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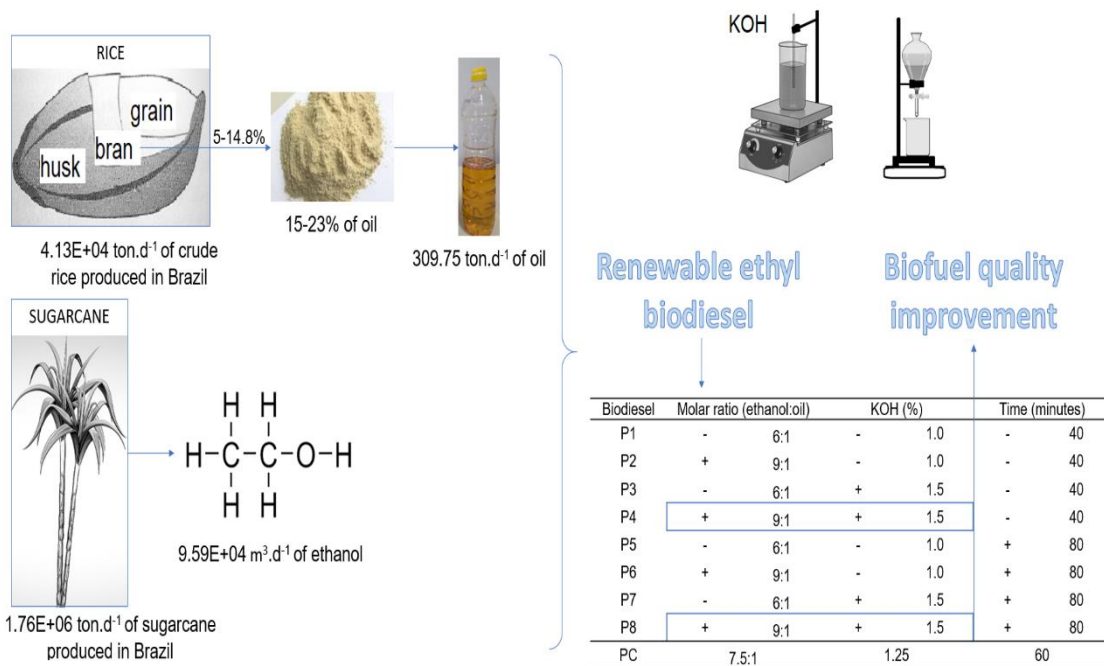
# Investigation of ethyl biodiesel production via transesterification of rice bran oil

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## GRAPHICAL ABSTRACT



## ABSTRACT

The energy sector in Brazil produces liquid biofuels as bioethanol and biodiesel. The most common technique to produce biodiesel is the transesterification of oils extracted from biomass. Rice processing generates grain bran, an agricultural residue. Brazil is one of the main countries that produce this grain. Therefore, the objective of this study was to produce a renewable biofuel using vegetable oil from grain bran via homogeneous basic transesterification. There are only three experimental studies reported in the literature on the production of biodiesel from rice bran oil via alkaline transesterification. Furthermore, the studies do not include results regarding biodiesel acidity, iodine, saponification and moisture content. Although potassium hydroxide (KOH) is the most commonly deployed alkaline catalyst in industrial biodiesel production, there are no reports regarding ethyl biodiesel production using rice bran oil with this catalyst. Therefore, this study applied a factorial arrangement in the experimental phase to produce ethyl biodiesel from rice bran oil using KOH as a catalyst on transesterification. The factors including reaction time, alcohol/oil molar ratio and amount of catalyst allowed to determine the best conditions for biodiesel production. To determine the viability of the biodiesel production, it was necessary to analyze the main parameters required by the national standards, which were kinematic viscosity, iodine index, acidity index, saponification index and moisture. All the yielded

31 biodiesel were complied with the standards of ANP, ASTM and EN, except  
32 kinematic viscosity, which ranged from 8.061 to 22.791 mm<sup>2</sup>s<sup>-1</sup>. According to the  
33 conditions of the factorial arrangement, the calculated kinematic viscosity  
34 indicated the need to raise the proportion of catalyst and/or the molar ratio  
35 between ethanol and alcohol. The lower kinematic viscosity, around 8-9 mm<sup>2</sup>s<sup>-1</sup>,  
36 occurred with 1.5% catalyst and, in general, with molar ratio 9:1. These results  
37 suggest that future studies could explore the production of high-quality ethyl  
38 biodiesel using rice bran vegetable oil. According to the results, it represents a  
39 viable possibility to produce fully renewable and sustainable biodiesel within the  
40 socio-economic, environmental and agricultural context in Brazil.

41 **Keywords:** Transesterification; ethyl biodiesel; rice bran; biofuel.

42

## 43 1. Introduction

44 Hydroelectric power plants represent about 70% of the renewable energy  
45 production in Brazil. However, despite high energy efficiency, such power plants  
46 cause several environmental concerns [1]. Moreover, an increase in the  
47 diversification of the Brazilian energy grid would be both environmentally and  
48 socioeconomically advantageous [2]. The development and use of biofuels can  
49 supply bioenergy in solid, liquid or gaseous forms for different uses [3,4].

50 Currently, the production of bioethanol and biodiesel uses different  
51 agricultural raw materials of oilseed and leguminous crops [4,5]. The most  
52 common technique to produce biodiesel is the transesterification of oils extracted  
53 from biomass. This approach ensures that biofuels acquire similar characteristics  
54 to diesel oil [6]. During the transesterification, a reaction between triglycerides in  
55 the raw material and short-chain alcohols produce methyl esters or ethyl esters  
56 of Fatty Acids (FA) and glycerol [7,8]. In this reaction, the use of catalyst is  
57 important to increase the reaction efficiency [9].

58 The industrial production of biodiesel gmostly uses fossil methanol, as  
59 production or availability of ethanol is low in most countries. Thus, the production  
60 using methyl transesterification becomes cheaper. In Brazil, the industrial  
61 production of biodiesel is also carried out using methanol of fossil origin.  
62 However, this scenario does not match the national reality, as the country has an  
63 internal supply of renewable ethanol for the production of ethyl biodiesel. The  
64 country has about 377 ethanol plants [10] and produced more than 35 million  
65 cubic meters of fuel in 2019 [11]. However, according to the literature, research  
66 on the optimization of ethyl biodiesel production from different raw materials is  
67 scarce [12]. Taking it into consideration, the use of methanol is even more

68 financially advantageous, due to its low cost combined with its high production  
69 efficiency. Boz and Kara [13] observed a 96% conversion rate of methanol to  
70 methyl esters, while the conversion rate of ethanol to ethyl esters did not exceed  
71 65% under similar transesterification reaction conditions. However, besides the  
72 lower toxicity, bioethanol is greatly available in Brazil and safeguards the  
73 production of a fully renewable fuel [14].

