

PREVALENCE OF PSEUDOMONAS AERUGINOSA IN HOSPITALIZED PATIENTS IN PAKISTAN: A REVIEW ARTICLE

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Abstract

Pseudomonas aeruginosa is rod-shaped gram-negative bacterium. They are aerobic in nature and commonly cause hospital acquired infections. The current review article focuses on the prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* among hospitalized patients in Pakistan. *P. aeruginosa* is considered one of the most common pathogens acquired in hospitals and cause infections ranging from urinary tract to bacteremia. *P. aeruginosa* is one of the main causes in hospital Acquired infections (HAIs), especially in those patients who are admitted in ICU (Intensive Care Unit). The aim of this study was to find out the prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* in hospitalized patients throughout Pakistan. The prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* was found high in Faisalabad in hospitalized patient and low in Peshawar city Pakistan. Prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* is found more in males as compared to females.

INTRODUCTION

Pseudomonas aeruginosa was first isolated by Gessard in 1882 and was first identified as a pathogen by Charrin in 1890. In 1896 and 1899, the first cases in which the bacterium was cultured from blood samples of infected patients were reported (Abidi et al., 2013). *P. aeruginosa* is Gram-negative bacilli, bacteria. They are aerobic and have rod shaped. Its size range from 0.5 to 3.0 μm (Al-Zaidi et al., 2016). They contain more than 140 species and mostly of these are saprophytic in nature. More than 25 species of *pseudomonas* are related to humans (Ryan & Ray, 2004). *P. aeruginosa* has a single flagellum while some have two or three flagella (Nadeem et al., 2009). *P. aeruginosa* is a ubiquitous free-living bacterium that

exists mostly in humid environments. It has also the ability to adapt and survive in various types of environments such as water, sewage, soils and other inanimate surfaces etc. (Hare et al., 2012). There are many possible sources for the spread of *Pseudomonas* infections in between the hospitalized patients due to the contaminated solutions, body lotions, sinks, and inhalation and resuscitation devices have all been shown to be short-lived carriers for individuals susceptible to slarge area of hospital environment, which includes critical care devices such as ventilators, nebulizers and antiseptic solutions etc. So environmental sources play main role in transmission of *P. aeruginosa* in hospitalized patients (Tanvir et al.,

2015). Majority of infections caused by *Pseudomonas* are opportunistic diseases. *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* is considered one of the most important bacteria because of its close pathogenic association with humans.

Although it rarely causes diseases in healthy individuals, it is a major threat to hospitalized and immunocompromised patients, especially those with serious underlying diseases such as cancer and burns (Nadeem et al., 2009). The high mortality related to these infections is due to a combination of weak host immune defense system, bacterial resistance to antibiotics, bacterial exoenzymes and toxins (Anzai, Kim, Park, Wakabayashi, & Oyaizu, 2000). *P. aeruginosa* infections among hospitalized patients are now one of the most serious global problems, leading to high mortality and increasing hospital costs.

P. aeruginosa is widely spread in nature and in hospital environment, so it is a common prevalent cause of nosocomial infections in patients especially in those who are using ventilators in intensive care unit (ICU) and high-dependency unit (HDU) (Mansoor et al., 2015). There are different pathogens such as *Enterococcus*, *S. aureus*, *Klebsiella*, *Acinetobacter* etc. which are acquired in hospital but *P. aeruginosa* is the most common and important pathogen found in hospitalized patient (Boucher et al., 2009).

