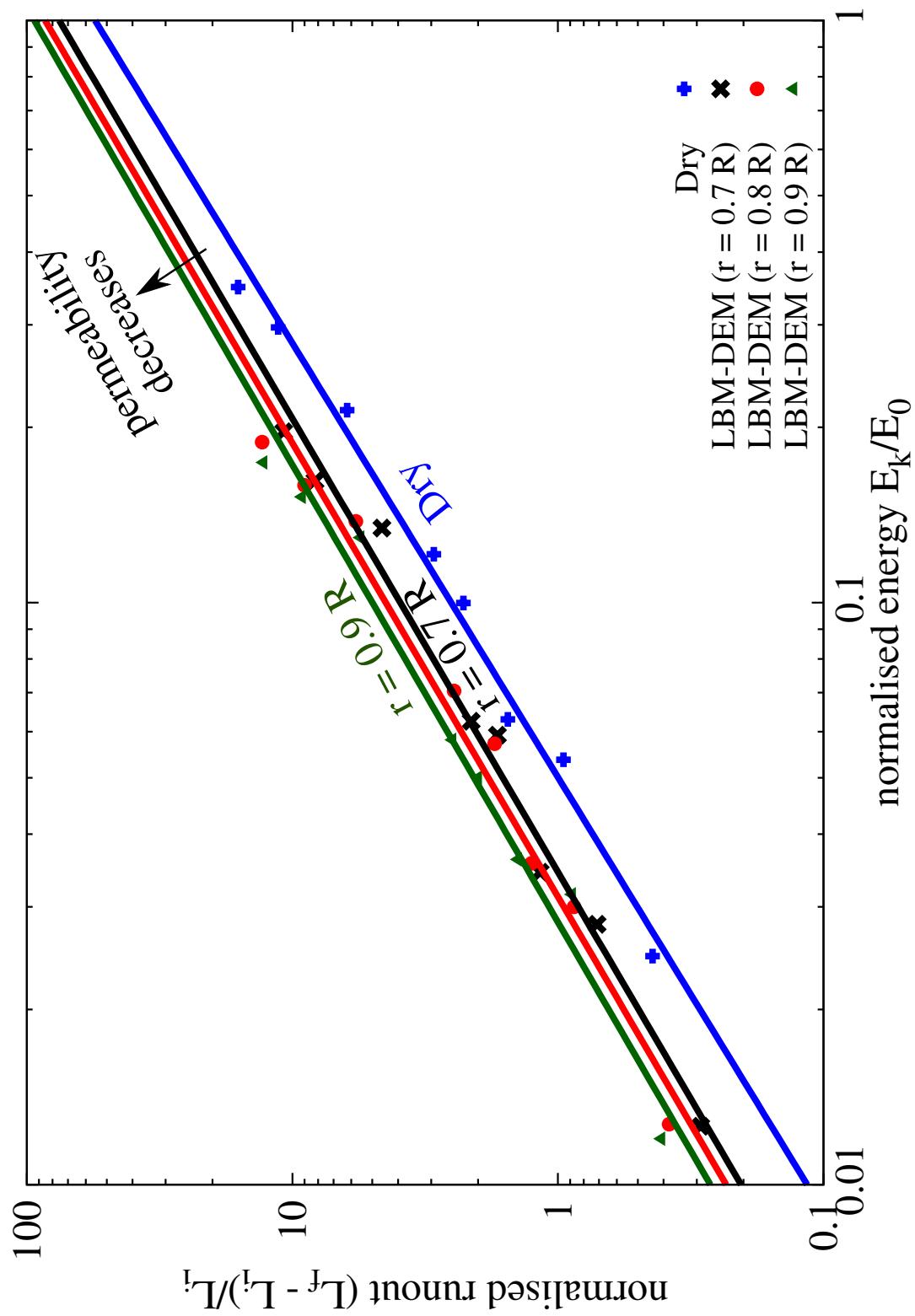


Figure 6.24 Normalised final run-out distance for columns as a function of peak kinetic energy. Comparison of dry and submerged granular column collapse for different hydrodynamic radius (0.7R, 0.8R and 0.9R).

### 5    6.3.4   Effect of initial packing density

6    Rondon et al. (2011) observed that the loose packings flow rapidly on a time scale proportional  
 7    to the initial height and results in longer run-out distance in comparison to the dense packing.  
 8    Hydroplaning occurs above a critical Froude's number of 0.4. The Froude's number is inversely  
 9    related to the thickness of the flow and its density. Hence, for the same thickness of flow, a  
 10   loose granular column will experience more hydroplaning than a dense granular flow. This  
   11   effect might result in longer run-out behaviour in fluid than the dry condition for the same  
   12   initial aspect ratio. The initial packing density and the permeability of a 2D granular column,  
   13   with an aspect ratio of 0.8, are varied to understand their influence on the run-out behaviour.  
   14   The run-out behaviour of the dense case (83% packing density), discussed in the previous  
   15   section, is compared with a loose granular column (79% packing fraction). The permeability is  
   16   varied by changing the hydrodynamic radius from 0.7 R to 0.95 R.

17       The normalised run-out evolution with time for a loose initial packing (79% packing frac-  
 18   tion) with different hydrodynamic radii 0.7 R, 0.8 R, 0.9 and 0.95 R are presented in figure 6.25.  
 19   The run-out evolution of dry and a column with grains in suspension with an initial aspect  
 20   ratio of 0.8 are also presented to understand the influence of hydrodynamic forces on the  
 21   flow kinematics. Similar to the dense granular column, the run-out distance increases with  
 22   increase in the hydrodynamic radius (i.e., decrease in permeability). At low permeabilities ( $r$   
 23   = 0.9 and 0.95R), the run-out distance is longer than the dry condition. This shows that the  
 24   lubrication effect in low permeability condition overcomes the influence of the drag force and  
 25   the development of large negative pore pressure resulting in a longer run-out distance. Although  
 26   suspended granular mass experience high drag force and turbulent effects, the run-out evolves  
 27   almost at the same rate in comparison with granular columns with high permeability. This  
 28   shows the effect of permeability on the dissipation rate of negative pore pressure developed  
 29   during the initial stage of collapse.

30       Figure 6.26 shows the development of negative pore pressure in low permeability ( $r = 0.95$   
 31   R) and dissipation of negative pore pressure in high permeability ( $r = 0.7$  R) at the same time  
 32    $t = \tau_c$ . This difference in the quantity and the rate of dissipation of negative pore pressure  
 33   results in a difference in the rate of flow evolution. A low permeable column takes longer  
 34   duration to evolve. As the flow progresses, the low permeability of the granular column  
 35   causes hydroplaning to occur at the base of the column resulting in longer run-out distance  
 36   (see figure 6.27).

The evolution of the potential energy with time reveals that at a very low permeability ( $r =$   
 1   0.95 R), the initial potential energy mobilised is smaller than at  $r = 0.9$ R. Also with decrease in  
 2   permeability, the time required to dissipate the negative pore pressure increases. This results in  
 3   a shorter run-out distance in the case of  $r = 0.95$  R than  $r = 0.9$  R. As the quantity of material  
 4

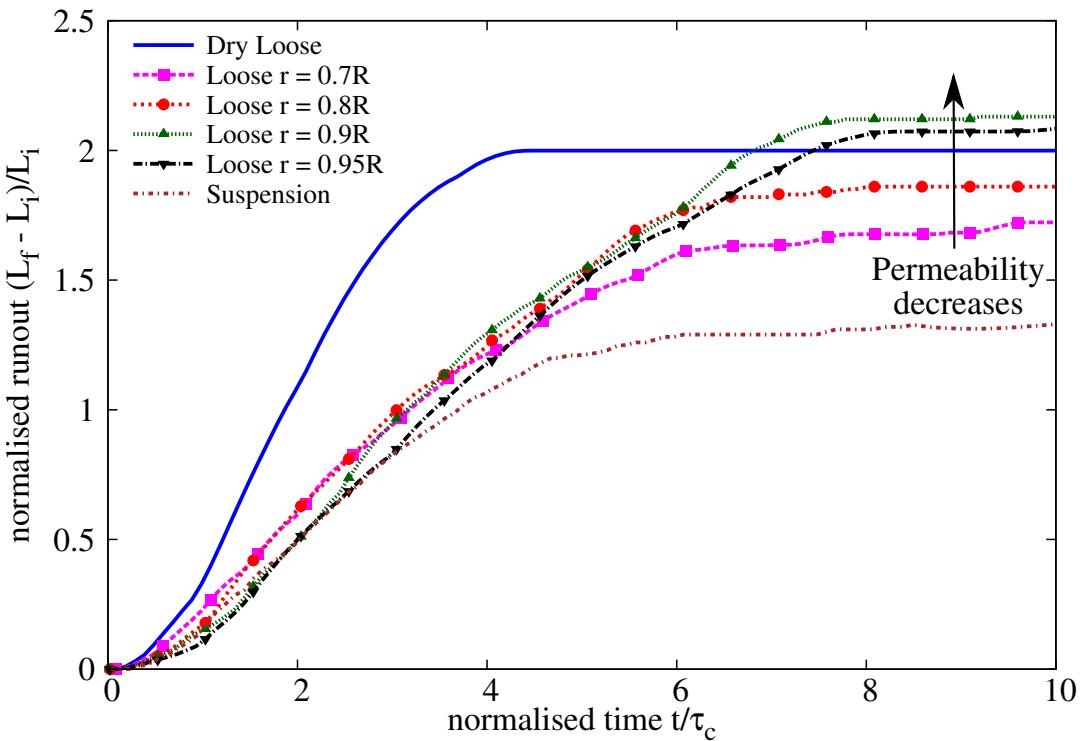


Figure 6.25 Effect of permeability on the evolution of run-out for a column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.8$  & loose packing)

destabilised is small, the flow is thinner and thus has a high Froude's number. However, the peak horizontal kinetic velocity observed in the case of  $r = 0.9$  R is higher than  $r = 0.95$  R (see figure 6.30b). A Froude's number of 0.59 for  $r = 0.9$  R is observed in contrast to 0.46 for  $r = 0.95$  R. Both values of hydrodynamic radii result in a Froude's number that indicates occurrence of hydroplaning. However, the difference in the amount of material destabilised for  $r = 0.95$  R and the decreased effect of hydroplaning results in a shorter run-out distance for  $r = 0.95$  R in comparison to  $r = 0.9$  R.

As the column collapses, water is entrained at the flow front. This can be observed by the decrease in the packing fraction during  $t = 1\tau_c$  and  $t = 3\tau_c$ . As the flow progresses, the entrained water is expelled and the soil grains consolidate to reach a critical packing density at the end of the flow (see figure 6.29). The permeability (hydrodynamic radius) plays a crucial role in the rate of dissipation of the entrained water. As the permeability decreases, the water entrained at the flow front takes longer time to be dissipated resulting in lubrication of the flow at low permeabilities. This lubrication effect results in an increase in the run-out distance for columns with low permeabilities.

The evolution of grain trajectories with time are presented in figure 6.31 for low ( $r = 0.95$  R) and high permeability conditions ( $r = 0.9$  R). It can be observed that a high permeability

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(a) High permeability ( $r = 0.7 R$ )(b) Low permeability ( $r = 0.95 R$ )

Figure 6.26 Effect of permeability on the excess pore water pressure distribution for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.8$  & loose packing) at  $t = \tau_c$

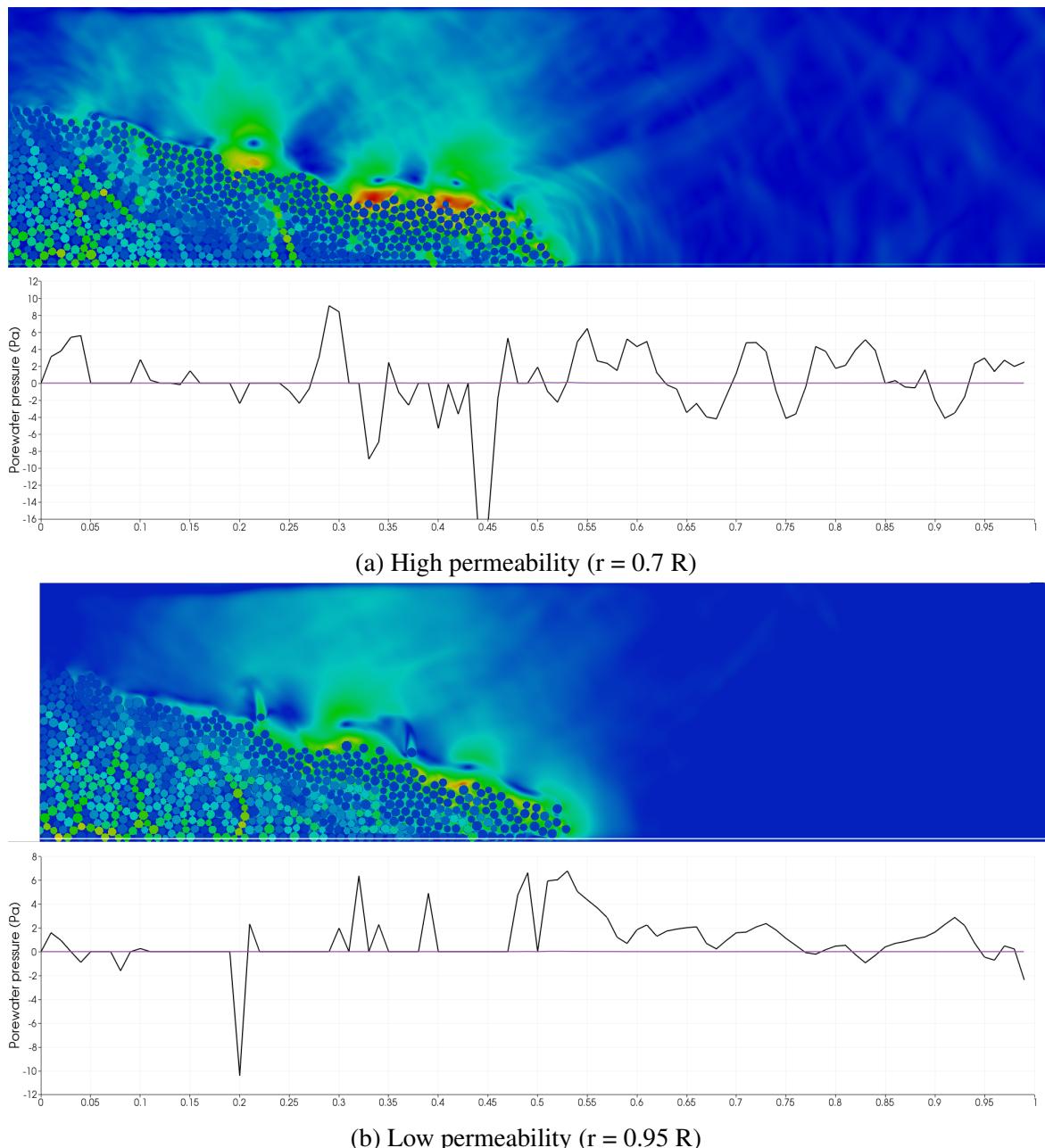


Figure 6.27 Effect of permeability on the excess pore water pressure distribution for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.8$  & loose packing) at  $t = 2\tau_c$

