A Study on Phytochemical Analysis and Toxicity Effect of Thevetia peruviana (pers) Merr, against the Filarial Vector, Culex quinquefasciatus Say

S. Uthirasamy*, T. Chitra and G. Manjula

Department of Zoology, Erode Arts and Science College, Rangampalayam, Erode (Dt)-638 009, India

*Corresponding author

ABSTRACT

Mosquitoes alone transmit diseases to more than 700 million people annually. Culex quinquefasciatus mosquitoes are transmitters of diseases like malaria, filaria dengue fever, chinkunguniya and Japanese encephalitis which are among the most serious vector borne diseases. Malaria is a major global health problem. Malaria alone kills 3 million each year, including 1 child every 30 seconds. Botanical pesticides are preferred in comparison to synthetic pesticides, as they are eco-friendly and bio degradable. Plant derived extracts possessing insecticidal activities are no doubt safer and receiving increasing importance as an alternative to synthetic pesticides. Bio pesticides of the plant origin have shown to possess tremendous potential for the safe pest. Mosquitoes have shown a remarkable ability to develop resistant to chemical insecticides. The plant extracts are easy to prepare, inexpensive and safe for mosquito control which might be used directly as larvicidal and mosquitocidal agents in small volume aquatic habitats or breeding sites of around human dwellings. Work is progress towards the evaluation of the potential of insecticidal activity of the plant against insect species and characterization of the bioactive principle that will help in demonstrating the potential of plant species for mosquito control. With this aim in view, the efforts have made to explore the toxicity effect activity of plant Thevetia peruviana which is well known through its everywhere availability. The larvae of Culex quinquefasciatus is used to determining the toxic effect of plant Thevetia peruviana. Mortality, fecundity and longevity of larvae of Culex quinquefasciatus were recorded at 24,48,72,96 hrs of exposure and bio efficacy (LC50) in each was calculated.

Keywords: Culex quinquefasciatus, Thevetia peruviana, Mortality, Fecundity, Longevity

Introduction

Vector borne diseases, such as insect-transmitted disease remains a major source of illness and death worldwide. Mosquitoes are both aggravating pests and disease-carrying insects that surround us for blood feeding. Mosquitoes alone transmit disease to more than 700 million people annually. Malaria is a major global health problem. Malaria alone kills 3 million each year, including 1 child every 30 seconds (Shell, 1997). Although mosquito-borne diseases currently represent a greater health problem in tropical and...
subtropical climates, no part of the world is immune to this risk. Control of such diseases is becoming increasingly difficult because of increasing resistance of mosquitoes to pesticides (Ranson et al., 2001). They are about 90 genera and 2500 species of mosquitoes all over the world. Mosquitoes are transmitters of diseases like malaria; filariasis, dengue fever, chikungunya and Japanese encephalitis are among the most serious vector borne diseases contribute significantly to poverty and social debility in tropical countries. One of the methods to control these diseases is to control the vectors for the interruption of disease transmission. In the past, synthetic organic chemical insecticides based intervention measures for the control of insect pests and disease vectors have resulted in development of insecticide resistance in some medically important vectors of malaria, filariasis and dengue fever. During the last decade, various studies on natural plant products against mosquito vectors indicate them as possible alternatives to synthetic chemical insecticides (Davidson, 1972).

There has been a large increase in the insecticide resistance of these vectors and it has become a global problem. Insecticide residues in the environment, as a result of using chemical insecticides, have turned the scientist’s attention to the use of natural products. During recent decades the use of natural products in the control of mosquitoes has gained high priority (Murty and Jamil, 1987). Mosquito control manages the population of mosquitoes to reduce their damage to human health, economies, and enjoyment. Mosquito control is a vital public-health practice throughout the world and especially in the tropics because a mosquito spreads many diseases.

