

DESIGN OF SOLAR DRYER

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Abstract

Drying of food item is important because excess of water lead to loss of food item. To maintain the proper amount of water with good amount of nutrients drying is used. Dryer is used in many industries but that dryer works on fossil fuels. Solar dryer saves the energy and the results obtain are good. Therefore, to design a dryer is a tedious thing, because the purpose of drying is different for different product and based on that the technique of design is different. There is no standard method for designing the dryer. By reviewing number of researches papers a design procedure is evaluated which is shown in this paper. The aim is to give the step by step procedure to design the solar dryer. This procedure can be used by any researcher which will help them to design any type of dryer.

Keywords: solar dryer, design of solar dryer, efficiency of dryer, performance analysis of dryer.

Nomenclature:

I_{sc} – Solar Constant (1353 W/m²)

I_{DN} – Direct Radiation

B- Atmospheric extinction (value is in range of 0.14 – 0.21)

β – Solar Altitude angle.

i - Latitude

Hr- Hour angle (The “Hour angle” is defined as the hour before or after the noontime multiplied by 15)

δ – Solar declination

n - the day of the year.

C – coefficient (0.058 for winter and 0.135 for the summer season)

F_{ss} - ratio coefficient

S- Solar tilt angle from the horizon

$I_{r\theta}$ - Reflected radiation

$k_{r\theta}$ - reflect coefficient of the environment its value is 0.2

F_{sg} – Collector angle

I_t = Total radiation

θ – incidence angle

Φ -Solar Azimuth

$lat\phi$ - latitude of the collector location

U_L -Total heat loss coefficient

U_L - Top heat loss coefficient

U_b - The bottom heat loss coefficient

U_e - The Edge heat loss coefficient

M_1 - initial moisture content of grain

W_1 - initial weight and

M_2 - desired moisture content

W_2 - final grain weight
 m_w = quantity or mass of water, kg
 η is the collector efficiency, mostly in the range of 30 to 50%
 Q_1 - sensible heat
 Q_2 - heat required to evaporate the moisture from the surface of the material
 ΔT - changes in temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$)
 Q = The amount of energy required for the drying process, kJ
 h_{fg} = latent heat of evaporation, kJ/kg H₂O
 T_{pr} = product temperature
 E = total heat energy, kJ
 m' = mass flow rate of air, kg/hr
 h_f and h_i = final and initial enthalpy of drying and ambient air, respectively, kJ/kg dry air.
 t_d = drying time, hrs
 h - enthalpy, $h = 1006.9T + w[2512131.0 + 1552.4T]$
 m_{dr} = average drying rate, kg/hr
 $w_f - w_i$, final and initial humidity ratio, respectively, kg H₂O/kg dry air
 A_v - area of the air vent, m²,
 V_w - wind speed, m/s.
 L_v , - length of air vent, m,
 B_v - the width of air vent, m
 V_a = volumetric flow rate m³/sec
 H is the pressure head (height of the hot air column from the base of the dryer to the point of air discharge from the dryer), m;
 P - the air pressure, Pa;
 g - the acceleration due gravity, 9.81 m/s²
 T_a is the ambient temperature, C.
 A_{ab} – Area of absorber
 L_c – length of collector
 W – width of the collector
 I = rate of total radiation incident on the absorber 's surface (Wm^{-2});
 A_c = collector area (m²); Q_u = rate of useful energy collected by the air (W);
 Q_{cond} = rate of conduction losses from the absorber (W);
 Q_{conv} = rate of convective losses from the absorber (W);
 Q_R = rate of long wave re-radiation from the absorber (W);
 Q_p = rate of reflection losses from the absorber (W).
 ρ - Reflection coefficient of the absorber
 α - solar absorbance
 UL = overall heat transfer coefficient of the absorber ($\text{Wm}^{-2}\text{K}^{-1}$);
 T_c = temperature of the collector 's absorber (K);
 q_u - energy per unit area of the collector
 Q_g = heat gained by the air
 m_a = mass of air leaving the dryer per unit time (kgs^{-1});
 C_p = specific heat capacity of air ($\text{kJkg}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$).
 F_R - collector heat removal factor.
 L_v = latent heat (kJ kg^{-1})
 m_a = mass of drying air (kg);
 T_1 and T_2 = initial and final temperatures of the drying air respectively (K);

1. Introduction

Sun is the biggest source of energy and we don't need to pay while using this solar energy. It's a free and vital energy available on the earth. World is moving towards the green revolution where recycling of product is going on and even using of solar energy is increasing. Solar energy can be used in many ways here in this paper the design of solar dryer for drying the food item is discussed.

