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Research Paper

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Improving CRDI Engine Efficiency: Utilizing Waste Plastic Oil and Innovative Catalytic Converter Design for CFD Analysis to Enhance Emission Performance

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Abstract - Catalytic converters are indispensable components in the automotive industry, tasked with the crucial mission of curbing harmful emissions and enhancing air quality. This study conducts an in-depth exploration of catalytic converter design, employing cutting-edge computational methodologies, including SOLIDWORKS and ANSYS FLUENT. The primary objective is to comprehensively assess fluid dynamics within both conventional and innovative catalytic converter configurations, with a particular focus on crucial parameters such as velocity distribution, dynamic pressure, and turbulent intensity contours. The outcomes of this rigorous analysis reveal compelling insights. The avant-garde catalytic converter design showcases a plethora of advantages over its conventional counterparts, manifesting in a uniform velocity distribution, diminished turbulence, and a substantially reduced backpressure profile. These insightful findings highlight the enormous potential of ground-breaking catalytic converter designs to revolutionize exhaust system efficiency and make considerable progress in reducing vehicle emissions and their effects on the environment. This research not only underscores the criticality of optimizing catalytic converter performance but also emphasizes the pivotal role of state-of-the-art computational tools in devising emissions control strategies. By bridging the gap between theoretical scrutiny and real-world applications, this study makes an indispensable contribution to the advancement of emissions control and catalytic converter design, with far-reaching implications for the global pursuit of cleaner transportation. Data envelopment analysis a multi-response linear programming optimization tool was employed to assess the output and emissions of DI diesel engines using waste plastic oil mixtures.

Keywords - Catalytic converter, MRLP (multi-response linear programming), Emissions control, and computational Fluid Dynamics.

1.Introduction

Internal combustion engines play a pivotal role in powering various modes of transportation and machinery, contributing significantly to modern society's productivity and mobility. However, these engines are not without their inefficiencies and environmental

concerns, particularly related to the gas exchange process involving the exhaust of burnt gases and the fresh charges being admitted into the engine's cylinder. Due to the energy needed to transfer gases from a lower inlet pressure to a higher exhaust pressure, this process results in a loss of power. This loss, known as exhaust stroke loss, has a direct impact on the engine's volumetric efficiency, a critical factor in engine performance. The engine's volumetric efficiency in turn, greatly influences its overall performance, emphasizing the importance of optimizing this aspect. The pressure rises due to the cylinder moving to the top dead center from the bottom dead center during the exhaust stroke, which results in the displacement of burnt gases from the top of the cylinder to the exhaust pipe. This results in exhaust stroke loss since it takes energy to push the exhaust gases out. Backpressure, which directly relates to the pressure drop through parts like the catalytic converter and other components in the exhaust system, is one of the main factors impacting exhaust stroke loss. Therefore, designing exhaust system components with minimal backpressure is essential to maximizing engine output. In this context, the present work aims to address exhaust emissions by proposing a catalyst using copper without compromising engine performance. The primary objective is to enhance fluid flow through the catalytic converter, ultimately improving its overall efficiency. This involves introducing a new design for the commonly used monolith in catalytic converters and optimizing the catalytic converter's honeycomb structure to minimize backpressure's impact on engine performance.

The growing number of motorized vehicles has a substantial negative impact on the environment, particularly due to the emission of exhaust gases. (1) Growing global concern over vehicle emissions' environmental contamination has led to the implementation of more stringent regulations on hazardous components like CO, NO_x, and HC, which are present in hazardous exhaust gases and have adverse effects on human health and the environment. Evaluate the effectiveness of the catalytic converter in reducing these deleterious gases by measuring CO and HC emissions at various engine velocities (1000 rpm, 2000 rpm, 3000 rpm, 4000 rpm, and 5000 rpm) using a five-gas analyzer. (2) Pollutant reduction is contingent upon exhaust emissions treatment, and catalytic converters are among the most effective remedies for reducing engine emissions.

