

## Quality Control Test on Aerosol: A review

Nitin Suan \*, Rajesh Kumar, Ajeet Pal Singh, Amar Pal Singh, Meenakshi Malhotra & Ritu Rani

Department of Pharmacy, St. Soldier Institute Of Pharmacy, Lidhran Campus, Behind Nit(R.E.C), Jalandhar-Amritsar Bypass, Nh-1, Jalandhar-144011, Punjab, India

\*Corresponding Author

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**Abstract**— Aerosols, comprising suspended particulate matter in the atmosphere, pose significant challenges to environmental and public health. Ensuring the accuracy and reliability of aerosol quality measurements is essential for assessing their impacts on air quality, climate, and human health. This review article provides a comprehensive overview of the various quality testing methods employed for aerosols, encompassing both traditional and emerging techniques. We discuss the principles, advantages, limitations, and applications of key quality testing methods, including gravimetric analysis, optical particle counting, chemical analysis, remote sensing, and advanced spectroscopic techniques. Additionally, we highlight recent advancements and innovations in quality testing methodologies, such as real-time monitoring, machine learning algorithms, and sensor networks. By synthesizing existing literature and technological developments, this review aims to inform researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders involved in aerosol monitoring and management.

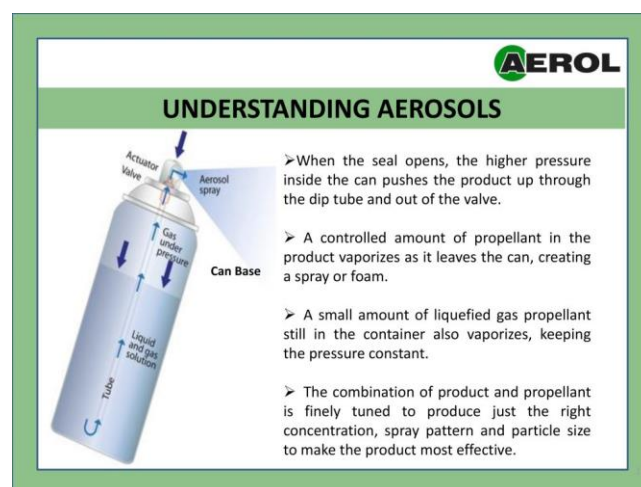
**Keywords**— Aerosols, Quality Testing Methods, Environmental Health, Air Quality Assessment, Technological Innovations

### I. INTRODUCTION

Aerosol are suspensions generally contains fine solid particles or liquid droplet in a gas, mainly air. Aerosol can vary in composition, size and origin and as well as human made sources such as vehicle exhaust, industrial emissions, and spray products. Aerosols play a crucial role in various environmental processes, including climate change, air quality, and public health. In the atmosphere, aerosols can scatter or absorb sunlight, affecting the Earth's radiative balance and influencing climate. They can also act as cloud condensation nuclei, facilitating cloud formation and altering cloud properties, which in turn impact precipitation patterns and regional climate.

Moreover, aerosols significantly affect air quality by contributing to the formation of fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), which can penetrate deep into the respiratory system and cause respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. Prolonged exposure to high levels of PM<sub>2.5</sub> is

associated with increased mortality rates and various health complications.



Understanding the behavior, composition, and sources of aerosols is essential for addressing environmental challenges such as climate change and air pollution. Further research into aerosol properties and their

interactions with the atmosphere is necessary for developing effective strategies to mitigate their impacts and safeguard both the environment and human health[1].

## II. HISTORY AND DISCOVERY OF AEROSOLS

The history and discovery of aerosols span centuries, beginning with observations of natural phenomena involving suspended particles in the air. However, the systemic study of aerosols as scientific field emerged recently in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries[2]. The following points are:

1. Early Observations: Aerosols have been observed throughout history, with ancient civilizations noting natural phenomena such as mist, fog, and volcanic emissions.
2. Scientific Exploration Begins: In the Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, scientists like John Aitken conducted pioneering experiments to measure atmospheric particles. His work led to the development of instruments for studying aerosols and contributed to the understanding of their properties.
3. Term "Aerosol" Coined: The term "aerosol" was invented in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to describe the dispersion of solid or liquid particles in a gas.
4. Technological Advancement: Aerosols found numerous applications in industry, medicine, and consumer products during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The invention of aerosol sprays revolutionized fields such as cosmetics, paints, and insecticides, driving commercial innovation.
5. Environmental Awareness: As industrialization progressed, concerns grew about the impact of aerosols on Air Quality (AQ), human health, and the environment. Studies linking aerosols to respiratory diseases, smog formation, and climate change spurred regulatory action and research efforts[3].

