

IMPROVING FUNCTIONAL PROPERTIES OF *PUNICA GRANATUM* JUICE BY
PROBIOTICATION USING *LACTOBACILLUS* SPECIES

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DEDICATION

First and Foremost, thankful to Allah The Almighty

*To my beloved husband Mohd Ramdan,
children Muhammad Zaid and Siti Sufiyyah, parents, family and friends,
thank you very much for the endless support*

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ABSTRACT

Fruit juice enriched with probiotics is increasingly accepted nowadays, mainly due to its health benefits for digestive system and lactose intolerant problem. In the present study, the whole fruit of *Punica granatum* (pomegranate) was probioticated with selected strains of beneficial bacteria in order to improve the functionality of the juice. *Lactobacillus* species such as *L. plantarum*, *L. salivarius*, *L. casei* and *L. bulgaricus* were used for probiotication. Probiotication was optimized based on three parameters; temperature, agitation speed and fermentative pH. The growth profile of *Lactobacillus* species was observed based on the biomass, pH and lactic acid content in the fermentation broth. The functionality of *L. casei* probioticated juice was further evaluated using samples from shake flasks and 5 L stirred tank bioreactor. The kinetic profile of *L. casei* in the pomegranate juice was also determined under the optimized conditions (37 °C, pH 4.0, 0 and 50 rpm). The results indicated that *L. casei* was the dominant species based on the high biomass, lactic acid and flavonoid content compared to other strains. The specific growth rate of *L. casei* in shake flasks and bioreactor were 0.083 h⁻¹ and 0.111 h⁻¹, respectively. Probiotication of the juice with *L. casei* improved the concentration of quercetin-3-glucoside, as well as bioactivities of the juice. The radical scavenging and antidiabetic activities achieved more than 80 % inhibition during exponential phase, concurrently with the increase of biomass (13.0 %), lactic acid concentration (13.3 %) and quercetin-3-glucoside concentration (51.1 %) in the bioreactor samples. The ability of *L. casei* to rapidly utilize fermentable sugars of pomegranate for growth without further nutrient supplementation has proved the suitability of pomegranate juice as a growth medium for *L. casei*.

