

Optimization of Vitamin B₁₂ Synthesis Using Microorganisms Utilizing Dairy Wastewater.

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ABSTRACT:

Vitamin B₁₂ is an essential vitamin which has been used in medical and food industries for years. Since the production of vitamin B₁₂ by chemical synthesis is too expensive and are labor intensive, time consuming and costly, a number of bacterial strains such as *Propionibacterium freudenreichii*, *Propionibacterium shermani* and *Pseudomonas denitrificans* have been successfully used in commercial production of vitamin B₁₂ industrially. Identification of vitamin B₁₂ producing microbial strains and synthesis of vitamin B₁₂ from Industrial wastewater especially dairy waste water was the main aim of this study. Isolation, Identification and characterization of *Propionibacterium* species were carried out using molecular level methods, specifically polymerase chain reaction (PCR). The aim of this research work was to examine the optimization of vitamin B₁₂ production using RSM methodology to produce high yield from *Propionibacterium* species. Purification of vitamin B₁₂ was carried out by using HPLC method. More recently advances in biotechnology have led to the development of methods that minimize manipulation which provide results in less time and reduce cost.

Keywords: vitamin B₁₂, microbial strains, dairy wastewater, *Propionibacterium* species, PCR, RSM methodology.

I. INTRODUCTION:

Traditionally, milk has been considered the most complete food provided by nature which is an important source of essential nutrients needed for the growth and development. It is also highly recommended in the diet of humans due to its high nutritional value [1]. It is mainly composed of water, proteins, lipids, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals. Lactose is the principal carbohydrate found in milk. It has been reported that lactose can stimulate the absorption of minerals including calcium and magnesium [2]. Moreover, it has been

demonstrated that milk not only contains nutritive compounds but also biologically active ones, like caseins and whey proteins. Caseins constitute 80% of the total protein present in milk; the other 20% is comprised of the whey proteins including α -lactalbumin, β -lactoglobulin and immunoglobulins [3].

Because of its high nutritional content, milk can be used to produce a large variety of dairy products such as whole, skim, lactose-free and fat free milk; or even whole or skimmed milk powder. Additional products include condensed and evaporated milk, which can be pasteurized or ultra pasteurized. Milk is also used to produce the fermented dairy products cheese, yogurt, kefir and bulgaro. Butter, milk whey, sweet/sour cream, casein acid type, lacticorrenin, caseinates, lactose, enzymatically modified milk ingredients, cream, ice cream and other dairy beverages, are the main products we obtain from milk [4] [5]

The manufacturing of dairy products represents a great concern because of pollution and damage to the environment. This problem is due to the generation of waste from livestock producers and the by-products from dairy foods [6]-[7].

Milk whey is a liquid by-product produced during the manufacturing process of cheese. It represents 85% - 90% of the original milk volume and retains 55% of the nutrients. Milk whey has proteins, lipids, soluble vitamins, minerals and carbohydrates. Of the total whey solids, 75% is lactose. Lactose is one of the most polluting by-products because of its high biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) < 35,000 ppm and its chemical oxygen demand (COD) < 60,000 ppm [8]. If this industrial effluent is discarded in the soil without prior treatment, it can modify the soil's physical and chemical composition, reducing crop yields and the availability of oxygen in water [9] [10]. It has been estimated that 40,000 liters of untreated milk whey produces contamination equivalent to that produced daily by a population of 250,000

people [11]. Another by-product from the dairy industry is clarified butter sediment waste derived from the manufacturing of clarified or ghee butter. This butter waste is mainly composed of fats in the form of fatty acids and small amount of proteins [12]. It has been found that discarding milk whey in the water of rivers and lakes causes enormous pollution problems because of the large amounts of nitrogen, and phosphorus and high BOD (40 - 48,000 mg/L) and COD (89 - 95,000 mg/L) contained in this by-product [13].

