

## Impact of salt stress on growth and lipid content in oleaginous green microalgae

### Impacto del estrés salino en el crecimiento y contenido lipídico en microalgas verdes oleaginosas

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#### ABSTRACT

At present time, about 70% of energy is generated from fossil fuels and only about 30% is produced from renewable energy sources. The forecasted energy demand increases make evident that the conventional oil reserves that can be commercially exploited was vanished after 2050. Deteriorating Environmental condition demands sustainable renewable energy sources with least greenhouse gases emission. Third generation biofuel from microalgae can fulfill are demand of environmentally friendly biofuel with least GHG emission. In present research an affected has been made to enhance lipid content via saline stress. Lipid estimate showed a significant source in lipid. It may help to curb are dependency on fossil fuels. Fossil fuels are high energy sources, but these are Reduce day to day. These fuels high demand present in time but fossil stock is limited. The present work is a particularly important and unique work to cope with fossil fuel deficiency and greenhouse gases (GHGs). Oleaginous green microalgae are very efficient to overcome fossil fuel deficiency and environment related problem. In this work we will cultivate in-vitro three different microalgae which have significant amount of lipid. And second phase saline stress was employed to enhance lipid content in the selected microalgae.

Key Words Transesterification, Third generation Biofuels, Oleaginous, microalgae, Biodiesel

#### RESUMEN

En la actualidad, alrededor del 70% de la energía se genera a partir de combustibles fósiles y solo alrededor del 30% se produce a partir de fuentes de energía renovables. Los aumentos previstos en la demanda de energía hacen evidente que las reservas de petróleo convencional que se pueden explotar comercialmente se desvanecieron después de 2050. El deterioro de las condiciones ambientales exige fuentes de energía renovables sostenibles con la menor emisión de gases de efecto invernadero. El biocombustible de tercera generación a partir de microalgas puede satisfacer la demanda de biocombustible ecológico con la menor emisión de GEI. En la presente investigación se ha realizado un efecto para mejorar el contenido de lípidos a través del estrés salino. La estimación de lípidos mostró una fuente significativa de lípidos. Puede ayudar a frenar la dependencia de los combustibles fósiles. Los combustibles fósiles son fuentes de alta energía, pero estos se reducen día a día. Estos combustibles presentan una alta demanda en el tiempo pero el stock fósil es limitado. El presente trabajo es particularmente importante y único para hacer frente a la deficiencia de combustibles

fósiles y los gases de efecto invernadero (GEI). Las microalgas verdes oleaginosas son muy eficientes para superar la deficiencia de combustibles fósiles y los problemas relacionados con el medio ambiente. En este trabajo vamos a cultivar in vitro tres microalgas diferentes que tienen una cantidad significativa de lípidos. Y se empleó una segunda fase de estrés salino para mejorar el contenido de lípidos en las microalgas seleccionadas. Palabras clave: Transesterificación, Biocombustibles de tercera generación, Oleaginosas, microalgas, Biodiesel

## INTRODUCTION

Biodiesel is a biodegradable and renewable fuel which can be produced from a variety of feedstock and is currently being produced in many parts of the world. (Edith Martinez-Guerra et al. 2018). Biodiesel production may not completely replace the fossil fuel consumption, diminish the dependency on this conventional depleting sources. One of the major drawbacks of biodiesel is the feedstock availability for its production. However, the use of microalgae has demonstrated its capabilities of producing non-toxic, high-quality biodiesel.

Transesterification is simply the conversion of lipids in the feedstock into biodiesel by adding an ethanol and methanol are the most common acyl acceptors used for biodiesel production; while the catalyst can be acidic, basic, or enzymatic. (Ma F, Hanna MA et al. 1999).

Microorganisms that can be found in freshwater, wastewater, and marine water sources. Their characteristics are like those of other plants, however, microalgae are more efficient converting solar energy because of their simple cellular structure (Arun N, Singh DP et al. 2012).

They use sunlight for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> to biofuels, and they can accumulate significant amounts of triglycerides within their cells suitable for biofuel production through transesterification reaction (Dai YM, Chen et al. 2014).

The lipid accumulation in microalgal cells ranges from 25 to 75% of its dry weight (Boussiba S et al. 1987). Moreover, microalgae have the potential of fixing 1.83 tons of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> when producing one ton of algae biomass (Chisti Y. 2007). Also, microalgae are oil producing factories producing one hundred times more oil per acre than any other plants (Mubarak M, Shaija S, et al. 2015).

