



Molecular Detection of *B1* Gene from Blood Samples of Iraqi Diabetic Type II Patients Infected with Toxoplasmosis

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Abstract: Many of warm-blooded birds and mammals, including human, are susceptible to infect with toxoplasmosis that caused by the ubiquitous intracellular protozoan parasite *Toxoplasma gondii* (*T. gondii*), which is present across the planet. The nested PCR technique has proven to have a good capacity and sensitivity for toxoplasmosis detection when compared to other PCR procedures. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated to be far more economical. Type II diabetes is primarily caused by a gradual decline in insulin production and insulin resistance. This study is objected to detect the gene *B1* of *T. gondii* in blood samples of Iraqi diabetic type II patients by using the molecular assay nested-PCR. One hundred-nine of blood samples from Iraqi type II diabetes patients and 80 blood samples from non-diabetic control volunteers were compared in the study. All of the samples were collected in March and June of 2022 from a private laboratory in Baghdad, Iraq. According to the findings of the diabetic diagnostic tests, the group of patients with diabetes had the highest mean of glycated haemoglobin 7.9. Moreover, 30/80 (15.87%) cases of non-diabetic control were sera-positive that had 32.7 ± 8.45 UI/mL for the anti-*Toxoplasma* IgG antibody in the CMIA assay, whereas 51/109 (26.98%) samples of the group of diabetic patients were sera-positive to toxoplasmosis with a titer of 34.95 ± 7.5 UI/mL for the same antibody in the same assay. While, all samples were sera-negative in CMIA for acute toxoplasmosis IgM antibody. Additionally, 11/25 (44%) of diabetic patients infected with toxoplasmosis were positive for gene *B1* detection in the nested PCR. As well as, 7/20 (35%) of toxoplasmosis asymptomatic considered control positive were also positive for the same detection. This indicate that the *B1* gene of *T. gondii* was detected by nested PCR technique in a small percentage of the studied samples.

Keywords: *Toxoplasma gondii*, *Diabetes mellitus II*, *HbA1C* and *B1* gene.

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Introduction

Within the obligate intracellular protozoa, *Toxoplasma gondii* (*T. gondii*), is one of the most prevalent parasites that infect animals with warm blood. Cats and felines family are the parasite's definitive hosts, with human acting as intermediary host. Eating raw or undercooked meat or consuming infectious oocysts from the environment are the main ways that human becomes infected postnatally. Several clinical

disorders are brought on by this condition, the majority of patients are asymptomatic. On the other hand, it has the ability to vertically infect the fetus during pregnancy and result in a variety of clinical symptoms in the progeny (1-3). Toxoplasmosis infection had ability to alters behavior of chronic infection. It is a common zoonotic disease affecting one-third of the world population with

potentially serious health implications (4-6).

Diabetes mellitus is a metabolic disease that is defined by sustained hyperglycemia brought on by anomalies in the secretion, action, or both of insulin. It can lead to long-term harm, organ malfunction, and organ failure (7). The pancreas is unable to produce sufficient insulin to overcome this resistance resulting in insulin deficiency. Diabetes comes in two varieties. Type I (insulin dependent) and type II (insulin independent). Ninety-five % of instances of diabetes globally are of the second kind, whose etiology is principally linked to obesity and insufficient insulin utilization by the body (8-10).

The diagnosis of *T. gondii* can be determined by variable immunological and molecular assays. Numerous serological methods, such as the haemagglutination test, the latex agglutination test, the indirect fluorescent antibody (IFA), and the enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA), have been developed and are used to detect anti-*Toxoplasma* antibodies (11,12). For molecular diagnosis, polymerase chain reaction (PCR)-based techniques are therefore extremely valuable. One of the most important assays in epidemiological investigations is the nested-PCR assay, which has demonstrated consistent sensitivity for detecting *T. gondii* infection (13-15). Many researches have demonstrated that the *B1* gene is extremely unique to *T. gondii*, that it is highly conserved across all strains examined thus far, and that the sensitivity of the 35-fold repeat *B1* is significantly higher than that of the ribosomal gene (16,17).

