DNA methylation changes in a gene-specific manner in different developmental stages of Drosophila melanogaster

Chitra S. Panikar, Mandar S. Paingankar, Saniya Deshmukh, Varada Abhyankar and Deepti D. Deobagkar*

Molecular Biology Research Laboratory, Centre for Advanced Studies, Department of Zoology, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune 411 007, India

Although genomic DNA of Drosophila melanogaster has been shown to contain little cytosine methylation, the distribution of this genome-wide methylation patterns in different life stages remains to be elucidated. We have developed an immunochemical method using cDNA microarray to assess methylation. In the present work, this methylation microarray method was employed to identify DNA methylation in and around the genes in different life stages of D. melanogaster. This led to the identification of methylated genes in three stages of D. melanogaster, viz. embryo, pupa and adult. It is noteworthy that there was differential methylation in genes in different life cycle stages. Remarkably, a few functional annotation clusters showed negative correlation between transcription of a particular gene and its methylation status. In this analysis, some of the genes attributed to characteristic biological processes of particular life stage in D. melanogaster were found to be methylated in other life stages. Our analysis while providing a methylation map also suggests that gene-specific DNA methylation is altered during the life cycle stages of D. melanogaster.

**Keywords:** Developmental regulation, DNA methylation, Drosophila development, epigenetics, gene-specific methylation, 5 methyl cytosine.

DNA methylation is involved in the regulation of several molecular processes in an eukaryotic system. Methylation plays an important role in gene silencing, chromatin remodelling and repression of transposon activity. In vertebrates, X chromosome inactivation and genomic imprinting are influenced by DNA methylation, wherein these phenomena are essential for the normal development of an organism. Invertebrates such as insects show significantly distinct life stages and developmental stage-specific regulation of gene expression which plays a crucial role in the transitions between differentiated life-history stages. Many research groups have emphasized the presence of DNA methylation in invertebrates and have advocated that DNA methylation might be the mechanism for developmental gene regulation involved in life cycle transition. The genome-wide DNA methylation maps of insects like Drosophila melanogaster, Bombyx mori, Solenopsis invicta and Apis mellifera have been generated using whole genome bisulphite sequencing. Therefore it is important to study whether these methylation signatures play an important role in life cycle processes in invertebrates.

Although Drosophila lacks the canonical DNMT1, DNMT3A and DNMT3B, the presence of very low levels of DNA methylation has been reported in D. melanogaster. Presence of methylated DNA has been a controversial issue since few reports suggest that D. melanogaster lacks DNA methylation and DNMT2 is indeed an RNA methyltransferase that uses a DNA methyltransferase type of mechanism. Capuano et al. employed a sensitive LC–MS/MS method to report the presence of 0.034% cytosine DNA methylation in D. melanogaster. DNA methylation in embryonic stage 5 of D. melanogaster was demonstrated by employing immuno-precipitation and bisulphite sequencing. These observations indicate that immuno-affinity based assays using anti-5-methyl cytosine antibodies have led to detection of DNA methylation in D. melanogaster.

Although 5’-cytosine methylation has been detected in different life stages of D. melanogaster, information on methylome map across the different life cycle stages of D. melanogaster is lacking. Assessment of genome wide DNA methylation in different developmental stages will provide insight into understanding the probable role of methylation during the development of D. melanogaster. In this context immunochemical techniques offer an advantage in enriching methylated DNA having low level of methylation. We had earlier employed an immunochemical method which exploits cDNA microarray to generate the methylome map in human and mouse. In the current study, methylation microarray provided us the means to generate the methylome of three distinct stages of D. melanogaster, viz. embryo, pupa and adult. Our results suggest that

*For correspondence. (e-mail: dddeo@unipune.ac.in)
DNA methylation might play an important role during the development of *D. melanogaster*.

**Materials and methods**

*D. melanogaster* culture

*D. melanogaster* ORK strain was cultured and maintained in laboratory conditions at 23°C. *D. melanogaster* adult (2–3-days-old), pupa (white pupa 8–10 h) and embryo (8–10 h) were used for the experiments. Three independent biological replicates were carried out.

Methylation microarray

Methylation microarray was carried out using methods described earlier31 (Figure 1a). Microarray slides were procured from the Toronto microarray centre (Toronto University, Canada) containing 28,000 *Drosophila* probes, representing 12,000 genes.

