

PHYTOCHEMISTRY, ACUTE TOXICITY AND *INVITRO*
ANTITRYPANOSOMAL STUDIES ON AQUEOUS EXTRACT OF
GOSSYPIUM HERBACEUM (LINN) LEAF

¹Biu, A.A., ²Buratai, L. B., ³Lawal, J.R., ³Yakaka, W. ¹Zango, M.K.,
⁴Mustapha, F.B. and ²Ali, B.J.

¹Department of Veterinary Microbiology and Parasitology, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria

² Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Science, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.

³Department of Veterinary Medicine, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria

⁴Department of Veterinary Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Maiduguri

E-mail: biuвет@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The phytochemical components, median lethal dose (LD₅₀) in albino rats and *In vitro* efficacy of aqueous extract of *Gossypium herbaceum* leaf on *Trypanosoma brucei* was investigated in this study. Tannins had a high score in the extract, alkaloids, saponins, flavonoids and reducing sugars indicated moderate scores, while glycosides and phlobotannins showed low scores. The calculated medium lethal dose (LD₅₀) in albino rats was 500mg/kg body weight, with early clinical signs of sluggishness, awkward posture, loss of appetite, starry hair coat and terminal death within 24 hours. All clinical signs were dose dependent. *In vitro* efficacy of *Gossypium herbaceum* leaf aqueous extract had a positive correlation with the extract dose, but negatively correlated with the time of exposure, showing a 100% inhibition of trypanosomes at the concentration of 5.0mg/kg. In conclusion *Gossypium herbaceum* leaf aqueous extract could be described to have bioactive components, moderately toxic and could inhibit trypanosomes *In vitro*.

Keywords: *Gossypium Herbaceum*, Aqueous Extract, Albino Rats, *Trypanosoma Brucei*

INTRODUCTION

Trypanosomiasis a disease of man (Solano *et al.*, 2003), domestic animals (Abu *et al.*, 2009) and wild animals (Abenga and Anosa, 2006) is caused by trypanosomes and transmitted by the tsetse fly (Abu *et al.*, 2009). The disease is currently epidemic in about thirty-six countries in sub-Saharan Africa threatening more than sixty million lives on daily basis (Steverding and Tyler, 2005; Vanhollebeke *et al.*, 2006). Meanwhile, the disease has spread beyond its original distribution

in the sub-Saharan Africa and is now present in South America, North America and large parts of Asia (Vanhollebeke *et al.*, 2006). The pathology and pathogenesis of the disease have been reported by Anosa and Kaneko, (1983) and Mbaya *et al.*, (2009). Generally, its eradication and control is principally based on chemotherapy and chemoprophylaxis by trypanocides using the salts of isometamidium, homidium and diminazene (Anene, *et al.* 2001; Brian *et al.*, 2010; Ajakaiye *et al.*, 2013; Ameen, 2013). Unfortunately the use of these trypanocides is beset by numerous limitations and drawbacks that include the lengthy parenteral administration, unaffordability of the drugs by low resource poor rural farmers, development of resistance to the drugs by the parasite, toxicity to the hosts due to long period of treatment (McDermott *et al.* 2000; Maikai *et al.* 2007; Eze *et al.* 2013; Lawal *et al.* 2013) and exhibition of antigenic variation which hampers vaccine production making drug therapy the only viable management (Anene, *et al.* 2001; Prathalingham *et al.* 2007; Samdi *et al.* 2010). However, it has been observed that natural plant products offer novel possibilities against trypanosomes (Atawodi *et al.* 2002; Hoet *et al.* 2004; Shuaibu *et al.* 2008; Oluyomi *et al.* 2011; Lawal *et al.* 2013). In spite of the possible role of medicinal plants as trypanocides some of the secondary metabolites in the extracts are toxic in nature (Nok, 2002; Mbaya *et al.* 2007; 2009; 2010). *Gossypium herbaceum* has been reported to be used for the treatment of diarrhea, dysmenorrhea, dysentery, gout, sexual debility, bronchial asthma and skin disease (Gupta and Sharma, 2006; Singh *et al.* 2011; Khalid *et al.* 2012; Sultan *et al.* 2010). It has also been used to stop bleeding from wound and help to induce abortion, augmentation of labour and retention of placenta (Fertosa *et al.* 2011; Singh *et al.* 2011; Khalid *et al.* 2012; Velmurugan *et al.* 2012). This study was carried out to determine the phytochemical components of the aqueous extract of *Gossypium herbaceum* leaf, its median lethal dose (LD₅₀) using albino rats and its efficacy against *Trypanosoma brucei* *In vitro*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Plant Collection and Identification

