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**Submission date:** 12-Jun-2020 11:04AM (UTC+0700)

**Submission ID:** 1342329245

**File name:** document.pdf (373.2K)

**Word count:** 5105

**Character count:** 26506



Research Article

## Inhibition Effect of $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ Ions on Sucrose Hydrolysis Using Invertase

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Received: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019; Revised: 15<sup>th</sup> July 2019; Accepted: 9<sup>th</sup> August 2019;  
Available online: 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019; Published regularly: December 2019

### Abstract

Fermentable sugar for bioethanol production can be produced from molasses due to its high sucrose content but  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ions found in the molasses may affect the hydrolysis. Therefore, this paper was focused to study the effect of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ions as  $\text{CaO}$  on sucrose hydrolysis using invertase and to obtain the kinetic parameters. The kinetic parameters ( $K_M$  and  $V_{max}$ ) were obtained using a Lineweaver-Burk plot. The value of  $K_M$  and  $V_{max}$  parameters were 36.181 g/L and 21.322 g/L.h, respectively. The  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ions act as competitive inhibitor in sucrose hydrolysis using invertase. Therefore, the inhibition mechanism was followed the competitive inhibition mechanism. The value of inhibition constant was 0.833 g/g. These parameters were obtained from the non-substrate inhibition process because this study used the low substrate concentrations which means the fermentable sugar production was low. Hence, there were still more challenges to studying the simultaneous effect of substrate and  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  on sucrose hydrolysis to produce high fermentable sugar. Copyright © 2019 BCREC Group. All rights reserved

**Keywords:** Sucrose; Invertase; Enzymatic Hydrolysis;  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  Ions; Competitive Inhibition

**How to Cite:** Hargono, H., Jos, B., Abdullah, A., Riyanto, T. (2019). Inhibition Effect of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  Ions on Sucrose Hydrolysis Using Invertase. *Bulletin of Chemical Reaction Engineering & Catalysis*, 14(3): 646-653 (doi:10.9767/bcrec.14.3.4437.646-653)

**Permalink/DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.9767/bcrec.14.3.4437.646-653>

### 1. Introduction

One of the by-products of the sugar refinery process which is the most economical source of carbohydrate for ethanol and citric acid fermentation is molasses [1]. Molasses can be converted into fermentable sugar through the enzymatic hydrolysis due to its high reduced polymeric sugars content. Usually, molasses has a water content of 17-25% and high sugar content (sucrose 30-40%, glucose 5-9%, and fructose 5-12%) [1,2]. Some minerals are also found in the molasses such as potassium 1.5-6% and calcium 0.3-0.9% [3]. The appearance of calcium ( $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ ) in molasses is a consequence of the clarification

process. In the sugar refinery process, the sugarcane juice is acidic. For the clarification process reason, the sugarcane was mixed with milk of lime (MOL) as  $\text{CaO}$ , so that the pH of sugarcane juice changes to a range of 8.9 to 9. Besides the clarification process, the sulphitation process also occurs as a part of the sugar refinery process. The sulphitation process was done to maintain the pH of the process considered as one of the main reasons for the whitening of the sugar crystals. In the sulphitation process,  $\text{SO}_2$  is added to the sugarcane juice so that the pH value becomes 7.4 to 7.5 [4].

As has been mentioned before, calcium was found in the final molasses. It mixed in the molasses which could interfere with the products produced in the next process, for example, the fermentation process for ethanol production.

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Ethanol production would decrease during the sucrose fermentation in the presence of calcium, possibly caused by the inhibition process on invertase by calcium [5]. Takeshige and Ouchi [6] reported that ethanol productivity was affected by yeasts, which were strain dependent. When the process used molasses containing metal ions such as copper, potassium, and calcium, the yeast strain with low ethanol showed a lower invertase activity which indicated an inhibition effect on invertase activity [6]. In this case, calcium in molasses influenced the invertase activity.

