

The Cyclic Loading of Normal Concrete in a Specific Stress Range

Ghousson Michel Andrawes

Faculty of Civil Engineering, Tishreen University, Lattakia, Syria.
E-Mail: ghousson@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This research presents a study about the effect of static cyclic loading at compression on the properties of normal concrete, which are: the modulus of elasticity, the compressive strength and the ultimate strain.

The static cyclic loading of concrete is achieved by loading-unloading-reloading at compression, for a short duration, in a specific stress range and for a few number of cycles.

Experimental program includes tests for sixteen concrete specimens with maximum compressive strength 30 MPa. Twelve of the specimens are tested under a static cyclic loading, at the stress range (40 to 80) percent of the maximum compressive strength. The four remaining specimens are tested under uniaxial loading till failure. The cyclic loading is carried out for a few number of cycles, which is determined with (5, 10, 15, 20) cycles.

Analytical part of this study is based on mathematical formulations for the stress-strain response, which are developed from the test results, in order to get the properties of concrete. A comparison between the properties of concrete in the two cases of loading (cyclic and uniaxial), is carried out. The results show an obvious improvement in the properties of concrete under cyclic loading, when achieved in the specific stress range (40 to 80) percent of the maximum strength, and for the number of cycles 15 or 20 cycles.

The improvement in the properties of normal concrete under cyclic loading is the fundamental for the application of this kind of loading on High-Strength concrete. Hence, the cyclic loading causes an increase in the ultimate strain of normal concrete, so it may be of greater efficacy in High-Strength concrete.

KEYWORDS: Cyclic loading, Unloading, Reloading, Stress-strain curve, Modulus of elasticity, Compressive strength, Ultimate strain.

INTRODUCTION

The design of concrete structures is mainly depending on compression tests under uniaxial loading until failure occurs due to the crushing of concrete at ultimate strain. The typical shape of the stress-strain curve is closely associated with the mechanism of internal progressive microcracking, as shown in Fig. (1).

On the other side, many of engineering structures are liable to the cyclic loading in service conditions. The cyclic loading is represented as a live load in the residential, industrial and hydraulic constructions.

Many researchers offered experimental studies about cyclic loading such as: Sinha (1964), Karasan and Jirsa (1969), Sakai and Kawashima (2000) and Bangash (2001). The results of the previous experimental researches showed that repeated loading and unloading do not influence the behavior of concrete, so long as the value of stress does not exceed

about 50 percent of the strength in compression, while a substantial decrease in strength as well as in stiffness is observed whenever stress exceeds about 85% of strength.

For each cycle of unloading and reloading, a hysteresis loop is formed, and the area of this loop

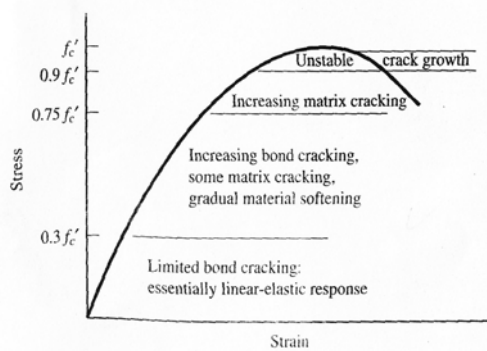


Figure (1): A typical stress-strain curve for concrete subjected to uniaxial loading

Among the analytical models proposed for estimating the response of concrete to cyclic loading are: Blakely and Park (1973), Al-Sulayfani, Darwin and Pecknold (1974), Sadeghi and Nouban (2010), Lokuge, Sanjayan and Setunge (2004), Aslani and Jowkarmeimandi (2012), Sakai and Kawashima (2000) which combine simplicity with a reasonably accurate description of the basic characteristics of the actual behavior of concrete.

Most of previous studies were performed to decide fatigue limit of concrete at large number of cycles, predict unloading and reloading paths or to develop analytical models which simulate behavior of concrete under cyclic loading.

In this research, the aim is to evaluate the behavior of normal concrete under a static cyclic loading for a few number of cycles, in a specific range of stress, whereas the repeated loads will cause changes in the internal construction of concrete. These changes may create a good influence on the properties of concrete.

decreases with each successive cycle, but eventually increases before fatigue failure. The stress-strain curve for monotonic loading serves as a reasonable envelope for the peak values of stress for concrete under cyclic loading, see Fig. (2).

