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### **Original Research Article**

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## **Purification and Kinetics of Cholesterol Oxidase from** *Penicillium chrysogenum*

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Cholesterol oxidase (CO) was purified from P. chyrsogenum by 85% ammonium sulphate precipitation, DEAE-Cellulose and Sephadex G-200. The final specific activity was 300

units mg<sup>-1</sup> protein and 230-fold. CO was purified to homogeneity as indicated by SDS-PAGE which expressed a single band at 43 KDa. The optimal cholesterol concentration

was 1mM.  $K_m$  and  $V_{max}$  values were 0.53 %w/v and 51.5 Umg<sup>-1</sup> protein, respectively. The

optimal incubation time for enzyme catalysis was 15 min. The optimal temperature was

 $40^{\circ}$ C and the optimal pH was 7. At 1 mM and 5mM Ca<sup>+2</sup> activated CO whereas Cu<sup>+2</sup>, mg<sup>+2</sup>,

 $Hg^{+2}$ ,  $B^{+2}$ , and  $Fe^{+2}$  inhibited CO activity.  $Hg^{+2}$  was the most potent inhibitor which abolished 69.1% and 86.8% at 1 mM and 5 mM, respectively. Ethylenediaminetetra acetate

(EDTA), ethyleneglycoltetra acetate (EGTA),  $\theta$ -phenanthroline and  $\alpha$ -dipyridyl inhibited

CO activity with  $IC_{50}$  of 9.7, 7.6, 20.8 and 14.2 mM, respectively indicating that CO is a

metalloenzyme. N-ethylmaleimide (NEM), dansyl chloride (DnsCl), N-bromosuccinimide

(NBS) and diethylpyrocarbonate (DEPC) and butandione (BD) inhibited CO of from P.

chrysogenum in concentration-dependent manner with IC<sub>50</sub> values 5.1, 5.8, 6.7, 8.1 and 8.2

mM, respectively indicating the essentiality of sulfhydryl, lysyl, histidyl, tryptophanyl and

## **ABSTRACT**

arginyl groups, respectively.

#### Keywords

Cholesterol oxidase, Purification, Metal ions, Chelating agents and Active groups

**Article Info** 

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## Introduction

Studying of the industrial enzymes and their uses is known as enzyme technology. The benefits of using enzymes are endorsed to numerous properties. They are specific to their substrates; they cause fewer environmental contamination. act at slight temperatures as well as neutral pH. They produce unwanted by-products (Adrio and Demain, 2014). The wide range of microbial enzymes made them interesting tools for application in different areas

including chemical industry, agricultural purposes, food industry, textile industry, pharmaceuticals, wood industry, and cosmetics (Liu and Kokare, 2017).

Commercial applications of enzymes are classified into various groups including food feed and detergents (Sharma et al., 2010). Feed and food signifies the largest section for industrial enzymes. However, detergents signify the other group of industrial enzymes (Adrio and Demain, 2014).

Cholesterol is essential for different metabolic pathways in mammal's bodies. Cholesterol is involved in transport of fat in blood stream and is a part of the structure of cell membranes (Doukyu and Ishikawa, 2020).

Cholesterol is the important in synthesis of vitamin D. One of the main roles of cholesterol is its involvement in synthesis of bile acids. They have role in absorption of fats from the intestine (Sagermann, *et al.*, 2010; Kumari and Shamsher, 2015; Kalaivani and Suja, 2020).

Cholesterol oxidase (CO, EC.1.1.3.6) is bifunctional enzyme belongs to the first group of enzymes which are oxidoreductases (El-Naggar *et al.*, 2018; Devi *et al.*, 2019; Perdani *et al.*, 2020). The enzyme was found in fungi (Perdani *et al.*, 2019) and actinomycetes (Kumari and Shamsher, 2012).

