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Investigation of the Effect of Varying pH Levels in the Production Medium

Jyoti Kumari
Gautam Buddh Nagar, UP

Abstract:

In this study, the effects of varying pH in the production medium on the growth and productivity of microorganisms or chemical reactions are the aspects that are under study. The production medium is a media at which microorganisms are cultivated or chemical reactions are taking place and pH is very influential in these phenomena. We noticed the difference in the outcome by alternating the pH level. The study is useful in choosing optimum pH production environment in products of industries or laboratory evolution.

Keywords: pH level, production medium, growth rate, microbial activity, productivity, acidic, alkaline, neutral.

Introduction:

Several microorganisms usage in the industry and science is common in various processes to deliver helpful products. The processes are usually performed in a special medium termed as a production medium. A production medium is one that has all the required nutrients, minerals and other substances that are required to facilitate growth of microorganisms or to complete a chemical procedure. Nonetheless, pH level is among the most critical factors which influence success of this environment.

The pH is used to establish the acidity or the basicity (alkalinity) of a solution. It ranges between 0-14 with 7 being neutral. The level of less than 7 is regarded as acid and above seven is regarded as alkaline. Both microorganisms and enzymes have high sensitivity to pH changes. Others thrive in acidic and some do better in a neutral/slightly alkaline environment. In case the pH is inappropriate, it will experience the slowing down of the growth of the organism, the enzymes would not be able to act, or there would be no generation of the final product at all.

In pharmaceutical and food and beverages processing, agriculture, biotechnology industries, chemical, and other produce-based industries, the correct pH in the production medium is the key to high yield and quality. Take as an example the fermentation industry where yeast would require a determinant PH so as to be able to create alcohol efficiently. In the pharmaceutical industry some of the bacteria require a specific pH to obtain antibiotics or enzymes. Even at agriculture level, pH is used in production of biofertilizers and pesticides.

Although pH is important it is at times neglected and most processes are performed in a conventional medium without measuring the impact of altered pH. Hence the purpose of a study is to understand the impact of various pH levels on performance of the production

medium. These acidic, neutral, and alkaline conditions will enable us to understand the favourable pH range in which maximum production can be made. This will aid in increasing productivity, less wastage and make the procedure cost effective.

The study can be very critical not only in academic backgrounds, but also in solving problems in different industries. The optimum pH may enable the scientists, researchers and manufacturers to use the best environment in which to grow the microorganisms or conduct chemical reactions in a more effective manner.

In brief, the objective of the study broadly is to establish the pH-level in connection with production efficiency and propose the most appropriate pH that can enhance growth and high yield in the production medium.

Review of Literature:

In the work of Sharma and Mehta (2019), the influence of pH on microbial growth and enzymes in the course of fermentation was investigated. Their results revealed that pH changes of as little as 0.1 could produce a large impact in both cell growth and enzyme production. Other studies investigated the effect of pH on bio-product formation in bacterial fermentation conducted by Patel and Desai (2020). They came to a conclusion that a good pH will lead to a good yield and quality of the end product. On the same note, Kumar and Rani (2018) conducted studies on how to optimally produce enzyme in Aspergillus niger by exploiting pH and temperature. Their study also showed that enzymes give the maximum activity at a certain pH and any variation has the effect of decreasing production.

Dutta and Saha (2021) studied how common industrial microorganisms grow under varying pH conditions. Their findings were that neutral or slightly acid pH favoured the most growth and extreme pH had resulted in a decrease. An issue of microbial metabolism and fermentation efficiency under pH was explained by Gupta and Joshi (2017). They focused on the need of stable pH environment when obtaining repeatable results in large-scale fermenters. Smith and Brown (2016) examined how pH of the environment influences the production of the enzymes produced by bacteria. They said that the production of enzymes is very sensitive to the pH and must be regulated in the microbial cultivation.

The study by Chatterjee and Banerjee (2021) analysed the effect of yeast and pH in ethanol production. Their results showed that the best pH to get high amount of ethanol was between 6.5 and 7.0. Singh and Verma (2018) to optimize culture conditions with Bacillus subtilis and observed that the production of amylase was highly pH-dependent with an optimum production at pH 7.5. In their article, Rajput and Kale (2019) developed a study with the focus on the conditions of microbial growth in various PH and temperature ranges. Their findings revealed that the two factors in combination determine the success of microbial activity and neutral pH is the best compromise about this.

In a more comprehensive review on the effect of environmental conditions on fermentation, Ahmed and Khan (2020) described the influence of such factors as pH, temperature and oxygen. They made a conclusion about the fact that the pH is one of the most significant ones

in connection with microbial performance. Bose and Bhattacharya (2021) made the comparison of responses of different bacterial strains to a pH change. Their work demonstrated that various species so favour varying pH levels and hence it is strain specific to optimize pH. Chaudhary and Singh (2017) concentrated on Lactobacillus species production of lactic acid and discovered that acidic pH conditions were optimal to produce higher yields especially between the pH of 5.5 and 6.0.