Vehicle emissions become more environmentally friendly when technologies like metallic catalytic converters (MCC) reduce CO and HC emissions by converting them into less harmful compounds. [3] The catalytic converter's unique integral honeycomb structure design increases the contact area between the exhaust gas and the catalyst. This enables faster conversion reactions and more effective control over the amount of emissions. (4) Research has shown that metallic oxides like copper oxide and silver oxide have promising catalytic properties that can replace expensive noble metals like platinum and palladium in catalytic converters. (5) Catalytic converters are crucial for reducing hazardous emissions, with a focus on improving cold-start efficiency due to harmful emissions being highest during this phase. The efficiency of catalytic converters depends on the substrate's temperature and thermal response, with conventional converters often having low conversion efficiency due to slow temperature increases, resulting in cold-start issues and increased emissions. (6)

Mathematical models are essential for approximating the ultimate outcome of system layout and control strategies, which assist in the transition from design specifications to on-road testing. Fast mathematical models, such as the Filling-and-Emptying (FE) and Quasi-Steady Flow (QSF) approaches, frequently develop 0D, aggregated parameter models for intake and exhaust systems, in-cylinder processes, and real-time simulations. Despite the complexity of chemical and physical processes in the cylinder, 'fast' models efficiently depict combustion and pollutant formation reactions using simplified 0D single-zone approaches [7]. Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) is in high demand for catalytic converter analysis and design in order to minimize the time and cost associated with experimentation. The objective of this investigation

is to optimize the design of automotive three-way catalytic converters by modifying the substrate length in order to reduce emission concentrations and improve conversion efficiency. (8)

A three-dimensional steady-state analysis is conducted using Ansys Fluent software and a finite volume approach. Research indicates that a 20° diffuser angle results in a decrease in pressure drop, a decrease in peak pressure, and an increase in the uniformity index (9). The investigation focuses on the use of computational fluid dynamics (CFD) to analyze and optimize catalytic converter design, with the goal of minimizing the time and costs associated with experimentation. (10) Optimizing a variety of physical and chemical parameters is a multifaceted process involved in the design of catalytic converters. Numerical simulation is suggested as a viable method for predicting catalyst performance and investigating catalytic properties. The study models the oxidation of hydrogen, carbon monoxide, methane, and C₃H₆ using a detailed surface reaction model and a two-dimensional flow field description. The analysis is based on the change in the ratio of precious metal (Pt/Rh) and its impact on pollutant emissions as a function of temperature. The research's objective is to verify the computational fluid dynamics (CFD) analysis through experimental analysis from a reference paper, underscoring the importance of understanding the behavior of catalytic converters in the context of emission mitigation. (11)

The research involves utilizing CAD software to design and modify the catalytic converter. Reference is taken from conventional catalytic converters to assess the impact of design parameter changes. Specific modifications include altering the honeycomb structure, shifting the inlet pipe to the center for better flow distribution, and creating a conical section at the entry and exit of the casing to avoid sudden expansion and contraction effects. These design enhancements aim to achieve more uniform flow distribution and reduce pressure losses within the catalytic converter. This endeavor aligns with broader efforts to reduce exhaust emissions from internal combustion engines, aligning with stringent environmental regulations. The catalytic converter, as a pivotal component in emission control, plays a crucial role in achieving these goals. Therefore, this research seeks to contribute to the development of more efficient catalytic converters that can help mitigate the environmental impact of engine exhaust while maintaining or enhancing engine performance.

Pyrolysis is a thermal process that breaks down long-chain polymer molecules into simpler compounds under controlled temperature and pressure conditions, producing oil, gas, and char as byproducts. Research indicates that PET waste can yield oil ranging from 23% to 40% through pyrolysis, making it a suitable candidate for this process. HDPE (High-density polyethylene), known for its strength and durability, is commonly used in products like milk bottles and toys. Studies have shown that HDPE waste can yield oil up to 80.88% through pyrolysis, demonstrating its potential as a feedstock for fuel production. On the other hand, PVC (Polyvinyl chloride), composed primarily of chlorine and carbon, poses challenges due to the release of toxic substances at high temperatures during pyrolysis. However, some research efforts have explored the conversion of PVC waste into oil, albeit with limitations. (12)