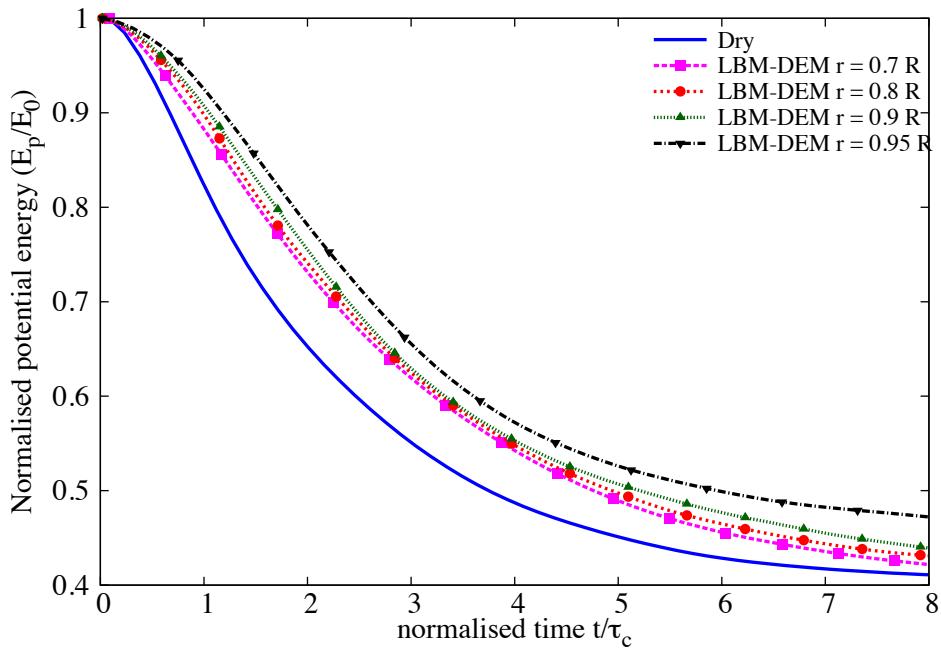


Figure 6.28 Effect of permeability on the evolution of the potential energy with time for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.8$  & loose packing)

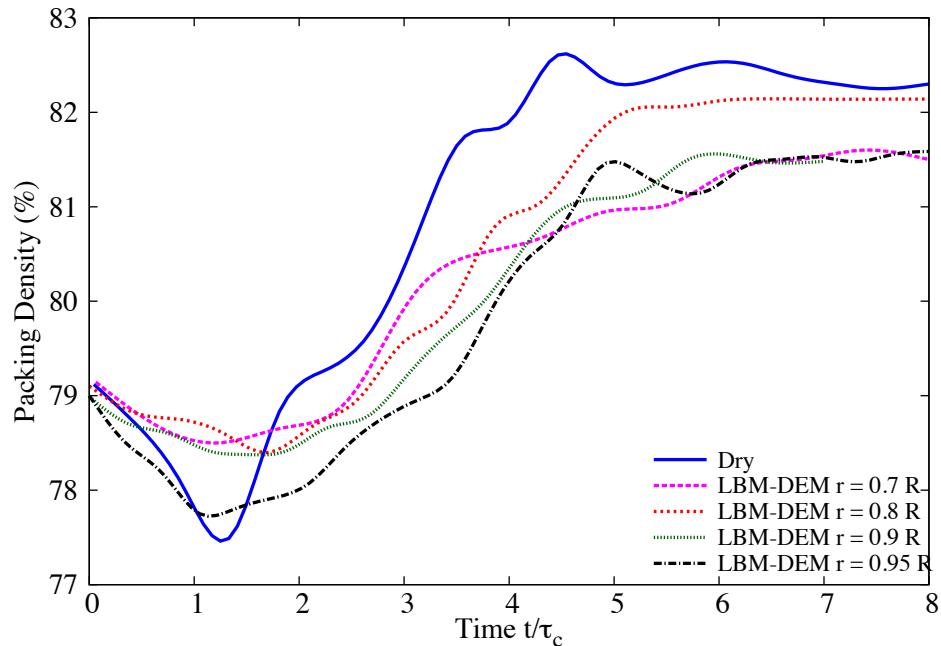
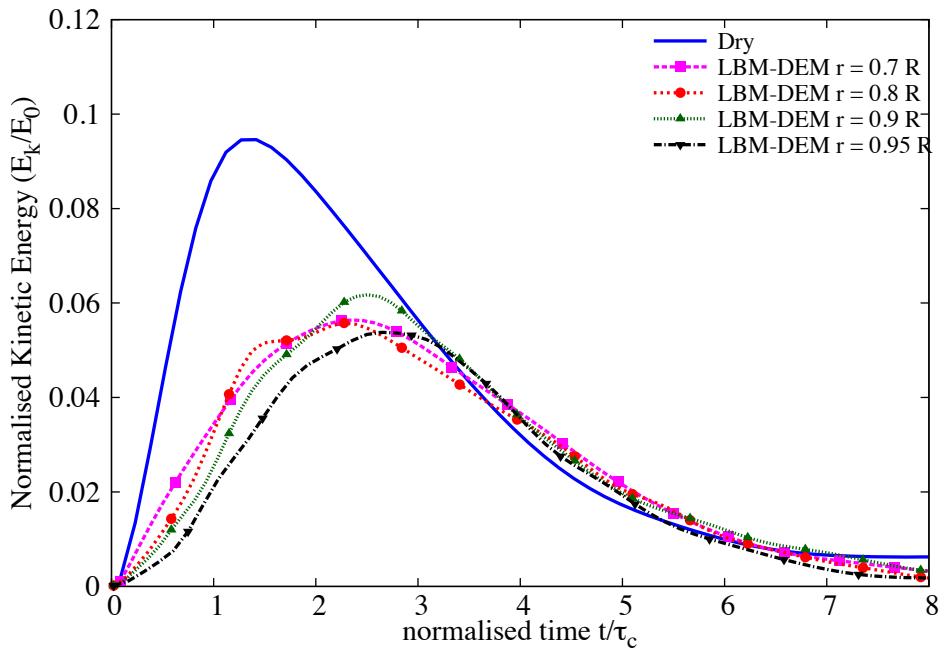
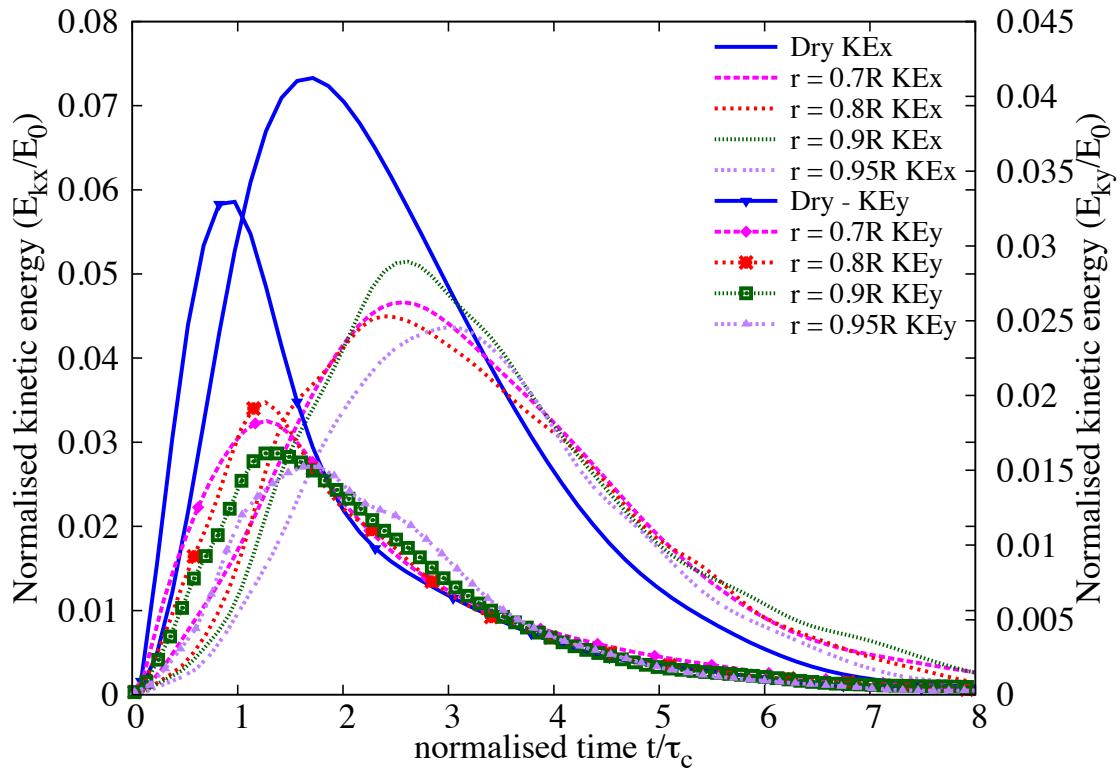


Figure 6.29 Effect of permeability on the evolution of packing density for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.8$  & loose initial packing)

## 6.3 Granular collapse in fluid



(a) Evolution of the total kinetic energy



(b) Evolution of horizontal and vertical kinetic energies

Figure 6.30 Effect of permeability on the evolution of kinetic energies with time for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.8$  & loose packing)

5 column shows a parabolic (convex) final profile in contrast to the more concave profile observed  
6 in low permeability condition. This difference in the flow thickness results in higher value of  
7 Froude's number and the occurrence of hydroplaning in the low permeability condition. Due  
8 to the high permeability, the water entrained at the flow front is dissipated quicker and thus  
9 no lubrication effect is observed. A Froude's number of 0.272 (no hydroplaning) is observed  
10 for the high permeability condition ( $r = 0.7 R$ ). This shows that the drag force predominates at  
11 high permeability, while the low permeability condition is characterised by hydroplaning and  
12 lubrication.

13 Figure 6.32 shows the normalised pressure at the base for the low and high permeability  
14 flows at  $t = 2\tau_c$ . The normalised effective stress plotted is obtained as the average over 5  
15 time steps at  $2\tau_c$ . The effective stress at the base is normalised to the effective stress of a  
16 static granular column before the collapse. A value of 1 indicates that the effective stress  
17 hasn't changed, which can be observed in the static region of the granular column. It can be  
18 observed that the normalised effective stress is significantly high for the high permeability  
19 condition at the flow front in comparison to almost non-existence of effective stress in the low  
20 permeability condition. The observation of trivial effective stress at the flow front corroborates  
21 the lubrication effect observed at low permeability conditions.

22 Figure 6.33 shows the grain trajectories of a dense and a loose initial packing for a hydro-  
23 dynamic radius ( $r = 0.95R$ ). It can be observed that the dense initial packing results in a lot of  
24 turbulent behaviour at the flow surface in contrast to the more plug like flow observed in the  
25 loose condition. The thickness of the deposit in both dense and loose condition is almost the  
26 same, however the density of the flow results in a Froude's number of 0.46 and 0.429 for loose  
27 and dense conditions, respectively. The low initial density results in more hydroplaning in the  
28 loose condition. The effect of water entrainment at the flow front between dense and loose  
29 condition can be seen in figure 6.34. Comparing the packing density (see figures 6.21 and 6.29)  
30 reveals almost the same amount of water entrainment in both dense and loose conditions.  
31 Hence, it is the density of the flowing granular mass that controls the influence of hydroplaning  
1 for a given hydrodynamic radius and initial aspect ratio. A loosely packed granular column  
2 with low permeability entrains more water at the flow front, resulting in a hydroplaning effect  
3 that overcomes the influence of viscous drag forces and thereby yields a higher run-out distance  
4 than the dry condition.

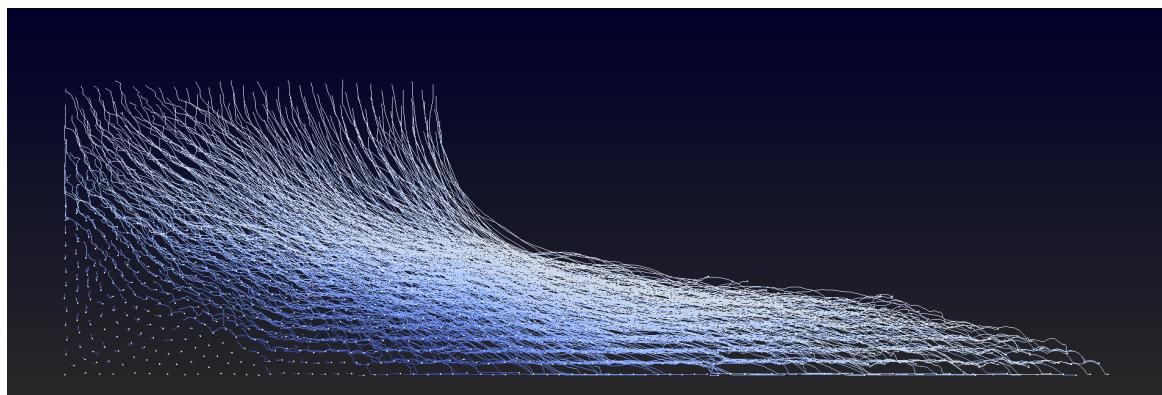
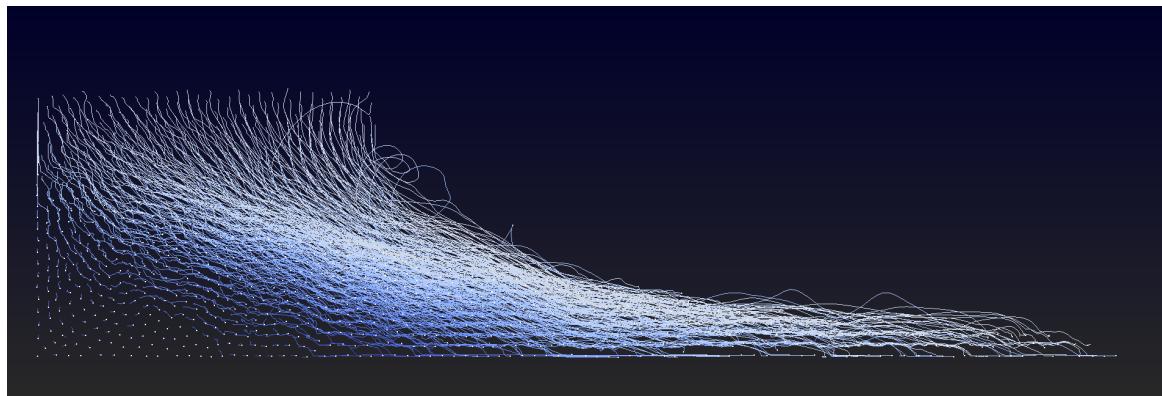
(a) High permeability ( $r = 0.7 R$ )(b) Low permeability ( $r = 0.95 R$ )

Figure 6.31 Particle tracking of the deposit morphology for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.8$  & loose packing), influence of permeability

