Phytochemical Screening and Antimicrobial Activity of Tamarindus indica

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ABSTRACT

The method of cold maceration was used in the extraction by serial exhaustive extraction method which involves successive extraction with solvents of increasing polarity from a non-polar (hexane) to a more polar solvent (methanol) to ensure that a wide polarity range of compound could be extracted. The phytochemical screening of crude yields of the chemical constituents of Tamarindus indica showed that alkaloids, flavonoids, and tannins are present in all the extracts are present in all the leaf extracts. Activity of the crude hexane, chloroform, ethyl acetate acetone and methanol extracts from the leaf of Tamarindus indica were tested on five clinical isolates; Pseudomonas aeruginosa, Staphylococcus aureus, Escherichia coli, Aspergillus niger and penicillium spp Augmentin and mycotin were used as control drugs. All the crude extracts of the leaf inhibited or exhibited antibacterial activity against all the bacteria pathogens tested with a diameter that ranged between 8 – 26 mm. All the crude extracts of the leaf inhibited or exhibited antifungal activity against Penicillium Spp with a diameter that ranged between 8 - 13 mm but did not show significant inhibition against A. niger. The minimum inhibitory activity (MIC) of the extracts of Tamarindus indica against tested microbes ranges from 400 to 100 mg/ml in all the extracts against the tested bacteria. The minimum inhibitory activity (MIC) of the extracts of Tamarindus indica against tested microbes ranges from 400 to 200 mg/ml in almost all the extracts for the tested fungi.
Introduction

Most of the people in the rural areas of the world depend largely on herbs for treatment of several ailments because medicinal herbs constitute indispensable components of traditional medicine practice due to low cost, easy access and ancestral experience (Marini-Bettolo, 1980). There is evidence of herbs been used in the treatment of diseases and for revitalizing the body system in almost all ancient civilization (Manjula et al., 2013). For a long period of time, plants have been a valuable source of natural products for maintaining human health, especially in the last decade, with more intensive studies for natural therapies. In developing countries majority of the people living in rural areas almost exclusively use traditional medicine in treating all sorts of diseases. Many indigenous plants are used as food plants or crops. They are sometimes added to food meant for pregnant and nursing mothers for medicinal purposes (Adamu et al., 2015). It is a rich source of most of the essential amino acids and phytochemicals, and hence the plant is reported to T. indica has ameliorative effects on many diseases (Kuru 2014). It can also be preferred as a nutritious support for malnourished patients as it is cheap and easy to access. Throughout Southeast Asia, fruit of the tamarind is used as a poultice applied to foreheads of fever sufferers (Doughari, 2006) Kuru 2014 pointed out that T. indica is used for abdominal pain, diarrhea and dysentery, some bacterial infections and parasitic infestations, wound healing, constipation, possess antidiabetic, antimicrobial, antivenom, antioxidant, antimalarial, cardioprotective, hepatoprotective, antiasthmatic, laxative and anti-hyperlipidemic activity and inflammation. The plant kingdom still holds many species of plants containing substances of medicinal value, which are yet to be discovered in Zing Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria. Tamarindus indica leaf is one part of the plants which have been used in traditional medicine for many years. To the best of our knowledge from the available literature there is no work which has been done on the plant Tamarindus indica leaves, in Zing Local Government Area. The present work is designed to enrich the available scientific data on the phytochemistry and antimicrobial activities T. indica leaf extracts.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sample Collection and Preparation

Tamarindus indica leaves were collected from their natural habitat of Zing Local Government Areas of Taraba state, Nigeria. The samples were air-dried for two weeks and then milled into fine powder using a milling machine.

Method of Extraction

The method of cold maceration was used in the extraction by serial exhaustive extraction method which involves successive extraction with solvents of increasing polarity from a non polar (hexane) to a more polar solvent (methanol) to ensure that a wide polarity range of compound could be extracted. The extracts of the leaves was prepared by soaking 100 g of each in 250 ml hexane for four days with frequent agitation until soluble matter is dissolved. The resulting mixture was filtered by gravity filtration and the filtrate was concentrated by evaporation using rotatory evaporator, kept in a vacuum oven over night at room temperature to remove all the solvent and weighed. The procedure was repeated on the residue using the following solvents: Chloroform, ethyl acetate, acetone and methanol sequentially in order of polarity. The extracts were stored in a desiccator until required for testing.

Phytochemical Screening Assay

Phytochemical examinations were carried out for all the extracts using standard procedures to identify the constituents. Chemical tests were carried out on the aqueous extract and on the powdered specimens using standard procedures to identify the constituents as described by Sofowara (1993), Trease and Evans (1989), Harborne (1988).and Ushie et al., 2013

Test for Tannins

A small quantity of the extract was mixed with distilled water and heated on a water bath. The mixture was filtered and ferric chloride was added to the filtrate. A blue solution indicated the absence of tannins in distilled water and dark green colour indicating presence in methanol.

Test for Saponins

About 0.2g of plant extract was mixed with distilled water and heated to boil. Frothing (appearance of creamy mix of small bubbles) showed the presence of Saponins in Methanol while red in Distilled water.
### Table 1: Phytochemical screening of *Tamarindus indica*

| S/N | Phytochemicals     | HE | CE | EAE | AE | ME | C (+) | DMSO (-ve) |
|-----|--------------------|----|----|-----|----|----|-------|------------|
| 1   | Alkaloids          | +  | +  | +   | +  | +  |       |            |
| 2   | Phlobatanins       | -  | -  | -   | -  | -  |       |            |
| 3   | Flavonoids         | +  | +  | +   | +  | +  |       |            |
| 4   | Saponins           | -  | -  | -   | -  | -  |       |            |
| 5   | Cardiac glycosides | -  | -  | -   | -  | -  |       |            |
| 6   | Terpenoids         | -  | -  | -   | -  | -  |       |            |
| 7   | Steroids           | -  | -  | -   | -  | -  |       |            |
| 8   | Tannin             | +  | +  | +   | +  | +  |       |            |

