

“Fuel Production from Waste Plastics” high density Polyethylene and polypropylene”

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Abstract.

Recently more than 150 million tonnes of plastics were produced in the world. On the one hand, the consumption and production of polymers is increasing, on the other hand as landfill and incineration become more expensive and less accepted, the increasing amount of polymer wastes from them generates further mainly environmental problems. In present work catalytic cracking of waste plastics blend with heavy gas oil (HGO) was investigated using H-ZSM5 and H-BETA. Reaction systems that were studied included high density polyethylene HDPE and polypropylene blend with HGO. Reactions were carried out in 1L micro autoclave reactor under different conditions of weight, temperature and type of catalyst. The optimum conditions were 2.5% catalyst by weight of total feed stock, 60 min residence time, working at atmospheric pressure and three temperatures selected 400°C, 425°C and 450°C. The product distribution for the system [plastics and HGO] provided promised results of high yield of liquid [gasoline] up to 210°C, gases and small amount of heavy oils.

Introduction

Plastics have become common materials of our everyday life and many of their properties such as durability, versatility and light weight can be significant factor in achieving sustainable development. However plastic applications also contribute to growing amount of solid waste generated as plastic products are often used only once before disposal. Most countries give attention to pollutants in the air such as carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides and other greenhouse gases as climate change has been definitively libeled as global problem [1].

The recycling of plastic wastes is gaining increasing importance and classify to primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary recycling. Tertiary recycling is converting the waste plastics into original feedstock by Pyrolysis. Slow pyrolysis is one promising method for the treatment of mixed and contaminated plastic wastes and it can be thermally or catalytically treated.

The advantages of catalytic cracking processes compared with simple thermal treatments are lowering of the reaction temperature, and shorter residence times. In the case of polyolefin, the products derived from the catalytic cracking contain mainly cyclic, branched and aromatic hydrocarbons, which increase the quality of the potential fuels [2].

A major problem with using catalysts in the pyrolysis of mixed plastics is that of coke formation deactivating the catalyst over time. The cost of catalysts also influences their selection and commercial viability.

A few studies on the catalytic conversion of polymers co processing with coal and petroleum fractions were performed. The conversion of poly ethylene blended with oil (VGO) to transportation fuels via catalytic cracking was examined by that blended of VGO and 5 and 10 wt% high density polyethylene were thermally and catalytically cracked in fixed bed reactor at 510°C [3].

Thermal cracking led to low conversion of VGO but the conversion of poly ethylene was over 50% by assuming that VGO gave the same overall product distribution as when poly ethylene was not present. The gasoline yields were in range 42-54% for all conditions studied, increasing with the catalyst to oil ratio, [4] performed similar study of catalytic and thermal cracking of polypropylene and polystyrene dissolved in refinery light cycle oil (LCO) a commercial cracking catalyst based on a REY Zeolite was used. The runs were carried at 1 bar at temperature range of 450°C to 550°C for thermal cracking and 500°C to 550°C for catalytic cracking with a catalyst to feed ratio of 6 by weight. The feeds were made up of polypropylene at 5 wt% and polystyrene at 10% and 25 wt % Thermal cracking of polypropylene produced mainly olefin's and iso-paraffines from polystyrene. Styrene monomer was the major product formed where catalytic cracking was carried out and the formation of gasoline increased with temperature for all cases. The product distribution for binary system using plastic and petroleum residue using Ni Mo/Al₂O₃, ZSM-5, FCC and hydro cracking catalysts provided high yield of liquid fuels in the boiling range 100°-480°C, gases and coke [5].

Antonio Marcella et al, [2006] investigated the thermal degradation of blends of different percentages of low-density polyethylene in vacuum gas oil carried out in fluidized bed reactor over FCC equilibrium catalyst, the result showed a high selectivity to production of iso-butane and iso-pentane in the volatile compounds as well as the aromatic the liquid products .Due to these

advantages this research may provide meaning about the recovery of catalytic degradation of waste plastics with hydrocarbons gasoline-range.

Materials:

Polymers used in this study are high density polyethylene [HDPE, Mn=8500] and polypropylene [PP, Mn=7500]. Petroleum Libyan gas oil derived from the Hamada fields and Share fields is supplied by Zamia Oil Refinery Company and its properties are listed in table 1.

Catalysts:

The following two catalysts were used as a catalytic material for the cracking of gas oil blended with HDPE and PP.

These catalysts are:

1. H-ZSM-5[Na/ZSM-5 sample with Si/Al ratios of about 40 was exchanged with[1 M NH_4NO_3 solution].
2. H-Beta the H-BETA zeolite catalyst was used as received.