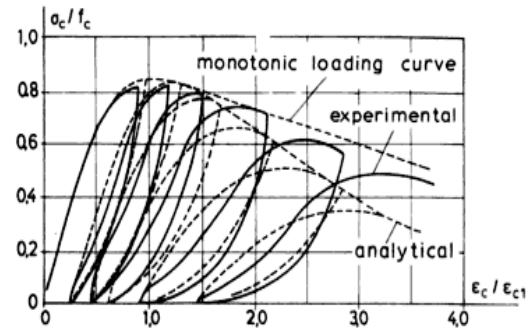


Figure (2): Stress-strain diagram for repeated loading and complete unloading

EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM

A mixture of concrete with maximum compressive strength $f'_c = 30$ MPa is designed. Water-to-cement ratio of concrete is 0.5. The maximum size of aggregate is 14 mm. The maximum diameter of sand is 0.5 mm.

The strain in concrete is measured by using Teclock Dial Indicator, Model TM-110, Graduation 0.01 mm. The strain gauges glued at two sides of the specimen.

Sixteen prism specimens with a cross-section of (100×100) mm and a height of 400 mm are tested. Twelve of these specimens are subjected to static compression cyclic loading, when the stress range is between 40 and 80 percent of the maximum compressive strength. The four remaining concrete specimens are tested under uniaxial loading from zero till failure.

The cyclic loading is achieved by loading-unloading-reloading for a few number of cycles, which is determined with (5, 10, 15, 20) cycles.

Experimental program is shown in Table (1).

EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

According to Table (1), twelve specimens are tested

under cyclic loading and the experimental stress-strain curve is drawn for every specimen.

For instance, the test for specimen (1) under cyclic loading will be detailed.

Table 1. Experimental program for concrete specimens

Type of loading	Number of specimen	Number of cycles	Range of stress
Cyclic loading	1, 2, 3	5	$(0.4 f'_c)$ to $(0.8 f'_c)$ = (12) to (24) MPa
	4, 5, 6	10	
	7, 8, 9	15	
	10, 11, 12	20	
Uniaxial loading	13, 14, 15, 16	.	From zero till failure

Specimen (1) is subjected to cyclic loading for five cycles, in the range of stress (12-24) MPa. The test for specimen (1) is carried out as follows:

First, specimen (1) is loaded continuously from zero to (12×10^4) N. Then, the specimen is subjected to cyclic loading for five times, in the range of load from (12×10^4) N to (24×10^4) N. After that, a continuous loading is applied till failure.

The load is applied with a constant intensity, and at every value of load the strain is measured by two strain gauges, placed on opposite sides of the specimen.

The experimental results due to cyclic loading for specimen (1) are shown in Table (2).

Table 2. The experimental results for specimen (1)

Specimen (1) subjected to cyclic loading for five cycles in the range of stress (12-24) MPa			
The load $\times 10^4$ (N)	The stress (N/mm ²)	The strain ($\times 10^{-3}$)	Steps of loading
0	0	0	Loading
4	4	0.145	
8	8	0.235	

12	12	0.313	First cycle (loading-unloading)
15	15	0.415	
18	18	0.513	
21	21	0.640	
24	24	0.850	
21	21	0.760	
18	18	0.678	
15	15	0.608	
12	12	0.505	Second cycle (reloading-unloading)
15	15	0.570	
18	18	0.663	
21	21	0.755	
24	24	0.870	
21	21	0.813	
18	18	0.725	
15	15	0.638	
12	12	0.533	Third cycle (reloading-unloading)
15	15	0.590	
18	18	0.685	
21	21	0.783	
24	24	0.880	
21	21	0.838	
18	18	0.725	
15	15	0.640	
12	12	0.538	

15	15	0.598	Fourth cycle (reloading-unloading)
18	18	0.695	
21	21	0.790	
24	24	0.888	
21	21	0.845	
18	18	0.733	
15	15	0.653	
12	12	0.553	
15	15	0.608	Fifth cycle (reloading-unloading)
18	18	0.700	
21	21	0.798	
24	24	0.898	
21	21	0.845	
18	18	0.738	
15	15	0.653	
12	12	0.568	
15	15	0.635	Loading till failure
18	18	0.700	
21	21	0.805	
24	24	0.898	
27	27	1.000	
30	30	1.150	
33	33	1.363	
36	36	1.555	

The stress-strain curve for specimen (1) is drawn in Fig. (3), depending on experimental results from Table (2).

