

RESEARCH ARTICLE

CONCENTRATION OF FINE PARTICULATE MATTER (PM_{2.5}) AND BLACK CARBON (BC) IN AEROSOL SAMPLES IN AL-ZUBAIRY AREA IN SANA'A, YEMENAhmed Khalid Abdul-Rahim^{1,*}, Nabilah Ali Al-Sowaidi² and Zaid Abdullah Eadan²¹ Dept. of Physics, Faculty of Science, University of Sana'a, Yemen² National Atomic Energy Commission, Sana'a, Yemen

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Abstract

This research aims to study the air pollution due to fine Particulate Matter of radius less than 2.5 μm (PM_{2.5}) and Black Carbon concentration (BC) in air samples. Aerosol PM_{2.5} samples were collected from the rooftop of the National Oncology Center site in Al-Zubairy area in Sana'a Yemen. A Microprocessor Controlled Aerosol Sampling device ISAP1050e (Gerhard Schulze Automation Engineering, Germany company) was used to collect samples. The mass concentration of PM_{2.5} of collected samples ranged from 14.27 to 159.09 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ with an average of 32.66 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. The PM_{2.5} results were compared with the World Health Organization (WHO) 2005 guideline of PM_{2.5} concentration in air. Statistical analysis showed a positive correlation between PM_{2.5} concentrations and temperature for both fall and summer samples. However, analysis showed a positive correlation between PM_{2.5} concentrations and relative humidity for fall samples and a negative correlation for summer samples. The black carbon (BC) concentrations in PM_{2.5} samples were measured using a Smoke Stain Reflectometer (SSR) device. The BC concentration ranged from 1.84 to 3.90 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ with an average of 2.90 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. The BC results were compared with some international reported results. The Air Quality Index (AQI) of 78.95% of PM_{2.5} concentrations was higher than the standard limit (AQI < 100) developed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Keywords: Particulate Matter, Black carbon, Concentration, Air Quality Index, Correlation.**Introduction**

Air Pollution is considered to be one of the biggest challenges in the world. It represents a high-risk factor for human health, climate and the environment [1]. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported that air pollution causes seven million deaths every year [2]. Air Pollution occurs when high concentrations of air components exceed the normal ratio of the naturally existing components of air. It also occurs when the abnormal or toxic components of elements are present in the air. Volcanos, dust storms, and forest fires are natural sources of air pollution. Fossil and wood fuel, exhaust emission from vehicles, construction activities, industrial manufacturing and oil refineries are anthropogenic sources that contribute seriously to air pollution [3, 4]. EPA classified the air pollutants into six common groups: ground-level ozone, carbon monoxide, sulfur

dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, lead and particulate matter [5]. Fine Particulate Matter PM_{2.5} are particles of radius less than 2.5 μm . PM_{2.5} particles are an atmospheric aerosol that consist of a mixture of tiny particles or liquid droplets suspended in the atmosphere. Particulate Matter may contain sulfate, ammonium nitrate, sodium, chloride, trace metals, carbonaceous, crustal elements [2]. Primary Particulate matter such as fly ash and dust are emitted directly into the atmosphere whereas secondary Particulate matter are formed in the atmosphere by the reaction of the primary particulate and gases [6, 7]. The lifetime of PM_{2.5} can be several days to months and they can be transported hundreds or thousands of kilometers from their source of origin [8]. Domestic and global pollutant emission sources, and the meteorological conditions have various effects on PM_{2.5} mass concentration [9]. Particulate matter PM_{2.5} may cause some serious health complications in respiratory

and cardiovascular systems since they can get deep into the lung and may get into the bloodstream [10]. The black carbon (BC) is one constituent of PM_{2.5} [11]. It is a solid form of pure carbon that absorbs sunlight at all wavelengths. BC warms the air, and it is considered to be the second contributor of global warming after CO₂ [12]. BC is emitted directly into the atmosphere due to the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, biofuels and biomass [13, 14]. It was reported that the global emissions of BC are due to various causes such as house activities, transportation, industrial production, and fossil fuels [13]. In this study, mass concentrations of PM_{2.5} collected from the study area were measured and compared with the guideline of WHO of PM_{2.5} concentrations. The limiting values stated by WHO (2005) guideline for PM_{2.5} concentration in air are 10 µg/m³ as annual limit and 25 µg/m³ as twenty -four hours limit [1, 15]. Furthermore, our study measured the black carbon concentrations in PM_{2.5} samples and results were compared with some international studies. Finally, the study investigated the air quality of the study area through finding the Air Quality Index (AQI) for collected samples.

