

**MOLECULARLY IMPRINTED POLYMER SOLID PHASE EXTRACTION
FOR THE ANALYSIS OF ORGANOPHOSPHORUS PESTICIDES
IN FOOD SAMPLES**

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MOLECULARLY IMPRINTED POLYMER SOLID PHASE EXTRACTION
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IN FOOD SAMPLES

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*To my beloved mama and ayah,
Hajah Fatimah Binti Haji Kasmani and Haji Salleh Bin Haji Megat Abdullah,
my family members and those who are close to me.*

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ABSTRACT

A new material based on molecularly imprinted polymers (MIP) was prepared as solid phase extraction (SPE) sorbent for sample enrichment in the analysis of organophosphorus pesticides (OPPs). The polymer with binding sites situated on the surface shows many advantages including high selectivity and high recoveries towards the target analytes. The MIP was synthesized by non-covalent imprinting technique using quinalphos as the template molecule, methacrylic acid (MAA) as functional monomer, ethylene glycol dimethacrylate (EGDMA) as crosslinker and acetonitrile as porogen solvent. The physical characteristics of the MIP were characterized using fourier transform infrared spectrometry (FTIR), CHN analyzer, field emission scanning electron microscopy (FE-SEM), nitrogen adsorption and UV-VIS spectrometry. The three OPPs (diazinon, quinalphos and chlorpyrifos) were selected as target analytes as they are widely used in agriculture sector. Various parameters and conditions affecting the extraction efficiency of the imprinted polymers were evaluated to optimize the selective preconcentration of OPPs compounds from aqueous samples. By using 100 mg of sorbent, it was found that the optimum MIP-SPE conditions were: 10 mL loading sample volume, 30% of acetonitrile in water as washing solvent, 5% acetic acid in methanol as elution solvent, and 6 mL elution solvent volume. The extracts were analyzed by high performance liquid chromatography coupled with ultraviolet-visible detection at 200 nm. The accuracy and selectivity of the MIP-SPE method developed were verified with non-imprinted polymer solid phase extraction (NIP-SPE) and commercial C₁₈-SPE for comparison. The MIP-SPE showed superior extraction efficiency towards the three selected OPPs compared to the NIP-SPE and commercial C₁₈-SPE. The limits of detection (LOD) of OPPs for MIP-SPE ranged from 0.83 $\mu\text{g L}^{-1}$ -2.8 $\mu\text{g L}^{-1}$ with the percentage recovery of greater than 91%. Meanwhile, the LODs of OPPs for NIP-SPE and C₁₈-SPE were in the range of 3.77 $\mu\text{g L}^{-1}$ -6.14 $\mu\text{g L}^{-1}$ and 2.87 $\mu\text{g L}^{-1}$ -3.12 $\mu\text{g L}^{-1}$, respectively and percentage recoveries of greater than 62% and 88%, respectively. The developed method was successfully applied to the analysis of OPPs in two selected fruit samples namely, grapes and green apples. The analysis of OPPs in samples using the developed MIP-SPE showed good results with recoveries of 89.74%-99.70% and RSDs of less than 3%.

