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# Resveratrol Trisepoxy-Based High-Performance Resin Formulation and Carbon Fiber-Reinforced Composite Processing for Structural Applications

William E. Dyer,<sup>†</sup> Elmar-Daniel Alasoo,<sup>†</sup> Niklas Lorenz, and Baris Kumru\*



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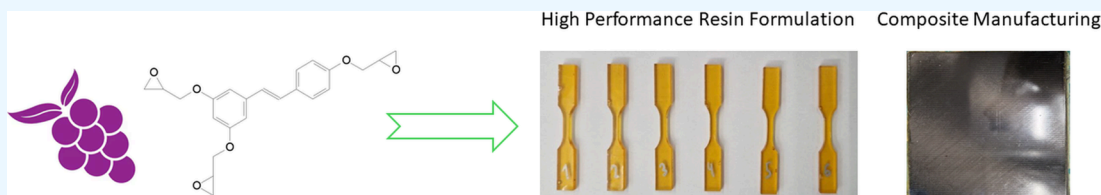
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**ABSTRACT:** Tactix 742 (a trifunctional aromatic epoxy resin) is a benchmark epoxy monomer elucidating the highest  $T_g$  epoxy resin system; however, its manufacturing relies on petroleum-based toxic chemistries. In the realm of sustainability, potential replacement of Tactix 742 with a renewable platform possessing similar thermomechanical properties as well as processing character is critical. The resin system of renewable resveratrol triglycidyl ether with aerograde hardener 4,4-diaminodiphenylsulfone shows an ultrahigh  $T_g$  of 324 °C and mechanical properties comparable to the industrially used petro-based tris(hydroxyl phenyl)methane epoxy monomer. The results highlight the untapped potential that biobased molecules show in innovating existing high-performance plastic formulations while potentially increasing sustainability potential in the future. Resveratrol triglycidyl ether-4,4-diphenyldisulfone (RTE-DDS) formulation shows  $T_g$ , stiffness, strength, and processing behavior similar to that of the industrially used petro-equivalent formulation (T742-DDS) with slightly lower modulus and strength in both tensile and flexural testing. Fracture toughness of the biobased formulation is 61% higher than the petro-based formulation. CFRP manufacturing yields high-quality composite materials tested in compression, interlaminar shear, and in-plane shear modes. Fiber volume content is slightly lower than ideal due to the formulations high viscosity and the choice of vacuum bagging and autoclave manufacturing technique, but low void content of  $0.55\% \pm 0.26$  allows for accurate characterization of CFRP laminates. Conclusions are drawn regarding the future potential of resveratrol epoxy monomer in high-performance epoxy CFRPs.

## INTRODUCTION

Epoxy resins are the most abundant class of thermoset plastics due to their desirable material properties and versatile processability, which can be tailored by choice of the particular monomers and curing agents.<sup>1</sup> These curing agents are typically amines, phenolics, anhydrides, or thiols depending on the specific application and processing requirements.<sup>2</sup> Alongside attractive properties such as adhesive strength (due to hydroxyl formation upon ring opening), chemical resistance, stiffness, strength, low-brittleness (compared to other thermoset types), and well-established synthetic routes, the sheer versatility in epoxy-hardener combinations leads to the possibility to process epoxies across a considerable range of temperature, time, and viscosity requirements.<sup>3</sup> Indeed epoxy resin formulations are found throughout the economy: from simple household adhesives, all the way to the matrix material in aerospace structural CFRPs.<sup>4–7</sup> While the underlying chemical reactions occurring are the same across formulations, the structure of the epoxy monomer and hardener greatly affects reactivity, processing, and the resulting material's thermal and mechanical properties.<sup>1</sup>

Since their discovery and patent almost 90 years ago,<sup>8</sup> epoxy-amine resin formulations have risen to become a ubiquitous epoxy resin.<sup>1</sup> Epoxy monomers find use across the domains of electrical insulation, adhesives, coatings, composites, and castings, epoxy-amine formulations included; however, they find particular use in composite materials. This is due to a few unique properties of the epoxy-amine interactions. First, the epoxy-amine reaction produces a densely cross-linked network due to each amine hydrogen reacting with one epoxy group.<sup>9–11</sup> Second, hydrogen bonding between the nitrogen lone pair, on top of the hydroxyl groups present in other classes of formulations,<sup>12,13</sup> leads to stronger intermolecular interactions, giving rise to higher stiffness<sup>14</sup> and

