

**CULTURE ASSESSMENT OF THE BACTERIAL QUALITY
OF AIR IN THE FOOD PREPARATION AREAS OF A
CAFETERIA AND CHARACTERISATION OF THE GRAM-
POSITIVE BACTERIAL SPECIES ISOLATED**

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SPECIES ISOLATED**

By

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ABSTRACT

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YAP MING ZHE

The exact role of bioaerosols in the spread of disease and spoilage of food remains poorly understood despite their significant impacts. This study aimed to assess the levels of culturable airborne bacteria in the food preparation areas, of a UTAR Perak Campus cafeteria and characterise the Gram-positive bacteria species isolated. The airborne bacteria were collected via the culture impaction method. The levels of culturable bacteria in the air were determined and their association with the temperature and relative humidity at the sampling points was investigated. Gram-positive bacteria were selected from among the primary isolates obtained and identified via the 16S rDNA sequencing. The Gram-positive bacterial species that are potentially associated with foodborne illness were confirmed via the API tests. They were then further characterised via the [CONFIDENTIAL], [CONFIDENTIAL], antibiotic susceptibility test, and pulsed-field gel electrophoresis (PFGE) subtyping. The findings from this study showed that the levels of airborne bacteria were higher in [CONFIDENTIAL] than in [CONFIDENTIAL] on average. Statistical analysis

showed that the levels of airborne bacteria in the air were correlated to the temperature and relative humidity. The identities of the Gram-positive bacteria were successfully determined via the 16S rDNA sequencing and they were clustered into: [CONFIDENTIAL]. Out of the six [CONFIDENTIAL] isolates, five (1A1, 1A10, 1D9, 3B4, and 3D2) were identified as [CONFIDENTIAL] and one (2E5) was identified as [CONFIDENTIAL]. All these isolates are potentially diarrhoeagenic since they were shown to possess various [CONFIDENTIAL] in their genome. Besides, they were also tested to be resistant to both ampicillin and penicillin. Therefore, the [CONFIDENTIAL] species isolated in this study are a concern to food safety and quality due to their pathogenic and spoilage potentials, respectively.

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For my aunt,

Yap Siew Hun;

Without her, I would not be here today.

Thank You.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project report is based on my original work except for quotation and citation which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UTAR or other institution.

(YAP MING ZHE)

APPROVAL SHEET

This project report entitled “**CULTURE ASSESSMENT OF THE BACTERIAL QUALITY OF AIR IN THE FOOD PREPARATION AREAS OF A CAFETERIA AND CHARACTERISATION OF THE GRAM-POSITIVE BACTERIAL SPECIES ISOLATED**” was prepared by YAP MING ZHE and submitted as partial fulfilment of the requirement of degree of Bachelor of Science (Hons) Biotechnology at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman.

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PERMISSION SHEET

It is hereby certified that **YAP MING ZHE** (ID No: **12ADB06987**) has completed this final year project entitled “**CULTURE ASSESSMENT OF THE BACTERIAL QUALITY OF AIR IN THE FOOD PREPARATION AREAS OF A CAFETERIA AND CHARACTERISATION OF THE GRAM-POSITIVE BACTERIAL SPECIES ISOLATED**” under the supervision of Dr. Eddy Cheah Seong Guan from the Department of Biological Science, Faculty of Science.

I hereby give permission to the University to upload the softcopy of my final year project in pdf format into the UTAR Institutional Repository, which may be made accessible to the UTAR community and public.

