



***In vitro EXOPROTEOME PROFILE OF *Stenotrophomonas maltophilia* IN
IRON DEPLETED CONDITION***

By

ADLEEN BINTI AZMAN

Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra
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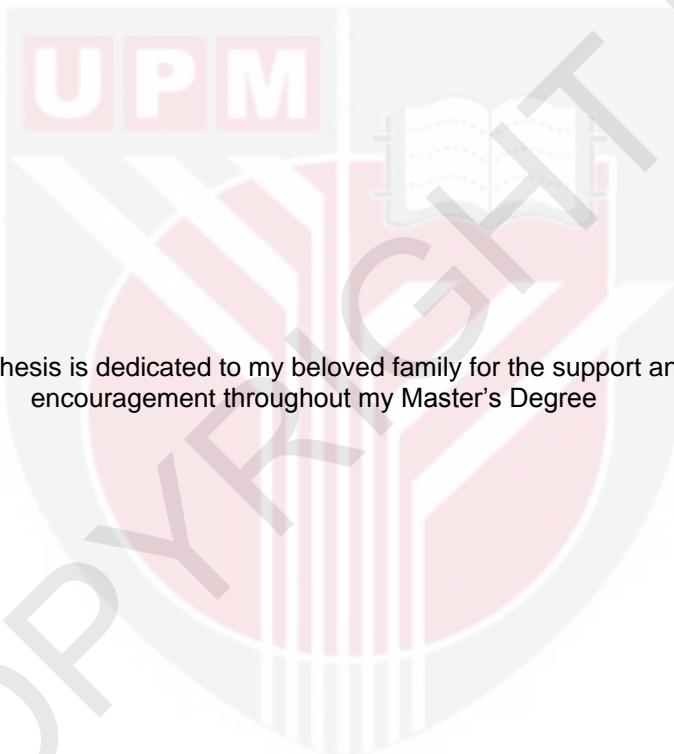
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This thesis is dedicated to my beloved family for the support and
encouragement throughout my Master's Degree



Abstract of the thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

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ADLEEN BINTI AZMAN

December 2015

**Chairman : Associate Professor Vasantha Kumari Neela, PhD
Faculty : Medicine and Health Sciences**

Stenotrophomonas maltophilia has been recently identified as the third most common nosocomial infection in the hospital especially among immunocompromised patients. Management of *S. maltophilia* infection is an inordinate challenge in the hospital due to its intrinsic and acquired resistance to most of the antibiotics. Although *S. maltophilia* is frequently associated with increased morbidities and mortalities, the pathogenesis mechanisms of *S. maltophilia* are still not very clear. This is due to *S. maltophilia* which entered hospital setting from environmental sources heavily colonizes the respiratory tract and other anatomical sites, without showing a clear cut infection in human. Hence, the debate about whether *S. maltophilia* is a true pathogen or a colonizer is still an ongoing investigation.

Iron is an essential factor for their survival. In the host environment, the level of iron is $\sim 10^{11}$ times below than the level required for microorganism and is mostly unavailable as it is bound together with host protein. Microbes develop multiple mechanisms such as siderophores secretion to forage for free iron in an iron limited environment. Under iron starvation, microbes also secrete other virulence potential exoproteins. The present study was aimed at investigating the effect of iron depletion in secretion of proteomes in *S. maltophilia*.

Briefly, four strains of the *S. maltophilia* LMG959 (environment), ATCC 13637, CS17 and CS24 (clinical) were grown in normal and iron depleted medium. The siderophores production was screened qualitatively and quantitatively using CAS plate and liquid assay. Followed by, nematocidal assay was performed to test the ability of *S. maltophilia* supernatant grown in iron depleted medium to kill the nematode *Caenorhabditis elegans*. Lastly, the putative proteins expressed

during the stressed condition were identified by Isobariq Tags for Relative and Absolute Quantification (ITRAQ) mass spectrometry.