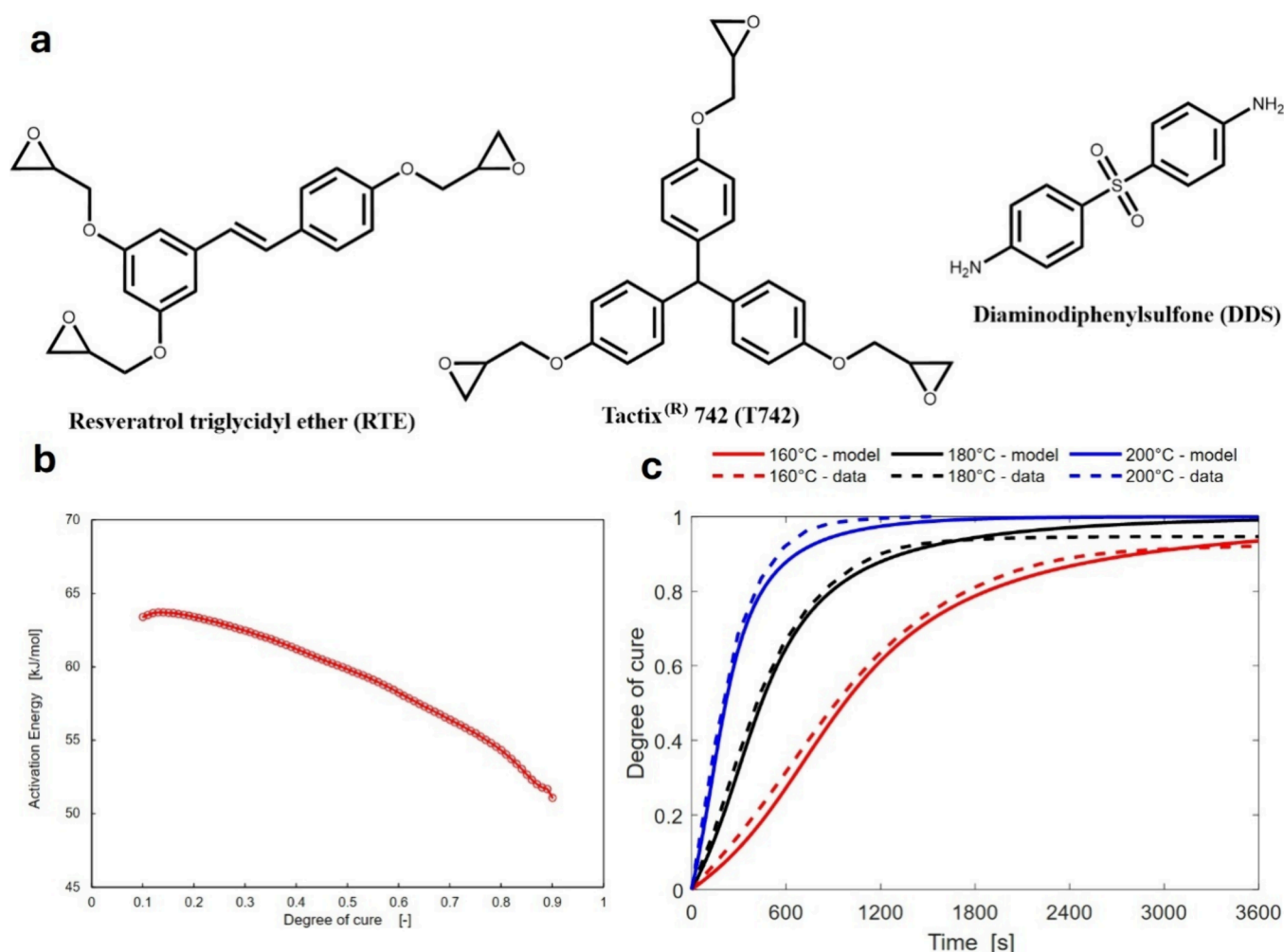
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**Figure 1.** (a) Chemical structures of monomers used in this work. (b)  $E_a$ -dependency for the different resin formulations derived by the Friedman method. (c) Comparison of measurements for isothermal curing.

better adhesive properties, which is essential in composite materials.<sup>15</sup> These two factors also contribute to better thermal resistance compared to other epoxy formulations.<sup>1</sup> Industry formulations are tailored for specific processing and reactivity requirements, and the vast array of monomers and hardeners available gives great breadth in the manufacturing choice of composite materials.<sup>16</sup> The wide range of formulations available have given rise to further innovation within the manufacturing domain, with high-output molding techniques such as RTM pioneering and giving rise to complex, more sustainable production of high-performance CFRP materials for use in automotive and aerospace industries.<sup>17,18</sup> These pioneering manufacturing techniques continue to drive innovation within the composites industry and rely heavily on the versatility of epoxy–amine formulations.<sup>19</sup>

While the established epoxy–amine formulations have been refined and adjusted over the years to yield reliable products, there is always scope for innovative formulations to enter the market and disrupt the status-quo. Alongside this pressure to innovate, the plastics industry has been facing societal pressure on a much larger scale than previous decades, and this of course comes from the need to increase sustainability in all aspects of human civilization.<sup>20,21</sup> Cleaner energy, lower reliance on fossil fuels (greater resiliency), reducing plastic pollution, and more eco-friendly and less-toxic products are the

main areas of scrutiny.<sup>22</sup> As a result, the research domain of sustainable polymers has seen huge growth in the last 2 decades, with efforts focusing on both ends of the linear lifecycle of plastic products.<sup>23</sup> Research papers focusing on the use of biobased materials are abundant, with academia and industry alike lauding the potential for more sustainable “drop-in” products—that is, products that can easily fit into current manufacturing processes.<sup>24</sup>

Biobased chemical building blocks for sustainable plastics production are a large research field in the domains of synthetic and industrial chemistry.<sup>25</sup> There are hundreds of contenders to replace current petrochemicals, which is important in meeting the sustainability requirements for all industries as each application requires unique biomaterial properties.<sup>26,27</sup> The most accessible and economically competitive materials are those generated from plant waste, which contains many sugars and polymers including cellulose, hemicellulose, and lignin.<sup>28</sup> These three components are found to varying degrees depending on the plant feedstock, and the properties of the monomers extracted and bioplastics produced from each component differ greatly. Cellulose, hemicellulose, and smaller sugars contain large amounts of oxygen atoms, whereas lignin contains large amounts of aromatic phenyl groups. Aromatics are of particular interest in higher-performance applications as they impart high  $T_g$  and good

thermal resistance, stiffness, and strength to plastics.<sup>29</sup> The aromatics extracted from plant material contain heteroatoms, most often oxygen in the form of alcohol, aldehyde, or ether moieties. This is of great significance when considering the suitability of a molecule for its use in bioplastics as the synthesis of epoxy monomers is currently based on epichlorohydrin, itself a potentially biobased molecule from glycerol.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, we seek multifunctional phenolic compounds when looking for biobased epoxies for high-performance applications.