In that diabetes affects innate immunity and increases vulnerability to opportunistic infections, the condition is strikingly comparable to immunodeficiency disorders such as HIV infection. Prior research has

indicated that diabetic people are more susceptible to opportunistic infections like *T. gondii*, and that prompt toxoplasmosis diagnosis and detection in at-risk individuals is essential to stop the spread of the disease (18 – 21). Diabetes mellitus makes the host more sympathetic and may even lead to the development of another illness. Those with diabetes mellitus may be more susceptible to many infections and empathy. The Apicomplexan parasite *T. gondii* has been suggested as a likely cause of diabetes in a number of cases. Meanwhile, a meta-analysis of studies on the relationship between chronic toxoplasmosis and diabetes mellitus suggested that chronic toxoplasmosis may be a risk factor for type II diabetes (22,23).

This study is objected to detect the gene *B1* of *T. gondii* in blood samples of Iraqi diabetic type II patients by the molecular technique nested-PCR.

Materials and Methods

Subjects and Samples

One hundred-nine type II diabetes cases were enrolled in the period from March to June 2022. However, specialized at a private laboratory in Baghdad, Iraq, recognized from 80 control samples that were taken from non-diabetic outpatient clinics. 15 to 85 years old was the range of their ages. A total of 10 ml of venous blood were drawn from each case. The blood was then separated into 5 ml and centrifuged for 10 min at 3000 rounds per min (rpm) to extract the serum for *T. gondii* antibodies diagnosis. While, the other 5 ml were used for glycated haemoglobin measuring and for molecular detection of gene *B1*.

Diabetes Mellitus Diagnosis

The Hemoglobin A1C Architect kit (Abbott GmbH, Germany) is used to measure the glycated hemoglobin level in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

T. gondii* Diagnosis*Serological Diagnosis**

The mean titer of anti-*Toxoplasma* IgM/IgG antibodies were detected using the chemiluminescent microparticles immunoassay (CMIA) Architect Toxo IgM/G kit (Abbott GmbH, Germany) in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Molecular Diagnosis via Nested PCR Technique

The following groups were certified for molecular detection after serological test CMIA performed: a group included 25 blood samples of diabetic type II patients infected with toxoplasmosis, 20 blood samples from each group of diabetic type II patients only, control positive which include toxoplasmosis asymptomatic individuals, and control negative that included healthy individuals respectively.

Following the manufacturer's instructions, firstly, DNA was extracted from the blood samples using the gSYNCTM DNA extraction kit fast technique (Geneaid, Taiwan). Then, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, the *T. gondii* genomic DNA *B1* gene (AccuPower PCR PreMix, Bioneer Corporation, Korea) was used for nested PCR technique. In the first run of PCR reaction, a 287 bp fragment was amplified by using the first forward and reverse primer sets (table 1). For each 1st primer reaction,

1 µl of dissolved forward or reverse primer and 5 µl of extracted DNA are combined to generate the MasterMix tube. Next, 13 µl of distilled water (D.W.) was added to the MasterMix tubes until their total volume reached 20 µl. Once thoroughly combined by vortexing, the reaction mixture was put into a PCR thermocycler for the preprogrammed PCR reaction under amplification conditions mentioned in the below table (table 1). The amplified fragments were electrophoresed in 2% agarose gel and stained with ethidium bromide while being exposed to ultraviolet light. In the second PCR reaction, a 194 bp fragment was amplified by using the second forward and reverse primer sets (table 1). Which for each 2nd primer reaction, 1 µl of dissolved forward or reverse primer and 5 µl of the first run PCR result are combined to generate the MasterMix tube. Next, 13 µl of D.W. was added to the MasterMix tubes until their total volume reached 20 µl. The reaction mix was placed into a PCR thermocycler to start the preprogrammed PCR reaction after it had been well mixed using an ultracentrifuge (exispin vortex) under ultraviolet illumination and amplification conditions that mentioned in the below table (table 1). The amplified fragments underwent ethidium bromide staining and were electrophoresed in 2% agarose gel.

