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VIRULENCE FACTORS AND MECHANISMS OF STREPTOCOCCUS AGALACTIAE INFECTION IN TILAPIA (OREOCHROMIS SPP.): A REVIEW AND BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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Volume: 88 Issue: 2 Page: 11-21

DOI: 10.11113/jurnalteknologi.v88.23322

Published MAR 2026

Indexed 2026-03-09

Document Type Article

Abstract Tilapia, a globally significant fish in aquaculture, faces the threat of *Streptococcus agalactiae* infections, leading to severe financial losses in the aquaculture sector. This emphasizes the need for a deeper understanding of virulence factors driving pathogenicity. This bibliometric review synthesizes scientific studies on the *S. agalactiae*'s virulence factors, aiming to elucidate key genes influencing bacterial attachment and adhesion in fish hosts. Data from 115 relevant documents retrieved through Scopus database were analyzed using the VOSviewer application for keyword relationships. The results highlighted clusters related to virulence genes, infected organs, and clinical signs associated with *S. agalactiae* infections in tilapia. Capsular polysaccharides (CPs) emerged as a crucial virulence factor, with the brain being the major infected organ. Meningitis, lesions/necrosis, and hemorrhage were identified as primary clinical signs. The proposed mechanism outlines how *S. agalactiae* utilizes virulence genes to penetrate the fish's digestive system, evade the immune system, and cause systemic infections. In conclusion, this review emphasizes the importance of capsular polysaccharides as a key virulence factor in *S. agalactiae* infections in tilapia. Understanding the signaling response of Group B *Streptococcus* becomes crucial for devising effective vaccines to enhance the fish's immune responsiveness and detect *S. agalactiae* infections more efficiently.

Keywords **Author Keywords:** [Bibliometric](#); [Streptococcus agalactiae](#); [virulence factor](#); [capsular polysaccharide](#); [VOSviewer](#)
Keywords Plus: [FIBRINOGEN-BINDING PROTEIN](#); [NILE TILAPIA](#); [RED TILAPIA](#); [BETA-HEMOLYSIN/CYTOLYSIN](#); [IMMUNE-RESPONSES](#); [C5A PEPTIDASE](#); [CAMP FACTOR](#); [NILOTICUS](#); [RESISTANCE](#); [ADHERENCE](#)

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Categories/ Classification

Research Areas: Engineering

Citation [1 Clinical & Life Sciences](#) [1.23 Infection Management & Resistance](#) [1.23.1757 Group B Streptococcus](#)

Sustainable Development Goals: [03 Good Health and Well-being](#)

Web of Science Categories

[Engineering, Multidisciplinary](#)

Funding

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Funding agency	Grant number
University Malaysia Terengganu	55268

+ [See more data fields](#)

Journal information

[JURNAL TEKNOLOGI-SCIENCES & ENGINEERING](#)

← [View Journal Impact](#)

ISSN 0127-9696

0.7

Journal
Impact

eISSN 2180-3722

Current Publisher PENERBIT UTM PRESS, PENERBIT UTM PRESS,
SKUDAI, JOHOR 81310, MALAYSIA

Research Areas Engineering

Web of Science Categories Engineering, Multidisciplinary

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