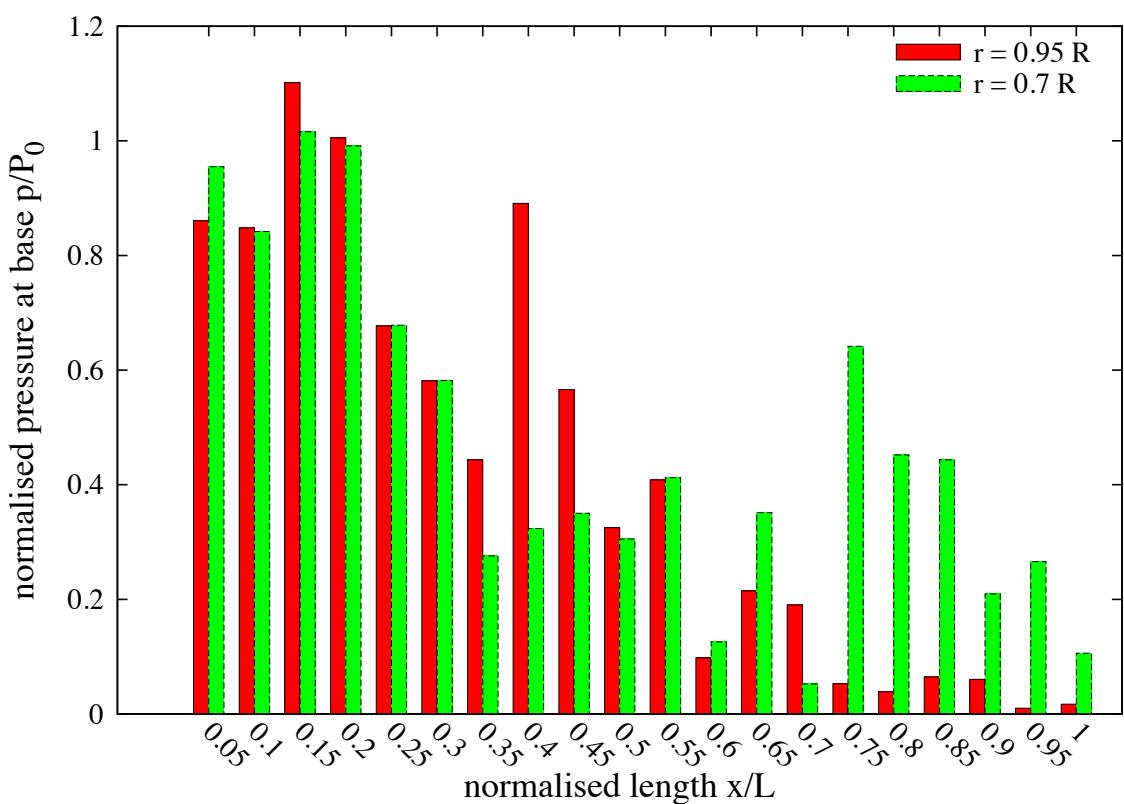
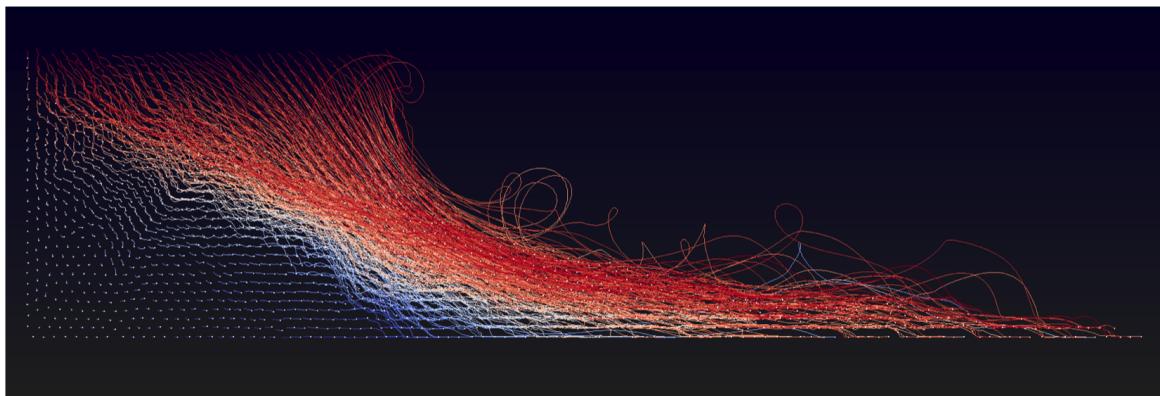
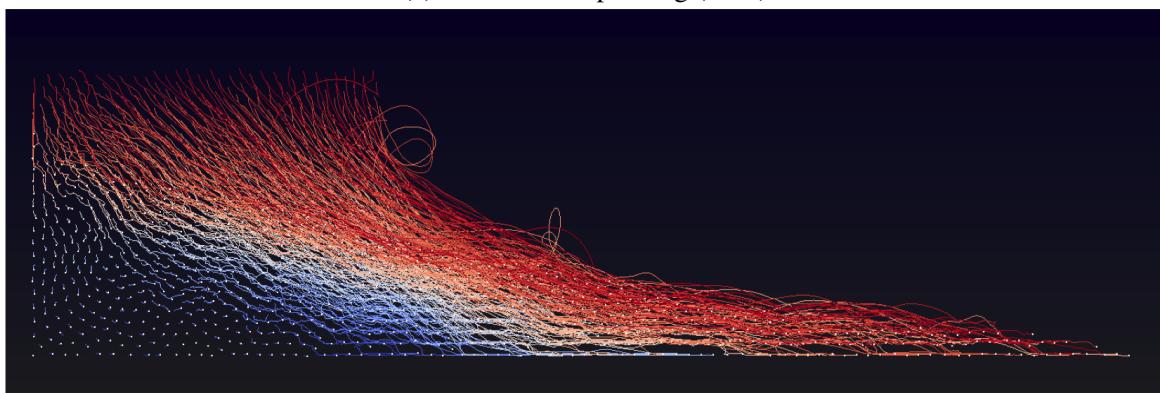


Figure 6.32 Effect of permeability on the normalised effective stress for loose initial packing at  $t = 2\tau_c$



(a) Dense initial packing (83%)



(b) Loose initial packing (79%)

Figure 6.33 Effect of initial density on the deposit morphology for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 0.8$ ). Dense vs loose initial packing fraction ( $r = 0.95R$ ). Darker means dense packing, white indicates loose packing density.



(a) Dense initial packing (83%)



(b) Loose initial packing (79%)

Figure 6.34 Evolution of packing fraction at  $t = \tau_c$  for dense and loose initial packing fraction.

## 5    6.4 Submarine granular flows down incline plane

6    Slope failure is a problem of high practical importance for both civil engineering structures  
 7    and natural hazards management. Catastrophic events such as landslides, debris flows, rock  
 8    avalanches or reservoir embankment failures exemplify the potential consequences of a soil  
 9    gravitational instability. One of the most critical situation concerns a submerged sandy slope  
 10   since pore pressure changes, related to groundwater seepage flow or soil dilation/contraction,  
 11   can significantly affect the stability of many earth structures or natural soils.

12   The influence of slope angle on the effect of permeability and the initial packing density  
 13   on the run-out behaviour are studied. In this study, a 2D poly-disperse system ( $d_{max}/d_{min} = 2$ )  
 14   of circular discs forming a granular column in fluid is used to understand the behaviour of  
 15   granular flows down inclined planes (see ??). The soil column is modelled using  $\sim 1000$  to  
 16    $2000$  discs of density  $2650 \text{ kg m}^{-3}$  and a contact friction angle of  $26^\circ$ . The collapse of the  
 17   granular column is simulated inside a fluid with a density of  $1000 \text{ kg m}^{-3}$  and a kinematic  
 18   viscosity of  $1 \times 10^{-6} \text{ m}^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$ . A granular column with an initial aspect ratio  $a$  of  $0.8$  is used.  
 19   A hydrodynamic radius  $r = 0.9 R$  is adopted during the LBM computations. Dry analyses  
 20   are also performed to study the effect of hydrodynamic forces on the run-out distance. The  
 21   numerical configuration used in this study is shown in figure 6.5. The slope angle  $\theta$  is varied  
 22   as  $0^\circ$ ,  $2.5^\circ$ ,  $5^\circ$ , and  $7.5^\circ$ . The effect of initial packing density is studied using a dense packing  
 23   (83% packing fraction) and a loose packing (79% packing fraction) of granular columns that  
 24   collapse on to an inclined plane at different slope angles. The influence of permeability (with  
 25   hydrodynamic radius varied as  $0.7$ ,  $0.75$ ,  $0.8$ ,  $0.85$  and  $0.9 R$ ) on the run-out behaviour of  
 26   collapse of granular columns with initial packing density of 83% and 79 % on to an inclined  
 27   plane with a slope angle of  $5^\circ$  is also analysed.

### 28    6.4.1 Effect of initial density

29   The morphology of granular deposits in fluid is shown to be mainly controlled by the initial  
 30   volume fraction of the granular mass and not by the aspect ratio of the column (Pailha et al.,  
 31   2008; Rondon et al., 2011). In order to understand the influence of the initial packing density  
 32   on the run-out behaviour, a dense sand column (initial packing density,  $\Phi = 83\%$ ) and a  
 33   loose sand column ( $\Phi = 79\%$ ) are considered. The granular columns collapse and flow down  
 34   slopes of varying inclinations ( $2.5^\circ$ ,  $5^\circ$  and  $7.5^\circ$ ). The run-out behaviour is compared with the  
 collapse of a granular column in fluid on a horizontal surface. For all slope angles, the flow  
 kinematics in the submerged condition is compared with its dry counterpart to understand the  
 influence of lubrication and viscous drag. A hydrodynamic radius of  $r = 0.9 R$  is adopted in all

cases, because low permeability conditions result in longer run-out distance as observed in the previous section.

The evolution of run-out for a dense sand column with time in dry and submerged conditions for varying slope inclinations are presented in figure 6.35a. For all slope angles, the run-out distances in the dry condition are longer than those observed in the submerged condition. Similar to the case of collapse on a horizontal plane, the dense granular columns experience significant drag forces than the lubrication effect. The difference in the run-out between the dry and the submerged condition decreases with increase in the slope angle. At a slope angle of 5° the difference in the run-out between the dry and the submerged condition is the smallest. This is due to significant hydroplaning of a thin flowing layer, the occurrence of hydroplaning can be observed by a sustained peak kinetic energy (see figure 6.35b). At higher slope angles (> 5°), the drag force predominates over the lubrication effect and results in shorter run-out distance.

Similar to the case of collapse on a horizontal surface, the dense granular columns in fluid require a longer time to collapse and flow, due to the development of large negative pore pressures. Large negative pore pressures are developed as the dense granular material dilates due to shearing along the fracture surface in the initial phase of the flow. The snapshots of the dense granular column collapse down slopes of varying inclinations at the time ( $t = \tau_c = 3\sqrt{H/g}$ ), are shown in figure 6.36.

It can be seen that the viscous drag on the dense column tend to predominate over the influence of hydroplaning on the run-out behaviour. This influence can be observed in the smaller peak kinetic energy for submerged granular in comparison to the dry condition (see Figure 6.35b). With increase in the slope angle, the volume of material that dilates increases. This results in large negative pore pressures and more viscous drag on the granular material. Hence, the difference in the run-out between the dry and the submerged conditions, for a dense granular assembly, increases with increase in the slope angle above an inclination of 5°.

In contrast to the dense granular columns, the loose granular columns (packing fraction of 79%) show longer run-out distance in immersed conditions (see Figure 6.37a). The run-out distance in fluid increases with increase in the slope angle in comparison to the dry cases. The loose granular flow tends to entrain more water at the base of the flow front, creating a lubricating surface, which results in a longer run-out distance (see Figure 6.38). For the same thickness of the flow, the loose granular flow has smaller density and hence a higher Froude's number than the dense flow resulting in a higher probability of hydroplaning. The hydroplaning effect causes an increase in the flow velocity for the loose granular material in comparison with the dense condition (see Figure 6.37b).

The snapshots at  $t = 3\tau_c$  of a loose granular column ( $\alpha = 0.8$ ) collapse down slopes inclined at an angle of 2.5°, 5° and 7.5° are presented in figure 6.38. In contrast to dense granular

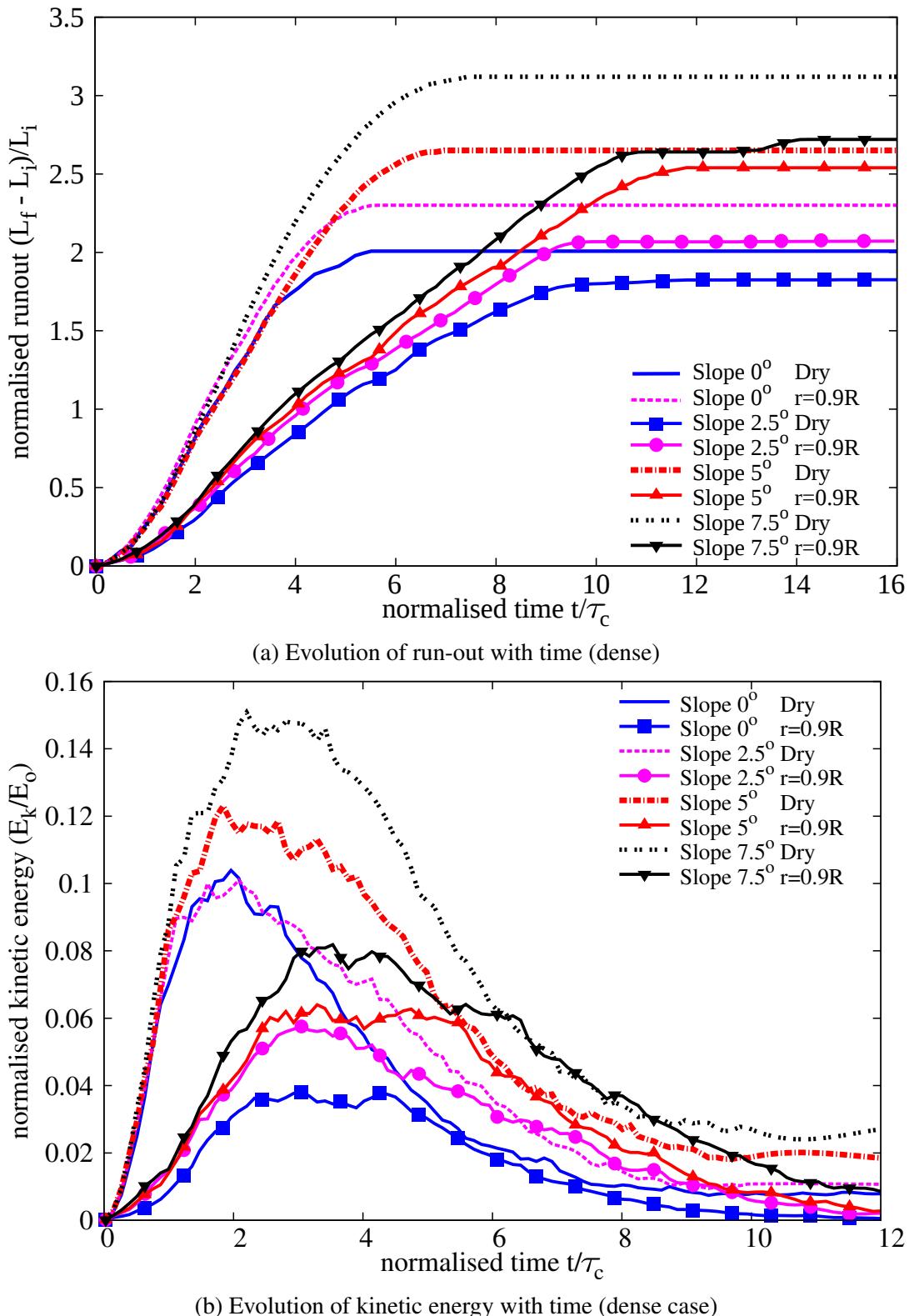
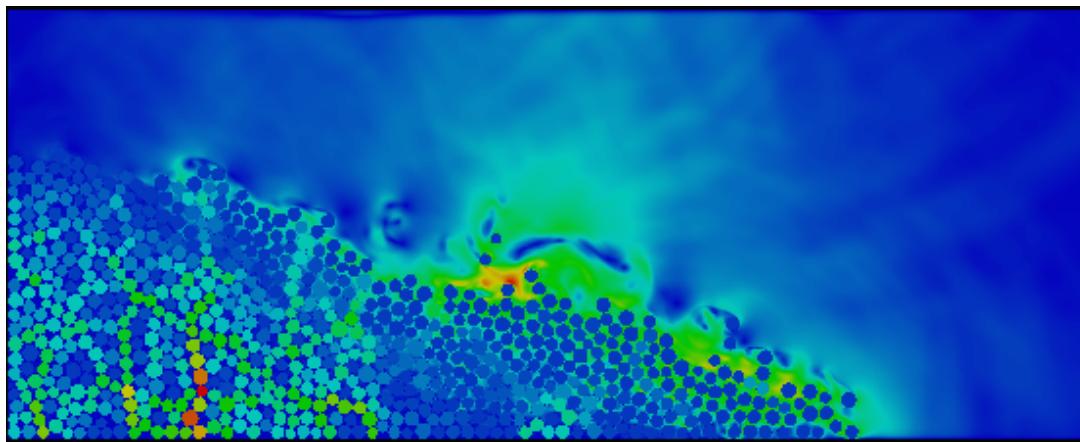
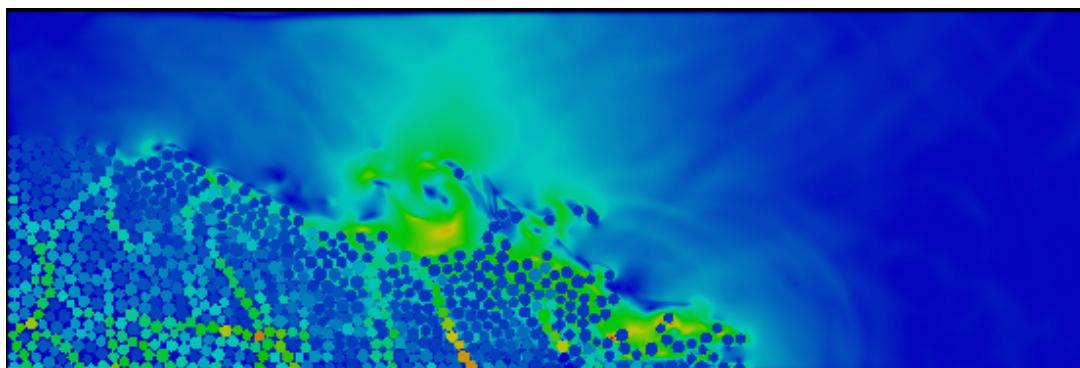