Methodology

Aerosol PM_{2.5} samples were collected during summer and fall seasons of 2017. Samples

were collected using Teflon filters employing the Microprocessor Controlled Aerosol Sampling device ISAP1050e (model 1050e PKPM 10& 2.5& 1.0/2.3, I S A P Gerhard Schulze Automation Engineering, Germany). For each sample, the total mass, in microgram, was weighed using a sensitive balance with a sensitivity of 10µg. The black carbon content in the each sample was measured using Smoke Stain Reflectometer EEL (Model 43D(Diffusion Systems Ltd., London).

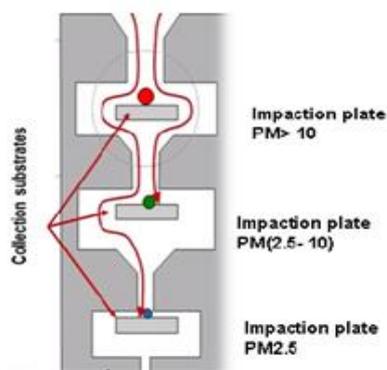


Fig. 1: Impactor working principle

Sampling and PM_{2.5} mass concentration analysis:

The sampler was located on the rooftop of the National Oncology Center building at the Republican Hospital in Al-Zubairy area in Sana'a, the capital of Yemen. The sampling inlet was set 2 meters above the ground to avoid the re-suspension of dust in the samples [16]. After downloading the filter on the sampler, the aerosols were deposited on the Teflon filters. The air in the sampling inlet is drawn through a slit, which is directed towards a collecting plate (impaction plate). Higher diameter particles deviate from the sampler streamlines and impact on the first plate (PM >10). Smaller particles move to the next impaction plate (PM 2.5-10), and finally the smallest particles continue moving to the last impaction plate (PM_{2.5}).

The procedure of collection of samples includes four steps [17]: preparation of filters before sampling, pre-weighing the filters before sampling, filters loading and unloading on the ISAP1050e sampler, and finally post-weighing of the filters after sampling. Before sampling, the filters are inspected visually for any defects such as holes, dirt and those defected filters were discarded. One day prior to pre-and post-weighing, the filters were left in a clean hood or box for equilibrium. After pre-weighing, the filter is loaded on the ISAP1050e sampler and the sampler is programmed to start at midnight of sampling day and stop at midnight of next day. When the period of sampling is completed, the filter is unloaded from the ISAP1050e sampler and then the filter is post-weighed. Furthermore, simultaneously with sampling, the meteorological conditions are measured using a temperature, relative humidity and pressure sensor (model ISAP^R TPsP/I SAP^RTPrHsP Gerhard Schulze Automation Engineering, Germany) which measures temperature, pressure and relative humidity every five minutes during the sampling process just as the device was set up by the manufacturer.

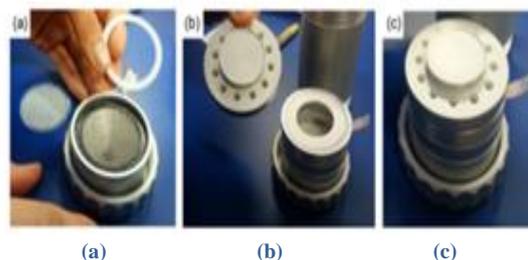


Fig. 2: Filters and their locations within ISAP1050e aerosol sample: (a) Fine particles (PM_{2.5}), (b) coarse particles PM₁₀-PM_{2.5}, (c) coarse particles

The samples were weighed before and after sampling using Sartorius/CP225D sensitive balance as demonstrated in figure (3) with a sensitivity of 10 μ g. Before and after 24 hours of the weighing process, the samples (filters) were conditioned in a desiccator. The mass concentration of PM_{2.5} is calculated as follows:

Mass concentration ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) = (final mass – initial mass)/volume