Initial screening of siderophores production exhibited largest yellow zone for CS17 and CS24 (10 mm) followed by ATCC13637 (8 mm), LMG959 (6 mm). The siderophores production was further confirmed quantitatively and the highest was detected in both clinical isolates (30.8% [$p<0.05$] and 29.4%) at 72 h followed by ATCC 13637 (8%) and LMG959 (4%) in iron depleted medium ($p>0.05$). Isolates grown under iron-depleted condition (ATCC 13637: 63%; CS17: 96%; CS24: 97%) showed more nematocidal activity than in normal condition (ATCC 13637: 43%; CS17: 76%; CS24: 79%) ($p>0.05$). None of the worms were killed when infected with LMG959. Based on the above result, only CS17 and LMG959 are subjected to ITRAQ analysis. ITRAQ analysis revealed a total of 122 proteins showed altered expression in response to iron starvation with 96 being up-regulated and 26 were down-regulated for both isolates. ITRAQ analysis identified higher expression of several iron acquisition and pathogenic potential proteins in both isolates grown in iron depleted condition. In another study, clinical and environment isolates grown under normal condition were compared to identify the proteomic profiles. ITRAQ analysis discovered 81 proteins that exhibited differently expressed with 40 proteins up-regulated and 41 proteins down-regulated. In normal condition, several proteins such as Elongation factor G, Endoribonuclease and Fimbrial protein expressed in higher fold in clinical isolate compared to environmental isolate.

In conclusion, *S. maltophilia* produced siderophores under iron depleted condition. Based on nematocidal assay, eventhough there is no significant difference in killing rates between iron depleted and normal condition but *S. maltophilia* did show an increased of ~20% of its killing rates in iron depleted medium except for LMG959. ITRAQ analysis revealed *S. maltophilia* altered the expression of metabolic, iron acquisition and pathogenic potential proteins under iron starvation. A comparison of clinical and environmental isolates grown in normal medium revealed that clinical isolates expresses more pathogenic potential proteins compared to environmental isolate. The data obtained in the present study, clearly indicates that under iron depleted condition, *S. maltophilia* are capable of altering the expression of its proteomes to ensure their survival in the host.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

***In vitro EXOPROTEOME PROFIL PADA *Stenotrophomonas maltophilia*
DALAM KEADAAN KEKURANGAN ZAT BESI***

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Stenotrophomonas maltophilia telah dikenal pasti sebagai jangkitan nosokomial ketiga paling kerap ditemui di hospital terutamanya di kalangan pesakit yang mempunyai sistem imun yang rendah. Pengurusan terhadap jangkitan *S. maltophilia* merupakan satu cabaran besar di hospital kerana sifat mikrob yang mempunyai daya tahan intrinsik dan daya tahan dapatan terhadap antibiotik. Walaupun *S. maltophilia* sering dikaitkan dengan kadar morbiditi dan mortaliti, mekanisma patogenesisnya masih belum diketahui dengan jelas. Hal ini disebabkan oleh *S. maltophilia* yang berada di persekitaran kebiasaannya mendominasi saluran pernafasan dan bahagian-bahagian anatomilain tanpa menunjukkan tanda-tanda jangkitan yang jelas pada manusia. Oleh itu, persoalan samada *S. maltophilia* merupakan patogen atau tidak masih menjadi tanda tanya dikalangan penyelidik.

Zat besi merupakan salah satu faktor penting untuk kelangsungan hidup mikroorganisma. Dalam persekitaran perumah, tahap zat besi adalah $\sim 10^{11}$ kali lebih rendah dari tahap minimum yang diperlukan mikroorganisma untuk hidup dan kebanyakan zat besi terikat dengan protin perumah. Mikroorganisma mempunyai pelbagai mekanisma bagi mendapatkan zat besi dari persekitaran. Antaranya adalah secara perembesan siderophores yang bertujuan untuk mendapatkan zat besi yang tidak terikat dengan protin perumah dan kemampuan membebaskan eksoprotin yang mengandungi faktor virulen.

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenalpasti kesan kekurangan zat besi kepada rembesan protin pada *S. maltophilia*. Secara ringkasnya, empat pencilan *S. maltophilia* LMG 959 (pencilan alam sekitar), SM13637 (ATCC), CS17 dan CS24 (pencilan klinikal) telah dibiakkan dalam medium biasa dan medium rendah zat besi. Penghasilan Siderophores telah disaring secara kualitatif dan kuantitatif

menggunakan piring CAS dan cecair CAS asai, diikuti dengan ujian nematocidal asai yang dilakukan untuk menguji keupayaan supernatan *S. maltophilia* yang dibiakkan dalam medium rendah zat besi untuk membunuh nematod, *Caenorhabditis elegans*. Akhir sekali, protein yang dirembeskan oleh mikrob yang berada dalam keadaan tertekan telah dikenalpasti menggunakan spektrometri massa iTRAQ.