Many such phenolics have been isolated directly or indirectly from lignin including eugenol,<sup>31</sup> vanillin,<sup>32,33</sup> daidzein,<sup>34</sup> resorcinol,<sup>35</sup> gallic acid,<sup>36</sup> and resveratrol.<sup>37</sup> The wide variety of bioderived chemicals being explored is essential in meeting the variety of applications for which aromatic molecules are used within the plastics industry, which includes advanced applications such as aerospace.<sup>38,39</sup> Furthermore, other biosynthetic techniques are being explored for the production of industrial chemicals, including fermentation and bacterial and enzymatic syntheses.<sup>30,40–42</sup> The majority of articles investigating biobased epoxy–amine formulations focus largely in the chemistry domain, with many papers investigating synthetic routes to produce potential biobased alternatives.<sup>40,43–46</sup> Initial characterization is often given but usually lacks more systematized testing (such as the use of ASTM standards) to gauge mechanical performance. More research is needed in bridging the gap between chemistry and engineering literature, enabling trialling and future adoption of these potentially more sustainable resins. This includes thoroughly characterizing the curing behavior of novel biobased resin formulations following established procedures and exploring composite manufacturing to reveal specific macroscopic mechanical characteristics and quantitatively assess the potential of the novel biobased resin formulation.<sup>26,47,48</sup> Systematized testing also increases confidence in claims that biobased plastics can compete with existing petro-based formulations, specifically at the high-performance level.

Resveratrol formulations in particular have been shown to exhibit attractive thermal properties including high  $T_g$ , high char yields, and maintained modulus at elevated temperatures.<sup>49–52</sup> The first research paper using resveratrol in an epoxy resin system appears in 2018, yielding a resin with  $T_g$  of 148 °C and good heat resistance compared against the ubiquitous bisphenol A epoxy (BADGE).<sup>53</sup> In 2020, the resveratrol epoxy was again compared against BADGE using an anhydride curing agent and found similarly promising results including adequate mechanical properties, high char yield, and low permittivity with relevance to electronic applications.<sup>51</sup> Following this, many more studies aim to elucidate the properties of resveratrol-based thermosetting resins including chemical modification to tailor properties of materials.<sup>52,54,55</sup>

The following study builds upon this literature by providing in-depth curing analysis of the RTE-DDS formulation, resin comparison against tris(hydroxyl phenyl)methane epoxy (Tactix 742) monomer, and high-quality CFRP manufacturing and testing of resveratrol-based epoxy–amine formulation. The comparison resin is typically used in structural adhesive and composite formulations, especially in high-heat zone applications. ASTM procedures are followed, allowing for a fair and comprehensive comparison of these two resin systems.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Curing Kinetics.** Chemical structures of the monomers are provided in Figure 1a. Curing kinetics were investigated using dynamic and isothermal heating experiments via a DSC. We utilized model-free and model-based procedures to gain a more in-depth understanding of the curing behavior of RTE-DDS. Initial studies revealed a high  $T_g$ ; therefore, the curing cycle was selected as 180 °C for 2 h and 220 °C for 1 h postcure. This high postcuring temperature ensures a high level of cross-linking and maximization of mechanical properties without being excessively high (to promote epoxy ring opening via hydroxyl groups or network degradation).

**Model-Free Kinetics.** Various analytical and computational methods have been applied to approximate the data derived from dynamic or isothermal DSC measurements into an appropriate mathematical expression. The isoconversional principle states that the reaction rate  $\frac{d\xi}{dt}$  at a certain isoconversional value  $\xi$  ( $0 \leq \xi \leq 1$ ) solely depends on the temperature (eq 1):<sup>56,57</sup>

$$\left[ \frac{\partial \ln \left( \frac{d\xi}{dt} \right)}{\partial T^{-1}} \right]_{\xi} = -\frac{E_{\xi}}{R} \quad (1)$$