Since ancient times, plant products were used in various aspects. However, their use against pests decreased when chemical products became developed. Recently, concerns increased with respect to public health and environmental security requiring detection of natural products that may be used against insect pests. An alternative approach for mosquito control is the use of natural products of plant origin. The botanical insecticides are generally pest specific, readily biodegradable and usually lack toxicity to higher animals (Bowers, 1992). The plant materials are non-toxic to non-target animals, have no phytotoxic properties and leave no residue in the environment. Scientists therefore have embarked on a mission to survey the flora extensively to discover more and more potential plants have insecticidal properties. Plant products have been used by traditionally human communities in many parts of the world against the vectors and species of insects. The phytochemicals derived from plant sources can act as larvicides, insect growth regulators, repellents, ovipositional attractants and have deterrent activities. Plant-derived materials are usually safer and more ecologically acceptable. They must be tested, however, to judge their efficacy against the target hosts.

Phytochemicals obtained from plants with proven mosquito control potential can be used as an alternative to synthetic insecticides or along with other insecticides under the integrated vector control. Plant products can be used, either as insecticides for killing larvae or adult mosquitoes or as repellents for protection against mosquito bites, depending on the type of activity they possess.

A large number of plant extracts have been reported to have mosquitocidal or repellent activity against mosquito vectors (Sukumar et al., 1991), but very few plant products have shown practical utility for mosquito control. It has been proved that larvicidal measures sustain mosquito population for a short period and require repeated applications of chemicals.
Plants are rich source of bioactive organic chemicals and synthesize a number of secondary metabolites to serve as defence chemicals against attack. Numerous plant products have been reported either as insecticides for killing larvae or adult mosquitoes or as repellents for mosquito biting and are one of the best alternatives for mosquito control. These chemicals may serve as insecticides, antifeedants, oviposition deterrents, repellents, growth inhibitors, juvenile hormone mimics, moulting hormones, as well as attractants. The botanicals offer an advantage over synthetic pesticides as they are less toxic, less prone to development of resistance and easily biodegradable. The larvicidal activity and repellency of 5 plant essential oils--thyme oil, catnip oil, amyris oil, eucalyptus oil, and cinnamon oil--were tested against 3 mosquito species: *Aedes albopictus, Ae. aegypti, and Culex pipiens pallens*. Larvicidal activity of these essentials oils was evaluated in the laboratory against 4th instars of each of the 3 mosquito specie.

Plants are rich source of bioactive organic chemicals and synthesize a number of secondary metabolites to serve as defence chemicals against attack. Numerous plant products have been reported either as insecticides for killing larvae or adult mosquitoes or as repellents for mosquito biting and are one of the best alternatives for mosquito control. These chemicals may serve as insecticides, antifeedants, oviposition deterrents, repellents, growth inhibitors, juvenile hormone mimics, moulting hormones, as well as attractants. The botanicals offer an advantage over synthetic pesticides as they are less toxic, less prone to development of resistance and easily biodegradable. Thevetia peruviana an evergreen shrub, belonging to Apocynanceae family, was selected to be evaluated against the yellow fever mosquito, *Aedes aegypti* (Linnaeus), the malaria vector, *Anopheles stephensi* (Liston), and the filariasis and encephalitis vector, *Culex quinquefasciatus* (Say) (Diptera: Culicidae) using the skin of human volunteers to find out the protection time and repellency (Amer and Mehlhorn, 2006).

Extracts or essential oils from plants may be alternative sources of mosquito larval control agents, as they constitute a rich source of bioactive compounds that are biodegradable into nontoxic products and potentially suitable for use in control of mosquito larvae. In fact, many researchers have reported on the effectiveness of plant extracts or essential oils against mosquito larvae.
family, is a very poisonous shrub in nature and the kernels being the most toxic.

This plant is native of central and South America, but now frequently grown throughout the tropical. The shrub or small tree that bears yellow or orange yellow, trumpet like flowers and its fruit is deep red/black in colour enhancing a large seed that bears some resemblance to a Chinese “Lucky nut” Leaves are covered in waxy coating to reduce water loss.

The physical properties of the fruit and kernel are unique and different from other tree borne oil seeds. Activities related to the fruits and kernels will require modifications in the processes and structures prevailing for other tree born oil seeds.

Hence in the present study an effort has been made to assess the toxic effect of *T. peruviana* against the filarial vector *Culex quinquefasciatus*.

