doi:10.1351/goldbook.S05999

steric factor

in polymers

The ratio, σ, of the root-mean-square end-to-end distance of a polymer chain with unperturbed dimensions, $< r^2 >_0^{1/2}$, to that of a freely rotating chain with the same structure, $< r^2 >_{0,f}^{1/2}$, i.e. $\sqrt{\frac{< r^2 >_0}{< r^2 >_{0,f}}}$, in the limit of infinite chain length. The steric factor reflects the effect of hindrance to free rotation.

Source:
Purple Book, p. 50

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