Several studies have investigated the enzymatic hydrolysis of sucrose using different enzyme and with or without the presence of metal ions which thought to affect the hydrolysis process. Ettalibi and Barati [7] investigated the sucrose hydrolysis using the thermostable inulinase. The enzyme activity depended on sucrose concentration. At high sucrose concentration, sucrose could inhibit the process. Onishi *et al.* [8] reported the influence of enzymatic pre-hydrolysis of sugarcane molasses with  $\alpha$ -amylase and amyloglucosidase treated with the amyolytic enzymes and then submitted to alcoholic fermentation for 8 h at 32 °C, in the presence of baker's yeast (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae*) and nutrients. The best result for the treatment of molasses with the two enzymes yielded a 10.2% increase of sugars in comparison to molasses without pre-treatment [8]. Bhalla *et al.* [9] investigated the sucrose hydrolysis using invertase enzyme from *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*. They explained that the optimum temperature and pH for invertase activity were 40 °C and 6.0. The  $K_M$  parameter value was 11 mM. It can be concluded that the invertase potentially to be used for sucrose hydrolysis due to the lower  $K_M$  value.

The effect of metal ion on sucrose hydrolysis was investigated by several authors [10–15]. Bagal-Kestwal *et al.* [10] studied the effect of several metal ions such as  $Hg^{2+}$ ,  $Pb^{2+}$ ,  $Ag^+$  and  $Cd^{2+}$  on sucrose hydrolysis. Those metals ions acted as the inhibitor and classified as competitive inhibitors. Essel and Ossei [11] also investigated the effect of  $Ag^+$  ions as silver nitrate on sucrose hydrolysis and concluded that the  $Ag^+$  acted as an inhibitor on sucrose hydrolysis. Plascencia-Espinosa *et al.* [12] investigated the effect of several metal ions, such as:  $Cu^{2+}$ ,  $Zn^{2+}$ ,  $Hg^{2+}$ ,  $Mn^{2+}$ , and  $Co^{2+}$ , on sucrose hydrolysis. Some metal ions ( $Cu^{2+}$ ,  $Zn^{2+}$ , and  $Hg^{2+}$ ) acted as the inhibitors, but interestingly, the presence of  $Mn^{2+}$  and  $Co^{2+}$  could increase the enzyme activity. de Gine's *et al.* [13] has investigated that bivalent metal ions such as  $Ca^{2+}$ ,  $Cu^{2+}$ ,  $Cd^{2+}$ ,

and  $Hg^{2+}$  significantly inhibited the activity of invertase. Kaur and Sharma [14] investigated that all metal ions were well tolerated and did not adversely affect the activity of invertase except  $Na^+$ ,  $Hg^{2+}$ , and  $Ca^{2+}$ . It means that the  $Na^+$ ,  $Hg^{2+}$ , and  $Ca^{2+}$  was adversely affect invertase activity and could inhibit the invertase. Maruyama and Onodera [15] also investigated that invertase activity would decrease in the presence of  $Ca^{2+}$ ,  $Zn^{2+}$ , and  $Cu^{2+}$ .

Studies on sucrose hydrolysis using invertase have not been widely conducted. Therefore, this research was conducted to investigate hydrolysis sucrose with and without added CaO. It has been clarified that  $Ca^{2+}$  ions on sucrose hydrolysis have the stronger effect than  $K^+$  ions [16] but the inhibition type of  $Ca^{2+}$  on invertase is still not clear. Due to this reason, this study aims to investigate the effect of  $Ca^{2+}$  ions as CaO during of hydrolysis of sucrose using invertase and to obtain the kinetic parameters. The kinetic parameters ( $K_M$  and  $V_{max}$ ) obtained from this study is supposed to be used for the scale-up of the hydrolysis process into a pilot plant or even the commercial scale.

## 2. Materials and Method

### 2.1 Materials

The enzyme used in this study was invertase (EC.3.2.1.26) from *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* (purchased from BIO-CON<sup>®</sup>) and its activity was determined by measurement the liberated reducing sugar (fructose and glucose) produced from sucrose [17]. The other chemicals were sucrose (99.5%, Sigma-Aldrich), sulfuric acid (98.5%, Merck), 3,5-Dinitrosalicylic acid (98%, Merck), potassium sodium tartrate tetrahydrate (99%, Merck), sodium acetate buffer (pH 5.2±0.1, Merck), sodium sulfite (98.5%, Merck), glucose (99.5%), and sodium hydroxide (98%, Merck).