Thus, to get more use of this solar energy a proper design is needed which will help to get more output with less time. It is necessary to designed and developed an energy efficient solar dryer for continuous drying operations [1].

1.2. Characteristics of drying

The moisture content in the food element or any other material is not same it varies. It totally depends on its hygroscopic nature. zero moisture level can be attained in non-hygroscopic materials[3]. Fruits and vegetable are the Hygroscopic materials where it is required to keep a minimum amount of moisture [4, 5]. The moisture remains in hygroscopic material, may be bound or unbound moisture. This is due to surface tension of water as shown in Figure. 1. If the hygroscopic material is exposed to air, then it is possible that it will absorb or might desorb the moisture due the relative humidity of air. It is found that to reach the equilibrium moisture content (EMC) the vapour pressure of water in the material should be equal to the partial pressure of water in the surrounding air, [6, 7]. It is already known that theequilibrium moisture content is very important in the drying process. Because it is the moisture level up to which we can dried the product.

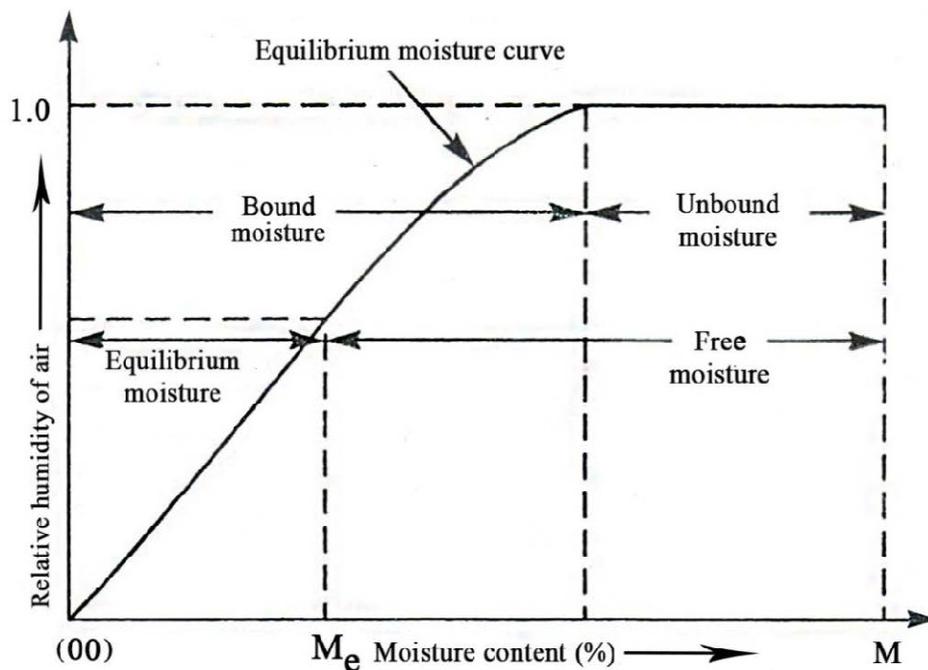


Figure. 1: Moisture in the drying material [2]