74 As a result of the mandatory requirement on the gradual increase in the  
75 concentration of biodiesel mixed with fossil diesel, biofuel production grows in the  
76 country. In the 2018, the production of biodiesel in the country grew by 24.7% in  
77 relation to the previous year, reaching the amount of 5,350,036 m<sup>3</sup> [15,16]. The  
78 socio-economic benefits of producing biodiesel in Brazil are due to the high  
79 production of raw materials for biofuel in the country [17], with the mostly used in  
80 the country being soybean oil and animal fat. The vegetable oils and the bovine  
81 tallow represent 77.7% and 18.8% of the national biodiesel production,  
82 respectively [18]. Therefore, the growing production of biodiesel in Brazil will  
83 result in an increase in the demand for soybeans. However, the uptake of planting  
84 areas for the cultivation of soybeans on national soil has caused several negative  
85 environmental impacts related to deforestation. Between 2001 and 2018, 21.5  
86 Mha were deforested in the Legal Amazon and 202 Mha were burned, while the  
87 total soybean area increased from 14 Mha to 35 Mha [19].

88 The state of Rio Grande do Sul is the national leader in biodiesel  
89 production from soybean oil and bovine tallow. However, other crops could  
90 become potential sources of biofuel production, not only in this state, but  
91 throughout Brazil [20,21]. The great diversity of vegetable oils in Brazil combined  
92 with its high agricultural productivity highlights the potential of Brazilian biofuel  
93 production and the possibility of mitigating the growing use of land for the  
94 cultivation of soybeans. Rice processing provides the grain bran, a low-cost source  
95 of triglycerides for biodiesel production. Grain bran is a byproduct of cereal  
96 processing or an agricultural residue from the stages of peeling and polishing of  
97 the grain [22-25]. However, there are no reports about the production of biodiesel  
98 from this raw material on small or large scales.

99 The rice grain presents from 5% to 14.8% of bran [26-28] and the bran  
100 contains 15% to 23% of oil [25-29]. In the 2018/19 harvest period, the rice  
101 production in Brazil reached 12 million tons, of which 70.1% was from Rio Grande

102 do Sul [30]. Thus, the possibility of a large biofuel production from the rice bran  
103 oil in the country, especially in Rio Grande do Sul, is evident.

104 According to Nadaleti and Przybyla [31], the potential for energy  
105 production from wastewater and rice husk of rice parboiling industries in Brazil  
106 can help achieve energy self-sufficiency of these industries through biogas and  
107 syngas. The authors highlighted the high energy potential of the sector — in  
108 addition to self-sufficiency, rice industries could generate surplus energy that can  
109 be made available for sale. However, the authors did not address the possibility  
110 of producing biodiesel from rice bran oil. Although a few studies [32-37] have  
111 already investigated the production of methyl biodiesel from this raw material,  
112 there are no reports in the literature for biodiesel production using ethanol and  
113 KOH as a catalyst.

114 Therefore, the aim of this study was to assess the possibility of production  
115 of a renewable biofuel using the vegetable oil from rice grain bran produced in  
116 the state of Rio Grande do Sul. This study applied a  $2^3$  factorial arrangement  
117 considering the lack of studies on the production of ethyl biodiesel from rice bran  
118 oil using KOH as a catalyst. The analysis was comprised of the variation in the  
119 reaction time (40 and 60 minutes), the molar ratio of alcohol to oil (6:1 and 9:1)  
120 and the amount of KOH (1.0 and 1.5%). The biodiesel purification and the  
121 moisture removing, as well as the analysis of kinematic viscosity, iodine index,  
122 acidity index, saponification index and moisture enabled production of a high-  
123 quality biofuel compliant to ANP, ASTM and EN standards.

124

## 125 **2. Literature Review**

126 Biodiesel is a liquid biofuel widely used in Brazil. The use of this biofuel  
127 shows social and environmental benefits derived from good utilization of  
128 biodiesel feedstocks in Brazil [4-6], making the country one of the pioneers in  
129 biodiesel production and ensuring an important role in the development and use  
130 of this energy source [17]. The transesterification reaction, the most common  
131 technique used to produce biodiesel, is a chemical reaction between raw material  
132 triglycerides and short-chain alcohols in the presence of a catalyst that results in  
133 FA (Fatty Acids) and glycerol esters [8,9,12,32,38]. Despite great scientific  
134 advancement in biodiesel production over the last three decades, industrial  
135 production has not undergone significant changes in its mechanism [33]. On an

136 industrial scale, biofuel production continues to be carried out through the  
137 transesterification of vegetable oils using homogeneous catalysts [33,39].

138 In general, the catalysts deployed are alkali metal hydroxides and  
139 alkoxides [40] such as sodium hydroxide (NaOH) and potassium hydroxide  
140 (KOH). The use of excess catalyst in the reaction leads to emulsion formation  
141 resulting in higher viscosity, while insufficient amounts hinder the catalyst  
142 capability to increase the conversion efficiency of the reaction [41,42-47].  
143 According to Nadaleti [48], the yield of biodiesel depends on the type of catalyst,  
144 the source of triglycerides and the other parameters involved in the reaction.

145 In the transesterification reaction, triglycerides or triacylglycerols present  
146 mainly in the composition of oils, react with short-chain alcohols generating esters  
147 and glycerin [23,22,49-51]. The reaction involves three consecutive and  
148 reversible steps; one mole of ester is released at each step of the reaction [23,49-  
149 52]. According to Verma [53], the type of alcohol, the molar ratio between alcohol  
150 and vegetable oil, the type of catalyst and its concentration, temperature and  
151 reaction time are parameters which affect the transesterification reaction.

152 Studies indicate that increasing the temperature accelerated the  
153 transesterification reaction, resulting in higher yields [41,54-60]. Higher  
154 temperatures reduced oil viscosity and resulted in better oil-alcohol mixing and  
155 subsequent rapid separation of glycerol from biodiesel. However, an excessive  
156 increase in temperature may decrease yield as it may cause faster side reactions  
157 than the transesterification. Another important factor in the transesterification is  
158 the reaction time due to the reversible nature of the reactions involved in the  
159 transesterification [48]. The reaction equilibrium can occur at varying times  
160 according to the type of catalyst, alcohol and raw vegetable oils.

161 Due to the reversible nature of the reactions, the use of a surplus of alcohol  
162 is necessary to shift the equilibrium balance towards the formation of products  
163 and to favor the complete conversion of FA [14,41]. Thus, instead of the 3:1  
164 alcohol-to-oil molar ratio, it is common to use a ratio ranging from 6:1 to 12:1  
165 depending on the type of alcohol and oil used [62-64]. A low molar ratio of alcohol  
166 to oil may negatively affect the conversion of triglyceride to ester, while a higher  
167 molar ratio may decrease the yield [53].