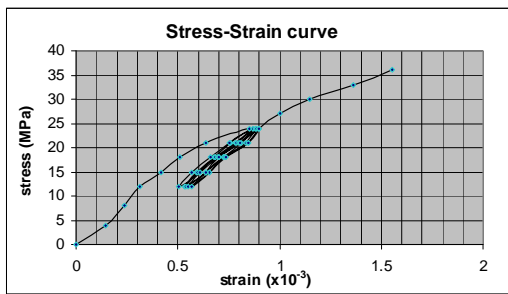


Figure (3): Experimental curve for specimen (1) under cyclic loading, for five cycles

The cyclic loading stage for specimen (1) is

clarified by using large scale in Fig. (4).

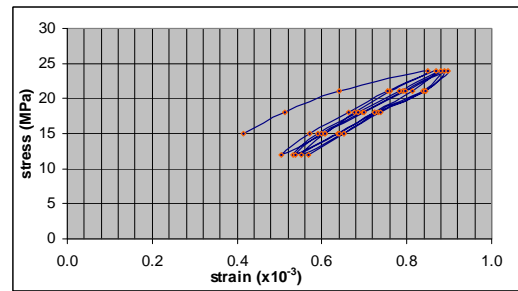


Figure (4): Cyclic loading stage for specimen (1)

The stress-strain curves for the other specimens, which are subjected to cyclic loading, are drawn with a resembling way. The curves are shown in the following Figures.

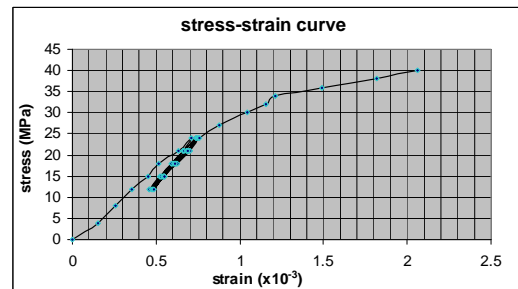


Figure (5): Experimental curve for specimen (2) under cyclic loading, for five cycles

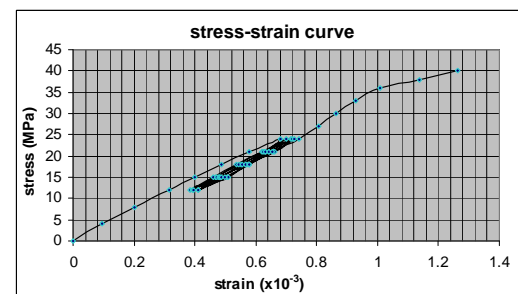


Figure (6): Experimental curve for specimen (3) under cyclic loading, for five cycles

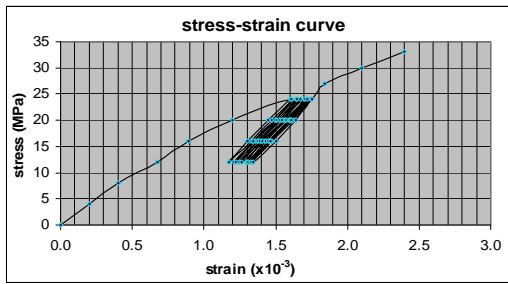


Figure (7): Experimental curve for specimen (4) under cyclic loading, for ten cycles

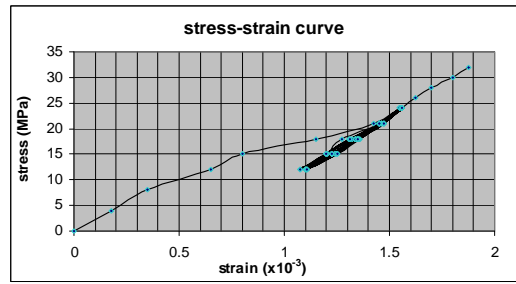


Figure (11): Experimental curve for specimen (8) under cyclic loading, for fifteen cycles

