

Production, characterization and application of crude fungal lipase from *Aspergillus rubber* OP520917

Rania Abdel Razik, Mona S. Shafei

Chemistry of Natural and Microbial Products
Department, Pharmaceutical and Drug
Industries Research Institute, National
Research Centre, 33 El Bohouth St.
(from El Tahrir St.), Dokki, Giza, Egypt

Correspondence to Rania Abdel Razik,
Chemistry of Natural and Microbial Products
Department, Pharmaceutical and Drug
Industries Research institute, National
Research Centre, 33 El Bohouth St.
(from El Tahrir St.), Dokki, Giza, Egypt.
Tel./Fax: 01227272695;
e-mail: Rania122bc@gmail.com

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Background

The pancreatic and stomach juices both include the naturally occurring lipase enzyme. Its job is to digest lipids and fats, which helps to keep the gallbladder working properly. Long chain triglycerides are hydrolyzed by microbial lipases, E.C 3.1.1.3 because they are capable of producing changed molecules, the lipase enzymes that come from microorganisms are theoretically versatile and useful for a wide range of industrial applications.

Objective

This study sought to determine the amount of crude lipase produced by *A. rubber* OP520917 during submerged fermentation and its use in removing oil from fabrics and breaking down chicken fats.

Materials and methods

Aspergillus rubber OP520917 was tested for lipase production using submerged fermentation; lipase activity was estimated, characterized and tested for industrial applications. Influence of: the pH; incubation times; surfactants and organic solvents and their concentration on the production of lipase by the selected strain were evaluated.

Results and conclusion

Aspergillus rubber OP520917 was identified strain for lipase production. The biochemical characterizations of lipolytic activity of *A. rubber* were studied and documented that the best temperature was 37°C at pH 4 after 4 days of incubation time. The medium used for enzyme production contains olive oil as a carbon source, Moreover, 30% of hexane was the best organic solvent for the strain. Where the relative activity increased to 200%. The lipase activities were maximal (210,145 U/ml) in the presence of surfactants tween80 and tween20 respectively at 1% concentration. Furthermore, Lipase activity was also tested for removal of oil stains from the fabrics and the degradation of natural chicken fats with crude enzyme as industrial applications. The results showed that more than 74% of fats degraded after 5 days of the incubation period.

Keywords:

Aspergillus rubber, destaining and degradation of animal fats application, lipase production

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Introduction

Both the chemical and enzymatic catalysts are effective for industrial applications. However, there are several drawbacks in chemical catalysis such as undesirable by-product formation, high energy consumption and equipment corrosion [1] On the other hand, the enzymatic catalysis is preferable as it is specific, selective and thus preventing undesired modifications of substrate and the formation of the toxic byproduct in addition to the fact that it is less energy demanding [2,3].

The reaction is catalysed at the lipid-water interface by lipases, a subclass of esterase with long chains of triacylglycerol that are very poorly soluble in water [4,5] Due to their excellent stability in temperature, pH, and organic solvent extremes, lipases are particularly effective in catalysing processes in both aqueous and non-aqueous conditions [6]. According [5], lipases are known to have a hydrophobic lid that is essential for their interfacial activity.

The breakdown of oils and fats is catalyzed by lipases (glycerol ester hydrolyses, E.C 3.1.1.3). They also facilitate the formation of esters through Trans

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esterification, thio esterification, and amylolysis [7] under micro-aqueous circumstances [8] Lipases are widely distributed in bacteria, yeasts, and fungi [9–11].

Studies on microbial lipases have expanded as a result of their practical industrial uses, such as fatty acid generation, fat hydrolysis, ester and peptide synthesis, racemic mixture resolution, and addition to detergents and food additives. Microbial lipases can be produced utilizing both submerged and solid state fermentation systems with a variety of carbon and nitrogen sources. The majority of literature publications confirmed that the solid state fermentation systems are superior techniques for the synthesis of microbial lipase.