ABSTRAK

Jus buah diperkaya dengan probiotik semakin diterima pada masa kini, terutamanya disebabkan oleh manfaatnya pada kesihatan untuk sistem pencernaan dan masalah intoleransi laktosa. Dalam kajian ini, keseluruhan buah *Punica granatum* (delima) telah diprobiotikkan dengan bakteria terpilih yang bermanfaat untuk meningkatkan fungsi jus. Spesies *Lactobacillus* seperti *L. plantarum*, *L. salivarius*, *L. casei* dan *L. bulgaricus* digunakan untuk fermentasi menggunakan probiotik. Fermentasi dioptimumkan berdasarkan tiga parameter; suhu, kelajuan pengadukan dan pH fermentatif. Profil pertumbuhan spesies *Lactobacillus* diperhatikan berdasarkan kandungan biojisim, pH dan asid laktik di dalam *broth* fermentasi. Fungsi jus yang diprobiotikkan dengan *L. casei* dinilai menggunakan sampel dari kelalang goncang dan bioreaktor tangki teraduk 5 L. Profil kinetik *L. casei* dalam jus delima pada keadaan optimum (37 °C, pH 4.0, 0 dan 50 rpm) juga telah ditentukan. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa *L. casei* merupakan spesies dominan berdasarkan kandungan biojisim, asid laktik dan flavonoid yang tinggi berbanding dengan bakteria lain. Kadar pertumbuhan spesifik *L. casei* dalam kelalang goncang dan bioreaktor masing-masing ialah 0.083 h⁻¹ dan 0.111 h⁻¹. Jus yang diprobiotikkan dengan *L. casei* meningkatkan kepekatan quercetin-3-glukosida, serta bioaktiviti jus tersebut. Aktiviti antiradikal dan antidiabetik mencapai lebih daripada 80% perencatan semasa fasa eksponen dan pada masa yang sama berlaku peningkatan biojisim (13.0 %), kepekatan asid laktik (13.3 %) dan kepekatan quercetin-3-glukosida (51.1 %) di dalam sampel bioreaktor. Keupayaan *L. casei* untuk menggunakan gula yang boleh dieram dari buah delima untuk pertumbuhan telah membuktikan kesesuaian jus delima sebagai medium pertumbuhan untuk *L. casei*, walaupun tanpa penambahan nutrien dari sumber luar.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	-	Analysis of Variance
MS	-	Mass Spectra
LCMS	-	Liquid Chromatography Mass Spectrometry
HPLC	-	High Performance Liquid Chromatography
NMR	-	Nuclear Magnetic Resonance
GCMS	-	Gas Chromatography Mass Spectrometry
HPTLC	-	High Performance Thin Layer Chromatography
UV	-	Ultraviolet
MRS medium	-	De Man, Rogosa and Sharpe
OD	-	Optical Density
GLP-1	-	Glucose-like Peptide – 1
DPP-IV	-	Dipeptidyl Peptidase IV (4)
PJ	-	Pomegranate Juice
BHA	-	Butylated hydroxyanisole
BHT	-	Butylated hydroxytoluene
ROS	-	Reactive oxygen species
RNS	-	Reactive nitrogen species
PON1	-	Paraoxonase-1
HDL	-	High density lipoprotein
LDL	-	Low density lipoprotein
ZOI	-	Zone of Inhibition
NAOH	-	Sodium Hydroxide
Q3G	-	Quercetin-3-glucoside
CE	-	Catechin equivalent
DPPH	-	1,1-diphenyl-2-picrylhydrazyl
DMSO	-	Dimethyl Sulfoxide

DMBA	-	7,12-dimethyl benz(a)anthracene
UPLC	-	Ultra Performance Liquid Chromatography
ESI	-	Electrospray ionization
μl	-	Microliter
ml	-	Milliliter
mg	-	Miligram
min	-	Minute
μm	-	Micrometer
g	-	Gram
m	-	Meter
mM	-	Milimeter
mg/g	-	Miligram per gram
cm	-	Centimeter
cfu/ml	-	Colony forming unit per milliliter
h	-	hour
rpm	-	Revolutions per minute
nm	-	Nanometer
RI	-	Refractive Index
%	-	Percentage
α	-	Alpha
β	-	Beta
°C	-	Degree Celsius

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Foods and beverages are important source of energy and nutrients for the survival of life. Fruits are nutrient-dense foods, rich in phytonutrients that offer good health benefits. Current processed foods and beverages are mostly fortified with synthetic preservatives, additives as well as adding excessive sugar. Poor nutrient-dense diet intake causes the explosion of various chronic-linked diseases that possibly lead to death. Oxidation linked diseases are caused by excessive reactive oxygen species (ROS) because of disruption in cellular antioxidant homeostasis. This could be due to overload of calories combined with stress, no exercise and diet low in antioxidants (Ankolekar, 2013). Increase consumption of fruits, vegetables and whole grains could be a possible solution (Hyson, 2011). Fruits present a healthy and colorful array of phytochemicals that have been shown to associate with lower risks of diseases.

The National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS), 2011 has shown that the prevalence of diabetes in Malaysia has increased within just 5 years, from 11.6% in 2006 to 15.2% in 2011. This means that there are about 2.6 million adults aged 18 years and above living with diabetes. Data from NHMS (2011) also shows that about 80% of patients diagnosed with diabetes are seeking treatment in public health care facilities, while the rest are treated by private practitioners, or taking complementary and alternative medicines (National Diabetes Registry 2009-2012). Even though the correlation of diet intake and disease is complex, various sources of functional foods are formulated to fulfil the demand of consumers for healthier foods recently (Mustafa and Chua, 2017). Functional foods are classified as foods comprising component(s) that able to avoid and/or treat diseases (Scheinbach, 1998). The formulation is based

on the function of diet in the preclusion and dealing of particular illnesses (Viuda-Martos *et al.*, 2010).