To provide context and build upon existing knowledge in this field, the following sections will delve into a literary survey, detailed descriptions of catalytic converters, their components, and the experimental setup used in this research. Furthermore, this work will explore the achievements and limitations of catalytic converters, shedding light on the challenges and opportunities in this critical area of automotive technology. (13)

2. Mathematic modeling

The commercial Ansys Fluent CFD application is employed to model the flow through the catalytic converter. Darcy's law [14] is used to define the inertial and viscous terms of the monolith, which are derived by conducting discrete channel simulations for a single monolith flow channel at the specified range of flow conditions. The monolith is classified as a porous zone.

$$\rho \frac{Du}{Dt} = -\frac{\partial p}{\partial x} + dtv(\mu gradu) + Smx \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

$$\rho \frac{Dv}{Dt} = -\frac{\partial p}{\partial y} + dtv(\mu gradv) + Smy \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

$$\rho \frac{Dw}{Dt} = -\frac{\partial p}{\partial z} + dtv(\mu gradw) + Szx \dots\dots\dots (3)$$

Governing equations of the flow of a compressible Newtonian fluid

$$Continuity \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial x} + dtv(\rho u) = 0 \dots\dots\dots (4)$$

1)x – momentum

$$\frac{\partial(\rho u)}{\partial x} + div(\rho uu) = -\frac{\partial p}{\partial x} + div(\mu gradu) + Smx \dots\dots\dots (5)$$

2)y – momentum

$$\frac{\partial(\rho v)}{\partial x} + div(\rho vu) = -\frac{\partial p}{\partial y} + div(\mu gradv) + Smy \dots\dots\dots (6)$$

3)z – momentum

$$\frac{\partial(\rho w)}{\partial z} + div(\rho wu) = -\frac{\partial p}{\partial y} + div(\mu gradw) + Smz \dots\dots\dots (7)$$

4)Energy

$$\frac{\partial(\rho i)}{\partial t} + div(\rho iu) = -\frac{\partial p}{\partial y} + div(k gradT) + \varphi + Sl \dots\dots\dots (8)$$

3. Experimental Work

This research investigation focuses on assessing the performance of the catalytic converter and its design modifications using a combination of CAD (Computer-Aided Design) simulations and real-world experiments. This work provides a detailed account of the experimental procedures, methodologies, and findings.

3.1 Design of Catalytic Converter Using CAD

3.2 CAD Design, Geometry and Modification in base design.

The initial design of the catalytic converter was created using SOLIDWORKS, with reference to conventional catalytic converters. The purpose was to assess the impact of design modifications on various parameters. The basic design served as a foundation for simulation, and major dimensions were determined. **Fig. 1** and **2** portraits the catalytic Converter and modified Honeycomb structure developed using SolidWorks. Several modifications were made to the base design to improve the catalytic converter's performance. These modifications included changes to the honeycomb structure, diameter of holes, thickness of the honeycomb, and the addition of conical sections at the inlet and outlet. The shape of the catalytic converter was also altered from the traditional circular shape to an oblong or oval shape. This change was made to enhance the efficiency of the converter in reducing harmful emissions. The developed

