



Concentrations of Indoor PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ Worldwide

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ABSTRACT

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Indoor air pollution has gained importance in recent years due to its direct contact with humans and its greater potential for harm. In this context, the objective of the study was to compare indoor PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ concentrations with the World Health Organization (WHO) guideline. The methodology of the PRISMA 2020 statement was used, the bibliographic review was in 5 digital databases. The annual growth rate of scientific production was determined using the digital calculator Calcuvio, while data analysis was carried out with Microsoft Office Excel and VOSviewer. Approximately 80% of studies did not exceed the WHO guideline; the most studied indoor environment and pollution sources were homes and road traffic/cigarette smoke. The year and country with the highest scientific output were 2014 and the United States, respectively, with an annual growth rate in scientific production (1984–2024) of 13.49%. The most frequently appearing keyword was "particulate matter." The study concludes that corrective measures should be implemented to reduce particulate matter indoors, given that humans spend the majority of their lives in these environments.

1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, the deterioration of air quality has become a major challenge to control due to the release of high concentrations of pollutant gases from motor vehicles and industrialization, as well as a lack of environmental awareness [1, 2]. Air pollution occurs both outdoors and indoors; the latter is a complex mixture of suspended particles with an aerodynamic diameter of less than 10 µm (PM₁₀) and 2.5 µm (PM_{2.5}) [3], as well as pollutant gases such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), carbon monoxide (CO), ozone (O₃), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) [4-10].

Rapid urbanization and lifestyle changes have led people to spend most of their day in indoor environments (homes, workplaces, and leisure spaces), consequently increasing their exposure to pollutants [11-14]. Anthropogenic activities contributing to indoor air pollution include smoking, cooking, burning candles, cleaning, construction materials, and the use of traditional heating methods (coal and wood) [15-17]. Additionally, outdoor pollutants that can infiltrate indoor environments are caused by motor vehicles, industrial facilities, road dust, and biomass burning [18, 19].

Air pollution predominantly affects the most vulnerable

populations (pregnant women, children, and the elderly), compromising the immune system in patients with respiratory, asthmatic, and cardiovascular diseases. Furthermore, indoor air pollution is responsible for one million deaths worldwide, and the United Nations Environment Programme determined that in 2020 and 2021, it accounted for 3.2 million and 4 million premature deaths, respectively [20, 21].

The regulations applicable to both outdoor and indoor air quality are set by the WHO, which presents guidelines of an average of 15 µg/m³ and 45 µg/m³ for PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀, respectively, over a 24-hour period [18].

Thus, the objective of the research was to compare the concentrations of PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ indoors with the WHO guidelines. In this context, the following research questions (RQ) were posed:

RQ1: What proportion of studies exceed the WHO guideline?

RQ2: Which indoor environment and source of pollution were the most studied?

RQ3: In which year and country was there the highest scientific output?

RQ4: What is the annual growth rate of scientific production?

RQ5: What keywords appear most frequently?

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The methodology used was the review applying the PRISMA 2020 statement [22], which will aid in better preparing, understanding, and summarizing the review [23, 24].

2.1 Document eligibility

In the inclusion, the following were applied: (1) scientific research articles, (2) research in the world (all languages), (3) in all years up to September 2024, and (4) studies with PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ results expressed in µg/m³. This was all aimed at covering a larger number of articles on the topic.

Regarding the exclusion criteria, the following were discarded: (1) duplicate articles among the search equations, (2) closed-access articles, (3) articles whose titles or abstracts did not meet the study's objectives, and (4) other types of scientific publications.

The criteria were used to delimit the research in depth and to obtain a greater number of articles for the review.