The volume of the air in the filter (sample) was corrected to take into account metrological conditions of pressure and temperature compared to standard conditions as follows [18]:

If Q_a is the average sampler flow rate (2.3 m³/h), T_a is the average actual temperature in K, P_a is the average actual pressure in KPa, t is the total elapsed sampling time, then the corrected average flow and the corrected volume are calculated as follows:

$$Q_{corrected} = Q_a(P_{std}T_a/P_aT_{std})$$

And the corrected volume is given by:

$$V_{corrected} = Q_{corrected} \times t$$

where: $T_{std} = 298.15 \text{ K}$ and $P_{std} = 101.3 \text{ KPa}$

Black Carbon Analysis:

A Smoke Stain Reflectometer (SSR) was used for Black Carbon measurements such that measurements were performed three times for each sample and the average value was used in the calculations. In the SSR, the light from a tungsten lamp shines its light on the filter, and it is reflected back to a photocell located in a black housing (head). The reflectance of the exposed filter (aerosol sample) is obtained directly from the digital readout which is represented by R (in percentage) and the Reflectance of a clean filter (blank) is represented by R_o , 100% [14].



Fig. 3: Sartorius/CP225D sensitive balance

To calculate the concentration of BC in PM_{2.5}, we used the following equation [14]:

$$\text{BC} \left(\frac{\mu\text{g}}{\text{m}^3} \right) = \frac{100A}{2 \varepsilon V} \ln \left(\frac{R_o}{R} \right)$$

Where:

A is the filter area in cm², V is the volume of air in the filter in m³,

ε is the mass absorption coefficient and equals 7 m²/g at the given wavelength 520nm,

R_o (=100%) is the reading of the light reflection using the clean filter (blank filter), and

R is the reading of the light reflection using the exposed filter (aerosol samples).

Air Quality Index (AQI):

Air Quality Index (AQI) is defined as an index for reporting the quality of the ambient air and it is an indicator to how the air pollution affects the human health. The Air Quality Index (AQI) has been developed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The AQI is mainly categorized into six zones as summarized in table 1.



Fig. 4: EEL43M Smoke Stain Reflectometer (SSR)

Table (1): Air Quality Index Categories

Group Icon	AQI Values(range)	Descriptor	Color Code	Health Advisory
A	0-50	Good	Green	None
B	51-100	Moderate	Yellow	The air quality is acceptable; however, for some pollutants there may be a moderate health concern for a very few/specific number of people who are unusually sensitive to air pollution
C	101-150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Orange	People with heart or lung diseases, older adults, and children should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion
D	151-200	Unhealthy	Red	People with heart or lung diseases, older adults, and children should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion. Everyone else should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion.
E	201-300	Very Unhealthy	Purple	People with heart or lung diseases, older adults, and children should avoid all physical activity outdoors. Everyone else should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion.
F	301 and above	Hazardous	Maroon	Everyone should avoid all outdoor exertion

EPA has set the air quality standard limit of 100 to protect public health. If AQI values were at or below 100 (AQI < 100), the air quality is acceptable and if AQI values were above 100 (AQI >100), the air quality is considered to be unhealthy for everyone [19, 20].

Results and Discussion

The mass concentration of PM_{2.5} in the study region during the sampling period was in the range 14.27-159.09 µg/m³ with an average of 32.66µg/m³. Referring to tables (2) and (3) for PM_{2.5}, it was found that the mass concentration of PM_{2.5} in summer season was higher than

in fall season. As shown in figure (6), the mass concentration in summer season was in the range 16.91-159.09µg/m³ with an average of 45.50µg/m³. On the other hand, the mass concentration of PM_{2.5} in fall season was in the range 14.27-35.48 µg/m³ with an average of 20.75µg/m³ as shown in figure (5)