Penyaringan awal pengeluaran siderophores menunjukkan bahawa zon kuning terbesar telah dihasilkan oleh CS17 dan CS24 dengan 10 mm diameter manakala ATCC13637 dan LMG959 menghasilkan 8 mm , 6 mm zon kuning. Penghasilan siderophores disahkan secara quantitatif dan didapati penghasilan siderophores yang tinggi telah dikesan pada penciran klinikal CS17 dan CS24 (30.8% dan 29.4%) pada jam ke-72 diikuti oleh ATCC13637 (8%) dan LMG959 (4%). Penciran yang berada dalam persekitaran rendah zat besi (ATCC 13637 : 63%; CS17: 96%; CS24: 97%) menunjukkan tahap aktiviti nematocidal yang lebih tinggi daripada keadaan normal (ATCC 13637 : 43%; CS17: 76%; CS24: 79%). Tiada nematoda pun yang terbunuh pada penciran LMG959. Berdasarkan analisa spektrometri massa iTRAQ, sebanyak 122 jenis protein dikenalpasti menunjukkan perubahan terhadap persekitaran rendah kekurangan zat besi dimana 96 protein mengalami peningkatan menaik dan 26 protein mengalami penurunan. Perbandingan antara penciran klinikal dengan penciran persekitaran yang dibiakkan dalam keadaan normal menunjukkan bahawa 81 jenis protein mengalami perubahan dengan 40 jenis protein meningkat dan 41 jenis protein menurun. Analisa ini juga mengenal pasti kadar rembesan beberapa protein yang mempunyai sifat pengambilalihan zat besi dan keupayaan virulen yang lebih tinggi dalam penciran-penciran yang dibiakkan dalam medium rendah zat besi.

Di perbandingan yang lain, penciran persekitaran dan klinikal dalam keadaan normal dibandingkan dengan mengenal pasti proteomes profil penciran. Analisis iTRAQ menemui 81 protein menunjukkan perubahan dengan 40 protein mengalami peningkatan menaik dan 41 protein mengalami penurunan. Dalam keadaan normal, beberapa protein seperti faktor Pemanjangan G, Endoribonuclease dan protein Fimbrial dinyatakan dalam kali ganda lebih tinggi dalam penciran klinikal berbanding penciran persekitaran.

Kesimpulannya, *S. maltophilia* menghasilkan siderophores dalam keadaan kekurangan zat besi. Berdasarkan aktiviti nematocidal, dalam keadaan kurang zat besi, *S. maltophilia* penciran klinikal mampu membunuh lebih banyak nematode, *C. elegans* berbanding penciran persekitaran. Analisis iTRAQ menunjukkan *S. maltophilia* menghasilkan metabolik protein, pengambilan zat besi dan protein yang berpotensi patogenik dalam keadaan kekurangan zat besi. Perbandingan penciran klinikal dan persekitaran dibiakkan dalam medium biasa menunjukkan bahawa penciran klinikal menghasilkan lebih banyak protein yang bersifat patogenik berbanding penciran persekitaran. Berdasarkan data yang diperolehi dalam kajian ini, dalam keadaan kekurangan zat besi, *S. maltophilia* mampu mengubah proteomes untuk memastikan kelangsungan hidup mereka dalam perumah.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

%	Percentage
oC	Degree celcius
≤	Less than
≥	More than
µl	microliter
µm	Micrometer
2DGE	Two dimensional Gel Electrophoresis
ATCC	American Type Culture Collection
BCCM	Belgium coordinate Collection Microbiology
BHI	Brain Heart Infusion
BSA	Bovine Serum Albumin
CAS	Chrome Azurol S
CF	Cystic Fibrosis
CS17	Clinical isolate
DC	Detergent compatible
ddH ₂ O	distilled water
DIP	2,2 dipyridyl
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
Fe(II)/Fe ²⁺	Ferrous iron
Fe(III)/Fe ³⁺	Ferric iron
FUDR	Fluorodeoxyuridine
Fur	Ferric uptake regulation protein
g	gram

h	Hours
HCL	Hydrochloric acid
HPLC	High-performance liquid chromatography
HSCT	Hematopoietic stem cell transplantation
ICU	Intensive Care Unit
ITRAQ	Isobariq Tagging for Relative and Absolute quantification
LMG959	Environmental isolate
M	Molar
min	minutes
ml	mililiter
mm	milimeter
MS	Mass spectrometry
NaOH	Sodium Hydroxide
NGM	Nematode Growth Media
nm	nanometer
OD	Optical Density
PAH	Pulmonary alveolar hemorrhage
PBS	Phosphate Buffered Saline
pH	Puissanse hydrogen (Hydrogen ion concentration)
RAST	Rapid Annotation Subsystem Technology
RC	Reducing agent compatible
RC-DC	Reducing agent and detergent compatible
rpm	Revolutions per minute
s	seconds
SCX	Strong cation exchange liquid chromatography

