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Mohan Verma

Department of Pharmaceutical
Sciences, Maharshi Dayanand
University, Rohtak, Haryana,
India

Dr. Prabhakar Kumar Verma

Department of Pharmaceutical
Sciences, Maharshi Dayanand
University, Rohtak, Haryana,
India

Anticancer and antimicrobial prospective of Pyrimidine derivatives: A review

Mohan Verma and Dr. Prabhakar Kumar Verma

Abstract

Pyrimidine is the parent heterocycle of a very important group of compounds that have been extensively studied due to their occurrence in living systems. Pyrimidine and its derivatives demonstrate a diverse array of biological and pharmacological activities. During the last two decades several pyrimidine derivatives have been developed which are found to have wide clinical and pharmacological applications. The aim of this paper is to review the anticancer and antimicrobial potentials of pyrimidine derivatives.

Keywords: Anticancer, antimicrobial, pyrimidine derivatives

Introduction

Cancer is a devastating disease characterized by malignant growth of cells that could be clearly distinguished from normal cells by their out-of-limit growth. Approximately 50% of patients will ultimately die of locally advanced or metastatic disease. The term *metastatic cancer* indicates that the cancer has spread or metastasized to lymph nodes or other parts of the body especially to bones^[1, 2]. Antiproliferative and cytotoxic drugs play a major role in cancer therapy, whether used alone or in combination with other treatments such as surgery, radiation, and biological therapy. In the past 50 years, mass screening of both synthetic derivatives and natural products has led to the discovery of a number of the currently utilized anticancer drugs. In the field of chemotherapeutic drugs, search for new, more active, selective and less toxic compounds is still in progress, and promising new anticancer approaches are being pursued^[3]. Infectious diseases are responsible for a great number of deaths in the world population. The reduction of sensibility to antimicrobial agents in current use has been increasing for a great variety of pathogens and the resistance to multiple drugs is common for several microorganisms, especially for Gram positive bacteria. Infection by methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and vancomycin-resistant *Enterococci* (VRE) presents a difficult problem for medicine. Given the evidence for the rapid global spread of resistance, the need for discovery or optimization of antimicrobial agents active against these resistant strains is of paramount importance^[4].

Pyrimidines are the heterocyclic aromatic compounds similar to benzene and pyridine containing two nitrogen atoms at positions 1st and 3rd position of the six membered rings (Fig-1) Pyrimidines are biologically very important heterocycles and represent by far the most ubiquitous members of the diazine family with uracil and thymine being constituents of ribonucleic acid (RNA) and deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) and with cytosine Heterocycles containing pyrimidine moiety are of great interest because they constitute an important class of natural and nonnatural products, many of which exhibit useful biological activities and clinical applications^[5].

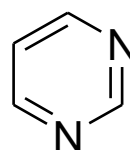


Fig 1: Pyrimidine

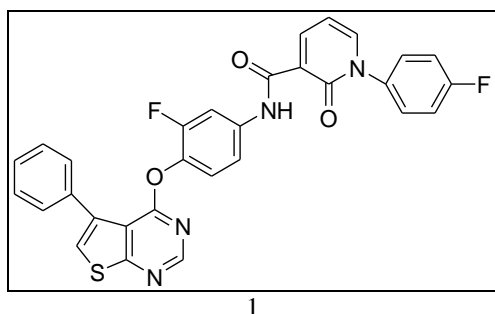
In the light of above facts, in the present review article, we hereby report antimicrobial and anticancer potential of pyrimidine derivatives.

Correspondence**Prabhakar Kumar Verma**

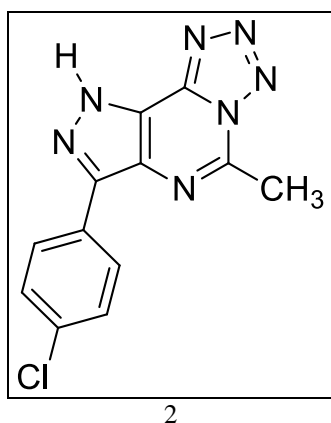
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Sciences, Maharshi Dayanand
University, Rohtak, Haryana
India

Anticancer activity

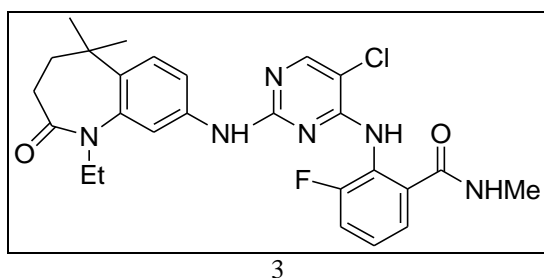
Zhao *et al.* synthesized a novel derivatives of thieno [2, 3-*d*] pyrimidine or furo [2, 3-*d*] pyrimidine and evaluated their anticancer activity by inhibition of c-Met kinase enzyme. Among the synthesized compounds, derivative 1 was found to be most active compound ($IC_{50} = 35.7$ nM) [6].