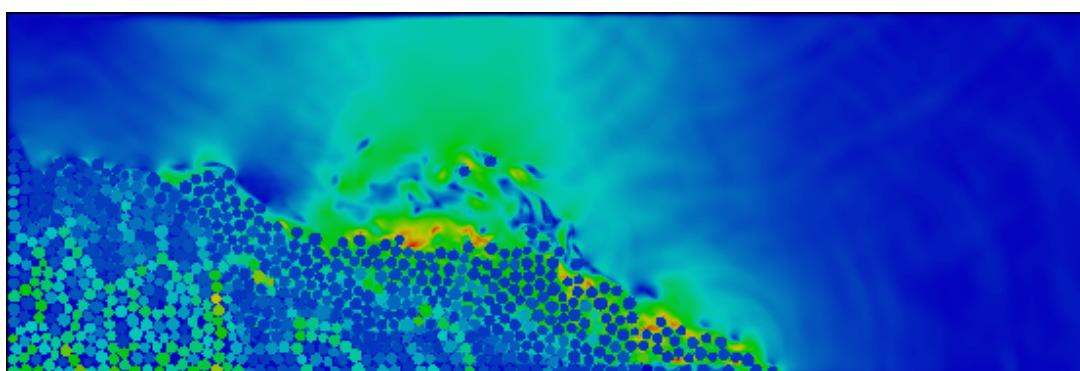
Figure 6.35 Evolution of run-out and kinetic energy with time (dense)



(a) Slope 2.5



(b) Slope 5.0



(c) Slope 7.5

Figure 6.36 Flow morphology at  $t = 3\tau_c$  for different slope angles (dense)

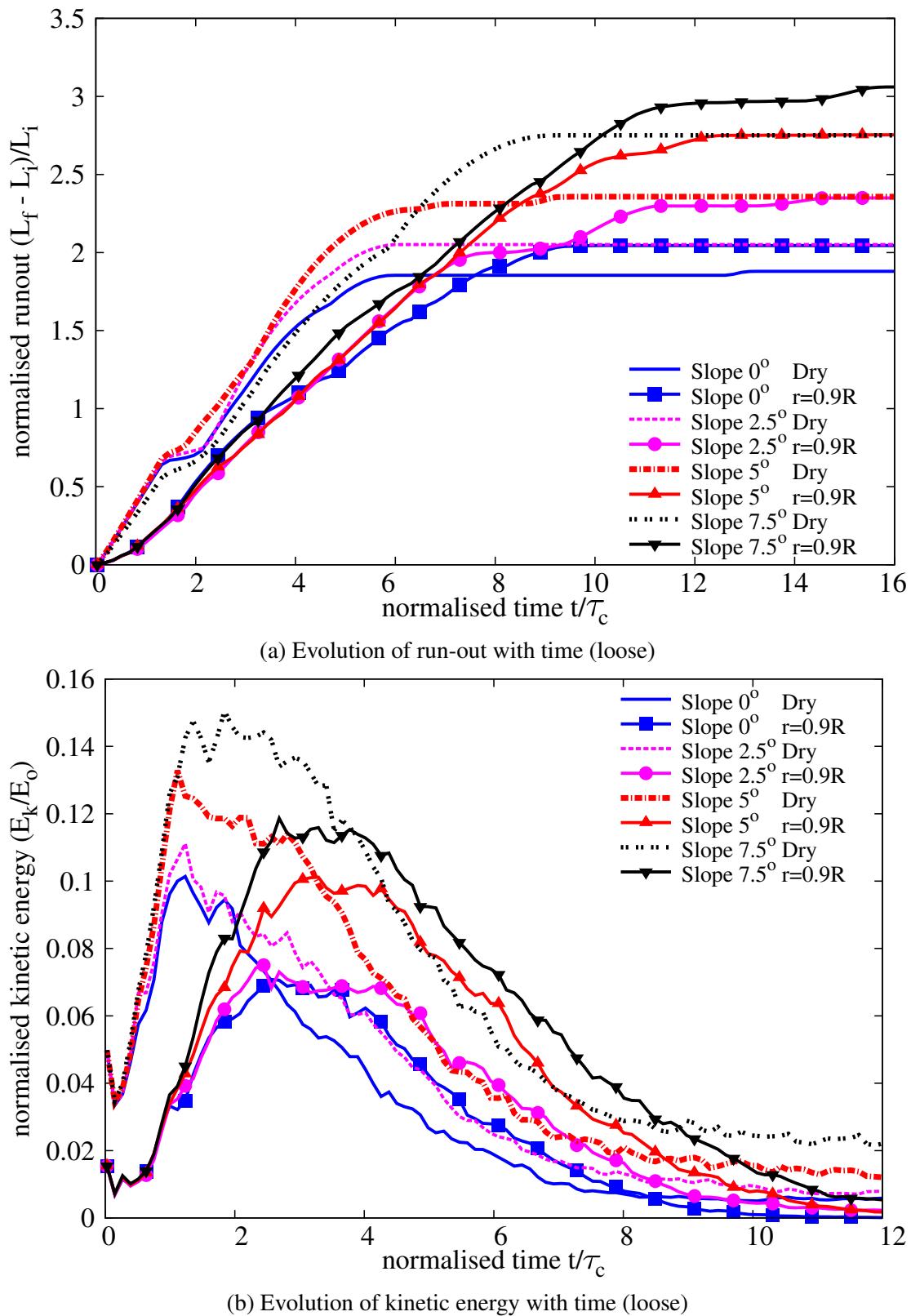


Figure 6.37 Evolution of run-out and kinetic energy with time (loose)

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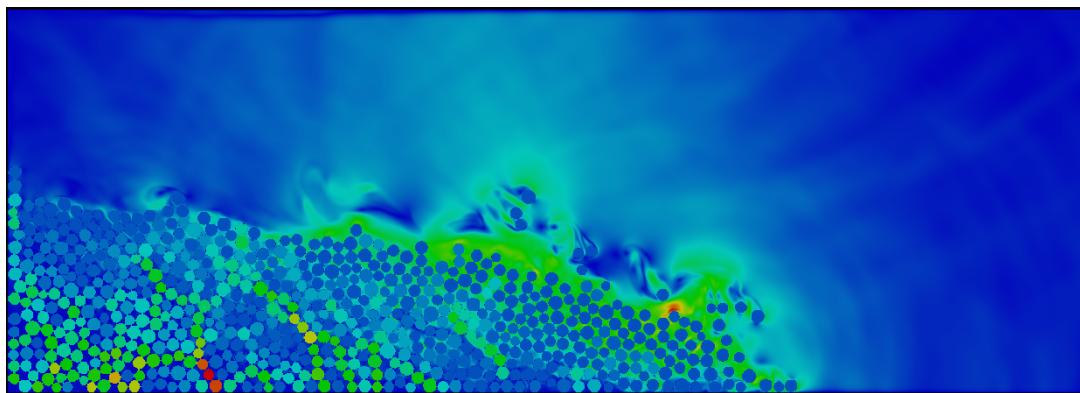
6.4 Submarine granular flows down incline plane

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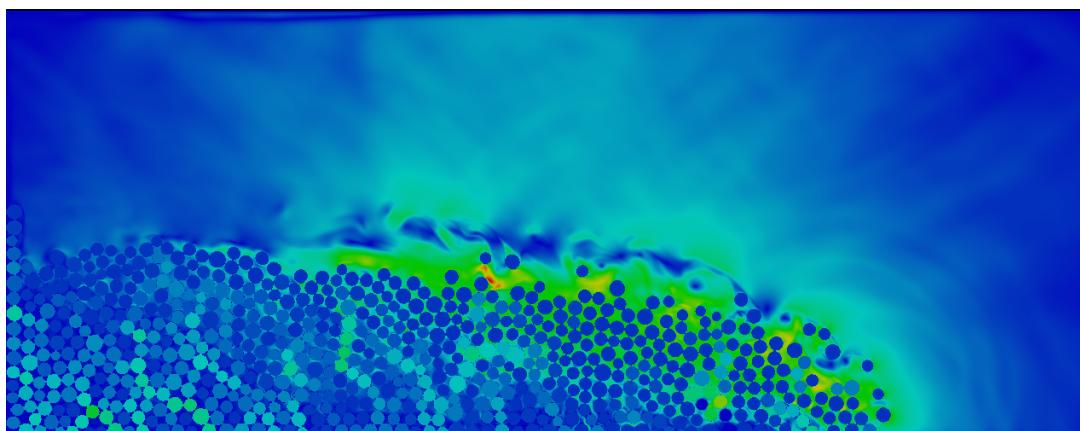
flows, a plug-like flow can be observed. Due to the low permeability, the water entrapped in the flow front results in a drop in the density of the flowing mass thus enabling hydroplaning. The turbulence effect observed on the surface of the dense granular flow is absent in the loose granular collapse. This along with the lubrication effect result in longer run-out distance in the submerged condition for a loose granular column than the dry collapse.

The evolution of packing density (see Figure 6.39) shows that, at the end of the flow, both the dense and the loose conditions reach similar packing density. This indicates that the dense granular column dilates more and is susceptible to higher viscous drag forces. Whereas in the loose condition, a positive pore-pressure is observed at the base of the flow, indicating entrainment of water at the base, i.e. lubrication and drop in the effective stress resulting in a longer run-out distance. The amount of water entrained in the loose granular column is higher than the dense condition, this can be observed by the low packing fraction observed between  $2\tau_c$  and  $5\tau_c$ .

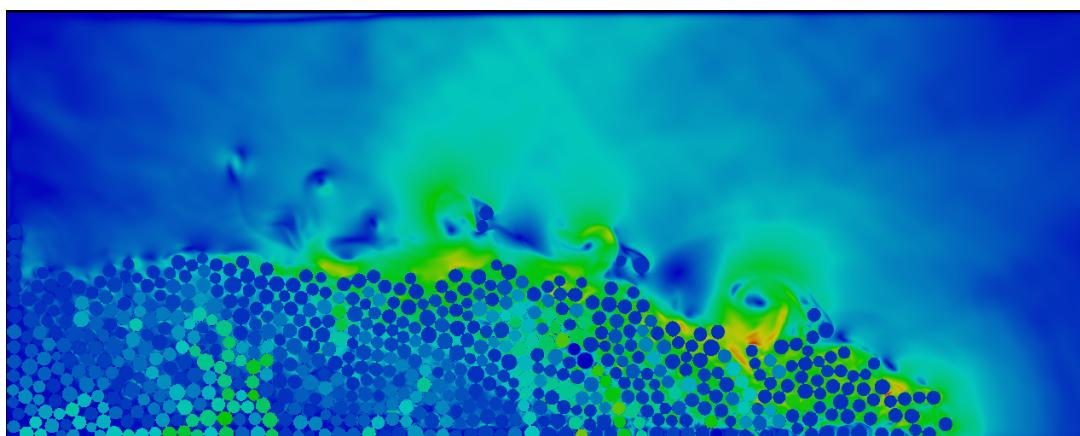
Figure 6.40a shows the evolution of run-out with slope angle for an initially dense granular column. With increase in the slope angle, the run-out increases in both dry and submerged conditions. For all slope angles, the run-out in the dry condition is higher than the submerged conditions. With increase in the slope angle, the drag force experienced by the dense granular column predominates over the lubrication effect on the run-out behaviour, this results in an increase in the difference between the dry and the submerged conditions with increase in the slope angle. Whereas with increase in slope angle, the loose granular column flows longer than the dry conditions. The longer run-out in the loose granular column collapse is due to hydroplaning experienced at the flow front as a result of entrainment of water. Figure 6.41 shows that for a given initial aspect ratio and slope angle, the run-out distance in the loose granular collapse in fluid is higher than the dense condition. This observation in fluid is in contrast to the dry condition, where the dense granular column flows longer due to higher initial potential energy. The low permeability observed in the loose granular flow ensures that water entrained at the base of the flow front is retained resulting in sustained lubrication effect. Also, the low permeability ensures that the density of the flowing mass remains in a slurry state resulting in a longer duration of hydroplaning. These effects in the loose granular column with low permeability condition result in a longer run-out distance.