**Materials and Methods**

**Collection of plant materials**

The fresh, leaves of *Thevetia Peruviana* (*Apocynaceae*) were collected from rural areas of Veerappam palayam village, Idappadi Taluk, Salem District Tamilnadu. The plants were authentified at BSI (Botanical Survey of India) and the specimens were deposited at Zoology Department, Erode Arts and Science College, Erode.

**Preparation of plant extracts**

The plant materials of *Thevetia Peruviana* leaves were washed with tap water, shade dried at room temperature and powdered by an electrical blender. Material was extracted with 300 ml of methanol for 8 hours in a soxhlet apparatus (Vogel, 1978). The crude plant extracts were evaporated to dryness in rotary vaccum evaporator.

**Preparation of extract**

After collection, fresh leaves were washed in running – tap water and the stems were removed before use, and air dried in the shade for 15days. The dried leaves were ground to powder in electric grinder to obtain fine powder. The powder was then stored in air tight glass jars in a cool place away from sunlight. The *Thevetia peruviana* leaf powder 50g with methanol (300ml fine) in a soxhlet apparatus (boiling point range 60-65 °c) for 4 hours, according to the techniques of Imaga et al., (2010). After extraction the soxhelt were cool in a room temperature. The extract were filtered through a Buchner funnel with Whatman no 1(125) filter paper. The filtered materials were taken into a round bottom flask and then condensed by evaporation of solvent in a ethanol extract respectively. After the evaporation of solvent from filtrate, the crude extract was weighed, the yields was 24% and the condensed extracts were preserved in tightly covered – labelled and stored in a cooling incubator at 4°C and until their use for insect bioassays.

**Preparation of required plant extracts concentration**

One gram of plant residue was dissolved in 100 ml of acetone (stock solution) considered as 1% stock solution. Each different concentration was prepared from stock solution ranging from 2 to 10.

**Results and Discussion**

The present work was carried out in filarial vector *Culex quinquefasciatus* to evaluate the general development life cycle, rate of mortality, longevity, fecundity and repellency using *Thevetia peruviana* leaf extract. The
work mainly aims at the effect of alternative pesticide control for commonly used chemical pesticides. Observation was carried out in sub lethal concentration of plant extract.

**Biology of Culex quinquefaciatus**

*Culex* mosquito usually lay their eggs are laid one at time, struck together to form a raft of about 250-350 eggs. A raft of eggs looks like a speck of soot floating on the water surface and is about 1/4 inch long and 1/8 inch wide. The number of eggs per raft ranged from 105-280.

**Morphometric analysis and Incubation period**

Incubation period ranged from 3 to 5 days, the mean being 4.33±0. 50 days. The minimum percentage of hatching recorded was 87.33 and the maximum was 90. The first instar larva was 1.69±0.003mm long and 0.81±0.006mm broad.

The stadial period extended up to 2.66±0.130 days. The length of second instar larva was 3.08±0.028mm, breadth was 0.81±0.014mm and the larval duration was 2.33±0.130 days.

The third instar larva was 4.90±0.073mm long, 2.84±0.035 mm broad and the larval duration was 3.33±0.128 days.

The length of the fourth instar larva was 5.22±0.063mm, width was 3.1±0.011 mm and the larval duration was 2.33±0.130 days. The pupa was comma shaped, 3.85±0.027 mm long and 1.99±0.042 mm broad.

**The LC<sub>50</sub> value of Culex quinquefaciatus**

The insecticidal activity of *Thevetia peruviana* on *Culex quinquefaciatus* showed with LC<sub>50</sub> value of 100ppm. The extract showed fluctuation in limit of LC<sub>50</sub> values from 250 to 360ppm (Fig. 1).

