

# First-principles studies of the electronic structure and optical properties of $\text{AgBO}_3$ (B=Nb,Ta) in the paraelectric phase

Research Article

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**Abstract:** The electronic energy-band structure, density of states (DOS), and optical properties of  $\text{AgBO}_3$  in the paraelectric cubic phase have been studied by using density functional theory within the local density approximation for exchange-correlation for the first time. The band structure shows a band gap of 1.533 eV ( $\text{AgNbO}_3$ ) and 1.537 eV ( $\text{AgTaO}_3$ ) at (M- $\Gamma$ ) point in the Brillouin zone. The optical spectra of  $\text{AgBO}_3$  in the photon energy range up to 30 eV are investigated under the scissor approximation. The real and imaginary parts of the dielectric function and — thus the optical constants such as reflectivity, absorption coefficient, electron energy-loss function, refractive index, and extinction coefficient — are calculated. We have also made some comparisons with related experimental and theoretical data that is available.

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## 1. Introduction

The Ag compounds  $\text{AgNbO}_3$  and  $\text{AgTaO}_3$  belong to the ferroelectric perovskite family  $\text{ABO}_3$ . Silver niobate,  $\text{AgNbO}_3$ , has been reported by Francombe and Lewis to exhibit an orthorhombic distortion from the perovskite lattice at room temperature [1]. One of the first investigations of silver tantalate  $\text{AgTaO}_3$  was performed by Francombe and Lewis, who determined an orthorhombic structure with a monoclinic distortion of the pseudo-cubic perovskite unit

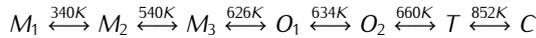
cell at room temperature [1].  $\text{AgTaO}_3$  is one of the less commonly investigated compounds among the  $\text{ABO}_3$  perovskites.  $\text{AgBO}_3$  is a ferroelectric and antiferroelectric perovskite system that has recently attracted attention due to its interesting microwave dielectric properties [2]. Because of recent developments in telecommunications, electro-optics, and piezoelectric components, perovskite niobates and tantalates have been placed on a short list of functional materials for future technologies [3].

$\text{AgNbO}_3$  and  $\text{AgTaO}_3$  have a paraelectric phase with cubic symmetry when the temperature is above 903 K [4] and 758 K [5], respectively. As the temperature decreases, a series of structural phase transitions is observed in  $\text{AgNbO}_3$  [6–10]. From literature data,  $\text{AgNbO}_3$  undergoes the fol-

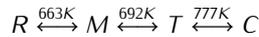
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lowing sequence of phase transitions :



where  $M_1$ ,  $M_2$ , and  $M_3$  denote monoclinic distortions with orthorhombic symmetry, while  $O_1$  and  $O_2$  are the phases with orthorhombic symmetry.  $T$  and  $C$  denote the phases with tetragonal and cubic symmetry, respectively. The phase transition sequence of  $\text{AgTaO}_3$  has been shown as follows [6] :



where  $R$  indicates rhombohedral symmetry. In both  $\text{AgNbO}_3$  (below 340 K) and  $\text{AgTaO}_3$  (below 180 K), a weak indication of ferroelectricity has been detected [11, 12]. The electronic structure of niobates and tantalates attract attention due to their interesting ferroelectric and relaxor properties. However, most of the papers devoted to  $\text{AgBO}_3$  are focused on their structural and dielectric properties [13–16]. There are only a few studies of electronic structure of these compounds [17–19, 38–42]. The electronic structure of valence bands, the band gap, and the low-energy conduction band determine the most important properties of the material in electronic device application. In this work we have calculated, from first principles, the pseudopotential of the electronic band structure and optical properties of  $\text{AgBO}_3$  in the cubic phase.