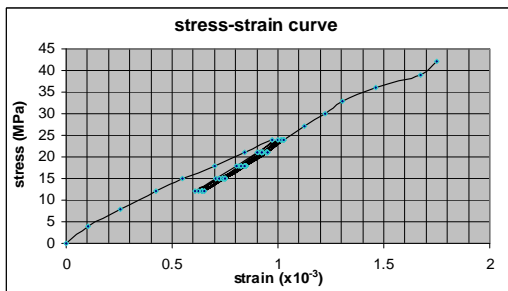


Figure (8): Experimental curve for specimen (5) under cyclic loading, for ten cycles

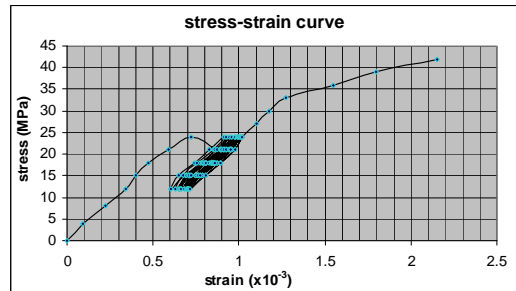


Figure (12): Experimental curve for specimen (9) under cyclic loading, for fifteen cycles

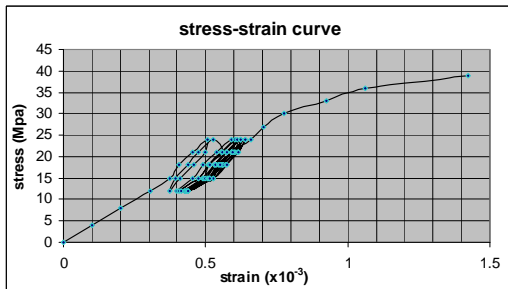


Figure (9): Experimental curve for specimen (6) under cyclic loading, for ten cycles

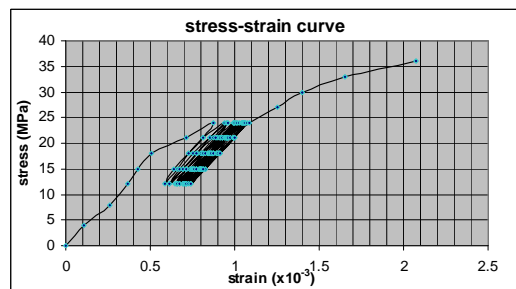


Figure (13): Experimental curve for specimen (10) under cyclic loading, for twenty cycles

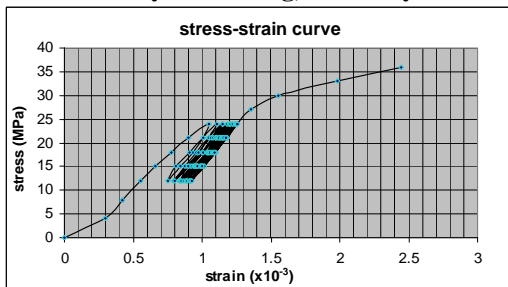


Figure (10): Experimental curve for specimen (7) under cyclic loading, for fifteen cycles

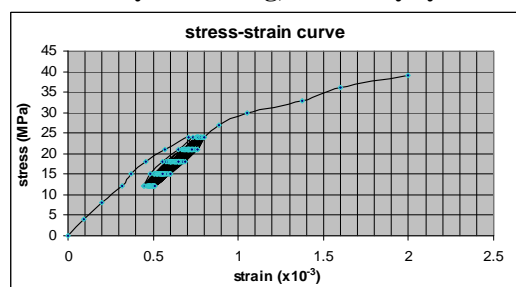


Figure (14): Experimental curve for specimen (11) under cyclic loading, for twenty cycles

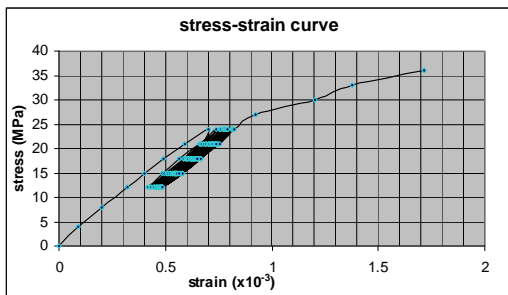


Figure (15): Experimental curve for specimen (12) under cyclic loading, for twenty cycles