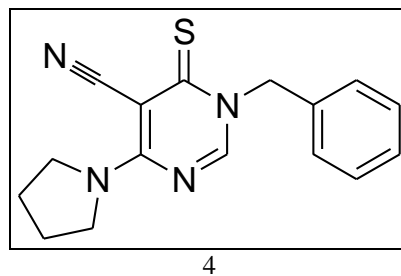
Hafez *et al.* synthesized novel derivatives of pyrazole and screened its *in vitro* anticancer activity against human colon (HT29), liver (HepG2) and breast adenocarcinoma (MCF-7) tumor cell lines. Compound 2 (7-(4-chlorophenyl)-5-methyl-9*H*-pyrazolo [3, 4-*e*] tetrazolo [1, 5-*c*] pyrimidine) showed the good anticancer activity as compared to standard drug doxorubicin [7].



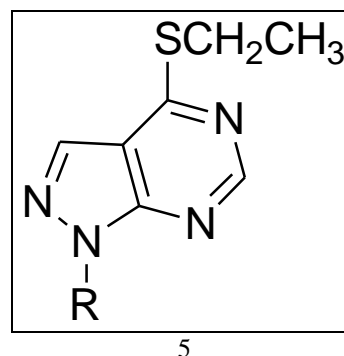
Weinberg *et al* synthesized a series of 2, 4-diaminopyrimidine as c-Met kinase inhibitors. Anticancer activity results indicated that compound 3, 2- (5-chloro-2- (1-ethyl-5, 5-dimethyl-5,5-dimethyl-2-methylene-2,3,4,5-tetrahydro-1*H*-benzo [b] azepin-8-ylamino) pyrimidin-4-ylamino)-3-fluoro-*N*-methyl benzamide, was found to possess maximum inhibition against c-met kinase ($IC_{50} = 35.7$ nM) [8].



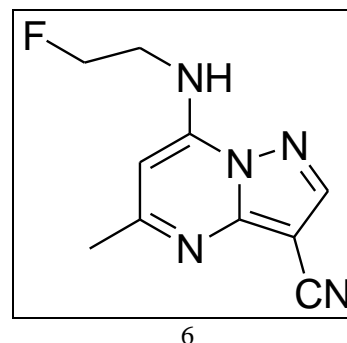
Cocco *et al.* synthesized novel derivatives of 6-thioxopyrimidines and evaluated its *in vitro* anticancer activity. Among the synthesized derivatives compound 4 (1-benzyl-4-(pyrrolidin-1-yl)-6-thioxo-1, 6-dihydro pyrimidine-5-carbonitrile) showed the best cytotoxicity against CNS cancer lines [9].



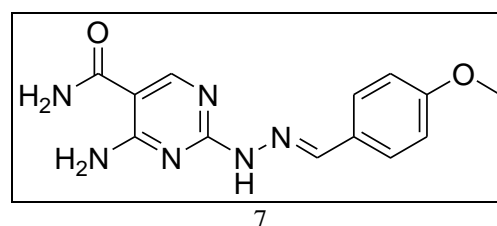
A series of novel pyrazolo [3, 4-*d*] pyrimidine derivatives was synthesized by Rashad *et al.* and performed their cytotoxicity against human breast adenocarcinoma (MCF-7) cell lines. Compound 5 showed significant activity on MCF-7 cells [10].



Xu *et al.* synthesized novel derivatives of pyrazolo [1, 5-*a*] pyrimidine derivatives and screened their anticancer activity. The anticancer results revealed that compound 6 (7-(2-[18F] fluoroethylamino)-5-methylpyrazolo [1, 5-*a*] pyrimidine-3-carbonitrile), exhibited good activity [11].