wireframemodelis alsodisplayed inFig. 3

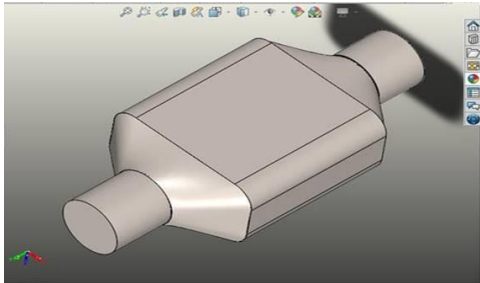


Fig. 1. Catalytic Converter in Solid Works

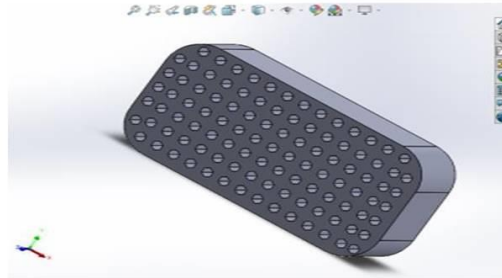


Fig.2 Modified Honeycomb Structure

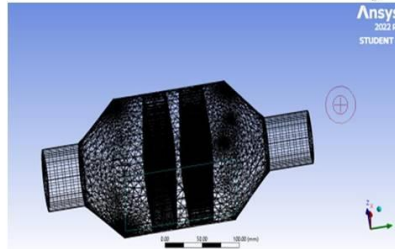


Fig. 3 Wireframe model in ANSYS

3.3 Meshing

Fig. 4 to conduct simulations, only the internal wetted surfaces were extracted from the CAD model and meshed in the ANSYS Workbench. This meshing was crucial for performing CFD (Computation al Fluid Dynamics) simulations. Various assumptions were made for the simulations, including the assumption of steady flow, uniform fluid entering the domain through the inlet, and isotropic material properties.(7)

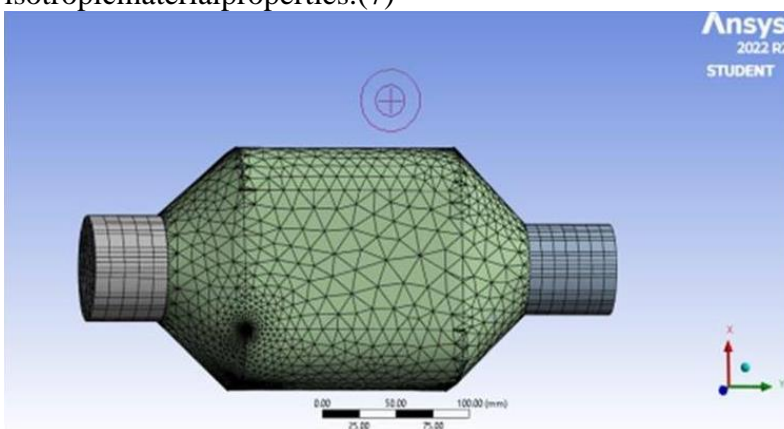


Fig.4 Meshing of the Catalytic Converter

3.4 Analysis of Catalytic Converter

The models designed in SOLIDWORKS were imported into ANSYS for CFD analysis. The analysis involved measuring velocity distribution, dynamic pressure distribution, and turbulent intensity.

nsityfordifferent models from Fig.5

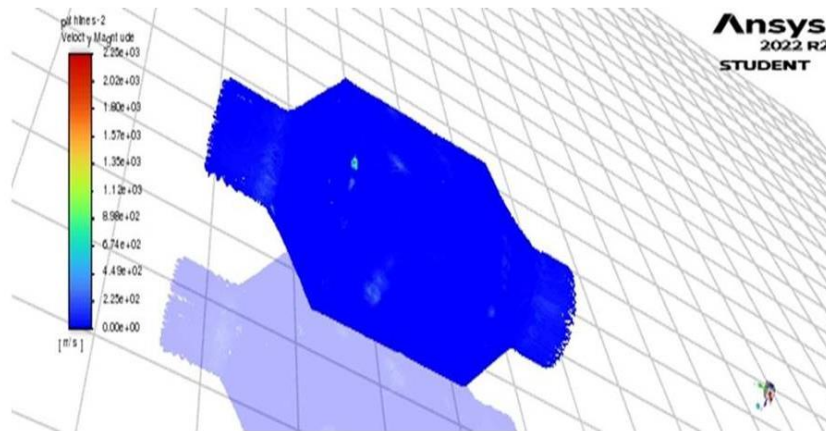


Fig.5 Total velocity

3.5 Conditions

3.5.1 FlowCondition

Table1FlowConditionforCatalytic Converter	
OuterCaseMaterial	STAINLESSSTEEL416
InletCondition	25m/s
OutletCondition	NoBackPressure
OutsideOperatingTemperature	300K
CADSoftware	SOLIDWORK
MeshandAnalysis	ANSYS
Solver	FLUENT