CO oxidizes cholesterol and converts 5-cholesten-3 $\beta$ -ol into 4-cholesten-3-ones (Bholay *et al.*, 2013). Cholest-4-en-3-one is an essential synthetic intermediate in transformation of many steroids. Moreover, cholest-4-en-3-one is involved in synthesis of drugs (Wu *et al.*, 2015). CO is produced by different microorganisms as an extra-cellular or intra-cellular enzyme (Lashgarian *et al.*, 2016; Perdani *et al.*, 2019). The present work aimed to purify CO from *P.chyrsogenum* and studying its properties.

## **Materials and Methods**

## **Experimental Organism**

*Penicillium chyrsogenum* was provided by Prof. Metwally A. Metwally, Prof. of Microbiology, Botany Department, Faculty of Science, Tanta University, Egypt.

## Preparation and determination of CO activity

The enzyme extract was prepared and assayed by the method of Ruiz-Herrera and Starkery (1969).

## **Purification of CO**

## CO precipitation by ammonium sulphate

Ammonium sulphate was used to precipitate the extracellular CO from the fungal culture, in ice bath, till desired saturation (85% w/v) according to Bollag *et al.*, (1996).

## **Ion-Exchange chromatography**

DEAE-cellulose was made by soaking 3g of DEAEcellulose in phosphate buffer (pH 7.0) for 24h, then packing the column ( $2\times40$ cm). The column was equilibrated by phosphate buffer (pH 7.0). The flow rate was 1 ml/5 min and the concentrated enzyme (5ml) dialysate was uploaded to the column of DEAE-cellulose.

The enzyme in the gel was equilibrated by 30 ml phosphate buffer (pH 7.0). CO was then eluted by NaCl concentrations (100, 150, 200 mM). The activity of CO as well as the protein content was measured in each fraction. The active fractions were pooled and concentrated by dialysis against polyethyleneglycol (PEG).

## **Gel-filtration chromatography**

The dialysis was fractionated by gel filtration chromatography using Sephadex  $G_{200}$  column. Sephadex  $G_{200}$  particles (2g) were soaked in 100 ml potassium phosphate (pH 7.0) overnight at 4°C, then carefully packing to the column (2×40cm).

The column was pre-equilibrated with potassium phosphate (pH 7.0) and the rate of buffer flow was assessed. The column was maintained at  $4^{\circ}$ C in refrigerator during the fractionation process. CO was eluted by potassium phosphate buffer (pH 7.0) at 1 ml/ 10min flow rate.

The activity of CO and protein content of the fractions were measured. The active fractions were pooled and consumed for investigating the biochemical properties.

#### Biochemical characterization of the purified CO

#### Effect of substrate concentration on CO activity

The effect of cholesterol concentration as a substrate for CO activity was studied using cholesterol at various concentrations (0.2, 0.4, 0.6, 0.8 and 1.0 mM). The Michaels constant (Km) and the maximum velocity ( $V_{max}$ ) of CO was evaluated by plotting the relation between the reciprocal of substrate (S) against the reciprocal of velocity (V).

#### Effect of incubation time on CO

To study the effect of incubation time on CO activity, the enzyme mixture was incubated for 5,10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 min followed by determination of CO activity.

#### Effect of incubation temperature on CO activity

The enzyme activity was measured at temperature range 20-60oC. The other factors affecting the enzyme activity such as substrate concentration, enzyme concentration and pH were kept constant.

#### Effect of pH on CO activity

Effect of pH of reaction mixture on CO activity was determined at different pH values (4.5, 5, 5.5, 6, 6.5, 7, 7.5, 8 and 8.5) using various buffers: 50 mM acetate buffer (pH 3.0-5.0), 50 mM phosphate buffer (pH 5.0-8.0) and 50mM sodium carbonate buffer (pH 9.0-10.0).

#### Effect of some cations on CO activity

The effect of various metal ions on CO activity from *P.chrysogenum* was tested. The CO activity was measured in the presence of  $Ca^{+2}$ ,  $Cu^{+2}$ ,  $Mg^{+2}$ ,  $Hg^{+2}$ ,  $Ba^{+2}$  and Fe<sup>+3</sup> as chloride salt at 1mM and 5 mM in the assay mixture and CO activity was determined.

