

## CHARACTERIZATION OF DIARRHEAGENIC *ESCHERICHIA COLI* ISOLATED FROM RAW BEEF, MUTTON, AND INTESTINES SOLD IN OUAGADOUGOU, BURKINA FASO

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### ABSTRACT

Diarrheagenic *Escherichia coli* are zoonotic bacteria commonly present in animal gut. The aim of our study was to determine the prevalence of diarrheagenic *E. coli* isolated from raw meats and intestines in open markets of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. A total of 450 samples were collected from beef, mutton, beef intestine and sheep intestine, in respective number 175, 175, 50 and 50. Diarrheagenic *E. coli* were isolated by using standard microbiological methods and then Multiplex Polymerase Chain Reaction was used for characterization. Among the pathotypes, enteropathogenic *E. coli* was identified by serotyping (slide agglutination). A 30% (135/450) were *E. coli*. 30% (40/135) of *E. coli* strains provided the virulence genes. 14% of Shiga toxin producing *Escherichia coli*, 13% of shiga toxin producing *Escherichia coli*-enterotoxinogenic *Escherichia coli*, 1% of enteroaggregative *Escherichia coli*, 2% of enteroinvasive *Escherichia coli* and 1% of enterotoxinogenic *Escherichia coli*. 41% (55/135) were enteropathogenic *Escherichia coli* belong to serotypes: (5%), O119 (3%), O127 (16%), O125 (9%), O126 (18%), O128 (5%), O114 (5%), O124 (5%), O142 (7%). This study show contamination of slaughter animal with diarrheagenic *E. coli* pathotypes in Burkina Faso. Precaution can take of mutation breeding level.

**Keywords:** Beef, Mutton, Raw intestines, Diarrheagenic *E. coli*, Burkina Faso

### INTRODUCTION

Meat and meat products, second food outbreak are associated several cases of collective foodborne diseases worldwide (EFSA, 2012; OMS, 2015). Meat, being it a nutrient-rich substrate, can support the growth of a wide range of microorganisms, which also include *Escherichia coli*. The latter has received much attention as a potential public health threat due to the morbidity and mortality rates associated with outbreak and sporadic cases of human illness (Paton and Paton, 1998). However, people who have died from diarrheal diseases were estimated to 2 million cases (OMS, 2015), including a large proportion cases from the consumption of contaminated food. In Burkina Faso, many studies showed that diarrheal diseases are caused by *E. coli* (Bonkougou et al., 2012; Timbiné et al., 2013; Dembélé et al., 2015). Various diseases have been reported due to ingestion of food contaminated with pathogenic *Escherichia coli* (Fadi et al., 2012; Kagambèga et al., 2012; Croxen et al., 2013). There are several pathovars of *Escherichia coli* described as clinical generate indication. Pathogenic strains are divided into intrainestinal *E. coli* pathogens causing diarrhea and extraintestinal *E. coli* causing a variety of infection in both humans and animals (Jafari et al., 2012). Diarrheagenic *E. coli* possess virulence factors which are responsible for their pathogenicity. They include enteropathogenic *E. coli* (EPEC), enteroaggregative *E. coli* (EAEC), enterotoxigenic *E. coli* (ETEC), enteroinvasive *E. coli* (EIEC), enterohaemorrhagic *E. coli* (EHEC), and diffusely adherent *E. coli* (DAEC) (Nataro and Kaper, 1998; Igbeneghu and Lamikanra, 2014; Saeed et al., 2015). Among them enteropathogenic *Escherichia coli* (EPEC) is a major cause of infantile diarrhea among children under five years in developing countries (Jafari et al., 2012; Kotloff et al., 2013; Croxen et al., 2013; Dembélé et al., 2015).