3.5.2 BoundaryCondition

Table2:CellZoneConditions		
Location	Material	Value
Fluid	CO andAir mixture	Density = 0.7535 kg/m ³ Viscosity=3.0926 *10 ⁻⁰⁵ kg/m-s

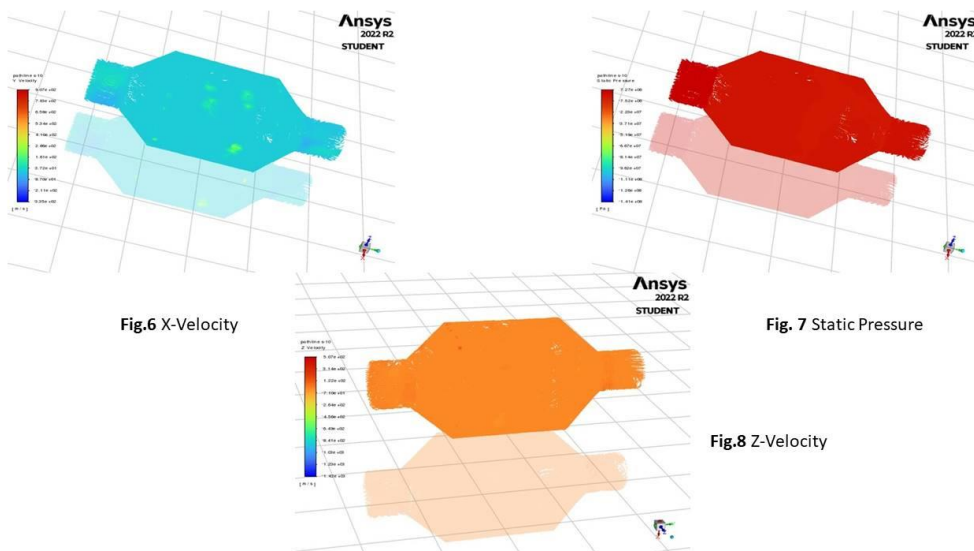
3.5.3 MaterialSpecification

Table3MaterialSpecification	
PhysicalProperties/Substance	ferrous-sulfate-heptahydrate
Formula	FeSO4.7H2O
Density(kg/m ³)	1898
SpecificHeatCp(J/kg-K)	1418.96
ThermalConductivity(W/m-K)	Kinetictheory
Viscosity(Kg/m-S)	Kinetictheory
MolecularWeightkg/kg-mol	278.02
EnthalpyJ/kg-mol	-988260800

EntropyJ/kg-mol-K	409100
TemperatureReference(K)	298

3.6 AnalysisDiagram

Fig. 6 Velocitydistributionacrossthecatalyticconverterwasanalyzed. Fig.7 Different speed conditions were studied to understand howvelocity affects fluid flowwithinthe converter.Fig.8 The pressuredistributionwithinthecatalyticconverterwasinvestigated.Thisanalysisrevealedhowpressure evels changedatdifferent speeds.(8)Turbulent intensity, representing wind velocity fluctuations, was assessed across the catalytic converter. Turbulence levels were compared at different sections. The experimental work conducted in this research aimed to evaluate the performance of the catalytic converter designand its modifications. Both CAD simulations and actual tests were used to provide insight intohow design modifications affected the catalytic converter's fluid flow, pressure distribution, andturbulencelevels.



3.7 Test Engine Setup

A multi-cylinder, four-stroke, CRDI diesel engine placed on an engine bed was used for the experimental work.(2)

The load was measured using a load cell, and an eddy current dynamometer of the water-cooled type was connected to the engine to provide precise loading. Various parameters, including cylinder pressure, heat release rate (HRR), and crank angle pulses, were monitored and recorded using a data acquisition system (DAS). A non-contact optical sensor placed close to the flywheel was used to keep the engine running at a constant speed of 1000 rpm. A high-precision flow meter was installed to calculate fuel flow rates at specific time intervals. K-type thermocouples placed at various positions within the cylinder chamber were used to measure exhaust gas temperatures (EGT). Additionally, an AVL Di Gas 444 exhaust gas analyzer was used to assess CO, HC, and NOx emissions. The experimental setup was monitored and controlled using Lab VIEW software installed on a computer.