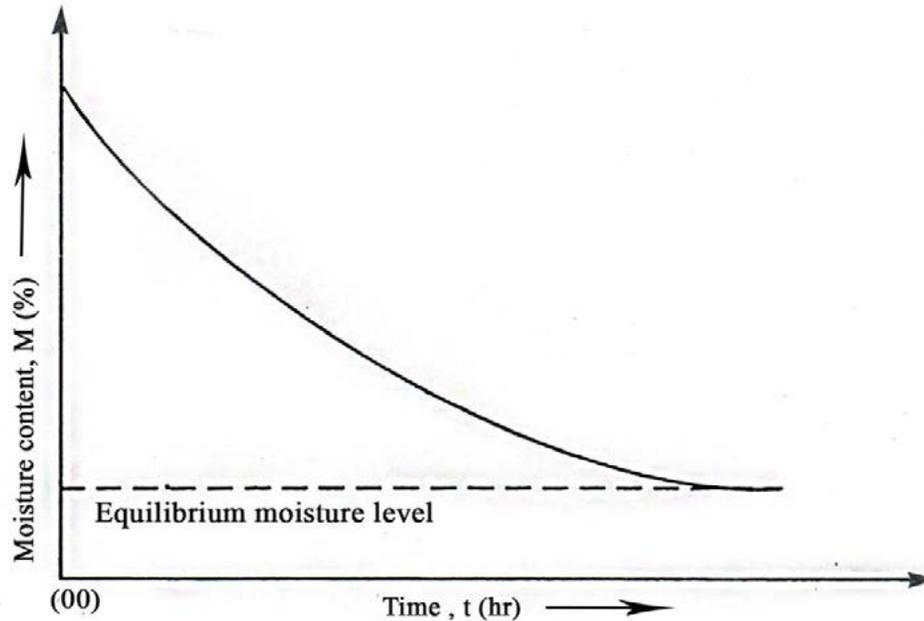


Figure. 2: Rate of moisture loss [2]

It is possible to plot a chain of drying curves. Figure.2 shows the plotted curve of moisture content M of the food material or any other material versus time. The curve explains the characteristic that with increases in time the moisture content in the product reduces drastically and this help to attain the equilibrium moisture content position. Furthermore, another curve plotted between drying rate i.e. dM/dt versus moisture content M shown in Figure.3. which explain more. The Figure explains the falling rate of moisture in the product. When the material it may be hygroscopic or non-hygroscopic dried at constant rate then the changes in its nature occurs at the critical point. From this point the falling rate started and this lead to achieve almost zero in the non-hygroscopic material. But in hygroscopic material the rate is different, here the falling rate is similar until the unbound moisture is removed. This goes on continuing until the vapour pressure of drying air not becomes equal to the vapour pressure of material [7,8]. It is seen that the zero drying rate is achieved at equilibrium stage.

The adiabatic drying means the heat content rate of air is constant. This adiabatic condition depends on many factors like air transport properties, flow rate of air and its aggregation state for material. Following Figure.4 gives the information about constant falling rate. In drying the temperature of material will starts increasing and this gives the suitable drying. To attain it we must have an appropriate control over the humidity and temperature of air. Hence, it is difficult to predict the drying time in this falling rate period, therefore it is difficult to obtain an expression for it. There are number of theories for explaining the mechanisms of drying like vapour due to concentration gradients or liquid diffusion, liquid movement due to capillary forces are given to explain the moisture movement through the drying material. But no existing theory can properly explain the drying process [9-11].

Practically it is found that the constant drying period for most of the biological materials like timber, fruits and vegetables is small and mainly it is the falling rate period. It is found that the due to affected cells and jammed interstices in high moisture content materials the diffusion of moisture content is comparatively slow.

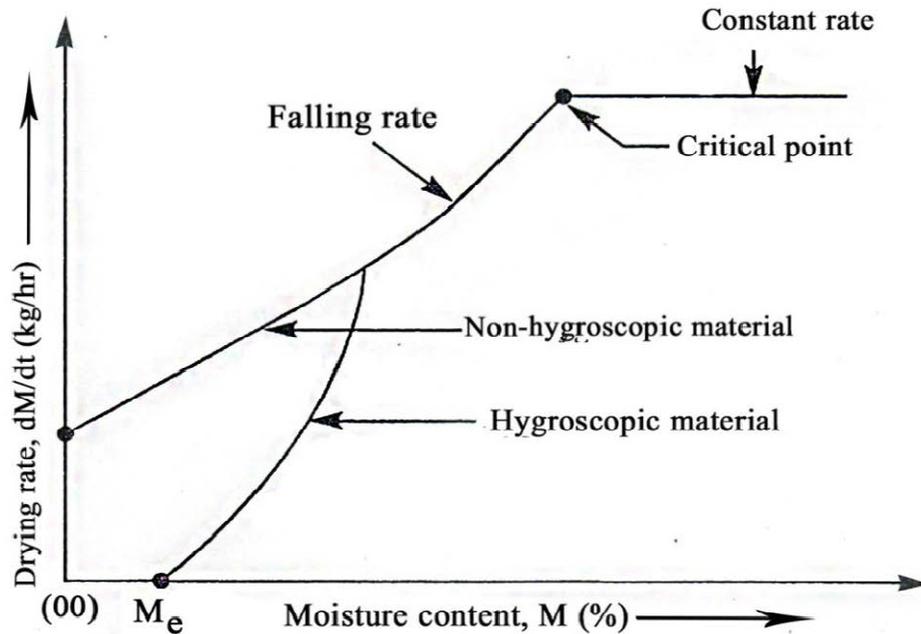


Figure. 3: Drying rate versus moisture content [2]

