

Assessment of Oxidative Stress Related Parameters in the Development of Diabetes and Diabetic Nephropathy

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Abstract

Background: The primary cause of end-stage renal disease is diabetic nephropathy (DN). Type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) and the development of diabetic nephropathy are significantly influenced by reactive oxygen species (ROS). Assessing the levels of oxidative and antioxidative markers in T2DM and DN patients in the North Indian community is the aim of our current investigation. Type 2 diabetes patients and those with nephropathy were used as controls to measure the levels of Catalase (CAT), lipid peroxides (LPO), superoxide dismutase (SOD), reduced glutathione (GSH), glutathione peroxidase (GPx), glutathione reductase (GR), and protein carbonyl content.

Results: SOD and CAT activity was considerably lower in DN than in controls. Patients with diabetes and nephropathy had considerably higher levels of lipid peroxidation and protein carbonyl content than controls. Compared to the control group, type 2 diabetes patients with and without nephropathy showed significantly lower levels of GSH, GPx, and GR activity.

Conclusion: Our research revealed that higher LPO levels might be causing cellular antioxidant enzyme levels to drop, which would contribute to worse OS in T2DM patients with nephropathy as opposed to those with simple T2DM. As a result, OS might be an essential mediator in the pathophysiology of diabetic nephropathy development.

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KEYWORDS:

Diabetic nephropathy, Lipid peroxidation, Superoxide dismutase, Type 2 diabetes.

HOW TO CITE:

Tiwari S, Ahmad I, Agrahari P, Sonkar SK, Sonkar GK, Mahdi AA, Ahmad MK. Assessment of Oxidative Stress Related Parameters in the Development of Diabetes and Diabetic Nephropathy. Journal of Academy of Biomedical Sciences. 2025;2(1):10-15

doi: 10.61081/jabs/2v1i103

INTRODUCTION

In modern India, type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) is one of the most serious public health issues, currently affecting approximately, 62.4 million individuals. Projections by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) estimate this figure will rise to nearly 100 million by 2030.¹ Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is one of the main side effects of type 2 diabetes, and in 20–30% of diabetics, diabetic nephropathy (DN) is the main cause of end-stage renal disease (ESRD).^{2,3} Genetic predisposition, persistent hyperglycemia, activation of the polyol and protein kinase C pathways, stimulation of the renin-angiotensin system, increased formation of advanced glycation end products (AGEs), glomerular hyperfiltration, and elevated reactive oxygen species (ROS) are some of the factors that contribute to the onset and progression of diabetic nephropathy (DN).⁴

Oxidative stress parts a pivotal character in mediating many of the molecular mechanisms underlying DN

pathogenesis. Chronic hyperglycemia and increased AGE accumulation contribute to redox imbalance, impacting both the renin-angiotensin mechanism and transforming growth factor-beta (TGF- β) signaling. This dysregulation promotes chronic inflammation, as well as structural changes such as glomerular and tubular hypertrophy. Mesangial cell growth, excessive extracellular matrix (ECM) deposition, thickening of glomerular and tubular membranes, podocyte dysfunction, and apoptosis are the main causes of renal fibrosis in DN. These pathological features culminate in clinical manifestations such as albuminuria, proteinuria, glomerulosclerosis, and tubulointerstitial fibrosis, all of which are driven by redox disturbances.⁵

Oxidative stress, characterized by the overproduction of free radicals and peroxides, disrupts cellular homeostasis and damages critical biomolecules including lipids, proteins, and DNA. This oxidative imbalance is attributed to either increased generation of oxidizing agents or a compromised

antioxidant defense system, notably involving glutathione (GSH).^{6,7} Experimental data have shown that diabetic rats exhibit elevated nitric oxide levels and depleted GSH, alongside reduced actions of key antioxidant enzymes such as glutathione peroxidase (GPx) and glutathione-S-transferase.⁸ According to Singh and Singh,⁹ diminished GSH levels in diabetic patients result in reduced antioxidant enzyme function, thereby promoting oxidative injury and contributing to the pathogenesis of DN.

The current study search for to elucidate the role of oxidative stress in the progression of DN among Indian patients with diabetes, emphasizing the redox alterations that accompany disease advancement.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study population and study design: The study included 300 volunteer subjects in all, divided into three groups: 100 subjects with T2DM with nephropathy, 100 subjects with T2DM without nephropathy and 100 healthy subjects as healthy control. The institutional ethics committee gave its approval to the study protocol.

Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus Screening

Patients with T2DM were defined as having a HbA1c > 7%, a fasting blood sugar (FBS) level \geq 125 mg/dL, and a postprandial blood sugar (PPBS) level \geq 200 mg/dL.