168 Jain and Sharma [65] observed that an increase in methanol from 10% to  
169 30% (v/v) led to an increase in the yield of biodiesel. However, a further increase

170 in methanol resulted in a 90.6% drop in efficiency after its peak. The most  
 171 popularly used short-chain alcohols for the transesterification reaction are  
 172 methanol and ethanol, followed by propanol, butanol and amyl alcohol [22,66].  
 173 Methanol promotes higher reaction yield [22], lower alcohol consumption and  
 174 greater separation of esters and glycerin when used under similar conditions to  
 175 the others [32]. However, methanol is highly toxic, especially when compared to  
 176 ethanol, an alcohol produced on a large-scale and from renewable sources in  
 177 Brazil. Table 1 summarizes the advantages and disadvantages regarding the use  
 178 of the two most common transesterification alcohols.

180 Table 1 - Advantages and disadvantages when comparing the use of fossil  
 181 methanol and renewable ethanol in biodiesel production through  
 182 transesterification

<b>Alcohol</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Fossil methanol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Process consumption is about 45% lower;</li> <li>- Cost reduced by almost 50%;</li> <li>- Greater Reactivity;</li> <li>- Reaction time reduced by more than 50%;</li> <li>- Lower energy expenditure to promote reaction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fossil product;</li> <li>- High toxicity;</li> <li>- Higher volatility;</li> <li>- It has invisible flame.</li> </ul>
Renewable ethanol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consolidated production in Brazil;</li> <li>- Biodiesel with higher cetane content and higher lubricity;</li> <li>- Produces 100% renewable fuel;</li> <li>- Generates higher occupation and income in rural areas;</li> <li>- Lower toxicity;</li> <li>- Lower volatility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Produces esters with higher affinity to glycerin;</li> <li>- Production costs can be 100% higher.</li> </ul>

183 Source: Adapted from Silva [32].

184  
 185 Despite the high toxicity of fossil methanol, all commercial biodiesel  
 186 produced in Brazil is based on methyl source. This is due to the greater efficiency  
 187 of methanol in the transesterification reaction and its low cost. However, the  
 188 supply of fossil resources and oil-derived products is uncertain. In this regard, Li  
 189 et al. [40] stated that the availability of ethanol for biodiesel production is

190 promising. Ethanol can be easily produced from biomass due to the maturity of  
191 commercial production of bioethanol as a substitute for gasoline. Moreover, from  
192 an environmental point of view, the use of ethanol becomes attractive because it  
193 enables a fully sustainable and renewable Brazilian biodiesel production since  
194 ethanol from different biomasses is produced on a large scale in Brazil. Given  
195 this scenario, the use of ethanol to produce biodiesel, i.e. fatty acid ethyl esters,  
196 has high significance in societal and environmental benefits.

197         Results of studies using different approaches and raw materials for the  
198 production of ethyl biodiesel [67-71] suggest that as the molecular structure of  
199 ethanol and methanol differs only by a methyl group so that there is no big  
200 difference in the chemical and physical properties between methyl and ethyl  
201 biodiesels. However, studies reported advantages from the use of ethanol for  
202 biofuel production, such as reduced emissions of particulate matter and  
203 greenhouse gases, higher biodegradability and yield in terms of the mass ratio of  
204 FA and triglycerides [71]. Moreover, the literature indicates that ethyl FA has  
205 better fuel properties compared to methyl esters, although they hinder the  
206 separation and purification processes [72,73]. Thus, considering a more  
207 sustainable approach from an environmental and social point of view, this review  
208 suggests the adoption of ethanol for the transesterification reaction. Despite the  
209 high production of renewable ethanol in Brazil, its adoption on an industrial level  
210 to produce biodiesel is poorly explored. There are some studies on the use of  
211 alcohol in the reaction in the scientific literature, but with few types of vegetable  
212 oils.

213

## 214         **2.1 Rice bran vegetable oil**

215         Despite the possibility of biodiesel production from different sources (e.g.  
216 oilseeds, animal tallow, waste oil, microalgae and sewage treatment residues)  
217 [84,85], biofuel production is mainly from soybean in Brazil which accounts for  
218 more than 65% of the national production, followed by beef tallow [74]. This  
219 situation becomes alarming because deforestation and burning of the Amazon  
220 Rainforest and the Cerrado region has become recurrent due to the expansion of  
221 soy cultivation in the country. Other oilseeds with potential for biodiesel  
222 production are currently studied [21] and in this context, Brazil has a high  
223 exploratory potential due to its high agricultural productivity.



224 A case study in the rice parboiling industry in Brazil evaluated the energy  
 225 potential from waste and effluents in the systems operating with a Combined Heat  
 226 and Power (CHP) generator set, using hydrogen-rich syngas from rice husks and  
 227 biogas from anaerobic effluent treatment [75]. The author determined a power  
 228 generation potential to promote the self-sufficiency of the industry, with the  
 229 possibility of selling the surplus. However, the study does not mention rice bran,  
 230 which is produced largely from grain processing and can be a source of low-cost  
 231 triglycerides for biodiesel production [22-25].

232 During the grain processing, an agricultural residue from the husking and  
 233 polishing stages that are generally intended to produce animal feed is generated  
 234 and termed rice bran [24,33]. Bran contains 15 to 23% of oil [25,29], consisting  
 235 of about 68 to 71% triacylglycerols, 2 to 3% diglycerols, 5 to 6% monoglycerols  
 236 and 2 to 3% Free Fatty Acids (FFA) [76]. The oil derived from rice bran is one of  
 237 the most nutritious vegetable oils [22,32,34] and widely consumed in Asian  
 238 countries, especially in the eastern region of Asia particularly for its benefits to  
 239 human health [28,77,78], although the oil has no relevant human consumption in  
 240 Brazil. Rice bran oil has approximately 80% unsaturated FA, which would make  
 241 the oil prone to oxidation if natural antioxidants were not part of its composition  
 242 [79-82]. The main difference between rice bran raw oil and most vegetable oils is  
 243 the higher FFA content of rice oil due to active lipase [83]. Table 2 shows the  
 244 composition of the oil for the FA present .

245

246

Table 2 - Composition of rice bran oil by FA

FA	(%)
C14:0 Myristic	0.1 - 2.4
C16:0 Palmitic	12.3 - 20.5
C16:1 Palmitoleic	0.1 - 0.2
C18:0 Stearic	1.1 - 3.0
C18:1 Oleic	37.1 - 52.8
C18:2 Linoleic	27.0 - 40.7
C18:3 Linolenic	0.5 - 2.3
C20:0 Archaic	0.3 - 0.7
C22:0 Behenic	0.5 - 1.0
C24:0 Lignoceric	0.4 - 0.9

247 Source: [84]  
248

249 The enzymatic systems present in the bran allow triglycerides to be rapidly  
250 hydrolyzed in FFA leading to increased acidity [33]. Thus, extracting oil for human  
251 consumption must take place only when the acidity is low. The National Health  
252 Surveillance Agency of Brazil (ANVISA) [85] determines that the percentage of  
253 FFA in vegetable oils used for human consumption must be at most  $0.3\text{g}\cdot 100\text{g}^{-1}$ .  
254 In the study of Zullaikah et al. [29], rice bran showed a higher FFA percentage  
255 than ANVISA endorses even in the initial storage time, [85]. The restrictions  
256 associated with the human consumption of bran oil make biodiesel production  
257 through oil extracted from rice bran more appealing.