The rapid economic growth that took place in the second half of the 20th century caused a re-orientation in the manner of utilization of energy raw materials. A new model of the world economy has developed based on petroleum and natural gas, with a declining importance of hard coal (Ryan et al., 2006; Mata et al., 2010). However, the resources of those raw materials deplete fast, and their use causes several unfavorable effects, such as acid rains or global warming with the resultant climate changes (Demirbas, 2007; Somerville, 2007).

The dependence of the world economy on oil is such that speculations concerning the exhaustion of the raw material may result in a crisis in the world market. Such a phenomenon happened thrice in 1973, at the turn of 1980 and 1981 and 2008, when the price of oil soared to the level of 146.14 dollars per barrel (Huang et al., 2010). Apart from this, transport and the energy producing industry are the primary anthropogenic sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the European union that are responsible for more than 20 and 60%, respectively, of that emission (Mata et al., 2010).

In recent research microalgae such as Feedstock avoids these issues and presents several distinct advantages of not requiring agricultural or arable lands for production high photosynthetic efficiencies and biomass productivities (biomass doubled in less than one day), and one hundred times more lipids per acre of land [M. R Tredici, 2010]. Moreover, the main storage lipids in microalgae are neutral lipids (NLs) or triacylglycerols that can be esterified to FAMES with the primary profiles of C16 and C18, proven to be the most suitable for biofuel production [S. Champagne Ge, P et al. 2017].

Energy crisis, global warming, and climate changes concern on the sustainability issues of fossil fuels utilization and energy supply. Biofuels as types of renewable, sustainable energy are recognized with the highest potential to satisfy the global energy demand.

Biofuels can be divided into three categories: First generation biofuels use edible feedstock such as soya beans, wheat, corn, rapeseed, oil crops, maize, sugarcane, and sugar beet, while second generation biofuels are derived from wastes and dedicated lignocellulosic feedstock such as switch grass (*Panicum virgatum*) and *Jatropha* (Zhu, et al. 2016). One of the major disadvantages of both first- and second-generation biofuels is that the cultivation of these food or nonfood crops as biofuel feedstock might compete for limited arable farmland, which should be utilized to cultivate crops as food feedstock, (Zhu et al. 2016).

Due to continuous and increasing combustion of fossil fuel the amount of greenhouse gas CO<sub>2</sub> has increased. As a results global warming and climate change are threatening ecological stability, food security and social welfare (Chisti, 2008; Christenson, 2011). The transportation and energy sector are the two major sources, responsible for the generation of 20% and 60% of greenhouse gases (GHG) and fossil fuels emissions, respectively, and it is expected that with the development of emerging economies the global consumption of energy will rise, and this will lead to more environmental damage (Stephens, et al.2011).

Lipids in the form of triacyl glycerides typically provide a storage function in the cell that enables microalgae to endure adverse environmental conditions (Giorgos and Elis, 2013; Kalpesh, et al. 2012). Studies have indicated that the lipid content of microalgae can be enhanced by changing the cultivation conditions and objecting them to diverse stress conditions (Pittman, et al. 2011; Devi and Venkta Mohan, 2014).

The major stress conditions applied to enhance lipid accumulation are temperature. Light intensity, pH, salinity, minerals salt and nutrients (Takagi, 2006; lfeanyi, et al. 2011; Devi, et al. 2012).

Salinity stress can also lead to increment in the lipids content of microalgae due to its crucial role in causing changes in the fatty acid metabolism (Kalita, et al. 2011). Under high salinity stress, many organisms including microalgae alter their metabolism to adapt to the extreme environment (Kan, et al. 2012). The ability of microalgae to survive in saline environment under the influence of osmotic stress has received considerable attention which can also affect cell growth and lipid formation (Asulabh, et al. 2012).

Fluctuation in the salt content of the growth medium has also been found to alter the lipid composition of microalgae (Kalpesh, et al. 2012). As, algae are inhabitant of biotopes characterized by varying salinities, they have gained significance in salt tolerance studies domain any have served as model organisms for better understanding of salt acclimation in more complex physiological processes (Talebi, et al. 2013; Alkayal, et al. 2011).

Microalgae are being employed as potential generation vehicles to harness various useful products like biofuels, nutraceuticals, animal feeds and biomaterials etc. (Singh, et al., 2016).