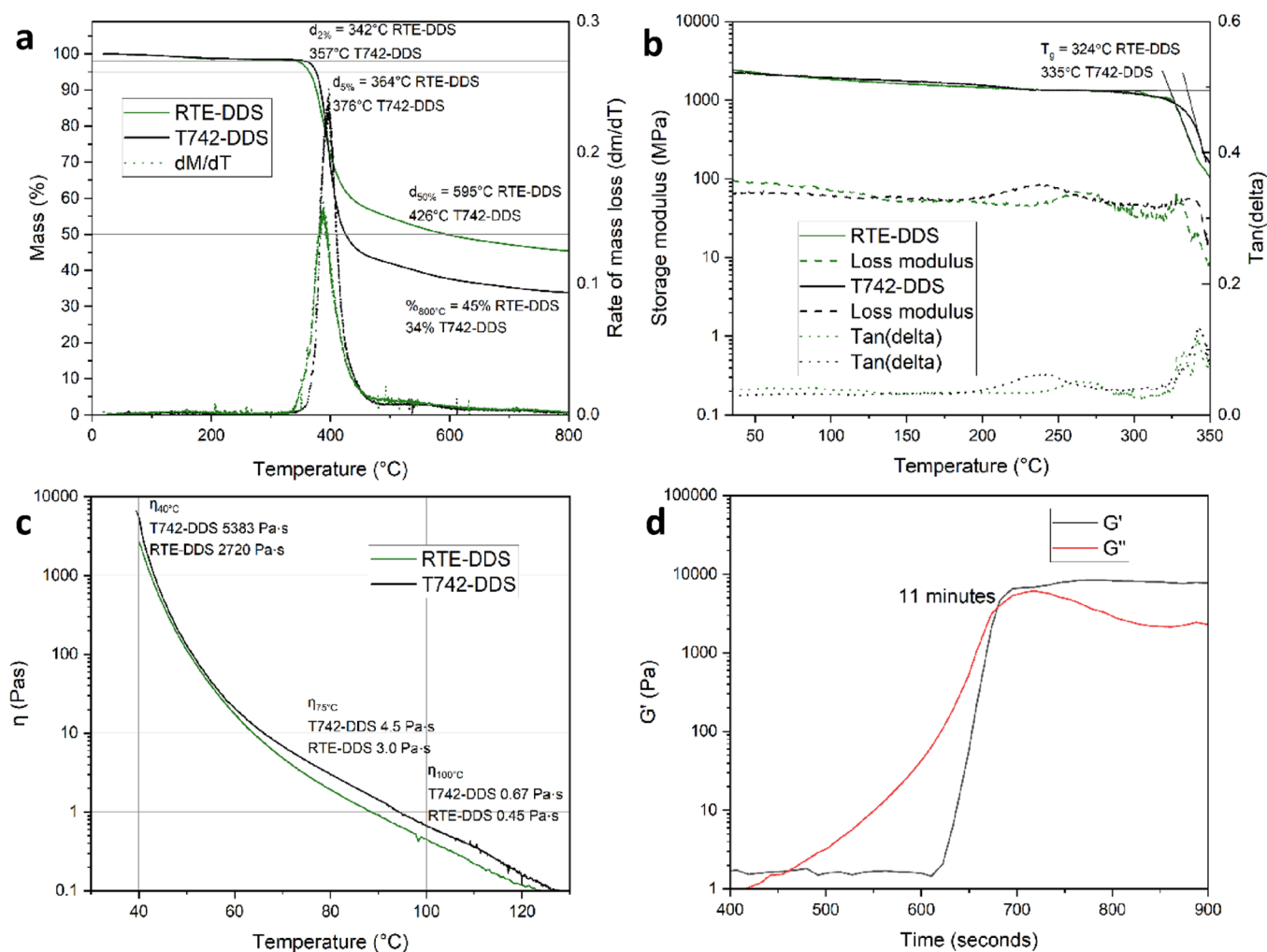
whereas  $E_{\xi}$  is the apparent activation energy for a certain degree of cure  $\xi$ , and  $R$  is the universal gas constant. Based on eq 1, a model-free value of the apparent activation energy can be estimated for each  $\xi$  value. Within the present work, we utilize the Freedman's method<sup>58</sup> given in the following eq 2:

$$\ln \left( \frac{d\xi}{dt} \right)_{\xi,i} = \ln[A_{\xi}f(\xi)] - \frac{E_{\xi}}{RT_{\xi,i}} \quad (2)$$

Applying this method requires knowledge of the reaction rate  $\left( \frac{d\xi}{dt} \right)_{\xi,i}$  and the corresponding temperature  $T_{\xi,i}$  for a specific extent of conversion  $\xi$  across  $i$  temperature programs utilized.<sup>59</sup> Within the present work,  $E_{\xi}$  is calculated for  $\xi$  ranging from 0.1 to 0.9 within steps of 0.01. The five temperature programs include heating with constant heating rates  $\beta_i$  of 2, 5, 10, 15, and 20 K/min. For each  $\beta_i$ , the  $\left( \frac{d\xi}{dt} \right)_{\xi,i}$  and  $T_{\xi,i}$  values are determined. As the term  $\ln[A_{\xi}f(\xi)]$  remains constant for a particular value of  $\xi$ , the left-hand side of eq 2 depends linearly on the reciprocal temperature. Taking advantage of this linear correlation, the effective  $E_{\xi}$  can be calculated from the slope. Indeed, either isoconversional or model-based fitting approaches can be applied,<sup>60</sup> whereas the latter lacks in consideration of vitrification.<sup>60,61</sup> Still, isoconversional methods provide meaningful insights into mechanistic analysis, detecting governing curing mechanisms, and are essential for detecting the multistep nature of kinetics.<sup>59,60</sup> Therefore, isoconversional methods are applied to first assess the curing reactions of the RTE-DDS formulation.