Method:

The reactions were carried out in Batch autoclave reactor consists of a stainless steel tubular reactor with programmable temperature controller obtained from the Parr Scientific, USA. The size of autoclave reactor is 1 L.

The dimension of this reactor is 19 cm in length with 9 cm in diameter. The reactor is housed in furnace. The maximum operating pressure of this reactor is 345 bar whilst, the maximum operating temperature is 500°C. The reactor with 25g feed was gradually heated via a 50 minute temperature ramp at the rate of 10 C⁰/min and temperature was kept at 400 C for 1 h under the nitrogen blanket.

All runs were made at reaction time of 1 hr and at temperatures of 400, 425, and 450C.

The Catalytic cracking of gas oil blended with HDPE, PP with different ratios were studied .

Table 2 shows the cracking temperature, catalyst type and the ratio of HGO/HDPE/PP selected in this research.

Table 1: Property data of heavy gas oil

Test method	Test description	Unit	Results
ASTMD1298	SPECIFICGRAVITY AT60/60F	-	0.8731
ASTMD1298	Density at15C	Kg/L	0.8727
ASTMD1298	API Gravity	-	30.57
ASTMD611	Anline Point	C	83
ASTMD975	Diesel index	-	55.45
	Anline Gravity	-	5545
	Refractive index at 20C	-	1.4895
	Total acidity	Mg KOH/g	0.058
ASTM D976	Cetane index	-	55.4
ASTMD2887	IBP-FBP	C	275-375

Table: 2 Operating conditions used in current work

Runs	Catalyst	Temperature	PP:HDPE:HGO
1,2,3	H-BETA	400 ⁰ C,425 ⁰ C,450 ⁰ C	5%:15%80%
4 ,5,6	H-BETA	400 ⁰ C,425 ⁰ C,450 ⁰ C	10%:20%:70%
7,8,9	H-ZSM5	400 ⁰ C,425 ⁰ C,450 ⁰ C	5%:15%:80%
10,11,12	H-ZSM5	400 ⁰ C,425 ⁰ C,450 ⁰ C	10%:20%:70%

Feedstock and Reaction Products Analysis: -

There action products collected from the outlet of the batch reactor were classified into gases, liquid hydrocarbons, and coke deposited on the catalyst surface. The feedstock and liquid reaction products were subjected to detail analysis using GC, and SimDist techniques whilst, gas products were identified using GC technique. Thermal gravimetric analysis (TGA) was used to quantify the carbon deposited on the catalyst. The yields of reaction products, gases, liquid and coke obtained from the catalytic cracking of different ratio of HGO/HDPE/PP at 400, 425 and 450⁰C are given in table 3. The results demonstrate the yield of gases (C₁-C₄), gasoline (IBP-210), distillate(210C⁺) and coke using both H-Beta and H-ZSM5 catalysts with different percentage of HDPE. It is clear from

this table that both reaction temperature and percentage of HDPE have strong influence on the yield. As it can be seen from this table that the highest conversion achieved was 46% at 450°C cracking temperature with 20% HDPE using H-ZSM5 catalyst.

Carbon distribution of feedstock HGO and reaction products from catalytic cracking of 5%PP, 15%HDPE and 80%HGO and 10%PP, 20% HDPE and 70%HGO at different cracking temperature using both H-Beta and H-ZSM5 are shown in figures1,2.

The most dominate hydrocarbon present in feedstock is C₂₀. As the cracking temperature increase the light products formed increased when 5%, 15% and 10%,20% of PP, HDPE receptivity blended with HGO over H-BETA.

The liquid products were distributed in the range of (n-C₅-C₂₉), where the main product present was C₉ exceptfor10%PP,20%HDPE70%HGOoverH-ZSM5wherethemainproductwasC₁₀.

The liquid products from 70%HGO, 20%HDP and 10%PP over both of catalysts were lighter than that from 80%HGO, 15%HDPE and 5%PP over both of catalysts as shown in Fig 3,4. It ranged from 80 °C to 224 °C at first ratio. In general, the greatest change at 450 °C over H-ZSM5 and all factors has effect on the conversion. Figures 5 and 6 refer to the composition of gas products from the catalytic cracking of the HGO/HDPE/PP blend. The main products were C₃ and C₄ in all cases, as the cracking temperature change. The small effect occurs on the percentage of C₁ and C₂ and the yield of C₅, C₆ decreases.

Table: 3 Product distributions of PP/HDPE/HGO.