Antibodies

In-house developed anti-5-methyl cytosine mouse monoclonal antibodies were used in methylation microarray and immuno-precipitation experiments31. Anti-mouse IgGs were labelled with cy3 using the cy3 antibody labelling kit (GE Healthcare life Sciences, USA). Genomic DNA was isolated as described earlier27.

Methylated DNA immuno-precipitation (MeDIP)

Genomic DNA (5 μg) extracted from different developmental stages of *D. melanogaster* was subjected to sonication to generate random fragments ranging in size from 800 to 1000 bp. By employing protein A/G magnetic beads (Pierce, USA) and anti-5-methyl cytosine mouse monoclonal antibodies specific for methylated DNA, were used in immuno-precipitation pull-down experiments. Anti-5-methyl cytosine mouse monoclonal antibodies were immobilized on protein A/G beads as per instructions of manufacturer (Pierce, USA). DNA was first incubated with uncoupled beads to reduce the non-specific binding of DNA to beads. Anti-5-methyl cytosine mouse monoclonal antibody coupled with magnetic beads was incubated overnight with DNA (pre-cleared by protein A/G magnetic beads) at 8°C with continuous shaking. The DNA/antibody/beads complexes were washed twice with high stringency wash buffer (10 mM Tris-cl pH 7.5, 1 mM EDTA pH 8, 2 M NaCl), low stringency wash buffer (10 mM Tris-cl pH 7.5, 1 mM EDTA pH 8, 2 M NaCl), and finally with distilled water.

**Figure 1.** Schematic representation of (a) methylation microarray and (b) efficiency of methyl DNA immuno-precipitation.
pH 8, 150 mM NaCl) and finally with TE buffer (10 mM Tris-cl pH 8, 1 mM EDTA pH 8). Elution was done by re-suspending the beads in elution buffer (Pierce, USA). The no anti-5-methyl cytosine antibodies and no genomic DNA control IP reactions were performed. Schematic representation of MeDIP is shown in Figure 1b.

qPCR analysis for immuno-precipitated DNA

Primers for selected genes were synthesized from IDT (USA) (see Supplementary Information S1 online). Real-time PCR on MeDIP samples was carried out using a Step-One-plus Real-Time PCR system (Applied Biosystems, USA). Universal thermal cycling conditions were used for detection of candidate genes: 50°C for 2 min, then 95°C for 10 min, followed by 95°C for 15 sec, and 60°C for 1 min, repeated for 40 cycles. RpS7, GAPDH and Rpn3 were used as negative control. Schematic representation of MeDIP qPCR is shown in Figure 1b.

The efficiency of methylated DNA immuno-precipitation of particular genome loci was calculated from qPCR data and reported as a % methylated DNA-IP/total input DNA

\[
\% \text{ MeDNAIP/total input} = 2^{\left( (\text{Ct}_{\text{input}} - 3.321) - \text{Ct}_{\text{MeDNAIP}} \right)} \times 100\%.
\]

Gene ontology

Pathway and functional analysis of the genes was performed using database for annotation, visualization and integrated discovery (DAVID) Gene Ontology tool (http://david.abcc.ncifcrf.gov/35,36 and PANTHER database available online (http://www.pantherdb.org/)37.

Gene expression data retrieval

Mapped RNA-sequence reads from 10 to 12 h embryos, white pupa 12 h and adult 5 days were downloaded from the modMine database (http://intermine.modencode.org/)38.

Detection of 5-methyl cytosine in embryo

Embryos were dechlorinated using 5% hypochlorite solution and treated with fix and perm cell fixation and cell permeabilization Kit (Life technologies, USA). They were then incubated with anti-5-methyl cytosine monoclonal antibodies for 2 h, washed thrice with PBST (PBS pH 7.4 Tween20 0.1%) and treated with cy3 labelled anti-mouse Rabbit IgGs for 1 h. These embryos were again washed thrice with PBST (PBS pH 7.4 Tween 20 0.1%). Nuclei were stained with DAPI (Promega, USA) and embryos visualized on AxioScope microscope equipped with Axiovision software (Zeiss, Germany).

Statistical analysis

Consistency in methylation signal of each gene in three independent experiments was checked by using one sample t test (comparison with mean). The significance of a change between two groups was tested using t-test as well as Mann-Whitney U test. The significance of the methylation-expression correlation was assessed using Pearson correlation coefficient. Cluster analysis of methylated genes was carried out using agglomerative hierarchical clustering with Ward’s method and a Euclidean distance matrix.

