Applicability of Hybrid Metal Manufacturing (HMM), Characteristics, Steel Types, and Mechanical Properties: Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract:

Background: Additive manufacturing (AM) is one of the pillars of Industry 4.0, where automation to create smart factories is the main target. Process hybridization is one of the main strategies for implementing a more flexible, *efficient system and interconnected manufacturing environment. Currently, there are different researches focused on hybridization of metal AM and subtractive manufacturing (SM), this technology is called hybrid metal manufacturing (HMM).*

Materials and Methods: Many of these techniques consist of integrating Directed Energy Deposition (DED) and Powder Bed Fusion (PBF) additive processes with subtractive computer numerical control (CNC) machining within a multi-axis machine tool. In this context, the present article is a systematic literature review (SLR), *prepared with the help of the Parsifal tool, having Scopus and Web of Science as search bases. The objective was to investigate the scientific literature to verify the applications of HMM in the metal mechanical sector, evaluate its characteristics, identify the main types of steel used in the process, and investigate its mechanical properties and the results obtained.*

Results: Recent advances in HMM methods allow the manufacturing of parts with complex geometries while achieving comparable or higher quality than those manufactured by conventional methods. Current HMM technologies are capable of processing a wider selection of metals, including materials used in steel molding such as H13 and P20. In the injection molding industry, mold makers are implementing metal AM technologies in mold manufacturing. The main challenge currently faced by mold makers is to print steel molds with mechanical properties comparable to those manufactured conventionally.

Conclusion: Finally, the review summarizes the current status of the HMM application and future perspectives in mold making.

Key Word: HMM; Application and Characteristics; Steel Types and Mechanical Properties.

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I. Introduction

Hybrid manufacturing (HM) is a designation used for processes that combine different technologies as a way to overcome their limitations and benefit from their intrinsic advantages. Manufacturing industries require efficient processes that provide a reduction in the manufacturing costs and time needed to gain competitiveness while meeting quality standards. Thus, hybrid manufacturing systems are becoming an industrial solution for the manufacturing and repair of overly complex parts aimed at various industries ¹.

The combination of AM and CNC machining is an example of a hybrid process that is of particular interest because, in general, AM systems have an advantage when producing complex geometries from difficultto-process materials, however, compared to finishing in the subtractive process, the resulting surface quality and dimensional accuracy are generally significantly inferior ². However, the full integration of both processes is a complex task that still has to overcome many difficulties, as both laser-based additive processes and machining processes need to overcome challenges to improve their performance and the quality of the manufactured parts¹.

Additive manufacturing is an emerging area and in need of further studies, so a better understanding of the main trends will contribute to the dissemination of knowledge about the technology and its consolidation 3. In this context, this article aims to verify the applications of hybrid additive manufacturing of metals in the metal mechanical sector, to evaluate its characteristics, to identify the main types of steels used in the process, to investigate their mechanical properties, and the results obtained.

The method adopted was the use of the Parsifal tool to systematically review the scientific literature, through bibliometric searches performed in the Scopus and Web of Science databases, the keywords were "Hybrid Additive Manufacturing" and "Metal Additive Manufacturing", and the period was delimited from 2018 to the current year 2022 due to recent publications on the advances of this technology. It is hoped that the results obtained can make an important contribution to the field of research that addresses the methodology of applying HMM to assist companies in adopting this technology.

II. Material And Methods

Hybrid Metal Manufacturing (HMM)

Additive manufacturing has the potential to provide several sustainability benefits. These benefits include the generation of less waste during production; the ability to optimize geometries and create lightweight components that reduce material consumption and in-use energy consumption through the ability to create parts on demand, layer by layer⁴.