The high prevalence of diabetes and its long-term complications has led to an ongoing search for hypoglycaemic agents. Fruit extracts have been used extensively in this context because they are natural, safe and readily available. Pomegranate has widely been investigated in recent years by scientists worldwide, as proven by hundreds of publications on their chemical composition, potential uses and health-promoting effects (Gumienna *et al.*, 2016). Its application against many ailments can be seen in folk medicine of the Near East (Langley, 2000; Jurenka, 2008). Currently, food-based phenolics are among the interest phytochemicals dealing with the occurrence of oxidation-linked diseases, most notably type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer. Products derived from pomegranate exhibit a broad spectrum of activity, improving human health, due to high contents of polyphenolics.

Fermentation is currently becoming the chosen method for preservation of fruit juices as the growing concern of consumers over artificial preservatives is continuously increased (Gumienna *et al.*, 2016). The fermentation process provides potential applications of whole fruit pomegranate juice with very attractive sensory attributes and health-promoting properties, which might become popular in the Eastern European market, and possibly in Asian countries (Mena *et al.*, 2012; Shubhada *et al.*, 2018). Probiotic product is the largest functional food market. This is because probiotication which is one of the food processing techniques that can preserve and enhance the functional and nutritional content of foods (Mustafa *et al.*, 2016). Probioticated products can be described as food containing live microorganisms that, when are ingested in adequate amount, confer a health benefit on the host. Meanwhile, probiotics are mostly lactic acid bacteria, which may provide antimicrobial, antiviral and antioxidant activities by the production of organic acids, hydrogen peroxide and bacteriocins. It is foreseen that food processing industry is going to develop the fruit-based probiotic product which shall have high resistance against the processing technology and gastrointestinal challenges, as well as meeting the requirement of medical application in the near future, particularly from the well-known “superfood”, namely pomegranate.

Concurrent with the increasing cost of health care, the human population is plagued by an epidemic of chronic diseases which has led consumers to adopt a “preventive” approach with a more careful and conscious selection of food for leading a healthy lifestyle (Ankolekar, 2013). Probiotic fermented foods with their low-cost and multi-faceted therapeutic potential is one of the top choices towards a healthier lifestyle. Fermentation has records on the history of food, eating habits and cultural exchange of food. Although fermentation provides a number of functional aspects, it primarily evolved as a process to preserve food safely or sometimes known as biopreservation. Fermentation may increase the shelf life of food by one to two orders of magnitude, by adding value to enrich it with nutrients, flavour, and in some cases, detoxifying substrate (Huynh *et al.*, 2014).

Owing to the benefit offers by fermentation, probiotic is inoculated into the food and beverage products. Lactic acid bacteria such as *Lactobacillus* sp. and *Bifidobacterium* sp. are the major class of probiotics, which are defined as living microorganisms which exert health benefits beyond basic nutrition (Ljungh and Wadstrom, 2006). Lactic acid bacteria have been shown to confer several benefits to the host including better absorption of nutrients from food, decrease in lactose intolerance in some individuals, control of diseases originating from intestinal infections, potential to control of some types of cancer and stimulation of host immune response (Perdigon *et al.*, 2001; Rafter, 2002). Moreover, lactic acid fermentation is used for commercial bulk storage of seasonal fruits to increase their availability and to obtain a desired sensory quality of the products (Thakur and Joshi, 2017).

The probiotic dairy products such as fermented milks, ice cream, various types of cheese, baby-food milk powder, frozen dairy desserts, whey-based beverages, sour cream, buttermilk, normal and flavoured liquid milk and concentrated milk are formerly well known (Mortazavian *et al.*, 2011). However, the increasing health concerns such as lactose intolerance, milk protein allergy, high cholesterol content and high amounts of saturated fatty acids of dairy based foods have promoted the growth of non-dairy foods such as probiotic fermented cereals, fruits and vegetables juices (Gupta and Abu-Ghannam, 2012; Peres *et al.* 2012;

Kumar *et al.* 2013, 2015). Hence, the non-dairy based probiotic foods and beverages have been gaining popularity.