Fig 9 : Test Engine Setup

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Design and Analysis of Catalytic Converter

4.1.1 CFD Analysis and Simulation Results

The design modifications of the catalytic converter aimed to enhance its performance in reducing harmful emissions. These modifications included changes to the honeycomb structure, diameter of holes, thickness of the honeycomb, and the addition of conical sections at the inlet and outlet. The traditional circular shape was also altered to an oblong or oval shape to improve efficiency.

To evaluate the impact of these design changes, Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) simulations were conducted using ANSYS Workbench. The internal wetted surfaces of the CAD model were meshed for CFD analysis.



Fig 10 : Modified Honeycomb Structure

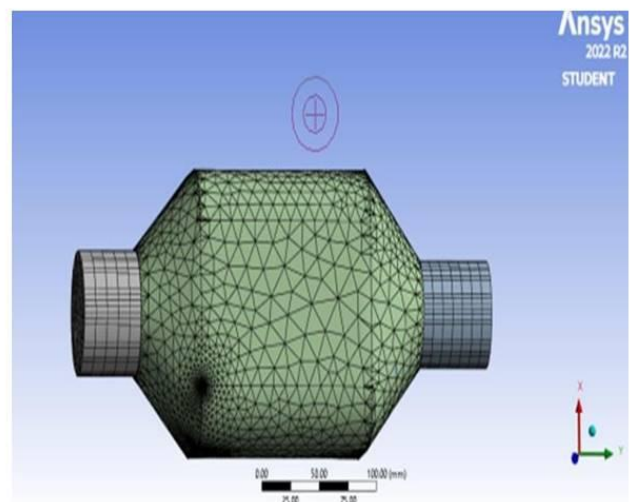


Fig 11: Meshing of the Catalytic Converter

The CFD analysis involved measuring velocity distribution, dynamic pressure distribution, and turbulent intensity for different models. The results indicated improved velocity distribution and pressure distribution for the modified design when compared to the conventional model. The simulations showed that the proposed design exhibited more uniform flow, lower turbulence, and less back pressure for exhaust gases. These findings suggest that the design modifications have the potential to enhance the catalytic converter's performance in reducing emissions.

4.2 Emission Control with Reducing Agents

Furthermore, alongside the design analysis, the research delved into the application of different reducing agents for the purpose of NO_x emission reduction. The study specifically investigated Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) technology, which utilizes various reducing agents such as Ad Blue solution, Formic acid, and Glucose. Notably, Formic acid emerged as a highly effective option for mitigating NO_x emissions, surpassing the performance of the traditional Ad Blue solution. Under full load conditions, Formic acid achieved a remarkable reduction of up to 69.47% in NO_x emissions in comparison to conventional catalytic converters. This study underscores the potential viability of Formic acid as a reducing agent in the context of NO_x reduction in diesel engines. (9)

4.3 Emission Control and Analysis

4.3.1 Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) Emissions

Fig. 12 indicates the Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is an unavoidable byproduct of the combustion process and is not chemically reactive like other pollutants such as carbon monoxide (CO) or hydrocarbons (HC). Hence, catalytic converters do not directly reduce CO₂ emissions. However, catalytic converters indirectly contribute to reducing CO₂ emissions by mitigating other pollutants that contribute to climate change. For instance, catalytic converters are essential in lowering emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and NO_x.