The conditions mentioned above promote the process of eutrophication, causing an excessive growth of microorganisms and aquatic plants [14] [15]. However, in this present analysis it has been emphasized that the manufacturing processes of many dairy products produce large amounts of by-products. Dairy by-products can be used to obtain valuable chemical compounds that are useful in the fields of health, pharmaceuticals, food, plastics and fuels. The manufacturing industries of food, beverages and pharmaceuticals demand a variety of chemical compounds, which are used as additives for the production of many products. These additives can act as acidifying agents, stabilizers, flavor enhancers or preservatives. Some examples of additives are the organic acids (citric, lactic, succinic and propionic acid) [16]-[18]

Vitamin B₁₂ is one of the most essential vitamin which is widely used in the medical and food industries.[19] Vitamin B₁₂ also known as cyanocobalamin belongs to the family of cobalamin, synthesized by prokaryotes and inhibits in the development of pernicious anemia in animals. Since the production of vitamin B₁₂ by chemical synthesis is too expensive, a number of bacterial strains such as *Propionibacterium freudenreichi*, *Propionibacterium shermani* and *Pseudomonas denitrificans* have been successfully used in commercial production of vitamin B₁₂ industrially. Whereas *Pseudomonas denitrificans* has been successfully and exclusively used in industries for its rapid growth and high productivity. It has been demonstrated that *Propionibacterium* species has the high potential to accumulate vitamin B₁₂ and are considered as GRAS (Generally Recognized As Safe). In general a high yield of Vitamin B₁₂ has been achieved by further treating the organisms with mutagenic agents such as UV light or chemical agents and selecting the strains with practical advantages such as genetic stability, productivity, reasonable growth rates and resistance to high concentrations of toxic substances present in the medium. [20]

Vitamin B₁₂, which is one of the water-soluble vitamins and naturally occurring cobalt

organometallic compounds containing substances which involves a range of biochemical process such as DNA synthesis, regulation of fatty acids, amino acid metabolism as well as energy production. Vitamin B₁₂ deficiency causes mitotic disorder, neuropathy, nervous system disease and pernicious anaemia. [21] To prevent from such fatal diseases, daily intake of 2.4 µg vitamin B₁₂ is recommended. [22]. The aim of this study was to isolate and identify the vitamin B₁₂ producing microorganism from dairy wastes. To screen and characterize the vitamin B₁₂ producing capability of organisms using HPLC Method.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Sample Collection and isolation of strains:

The samples were collected from different locations of Dairy wastes from industries in Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. The samples were stored in sterile vials at 4°C for experimental purpose. The samples were homogenized and serially diluted using saline (0.9%) and plating techniques were carried out by three different mediums viz., Yeast extract medium (YEM), MRS agar, Sodium Lactate Medium.[23] The plates were incubated at 37°C for 48hrs. The strains were stored in 50% glycerol stock at -20°C and also working cultures were prepared by using sodium lactate medium stabs stored at 4°C.

Screening of vitamin B₁₂ producing organism:

Screening by plating method

Screening of vitamin B₁₂ producing organism helps in selecting the organism responsible for Vitamin B₁₂ production. The colonies, which showed zone of clearance in starch agar plates, were maintained on to MRS agar plate for further experiments Selected from high dilution in the MRS agar plates, Strains were grown in MRS broth at 25°C. Purity was checked by streaking on suitable agar medium.

Molecular identification of strains by using PCR:

Frozen isolates were revived from the glycerol stock, thawed and reinoculated into freshly prepared sterile YEM and Sodium lactate broth and incubated at 37°C for 24 h. After confirmation of purity, 10 µl of active broth culture was reinoculated into 10 ml sterile YEM broth and incubated at 37°C for 10 h. Two milli litre aliquots of active log phase cultures from this broth were then used to isolate genomic DNA. To the 2 ml culture, 2-3 µl of a sodium salt of ampicillin solution (50 mg/ml) was added and the mixture incubated at 37°C for 1 h. Post incubation, the bacteria were harvested by centrifugation at

5000 rpm for 5 min in a refrigerated centrifuge. The DNA was extracted by using extraction kit by Himedia laboratories. Qualitative and Quantitative Assessment of DNA: All samples of the preliminary study were analyzed by spectrophotometer. DNA concentration was determined by recording the absorbance at 260 nm (A260) using a Nanodrop spectrophotometer (Bio-Tek instruments, inc.). The purity of the DNA was determined from the A260/A280 ratio. The quality of the isolated DNA was also evaluated by (0.9% agarose) gel electrophoresis using 2 µl of isolated DNA. The type of band pattern indicates the quality of the DNA isolated.