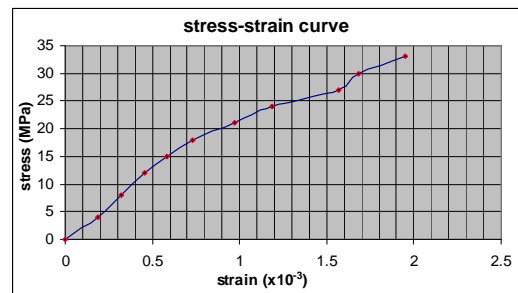


Figure (18): Experimental curve for specimen (15) under uniaxial loading

The four remaining specimens are tested under cyclic loading and the experimental stress-strain curve is drawn for every specimen. The curves are shown in Figures (16), (17), (18) and (19), respectively.

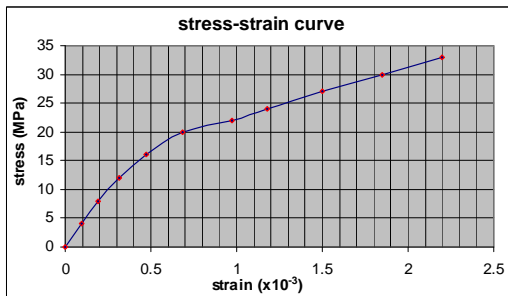


Figure (16): Experimental curve for specimen (13) under uniaxial loading

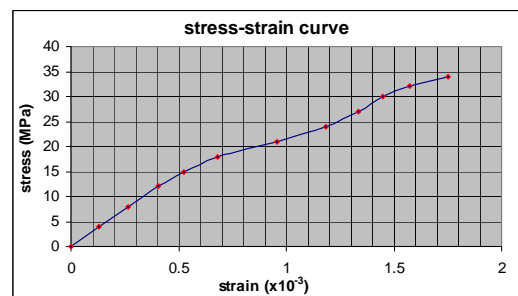


Figure (19): Experimental curve for specimen (16) under uniaxial loading

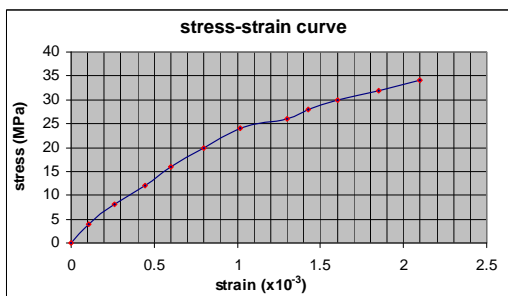


Figure (17): Experimental curve for specimen (14) under uniaxial loading

ANALYSIS OF EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

In the case of cyclic loading, the stress-strain curves for tested concrete specimens have been charted. Mathematical equations are extracted from the test results by using the method of least squares in Excel. The properties of concrete are determined from the mathematical equations as follows:

- The secant modulus of elasticity: It is drawn by using linear equation according with experimental results.
- The tangential modulus of elasticity: It is the slope of a tangent to the curve at the end of the cyclic loading stage. It is drawn by using linear equation according to experimental results.
- The compressive strength and the ultimate strain: They are the strength and strain at the peak of stress-strain curve. They are obtained by replacing

the experimental points with a parabolic equation.

For example, the properties of concrete for specimen (1) are extracted from mathematical equations, which are shown in Figures (20,A), (20,B) and (20,C), respectively.

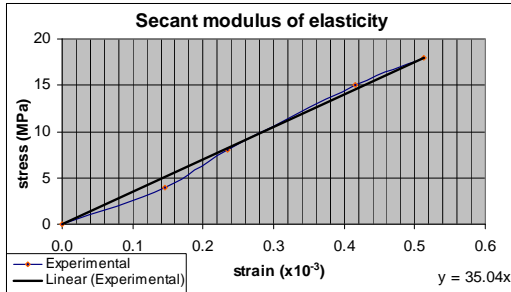


Figure (20,A): Secant modulus of elasticity for specimen (1)