P. aeruginosa is considered one of the most common pathogens acquired in hospitals and causes different diseases in patients who are admitted in hospital. The infections caused by *P. aeruginosa* in hospitalized patients range from urinary tract to bacteremia (Streit, Jones, Sader, & Fritsche, 2004). *P. aeruginosa* can also be regarded as a sign of increased mortality in the hospital (Nathwani, Raman, Sulham, Gavaghan, & Menon, 2014). The mortality rate of patients infected with *P. aeruginosa* is high in hospital as compare to other pathogens (Weinstein, Gaynes, Edwards, & System, 2005). *P. aeruginosa* is a complex pathogen and also known the most causative agent of ventilator associated pneumonia (VAP) (Mansoor et al., 2015). Hussain et al reported in their study that the *P. aeruginosa* is the most common infectious agent in hospital admitted patients (A. Hussain et al., 2015). *P. aeruginosa* is also considered one of the most common causative agent of nosocomial pneumonia, nosocomial urinary tract infection and nosocomial

bacteremia in hospitalized patients (Lister, Wolter, & Hanson, 2009).

Among all gram-negative bacteria, *P. aeruginosa* has been considered a predominant opportunistic pathogen in hospitalized patient (Ali, Mumtaz, Naz, Jabeen, & Shafique, 2015) which usually infects immunocompromised patient (Hayward et al., 2000). In hospital admitted patients, *P. aeruginosa* mainly attacks patients with burns and wounds which further complicate the primary condition and mostly lead to bacteremia. (Kalantar et al., 2012). Burns remove the protective skin layer and expose the body to many bacterial pathogens (F. Ullah, Malik, & Ahmed, 2009). *P. aeruginosa* known as opportunistic pathogen, it often causes infection in burn patients (Van Eldere, 2003). Mortality in burn patients is mostly due to *P. aeruginosa* infections (Bloemsma, Dokter, Boxma, & Oen, 2008). In different studies *P. aeruginosa* has been reported to be the main agent isolated via culturing from a burn patient's wounds (Bloemsma et al., 2008). It is also an important cause of death from sepsis in burn patients (Tredget, Shankowsky, Rennie, Burrell, & Logsetty, 2004). *P. aeruginosa* may also cause life-threatening condition in immunocompromised patients who were admitted in hospital. (Ikpeme, Enyi-idoh, Nfongeh, Etim, & Akubuenyi, 2013).

The colonization of *P. aeruginosa* is also one of the main problems in wound infections which increase the rate of mortality and morbidity in hospital. Wound is defined as discontinuity of body tissue and considered as a serious problem around the world especially when it becomes infectious. The curing of wound delayed due to presence of bacteria which increases the inflammation (Xu, Moore, Murphy, Millar, & Elborn, 2004). The most important bacteria present in different types of wounds are *P. aeruginosa*. The *P. aeruginosa* is mostly present in patients of burn, accidental, surgical and pus wounds along with urinary tract and ear infection (Khalid et al., 2017). There are many factors due to which *P. aeruginosa* cause mostly hospital acquired infection such as, overuse and misuse of antibiotics, patient linked issues, improper prescription by the doctors, self-medication, unnecessary use of broad spectrum and untrained staff etc. (Bhatia & Narain, 2010).

P. aeruginosa cause different types of infections such as pneumonia, urinary tract infection, eye, ear

infection and surgical site infections (Farooq, Memon, Ismail, & Sadiq, 2019). *P. aeruginosa* also play an important role in the enhancement of complications in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) (Reinhart & Oglesby-Sherrouse, 2016). *P. aeruginosa* infection is also the main reason for morbidity in people with COPD (Murphy et al., 2009).

The pathogenicity of *P. aeruginosa* is the result of long-term adaptation in environment. *P. aeruginosa* has ability to adapt and release virulence factors such as enzymes etc. to escape host immune system (Naqvi, Hashmi, Rizwan, & Kharal, 2005). Once *P. aeruginosa* enters the airway, the bacterium will replicate and colonize the airway cavity and alveolar sacs (Rashid & Kornberg, 2000). Some of the bacteria will be engulfed and cleared by lung macrophages while some release inflammatory factors, cytokines, enzymes etc. and damage the respiratory system, resulting in immune cell infiltration (Bucior, Pielage, & Engel, 2012). The bacteria cross the protection barrier such as mucin or surfactant films through the damage area (Vallet, Olson, Lory, Lazdunski, & Filloux, 2001). Then, bacteria adhere to the epithelial cell membrane and cross the membrane to replicate and colonize in the cell (Chemani, 2009). The flagella and pili of *Pseudomonas* helps in adhesions with host cell (Hayashi et al., 2015).

