Virulence of *Aeromonas hydrophila* in Siamese fighting fish (*Betta splendens*) and the bacterium susceptibility to some herbal plants

Kanchan C.1*; Imjai P.1; Kanchan N.2; Panchai K.3; Hatai K.4

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Abstract

Aeromonas hydrophila was isolated from diseased Siamese fighting fish Betta splendens Regans. The virulence of A. hydrophiala to Siamese fighting fish was conducted by intraperitoneal injection of two doses of bacterial suspensions with 7.5×10⁷ and 7.5×10⁵ cfu per 0.05 ml. The cumulative mortality was observed in high and low dose groups which showed 98.33 and 20 percent, respectively. Moreover, five medicinal plants extracts namely Centella asiatica, Morinda citrifolia, Melissa officinalis, Piper sarmentosum and Terminalia catappa were determined for antimicrobial activities by broth dilution method. Terminalia catappa extract showed highest antimicrobial effect of MIC and MBC (25 and 12.5 mg mL⁻¹), followed by M. officinalis and P. sarmentosum with the same values of MIC and MBC (12.5 and 25 mg mL⁻¹). Finally, Centella asiatica and Morinda citrifolia were similarly MIC and MBC (50 and 100 mg mL⁻¹). It was concluded that five medicinal plants can use to inhibit and kill A. hydrophila in fish.

Keywords: Aeromonas hydrophila, Betta splendens, Antibacterial activity, Medicinal plants

¹⁻Program in Aquaculture Technology, Faculty of Agriculture Technology, Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University, 44000, Thailand

²⁻Animal Production Technology Program, Faculty of Agro-Industrial Technology, Kalasin University, 46000, Thailand

³⁻Biology Program, Faculty of Science and Technology, Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University, 30000, Thailand

⁴⁻Borneo Marine Research Institute, University Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia, 88400 Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia

^{*}Corresponding author's Email: cmunchan@yahoo.com

Introduction

Siamese fighting fish is an economically major species of ornamental fish in Thailand. As an ornamental fish, the males have more attractive colors and fins (Amiri and Shaheen, 2012). Bacterial diseases are the most common infectious problem of ornamental fish, and the most bacterial infections are caused by gram-negative organisms including Aeromonas, Citrobacter. Edwardsiella, Flavobacterium (Flexibacter). Pseudomonas and Vibrio (Lewbart, 2008; Buller, 2004) genera. Especially, Aeromonas species has documented as a pathogenic organism in ornamental fish (Jagoda et al., 2014). Outbreaks ofmotile aeromonad septicaemia usually occur whether fish immune compromised unpleasant environment or predisposing factors leading to stresses such as temperature, overcrowding, pollution and hypoxia (Anusha et al. 2014). Diagnosis of bacterial diseases of fish required observation of common clinical signs associated with disease, isolation and identification of the causative bacterial organisms and confirmation with animal inoculation is important to fish culturist and fisheries managers (Abowei and Briyai, 2011). The degree of virulence of its bacterium therefore is importantly studied in the aquaculture filed. Moreover, the most common approach to eliminate bacterial diseases is using antibiotics (Yanong, 2006: Rattanachaikunsopon and Phumkhachorn, 2009). Therefore, mistreatment of any antibiotics can leads to the founding of resistant bacteria and accumulation of antibiotic residues in the environment. The alternative treatment by using some medicinal plants has been investigated for pathogenic bacteria (Harikrishnan *et al.*, 2011; Anusha *et al.*, 2014; Prasad, 2014). The aim of the present study was to study the pathogenesis of *A. hydrophila* against Siamese fighting fish and to study the antibacterial activity of some medicinal plants against mentioned bacteria.

Materials and methods

Fish

Ninety-healthy Siamese fighting fish (average 3.67 g in body weight and 9.72 cm in body length) were used in this study. The experiments carried out the Faculty at Agricultural Technology, Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University in April 2014.

Preparation of the inocula

A. hydrophila RMU 5603 isolated from diseased Siamese fighting fish in 2013 was used in challenges. Concentrations of bacterial suspension were adjusted to 7.5x10⁷ and 7.5x10⁵ cfu per 0.05 ml by compared to the 0.5 McFarland standards.

Experimental infection

Ninety fish (30 fish group⁻¹) without clinical signs were used for experiment infection. Two groups of fish were challenged with high and low doses of inocula, respectively. Each fish was intraperitoneally injected with 0.05 mL bacterial suspension. The fish in the third group was injected with sterile

normal saline served as a negative control group. All experiment groups were maintained in 1 L of individual aquarium per fish. Mortalities were recorded every 12 h for 2 weeks post injection with bacterial suspension. Both dead and survived fishes were reisolated from the kidney for evaluated etiological evidence of fish. Bacteria were re-isolated and identified by biochemical tests (Buchanan and Gibbon, 1974) and API 20E (bioMerieux, France).