258 Sinha, Agarwal and Garg [25] found that rice bran vegetable oil produced  
259 biodiesel has excellent physicochemical properties because of its natural  
260 antioxidants. According to Evangelista [43], a high quality biodiesel also supports  
261 its use in blends with biodiesel from other oilseeds or mineral diesel. However,  
262 the literature review carried out about this topic revealed the absence of studies  
263 on the production of ethyl biodiesel from vegetable oil from rice bran. In addition,  
264 only a few studies were found on the production of methyl biodiesel from such  
265 raw material [32-37]. Although a large-scale production is present through the  
266 use of methanol, environmental and social demands make it necessary to  
267 investigate the production of ethyl biodiesel. Such research is fundamental for the  
268 transition from the use of methanol to ethanol in the biodiesel production chain.

269 Zaidel et al. [86] discussed in their review study the production of biodiesel  
270 from rice bran oil. The authors reported the use of methanol as the reaction  
271 alcohol. Hoang et al. [87] reviewed the rice bran oil biodiesel as a promising  
272 renewable alternative fuel to diesel, reporting only one study in the literature that  
273 uses ethanol as chain alcohol [88]. The authors used CaO as catalyst. Table 3  
274 presents the literature data on the production of biodiesel from rice bran oil  
275 according to the alcohol and alkaline catalyst applied.

276  
277  
278  
279

280 Table 3 – Literature data regarding rice bran biodiesel production alkaline  
 281 catalysis

Alcohol	Molar ratio (alcohol:oil)	Catalyst	Catalys (%)	Reaction (minutes)	Temperatur (°C)	Referenc
Methano l	15:1	CaO	2.00	360	60	[89]
	35:1	CaO	0.50	120	65	[35]
	6:1	Fe <sub>2</sub> (SO <sub>4</sub> ) <sub>3</sub>	3.00	180	60	[90]
	15:1	KI/Al <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	5.00	480	reflux	[33]
	10:1	K <sub>2</sub> CO <sub>3</sub> /zeolit	4.00	180	65	[91]
	5:1	KOH	0.50	40	55	[92,93]
	6:1	KOH	0.50	48	55	[94]
	6:1	KOH	0.75	60	65	[95]
	6:1	KOH	0.90	60	60	[96]
	6:1	KOH	-	60	70	[97]
	30:1	Mg(Al)La	7.50	540	100	[98]
	9:1	NaOCH <sub>3</sub>	0.75	45	60	[99]
	9:1	NaOH	0.75	60	55	[25]
	-	NaOH	1.00	60	55-60	[100]
	15:1	Na <sub>2</sub> SiO <sub>3</sub>	2.00	90	50	[101]
Ethanol	9:1	CaO	3.00	90	70	[88]
	9:1	NaOH	0.18	20	80	[102]

282

283 Based on the review carried out, two other studies show the use of-ethanol  
 284 to produce ethyl biodiesel from air bran oil [102,103]. However, none of them  
 285 have used KOH as catalyst. Kanitkar et al. [102] investigated the production of  
 286 ethyl biodiesel from rice bran oil using NaOH as catalyst and the batch microwave  
 287 system for the reaction. The authors evaluated the best conditions of biodiesel  
 288 production by varying the temperature (60, 70, and 80 °C) and the reaction time  
 289 (5, 10, 15 and 20 minutes). The kinematic viscosity varied from 5.09±0.120 at  
 290 6.73±0.226 mm<sup>2</sup>.m<sup>-1</sup>, values above 6 mm<sup>2</sup>.m<sup>-1</sup>, the maximum limit stipulated by  
 291 the ASTM. The study used a two-stage process for ethyl biodiesel production.  
 292 Firstly the authors used acid catalysis esterification and then proceeded a  
 293 transesterification reaction using alkaline catalysis. The authors simultaneously  
 294 employed Ca and NaOH as catalysts for transesterification. The study did not  
 295 evaluate the biodiesel quality such as iodine index, saponification, acidity, and  
 296 humidity as its focus was the evaluation of the yield and the rate of reactions..

297

### 298 3. Material and methods

299 A 2<sup>3</sup> factorial arrangement was designed to find the most suitable  
 300 conditions for the biodiesel production from rice bran refined vegetable oil using

301 KOH as catalyst. The Central Point (PC) conditions were adapted from the  
 302 Nadaleti's biodiesel production method [48]. The experiment had 8 combinations  
 303 of molar ratios between the vegetable oil and ethanol, amounts of catalyst and  
 304 time of heating and stirring, resulting in eight different biodiesels being produced  
 305 (Table 4).

306

307

Table 4 – Experimental Delineation

Biodiesel	Molar ratio (alcohol:oil)	Catalyst (%)	Time (minutes)
P1	6.0:1	1.00	40
P2	9.0:1	1.00	40
P3	6.0:1	1.50	40
P4	9.0:1	1.50	40
P5	6.0:1	1.00	120
P6	9.0:1	1.00	120
P7	6.0:1	1.50	120
P8	9.0:1	1.50	120
PC	7.5:1	1.25	60

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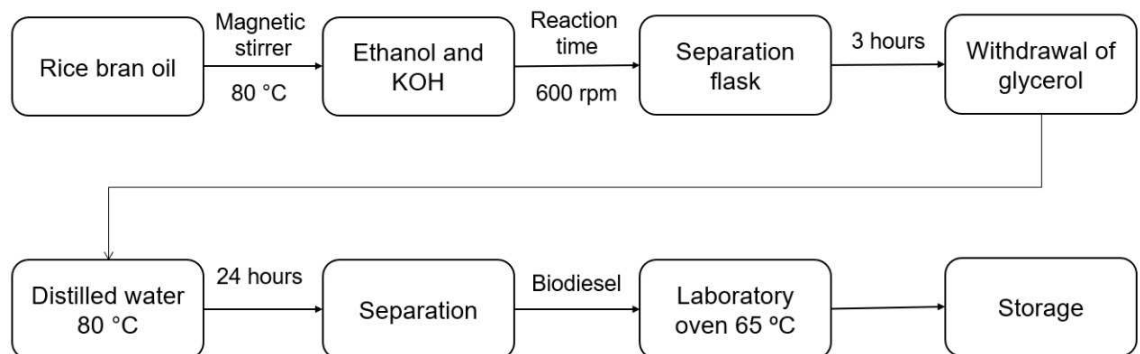
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316

Nadaleti's Methodology [48] was used to produce biodiesel from rice vegetable oil. The first stage of biodiesel production was to heat the vegetable oil in a magnetic stirrer at 80 °C. The next step was to add alcohol and catalyst previously homogenized to start transesterification reaction.. Next, it was necessary to activate the magnetic stirrer to agitate the medium (600 rpm). The last phase of production was to transfer the reaction product to a separating flask to remove glycerol after 3 hours of settling (Fig.1).