ABSTRAK

Bahan berkepilihan baru berdasarkan polimer cap molekul (MIP) telah disediakan sebagai bahan penjerap pengeskrakan fasa pepejal (SPE) dalam pemekatan sampel analisis racun organofosforus (OPPs). Polimer dengan lokasi ikatan pada permukaannya menunjukkan banyak kelebihan termasuk keterpilihan tinggi dan peratus pengembalian tinggi bagi analit sasaran. MIP telah disediakan dengan teknik pencetakan bukan kovalen menggunakan kuinalfos sebagai molekul templat, asid metakrilik (MAA) sebagai monomer berfungsi, etilena glikol dimetakrilat (EGDMA) sebagai bahan silang dan asetonitril sebagai pelarut porogen. Sifat fizik MIP telah diuji dengan spektroskopi inframerah transformasi fourier (FTIR), analisis CHN, mikroskop imbasan elektron-pancaran medan (FE-SEM), penjerapan nitrogen dan UV-VIS spektroskopi. Tiga OPPs (diazinon, kuinalfos dan klorpirifos) dipilih sebagai analit sasaran kerana ia digunakan secara meluas dalam sektor pertanian. Pelbagai parameter dan keadaan yang mempengaruhi kecekapan pengekstrakan polimer cap itu telah dinilai bagi mengoptimumkan pra-pemekatan berkepilihan bagi sebatian OPPs dalam sampel akueus. Dengan menggunakan bahan penjerap 100 mg, didapati keadaan optimum MIP-SPE adalah: pemuatan isipadu sampel 10 mL; campuran 30% asetonitril dalam air sebagai pelarut pembilas, campuran 5% asetik asid dalam pelarut metanol sebagai pelarut pengelusan analit dan isipadu pelarut pengelusan analit 6 mL. Ekstrak telah dianalisis menggunakan kromatografi cecair prestasi tinggi berganding dengan pengesanan ultralembayung-nampak pada 200 nm. Ketepatan dan kepilihan kaedah MIP-SPE yang dibangunkan telah diuji dengan menggunakan pengeskrakan fasa pepejal polimer bukan cap (NIP-SPE) dan komersial C₁₈-SPE sebagai perbandingan. Kaedah MIP-SPE menunjukkan kecekapan pengekstrakan yang lebih baik terhadap ketiga-tiga OPPs terpilih berbanding dengan pengekstrakan menggunakan NIP-SPE dan C₁₈-SPE komersial. Had pengesanan (LOD) OPPs untuk MIP-SPE adalah dalam julat 0.83 µg L⁻¹-2.8 µg L⁻¹ dengan peratus pengembalian melebihi 91%. Sementara itu, kaedah NIP-SPE dan C₁₈-SPE komersial memberi had pengesanan (LOD) dalam julat 3.77 µg L⁻¹-6.14 µg L⁻¹ dan 2.87 µg L⁻¹-3.12 µg L⁻¹ masing-masing dan peratusan pengembalian melebihi 62% dan 88%, masing-masing. Kaedah yang dibangunkan telah berjaya diaplikasikan bagi analisis OPPs dalam buah-buahan terpilih, iaitu, anggur dan epal hijau. Analisis OPPs dalam sampel buah-buahan menggunakan kaedah MIP-SPE memberikan keputusan yang baik dengan pengembalian 74%-99.70% dan sisihan piawai relative (RSD) kurang daripada 3%.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MIP	-	Molecularly imprinted polymer
SPE	-	Solid phase extraction
NIP	-	Non imprinted polymer
C ₁₈	-	Octadecyl carbon chain
MIP-SPE	-	Molecularly imprinted polymer solid phase extraction
LLE	-	Liquid-liquid extraction
OPPs	-	Organophosphorus pesticides
OCP	-	Organochlorine pesticides
EU	-	European Union
EEC	-	Estimated environmental concentration
EC	-	European Council
HPLC-UV	-	High performance liquid chromatography-Ultraviolet
RP-HPLC	-	Reverse phase-High performance liquid chromatography
MAA	-	Methacrylic acid
EGDMA	-	Ethylene glycol dimethacrylate
AIBN	-	Azobisisobutyronitrile
PTFE	-	Teflon
FTIR	-	Fourier transform infrared
FE-SEM	-	Field emission-scanning electron microscopy
UV-VIS	-	Ultraviolet visible
EPA	-	Environmental Protection Agency
DOA	-	Department of Agriculture
MOA	-	Ministry of Agriculture
PS-DVB	-	Polystyrene-divinylbenzene
RSD	-	Relative standard deviation
CE	-	Capillary electrophoresis
LOD	-	Limit of detection

LOQ	-	Limit of quantification
Log K _{ow}	-	Octanol/water partition coefficient
Is	-	Internal standard
LD	-	Lethal Dose
LC	-	Lethal Concentration
GC	-	Gas chromatography
min	-	minutes
mL	-	milliliter
mmol	-	millimol
ppb	-	part per billion
ppm	-	part per million
mV	-	miliVolt
mL min ⁻¹	-	milliliter per minute
μL	-	microliter
μm	-	micrometer