Herbal extracts for in vitro antibacterial activity against A. hydrophila

Five herbal extracts including Centella asiatica, Morinda citrifolia, Melissa officinalis, Piper sarmentosum and Terminalia catappa were carried out according to Ponnusamy et al. (2010) with slight modification. Briefly, 50 g of each plant powder and 200 mL of 95% ethanol. Then, the aqueous extracts were filtered and concentrated in vacuum at 40 °C using rotary evaporator. These extracts dissolved in dimethyl sulphoxide to make the final concentrations.

Determination of minimum inhibitory concentration

In order to determining minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC), a serial dilution of each extract (200, 100, 50, 25, 12.5, 6.25, 3.125 and 1.563 mg L⁻¹ were prepared in sterile 96-well microtiter plate. Then, the bacterial suspensions were added to each well and incubated at 30 °C for 18-24 hours

according to Prasad (2014) with some modifications. The experiments were conducted in triplicate. The MIC was observed in the minimum concentration of each plant extract that could be inhibited the growth of bacteria.

Determination of minimum bactericidal concentration

Fifty microliter of each clear well were inoculated into Muller Hinton Agar and incubated at 30 °C for 18-24 hours. The experiments were done in triplicate. The MBC was observed in the minimum concentration of each plant extract that could be killed the growth of bacteria.

Results

Mortality

The cumulative mortality of Siamese fighting fish challenged with hydrophila at 14 days post injection was 98.33 and 20 percent in high and low doses of inocula, respectively. In addition, the mortality in control group was 0 %. The abnormal symptoms were hemorrhage in the vent, protruding scales, exophthalmia and abdomen distention in experimental fish (Fig. 1). mortality records The were corresponded with re-isolation from the kidney of moribund fishes. Thus it seems that A. hydrophila was a pathogenic bacteria base on the results of mortality.





Figure 1: A diseased Siamese fighting fish showing hemorrhage (A), protruding scales (B) after post-injected with *Aeromonas hydrophila*.

Antimicrobial activity of leave extracts against A. hydrophila

Determination of minimum inhibitory concentration and determination of minimum bactericidal concentration Five medicinal plants extracts namely C. asiatica, M. citrifolia, M. officinalis, P. sarmentosum and T. catappa were used in this study. Crude extracts were performed for antimicrobial activities by broth dilution method. The results showed that the Indian almond (T. extract had the catappa) best antimicrobial effect which revealed MIC and MBC values as 25 and 12.5 mg/ml, respectively. Consequently, M. officinalis and P. sarmentosum had moderately antibacterial activity which recorded the MIC and MBC were 12.5 and 25 mg mL⁻¹, respectively (Table 1). Afterwards, C. asiatica and M. citrifolia showed slightly antimicrobial effect against the A. hydrophila. The MIC and MBC of C. asiatica and M. citrifolia were 50 and 100 mg mL⁻¹, respectively.

Table 1: Antibacterial activity of medicinal plants leave extracts against Aeromonas hydrophila

Medicinal plants leave extracts	MIC (mg mL ¹)	MBC (mg mL ⁻¹)
Centella asiatica	50	100
Morinda citrifolia	50	100
Melissa officinalis	12.5	25
Piper sarmentosum	12.5	25
Terminalia catappa	25	12.5

Discussion

Bacterial diseases are the most important diseases which cause of high morbidity and mortality in ornamental fishes (Barker, 2001). Especially, *A. hydrophila* is ubiquitous bacteria and opportunistic pathogen for immuno compromised fish. (Lewbart, 2008). Moreover, *A. hydrophila* was mainly

pathogens has been isolated from diseased ornamental fish (Musa, 2008). According to the results of this study the abnormal symptoms were hemorrhage in the vent, protruding scales, exophthalmia and abdomen distention in experimental fish which corresponded with Lewbart (2008) and Jagoda *et al.*, (2014). The

pathogenicity results showed that A. hydrophila was a pathogenic bacteria to the Siamese fighting fish according to the mortality rate of 98.33% when challenged with 7.5x10⁷ cfu 0.05mL⁻¹. For antimicrobial activity of five medicinal plants against A. hydrophila showed that all leaves extracts can be used to treat the A. hydrophila infection in the diseased ornamental fish. MIC of M. officinalis and P. sarmentosum was 12.5 mg mL⁻¹ whereas T. catappa at 25 mg mL^{-1} with similar results of Haniffa and Kavitha which (2012)were reported the effective MIC of plant extracts against A. hydrophila at MIC value 12.5, 25 and 50 mg mL^{-1} . There have been several reports to determine antimicrobial effect from the plant sources against the fish pathogens as follow: Clitoria ternatea leaves extracts against A. formicans, A. hydrophila, Bacillus subtilis, Escherichia coli, Klebsiella pneumonia, P. aeruginosa and Streptococcus agalactiae (Ponnusamy et al., 2010). Ruixuan et al. (2013) reported that Psidium guajava and Atractylodes lancea leaves extracts had an antimicrobial effect to Photobacterium damselae which isolated from cultured golden pompano (Trachinotus ovatus). Vasanthakumar et al. (2015) has been revealed the antibacterial activity of Rosa damascena petal extracts against A. hydrophila. In conclusion, medicinal plants extracts could be applied in the treatment of bacterial infection caused by A. hydrophila for reducing the use of antibiotics in fish populations and the environments.

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