Table (1): Primer sequencing of *B1* gene of *T. gondii* utilizing nested PCR assay.

Primers Sequences (5'— 3').	Amplicon size bp	PCR round	PCR amplification conditions
F1: TCA-AGC-AGC-GTA-TTG-TCG-AG	287	1 st	Initial denaturation 95 °C for 5 min
			Denaturation 95 °C for 30 sec.
			Annealing 55 °C for 30 sec.
R1: CCG-CAG-CGA-CTT-CTA-TCT-CT			Extension 72 °C for 1 min.
			Final extension 72 °C for 5 min.
F2: GGA-ACT-GCA-TCC-GTT-CAT-GAG	194	2 nd	Initial denaturation 95 °C for 5 min
			Denaturation 95 °C for 30 sec.
			Annealing 55 °C for 30 sec.
R2: TCT-TTA-AAG-CGT-TCG-TGG-TC			Extension 72 °C for 1 min.
			Final extension 72 °C for 5 min.

Statistical Analysis

The Statistical Analysis System-SAS (24) application was used to examine the effects of several research parameter components. The examination of Variation (ANOVA) Least Significant Difference (LSD) test was used to provide a thorough examination of the mean titers. The Chisquare test was utilized in order to compare the probability (0.05 and 0.01) in a meaningful way.

Results and Discussion

Studies on diabetes patients have already highlighted some of the immunological abnormalities associated with the disease, such as humoral disorders, decreased T-cell response,

decreased neutrophil function, and dysregulation of innate immunity. As a result, opportunistic infections like *T. gondii* infection may become more common in these people. As a result, early identification of *T. gondii* in individuals who are at risk can stop the disease's progression and its aftereffects (25 – 27).

Figure (1) demonstrated that the group of diabetic type II patients have the mean of glycated haemoglobin 7.9 while the group of non diabetic individuals have 4.98. According to the reference range of HbA1C, the last group have normal mean of HbA1C in contract to the 1st group.

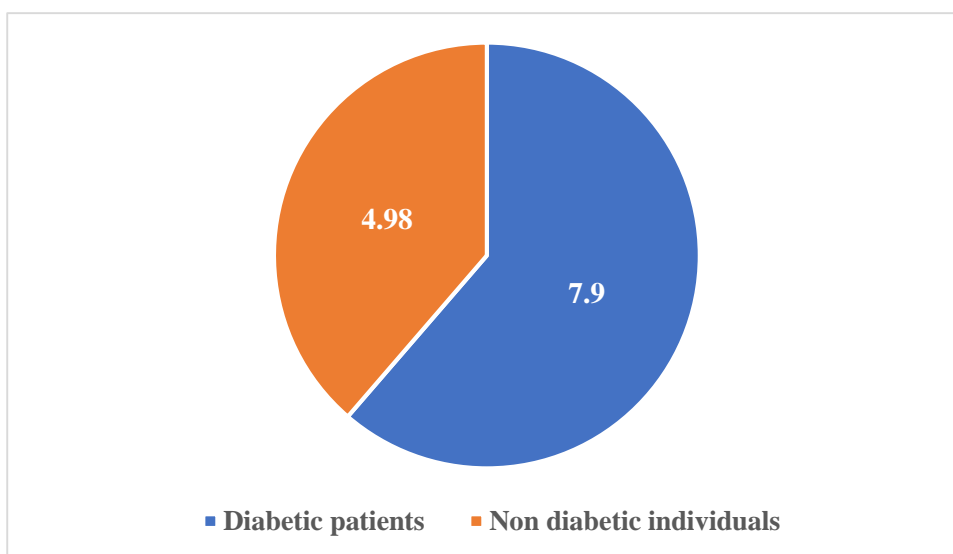


Figure (1): Mean values of glycated haemoglobin HbA1C in the studied groups.