317

318

319

Fig. 1 – Stages of biodiesel production and purification.

320

321

After removing the glycerol, the next process was to add distilled water heated at 80 °C in the flask, in a proportion equal to one-third of the volume of oil

322 used in the transesterification, to purify the biodiesel. After 24 hours, the last step  
323 was to remove the water and transfer the biodiesel to an oven at 65 °C for 12  
324 hours to remove moisture for further analysis.

325 After the biodiesel production it was necessary to analyze the biofuel for  
326 kinematic viscosity (Eq. 1), iodine index (Eq. 2), and acidity index (Eq. 3)  
327 according to the ASTM standard methods [104-106]; saponification index (Eq. 4)  
328 according to the AOAC International method [107]; and moisture using  
329 desiccation loss at 105 °C, according to the Adolfo Lutz Institute's methodology  
330 [108] (Eq. 5). The equipment used to determine the Kinematic Viscosity at 40 ° C  
331 was a Saybolt Viscometer model Q288SR:

332

$$333 \quad v = C * t \quad (1)$$

334 where:

335  $v$ : kinematic viscosity values ( $\text{mm}^2.\text{s}^{-1}$ );

336  $C$ : calibration constant of the viscometer ( $\text{mm}^2.\text{s}^{-2}$ );

337  $t$ : measured flow time (s).

338

$$339 \quad II = [(B - V)N * 12.69]/S \quad (2)$$

340 where:

341  $II$ : iodine index ( $\text{gl}_2.\text{g}^{-1}$ );

342  $B$ :  $\text{Na}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_3$  solution required for titration of the blank (mL);

343  $V$ :  $\text{Na}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_3$  solution required for titration of the sample (mL);

344  $N$ : normality of the  $\text{Na}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_3$  solution;

345  $S$ : sample used (g).

346

$$347 \quad AI = [(A - B) * M * 56.1]/S \quad (3)$$

348 where:

349  $AI$ : acidity index ( $\text{mgKOH}.\text{g}^{-1}$ );

350  $A$ : alcoholic KOH solution required for titration of the sample (mL);

351  $B$ : volume corresponding to  $A$  for blank titration (mL);

352  $M$ : concentration of alcoholic KOH solution ( $\text{mol}.\text{L}^{-1}$ );

353  $S$ : sample used (g).

354

355  $SI = [56.1 * (B - A) * N]/S$  (4)

356 where:

357  $SI$ : saponification index ( $\text{mgKOH.g}^{-1}$ );

358  $B$ : hydrochloric acid solution required for titration of the blank (mL);

359  $A$ : hydrochloric acid solution required for titration of the sample (mL);

360  $N$ : normality of the standard hydrochloric acid;

361  $S$ : sample used (g).

362

363  $M = (100 * N)/P$  (5)

364 where:

365  $M$ : Moisture (%);

366  $N$ : loss of sample mass after drying at 105 °C (g);

367  $P$ : mass of sample (g).

368

369 The last methodological approach was statistical analysis of the results  
370 using the IBM SPSS Statistics software with 5% significance level. To interpret  
371 the F Test in the Analysis of Variance, the null hypothesis was: none of the means  
372 of the triplicates of each point of the factorial arrangement differ statistically. If  
373 rejected, Tukey's test detected which means differed from each other.

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#### 376 **4. Results and Discussion**

377 The National Agency of Petroleum, Natural Gas and Biofuels (ANP) of  
378 Brazil published in 2014 the Resolution n<sup>o</sup> 45. This resolution enforced the quality  
379 control obligations to be fulfilled by agents responsible for biofuel  
380 commercialization in Brazil. Furthermore, this resolution stipulated that the  
381 characterization of biodiesel must be done following the Brazilian Association of  
382 Technical Standards (ABNT), the international standards of *American Society for*  
383 *Testing and Materials* (ASTM), the International Organization for Standardization  
384 (ISO) and the "*European Committee for Standardization*" (EN) [109]. Each  
385 standard has different maximum and/or minimum limits for the biofuel  
386 parameters. Table 5 shows the results obtained from the analyses performed in  
387 this study. The acidity index of the biodiesel produced varied from 0.165 to 0.348

388 mgKOH.g<sup>-1</sup>, while the saponification index and iodine index were around 60.813-  
 389 96.553 mgKOH.g<sup>-1</sup> and 84.925-104.691 gl<sub>2</sub>.g<sup>-1</sup>, respectively. The humidity ranged  
 390 from 0.016 to 0.031%, with most biofuels having little moisture variation. While  
 391 statistically, the lowest moisture occurred in points P1, P3, P4, P6, P7 and P8,  
 392 the highest moisture occurred in P2, P3, P4, P5, P7 and P8. That is, the points  
 393 that belong statistically to the group with the lowest results of moisture also  
 394 belong to the group with the highest moisture. This occurs because the conditions  
 395 that varied, according to the factorial arrangement, do not influence the moisture  
 396 content of biodiesel. The entire process of purification and drying of biodiesel  
 397 remained constant for all productions.

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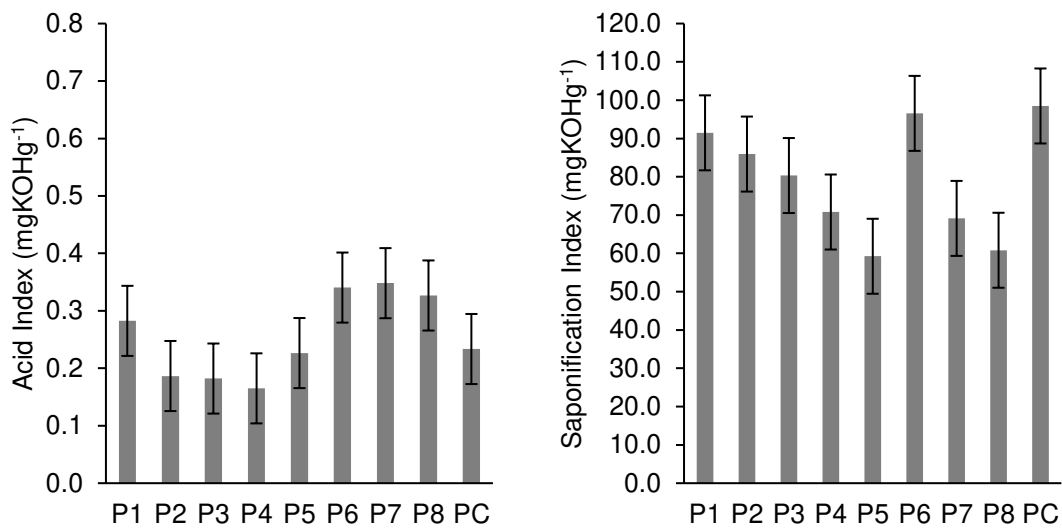
399 Table 5 – Results of the analyses. Equal letters in the same column do not differ  
 400 statistically by Tukey test at 5% significance.