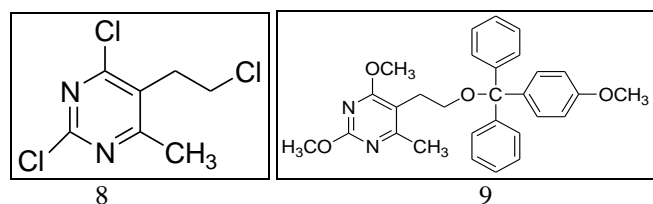


A new series of pyrimidines and fused pyrimidines derivatives as triazolo [4, 3-*a*] pyrimidine, pyrido [2, 3-*d*] pyrimidine and pyrimido [4, 5-*d*] pyrimidine systems was synthesized by Shaaban *et al.* All the synthesized derivatives were evaluated for their anticancer and antimicrobial activities. Among the tested derivatives, compound 7 exhibited the best activity against different cancer cell lines [12].

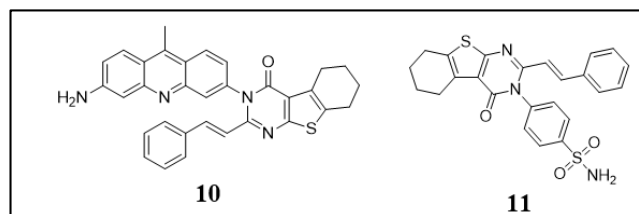


A series of 5, 6-disubstituted pyrimidines was synthesized by kreljevic *et al.* and screened their antitumor activity against

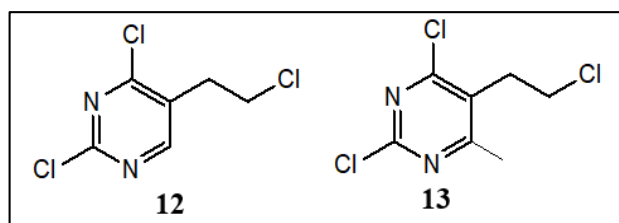
human malignant cell lines. Among all the tested compounds, derivatives 8 (IC₅₀ = 4 μM) and 9 (IC₅₀ = 0.4 μM) showed the most prominent inhibitory effects [13].



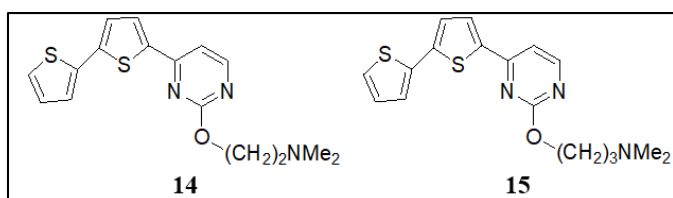
Abbas *et al.* synthesized a novel series of tetrahydrobenzo [4, 5] thieno [2, 3-*d*] pyrimidine derivatives. All the synthesized derivatives were screened for its anticancer activity against breast MCF-7 and liver HEPG-2 cancer cell lines. Compounds 10 ((*E*)-3-(6-amino-9-methylacridin-3-yl)-2-styryl-5, 6, 7, 8 -tetrahydrobenzo [4, 5] thieno [2, 3-*d*] pyrimidin-4 (3*H*)-one) and 11 ((*E*)- 4- (4-oxo-2-styryl-5,6,7,8-tetrahydrobenzo [4, 5] thieno [2,3-*d*] pyrimidin-3 (4*H*)-yl) benzene sulfonamide) showed excellent activity [14].



Kraljevic *et al.* synthesized C-5 substituted and *N*-acylic pyrimidine derivatives and evaluated their cytotoxic activity. Among the synthesized derivatives, compound 12 and 13 were found to be most potent against colon carcinoma (HCT116) cells [15].



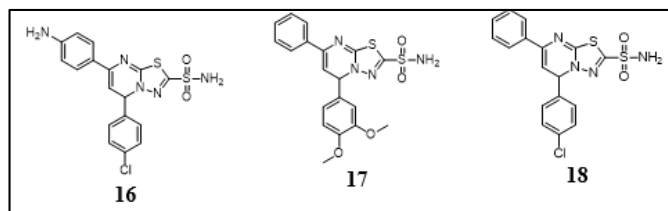
Chou *et al.* synthesized bithienyl-pyrimidines with electrostatic binding side chains and performed their anticancer activity. Among the synthesized derivatives, the compounds 14 and 15 showed significant activity against the tested cell lines [16].