### 2.2 Batch Hydrolysis Enzymatic of Sucrose

Sucrose solution (pH 7) with concentrations of 10-80 g/L was used in the present study. The pH of the solution was adjusted to 5 using 0.1 M of sodium acetate as a buffer. Then, the invertase was added to the sucrose solution with a concentration of 1% (w/w). A thermostatic water bath heater was used to maintain the temperature of the mixture so that the temperature can be adjusted at 50±1 °C. During the incubation for 5 h, the mixture was continuously stirred at 100 rpm. In order to determine the reducing sugar concentration, initial velocity, and kinetic parameters, the samples were

collected at 1 h interval. In order to study the effect of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ions inhibition,  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ions as  $\text{CaO}$  was added to the mixture with various concentrations of 0.25, 0.5, 0.75, 1, and 1.25% (w/w).

### 2.3 Analytical Methods for Reducing Sugar Determination

Dinitrosalicylic acid (DNS) method as described by Miller was used to measure the reducing sugar produced [18]. An aqueous solution containing 1 %wt of DNS, 20 %wt of potassium sodium tartrate tetrahydrate, 1 %wt of sodium hydroxide, and 0.05 %wt of sodium sulfite was added to the samples in the mass ratio of 3:1. During the incubation in a boiling water bath for 8 min, the solution was shaken. After that, it was cooled in an iced water bath for 5 min then its absorbance was measured at 540 nm using a UV/visible spectrophotometer (UV-160A, SHIMADZU, Kyoto, Japan). The total reducing sugars produced was determined using the procedure described by Somogyi [19] and Nelson [20] methods in which fructose (0 to 10 g/L) was used as the standard solution.

### 2.4 Determination of Kinetic Parameters

The enzymatic reaction mechanism follow the Michaelis-Menten mechanism [21]. First, the enzyme combined reversibly with the substrate to form an enzyme-substrate complex in a relatively fast reversible step. Then, the enzyme-substrate complex broken down in a slower step to yield the free enzyme and the reaction product.



The general structure of Michaelis-Menten equation to determine the reaction velocity is presented in Equation 1.

$$V_0 = \frac{V_{\max} [S_0]}{K_M + [S_0]} \quad (1)$$

where  $V_0$  noted as initial reaction velocity,  $[S_0]$  noted as the initial substrate (sucrose) concentration,  $V_{\max}$  represented at the maximum rate of reaction, and  $K_M$  noted as the Michaelis-Menten constant. This equation was used to measure the initial reaction velocity, noted as  $V_0$ , in the kinetic experiments. The initial reaction velocity at a particular initial substrate concentration was determined from the slope of the curve of the product concentration versus time at the beginning of the reaction [21]. Generally, the  $K_M$  and  $V_{\max}$  values were determined using a Lineweaver-Burk plot [22]. Equation 2 was obtained by rearranging Equation 1. Plot-

ting of  $1/V_0$  versus  $1/[S_0]$  would get a straight line. The y-intercept of the Cartesian diagram was used to determine the  $V_{\max}$  value and the x-intercept of the Cartesian diagram was used to determine the  $K_M$  value [23,24].

$$\frac{1}{V_0} = \frac{K_M}{V_{\max}} \frac{1}{[S_0]} + \frac{1}{V_{\max}} \quad (2)$$

In the presence of a competitive inhibitor, the measured  $K_M$  will be higher than the  $K_M$  in the absence of the inhibitor [25]. Equation 3 represented the modification of Michaelis-Menten equation in the presence of a competitive inhibitor.

$$V_0 = \frac{V_{\max} [S_0]}{\alpha K_M + [S_0]} \quad (3)$$

The meaning of the  $\alpha$  term was explained in Equation 4.

$$\alpha = 1 + \frac{[I]}{K_I} \quad (4)$$

The value of  $\alpha$  can be obtained by a Lineweaver-Burk plot of Equation 5 which was obtained by rearranging Equation 3.

$$\frac{1}{V_0} = \alpha \frac{K_M}{V_{\max}} \frac{1}{[S_0]} + \frac{1}{V_{\max}} \quad (5)$$

The value of the inhibition constant ( $K_I$ ) was determined by the plot of  $\alpha$  versus inhibitor concentration,  $[I]$ . For this plot, the x-intercept of the Cartesian diagram was used to determine the  $K_I$  value.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Effect of Initial Substrate Concentration on Enzymatic Hydrolysis of Sucrose using Invertase