	AI (mgKOH.g <sup>-1</sup> )	SI (mgKOH.g <sup>-1</sup> )	II (gl <sub>2</sub> .g <sup>-1</sup> )	Moisture (%)	$\nu$ (mm <sup>2</sup> .s <sup>-1</sup> )
P1	0.283 <sup>ab</sup>	91.473 <sup>bc</sup>	104.691 <sup>d</sup>	0.016 <sup>a</sup>	22.311 <sup>d</sup>
P2	0.187 <sup>ab</sup>	85.927 <sup>abc</sup>	084.925 <sup>a</sup>	0.031 <sup>c</sup>	11.175 <sup>c</sup>
P3	0.182 <sup>ab</sup>	80.322 <sup>abc</sup>	088.830 <sup>ab</sup>	0.021 <sup>abc</sup>	08.061 <sup>a</sup>
P4	0.165 <sup>a</sup>	70.797 <sup>abc</sup>	086.292 <sup>a</sup>	0.025 <sup>abc</sup>	08.120 <sup>a</sup>
P5	0.226 <sup>ab</sup>	59.247 <sup>a</sup>	101.560 <sup>cd</sup>	0.029 <sup>bc</sup>	22.791 <sup>d</sup>
P6	0.340 <sup>b</sup>	96.553 <sup>bc</sup>	095.290 <sup>bc</sup>	0.017 <sup>a</sup>	10.425 <sup>bc</sup>
P7	0.348 <sup>b</sup>	69.129 <sup>ab</sup>	103.662 <sup>d</sup>	0.020 <sup>abc</sup>	09.614 <sup>abc</sup>
P8	0.327 <sup>ab</sup>	60.813 <sup>a</sup>	102.515 <sup>cd</sup>	0.025 <sup>abc</sup>	08.789 <sup>ab</sup>

401 AI: Acidity Index; SI: Saponification Index; II: Iodine Index;  $\nu$ : Kinematic viscosity.

402

403 The ANP requires that the acidity index of biodiesel should be less than  
 404 0.8 mgKOHg<sup>-1</sup>, while the ASTM and the EN have a maximum limit of 0.5  
 405 mgKOHg<sup>-1</sup>. The lowest indexes were associated with the shortest reaction time  
 406 used in the study. Although the highest result obtained in the analysis was 0.348  
 407 mgKOHg<sup>-1</sup> in P7, the only point that differed statistically from this result was P4.  
 408 All the biodiesels produced were within the limits of ANP, ASTM and EN (Fig.  
 409 2a); as shown in the graph. In fact, the results were significantly lower than the  
 410 maximum allowed limit. High levels of acidity can lead to corrosion in storage  
 411 tanks and engines. Moreover, this index provides data on oil status and product  
 412 quality [110] and can be used to evaluate the level of biodiesel degradation [111].  
 413 An acidity Index of 0.13-0.50 mgKOHg<sup>-1</sup> is reported in the literature for methyl  
 414 biodiesel produced from rice bran oil [35,36], 0.14-0.18 mg mgKOHg<sup>-1</sup> for  
 415 soybean oil [40,67] and 0.45-0.60 mgKOHg<sup>-1</sup> for bovine tallow [48,112].



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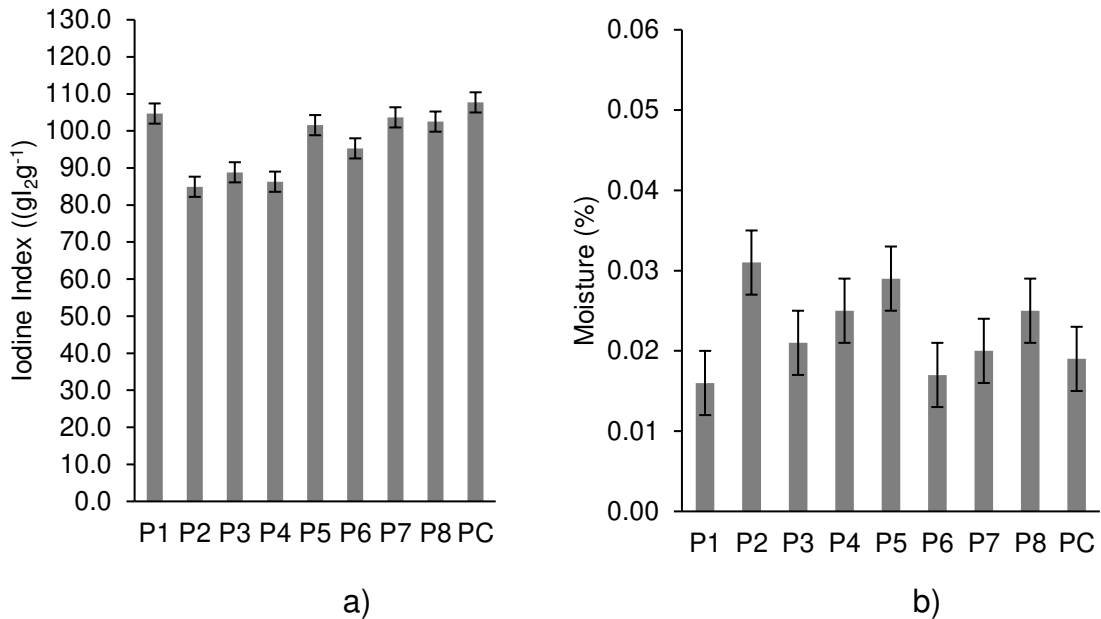
a) b)  
 Fig. 2 – a) Graph of the results of acidity index; b) Graph of the results of saponification index.

Regarding the saponification index, there is no regulatory limit, although such index influences the costs of biofuel production and use. Thus, lower indexes are preferable by reducing operating and maintenance costs [113]. In this study, the highest index was 96.553 mgKOHg<sup>-1</sup> (Fig. 2b). The lowest saponification index was found in P5 (Fig. 2b), differing statistically only from P1 and P6 (Table 5). The literature reported an acidity index of 186.64 mgKOHg<sup>-1</sup> for rice bran vegetable oil methyl biodiesel [33]. For biodiesel from bovine tallow, the values found in the literature are between 34.9 and 67.6 mgKOHg<sup>-1</sup> [112] and 195.03 mgKOHg<sup>-1</sup> from soybean oil [114]. The lowest saponification indexes obtained in this study occurred with a longer reaction time.

Only the EN requires a maximum limit for the iodine index with a maximum of 120 gI<sub>2</sub>.g<sup>-1</sup> [36] (Fig. 3a). This index is related to the degree of chain unsaturation and depends on the source of triglycerides used to produce biofuel [115]. Statistically, the lowest Iodine Index was obtained in P2, P3 and P4 (Table 5). All biodiesels produced in this study had iodine index within the EN recommendation (Fig. 3a) and indexes reported in the literature (118-128 gI<sub>2</sub>.g<sup>-1</sup>) in relation to biodiesel of soybean oil [116, 117]. Bovine tallow is a raw material which can produce biodiesel with a lower iodine index than the others mentioned, reported to be between 50 and 93 mg gI<sub>2</sub>.g<sup>-1</sup> [112]. The maximum moisture



441 allowed by ASTM is 0.05%, thus all biodiesels produced in this study were within  
442 the specified limit (Fig. 3b).