Feed stock	Gas%	210%	Coke%	Total con. %
5%PP15%PE80%HGO H-BETA 400C	16%	16%	4%	36%
5%PP 15%PE 80%HGO H-BETA 425C	29%	35.37%	6%	70.37%
5%PP 15%PE 80%HGO H-BETA 450C	30%	29.04%	10%	72.04%
5%PP 15%PE 80%HGO H-ZSM5 400C	16.1%	38.4%	3.9%	58.4%
5%PP 15%PE 80%HGO H-ZSM5 425C	27.12%	39.6%	5.5%	72.22%
5%PP15%PE 80%HGO H-ZSM5 450C	37%	44.544%	15%	96.15%
10%PP 20%PE 70%HGO H-BETA 400C	27.45%	34.75%	3.05%	65.25%
10%PP 20%PE 70%HGO H-BETA 425C	33%	30.77%	7%	70.77%

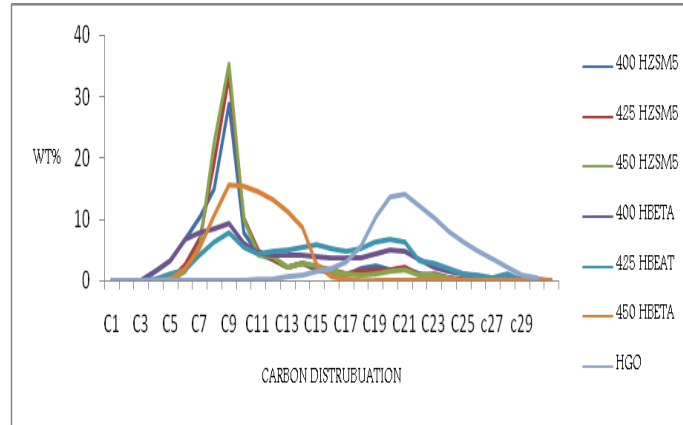


Fig: 1 Carbon distribution of feedstock (HGO) and reaction products from catalytic cracking of 5%PP/15%HDPE/80%HGO using H-ZSM5,H-BETAcatalyst

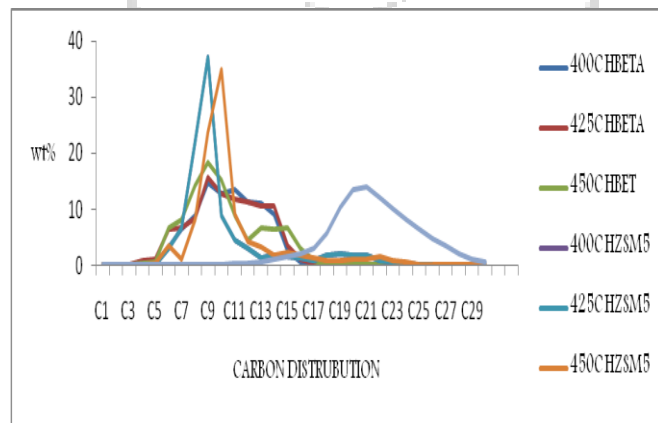


Fig: 2 Carbon distribution of feedstock (HGO) and reaction products from catalytic cracking of 10%PP/20%HDPE/70%HGO using H-ZSM5 ,H-BETA catalyst.

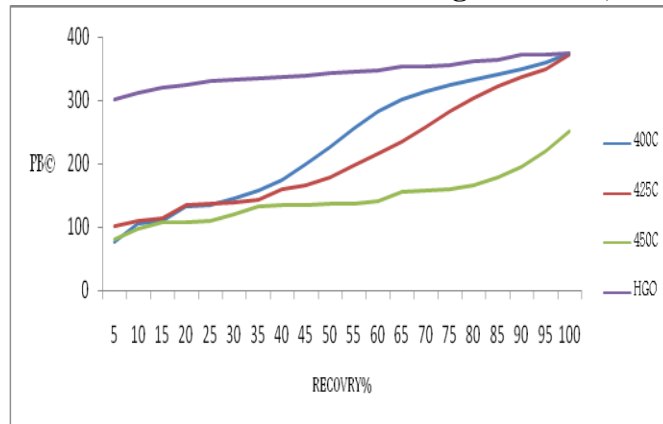


Fig: 3The boiling point distribution of liquid products of 10%PP, 20%HDPE and 70%HGO over H-ZSM5