The best sources of lipase are fungi, which are frequently employed in industrial applications, particularly in the food industry. *Aspergillus niger* is one of the most well-known lipase producers, and its enzyme is suitable for use in many developed applications [12]. According to various research, a wide range of species developed extracellular lipases. This throws light on the biochemical characterization of lipase activity and stability of *A. rubber* that can help in understanding the major aspects of its production as well as its potential in industrial applications.

Materials and methods

Chemicals

All media components were purchased from sigma Aldrich Chemical Company and were of analytical grade.

Microorganisms

Aspergillus rubber OP520917 was kindly obtained from the culture collection at Institute of Pharmaceutical and Industrial Drugs chemistry of natural and microbial products department, National Research Centre (NRC) culture collection, Cairo, Egypt. The fungal strain was maintained on potato dextrose agar (PDA) and stored at 4°C.

Inoculum preparation

The fungal inoculum was prepared by scratching the spores of cultivated slants (4.3×10^6 spores/100 ml medium) into a sabouraud liquid medium.

Submerged fermentation (SmF)

Submerged fermentation was used for quantitative evaluation of *A. rubber* OP520917 where Erlenmeyer flasks (250 ml) containing 100 ml sabouraud broth

medium which has the following composition (g/l): 40 g glucose; 10 g peptone [13]. The flasks were inoculated with 4.3×10^6 spores/100 ml of the tested microorganism and incubated at 30°C on a rotary shaker (160 rpm) for 4 days. At the end of the incubation period, the fermented medium filtrated using whatman No.1 was and the cell dry weight was measured and the lipase activity was assayed in the supernatant.

Lipase assay

Culture filtrate lipase (1 ml) was mixed with 3-ml emulsion of olive oil in Arabic gum (10% w/v) and 2.5 ml of deionized water in 1-ml 0.1 M Tris-HCl buffer to assess lipase activity (pH 7.5). 10 ml of 99% ethanol solution was added to terminate the reaction after it had been incubated for 2 h at 37°C and 160 rpm. Thymolphthalein was used as an indicator as the mixture was then titrated against 0.05 N Na OH. Blank experiments were then carried out by boiling the enzyme. The amount of enzyme that releases 1 mole of free fatty acids per minute under test conditions is considered one unit of lipase activity [14].

Effect of incubation period on lipase production

On the productive medium, *A. rubber* was allowed to grow for various incubation times ranging from 24 to 120 h at 30 degrees Celsius on a rotary shaker (160 rpm). Enzyme activity was assessed after the extract was collected.

Characteristics for the lipase

The ideal conditions for lipase activity to be used in diverse applications were determined using the clear supernatant.

Effect of pH and temperature

Using citrate, phosphate, and glycine buffer, the impact of pH on lipase activity was evaluated at various pH values ranging from 3 to 10. A wide range of temperatures, from 25 to 50°C, were used to study how temperature affected lipase activity. The enzyme assay was conducted as previously described in order to establish the ideal pH and temperature

Effect of organic solvents and surfactants

This was determined by using different surfactants (tween 80, tween20) at different concentrations (0.5, 1, 1.5%v/v) and organic solvents either water soluble (ethanol, methanol and acetone) or water insoluble (hexane) were added to the enzyme solution and incubated at 37°C for 2 h. Activity of the enzyme was measured as previously mentioned.

Effect of enzyme concentration

To investigate the effect of the different enzyme concentration on the lipolytic activity, aliquots of crude enzyme (0.1–2.5 ml) were added to the reaction mixture which contained 3 ml olive oil. The lipase activity was determined and the relative activities were plotted against different concentration of the crude enzyme and relative activities.

Determination of lipase efficiency

The crude fungal lipase, were examined for their effectiveness in eliminating oil stains from fabrics and decomposing natural chicken fat.

Removing oil stains

Two drips of frying oil were used to stain a fabric that was 3 cm by 2 cm and 3 cm by 4 cm in size. The fabric pieces were placed on reagent bottles with four different treatments after being allowed to dry as follows: (a) Water (100 ml), (b) 1% (w/v) detergent in water (99 ml+1 ml), (c) lipase in water (99 ml+1 ml), and detergent and lipase in water (98 ml+1 ml+1 ml) are examples of the four different types of liquids. A cold-water treatment (25°C) and a hot water treatment (60°C) were performed in parallel for each treatment. For 30 min, all treatments were incubated and gently stirred. The fabric pieces were then taken out, dried, and checked for any signs of oil left over. Titrimetric assay was employed as previously mentioned to measure the quantity of free fatty acids produced with each

treatment. Each sample's relative activity (%) was calculated and contrasted with the detergent-free control. the relative activity of control was defined as the enzyme activity without detergent incubated under similar conditions and was taken as 100%.