#### Effect of chelating agents on CO activity

#### Effect of EGTA and EDTA on CO activity

The effect of EGTA (ethylene glycol tetraacetate) and EDTA (ethylene daiamine tetraacetate) on CO

activity was investigated. They were tested at 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 mM in the reaction medium followed by determination of enzyme activity and calculating the relative activity (% of the control value).

## Effect of *o*-phenanthroline and $\alpha$ - $\alpha$ -dipyridyl on CO activity

The chelating agents of 0-phenanthroline and  $\alpha$ - $\alpha$ -dipyridyl were tested at 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 mM in the reaction medium followed by enzyme assay as mentioned before.

## Effect of various reagents of active groups in enzyme protein

## Effect of N-ethylmaleimide (NEM) on CO activity

Purified CO was incubated for 1 h at 25 °C in 100 mM Tris-HCl (pH 5.0). NEM was tested at 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10mM. After 60 min of the incubation aliquot of the mixture was withdrawn and assayed for CO activity.

#### Effect of dansyl chloride (DnsCl) on CO activity

Stock solution of DnsCl in acetonitrile was prepared. CO (0.5 ml) was incubated for 60 min at 4 °C with different concentrations of dnsCl (2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 mM) in 100 mM Tris (pH 7).

The reaction was terminated by 20 mM  $\beta$ mercaptoethanol and 30 mM lysine (El-Shora *et al.*, 2015).

# Effect of diethyl pyrocaronate (DEPC) on CO activity

Dimethyl pyrocaronate (DEPC) was prepared (Hirs and Timasheff, 1977).The purified CO (0.5ml) incubated with 0,2,4,6,8 and 10 mM DEPC at 25 °C in assay buffer for 5 min prior to enzyme assay and subsequently the activity of CO determined and the results were depicted as graph.

## Effect of N-bromosuccinamide (NBS) on CO activity

Tryptophanyl group of CO was modified using NBS according to Williams (1975). Aliquots of each concentration of NBS (2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 mM) were added to 5 ml of CO in 15 mM phosphate buffer (pH7.0). The modified CO was dialyzed against distilled water after 1 h of stirring at  $28\pm 2$  °C for 24 h and the enzyme was assayed.

#### Effect of butanedione (BA) on CO activity

The modification was carried out at room temperature according to Willassen and little, (1989) and Bihzad and EL-Shora (1996). BA solution was tested at various concentrations (2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 mM) added to CO (5 ml) in 50 mM sodium borate buffer (pH 8.0) to start the modification reaction. CO incubated with the buffer alone represents the untreated control and the activity was measured.

#### **Results and Discussion**

#### **Purification of CO**

CO was isolated and purified by 85% ammonium sulphate, DEAE-Cellulose and Sephadex G-200. The results are summarized in Table 1. The results indicate that CO was purified with specific activity of 300 units mg<sup>-1</sup> protein. The yield was 12.1% and the purification fold was 230. The purity of CO was confirmed by SDS-PAGE which showed a single band at 43 KDa (Fig.1)

#### Effect of cholesterol concentration on CO activity

The effect of cholesterol as substrate concentration on CO activity was examined using various concentrations of cholesterol (0.2, 0.4, 0.6, 0.8 and 1.0 mM). CO activity was determined in presence of each concentration. The results in Fig. 2A demonstrates that there was continuous increase in the enzyme activity with increment in substrate concentrations up to 1.0 mM where the activity was 16.5 units mg<sup>-1</sup> protein after which there was steady increase in the enzyme activity at the higher concentration of cholesterol. Plotting the reciprocal of substrate concentration (1/S) against the reciprocal of velocity of enzyme (1/V) gave straight line Fig 2B. The  $K_m$  and  $V_{max}$  values are calculated from this figure and their values were 0.53 % (w/v) and 51.5 units mg<sup>-1</sup> protein, respectively.

