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## Investigation of Bacterial and Fungal Load of Five Printing House in Kahramanmaraş City

Ufuk YILMAZ<sup>1\*</sup>, Ferudun KOÇER<sup>2</sup>  
Ahmet TUTUŞ<sup>3</sup>, Sinan SÖNMEZ<sup>4</sup>

\*Sorumlu yazar:kufu27@hotmail.com

<sup>1</sup>Kahramanmaraş Sutcu Imam University, Forest Industry Engineering

Orcid ID: 0000-0001-8240-1294/kufu27@hotmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Kahramanmaraş Sutcu Imam University, Bioengineering

Orcid ID: 000-0002-8749-7106/kocerferudun@gmail.com

<sup>3</sup>Kahramanmaraş Sutcu Imam University, Forest Industry Engineering

Orcid ID: 0000-0003-2922-4916/atutus@gmail.com

<sup>4</sup>Marmara University - School of Applied Sciences / Department of Food Technologies

Orcid ID: 0000-0003-3126-9590/ssonmez78@gmail.com

**Abstract:** Employee health is one of the most important issues in the printing sector as well as in all sectors. In addition to the chemical substances in printing, some of the pathogenic bacteria and fungi that are formed in the environment may threaten the working health if factors such as the printing materials used, humidity and temperature in the environment can not be controlled. In our study, it was aimed to determine the bacterial and fungal load in the internal environment of the printing houses existing in different regions in Kahramanmaraş Province. In the scope of the study, petri plate method was used for indoor sampling. Rose Bengal Streptomycin Agar (RSBA) was used for sampling. After sampling, incubation was performed at 27°C for 7 days. After incubation, morphological characteristics of fungal colonies were examined and pure cultures were transferred to selective media. Fungus colonies were identified as genus and species level with morphological characteristics. According to the results of the study, it was determined that the printing houses were exposed to indoor pathogens intensely. The most fungi are *Penicillium* and *Aspergillus* species were found to be followed by *Cladosporium* and *Alternaria* species. Among the identified species, species known as allergy sources have been identified. In such environments, it is necessary to take preventive measures for these microorganisms.

**Keywords:** Printing house, fungus, bacteria, allergy

### Kahramanmaraş'taki Beş Matbaanın Bakteri ve Mantar Yükünün İncelenmesi

Çalışan sağlığı tüm sektörlerde olduğu gibi matbaacılık sektöründe de en önemli konulardan biridir. Matbaacılıkta kullanılan kimyasal maddelerin yanı sıra kullanılan baskı altı malzemeler ortamdaki nem, sıcaklık gibi etkenlerin kontrol altında tutulamaması durumunda ortamda bulunan bazı patojen bakteriler ve mantarlar çalışan sağlığını tehdit edebilir. Bu çalışmada Kahramanmaraş ilinde bulunan farklı mahallelerde faaliyet gösteren matbaaların iç ortamında bakteri ve mantar yükünün belirlenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Çalışma kapsamında iç ortamdan petri plak yöntemi ile örnekleme yapılmıştır. Örnekleme için Rose Bengal Streptomisin Agar (RSBA) kullanılmıştır. Örnekleme sonrası laboratuvarda 7 gün süre ile bırakılmıştır. İnkübasyon sonrası fungal koloniler morfolojik özellikleri incelenerek seçici besiyerlerine saf kültürleri elde edilmiştir. Fungus kolonileri morfolojik kriterler doğrultusunda cins ve tür düzeyinde tanımlamaları yapılmıştır. Çalışma sonuçlarına göre matbaalarda birçok fungus türüne maruziyet olduğu belirlenmiştir. Bu fungus türlerinin başında *Penicillium* ve *Aspergillus* türlerinin yer aldığı, bunları *Cladosporium* ve *Alternaria* türlerinin takip ettiği belirlenmiştir. Bu türler içerisinde alerji kaynağı olarak bilinen türler tespit edilmiştir. Bu gibi ortamlarda bu mikroorganizmaları önleyici tedbirler alınması gerekliliği ortaya konulmuştur.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Matbaa, mantar, bakteri, alerji



## Introduction

With the developing industrialization in the world, the number of diseases caused by industrial working environments has increased. For this reason, studies are carried out to determine occupational diseases originating from the working environment. With the development of technology, the printing industry has become connected with almost all sectors (Yavuz, 2016). According to social security Institution statistics, Turkey in the printing industry in 2012 395 cases of occupational diseases were observed. 395 occupational disease cases were seen in the printing sector in 2012. 173 employees have become permanently incapacitated as a result of occupational disease. The causes of these diseases are the pathogen and allergen bacteria and fungi that are constantly growing in the printing house as well as the hazardous chemicals used in the facility environment. There are many studies examining the bacterial and fungal concentrations for the determination of indoor air quality (Adams et al 2014; Jafari et al, 2015; Adams et al,2015; Hanson et al, 2016; Nevalainen et al, 2015; Güneş Et al, 2016; Weigl et al, 2016; Ogbu et al, 2016; Benammar et al, 2017; Pokhum et al, 2018). Bacterial infections and fungal allergens constitute a significant expense in developed countries' health expenditures.