Results

DNA methylation and DNA methyl transferase activity was detected in different developmental stages of D. melanogaster (see Supplementary Information S2 online). After confirmation of presence of DNA methylation in different developmental stages of D. melanogaster, methylation microarrays were performed to assess DNA methylation changes in a gene-specific manner.

Methylation pattern in different developmental stages of D. melanogaster

Methylation microarray was performed to determine gene-specific methylation in three developmental stages of D. melanogaster, viz. adult, pupa and embryo. Out of 12,000 genes present on the Drosophila cDNA microarray slide, adult D. melanogaster flies showed the presence of methylation in 457 genes in all three biological replicates (t test P < 0.05) (Table 1, and see Supplementary Information S3 online). Methylation signal was detected in 373 and 123 genes of the pupa and embryo respectively (t test P < 0.05) (Table 1 and see in Supplementary Information S4 and S5 online). The methylated genes specific to each developmental stage, as well as the overlap between different developmental stages are shown in Figure 2a. The biological process annotations of the methylated genes for the adult, pupa and embryo are shown in Figure 2b. The genes involved in typical embryonic and larval development processes were found to be methylated in pupal and adult stages of D. melanogaster. Similarly, genes that are critically important in pupal and adult development were found methylated in the embryo.

Methylation signature of the adult

Methylation microarray analysis of adult stage identified the presence of consistent methylation in 457 genes (one sample t-test P < 0.05) (see Supplementary Information S3 online). Important methylated genes of adult are listed in Table 2. Genes involved in developmental
Table 1. Summary of methylation microarray data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Pupa</th>
<th>Embryo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of genes spotted on Drosophila array</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of genes positive for methylation signal (All three biological replicates)</td>
<td>970</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of genes positive for methylation signal (All three biological replicates with t test P &lt; 0.05)</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methylation levels/gene</td>
<td>2.319 (± 1.37)</td>
<td>2.309 (± 1.157)</td>
<td>2.09 (± 1.389)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. General statistics of probable methylated genes present in different developmental stages of D. melanogaster. 

a. Venn diagram of the numbers of overlapping and non-overlapping probable methylated genes in different development stages of D. melanogaster. b. Biological processes of probable methylated genes.

processes, regulation of cell death, negative regulation of signal transduction and negative regulation of Wnt receptor signalling pathway were marked with methylation signal in adult D. melanogaster. Furthermore, characteristic embryonic developmental processes such as embryonic pattern specification, oocyte differentiation and development, blastoderm segmentation, anterior/posterior pattern formation and embryonic axis specification showed methylation in adult. Moreover, typical larval developmental processes such as larval locomotory behaviour and imaginal disc-derived appendage and wing development were found to carry cytosine methylation in adults. It is noteworthy that biological processes such as muscle cells, skeletal muscles, organ, muscle tissue, appendage development and regulation of nurse cell apoptosis, which are attributed to pupal development were found methylated in adult (see Supplementary Information S3 online). Agglomerative hierarchical clustering illustrated four clusters of methylated genes (see Supplementary Information S6 online). Genes accredited to processes such as chromatin remodelling, gene silencing, tissue development, Wnt signalling and developmental processes were grouped together in cluster 1. Subsequently, genes implicated in processes such as metabolic processes, transport, larval and embryonic development were dominated in cluster 2. Moreover, genes that have crucial function in cell cycle, stem cell development, cell morphogenesis and phosphorylation were grouped together in cluster 3 and showed moderate methylation. Consequently genes that encode functions involved in metal ion binding and transport across the plasma membrane were marked with higher methylation signal and grouped together in cluster 4.

Methylation pattern of the pupa

Out of 627 methylated genes of pupa, 373 genes showed consistent methylation in all three biological replicates (one sample t-test P < 0.05) (see Supplementary Information S4 online). Important methylated genes of pupa are listed in Table 2. Several genes that are known to express in embryonic stages and larval stages showed the presence of methylation in pupa. Genes involved in embryonic development, morphogenesis and differentiation showed evidence of methylation signal in pupa. Moreover, characteristic larval processes such as imaginal disc-derived wing and appendage morphogenesis, instar larval or pupal development and morphogenesis were marked with methylation signal in pupa (see Supplementary Information S4 online). In addition, genes involved in characteristic adult processes such as gamete generation, sexual
reproduction and reproductive process in a multicellular organism were found methylated in pupa (see Supplementary Information S4 online). Agglomerative hierarchical clustering revealed the presence of three clusters (see Supplementary Information S6 online). Cluster one was dominated by genes involved in typical embryonic and larval development such as tran- scription factor activity showed moderate levels of methylation and clustered together in cluster 3. Moreover, genes involved in isomerase activity, beta-lactamase, and epoxide hydrolase PSR, Myc protein; dm; Tumor suppressor protein 101; DNA binding transcription factor activity, translation elongation factor activity, structural constituent of cytoskeleton and sequence-specific DNA binding transcription factor activity showed moderate levels of methylation and clustered together in cluster 3. Moreover, genes involved in isomerase activity, binding.

