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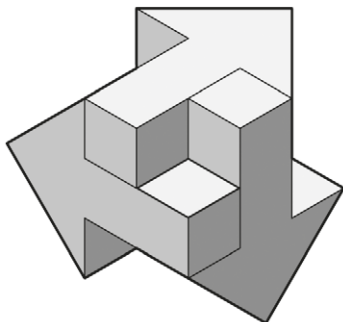


PRATICHE TRADIZIONALI E TECNOLOGIE  
INNOVATIVE PER L'END OF WASTE

a cura di  
Adolfo F. L. Baratta



**PRE-FREE**  
**UP-DOWN**  
**RE-CYCLE**



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**PRE|FREE - UP|DOWN - RE|CYCLE**

pratiche tradizionali e tecnologie innovative per  
l'End of Waste

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*traditional solutions and innovative technologies  
for the End of Waste*

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*prácticas tradicionales y tecnologías innovadoras  
para la disposición de los desechos*

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**Beatriz E. Mira Rada**

Professor

Universidad Autónoma de Manizales, Facultad de Ingeniería

*beatrize.mirar@autonoma.edu.co*

**Andres Salas Montoya**

Associate Professor

Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Civil Engineering Department

*asalasmo@unal.edu.co*

*Effect of moisture content and mixing procedure on  
the Properties of Recycled Aggregate Concrete with  
Silica fume*

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*Silica Fume, Strength, Elastic Modulus,  
Aggregates, Recycling*

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## Summary

This document summarizes the results of a laboratory study to determine the effect of the moisture state of aggregates and mixing method on some of the mechanical properties of concretes produced using natural (NA) and recycled concrete aggregates (RA) including silica fume (SF).

Concrete wastes were crushed and used as 100% replacement for natural coarse aggregate to produce concrete mixtures.

The study includes the evaluation of the compressive strength and static modulus of elasticity of the concrete mixes produced following the standard mixing procedure and the two-stage mixing approach, using aggregates in different moisture states: oven dry (OD), air dry (AD) and saturated surface dry (SSD).

Based on the results, it was feasible to produce high quality concretes using recycled aggregates in the concrete by manipulating the parameters of the mix, such as the mixing procedure, and the moisture content of the aggregates.

## Introduction

There is a worldwide search on new sources of aggregates to produce concrete, due to the critical shortage of the natural resources [BBC, 2021; Tam e Tam, 2007]. The use of recycled materials could be an alternative for replacing natural aggregates in concrete in terms of fulfilling, at least, part of the aggregates demand, also for reducing environmental problems [Gonzales, 2018; Singh, 2018; Mohammed et al., 2018; Kumar et al., 2018]. Numerous researchers have deeply studied the use of RA to produce Portland cement concrete [Gonzales, 2018; Singh, 2018; Tam et al., 2018; Gonzales-Taboada, 2016; Yehia, 2015]. Several techniques have been developed to off-set some difficulties with RA so that the concrete can achieve the desired performance criteria at least on par or above the performance of natural aggregate concrete (NAC), and thus prevent the properties of RAC from being negatively affected [Yehia, 2015; Li et al., 2009; Katz, 2004], but few of those researches have emphasized on the combined effect of key factors such as the moisture content of the aggregate in conjunction with the mixing procedure and the use of supplementary cementitious materials [Tam e Tam, 2007; Gonzales, 2018; Tam et al., 2018; Yehia, 2015; Li et al., 2009; Ferreira et al., 2011]. One method proposed to enhance properties of RAC that has shown high effectiveness was the termed by Tam et al. [Tam, et al., 2008] as Two Stage Mixing Approach (TSMA), in which the sequence of different steps for mixing process was utilized, not following the ordinary mixing approach suggested by the ASTM called normal mixing procedure (NMP) [Tam e Tam, 2007; am et al., 2018; Faysal et al., 2020; Tam, et al., 2008; Ka-hung ng. et al., 2006; Kong, D. et al., 2010]. The main thrust of this research was to evaluate the effect of combining two strategies in different recycled aggregate concretes and their comparison with a control concrete using only NA to enhance the performance of RAC. The first method is a change on the moisture content, and the second is the use of two different mixing procedures: the TSMA and the NMP.

## Materials

Commercial silica fume (SF) suitable with ASTM C 1240 and Portland cement type V, compatible with ASTM type I Portland cement, were used as cementitious materials. A liquid Polycarboxylate Polymer

Agg.	Type	Maximum size [mm]	Density [g/cm <sup>3</sup> ]	Abs. Capacity [%]	Degree of saturation [%]
Fine agg.	Natural coarse river sand	4.75 (No. 4)	2.75	1.64	-
	Natural fine river sand		2.71	2.6	-
NA AD	Natural coarse aggregate, crushed basalt, humid, pre-wetted state				75
NA SSD	Natural coarse aggregate, crushed basalt, saturated-surface-dry (SSD)		2.98	1.61	100
NA OD	Natural coarse aggregate, crushed basalt, oven dry (OD)	19			0
RA AD	Recycled coarse aggregate, humid, pre-wetted state				55
RA SSD	Recycled coarse aggregate, saturated-surface-dry (SSD)		2.47	4.7	100
RA OD	Recycled coarse aggregate, oven dry (OD)				0

Table1. Notation and Physical Properties of Aggregates. [Original from authors].

superplasticizer (SP), conforming to ASTM C494 was used as liquid chemical admixture.