PCR for 16s amplification:

The 16srRNA amplification was carried out by using universal primers 27F and 1492R. The PCR product was taken for sequenced and analyzed using a BLAST search algorithm to find the higher similarity sequences obtained from the Genbank in NCBI. The amplification was done by using 16s primers, Forward primer: 27F (AGAGTTTGATCMTGGCTCAG), Reverse primer: 1492 (RCGGTTACCTTGTTACGACTT). The PCR master mix was as follows: 10 µl of 10× reaction buffer (100 mM Tris [pH 8.3], 500 mM KCl, 9 mM MgCl₂), PCR primers (final concentration, 40 µM each), and deoxynucleoside triphosphates (final concentration, 200 µM) in a final volume of 100 µl with 2.5 U Taq DNA polymerase. Water was then added to bring the volume to 100 µl. The PCR reaction was performed with 25 µl of the reaction mix containing ~100 ng of isolated genomic DNA, in a hot lead thermocycler (Eppendorf). The reaction mixture was subjected to an initial heating at 95°C for 2 min. The temperature was cycled through 94°C for 1 min, 55°C for 1 min, extension at 72°C for 1 min and then a final extension at 72°C for 2 min. The cycle was repeated 30 times.

PCR for specific gene identification:

For identification of Vitamin B₁₂ producing organism species specific amplification was carried out by Cbi gene. Forward primer: (CAAGCATGCGGTGAGCCTA) Reverse primer: (GTCGCGCCACATCTTCTTCT). The PCR master mix was as follows: 10 µl of 10× reaction buffer (100 mM Tris [pH 8.3], 500 mM KCl, 9 mM MgCl₂), PCR primers (final concentration, 40 µM each), and deoxynucleoside triphosphates (final concentration, 200 µM) in a final volume of 100 µl with 2.5 U Taq DNA polymerase. Water was then added to bring the volume to 100 µl. The PCR reaction was performed with 25 µl of the reaction

mix containing ~100 ng of isolated genomic DNA, in a hot lead thermocycler (Eppendorf). The reaction mixture was subjected to an initial heating at 95°C for 2 min. The temperature was cycled through 94°C for 1 min, 53.2°C for 50secs, extension at 72°C for 1 min and then a final extension at 72°C for 2 min. The cycle was repeated 30 times.[24]

Optimization of Vitamin B₁₂ using RSM methodology:

Inoculum preparation:

One milliliter of stored culture was transferred into 9 mL of fresh medium containing glucose and the culture was incubated at 30°C for 48 h. This culture was added to 200 mL of preculture medium containing glucose and incubated for 48 h at 30°C. An aliquot (10% v/v) was used to inoculate 200 mL of various culture media with crude glycerol for vitamin B₁₂ fermentation. [25] The culture was maintained at 30 °C and the pH was adjusted daily to 6.8 with 25% ammonia solution. After 96 h, the vitamin B₁₂ precursor, DMB, was added, and the vitamin B₁₂ content of cultures was analyzed after 168 h. All fermentation experiments were run in duplicate.

Experimental design:

A two-step optimization strategy was employed to optimize vitamin B₁₂ production by *P. freudenreichii*, *P. shermanii*. In the first step, Plackett–Burman design was used to identify which variables have significant effects on vitamin B₁₂ biosynthesis. Seven variables (A–G) K₃PO₄, NaH₂PO₄.2H₂O, casein Hydrolysate (acid), tryptone, biotin, Ca pantothenate, FeSO₄ .7H₂O was chosen as factors, two dummy factors were employed to evaluate the standard errors of the experiment. Low (-1) and high (+1) levels were appointed for each factor (Table 1). Average values of vitamin B₁₂ concentration after 168 h of fermentation were used as response in this design.[26]

In the second step, response surface methodology was used to optimize the levels of significant variables selected by the Plackett–Burman design. A five level (-a, -1, 0, +1, +a) two-factor

Central composite design was used twice to facilitate statistical analysis of possible interactions between components in a smaller number of experiments than would be necessary for factor design. The experimental designs and responses are shown in Tables 3 and 4, for the first and the second phase of the experiment respectively.

Table 1: Experimental ranges and levels of the Seven factors tested in the Plackett–Burman design.