#### MATERIAL AND METHODS

Microalgae and media composition: *Chlorella pyrenoidosa*, *Chlorella protothecoides* and *Scenedesmus obliquus* was procured from National Collection of Industrial Microorganisms (NCIM), Pune, India. Stock cultures of these algae was cultivated in BG11 medium at temperature ranges  $32\pm 2^\circ\text{C}$  under natural day light illumination in twelve 250 ml Erlenmeyer flasks, four for each alga. 150 ml freshly prepared BG11 medium was taken into each erlenmeyer flask, and each was inoculated with 20 % of inoculum i.e., 30 ml. Each liter of the BG11 medium contained  $\text{NaNO}_3$ -1.5 g,  $\text{K}_2\text{HPO}_4$ -0.04 g,  $\text{MgSO}_4 \cdot 7\text{H}_2\text{O}$ -0.075 g,  $\text{CaCl}_2 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ -0.036 g, Citric acid-0.006 g,  $\text{NaCO}_3$ -0.02 g,  $\text{H}_3\text{BO}_3$ -0.00286 g,  $\text{MnCl}_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$ -0.00181 g,  $\text{ZnSO}_4 \cdot 7\text{H}_2\text{O}$ -0.00022 g,  $\text{Na}_2\text{MoO}_4 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ -0.00039 g,  $\text{CuSO}_4 \cdot 5\text{H}_2\text{O}$ -0.00008 g,  $\text{Co}(\text{NO}_3)_2 \cdot 6\text{H}_2\text{O}$ -0.00005 g,  $(\text{NH}_4)_6\text{Mo}_7\text{O}_{24} \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$ -0.003 g,  $\text{Na}_2\text{EDTA}$ -0.00001 g. The inoculums of known optical density (OD) at 680 nm was used to inoculate 1800 ml of freshly prepared BG11 medium. All the cultures were inoculated under aseptic conditions to avoid contamination. Illumination of  $11 \mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$  at  $32\pm 2^\circ\text{C}$  was provided to the culture for four days on an orbital shaker at 120 rpm.

These cultures were selected based on their lipid or fats. BG11 nutrient media was used to cultivate selected oleaginous green algae. Different saline concentrations of NaCl dose were prepared and applied to evaluate the impact of salt stress on lipid content of the selected algae. Different saline NaCl concentration was 0, 10, 25, 50, mM. All experiments were executed in triplicates. All the working solutions was inoculated by 3 % (v/v) of stock algal species cultures. The flasks was incubated under natural day light illumination at  $11 \mu\text{mol}(\text{photon})/\text{m}^2\text{s}$  at  $32\pm 2^\circ\text{C}$  for 20 days with shaking at 120 rpm. 10 min.  $\text{d}^{-1}$ .

Culture conditions: The composition and quantity of lipids content are species-dependent and can be affected by external cultivation conditions, such as light intensity, temperature, carbondioxide, nutrient starvation, salinity stress, pH. All algal species are cultivated and maintained in natural conditions.