Comp.	IC ₅₀ (μM)			
	Hep2	Hela	Colon205	KB
14	16	15	12	17
15	11	7	7	5

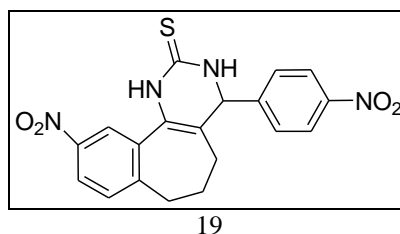
El-Sayed *et al.* designed and synthesized novel derivatives of pyrimidine and evaluated its antitumor potentials. Preliminary

biological studies revealed that compounds, 16 (4- (5- (4-

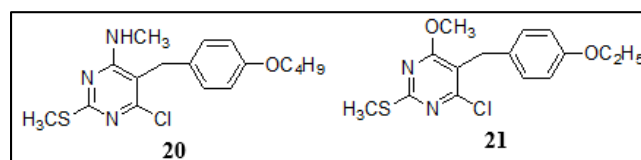


chlorophenyl) - 2- sulfamoyl-5*H*- [1, 3, 4] thiadiazolo [3, 2-*a*] pyrimidin-7-yl) benzenamine), 17 (5-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-7-phenyl-5*H*- [1, 3, 4] thiadiazolo [3, 2-*a*] pyrimidine) and 18 (5- (3, 4- dimethoxy phenyl) -7-phenyl-5*H* [1, 3, 4] thiadiazolo [3, 2-*a*] pyrimidine-2-sulfonamide) showed the good affinity to DNA and highest percentage increase in lifespan of mice inoculated with Ehrlich ascites cells over 5-fluorouracil [17].

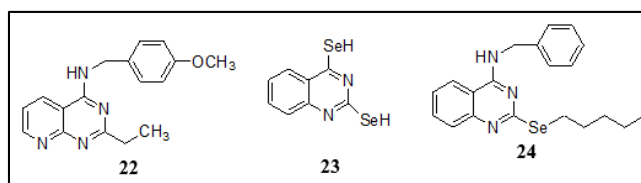
With the aim to develop the new anticancer drug, Amr *et al.* synthesized pyridine, pyrane and pyrimidine derivatives. Among all the derivatives, compound 19 exhibited most potent anticancer activity [18].



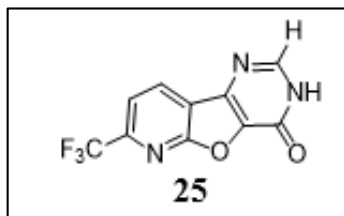
Grigoryan *et al.* synthesized novel 5-(4-alkoxybenzyl) pyrimidine derivatives and studied their antitumor activity and found that compounds 20 and 21 were the most potent ones [19].



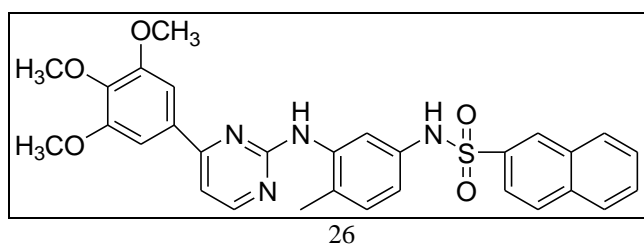
Moreno *et al.* synthesized novel derivatives of quinazoline and pyrido [2, 3-*d*]pyrimidine and their *in vitro* cytotoxic activity was performed. Anticancer results revealed that the compounds 22, 23 and 24 showed very high potency against MCF-7 cancer cell lines [20].



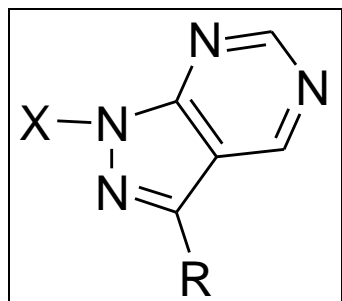
A new series of trifluoromethyl substituted furo[2,3-*b*]pyridine and pyrido [3',2':4,5] furo[3,2-*d*]pyrimidine derivatives was synthesized and evaluated for its anticancer activity against four human cancer cell lines by Kumar *et al.* All the compounds showed good anticancer activity against all the tested cell lines at <25 μM concentration except few derivatives. Compound 25 (7- (trifluoromethyl) pyrido [3', 2': 4, 5] furo [3, 2-*d*] pyrimidin-4(3*H*)-one) were found highly potent one and exhibited promising cytotoxicity comparable to standard drug 5-fluorouracil [21].