Degradation of natural chicken fats

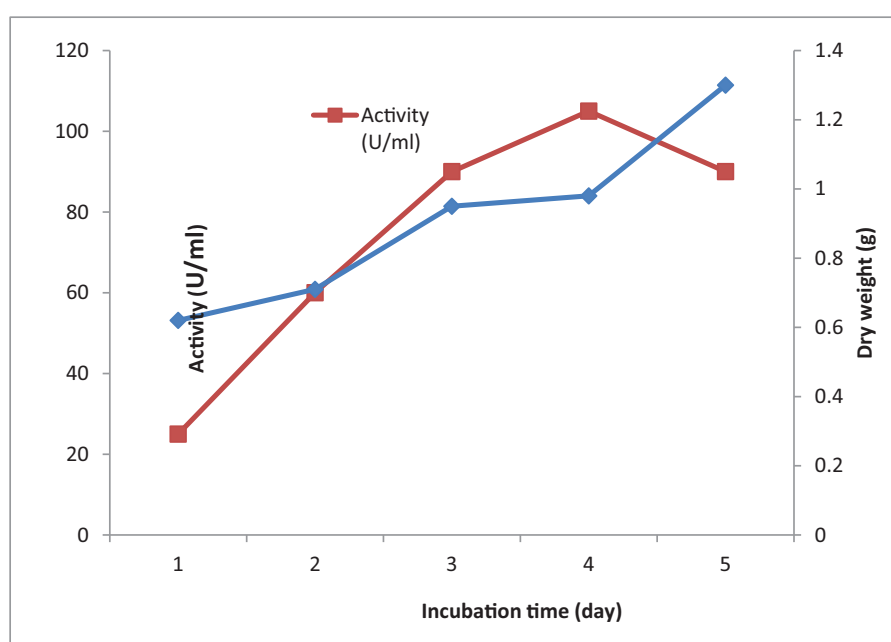
To assess the efficiency of the crude fungal lipase in breaking down natural fat, 2.5 g of chicken fat was autoclaved and placed in tubes before the crude enzyme were added. The tubes were then incubated for 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 days at their ideal temperature (50°C for *A.rubber*). Fat chunks were weighed following incubation, and the enzyme activity was assessed.

Results and discussions

Effect of incubation period on lipase activity

The incubation period plays an important role in the biosynthesis of lipase. In our study 4 days under submerged fermentation was found to be optimum incubation period for enzyme production by *A.rubber* OP520917 reaching its maximal values (105U/ml) at 0.98 g/l mycelial dry weight (Fig. 1). As the fermentation period increased the biomass increased up to 5 days where the enzyme activity started to decrease. Colla *et al.* [15] recorded 3 to 4 days as ideal incubation period to produce maximum lipolytic activity using *Aspergillus sp.* On the other Cesario *et al.* [16] and Kempaka *et al.* [17] adopted 6 and 7 days incubation period for maximal lipase

Figure 1



Effect of incubation period on lipase activity (U/ml) as indicated by the growth of *Aspergillus rubber* (dry weight g/flask).

activity. These diversities may be attributed to the wide varieties of fungal isolates as well as conditions and the media used [16].

Effect of pH on lipase activity

Lipase activity produced by *A. rubber* OP520917 was measured at various enzyme solutions ranging from pH 3 to 10. The lipase tends to be active under acidic to neutral (Fig. 2). Optimum lipase activity (155 U/ml) was found at pH 4.0 using citrate buffer. Nearly similar results were shown lipase produced from both *A. niger* and *P. simplicissimum* in pH 5 and pH 6 respectively [18,19]. In the same manner, *Aspergillus niger* J-1 [20] and *A. niger* NCIM1207 [21] had optimum activity under acidic conditions, pH 6 and 3 respectively. This is a result of the ionization state of the enzyme and, consequently, of the enzyme's reaction rate. Ionic interactions recognize the flexibility and confirmation of the enzyme and its active site at various pH settings. As a result, at various pH settings, the side groups' ionization state changes, interfering with these forces and denature the protein structure [22] As a result, every enzyme has an ideal pH range where they perform at their highest level.