### Composition of Aerosol:

The composition of these can vary significantly which depend on their sources as well as environmental conditions. General overview of aerosol composition:

#### 1. Primary Aerosol Particles:

(a)Dust: Mineral particles obtained from various sources mainly involves soil, desert regions and anthropogenic activities[4].

(b)Sea Salt: These are also generated by the breaking of sea waves and spray[5].

(c)Biological Particles: It includes bacteria, spores, pollen and other organic material[6].

#### 2. Secondary Aerosol Particles:

(a)Sulfates: It is formed by the oxidation of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) emitted from various sources[7].

(b)Nitrates: It is generally formed by the oxidation of nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) emitted from combustion processes[8].

(c)Organic Aerosols: Compounds which is formed by the oxidation of volatile organic compounds (VOCs)[9].

#### 3. Trace Elements and Compounds:

(a)Heavy Metals: It includes lead, cadmium, and mercury, originating from various industrial processes[10].

(b)Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs): It is obtained by incomplete combustion of organic matter[11].

### Types Of Aerosols:

It is mainly of two types:

#### 1. Natural Aerosol

#### 2. Anthropogenic Aerosol

1. Natural Aerosol: These are those aerosol which obtained from natural sources and processes without significant human influence. It is further of different types:

(a)Sea Salt Aerosols: These are produced by the breaking of waves and sea spray in the ocean. It contributes to the global aerosol burden, mainly in coastal as well as oceans regions[12].

(b)Dust Aerosols: It consists of mineral particles which are suspended in the atmosphere and originate from sources like deserts, arid regions, and dry soil surfaces. It can be transported over long distances by wind and have huge impact on climate as well as air quality[13].

(c)Biogenic Aerosols: The particles are emitted by natural biological processes, such as vegetation, phytoplankton in oceans, and microbial activity[14].

2. Anthropogenic Aerosols: These are those aerosols which are primarily developed by human activities. These have huge impacts on air quality, climate and human health. It is further of different types:

(a) Soot/Black Carbon: It is also known as black carbon, which is composed of carbonaceous particles that result from incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, biomass and biofuels[15].

(b) Sulfate Aerosols: It is formed from the oxidation of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) which is emitted by burning fossil fuels, industrial processes, and volcanic eruptions[16].

(c) Nitrate Aerosol: It is formed through the oxidation of nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) emitted from combustion processes, such as vehicles and industrial activities. They contribute to both air pollution and atmospheric deposition of reactive nitrogen[17].

(d) Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) Aerosols: These are formed from the oxidation and condensation of volatile organic compounds emitted by various anthropogenic sources, including vehicles, industrial processes, and solvents. They contribute to both air pollution and secondary organic aerosol formation[18].

#### **Aerosol and Air Quality: Interplay and Impact:**

Aerosols, minute particles suspended in the atmosphere, significantly influence air quality, with ramifications for human health, environmental sustainability, and climate change. These particles, varying in size from nanometers to micrometers, originate from natural sources like volcanic eruptions, forest fires, and sea spray, as well as anthropogenic activities such as industrial emissions, vehicular exhaust, and agricultural practices.

The presence of aerosols in the atmosphere contributes to the formation of fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), which poses substantial risks to human health. PM<sub>2.5</sub> can penetrate deep into the respiratory system, leading to respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. Prolonged exposure to elevated levels of PM<sub>2.5</sub> is associated with increased mortality rates and exacerbation of respiratory ailments, making it a critical public health concern.