### Effect of incubation time on CO activity

The effect of incubation time on CO activity was carried out at various time intervals (5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 min). The results are shown in Fig. 3. The results indicate that increasing the time of incubation from 5 to 15 min led to increase in CO activity. The activity after 15 min was 15.8 units mg<sup>-1</sup> protein increasing the time after 15 min caused reduction of CO activity continuously and reached 11.0 units mg<sup>-1</sup> protein after 30 min.

### **Effect of temperature CO activity**

The effect of incubation temperature on CO activity was investigated at various temperatures (20, 25, 30, 40, 45, 50, 55 and  $60^{\circ}$ C). The other factors affect the enzyme activity was retained constant including pH, enzyme concentration and substrate concentration.

The obtained results show that there was continuous increment with the increase in the incubation temperature Fig. 4. The optimum temperature was  $40^{\circ}$ C after which the activity declined gradually.

## Effect of pH CO activity

For studding the effect of pH on CO activity, the other factors which affect the enzyme activity were kept constant such as temperature, enzyme concentration and substrate concentration. Various pH values were tested (4.5, 5, 5.5, 6, 6.5, 7, 7.5, 8 and 8.5) for their effect on CO activity. The results demonstrate that there was continuous increase in CO activity with the increase in pH up to 7 which is the optimum pH for the enzyme catalysis, and after which continuous decrease in CO activity at the extreme pH values (Fig. 5).

#### Effect of some cations on CO activity

The effect of various cations including  $Ca^{+2}$ ,  $Cu^{+2}$ ,  $Mg^{+2}$ ,  $Hg^{+2}$ ,  $Ba^{+2}$  and  $Fe^{+3}$  on CO activity was investigated. These cations were tested at both 1mM and 5 mM in the form of chloride salts. The results are shown in Fig. 6A. It is apparent that  $Ca^{+2}$  was activator at both 1 mM and 5 mM, where it activated the enzyme with 22% and 34%, at 1mM and 5mM, respectively.  $Mg^{+2}$  did not show any effect on CO activity. On the other hand, the remained cations including  $Cu^{+2}$ ,  $Hg^{+2}$ ,  $Ba^{+2}$  and  $Fe^{+3}$  inhibited the enzyme at both tested concentrations with different rates.

## Effect of Ca<sup>+2</sup>concentrations on CO activity

Since  $Ca^{+2}$  was the most effective cation in enhancing CO activity and the results are shown in Fig.6B. Plotting the relation between the reciprocals of  $Ca^{+2}$  (1/S) concentrations and the enzyme velocity (1/V), it is apparent that this relation follows Lineweaver-Burk plot. The values of V<sub>max</sub> and K<sub>m</sub> were 16.9 units mg<sup>-1</sup> protein and 0.29 % w/v, respectively.

#### Effect of chelating agents on CO activity

# Ethylene daiamine tetraacetate (EDTA) and ethylene glycol tetraacetate (EGTA)

EDTA and EGTA as chelating agents were tested at various concentrations (2- 10 mM). The results were illustrated in Fig. 7A and Fig. 7B. The activity of CO decreased gradually with increasing EDTA the concentration. The  $IC_{50}$  of EDTA was 7.7 mM and the  $IC_{50}$  of EGTA was 5.8mM.

## Effect of *o*-phenanthroline and on α- α dipyridyl CO activity

The effect of *o*-phenanthroline and  $\alpha$ - $\alpha$  dipyridyl as chelating agents were examined at various concentrations (2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 mM) on CO activity was investigated. The relative activities were calculated. The results in Fig.7C indicate

apparent reduction of CO with increasing o-phenanthroline concentration. IC<sub>50</sub> of o-phenanthroline was 8.5 mM.