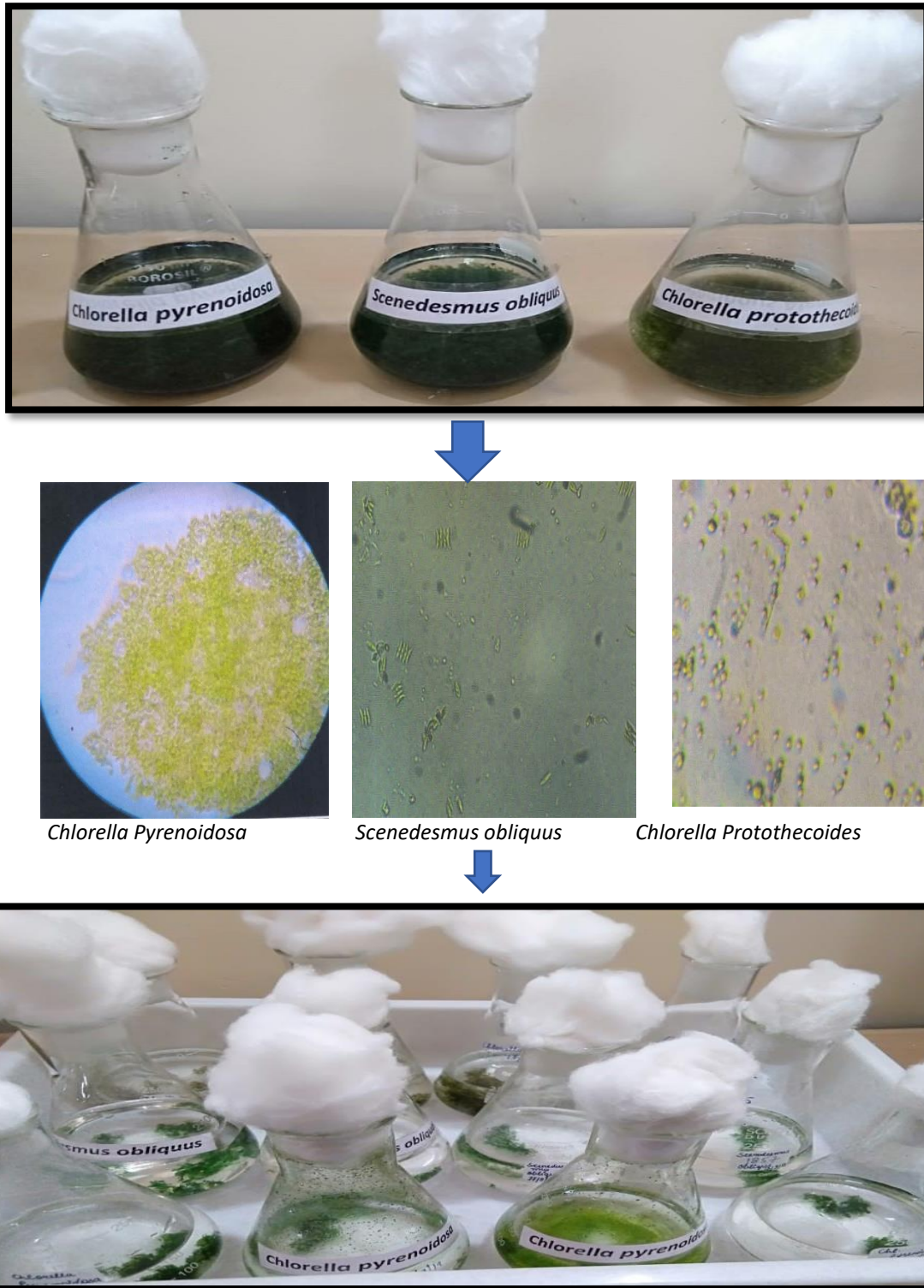
Biomass Growth Measurement: Optical density of growing micro algal culture was recorded by UV-Visible Spectrophotometer 2203 (SYSTRONICS) at 680 nm. Optical density of culture was recorded a regular basis at the interval of 4 days upto 20 days.

Measurement of lipid content (Folch et. al. 1957): Dried microalgae (40 mg) were taken in 5 ml of extraction solvent chloroform: methanol (2:1 v/v) The extract was filter via Whatman no.1 filter paper and 3 ml of 1% NaCl (1gm/100ml) was added to the filtrate. The resulting solution was transferred to a separating funnel to for separation. The lower organic phase containing the lipid components was collected in a small pre-weighed petri plate. It was kept overnight in a dessicator at room temperature in dark place. The beaker containing the dried extracts was reweighed and total lipids was estimated by subtracting the initial weight from the final weight.

#### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Cultivation of Oleaginous green microalgae: There are three microalgae which have been elected for research work were *Chlorella pyrenoidosa*, *Chlorella protothecoides* and *Scenedesmus obliquus* all were pure

culture and procured from National Collection of Industrial Microorganism (NCIM), Pune, Maharashtra, Procured algae were sub-cultured in prescribed medium at temperature ranges  $32\pm 2^{\circ}\text{C}$  under natural day light illumination in twelve 250 ml Erlenmeyer flasks, experiment was executed in triplicate.



Figures-1 Cultivation of green oleaginous microalgae

#### Spectroscopy of microalgal cultures (Fig 3)

*Chlorella pyrenoidosa*, *Scenedesmus obliquus* and *Chlorella protothecoides* were cultured in prescribed medium BG11 broth upto 20 days. Optical density was recorded at the interval of 4 days upto 20 days at 680nm via UV-Visible Double Beam Spectrophotometer 2203.

In *Chlorella pyrenoidosa* maximum O.D. was recorded in those culture stressed with 10mM, non-iodized NaCl, while least O.D recorded in cultures. Which stressed with 50mM non-iodized NaCl. However, optical density was maximum i.e, 0.706nm in control.

Results showed that saline stress inhibit growth rate of algae in some extent.