Based on Figure 1, the higher the substrate concentration, the greater the reducing sugar concentration obtained. In the range of sucrose concentrations of 10 - 80 g/L, the reducing sugar concentration produced was linear with the initial sucrose concentration. It indicates that in the range of substrate concentrations used in this study there was still no substrate inhibition. There were several studies reporting the substrate inhibition of sucrose hydrolysis begins to occur at sucrose concentrations of 0.4 M (137 g/L) [12] and 0.5 M (171 g/L) [26], and 50 g/L [27].

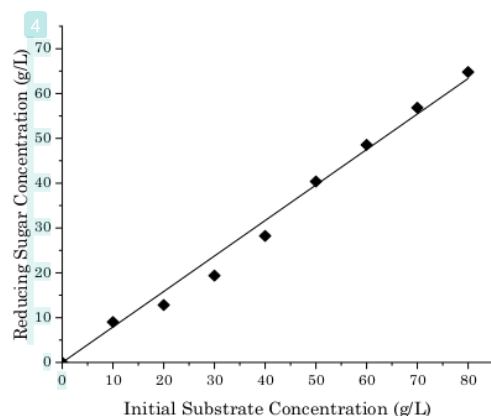
One of the factors influencing the enzymatic hydrolysis reaction was substrate concentration [9,28]. The higher the substrate concentration, the higher the product concentration because the enzyme activity increases with increasing substrate concentration [7,28]. En-



zyme activity will increase with increasing substrate concentration, but enzyme activity will decrease at certain substrate concentrations due to the inhibition of the substrate [29]. Substrate inhibition occurs at high substrate concentrations. The substrate viscosity will be higher along with the magnitude of substrate concentration. It will slow down the diffusion process so that the enzymatic reaction will be controlled by the diffusion process (diffusion limitation) [30]. Therefore, the substrate will be more difficult to be hydrolyzed by acid and enzymatic treatment [31]. At high substrate concentration, the degree of hydrolysis will decrease, possibly due to the high concentration of the substrate itself or caused by irreversible enzyme inhibitors found in the substrate [32]. Corazze *et al.* [33] states that at high substrate concentration, the substrate will compete each other to get the active site of the enzyme.

### 3.2 Effect of $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ Ion on Hydrolysis of Sucrose Using Invertase

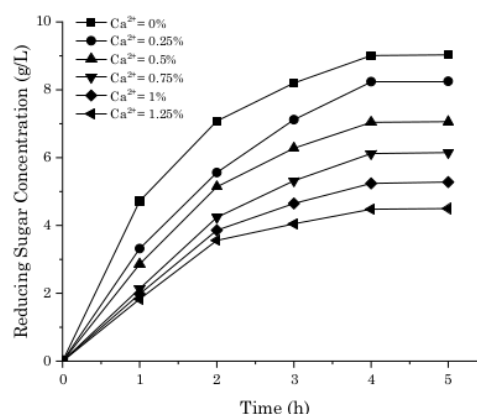
Effect of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ion on hydrolysis of sucrose using invertase was studied and the result was shown in Figure 2. Figure 2 shows the hydrolysis of sucrose using invertase in presence of different  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ion concentration (0-1.25%) in 5 hours. It can be seen, that the reducing sugar concentration increase with the increase of hydrolysis time over 5 h of hydrolysis. During hydrolysis, the longer the hydrolysis time, the higher the possibility of collision between the enzyme and sucrose (substrate) [34]. Therefore, the enzyme-substrate complex will be more formed. Hence, reducing sugar produced also will be more.



**Figure 1.** Reducing sugar concentration as the function of initial sucrose concentration at  $t = 5$  h and  $\text{Ca}^{2+} = 0\%$ .