Effect of temperature on lipase activity

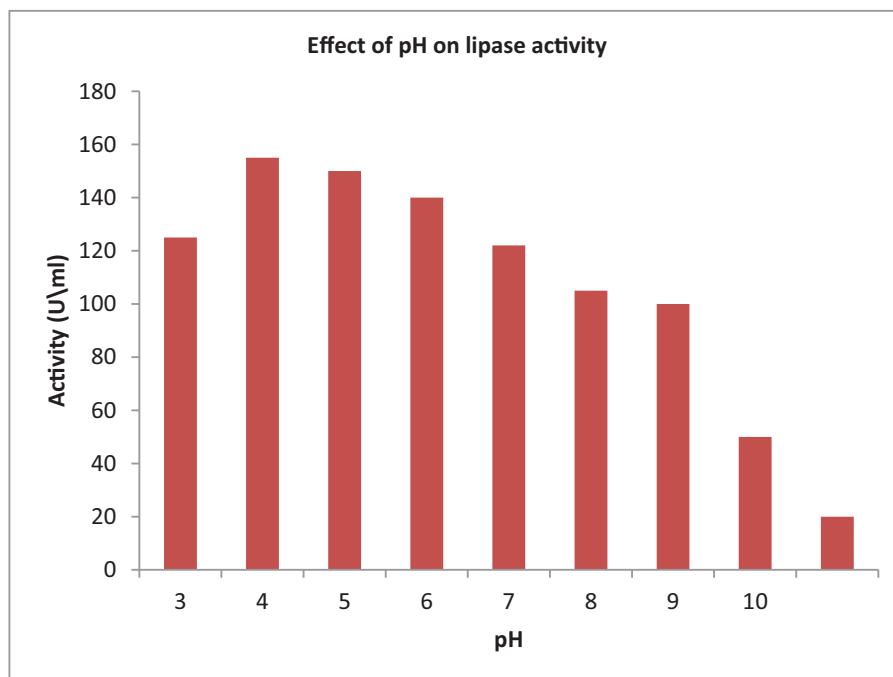
Lipase activity was estimated between 25°C and 50°C and results are exposed in (Table 1). The extract showed activity in all temperatures tested. The

lowest activity was at 25°C and continued to increase with temperature until it reached maximum at 37°C (155 U/ml) with relative activity 100%. Generally increasing the temperature increases the reactant molecules kinetic energy which in turn increases the effect of the shocks and the reactions rate. This phenomenon is observed at a particular temperature range when the enzyme's three-dimensional form is maintained. However, denaturation of the enzyme occurs at higher temperatures [23]. Our results agreed nearly with those obtained by Colla *et al.* [24] where the maximum lipase activity was at 37°C using *A. flavus*. Most of lipase activity produced by *Aspergilli* are at around 40°C as that obtained by Sundar and Kumaresapillai [25] using *A. niger* NCIM1207 as the maximum activity was at 40°C. Differently, Rashma and Shanmugam [26] stated that the optimum temperature was 27°C for maximum enzyme activity.

Table 1 Effect of temperature on the lipase activity

Temperature C°	Relative activity %	Activity (U/ml)
20	25.8	40
25	25.8	40
30	25.8	40
37*	100	155
40	41.9	65
45	38.6	60
50	38.6	60