(a) Slope 2.5



(b) Slope 5.0



(c) Slope 7.5

Figure 6.38 Flow morphology at time  $t = 3\tau_c$  for different slope angles (loose)

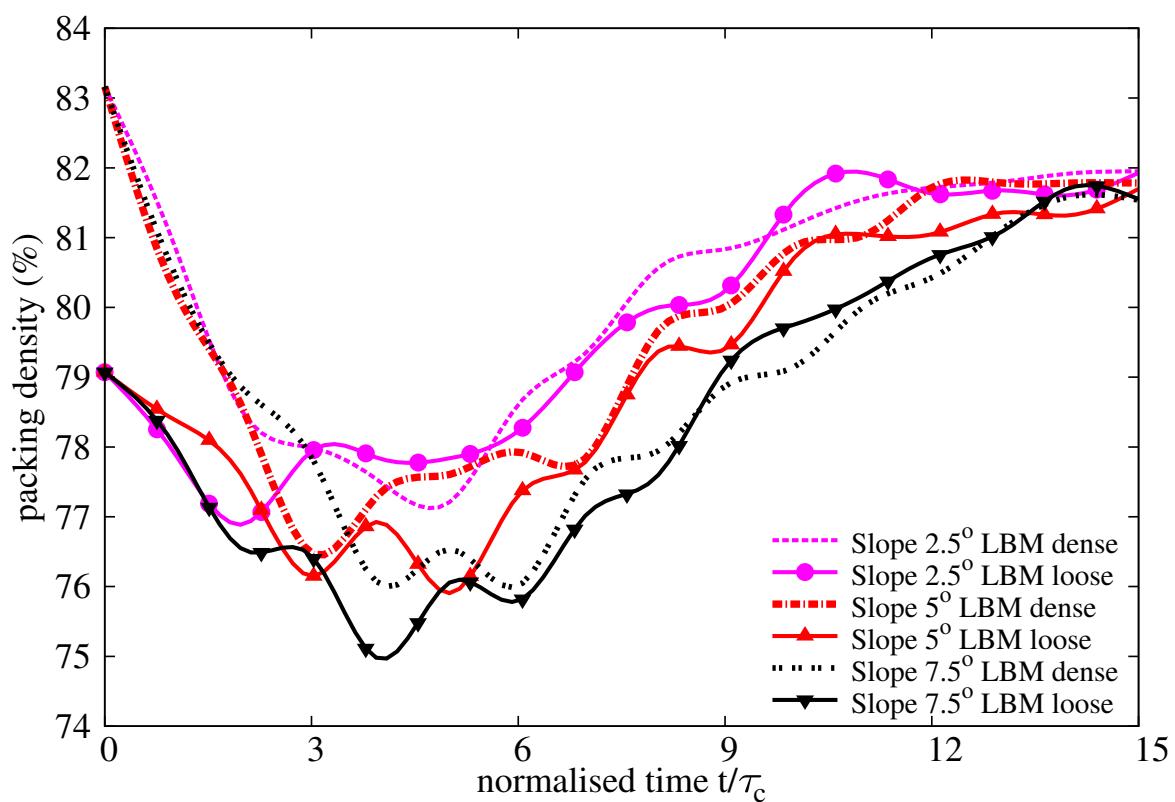
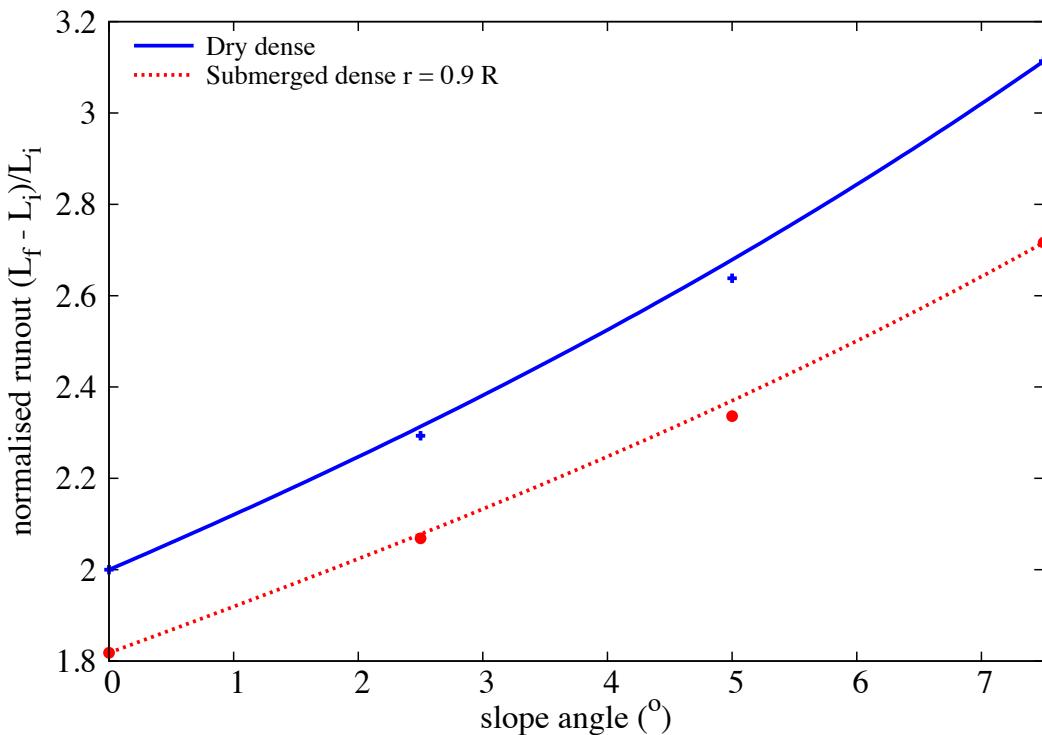
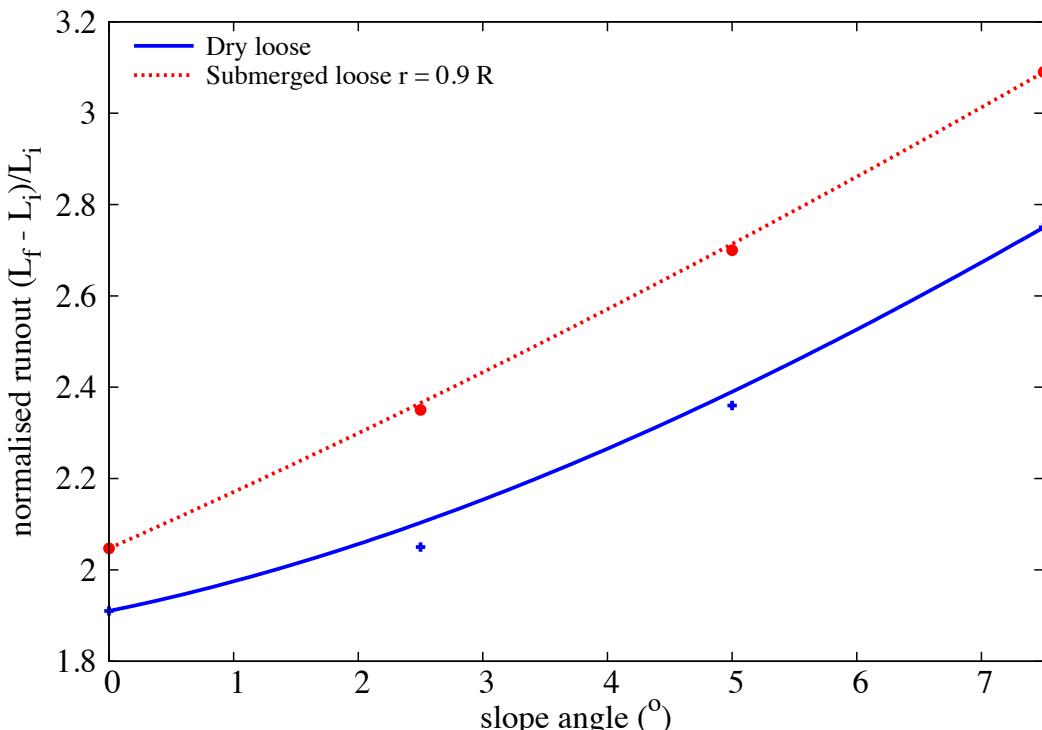


Figure 6.39 Evolution of packing density with time



(a) Dense



(b) Loose

Figure 6.40 Effect of slope angle on the run-out distance (Dense and Loose). Comparison between dry and submerged granular column.

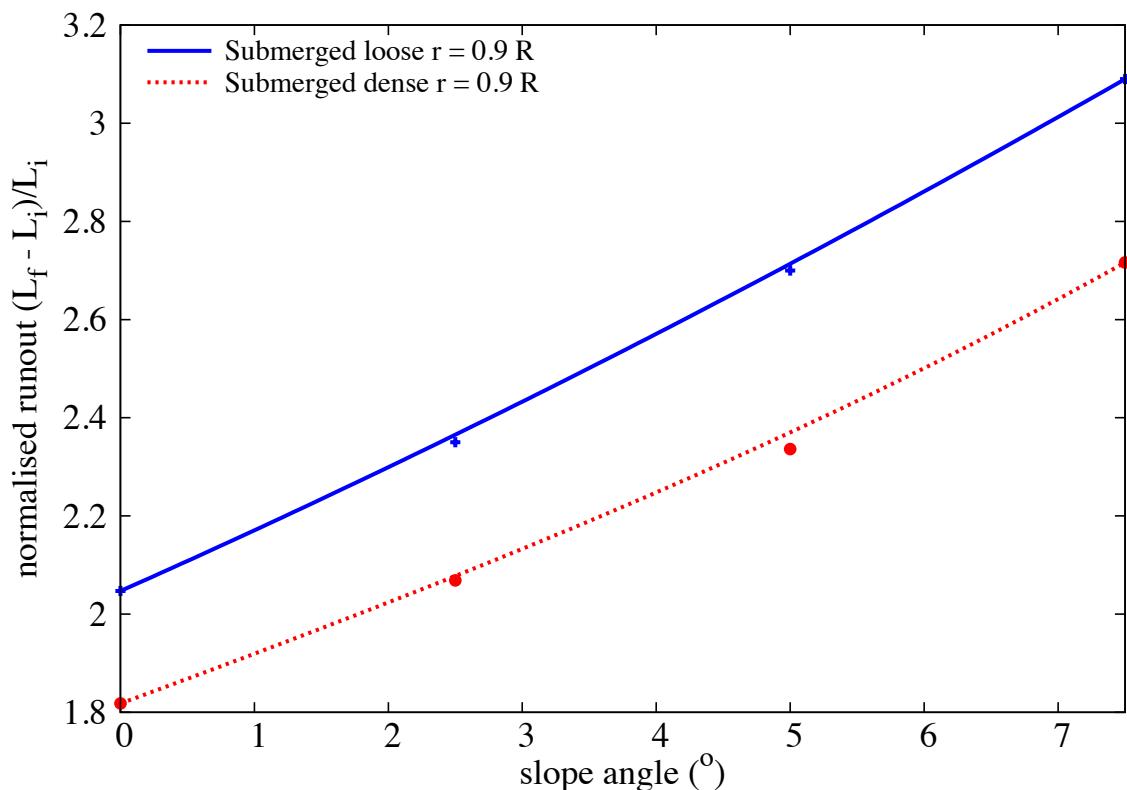


Figure 6.41 Effect of slope angle on the run-out behaviour for different initial packing density.

### 6 6.4.2 Effect of permeability

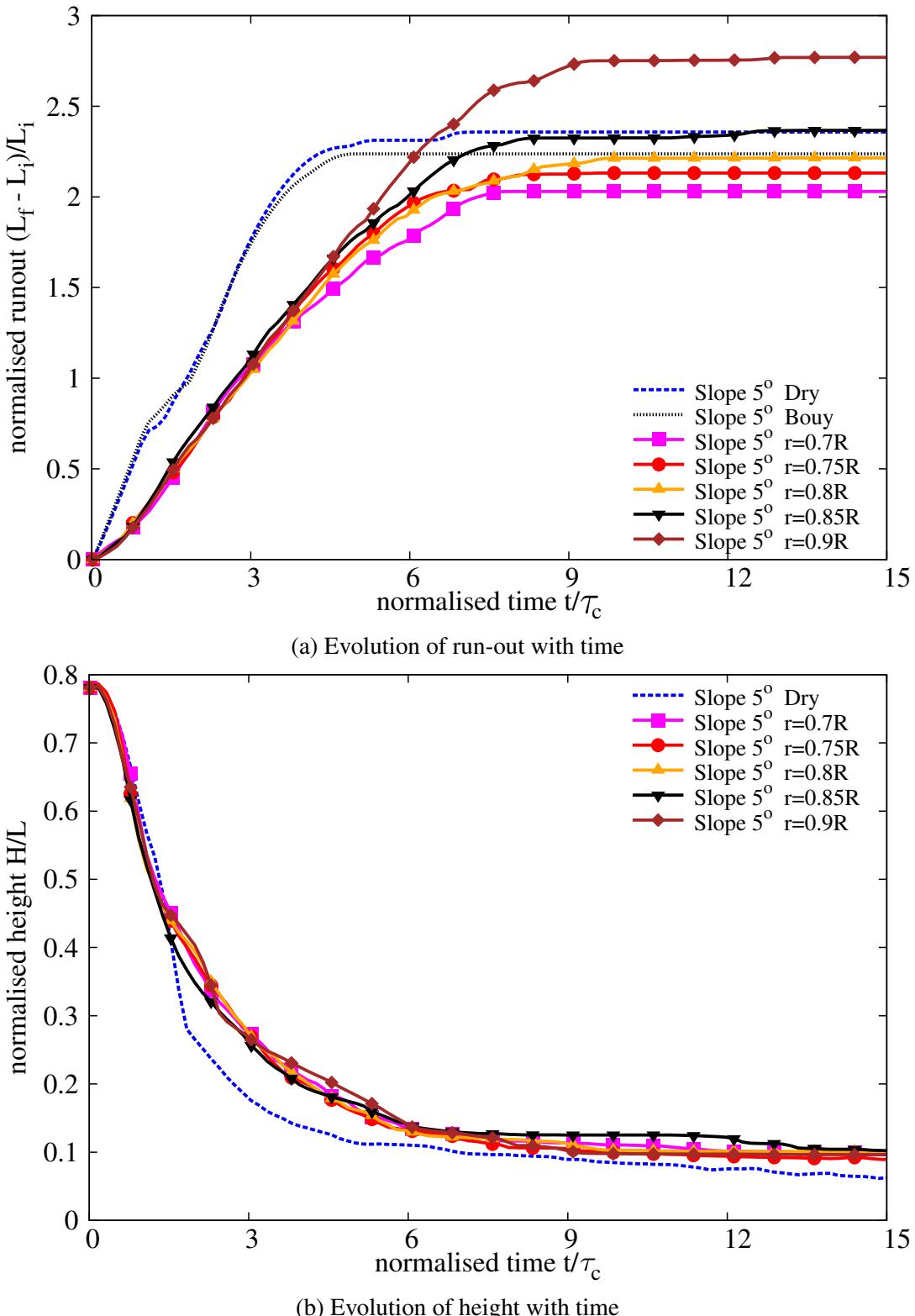
7 In order to understand the effect of permeability at a slope angle of 5°, the collapse of a  
8 granular column with an initial aspect ratio of 0.8 is simulated with different permeabilities.  
9 The hydrodynamic radius of a loosely packed granular column is varied from  $r = 0.7 R$  (high  
10 permeability), 0.75 R, 0.8 R, 0.85 R to 0.9 R (low permeability). The run-out distance is found  
11 to increase with decrease in the permeability of the granular assembly (see Figure 6.42a). The  
12 run-out distance for high permeable conditions ( $r = 0.7 R - 0.8 R$ ) are lower than their dry  
13 counterparts. Although, decrease in permeability resulted in an increase in the run-out distance,  
14 no significant change in the run-out behaviour is observed for a hydrodynamic radius of up to  
15 0.8 R.