Fresh leaves of *Gossypium herbaceum* were collected from Bolori ward in Maiduguri, Borno State, Northeastern Nigeria on the 17th of January, 2013. The plant was authenticated by a botanist of the Department of Biological Sciences, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria

Plant Preparation and Extraction

The fresh leaves were rinsed in clean tap water to remove dirt and later shade dried for a period of 8 days. The dried leaves were then pounded into fine powder with pestle and mortar, and then sieved to remove debris and coarse plant materials. A fine powder of 1000 grams weight was obtained, which was soaked in 300ml of distilled water, and left to stand for 24 hours with frequent shaking after every 6 hours. This solution was then filtered through Whatman® filter paper and the filtrate concentrated on a water bath at 40^o - 50^o C and evaporated by drying using a hot plate at temperature of 50^o - 60^oC. The residue obtained was ground into powder to weigh 44.89g and stored at room temperature until used. The % yield was determined as 4.49%.

Phytochemical Analysis

The phytochemical screening of *Gossypium herbaceum* leaf was carried out using standard procedure to identify the constituents as described by Sofowara (1993). Test for tannins, alkaloids, glycosides, steroids, reducing sugars (Fehling's test), monosaccharides (Benedict's test), anthraquinones and phlobotannins were carried out as previously described by Evans (2000), while the test for flavonoids was carried out as previously described by Harbone (1989).

Determination of LD₅₀

Twelve adult albino rats of both sexes weighing between 56.3 - 211.8g were used for the determination of LD₅₀. They were grouped into 4 groups (A - D) of three rats each and kept within ambient conditions (temperature: 27±1^oC., photoperiod: 12 hours natural light and 12 hour dark, humidity 40±5%). They were fed with standard feed (Grand Cereal Ltd, UAC Nigeria PLC, Jos, Nigeria) and portable water *ad libitum* for 4 weeks to acclimatize to the laboratory conditions before the toxicity study. All experimental albino rats were handled according to the international guiding principles for biomedical research involving animal use and care (C.I.O.M.S, 1985). Using group A - D the rats were intraperitoneally treated with different doses of 100, 200, 400 and 800mg/kg body weight, concentration of the *Gossypium herbaceum* leaf aqueous extract respectively. The rats were observed for 24 hours for clinical signs and death, LD₅₀ of *Gossypium herbaceum* was calculated using the modified arithmetic mean of Karber (Aliu and Nwude, 1982)

***Trypanosoma brucei* Stock**

The *Trypanosome brucei* that was used in this study was obtained from Nigeria Institute of Trypanosomiasis Research (NITR), Vom, Plateau State, Nigeria. *Trypanosome brucei* viability was maintained by subsequent passage into other clean (parasite free) albino rats.