Factor	Symbol	Ranges and levels	
		-1	+1
K ₃ PO ₄ (g/L)	A	1	5
NaH ₂ PO ₄ .2H ₂ O (g/L)	B	1	5
Casein Hydrolysate (acid) (g/L)	C	5	20
Tryptone (g/L)	D	10	30
Biotin (mg/L)	E	0.2	1
Ca pantothenate (mg/L)	F	2	1
FeSO ₄ .7H ₂ O (mg/L)	G	10	30

In both cases nine experiments were performed. Among them, five replications were at center points (0), four of them were axial (-a, +a) and determined to be p2. Each response obtained was used to develop the empirical model of the response surface in which each dependent variable was shown as a sum of the contributions of these two investigated factors. For the two-factor design the model Eq. (1) is:

$$Y=b_0+b_1A+b_2B+b_{12}AB+b_{11}A^2+b_{22}B^2$$

Where y: predicted yield of the response; b₀: intercept; b₁, b₂: linear coefficients; b₁₁, b₂₂ quadratic coefficients, and b₁₂: interaction coefficient. Average vitamin B₁₂ concentrations after 168 h fermentation were used as response in this design.

Analytical Methods

The samples were centrifuged at 12,000 rpm for 10 min at 4°C, and then cells were boiled at 15 min in 0.01% potassium cyanide at pH 6.0 and 0.1 M phosphate buffer containing vials taken for filtration (0.45 μm syringe filters) vitamin B₁₂ was quantified by using HPLC method. A mixture of 0.25 M NaH₂PO₄ pH 3.5 (phosphoric acid): methanol (75:25) at 1 mL/min was the mobile phase. Injection volume was 16 μL. The detector wavelength was set at 362 nm. A standard of vitamin B₁₂ (Sigma Chemicals, St. Louis, MO, USA) was used. Quantitation was based on peak

area. Data acquisition and analysis were done with Agilent ChemStation software for LC 3D systems.

Dry weight:

Dry weight of biomass was estimated after centrifugation and drying to constant weight at 105°C.

Statistical analysis:

STATISTICA 6.0 software was used for all statistical analyses. The statistical tests were performed at the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Isolation and screening of Vitamin B₁₂ producing bacteria

Isolated strains of total 55 was carried out for the study, out of that 4 strains showed maximum clear zone in screening plate compared with standard strain. The zone index compared with Lactobacillus plantarum (MTCC 1325) already known efficiency of vitamin B₁₂ in dairy products. Dairy products alone not only the source of isolating as P. freudenreichii, P. shermanii these strains. Other source also can existence of above mentioned organisms such as human skin, gastrointestinal tract, spoiled citrus fruits etc. The vitamin B₁₂ production existed greater amount in Lactobacillus sp. has been reported in previous work (Rossi, F., et al., 1999).



Fig 1: A- Sodium Lactate Medium



Fig 2: B- Yeast Extract Medium

Purification of vitamin B12 organisms:



Fig 3: C- Purified strains

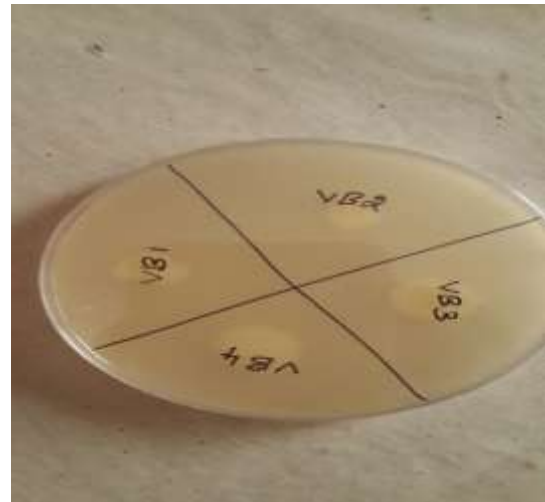


Fig 4: D- Selected strains for optimization

Molecular Identification Based on 16s r-RNA sequencing the strains of VB1, VB2 were identified as *P. freudenreichii*, *P. shermanii*. From phylogenetic analysis, the closely related strains were compared with identified strains shown in the figure 6&7. Molecular level of identification

carried out by using *Cbi* gene and results showed that base pair size of ~400bp shown in the figure 5. In previous research work author as conducted the experiment of vitamin B₁₂ using *Cob* gene with base pair size of ~478bp (Piao, Y., et al., 2004).