In Burkina Faso there are a few data concerning the prevalence of diarrheagenic *E. coli* in food stuffs. Therefore, the objective of our study was to determine diarrheagenic *E. coli* pathotypes from meat and intestines samples sold at some open markets in Ouagadougou and to identify the prevalent serogroups of EPEC.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

#### Study design and sampling

Sampling of raw meats and intestines of beef and sheep were carried out in twenty-five (25) open markets of Ouagadougou. Overall 450 samples: 175 samples of beef, 175 samples of mutton, 50 samples of beef intestine and 50 samples of sheep intestine were collected from each animal after slaughtering. Approximately 400g were collected aseptically from October 2011 to October 2012. The samples were placed in sterile plastic bags and transported to the laboratory and kept at 4°C until microbial examination within 2h.

#### Isolation and identification of *E. coli*

#### Samples processing

The ISO 4832, 1991 lightly modified were used for the isolation of *E. coli*. Twenty five (25) g of each sample was transferred in to 225 ml of buffered peptone water (Liofilchem, Italy) and was homogenized in a stomacher LAB BLENDER 400 (Sewar, England). The suspension of meat was incubated at 37°C.

**Isolation of *E. coli***

After 24 h of incubation two (2) loopful of pre-enrichment broth were streaked onto Eosin Methylene Blue (EMB) agar (Liofilchem, Italy) and Violet Red Bile Lactose (VRBL) agar (Liofilchem, Italy). The plates were incubated at 44 °C for 18-24 hours. Suspect *E. coli* colonies were appeared metallic green on EMB agar and as small colonies purple with a purple cloud on VRBL agar.

**Identification of *E. coli***

The suspect colonies were selected and streaked onto Mueller Hinton agar (Liofilchem, Italy). Confirmation was carried out by biochemical microbiology method based on negative urease (Bio-Rad, French), negative citrate (Liofilchem, Italy), positive indole (Bio-Rad, France), positive lactose (Liofilchem, Italy) and positive orthonitrophenyl-β-D-galactopyranoside (ONPG) (BioMerieux, France). The *E. coli* strains isolated were confirmed by API 20E (BioMérieux, France) system and API 20E interpretation was done by API 20E catalogue.

**Multiplex polymerase chain reaction (16 plex PCR)**

The 16-plex PCR was used to detect simultaneously 16 genes of 5 main pathogroups of *E. coli* (STEC, STEC-ETEC, EAEC, EIEC and ETEC) as

describe by Antikainen et al., (2009). The genes investigated and primers used are described in (Tab 1). DNA extraction was performed using heating method (Moyo et al., 2007). A loopful of bacterial growth of Mueller Hinton agar plate was suspended in 1.5 ml of distilled sterile water. The mixture was boiled for 10 min and centrifuged for 10 min at 11337 rpm. The supernatant was collected and used in the PCR reactions. One (1) µl of supernatant was added to 19µl reaction mixture containing 1U of Taq DNA polymerase (AccuPower, Korea), deoxyribonucleic triphosphate (250 mM), Tris HCl (pH 9.0) (10 mM), KCl (30 mM), MgCl<sub>2</sub> (1.5 mM), and PCR primers (*escV*, *bfpB*, *stx1*, *stx2*, *LT*, *ST1a*, *ST1*, *invE*, *astA*, *aggR*, *pic*, *uidA*, *hly*, *eaeA*, *ipaH* *ent*) (100 µM) (STEC, STEC-ETEC, EAEC, EIEC, ETEC). Thermocycling conditions were as follows: 30s at 98°C, followed by 35 amplification cycles of 98°C for 30s, 62.5°C for 60s and 72°C for 90s with a final extension of 72°C for 10 min on a thermal cycler (Perkins Helmer Cetus, USA). Following PCR, the reaction products were separated to electrophoresis in (2% weight/volume) agarose gel, stained with ethidium bromide solution (Prolabo, France) and visualized under UV light (Applex, France). Reference strains (FE 102301 (*stx2*, *eae*, *escV*, *ent* EHEC-*hly*), FE 95562 (*stx1*, EHEC-*hly*, *estla*, *astA*, *uidA*), IHE 56822 (*aggR*, *pic*, *astA*, *uidA*), RHE 6647 (*invE*, *ipaH*, *uidA*), FE 94725 (*elt*, *astA*) and IHE 50246 (*uidA*)) were used in each PCR run