Table (2): PM_{2.5} mass and Black Carbon concentrations for summer samples

Sample No.	Date of sampling	PM _{2.5} (µg/m ³)	BC (µg/m ³)	BC/PM _{2.5} (%)	Meteorological Conditions			AQI (µg/m ³)	AQI Rate
					T(K)	P(KPa)	RH(%)		
1	11-Jun	36.55	3.90	10.66	297.33	77.26	24.66	152.31	D
2	18-Jun	43.52	2.81	6.46	299.14	77.24	32.44	181.35	D
3	21-Jun	25.68	2.84	11.07	298.55	77.27	37.67	107.01	C
4	25-Jun	37.30	1.84	4.93	296.88	77.26	41.58	155.43	D
5	28-Jun	21.86	2.15	9.84	297.46	77.30	31.86	91.09	B
6	2-Jul	25.74	2.46	9.57	299.13	77.17	22.84	107.26	C
7	5-Jul	69.32	1.85	2.67	297.77	77.27	42.60	171.33	D
8	12-Jul	45.51	2.06	4.54	299.26	77.22	30.38	189.64	D
9	16-Jul	42.93	2.71	6.31	298.96	77.22	31.85	178.87	D
10	19-Jul	39.48	2.31	5.86	294.86	77.25	55.81	164.50	D
11	23-Jul	36.24	3.02	8.33	297.60	77.13	43.12	150.99	D
12	30-Jul	35.65	2.83	7.93	297.01	77.17	45.33	148.55	C
13	02-Aug	123.65	3.24	2.62	296.09	77.41	54.43	318.05	F
14	06-Aug	159.09	3.77	19.52	297.09	77.11	47.51	204.49	E
15	09-Aug	19.32	3.28	2.01	291.80	77.37	72.83	80.50	B
16	13-Aug	22.96	3.90	17.01	293.00	77.27	69.15	95.65	B
17	16-Aug	16.91	3.70	21.87	293.47	77.25	65.38	70.45	B
18	20-Aug	30.76	3.57	11.61	296.10	77.23	49.14	128.18	C
19	23-Aug	31.98	3.49	10.92	298.54	77.02	33.00	133.26	C

Table (3): PM_{2.5} mass and Black Carbon concentrations for fall samples

Sample #	Date of sampling	PM _{2.5} (µg/m ³)	BC (µg/m ³)	BC/PM _{2.5} (%)	Meteorological Conditions			AQI (µg/m ³)	AQI Rate
					T(K)	P(KPa)	RH(%)		
1	3-Sep	28.34	3.17	11.20	295.57	77.23	54.52	118.06	C
2	6-Sep	24.44	3.12	12.78	296.71	77.38	44.37	101.84	C
3	10-Sep	21.68	2.78	12.84	296.25	77.32	26.40	90.33	B
4	13-Sep	35.48	1.86	5.24	296.91	77.41	28.80	147.82	C
5	17-Sep	16.12	3.19	19.81	295.89	77.46	24.32	67.15	B
6	24-Sep	18.98	3.02	15.92	295.16	77.49	20.27	79.08	B
7	1-Oct	14.28	2.96	20.71	293.89	77.61	24.77	59.49	B
8	4-Oct	19.93	3.65	18.30	293.70	77.56	25.07	83.04	B
9	8-Oct	14.98	2.49	16.65	292.36	77.48	33.72	62.40	B
10	18-Oct	21.42	2.83	13.21	293.18	77.49	25.78	89.23	B
11	22-Oct	23.76	2.84	11.94	292.69	77.58	28.73	98.99	B
12	25-Oct	21.03	2.70	12.83	291.44	77.74	28.34	87.61	B
13	1-Nov	14.27	2.94	20.58	290.72	77.58	27.26	59.44	B
14	5-Nov	17.13	3.10	18.10	290.48	77.52	31.64	71.39	B
15	8-Nov	22.33	3.26	14.58	289.61	77.61	32.87	93.04	B
16	12-Nov	17.72	2.86	16.14	293.30	76.98	31.19	73.84	B
17	15-Nov	23.75	2.84	11.97	288.03	77.60	31.69	98.97	B
18	26-Nov	21.83	2.78	12.72	289.79	77.86	52.92	90.98	B
19	29-Nov	16.84	2.58	15.34	289.30	77.82	38.80	70.16	B

BC: Black Carbon, T: Temperature in Kelvin, P: Pressure in Kpa, RH: Relative humidity, AQI: Air Quality Index
B: Good, C: Unhealthy for sensitive groups, D: Unhealthy, E: Very unhealthy, F: Hazardous