**Mortality rate of Culex quinquefaciatus**

*Thevetia peruviana* leaf extract was used on *Culex quinquefaciatus* and exposed at different sub lethal concentration such as 250ppm, 300ppm, 350ppm and 400ppm for continuous exposure period of 96 hours. The mortality rate of *Culex quinquefaciatus* was significantly influenced by *Thevetia peruviana* leaf extract at 250ppm concentration on 24, 48, 72, and 96 hours duration of exposure period. Mortality of I instar larvae was recorded as 20.00±1.539, 24.33±1.351, 25.33±0.128, 25.33±0.382. Mortality of II instar larvae observed was 11.33±0.898, 12.00±1.154, 18.66±0.513 and 19.67±0.899. In III instar larvae the mortality was 8.66±0.513, 11.66±0.898, 13.33±0.128 and 14.33±1.094. In IV instar larvae mortality was 8.33±0.898, 11.33±0.513, 13.33±0.739 and 13.00±1.154. Mortality of pupa was found as 2.66±0.572, 3.66±0.572, 6.66±0.513 and 10.33±0.128 compared with their respective controls (Table 1).

The mortality rate of *Culex quinquefaciatus* was increased with *Thevetia peruviana* leaf extract at 300ppm concentration on exposure for 96 hours. In the larval stages of *Culex quinquefaciatus* mortality rate was in I instar 28.00±1.539, 30.66±0.513, 35.33±0.128 and 40.33±0.128. In II instar larva it was recorded as 23.33±0.767, 25.66±0.135, 28.33±0.128 and 32.00±1.154. In III instar mortality rate was 22.00±1.539, 24.66±0.130, 26.66±0.898 and 33.33±0.513. In IV instar the mortality rate was 18.00±1.539, 21.66±0.130, 24.66±0.898 and 28.33±0.513. Mortality rate of pupa was 5.66±0.128, 6.33±0.128, 8.33±0.891 and 10.66±0.512 present generally (Table 2). *Culex quinquefaciatus* mortality rate was recorded with 350ppm concentration at 96 hours exposure recorded in I instar was 32.33±0.128, 35.33±0.513, 39.66±0.758 and 42.00±0.384 respectively.
### Table 1: Biology of Culex quinquefasciatus

| S. No | Parameters                 | Days X ± SE     | Parameters     | Percentage       |
|-------|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| 1     | Larval duration            | 4.33 ± 0.50     | Hatchability   | 86.33 ± 6.285    |
| 2     | Incubation period          |                 | Larval survival| 100              |
|       | i). I instar               | 2.66 ± 0.130    |                |                  |
|       | ii). II instar             | 2.33 ± 0.130    |                |                  |
|       | iii). III instar           | 3.33 ± 0.129    |                |                  |
|       | iv). IV instar             | 2.33 ± 0.130    |                |                  |
| 3     | Pupal duration             | 2.66 ± 0.513    | Adult emergence| 100              |

### Table 2: Morphometric analysis of larvae and pupae

| S. No | Life stages | Head | Thorax | Abdomen | Total |
|-------|-------------|------|--------|---------|-------|
|       |             | Length | Width | Length | Width | Length | Width | Length | Width |
| 1     | I instar    | 0.32 ± 0.732 | 0.30 ± 0.962 | 0.33 ± 0.001 | 0.29 ± 0.577 | 1.04 ± 0.002 | 0.22 ± 0.577 | 1.69 ± 0.003 | 0.81 ± 0.006 |
| 2     | II instar   | 0.55 ± 0.067 | 0.62 ± 0.038 | 0.57 ± 0.036 | 0.66 ± 0.009 | 1.99 ± 0.005 | 0.53 ± 0.005 | 3.08 ± 0.028 | 1.81 ± 0.014 |
| 3     | III instar  | 0.86 ± 0.011 | 1.02 ± 0.021 | 0.94 ± 0.010 | 1.02 ± 0.006 | 3.19 ± 0.037 | 0.80 ± 0.003 | 4.99 ± 0.073 | 2.84 ± 0.035 |
| 4     | IV instar   | 0.79 ± 0.012 | 0.92 ± 0.009 | 1.02 ± 0.012 | 1.26 ± 0.015 | 3.04 ± 0.015 | 0.92 ± 0.009 | 5.22 ± 0.063 | 3.01 ± 0.011 |
| 5     | Pupa        | 1.28 ± 0.009 | 1.29 ± 0.011 | 2.56 ± 0.038 | 0.70 ± 0.015 | 3.85 ± 0.027 | 1.99 ± 0.042 |       |       |