## 2. Calculation method

The crystal structure of  $\text{AgBO}_3$  in the paraelectric phase has been studied experimentally using various techniques. The paraelectric phases are cubic and belong to the space group  $\text{Pm}\bar{3}\text{m}$  (No. 221). There are five atoms of three types, the cubic unit cell.  $\text{Ag}$  is in the 1a position (0,0,0),  $\text{B}$  is located at the central position (1/2, 1/2, 1/2), and  $\text{O}$  takes the 3c position: (1/2, 1/2, 0), (1/2, 0, 1/2) and (0, 1/2, 1/2). The calculations were carried out using experimental data for lattice constant  $a = 3.9598 \text{ \AA}$  for  $\text{AgNbO}_3$  [4] and  $a = 3.948 \text{ \AA}$  for  $\text{AgTaO}_3$  [5]. The calculations presented in this paper stayed within the local density approximation (LDA) [20] of the density functional theory (DFT), as implemented in the FH198PP package [21], using the pseudopotential method. The self-consistent norm-conserving pseudopotentials are generated using the Troullier–Martins scheme [22]. Plane waves are used as a basis set for the electronic wave functions. In order to solve the Kohn–Sham equations [23], the conjugate gradient minimization method [24] is employed, as

implemented by ABINIT code<sup>1</sup> [25]. The exchange correlation effects are taken into account within the Perdew–Wang scheme [26] as parameterized by Ceperley and Alder [27].

Pseudopotentials are generated using the following electronic configurations: For  $\text{Ag}[\text{Kr}]$ , the  $4d^{10}5s^1$  electron is considered as the true valence. For  $\text{Nb}[\text{Kr}]$ ,  $4d^45s^1$ , and for  $\text{Ta}[\text{Xe}]$ ,  $6s^25d^3$ , electron states are treated as valence states. For  $\text{O}$ , only the true valence states ( $2s^2$  and  $2p^4$ ) are taken into account, because these states are enough to have the correct transferability property. The above configuration is found to be the optimized choice for these materials. All of the calculations involve a five atoms cubic unit cell arranged in a perovskite structure. We get a good convergence for the total-energy calculation with a cutoff energy of 32 a.u. for  $\text{AgNbO}_3$  and 33 a.u. for  $\text{AgTaO}_3$ , using a  $8 \times 8 \times 8$ , Monkhorst–Pack [28] mesh grid. We have found that in the band structure calculations 67k points are enough to obtain good results for these transition-metal oxides. In the density of states calculations, however, the irreducible Brillouin zone was sampled with 512k points for  $\text{AgBO}_3$ .

## 3. Results and discussions

### 3.1. Structure parameters

The calculations first were carried out using the experimental data for lattice constants. Then, by minimizing the ratio of the total energy of the crystal to its volume, the theoretical lattice constants were obtained for cubic  $\text{AgBO}_3$ , as shown in Table 1. We compare the present results for lattice parameters of  $\text{AgBO}_3$  with previous theoretical and experimental values. This is within the accuracy range of calculations based on density functional LDA.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.abinit.org/>

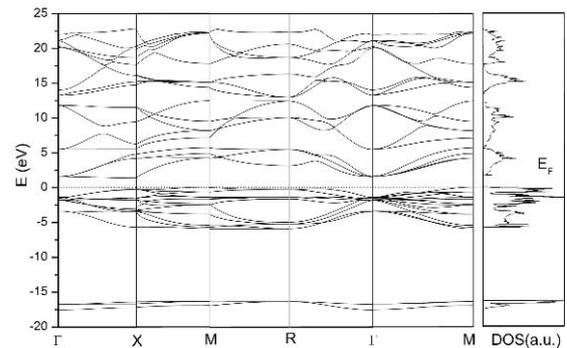
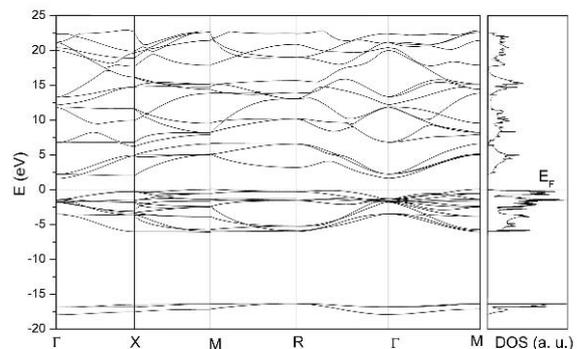
**Table 1.** Comparison of present results for lattice parameters of cubic AgBO<sub>3</sub> with previous theoretical and experimental values.