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

A molecularly imprinted polymer (MIP) is a polymer that is formed in the presence of a molecule (called template) that is extracted afterwards, thus leaving complementary cavities behind (Glad *et al.*, 2000). MIPs are tailor-made materials with high selectivity for target molecules. Many MIPs have been prepared and utilized mainly as affinity chromatography media. The resulting imprinted polymers are stable and robust. In addition, it is important to point out that synthesis of MIP is also relatively cheap and easy as compared with other selective materials such as immunosorbent (IS), thus making MIP a clear alternative to the use of natural receptors (Pichon, 2007).

One of the most exciting applications of MIPs is as sorbent for solid-phase extraction (SPE). In SPE, the sample is passed through a cartridge or a packed column filled with a solid sorbent where the analytes are absorbed and then eluted with an organic solvent. This procedure presents several advantages: particularly it is less time consuming than liquid-liquid extraction (LLE) procedure, it decreases the use of toxic solvents and offers the possibility of automation (Andersson, 2000; Pichon and Hugon, 2008). Despite their attractive features, the classical SPE sorbents such as C₁₈, ion-exchange and size-exclusion phases are lacking in selectivity towards target analytes. In order to overcome this drawback, the use of MIPs in SPE (MIP-SPE) has been developed (Jiang *et al.*, 2008; Caro *et al.*, 2006; Han *et al.*, 2005; Fang *et al.*, 2005; Boer *et al.*, 2002). MIP-SPE allows not only the

analyte to be pre-concentrated but also the other compounds present in the sample matrix to be removed.

Over the last 60 years, farmers and growers have been using pesticides for food production in order to meet the expectation of consumers, increasing production and quality in food production. Consequently, the consumers are exposed to pesticides usually in little quantities in a number of food groups such as vegetable, fruits and juices. Organophosphorous pesticides (OPPs) are one of the most common classes of pesticides involved in poisoning because of the inhibition of acetylcholinesterase (Sultafos, 2008). *Monitoring and analysis the trace level of OPPs in food and environmental contamination are therefore essential for human health protection and environmental control.* The maximum residue limits (MRLs) of pesticide residues in fruits and vegetables set by the European Communities depend on types of fruits or vegetables (*European Economic Community (EEC), 1976*). However, the regulation stated a default limit of 0.01 mg kg^{-1} for all pesticides combinations in food which has no set MRLs (European Communities, 2005). In addition, the European Union (EU) has established a *maximum allowable concentration* of a single compound for drinking water quality of $0.1 \text{ } \mu\text{g L}^{-1}$ for individual pesticides and $0.5 \text{ } \mu\text{g L}^{-1}$ for the total concentration of all pesticides (*European Economic Community (EEC), 1980*). The Malaysian Food Regulation 1985 (pesticides residue, Part VII) has stated that the maximum residue limits for all pesticides were as recommended by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Joint FOA/WHO Food Standards) and 0.01 miligram per kilogram for any pesticide residues that are not listed in Codex Alimentarius (Food Regulations 1985; Codex Alimentarius Commission 2010).

1.2 Problem Statement

The trace levels determination of organic contaminants in complex matrices requires sample pretreatment and enrichment processes because of high levels of interferences. Solid-phase extraction (SPE) is routinely used for the extraction of compounds from liquid or solid matrices. However, most of the classical SPE

sorbents such as C₁₈, ion-exchange and size-exclusion phases do not show high selectivity for specific analytes. Recently, MIPs have attracted considerable attention to be used as SPE sorbents to get high selectivity and high recoveries towards the target analytes. In addition, MIPs offer cleanup and preconcentration of target analytes prior to determination.