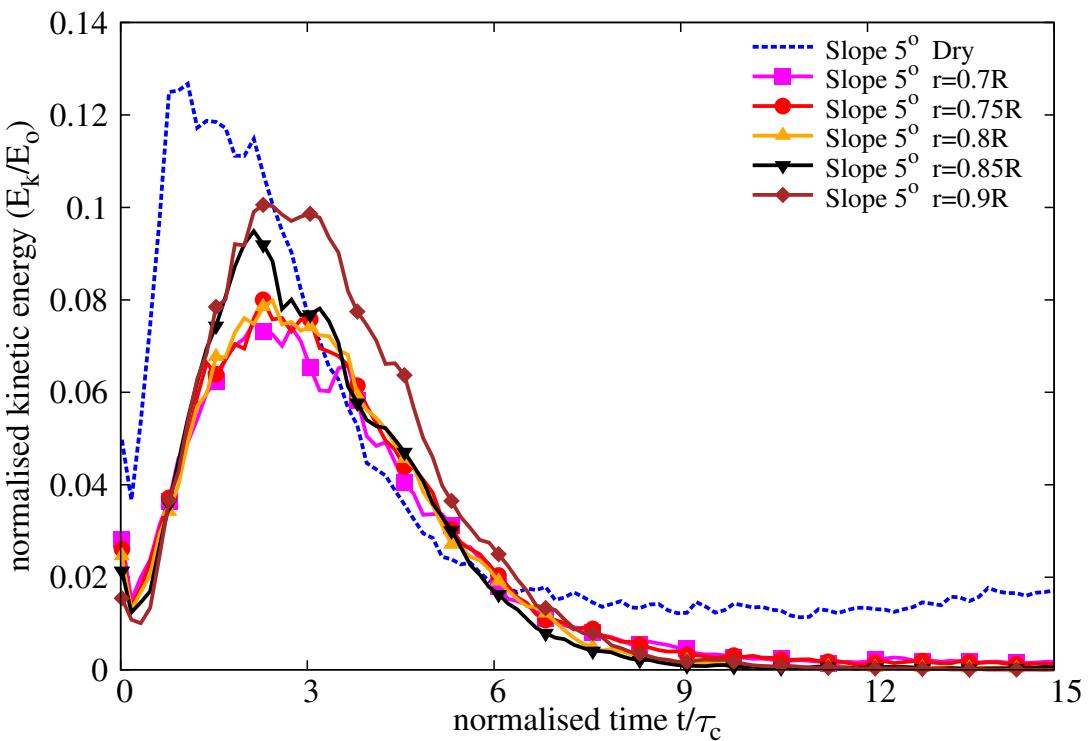
16 With further decrease in permeability ( $r = 0.85 R$  and 0.9 R), the run-out distance in the  
17 fluid is longer than that observed in the dry condition. At a very low permeability ( $r = 0.9 R$ ),  
18 the flowing granular mass entrains more water at the base, which causes a reduction in the  
19 effective stress accompanied by a lubrication effect on the flowing granular media. This can be  
20 seen by a significant increase in the peak kinetic energy and the duration of the peak energy, in  
21 comparison to the dry and the highly permeable conditions (see Figure 6.43a). However, the  
22 permeability of the granular column did not have an influence on the evolution of height during  
23 the flow. But, the dry granular column tends to collapse more than the immersed granular  
24 column due to lack of viscous dissipation (see Figure 6.42b).

25 Positive pore-pressure generation at the base of the flow is observed for low permeable con-  
26 ditions. Inspection of the local packing density showed entrainment of water at the base of the  
27 flow, which can also be observed by the steep decrease in the packing density (see Figure 6.43b)  
28 for the very low permeability condition ( $r = 0.9R$ ). At the end of the flow ( $t \geq 10 \times \tau_c$ ), the  
29 excess pore-pressure dissipates and the granular flows, irrespective of their permeability, reach  
30 almost the same packing density.

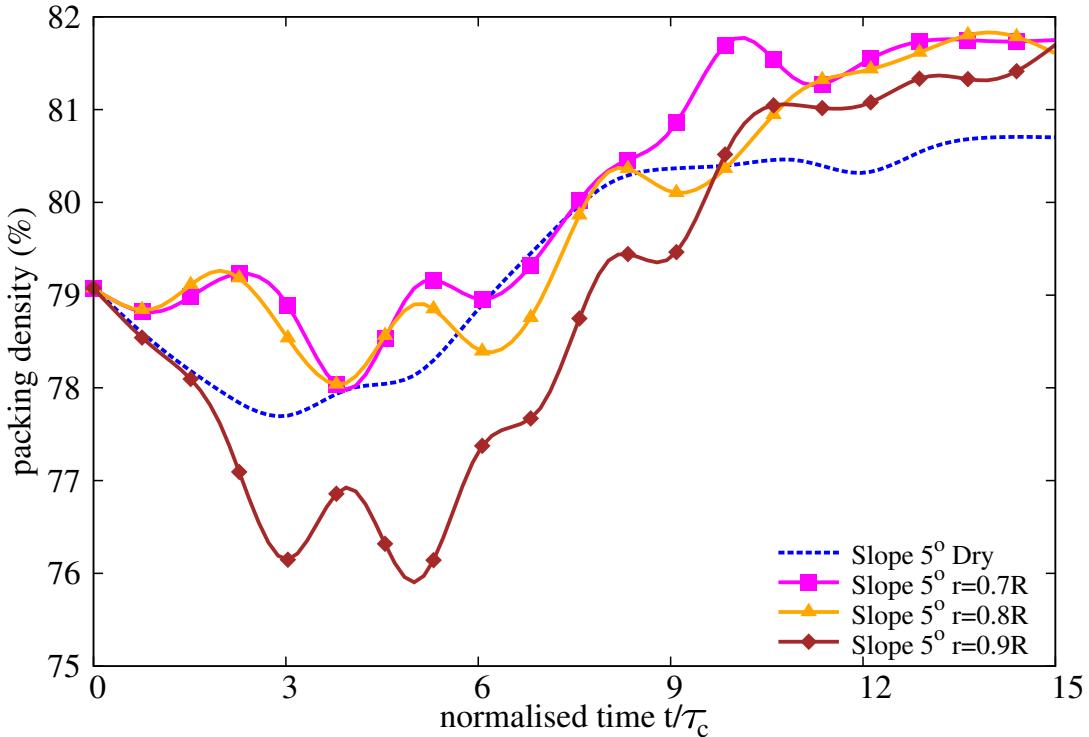
31 Figure 6.45 shows the effect of permeability on the run-out behaviour for a dense and a  
32 loose granular column collapse on a slope of 5° and 0°. In both cases, the run-out distance  
33 increases with increase in the hydrodynamic radius (decrease in permeability). However in the  
34 dense case, the run-out distance observed in the fluid is shorter than the dry condition. Whereas  
35 in the loose condition, the run-out distance increases significantly at low permeabilities and  
36 results in a longer run-out distance in the submerged condition in comparison to the dry granular  
1 collapse. The comparison of loose and dense collapse on a slope of 0° and 5° shows that the  
2 initial packing density plays a significant role in the case of collapse on a horizontal plane,  
3 however at a slope of 5°, the run-out distance is unaffected by the initial packing density at  
high permeability conditions. This shows that at high permeabilities, the viscous drag forces  
predominate resulting in almost the same run-out distance for both dense and loose conditions.

## 6.4 Submarine granular flows down incline plane

Figure 6.42 Evolution of run-out and height with time for different permeability (loose slope  $5^\circ$ )



(a) Evolution of kinetic energy with time



(b) Evolution of packing density with time

Figure 6.43 Evolution of kinetic energy and packing density with time for different permeability (loose slope 5°)

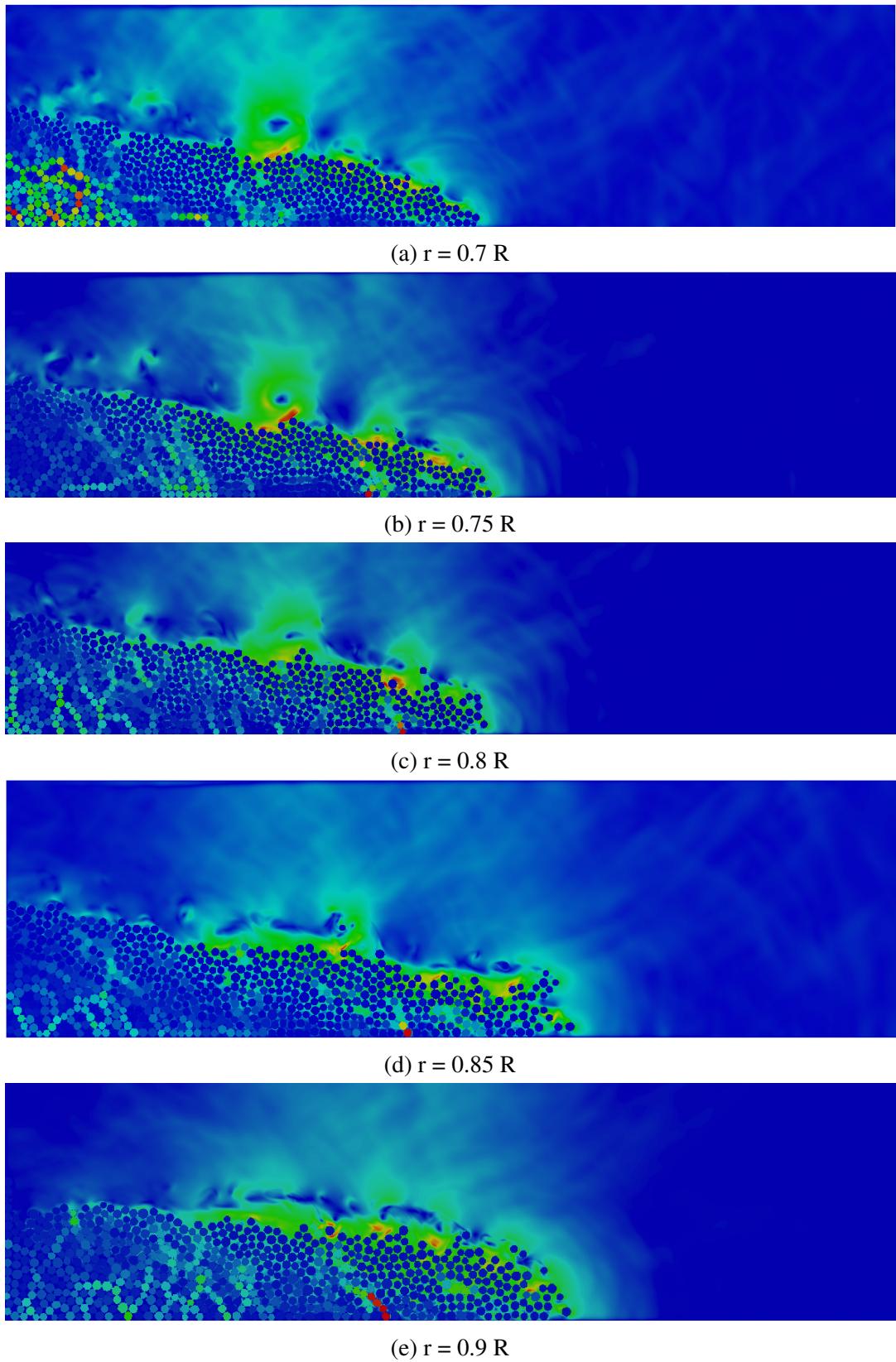


Figure 6.44 Evolution of the flow front at  $t = 3\tau_c$  for different permeabilities (loose slope  $5^\circ$ ).

However at a low permeability ( $r = 0.9 R$ ), hydroplaning is observed in the case of loose granular column resulting in a substantially longer run-out distance than the dense granular column in submerged condition.

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## 6.4 Submarine granular flows down incline plane

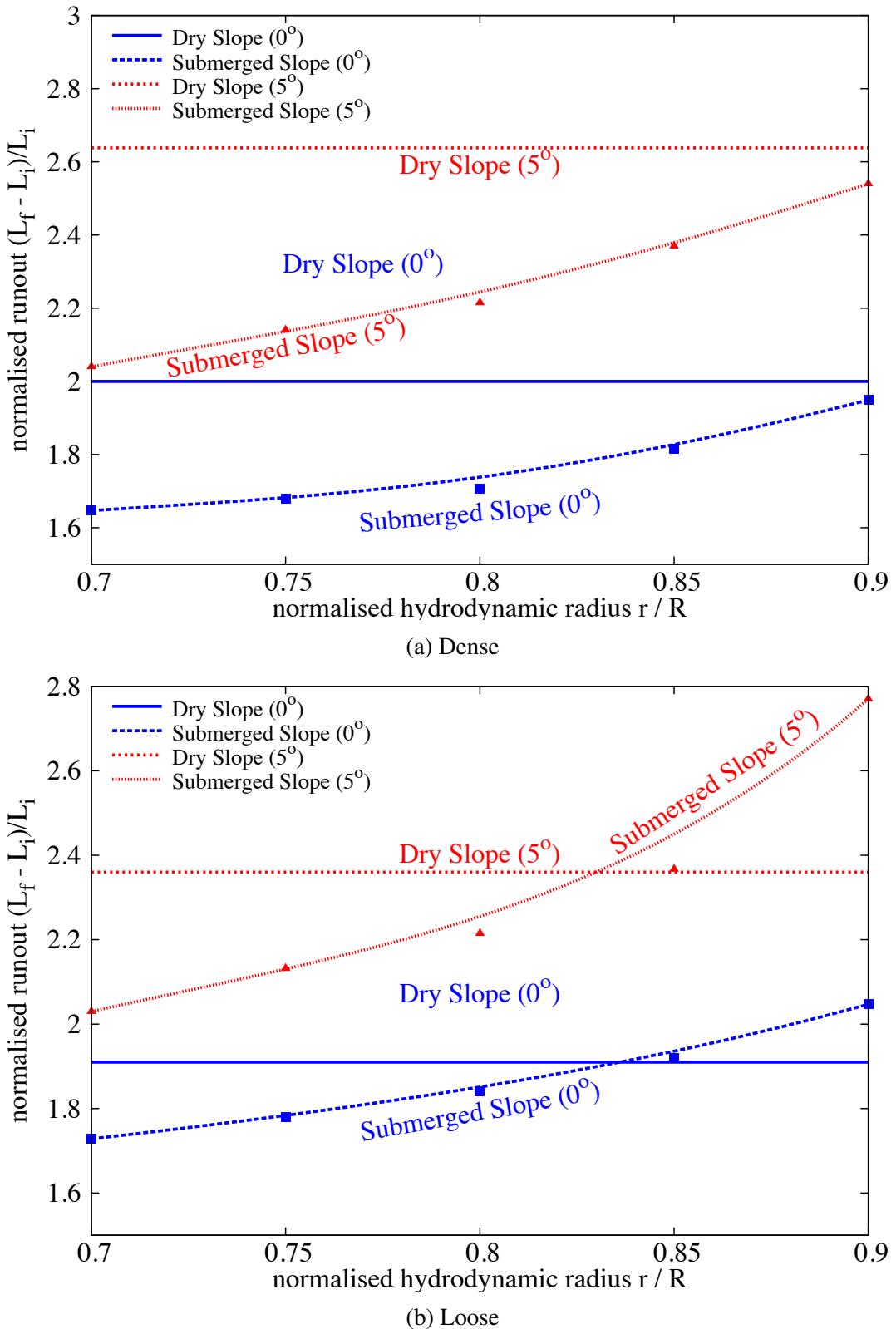


Figure 6.45 Effect of permeability on the run-out distance (Dense and Loose). Comparison between dry and submerged granular column for a slope angle of  $0^\circ$  and  $5^\circ$ .