***In vitro* Experiment**

Serial dilutions of the extract were prepared in phosphate buffered saline to give concentrations of 40, 20, 10, 5, 2.5, 1.25, 0.625, 0.313, 0.156, 0.078 and 0 mg/kg into test tubes of 8 replicates each, two drops of infected blood obtained by albino rat tail puncture was diluted in glucose solution and added into each test tube and incubated at 37°C. Neubauers chamber was used to count the number of parasites per field and antitrypanosomal activity was determined based on cessation of motility. The parasite count was carried out at intervals of 30, 60 90, and 120 minutes, after which percentage inhibition of the parasite for each extract solution was calculated using the expression described by Atawodi and Ogunbusola (2009).

$$\text{Percentage inhibition} = \frac{\text{Parasite count in control untreated (Pc)} - \text{Parasite count in extract treated (Pe)}}{\text{Parasite count in control untreated (Pc)}} \times 100\%$$

Statistical Analysis

In vitro data were expressed as mean \pm standard deviation (SD), variation and range.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the result of the phytochemical screening of bioactive substance. Tannin had high scores (3+), alkaloids, saponins, flavonoids and reducing sugars had moderate scores (2+), while glycosides, monosaccharides and phlabotannins showed low scores (1+). Table 2 shows the calculated lethal dose of *Gossypium herbaceum* leaf aqueous extract. The dose of the extract that produces 100% mortality rate was 800mg/kg. The calculated LD₅₀ was 500mg/kg, and doses of 100 and 200mg/kg did not cause mortality. Clinical signs observed were sluggishness, awkward posture, loss of appetite, starry hair coat and terminal death within 24hours. Table 3 shows the effect of grade doses of *Gossypium herbaceum* leaf aqueous extract on parasite motility (% inhibition). There was 100% inhibition of *T. brucei* at the extract concentration of 5.0mg/ml, meanwhile the various extract concentration generally had a positive correlation with parasite inhibition.

Table 1: Phytochemical Components of *Gossypium Herbaceum* Leaf Aqueous Extract

Component	Test	Observation	Scoring
Tannins	Ferric chloride	None	3+
Alkaloids	Dragendorff's test	Orange - red precipitate	2+
Saponins	Frothing	None	2+
Glycosides	Salkowski's test	Red precipitate	1+
Steroids	Chloroform	Green - ring colour	Nil
Flavonoids	Peil's test	None	2+
Reducing sugars	Fehling's test	Orange precipitate	2+
Monosaccharides	Benedict's test	Red precipitate	1+
Anthraquinones	Borntrigge's test	None	Nil
Ketones	Standard	None	Nil
Phlobatannins	Hydrogen chloride	Red precipitate	1+

Keys:

Nil = not detected

1+ = low concentration

2+ = moderate concentration

3+ = high concentration

Table 2: Median Lethal Dose (LD₅₀) of *Gossypium Herbaceum* Leaf Aqueous Extract

Group (n= 3)	Plant extract (mg/kg body weight)	Dose difference (DD)	Dead rats	Mean dead (MD)	DDxMD
A	100		0		
		B - A = 100		0	0
B	200		0		
		C - B = 200		0.5	100
C	400		1		
		D - C = 400		2	800
D	800		3		
Total					900

$$\begin{aligned}
 LD_{50} &= LD_{100} - \frac{DD \times MD}{n} = \frac{800 - 900}{3} \\
 &= 800 - 300 \\
 &= 500\text{mg/kg body weight}
 \end{aligned}$$

Table 3: Effects of Graded Doses of *Gossypium herbaceum* Leaf Aqueous extract on Parasite Motility (% Inhibition)