Furthermore, aerosols play a pivotal role in the formation of ground-level ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) and other secondary pollutants through complex atmospheric chemical reactions. Ozone, a key component of smog, can cause respiratory issues and worsen existing health conditions, particularly in urban areas with high levels of vehicular emissions and industrial activities.

The impact of aerosols on air quality extends beyond human health to include environmental effects such as visibility degradation and ecosystem damage. High

concentrations of aerosols can reduce visibility, impairing visual aesthetics and posing hazards to transportation safety. Additionally, aerosols deposited onto surfaces can affect ecosystems, soil quality, and water bodies, leading to biodiversity loss and ecological imbalances[19].

#### **Aerosol and Urban Pollution:**

Urban areas serve as hotspots for aerosol pollution due to the concentration of anthropogenic activities such as industrial processes, transportation, and residential emissions. Aerosols in urban environments encompass a diverse array of particles, including soot, sulfate, nitrates, and organic compounds, originating from various sources like vehicular exhaust, industrial emissions, construction activities, and residential heating.

One of the primary concerns regarding aerosols in urban areas is their impact on air quality. Fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), a subset of aerosols, poses significant health risks as it can penetrate deep into the respiratory system, leading to respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. High concentrations of PM<sub>2.5</sub> in urban environments are often associated with increased hospital admissions, respiratory ailments, and mortality rates among urban residents[20].

Addressing aerosol-related urban pollution requires integrated strategies that target both primary aerosol emissions and precursor pollutants. This includes implementing regulations to control industrial and vehicular emissions, promoting the use of clean energy technologies, enhancing public transportation systems, and implementing urban planning measures to reduce pollution exposure for residents.

In conclusion, aerosols play a significant role in urban pollution, affecting air quality, public health, and environmental sustainability in densely populated areas. Understanding the complex relationship between aerosols and urban pollution is crucial for devising effective policies and interventions to mitigate pollution levels and safeguard the health and well-being of urban populations[19][20].

#### **Gravimetric Analysis:**

Gravimetric analysis is a widely used method for measuring aerosol mass concentration, relying on the accurate weighing of aerosol samples collected on filters. This technique offers high precision and reliability, making it suitable for regulatory compliance

monitoring and research studies. However, gravimetric analysis requires labor-intensive sample collection and processing, limiting its suitability for real-time monitoring applications[16].

#### **Optical Particle Counting:**

Optical particle counting involves the use of optical sensors to quantify aerosol particle concentrations and size distributions in real-time. This method offers rapid data acquisition and high temporal resolution, making it valuable for indoor air quality monitoring, workplace exposure assessments, and ambient air pollution studies. However, optical particle counters may exhibit limitations in accurately sizing and counting particles in complex aerosol mixtures or under variable environmental conditions[21].

#### **Chemical Analysis:**

Chemical analysis techniques, such as chromatography, mass spectrometry, and spectroscopy, enable the identification and quantification of aerosol chemical components. These methods provide valuable insights into aerosol compositions, sources, and transformation processes. Advanced spectroscopic techniques, including Fourier-transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) and X-ray fluorescence (XRF) spectroscopy, offer non-destructive and rapid analysis of aerosol samples, facilitating on-site measurements and real-time monitoring[22].

#### **Remote Sensing:**

Remote sensing techniques, such as lidar (light detection and ranging) and satellite-based instruments, allow for the remote detection and characterization of aerosols over large spatial scales. These methods offer valuable information on aerosol optical properties, vertical distribution, and transport patterns. However, remote sensing approaches may encounter challenges in distinguishing between different aerosol types and accurately quantifying aerosol concentrations, particularly in regions with complex atmospheric conditions[23].

#### **Advanced Spectroscopic Techniques:**

Advanced spectroscopic techniques, including laser-induced breakdown spectroscopy (LIBS), Raman spectroscopy, and cavity-enhanced absorption spectroscopy, enable rapid and sensitive analysis of

aerosol properties, such as chemical composition, size, and morphology. These techniques offer potential for real-time, in-situ measurements of aerosol characteristics with high sensitivity and specificity. However, their widespread adoption may be limited by instrument complexity, cost, and operational requirements[16][23].