The results of the study are in line with those of Waheed *et al.* (28) which showed that, the group of Iraqi diabetic type 2 patients (30/50) had the highest levels of glucose (7.993 ± 0.646) in comparison to the Iraqi non-diabetic group (20/50) that had (4.68 ± 0.484) of glucose in the glycated haemoglobin test. The recommended test is HbA1C since it is more useful over an extended

period of time and more time-varying. The HbA1c test has become one of the best tools for confirming that diabetes is under control in recent times. Their benchmarks are unchanged from the previous few years Saudeket *al.*(29), Taher *et al.* (30) and Hammad *et al.*(31).

However, the study cohorts were divided into four groups according to

the mean anti-*Toxoplasma* IgG titer: diabetic patients who also had toxoplasmosis, diabetic patients only, non-diabetic toxoplasmosis asymptomatic people as a positive control, and healthy people as a negative control. Moreover, significant differences in the negative response to anti-*Toxoplasma* IgM were found in all samples from diabetes patients when

compared to controls without the disease.

The findings of serological test are displayed in figure (2), the mean titers of anti-*Toxoplasma* IgG antibodies varied greatly; the group of patients with diabetes (51/109) had the highest mean titer, at 34.95 ± 7.5 UI/mL, while the group of non-diabetic(30/80)(asymptomatic) people came in second, at 32.7 ± 8.45 UI/mL.

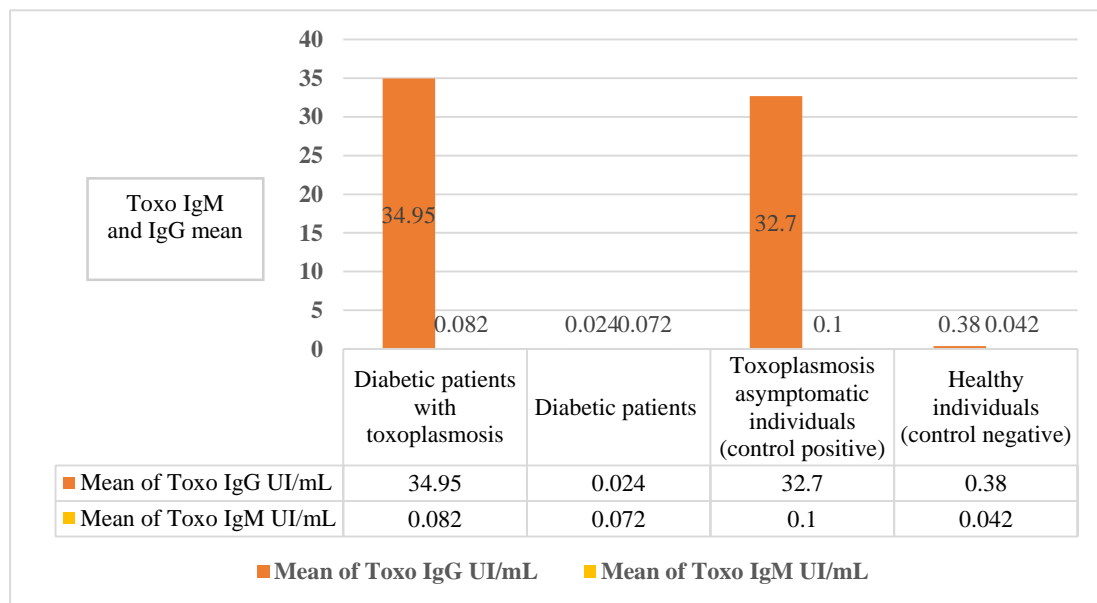


Figure (2): Mean titers of anti-*Toxoplasma* IgG and IgM antibodies via CMIA in the studied groups.