	Ref.	Lattice parameter [Å]	pa-Error [%]
<b>AgNbO<sub>3</sub>:</b>			
(LDA) PW-CA	(this work)	$a = 3.9584$	0.035
VASP	[29]	$a = 7.9088$	99.7
Experimental value	[4]	$a = 3.9598$	-
<b>AgTaO<sub>3</sub>:</b>			
(LDA) PW-CA	(this work)	$a = 3.9545$	0.16
Experimental value	[5]	$a = 3.9480$	-

### 3.2. Band structure

The calculated electronic band structure for paraelectric AgBO<sub>3</sub> in high-symmetry directions in the Brillouin zone is shown in Fig. 1 and 2. The Fermi level ( $E_F$ ) is set as zero of energy and indicated by a horizontal dashed line. High-symmetry points in the Brillouin zone include  $\Gamma$  (0,0,0), X (0,1/2,0), M (1/2,1/2,0), and R (1/2,1/2,1/2). The general features of the energy bands are similar for both oxides. In both crystals, the bottom band between about -18 eV and -16 eV originate from the O 2s orbital. The valence band exists from -18 eV to 0 for both compounds. The top of the valence band for cubic AgBO<sub>3</sub> consists of mainly O 2p. Also O 2p is hybridized with Ag 4d and somewhat with B nd orbitals ( $n=4$  and 5 for Nb and Ta, respectively). However, the conduction band consists of mainly B nd from 1.64 eV to 12 eV (for AgNbO<sub>3</sub>) and 1.82 eV to 11.50 eV (for AgTaO<sub>3</sub>). So, electron excitation happens from O 2p and (O 2p+Ag 4d) to B nd. The excited electrons on B are responsible for reduction, and the holes left on O are responsible for oxidation. The contribution of Ag atoms to the bands of B nd is very small because of the large distance between Ag and B atoms. Ag 5s and 5p, which are unoccupied and somewhat localized, contribute a little to the conduction band. An unoccupied Ag 5s and 5p orbital covers the conduction band at an energy level from 12 eV to 22.67 eV (for AgNbO<sub>3</sub>) and 11.50 eV to 22.5 eV (for AgTaO<sub>3</sub>). Ag 5s and Ag 5p cover the latter part of the conduction band from 12 eV to 22.67 eV (for AgNbO<sub>3</sub>) and 11.50 eV to 22.5 eV (for AgTaO<sub>3</sub>), which somewhat overlap but are not hybridized with B nd, as judged from the different band shape. It is found to be in agreement with the valence bands of AgNbO<sub>3</sub> single crystals and ceramics determined by x-ray photoemission spectroscopy (XPS) measurements of a valence band width of about 6.5 eV [19]. The valence bands are separated from the conduction bands at the symmetry point ( $\Gamma$ ) by a direct gap of 2.933 eV for AgNbO<sub>3</sub>

and 2.908 eV for AgTaO<sub>3</sub>. In both AgNbO<sub>3</sub> and AgTaO<sub>3</sub>, an indirect band gap appears between the top-most valence band at the M point and the bottom-most conduction bands at the  $\Gamma$  point. Our calculated values of the indirect band gaps of Ag(Nb,Ta)O<sub>3</sub> are 1.533 eV and 1.537 eV, respectively. These calculated values are smaller than experimental values estimated from the onset of absorption, which is 2.8 eV for AgNbO<sub>3</sub> and 3.4 eV for AgTaO<sub>3</sub> [18]. It is well known that the band gap calculated by DFT is smaller than that obtained from experiments. This error is due to the discontinuity of exchange-correlation energy. Therefore a scissors operator was needed to shift all the conduction levels to agree with the measured value of the band gap, which we applied to the calculation of optical parameters.

**Figure 1.** Band structure along the high symmetry directions in the Brillouin zone and DOS of AgNbO<sub>3</sub>.**Figure 2.** Band structure along the high symmetry directions in the Brillouin zone and DOS of AgTaO<sub>3</sub>.

