Isolation, Identification and Antibiotic Sensitivity Pattern of Escherichia coli Isolated from Diarrheic and Non diarrheic Calves

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A B S T R A C T

The present study was conducted to isolate, identified Escherichia coli from healthy and diarrheic cattle and buffalo calves and determine their antibiotic sensitivity pattern to commonly used antibiotics. A total 100 E. coli isolated from 104 rectal swabs sample from healthy and diarrheic cattle and buffalo calves were subjected to antibiotic sensitivity pattern against 08 different antibiotics by Kirby-Bauer disk diffusion method. The antibiotic sensitivity pattern showed that the E. coli isolated from healthy and diarrheic cattle calves showed higher resistance against ampicillin (88.88%), tetracycline (44.44%) and ampicillin (62.50%), co-trimoxazole (54.16%), respectively. While, healthy cattle calves showed higher resistance against ampicillin (46.15%) and cotrimoxazole (23.07%) whereas diarrhea buffalo ampicillin (52.17%) and cotrimoxazole (39.13%) were recorded.

Keywords: Escherichia coli, Antibiotic sensitivity pattern, Healthy calves, Diarrheic calves

Introduction

The emergence and spread of antimicrobial resistant bacteria is an increasing problem and a threat to global public health (WHO 2017). Various studies have been conducted worldwide to isolate pathogenic bacteria that may be a cause of concern for human or animal health. Neonatal calf diarrhea is multifactorial symptom which despite of continuous research is major cause of poor growth in young calves (Lorenz et al., 2011). The economic aspect of diarrheal diseases in calves and their mortality and morbidity is a matter of great concern to the livestock owners. Gram negative bacteria are a major therapeutic challenge in both livestock and human beings. More than 85% of the diarrhoea is due to the members belonging to family Enterobacteriaceae, particularly E. coli. E. coli is a Gram negative, short rod shaped, flagellated, motile, oxidase negative, facultative anaerobic bacterium (Markey et al., 2013). E. coli is a commensal microbe, which is the major part of normal aerobic microbial population of the intestine of humans and warm blooded animals and plays an important role in host metabolism,
immunology and nutrition (Tenaillon et al., 2010).

Materials and Methods

Rectal swabs sample of healthy and diarrheic cattle and buffalo calves were collected from organised and unorganised dairy farms in and around Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh) in peptone water and incubated at 37°C for 18 hours. A total of 104 samples were processed for isolation of E. coli using standard microbiological techniques and their sensitivity profile for antibiotics as per the standard microbiological protocols. The swabs were inoculated on Mac Conkey’s agar and Eosin methylene blue agar plates at 37°C for 24 hours. The primary identification of the bacterial colonies from the positive cultures performed with the help of colony appearance. Furthermore, identification and characterization of the E. coli isolates was conducted on the basis of colony morphological characteristics, Gram’s staining and biochemical tests such as indole, methyl red, Voges Proskauer, citrate utilization and triple sugar iron agar (Markey et al., 2013). Antibiotic susceptibility pattern of the isolates was determined by using Kirby-Bauer disc diffusion test recommended by Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI, 2013) against 08 antibiotics belonging to 06 different class of antibiotics. Disc used were Aminoglycosides (gentamicin 10μg), Polymyxin (colistin 10μg), Fluoroquinolone (levofloxacin 10μg, ciprofloxacin 5μg), Penicillins (ampicillin 10 μg, chloramphenicol 30 μg), Tetracyclines (tetracyclines 30 μg), Sulphonamides (cotrimoxazole 25 μg). An inoculum was prepared for each bacterial isolate by adjusting the turbidity to 0.5 McFarland standards, which was then spread on Muller-Hinton agar plates. The antibiotic discs were then set on the agar plates and incubated overnight at 37°C for 24 hours. The zones of inhibition for the antibiotics were measured in mm and were further classified according to CLSI guidelines.

Results and Discussion

Out of 104 fecal samples, 100 samples were positive for E. coli (Table 1). The small bright pink colour colony on MacConkey agar indicating the lactose fermenter (fig. 1) when further streaked on EMB showed characteristics metallic green sheen (fig.2) which was further characterized by biochemical test (fig. 3). E. coli was Indole and MR positive and VP and Citrate negative and yellow color butt and slant in TSI agar slant (fig.4). On the basis of morphological and biochemical characteristics 96.15% samples were positive for E. coli. Antibiotic susceptibility pattern of the 100 E. coli isolates were determined by Kirby Bauer disc diffusion method against 08 different antibiotics (fig.5). E. coli isolated from healthy and diarrheic cattle calves showed higher resistance against ampicillin (88.88%), tetracycline (44.44%) and ampicillin (62.50%), co-trimoxazole (54.16%), respectively. Healthy and diarrheic buffalo calves were showed higher resistance against ampicillin (46.15%), cotrimoxazole (23.07%) and ampicillin (52.17%), cotrimoxazole (39.13%), respectively.