Tenter *et al.* (32) state that the reason for the elevated IgG antibody levels is that the immune humoral system response plays a vital role in limiting the parasite's ability to spread. However, it should be emphasized that anti-*Toxoplasma* IgG antibodies are often found 1-2 weeks after infection, peak in concentration in the next 6-8 weeks, and then gradually drop over the course of a year or two, with low levels perhaps lasting a lifetime. Moreover, because it may substitute large molecules in the absence of antibody makers, the half-life of the IgG antibody is longer than that of the IgM antibody (33). The current results are similar to those of Al-

Khafajii (34), who revealed that diabetic patients only accounted for 22/45 (48.88%) of the seropositive cases, whereas 28/55 (50.9%) of the non-diabetic control group tested positive for the same antibody. Moreover, the most recent results were consistent with those of Al-Aubaidi *et al.* (35) who showed that 47/100 diabetic patients were seropositive for *Toxoplasma* IgG antibody, whereas healthy controls showed highly significant variations in seronegative status for the same antibody in the same test.

The aforementioned information suggests that diabetes patients were more susceptible than healthy

individuals to infect with toxoplasmosis. As a result, toxoplasmosis patients may be more likely to acquire diabetes than those who are not affected. Diagnosis and treatment of toxoplasmosis have advanced dramatically with the use of PCR to directly observe the parasite in biological samples (36,37).

In diabetes type II patients infected with toxoplasmosis, as shown in table (2), the results of the nested PCR technique demonstrated that 11/25

(44%) were positive for the detection of the gene *BI* in contrast 14/25 (56%) of the same group were negative. In addition, 7/20 (35%) of the group of control positive for toxoplasmosis who did not exhibit any symptoms tested positive for gene *BI*. On the other hand, 13/20 (65%) tested negative for the same detection. Additionally, there was no *BI* gene found in the groups of healthy people and diabetic patients.

Table (2): Gene *BI* detection via using nested PCR technique.

Groups	Samples No.	+ ve No. (%)	- ve No. (%)	P-value
Diabetic patients with toxoplasmosis	25	11 (44.00%)	14 (56.00%)	0.548 NS
Diabetic patients	20	0 (0.00%)	20 (100%)	0.0001 **
Toxoplasmosis asymptomatic (control positive)	20	7 (35.00%)	13 (65.00%)	0.179 NS
Healthy individuals (control negative)	20	0 (0.00%)	20 (100%)	0.0001 **
P-value		0.041 *	0.0035 **	0.0392 *
Significant: * ($P \leq 0.05$), Highly Significant: ** ($P \leq 0.01$).				

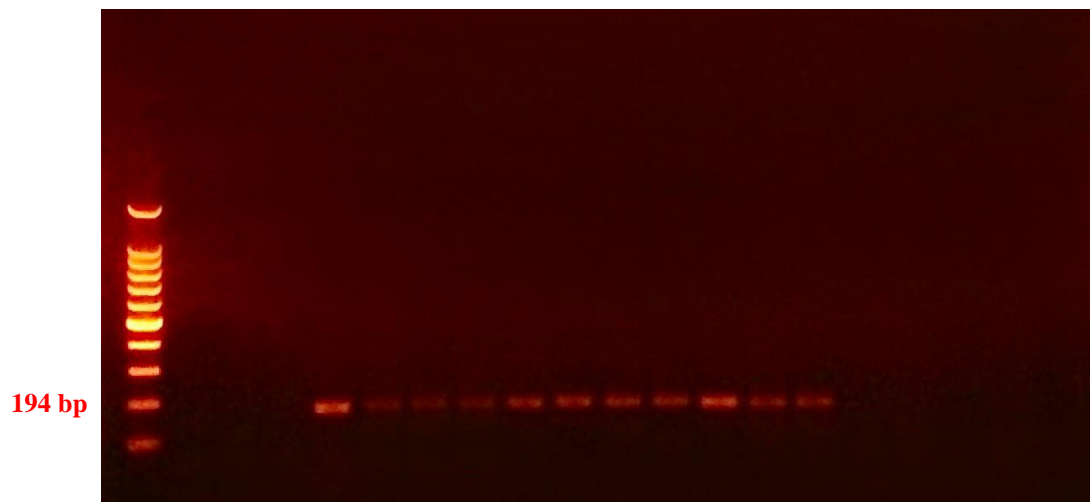


Figure (3): Gel electrophoresis bands of gene *BI* detection in the group of diabetic patients infected with toxoplasmosis via nested PCR technique.