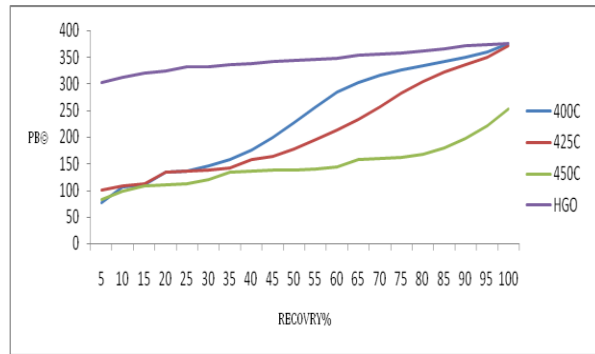


Fig4 The effect of cracking temperature and catalyst type on the boiling point distribution range of liquid products of 5%PP, 15%HDPE, and 80%HGO over H-ZSM5

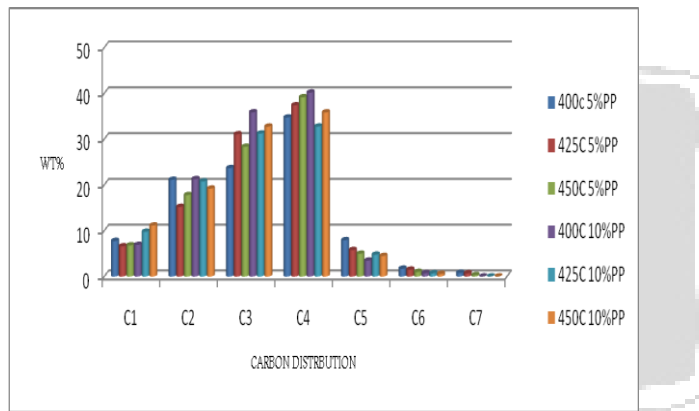


FIG: 5 Gas products from catalytic cracking over H-BETA

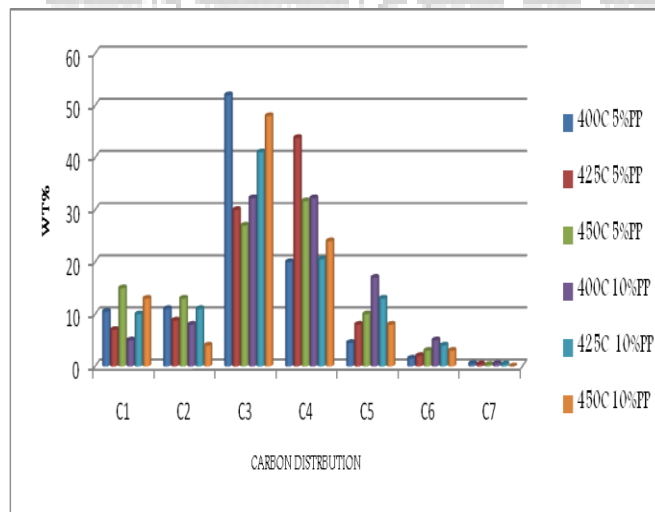


FIG: 6 Gas products from catalytic cracking over H-BETA.

The influence of cracking temperature on the yield of gasoline using H-Beta and H-ZSM5 are given in figure 7. H-ZSM5 gives higher yield of gasoline than H-Beta, as well as higher yield of gas than H-BETA. This can be explained that the bimolecular reactions are more favoured in the presence of H-ZSM5 zeolite [6]. It is obvious that as the cracking temperature increase, the percentage of coke increase Also with increase of the PP, HDPE ratio the percent of coke increase as shown in Fig 8.