As can be seen at Figure 2, the reducing sugar produced has same pattern and constant at 5 h even without  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ( $\text{Ca}^{2+} = 0\%$ ). It is caused by the time dependence of product. The product pattern follows the exponential pattern, therefore, it will constant at certain time [28]. At low substrate concentration, the product obtained is linear with the inhibitor concentration [35,36]. From Figure 2, we conclude that the reducing sugar concentration decreased with the increasing of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ion concentration in the hydrolysis system. When the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ion concentration increased from 0 to 1.25 %, reducing sugar concentration decreased from 9.03 g/L to 5.28 g/L. It indicated that  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ion could inhibit the hydrolysis of sucrose using invertase. The presence of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ion reduced the enzyme activity. Therefore, the degree of hydrolysis decreased as well as reducing sugar concentrations obtained. The inhibition mechanism of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  will be provided in the following section.

Several studies have reported that several metal ions could inhibit the sucrose hydrolysis such as  $\text{Hg}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{Pb}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{Ag}^+$ ,  $\text{Cd}^{2+}$  as their chloride salts [10] and  $\text{Ag}^+$  as silver nitrate [11]. Those metal ions were classified as competitive inhibitor [10,11] which can be indicated by the increasing of the apparent  $K_M$  value. Based on the study of Bagal-Kestwal *et al.* [10],  $\text{Hg}^{2+}$  and  $\text{Pb}^{2+}$  ions were classified as irreversible competitive inhibitor while  $\text{Ag}^+$  and  $\text{Cd}^{2+}$  were classified as reversible competitive inhibitor. The type of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  inhibition on sucrose hydrolysis using invertase will be determined in the following section.



**Figure 2.** Effect of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ion on hydrolysis of sucrose using invertase at  $[\text{S}_0] = 10$  g/L.

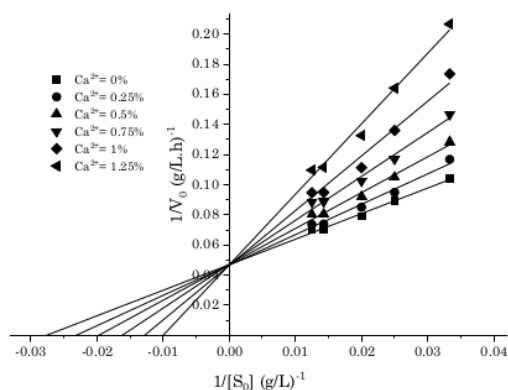
### 3.3 Type of $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ Inhibition on Sucrose Hydrolysis Using Invertase and Kinetic Parameters Determination

The effect of the presence of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  on sucrose hydrolysis has been described in the previous section. It has been observed that  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ion acted as an inhibitor on hydrolysis. Subsequently, it's important to determine the type of inhibition of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  on the hydrolysis of sucrose using invertase. The inhibition type of inhibitor can be determined by the Lineweaver-Burk plot. The inhibition type can be classified as competitive, non-competitive and un-competitive inhibition. Competitive inhibition can be noticed by the increasing of apparent  $K_M$  parameter with fixed  $V_{max}$  parameter. Non-competitive inhibition can be noticed by the decreasing of apparent  $V_{max}$  parameter with fixed  $K_M$  parameter while un-competitive inhibition can be noticed by the decreasing of the apparent  $K_M$  and  $V_{max}$  parameters.

It can be seen from Figure 3 and Table 1 that the  $K_M$  and  $V_{max}$  values for native (without  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ ) sucrose hydrolysis using invertase were

**Table 1.** Apparent kinetic parameters value

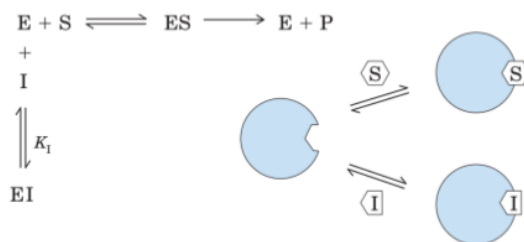
$\text{Ca}^{2+}$ (%wt)	$V_{max}$ (g/L.h)	$K_M$ (g/L)	$K_M/V_{max}$ (h)	$\alpha$
0.00	21.322	36.181	1.697	1.000
0.25	21.413	43.171	2.016	1.188
0.50	21.231	50.601	2.383	1.405
0.75	21.186	61.752	2.915	1.718
1.00	21.505	78.103	3.632	2.140
1.25	21.368	100.058	4.683	2.760



