

CANDIDA RUGOSA LIPASE IMOBILIZATION ON MODIFIED MESOPOROUS
KIT-6 FROM RICE HUSK AS BIOCATALYST IN ESTERIFICATION
FOR BUTYL BUTYRATE

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ESTERIFICATION FOR BUTYL BUTYRATE

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Specially dedicated to;

Myself.

My beloved and supportive supervisors;

Prof. Dr. Salasiah Endud and P.M. Dr. Zainab Ramli, who made all this possible.

My dearest husband;

Hilmi Masrur Ab Halim for his endless love and patience.

My daughter;

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Golbaha Mat & Radziah Md. Noor ; Ab. Halim Mustapha & Sakinah Ismail

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And

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ABSTRACT

Lipases are widely exploited in various industries, especially in the food processing industries for their ability to act on a variety of substrates, pH and thermal stability, resistance to solvents, and they are also highly specific as chemo-, regio-, and enantioselective biocatalysts. However, enzymes have serious drawbacks such as, often unstable in the long term operation, high cost and non-reusability. Enzyme immobilization is a creative solution to alleviate these problems, whereas the mesoporous silica KIT-6 has great potential as catalyst support due to the high surface area, porosity and stability. This research aimed to explore the potential of APTES-functionalized KIT-6 silica as immobilization matrix for lipase from *Candida rugosa* (CRL). In particular, the immobilized CRL onto KIT-6 silica nanoparticles derived from rice husk ash, is reported here for the first time as a catalyst in the esterification reaction. Additionally, a comparative study of the effectiveness of immobilization methods (physical adsorption and covalent binding) on the biophysical properties of the immobilized CRL, and the hydrolytic activities of free and immobilized enzymes in the esterification of butyric acid with butanol were carried out. The different techniques used for the biophysical characterization of the immobilized CRL onto KIT-6 were SAXS, TEM, FESEM, FTIR, XPS, fluorescence spectra, and TGA. The results showed that both functionalization and immobilization procedures did not disrupt the structural integrity of the immobilized CRL, but found significant differences in the morphology of each of the resultant catalysts. The KIT-6/a/g/CrI catalyst displayed highly dense and more compact morphology than the KIT-6/CrI with a higher enzyme loading. The findings suggest that some of the attached APTES-glutaraldehyde compounds including CRL molecules may be physically adsorbed inside the pores of the KIT-6/a/g/CrI, which resulted in the obvious reduction in surface area and total pore volume when the CRL loading increased. Further, the structure of immobilized CRL in KIT-6 was verified by FTIR spectra and correlated with the XPS analysis. The values of binding constant, K_{ass} , determined by fluorescence quenching studies, confirmed that the direct physical interaction of KIT-6 with CRL was much weaker ($5.20 \times 10^2 \text{ M}^{-1}$), compared to the covalent binding ($1.20 \times 10^4 \text{ M}^{-1}$). The optimal assay conditions of the CRL catalyzed esterification were identified to be pH 7.0 at 35 °C with 0.10 mg/mL concentration of the CRL in n-hexane as the solvent. The CRL immobilized onto KIT-6 through physical adsorption and covalent binding method is more advantageous compared to the free CRL, as it could withstand extreme reaction conditions and capable to achieve a high activity. Besides, the conformational changes in the CRL were restricted due to entrapment in the porous silica matrix. Overall, CRL immobilized onto silica KIT-6 demonstrated improved properties compared with the free CRL giving excellent results in the thermal stability, storage and reusability studies. Both the immobilized CRL onto KIT-6 by covalent binding method (KIT-6/a/g/CrI) and physical adsorption (KIT-6/CrI) were able to retain more than 50% of the activity after the heat treatment. Moreover, KIT-6/a/g/CrI retained 67.3% of the activity after 85 days of storage, indicating enhanced thermal stability and shelf-life through the immobilization process. Recycling studies showed that the KIT-6/a/g/CrI, which has less loading amount of CRL (2.57 mg/g support versus 3.10 mg/g support in KIT-6/CrI) was reusable up to 20 cycles, with only 75.3% of its activity lost during the first 10 cycles; as compared to KIT-6/CrI which rendered inactive over 7 cycles. Under an optimized reaction condition, even using low CRL loadings, the specific activity of KIT-6/a/g/CrI was shown higher (2144.7 U/mg) than the KIT-6/CrI (1847.6 U/mg) and free CRL (1604.3 U/mg). Optimal yields of the esterification of butyric acid with butanol in hexane using the KIT-6/CrI and KIT-6/a/g/CrI catalysts were 94% and 90% respectively, with 100% selectivity. The kinetic studies revealed that K_m of immobilized CRL was higher than that of free CRL, implying a high affinity towards the substrate. Also, the V_{max}/K_m (catalytic efficiency) value of KIT-6/a/g/CrI was comparable with the free CRL, whereas the value determined for the KIT-6/CrI was lower compared to the KIT-6/a/g/CrI.

