



ASSESSMENT OF AMBIENT AIR QUALITY AND AIR QUALITY INDEX IN GOLDEN CORRIDOR OF GUJARAT, INDIA: A CASE STUDY OF DAHEJ PORT

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Abstract

Clean air is the basic requirement of all living organisms. In recent times, due to population growth, urban sprawl, industrial development, and vehicular boom, the quality of air is deteriorating and being polluted. Pollutants of major public health concerns include particulate matter, carbon monoxide, ozone, nitrogen dioxide, and sulfur dioxide, which pose serious threats to human health and hygiene. In the present study, prime particulate pollutants (PM_{10} , $PM_{2.5}$), and gaseous pollutants (SO_2 and NO_2) were estimated at seven stations in and around Dahej Port, Gujarat, India. The obtained values of PM_{10} , $PM_{2.5}$, SO_2 and NO_2 in all the studied stations (seven) ranged from 67.39 to 98.75, 29.57 to 45.79, 17.76 to 22.29 and 28.29 to 32.42 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, respectively. The level of PM_{10} at all sampling locations, and that of $PM_{2.5}$ at Station A3 (Lakhigam) were found little higher than prescribed permissible limits of CPCB standards, while SO_2 and NO_2 levels were within the acceptable range. The Air Quality Index (AQI) score was found to be ranged from 76.50 to 97.75, which is at satisfactory level as per CPCB standards. Further, precautionary measures and management strategies to minimize the effect of particulate as well as gaseous pollutants have also been suggested for achieving its ambient levels in and around Dahej Port, Gujarat, India.

Keywords: Ambient Air Quality, Air Quality Index, Golden Corridor, Dahej Port, Gujarat, India

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Introduction

In addition to land and water, air is the prime resource for sustenance of life. For better human health and wellbeing of the humanity, clean air is one of the main basic requirements. Clean air is deteriorating day by day, and being polluted by variety of sources e.g. household combustion devices, motor vehicles, industrial facilities, and forest fires (the common sources of air pollution) that change the composition of atmosphere, affecting the biotic environment adversely. The concentration of air pollutants depends not only on the quantities that are emitted from the polluting sources, but also on the ability of the atmosphere to either absorb or disperse such emissions (USEPA, 2008).

The population growth, urban development, and vehicular boom have deteriorated the ambient air quality in recent industrial era. Particulate and gaseous pollutants of major public health concerns pose a serious threat to human health, if exceed the permissible limits prescribed by the regulatory authorities (WHO, 2000; USEPA, 2008). More than two million premature deaths per year are attributed to the effects of urban (outdoor /indoor) air pollution that is mainly caused by burning of solid unburned fuels (WHO, 2005). More than half of the air pollution driven diseases is borne by the population of developing countries (WHO, 2005). The relationship between the occurrence of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases and cardiopulmonary mortality with exposure to air pollutants are well documented in the published literature in the past (Dockery *et al.*, 1994; Koken *et al.*, 2003).

Major sources responsible for higher level of SPM (Suspended Particulate Matter), RSPM (Respirable Particulate Matter), SO₂, NO₂ and other organic and inorganic pollutants in environment are incurred through partial combustion of motor vehicle fuels (Sharma *et al.*, 2006; Jayaraman, 2007; Barman, *et al.*, 2010). In addition, 60 to 70% of the air pollution found in the urban environment is also due to the use of old or pre-owned automobiles and locomotives (Panday *et al.*, 1988; Singh *et al.*, 1995). The public health implications due to the emission of CO, O₃, SO₂, NO₂ and particulates are very well known in most of the developed countries (Yadav *et al.*, 2012). Among particulate pollutants, particulate matter (PM) is a ubiquitous entity, and is especially a grave problem due to its higher suspension rate into the atmosphere, and adverse health effects on plants, animals, humans, and materials in the form of visibility reduction, soiling of buildings, etc. (Horaginamani and Ravichandran, 2010; Chaurasia *et al.*, 2013).

In the same context, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), India, initiated National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring (NAAQM) program in the year 1984 at Agra and Anpara, Northern India. Subsequently, in 1998-99 the program was renamed as National Air Monitoring Program (NAMP). The number of monitoring stations under NAMP has been increased steadily up to 295 by 2000-01, covering

98 cities/towns in 29 States and 3 Union Territories of India. Under NAMP, four air pollutants viz. sulfur dioxide (SO₂), oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) as NO₂, particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) and respirable suspended particulate matter (RSPM/PM₁₀), have been identified for regular monitoring of air quality (CPCB, 2006).