**Table 1** Oligonucleotides primers used for Multiplex PCR reaction

Pathotype	Target gene	Primer Sequence (5'to3')	PCR product size (bp)	Concentration (µM)	Reference
STEC	<i>Stx2</i>	MP3-stx2A-F:GTTTTGACCATCTTCGTCTGATTATTGAG	324	0.4	Müller et al., 2007
		MP3-stx2A-R:AGCGTAAGGCTTCTGTCTGTGAC		0.4	
	<i>eaeA</i>	eae-F:TCAATGCAGTTCGGTTATCAGTT	482	0.1	Müller et al., 2007
		eae-R:GTAAAGTCCGTTACCCCAACCTG		0.1	
	<i>escV</i>	MP3-escV-F:ATTCTGGCTCTCTTCTTCTTATGGCTG	544	0.4	Müller et al., 2007
		MP3-escV-R:CGTCCCCTTTTACAAACTTCATCGC		0.4	
	<i>ent</i>	ent-F:TGGGCTAAAAGAAGACACACTG	629	0.4	Müller et al., 2007
		ent-R:CAAGCATCTGATTATCTCACC		0.4	
	<i>Stx1</i>	MP4-stx1A-F:CGATGTTACGGTTTGTACTGTGACAGC	244	0.2	Müller et al., 2007
		MP4-stx1A-R:AATGCCACGCTTCCCAGAATTG		0.2	
EAEC	<i>aggR</i>	MP2-aggR-F:ACGCAGAGTTGCCTGATAAAG	400	0.2	Müller et al., 2007
		MP2-aggR-R:AATACAGAATCGTCAGCATCAGC		0.2	
	<i>pic</i>	MP2-pic-F:AGCCGTTCCCGAGAAGCC	1,111	0.2	Müller et al., 2007
		MP2-pic-R:AAATGTCAGTGAACCGACGATTGG		0.2	
EIEC	<i>invE</i>	MP2-invE-F:CGATAGATGGCGAGAAATTATATCCCG	766	0.2	Müller et al., 2007
		MP2-invE-R:CGATCAAGAATCCCTAACAGAAGAATCAC		0.2	
	<i>ipaH</i>	ipaH-F:GAAAACCTCCTGGTCCATCAGG	437	0.1	Vidal et al., 2005
		ipaH-R:GCCGGTCAGCCACCTCTGAGAGTAC		0.1	
ETEC	<i>elt</i>	MP2-LT-F:GAACAGGAGGTTTCTGCGTTAGGTG	655	0.1	Müller et al., 2007
		MP2-LT-R:CTTCAATGGCTTTTTTTTGGGAGTC		0.1	
	<i>astA</i>	MP2-astA-F:TGCCATCAACACAGTATATCCG	102	0.4	Müller et al., 2007
		MP2-astA-R:ACGGCTTTGTAGTCCTCCAT		0.4	
<i>E.coli</i>	<i>uidA</i>	MP2-uidA-F:ATGCCAGTCCAGCGTTTTTGC	1,487	0.2	Vidal et al., 2005
		MP2-uidA-R:AAAGTGTGGGTCAATAATCAGGAAGTG		0.2	

**Legend.** STEC = *E. coli* producing shiga toxine, ETEC = *E. coli* enterotoxinogenic, EAEC = *E. coli* enteroaggregative, EIEC = *E. coli* enteroinvasive, PCR=polymerase chain reaction, µM=micromolaire, pb=paire de base.