Also, there was continuous decrease in CO with increasing in  $\alpha$ -  $\alpha$  dipyridyl concentration (Fig. 7D) and the IC<sub>50</sub> of  $\alpha$ -  $\alpha$  dipyridyl was 5.7 mM. The inhibition of CO by EDTA, EGTA, *o*-phenanthroline and  $\alpha$ - $\alpha$  dipyridyl reveals that CO is a metalloenzyme.

Effect of various reagents of active groups in enzyme protein

## Effect of N-ethylmaleimide (NEM) on CO activity

The effect of NEM as a reagent for sulfhydryl group on CO was investigated and the results are shown in Fig.8A.The enzyme activity decreased gradually in a concentration dependent manner. The IC<sub>50</sub> of NEM was5.1mM.

#### Effect of dansyl chloride (DnsCl) on CO activity

DnsCl is a reagent used for detection of lysyl group in protein EL-Shora *et al.*, (2015). The effect of DnsCl on CO activity was investigated at various concentrations (2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 mM).

The relative activity was calculated. The results in Fig. 8B indicate continuous decrease in the enzyme activity with the increase in DnsCl concentrations.  $IC_{50}$  of DnsCl was 5.8 mM.

# Effect of diethylpyrocarbonate (DEPC) on CO activity

DEPC is used as a reagent for histidyl group in the enzyme molecule. This compound was tested at various concentrations (2-10 mM) and CO activity was determined for each concentration. The results indicate continuous reduction of the CO activity with the increase of DEPC concentration and the  $IC_{50}$  value was 6.7 mM Fig. 8C.

## Effect of N-bromosuccinimide (NBS) on CO activity

N-bromosuccinimide is an indicator for tryptophanyl group in protein EL-Shora *et al.*, (2015). Therefore, this experiment aimed to investigate whether tryptophanyl group is essential for CO catalysis.

This compound is tested at various concentrations (2- 10 mM). The results are shown graphically in Fig. 8D. The results show that there was continuous reduction in CO activity in presence of NBS and the reduction was concentration-dependent and the  $IC_{50}$  of NBS was 6.1 mM.

Step	Total protein (mg)	Total units	Specific activity (unitsmg <sup>-1</sup> protein)	Yield (%)	Fold of purification
Crude extract	475	617.5	1.3	100	1
Ammonium	108	432	4.0	69.9	3.1
sulphate (85%)					
<b>DEAE-Cellulose</b>	6.4	160	25.0	25.9	19.2
Sephadex G-200	6.25	75	300.0	12.1	230

### Table.1

#### Fig.1 SDS-PAGE of CO from *P. chrysogenum*.







**Fig.3** Effect of incubation time on CO activity.





Fig.5 Effect of pH on CO activity.





Fig.7A The relative activity of CO in presence of EDTA



#### Effect of butanedione (BD) on CO activity

In this experiment the influence of BD as a reagent of arginyl group EL-Shora *et al.*, (2019) on CO activity was studied. The results are illustrated in Fig. 8E and indicate that BD inhibited CO activity gradually depending on the concentration and the  $IC_{50}$  of BD was 8.2 mM.

CO was purified from *P. chrysogenum* by 85% ammonium sulphate precipitation, DEAE-Cellulose and Sephadex G-200. The final specific activity was