Air pollution has emerged in the past few decades, that poses a critical health problem to the human population and the whole ecosystem (Tripathee *et al.*, 2016). Various studies in this regard have been undertaken all over the world and also in India (Katsouyanni *et al.*, 2001; Afroz *et al.*, 2003; Yang *et al.*, 2004; Samoli *et al.*, 2005; Analitis *et al.*, 2006; Kaushik *et al.*, 2006; Barman *et al.*, 2010; Yadav *et al.*, 2012; Mukhopadhyay and Mukherjee, 2013; Rai *et al.*, 2013; Barman *et al.*, 2015). The aim of the present study was to assess the Ambient Air Quality (AAQ) (PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, SO₂, and NO₂) and measurement of Air Quality Index (AAQ) in Golden Corridor of Gujarat, Dahej Port, District Bharuch, Gujarat State, India.

Methods

Study Area: Dahej (21°68' 35" N and 72°49' 65" E) is a cargo port situated about 45 km from Bharuch Town on the South-West coast of Gujarat, India. It is an all-weather, direct berthing, multi-cargo port on the west coast of India, situated on the Gulf of Khambhat. The port provides import and export services to the Indian States (Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh). It is a natural deep-water port with two deep draft berths capable of accommodating cape-size vessels. It operates the coal import terminal with the capacity to handle 20 million tons of coal per year, which has a fully mechanized conveyor system for receiving imported coal, which can be unloaded at the rate of 4200 tons per hour.

Study Sites: Based on the standard site selection criteria, and reduced interference of local public, the study sites (sampling stations) were chosen in and around Dahej Port for intensive investigation with the help of an air quality measurement device (Omron Digital Arm Bp Monitor HEM-7120). The concentration of PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, Sulphur dioxide (SO₂), and Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), was measured from selected monitoring stations viz. Station A1 (Project Site of Rallis India Pvt. Ltd.– RIPL: SEZ-2), Station A2 (Jolwa Village), Station A3 (Lakhigam Village), Station A4 (Rahiyad Village), Station A5 (Jageshwar Village), Station A6 (Suva Village), and Station A7 (Ambetha Village) (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Study Area and Study Sites (Dahej Port, Gujarat, India)

Ambient Air Quality Monitoring

The quality of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} was determined with the help of Combo PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} Respirable Dust Sampler (Envirotech APM 460 BL), with the airflow rate of 2.3 m³/hr and 1.0m³/hr, respectively. The concentration of Sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) was measured by gaseous pollutant sampler (LES 411) using specific absorbing solutions (Potassium tetrachloromercurate for SO₂, and Sodium hydroxide and Sodium arsenite for NO₂). The sampling was carried out consecutively for three months (December, 2014 to February, 2015) at the interval of one week. The average values of all readings were taken into consideration for final output of the results. The apparatus was kept at a height of 5 m from the ground surface for eight (8) hours per day. Once the sampling was over, the samples were immediately kept in icebox, brought to the laboratory, and preserved in refrigerator prior to analyses. Later, the concentrations of different air pollutants in samples were analyzed spectrophotometrically (VARIAN Cary 50 Bio UV-Visible Spectrophotometer) (USEPA, 2000a; 2000b; 2008). The

concentration of gaseous pollutants (SO₂ and NO₂) was analyzed using Modified West and Gaeke Method (West and Gaeke, 1956), and Modified Jacob Hochheiser Method (Jacob and Hochheiser, 1958), respectively, and the quantity of particulate pollutants (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀) was measured by Gravimetric Method (CPCB, 2013).

Air Quality Index (AQI)

The Air Quality Index (AQI) is an environmental index, which describes the overall ambient air status and trend of a particular place based on specific standard. It is a tool that transforms the (weighted) values of individual air pollutants (parameters) into a single number or set of numbers (Rao, 1991). The overall ambient air quality of a specified area can be assessed in a better way and quantified in terms of AQI since it represents the cumulative effect of all the pollutants. AQI can also enable one to formulate the alternative policies for prevention of air pollution or to design control equipment, which, for instance, will reduce the level of certain pollutants while increasing the levels of others. There are several methods and equations used for determining the AQI. However, here the below mentioned formula (Zlauddin and Siddiqui, 2006; Joshi and Semwal, 2011) has been used for computation of AQI value:

$$AQI = \frac{1}{4} \times (IPM_{10}/SPM_{10} + IPM_{2.5}/SPM_{2.5} + ISO_2/SSO_2 + INO_2/SNO_2) \times 100$$

Where, SPM₁₀, SPM_{2.5}, SSO₂ and SNO₂ represent the revised Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS) as prescribed by Central Pollution Control Board of India (2013), and IPM₁₀, IPM_{2.5}, ISO₂ and SNO₂ represent the actual values of pollutants obtained at the time of sampling. Based on AQI range, AQI categories have been framed to determine the overall health status of an environment (CPCB, 2013) (Table 1).