ABSTRAK

Lipase dieksploitasikan secara meluas dalam pelbagai industri, terutamanya industri pemprosesan makanan kerana kemampuannya bertindak balas dengan pelbagai substrat, kestabilan pH dan haba, ketahanan terhadap pelarut, dan ia juga sangat spesifik sebagai biomangkin kemo-, regio- dan enantioselektif. Walau bagaimanapun, enzim mempunyai kelemahan yang serius antaranya sering tidak stabil dalam operasi jangka panjang, sangat mahal dan tidak boleh diguna semula. Pemegunan enzim merupakan satu penyelesaian kreatif bagi mengatasi kelemahan tersebut, sedangkan silika mesoliant KIT-6 sangat berpotensi sebagai penyokong mangkin kerana mempunyai luas permukaan, keliatan dan kestabilan yang tinggi. Penyelidikan ini bertujuan meneroka potensi KIT-6 silika berfungikan-APTES sebagai matriks untuk pemegunan lipase dari *Candida rugosa* (CRL). Khususnya, pemegunan CRL ke atas nanopartikel silika KIT-6 yang diperoleh daripada abu sekam padi, pertama kali dilaporkan di sini sebagai mangkin dalam tindak balas esterifikasi. Tambahan lagi, kajian perbandingan kesan kaedah pemegunan (penjerapan fizikal dan penambatan kovalen) ke atas sifat biofizik CRL, dan aktiviti hidrolisis untuk enzim bebas dan enzim terpegun dalam pengesteran asid butirik dengan butanol telah dijalankan. Teknik berlainan yang digunakan untuk pencirian biofizik CRL terpegun di atas KIT-6 ialah SAXS, TEM, FESEM, FTIR, XPS, spektrum pendarfluor, dan TGA. Keputusan kajian menunjukkan bahawa prosedur pemfungsian dan pemegunan tidak menjejaskan integriti struktur CRL terpegun, tetapi terdapat perbezaan morfologi yang ketara bagi setiap mangkin yang dihasilkan. Mangkin KIT-6/a/g/CrI menunjukkan morfologi yang sangat tumpat dan lebih padat berbanding dengan KIT-6/CrI dengan muatan enzim yang lebih tinggi. Keputusan ini mencadangkan sebahagian daripada sebatian APTES-glutaraldehyd yang terlekat termasuk molekul CRL, mungkin terjepit di dalam liang KIT-6/a/g/CrI, menyebabkan penurunan luas permukaan dan jumlah isipadu liang KIT-6 yang ketara apabila muatan CRL meningkat. Selanjutnya, struktur CRL terpegun dalam KIT-6 telah dibuktikan oleh spektrum FTIR dan dikorelasikan dengan analisis XPS. Nilai pemalar penambatan, K_{ass} , ditentukan melalui kajian pelindapan pendarfluor, mengesahkan bahawa interaksi fizikal langsung antara KIT-6 dan CRL adalah lebih lemah ($5.20 \times 10^2 M^{-1}$), berbanding dengan penambatan kovalen ($1.20 \times 10^4 M^{-1}$). Keadaan optimum assai bagi esterifikasi asid butirik bermangkinkan CRL dikenalpasti sebagai pH 7.0 pada 35 °C dengan kepekatan CRL 0.10 mg/mL dan n-heksana sebagai pelarut. CRL terpegun pada KIT-6 melalui penjerapan fizikal dan kaedah penambatan kovalen adalah lebih menguntungkan berbanding dengan CRL bebas, kerana mampu bertahan dalam keadaan tindak balas yang ekstrim dan berupaya mencapai aktiviti yang tinggi. Lagipun, perubahan konformasi CRL adalah terbatas kerana pemerangkapan dalam matriks silika berliang. Pada keseluruhannya, CRL terpegun ke dalam silika KIT-6 menunjukkan ciri yang lebih baik daripada CRL bebas dengan memberikan keputusan yang cemerlang dalam kajian kestabilan terma, penyimpanan dan kebolegunaan semula. Kedua-dua CRL terpegun ke atas KIT-6 dengan kaedah penambatan kovalen (KIT-6/a/g/CrI) dan penjerapan fizikal (KIT-6/CrI) mampu mengekalkan lebih 50% aktiviti selepas perawatan terma. Manakala, KIT-6/a/g/CrI mengekalkan 67.3% aktiviti selepas 85 hari penyimpanan, yang menunjukkan peningkatan kestabilan terma dan hayat simpanan melalui proses pemegunan. Kajian kitar semula menunjukkan KIT-6/a/g/CrI yang mempunyai muatan CRL rendah (2.57 mg/g penyokong melawan 3.10 mg/g penyokong untuk KIT-6/CrI), boleh diguna semula sehingga 20 kitaran dengan kehilangan aktiviti sebanyak 75.3% sepanjang 10 kitaran pertama; berbanding dengan KIT-6/CrI yang menjadi tidak aktif selepas 7 kitaran. Di bawah keadaan optimum, walaupun menggunakan muatan CRL yang rendah, aktiviti spesifik KIT-6/a/g/CrI didapati lebih tinggi (2144.7 U/mg) berbanding dengan KIT-6/CrI (1847.6 U/mg) dan CRL bebas (U/mg 1604.3). Hasil optimum esterifikasi asid butirik dengan butanol dalam n-heksana menggunakan mangkin KIT-6/CrI dan KIT-6/a/g/CrI ialah 94% dan 90% masing-masing, dengan selektiviti 100%. Kajian kinetik mendedahkan bahawa K_m untuk CRL terpegun adalah lebih tinggi daripada CRL bebas, mencadangkan afiniti yang kuat terhadap substrat. Juga, nilai V_{max}/K_m (kecekapan pemangkinkan) untuk KIT-6/a/g/CrI adalah sebanding dengan CRL bebas, manakala nilai yang ditentukan untuk KIT-6/CrI adalah lebih rendah berbanding dengan KIT-6/a/g/CrI.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	TITLE	PAGE
	DECLARATION	i
	DEDICATION	iii
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
	ABSTRACT	v
	ABSTRAK	vi
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
	LIST OF TABLES	xi
	LIST OF FIGURES	xii
	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xv
	LIST OF SYMBOLS	xviii
	LIST OF APPENDICES	xxi
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Background of Study	1
	1.2 Statement of Problems	8
	1.3 Objectives of Study	9
	1.4 Scope of Study	9
	1.5 Significant of Study	10
	1.6 Outline of Study	11
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	12
	2.1 Rice Husk Ash (RHA)	12