The activation energies  $E_{\xi}$  (Figure 1a) of RTE-DDS fall between 65 and 50 kJ/mol, which is in the range of conventional epoxy–amine reactions varying from 20 up to 100 kJ/mol.<sup>62–64</sup> The continuous decrease in  $E_{\xi}$  can be attributed to the autocatalytic nature of the system. As indicated in Figure 1b, the change of  $E_{\xi}$  emphasizes that the cross-linking exhibits a more complex behavior and involves multiple reaction mechanisms that require supplementary





**Figure 2.** (a) Temperature-dependent viscoelastic properties of RTE-DDS and T742-DDS as measured by DMA. (b) TGA results of RTE-DDS and T742-DDS showcasing the thermal degradation behavior of the resin systems. (c) Viscosity profile of both resins from 40 to 120 °C highlighting the similarities between these resin systems. (d) 180 °C gel point profile of RTE-DDS showing its adequate processing time at this high temperature.

investigation. Therefore, a model-based kinetic model approach is selected to study the reaction kinetics. Model-based approaches are more versatile and able to simulate systems in which temperature history plays a role,<sup>65</sup> which might be relevant to postcuring analysis and combining isothermal dwelling and nonisothermal curing.

**Model-Based Kinetics.** For the kinetic modeling, the DSC signals are integrated to calculate the evolution of the reaction enthalpy using a linear baseline for dynamic and a strictly horizontal baseline for the isothermal runs. With a final glass transition temperatures  $T_{g,\infty}$  greater than 220 °C, at suggested maximum curing temperatures of 160–200 °C, the resin is likely to vitrify once the developing glass transition temperature exceeds the curing temperature. At this point, the reaction process becomes dominated by the diffusion processes in the glassy state (and slows down).

Three dynamic (5, 10, and 15 K/min) (Figure S2) and three isothermal (160, 180, and 200 °C) (Figure 1c) DSC scans were evaluated simultaneously using multivariate analysis to account for isothermal and nonisothermal conditions during curing. Isothermal measurements were included in the fitting routine as these are vital for accurately modeling isothermal cure.<sup>66</sup> The phenomenological Kamal Sourour approach

provided the basis for the proposed modeling approach.<sup>67,68</sup> Combining an  $n^{\text{th}}$  order and an autocatalytic model represented an established approach for the curing behavior of epoxy resins (eq 3):<sup>65,69–71</sup>

$$\frac{d\xi}{dt} = k_1(1 - \xi)^{n_1} + k_2\xi^m(1 - \xi)^{n_2} \quad (3)$$

Still,  $T_g$  is likely to exceed the isothermal curing temperature during the curing process, making the curing reaction diffusion controlled. Therefore, the kinetic constants  $k_i$  are superimposed quantities consisting of a chemical  $k_{i,\text{chem}}$  and a diffusion  $k_{i,\text{diff}}$  part (eq 4):

$$\frac{1}{k_i} = \frac{1}{k_{i,\text{chem}}} + \frac{1}{k_{i,\text{diff}}} \quad (4)$$

while the chemical kinetic constants  $k_{i,\text{chem}}$  exhibit Arrhenius-like behavior (eq 5):

$$k_{i,\text{chem}} = A_i e^{-E_i/RT} \quad (5)$$

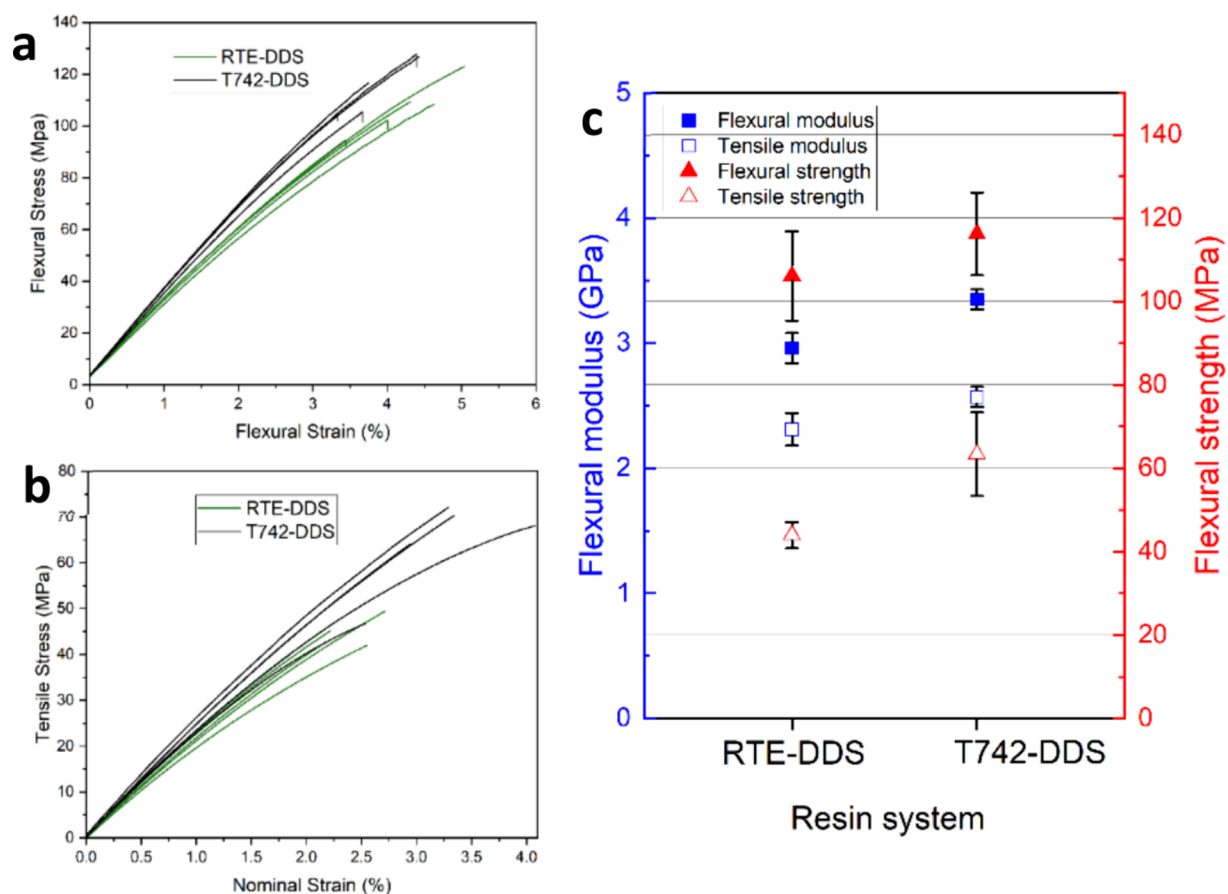
and the diffusion part kinetic constants  $k_{i,\text{diff}}$  (eq 6):<sup>19</sup>