Diabetic Nephropathy Screening

Serum creatinine, blood urea, and the amount of albumin excreted in a 24-hour urine sample have all been used to measure the presence of DN. Urinary excretion of albumin \geq 30 mg/dL albumin in a 24-hour collection is considered significant albuminuria, and both micro and macroalbuminuria were present in our study participants. In a 24-hour collection, participants with macroalbuminuria had urinary excretion of \geq 300 mg/dL of urinary albumin, whereas those with microalbuminuria had albumin 30–299 mg/dL.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The study excluded participants with autoimmune illnesses, liver and heart failure, allergies, eczema, thyroid abnormalities, infectious disease, and alcohol misuse. The study included participants with diabetes, diabetic patients with pre-renal failure, and diabetic patients with kidney failure.

Sample Collection

Following a 12-hour overnight fast, venous blood samples were taken from each participant. After putting the samples on ice, they were centrifuged for an hour at 3,500 rpm and 4°C for 15 minutes. The supernatants were then stored for later analysis at –80°C.

Biochemical Assay

Important variables include age, body mass index (BMI),

HbA1c, urea level, serum creatinine, lipid profiles, uric acid, total protein, albumin protein, urine albumin test, and FBS and PPBS levels. All biochemical analyses were carried out using the Vitros 250 Autoanalyzer (Johnson & Johnson, Germany) using kits.

OXIDATIVE STRESS PARAMETERS

Estimation of lipid peroxides (LPO): by the procedure of Ohkawa *et al.*¹⁰

Catalase (CAT) measurement: by the procedure of Aebi and Suter.¹¹

Estimation of Superoxide Dismutase (SOD): by the procedure of McCord and Fridovich¹²

Assay of GPx: by the procedure of Rotruck *et al.*, 1973.¹³

Estimation of GSH: by the procedure of Kuo *et al.*, 1983.¹⁴

Estimation of Glutathione Reductase (GR): by the procedure of Hazelton and Lang.¹⁵

Protein carbonyl group (PC): by method of Levine and Williams, 1994.¹⁶

Analysis of Statistics

Version 29.0 of IBM-SPSS was used for statistical analysis. The mean \pm standard deviation (SD) was used to express the results. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and post-hoc Tukey's test were used to compare the subject groups' demographic profiles and clinical characteristics. Pearson's correlation analysis was used to find the correlation between the various parameters. A *p*-value of less than 0.05 was deemed significant.

RESULTS

The baseline aspects of T2DM, DN and healthy controls are provided in table 1.

In this investigation, we found that DN patients were considerably older than controls. When compared to controls, T2DM and DN patients had noticeably higher levels of FBS, PPBS, HbA1C, TG, and uric acid. Additionally, DN patients had a significantly higher level of creatinine than controls, while T2DM patients had a much lower level. In contrast, DN patients had significantly lower levels of LDL, HDL, and albumin than controls. T2DM patients also had lower amounts of these substances, though not to a significant degree.

The results of oxidative stress markers estimation in T2DM, DN and controls are represented in table 2.

Lipid peroxidation levels were substantially greater in T2DM patients with DN ($p < 0.001$) and T2DM patients with DN ($p < 0.001$) than in controls. Both T2DM and DN patients had considerably lower SOD and CAT activity ($p < 0.001$) than the healthy control. While GR levels were lower in diabetic patients and DN patients ($p < 0.01$), the differences between the two groups and the healthy controls were not statistically significant. However, GSH, GPx level were significantly decrease in T2DM subjects and DN patient ($p < 0.001$). In

Table 1: Clinical and anthropometric characteristics of T2DM and DN Subjects.

Variables	Control (N = 100)	Type 2 Diabetes (N = 100)	Diabetic Nephropathy (N = 100)
Duration Onset		10.02 ± 3.01	11.22 ± 6.4
Age	50.94 ± 10.18	53.48 ± 9.39	57.84 ± 9.5
BMI	26.05 ± 4.39	24.11 ± 5.69**	22.28 ± 4.03***
HbA1C	5.41 ± 0.59	9.72 ± 3.08***	8.22 ± 2.32***
FBS	94.66 ± 9.00	176.22 ± 85.25***	179.66 ± 67.65***
PPBS	127.81 ± 15.05	264.80 ± 106.27***	247.57 ± 82.41***
HDL	43.49 ± 13.94	39.30 ± 25.74	36.78 ± 23.19**
LDL	88.73 ± 32.51	79.39 ± 36.51	68.77 ± 40.40***
VLDL	26.51 ± 8.86	35.86 ± 28.56**	32.29 ± 22.06*
TG	132.41 ± 44.59	202.29 ± 149.37***	163.16 ± 109.99**
Cholesterol	148.68 ± 29.86	147.38 ± 47.24	139.18 ± 44.86
Urea	28.92 ± 6.42	34.16 ± 23.29*	118.58 ± 63.39***
Creatinine	0.81 ± 0.12	0.72 ± 0.18***	4.69 ± 3.57***
ALP	93.07 ± 16.82	236.28 ± 213.97***	258.94 ± 187.89***
Uric Acid	4.5 ± 0.98	4.83 ± 1.05*	7.34 ± 2.27***
Total Protein	7.21 ± 0.55	6.60 ± 1.00***	6.40 ± 0.84***
Albumin Protein	4.01 ± 0.56	3.57 ± 0.68***	3.03 ± 0.65***
Urine Protein	3.42 ± 2.78	8.89 ± 5.71**	152.20 ± 83.55***