β -lactam antibiotics have a broad host spectrum and low toxicity. They can penetrate gram-negative bacteria through outer membrane channel proteins called porins, and are considered a relatively safe treatment option (Saleem & Bokhari, 2020). Other studies have also recorded high resistance to penicillin, cephalosporins and aminoglycoside in *Pseudomonas* (Shahid & Malik, 2005). The carbapenems (imipenem and meropenem) were used as an effective treatment for *P. aeruginosa* since last decade but during the last few years' bacteria show resistance against these antibiotics (Perez & Endimiani, 2007) and recently colistin or polymyxin B antibiotics are used as a last choice of treatment for *P. aeruginosa* (Fernández, 2010), while resistance against colistin has also been reported. (Lescat, Poirel, Tinguely, & Nordmann, 2019).

DISCUSSION

A study was conducted by (Mansoor et al., 2015) from January 2013 to January 2015 in the Microbiology Department of Ziauddin Medical University Hospital Karachi, Pakistan. Blood, urine, body fluids, pus, tracheal aspirate and bronchial alveolar samples were collected from patients who were admitted in the ICU at the hospital. The prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* was reported 36%. A similar study was conducted by (Sabir, Alvi, & Fawwad, 2013) in Karachi, Pakistan. They were collected different samples such as urine, pus, blood and tracheal aspirates etc. The prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* was reported 36.2%.

A research study was conducted by (Ijaz, Siddique, Rasool, & Shafique, 2019) in Department of Microbiology, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan from January to December 2018. A total of 532 samples were collected from various types of wounds such as surgical wound, burn wound, accidental wound and pus wound out of which 203 samples were confirmed *P. aeruginosa*. The prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* was 38%.

In another study by (M. S. Hussain, Nasir, Shahid, Sarwar, & Ejaz, 2017) in the department of pathology (Microbiology section) Sheikh Zayed Medical College/Hospital, Rahim Yar Khan, from 1st October 2015 to 31st January 2016. A total of hundred specimens were collected such as blood, pus, urine and wound swab from patients admitted in different wards and units in the hospital. Total of hundred (100) samples were collected from burn unit (22%), ICU (16%), OPD (28%), surgical ward (16%) and medical ward (18%) patients. Clinical samples included blood (10%), wound swabs (36%), pus (28%) and urine (26%). *P. aeruginosa* was confirmed positive from urine 4 (17%), pus 6 (26%), blood 2 (9%) and wound swab 11 (48%). The prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* was reported 23% in total of 100 samples. It was assessed in another study by (Khan, Khan, & Kazmi, 2014) from January 2012 to January 2013 in Microbiology Department, University of Karachi. Different clinical samples were collected such as blood, urine, pus etc. from different hospital of Karachi. The maximum number of *P. aeruginosa* was confirmed positive in pus samples 10 (33.3%) followed by wound swabs 8 (26.6%), bronchial fluid 7 (23.5%), urine 3 (10%) and blood samples 2 (6.6%). The prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* was reported 30%.

Study assessed by (Abbas et al., 2015) in microbiology section of Pathology laboratory Khyber Teaching Hospital and Lady Reading Hospital Peshawar. A total of 2058 different clinical samples were collected such as pus, urine, blood, ear swab, sputum etc. Out of total, 258 clinical samples were confirmed positive for *P. aeruginosa* which include pus samples 177 (68.6%), urine 17 (6.6%), blood 17 (6.6%), ear swab 25 (9.7%), pleural fluid 10 (3.8%), sputum 8 (3.1%) and

miscellaneous 4 (1.8%). The prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* was reported 12.5%. Positive tested samples for *P. aeruginosa* consisted of 159 males and 99 females. The prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* for males and females were reported 61.6% and 38.4% respectively as represented in (Figure.1). Ages of patient was range from 5 years to 74 years. (Table1).