300 units mg<sup>-1</sup> protein and 230 fold. CO was purified to homogeneity as indicated by SDS-PAGE which expressed a single band at 43 KDa. The specific activity of purified CO from Streptomyces sp. AKHSS was 1.99 units mg<sup>-1</sup> with 16.58-fold purification and 23.68% yield (Kavitha and Savithri, 2019). El-Naggar et al., (2018) reported the purification of CO from Stryptomyces aegyptia 102 through ammonium NEAE sulphate precipitation, dialysis and DEAE Sepharose CL-6B ion exchange chromatography with specific activity 16.08 units mg<sup>-1</sup> protein and 3.14-fold. Yehia *et al.*, (2015) reported that the partial purification of the enzyme from Enterococcus hirae increased the enzyme's specific activity from 53.30 to 124.87 units mg<sup>-1</sup>protein, which corresponds to 2.3-fold purification and 79 % yield on Sephadex G-100 purification step. The specific activity of the obtained pure CO from Staphylococcus epidermidis was 62 units mg<sup>-1</sup> protein with43.4 fold. However, the specific activities from Entrobacter sp., Bordetella sp. and Rhodococcus sp. were 25.2, 21.0 and 5.5 units  $mg^{-1}$  protein, respectively (Elalami *et* al., 1999; Ye et al., 2008; Lin et al., 2010). These results revealed that there was an increase in CO activity with the increase of incubation till 15 min which was the optimal time. The results also reveal that there was continuous increase in the enzyme activity with increasing of substrate concentrations up to 1.0 mM where the activity was 16.5 units  $mg^{-1}$ protein after which there was steady increase in the enzyme activity at the higher concentration of cholesterol as substrate. After the initial period, the

rate of reaction decreases and shows that the substrate is present in excess. The explanation of this phenomenon is the reduction of enzyme activity after a period of time. This may be due to the effect of heat of incubation on the tertiary structure of the enzyme or to formation of side-product of the reaction, which inhibits the enzyme activity (Lizotte et al., 1990). The obtained relationship between the velocity (V) and concentration (S) of CO reaction is in accordance with the typical enzyme reaction (Michaels and Menten, 1913). Also, it was apparent that the typical addition of excessive amounts of the substrate resulted in lowering the velocity of enzyme reaction. This may be due to the fact that higher substrate concentration may cause an inhibition of the enzyme reaction (Palmer, 1995).  $K_m$  and  $V_{max}$ values of CO from P. chrysogenum were 0.53 mM and 51.5 units mg<sup>-1</sup> protein, respectively. Also, The K<sub>m</sub>of CO was 0.026 and 0.556 mM from Chromobacterium sp. (Doukyu et al., 2008) and Bordetella sp. (Lin et al., 2010), respectively. Generally, the advantages of knowing K<sub>m</sub> value for an enzyme of interest. Firstly, we can predict the need of cells to more enzymes or more substrate to speed up the reaction. Some enzymes are usually not saturated by substrates (E-Shora et al., 2016). Second, K<sub>m</sub> value represents approximate inverse measure of the affinity of the enzymes that can catalyze reactions with two similar subrates, the substrate for which the enzyme has the lower K<sub>m</sub> is one most frequently acted upon the cell (Devasena, 2010).

#### **Fig.7C** *o*-phenanthroline







**Fig.8** The relative activity of CO in presence of NEM (Fig. 8A), DnsCl(Fig. 8B), DEPC (Fig. 8C),NBS (Fig. 8D) and BD (Fig. 8E).



Thirdly, the  $K_m$  gives approximately measure of the cell in which reaction occurs. For example, enzymes can catalyze reactions with the relatively concentrated substrates usually have relatively high  $K_m$  values for their substrates and enzymes that react with substrates present in very low concentrations have much lower  $K_m$  values for their substrates (EL-Shora *et al.*, 2015).

The results elucidated that the optimum temperature CO from *P.chrysogenum* was 40°C after which the activity declined gradually at the higher temperatures. This result was in agreement with results obtained from Staphylococcus epidermidis when the optimum temperature of CO was 40 C (EL-Shora et al., 2011). Also, it is similar to that reported for the enzyme from Rhodococcus equi (Richmond, 1973). Other optimum temperature was reported for the enzyme from Proteobacterium (Isobe et al., 2003), Brevibacterium sterolicum (Fujishiro et al., 2002) and Chromobacterium sp. (Doukyu et al., 2008). The heat stability of CO is useful when supplying it in a process involving cholesterol degradation, e.g. food-cholesterol degradation (Wang et al., 2008). The heat stability of an enzyme is affected by two factors. The first one is the primary structure of the enzyme. The high content of hydrophobic anion acids provides a compact structure, which cannot denaturants easily by change in the external environment.