Organophosphorus pesticides (OPPs) are important compounds to analyze as over the last several years OPPs contamination of drinking water and agricultural products has become a major concern and the number of OPPs is steadily increasing. Recently, molecularly imprinted solid-phase extraction method was used for the analysis of OPPs in river water sample, with extraction recoveries ranging from 77.5% to 99.1% (Zhu *et al.*, 2005). However, their work was limited to only the relatively polar OPPs (monocrotophos, mevinphos, phosphamidon, omethoate). Hence, in this work, a new MIP was synthesized based on O,O-diethyl O-2-quinoxalinylnyl phosphorothioate (quinalphos) as a template for use in MIP-SPE sample enrichment of selected non polar OPPs (quinalphos, diazinon and chlorpyrifos) in fruit samples prior to HPLC-UV analysis. To the best of our knowledge, no report has been published on MIP-SPE of these OPPs.

1.3 Research Objectives

The research objectives are as follows:

- 1.3.1 To prepare a molecularly imprinted polymer (MIP) using an organophosphorus pesticide (OPP) as the template.
- 1.3.2 To characterize structure and surface morphology of the MIP.
- 1.3.3 To apply the MIP as solid-phase extraction (SPE) sorbent for the analysis of organophosphorus pesticides prior to HPLC.
- 1.3.4 To compare the selectivity and extraction efficiency between the newly prepared MIP sorbent and commercial C₁₈-SPE sorbent in the determination of organophosphorus pesticides in samples.

1.4 Scope of Study

In this study a new selective material based on molecularly imprinted polymers (MIP) was prepared for sample preparation in the analysis of organophosphorus pesticides (OPPs). Three OPPs were considered in this study, namely quinalphos, diazinon, and chlorpyrifos. The physical and chemical characteristics of the MIP were characterized using fourier transform infrared spectrometry (FTIR), CHN analyzer, field emission scanning electron microscopy (FE-SEM), nitrogen adsorption and UV-VIS spectrometry. The MIP was applied as SPE sorbent (MIP-SPE) and in the analysis of OPPs. The results of the analysis were compared with non imprinted polymer as solid phase extraction sorbent (NIP-SPE) and commercial C₁₈-SPE. The identification and quantification of OPPs was carried out using high pressure liquid chromatography with ultraviolet detection (HPLC-UV) at 200 nm.

Optimization of MIP synthesis parameters were carried out to evaluate the affinity and imprinting effects. The parameters chosen in this study were types of crosslinker and porogen solvents. The optimized parameters of MIP-SPE, NIP-SPE and commercial C₁₈-SPE were washing solvents, loading volumes, elution solvent types and elution volumes. The extraction efficiency of the MIP-SPE was compared with NIP-SPE and commercial C₁₈-SPE under identical extraction conditions. The MIP-SPE method was validated in terms of linearity, limit of detection and limit of quantification. The developed method was applied to fruit samples, namely grape and green apple.

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LIST OF PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

1. M. Marsin Sanagi, Syairah Salleh, Wan Aini Wan Ibrahim and Ahmedy Abu Naim, “Molecularly Imprinted Polymers For Solid Phase Extraction Of Organophosphorus Pesticides”, poster presented at Regional Annual Fundamental Science Seminar 2010 (RAFSS 2010), Kuala Lumpur., 25 June 2010.
2. M. Marsin Sanagi, Syairah Salleh, Wan Aini Wan Ibrahim and Ahmedy Abu Naim, “Determination Of Organophosphorus Pesticides Using Molecularly Imprinted Polymer Solid Phase Extraction”, paper presented at the The 23rd Regional Malaysian Symposium of Analytical Sciences (SKAM-23), Permai Inn, Kuala Terengganu. 4-6 October 2010.
3. M. Marsin Sanagi, Syairah Salleh, Wan Aini Wan Ibrahim, and Ahmedy Abu Naim., “Molecularly Imprinted Polymers For Solid Phase Extraction Of Organophosphorus Pesticides”, *Journal of Fundamental Sciences*, Ibnu Sina UTM, Vol. 6, No. 1 (2010) 27-30; ISSN 1823-626X.
4. M. Marsin Sanagi, Syairah Salleh, Wan Aini Wan Ibrahim, and Ahmedy Abu Naim., “Molecularly Imprinted Polymers For Solid Phase Extraction Of Organophosphorus Pesticides”, *The Malaysian Journal of Analytical Sciences*, Vol 15 No 2 (2011) 175-183; ISSN 1394-2506.