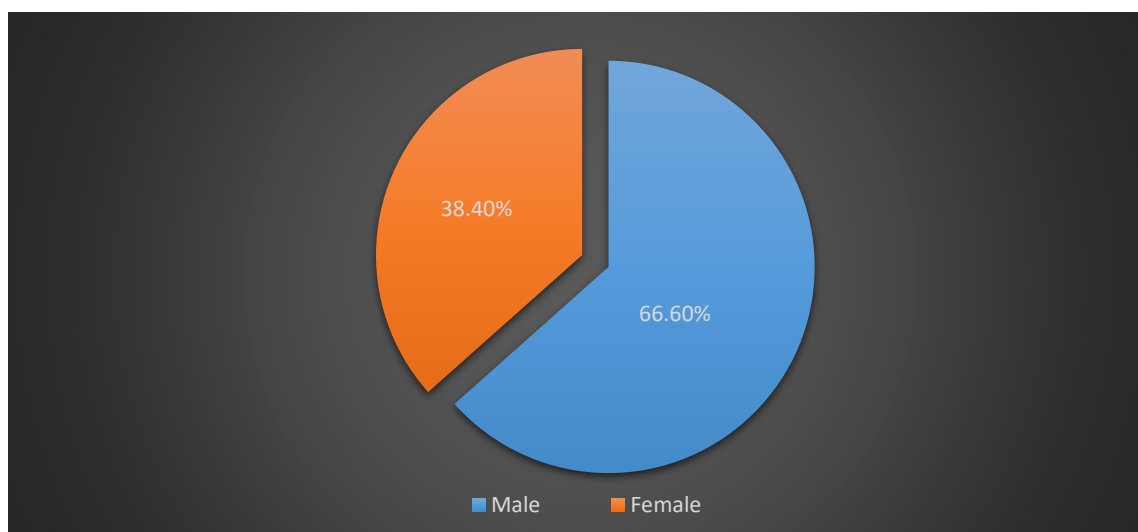


Figure 1. Gender wise Prevalence of *P. aeruginosa*. (Abbas et al., 2015)

Table -1: Number of isolates collected from different age groups (Abbas et al., 2015)

Age (years)	Number of isolates (Total= 258)	Prevalence (%)	Reference
5-15	33	12.79	(Abbas & Naeem, 2015)
15-30	39	15.11	
30-40	52	20.15	
40-50	61	23.63	
50+	33	12.79	
60+	40	15.50	

Similar study was conducted by (Samad, Ahmed, Rahim, Khalil, & Ali, 2017) from January to December 2014 in Northwest General Hospital and Research Centre, Peshawar. A total of 354 sputum samples were collected out of which 71 samples were

confirmed positive for *P. aeruginosa*. The prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* was reported 71 (20.05%) out of which 39 (54.93%) were males and 32 (45.07%) were females as shown in Figure.2.