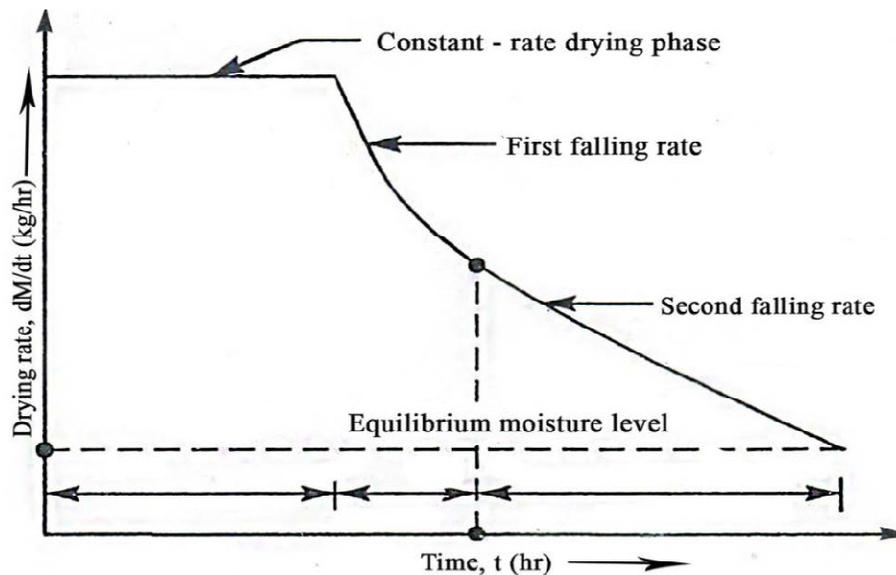


Figure.4: Drying rate versus moisture content [2]

The researchers [7, 12 and 13] have reported that, furthermore it is found that the fruits and vegetables contain starch and sugar in the liquid phase in it. This starch then migrates to the surface while drying. This led to an increase in the viscosity and resulted in a reduction of the surface vapour pressure moisture evaporation. There are two basic methods for agriculture products, i.e. by thin layer drying or deep layer drying. Thin layer drying is done for fruits and vegetables. Where the product is spread in thin cutting layers on the surface, so that the whole surface is exposed to moving air.

Change in wall temperature, air velocity and downcomer height can lead to new result in drying with multi stage in drying [14]. Some designer did the design for drying the Areca leaf for

2. Designing of Solar Dryer

Dryers main functions is to dryer the product fast. To achieve this more effectively there is a need to control some parameters, the dryer can be used for many purposes. One of the examples for this is the dryer made to form a better quality of plates from sheath of the areca palm tree. They design an indirect type forced convection solar dryer to reduce the moisture content of the sheath and then they simply formed the plate using the press machine. The dryer helps them to control the cost drastically [15]. Parameter define the design values some uses drying efficiency, drying kinetics and energy efficiency as the criteria for evaluation [16]. There is a need to find the amount of solar radiation receiving on the surface. If it is known then it will reduce the experiment time. The dynamic model with tilted surface radiation calculation was prepared and validated [17]. The parameter that are important in designing the dryer are air flow rate, collector area, and type of dryer.

Based on literature the following points are considered generally in designing of direct natural and forced convection solar dryer system [15-18]:

- a) How much amount of moisture to be removed.
- b) The daily sunshine hours for the selection of the total drying time.
- c) The air quantity needed for drying for drying time.
- d) Daily solar radiation according to the location.
- e) Velocity of air for the calculation of air vent dimensions.

2.1 Design procedure

1. Determine the Design conditions and Assumptions needed before designing i.e. product characteristic, Climatic condition, capacity of dryer.
2. Determine Initial and Final moisture (depends on product) content.
3. From gas laws equation determine amount of air to effect moisture loss.
4. Calculate the collector area, dimensions and select materials.
5. Calculate drying time.
6. Calculate the dryer chamber area, dimensions and select materials
7. Calculate the air vent dimensions and vent locations
8. Design a fan with capacity to deliver the required airflow and static pressure.
9. calculate collector efficiency.
10. Fabrication of the dryer for experimental drying tests.