Table 1. AQI Range and Category

AQI Range	AQI Category
0-50	Good
51-100	Satisfactory
101-200	Moderate
201-300	Poor
301-400	Very Poor
401-500	Severe

Results and discussion

Ambient Air Quality (AAQ)

Table 2 depicts the obtained values of air pollutants (PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, SO₂ and NO₂) at seven selected sampling stations. The concentration of PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, SO₂ and NO₂ at all the locations were ranged from 67.39 to 98.75, 29.57 to 45.79, 17.76 to 22.29, and 28.29 to 32.42 µg/m³, respectively.

Table 2. Concentration of Air Pollutants (PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, SO₂ and NO₂) at Sampling Stations, Dahej Port, Gujarat, India (@ 8 hours / day)

Station	PM ₁₀ µg/m ³	PM _{2.5} µg/m ³	SO ₂ µg/m ³	NO ₂ µg/m ³
A1	98.75	40.45	22.29	32.42
A2	76.28	30.48	20.84	30.88
A3	83.82	36.67	18.73	29.17
A4	67.39	29.57	19.80	32.33
A5	78.56	33.64	17.89	31.04
A6	86.70	45.79	21.59	28.79
A7	97.44	42.50	17.76	30.18
CPCB*	100	60	80	80
Mean Conc.	84.13	37.01	19.84	30.69
S.D.	11.33	6.17	1.80	1.42

* CPCB Standards (2013) @ 24 hrs /day

The primary sources of PM₁₀ in the atmosphere are incomplete combustion, automobile emissions, industrial dust, unburned cooking methods, and secondary sources e.g. chemical reactions in the atmosphere (USEPA, 2008; WHO, 2000). In case of PM₁₀, stumpy amount (67.39 µg/m³) was reported at A4 (Rahiyad), and 76.28 µg/m³ at A2 (Jolwa), followed by modest concentration (78.56 µg/m³) at A5 (Jageshwar), 83.82 µg/m³ at A3 (Lakhigam), 86.70 µg/m³ at A6 (Suva), accentuated quantity (97.44 µg/m³) at A7 (Abmetha), and peak amount (98.75 µg/m³) of PM₁₀ at A1 (RIPL). Overall, the mean concentration of PM₁₀ was 84.13 µg/m³, with an average deviation of 11.33 µg/m³. The present study reveals that the level of PM₁₀ was within the prescribed permissible limits of CPCB standards (100 µg/m³) at all the selected study sites (except at A1 and A7: nearby stations with marginal values) in and around Dahej Port. Trace metals concentration in PM₁₀ at different locations of Lucknow city was studied by Sharma *et al.* (2006). The influenced localities with heavy loads of PM₁₀ suggested the preventive measures for safe health and secure hygiene of locales in and around Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India. The trend observed in the present study was due to the fact that in winter, anti-cyclonic condition prevailed, which was characterized by calm or very low wind, there was little dispersion or dilution of pollutants which caused marginal levels of PM₁₀ (Panda and Panda, 2012) as observed during the present study.

There are many sources of emissions of PM_{2.5} at source level, which includes wood-burning stoves, forest fires, diesel engines, natural sources, non-road vehicles, agricultural burning, and fugitive emissions of industries (Simon *et al.*, 2008; WHO, 2000; 2005). Contrary to PM₁₀, low concentration of PM_{2.5} was recorded at A4 (29.57 µg/m³), and A2 (30.48 µg/m³), whereas medium quantity was observed at A5 (33.64 µg/m³), A3 (36.67 µg/m³), and A1 (40.45 µg/m³), with an accentuated amount at A7 (42.50 µg/m³), with maximum concentration at A6 (45.79 µg/m³). As a whole, the average concentration of PM_{2.5} documented at Dahej Port was 37.01 µg/m³, with an average deviation of 6.17 µg/m³ from observed values. During the present study, the amounts of PM_{2.5} were found within the standard limits prescribed by CPCB (60 µg/m³) in and around Dahej Port. The exposure to particle pollution is a grave public health hazard. When inhaled, particulate pollution (PM_{2.5}) can travel deep into the lungs, and cause or aggravate heart and lung diseases. This increases in doctor and emergency room visits, hospital admissions, use of prescription medication, and absences from work and school (Yang *et al.*, 2004). The slightly higher value may be mainly due to the massive transportation of cargo, raw materials, and finished products.