The band gaps are computed very accurately, using the so-called GW approximation [30]. The origin of this discrepancy may be the LDA, which underestimates the band gaps even for insulators. To further elucidate the nature of electronic band structure, the DOS have been calculated by the tetrahedral method [31] for both crystals shown in the right panels of Fig. 1 and 2. The DOS for AgBO<sub>3</sub> in both calculations are quite similar to each other. The electronic structure and DOS for AgTaO<sub>3</sub> are in agreement with the ones calculated by the CASTEP program [18].

### 3.3. Optical properties

The optical response of crystals can be described by the complex dielectric function  $\epsilon(q, \omega)$ , where  $q$  is the momentum transfer in the electron-photon interaction and  $\omega$  is the energy transfer. The ( $q=0$ ) dielectric function was calculated in the momentum representation, which requires matrix elements of momentum  $\vec{P}$  between occupied and unoccupied eigenstates. To be specific, the imaginary part of the dielectric function,  $\epsilon_2(\omega) = \text{Im}\epsilon(q=0, \omega)$  was calculated from [32]

$$\epsilon_2^{ij}(\omega) = \frac{4\pi e^2}{\Omega m^2 \omega} \sum_{\kappa n n'} \langle \vec{\kappa} n \sigma | P_i | \vec{\kappa} n' \sigma \rangle \langle \kappa n' \sigma | P_j | \kappa n \sigma \rangle \cdot f_{\kappa n} (1 - f_{\kappa n'}) \delta(E_{\kappa n'} - E_{\kappa n} - \hbar\omega) \quad (1)$$

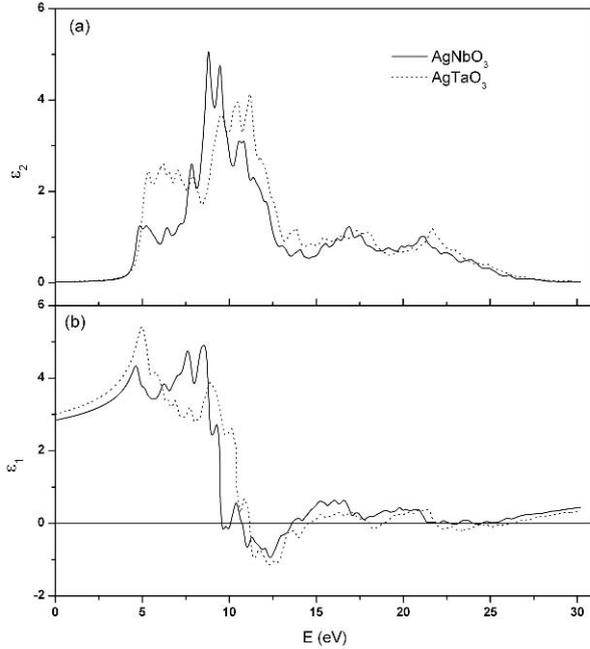
In Eq. (1),  $e$  is the electron charge,  $m$  is its mass,  $\Omega$  is the volume, and  $f_{\kappa n}$  is the Fermi distribution. Moreover,  $|\vec{\kappa} n \sigma\rangle$  is the crystal wave function corresponding to the  $n$ -th eigenvalues, with crystal momentum  $\vec{\kappa}$  and spin  $\sigma$ . The summation over the Brillouin zone Eq. (1) is calculated using a linear interpolation on a mesh of uniformly distributed points. Matrix elements, eigenvalues, and eigenvectors are calculated in the irreducible part of the Brillouin zone. The correct symmetry for the dielectric constant was obtained by averaging the calculated dielectric function. A major problem with LDA calculations of dielectric constant  $\epsilon = 1 + 4\pi\chi$  is the underestimation of the band gap. Because the Kohn-Sham equation determines ground-state properties, the unoccupied conduction bands that appear in the calculations have no physical significance. If they are used as single-particle states in a calculation of optical properties for semiconductors or insulators, a band problem comes into existence: The absorption begins at too low an energy. In LDA calculations, it is common practice to apply a scissors operator approximation [30, 33, 34] to compensate for the lack of polarization dependence of the exchange-correlation functional. The discussion above concerning the band-gap problem suggests that one should choose