**Serotyping**

EPEC serogroups were identified by slide agglutination test using nonavalent, trivalent and monovalent antisera (Bio-Rad, France) according to the method described by Neter et al., (1955) lightly modified. The first test witness was carried out with physiological solution to check if the strain was not autoagglutinable. If not, trivalent I (O111 + O55 + O26), II (O86 + O119 + O127), III (O125 + O126 + O128) and trivalent IV (O114 + O124 + O142) antisera were used. Finally, monovalent antisera were used according to the manufacturers. Only strong agglutination occurring within 1 min was considered to be positive reaction.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Total prevalence of *E. coli***

Foodborne diseases are of utmost concern for public health due to their direct impact on consumer. Our study showed that 30% (135/450) among 450 samples analyzed were isolated *E. coli* (tab 2). The highest prevalence was isolated from beef with 33% (57/175), followed by mutton 26% (46/175). The same prevalence 32% (16/50) of *E. coli* was isolated from beef and sheep intestines. This high prevalence is sometimes responsible of the non-conformity of meat processing environment such as reported by many authors (Barro et al., 2007; Iboudo et al., 2010; Kagambèga et al., 2012).

**Table 2** Prevalence of *E. coli* strains on meats and intestines samples

Samples (n=450)	Number of isolates
Beef (n=175)	57 (33 %)
Beef intestine (n=50)	16 (32 %)
Mutton (n=175)	46 (26 %)
Sheep intestine (n=50)	16 (32 %)
<b>Total prevalence</b>	<b>135 (30 %)</b>

**Legend:** n = number of sample, % = percentage.

**Table 3** Prevalence of *E. coli* carrying different virulence genes

Virulence genes																	
Pathotypes	<i>stx</i> <sub>1</sub>	<i>stx</i> <sub>2</sub>	<i>eae</i>	<i>escv</i>	<i>ent</i>	EHEC- <i>hly</i>	<i>bfpb</i>	<i>aggr</i>	<i>pic</i>	<i>inve</i>	<i>ipah</i>	<i>elt</i>	<i>estla</i>	<i>estb</i>	<i>asta</i>	<i>uidA</i>	
<b>Beef (n=33)</b>																	
STEC	-	2	3	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	
STEC-ETEC	7	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	6	7	
EAEC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
EIEC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	
ETEC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	
<b>Beef intestine (n=7)</b>																	
STEC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
STEC-ETEC	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	
EAEC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
EIEC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
ETEC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Mutton (n=29)</b>																	
STEC	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	
STEC-ETEC	5	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	5	
EAEC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	
EIEC	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	2	
ETEC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	
<b>Sheep intestine (n=11)</b>																	
STEC	-	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
STEC-ETEC	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	
EAEC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
EIEC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
ETEC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

**Legend:** STEC = *E. coli* producing shiga toxine, ETEC = *E. coli* enterotoxinogen, EAEC = *E. coli* enteroaggregative, EIEC = *E. coli* enteroinvasive, - = no prevalence, n = number of gene.

Otherwise, five (5) mainly pathotypes of *E. coli* were detected by 16 plex PCR. The *stx* gene is the most detected with a high prevalence of STEC. In fact, STEC is responsible for diseases in humans and animals whose clinical spectrum includes hemorrhagic colitis (HC), hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS) and thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura (TTP) (Nataro and Kaper, 1998). Globally, the prevalence of STEC is higher in meat than other foods in Burkina Faso and other countries (Kagambèga et al., 2012; Rahimi and Nayebpour, 2012; Isibor et al., 2013; Mori et al., 2014). However, the low prevalence of ETEC, EAEC and EIEC pathotypes were recorded respectively in mutton and beef only. These results are similar to studies conducted in Senegal, Burkina Faso, Morocco and Iran (Gassama-Sow et al., 2004; Kagambèga et al., 2012; Fadi et al., 2012; Jafari et al., 2012; Sarker et al., 2013). The most important mode of transmission diarrheagenic *E. coli* is the contaminated meat. Person to person transmission is possible, but not frequent because there is the high

**Prevalence of diarrheagenic *E. coli* pathotypes**

From 135 *E. coli* strains, 59% (80/135) were identified by 16 plex PCR among others 30% (40/135) *E. coli* strains provided the virulence genes. Five (5) *E. coli* pathotypes were identified: STEC 14% (18/135), STEC-ETEC 13% (17/135), EAEC 1% (1/135), EIEC 2% (3/135) and ETEC 1% (1/135) in the meat samples. The higher prevalence was observed in STEC and STEC-ETEC. The genes *uidA* were identified only in 30% (40/135) *E. coli* strains; however, they were considered like non diarrheagenic *E. coli* (tab 3).

infectious dose considered as a major cause of infantile diarrheas in developing countries.