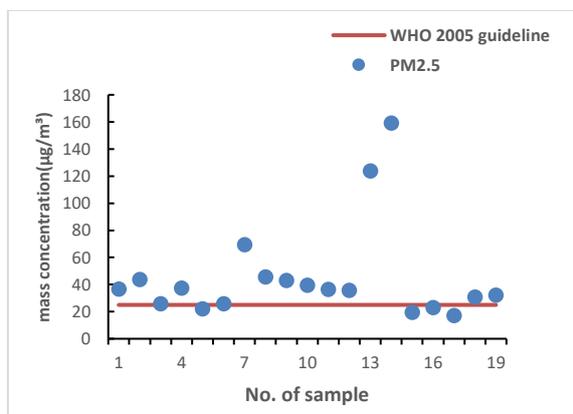


Fig. 5: mass concentration for Fall samples

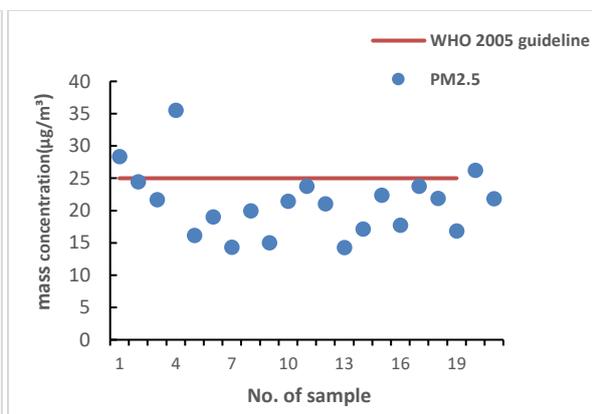


Fig. 6: mass concentration for Summer samples

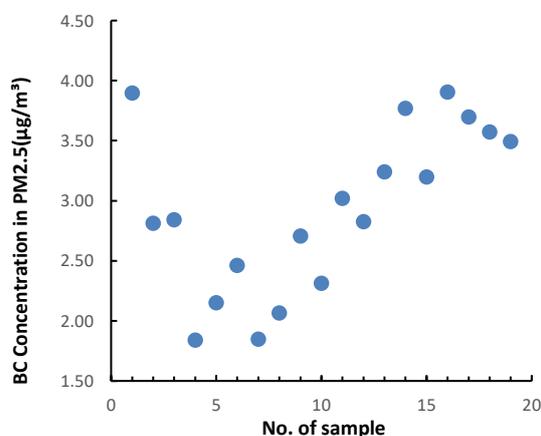


Fig. 7: The Black Carbon Concentration in Summer

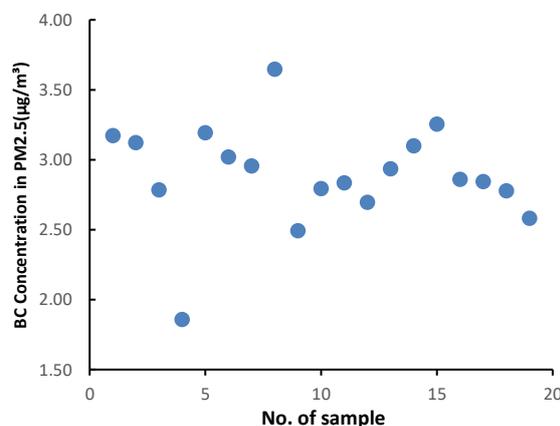


Fig. 8: The Black Carbon concentration in Fall

Results showed that 68.4% of the samples in summer season had higher PM_{2.5} concentrations than the (2005) guideline of WHO, 25µg/m³, while 89.47% of the samples in fall season had lower PM_{2.5} concentrations than WHO guideline. Furthermore, the Air Quality Index (AQI) for about half of the samples was acceptable. Monthly average of Air Quality Index of PM_{2.5} showed that AQI in July was the highest due to dust storms and that AQI in October and November were the lowest. It was noted that, in summer the AQI of 78.95% of PM_{2.5} concentrations was higher than the standard limit, <100, in which 26.31% of the cases AQI was found to be “unhealthy for sensitive people level”, 42.11% “unhealthy level”, 5.26% “very unhealthy level”, and 5.26% “Hazardous level”. In fall season, the AQI of