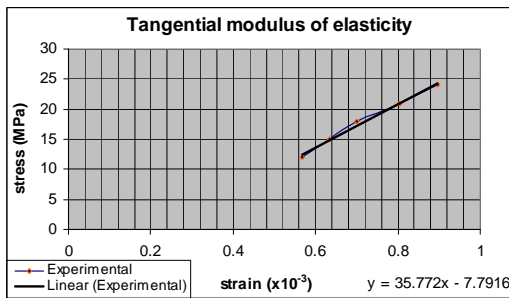


Figure (20,B): Tangential modulus of elasticity for specimen (1)

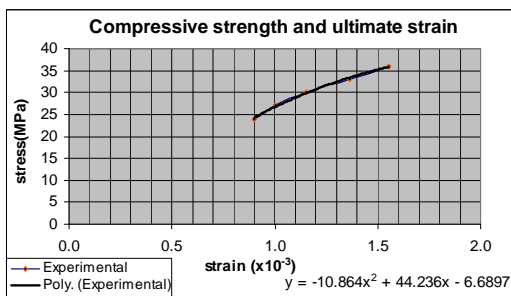


Figure (20,C): Compressive strength and ultimate strain for specimen (1)

The properties of concrete for specimen (1) are:

1- The secant modulus of elasticity:

According to Fig. (20,A), the linear equation which represents secant modulus of elasticity is:

$$y = 35.04x$$

x, y: The values of strain and stress at any point of line.

The secant modulus of elasticity is:

$$E_C = dy/dx = 35.04$$

2- The tangential modulus of elasticity:

According to Fig. (20,B), the linear equation which represents tangential modulus of elasticity is:

$$y = 35.77x - 7.79$$

The tangential modulus of elasticity is:

$$E_{C1} = dy/dx = 35.77$$

3-The compressive strength and ultimate strain:

According to Fig. (20,C), the parabolic equation which represents the compressive strength and the ultimate strain at the peak of curve is:

$$y = -10.864x^2 + 44.236x - 6.6897$$

$$dy/dx = -21.72x + 44.23$$

$$dy/dx = 0 \Rightarrow x = 2.035$$

$$y = 38.34$$

The compressive strength for specimen (1):

$$y = \sigma_{C1} = 38.34 \text{ MPa}$$

The ultimate strain for specimen (1):

$$x = \epsilon_{C1} = 2.035 \times 10^{-3}$$

The mathematical equations for the remaining specimens, which are subjected to cyclic loading, are extracted with a resembling way which is discussed above.

The mathematical equations for the twelve specimens under cyclic loading are clarified in Table (3).

In the case of uniaxial loading, the stress-strain curves for tested concrete specimens have been charted. Parabolic equations for the stress-strain response are modeled from the test results by using Excel spreadsheet, as shown in Figures (21), (22), (23) and (24), respectively.

Table 3. Mathematical analysis for specimens under cyclic loading

Number of specimen	Equations of secant modulus	Equations of tangential modulus	Equations of compressive strength and ultimate strain
1	$y = 35.04x$	$y = 35.77x - 7.79$	$y = -10.86x^2 + 44.23x - 6.68$
2	$y = 33.42x$	$y = 43.41x - 8.89$	$y = -8.67x^2 + 36.09x + 1.89$
3	$y = 37.37x$	$y = 37.01x - 3.33$	$y = -51.35x^2 + 133.51x - 46.88$
4	$y = 17.44x$	$y = 29.03x - 26.67$	$y = -12.78x^2 + 66.12x - 52.16$
5	$y = 28.07x$	$y = 32.40x - 9.15$	$y = -13.41x^2 + 60.96x - 24.39$
6	$y = 39.57x$	$y = 56.87x - 13.39$	$y = -27.63x^2 + 75.99x - 13.26$
7	$y = 22.90x$	$y = 36.32x - 21.53$	$y = -6.54x^2 + 33.43x - 6.85$
8	$y = 18.75x$	$y = 26.38x - 17.30$	$y = -13.17x^2 + 70x - 53.06$
9	$y = 35.40x$	$y = 38.06x - 14.88$	$y = -9.30x^2 + 43.33x - 8.41$
10	$y = 30.43x$	$y = 34.01x - 12.91$	$y = -9.40x^2 + 41.89x - 10.44$
11	$y = 38.56x$	$y = 39.84x - 7.80$	$y = -5.85x^2 + 28.09x + 6.11$
12	$y = 35.79x$	$y = 35.27x - 4.98$	$y = -5.91x^2 + 27.96x + 5.46$