Yours truly,

(YAP MING ZHE)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
DECLARATION	vi
APPROVAL SHEET	vii
PERMISSION SHEET	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ix
LIST OF TABLES	xiv
LIST OF FIGURES	xv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xvi
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 LITERATURE REVIEW	5
2.1 Bioaerosols	
2.1.1 General Overview	5
2.1.2 Bacterial Composition in the Air	6
2.2 Bioaerosol Sampling Methods	7
2.2.1 Impactors	7
2.2.2 Filtration and Impingers	8
2.3 Gram-Positive Bacteria Associated with Foodborne Illnesses	9
2.3.1 <i>Bacillus cereus</i>	9
2.3.2 <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>	11
2.3.3 <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	12
2.3.4 <i>Clostridium</i> spp.	13
2.4 Recent Development in Rapid Detection Methods	14
2.4.1 Nucleic Acid-based Assays	14
2.4.2 Immunological Assays	15

2.5	Molecular Subtyping of Foodborne Pathogens	15
2.5.1	Pulsed-field Gel Electrophoresis	16
2.5.2	Ribotyping	16
2.5.3	Multilocus Sequence Typing	17
3	METHODOLOGY	19
3.1	Experimental Design	19
3.2	Apparatus and Consumables	19
3.3	Preparation of Culture Media	20
3.3.1	Brain-Heart Infusion Broth with Glucose	20
3.3.2	Fortified Nutrient Agar	20
3.3.3	Müller-Hinton Agar	20
3.3.4	Tryptic Soy Agar with Cycloheximide	21
3.4	Preparation of Reagents	21
3.4.1	Cell Lysis Buffer	21
3.4.2	Cycloheximide Solution	21
3.4.3	Modified Mineral Solution	22
3.4.4	Tris-EDTA Buffer	22
3.5	Air Sampling	22
3.5.1	Sampling Location	22
3.5.2	Sampling Strategies	22
3.5.3	Environmental Parameters	23
3.5.4	Statistical Analysis	23
3.6	Bacterial Isolation	24
3.7	Genotypic Identification of Bacterial Isolates	24
3.7.1	DNA Extraction	24
3.7.2	Universal 16S rDNA PCR Assay	25
3.7.3	Gel Analysis of PCR Amplicons	25
3.7.4	Purification of PCR Amplicons	26
3.7.5	DNA Sequencing and Analysis	26
3.8	Identification of Bacterial Isolates via the API Tests	26

3.9	[CONFIDENTIAL] PCR Assay	27
3.10	[CONFIDENTIAL]	27
3.11	Antibiotic Susceptibility Test by the Kirby-Bauer Assay	28
3.12	Pulsed-field Gel Electrophoresis	31
	3.12.1 Preparation of Plugs	31
	3.12.2 Lysis of Bacterial Cells in Plugs	31
	3.12.3 Washing of Plugs	31
	3.12.4 Restriction Enzyme Digestion of Genomic DNA in the Plugs	32
	3.12.5 PFGE of Restriction Digests	32
4	RESULTS	33
4.1	Bioaerosol Sampling	33
	4.1.1 Quantitative Evaluation of the Distribution of Culturable Airborne Bacteria in the Food Preparation Areas	33
	4.1.2 [CONFIDENTIAL]	34
4.2	Culture-based Assessment of Bacterial Isolates	36
	4.2.1 Gram Stain Appearance and Colony Morphology	36
4.3	Genotypic Identification of Bacterial Isolates	38
	4.3.1 Universal 16S rDNA PCR Assay and DNA Sequencing	38
	4.3.2 Phylogenetic Diversity Analysis of the Bacterial Isolates	40
4.4	Identification of the Bacterial Isolates via the API Tests	41
4.5	[CONFIDENTIAL] of the Bacterial Isolates	42
4.6	[CONFIDENTIAL] of the Bacterial Isolates	44
4.7	Antibiotic Susceptibility Profiles of the Bacterial Isolates	46
4.8	PFGE Subtyping of the Bacterial Isolates	48
5	DISCUSSION	49
5.1	Bioaerosols in Food Preparation Areas	49