Figure 2



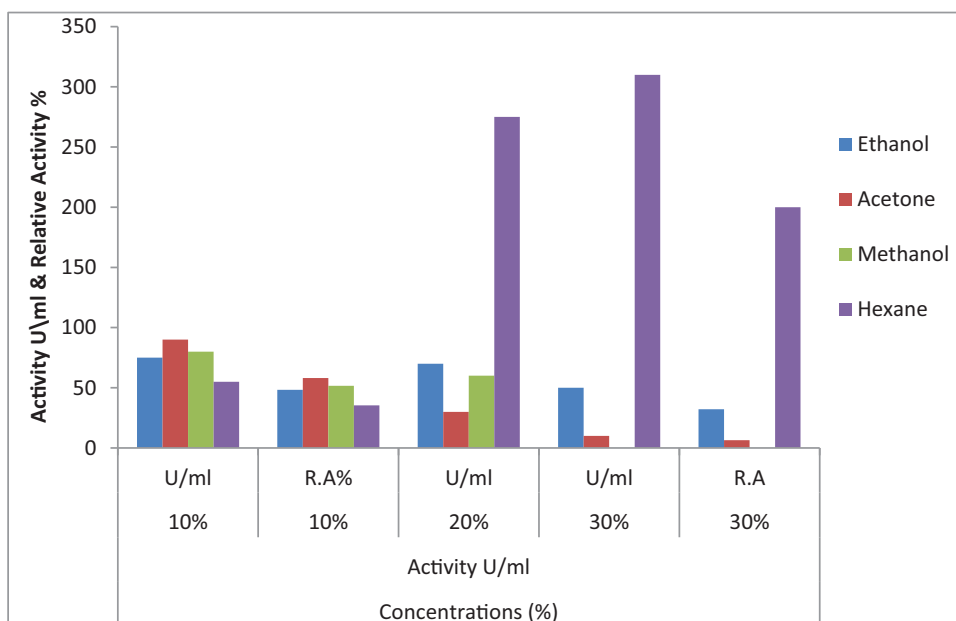
Effect of pH on lipase activity (U/ml).

Effect of different concentrations of organic solvents on lipase activity

In biotechnological process, lipases are important in bioconversions in organic solvents. Which have influencing role on the activity of enzymes and their effectiveness. The organic solvents (methanol, ethanol, acetone& hexane) were used at two different concentrations (10, 30% v\v) to test the optimal activity for *A.rubber* OP520917. The effect of

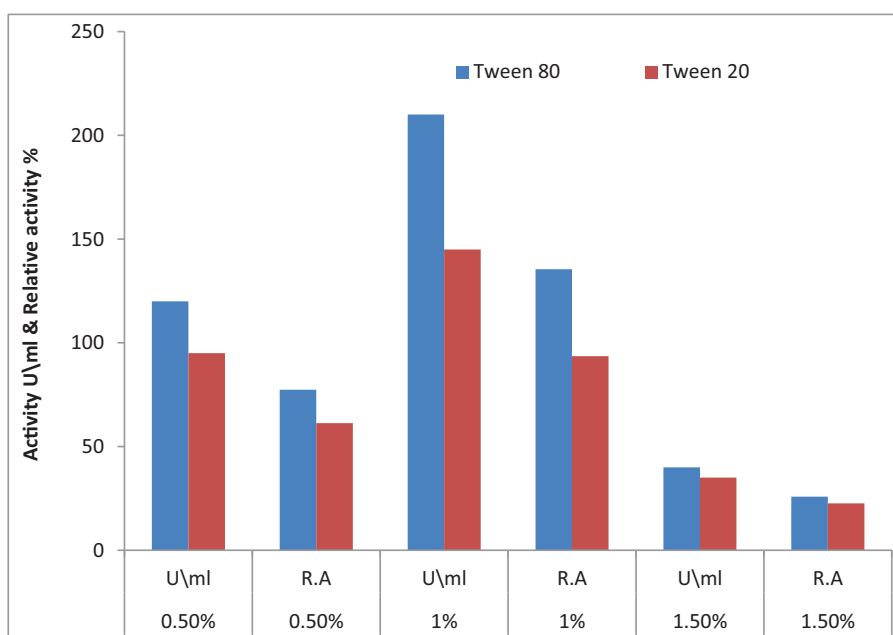
organic solvents on lipase activity was investigated as shown in (Fig. 3). The lipolytic activity of *A.rubber* OP520917 changed and showed different degrees of decline. However, *A.rubber* lipase showed good tolerance to hexane at 30% concentration and relative activity was 200% .While other organic solvents caused a decrease in the lipase activity. This may be attributed to the fact that hexane is a non-polar solvent with high log P 3.5. Klibanov [19] reported

Figure 3



Effect of different concentrations of organic solvents on *A.rubber* lipase activity (U/ml) and relative activity (%).