The purpose of this study determine the bacterial and fungal load in different printing houses. Determination of indoor air fungal and bacterial load is important in determining the microorganisms that cause the spread of disease and taking necessary precautions.

## Material and method

Sampling was made during the working hours of the staff in 5 different printing houses operating intensively in Kahramanmaraş city center.

**Preparation of media:** Rose-bengal-Streptomycin Agar (RBA) was used as first medium for the isolation and diagnosis of bacteria (Biyik et al, 2005, 2011a). The isolates obtained after incubation were inoculated into flat agar tubes for short-term storage on special media (Malt Extract Agar, Czapek Dox Agar) for diagnosis (Biyik et al. 2005). Gram Stain (GSA) was used to determine bacterial load.

**Sampling from the station:** In the samples, Gravity based Petri Plate Method was used. Simultaneously at all stations, it is taken from a height of 1.5 meters above the ground. Five (5) petri plates containing the appropriate medium were provided to contact with air by leaving the lid open for 15 minutes. The closed plates were wrapped with stretch film and brought to the laboratory for incubation. Incubation was performed

for 48 hours at 37 °C for growth of bacteria and 7-10 days at 27 °C for growth of fungi (Sarica et al, 2002).

**Identification:** The total number of microfungi was determined according to the macroscopic appearance obtained at the end of incubation. The following sources were used for identification of microfungi: Öngül (1991), Samson and Pitt (2000), Cengiz et al and Jafari et al (2013) and Walsh et al. (2018). Based on these sources, identification of genus and species level was performed under light microscope and macroscopic and microscopic structures.

## Results

The number of bacteria in indoor air of the printing houses and the genera and species level of microfungi in this study were made. The following Table 1 shows the percentage of bacteria and microfungi.

Table 1: Percentage of bacteria and microfungi determined in this study

Station	Bacteria (%)	Microfungi (%)
1	35,90	7,14
2	14,53	39,29
3	5,98	0,00
4	39,32	53,57
5	4,27	0,00

When Table 1 was examined, it was seen that the highest bacterial load was in station number 4 and the least bacterial load was in station number 5. At the same time, microfungi were not found in stations 3. and 5. while fungal diversity was determined to be the highest in station 4. When the table was examined, it was determined that the bacteria rate was the highest (39.32%) and the microfungus percentage was the highest (53.57%) in the 4th station. It was determined that the stations with the lowest bacterial density are stations 3 and 5. The majority of bacteria and microfungus organisms were found to be in the paper stack area in the printing house. It should be noted that the higher the bacterial flora in the indoor air of the studied facility, the higher the number of microfungi. Therefore, ventilation systems should be developed and widespread use in working environments.

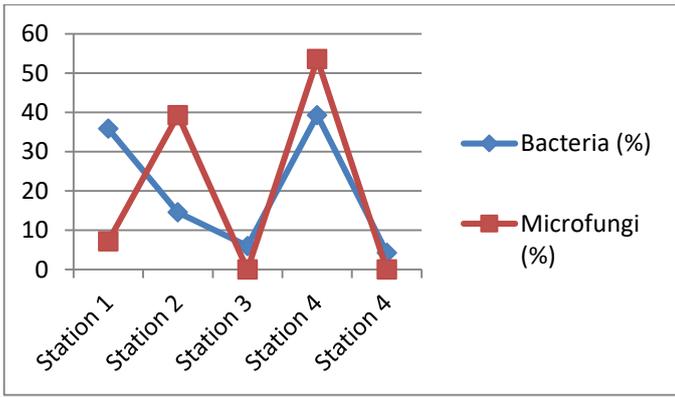


Figure 1. Graphical representation of bacteria and fungi

Table 2 below shows the microfungus species identified in the study.

Table 2. Microfungus species identified in the study

Mikrofungi genus and species	
<b>Aspergillus P. Micheli ex Haller</b>	Samson and Pitt, (2000)
<i>Aspergillus niger</i> Tiegh.	
<i>Aspergillus flavus</i> Link	Campbell and Johnson, (2013)
<i>Aspergillus fumigatus</i> Fresen.	
<b>Alternaria Nees</b>	
<i>Alternaria alternata</i> (Fr.) Keissl.	
<i>Alternaria brassicicola</i> (Schwein.) Wiltshire	Hasenekoğlu, (1991)
<b>Penicillium Link</b>	
<i>Penicillium</i> sp.	
<i>Penicillium chrysogenum</i> Thom	
<i>Penicillium brevicompactum</i> Dierckx	Samson and Pitt, (2000)
<i>Penicillium commune</i> Link	Pitt, (2000)
<i>Penicillium thomii</i> Maire	
<b>Mucor Fresen.</b>	
<i>Mucor hiemalis</i> Rehm	Hasenekoğlu, (1991)
<b>Cladosporium Link</b>	
<i>Cladosporium cladosporioides</i> (Fresen.) A. de Vries	
<i>Cladosporium oxysporum</i> Berk.	Hasenekoğlu, (1991)
<i>Cladosporium oxysporum</i> Berk.	Curtis