There is no proper designing method for drying the solar dryer following are some design formulation which was taken from research paper. To design anything related to solar there is a need to know the solar radiation quantity in that location. It was not possible for everyone to purchase the pyranometer for the experimentation. Therefore, following mathematical calculation can give the data for solar radiation and now a days the data of solar radiation for the particular area can be get from google. Let's see the mathematical formulation of solar radiation.

2.2. The solar radiation modelling

The total radiation on any tilt or horizontal surface is divided into three types of direct, diffuse and reflected radiation [18,19]. Each type was calculated as follows:

Direct radiation [18]

$$I_{DN} = I_c e^{\frac{-B}{\sin(\beta)}} \quad (1)$$

Solar altitude angle [18,19]

$$\sin(\beta) = [\cos(i) \cdot \cos(Hr) \cdot \cos(\delta)] + [\sin(i) \cdot \sin(\delta)] \quad (2)$$

Solar Declination [19, 20]

$$\delta = 23.45 \sin\left(360 \frac{284+n}{365}\right) \quad (3)$$

Diffuse radiation [18-20]

$$I_{d\theta} = C \cdot I_{DN} \cdot F_{ss} \quad (4)$$

F_{ss} is defined as the ratio of the diffusion radiation on the tilted surface of the collector to the horizontal onestilted surface of the collector to the horizontal ones [20]

$$F_{SS} = \frac{[1 + \cos(S)]}{2} \quad (5)$$

Reflected radiation

$$I_{r\theta} = (I_{DN} + I_{d\theta}) \cdot k_{r\theta} \cdot F_{sg} \quad (6)$$

Collector angle [20]

$$F_{sg} = \frac{[1 - \cos(S)]}{2} \quad (7)$$

Total radiation[18,19]

$$I_t = I_{DN} \cdot \cos(\theta) + I_{d\theta} + I_{r\theta} \quad (8)$$

Incidence angle [18,19]

$$\cos(q) = [\cos(b) \cdot \cos(j) \cdot \sin(S)] + [\sin(b) \cdot \cos(S)] \quad (9)$$

Solar Azimuth [18,19]

$$\sin \Phi = \frac{\cos \delta \cdot \sin Hr}{\cos \beta} \quad (10)$$

the capacity of the dryer can be selected as the need and product specifications. The types of dryer are selected as per the product and climatic conditions.

The angle of tilt for solar collector / Air heater

$$\beta = 100 + \text{lat}\phi \quad (11)$$

From above equation (1) to (11) one can predict the radiance and even the tilt angle needed for collector as per the location.

2.3. The heat loss calculations for solar collector

The thermal efficiency mostly depends on thermal losses from outer surfaces of the collector. There are three main types of losses in solar collector [21].

Top heat loss coefficient

$$U_t = \left[\frac{N}{\frac{C}{T_p} \left[\frac{T_p - T_a}{N+f} \right]} + \frac{1}{h_w} \right]^{-1} + \frac{\delta (T_p^2 - T_a^2) (T_p + T_a)}{\frac{1}{d} + \frac{2N+f-1}{\epsilon_g} - N} \quad (12)$$

and

$$C = \frac{204.429 (\cos \beta)^{0.252}}{L^{0.24}} \quad (13)$$

$$d = \epsilon_p + 0.0425N (1 - \epsilon_p) \quad (14)$$

$$f = \left[\frac{9}{h_w} - \frac{9}{h_w^2} \right] \left[\frac{T_a}{316.9} \right] (1 + 0.091N) \quad (15)$$

$$h_w = 5.7 + 3.8v$$

$$e = 0.252$$

The Bottom loss coefficient.[21]

$$U_b = \frac{1}{\frac{x_i}{k_i} + \frac{x_w}{k_w} + \frac{1}{h_w}} \quad (16)$$

The Edge heat loss coefficient [21]

This loss can be ignored because it is very less as compared with the top and bottom loss. The edge loss coefficient is given as

$$U_e = 0.45 (D \times P) \frac{A_e}{A_c} \quad (17)$$

Now the total heat loss coefficient is given by.

$$U_L = U_t + U_b + U_e \quad (18)$$

The efficiency of solar collector is defined as the ratio of the useful energy gain to the incident

solar energy [21].

$$\eta_c = \frac{Q_u}{I_T \times A_c} \quad (19)$$

$$Q_u = mc_p (T - T_a) \quad (20)$$

2.3. Moisture content calculation

The moisture percent in the grain can be expressed as percentage moisture on dry matter and percentage moisture of wet grain.