Figure 4



Effect of different concentrations of surfactants on lipase activity as indicated by U/ml and relative activity represented by (%).

previously that polar solvents with low log P 0.8 as in methanol reduced the enzyme activity while the non-polar solvents with high log P increased the enzyme activity. Similarly Gururaj *et al.* [27] reported that n-hexane increased lipase activity of *Acinobacter sp* AU07 by 1 fold therefore, during lipase-catalyzed organic synthesis, it is necessary to select a suitable reaction solvent [22].

Effect of surfactants

Surfactants in particular tween 80 and tween 20 have an effect on *A. rubber* OP520917 lipase activity. When Tween80 (1% v/v) was used, which is known to reduce the interfacial stress between the water and oil phases and improve the water-lipid interface area, lipase activity raise by 135.4% (Fig. 4). This raises the rate at which lipase-catalyzed reactions occur Shaoxin & Bingzhao [28]. This offers prospective benefits in the detergent industry. This in accordance with results obtained by Ben Bacha *et al.* [29], Das *et al.* [30] & Malekabadi *et al.* [31] who stated that tween 80 surfactants stimulated the enzymatic activity. Zheng *et al.* [32] and Sharma & Kanwar [33] stated that tween 20 SDS surfactants had inhibitory effect.

Our results showed that Tween 80 at 1% was found to be the most effective variable during lipase activity by *A. rubber*, because it served as a carbon source and an inducer. These results agreed with Salhiu *et al.* [34] who found that the presence of Tween 80 led to higher lipase production from *Penicillium citrinum*.

Effect of enzyme concentration on *A. rubber* lipase activity

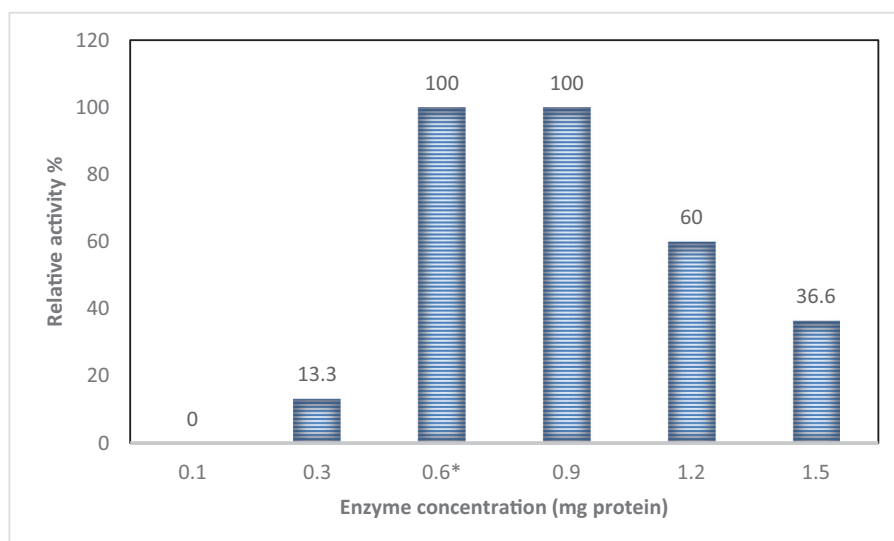
Our results showed that 1 ml containing 0.6 mg protein was the best enzyme concentration for lipase activity as

shown in (Fig. 5) and these results agreed with Al-Haidari *et al.* [35] who stated that 1 ml of lipase concentration was the optimum concentration of enzyme that exerted the highest activity (2.31 U/ml) as more enzymes causes more colloid with substrate molecules. Cumulative enzyme concentration will speed up the chemical reaction rate, as long as there is substrate accessible for binding. Once all of the substrate is bound, the reaction will no longer speed up because there will be nothing for additional enzymes to bind.