Lately, various fruit juices have been investigated as a non-dairy probiotic drink after fermentation with selected probiotic lactic acid bacteria such as pear (Ankolekar *et al.*, 2012), watermelon (Fazeli *et al.*, 2007), cantaloupe (Fonteles *et al.*, 2012), orange (Escudero- Lopez *et al.*, 2013), as well as pomegranate fruit juice which is recommended to be as an appropriate substrate for cultivation of probiotic bacteria (Mousavi *et al.*, 2011, Fazeli *et al.*, 2011). The current trend is the use of fermentation to deliver fruit and juice products which are less “heavily” preserved, higher in quality, perceived as natural product containing fewer additives, and are nutritionally healthier (Mihiretie and Desta, 2015).

Fermentation is a very effective method of food product biopreservation, as changes taking place during this process resulted in the extension of shelf life, modifying sensory attributes of the final product, in terms of its taste, aroma and texture (Gumienna *et al.*, 2016, Huynh *et al.*, 2014). Chemical reactions may occur during this process, and thus contributing to the improvement of nutritive value by enhancing the bioavailability of compounds and improving their digestibility. Possibly, the process may also contribute to the formation of new compounds exhibiting many beneficial properties for human health.

Since pomegranate is rich with the therapeutic properties and the chronic diseases are becoming serious health concern, fermentation could play a significant role. During the last two decades, various parts of the plant had been subjected to extensive phytochemical, pharmacological and clinical investigations. Many interesting findings have been reported in various fields (Artik, 1998). Most of the previously probioticated pomegranate juice are utilizing the aril part of the fruit (Fazeli *et al.*, 2011) or simply the commercial concentrated fruit juice (Mousavi *et al.*, 2011). To date, fermentation of whole part of the pomegranate fruit is scarcely investigated. With respect to non-dairy food matrices, the information regarding the survival of microorganisms against the challenges, the criteria for fermentation, their use as starters and their relationship with other microorganisms are limited

(Schrezenmeir and de Vrese, 2001). The type of food matrix and the cell condition play a major role for the survivability of probiotics during long-term storage and processing (Endo *et al.*, 2014).

Therefore, different bioprocessing parameters such temperature, pH and agitation were tested in this study to investigate the quality of pomegranate juice with different cultivation conditions. The aim was to produce a successful culture, which is enriched with sustainable nutritive substances. Additionally, more research works should be implemented to obtain high yield of fermentation products with retention of functionality properties upon consumption. We sought more in-depth knowledge of the mechanisms of growth and survival in diverse and hostile fruit habitats with the aim of describing specific metabolic traits, which allows better design of fermentation strategies based on selected strains of lactic acid bacteria for targeted raw matrices.

1.2 Problem Statement

Reviews on scientific papers from the search engine Science Direct in 2010 revealed that 770 papers reported on the functional features of pomegranate like antioxidant, antimicrobial or anti-diabetes by its juice, seed oil, peel, flowers and other parts of the tree (Viuda-Martos *et al.*, 2010). From 2010 until 2017, research of pomegranate in the same search engine resulted 3274 accumulated manuscripts, which include 1957 research articles, 509 review articles, 459 book chapters and 61 encyclopaedias. Pomegranate flower extract, pomegranate pure juice and concentrates have been premeditated for their functions in treating diabetes through animal models like Zucker diabetic rats and in humans. Lansky and Newman (2007) indicated that further research in this field is crucial to evaluate the inclusive significance and safety of pomegranate as an intact fruit, extracts from the fruit or fermented pomegranate juice.