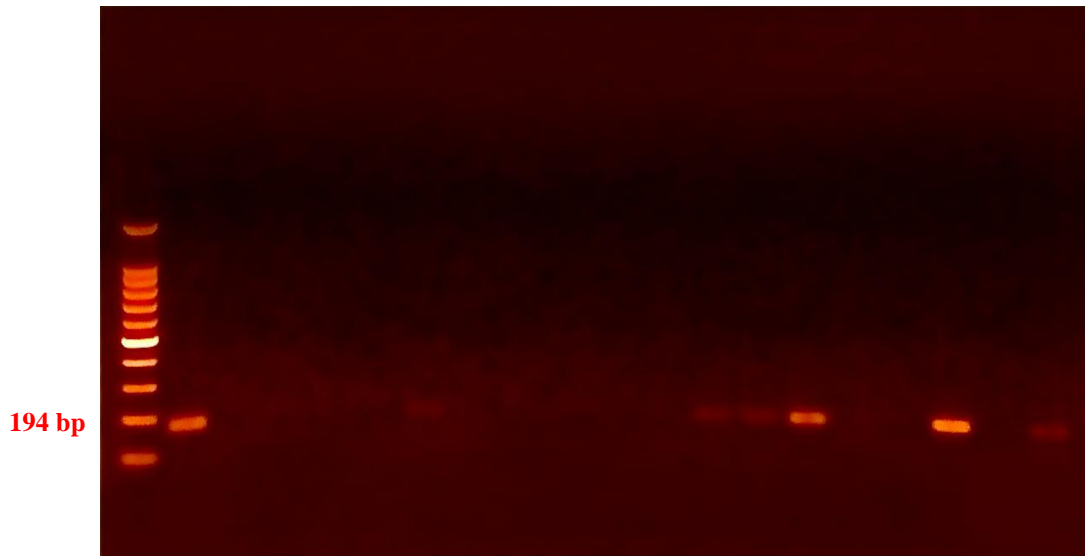


Figure (4): Detection of gene *B1* in the group of toxoplasmosis asymptomatic (control positive) in the nested PCR technique.

The above results were similar to those of Mala and Bakre (38), who showed that in the nested PCR, gene *B1* was detected in 30/64 (46.88%) of diabetic type II patients infected with chronic toxoplasmosis, whereas no detection were found in the group of healthy individuals. The findings of this investigation, however, is dissimilar to those of Mousavi *et al.* (39), who demonstrated that 41/60 (68.3%) of healthy individuals and 51/72 (69.8%) of diabetic patients with chronic toxoplasmosis infection had gene *B1* detection in the same assay. Moreover, the current results disagree to the results of Saki *et al.* (40) that demonstrated 36/167 (21.55%) of diabetic type II patients which have sero-positive to *T. gondii* infection have gene *B1* detection as well as 5/38 (13.15%) of healthy individuals were positive detection to the same gene in the same assay.

According to the previous and current results, there are two probable explanations: the first is that the patient's blood had an acute infection that was probably clinically significant based on the clearance period for *Toxoplasma* DNA (5.5–13) weeks (41). On the other hand, accurate techniques

like PCR are the only ways to identify the presence of a tiny number of parasites that may have been liberated from tissue into the blood at a subclinical level (42,43).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the *B1* gene of *T. gondii* was detected by the nested PCR technique in a small percentage of the studied samples.

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