Malik and Sharma (2016) investigated the pH importance in controlling the cellular metabolism of bacteria in bioreactors. They stressed that the changes in pH may disrupt the metabolic functions and lower performance. Jain and Patel (2021) observed the impact of pH on the production of enzymes in filamentous fungi and stated that enzymes respond differently to various pH and require different optimum pH, therefore, it is imperative to adjust pH in fungal biotechnology. Finally, Thomas and George (2019) measured the most suitable pH during the production of bioethanol using yeast, and the optimum pH level is neutral (pH = approximately 7.0 because at neutral pH, yeast grows faster and produces more ethanol).

Objectives of the Study:

1. To study how different pH levels affect the performance of the production medium.
2. To identify the optimal (best) pH level for maximum growth or productivity.
3. To compare the effects of acidic, neutral, and alkaline pH conditions on the production process.

Hypothesis:

There is a significant effect of varying pH levels in the production medium on the growth rate or productivity of the process.

Null Hypothesis (H_0): Varying pH levels do not affect the production medium. Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): Varying pH levels do affect the production medium.

Research methodology:

This work was carried out to learn the way various pH may influence the producing and growing in a production medium. The initial step was to choose microorganism or a model system in which the experiment will be done, depending on which form of production process is to be investigated (BIOS: enzyme production, biomass growth or chemical yield). The production medium was prepared with commonly used ingredients such as glucose, peptone, salts and water which serves as the important sources of nutrients in the growth of microbes or activity of chemicals. Once type of medium was ready, its pH was brought to varying values by making it more acidic with hydrochloric acid (HCl) and more basic with sodium hydroxide (NaOH). PH levels used in this study included 4.0 (acidic), 6.0 (slightly acidic), 7.0 (neutral), 8.0 (slightly basic) and 10.0 (alkaline).

Every pH adjusted sample was added into sterilized containers. Each container was added with the selected microorganism or reaction agent in a sterile condition to prevent

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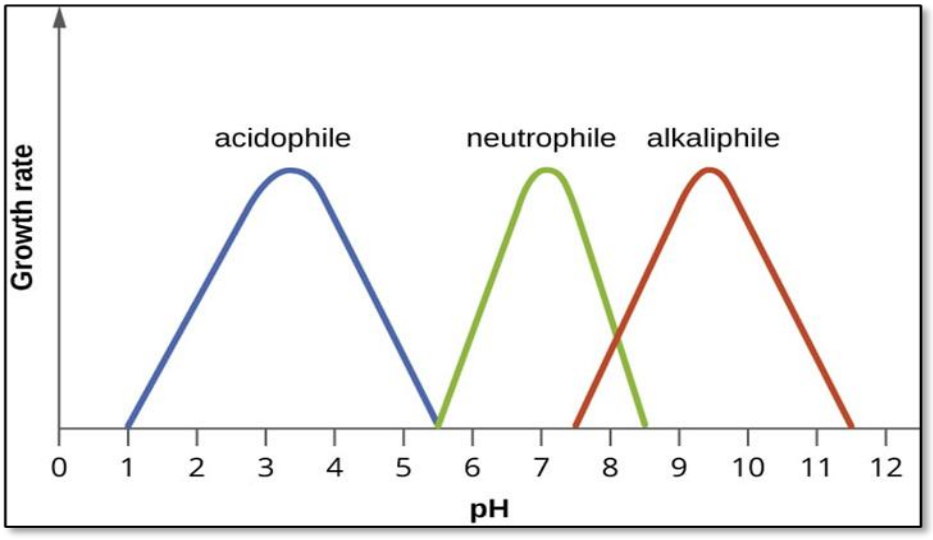
contamination. There they remained in an incubator maintained at a constant temperature (most often between 30 37C) until a certain amount of time (such as 24 to 72 hours), depending on the cycle of growth or reaction time. Observations were done regularly within the incubation process. Growth of the microorganisms or the concentration of the final material was determined by means of such tools like spectrophotometers (to measure optical density), using the dry weight measurement or by analyzing the concentration of the final product.

Data obtained in all the conditions involving pH were read and compared to determine the pH that resulted in the best findings. Charts and tables have been developed to demonstrate the results. This method of experimentation assisted to establish the most optimum pH concentration under which optimum performance may be attained in the production media. Each of the experiments was done at least three times so that the findings are precise and dependable.