### **Natural Aggregates**

Three different NA were blended: a crushed basalt as coarse aggregate and two river silicious sands, a coarse sand with fineness modulus of 3.63 and a fine sand with fineness modulus of 1.78, as fine aggregate. The defined properties of aggregates are in table 1. The notation given in table 1 includes three parts. The first part indicates the origin of aggregates: RA for recycled coarse aggregate and NA for natural aggregates. The second part is used to identify the moisture content of aggregates: AD for air dried state, SSD for saturated surface dry and OD for oven dry state. Finally, third part indicates the mixing procedure followed: NMP for the ASTM C192 standard procedure and the TSMA for Two Stage Mixing Approach.

### **Recycled Aggregates**

Recycled coarse aggregate (RA) were used as 100% replacement of coarse NA in the concrete mixtures. Recycled aggregates were obtained from crushed beams and cylinders that were selected, crushed, cleaned, and sieved from a concrete laboratory. After production of RCA, aggregates were separated using individual sieves and then recombined to have the same sieve distribution of the natural coarse and fine aggregates, and thus have a basis for comparison.

### **Aggregate moisture conditions**

To analyze how the moisture states of the recycled aggregates affects concrete behavior, authors analyzed three different humidity conditions in aggregates: Oven dry state (OD), Air dried state, AD and Saturated Surface Dry (SSD) state.

### **Mixture Proportions**

Twelve concrete mixtures were formulated and prepared using NA and RA, with 440 kg of cementitious materials per cubic meter of concrete and with water/cementitious material ratio (w/cm) of 0.45. The dosage of superplasticizer was between 1.0 and 1.3 L/m<sup>3</sup> of binder mass to pro-



vide a workability between 125-150 mm. Potable water was used for casting and curing specimens. All mixes contained 10% silica fume (SF) as supplementary cementitious material replacing Portland cement by weight.

### Mixing Concrete

As mentioned previously, authors used two different mixing procedures: the ASTM C192 [ASTM C192] standard mixing procedure, and the Two-Stage Mixing Approach (TSMA) suggested by Tam et al. [Tam e Tam, 2007; Bentur, 1988]. To prepare concrete specimens, all concretes were mixed in a tilting drum mixer. Six mixtures were prepared in accordance with ASTM C 192 and six concretes were mixed following the TSMA. The procedures are explained in a previous publication [19].

### Hardened Concrete Testing

The hardened tests were conducted in accordance with ASTM standards. Measured properties of concrete mixtures included compressive

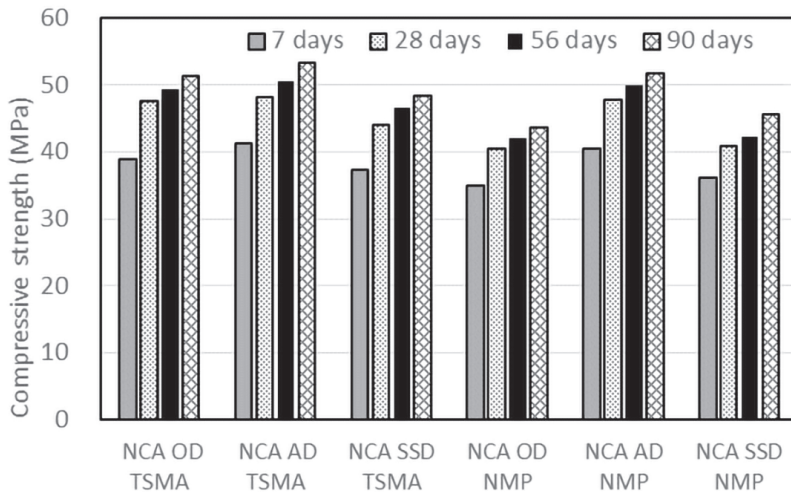


Figure 1. Compressive Strength of the concrete mixes. [Original from authors].

strengths, according to ASTM C 39 using three 100×200 mm cylindrical specimens at 7, 28, 56, and 90 days and elastic modulus on two 100×200 mm cylindrical specimens by using ASTM C 469.

## Tests results

### Compressive Strength

According to Figure 1, the moisture content of the aggregates has an opposite effect on the strength properties for both, NA and RCA concretes. For NA concretes, the mixes with aggregates in OD condition presented the lowest results on compressive strength when compared with those in AD and SSD states.