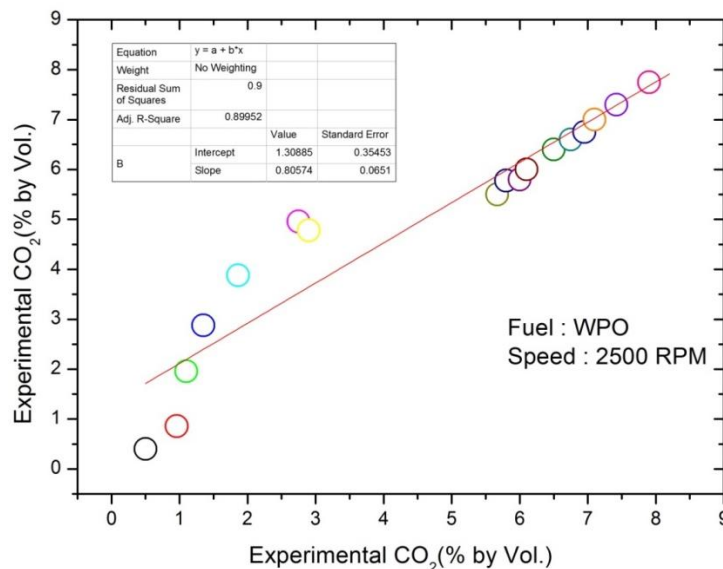


Figure: 12 Comparison of MRLP prediction of CO₂ with measured data for the 20 data points

4.3.2 Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x) Emissions

Nitrogen oxide (NO_x) emissions from a catalytic converter are influenced by the speed of the vehicle. Generally, higher speeds correspond to higher NO_x emissions. (11) At lower speeds, NO_x emissions from the catalytic converter are typically lower. This is primarily because the engine operates at reduced intensity during low-speed driving, resulting in reduced exhaust production. Furthermore, catalytic converters are most efficient within a temperature range of 400°C to 600°C, which is reached more rapidly at lower speeds. Conversely, as the vehicle's speed increases,

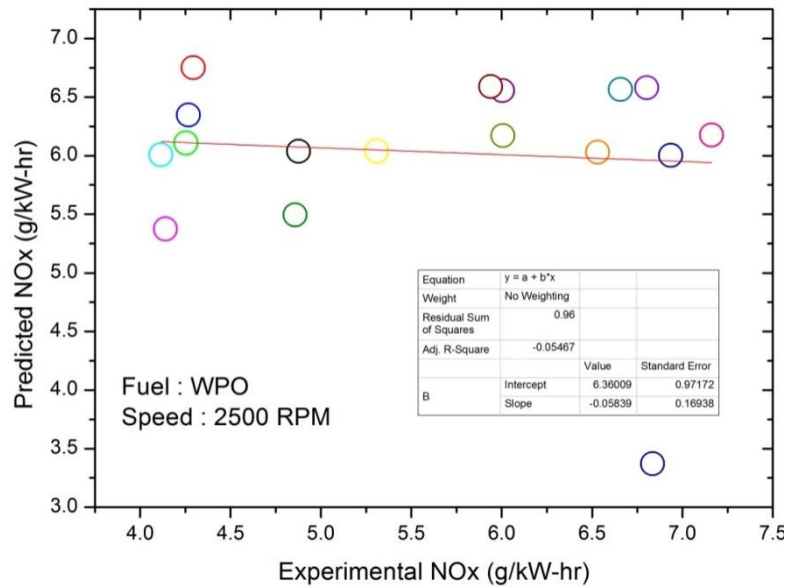


Figure: 13 Comparison of MRLP prediction of NO_x with measured data for the 20 data points

4.3.3 Hydrocarbon(HC)Emissions

The levels of hydrocarbon (HC) emissions from a vehicle's catalytic converter are influenced by various factors, including the vehicle's speed. Vehicle speed can impact the catalytic converter's efficiency in converting harmful exhaust gases into less harmful compounds.