2.2	Mesoporous Silica Materials	13
2.2.1	Mesostructure Formation of Silica	15
2.2.2	KIT-6 Mesoporous Silica	18
2.3	Mesoporous Silica as Support	19
2.4	Functionalization of Mesoporous Silica with Organosilanes	20
2.5	Enzymes as Biocatalyst	21
2.5.1	Advantages of Enzyme as Catalyst	24
2.5.2	<i>Candida Rugosa</i> Lipase (CRL)	25
2.6	Optimization of Enzyme	28
2.7	Enzyme-Catalyzed Esterification	31
2.8	Immobilization of Enzyme	32
2.8.1	Advantages of Immobilization	33
2.8.2	Properties of Immobilized Enzyme	34
2.8.3	Immobilization Methods	35
2.8.3.1	Immobilization by Physical Adsorption	37
2.8.3.2	Immobilization by Covalent Binding	39
2.8.4	Enzyme Immobilization on Mesoporous Silica	40
2.8.5	Development of Silica as Support for Immobilization of Various Enzymes	41
2.9	Industrial Applications of Lipase	48
3	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	51
3.1	Chemicals and Materials	51
3.2	Preliminary Study	51
3.3	Synthesis Procedure	52
3.3.1	Synthesis of KIT-6 Silica Material as Support	52
3.3.2	Functionalization of KIT-6 Silica	53
3.3.3	CRL Immobilization	54
3.4	Protein Assay	55

3.4.1	Preparation of BSA Standard Solution	57
3.5	Leaching Analysis	57
3.6	Esterification Reaction	57
3.6.1	CRL-Catalyzed Esterification Reaction	58
3.6.2	Identification of Reaction Product	59
3.7	Optimization Study of Esterification Reaction	59
3.7.1	Effect of pH	60
3.7.2	Effect of Temperature	60
3.7.3	Effect of CRL Concentration	61
3.7.4	Effect of Solvent	61
3.8	Stability Assessment	61
3.8.1	Thermal Stability	61
3.8.2	Storage Stability	62
3.8.3	Reusability	62
3.9	Kinetic Study	63
3.10	Characterization Method	63
3.10.1	Small Angle X-Ray Scattering (SAXS)	64
3.10.2	UV-Visible Spectroscopy (UV-Vis)	65
3.10.3	Transmission Electron Microscopy (TEM)	65
3.10.4	Field Emission Scanning Electron Microscopy (FESEM)	66
3.10.5	Fourier Transform Infrared spectroscopy (FTIR)	67
3.10.6	Nitrogen Adsorption Desorption Analysis	68
3.10.7	X-Ray Photoelectron Spectroscopy (XPS)	68
3.10.8	Fluorescence spectroscopy	69
3.10.9	Thermal Gravimetric Analysis (TGA)	70
3.10.10	Gas Chromatography (GC)	70

4	RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	72
4.1	Preliminary Study	72
4.2	Characterizations	73
4.3	Optimization Study	86
4.3.1	Effect of pH	86
4.3.2	Effect of Temperature	87
4.3.3	Effect of CRL Concentration	90
4.3.4	Effect of Solvent	91
4.3.5	Optimization Study Summary	93
4.4	Immobilization Properties and Activity	94
4.4.1	CRL immobilization	94
4.4.2	CRL Attachment on KIT-6	96
4.5	Stability Assessment	107
4.5.1	Thermal Stability	107
4.5.2	Storage Stability	110
4.5.3	Reusability	111
4.6	Kinetic Study	113
5	CONCLUSION	117
5.1	Research Conclusions	117
5.2	Recommendations	120
	REFERENCES	121
	Appendices A – E	159-177

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	Differences between enzyme and chemical catalyst	23
2.2	Comparison of optimization properties of various sources of lipase	30
2.3	Development of silica as support for immobilization of various enzymes	42
2.4	Industrial applications of lipase	48
3.1	Notations for the catalysts used in this study	55
4.1	Report on CRL loading and yield of esterification catalyst by CrI on different support in preliminary study.	73
4.2	<i>d</i> -spacing and unit cell parameter of catalysts	76
4.3	Average particle size of the samples	78
4.4	Physical properties of catalysts	83
4.5	Summary of Optimization Study	94
4.6	CRL immobilized on KIT-6 silica and its properties in esterification and hydrolysis of olive oil	96
4.7	Area ratio of amide group band (CONH) and (Si–O–Si)	99
4.8	Binding constant and Stern–Volmer constant of KIT-6/CrI and KIT-6/a/g/CrI	103
4.9	TGA data of all the samples	106
4.10	Effect of storage duration on the remained activity (%) of free CRL, KIT-6/CrI and KIT-6/a/g/CrI.	111
4.11	Kinetic parameters of free and immobilized CRL	116

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
1.1	Outline of the study	11
2.1	Possible pathways for the liquid crystal templating mechanism	16
2.2	Scheme structures for bicontinuous cubic phases (a) G-surface and the Ia3d network, (b) D-surface and the Pn3m network and (c) P-surface and the Im3m network	17
2.3	(a) KIT-6 with 3D-cubic bicontinuous structure and, (b) KIT-6 structure with two sets of pore in 2-dimensional structure.	18
2.4	Diagrammatic representation of a lipase molecule showing its main features.	22
2.5	The key and lock theory	24
2.6	Induced fit model	24
2.7	(a) X-Ray Diffraction biological molecule of CRL by Protein Data Bank (PDB-PDB id:1CRL) and (b) topology diagram of CRL. The lid forming α -helix of Crl is labelled A-1 by Lipase Engineering Database (LED), 2009	26
2.8	Enzyme immobilization methods	36
2.9	Irreversible methods in enzyme immobilization	37
2.10	Reversible methods in enzyme immobilization	37
2.11	Schematic diagram of adsorption of enzyme on silica surface	38
2.12	Schematic diagram of covalent binding of enzyme on silica surface	39
3.1	Schematic representation of CRL immobilization on to KIT-6	55
3.2	Esterification reaction of butyric acid and butanol	58
4.1	SAXS and scattering two-dimensional patterns (shown in the inset) for (a) KIT-6, (b) KIT-6/Crl, (c) KIT-6/a/g and, (d) KIT-6/a/g/Crl.	75