84.21% of PM_{2.5} concentrations was moderate level whereas the AQI of 15.79% was higher than the standard limit and classified as “unhealthy for sensitive groups level”. Moreover, results show that black carbon concentration in the study area during the sampling period was in the range (1.84-3.90) µg/m³ with an average 2.90 µg/m³. Black carbon concentration in summer ranged from 1.84 µg/m³ to 3.90 µg/m³ with an average of 2.91 µg/m³ and it ranged from 1.86 µg/m³ to 3.65 µg/m³ with an average of 2.89 µg/m³ in fall season. The lowest monthly average of concentration of black carbon (BC) was 1.84 µg/m³ in June and the highest concentration of Black Carbon (BC) was 3.90 µg/m³ in August. Moreover, the percentage of BC in PM_{2.5} varied from 2.01% to 21.87% during the period of study.

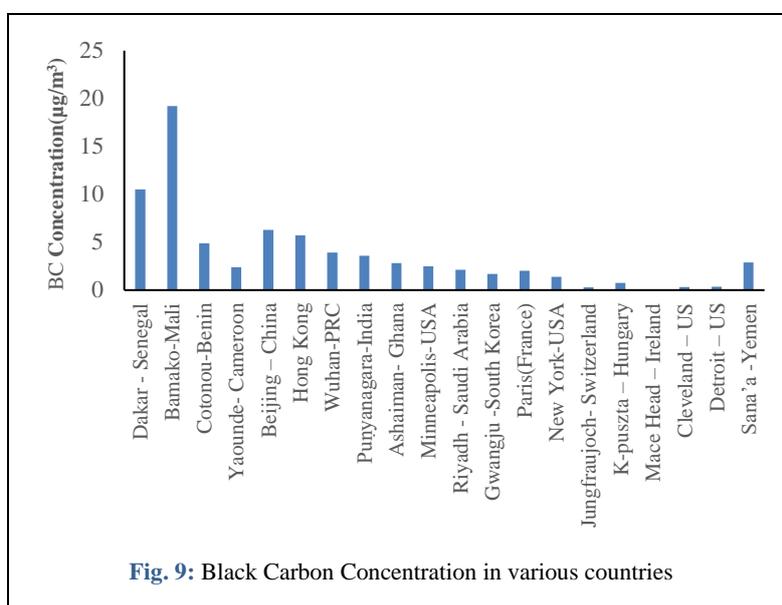


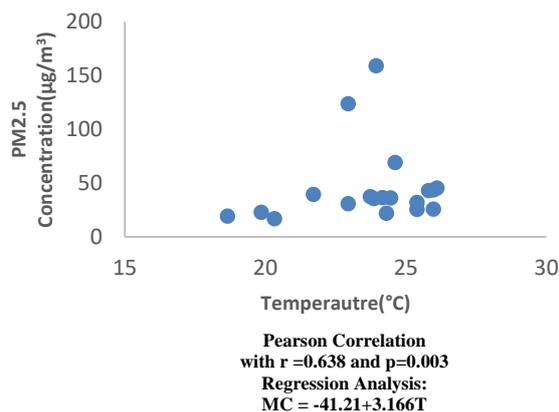
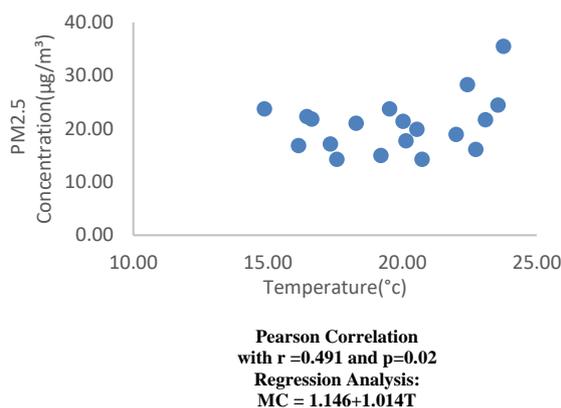
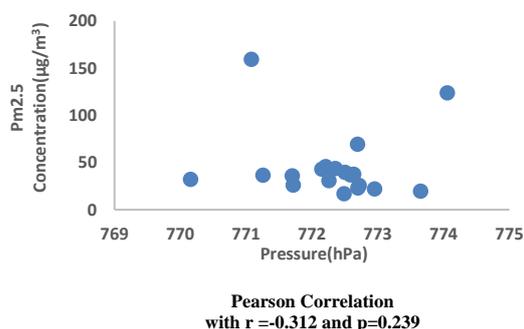
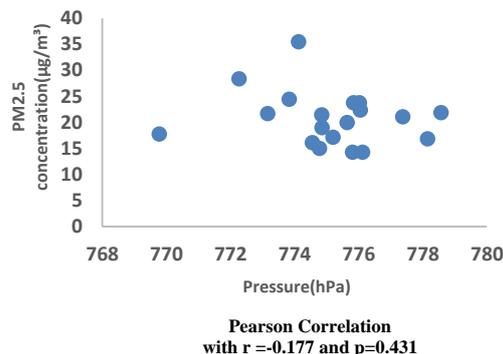
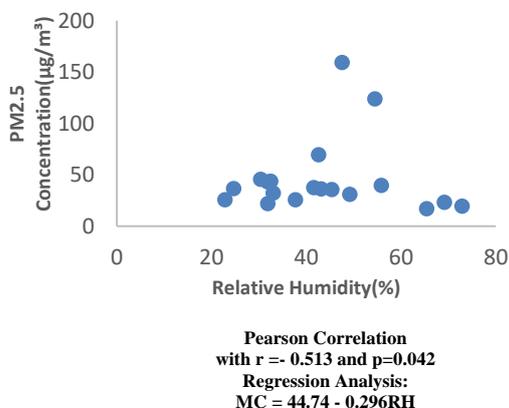
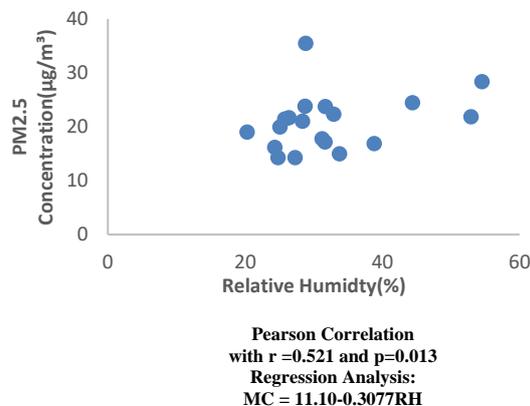
Fig. 9: Black Carbon Concentration in various countries

Moreover, It was noted that 66% of the monthly Black Carbon (BC) percentage in PM_{2.5} had higher value than twelve percent. Those values of relatively high percentage of BC in PM_{2.5} may cause significant health risk to the public and the long-term average BC exposure could be associated with a variety of health effects [22]. Figure (9) shows a comparison between Black Carbon (BC) concentrations in this study and some other reported studies such as Ashaiman-Ghana, Minneapolis-USA, Riyadh-Saudi Arabia, Punyanagara-India, Wuhan-PRC, Urban Hong Kong, and Beijing-China. Details of these international studies were referred in [23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29].

Statistical analysis

The Pearson correlation method was used in our statistical analysis. As demonstrated in figures (10 to 15). Results show that there were correlations between PM_{2.5}

concentrations with temperature and relative humidity during the study period. However, there was no correlation between PM_{2.5} concentrations and pressure. Specifically, there was a moderate significant positive correlation between PM_{2.5} concentration and temperature with $r = 0.638$ and P value = 0.003 in summer and $r = 0.50$ and P value = 0.02 in fall. For relative humidity there was a moderate significant positive correlation with $r = 0.52$ and $P = 0.013$ in fall; however, there was a moderate significant negative correlation in summer with $r = 0.513$ and $P = 0.042$. Analysis may be interpreted as a temperature increases, the PM_{2.5} concentration increases in both fall and summer seasons. The statistical analysis gives us some suggestions to explain the variation of PM_{2.5} concentration during the sampling period, however we should not ignore other main reasons such as dust concentration in the atmosphere and dust storms.