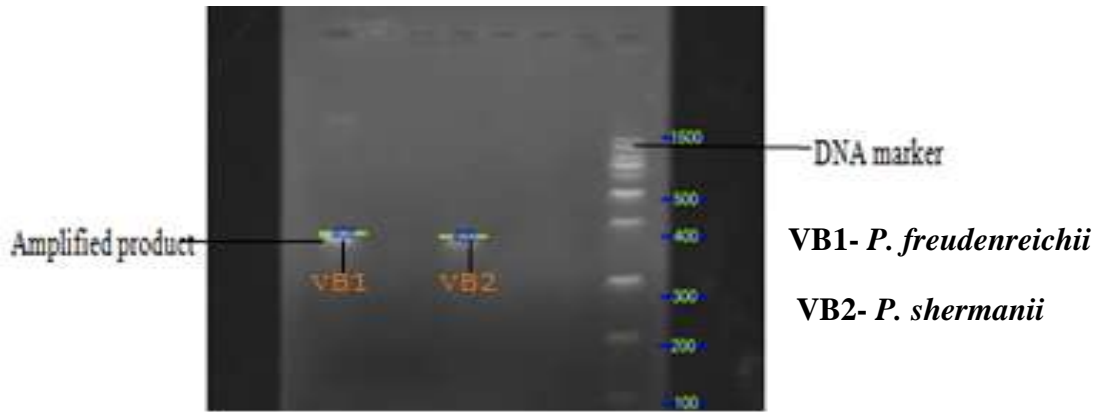


Fig 5: Amplification of Cbi gene

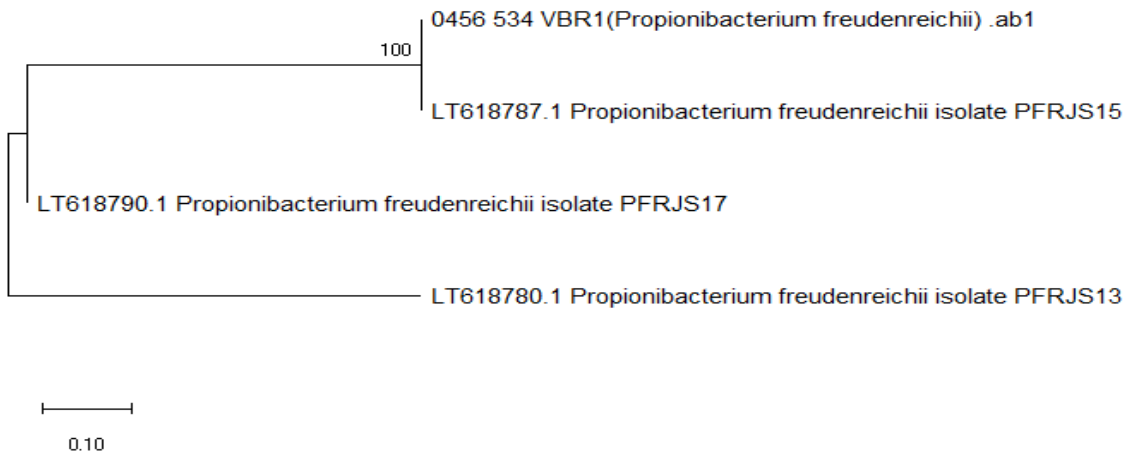


Fig 6: Phylogenetic tree for *P. freudenreichii*

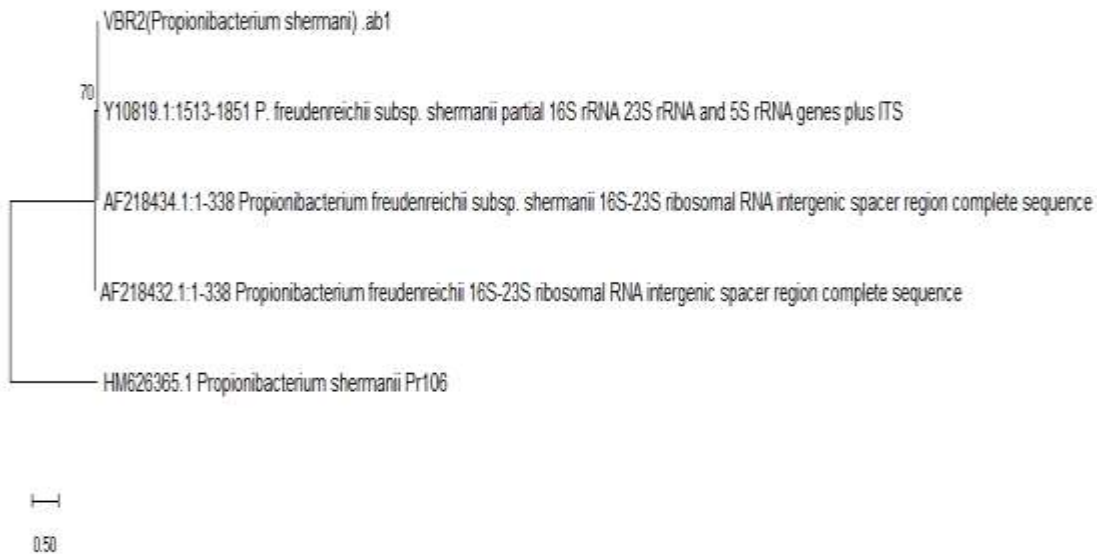


Fig 6: Phylogenetic tree for *P. shermanii*

Optimization studies using RSM methodology

To estimate the vitamin B₁₂ production on culture medium of *P. freudenreichii*, *P. shermanii* were engaged using Plackett Burmann design. In this design elements of 7 were tested. In this case, amount of vitamin B₁₂ production in experiment on 8 runs showed highest percentage achieved in this design was 34.57 mg/L. To perform the experiment, ANOVA variance of statistical tools to find the relationship between significant variables and response. Based on this response only 4 tested variables influences significantly discovered from Plackett–Burman design from p-value represented in Table 1.

From table 2 showed that each parameters of variables in regression analysis, if the variable is

positive, it influence the vitamin B₁₂ production at higher level indicates (H). At the same time if it is negative, then the amount of concentration of vitamin B₁₂ is low (L). In this next stage of research was examined based on significant variables mentioned above.

Central composite design

In the First level of Plackett Burmann design, CCD was established based on screening variables that influences vitamin B₁₂ production. In the first factor, to determine the optimal concentration of NaH₂PO₄.2H₂O and calcium pantothenate having highest affect on vitamin B₁₂ production was found.