5.1.1	Quantitative Evaluation of the Distribution Of Culturable Bacteria in the Air of Food Preparation Areas	49
5.1.2	Correlation between Levels of Airborne Bacterial CFUs with Temperature and Relative Humidity	50
5.1.3	[CONFIDENTIAL]	51
5.2	Culture-based Assessment of Bacterial Isolates	52
5.3	Genotypic Identification of Bacterial Isolates	52
5.3.1	Universal 16S rDNA PCR Assay and DNA Sequencing	52
5.3.2	Phylogenetic Diversity Analysis of the Bacterial Isolates	53
5.4	Identification of the Bacterial Isolates via API Tests	54
5.5	Final Identification of the Bacterial Isolates	55
5.6	[CONFIDENTIAL] of the Bacterial Isolates	55
5.7	[CONFIDENTIAL] of the Bacterial Isolates	57
5.8	Antibiotic Susceptibility Profile of the Bacterial Isolates	58
5.9	PFGE Subtyping of the Bacterial Isolates	59
5.10	Future Directions	60
5.10.1	Characterisation of the Enterotoxins Produced by the Bacterial Isolates	60
5.10.2	Determination of the [CONFIDENTIAL] of the Bacterial Isolates	61
5.10.3	Metagenomics Study	61
6	CONCLUSIONS	62
	REFERENCES	65
	APPENDIX	72

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
3.1	Sequences of the primers used in the PCR assay	28
4.1	Levels of culturable airborne bacteria in the food preparation areas of the Student Pavilion I Cafeteria, UTAR Perak Campus	33
4.2	Gram stain appearance and colony morphology on TSA for the bacterial isolates	35
4.3	BLASTn analysis results of partial 16S rDNA amplicons for the bacterial isolates	37
4.4	Identification of bacterial isolates by the API tests	39
4.5	[CONFIDENTIAL]	40
4.6	Antibiotic susceptibility profiles of the bacterial isolates	45

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
3.1	Overview of the experimental design of this project	18
3.2	Layout of the sampling area and sampling points	22
4.1	Comparison between the levels of culturable airborne bacteria in the food preparation areas at different sampling times	32
4.2	Gram-positive bacterial isolates observed under oil immersion at 1000x magnification	34
4.3	Gel analysis of 16S PCR amplicons	36
4.4	Phylogenetic tree of the bacterial isolates based on their partial 16S rDNA sequences	38
4.5	[CONFIDENTIAL]	41
4.6	[CONFIDENTIAL]	42
4.7	[CONFIDENTIAL]	43

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACGIH	American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists
API	Analytical Profile Index
BHIG	brain-heart infusion broth with glucose
BLAST	Basic Local Alignment Search Tool
CaCl ₂	calcium chloride
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CFU	colony-forming unit
CLSI	Clinical and Laboratory Standard Institute
CuSO ₄	copper sulphate
CytK	cytotoxin K
DNA	deoxyribonucleic acid
dNTP	deoxyribonucleoside triphosphate
EDTA	ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
EntFM	enterotoxin FM
E-value	expect value
FeSO ₄	iron sulphate
FNA	fortified nutrient agar
Hbl	haemolytic toxin
MgCl ₂	magnesium chloride
MgSO ₄	magnesium sulphate
MH	Müller-Hinton
MLST	multilocus sequence typing
NaCl	sodium chloride
NCBI	National Center for Biotechnology Information
Nhe	non-haemolytic toxin
NIOSH	National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health
NTC	no-template control
OD	optical density

PCR	polymerase chain reaction
PFGE	pulsed-field gel electrophoresis
rDNA	ribosomal deoxyribonucleic acid
TSA	tryptic soy agar
UV	ultraviolet
WHO	World Health Organization
ZnSO ₄	zinc sulphate

°C	degree Celsius
×	times
bp	base pair
G	gramme
h	hour
L	litre
μL	microlitre
μM	micromolar
min	minute
mL	millilitre
mm	millimetre
mM	millimolar
ng	nanogramme
nm	nanometre
U	unit
V	volt
v/v	volume per volume
w/v	weight per volume