Fig. 10: variation of PM_{2.5} with Temperature in summerFig. 11: variation of PM_{2.5} with Temperature in fallFig. 12: variation of PM_{2.5} with Pressure in summerFig. 13: variation of PM_{2.5} with Pressure in fallFig. 14: variation of PM_{2.5} with relative humidity in summerFig. 15: variation of PM_{2.5} with relative humidity in fall

Conclusion

The concentrations of PM_{2.5} of aerosol samples and Black Carbon content in PM_{2.5} of the study area were studied. We concluded that, most of aerosol PM_{2.5} concentrations in summer were above the WHO 2005 guideline. The PM_{2.5} concentrations in summer were higher than in fall season due to the dust storms in June and July. Additionally, it was concluded that the Air Quality Index (AQI) of PM_{2.5} concentrations for about half of the samples were higher than the EPA standard limit and ranged from “unhealthy for sensitive groups level” to “hazardous level”. The Air Quality Index (AQI) for about half of the samples was acceptable. The

monthly average of Air Quality Index of PM_{2.5} showed that AQI in July was the highest and that AQI in October and November were the lowest. Furthermore, it was found that the air pollution due to PM_{2.5} in the summer is more than in the fall because of dust storms in summer season. Moreover, it was found that the percentage of BC in PM_{2.5} in fall was higher than the percentage in summer season. The reason could be explained as: the more usage of wood and coal in fall season causes the high percentage of BC occurrence. Furthermore, even though our study region is urban and is not industrial, the black carbon concentrations were relatively high. This suggests that the source of black carbon in our study is local pollution sources such as kerosene fuel, charcoal,

firewood, diesel generator etc. Compared with some other international studies, the BC concentrations in PM_{2.5} in our study were higher than twelve international studies.

Funding

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تركيز الجسيمات الهوائية الدقيقة (PM_{2.5}) وتركيز الكربون الأسود (BC) في عينات الهواء في منطقة الزبيري - صنعاء

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المُلخَص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة تلوث الهواء الناتج عن الجسيمات الهوائية الدقيقة (PM_{2.5}) التي لها نصف قطر أقل من 2.5µm ومحتوى الكربون الأسود (BC) في عينات الهواء المُجمعة من موقع أعلى سطح المركز الوطني للأورام في منطقة الزبيري صنعاء – اليمن. أُستخدم مجمع العينات ISAP 1050e لتجميع عينات الجسيمات الهوائية PM_{2.5} الدقيقة وُجد أن التركيز الكلي لعينات الجسيمات الهوائية PM_{2.5} الدقيقة تراوح بين 14.27 إلى 159.09 µg/m³ بمتوسط 32.66µg/m³. تم مقارنة نتائج تركيز عينات الجسيمات الهوائية الدقيقة PM_{2.5} مع الدليل الإرشادي لسنة (2005) لمنظمة الصحة العالمية الخاص بالجسيمات الهوائية الدقيقة PM_{2.5}.

بينت التحليلات الإحصائية وجود ارتباط موجب بين تركيز الجسيمات PM_{2.5} مع درجة الحرارة في كل من فصلي الصيف والخريف. في الجانب الآخر بينت التحليلات الإحصائية وجود ارتباط موجب بين تركيز الجسيمات PM_{2.5} والرطوبة النسبية في عينات فصل الخريف وارتباط سلبي بين تركيز PM_{2.5} والرطوبة النسبية في عينات فصل الصيف. كذلك أُستخدم جهاز الانعكاس SSR لقياس تركيز الكربون الأسود (BC) في عينات PM_{2.5} وبينت النتائج أن تركيز الكربون الأسود (BC) تراوح بين 1.84 إلى 3.90 µg/m³ بمتوسط 2.90 µg/m³. كذلك تم مقارنة نتائج تركيز الكربون الأسود (BC) مع بعض الدراسات في مجموعة من الأقطار العالمية. أيضاً بينت التحليلات أن معامل الهواء النوعي (AQI) ل 78.95% من عينات جسيمات الهوائية PM_{2.5} الدقيقة أعلى من الحد المعياري (AQI < 100) المنصوص به من قبل منظمة حماية البيئة الأمريكية (EPA).

الكلمات المفتاحية: الجسيمات الدقيقة، الكربون الأسود، التركيز، المعامل النوعي للهواء، الارتباط.

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