scissors shift  $\Delta = E_{gap}^{exp} - E_{gap}^{LDA}$  [30]. We therefore estimate the correction to the band gap on the basis of the difference between the calculated LDA band gap and the experimental optical gap [18]. In the present work,  $\Delta$  is 1.27 eV (AgNbO<sub>3</sub>) and 1.86 eV (AgTaO<sub>3</sub>). Finally the real part of the dielectric function  $\epsilon_1(\omega)$  is obtained from  $\epsilon_2(\omega)$  using the Kramers-Kronig transformation,

$$\epsilon_1 = \text{Re}[\epsilon(q=0, \omega)] = 1 + \frac{1}{\pi} \int_0^\infty \epsilon_2(\omega') \left( \frac{1}{\omega' - \omega} + \frac{1}{\omega' + \omega} \right) d\omega' \quad (2)$$

Using the method mentioned above, we calculated the imaginary ( $\epsilon_2$ ) and real ( $\epsilon_1$ ) parts of  $\epsilon(\omega) = \epsilon_1(\omega) - i\epsilon_2(\omega)$  between 0 and 30 eV for AgBO<sub>3</sub>, and the results are shown Fig. 3(a) and (b). Solid line indicates the function for AgNbO<sub>3</sub> and dotted line for AgTaO<sub>3</sub>. In order to account for the structures observed in the optical spectra, it is customary to consider transitions from occupied to unoccupied bands in the electronic energy band structure, especially at high symmetry points in the Brillouin zone. For the absorptive part of the dielectric function  $\epsilon_2$ , for AgNbO<sub>3</sub>, shown in Fig. 3(a), the highest peak in  $\epsilon_2$  at  $\sim 8.8$  eV arises from O 2p  $\rightarrow$  Nb 4d  $t_{2g}$  at the M point. For AgTaO<sub>3</sub>, the value of the main peak of the  $\epsilon_2$  curve in Fig. 3(a) is 11.19 eV, which arises from O 2p  $\rightarrow$  Ta 5d  $t_{2g}$  at the M point. These are followed by other, smaller peaks between 10 and 20 eV for AgNbO<sub>3</sub> and 12–20 eV for AgTaO<sub>3</sub>. The minimum in  $\epsilon_2$  occurs at about 13 eV (AgNbO<sub>3</sub> and AgTaO<sub>3</sub>). The real parts of the dielectric function are shown in Fig. 3(b) for AgBO<sub>3</sub> in the cubic phase. The first peak in  $\epsilon_1$  at about 4.62 eV (AgNbO<sub>3</sub>) and 4.97 eV (AgTaO<sub>3</sub>) originates from O 2p  $\rightarrow$  Nb 4d and O 2p  $\rightarrow$  Ta 5d at probably the  $\Gamma$  point or the X point, respectively. This peak is followed by a decrease, which reaches a global minimum at 12.40 eV (AgNbO<sub>3</sub>) and 12.28 eV (AgTaO<sub>3</sub>), and fairly small peaks between 12.5 and 20 eV for AgBO<sub>3</sub>. The  $\epsilon_1(0)$  values of AgBO<sub>3</sub> in the cubic phase are 2.843 (AgNbO<sub>3</sub>) and 3.013 (AgTaO<sub>3</sub>). The optical properties may be extracted from knowledge of the complex dielectric function. Expressions for optical constants like refractive index  $n(\omega)$ , extinction coefficient  $k(\omega)$ , absorption coefficient  $\alpha(\omega)$ , reflectivity  $R(\omega)$ , and energy loss spectrum  $L(\omega)$  now follow immediately as given below [35]:

$$\begin{aligned} n(\omega) &= (1/\sqrt{2})[\epsilon_1(\omega) + \sqrt{\epsilon_1^2(\omega) + \epsilon_2^2(\omega)}]^{1/2} \\ k(\omega) &= (1/\sqrt{2})[\sqrt{\epsilon_1^2(\omega) + \epsilon_2^2(\omega)} - \epsilon_1(\omega)]^{1/2} \\ \alpha(\omega) &= \sqrt{2}\omega[\sqrt{\epsilon_1^2(\omega) + \epsilon_2^2(\omega)} - \epsilon_1(\omega)]^{1/2} \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$