$$k_{i,\text{diff}} = k_{i,\text{diff}}^* \cdot e^{(C_1(T-T_g))/(C_2+T-T_g)} \quad (6)$$

Table 1. Physical Properties of RTE-DDS and T742-DDS Resins

resin system	density (kg m <sup>-3</sup> )	T <sub>g</sub> (°C)	T <sub>d</sub> (°C)	η (Pa·s)	water absorption (% mass increase 14 days submersion)	water contact angle (°)	gel content (%)
RTE-DDS	1307.6 ± 1.67	324 <sup>a</sup>	364 <sup>b</sup> , 595 <sup>c</sup>	2720 <sup>d</sup> , 0.45 <sup>e</sup>	1.39 ± 0.04	75.51 ± 2.56	99.96
T742-DDS	1288.9 ± 3.83	335 <sup>a</sup>	376 <sup>b</sup> , 426 <sup>c</sup>	5383 <sup>d</sup> , 0.67 <sup>e</sup>	0.97 ± 0.01	71.26 ± 2.98	99.95

<sup>a</sup>Determined by DMA at 3 °C/min heating rate. <sup>b</sup>Temperature at 5% weight loss. <sup>c</sup>Temperature at 50% weight loss. <sup>d</sup>Viscosity at 40 °C. <sup>e</sup>Viscosity at 100 °C.



**Figure 3.** (a) Flexural stress versus strain curves of RTE-DDS and T742-DDS pure resin samples. (b) Tensile stress vs strain curves of RTE-DDS and T742-DDS pure resin samples. (c) Comparison plot of flexural and tensile modulus and strength between RTE-DDS and T742-DDS.

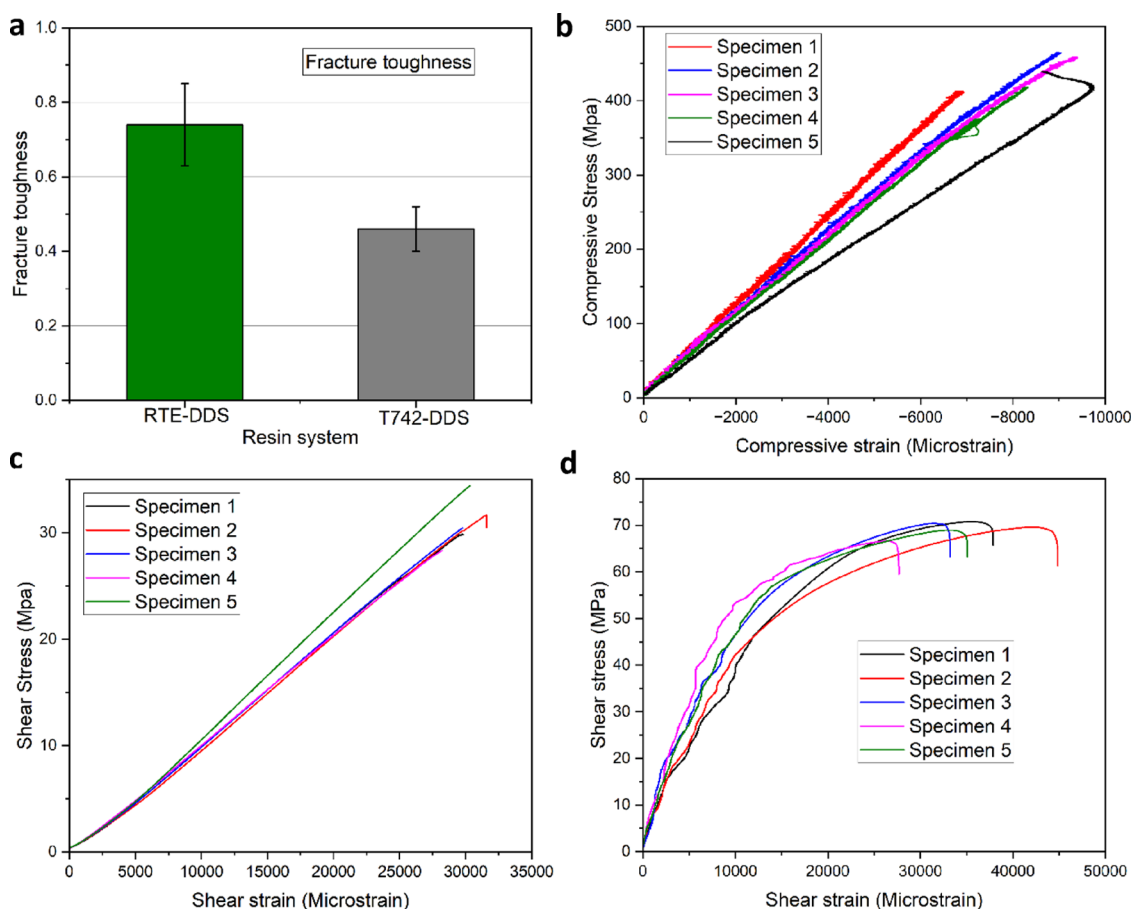
with  $C_1$  and  $C_2$  representing fitting parameters. The correlation between  $\xi$  and  $T_g(\xi)$  is approximated by the Di-Benedetto-eq (eq 7):<sup>72</sup>