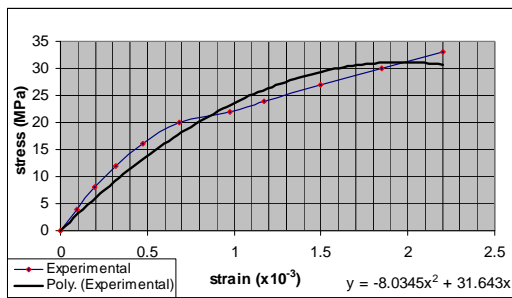


Figure (21): Experimental and analytical curves for specimen (13), under uniaxial loading

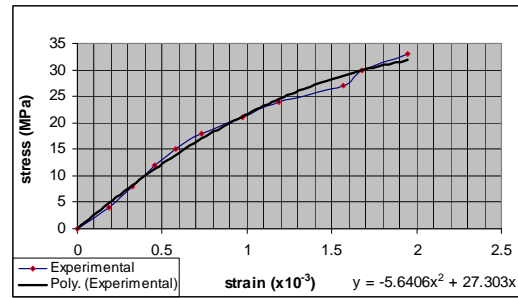


Figure (23): Experimental and analytical curves for specimen (15), under uniaxial loading

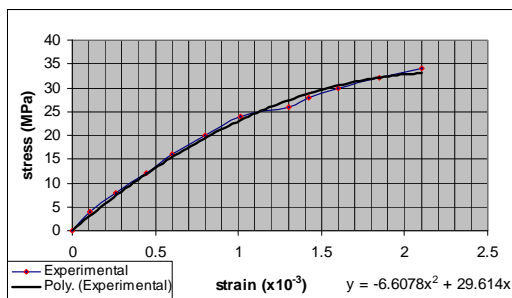


Figure (22): Experimental and analytical curves for specimen (14), under uniaxial loading

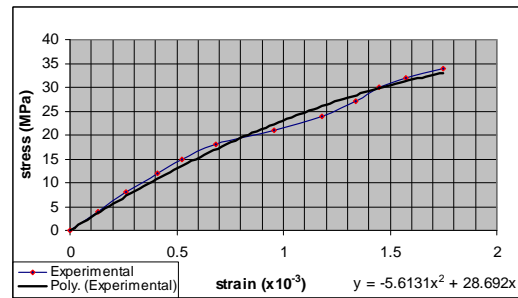


Figure (24): Experimental and analytical curves for specimen (16), under uniaxial loading

The parabolic equations for the four specimens under uniaxial loading are clarified in Table (4).

Table 4. Mathematical analysis for specimens under uniaxial loading

Number of specimen	Equations of compressive strength and ultimate strain
13	$y = -8.03x^2 + 31.64x$
14	$y = -6.60x^2 + 29.61x$
15	$y = -5.64x^2 + 27.30x$
16	$y = -5.61x^2 + 28.69x$

For example, the compressive strength and ultimate strain for specimen (13) are derived from the equation:

$$y = -8.03x^2 + 31.64x$$

$$dy/dx = -16.06x + 31.64$$

$$dy/dx = 0 \Rightarrow x = 1.969$$

$$y = 31.16$$

The compressive strength for specimen (13):

$$y = \sigma_c = 31.16 \text{ MPa}$$

The value of ultimate strain for specimen (13):

$$x = \varepsilon_c = 1.969 \times 10^{-3}$$

RESULTS

According to the mathematical equations in Table (3) and Table (4), the properties of concrete in the two cases of loading (cyclic and uniaxial) are extracted and shown in Table (5) and Table (6), respectively.