#### Spectroscopic access of *Scenedesmus obliquus*

In *Scenedesmus obliquus* maximum O.D. was recorded in those culture stressed with 10mM, non-iodized NaCl, while least O.D recorded in cultures. Which stressed with 50mM non-iodized NaCl. However, optical density was maximum i.e, 0.192nm in control. Results showed that saline stress inhibit growth rate of algae in some extent.

#### Spectroscopic access of *Chlorella protothecoides*

In *Chlorella protothecoides* maximum O.D. was recorded in those culture stressed with 10mM, non-iodized NaCl, while least O.D recorded in cultures. Which stressed with 50mM non-iodized NaCl. However, optical density was maximum i.e, 0.427nm in control. Results showed that saline stress inhibit growth rate of algae in some extent.

#### Lipid Estimation (Folch et al., 1957)



Figure-2 Lipid Estimation by Folch method

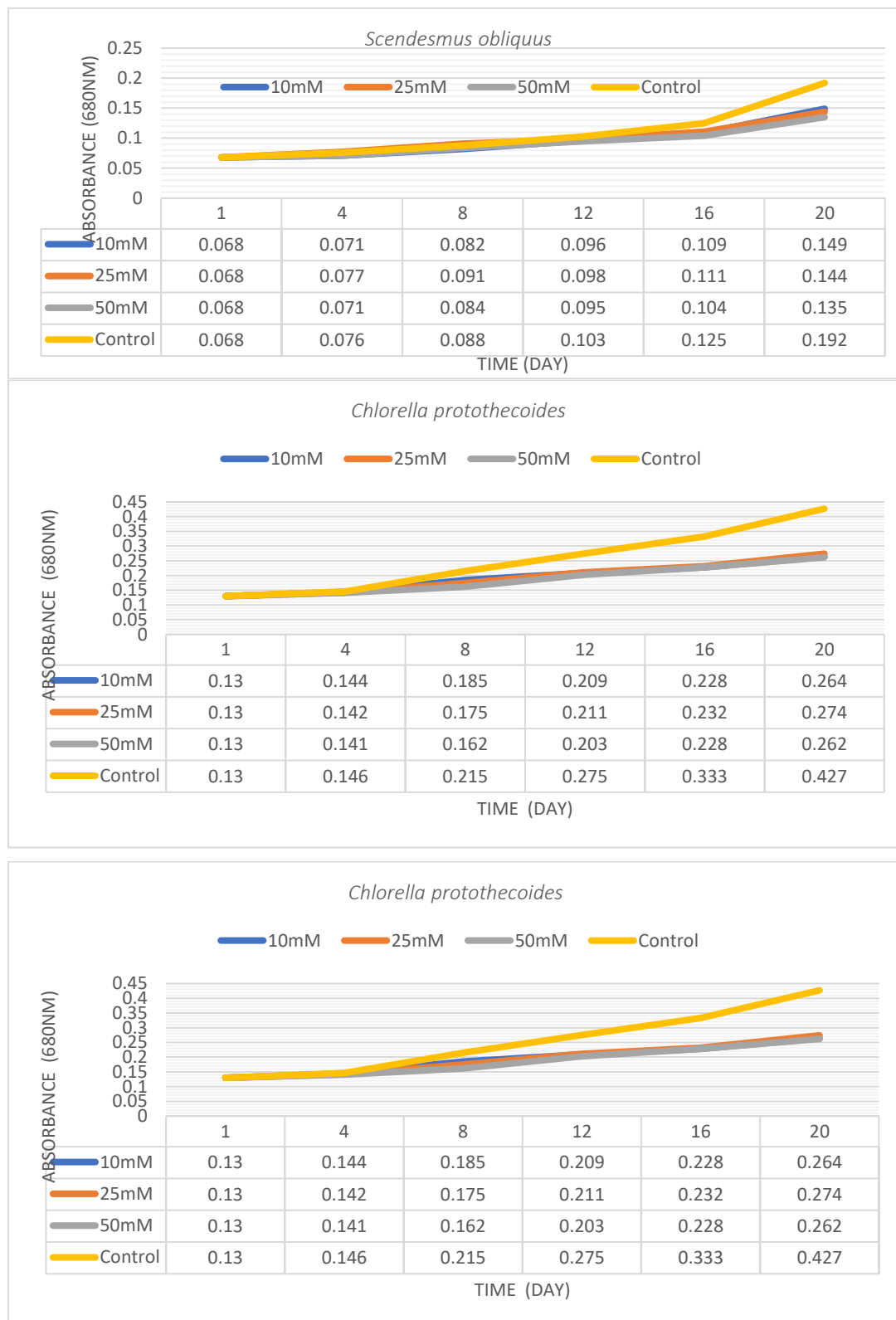


Figure 3. Spectroscopy of microalgal cultures

A significant surge has been recorded in lipid content when algae were stressed with non-iodized NaCl. Maximum lipid content 28.5mg has been recorded in *Chlorella protothecoides* when stressed, while lipid content was 20mg when not stressed. In *Scendesmus obliquus* maximum lipid content 4.8 mg has been recorded when