$$\frac{T_g - T_{g,0}}{T_{g,\infty} - T_{g,0}} = \frac{\lambda \xi}{1 - (1 - \lambda)\xi}, \quad 0 < \lambda < 1 \quad (7)$$

with  $T_{g,0}$  representing the initial,  $T_{g,\infty}$  the final glass transition temperature, and  $\lambda$  a fitting parameter. In total, the model contains 12 independent material parameters ( $E_1, E_2, A_1, A_2, m, n_1, n_2, k_{1,diff}^*, k_{2,diff}^*, C_1, C_2$ , and  $\lambda$ ) to describe the curing behavior. The differential equation (eq 3) is solved numerically with the initial condition  $\xi = 0$ . The model parameters are determined simultaneously for the six data (isothermal and nonisothermal conditions). Isothermal measurements are included in the fitting routine as these are vital for accurately modeling isothermal cure.<sup>66</sup> Even if higher  $T_{g,\infty}$  can result from post curing at elevated temperatures above 220 °C, this leads to undesirable side reactions and are not desirable for industrial applications, so that a maximum  $T_{g,\infty}$  of 220 °C is defined. Usually, two approaches for determining  $\lambda$  (eq 7) are

applied: either  $\lambda$  is determined from the quotient of the change in specific heat capacity in the cured and uncured state<sup>72–74</sup> or from a data set containing  $i$  pairings of  $T_{g,i}$  and partially cross-linked states  $\xi_i$ .<sup>60,75</sup> Unfortunately, it was not suitable to use one of the above methods, as the glass transition during DSC is not very pronounced, which might be attributed to the very high cross-linking density of the resin. Therefore, we include  $\lambda$  as an additional variable in the optimization algorithm and restrict the values within 0.4–0.57<sup>60,73,76</sup> by introducing boundary conditions. Figures S1, S2, and S3 summarize the fitting parameters for the different resin systems. Mean average errors (MAEs) smaller than 2% state an excellent agreement of measurement data and model.

**Thermal Properties of the Resin Systems.** TGA analysis of the resin systems was performed to understand the maximum service temperature and the degradation behavior of the systems (Figure 2a). Overall, RTE-DDS displayed earlier onset of weight loss in TGA measurements, up to around 400 °C. The  $t_{d5\%}$  of RTE-DDS was 342 °C, 15 °C lower than that of T742-DDS. Once the temperature goes



**Figure 4.** (a)  $K_{IC}$  values for RTE-DDS and T742-DDS as determined by SENB coupon testing. (b) CLC compact compression force versus deformation curves for RTE-DDS CFRP. (c) Interlaminar shear strength (ILSS) force vs deformation curves for RTE-DDS CFRP. (d) In-plane shear strength (IPSS) stress versus strain curves for RTE-DDS CFRP.

above 400 °C, the resveratrol-based resin degrades slower than the Tactix 742 resin, with  $t_{d50\%}$  of 595 °C for RTE-DDS and 426 °C for T742-DDS, 169 °C higher for the bio-based system. Similar results have been seen in previous research and highlights the antifiability potential for Resveratrol-based plastics.<sup>77</sup> Indeed, the final char % at 800 °C was 44.5% for RTE-DDS and 33.3% for T742-DDS, the highest reported char yield for a resveratrol epoxy-based resin system.

Dynamic mechanical analysis (DMA) was performed on the two resin systems (Figure 2b) to evaluate their  $T_g$  and any other important material behavior at elevated temperatures, such as decrease in stiffness. The determined  $T_g$  for RTE-DDS was 324 °C, comparable to the literature and to the T742-DDS resin with a  $T_g$  11 °C higher. Storage modulus was similar for the two resin formulations at around 2300 MPa at 30 °C, decreasing by half to 1200 MPa at 300 °C. While this difference is significant, the moduli are still within the same order of magnitude, showing that the structural capacity of the resins is still present at this highly elevated temperature. The viscosity profiles (Figure 2c) of the uncured resins show that below 40 °C, the resins are essentially glassy solids. At 40 °C, we see viscosities in the magnitude of kPa s. As the temperature increases, we see a gradual decline in the viscosity of both systems. At 100 °C, the viscosities are below 1 Pa s, making the resins suitable for RTM and VARTM composite manufacturing techniques.<sup>78</sup> Gel point for the RTE-DDS formulation is checked at 180 °C (Figure 2d) to ensure adequate processing time for CFRP manufacturing and comes

out at 11 min. Industry standard formulation RTM6 has gel point of around 30 min at 180 °C according to the Hexcel technical data sheet, showing RTE-DDS reacts considerably faster.