443

444

445 Fig. 3 – a) Graphs of the results of the iodine index; b) Graphs of the results of  
446 the moisture.

447

448 Kinematic Viscosity is one of the most important factors for the use of  
449 biodiesels in compression ignition engines. The high viscosity of vegetable oils  
450 is associated with low volatility, poor atomization of fuel, clots, deposits, fuel  
451 coking and dilution of the lubricating oil.[20]The kinematic viscosity of the fuel oil  
452 increases proportionally to the increase in the length of the chain of FA and  
453 decreases with the increase in the number of unsaturation [110,115]. For  
454 biodiesel of soybean oil, the literature indicates a range of 4.10-4.20 mm<sup>2</sup>s<sup>-1</sup> of  
455 kinematic viscosity [36,116,117]. As can be seen in Table 5 and Fig. 4, the results  
456 of Kinematic Viscosity analysis ranged from 8.061 to 22.791 mm<sup>2</sup>s<sup>-1</sup>, and the  
457 biodiesels that showed lowest viscosity according to the Tukey test occurred in  
458 P3, P4, P7 and P8 (Table 4).

459

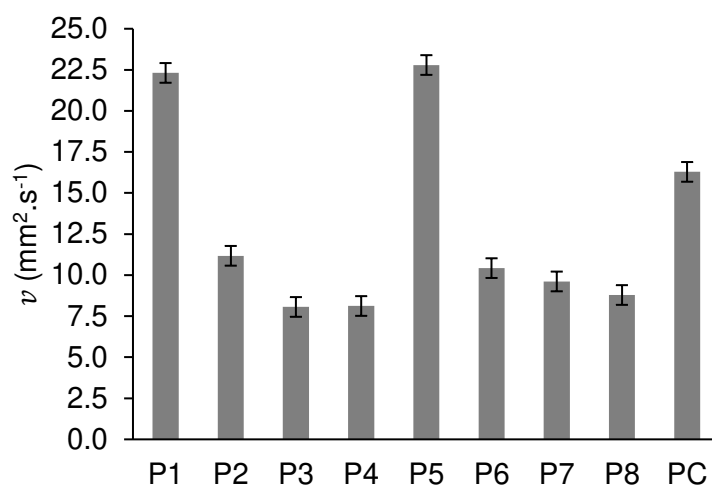


Fig. 4 – Graph of the results of the Kinematic Viscosity analysis.

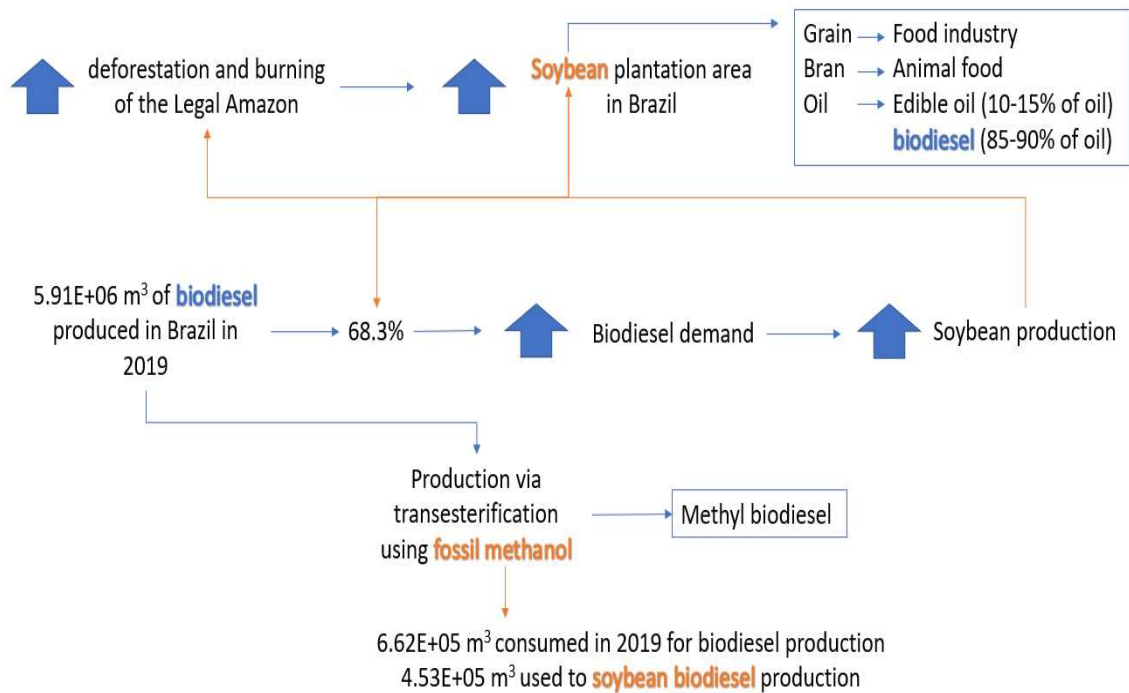
Therefore, all biodiesels produced in this study had Kinematic Viscosity above the recommended limits according to the ANP, ASTM and EM, indicating that the conditions used in the study did not effectively promote transesterification reactions. Studies on the production of methyl diesel from rice bran vegetable oil reported kinematic viscosity of  $4.30\text{-}4.76 \text{ mm}^2\text{s}^{-1}$  [7,33] at  $26 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$  and  $4.12\text{-}8.45 \text{ mm}^2\text{s}^{-1}$  at  $40 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$  [35,115,32,118].

The results obtained in this study indicate reduced kinematic viscosity with the use of a larger amount of catalyst. Those reactions at 1.5% of KOH and 9:1 molar ratio of alcohol to oil resulted in an overall lower viscosity. Therefore, raising the amount of catalyst to promote biodiesel production and/or the molar ratio of ethanol to rice bran vegetable oil is recommended. Regarding reaction time, both presented similar results while fixing the other factors of the factorial arrangement.

The results obtained are of paramount importance since the ideal conditions for the production of biodiesel vary according to the raw material, the alcohol and the catalyst used. Cardoso et al. [119], for example, investigated the production of ethyl biodiesel from the transesterification of another waste largely generated in Brazil, fish oil. The authors reported that the optimum condition, was obtained with 0.7% alkaline catalyst (NaOH), temperature of  $54 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$  and molar ethanol:oil ratio of 11.7:1. Such conditions resulted in a biodiesel with  $0.32 \pm 0.08 \text{ mgKOHg}^{-1}$  of acidity index,  $90 \pm 0.40 \text{ gI}_2\text{.g}^{-1}$  of iodine index, and  $4.62 \pm 0.08 \text{ mm}^2\text{.s}^{-1}$  of cinematic viscosity at  $40 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ . Sinha et al. [25] evaluated the biodiesel production of rice bran oil using methanol as a short-chain alcohol and NaOH as

486 a catalyst. In their study, the optimal conditions for transesterification were  
 487 obtained at 55 °C, one hour of reaction time, molar ratio of 9:1 of oil to alcohol,  
 488 and 0.75% of catalyst.