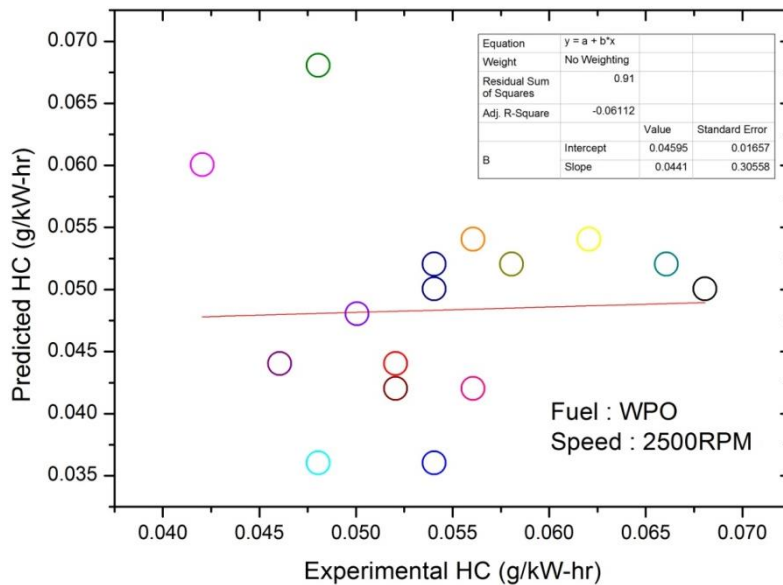


Figure: 14 Comparison of MRLP prediction of HG with measured data for the 20 data points

4.3.4 CarbonMonoxide(CO)Emissions

Fig 15 displays a comparison between experimental and predicted CO values. Due to the catalytic converter's performance being dependent on the temperature of the exhaust gases, vehicle speed has an impact on carbon monoxide (CO) emissions from the converter. At lower speeds, the catalytic converter may not reach its optimal operating temperature, leading to higher CO emissions. However, at higher speeds, the converter can achieve its optimal temperature more rapidly, resulting in lower CO emissions.(13)

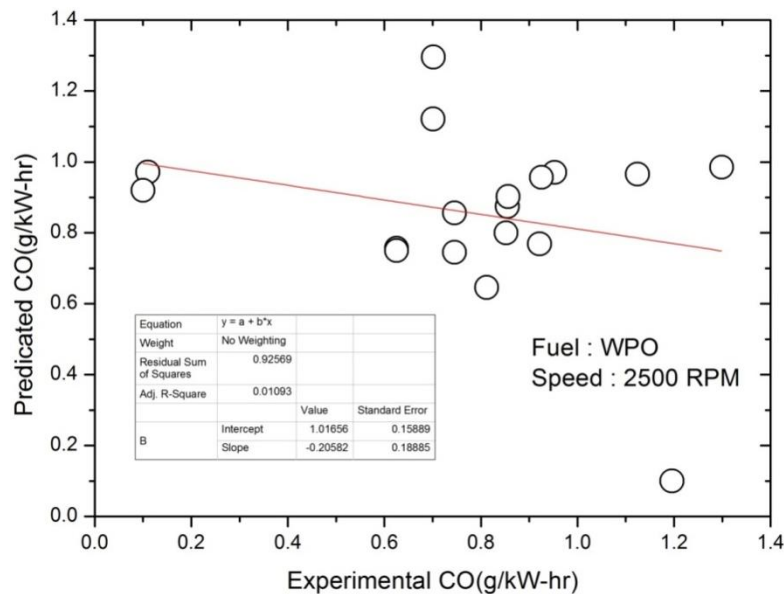


Figure: 15 Comparison of MRLP prediction of CO with measured data for the 20 data points

5. Conclusion

In this study, we conducted a comprehensive analysis of fluid flow within both the current conventional catalytic converter design and a proposed innovative design. The investigation included an assessment of velocity, dynamic pressure, and turbulent intensity contours to evaluate the performance of these designs. The following summarizes our key findings and contributions: We embarked on a thorough examination of fluid flow dynamics in conventional and proposed catalytic converter designs. Our study involved the use of cutting-edge software tools, including SOLIDWORKS for creating the new catalytic converter filter design and ANSYS FLUENT for conducting Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) tests. We explored the potential for enhancing the performance of catalytic converters through innovative design modifications.

The analysis of fluid flow dynamics revealed that the proposed design exhibits notable advantages over the conventional design. The velocity distribution in the proposed design is more uniform, contributing to improved performance. The proposed design displays reduced turbulence as the fluid enters the catalytic converter, minimizing disruptions in flow. Back pressure in the proposed design is significantly lower and more uniformly distributed compared to the current model, resulting in improved exhaust system efficiency. The proposed design shows cases substantial improvements over the conventional model, offering enhanced uniformity, reduced turbulence, and optimized exhaust system operation.

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