2.2 Origin of the information and search strategies

The information collected was in databases (Table 1), which began on June 3 and ended on September 23, 2024. The aforementioned databases were chosen because they have the largest number of journals in the world and in different fields of studies [25, 26]. Two search equations were used:

Table 1. Search strategies

Digital Databases	Search Equations
Taylor & Francis	
Scopus	
Wiley	TITLE-ABS-KEY
ScienceDirect	("particulate matter" AND
EBSCO (Academic Search	indoors)
Ultimate, Biological &	TITLE-ABS-KEY (PM
Agricultural Index Plus,	AND indoors)
Environment Complete,	
GreenFILE and Veterinary Source)	

2.3 Choice and collection of information

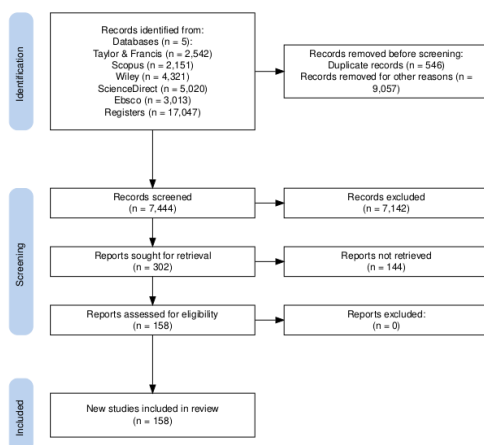


Figure 1. Flow diagram of article selection

In the selection of articles, 2 groups were formed (5 authors per group) so that each group searched for a search equation. The doubts that arose in the process were resolved at the end of the selection process. For the schematization of the selection of the articles, we used the online tool where the diagram was created (Figure 1) [27]. At the beginning, 17047 items were identified and by applying the criteria, 158 were subtracted.

2.4 Compound annual growth rate (CAGR)

Indicates the percentage of annual growth in scientific production (1984 to 2024), and with the help of an online calculator [28], the value was determined using the formula:

$$CAGR \% = 100 * \left(\left(\frac{V_f}{V_i} \right)^{\frac{1}{t}} - 1 \right)$$

where, V_i = Initial value; V_f = Final value; t = Years.

2.5 Data analysis

The information was downloaded from the database in CSV format in order to determine the distribution of the investigations. For the analysis of keyword co-occurrence, VOSviewer 1.6.19 software [29] is useful in the scientific field to plot bibliometric networks in many colors to understand co-authorship, countries and keyword co-occurrence relationships [30, 31].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 2 shows the 158 studies along with their respective particulate matter concentrations, of which 35 (PM_{2.5}) and 29 (PM₁₀) studies exceed the WHO guideline.

Table 2. Comparison of PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ concentrations with WHO guideline

WHO 24 Hour Average		Refs.
PM _{2.5} 15 µg/m ³	PM ₁₀ 45 µg/m ³	
11	X	[32]
X	78**	[33]
X	42	[34]
57.78**	106.19**	[35]
X	9840**	[36]
21.10**	28.90	[37]
19.52**	34.91	[38]
11.40	26.80	[39]
12.75	X	[40]
14	X	[41]
X	386**	[42]
X	32.60	[43]
13.50	X	[44]
22.50**	X	[45]
47**	X	[46]
15.45**	5.63	[47]
43.56**	X	[48]
X	1422.67**	[49]
X	24.50	[50]
2.60	X	[51]
13.45	X	[52]
111.31**	128.13**	[53]
35.83**	X	[54]
28.80**	X	[55]