Table 5. The properties of concrete under cyclic loading

Range of stress	Number of specimen	Number of cycles	Secant modulus of elasticity (E_c)	Tangential modulus of elasticity (E_{c1})	Compressive strength (σ_{c1}) (MPa)	Ultimate strain (ε_{c1}) (10^{-3})
(12) to (24) MPa	1	5	35.04	35.77	38.34	2.035
	2	5	33.42	43.41	39.45	2.081
	3	5	37.37	37.01	39.89	1.299
	4	10	17.44	29.03	33.37	2.586
	5	10	28.07	32.40	44.87	2.272
	6	10	39.57	56.87	38.98	1.375
	7	15	22.90	36.32	35.84	2.554
	8	15	18.75	26.38	39.93	2.656
	9	15	35.40	38.06	42.06	2.329
	10	20	30.43	34.01	36.21	2.227
	11	20	38.56	39.85	39.79	2.397
	12	20	35.79	35.27	38.52	2.364

Table 6. The properties of concrete under uniaxial loading

Range of stress	Number of specimen	Compressive strength (σ_c) (MPa)	Ultimate strain (ϵ_c) (10^{-3})
From zero till failure	13	31.16	1.969
	14	33.18	2.240
	15	33.04	2.420
	16	36.67	2.555
average	.	33.51	2.296

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

According to Tables (5) and Table (6), a comparison between the two cases of loading (cyclic and uniaxial) is carried out, and the following results can be drawn:

1. The tangential modulus of elasticity increased with a percentage which varies between (3) percent and (40) percent, in comparison with the secant modulus of elasticity. This increase appeared at (5,10,15,20) cycles.
2. The compressive strength after cyclic loading increased with a percentage which varies between (7) percent and (25) percent, in comparison with the average of stress in the case of uniaxial loading. This increase appeared at (5,10,15,20) cycles.
3. The ultimate strain after cyclic loading increased

with a percentage which varies between (3) percent and (13) percent, in comparison with the average of strain in the case of uniaxial loading, especially when the cycles are 15 or 20.

4. In the case of cyclic loading, the increase of ultimate strain is associated with the increase of the compressive strength at the peak of stress–strain curve.
5. The increase in the values of properties of concrete in the case of cyclic loading confirms that cyclic loading has a positive influence on the properties of concrete.

For example, the stress-strain curves for specimens (7) and (11), which were subjected to cyclic loading have been charted and compared with the stress-strain curves for specimens (14) and (15), which were subjected to uniaxial loading till failure, as shown in Fig. (25).

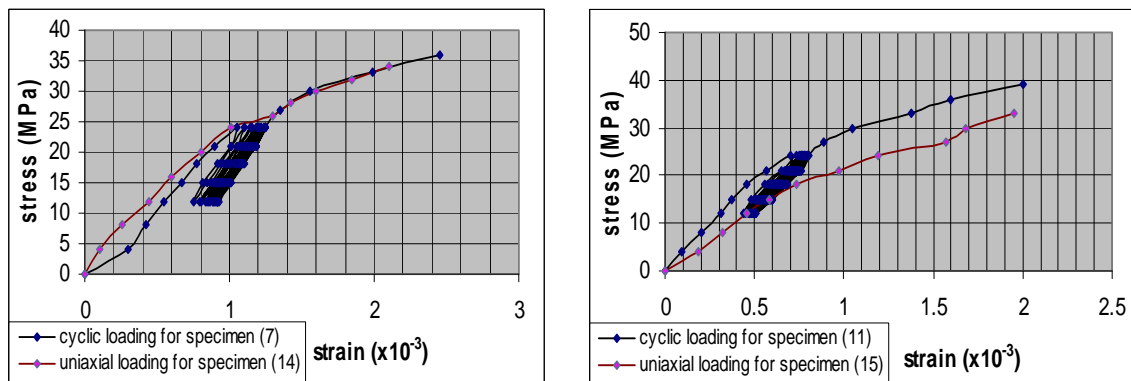


Figure (25): Comparison between cyclic and uniaxial loading

CONCLUSIONS

1. The cyclic loading of normal concrete in the specific stress range (40-80) percent of the maximum strength showed an obvious improvement in the properties of concrete, in comparison with the case of uniaxial loading.
2. The application of cyclic loading for a few number of cycles produced a good effect on the properties of normal concrete, especially at fifteen or twenty

cycles.

3. The increase of ultimate strain of normal concrete under cyclic loading is a noteworthy matter, due to the fact that it enables to apply this kind of loading on High-Strength concrete, which is known for its brittle falling at small values of strain.
4. The improvement in the properties of normal concrete under cyclic loading is the base to investigate the capability of cyclic loading for high strength concrete.

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