In our country, many studies have been conducted to determine the indoor air fungal and bacterial load (İmalı et al, 2011a; Sarıca et al, 2002; Aydogdu et al, 2005;). The determination of indoor air fungal and bacterial concentration is important for the prevention of parameters affecting human health in different working environments. Demirel et al. (2017) reported that *Aspergillus flavus* fungus is a thermotolerant and may be infectious agent. In our study, *Aspergillus* species were identified in the sampling area. *Aspergillus* spores, which are common allergen sources and other diseases, were identified (Sugeçti et al. 2018) [Table 2]. *Aspergillus* species, which is a dominant species in the study, is intensively studied by many scientist Pitt and Taylor (2000), Samson and Pitt (2000), İmalı et al.(2011b), Aydogdu et al. (2005), Nascimento et al. (2019).

Alabbasy (2019) stated that *Penicillium* spp., *Aspergillus* spp., *Alternaria* spp., and *Cladosporium* spp. were found in his study on paper mill. *Penicillium* species were found to be the most common species in the printing facilities where sampling is taken within the scope of the study. This was followed by *Aspergillus*, *Alternaria*, *Cladosporium* and *Mucor* respectively. Some species belonging to these genera are found to be common in the air and spores have all over the world (İmalı et al, 2011b)[Fig. 1]. It can also be concluded that the paper origin used also contributes to the reproductive environment of the microfungi. The images in Figure 1, shows the images of the microfungi identified in the study.

Routine health screening of working people is important as an indicator of immune system parameters, early detection and prevention of bacteria and fungal infections. In addition, improvement of working conditions (air filtration (Burrell, 1991) removal of biological resources (Nevalainen et al, 2015) etc.) is necessary to protect employee health. It is possible to develop immunoprotective antifungal strategies (prophylaxis, empirical and preventive).

**Conclusion**

Identifying and identifying microfungi in the workplace is important for eliminating employee exposure. *Penicillium*, *Aspergillus*, *Alternaria*, *Cladosporium* and *Mucor* species which are commonly found in airborne microfungi have been reported to be allergen. It has been demonstrated that the necessary controls of the personel working in closed environments should be made and that they should be included in the diseases list such as COPD, asthma and allergy..

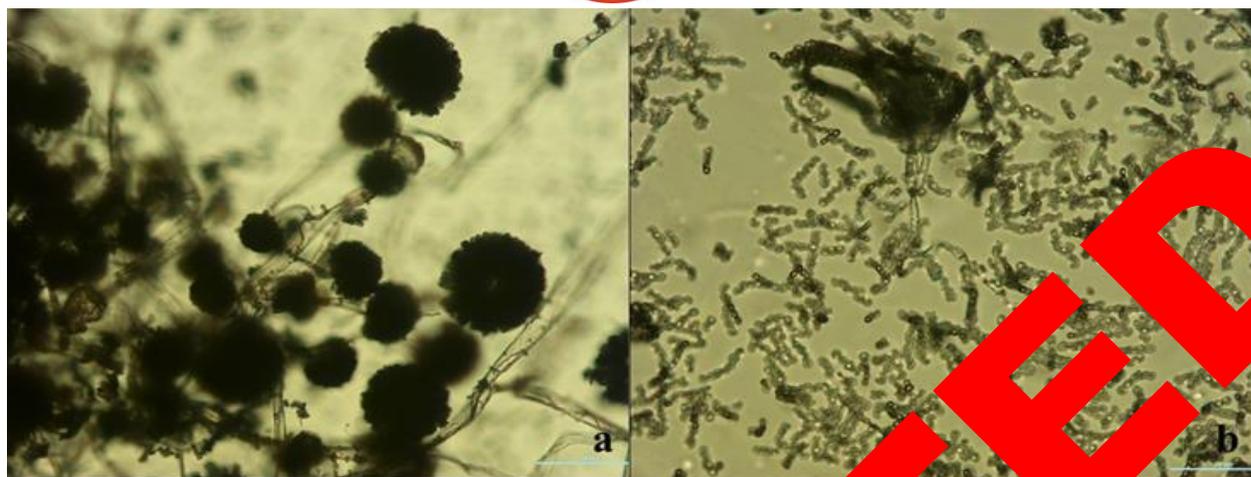


Figure 2. Images of microfungi obtained in the study [a: *Aspergillus* sp. b: *Penicillium* sp.] (40x)

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