SO₂ is emitted primarily from stationary sources, power plants, and refineries that burn fossil fuels. Other sources are smelters, steel mills, and pulp and paper mills. Wood, natural gas, propane, and other common fuels used for home heating do not contain significant quantities of sulfur and, therefore, are not considered to be the major sources of SO₂. On the contrary, diesel fuel, and to a lesser extent gasoline, contain sulfur, and contribute to SO₂ emission in the ambient air (West and Gaeke, 1956). The concentration of SO₂ recorded was very high at A1 (22.29 µg/m³), and A6 (21.59 µg/m³), as compared to moderate quantity at A2 (20.84 µg/m³), followed by A4 (19.80 µg/m³), and A3 (18.73 µg/m³). On the other hand, very low amount of SO₂ was reported at A5 (17.89 µg/m³), and the least concentration was observed at A7 (17.76 µg/m³). Overall, the mean concentration of SO₂ reported was 37.01 µg/m³ with an average deviation of 1.80 µg/m³ at Dahej Port, and was within the CPCB limits (80 µg/m³). This slightly higher concentration may be related to the prevalence of high speed wind and frequent precipitations over the sampling sites. Further, it was observed that SO₂ emission, though insignificant, was more at non-industrial sites in comparison to industrial sites. This is an indication that existing industries are not abusive, as far as SO₂ emission is concerned (Zlauddin and Siddique, 2006).

Among all the sampling stations at Dahej Port, the highest concentration (32.42 µg/m³) of NO₂ was recorded at A1, and A4 (32.33 µg/m³), followed by modest amount at A5 (31.04 µg/m³), A2 (30.88 µg/m³), and A7 (30.18 µg/m³). However, the low concentration of NO₂ was observed at A3 (29.17 µg/m³), with the lowest at A6 (28.79 µg/m³). The overall mean concentration of NO₂ observed was 30.69 µg/m³, with an average deviation of 1.42 µg/m³ at Dahej Port, within the CPCB limits (80 µg/m³).

Compared to SO₂, an average concentration of NO₂ was a bit higher, which could be explained by frequent transportation of cargo vehicles, automotive, and locomotives in and around Dahej Port (**Panda and Panda, 2012**).

Site fidelity

The cumulative results clearly reflect that at most of the sampling stations (A1, A3, A5, A6, A7), the amount of particulate pollutant (PM₁₀) was a bit higher than that of PM_{2.5}, except at stations A2 and A4, where the trend of concentration gradient was bit different i.e. PM₁₀ was found more than PM_{2.5}. Similarly, the amount of NO₂ was more than SO₂ at most the sampling stations (A1, A3, A5, A6, A7), except at stations A2 and A4, where the concentration of PM_{2.5} was found a bit higher than that of SO₂. However, considering the mean concentration of gaseous as well as particulate pollutants, it was clear that the amount of PM₁₀ was always higher than that of PM_{2.5}, followed by moderate concentration of NO₂, with low amount of SO₂. Thus, the overall scenario depicts that the Dahej Port and its adjoining areas are heavily influenced by more dispersal of PM₁₀, followed by PM_{2.5}, NO₂ and SO₂. As a whole, the concentration gradient of air pollutants is represented as PM₁₀ > PM_{2.5} > NO₂ > SO₂. Moreover, the air quality in and around Dahej Port is disseminated in the form of dispersal ratio, which is represented by 1.00: 0.44: 0.36: 0.24 for PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, NO₂ and SO₂ (**Table 3, Fig. 2**). Similar trend was observed by **Yadav et al. (2012)** in urban residential areas of Jhansi city and rural residential areas of adjoining villages of Madhya Pradesh, India.