4.2	TEM image of (a) KIT-6 silica with gyroid structure, (b) KIT-6/Crl and (c) KIT-6/a/g/Crl	76
4.3	FESEM of (a) KIT-6, (b) Free CRL, (c) KIT-6/Crl and (d) KIT-6/a/g/Crl	78
4.4	FTIR spectra of the samples; (a) free CRL, (b) KIT-6, (c) KIT-6/Crl and (d) KIT-6/a/g/Crl.	80
4.5	Suggested amino group-lysine attached on KIT-6 by physical and covalent binding	81
4.6	Schematic diagram of adsorption for the interaction of proteins (positive charge) with the silica surface (negative charge).	82
4.7	Nitrogen adsorption isotherm of (a) KIT-6, (b) KIT-6/Crl, (c) KIT-6/a/g and, (d) KIT-6/a/g/Crl.	85
4.8	Pore size distribution curve of (a) KIT-6, (b) KIT-6/Crl, (c) KIT-6/a/g and, (d) KIT-6/a/g/Crl.	85
4.9	Effect of pH on activity of free CRL, KIT-6/Crl and KIT-6/a/g/Crl	87
4.10	Effect of temperature on activity of free CRL, KIT-6/Crl and KIT-6/a/g/Crl.	89
4.11	Effect of equilibrium concentration of CRL on activity of free CRL, KIT-6/Crl and KIT-6/a/g/Crl	91
4.12	Effect of solvent polarity on activity	92
4.13	Percentage leaching profile of KIT-6/Crl and KIT-6/a/g/Crl	98
4.14	Structure of SBA-15 and KIT-6 showing the molecule in and out from the pore of the structure	98
4.15	Regional FTIR spectra of KIT-6/a/g/Crl with different percentage CRL loading (a) 4 %, (b) 8 %, (c) 12 %, (d) 16 % and, (e) 20 %	100
4.16	XPS of (a) C1s (A-KIT-6/Crl ; B-KIT-6/a/g ; C- KIT-6/a/g/Crl) and (b) O1s (A- KIT-6 ; B- Kit-6/Crl ; C- KIT-6/a/g ; D- KIT-6/a/g/Crl)	100
4.17	Fluorescence spectra of (a)KIT-6, (b) KIT-6/a/g/Crl, (c) KIT-6/Crl and (d) free CRL.	102
4.18	Tryptophan (Trp) amino acid.	102
4.19	Fluorescence spectra of (a) KIT-6/Crl and (b) KIT-6/a/g/Crl at 429 nm with different CRL loading.	103
4.20	Stern-Volmer plot in determining the quenching of the samples	105

4.21	TGA curve of KIT-6, KIT-6/a/g, KIT-6/CrI and KIT-6/a/g/CrI.	107
4.22	Thermal stability of the free CRL, KIT-6/CrI and KIT-6/a/g/CrI (50 °C- dash line; 60 °C-straight line)	109
4.23	Reusability of immobilized CRL on KIT-6 silica	113

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MSU-H	-	Hexagonally Ordered Mesostructured Silicas
SBA-15	-	Santa Barbara Amorphous no-15
MCM-41	-	Mobil Composition Mater no-41
DNA	-	Deoxyribonucleic acid
KIT-6	-	Korean Institute and Technology no.6
KIT-5	-	Korean Institute and Technology no.5
CRL	-	<i>Candida rugosa</i> lipase
APTES	-	(3-Aminopropyl) triethoxysilane
SAXS	-	Small Angle X-Ray Scattering
FTIR	-	Fourier Transform Infrared
XPS	-	X-Ray Photoelectron Spectroscopy
TGA	-	Thermal Gravimetric Analysis
FESEM	-	Field Emission Scanning Electron Microscopy
TEM	-	Transmission Electron Microscopy
Uv-Vis	-	Ultraviolet Visible
BSA	-	Bovine Serum Albumin
GC-FID	-	Gas Chromatography – Flame Ionization Detector
GC-MS	-	Gas Chromatography – Mass Spectroscopy
THF	-	Tetrahydrofuran
MSU	-	Michigan State University
FDU	-	Fudan University
HOM	-	Highly Ordered Mesoporous Silica
AMS	-	Anionic-surfactant-templated mesoporous silica
MCM-48	-	Mobil Composition Mater no-48

OMM	-	Ordered Mesoporous Materials
CTMS	-	Chlorotrimethylsilane
MPTMS	-	(3-Mercaptopropyl) triethoxysilane
APTMS	-	(3-Aminopropyl) trimethoxysilane
RNA	-	Ribonucleic acid
PGA	-	Penicillin G Acylase
CLEAs	-	Cross-Linked Enzyme Aggregates
MCFs	-	Mesocellular foams
PMOs	-	Periodic Mesoporous Organosilicas
GOD	-	Glucose Oxidase
HRP	-	Horseradish Peroxidase
PUFA	-	Polyunsaturated fatty acid
RHA	-	Rice husk ash
RT	-	Room temperature
HOMO	-	Highest occupied molecular orbital
LUMO	-	Lowest unoccupied molecular orbital
BET	-	Brunauer-Emmett-Teller
BJH	-	Barrett-Joyner-Halenda
PI	-	Polarity index
RSM	-	Response Surface Methods
STP	-	Standard Temperature and Pressure
BuOH	-	Butanol
sp.	-	Species
IY	-	Immobilization Yield
Å	-	Angstrom
a.u	-	Arbitrary unit
eV	-	Electron volt
kDa	-	Kilo Dalton