All data are shown as mean ± SD. *p* < 0.05 is considered statistically significant

Table 2: Comparisons of oxidative stress markers in T2DM, DM subjects and control.

S.No.	Variables	Healthy Control (N = 100)	Type 2 Diabetes (N = 100)	Diabetic Nephropathy (N = 100)
1	LPO (nmol MDA/ml)	2.13 ± 1.13	4.25 ± 1.039 ***	6.91 ± 1.16 ***
2	SOD (Unit/mg protein)	6.02 ± 2.92	4.18 ± 1.5 ***	3.08 ± 2.73 ***
3	Catalase (Unit/mg protein)	12.93 ± 5.53	11.80 ± 4.75	10.91 ± 4.36**
4	Glutathione reductase (Unit/min/mg protein)	1.11 ± 0.51	1.07 ± 0.27	0.98 ± 0.14 **
5	Glutathione (GSH) ug/ml	3.46 ± 0.97	2.11 ± 0.53 ***	1.08 ± 0.46 ***
6	GPx (unit/min/mg protein)	47.46 ± 12.51	30.85 ± 6.13 ***	25.24 ± 6.03 ***
7	Protein carbonyl (nmol/mg protein)	0.08 ± 0.02	0.16 ± 0.07***	0.30 ± 0.05***

All data are shown as mean ± SD. *p* < 0.05 is considered statistically significant

addition, PC was considerably higher in DN and diabetic patients than in the control group (*p* < 0.001).

In table 3, we analysed matrix correlation between, the different parameters of oxidative stress, and we found that GSH significantly positively correlated with GPx (*R*² = 0.235148, *p* = 0.025) and PC level was positively related with GSH level (*R*² = 0.208369, *p* = 0.046) in DN patients.

The correlations between clinical and oxidative stress parameters by Person’s correlation analysis are presented in table 4.

In correlation study, we observed that HbA1c and FBS level was significantly positive correlated with GPx level (*R*² = 0.0506, *p* = 0.02, *R*² = 0.1991, *p* = 0.04) and GSH level (*R*² = 0.0501, *p* = 0.04, *R*² = 0.2204, *p* = 0.02) in DN subjects. Level of uric acid was negatively related with GR level (*R*² = -0.1981, *p* = 0.04) and positively related with PC (*R*² = 0.1072, *p* = 0.05). Creatinine level was significantly positively correlated with CAT level (*R*² = 0.2438, *p* = 0.01), and negatively with GPx level (*R*² = -0.3176, *p* = 0.001) in DN subjects. LDL level was positively associated with CAT level (*R*² = 0.2056, *p* = 0.04) in DN subjects.

Table 3: Matrix correlation between, the different parameters of oxidative stress in DN subjects.

Variables	Catalase	SOD	LPO	GR	GPx	GSH	PC
Catalase	1						
SOD	-0.14262	1					
LPO	0.024367	0.107152	1				
GR	0.039142	-0.06765	-0.06007	1			
GPx	-0.33836	0.15762	0.054556	-0.158	1		
GSH	0.072921	0.036716	-0.17568	0.110219	0.235148** (<i>p</i> = 0.025)	1	
PC	0.07463	0.067113	0.283521	0.059307	0.095554	0.208369* (<i>p</i> = 0.046)	1

p < 0.05 is considered statistically significant.

Table 4: Correlation between the clinical and oxidative stress parameters.

Variables	R2 – Value	<i>p</i> -value
HbA1c vs SOD	0.2165	0.03
FBS vs GPx	0.1991	0.04
FBS vs GSH	0.2204	0.02
Uric Acid vs GR	-0.1981	0.04
Uric Acid vs PC	0.1972	0.05
Creatinine vs Catalase	0.2438	0.01
Creatinine vs GPx	-0.3176	0.001
LDL vs Catalase	0.2056	0.04

Person’s correlation. *p* < 0.05 is considered statistically significant.