In order to synthesize new anticancer agents, Kamal *et al.* developed new anilino substituted pyrimidine sulphonamides as anticancer agents against K562 cell lines. Among the synthesized derivatives, compound 26, *N*-(4-methyl-3-(4-(3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl)pyrimidin-2-ylamino)phenyl)aphthalene-2-sulfonamide, was found to be most potent with IC_{50} values 5.60, 9.33 and 6.93 (μM) against K562, MCF-7 and MDA-MB 231 cell lines respectively [22].



Huang *et al.* synthesized a new class of parasol [3, 4-*d*] pyrimidine derivatives and evaluated for its ant proliferative activity against NCI-H226 (human lung carcinoma) and NPC-TW01 (human nasopharyngeal carcinoma) cancer cells by MTT assay. Among them, compounds (27-30) possessed better potency against NCI-H226 and NPC-TW01 cancer cells (Table 1) [23].



27 X= Ph; R= *p*-Cl-Ph; 28 X=2-Quinoliny; R= *p*-Me-Ph
29 X= 2-Quinoliny; R= *p*-Cl-Ph; 30 X= 2-Quinoliny; R= *p*-e-Ph

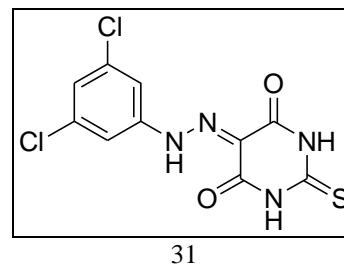
Table 1: Antiproliferative results of active compounds

Compounds	Cancer cell lines ($GI_{50} = \mu M$)	
	NCI-H226	NPC-TW01
27	18	23
28	29	30
29	39	35
30	37	36

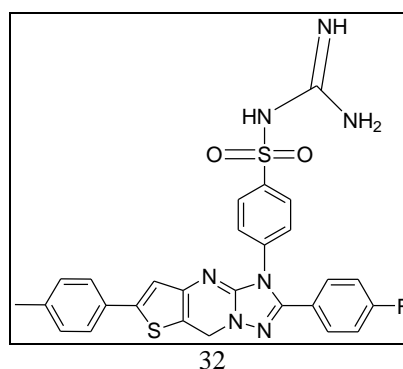
Antimicrobial activity

Abdelgawad, synthesized new azo-pyrimidine derivatives. The minimum inhibitory concentration of new azo-compounds was evaluated for their antibacterial activity against Gram-positive microorganisms; *Sarcina lutea*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Bacillus subtilis*, and *Enterococcus faecalis*; and Gram-negative microorganisms; *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. Among the synthesized derivative, compound 31, 5-[(3,5-Dichloro-phenyl)-hydrazone]-2-thioxo-dihydro-

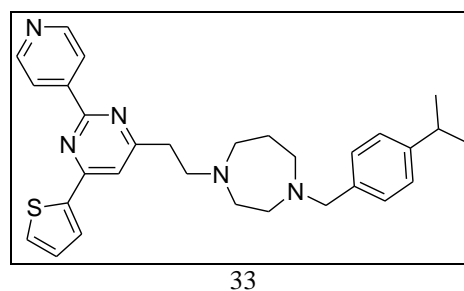
pyrimidine-4,6-dione found to be most active one against the bacterial strains [24].



A novel series of carbamothioylamino-benzene-sulfonamidethiophene -carboxylates and thieno [3, 2-*d*] pyrimidin-2-yl-amino-benzene-sulfonamides were synthesized. All the synthesized compounds were evaluated for their *in vitro* activity against three human tumor cell lines, namely, liver cancer (HepG-2), colon cancer (HT-29) and lung cancer (NCI-H460), using doxorubicin as standard. Compound 32 exhibited high activity against Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacteria [25].

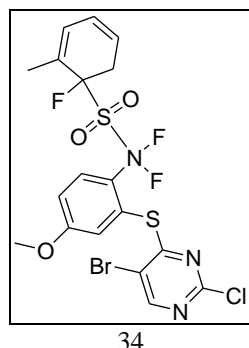


A series of novel 2, 4-disubstituted-6-thiophenyl-pyrimidine derivatives was synthesized by Fang *et al.* and their antibacterial activities against clinically related pathogens were investigated. Compounds show strong antibacterial activities against MRSA and VREs. The antibacterial activity of compound 33 against MRSA and VREs (MIC values: 2 mg/mL) is stronger than that of methicillin and vancomycin. From the *in vitro* and *in vivo* results, Compound 33 was found to inhibit ATPase activity and Fts Z polymerization. The compound is able to inhibit bacterial cell division through interacting with GTP binding site of Fts Z and thus causing cell death. In addition, *S. aureus* was found to develop resistance to methicillin but not for 33, which was proved in our resistance generation experiments [26].