Concentration of Extract (mg/kg)	% Inhibition MPI (Mean \pm SD: Range)			
	30	60	90	120
PSS (control)	0.0 \pm 0.0	0.0 \pm 0.0	0.0 \pm 0.0	0.0 \pm 0.0
0.078	60.8 \pm 3.4 (57.7 - 64.6)	67.8 \pm 2.7 (65.6 - 69.6)	74.4 \pm 3.6 (71.2 - 77.8)	83.1 \pm 4.1 (70.9 - 88.1)
0.156	67.4 \pm 2.5 (64.0 - 70.0)	72.4 \pm 1.7 (71.8 - 73.6)	77.9 \pm 1.4 (77.0 - 80.0)	88.3 \pm 2.4 (84.6 - 89.7)
0.313	74.1 \pm 3.9 (69.3 - 78.7)	79.7 \pm 2.8 (76.3 - 82.4)	83.6 \pm 1.7 (81.6 - 85.4)	90.2 \pm 1.7 (87.7 - 91.6)
0.625	0.30 \pm 0.1 (70.1 - 80.0)	80.8 \pm 5.2 (74.1 - 86.3)	87.5 \pm 3.7 (82.1 - 90.0)	93.3 \pm 1.4 (91.9 - 95.2)
1.25	91.8 \pm 2.7 (88.2 - 94.4)	97.3 \pm 0.8 (96.2 - 97.8)	98.6 \pm 1.5 (96.6 - 100.0)	99.4 \pm 0.7 (98.3 - 100.0)
2.5	93.3 \pm 1.6 (91.3 - 94.6)	96.2 \pm 1.6 (93.9 - 97.7)	97.9 \pm 1.3 (96.2 - 99.2)	99.9 \pm 0.3 (99.5 - 100.0)
5.0	100 \pm 0.0	100 \pm 0.0	100 \pm 0.0	100 \pm 0.0

Keys:

PSS = Physiological saline solution

MPI = Minutes post inoculation

DISCUSSION

Although the present study did not involve detailed characterization of different compounds that could be responsible for the observed activities, preliminary phytochemical screening of *Gossypium herbaceum* leaf has shown the presence of bioactive components using various tests. Tannins had high concentrations, alkaloids, saponins, flavonoids and reducing sugars were found in moderate concentrations, while glycosides, monosaccharides and phlabotannins were found in low concentrations. This plant extract no doubt have medicinal properties. This agrees with the findings of Wurochekke *et al.*, (2014) who reported that medicinal plants are those plants that contain potential phytochemical constituents used in the treatment and management of diseases. The trypanocidal property of the *Gossypium herbaceum* extract may be due to the action of one or more of these secondary metabolites present. Several authors have either identified or isolated tannins and phenolic compounds (Shuaibu *et al.* 2008; Mbaya *et al.* 2010), flavonoids (Ambrozin *et al.* 2004; Umar *et al.*, 2014) and alkaloids (MerschJohann *et al.* 2001) in plants that showed trypanocidal activities. The LD₅₀ of the leaf extract was calculated at

500mg/kg, with mortality and some clinical symptoms observed in all the groups tested. It has been previously reported that scientific evaluation of toxicities by determining lethal dosages (LD₅₀) usually preceded *In vivo* trypanocidal efficacy trials (Mbaya *et al.* 2010). During *In vitro* studies cytotoxicity in animal cell cultures has been documented (Camacho *et al.* 2003; Sara *et al.* 2004). It has also been previously reported by Biu *et al.*, (2010) that toxicity of plant extracts and clinical signs that were dose dependent are related to the effects of the extract on the liver, kidneys and other functional organs of tested animals. There was a 100% inhibition on *T. brucei* motility *In vitro* at 5.0mg/kg concentration of *Gossypium herbaceum* extract on *T. brucei*. However, there was a positive correlation between extract concentrations and inhibition of *T. brucei* activity. This report agrees with findings previously reported by Sepulveda-Boza and Cassel (1996), however, this anti - trypanosomal property of *Gossypium herbaceum* leaf observed in this study have a lesser activity when compared with that previously reported by Igweh *et al.*, (2002) and Shaba *et al.*, (2012). The mechanism of the extract trypanocidal action was not determined. However, Atawodi *et al.*, (2003) reported that many natural products exhibit their trypanocidal activity by virtue of their interference with the redox balance of the parasites acting either on the respiratory chain or on the cellular defenses against oxidative stress. This is because natural products possess structures capable of generating radicals that may cause peroxidative damage to enzymes that are very sensitive to alteration in redox balance. It is also known that some agents also act by binding with the kinetoplast DNA of trypanosomes as reported by Alli *et al.*, (2011).

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