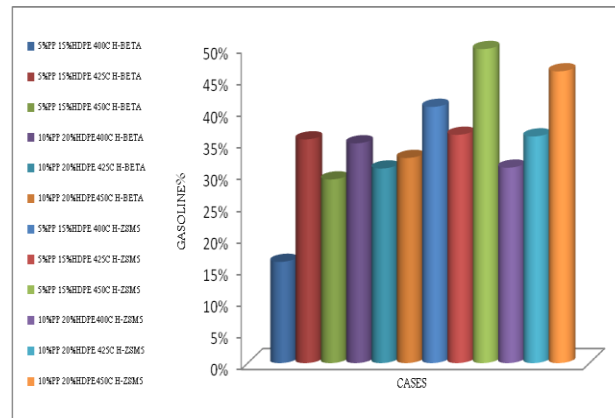


Fig: 7The effect of cracking temperature on the yield of gasoline

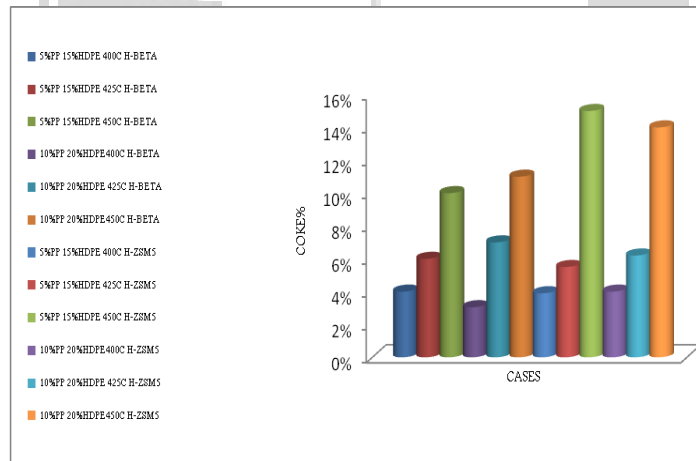


Fig: 8The effect of cracking temperature on the yield of coke.

The quantity of coke deposited on the surface of catalyst found by thermal gravimetric technique.

The deactivation of zeolites due to coke deposition is very important. When the amount of coke on the surface and in the pores increases, the number of available acid sites and the local diffusion possibilities decreases. Figure 9 shows the TGA curves for H-ZSM5 at 450°C cracking temperature.

The drop of the mass loss curve (green line) is clear. This indicates that the carbon was oxidized to CO₂. From fig 9, the exothermic peak appears on the heat flow started from 10 to 23 μV, the temperature ranged from 400°C to 500°C and the coke % is about 14.1%.

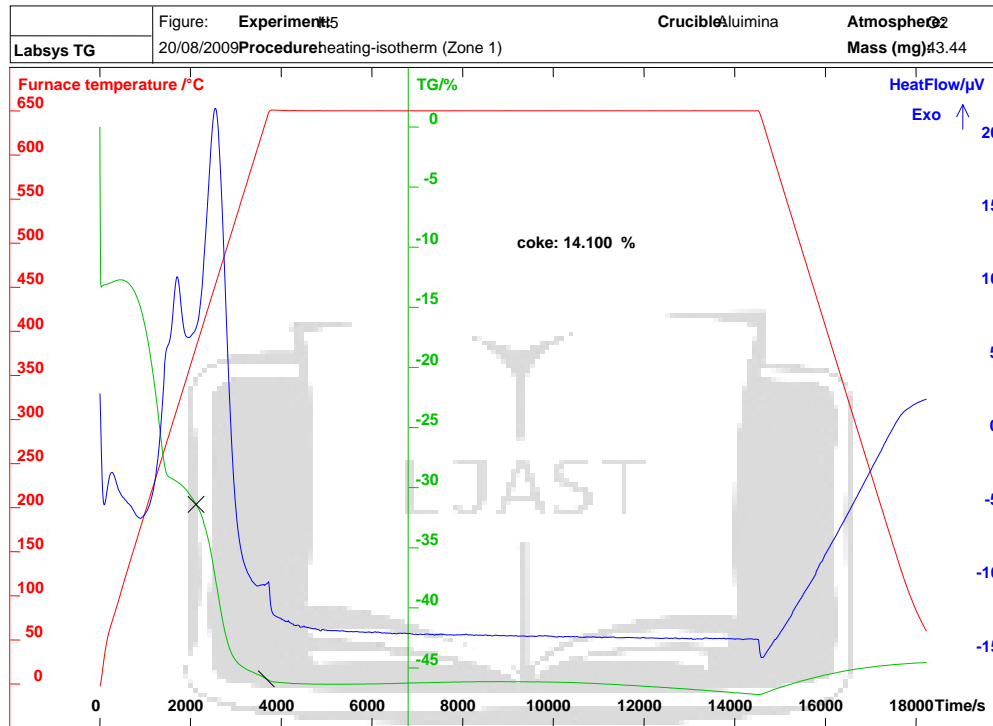


Fig 9 TGA of H-ZSM5 after reaction at 450°C^o

Conclusion:

The catalytic cracking of waste plastics blends with HGO is a feasible process by which they can be converted into liquid fuels or chemical feedstock. In liquid products, as the percentage of HDPE/PP increase the yield of gases, gasoline and coke are increased whilst the yield of [210+C^o] is decreased. In gas fraction, the selectivity leads to much higher values of LPG fraction versus dry gas. This fact clearly indicates higher generation of C₃–C₄ compounds than C₁–C₂ hydrocarbons, C₃ formed more than C₄ when used H-ZSM5 but C₄ is more when H-BETA used. TGA is used to evaluate the quantity of the coke deposit on the catalyst surface and the analysis shows the H-ZSM5 produced more coke.

Acknowledgements

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