T	Time
TCA	trichloroacetic acid
TOF	Time-of-flight
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia
w/v	weight per volume

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Historically, *Stenotrophomonas maltophilia* is an environmental microbe that is commonly isolated from soil, plant roots, tap water and environment. During recent years, *S. maltophilia* has entered hospital setting and became a successful nosocomial pathogen. Properties which made *S. maltophilia* a successful nosocomial pathogen includes its natural resistance to multiple drugs, harboring antibiotic resistance genes, multidrug resistance pumps and various gene transfer mechanisms involved in the acquisition of antimicrobial resistance (Brooke, 2012). Although *S. maltophilia* is not a truly pathogen, but mortality rates associated with this microbe range from 20-70% especially among immune-compromised patients (Jang *et al.*, 1992; Victor *et al.*, 1994; Brooke, 2012). Infections that are associated with *S. maltophilia* include respiratory tract infections, biliary sepsis, endocarditis, urinary tract infection and meningitis.

Despite the clinical importance, information on *S. maltophilia* virulence is limited. Study reported by Figueredo *et al* (2006) indicated that *S. maltophilia* could behave as a pathogen as its supernatant exerted cytotoxic effects on Vero, HeLa and HEp-2 cells. It caused rounding, loss of intercellular junction and membrane alteration followed by cell death. Nematocidal assay performed by Thomas *et al* (2013) illustrated that *S. maltophilia* are capable of killing *Caenorhabditis elegans* even without direct bacterial contact. Based on the previous findings *S. maltophilia* has few pathogenic properties such as elastase, proteinase, dnase, heparinase, lecithinase, lipase and hyaluronidase (Thomas *et al.*, 2014).

It is well known that iron plays an important role in the pathogenesis of microbial infection. Iron is an essential factor for the growth of microorganism which is required for every metabolic process. In human under oxygen rich environment, the soluble iron ferrous is oxidized to insoluble ferric which is not accessible to bacteria while in human blood, the amount of iron is $\sim 10^{11}$ times lower than the level required for microbes. Iron that is available in human blood is mostly bound together with protein called transferrin and lactoferrin making it inaccessible to microbes thus preventing microbial growth (Garcia *et al.*, 2012). To overcome this condition, microbes have developed multiple mechanisms to scavenge the iron from the environment and also to avoid killing by the innate immune system. One of the common mechanisms is the secretion of iron scavenging compounds called siderophores.

Siderophores are low molecular weight compounds which have high affinity to ferric. Siderophores are only produced when the iron is limited in the environment. The production of siderophores indicates that microorganism is under stress (Schwyn and Neilands, 1987; Garcia *et al.*, 2012). These siderophores plays an important role in pathogenicity for most microorganisms

as it induces the secretion of other proteins which exhibits detrimental effect on host cells leading to life threatening infection (Hotta *et al.*, 2010).

The present study hypothesized that growing *S. maltophilia* in iron depleted condition will induce the production of siderophores and altered the *S. maltophilia* proteomes protein including pathogenic potential proteins. Therefore, to test the hypothesis, *S. maltophilia* is grown in an iron depleted medium, the stress for iron scavenging is measured through siderophores production. Followed by, nematocidal assay was performed to test the ability of *S. maltophilia* supernatant grown in an iron depleted medium to kill *C. elegans*. Lastly, the proteomes profiling expressed during the iron starvation was identified by mass spectrometry.

1.1 Problem statements

1. There is no conclusive data on *S. maltophilia* proteomes profilling.
2. *S. maltophilia* has received little attention regardless of their alarming presence in the hospital setting.
3. The uncertainty of whether *S. maltophilia* is a true pathogen remained unclear.

1.2 Objectives of the study

General objective

To investigate the effect of iron depletion in secretion of proteomes profilling in *S. maltophilia*

Specific objectives

1. To measure the production of siderophores in normal and iron depleted medium in *S. maltophilia*.
2. To determine the *in vivo* nematocidal activity of *S. maltophilia* grown in normal and iron depleted medium.
3. To identify the proteomes profile of *S. maltophilia* grown in normal and iron depleted condition.
4. To compare the proteomes profile of clinical and environmental *S. maltophilia* grown in normal medium.

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