In the present study, 100 fecal samples (healthy and diarrheic cattle and buffalo calves) were positive for E. coli. A similar finding was reported by the earlier worker Masud et al., (2012). The present study shows much higher isolation rate than Paul et al., (2010) (46 %), Masud et al., (2012) (30.71%) and Gebregiorgis and Tessema (2016) (36.8 %). The reason why the result of the current study varies from the other reports might be due to variations in farm management conditions. As documented in Radostits et al., (2007), gaps in management specifically calf handling practices, inadequate nutrition,
exposure to severe environment, insufficient attention to the newborn calf or a combination of these.

Resistance to antimicrobial drugs among bacterial pathogens is an emerging problem. Clinically important antimicrobials are extensively used in food animal for disease prevention, treatment and growth promotion. It is suggested that two-third of antimicrobials produced globally are consumed in the livestock sector (CDDEP, 2015). Several studies shows that widespread use of agricultural antimicrobials contributes to increased clinical resistance to antimicrobials (Chang et al., 2015 and Marshall and Levy, 2011).

**Table.1** Isolation of *Escherichia coli* by conventional method

| S.No | Particulars               | Non diarrheic cattle calves | Diarrheic cattle calves | Non diarrheic buffalo calves | Diarrheic buffalo calves | Total |
|------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-------|
| 1    | Sample size               | 27                          | 25                      | 26                          | 26                         | 104   |
| 2    | Total *E. coli* isolated  | 27                          | 24                      | 26                          | 23                         | 100   |
| 3    | Percentage positive       | 100%                        | 96.00%                  | 100%                        | 88.46%                     | 96.15%|

**Table.2** Antimicrobial resistance profile of *E. coli* in non diarrheic cattle calves

| S.No. | Antibacterial Agent | Concentration mcg/disc | Non diarrheic cattle calves(n=27) | Susceptible | Intermediate | Resistant | Total |
|-------|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|-------|
| 1     | Ampicillin          | 10                      | 03 (11.11%)                       | 0 (0%)      | 24 (88.88%)  | 27        |
| 2     | Chloramphenicol     | 30                      | 12 (44.44%)                       | 10 (30.03%) | 05 (18.51%)  | 27        |
| 3     | Ciprofloxacin       | 05                      | 25 (92.59%)                       | 01 (3.70%)  | 01 (3.70%)   | 27        |
| 4     | Co-Trimoxazole      | 25                      | 12 (44.44%)                       | 07 (25.92%) | 08 (29.62%)  | 27        |
| 5     | Colistin            | 10                      | 27 (100%)                         | 0 (0%)      | 0 (0%)       | 27        |
| 6     | Gentamicin          | 10                      | 26 (96.29%)                       | 0 (0%)      | 01 (3.70%)   | 27        |
| 7     | Levofloxacin        | 05                      | 26 (96.29%)                       | 01 (3.70%)  | 0 (0%)       | 27        |
| 8     | Tetracyclin         | 30                      | 03 (11.11%)                       | 07 (25.92%) | 17 (62.96%)  | 27        |

**Table.3** Antimicrobial resistance profile of *E. coli* in diarrheic cattle calves

| S.No. | Antibacterial Agent | Concentration mcg/disc | Diarrheic cattle calves(n=24) | Susceptible | Intermediate | Resistant | Total |
|-------|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|-------|
| 1     | Ampicillin          | 10                      | 09 (37.50%)                     | 0 (0%)      | 15 (62.50%)  | 24        |
| 2     | Chloramphenicol     | 30                      | 15 (62.50%)                     | 07 (29.16%) | 02 (8.30%)   | 24        |
| 3     | Ciprofloxacin       | 5                       | 16 (66.66%)                     | 01 (4.16%)  | 07 (29.16%)  | 24        |
| 4     | Co-Trimoxazole      | 25                      | 10 (41.66%)                     | 03 (12.50%) | 13 (54.16%)  | 24        |
| 5     | Colistin            | 10                      | 20 (83.33%)                     | 0 (0%)      | 04 (16.66%)  | 24        |
| 6     | Gentamicin          | 10                      | 22 (91.66%)                     | 0 (0%)      | 02 (8.30%)   | 24        |
| 7     | Levofloxacin        | 05                      | 17 (70.83%)                     | 01 (4.16%)  | 06 (25.0%)   | 24        |
| 8     | Tetracyclin         | 30                      | 07 (29.16%)                     | 07 (29.16%) | 10 (41.66%)  | 24        |