LIST OF SYMBOLS

Fe_2O_3	-	Ferum (III) Oxide
SiO_2	-	Silica
P123	-	Triblock copolymers based on poly(ethylene glycol)-poly(propylene glycol)-poly(ethylene glycol)
CONH	-	Amide/Peptide linkage
Si–O–Si	-	Siloxane
Si–OH	-	Silanol
O–C	-	Carbon-oxygen bond
E_a	-	Activation energy
U	-	Units (μmol substrate converted per min)
K_m	-	Michaelis- Menten constant
V_{max}	-	Maximum velocity
v	-	Velocity
k_{cat}	-	Turnover number/ catalytic constant
V_{max}/K_m	-	Catalytic efficiency
k_{cat}/K_m	-	Specificity constant
a_o	-	Unit cell parameter
d_{211}	-	d -spacing at (2 1 1) lattice
A_{SE}	-	Specific activity
A_E	-	Enzyme activity/ Esterification activity
A_{CONH}	-	Area of CONH
$A_{\text{Si-O-Si}}$	-	Area of Si–O–Si
P_s	-	Amount of protein adsorbed on the support
V_p	-	Pores Volume

D_p	-	Diameter pores
K_{ass}	-	Binding association constant
K_{sv}	-	Stern-Volmer constant
F_o	-	Initial fluorescence intensity
F	-	Final fluorescence intensity
$[R]$	-	Equilibrium concentration
$[S]$	-	Concentration of substrate
$[SC]$	-	Concentration of Specific compound of interest
η	-	Catalytic coefficient
θ	-	Theta
λ	-	Wavelength

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX	TITLE	PAGE
A1	Silica's extraction procedure from RHA	160
A2	Calibration curve of BSA standard solution at pH 7 recorded at 595 nm using UV-Vis wavelength program method.	161
A3	Internal standard calibration curve	162
B	Formula involve in this study.	163
C1	FTIR spectra of butyl butyrate (formation of ester bond at 1715.27 cm^{-1})	165
C2	Gas Chromatography spectra of butyl butyrate catalyzed by Free CRL, KIT-6/Crl and KIT-6/a/g/Crl	166
C3	Gas Chromatography Mass Spectroscopy (GC-MS) result for product identification	168
D1	Solvent's polarity chart	170
D2	Si 2p X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS) spectra of (a)KIT-6, (b)KIT-6/Crl, (c) KIT-6/a/g, and (d) KIT-6/a/g/Crl	171
D3	O 1s XPS spectra of (a)KIT-6, (b)KIT-6/Crl, (c) KIT-6/a/g, and (d) KIT-6/a/g/Crl.	172
D4	C 1s XPS spectra of (a)KIT-6/Crl, (b) KIT-6/a/g, and (c) KIT-6/a/g/Crl.	173
D5	N 1s XPS spectra of (a)KIT-6/Crl, (b) KIT-6/a/g, and (c) KIT-6/a/g/Crl.	174
D6	DSC curve and data of (a) as-synthesized KIT-6, (b) KIT-6, (c) KIT-6/Crl and (d) KIT-6/a/g/Crl	175
E	List of publication/proceeding	176

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

It is well known that most isolated enzymes are only stable under its physiological conditions. Therefore, to enhance their stability under severe conditions without altering their structure has become a fundamental question in the enzymatic research. In order to enhance their activity and stability, immobilization of enzymes on different types of supports such as organic polymers (Kallenberg *et al.*, 2005; Katchalski-Katzir and Kraemer, 2000), chitosan (Gilani *et al.*, 2016; David *et al.*, 2015), silica gels (Boros *et al.*, 2013), zeolitic (Chang and Chu, 2007; Marthala *et al.*, 2015; Celikbicak *et al.*, 2014) and mesoporous materials (Bautista *et al.*, 2015; Zou *et al.*, 2014) have been investigated. In recent years, nanostructured materials have been widely used as supports for enzyme immobilization owing to their high surface area that can effectively improve the enzyme loading, structural stability and catalytic efficiency of the immobilized enzyme.

In this work, the nanostructured mesoporous materials were synthesized using rice husk ash (RHA) as a silicon source. Rice husk, an agricultural waste, is a major by-product of the rice-processing industries and like most of the other rural biomass materials, for example; sugar, cane leaf and corn leaf are recognized as a potential source for energy generation from gasification or incineration processes (Islam and Mondal, 2013). The burning of rice husk in air results in the formation of RHA with a content in silica (SiO_2) that varies from 85% to 98%, depending on the burning conditions, the furnace type, the rice variety, the rice husk moisture content,

the climate and the geographic area (Lanning, 1963). RHA can be used as an alternative cheap source of amorphous silica for the production of value-added porous silica materials with industrial and technological interests (Prasad and Pandey, 2012; Ziegler *et al.*, 2016; Salama *et al.*, 2016; Cheah *et al.*, 2016). Among the various utilizations of RHA, there is a significant interest in its use in the preparation of silica materials due to the widespread industrial use of silica in separation processes as sorbents (Budnyak *et al.*, 2015; Ebrahimi-Gatkash *et al.*, 2015; Gibson, 2014; Menezes *et al.*, 2012; Kyzas *et al.*, 2013) as well as in catalytic refinery and petrochemical processes (Dubreuil *et al.*, 2017; Vermeiren and Gilson, 2009).