**Figure 3.** The imaginary parts (a) and the real parts (b) of complex dielectric function for  $\text{AgBO}_3$ .

$$R(\omega) = \left| \frac{\sqrt{\varepsilon(\omega)} - 1}{\sqrt{\varepsilon(\omega)} + 1} \right|^2$$

$$L(\omega) = \frac{\varepsilon_2(\omega)}{\varepsilon_1^2(\omega) + \varepsilon_2^2(\omega)}$$

We have derived  $n(\omega)$ ,  $k(\omega)$ ,  $\alpha(\omega)$ ,  $R(\omega)$ , and  $L(\omega)$  of  $\text{AgBO}_3$  in the energy range up to 30 eV using Eq. (3). The reflectivity spectra for  $\text{AgBO}_3$  are shown as a function of energy in Fig. 4(a). This could possibly make the compound  $\text{AgBO}_3$  suitable for a variety of optical application. The static refractive index values for  $\text{AgBO}_3$  in the cubic phase calculated in this work are shown in Fig. 4(b). We obtain  $n(0)$  as 1.686 ( $\text{AgNbO}_3$ ) and 1.736 ( $\text{AgTaO}_3$ ) for the cubic phase. The maximum  $n(\omega)$  of 2.092 ( $\text{AgNbO}_3$ ) and 2.348 ( $\text{AgTaO}_3$ ) were found. The refractive index for  $\text{AgBO}_3$  increases with energy in the transparency region, reaching a peak in the ultraviolet at about 5 eV, due probably to interband transitions. Then they decrease to a minimum level of about 12.5 eV. The calculated extinction coefficients for  $\text{AgBO}_3$  are presented in Fig. 4(c). As can be seen from Fig. 4(c), normal dispersion exists in the 0–3.5 eV energy range. This is consistent with results for  $\varepsilon_2$  in Fig. 3(a). The calculated linear absorption spectrum is displayed in Fig. 4(d) for  $\text{AgBO}_3$ .  $\alpha(\omega)$  is very large (about  $10^4 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ ) and decreases rapidly in the low-energy region. The fundamental absorption edge starts

from about 3.3 eV for  $\text{AgNbO}_3$  and 3.2 eV for  $\text{AgTaO}_3$ , which correspond to the direct  $\Gamma$ – $\Gamma$  transition. This originates from the transition from the O 2p electron states located at the top of the valence to the empty Nd 4d ( $\text{AgNbO}_3$ ) and Ta 5d ( $\text{AgTaO}_3$ ) electron states dominating the bottom of the conduction bands. The loss function  $L(\omega)$  describes the energy loss of a fast electron traversing the material. The electron energy-loss functions  $L(\omega)$  of  $\text{AgBO}_3$  were calculated from Eqs. (3). This is displayed in Fig. 4(e). In the energy region above 15 eV there is a drop in  $\varepsilon_2$ , and there is no sharp structure in its spectrum, which corresponds to exhaustion of the sum rule and the excitation of plasma vibrations in the valence band. At energies in excess of 15 eV, the spectrum of  $L(\omega)$  includes a wide band associated with the excitation of the 2p valence electrons of oxygen. The present spectra of  $L(\omega)$  exhibit maxima both at the energy of the interband transitions and at the energies of the plasma resonances (Fig. 4(e)). Analysis of  $L(\omega)$  determines the energy of the plasma oscillation of the valence electrons  $E_p = 25.567 \text{ eV}$  ( $\text{AgNbO}_3$ ) and  $26.498 \text{ eV}$  ( $\text{AgTaO}_3$ ). In addition the peaks of  $L(\omega)$  also correspond to the trailing edge in the reflection spectra, for instance, the peak of  $L(\omega)$  at 13.575, 25.567 eV ( $\text{AgNbO}_3$ ) and 14.367, 26.498 eV ( $\text{AgTaO}_3$ ) corresponding to the abrupt reduction of  $R(\omega)$ . The other peaks arise at the valence bands to the lower and upper conduction bands.