**Methylation impression of the embryo**

Out of 426 genes that showed evidence of methylation signal in the embryo, 123 genes showed consistent methylation (Table 1; one sample t-test $P < 0.05$) (see Supplementary Information S5 online). Important methylated genes of embryo are listed in Table 2. Gene ontology analysis illustrated that methylated genes are involved in biological processes such as epidermal growth factor receptor signalling pathway, lumen formation, Malpighian tubule morphogenesis, and open tracheal system development. Considering that these processes are not expected to be active in embryo, this stage-specific methylation reveals an interesting pattern. Similarly, genes involved in pathways such as p53 pathway, EGF receptor signalling pathway, gonadotropin releasing hormone receptor pathway, insulin/IGF pathway-mitogen activated protein kinase, FAS signalling pathway, FGF signalling pathway, and toll receptor signalling pathway showed the presence of methylation (see Supplementary Information S5 online). Noticeably these processes are attributed to pupal and adult stages of *D. melanogaster*. Agglomerative hierarchical clustering of methylated genes showed five clusters and most of the genes were represented in four clusters (see Supplementary Information S6 online). Cluster 1 was dominated by genes involved in proteolysis, epigenetic regulation of gene expression, actin filament bundle formation and oxidation reduction. Furthermore, genes attributed to processes such as transport, catabolic processes and kinases were grouped together in cluster 2. However, processes involved in oxido-reductase activity, racemase and epimerase activity, translation elongation factor activity, structural constituent of cytoskeleton and sequence-specific DNA binding transcription factor activity showed moderate levels of methylation and clustered together in cluster 3. Moreover, genes involved in isomerase activity, binding.
metallopeptidase activity and structural constituent of ribosome were grouped together in cluster 4.

**Methylated genes in different developmental stages**

Out of 13 genes that were found methylated in the embryo and pupa, 7 genes demonstrated consistent methylation levels (Mann Whitney U test; \( P > 0.05 \)) and 6 genes were differentially methylated (Mann Whitney U test; \( P < 0.05 \)). These genes were mainly involved in metabolic processes. Out of five methylated genes that are methylated embryo and adult, four genes showed differential methylation (Mann Whitney U test; \( P > 0.05 \)) and were mainly involved in kinase activity. Interestingly, out of 45 genes, genes that are methylated in adult and pupa, 24 genes showed differentially methylated (Mann Whitney U test; \( P < 0.05 \)). Heat maps based on methylated status of genes of adult, pupa, embryo, common genes in pupa and adult, common genes embryo and pupa are shown in Supplementary Information S6 (see online). Genes attributed to characteristic embryonic processes such as blastoderm segmentation, embryonic pattern specification, segmentation and pattern specification process were marked with methylation in adult and pupa. Thus methylation of genes in *D. melanogaster* shows distinct life stage specific pattern which shows a functional correlation with their activity states.

### Analysis of methylated DNA by MeDIP and q PCR analysis

Selected genes that indicated the presence of methylation were also subjected to MeDIP followed by qPCR to analyse methylation at particular genomic loci. The efficiency of methyl DNA immuno-precipitation for selected genes such as Psc, Jhi-26, Myd88 and Surf1 was higher than Rpn3 and RpS7 genes in the embryos (Table 3). Similarly the efficiency of methyl DNA immuno-precipitation for ida, opa, Bg25D, knrl and Kr-h1 genes was higher than Rpn3 and RpS7 genes of pupa (Table 3). Furthermore, the dm, fz, grk, Schank and Knrl genes showed higher efficiency of methyl DNA immuno-precipitation than Rpn3 and RpS7 genes of adult *D. melanogaster* (Table 3). This data is consistent with the reported differences in methylation status observed in methylation microarray.

### Correlation of methylation status and gene expression values

The methylation-expression correlation in different developmental stages was evaluated by retrieving the expression data available in modMine database (http://intermine.modencode.org/). Overall, no correlation between methylation status and gene expression was observed in embryo...
Figure 3. The methylation-expression correlation in different developmental stages was evaluated by retrieving the expression data available in modMine database (http://intermine.modencode.org/) for (a) embryo (b) pupa and (c) adults.