The combination of additive and subtractive processes on a single hybrid machine is especially suitable for manufacturing low-machinability materials, such as heat-resistant alloy steels and high-hardness materials, which were widely used in various industries $¹$.</sup>

A powder-based additive-subtractive manufacturing system using laser deposition and CNC milling is called hybrid manufacturing, a laser beam creates a melt pool on a surface as the powder is injected into the melt pool. The deposition follows prescribed scanning paths to create the desired part geometry. Milling operations machine the part within dimensional tolerance⁵.

Developing workstations for hybrid processes includes challenges associated with hardware and software integration. These workstations must include a tool magazine with AM heads, and milling and measuring tools, among others ⁶.

Laser metal deposition is widely recognized as an additive manufacturing technique used for refurbishment and repair applications, along with structural and geometric restoration⁷.

HMM Applications and Features

The combination of both technologies AM and CNC machining, on a single machine, is therefore advantageous, as it allows ready-to-use products to be built with an all-in-one hybrid machine, which maximizes the strengths of each technology. In this way, complex components that are originally not possible to machine due to accessibility constraints are now accessible $¹$.</sup>

Some examples of the application of PBF processes for the production of functional parts are dental and bone implants, airfoils, or turbine blades with embedded cooling channels, thus being able to service the aerospace, energy, and medical industries, among others ¹.

Figure 1 illustrates the application of MHAM in which the substrate part (a) can be fabricated by traditional subtractive manufacturing, and the top part (b) with an internal metal AM cooling channel system $\frac{8}{3}$.

Figure 1 - Illustration of hybrid metal additive manufacturing.

Laser melting (SLM), electron beam melting (EBM), and DED processes have been widely applied in academic research and systems developed for industrial applications ⁹. One of the main applications of MHAM is in the maintenance and repair of existing components 10 .

The integration of AM and SM includes computer-aided design (CAD), manufacturing (CAM), inspection (CAI), and engineering (CAE). All these tools must be combined synergistically to obtain an efficient hybrid process, which mainly depends on efficient tool path strategies and 5-axis hybrid additive manufacturing adds versatility to traditional 2.5-axis-based AM systems and enables the ability to produce parts without support structures ^{6,11}.

Usually, AM parts need some post-processing, for example, machining, heat treatment, or surface treatment. Hybrid AM, as an integration of AM processes with some post-processing technologies, aims to combine their capabilities synergistically and thus produce functional components with complex geometries, mechanical properties, and enhanced surface integrity ¹².

Figure 2 shows the advantages of hybrid AM as a combination of additive and CNC machining processes.

Figure 2 - Advantages of hybrid AM.

Steel Types and Mechanical Properties

Currently, various types of stainless steel, tool steel, cobalt-chromium alloys, titanium and its alloys, aluminum alloys, nickel alloys, and some precious metals such as pure silver and gold have been successfully processed by MA 13, the materials, for example, Ti-6Al-4V and Inconel 718 are the two alloys commonly used in critical applications such as aircraft structures and gas turbines. Ti-6Al-4V is the most widely used commercial titanium alloy, characterized by its high strength-to-weight ratio and excellent corrosion resistance. This material has been rigorously studied for Directed Energy Deposition processing ¹⁴.

Powder Bed Fusion (PFB) has the greatest potential for tooling in hot working and injection molding. A greater number of powdered metals are being designed for different tooling applications with lower raw material and processing costs, as well as, further productivity improvement, improved surface roughness, and guaranteed quality are some of the researched goals 15. Porosity and surface discontinuity in metallic AM in its built-up condition is a detrimental factor that affects its performance under cyclic loading, i.e., fatigue and abrasion wear. Several studies in the literature have investigated the effect of surface conditions on the fatigue and abrasion wear behavior of AM materials ¹⁶.

A comprehensive study of the inhomogeneity of the microstructure was performed in different areas and orientations. For example: within the melt pool structure, along with the build direction, and across the plane parallel to the deposited layers. This inhomogeneity of the microstructure is considered one of the main causes that can result in an anisotropic material ¹⁷. The AM process parameters need to be optimized to produce tools capable of increasing the wear and deformation resistance of the workpiece. It is important to avoid porosities in the fabricated part to obtain a dense layer through process parameter control¹⁸.