Unfortunately, we are not able to find any experimental results and theoretical calculations for optical properties of cubic  $\text{AgBO}_3$  in the energy region close to the fundamental absorption edge, except [18]. We expect that our theoretical studies will motivate experimental work aimed at investigating the optical properties of the cubic phase of this compound.

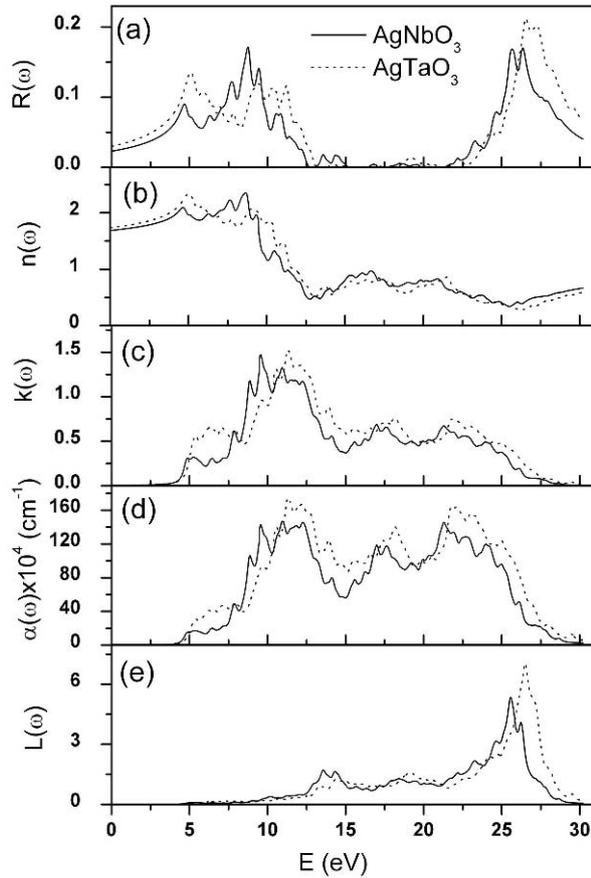
### 3.4. Sum rule and effective number of valence electrons

From the known sum rules [36] we can determine certain quantitative values, particularly the effective number  $N_{eff}$  of the valence electrons and the effective optical dielectric constant  $\varepsilon_{eff}$ , which contribute to the optical constant of the crystal at the frequency  $\omega_0$ . Recall that

$$N_{eff} = \frac{m}{2\pi e^2} \frac{1}{N_a} \int_0^{\omega_0} \omega \varepsilon_2(\omega) d\omega \quad (4)$$

$$\varepsilon_{eff} = 1 + \frac{2}{\pi} \int_0^{\omega_0} \omega^{-1} \varepsilon_2(\omega) d\omega \quad (5)$$

where  $N_a$  is the density of the atoms in the crystal. The quantities  $m$  and  $e$  are the electron mass and charge re-

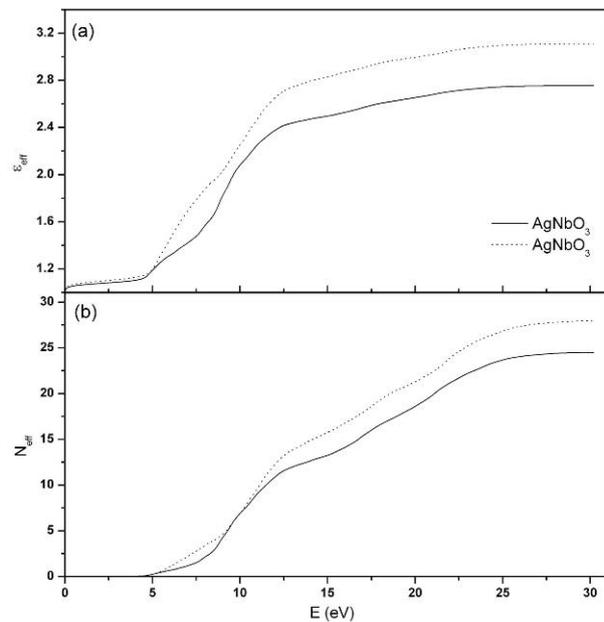


**Figure 4.** The calculated (a) reflectivity spectra, (b) refractive index, (c) extinction coefficient, (d) absorption coefficient, and (e) electron energy-loss spectrum for AgBO<sub>3</sub>.