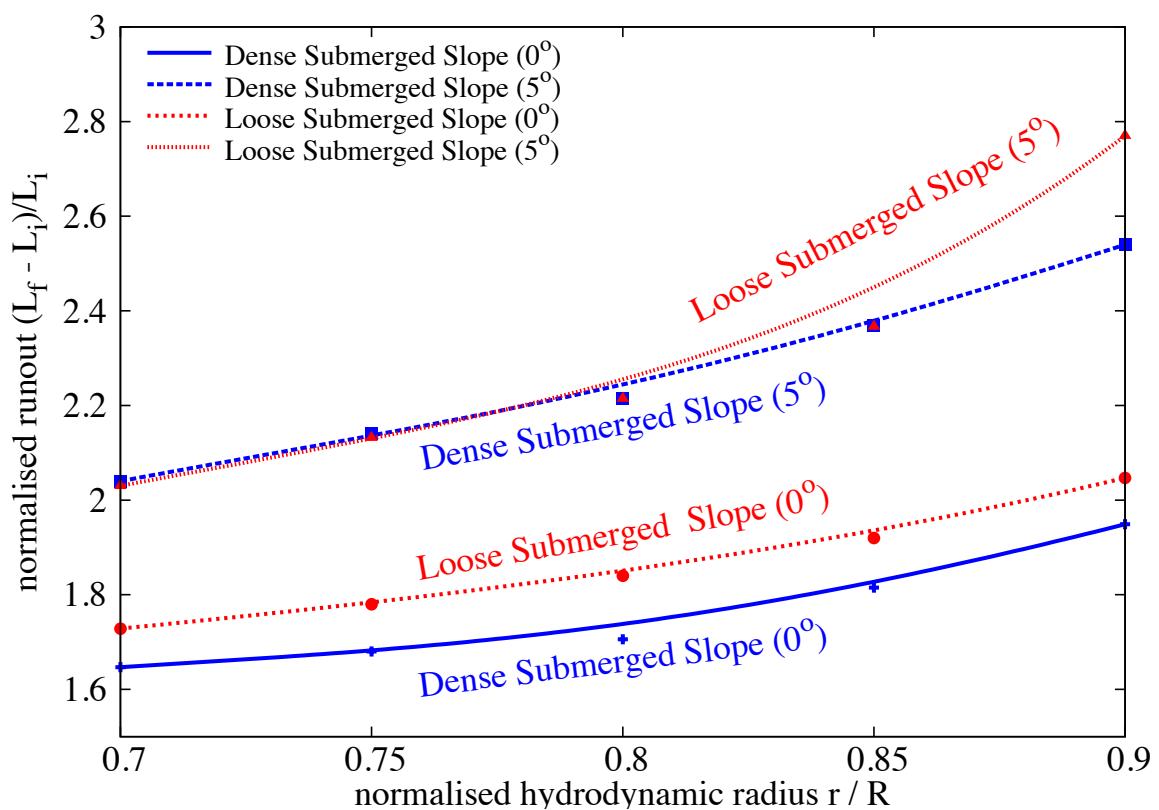


Figure 6.46 Effect of permeability on the run-out behaviour for different slope angle and the initial packing density.

## 6.5 Tall columns

In contrast to the collapse of short columns in fluid, the amount of material destabilised and in turn the surface area of the mobilised mass that interacts with the surround fluid increases. This increased interaction of the granular mass with the surrounding fluid results in the formation of turbulent vortices that alters the deposit morphology during the collapse. It was observed (see section 6.3.2) that the vortices result in formation of heaps that significantly affects the distribution of mass in the flow. Staron and Hinch (2007) observed that the distribution of the mass in the granular flow plays a crucial role in the flow kinematics. In order to understand the behaviour of tall columns, the run-out behaviour of a dense granular column with an initial aspect ratio of 6 is studied. The collapse of a tall granular column on slopes of 0°, 2.5°, 5° and 7.5° are studied. A hydrodynamic radius of  $r = 0.85 R$  is adopted. Unnatural permeability conditions were observed at higher hydrodynamic radii.

The snapshots of the collapse of an aspect ratio 6 column on a horizontal surface are shown in figure 6.47. The initial stage of collapse is characterised by the free-fall of grains above the failure surface. As the grains experience free-fall due to gravity, they interact with the surrounding fluid experiencing drag force. This results in a significant drop in the kinetic energy available for the flow. As the grains reach the static region, they interact with the neighbouring grains and the energy gained during the free fall is converted into horizontal acceleration. Only during this stage ( $t = 3\tau_c$ ) the interactions between the soil grains on the surface with the surrounding fluid result in the formation of eddies. The number of eddies formed during the flow is proportional to the surface area interacting with the fluid. Hydroplaning can be observed at the flow front ( $t = 3\tau_c$ ). Two large vortices with almost the same size can be observed at the final stage of collapse. The soil grains on the surface experience suction due to formation of eddies and this results in formation of heaps of granular mass in front of each vortex. The formation of heaps, although is evident, doesn't significantly affect the distribution of mass in the case of collapse on a horizontal plane.

The snapshots of a collapse of a granular column ( $a = 6$ ) on a inclined plane at angle of 5° are shown in figure 6.48. Similar behaviour in the flow evolution is observed for the collapse on a slope of 5°. The vortices are formed only during the horizontal spreading stage  $t = 3\tau_c$ , but the number of vortices formed during the collapse is higher than the collapse on a horizontal plane. However, as the flow progresses a single large vortex engulfs other smaller vortices, thus having a significant influence on the mass distribution. figure 6.49 shows the distribution of mass and the packing density at  $t = 6\tau_c$  and  $t = 8\tau_c$ . A heap can be observed in front of the large vortex almost at the middle of the flow. The height of the heap is higher than the collapse height next to the wall. However, when the flow comes to rest and the vortex moves away from

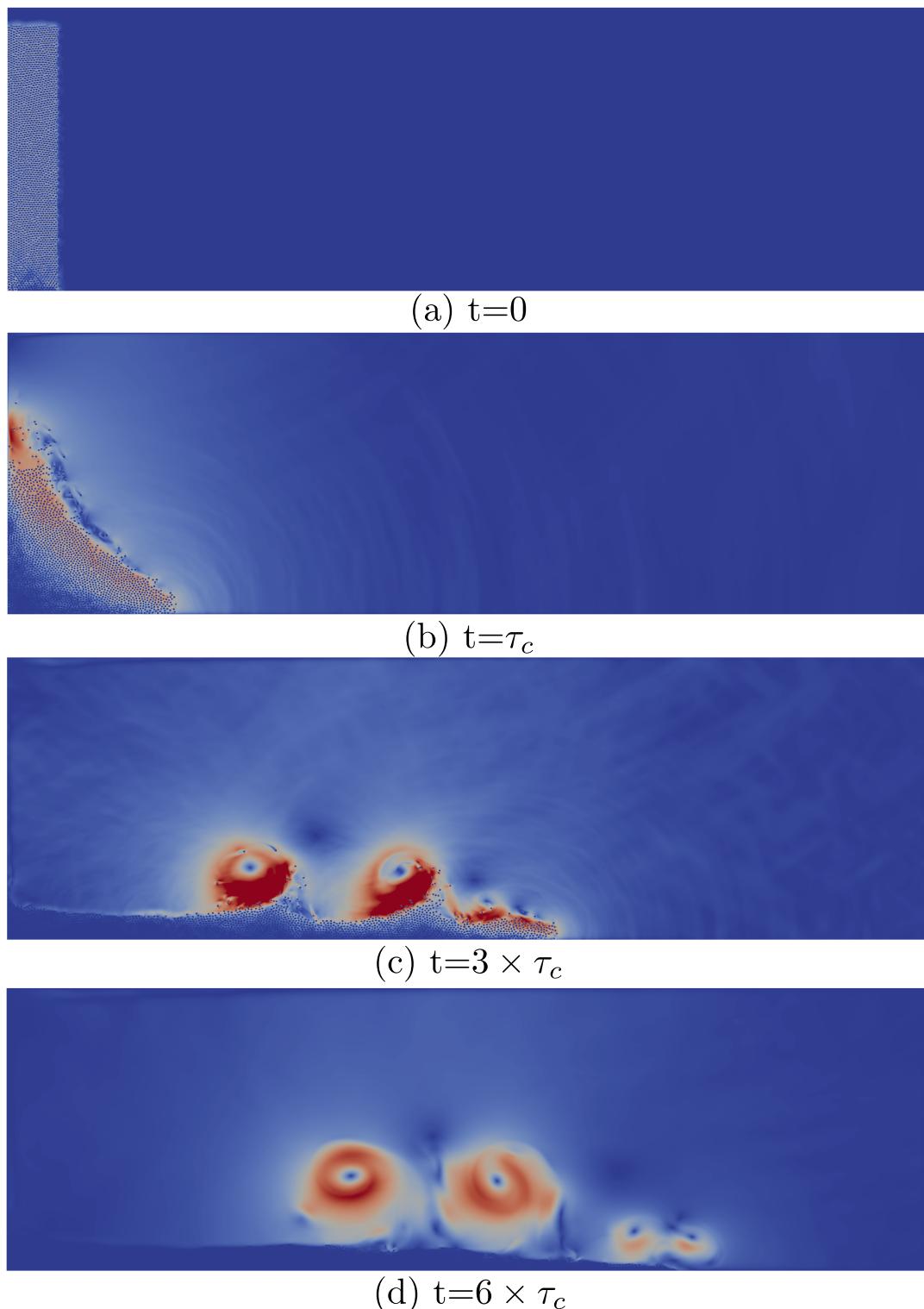


Figure 6.47 Flow evolution of a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 6$ ) on a horizontal surface

the flowing surface, the mass present in the heap gets redistributed (as seen in  $t = 8\tau_c$ ). This behaviour is significantly different from that observed in the case of short columns.

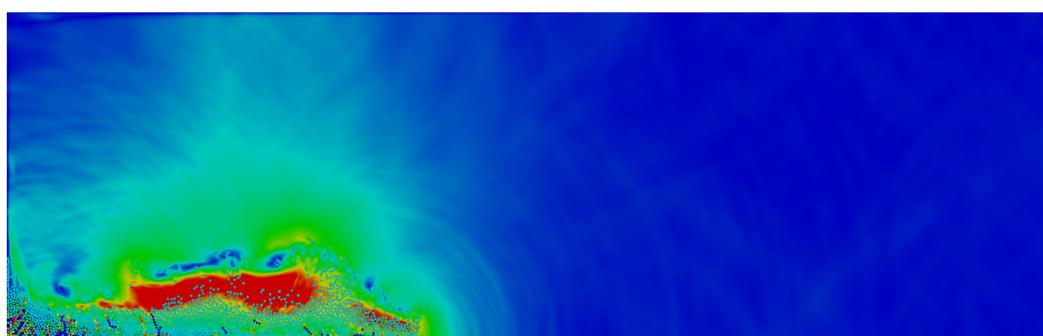
In order to understand the influence of slope angles on the run-out behaviour, the collapse of a granular column with an initial aspect ratio of 6 is performed on slopes of 0, 2.5°, 5° and 7.5°. The run-out evolution with time for different slope angles are presented in figure 6.50a. The run-out distance increases with increase in the slope angle, however the run-out distance in the fluid is significantly shorter than the dry condition. The slow evolution of run-out in the submerged condition is due to the delay in the dissipation of large negative pore-pressure developed during the initial stage of the collapse. The formation of eddies during the flow indicates that most of the potential energy gained during the free-fall is dissipated through viscous drag and formation of eddies. This effect predominates over the hydroplaning that is observed during the flow resulting in a shorter run-out distance in the case of fluid. The evolution of height with time indicates that the amount of material destabilised is much smaller due to the drag forces experienced by the grains (see figure 6.50b).

The amount of kinetic energy available for the flow in the submerged condition is almost half that of the dry condition (see figure 6.51a). It can be seen from figure 6.52b that the vertical kinetic energy is dissipate over a longer duration, in contrast to the free-fall release observed in the dry condition. The slower dissipation is attributed to the viscous drag force experienced by the grains and through formation of eddies.

The behaviour of tall columns are significantly different from that observed in the case of short columns. The slope angle has a strong influence on the number and size of eddies during the flow. The eddies interact with the surface of the granular flow and forms heaps in front of each vortex. This significantly affects the mass distribution and in turn the run-out evolution. Although, tall cliffs are quite rare in submarine condition in comparison to short cliffs or slopes, further research is required to understand the influence of permeability and packing density on the run-out evolution of tall columns.

## 6.6 Summary

Two-dimensional LB-DEM simulations are performed to understand the behaviour of submarine granular flows. Unlike dry granular collapse, the run-out behaviour in fluid is dictated by the initial volume fraction. Granular columns with loose packing and low permeability tend to flow longer in comparison to dense columns, due to entrainment of water at the base resulting in lubrication. In both dense and loose conditions, the run-out distance increases with decrease in the permeability. With decrease in permeability, the duration required for the flow to initiate takes longer due to development of large negative pore-pressure. However, the low