#### **Recent Advancements and Innovations:**

Recent advancements in aerosol quality testing methodologies include the development of novel sensors, miniaturized instruments, and integrated monitoring platforms. Emerging technologies, such as wearable sensors, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and distributed sensor networks, offer new opportunities for spatially resolved and multi-scale aerosol monitoring. Additionally, machine learning algorithms and data fusion techniques enable the integration of diverse datasets for improved aerosol characterization and source apportionment[11].

#### **Challenges in Quality control testing on aerosol:**

Quality control testing of aerosols presents several challenges due to the complex nature of aerosol particles, variability in atmospheric conditions, and limitations of measurement techniques. Addressing these challenges is crucial for ensuring the accuracy, reliability, and comparability of aerosol data across different monitoring networks and research studies. Here are some key challenges faced in quality control testing on aerosols:

##### **Particle Size Distribution Variability:**

Aerosols exhibit a wide range of particle sizes, from nanometers to micrometers, with size distributions influenced by emission sources, atmospheric processes, and meteorological conditions. Characterizing the size distribution of aerosol particles accurately and consistently poses a challenge for quality control testing.

##### **Instrument Calibration and Standardization:**

Ensuring the accuracy and reliability of aerosol measurement instruments through proper calibration and standardization procedures is essential. However, maintaining consistent calibration standards across different instruments and measurement platforms can be challenging, leading to potential biases and uncertainties in aerosol data.

##### **Interference from Background Contaminants:**

Ambient air contains background contaminants, such as dust, pollen, and sea salt, which can interfere with aerosol measurements. Discriminating between aerosol particles of interest and background contaminants poses challenges, particularly in urban and industrial environments with high background concentrations.

#### Sampling Artifacts and Losses:

Aerosol sampling can be influenced by sampling inlet design, particle losses during transport, and deposition on sampling surfaces. Minimizing sampling artifacts and losses while ensuring representative sampling of aerosol particles is essential for accurate quality control testing [24].

#### Data Interpretation and Uncertainty Analysis:

Interpreting aerosol measurement data and quantifying uncertainties require careful consideration of measurement biases, instrument limitations, and data processing techniques. Developing robust uncertainty analysis methods and quality assurance procedures is critical for reliable quality control testing.

#### Spatial and Temporal Variability:

Aerosol concentrations and properties exhibit spatial and temporal variability influenced by factors such as emission sources, atmospheric circulation patterns, and local meteorology. Capturing this variability accurately and accounting for spatial and temporal trends pose challenges for quality control testing, particularly in regions with complex atmospheric dynamics.

#### Integration of Multi-platform Data:

Integrating aerosol data from multiple measurement platforms, including ground-based monitors, satellite observations, and remote sensing techniques, requires harmonization of data formats, quality control procedures, and spatial/temporal coverage. Achieving seamless integration of multi-platform data poses challenges due to differences in measurement techniques and data processing algorithms[25].

Addressing these challenges in quality control testing on aerosols requires interdisciplinary collaboration, technological innovation, and standardization of measurement protocols. By overcoming these challenges, researchers and practitioners can improve the reliability and utility of aerosol data for environmental monitoring, air quality management, and scientific research.

### III. FUTURE TREND IN QUALITY CONTROL TESTING ON AEROSOLS

As the field of aerosol science continues to evolve, several emerging trends are shaping the future of quality control testing for aerosols. These trends reflect advancements in technology, changes in regulatory requirements, and evolving research priorities. Here are some key future trends:

#### (a). Advancements in Sensor Technologies:

The development of advanced sensor technologies, including miniaturized sensors, nanotechnology-based detectors, and optical sensors, will revolutionize aerosol quality control testing. These sensors offer improved sensitivity, selectivity, and portability, enabling real-time monitoring of aerosol properties with higher precision and accuracy.

#### (b). Integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning:

AI and machine learning algorithms will play an increasingly important role in aerosol quality control testing. These technologies can analyze large datasets, identify patterns, and predict aerosol behavior, facilitating more efficient data processing, interpretation, and decision-making.