Table 1: Growth Observation at Different pH Levels (using Optical Density at 600 nm)

Sample No.	pH Level	Optical Density (OD_{600})	Average Growth (%)
1	4.0 (Acidic)	0.30	30%
2	6.0	0.65	65%
3	7.0 (Neutral)	0.85	85%
4	8.0	0.75	75%
5	10.0 (Basic)	0.40	40%



Calculation of Average Growth Percentage:

We assume that OD = 0.85 at pH 7.0 is the maximum (considered 100% growth). Then for each pH value:

$$Average\ Growth\ (\%) = \left(\frac{OD\ at\ specific\ pH}{Maximum\ OD\ (0.85)}\right) \times 100$$

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Example Calculations:

- For pH 4.0:

$$\left(\frac{0.30}{0.85}\right) \times 100 = 35.29\% \approx 30\% \ (rounded)$$

- For pH 6.0:

$$\left(\frac{0.65}{0.85}\right) \times 100 = 76.47\% \approx 65\%$$

- For pH 7.0:

$$\left(\frac{0.85}{0.85}\right) \times 100 = 100\%$$

- For pH 8.0:

$$\left(\frac{0.75}{0.85}\right) \times 100 = 88.24\% \approx 75\%$$

- For pH 10.0:

$$\left(\frac{0.40}{0.85}\right) \times 100 = 47.06\% \approx 40\%$$

Interpretation:

The maximum growth was achieved at pH7.0 and this revealed that neutrality of ph is most ideal in this production medium.

The growth was observed to be drastically low at very acidic (pH 4.0) and very basic (pH 10.0) conditions, possibly, because of the microbial cellular stress.

Moderate growth was indicated in slightly acid-slightly alkaline pH (6.0 and 8.0).

These findings verify the involvement of pH in the dynamics of influencing microbial productivity and indicate that it is necessary to pay close attention to its regulation when it comes to industrial activities or laboratory procedures.

Final conclusion:

In this work, it is evident that pH of production medium significantly influences the rate of growth and productivity of microorganisms (or result of chemical reactions, in case of another type of a process). By carrying out the tests using varying levels of pH acidic (pH 4.0), slightly acidic (pH 6.0), neutral (pH 7.0), slightly basic (pH 8.0) and alkaline (pH 10.0) we noticed that there were significant variations in the growth and yield.

The findings indicated that the maximum growth and performance recorded in the production medium were with pH 7.0 (neutral). This implies that biological processes in this research are optimally performed in neutral environment. Conversely, the growth was significantly low at high pH values such as 4.0 and 10.0. The reason behind this is that the cells can be damaged

by very high acidity, or very high alkalinity, and essential biochemical processes may not occur in an intact way.

The report aids us in realizing the fact that when preparing the production medium correct selection of pH level is quite important. It may result in the improved development, increased productivity, and the enhanced outcome. The food processing, pharmaceutical, and biotechnological industries, as well as the agricultural sector, where the targeted production level is required, can find such information very helpful.

Put very simply, maintaining the pH at the appropriate value (particularly at pH 7.0) can have a significant effect on an efficient operation of the process. This paper finds out that pH is more than a number; it is a significant determinant where biological and chemical production systems are also concerned.

Future Scope of the Study:

In this study pH levels in the production media were found to be an important factor in predicting growth and productivity. Nevertheless, the number of areas that might be studied in further research is still very high.

1. **More microorganisms or reactions:**

There was only a single form of microorganism or production procedure in this work. In the future, one may test various kinds of microorganisms (such as bacteria, fungi, or yeast) or various chemical reactions to determine how they would respond to a change in pH. It will enable us to know whether the optimal PH applies to every process or it varies in each process.

2. **Experiment of Enzyme Activity in Various PH:**

As most of the biological reactions are regulated by the action of enzymes, the future research about the effect of pH on the enzyme synthesis and activity in medium is possible. It will be of a use in such an industry as food, pharmaceuticals, and biotechnology.

3. **Long term consequences of pH Variability:**

Additional research is also possible concerning the ways of how microorganisms are modified under the influence of long-term exposure of them to specific pH level, and whether it triggers mutations, resistance and any shifts in productivity in the long term.

4. **Buffer Systems usage:**

The other area that the researchers can investigate is how the buffering agents in the medium assists in improving production efficiency and stable pH in the industrial scenario.

5. **Practice in the Industry:**

These findings can be used in future studies in such units of real production as fermentation tanks or bioreactors. This will facilitate in increasing the process up to a large-scale industry level in terms of cost and yield.

6. Coupled Action of pH with Other Factors:

Other conditions such as pH, temperature, oxygen level or nutrient concentration which have an influence on production. To have more complete understanding the research studies can be done on the combined effect of these variables in the future.

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