Fermentation of fruit juices by probiotic lactic acid bacteria was successfully investigated by several researchers (Klewicka *et al.*, 2004; Mousavi *et al.*, 2011;

Yoon *et al.*, 2004, 2005). As fruit juices encompass good sources of saccharides, they are expected to be a proactive substrate in the cultivation of probiotic lactic acid bacteria, as well as to enrich the nutrient capacity of beverage products. With various phytochemicals in pomegranate juice, it is a good choice to initiate a functional drink to improve the health condition in a safe way. Most of the beverage products come with excessive sugar-added concept which would cause other diseases, mostly diabetes. The emergence of new food consumption patterns that lack of chemical preservatives yet preserved the food products naturally are the matter of interest. Process conditions play a critical role to lead the formation of desirable yield and product formation that serve benefits, as well as cost effectively. The health benefits of potential probiotic strains should be continuously assessed as the positive activity might be strain dependent and may be affected by the food matrix. Optimization of fermentation processes could be achieved through a selection of desirable trait of strain and process improvement. A successful culture with significant amount of probiotic upon ingestion into the human body is needed, at the same time with beneficial functionality properties.

The high prevalence of lactose intolerance and vegetarian people need an alternative as the carrier of probiotics. However, the largest probiotic food market share is dominated by dairy products (Mortazavian *et al.*, 2011). Cultivation of probiotics with fruit juices is the possible alternative to fulfil the need of some people who require the probiotic products, but allergic to dairy-based medium. Fermentation using probiotic bacteria would produce a novel, non-dairy probiotic drink, which could be a good product for individuals with lactose intolerance (Gumienna *et al.*, 2016).

Chronic-linked diseases generate serious complication and reduce patients' quality of life and raise the cost of medical care. For example, the prevalence of diabetes is increasing steadily worldwide, and it is estimated that by 2025, 300 million people in the world will be affected by this illness (Rios *et al.*, 2015). Indeed, glycemic management in type 2 diabetes mellitus has become increasingly complex and, to some extent, controversial, with a widening array of pharmacological agents now available, mounting concerns about their potential adverse effects and new

uncertainties regarding the benefits of intensive glycemic control on macrovascular complications (Inzucchi *et al.*, 2012). Hence, there is a strong need to look for effective and health-friendly antidiabetic agent with lesser adverse effects. Currently, plant source substances become possible therapeutic agent due to the safety and antioxidant activity (Qader, 2012). Thus, there is a need to establish an appropriate method, especially in quantifying phenolic compounds that are valuable for the bioactivities. Optimized fermentation process is crucial not only for having enough number of bacterial cells, but also retained phytonutrients upon ingestion.

Previous results showed that pomegranate juice is a good medium for the growth of probiotic bacteria, with their count being stable for 2-weeks of storage at 4 °C (Bialonska *et al.*, 2010; Plessas *et al.*, 2011; Mousavi *et al.*, 2011, Mousavi *et al.*, 2013). This process might yield pomegranate products exhibiting properties of functional food (Gumienna *et al.*, 2016). Only a few studies reported on the bioactivities after fermentation of fruit juice using *L. casei* (Wang *et al.*, 2009; Kumar *et al.*, 2013), some works focused on the growth and sensory properties (Pereira *et al.*, 2011; Yoon *et al.*, 2006; Costa *et al.*, 2013), metabolites components such as lactic acid (Silveira *et al.*, 2012; Kaavessina *et al.*, 2017), enzyme (Matthews *et al.*, 2004), bacteriocin (Adebayo *et al.*, 2014), and exopolysaccharides (Mozzi *et al.*, 2003). Thus, the exploitation of whole pomegranate fruit as probiotic carrier, as well as characterization of specific growth potential and functional features is one of the interest scopes in this study.

1.3 Research Objective

This study was conducted to achieve the objectives below:

1. To optimize probiotication of pomegranate juice with *Lactobacillus* species in shake flasks based on the parameters of temperature, pH and agitation speed.
2. To determine the kinetic growth of *L. casei* probioticated pomegranate juice in shake flasks.