 $t = 0\tau_c$  $t = 1\tau_c$  $t = 3\tau_c$

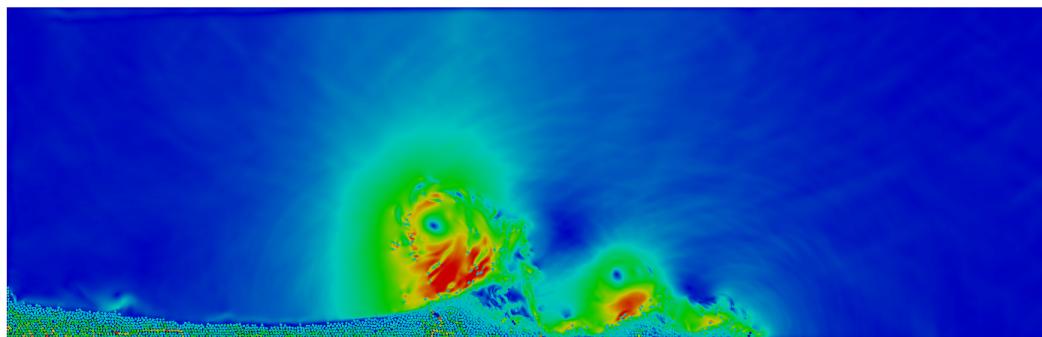
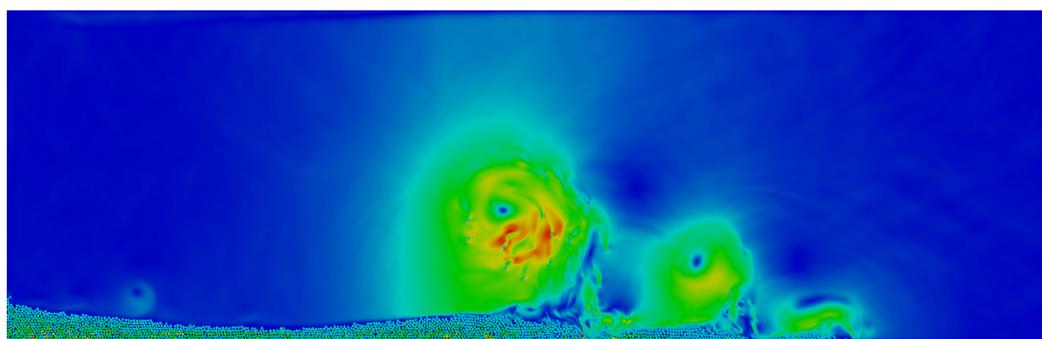
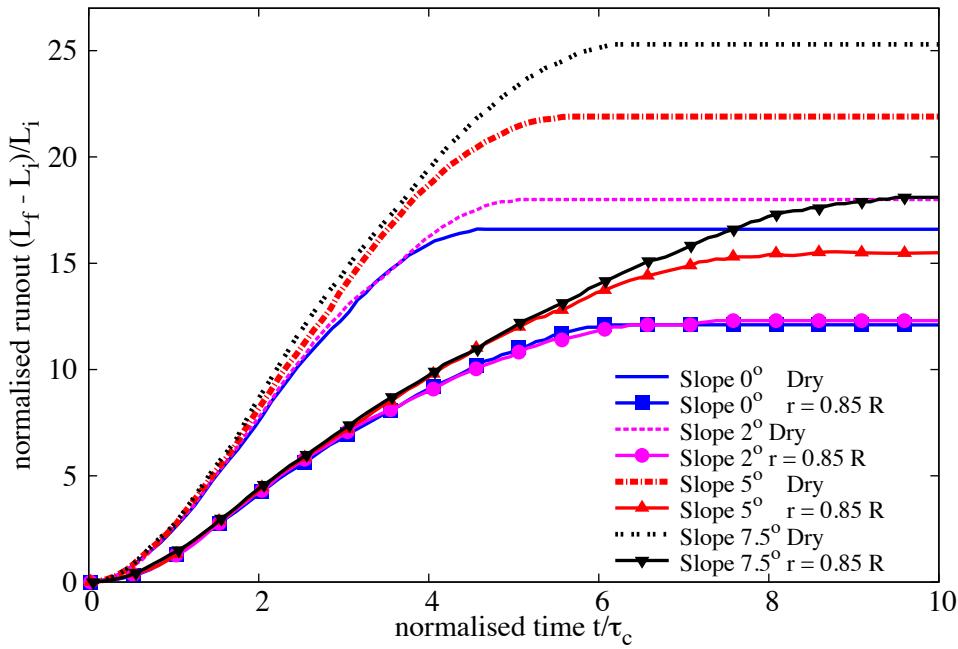
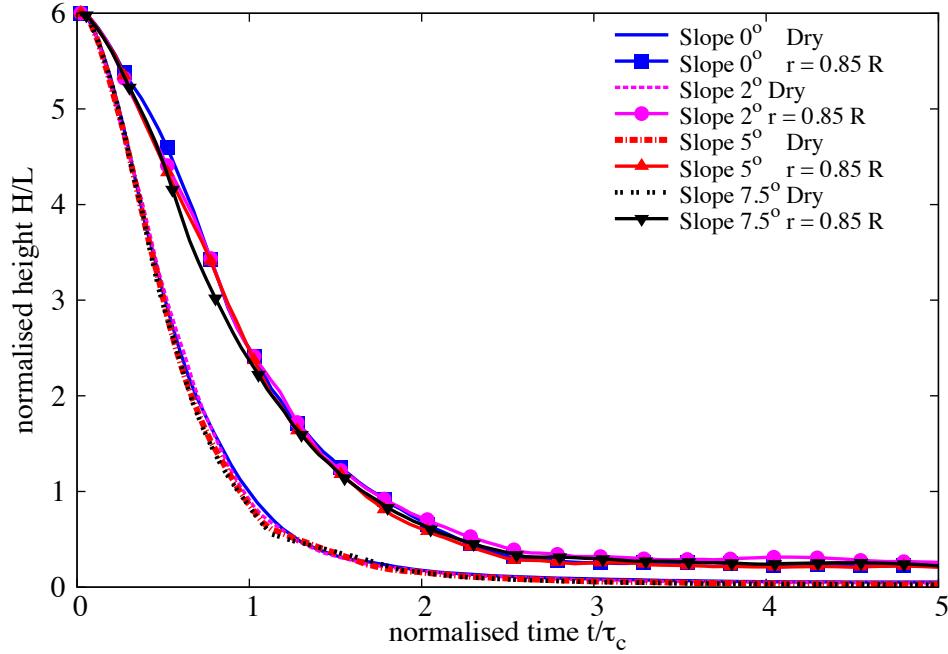
 $t = 6\tau_c$  $t = 8\tau_c$ 

Figure 6.48 Flow evolution of a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 6$ ) on a slope of  $5^\circ$ . Shows the velocity profile of fluid due to interaction with the grains (red - higher velocity).

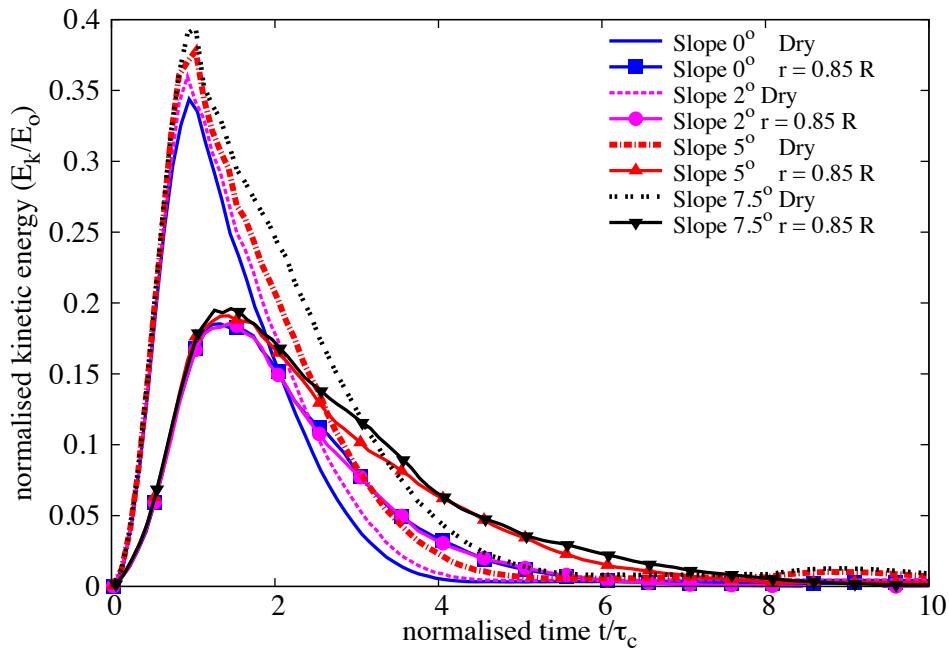
 $t = 6\tau_c$  $t = 8\tau_c$ 

Figure 6.49 Packing density of a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 6$ ) on a slope of  $5^\circ$ .

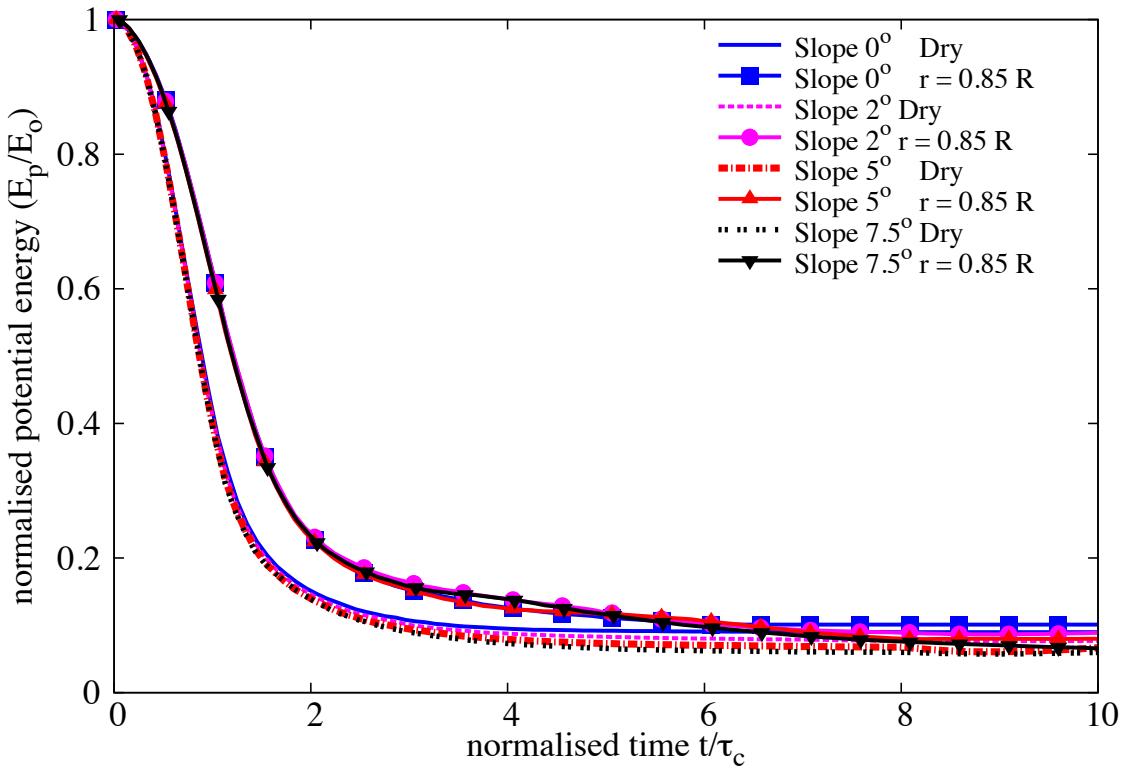
(a) Evolution of run-out for a column collapse in fluid ( $a = 6$ ) on a slope of  $5^\circ$ (b) Evolution of height with time for a column collapse in fluid ( $a = 6$ ) on a slope of  $5^\circ$ Figure 6.50 Evolution of run-out and height for a column collapse in fluid ( $a = 6$ ) on a slope of  $5^\circ$

## 6.6 Summary

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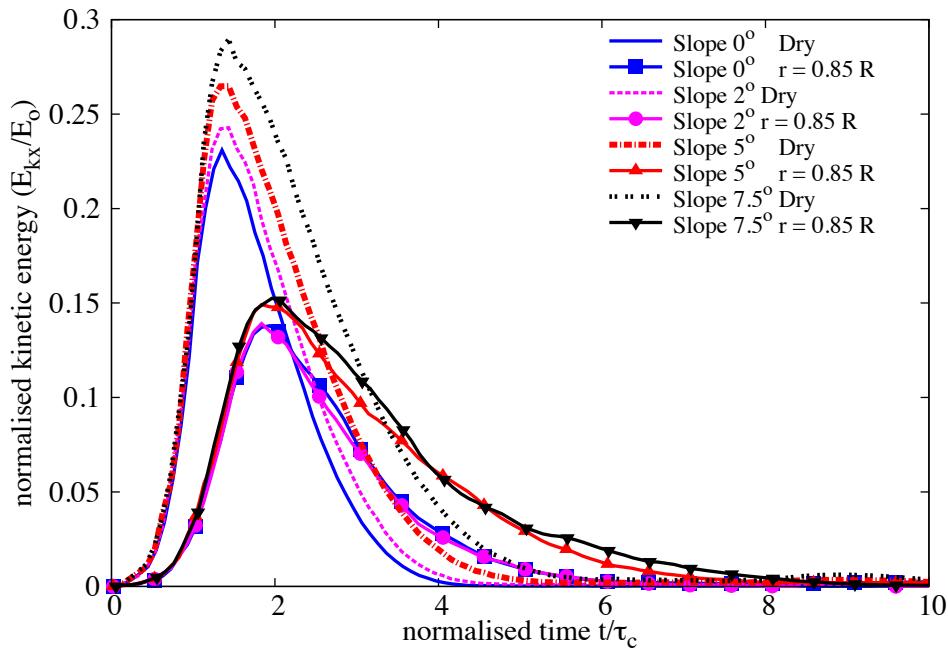


(a) Evolution of the total kinetic energy

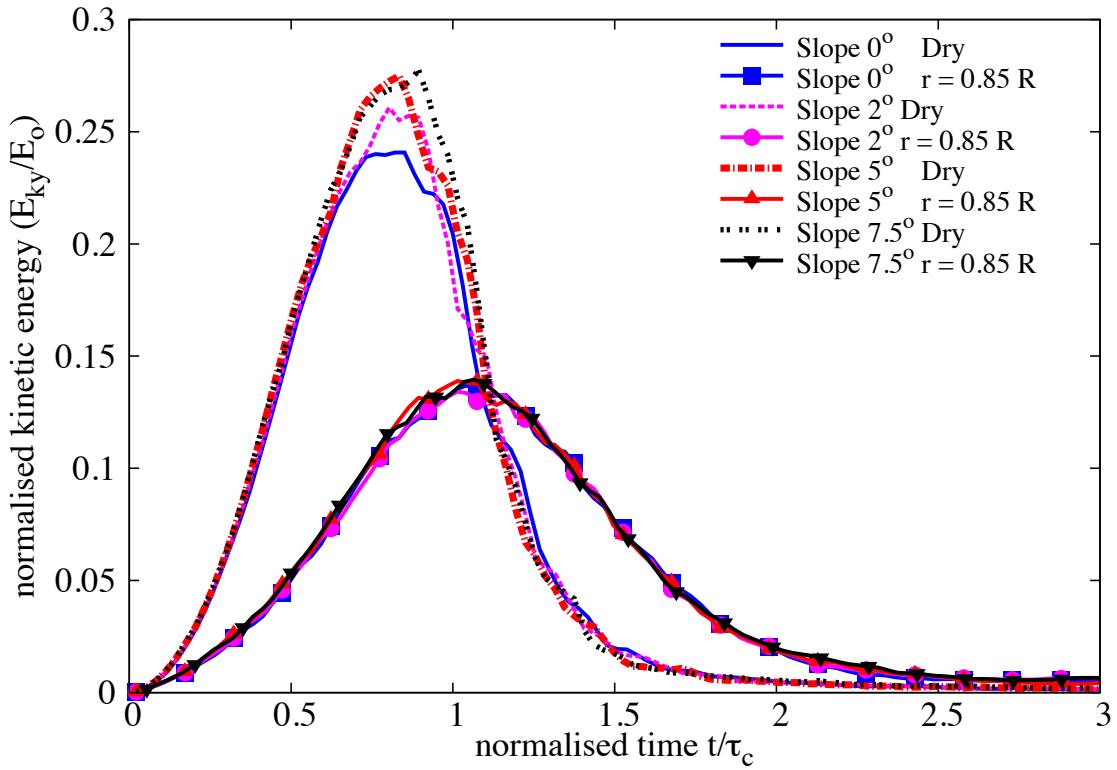


(b) Evolution of the total potential energy

Figure 6.51 Evolution of the kinetic and the potential energy with time for a granular column collapse in fluid (a = 6) on a slope of  $5^\circ$



(a) Evolution of the horizontal kinetic energy



(b) Evolution of the vertical kinetic energy

Figure 6.52 Evolution of the kinetic energies with time for a granular column collapse in fluid ( $a = 6$ ) on a slope of  $5^\circ$

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**6.6 Summary****65**

permeability of the granular mass results in entrainment of water causing hydroplaning. For the same thickness and velocity of the flow, the potential of hydroplaning is influenced by the density of the flowing mass. Loose column has more potential of hydroplaning than the dense granular mass. The loose column entrains more water at the flow front, leading to a partial fluidisation of the material. Thus resulting in longer run-out distance than the dry condition. However, with increase in the slope angle, the run-out in fluid is influenced by the viscous drag on the granular materials.

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