$$M_{db} = \frac{Wt \text{ of Water } \times 100}{Wt \text{ of dry matter}} \quad (21)$$

Where,

$$M_{db} = \frac{[Wt \text{ of Water}] \times 100}{Wt \text{ of water} + Wt \text{ of dry matter}}$$

Or

$$M = \frac{Wt \text{ of Water } \times 100}{\text{inital grain Wt}}$$

In Grain dryer designing there is a need of calculation of moisture reduction or weight of water removed from grain. It helps to find how much air, fuel and power are needed to dry a grain.

Let us consider

$$W_2 = \frac{100 - M_1 \times W_1}{100 - M_2} \quad (22)$$

2.4. Average drying rate [25-28]

following equation used to find the average drying rate

$$m_{dr} = \frac{m_w}{t_d} \quad (23)$$

The mass of air needed for drying was calculated using equation[28]

$$m' = \frac{m_{dr}}{w_f - w_i} \quad (24)$$

2.5. Quantity of heat needed to evaporate the H₂O:

The quantity of heat required to evaporate:[25-28]

$$Q = m_w \times h_{fg} \quad (25)$$

The latent heat is calculated by equation[29]

$$h_{fg} = 4.186 * 103(597 - 0.56(T_{pr})) \quad (26)$$

The total heat energy, E(kJ) required to evaporate water was calculated as follows:

$$E = m' (h_f - h_i)t_d \quad [30] \quad (27)$$

2.4. Collector Design

The total heat required for drying consist of sensible heat and heat required to evaporate the moisture from the surface of the material. The useful heat to remove the moisture is given as:[21-25]

$$Q_u = Q_1 + Q_2$$

$$Q_1 = W_w C_p \Delta T \quad (28)$$

Where $\Delta T = (T_d - T_a)$

$$Q_2 = W_w l \quad (29)$$

Mass of moisture to be evaporated from the grain surface is calculated as follows

$$M_w = \frac{W_w (M_i - M_f)}{1 - M_f} \quad (30)$$

the area of the collector is given as follows [24,25].

$$A_c = \frac{Q_u}{\eta l_T t_d} \quad (31)$$

The suggested length to width ratio is 1:2 [24]. The another way is as follows:

The solar drying system collector area A_c , in m² can be calculated from the

following equation:

$$AcI\eta = E = m \cdot (h_f - h_i) \cdot t \quad (32)$$

Therefore, area of the solar collector is:[28]

$$Ac = \frac{E}{I\eta} \quad (33)$$

2.5.1. Air vent dimensions:

The air vent dimension and area can be calculated from below equation [25,27]

$$\text{Vent Area} = \text{width of collector} \times \text{air gap} \quad (35)$$

or

The air vent was calculated by dividing the volumetric airflow rate by wind speed:

$$A_v = \frac{V_a}{V_w} \quad (36)$$

The width of the air vent can be given by:

$$B_v = \frac{A_v}{L_v} \quad (37)$$

2.5.2. Absorber Surface Area

The surface area of the absorber A_{ab} is approximately equal to the area of the collector surface area, A_c ; this is related to the length, L_c and width, W of the solar collector as follows: [28]

$$A_{ab} = A_c = L_c \times W. \quad (38)$$

$$\text{Volume flow rate (} V_a \text{)} = \text{vent area} \times \text{air velocity} \quad (39)$$

2.6. Required pressure:

The velocity of air can be determined from following equation: [25]

$$\text{Velocity} = \frac{V_a}{\text{Area of vent}} \quad (40)$$

Air pressure can be determined by equation given by [32]:

$$P = 0.00308 \text{ g}(T_i - T_a)H \quad (41)$$

2.7. Energy balance equation

The energy balance on the absorber is obtained by equating the total heat gained to the total heat loosed by the heat absorber of the solar collector[33-41]. Therefore,

$$I \cdot A_c = Q_u + Q_{cond} + Q_{conv} + Q_R + Q_P \quad (42)$$

$$Q_L = Q_{cond} + Q_{conv} + Q_R \quad (\text{combine the three heat loss}) \quad (43)$$