Developments in process parameters have focused on improving surface properties without changing the mass of the material. This led to the laser metal deposition technique being categorized under AM 19¹⁹.

Method

The methodology used in the execution of this article was the systematic literature review (SLR) which, according to Sampaio, Mancini²⁰, as well as other types of review studies, the SLR is a form of research that is used as a data source the literature on a given topic. This type of research makes available a summary of the evidence related to a specific intervention strategy by applying explicit and systematized methods of searching, critically appraising, and synthesizing the selected information.

The fundamental idea of an SLR is that it is replicable, meaning that another researcher can replicate the process and arrive at the same body of evidence and the same conclusion. A systematic review includes an exhaustive search of designated databases ²¹.

Systematic Literature Review (SLR)

Researchers must develop a research protocol that includes the following items: how to find studies, criteria for inclusion and exclusion of articles, the definition of results of interest, verification of the accuracy of results, determination of quality, search, and analysis of the statistics used, as illustrated in Figure 3^{20} .

Figure 3 - Overview of the SLR research protocol.

For data collection, following the guidelines of the SLR method, a systematic review protocol was developed with the aid of Parsifal, a web-based tool developed to support researchers in the task of conducting systematic literature reviews. During the planning phase, this tool facilitates the development of research questions, allows the selection of search bases and stores inclusion and exclusion criteria, provides a mechanism for specifying quality assessment criteria and generating search strings, and keeps track of all data collected, making the SLR protocol easy to replicate.

Parsifal is divided into the following protocols:

- Analysis
- Planning
- Driving
- Statement

III. Result

Analysis

Given the above, the SLR protocol was used to identify the applications of hybrid additive manufacturing of metals, through existing research, addressing its characteristics, the types of steels used, and their mechanical properties, thus contributing to future studies about this approach. The data analysis was descriptive.

Planning

The first step was planning. In this step, the real need for a systematic review was verified, an evaluation protocol was developed, and the following research questions were defined:

What are the applications of this technology in the metal-mechanic sector?

What are the main characteristics of the additive manufacturing process in steel?

What types of atomized steels are available for additive manufacturing?

What are the main mechanical properties of this steel?

What were the results obtained with the application of additive manufacturing in steel?

Table 1 defines the terms used in the PICRC for the separation of the keywords used to create the search string.

The keywords suggested by the protocol used to search the databases were "Additive Manufacturing", "Hybrid Additive Manufacturing" and "Metal Additive Manufacturing", the string automatically generated by Parsifal was: "Additive Manufacturing" OR "Hybrid Additive Manufacturing" OR "Metal Additive Manufacturing".

Regarding the databases, the databases available on the Capes Periodical Portal were used for this research due to their wide variety and the filter criteria as described in Table 2.

Data base	CAPES journals portal (Web of Sciense and Scopus)	
Type of documents	Conference and Review Articles	
Search field	Article Title, Abstract, Keywords	
Research areas	Materials science; Engineering materials; Metallurgy and metallurgical engineering	
Limit results	Year: 2018 to 2023 Document type : Articles	
	Language : English	

Table 2 - Databases and filter criteria

The inclusion and exclusion criteria observed in the selection of articles to be analyzed are described in Table 3. **Table 3** - Selection Criteria

As a first step in checking the quality of the researched articles, questions were defined according to Table 4.

Table 4 - Qualifying questions

Q7 Does this article presents the results obtained with the application of additive manufacturing in steel?

Q8 Does this article presents the application of additive manufacturing in the fields of Mechanical Engineering and Metalworking?

To assess the quality of the studies, a set of answers to the above questions was defined, and scores were assigned as shown in Table 5.