stressed. While lipid content was 9.6mg when not stressed. In *Chlorella pyrenoidosa* maximum lipid content 19.3 mg has been recorded when stressed. While lipid content was 8mg when not stressed (Fig. 4).

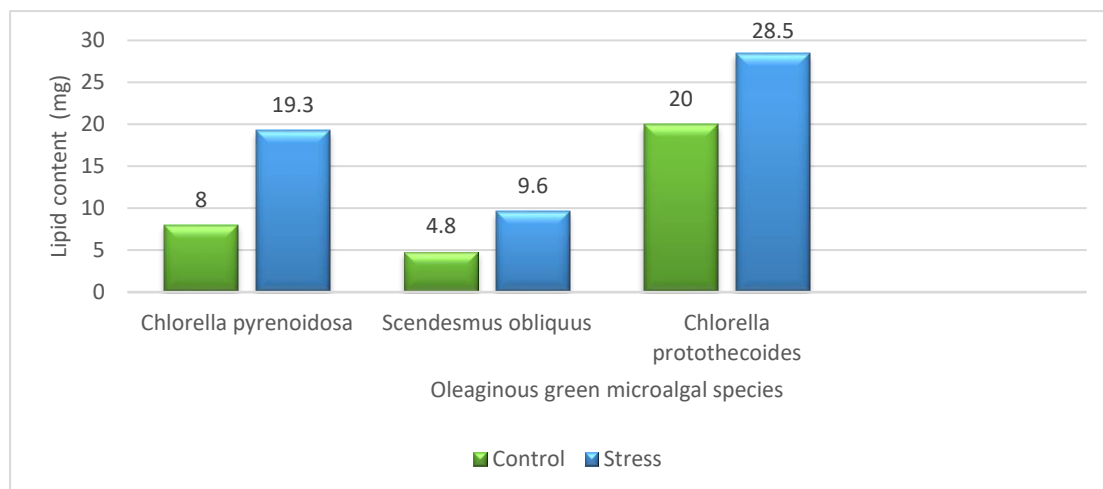


Fig . 4. Lipid content in Oleaginous green microalgae

## CONCLUSION

Oleaginous green microalgae- *Chlorella pyrenoidosa*, *Chlorella protothecoides* and *Scendesmus obliquus* are potent for biofuel production. After maintained microalgal have been sub-cultured successfully in phycology lab, DEI Dayalbagh Agra. After experimentation of impact of saline stress, a significant stage in lipid content of all selected green microalgae has been observed. Although growth rate of microalgae is affected due to saline stress. Spectroscopic data has revealed slight depression in growth rate of microalgae.

Significance and prospects: At present time, about 70% of energy is generated from fossil fuels and only about 30% is produced from renewable energy sources. The forecasted energy demand increases make evident that the conventional oil reserves that can be commercially exploited was vanished after 2050. Deteriorating Environmental condition demands sustainable renewable energy sources with least greenhouse gases emission. Third generation biofuel from microalgae can fulfill are demand of environmentally friendly biofuel with least GHG emission. In present research an affected has been made to enhance lipid content via saline stress. Lipid estimate showed a significant source in lipid. It may help to curb are dependency on fossil fuels. Fossil fuels are high energy sources, but these are Reduce day to day. These fuels high demand present in time but fossil stock is limited. These sources are not renewable energy sources. And Oleaginous green microalgae are a high energy sources and high lipid content. These energy sources are a renewable and sustainable energy sources. Thus, this source is environment friendly biofuels. Strategies for cost reduction is producing microalgal biodiesel by using a biorefinery based production strategy.

Data availability

All data are available in Department of Botany, Faculty of Science, Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Dayalbagh Agra-5.

conflict of interest

None

Author Contribution



Jeetendra singh in complete the work and writing of the paper and S.K. Soni provide proper guidance for this work.

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