Figure 4. Representative list of methylated genes and characteristic biological processes of each developmental stage of *D. melanogaster* that showed the presence of methylation signal.

(Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.122; *P* = 0.196; Figure 3a), pupa (Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.02; *P* = 0.725; Figure 3b) and adults (Pearson correlation coefficient = –0.058; *P* = 0.243; Figure 3c). When correlation in methylation-expression was tested in functionally annotated gene clusters of adults, genes involved in development showed negative correlation with marginal statistically significant *P* value (Pearson correlation coefficient = –0.226; *P* = 0.061). Genes involved in various pathways showed positive correlation in methylation-expression (Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.754; *P* = 0.05). However, functional annotation clusters of DNA binding (Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.006; *P* = 0.964), apoptosis (Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.343; *P* = 0.366), RNA processing (Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.218; *P* = 0.233) and immunity (Pearson correlation coefficient = –0.576; *P* = 0.424) did not show the methylation-expression correlation in adults. Functional annotation clusters of pupa did not show methylation-expression correlations (expression-methylation correlation; Pearson correlation coefficient *P* > 0.05 in all annotation clusters). While in embryo positive correlation
in methylation-expression was observed in proteolytic processes (Pearson correlation coefficient  = 0.612; P = 0.003), in other functional annotation clusters no significant methylation-expression correlations were observed. These observations suggest that patterns of methylation show significant changes in developmental stage and life cycle related manner.

Discussion

The presence of methylated DNA in several insect species has directed attention to its potential role in the complex developmental processes of invertebrates. Recently LC-MS/MS and the immuno-precipitation prior to bisulphite conversion studies have reported the presence of DNA methylation in *D. melanogaster* genome. Substantial evidence suggests that immuno-affinity based methods could find application in detecting DNA methylation in *D. melanogaster*. Though earlier studies have identified the methylated regions in *D. melanogaster* genome, a comprehensive list of methylated genes is not reported yet. Tyramide signal amplification (TSA) methods are promising in detection of antigen present in very low amount. TSA methods employ fluorescent dyes to achieve high-resolution signal amplification by at least 100 folds. In the current study, we employed a combination of immuno-affinity and principles of TSA methods to detect methylated DNA in *D. melanogaster*. The binding of a probe to the target via hybridization and detection of methylated cytosine in using immuno-affinity followed by signal amplification using fluorescently labelled secondary antibodies was used for detection of 5-methyl cytosine. This method was previously employed to identify the methylation profile of the human, mice and to detect epigenetic alterations in 45, X Turner syndrome. The present results suggest that this methylation microarray method has promising applications in determining the methylome map. In the current study we exploited methylation microarray to generate the methylome map of different developmental stages of *D. melanogaster*.

In the current study, we describe first the comprehensive list of methylated genes in three life stages of *D. melanogaster*. Immuno-affinity-based detection of 5-methyl cytosine in different developmental stages of *D. melanogaster* suggests the presence of DNA methylation and methyl transferase activity in different developmental stages. The methylation microarray analysis revealed that adult flies have the highest number of methylated genes (Table 1). Furthermore, MeDIP-qPCR analysis revealed that a small amount of methylated DNA might be present in different developmental stages of *D. melanogaster* (Table 3). The presence of mosaic DNA methylation patterns has been described in different developmental stages of invertebrates. DNA methylation increased drastically during developmental stages, and adults exhibited the highest observed DNA methylation level in *Trichinella spiralis*. It has been demonstrated that DNMT1a is essential during early embryogenesis of *Nasonia vitripennis* and lowering of maternal DNMT1a mRNA resulted in embryonic lethality during the onset of gastrulation. Stable methylation pattern has been
reported throughout the life cycle of Sea Urchin\textsuperscript{41}. DNA methylation has been shown to affect alternative splicing through its interaction with RNA polymerase II\textsuperscript{24,25}. The present results agree with the earlier studies and suggest that mosaic DNA methylation may exist in \textit{D. melanogaster}.