Table 5 - Answers and evaluation score

Description	Weight		
Yes	1.0		
Partially	0,5		
N٥	0.0		
Maximum score	8,0		
Cutoff score	5,0		

Driving

In this second step, the database search was performed in July 2022 and returned a total of 722 documents, proportionally divided between the WoS and Scopus databases as illustrated in the graph in Figure 4.

Figure 4 - Graph of the proportionality of the search results

Through a bibliometric analysis, it was possible to evaluate the number of publications per year in the period 2018 to 2022. In Figure 5 it is possible to verify an ascending curve starting in 2020. Although the year 2022 is still in effect, it is observed that the growth of research related to the theme of HMM in the first quarter, this fact contributed to and justified the interest in the execution of this SLR including this period.

Figure 5 - Number of publications in the period 2018 – 2022

In this bibliometric analysis, it was also verified the ten countries with the largest number of publications shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6 - Chart with the 10 countries with the most publications

Bibliometry was used to survey the authors according to the number of publications, citations, and the h-index. The ten most relevant authors were identified using the h-index as a criterion, as shown in Table 6.

	Author	No. Publications	Index h	Citations
1.	Kumar S. A.	65	16	753
2	Popov V.V.	16	16	818
3	Yadollahi A.	43	14	3914
4	A hn D . G.	29	12	456
5.	Cortina M.	20	11	1255
6	Davila J. L.	17	8	328
7	Afkhami S.	20	7	259
8	Jackson M.	8	4	100
9	Basinger K.	7	3	38
10	Sefene E. M.	14	2	43

Table 6 - Most relevant authors according to h-index

After collecting the data, the articles selected in the searches were imported into Parsifal to be analyzed. A search for duplicate articles was performed and 190 documents were separated, returning 532 documents.

The next step was the primary evaluation of the articles, applying the inclusion and exclusion selection criteria, done by reading the titles, abstracts, and keywords to segregate the articles outside the scope of the research. In this step, 268 articles were accepted.

Finally, the introduction, results and discussions, and final considerations of the articles were read, applying the questions for qualification and separating them by inclusion criteria. In this last step, 34 articles were qualified.

Statement

In the context by which HMM was addressed in the studies analyzed in this SLR, an evaluation from the results obtained allowed the identification of 4 main aspects in the qualified articles:

1 - Recent developments in HMM have increased the interest of researchers and the publication of papers, as can be seen in the evolution of the timeline in Figure 7.

Figure 7 - Number of publications on the timeline

2 - HMM is becoming a globally important topic of interest in research and publications, the USA is one of the leading countries in the number of publications as shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8 - Number of publications by countries

3 - Figure 9 shows that the field of mechanical properties is among the most researched and addressed in the articles that were carefully selected in this SLR.

Figure 9 - Evaluation of the selection of inclusion criteria

4 - Graphically represented in Figure 10 is the score assigned to the quality issues according to their relevance to this SLR.

IV. Discussion

DED processes have several advantageous characteristics in their application, as described in Table 7, such as relatively lower heat input, less distortion, lower dilution rate, excellent metal alloying, excellent mechanical performance, relatively higher precision geometry, suitability for full automation and control of thermal accuracy, in terms of repair, restoration, and remanufacturing of products 9 .

Most of the research papers and systems developed related to the HMM process have been focused on combining DED with machining processes, as shown in Figure 11 9 .

Figure 11 - Hybrid metal additive manufacturing

The characteristics and the improvement that can be obtained in the surface finish of additively manufactured components by post-processing through machining operations are demonstrated in Figure 12. Different approaches to seamlessly and synergistically combine the capabilities of powder-based laser AM technologies with post-processing machining processes have been implemented ¹².

Figure 12 - Hybrid metal additive manufacturing

In Table 8 a summary of hybrid AM solutions is presented and the different process combinations are analyzed and discussed, their main advantages and limitations are highlighted ¹².

Given the enormous potential in the application of metallic AM, qualification and certification are critical to ensure successful adoption by various industries and accelerate the progress of standardization.