Cephalothorax
Fig. 1 The LC$_{50}$ value of *Thevetia peruviana* leaf extract of *Culex quinquefasciatus*

**I instar**

**II instar**

**III instar**

**IV instar larva**

**Pupa**
**Table 3** Phytochemical screening of Methanolic extract of *Thevetia peruviana* leaves

| Phytochemicals observed | Test performed | Results |
|-------------------------|----------------|---------|
| Alkaloids | Dragendorff’s test | - |
| Flavonoids | Shinoda test | + |
| Terpinoids | Noller’s test | + |
| Tannins | Neutral FeCl₃ | - |
| Saponins | Chloroform and H₂SO₄ | + |
| Cardiac glycosides | Keller – Killani test | + |
| Phlobatannins | Hydrochloric acid test | + |
| Steroids | Acetic anhydride and H₂SO₄ | + |

Legend:  + = Present  - = Absent

II instar was 24.33 ± 0.128, 28.66 ± 0.513, 31.00 ± 0.384 and 36.33 ± 1.661. III instar the mortality rate was 20.33 ± 0.128, 23.00 ± 0.384, 28.33 ± 0.128 and 31.66 ± 0.513. IV instar mortality rate was 21.00 ± 0.384, 23.33 ± 0.513, 25.66 ± 0.130 and 31.33 ± 1.661. Mortality rate of pupa was 8.66 ± 0.513, 9.00 ± 0.384, 10.66 ± 0.513 and 11.66 ± 0.130 it was treated with jars respectively (Fig. 1).

The mortality rate of *Culex quinquefasciatus* were significantly affected by *Thevetia peruviana* leaf extract at 400ppm concentration was observed in I instar 32.66 ± 0.130, 38.33 ± 0.130, 41.66 ± 0.893 and 44.66 ± 0.893. II instar mortality rate was 27.00 ± 0.384, 32.33 ± 0.513, 35.66 ± 0.128 and 38.00 ± 0.130. III instar mortality rate was 23.66 ± 1.670, 25.66 ± 0.898, 29.66 ± 0.898 and 32.60 ± 1.154. IV instar mortality rate was 21.66 ± 0.898, 24.00 ± 1.539, 27.00 ± 0.384 and 30.00 ± 1.154. In pupa mortality rate was 9.33 ± 0.518, 11.00 ± 0.384, 11.33 ± 0.128 and 12.66 ± 0.130 respectively (Fig. 1).

The result also demonstrated that the highest mortality of *Culex quinquefasciatus* I instar 42.00 ± 0.384, II instar 36.33 ± 1.661, III instar 31.66 ± 0.513, IV instar 31.33 ± 1.661 and pupa 11.66 ± 0.130 occurred at 350ppm concentration of *Thevetia peruviana* at 96 hours post application. The mortality rate was increased with increasing concentration.

The results revealed that the mortality rate was increased after the increase of concentration and the larvae. On the other hand, Al-Sharook et al., (1991) reported that the death of treated insects may be due to inability of the molting bodies to swallow sufficient volume of air to split the old cuticle and expand the new one during ecdysis or to a metamorphosis inhibiting effect of the plant extract which is possibly based on the disturbance of the hormonal regulation. The 100% mortality might be due to the chemical constituents present in the methanol leaf extract *T. peruviana* that arrest the metabolic activity of the larvae, which caused the high percentage of mortality. Earlier authors reported that the methanol extract of LC₅₀ value of 20.57 mg/L, *Culex quinquefasciatus*, respectively (Govindarajan et al., 2014).

The methanol extract of *T. peruviana* was subjected to preliminary phytochemical analysis. The result showed the presence of alkaloid, glycosides, phenol, Flavonoids, Terpinoids, Saponins, Cardiac glycosides, Phlobatannins and Steroids but Alkaloids, Tannins were absent in methanol leaf extract of *T. peruviana* (Table 3).
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