3. To determine the growth profile of *L. casei* probioticated pomegranate juice in shake flasks (30 ml) and scaled up stirred tank bioreactor (5L).
4. To characterize the functionality of *L. casei* probioticated pomegranate juice for high antioxidant and antidiabetic activity.

1.4 Scope of Research

Experimental works of this study was started with probiotication of pomegranate juice with several strains of *Lactobacillus* species; *L. plantarum*, *L. salivarius*, *L. casei* and *L. bulgaricus*. The whole fruit of pomegranate included the peel, seed and arils were used as the cultivation medium for the probiotic. The probioticated and fresh juice were compared in term of metabolite profile by using Liquid Chromatography integrated with Mass Spectrometry (LCMS/MS), specifically on flavonoid compounds; quercetin, quercetin-3-glucoside, kaempferol rutinoside, kaempferol glucoside, rutin, apigenin. The successful starter culture with higher growth rate and functionality was utilized in the following analysis.

The probioticated pomegranate juice was further evaluated based on three bioprocessing parameters; temperature (30, 35 and 37 °C), agitation speed (0, 50, 100, 150 rpm) and pH. (2.5, 4.0, 5.5). Optimization using One Factor at A Time was used to obtain the best processing condition for the cultured juice. There were several responses included growth of *Lactobacillus* species, lactic acid production, flavonoids and phenolic acids availability and antioxidant activity.

Growth kinetic studies in shake flasks and 5L stirred-tank bioreactor were carried out at optimized condition (Temperature 37 °C, without agitation 0 rpm, pH 4.0). Kinetic studies in shake flask at the same temperature and pH, but differed in agitation speed (50 rpm) was also added. The integration of growth profile in all conditions was based on the Monod equation, which is basically applied for the batch cultivation. The equation is useful in describing the microbial process in terms of growth (biomass), substrate consumption and product formation.

The correlation of growth profile of *L. casei* probioticated pomegranate juice was further evaluated with the kinetics of quercetin-3-glucoside, antidiabetic and antioxidant activities statistically during shake flask and bioreactor cultivation. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was used to correlate the responses specifically for the bioreactor probioticated juice. It is estimated that the microbial growth is the influential factor towards the availability of the metabolite and bioactivities.

1.5 Significance of Research

This investigation offers several contributions in the bioprocessing technology using plant sources, mainly on the utilization of pomegranate juice as a probiotic carrier in the development of functional foods. This makes the research on this subject is not only timely, but also important for research and development of health promoting food and diseases prevention. Functional food is not the solely cure, but it could possibly assist our body system to be well-regulated and fight against various diseases.

To the best of our knowledge, the use of the whole part of pomegranate fruit is seldom studied by researchers. Most of the previous studies reported on the use of rind part of the fruit or fruit juice (rind) in the form of concentrate as the cultivation medium during probiotic action. Several researchers reported that pomegranate fruit is rich source of biologically active compounds in juice, peel and seed (Sreekumar *et al.*, 2014; Prakash and Prakash, 2011). After extensive literature survey on the medicinal properties of pomegranate, it is noted that Longtin (2003), referred pomegranate as “nature’s power fruit”. The utilization of the whole part of the fruit would possibly enhance phytonutrients accumulation in the medium during probiotic cultivation. With the improved fermentation condition, it is a good opportunity to evaluate the pomegranate's legacy and future as a powerful natural healing agent.

This study is intended to support the processing food and beverage industry for higher product quality. It can also be a method to improve a platform for

phytoceutical or nutraceutical industries. Fermentation with selected probiotic bacteria provide not only supplementary health effect, but also promote a safe preservation method for fruit juices. Developing fruit juice beverages fortified with probiotics could be an improvement in drinks that usually contain large amount of synthetic flavor, coloring and additive. The presence of synthetic additives in the fruit-based beverages could inhibit natural benefits from fruits to be fully absorbed by human body. Furthermore, practicing healthy diet into our life will cut down the supply of supplements, indirectly reducing medical expenditure.