$$I A_c = \tau I_T A_c \quad \text{---} \quad (44)$$

The reflected Energy from the absorber

$$Q_P = \rho \tau I_T A_c \quad (45)$$

By putting 43, 44, & 45 equation in 41

$$\tau I_T A_c = Q_u + Q_L + \rho \tau I_T A_c, \text{ or}$$

$$Q_u = \tau I_T A_c (1 - \rho) - Q_L \quad (46)$$

For an absorber $(1 - \rho) = \alpha$ and hence,

$$Q_u = (\alpha \tau) I_T A_c - Q_L \quad (47)$$

Q_L composed of different convection and radiation parts. It is presented in the following form [29]:

$$Q_L = U_L A_c (T_c - T_a) \quad (48)$$

From Equations (5) and (6) the useful energy gained by the collector is expressed as:

$$Q_u = (\alpha \tau) I_T A_c - U_L A_c (T_c - T_a) \quad (49)$$

Therefore, the energy per unit area (q_u) of the collector is

$$q_u = (\alpha \tau) I_T - U_L (T_c - T_a) \quad (50)$$

If the heated air leaving the collector is at collector temperature, the heat gained by the air

Q_g is:

$$Q_g = m_a C_{pa} (T_c - T_a) \quad (51)$$

The collector heat removal factor, FR , is the quantity that relates the actual useful energy gained of a collector, Eq. (49), to the useful gained by the air, Eq. (51). Therefore,

$$F_R = \frac{m_a C_p (T_c - T_a)}{A_c [\alpha \tau I_T - U_L (T_c - T_a)]} \quad (52)$$

Or

$$Q_g = A_c F_R [(\alpha \tau) I_T - U_L A_c (T_c - T_a)]$$

The thermal efficiency of the collector [35]

$$\eta_c = \frac{Q_g}{A_c I_T} \quad (53)$$

Energy Balance Equation for the Drying Process The total energy required for drying a given quantity of food items can be estimated using the basic energy balance equation for the evaporation of water [34 & 36]

$$m_w L_v = m_a C_p (T_1 - T_2) \quad (54)$$

2.8. Exergy Performance of dryer

According to law of thermodynamics no machine can convert the 100% energy in work. Therefore the energy here which can be converted is exergy and rest is waste energy [43]. Following equation (55) to (56) gives the exergy values at the inlet and outlet of the drying cabin by the following equation. In this equation the inlet and outlet temperatures, the specific heatcapacity and the mass flow rate of the air from the collector is considered. [44]

$$EX_{in} = m_a C_p [(T_{in} - T_a) - T_a \ln \frac{T_{in}}{T_a}] \quad (55)$$

$$EX_{out} = m_a C_p [(T_{out} - T_a) - T_a \ln \frac{T_{out}}{T_a}] \quad (56)$$

The exergy loss (EX_{loss}) was determined as follows;

$$EX_{loss} = EX_{in} - EX_{out} \quad (57)$$

The exergy efficiency (EX_{eff}) was calculated with Eq.

$$EX_{eff} = 1 - \frac{EX_{loss}}{EX_{in}} \quad (58)$$

The design of solar dryer is totally dependent on the heat transfer coefficient of material. It is design on the basis of heat transfer equation. To understand the solar dryer, one should understand the heat transfer subject. The design can be done by using software's now there is no need to calculate all the details. The paper gives the formula's for designing the dryer.

3. Conclusion

The major aim of the paper is to review design paper related to solar dryer and to reveal the design procedure used by the research on one paper. There are various techniques used by researcher to design the dryer. The equation used is truly on the heat transfer basis. The dryer deals with the heat and mass flow of air. Therefore, use of Nusselt number and Reynolds number is also applicable in designing the dryer. This was not shown in this paper. As in designing the dryer the important key is the collector. The collector converts the radiation energy in the thermal energy and then it is used to dryer the food item by means of air. Many research papers were reviewed and the equation based on that is written in the paper. The paper gives the idea of how to design a solar dryer more effectively and how to get the radiation data mathematically. The equation helps to find the collector area, vent area, mass flow rate and even more. Overall, this paper is the key to design the solar dryer with all parameters. During literature it is found that the collector efficiency is affected by temperature, type of material, absorberplate, airflow rate, and solar insolation. One can use this paper for finding all the formula related to design of solar collector in one place. It is more reliable to prepare the software for designing the solar dryer instead of this calculation. The new scope of this paper is to prepare a software for designing the solar dryer. Very limited software is available in market for solar design that also not perform well. Therefore, this can lead to new beginning for designing the solar dryer.

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