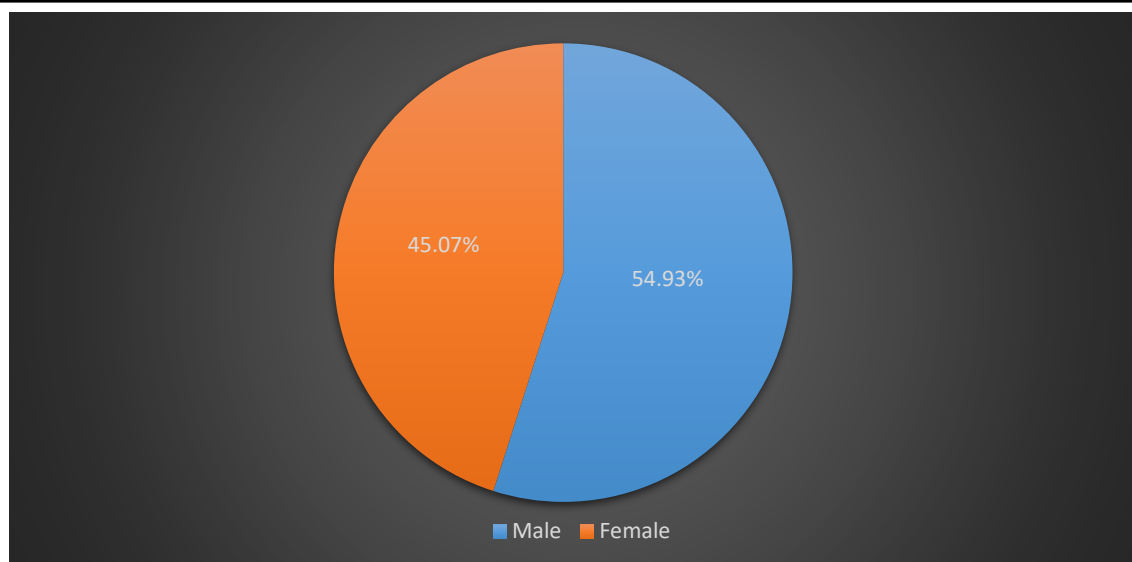


Figure 2. Gender wise Prevalence of *P. aeruginosa*. (Samad et al., 2017)

(W. Ullah et al., 2016) at tertiary care hospital, Peshawar, Pakistan from September 2013 to January 2014. Different clinical samples such as urine, sputum, pus and wound swab were collected from hospitalized patients. Total of 3700 samples were collected out of which 102 (2.7%) were confirmed positive for *P. aeruginosa*. Prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* was found more in male 54 (52%) as compared to

female 48 (47.05%). Prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* was also reported in different wards of the hospital. The prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* was found in burn ward 26 (25.4%) followed by surgical ward 16 (15.8%), medical ward 14 (13.8%), orthopedic and ICU ward 6 (5.8% each), skin and cardiovascular wards 4 (3.9% each). Lowest prevalence was reported in ENT and plastic 4 (3.9% each) as represented in (table 2).

Table 2. Prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* in different wards

Ward wise	No of isolates	Prevalence %	Reference
Surgical ward	16	15.68	(Ullah & Qasim, 2016)
Burn ward	26	25.48	
Cardiovascular ward	4	3.92	
Orthopedics ward	6	5.88	
Skin ward	4	3.92	
ICU ward	6	5.88	
Plastic surgery ward	1	0.98	
ENT ward	1	0.98	
Medical ward	14	13.76	
OPD	24	23.52	
Total	102	100	

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that *P. aeruginosa* is one of the most commonly isolated bacteria from hospitalized patients in Pakistan. *P. aeruginosa* is considered one of the most common pathogens acquired in hospitals and cause infections ranging from urinary tract to

bacteremia. The prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* was found high in Faisalabad in hospitalized patient and low in Peshawar city Pakistan. Prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* is found more in males as compared to females. *P. aeruginosa* mostly cause diseases in hospitalized patients, so it rarely causes disease in

healthy individuals. *P. aeruginosa* is a major threat to hospitalized and immunocompromised patients, especially those with serious underlying diseases such as cancer and burns etc. The prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* was reported high in burn ward and low in ENT ward. The average prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* was reported 24.80% in Pakistan.

The unreasonable use of antibiotics, unsanitary environment and practices of health-related personnel are considered to be factors that may increase the prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* in hospitalized patients.

The frequency of *P. aeruginosa* is raised. More attention is required to disinfect the hospital environment and limit the transfers of *P. aeruginosa* among hospitalized patients.

So, this study is limited to only few cities in Pakistan therefore we recommended to conduct a large-scale study to find out the exacted prevalence of *P. aeruginosa* in hospitalized patient in the Pakistan.

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