

Preface

Extensive use of Azo dyes by various industries and discharge of colored wastewater directly to the aquatic system leads to deterioration of our environment. Toxicity and aesthetic effects of these dye wastewater make them necessary to be treated before discharge. There are many efficient physical and chemical technologies for the treatment of dye-containing wastewater, but they have the disadvantage of high operating costs and secondary waste generation. Nowadays, biological methods seek attention for the treatment of dyes due to their low cost, eco-friendly nature and versatility, and their capability to degrade a variety of dyes to partially or wholly to a stable and non-toxic compound. Generally, dyes degraded easily in an anaerobic environment but they lead to the formation of aromatic amines. Therefore, further treatment is recommended for complete mineralization of amines into non-toxic compounds. Several combinations of anaerobic and aerobic biological treatments have been suggested for enhanced dye degradation. Most of the Azo dyes are degraded under anaerobic conditions. Developments of the toxic intermediates during anaerobic degradation and lower decolorization are some of the operational limitations of biological methods. Hence the study is being diverted in search of new technology that increases the overall biological process efficiency. Microbial Fuel Cell (MFC) is a new emerging green and non-combustion based degradation technology that utilizes the potential of microbes for the degradation of waste along with the production of electricity. It has the dual advantage of producing electricity, and simultaneously it degraded waste. It has proven its utility for treating many industrial wastes such as food industry waste, pharmaceuticals waste, paint industry waste, and sewage wastewater along with electricity production. The MFC technology has already been well established for electricity production, but it has the only disadvantage of low power output,

which limits its large scale use commercialization. If this MFC technology is combined with the bioremediation of dyes, then the overall performance of MFC can be increased. A very small amount of work in the area of dye degradation with electricity production has been reported to date. Therefore taking all these research gaps, the present work was planned which emphasizes decolorization and degradation of two different Azo dyes, namely Reactive Orange 16 and Reactive Red 120, using mixed and isolated strain. Then the degradation of both the dyes is optimized using response surface methodology (RSM) combined with central composite design (CCD). The bacterial kinetic study was also carried out for inhibition study in MFC. Before this study, a preliminary setup (MFC1 and MFC2) was constructed, and sewage wastewater from a primary clarifier fed with glucose as a carbon source was used. From the literature review, Nafion and agar salt bridge were taken as proton exchange membrane (PEM), and the most suitable membrane was chosen for further studies. It was concluded from different preliminary experiments that Nafion as PEM and carbon cloth as a current collector would be suitable for dye degradation and electricity generation. Experimental results are analyzed, discussed, and compared against results from similar investigations and correlations. An extensive literature survey has been conducted before all experimental studies.

Thesis Overview

Chapter 1 of the thesis contains the general introduction of dyes, their use, toxic effects, different treatment technologies, and treatment of these dyes using MFCs along with the production of electricity. Problem statements and the significance of researches have also been discussed here.

Chapter 2 represents detailed reviews of relevant literature related to synthetic dyes, classification, potential threats to the environment, and current treatment technologies. It also contains a review on MFC, its working principle and metabolism, recent researches, and parameters affecting its performance. It also highlights the significant research gap for the treatment of dyes and in MFC technologies. Research objectives of the present studies have also been discussed here.

Chapter 3 describes the details of materials and methods involved in the present study, which includes sampling, enrichment, and acclimatization, isolation and identification of dye degrading bacterial strain, optimization of process parameters in MFC for dye degradation. Also, different analytical techniques used for the analysis of the performance of MFC have been discussed in detail.

The result and discussion part are divided into five chapters (4,5,6,7,8). In **Chapter 4**, isolation and identification of bacterial strain for dye degradation have been carried out for finding out potent dye degrading bacterial strain. **Chapter 5** contains a comparative study of two MFCs with different proton exchange membranes. The **Chapter 6** describes the behavior of MFC for Azo dye degradation using mixed culture and their microbial kinetics study. The **Chapter 7** contains process optimization using RSM for dye degradation using a single strain in MFC. The **Chapter 8** of this thesis describes the comparative study of mixed and isolated strain in MFC for enhanced dye degradation and its process optimization.

An effort has been made to conclude the thesis in **chapter 9**. In the concluding chapter, valuable experiences gained as a result of the work done for this thesis are discussed. From

the lessons learned, recommendations are made to carry forward the present work more efficiently and systematically. References used in this thesis have been compiled at the end of the thesis. Three papers from the work have already been published in the referred journals and one paper has been communicated for the publication and is under review.