#### (c). Remote Sensing and Satellite Technology:

Remote sensing techniques, such as satellite-based instruments and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), will provide valuable insights into aerosol distributions and concentrations over large spatial scales. These technologies offer a cost-effective and efficient means of monitoring aerosol properties, complementing ground-based measurements.

#### (d). Real-time Monitoring Networks:

The establishment of real-time monitoring networks for aerosols will enable continuous monitoring of air quality in urban areas, industrial sites, and sensitive ecosystems. These networks can provide timely information on aerosol concentrations, sources, and trends, allowing for more effective pollution control measures.

#### (e). Multi-parameter Monitoring Systems:

Future quality control testing methods will incorporate multiple parameters and metrics to provide a more comprehensive characterization of aerosol properties. Multi-parameter monitoring systems can capture a wide range of aerosol characteristics, including size distribution, composition, and optical properties.

(f). Quality Assurance and Standardization:

Quality assurance protocols and standardization procedures will be further developed and standardized to ensure consistency, comparability, and reliability of aerosol data. Harmonized standards will facilitate data exchange, validation, and integration across different measurement platforms and locations.

(g). Interdisciplinary Collaboration:

Collaboration between aerosol scientists, engineers, policymakers, and stakeholders will become increasingly important in addressing complex aerosol-related challenges. Interdisciplinary research initiatives will foster innovation and knowledge exchange, leading to more effective aerosol quality control strategies.

(h). Citizen Science Initiatives:

Citizen science initiatives will engage the public in aerosol monitoring and quality control testing, empowering communities to participate in environmental stewardship and decision-making. Crowdsourced data collection efforts can supplement traditional monitoring efforts and provide valuable insights into local aerosol pollution.

These future trends in aerosol quality control testing reflect ongoing efforts to improve our understanding of aerosol dynamics, sources, and impacts on human health and the environment. By embracing these trends and leveraging advancements in technology and collaboration, researchers and practitioners can develop more effective strategies for aerosol pollution control and management[26].

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this review article has provided a comprehensive overview of quality control testing for aerosols, addressing methodologies, challenges, advancements, and applications in various environmental and industrial contexts. Aerosols play a critical role in air quality, climate, and human health, necessitating accurate and reliable measurement and monitoring. Quality control testing ensures the integrity of aerosol data, allowing for informed decision-making, policy formulation, and environmental management.

Throughout this review, we have discussed the basic principles of quality control, including calibration, standardization, and data validation. Gravimetric analysis, optical methods, chemical analysis techniques,

remote sensing, and real-time monitoring are among the key methodologies employed in aerosol quality control testing. Each method has its advantages and limitations, highlighting the importance of interdisciplinary approaches and cross-validation to enhance data accuracy and reliability.

Despite significant advancements in aerosol measurement technologies, several challenges persist in quality control testing. These challenges include variability in particle size distribution, instrument calibration and standardization, interference from background contaminants, sampling artifacts and losses, and spatial/temporal variability in aerosol concentrations. Addressing these challenges requires interdisciplinary collaboration, technological innovation, and standardization of measurement protocols.

Looking ahead, future trends in aerosol quality control testing are expected to focus on advancements in sensor technologies, integration of artificial intelligence and machine learning, remote sensing and satellite technology, multi-parameter monitoring systems, quality assurance and standardization, interdisciplinary collaboration, and citizen science initiatives. By embracing these trends and overcoming existing challenges, researchers and practitioners can enhance the accuracy, reliability, and utility of aerosol data for environmental monitoring, air quality management, and scientific research.

In conclusion, quality control testing plays a crucial role in ensuring the accuracy and reliability of aerosol data, enabling informed decision-making and effective management of aerosol-related challenges. By addressing current challenges and embracing future trends, we can advance the state-of-the-art in aerosol quality control testing and contribute to a healthier and more sustainable environment for future generations.

Through continued research, innovation, and collaboration, we can overcome existing challenges and unlock new opportunities to improve aerosol quality control testing and enhance our understanding of aerosol dynamics, sources, and impacts on human health and the environment.

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