Fig 7: Optimization of Vitamin B₁₂ producing organisms:

In this experiment, second factor considered as casein hydrolysate and Fe₂SO₄.7H₂O concentration were used for optimization and maintained in the tested culture medium at the levels corresponding to the calculated value of response in maximum of CCD and the rest of medium components (non-significant factors) were still maintained at the lower (L) level concentration of the levels used in the Plackett–Burman design. The design matrix, experimental responses, dry cell weight amount are given in Table 2. Some of the

runs produced substantially improved results for the vitamin B₁₂ production over those achieved in the Plackett–Burman design or in the first phase of the central composite design. The amount of vitamin B₁₂ obtained 31.67 mg/L. and it achieved better results obtained when compared with the previous experiments as shown in Table 3. The two significant factors correlated based on experimental responses executed by using statistical analysis of variance (ANOVA) according to regression equation (1):

$$[\text{Vitamin B}_{12}] = 2.97 + 0.24A + 0.21B - 0.26AB - 0.21A^2 - 0.29B^2$$

Effect	-1.5775	1.5775	5.4125
SE	0.365963	0.365963	0.365963
t-value	0.6831	-0.6831	-0.798
P-value	1.000	0.516	0.451
Confidence level	0.990	0.994	0.995

D=Dummy constituents/variable. Effect = significant for confidence level > 0.95. H–high; L–low

Table 2: Design of experiments and significance of effects of constituents in Plackett-Burman Screening for Propionibacterium freudenreichii