**Prevalence of enteropathogenic *E. coli* serogroups**

41% (55/135) were identified EPEC. These EPEC belong to the 12 serogroups (O111, O26, O55, O86, O119, O127, O125, O126, O128, O114, O124, and O142) with different proportions (tab 4). In all the strain isolated, the 12 serogroups were observed in beef. The most representative EPEC was the serogroup-O126 18% and the less representative was EPEC-O119 4%. 44% (24/55), 16% (9/55), 31% (17/55), 9% (5/55) of beef, mutton, beef intestine and sheep intestine respectively were contaminated by EPEC.

**Table 4** Prevalence of enteropathogenic *E. coli* in the beef, sheep and intestines raw meats

Samples	Trivalent I			Trivalent II			Trivalent III			Trivalent IV			Total EPEC
	O111	O26	O55	O86	O119	O127	O125	O126	O128	O114	O124	O142	
Beef	1(2%)	1(2%)	3(5%)	1(2%)	1(2%)	4(7%)	2(4%)	5(9%)	2(4%)	1(2%)	1(2%)	2(4%)	24(44%)
Beef intestine	1(2%)	-	-	-	-	-	1(2%)	2(4%)	-	2(4%)	2(4%)	1(2%)	9(16%)
Mutton	1(2%)	2(4%)	2(4%)	2(4%)	1(2%)	5(9%)	2(4%)	2(4%)	-	-	-	-	17(31%)
Sheep intestine	-	1(2%)	1(2%)	-	-	-	-	1(2%)	1(2%)	-	-	1(2%)	5(9%)
Total EPEC	3(5%)	4(7%)	6(11%)	3(5%)	2(4%)	9(16%)	5(9%)	10(18%)	3(5%)	3(5%)	3(5%)	4(7%)	55(100%)

**Legend:** - = none, EPEC = enteropathogenic *E. coli*, % = percentage

EPEC identified in raw meats and intestines from the open market shown different proportions in this study. This pathogroup was isolated in several similar studies (Kagambèga et al., 2012; Fadi et al., 2012; Mori et al., 2014) from raw meats. The prevalence of EPEC is highest and are most isolated from human than foods and animal, but the transmission of this pathogen to human occurs through various mechanism: consumption of contaminated ground meat and drinking unpasteurized milk (Kagambèga et al., 2012; Isibor et al., 2013; Bagré et al., 2014); consumption contaminated water, vegetables and juice (Isibor et al., 2013; Bsadjo Tchamba et al., 2014). The slaughtering and the transformation are the step of production generally considered as trunks of risk in frame of the prevention of EPEC that contaminated the meat (Cohen and Karib, 2006). According to several authors, EPEC constitutes the first cause of diarrhea in infant and child less than five years old in Burkina Faso (Bonkougou et al., 2012; Dembélé et al., 2015), and other authors Croxen et al., (2013); Igbeneghu and Lamikanra, (2014); Saeed et al., (2015).

A high proportion of STEC, STEC-EPEC and EPEC strains were obtained in this study from beef and mutton raw meats and intestines considering these animals as potential zoonotic reservoir of STEC, STEC-EPEC and EPEC. Prevent cross contamination in food preparation areas by thoroughly washing hands, counters, cutting boards, and utensils after they touch raw meat. Knowledge of transmission routes and vehicles allows consumers to be educated on reducing risky behavior that can decrease their risk for infection.

## CONCLUSION

The current study confirms the presence of DEC strains in beef and mutton. Also cross contamination by contact with areas of selling previously contaminated with raw meat and contact with the raw meat itself can lead a factor risk for consumers. The preventives measures must be integrated in the slaughterhouse and in the nice practices of hygiene of production. The prevalence of virulent *E. coli* indicated risk exposure of the population.

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