Insects such as \textit{D. melanogaster} show distinct life stages such as embryo, larva, pupa and adult which are characterized by various characteristic functions. During development, the characteristic functions of each developmental stage are repressed in other developmental stages. The exact mechanisms which control the fine-tuning of molecular mechanisms involved in these developmental stages are not completely understood. Methylation microarray-based analysis showed that the genes involved specialized processes of the embryo, such as embryonic development via the syncytial blastoderm, oocyte differentiation, embryonic pattern specification, axis specification and segmentation showed the presence of methylation in pupa and adult. Similarly, genes that are involved in typical larval processes, such as imaginal disc-derived appendage development, appendage development, and imaginal disc development are found to be methylated in pupae and adults. Interestingly, frizzled-4, Krueppel target at 95D isoform A, Wnt inhibitor of dorsal protein and blastoderm-specific protein 25D, trithorax and hunchback, which are the characteristic genes involved in embryonic development were found methylated in pupae and adults. These observations imply that methylation may be involved in fine-tuning of gene regulation processes during the development of \textit{D. Melanogaster} (Figure 4).

It has been documented that one might expect to see negative methylation-expression correlation for methylation located near a gene’s transcription start site and positive correlations for methylation located in its body. However, at large-scale no significant methylation-expression correlation (positive or negative) was observed in different developmental stages of \textit{D. melanogaster} (Figure 3). Interestingly, in adults, a negative correlation in methylation-expression was observed in genes involved in developmental processes. Genes involved in various pathways in adult flies showed a positive correlation in methylation-expression. Similar positive correlation in methylation-expression was observed in proteolytic processes of embryo. In both plants and vertebrates, methylation in promoters primarily represses gene expression\textsuperscript{46,47}, whereas methylation in the gene body showed bell-shaped relationship in methylation-expression correlation\textsuperscript{9,30,48,49}. Few processes in \textit{D. melanogaster} follow positive correlation in methylation-expression which is consistent with gene body methylation. Interestingly, development related genes showed negative correlation in methylation-expression suggesting the presence of gene body as well as promoter methylation in \textit{D. melanogaster}. However, in the fungus \textit{Neurospora crassa}\textsuperscript{48} and the silkworm \textit{Bombyx mori}\textsuperscript{11}, transcription initiation is not affected by methylation. At large scale, the present results are consistent with earlier results obtained in lower organisms\textsuperscript{14,46}. However, negative and positive correlation in methylation-expression in few functionally enriched clusters suggests the complexity of DNA methylation in \textit{D. melanogaster}. These observations warrant further detailed analysis of methylation and expression correlation in the life stages of \textit{D. melanogaster}. Thus, these results indicate that DNA methylation shows a remarkable diversity in its extent and function across eukaryotic evolution.

\textit{D. melanogaster} lacks both DNMT1 and DNMT3 genes and has a sparingly methylated genome. The role of DNMT-2 in methylation of \textit{D. melanogaster} has been a matter of considerable debate\textsuperscript{19,20,24,25,50}. It has been suggested that DNMT2 is indeed an RNA methyltransferase that uses a DNA methyltransferase type of mechanism\textsuperscript{24,25}. Given the non-CpG methylation in \textit{D. melanogaster}, asymmetric methylation appears to be more relevant\textsuperscript{19}. Retention of genomic cytosine methylation in Mi2-/- embryos\textsuperscript{20} raises an interesting possibility of presence of additional methyl transferase activity in \textit{D. melanogaster} which remains to be characterized. LC MS/MS protocol\textsuperscript{19} and the combination of methylated DNA enrichment and bisulphite sequencing\textsuperscript{20} have substantiated the low abundance genomic DNA methylation (less than 1%) in \textit{D. melanogaster}. MeDIP followed by qPCR results suggest less than 1% efficiency of methyl DNA immunoprecipitation of particular genomic loci (Table 3). It has always been suggested that genomic methylation is present in \textit{D. melanogaster} in small quantities and in unusual patterns\textsuperscript{39,50}. Furthermore, it has also been hypothesized that 5-methyl cytosine might be restricted to subset of nuclei\textsuperscript{20}. We could detect the distribution of methylated cytosine in pole cells of embryo (Figure 5). Our observations corroborate with restricted distribution of methylated cytosine hypothesis of Boffelli \textit{et al.}\textsuperscript{20}. Recently the importance of DNA methylation and Dmmt-2 mediated epigenetic regulation has been shown in \textit{Wolbachia–Drosophila} model system\textsuperscript{51}. The methylation microarray analysis carried out in the present study provided the list of methylated genes in different life stages of \textit{D. melanogaster}. Our observation of developmental stage-specific modulation of DNA methylation suggests that further analysis is required to ascertain the precise biological role of this DNA methylation in \textit{D. melanogaster}.

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\end{thebibliography}


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