K3PO4 (g/L)	NaH ₂ PO ₄ .7H ₂ O (g/L)	Tryptone (g/L)	Casein Hydrolysate (g/L)	Ca panthothinate (mg/L)	FeSO ₄ .7H ₂ O (mg/L)	Biotin (mg/L)	Yield µg/ml ⁻¹
H	L	H	L	H	L	H	31.67
L	H	H	L	L	H	H	24.26

L	H	H	L	H	L	H	19.46
H	L	L	H	L	H	L	22.53
L	H	L	H	L	H	L	18.27
H	L	L	H	H	L	L	14.38
L	H	H	L	H	L	H	11.51
L	H	H	L	L	H	H	10.35

Table 3: Central Composite Design (Coded and Uncoded test variables) with observed and predicted yield (Each row corresponds to a single experiment) for Propionibacterium freudenreichii

Run	Ca pantothenate		Casein Hydrolysate (g/L)		NaH ₂ PO ₄ ·2H ₂ O (g/L)		FeSO ₄ ·7H ₂ O (mg/L)		Observed Yield µg/ml ⁻¹	Predicted Yield µg/ml ⁻¹
	Coded	Uncoded	Coded	Uncoded	Coded	Uncoded	Coded	Uncoded		
1	-1	3.5	-1	4.5	1	6.5	1	3.5	32.68	34.57
2	-1	3.5	1	7.5	1	6.5	-1	3.5	26.25	28.52
3	-1	3.5	1	7.5	-1	3.5	1	4.5	18.56	24.45
4	0	5	0	6.5	0	5	0	6.5	23.54	23.63
5	0	5	0	6.5	0	5	1	4.5	17.34	20.42
6	1	6.5	-1	4.5	0	5	0	7.5	13.26	15.61
7	1	6.5	1	7.5	-1	6.5	-1	5	10.41	17.43
8	1	6.5	-1	4.5	-1	6.5	1	4.5	9.54	13.72

Table 4: Result of the second order response surface model (same for coded and Uncoded test variables) fitting in the form of analysis of variance (ANOVA) for Propionibacterium freudenreichii

	DF	SS	MS	F-test	P-value
Regression	5	13.50000	2.700000	1.801	0.000
Lack-to-fit	3	8.71875	1.743750	4.50	0.500
Total	7	22.2187			

$$R^2 = 0.7936, R = 0.2817, \text{Adj. } R^2 = 0.740$$

DF=Degree of freedom, SS=Sum of squares, MS =Mean square

The maximum response surface obtained from three dimensional plot used for evaluation and it indicates introduced model showed significant ($p=0.000$) and insignificant lack-of-fit was stated ($p = 0.500$). Shown in Table (4). The regression analysis of the data showed an R^2 value of (0.7936) and an adjusted R^2 value of (0.740) was obtained from analysis of variance. The experiment model validity verified from vitamin B₁₂ production in culture medium based on the predicted value obtained at confidence interval 95% was 2.85-3.55 mg/L as shown in figure 8. Several studies showed that pantothenic acid is essential for Propionibacterium species (Kośmider, A. et al., 2012). In the present study, the optimal

concentration of this compound increased vitamin B₁₂ production that was not accompanied by higher cellular biomass. This suggests that Ca pantothenate influences not only primary bacteria metabolism but also processes involved in vitamin B₁₂ formation. The validity of the model was verified experimentally, vitamin B₁₂ concentration of 34.57 mg/L was attained in culture medium and factors corresponding to the maximum value of response were evaluated. Although, no reports of vitamin B₁₂ production using this substrate were published previously. Many of the research reports exist concerning microbial propionic acid production on media containing crude glycerol (Himmi et al., 2000). However, this factor affects the overall substrate utilization of 93% increase in vitamin B₁₂ production in optimization of fermentation medium led to be completed when

compared to values attained before initial screening. In the previous research article (Chiliveri et al., 2010) a 43% increase in vitamin B₁₂ production by medium optimization with the use of statistical methods is reported.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The statistical experimental design of two step process of response surface methodology enabled to increase the Vitamin B₁₂ production by 93% when compared with highest value attained in initial screening of the culture samples. The concentrations of casein hydrolysate, Fe₂SO₄·7H₂O, Ca pantothenate and NaH₂PO₄·2H₂O influences the production of Vitamin B₁₂ synthesis from *P. freudenreichii* sp. and *P. shermanii*.

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