2081
Table 4 Antimicrobial resistance profile of *E. coli* in diarrheic buffalo calves

| S.No. | Antibacterial Agent | Concentration mcg/disc | Diarrheic buffalo calves (n=23) | Total |
|-------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-------|
| 1     | Ampicillin          | 10                      | 11 (47.82%)                     | 23    |
| 2     | Chloramphenicol     | 30                      | 17 (73.91%)                     | 23    |
| 3     | Ciprofloxacin       | 5                       | 14 (60.86%)                     | 23    |
| 4     | Co-Trimoxazole      | 25                      | 14 (60.86%)                     | 23    |
| 5     | Colistin            | 10                      | 22 (95.65%)                     | 23    |
| 6     | Gentamicin          | 10                      | 22 (95.65%)                     | 23    |
| 7     | Levofloxacin        | 05                      | 18 (78.26%)                     | 23    |
| 8     | Tetracyclin         | 30                      | 09 (39.13%)                     | 23    |

Table 5 Antimicrobial resistance profile of *E. coli* in Non diarrheic buffalo calves

| S.No. | Antibacterial Agent | Concentration mcg/disc | Non diarrheic buffalo calves (n=26) | Total |
|-------|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| 1     | Ampicillin          | 10                      | 15 (57.69%)                       | 26    |
| 2     | Chloramphenicol     | 30                      | 24 (92.30%)                       | 26    |
| 3     | Ciprofloxacin       | 5                       | 20 (84.61%)                       | 26    |
| 4     | Co-Trimoxazole      | 25                      | 19 (73.07%)                       | 26    |
| 5     | Colistin            | 10                      | 26 (100%)                         | 26    |
| 6     | Gentamicin          | 10                      | 26 (100%)                         | 26    |
| 7     | Levofloxacin        | 05                      | 19 (73.07%)                       | 26    |
| 8     | Tetracyclin         | 30                      | 15 (57.69%)                       | 26    |

Fig.1 Gram’s Staining of *Escherichia coli* (100X)
In present study, Antibiotic sensitivity pattern was recorded against 08 different antibiotics revealed the multidrug resistance profile in *E. coli* isolates from diarrheic and healthy cattle calves were 66.66% and 48.14% and for buffalo calves it was 47.82% and 38.46%, respectively. *E. coli* isolates from healthy and diarrheic calves were resistant to at least one of the antimicrobials tested.

The isolates from healthy cattle calves showed higher resistance to ampicillin...
(88.88%) followed by 44.44% for tetracycline while the antibiotics colistin, levofloxacin, gentamicin and ciprofloxacin were sensitive (Table 2). Highest rate of antibiotic resistance was observed in E. coli isolates from diarrheic cattle calves against ampicillin (62.50%), cotrimoxazole (54.16%) and tetracycline (37.50%) while chloramphenicol and gentamicin were effective (Table 3). Similar to the present findings, Kmet and Bujnakova (2018) reported highest antimicrobial resistance to ampicillin followed by tetracycline for the E. coli isolated from calves. Malik et al., (2013) observed highest antimicrobial resistance to the ampicillin and tetracycline and highest susceptibility to gentamicin for the E. coli for the E. coli isolated from diarrheic calves in UP, India. The variation in antibiotic resistance can be due to indiscriminate use of antibiotics in particular area.

Highest rate of antibiotic resistance was observed in E. coli isolates from diarrheic buffalo calves against tetracycline and ampicillin (52.17%) followed by cotrimoxazole (39.13%) while colistin followed by gentamicin, levofloxacin and chloramphenicol were effective (Table 4). In healthy buffalo calves, highest antimicrobial resistance was observed to ampicillin (46.15%) followed by tetracycline (38.46%), while colistin, gentamicin and chloramphenicol antibiotics were sensitive (Table 5). Similar to the present results, Srivani et al., (2017) reported higher antimicrobial resistance against tetracycline (63.21%) followed by ampicillin (48.11%), whereas highest susceptibility to chloramphenicol and gentamicin for the E. coli isolated from diarrheic buffalo calves in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states. Majueeb et al., (2013) observed higher susceptibility to chloramphenicol for the E. coli isolated from buffalo calves in Jammu, India. The E. coli isolated from diarrheic buffalo calves (Nizza et al., 2010) in Italy showed higher sensitivity to colistin as in the present findings.

It can be concluded from the present study that both diarrheic and healthy calves harvested multi drug resistance E. coli.

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