The reduction on the compressive strength of concretes with NA in OD condition is mainly related to the adherence between aggregate and cement paste due to the extra water added to compensate the absorption of the OD aggregate [Ferreira, 2011; Brand, 2015]. Meanwhile, the

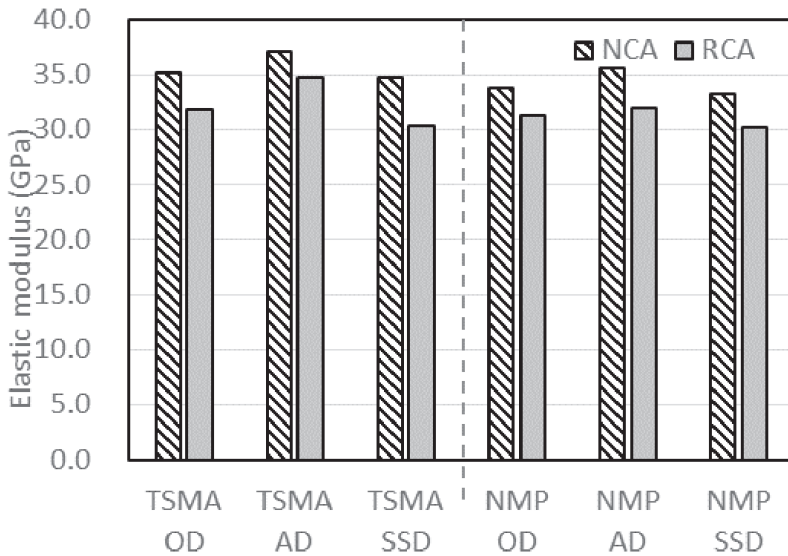


Figure 2. Elastic Modulus of the concrete mixes. [Original from authors].

results for the RAC are quite different, the best results on the compressive strength are for the concretes with aggregates in the AD and OD states at all tested ages, and the lowest results were for concretes with SSD aggregates. This is mainly caused by characteristics of the old mortar in RA, such as the absorption and its texture [Poon et al., 2004; Akir et al., 2015].

By the other side, when the RA are used in SSD state, the strength is lower because it is not possible to fill the cracks with the slurry of the cement pastes and thus fails to increase the density of the cement matrix near the ITZ of RA and the bond between the new cement paste and RA. With respect to the mixing procedure, the experimental results showed a slight difference on the compressive strength that the Two-Stage Mixing Approach was an effective method for enhancing the behavior of RAC. There is a triple benefit on the properties of concretes combining the incorporation of SF and the TSMA at the same time, compared to normal mixing.

Due to the very fine particle size of silica fume, it acts as a microfiller, fills pores and strengthening the microstructure of the mortar that is adhered to the original aggregate, enhancing adherence of aggregate-new cement matrix followed by a pozzolanic reaction at the same place [23] producing a substantial improvement in the strength when the results are contrasted to the NMP.

### **Modulus of elasticity**

The results show that  $E_c$  decreases depending on the level of moisture content and the type of aggregates as shown in figure 2. All the concretes with natural aggregates show a higher elastic modulus, and the RA concretes, especially for those in SSD states, showed lower modulus of elasticity.

This trend may be explained by examining concrete as a three-phase composite material as proposed by Mindess et al. [Monteiro, 1993], composed of aggregate particles dispersed in a cement paste matrix and the transition zone between coarse aggregate and cement paste

that has a strong influence over the elastic modulus. The bonding and interlocking between aggregates and paste is lower for the RCA concretes, especially for those prepared with the NMP.

## **Conclusions**

According to the experimental results obtained from this work, following conclusions can be drawn:

1. According to the results of the analysis of the three mechanical properties of concrete, it can be concluded that the type of aggregate is a relevant factor in concrete manufacturing, it influences the properties and recycled aggregate can increase the average compressive strength, and modulus of elasticity.
2. When the recycled concrete was used in the SSD states, the compressive strength of the concrete was affected due to the lack of absorption of the cement slurry inside the recycled aggregate.
3. The results revealed that there was a strong difference in compressive strength between NA and RA concrete.
4. The TSMA approach achieved higher compressive strength and elastic modulus compared with the NMP for both natural aggregate and RCA concrete.
5. The strength properties for RCA concrete were greatest when the RCA was at least in the partially saturated moisture state with TSMA.

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Adolfo F. L. Baratta è Architetto e Dottore di Ricerca. Dal 2014 è Professore Associato in Tecnologia dell'Architettura presso l'Università degli Studi Roma Tre e, dal 2018, è abilitato come Professore Ordinario. È stato docente presso l'Università degli Studi di Firenze e Sapienza Università di Roma, nonché Visiting Professor presso la Universidad de Boyacá di Sogamoso (COL) e la HTWG di Konstanz (DE). Dal 2020 è esperto della Struttura Tecnica di Missione del Ministero delle Infrastrutture e delle Mobilità Sostenibili. È autore di oltre 200 pubblicazioni.

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