Moreover, the higher concentration of NO₂ could be due to high fuel usage and trapping of the pollutants in the boundary layer due to frequent temperature inversions in and around study area. Further, it could probably due to intense solar radiation and increased photochemical activity. Overall, NO₂ showed higher values than SO₂, which could be due to more vegetation and favorable conditions for microbial activity in and around Dahej Port (SEZ: Special Economic Zone) (**Jacobs and Hochheiser, 1958; Joshi and Semwal, 2011**).

Table 3. Concentration Gradient of Air Pollutants

Station	Concentration Gradient
A1	PM ₁₀ > PM _{2.5} > NO ₂ > SO ₂
A2	PM ₁₀ > NO ₂ >PM _{2.5} > SO ₂
A3	PM ₁₀ > PM _{2.5} > NO ₂ > SO ₂
A4	PM ₁₀ > NO ₂ >PM _{2.5} > SO ₂
A5	PM ₁₀ > PM _{2.5} > NO ₂ > SO ₂
A6	PM ₁₀ > PM _{2.5} > NO ₂ > SO ₂
A7	PM ₁₀ > PM _{2.5} > NO ₂ > SO ₂
Mean	PM ₁₀ > PM _{2.5} > NO ₂ > SO ₂

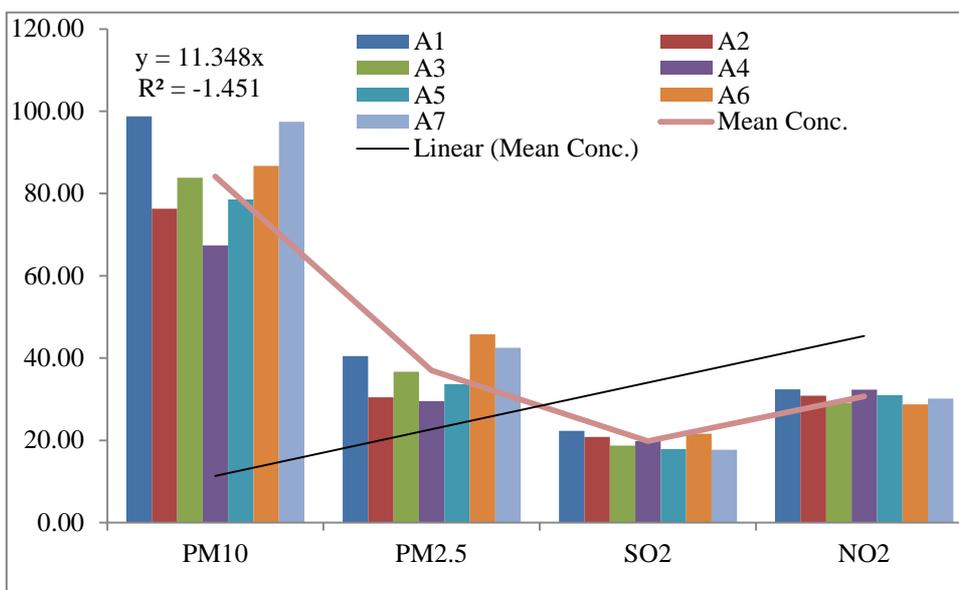


Fig. 2. Ambient Air Quality at Sampling Stations (Dahej Port, Gujarat, India)

Our study reflects that the concentration of PM₁₀ was ranged from 67.39 to 98.75 µg/m³ with an average concentration of 84.13 µg/m³, which was a bit marginal, tended to reach its recommended limit (100 µg/m³), prescribed by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), India, especially for residential areas as well as industrial units. Moreover, the standard limit for PM_{2.5} in human populated areas is 60 µg/m³ (CPCB, 2013), and our study delineated its substantial amount at A1 (40.45 µg/m³), A6 (45.79 µg/m³) and A7 (42.50 µg/m³), with a mean concentration of 37.01 µg/m³. This clearly depicts that the concentrations of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} were within the prescribed standards of CPCB at Dahej Port, but its adjacent areas are little bit affected by marginal dispersal of such particulate pollutants. The present scenario might be owing to downwind pattern of obnoxious pollutants from core region (Dahej Port) towards its buffer and fringe areas (sampling stations). Fortunately, the concentration of SO₂ (Range: 17.76 to 22.29 µg/m³; Mean Conc. 19.84 µg/m³) and that of NO₂ (Range: 28.79 to 32.42 µg/m³; Mean Conc. 30.69 µg/m³) was within the prescribed limits (80 µg/m³ for SO₂ and NO₂ each) (CPCB, 2013). This could be due to effective control methods for pollution abatement at source, process, and receptor levels at Dahej Port, Gujarat, India.