Among different nanostructured materials, mesoporous silica has increasingly proven to be an extremely effective solid support for the immobilization (Singh *et al.*, 2013; Mureseanu *et al.*, 2016) of a wide range of enzymes because a large specific surface area and uniform pore size (Huang *et al.*, 2013). The well-defined pores having a narrow diameter distribution, high surface area and silanol functionalization (Al-Othman *et al.*, 2012; Hoffmann *et al.*, 2006) which can be used as anchoring sites for further organic functionalization (Zhao *et al.*, 1997; Zhao *et al.*, 1998). These features are the key features that allow for the adsorption of molecules through hydrogen bonding and or electrostatic interaction (Hartmann and Kostrov, 2013). The pore diameters of mesoporous materials are important to improving the efficiency of immobilization of different enzymes, as they should be large enough to facilitate the process of mass transfer throughout the pore channels (Misson *et al.*, 2015; Wang *et al.*, 2001; Sheldon and van Pelt, 2013). These materials possess highly ordered pores which can be adjusted between 2 and 50 nm in diameters, allowing them to be employed as hosts to relatively large guest molecules.

Moreover, organic modification of mesoporous silica has been revealed as a key strategy to modulate molecule adsorption and delivery rates (Collila *et al.*, 2008; Al-Qadi *et al.*, 2012). Mesoporous silica materials also have particularly interesting properties for food and pharmaceutical applications, such as safety, hydrophobicity/hydrophilicity of the surface, electrostatic interactions, and

mechanical, chemical and bacterial resistance (Warmuth *et al.*, 1995; Pereira *et al.*, 2003; Brady *et al.*, 1988; Padmini *et al.*, 1993; Jeison *et al.*, 2003).

Despite the promising properties of the mesoporous silica materials for use as adsorbent for biomolecules (Chaikittisilp *et al.*, 2011), only limited work in this area has been reported. The size of molecules that could be incorporated and loaded inside the pores of mesoporous materials such as MCM-41 and SBA-15 are restricted by the pore sizes of 2-3 nm and ~6 nm, respectively. Consequently, large and bulky molecules such as protein, enzyme and DNA are not able to access to these the pores, thus limiting their application in the field of enzyme immobilization.

More interestingly, mesoporous solids are those structures with three-dimensional (3D) cubic *Ia3d* symmetry, which consist of two interpenetrating continuous networks of chiral channels. These unique 3D channel networks provide highly open porous hosts with easy access for guest species and more resistance to pore blocking, thus facilitating the mass transfer through the pore channels (Kim *et al.*, 2005; Gobin *et al.*, 2007; Fan *et al.*, 2003; Lawrence *et al.*, 2015). However, a simple synthesis using environmental waste (rice husk ash) of such mesoporous solids having cubic *Ia3d* symmetry was remained challenging, limiting their widespread application.

The silica KIT-6 (Korean Institute of Technology-6) synthesized from RHA is composed of two interwoven mesoporous networks similar to that found in MCM-48 silica, but has much larger pore diameters ranging from 8 to 20 nm (Jo *et al.*, 2009). This material has a potential that could be used for the immobilization of enzyme owing to the high surface area, minimum diffusion limitation, and high mass transfer (Kresge *et al.*, 1992; Kim *et al.*, 2005). Compared to the MCM-type mesoporous materials, the larger pore sizes of KIT-6 ranging from 8 to 20 nm (Jo *et al.*, 2009), could accommodate a wide variety of biomolecules (Lowe and Baker, 2014; Falahati *et al.*, 2012; Tran and Balkus, 2011; Gustaffson *et al.*, 2012; Guo *et al.*, 2010). The high-quality samples of cubic *Ia3d* KIT-6 materials are obtained in the presence of n-butanol as a co-surfactant at a reduced HCl concentration relative to conventional SBA-15-type mesostructures.

Meanwhile, several silicate materials have also been studied as the supports for biomolecules such as immobilized enzyme on MSU-H (Yu *et al.*, 2013), cation-exchanged functional silica (Zheng *et al.*, 2012), mica (Zaidan *et al.*, 2012) and SBA-15 (Salis *et al.*, 2010; Yang *et al.*, 2013). The biocompatibility, non-toxicity, chemical inertness, and high stability and mechanical strength of these materials make them suitable to be developed as supports for the biomolecules. However, to the best of our knowledge only a few reports are available on the immobilization of biomolecules on KIT-6, and include the following: immobilization of Penicillin G acylase (PGA) on KIT-6 and SBA-15 with different pore sizes (Lu *et al.*, 2008), immobilization of lysozyme on the large-pore KIT-6 (Vinu *et al.*, 2008), and immobilization of lipase in ordered mesoporous materials (focusing on effects of textural and structural parameters) (Serra *et al.*, 2008).

Furthermore, in these immobilization studies, the weakness of interaction between the mesoporous silica surface and the enzyme is revealed by the enzyme being leached off during the washing process. This serious drawback can be overcome by surface modification of the solid support (Takahashi *et al.*, 2000). Both organic (mainly polysaccharides, polyacrylic and polyvinyl materials) and inorganic supports (mainly silica- or other metal-oxide-based) have been described as efficient solid supports for enzyme immobilization (Magner, 2013; Sheldon, 2007; Hudson *et al.*, 2008; Ispas *et al.*, 2009). In particular, the latter are the materials of choice in this field and available with a wide range of porosities and costs. It is possible to chemically modify their surface enabling numerous immobilization techniques. Inorganic supports also present excellent thermal, mechanical and microbial resistance (Magner, 2013).