**Physical Properties.** Alongside the kinetic and thermal evaluation of the resin systems, physical tests were carried out to compare the properties of the bulk materials. A full collection of these physical properties can be found in Table 1. Density was determined according to ASTM D792 and revealed comparable densities of the two resins, with RTE-DDS having a slightly higher density. Water contact angle was used to assess the hydrophilicity of materials. Both RTE-DDS and T742-DDS showed hydrophilic behavior (<90°) with RTE-DDS being slightly less hydrophilic than T742-DDS. Water absorption was a critical consideration for epoxy-amine formulations as water acts as a plasticizer, considerably decreasing stiffness and  $T_g$  of materials. ASTM D570 was used to determine the water absorption of the materials (Table 1). After 2 weeks of immersion in water, the RTE-DDS mass increased by 1.39% on average, with T742-DDS increasing by 0.97% in the same time frame. Gel content determined according to ASTM D2765 showed a high gel fraction for both formulations.

**Mechanical Properties.** The mechanical properties of bulk resin material give essential information when considering its suitability for CFRP manufacturing. Flexural, tensile, and fracture toughness were evaluated according to ASTM standards D790, D638, and D5045, respectively. Detailed

Table 2. Bulk Material Properties of Pure Resin Systems

resin system	flexural modulus (GPa)	flexural strength (MPa)	tensile modulus (GPa)	tensile strength (MPa)	fracture toughness ( $\text{mpa m}^{0.5}$ )
RTE-DDS	$2.96 \pm 0.12$	$106.10 \pm 10.70$	$2.31 \pm 0.13$	$43.97 \pm 3.12$	$0.74 \pm 0.11$
T742-DDS	$3.35 \pm 0.08$	$116.18 \pm 9.91$	$2.57 \pm 0.08$	$63.36 \pm 10.02$	$0.46 \pm 0.06$

sample preparation, test procedure, and results can be found in [Supporting Information](#). Flexural testing revealed a flexural modulus of 2.96 GPa and a flexural strength of 106.10 MPa for the RTE-DDS resin (Figure 3a). This was slightly lower than the values of 3.35 GPa and 116.18 MPa determined for T742-DDS. Tensile results showed T742-DDS has a slightly higher modulus and significantly higher strength (44%). RTE-DDS showed tensile modulus and strength of 2.31 and 43.97 GPa compared to T742-DDS at 2.57 and 63.36 MPa (Figure 3b), still with significantly smaller failure stresses of  $2.3\% \pm 0.3$  for RTE-DDS and  $3.3 \pm 0.5$  for T742-DDS. These results show that the resveratrol epoxy monomer forms a slightly weaker and less stiff material than Tactix 742. Mode I fracture toughness testing through SENB samples then showed expected results, with RTE-DDS showing a higher value of  $0.74 \text{ MPa m}^{0.5}$  compared to T742-DDS's value of  $0.46 \text{ MPa m}^{0.5}$  (Figure 4a). While modulus and strength were between 11 and 13% and 10–44% lower for RTE-DDS, the fracture toughness value was 61% higher than that of T742-DDS, which aligned with current understanding of free volume theory in thermoset materials.<sup>79–81</sup> Bulk properties are comparatively summarized in Table 2.

**CFRP Manufacturing and Testing Results.** CFRP samples in three geometries were manufactured with RTE-DDS matrix using the vacuum bagging and autoclave curing technique. The detailed procedure can be found in [Supporting Information](#). The fiber volume and void content of the manufactured composite material were evaluated using ASTM D3171.

Fiber volume came out at  $37\% \pm 2.7$ , slightly low for high-performance composites due to the high viscosity of the formulation and the available vacuum bagging and autoclave manufacturing technique. Coupled with a void content of  $0.55\% \pm 0.26$ , these two composite components were acceptable for the following composite tests. ILSS was determined at  $30.6 \text{ MPa} \pm 1.5$ . IPSS was  $70.4 \text{ MPa} \pm 0.87$ . In-plane shear modulus was  $4.45 \text{ GPa} \pm 0.66$ . Combined loading compression (CLC) test revealed a compressive strength of  $438.6 \text{ MPa} \pm 20.6$ . Compressive modulus was  $58.7 \pm 2.9 \text{ GPa} \pm 2.9$ .

## CONCLUSIONS

In this research, resveratrol triglycidyl ether epoxy monomer with 4,4-diaminodiphenylsulfone amine hardener formulation has been characterized across its reactivity and processing domain, with in-depth DSC studied and CFRP sample manufacturing being showcased. Furthermore, the RTE-DDS resin was shown to perform at a comparative level against the analogous Tactix 742 resin system in the mechanical and physical property domains. The resins differed most in their thermal properties and fracture toughness values. RTE-DDS displayed a slightly earlier onset of degradation compared to T742-DDS, but displayed a higher char yield at  $800^\circ\text{C}$ , which showed its potential in high-heat zone applications such as those used for Tactix 742. In flexural and tensile testing, the resins behaved similar; however, the T742-DDS formulation did show generally higher strengths and moduli. The  $K_{IC}$  value

for RTE-DDS was 61% higher than the T742-DDS resin at  $0.74 \text{ MPa m}^{0.5}$ . These results build upon existing research to highlight the potential of biobased resin systems in replacing existing high-performance petro-based systems.

## ASSOCIATED CONTENT

### Supporting Information

The Supporting Information is available free of charge at <https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acsomega.5c05906>.

Details on sample preparation and mechanical tests, cure kinetics studies, formulations used to calculate mechanical properties, tables delineating specimen properties for mechanical tests (PDF)

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### Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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