82.65**	56.25**	[56]	12.80	X	[127]
8.40	13.95	[57]	56.33**	X	[128]
8.60	X	[58]	X	40	[129]
12.10	18.50	[59]	173**	153**	[130]
241.05**	392.81**	[60]	483**	X	[131]
X	90.83**	[61]	36.42**	X	[132]
95**	X	[62]	13.96	X	[133]
X	68.25**	[63]	X	40	[134]
7	35	[64]	186.50**	X	[135]
548**	2085**	[65]	212.01**	263.24**	[136]
6.90	X	[66]	177**	X	[137]
37.40**	118.20**	[67]	259**	X	[138]
7.30	X	[68]	7.71	X	[139]
34.15**	28.90	[69]	253.45**	X	[140]
37.85**	19.20	[70]	8.80	X	[141]
X	81.50**	[71]	13	X	[142]
178**	X	[72]	60.1**	93.20**	[143]
88**	110**	[73]	48.86**	X	[144]
93**	X	[74]	41**	43	[145]
97.81**	X	[75]	14.60	X	[146]
5.80	X	[76]	24.90**	X	[147]
204**	X	[77]	20**	X	[148]
588**	X	[78]	5.20	X	[149]
151**	X	[79]	166.40**	X	[150]
30.10**	35	[80]	5581**	X	[151]
X	15	[81]	14.10	27.50	[152]
61**	363**	[82]	29.50**	X	[153]
109**	181**	[83]	3.24	X	[154]
88**	X	[84]	X	59.70**	[155]
77**	X	[85]	53**	57**	[156]
X	33.67	[86]	7.50	X	[157]
X	77.20**	[87]	17.30**	X	[158]
19**	53.70**	[88]	434.52**	X	[159]
38.40**	18.10	[89]	34**	X	[160]
33**	X	[90]	25.98**	31.02	[161]
7	X	[91]	35.95**	67.73**	[162]
144.50**	X	[92]	52.20**	X	[163]
20.90**	X	[93]	32.40**	X	[164]
9.28	X	[94]	78**	123.60**	[165]
113**	X	[95]	795**	X	[166]
23**	X	[96]	65.3**	92.90**	[167]
55.23**	X	[97]	109**	X	[168]
71.90**	X	[98]	203**	X	[169]
53**	X	[99]	11.63	16.59	[170]
97**	X	[100]	24**	24.90	[171]
62**	X	[101]	10	15	[172]
68**	75**	[102]	41**	79.40**	[173]
X	54.60**	[103]	40.72**	X	[174]
86.72**	X	[104]	3.90	9.60	[175]
343.33**	X	[105]	291.70**	X	[176]
45.50**	X	[106]	10.80	X	[177]
70**	X	[107]	10.40	X	[178]
3.10	8.20	[108]	75.30**	X	[179]
34.69**	50.94**	[109]	15.34**	X	[180]
86.20**	320**	[110]	X	50.30**	[181]
243**	X	[111]	3869.98**	322.32**	[182]
34**	X	[112]	49.60**	X	[183]
X	31.10	[113]	23.90**	X	[184]
56**	X	[114]	142.30**	X	[185]
112.51**	X	[115]	18.21**	25.53	[186]
30**	X	[116]	18.10**	X	[187]
201**	305**	[117]	13.80	X	[188]
55.20**	X	[118]	83**	X	[189]
X	73.30**	[119]			
503**	X	[120]			
35.20**	27.40	[121]			
71.70**	X	[122]			
13.30	35.40	[123]			
135.60**	X	[124]			
112**	X	[125]			
6.30	83.56**	[126]			

** : Exceeded;

X: Not Specified, that is to say, the information was not found in the article.

The indoor environments where PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ concentrations were most frequently measured are homes and schools, with 96 and 30 studies (Figure 2), respectively. This can be attributed to the importance given to these types of environments, where people spend between 60% and 70% of

4. CONCLUSIONS

In the studies reviewed, approximately 80% did not exceed the WHO guideline. In this context, it is necessary to implement targeted strategies for each type of indoor pollution activity to further reduce this percentage. The home and school were the locations with the highest number of studies conducted, as they are places where people spend most of their lives. This underscores the importance of implementing corrective measures to reduce particulate matter concentrations. Additionally, the primary sources of pollution identified were road traffic and cigarette smoke.

The United States and China are leaders in addressing this topic, as with most air pollution research. In contrast, South and Central America have fewer studies; most countries in this region are developing nations, which often lack stringent enforcement of environmental policies.

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