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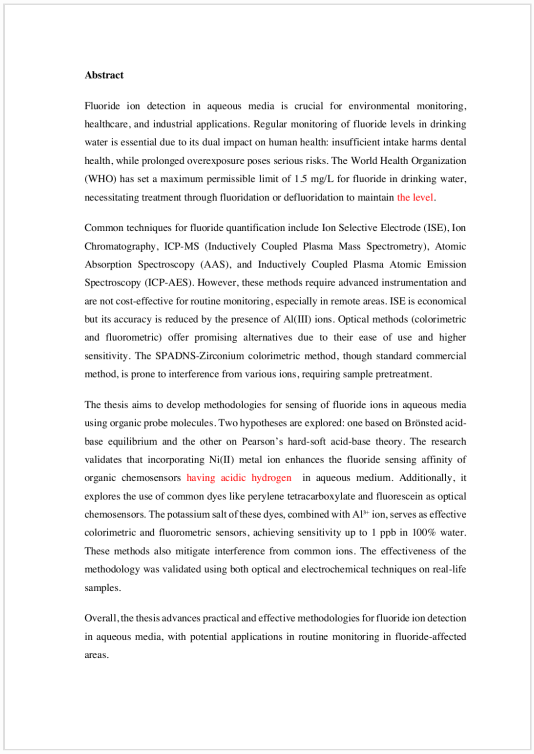
File name:	luoride_ion_in_Aqueous_Medium_Using_Organic_Probe_Mol...
File size:	150.2K
Page count:	63
Word count:	24,278
Character count:	135,232
Submission date:	24-Jul-2024 10:26AM (UTC+0530)
Submission ID:	2421663577



Abstract

Fluoride ion detection in aqueous media is crucial for environmental monitoring, healthcare, and industrial applications. Regular monitoring of fluoride levels in drinking water is essential due to its dual impact on human health: insufficient intake harms dental health, while prolonged overexposure poses serious risks. The World Health Organization (WHO) has set a maximum permissible limit of 1.5 mg/L for fluoride in drinking water, necessitating treatment through fluoridation or defluoridation to maintain the level.

Common techniques for fluoride quantification include Ion Selective Electrode (ISE), Ion Chromatography, ICP-MS (Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry), Atomic Absorption Spectroscopy (AAS), and Inductively Coupled Plasma Atomic Emission Spectroscopy (ICP-AES). However, these methods require advanced instrumentation and are not cost-effective for routine monitoring, especially in remote areas. ISE is economical but its accuracy is reduced by the presence of Al(III) ions. Optical methods (colorimetric and fluorometric) offer promising alternatives due to their ease of use and higher sensitivity. The SPADNS-Zirconium colorimetric method, though standard commercial method, is prone to interference from various ions, requiring sample pretreatment.

The thesis aims to develop methodologies for sensing of fluoride ions in aqueous media using organic probe molecules. Two hypotheses are explored: one based on Brönsted acid-base equilibrium and the other on Pearson's hard-soft acid-base theory. The research validates that incorporating Ni(II) metal ion enhances the fluoride sensing affinity of organic chemosensors having acidic hydrogen in aqueous medium. Additionally, it explores the use of common dyes like perylene tetracarboxylate and fluorescein as optical chemosensors. The potassium salt of these dyes, combined with Al^{3+} ion, serves as effective colorimetric and fluorometric sensors, achieving sensitivity up to 1 ppb in 100% water. These methods also mitigate interference from common ions. The effectiveness of the methodology was validated using both optical and electrochemical techniques on real-life samples.

Overall, the thesis advances practical and effective methodologies for fluoride ion detection in aqueous media, with potential applications in routine monitoring in fluoride-affected areas.

Methodological Development for Sensing of Fluoride ion in Aqueous Medium Using Organic Probe Molecules

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