DISCUSSION

The disruption of the equilibrium between the production of ROS and the defensive mechanisms of antioxidants has been identified as oxidative stress.¹⁷ Several redo-sensitive cell-signaling molecules are activated, and cytotoxic materials are generated as a result of the increased ROS generation brought on by the oxidative stress caused by hyperglycemia. Cellular damage and malfunction follow, which ultimately leads to diabetic micro and macrovascular problems.^{18,19} We assessed the oxidative stress state in DN and T2DM in this investigation. The current study demonstrates that diabetes mellitus, primarily in DN patients, is associated with significant oxidative stress.

Free radicals attacked membrane lipids to start lipid peroxidation, which resulted in large quantities of reactive species that have been linked to diabetes and its consequences.²⁰ A significant increase level of lipid peroxidation was found in T2DM and DN patients compared with healthy controls. Our finding is accordance of previous study.^{21,22} This significant higher MDA levels possibly will be increased generation of free radicals in diabetes mellitus patients. MDA, a byproduct of lipid peroxidation, may be in charge of collagen’s intermolecular cross-linking, which

stabilizes and advances glycation. As glycated collagen triggers more lipid peroxidation and releases extra MDA, a vicious cycle is initiated.²³

In-vivo, a number of enzyme antioxidants, including SOD, CAT, and GPx, are crucial for protecting against lipid peroxidation. LPO is largely protected by phospholipid hydroperoxide and GPx, an intrinsic renal cytoprotective antioxidant enzyme that is typically expressed in glomerular podocytes, parietal epithelial cells, and tubular epithelial cells.²⁴ The oxidized form of the enzyme GPx was reduced by GSH, which in turn reduced the dangerous intracellular reactive species H₂O₂. The lowering of GPx activity in DN patients is hampered by the increased production of LPO and H₂O₂, which leads to a decreased use of GSH.²⁵ Patients with DN have high aldolase reductase pathway activity, which consumes NADPH and causes an imbalance in GR activity. Therefore, reduced GPx antioxidant enzyme was seen in patients with DN.²³ In our results, we have found significant decrease levels of Gpx, GSH and GR in DN patients. Our results are accordance with previous studies.²⁶⁻²⁸ They are observed decreased levels of GPx, GSH and GR in DN patients compared with healthy individuals.

The first line of defense against the damaging effects of oxygen radicals within cells is SOD, an enzyme that scavenges superoxide radicals (O₂⁻). The occurrence of SOD in numerous compartments of the body enables it to neutralize O₂⁻ radicals promptly and protects the cells from oxidative harm.²⁸ DN and T2DM patients have considerably lower SOD levels than healthy controls. Our results are in good agreement with previous findings.^{20,23} In T2DM patients with microalbuminuria, a substantial reduction in SOD activity may lead to an elevated flux of O₂⁻ radicals, which in turn may indicate tissue damage or injury. Progressive glycation of enzyme proteins is linked to the decline in SOD levels in type 2 diabetes. Trace activity results from the glycation of about 50% of SOD in diabetic patients’ erythrocytes. Further decreased SOD activity in DN patients may result from increased excretion from inflammatory kidney in nephropathy and increased production of O₂⁻ radicals, which

are used in the autoxidation process.²⁹ When compared to healthy controls, CAT activity is lower in T2DM and DN patients. In patients with T2DM who also nephropathy had, CAT activity was shown to be considerably lower than in those who did not.³⁰ This observation is consistent with our results. Increased endogenous production of O₂-anion, as shown by elevated MDA, increased nitric oxide end products, and decreased SOD activity, may be the cause of the decline in CAT activity. Additionally, patients with DN may have lower CAT activity because they are experiencing higher levels of oxidative stress.²³ A widely used and established indicator of severe oxidative protein damage was PC content. Moreover, protein oxidation is a useful indicator for evaluating oxidative stress in vivo. An early and reliable indicator of protein oxidation is the production of carbonyl groups. The PC concentration was consistent, produced quantifiable findings, and seemed to biologically significantly represent illness outcomes. DN and T2DM were discovered to have elevated PC levels.³¹

CONCLUSION

In our study, correlation analysis reveals that the level of oxidative stress, i.e., alteration in the levels of oxidants and antioxidants, is thus related to the development of DN which justifies the aim of our study. Our current study's findings indicated that oxidative stress was out of balance in patients with DN and T2DM. Additionally, microalbuminuria raised oxidative stress in T2DM patients, which may be the cause of the pathophysiology of DN development. Furthermore, further extensive research must be done to confirm the aforementioned conclusions.

Acknowledgments: The Council of Science and Technology, U.P. (UPCST), No.CST/SERPD/D-293, provided assistance for this work.

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