The optimum pH for CO from *P.chrysogenum* was 7.0. This result was harmony with results obtained by (Yehia *et al.*, 2015). Generally, enzymes are sensitive to changes in pH value. The pH can influence the enzyme activity in a number of ways. 1: it can change the ionization of enzyme substrate complex. 2: it can change the ionization of various group of enzyme molecule which way affect the affinity of the enzyme for its substrate. 3: It changes the ionization of the substrate which way affect binding of substrate to enzyme.4: At the extreme PH it can brings changes in protein structure (Palmer, 1995).

On the other hand, the remained cations including

 $Cu^{\scriptscriptstyle +2}\!,\ Mg^{\scriptscriptstyle +2}\!,\ Hg^{\scriptscriptstyle +2}\!,\ Ba^{\scriptscriptstyle +2}$  and  $Fe^{\scriptscriptstyle +3}$  inhibited the enzyme at both tested concentrations with different rates. This inhibition of CO by Cu<sup>+2</sup> and Hg<sup>+2</sup> might be due to oxidation of sulfhydryl groups of the enzyme. Shah and Dubey (1997) reported that heavy metal ions could replace the essential metal ions in the active center of enzymes, thus inhibiting the enzyme activity.CO activity was markedly inhibited by Hg<sup>+2</sup> and Cu<sup>+2</sup> (Doukyu, 2009). FeCl<sub>3</sub> remarkably inhibited the activity of CO from Streptomyces violascens (Tomioka et al., 1976). Cu<sup>+2</sup> inhibited CO from Streptoverticillium cholesterolieum (Inouve et al., 1982). Ca<sup>+2</sup> was activator at both 1 mM and 5 mM, where it activated CO with 22% and 34%, respectively. Mg<sup>+2</sup> did not show any effect on CO activity. These results were in harmony with those obtained by EL-Shora et al., (2011) for CO from Staphylococcus epidermidis. The activation of CO by  $Ca^{2+}$  could be attributed to the strengthening of interactions inside CO molecules and by the binding of  $Ca^{2+}$  to the autolysis site.  $Ca^{2+}$  activated other enzymes such as phytase (El-Shora and Abo-Kassem, 2000). The increase in the activity of the enzyme in the presence of  $Ca^{+2}$  may be attributed to stabilization of enzyme in its active conformation rather than involving in the catalytic reaction. It is possible to act as a salt or ion bridge through a cluster of carboxylic groups as has been suggested to maintain rigid conformation of the molecule (EL-Shora *et al.*, 2009)

The inhibition of CO by EDTA, EGTA,  $\alpha$ -  $\alpha$  dipyridyl and *o*-phenanthroline seems likely to be mediated through chelation of the metal present in CO molecule converting it to non-active enzyme (EL-Shora *et al.*, 2015). Other microbial enzyme have been reported to be inhibited by EDTA such as  $\beta$ -lactamase (Marchiaro *et al.*, 2008), protease (El-Shora *et al.*, 2009) and  $\beta$ -glucanase (EL-Shora *et al.*, 2019). The inhibition of CO activity by the four chelating compounds indicates that CO is a metalloenzyme.

NEM, DnsCl, NBS, DEPC and BD inhibited CO of from *P. chrysogenum* in concentration-dependent manner. The inhibition of CO by these compounds reveals the necessity of sulfhydryl, lysyl, histidyl, tryptophanyl and arginyl groups for enzyme catalysis (EL-Shora *et al.*, 2015; EL-Shora *et al.*, 2016; EL-Shora *et al.*, 2019). Generally, it is remarkable that the chemical modification studies could selectively target the enzyme residues specifically at the active site. In fact, these results illustrate the usefulness of such study in preliminary identification of the groups in enzyme molecules responsible for catalysis.

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