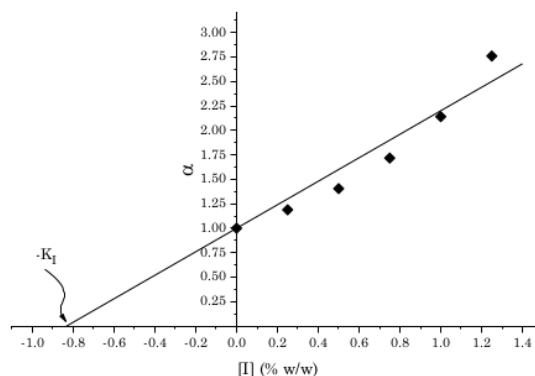
**Figure 3.** Lineweaver-Burk plot of sucrose hydrolysis using invertase in the presence of different  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ion concentration.

36.181 g/L (105.7 mM) and 21.322 g/L.h (1.973 mM/min), respectively. The value of  $K_M$  parameter in this study seemed different with the obtained value from several studies. Some studies calculated the value of  $K_M$  parameter on sucrose hydrolysis using invertase, such as: 24 mM [11], 45.2 mM [27], 227 mM [37], 24.5 mM [38], and 99 mM [39]. The different value between of  $K_M$  parameter in the present study with the previous study may be due to the different operating condition of hydrolysis and the different sources of invertase [37].

As can be seen from Figure 3 and Table 1, plots of  $1/V_0$  versus  $1/[S_0]$  and the value of apparent  $V_{max}$  and  $K_M$  for different  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ion concentrations showed a positive agreement that  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ion was a competitive inhibitor on sucrose hydrolysis using invertase. Several studies have shown that several metal ions acted as competitive inhibitors on sucrose hydrolysis using invertase [10,11]. The metal ions competed with substrate molecules to bind with the active sites of enzyme. For example,  $\text{Ag}^+$  ions make the invertase inactive through the binding of  $\text{Ag}^+$  ions to histidine side chains [11].



**Scheme 1.** Competitive inhibition mechanism [21]



**Figure 4.** Plots for determination of inhibition constant of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  on sucrose hydrolysis using invertase

The mechanism of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ion inhibition on invertase through sucrose hydrolysis follows the competitive inhibition. The inhibitor competes with the substrate for the active site of the enzyme [40]. The inhibitor will combine reversibly with the enzyme to form an enzyme-inhibitor complex which can reduce the amount of enzyme for interaction with the substrate, therefore, the reaction rate decreases. As known before, a competitive inhibitor combines reversibly with the enzyme, therefore, the effect of the inhibitor can be minimized by increasing the substrate concentration [41]. The mechanism of competitive inhibition is provided in Scheme 1.

The inhibition constant ( $K_i$ ) can be determined from the plot of  $\alpha$  versus  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ions concentration. As can be seen in Figure 4, the inhibition constant for  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  inhibition on sucrose hydrolysis using invertase was 0.833 g/g. Equation 6 represents the general equation for sucrose hydrolysis using invertase in the presence of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  as a function of sucrose (substrate) concentration (in g/L) and  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ion (inhibitor) concentration (in g of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ /g of sucrose).

$$V_0 = \frac{21.322[S_0]}{\left[1 + \frac{[I]}{0.833}\right] \times 36.181 + [S_0]} \quad (6)$$

#### 4. Conclusions

The presence of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ions in the system of sucrose hydrolysis using invertase decreases reducing sugar production. The  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ions inhibit the invertase activity. It can be seen from the decrease of reducing sugar production over sucrose hydrolysis using invertase. The higher  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ions concentration in the solution, the lower reducing sugar produced. The inhibition process of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  was classified as competitive inhibition. The kinetic parameters ( $K_M$  and  $V_{max}$ ) were obtained using a Lineweaver-Burk plot. The value of  $K_M$  and  $V_{max}$  parameters were 36.181 g/L and 21.322 g/L.h, respectively. The inhibition constant also was obtained; its value was 0.833 g/g. These parameters were obtained from the non-substrate inhibition process because this study used the low substrate concentrations which means the fermentable sugar production was low. Hence, there were still more challenges to study the simultaneous effect of substrate and  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  on sucrose hydrolysis to produce more fermentable sugar.

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#### Acknowledgment

The authors would like to thank Diponegoro University for the financial support.

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