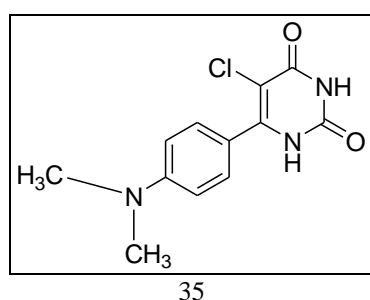


Mallikarjunaswamy *et al.*, synthesized a series of novel 2-(5-bromo-2-chloro-pyrimidin-4-ylsulfanyl)-4-methoxy-phenylamine derivatives by the reaction of 2-(5-bromo-2-chloro-pyrimidin-4-ylsulfanyl)-4-methoxy-phenylamine with

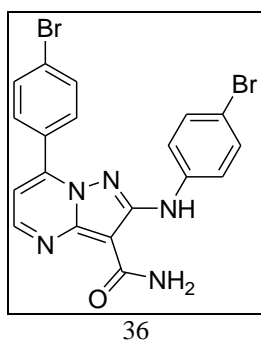
various sulfonyl chlorides, and *in vitro* antimicrobial activity was evaluated. Among the synthesized derivatives compound 34 exhibited an elevated antibacterial activity against Gram positive (zone of inhibition 29–33 mm) and Gram negative (zone of inhibition 32–33 mm) bacteria. Compound 34 also showed good antifungal activity with 96.9% inhibition when compared with other compounds in the series against *F. oxysporum* [27].



Sebastin *et al.*, synthesized novel derivatives of 1,3-dihydro pyrimidine from different substituted aldehydes. All the synthesized derivatives were screened for antibacterial activity using gram positive (*Bacillus subtilis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*) and gram negative (*Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Escherichia coli*) organisms at concentrations of 400 µg/disc and 200 µg/disc. Among the synthesized derivatives, compound 35 (p-dimethyl aminophenyl derivative) was found to be sensitive in all strains [28].

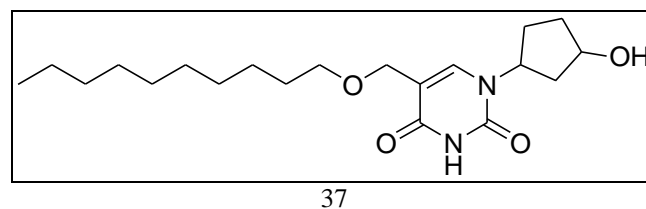


Abdallah *et al.*, synthesized novel derivatives of Pyrazolo [1, 5-*a*] pyrimidine and screened for its antibacterial and antifungal activities. Among the synthesis of derivatives, compound 36 with two moieties of 4-Br-C₆H₄ revealed increased reactivity compared with ampicillin as standard reference [29].



Khandazhinskaya *et al.*, synthesized a series of novel 5'-norcyclic derivatives of 5-alkoxymethyl or 5-alkyltriazolyl-methyl uracil were synthesized and the activity of the compounds evaluated against both Gram-positive and

Gram-negative bacteria. Most of the bacteria were not sensitive to the tested compounds. The only exception was against *M. smegmatis*, whose growth was completely inhibited by compound 37. The growth of *Mycobacterium smegmatis* was completely inhibited by the most active compound 37 at a MIC₉₉ of 67 µg/mL (mc²155) and a MIC₉₉ of 6.7–67 µg/mL (VKPM Ac 1339). Several compounds also showed the ability to inhibit the growth of attenuated strains of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* ATCC 25177 (MIC₉₉ 28–61 µg/mL) and *Mycobacterium bovis* ATCC 35737 (MIC₉₉ 50–60 µg/mL), as well as two virulent strains of *M. tuberculosis*; a laboratory strain H37Rv (MIC₉₉ 20–50 µg/mL) and a clinical strain with multiple drug resistance MS-115 (MIC₉₉ 20–50 µg/mL) [30].



Conclusion

In medicinal chemistry pyrimidine derivatives have been very well known for their therapeutic applications. The presence of a pyrimidine base in thymine, cytosine and uracil, which are the essential binding blocks of nucleic acids, DNA and RNA is one possible reason for their activity. The review article has outlined the anticancer and antimicrobial activities of the pyrimidine scaffold. The scientific information of this manuscript may be worthwhile in encouraging the prospective researchers working on this heterocyclic scaffold.

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