In comparison with free enzymes which typically work under mild conditions, immobilized enzymes are substantially robust, environmentally-friendly, and often have improved functional properties such as specific activity, retention of the biochemical properties and catalytic activity under appropriate reaction conditions of temperature, pH and organic solvent, allowing for multiple reuse of the enzyme and continuous reaction processes (Wang *et al.*, 2012; Seema and Steven, 2002; Xie and Wang, 2012; Won *et al.*, 2005). In addition, enzyme immobilized into

a support matrix could avoid contamination of the desired product with the enzyme, inhibit the denaturation of the enzyme in organic solvents, and expose active sites of the enzyme for a more efficient bonding with the support (Seema and Steven, 2002; Belhaj *et al.*, 2011; Foresti and Ferreira, 2007; Cabral *et al.*, 2010).

Even though many investigators have reported on immobilized enzyme in the literatures, detailed optimization studies for enzyme immobilization using various methods have been lacking. The optimization of enzymes for particular reactions is necessary as it can significantly reduce the production costs of enzymes used in the industrial processes. Currently, most common methods for lipase immobilization are covalent attachment, entrapment, encapsulation and adsorption to hydrophobic or hydrophilic supports. However, some of these methods have several advantages for examples; the need of very large porous materials/ beads is crucial for encapsulation and cross-linking within the enzyme molecules will decrease the enzyme activity as they could agglomerate and disturb the active site for substrate binding (Radva *et al.*, 2010; Heck *et al.*, 2013).

In this study, two methods are commonly employed for the enzyme immobilized on a solid support, namely the chemical method involving the formation of covalent bonds between the enzyme and the support matrix, and the physical methods; adsorption, which involve weak enzyme-support interactions such as van der Waals force, electrostatic force, hydrophobic interaction, and hydrogen bond (Jian *et al.*, 2006; Chiou and Wu, 2004; Jegannathan *et al.*, 2008). The adsorption method being a simple and economical method, was found to be most suitable for large scale lipase immobilization (Al-Duri and Yong 2000). Besides, enzyme immobilization by the covalent binding method has been so far the most extensively explored (Weetall and Filbert, 1974; Dodor *et al.*, 2004; Cho *et al.*, 2008; Datta *et al.*, 2013; Plagemann *et al.*, 2014; Singh *et al.*, 2010; Mateo *et al.*, 2000). It is more favorable because the strong bonding between the enzyme and support provides stable, immobilized enzyme derivatives that do not leach out enzyme into the surrounding solution. Furthermore, the presence of covalent bonds made possible simple and more efficient recovery of the enzyme (Belhaj *et al.*, 2011).

Therefore, in this study, lipase from *Candida rugosa* (CRL) was immobilized on to pure silica KIT-6 synthesized from RHA by physical adsorption method, and subsequently functionalized via covalent binding with 3-aminopropyltriethoxysilane (APTES) and glutaraldehyde as the activating agent. The APTES and glutaraldehyde were demonstrated as one of useful silane derivatives and cross-linking agent, respectively, in protein conjugation (Yiu and Wright, 2005; Chong and Zhou, 2004; Pandya *et al.*, 2005; Yiu *et al.*, 2001). One of the uses of glutaraldehyde is to activate the support for the immobilization of lipase. Consequently, this approach is expected to afford KIT-6 silica particles with high enzyme loading, high enzymatic activity, and improved reaction stability. The activity of the immobilized biocatalyst was tested using esterification of flavor esters.

In addition, esters are important fine chemical and widely used in numerous applications such as, emollients in perfume and cosmetic, emulsifiers in food and beverage, paints and pharmaceutical industries (Brault *et al.*, 2014; Behzad and Nasim, 2014). They are also used as plasticizers, solvents, biological additives, hydraulic fluids and lubricants in machinery industries (Joseph *et al.*, 2005; Mbaraka and Shanks, 2006; Krause *et al.*, 2009; Martinez *et al.*, 2011). Esters can be divided into three main groups which are short, medium and long-chain fatty acid esters. Short- and medium-chain fatty acid esters have a potential interest in the food industry as the flavor compounds. They are commonly used as important flavoring and fragrance molecules because of their typical fruity smell and high volatility (Schrader *et al.*, 2004; Mahapatra *et al.*, 2009).

Direct esterification of citronellol and geraniol with short-chain fatty acids were catalyzed by the free lipase from *Mucor miehe* with high yields were obtained in n-hexane was reported (Laboret and Perrault, 1999). Also, *Mucor miehei* lipase immobilized on the magnetic polysiloxane – polyvinyl alcohol particles by the covalent binding was employed for the synthesis of flavour esters using heptane as solvent. The highest activity of lipase was recovered and the ester synthesis was maximized for the substrates containing excess acyl donor (Bruno *et al.*, 2004). However, there is less report on short chain esters catalyzed by lipase from *Candida*

rugosa (Bezbradica *et al.*, 2006) as they always used for hydrolysis of long-chain fatty acids.

The main advantages of the enzyme catalyzed flavour generation are high selectivity or specificity of the reaction, high reaction rate even at low molar fractions, environmentally compatible and mild reaction conditions, and if viable cells are used there is a possibility to perform the multistep synthesis. Nowadays, this specific application meets the consumer demand for the natural products rather than synthetic products. Hexyl acetate, a short chain ester with fruity odor is a significant green non-flavour compound widely used in food industry (Shieh and Chang, 2001). Hexyl butyrate synthesized by the immobilized lipase (Lipozyme IM-77) from *Rhizomucor miehei* was employed as a flavour and fragrance in the food, beverage and pharmaceutical industry. It was synthesized by lipase catalyzed mild transesterification of hexanol and trybutyrin. It found enormous interest as the natural flavouring compound rather artificial or synthetic (Chang *et al.*, 2003).