489 Biodiesel production in Brazil is mainly from soy, about 68.3%. Despite  
 490 that biodiesel is a renewable fuel, it becomes less sustainable because the soy  
 491 cultivation in the country is directly associated with deforestation and burning in  
 492 the Legal Amazon area (Fig. 5).



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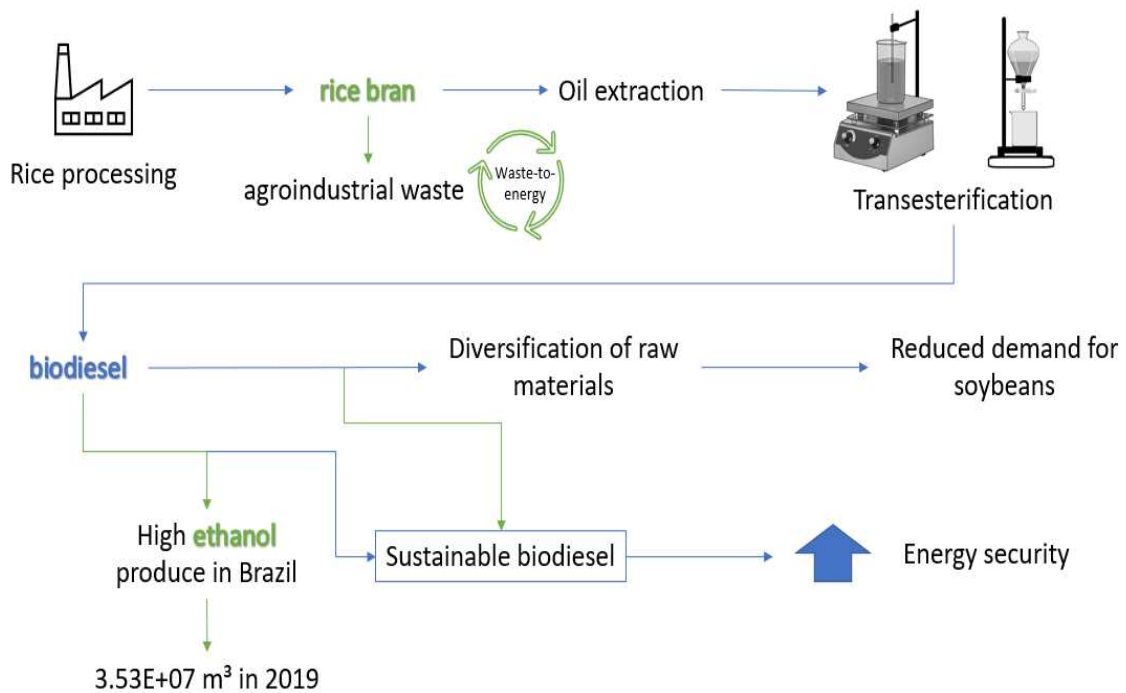
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Fig. 5 – Current scenario of biodiesel production in Brazil.

496 According to the first survey of the Brazilian harvest of 2020/2021 carried  
 497 out by the National Supply Company (CONAB) [120], the estimated production is  
 498 equal to 1.34E+08 tons for the 2020/2021 harvest, corresponding to an increase  
 499 of 2.5% cultivation area. In other words, 3.79E+07 hectares to be planted. Among  
 500 the reasons for this increase, the CONAB cites the use of soy for biodiesel  
 501 production since it is expected to increase the biofuel concentration in blends with  
 502 diesel, i.e. reaching 13%. Another reason for reducing the biodiesel sustainability  
 503 character is the use of fossil methanol for the transesterification reaction. (Fig. 5).  
 504 According to the ANP's 2020 Brazilian Statistical Yearbook, in 2019 the country  
 505 consumed of 6.62E+05 m³ of methanol during the biodiesel production [120].

506 The prospects projected by this study for greater sustainability in the  
 507 biodiesel production include the raw materials diversification in main agro-  
 508 industrial residues, such as rice bran (Fig. 6).



509  
 510 Fig. 6 - Perspectives of the study for the production of biodiesel in Brazil.

511  
 512 The use of residues for the biofuels generation allows for waste-to-energy  
 513 application and contributes to the circular economy in the energy and industrial  
 514 sector. Furthermore, the study promotes the use of ethanol as a substitute for  
 515 fossil methanol to increasing energy security and the sector sustainability by  
 516 using renewable alcohol widely produced in the country (Fig. 6). However, it is  
 517 important to note that Brazil has barriers that hinder the implementation of such  
 518 a perspective, emphasizing the need for studies in the area. The standards used  
 519 in the chromatographic analysis to define the esters present in biodiesel in Brazil  
 520 are standards for methyl esters, there are no standards for ethyl in the Brazilian  
 521 national market. A similar situation occurs with the methodologies disseminated  
 522 in the literature and in the area of biodiesel as a whole. What is found in the  
 523 literature for the estimated determination of the biodiesel composition regarding  
 524 ethyl esters are recent adaptations and still without scientific validation [121-123].  
 525 Although it are not recent studies from a chronological point of view, they are  
 526 current in terms of methodologies in the area.

527

## 528 **5. Conclusion**

529 The main conclusions obtained from this study is detailed as follows:

- 530 1) According to the parameters analyzed in this study, the biodiesels obtained via  
531 ethyl transesterification of the rice bran oil were compliant with the requirements  
532 of ASTM, EN and ABNT except kinematic viscosity. Both reaction times had  
533 similar results while fixing the other factors of the factorial arrangement;
- 534 2) It is recommended to adopt 40 minutes for the reaction time to reduce the  
535 energy expenditure for the production of biodiesel from the rice bran oil;
- 536 3) The results on viscosity variation from the factorial arrangement demonstrated  
537 the need to raise the ratio of catalyst and/or the molar ratio between ethanol and  
538 alcohol, as the lower kinematic viscosities were around  $8\text{-}9\text{ mm}^2\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$  with 1.5%  
539 catalyst and, generally, with a 9:1 molar ratio;
- 540 4) The possibility of producing biodiesel with the raw materials of this study could  
541 guide future studies and contribute to a scenario with the use of rice oil and  
542 ethanol in the industrial production of biodiesel. The scientific validation of the  
543 viability of producing rice oil based ethyl biodiesel in this study sets the basis for  
544 the futurere search to optimize its production and assess its viability on a large  
545 scale. Ultimagemely, the technology reported in this studywill makeit possible to  
546 reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, the diversity of the national energy  
547 matrix, and greater energy security in the Brazilian agro-industrial sector.

548

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550

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