Air Quality Index (AQI)

The Air Quality Index (AQI) may act as a valuable tool, and a proxy assessment of ambient air quality to determine the healthy status of environs (Zlauddin and Siddique, 2006). The values of AQI in our study were derived using the concentration of PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, SO₂, and NO₂. The AQI values were ranged from 76.50 to 97.75 in all sampling stations in and around Dahej Port, which are categorized as “Satisfactory

level” (50 to 100), designated by **CPCB (2013)**. The outranged results of AQI in and around study area may cause minor breathing discomfort to sensitive people as a temporary uneasiness or momentary anomaly, which can be ameliorated within a short-time period, based on individuals’ health and hygiene, susceptibility counterforce, and immunity capacity (**Panda et al., 2011**)(Table 3).

Table 3. Air Quality Index of Sampling Stations

Station	AQI	AQI Range	AQI Category
A1	97.75	50-100	Satisfactory
A2	82.50	50-100	Satisfactory
A3	85.25	50-100	Satisfactory
A4	76.50	50-100	Satisfactory
A5	82.25	50-100	Satisfactory
A6	93.75	50-100	Satisfactory
A7	94.75	50-100	Satisfactory
Mean	87.54	50-100	Satisfactory

Correlation Coefficient (r)

Correlation is the mutual relationship between two variables. Direct correlation is said to exist when increase or decrease in the value of one parameter is associated with a corresponding increase or decrease in the value of the other. Correlation is considered positive when increase in one parameter causes increase in other parameter and is said negative when increase in one parameter causes decrease in the value of the other and *vice versa*. The correlation coefficient (r) ranges between +1 and -1. When it is in the range of +0.8 to 1.0, the correlation is characterized as strong, is moderate in the range of +0.5 to +0.7, and is weak in the range of +0.1 and +0.4, it is characterized as weak. The correlation coefficient value among the parameters is given in **Table 4**. It is seen that PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} are strongly and positively correlated (r = 0.812) with each other, indicating that their sources are the same, having uniform dispersal pattern into atmosphere. Besides, the AQI is also having strong as well as positive correlation with PM₁₀ (r = 0.959) and PM_{2.5} (r = 0.898). This indicates that PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations squarely influence the value of AQI, as well as air quality of the environs.

Table 4. Correlation Coefficient Values among Parameters

Correlation	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}	SO ₂	NO ₂	AQI
PM ₁₀	1.000				
PM _{2.5}	0.812	1.000			
SO ₂	0.136	0.196	1.000		
NO ₂	-0.175	-0.527	0.203	1.000	
AQI	0.959	0.898	0.341	-0.227	1.000

Conclusion

The present study revealed that PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} are the causative air pollutants at all sampling points. However, gaseous pollutants (SO₂ and NO₂) are well within the permissible limits. The study clearly indicated that it would be more appropriate to consider AQI rather than individual air pollutant level, while planning prevention of air pollution in and around industrial areas. From AQI values, it was found that there was controllable air pollution at all locations. It was also observed that particulate emission was an outside factory phenomenon, and was basically a transport related phenomenon, and their levels were relatively high during winter period owing to particles' suspension into air for a shorter period, influenced by less wind flow, low cloud formations, and humid atmospheric conditions.

To maintain the PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations, it is suggested that massive green plantation must be taken up in and around the study area. Trees having high dust trapping efficiency (*Azadirachta indica*, *Cassia fistula*, *Delonix regia*, *Ficus religiosa*, *Pterocarpus marsupium*) are to be grown alongside the roads, and water is to be sprinkled continuously at the source of generation of particulate matter. Apart from this, measures like limiting vehicle speed at vulnerable localities, conducting public awareness campaigns about the harmful effects of air pollution, and educating the drivers to be more eco-friendly, are also to be implemented. Moreover, regulatory authorities must ensure that industries obey their moral and social responsibilities to protect the environment. Overall, the air quality in and around Dahej Port is in a satisfactory condition (except minor threats of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), which could be ameliorated by implementing above-mentioned managerial steps and strategic plans to live a safer and healthy life. Authors suggest the periodic estimation of air and gaseous pollutants at frequent intervals on regular basis to check the level of such obnoxious pollutants in and around Dahej Port, South-Western Gujarat, India.

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