The first qualification principle standard (ISO/ASTM 52942:2020), a total of seven standards is proposed and under development, as described in Table 9, which covers the industrial fields of AM, machine operations for specific processes, and the applications 22 .

Table 9 - Summary of published ISO/ASTM AM standards related to AM metal (ASTM International 2020; ISO 2020)

AM metal can be categorized into subcategories whose relative and typical attributes in terms of process speed, precision, and build volume are listed in Table 10^{23} .

	Process	Material shape	Power/heat source	Speed	Precision	Size
Powder bed	Laser powder bed fusion	Powder	Laser	Average	High	Average
	Electron beam powder layer melting	Powder	Electron beam	Average	High	Average
Deposition	Directed energy deposition	Powder	Laser	Average	Average	High
	Cold spray	Powder	Kinetic energy	High	Average	High
	Electron beam melting	Wire	Electron beam	High	Low	High
	Metal injection molding	Powder	Binder / Matrix	High	Average	Low
	Binder jet	Powder	Post- consolidation			
Consolidation			Binder	Average	Average	Average
			Post- consolidation			

Table 10 - Attributes of various AM metal shape systems

Table 10 also includes other near-liquid form manufacturing techniques, such as metal injection molding (MIM), a powder sintering and consolidation process.

In AM metal various types of stainless steel, tool steel (H13 and P20), cobalt-chromium alloys, titanium and its alloys, aluminum alloys, nickel alloys, and some precious metals such as pure silver and gold have been successfully processed.

Although a variety of steels exist, the fatigue characteristics of few of them have been studied so far. Table 11 summarizes a list of steels investigated in fatigue studies and their typical characteristics¹³.

Table 11 - Steels investigated for the evaluation of fatigue characteristics of AM materials.

Due to the complexity of the AM metal process, system manufacturers have developed sets of optimized processing conditions for some existing powdered metals. Table 12 defines the specific machine models and manufacturers for one or more types of powdered metals for AM 15.

Table 12 - Configuration of machine models and manufacturers

Powder metal options have been growing since 1995. However, the number of options is still minimal compared to the number of materials available in conventional manufacturing.

Laser metal deposition is widely recognized as an additive manufacturing technique used for refurbishment and repair applications along with structural and geometric restoration; however, mechanical properties need to be considered to ensure the final quality of the process.

In this regard, the high incident laser energy and a constant path length scanning strategy exhibit good mechanical properties. In contrast, martensitic and homogeneous microstructures are obtained at low incident energy, as can be seen in Table 13⁷.

Table 13 - Type of steel, laser power, and its mechanical properties

There is an effect of residual stress, surface finish, and microstructure defects that occur in the mechanical properties of material during the laser metal deposition technique that need to be considered in the scanning strategy and parameters during the process.

V. Conclusion

This article aimed to identify the applications of hybrid additive manufacturing of metals, its characteristics, the types of steels, and their mechanical properties, from a systematic review of the literature identified 722 articles published in the last five years, reached through specific protocols 268 articles being selected 34 articles as research objects of this article.

From a variety of studies, it was inferred that:

- AM metal's hybrid process combining DED and subtractive manufacturing can overcome the disadvantages of additional post-processing by multitasking in an integrated system;
- Developing workstations for hybrid processes include challenges associated with hardware and software integration;
- . Different powdered metals are being designed for various tooling applications with lower raw material and processing costs, among them H13 and P20;
- Experimental results indicate that reducing the surface roughness of AM materials will improve their fatigue and abrasion wear resistance.

Due to practical constraints, this article cannot provide a comprehensive review of HMM, as there is currently limited research work, and its application is still under development.

It is hoped that this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of HMM and its applications, however, there are still some knowledge gaps in the field of study.

In this sense, future research is suggested for:

- Development of new HMM processes and systems;
- Software development for HMM systems (including programs for path generation);
- Machine tool retrofit;
- Thermomechanical analyses to estimate deposition and strategies.

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