Furthermore, commercially available esters in the industry required strong acid catalyst such as sulfuric acid, which is considered as hazardous materials and can cause detrimental effect to the environment. The commercial esterification also required a high temperature and this may lead to unwanted side products. So, the use of biocatalysts such as enzymes in the esterification reaction was introduced and considered natural as they are biodegradable and safe, especially in the food industry (Mizuki *et al.*, 2013). Enzyme-catalyzed esterification is an effective alternative to the chemical synthesis of short-chain esters. Esterases and lipases (triacylglycerol hydrolases; EC 3.1.1.3) are important industrial enzymes with great potential for the production of flavors and fragrances (Sharma *et al.*, 2001; Hasan *et al.*, 2006). These biocatalysts generally do not require cofactors and are stable in organic solvents, thus facilitating the synthesis of hydrophobic or water-labile compounds (Klibanov, 2001). In non-aqueous conditions, lipases typically catalyze the esterification, interesterification, and transesterification of alcohols and fatty acids, the three main chemical reactions producing flavoring esters (Hasan *et al.*, 2006).

1.2 Statement of Problems

Despite the fact that enzyme immobilization enables easy recovery and repetitive use of enzymes, immobilized enzyme much or less will lose its activity during immobilization regarding the support (Guzik *et al.*, 2014; Norde and Favier, 1992) and methods used for immobilization (Kim *et al.*, 2006). A good support requires a large surface area and pore diameters with structures that could trap the enzyme. While, a robust immobilization method requires an easy to fabricate support that affect less on the activity and substrate/product mass transfer to/from the active site of the enzyme. In addition, facile and robust immobilization chemistry that assures respectable loading of the physical and covalently immobilized enzyme that prevents its leaching during repetitive use is required.

Recently, mesoporous silica materials are introduced as promising supports candidates for enzyme immobilization that possess many interesting properties. Among them, KIT-6 showed an exceptional large pore diameter with intertwined structure and their facile manipulation for enzyme immobilization in comparison with other mesoporous materials (Lee *et al.*, 2013; Vinu *et al.*, 2008). However, the immobilization of lipase on KIT-6 has not been investigated yet.

Other problems are related to the stability of the enzyme in different pH, temperature, enzyme concentration, solvent used and stability in thermal and storage duration. In general, a successful immobilization of the enzyme on a support reduces the dependence of the enzyme performance on exact pH and temperature (makes its activity more stable in wider ranges of pH and temperature), preserves considerable activity over a repeated number of reuses, and increase its storage duration.

1.3 Objectives of Study

The overall goal of this study was to develop a new biocatalyst to economically use in certain industrial reaction by using the immobilized CRL onto KIT-6 mesoporous materials. To reach this goal, the following specific objectives were proposed:

1. Synthesis and characterization of KIT-6 mesoporous silica from rice husk and APTES-functionalized KIT-6 as the support.
2. Immobilization and biophysical characterization of *Candida rugosa* lipase (CRL) onto KIT-6 by the physical adsorption method and APTES-functionalized KIT-6 by covalent binding.
3. Optimization of the reaction conditions of immobilized CRL by using various parameters such as temperature, pH, CRL solution concentration and organic solvents.
4. Evaluation of the activity and kinetic study of the prepared catalysts in the esterification reaction of butyric acid and butanol.

1.4 Scope of Study

In this research, the correlation between the structural and physicochemical properties of the catalyst and catalytic properties of the materials in the esterification of butyric acid are studied. For that reason, the research is divided into four main areas. Firstly, KIT-6 mesoporous silica as support materials for lipase immobilization was synthesized using rice husk ash as a silica source and further modified by functionalization with 3-(Aminopropyl) triethoxysilane (APTES) and glutaraldehyde as the linker. The obtained materials were characterized using small angle X-ray scattering (SAXS), Fourier transform infrared (FTIR) spectroscopy and nitrogen physisorption.

In the second stage, the *Candida rugosa* lipase (CRL) is immobilized onto KIT-6 silica via two methods; physical adsorption and covalent binding. For the preparation method, CRL was immobilized by direct attachment to the KIT-6 (physical adsorption) and covalent binding with functionalized KIT-6 in CRL solution. The obtained materials were characterized by SAXS, FTIR, nitrogen physisorption, X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS), thermogravimetric analysis (TGA), field emission scanning electron microscopy (FESEM) and transmission electron microscopy (TEM) for the study of the KIT-6 structure before and after immobilization treatments. Lipase loading and leaching was determined by UV-Vis spectroscopy using 3.1 mL assay protocol of Bradford method with Bovine serum albumin (BSA) as standard.

Thirdly, the activity of CRL in the esterification of butyric acid and butanol to produce butyl butyrate and the kinetics parameters of the series of catalysts were evaluated. The activity was determined using titrimetric method of determining residual acid content and gas chromatography (GC) analysis. The product obtained was identified by using gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS).

Lastly, the optimization studies were performed involving several parameters such as pH, temperature, lipase concentration, and polarity of solvents. Additionally, storage stability and reusability of the enzyme were determined with respect to esterification reaction.

1.5 Significant of Study

This study developed a high quality KIT-6 mesoporous materials using waste (rice husk ash) and a new catalyst of the enzyme CRL immobilization on mesoporous KIT-6 silica also can be used in many industries, specifically in food industries. Other than that, this study is expected to solve the problems of separation, production of high yields of products and less environmental hazard.

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APPENDIX A1

Silica Extraction

Raw material used for the experiment was rice husk ash (RHA). RHA was boiled in 1 M HCl at 80 °C for 1 h. After acid pretreatment, the ash was rinsed with distilled water, dried in an oven at 110 °C overnight and then calcined in a furnace at 650 °C for 4 h. The extracted silica obtained was examined by FTIR and XRD techniques, respectively. Then, the extracted silica was utilized as a siliceous raw material for MCM-41, MCM-48, KIT-6 and SBA-15 preparation.