spectively. The physical meaning of  $\epsilon_{eff}$  is quite clear:  $\epsilon_{eff}$  is the effective optical dielectric function governed by interband transition in the internal frequency from zero to  $\omega_0$ , that is, by the polarization of the electron shell. Each of our plots of  $\epsilon_{eff}$  vs. photon energy for AgBO<sub>3</sub> (Fig. 5(a)) can be arbitrarily divided into two parts. The first part is characterized by a rapid growth of  $\epsilon_{eff}$  and extends up to 12 eV. The second part shows a smoother and slower growth of  $\epsilon_{eff}$  and tends to saturate at energies above 25 eV. This means that the largest contribution to  $\epsilon_{eff}$  is made by transitions corresponding to the bands at  $\sim 5$  eV and  $\sim 12$  eV. (Their contribution amounts to  $> 80\%$ .) To determine the contribution made to the static dielectric function  $\epsilon(0)$  by transition with frequency  $\omega > \omega_0$ , we compare the maximum  $\epsilon_{eff}$  with the square of the refractive index ( $n^2 = \epsilon(0)$ ) measured in the transparency region [37]. The difference  $\delta\epsilon = \epsilon(0) - \epsilon_{eff} > 0$  points to the need for taking into account the polarizability of the deep levels. The obtained difference  $\delta\epsilon = \epsilon(0) - \epsilon_{eff}$  ( $\delta\epsilon = 0.1$  for

AgNbO<sub>3</sub> and 0.07 for AgTaO<sub>3</sub>) indicates a large contribution of transitions with  $\omega > \omega_0$  to the static dielectric constant. This means that the greatest contribution to  $\epsilon_{eff}$  arises from the interband transition between 5 eV and 25 eV.

On the other hand, the  $N_{eff}$  determined from the sum rule is the effective number of valence electrons per crystal atom at the energy  $\omega$  (under the condition that all the interband transitions possible at this frequency  $\omega_0$  were made). The photon energy dependence of the  $N_{eff}$  is shown in Fig. 5(b). The effective valence electron number up to 4.8 eV is zero (below the band gap), then rises rapidly at low energy and saturates at about 28 eV, with a value of 27.8 (AgTaO<sub>3</sub>) and 24.5 eV (AgNbO<sub>3</sub>) for the effective electron number. These show that the deep-lying valence orbital participates in the interband transition.



**Figure 5.** The calculated (a) effective optical dielectric constant and (b) effective number of electrons participating in the interband transitions.

## 4. Conclusions

We calculated the electronic structure, the total DOS, and optical properties of AgBO<sub>3</sub> in the paraelectric cubic phase using ABINIT code in a wide energy range. The results yield lattice constants that are in agreement with experimental studies. The calculation shows that the band gap is indirect (M- $\Gamma$ ). Our calculated fundamental gap is 1.533 eV (AgNbO<sub>3</sub>) and 1.537 eV (AgTaO<sub>3</sub>),

which is less than the experimental value, due to LDA underestimation. The optical properties, such as the dielectric function, reflectivity, absorption coefficient, electron energy-loss function, refractive index, extinction coefficient,  $\epsilon_{eff}$ , and  $N_{eff}$  have been analyzed for the interband contribution to the optical response functions. It is found that the origin of peaks in the dielectric function probably also explains the structures in the spectra of these optical functions. We are not aware of any published data of electronic structure and optical properties of cubic AgBO<sub>3</sub>, so our calculations can be used to cover this lack of data for these crystals.

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