The advantages of fruit juices as substrates for probiotic cultivation have been reported (Mousavi *et al.*,2011; Kazakos *et al.*, 2016; Thakur and Joshi, 2017) The low pH of fruit juices increases the acidity, thus making the incorporation of probiotics in this kind of matrix is challenging (Sheehan *et al.*, 2007). Some strains of probiotics have low ability to withstand the acidic pH of medium. Somehow, probioticated fruit juices have the potential to be embarked into a new industrial option. Further studies need to be carried out to optimize the survival conditions for individual strain based on the physicochemical properties of fruit juices. This is because probioticated fruit juices are likely to be the priority choice of consumers because of good agreement with health benefits. However, the number of scientific works on fruit-based probiotic foods as a delivery vehicle for the activity of probiotic bacteria is relatively limited till to date. The phenolic compounds in the pomegranate juice which mostly presence as quercetin-3-glucoside, with the addition of probiotic is believed to contribute on the bioactivities of the juice. Antidiabetic and antioxidant activities of the probioticated juice offer alternative treatment for those group of people.

Furthermore, synthetic drugs for the treatment of diabetes have adverse effects on human body. Alternatively, plant source product has high phytonutrients contributed by the presence of phenolic content, less toxicity and safer for intake. Dipeptidyl peptidase-4 (DPP-4) is one of the widely explored methods for Type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) evaluation. Research focused on the strategy to preserve the endogenous glucagon like peptide (GLP-1) activity by inhibiting the DPP-4 action. The DPP-4 inhibitors are weight neutral, well tolerated and giving better

glycaemic control over longer duration of time compared to the existing conventional therapies (Patel and Ghate, 2014). The medical care of T2DM patients consumes between 5 and 10% of the budget allocated to the health system due to the higher frequency of consultations and hospitalizations, and longer rehospitalizations and more complex treatments (Gagliardino *et al.*, 2004). Several studies have shown that actions aimed at preventing these complications by good diet or functional food consumption like probioticated pomegranate juice are cost effective (CDC Diabetes Cost-effectiveness Group, 2002).

Through this study, *L. casei* was able to survive well in the whole fruit pomegranate juice even though without nutrient supplementation. Indeed, the combination of whole part of the fruit (peels, arils, seeds) as the cultivation medium supplied the required nutrients needed for probiotic survival, thus improving the juice functionality. Probioticated pomegranate juice was proved to have higher antidiabetic and antioxidant activities than non-fermented juice. This was shown through the kinetic growth profile of *L. casei* with the improvement in the content of quercetin-3-glucoside.

1.6 Thesis Structure and Organization

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 covers the overview of the research background, problem statement, objective with its related scopes and significance of the study.

Chapter 2 describes and introduces *Punica granatum* in terms of characteristics and phytochemicals. Its biological activities such as antioxidant and antidiabetic are critically reviewed. The chapter also highlights the application of fermentation technology with the mechanistic action of probiotics to enhance the functionality of fruit juice.

Chapter 3 presents the materials and methodologies in the fermentation of pomegranate juice, as well as related assays like antidiabetic activity by using DPPIV

inhibition assay, antioxidant activity by DPPH assay, total phenolic content by Folin Ciocalteu assay, Liquid Chromatography tandem Mass Spectrometry (LCMS/MS) and High-Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC) for phytochemical compound identification and quantification. The process was also upscaled in 5L stirred-tank bioreactor for industrial platform basis.

Chapter 4 denotes the comprehensive results and discussion on the fermentation of pomegranate juice with the chosen probiotic lactic acid bacteria. Functionality of the probioticated fruit juice was determined by using the aforementioned analysis and thoroughly discussed and correlated.

Chapter 5 summarizes and concludes the research findings and suggests relevant recommendations for future works.

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