Application of *A. rubber* lipase in removing oil stain

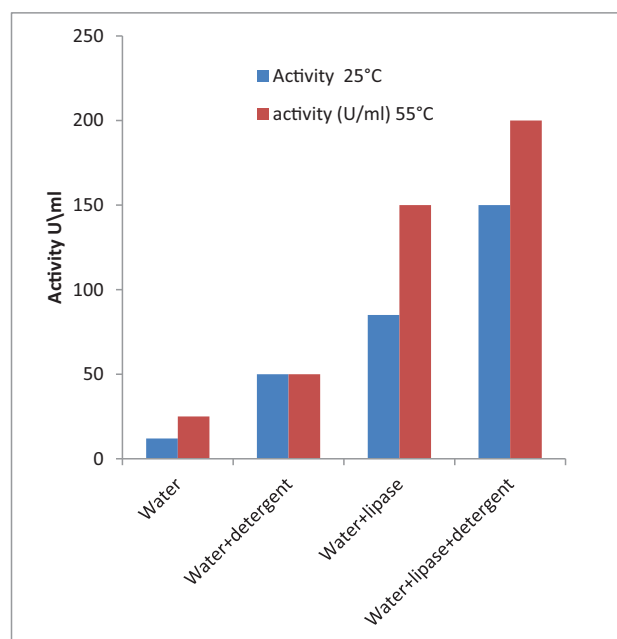
Oil stains on cotton garments were treated with hot and cold water four times each to test the effectiveness of *A. rubber* lipase. In comparison to low temperatures, lipase activity was found to be better at high temperatures (55°C) than low (25°C). When the cotton fabric was treated with the enzyme and the detergent, it was clear that the oil staining process had been successful. Moreover, adding crude lipase to cold or hot water boosted the enzyme activity in the absence of detergent by 1.7 and 3 folds, respectively. When crude lipase was added to cold or hot water in the absence of detergent, the enzyme activity rose by 1.7 and 3 times, respectively. The largest amount of oil distaining (200 U/ml) was achieved using hot water in the fourth treatment, which also included detergent, cold or hot water, and lipase. Our findings showed that oil stains may be eliminated even little in cold water when water, detergent, and enzyme were present. This suggests the potential for application and thus lowering energy use. Similar to this, Hemachander and Puvanakrishnan [36] showed that using detergent and *Rastonia pickettii* enzyme combined improved oil

Figure 5



Effect of different enzyme concentrations (weight/mg protein) on lipase relative activity (%).

Figure 6



Oil destaining efficiency of the lipase by using oil stains on cotton garments which were treated by a) water b) water+detergent, c) water + lipase, d) water+lipase+detergent.

removal by 24–27%. These results agreed with Prazeres and Cruz [37] using lipase from *Fusarium oxysporium* in removing oil stains while Das & Bhattacharya [30] using *Aspergillus tamarii* JGIF06. The effectiveness of removing oil stains in the presence of detergent and enzyme was the same in cold and hot water. This disagreed with our results in which the lipase activity in hot water was higher than in cold [30].

Degradation of chicken fats

It was used to break down chicken fats. After five days, it was shown that lipase was able to breakdown roughly 74% of the chicken fats (Fig. 6). Hence, lipase can address the problem of fat pollution in the environment in a safer and more affordable manner [21]. The removal of fats in the medical field as well as the lipolysis of fats in water sanitation and the prevention of water pollution can be accomplished using the enzyme from *A. rubber*, according to our findings [38] (Table 2).

Conclusion

In the present work, the extracellular enzyme was obtained from *A. rubber* OP520917 was characterized and showed several properties suitable for different applications. The lipase produced was stable to surfactants and organic solvents and thus suggesting its use for detergents and as biocatalysts for trans esterification reactions.

Table 2 Degradation of chicken fats by *A. rubber* lipase

Time	Weight of fats/g	Activity U/ml
Control	2.5	155
1st day	2.13	120
2nd day	1.82	80
3rd day	1.4	65
4th day	0.9	60
5th day	0.65	60

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Nil.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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