HE = Hexane extract, CE = Chloroform, AE = Acetone extract, EAE = Ethyl acetate extract, ME = Methanol extract, L: Leaves, +: Present, -: Not present

### Table 2: Mean Zone of Inhibition of *Tamarindus indica*

| Organisms              | Conc. (Mg/ml) | HE | CE | EAE | AE | ME | C (+) | DMSO (-ve) |
|------------------------|---------------|----|----|-----|----|----|-------|------------|
| *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* | 400           | 13 | 12 | 12  | 12 | 20 | 30   | 00         |
|                        | 200           | 11 | 08 | 12  | 12 | 14 | 22   | 00         |
|                        | 100           | 10 | 07 | 07  | 11 | 11 | 12   | 00         |
|                        | 50            | 00 | 07 | 06  | 08 | 08 | 10   | 00         |
| *Staphylococcus aureus* | 400           | 11 | 14 | 20  | 14 | 23 | 33   | 00         |
|                        | 200           | 09 | 10 | 14  | 12 | 11 | 21   | 00         |
|                        | 100           | 06 | 08 | 12  | 10 | 10 | 18   | 00         |
|                        | 50            | 00 | 00 | 07  | 06 | 08 | 12   | 00         |
| *Escherichia coli*     | 400           | 11 | 27 | 28  | 11 | 26 | 32   | 00         |
|                        | 200           | 09 | 19 | 13  | 09 | 19 | 25   | 00         |
|                        | 100           | 05 | 14 | 14  | 05 | 13 | 18   | 00         |
|                        | 50            | 00 | 09 | 07  | 00 | 07 | NA   | 00         |
| *Aspergellius Niger*   | 400           | 06 | 06 | 06  | 07 | 06 | NA   | 00         |
|                        | 200           | 03 | 03 | 02  | 05 | 05 | NA   | 00         |
|                        | 100           | 04 | 05 | 03  | 03 | 03 | NA   | 00         |
|                        | 50            | 00 | 00 | 00  | 00 | NA | NA   | 00         |
| *Penicillium Spp*      | 400           | 12 | 11 | 13  | 09 | 19 | NA   | 00         |
|                        | 200           | 08 | 07 | 09  | 05 | 13 | NA   | 00         |
|                        | 100           | 07 | 05 | 05  | 05 | 09 | NA   | 00         |
|                        | 50            | 00 | 00 | 00  | 00 | 00 | NA   | 00         |

Key: HE = Hexane extract, CE= Chloroform, EAE= Ethyl acetate extract, AE = Acetone extract, ME = Methanol extract, Values greater than 7 mm indicate activity and 00 means no activity.
Test for Terpenoids

The extract (0.2g) was mixed with 2ml of chloroform, and 3ml of concentrated $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ was carefully added to form a layer. A reddish brown interface was formed which indicated the presence of terpenoids on both extract.

Test for Steroids

Acetic anhydride (2 ml) was added to 0.5g of the extract in a test tube. It was then followed by the addition of 2 ml of sulfuric acid. A colour change from violet to blue or green indicated the presence of steroids on both extract.

Test for Flavonoids

About 0.2g of the extract was dissolved in dilute sodium hydroxide solution, and equal amount of hydrochloric acid was added. A yellow solution that turned colourless indicated the presence of flavonoids on both extract.

Test for Alkaloids

The aqueous (3ml) was stirred with (3ml) of 1% HCl on a steam bath. Meyer’s reagent was then added to the mixture. Turbidity of the resulting precipitate was taken as positive evidence of alkaloids.

Test for phlobatannins

An aqueous extract of each plant sample was boiled with 1% aqueous hydrochloric acid. Disposition of red precipitate determines the presence of phlobatannins.

Test for Anthraquinones

About 0.5g of the extract was boiled with 2ml of 10% HCl for few minutes in a water bath. The resultant solution was filtered and allowed to cool. Equal volume of chloroform was added to the filtrate. Few drops of 10% NH$_3$ solution was added to the mixture and heated. Formation of rose pink colour indicated the presence of anthraquinones on both extract.

Test for Cardiac glycosides

10 cm$^3$ of 50% $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ was heated in boiling water for 5 min. 10 cm$^3$ of Fehlings solution (5 cm$^3$ of each solution A and B) was added and boiled. A brick red precipitate indicating presence of glycoside was observed.

Bioassay

This is the study of antimicrobial activity of the crude or purified extracts against micro-organism. It was used as a guide to determine the active components of the leaves of Ximenia americana. The crude extracts were tested for antibacterial and antifungal activities. The test organisms were collected from Bauchi Specialist Hospital, Bauchi State, Nigeria. The antibacterial assay was carried out using methods described by Ochi et al., (2015) with modifications.

Preparation of varying concentrations of the extracts

Various concentrations of the extracts were prepared ranging from 50 to 400 mg/mL; this was obtained by measuring 1 mg of the extract and dissolved in 10 mL dimethyl sulphur oxide (DMSO), a solvent that dissolved the extract (100 mg/mL). A serial dilution of the dissolved extract (100 mg/mL) was carried out into three different bottles containing DMSO to obtain concentrations of 400, 200 100 and 50 mg/mL respectively.

Sensitivity test of the crude extract using Agar Well Diffusion Method

The organisms used were standardized using McFarland turbidity standard scale I, to obtain a bacterial cell density of $10^6$ colony forming unit per millilitre (cfu/mL). The standardized inoculate were uniformly streaked (swabbed) into freshly prepared Mueller Hinton agar and potato dextrose agar plates respectively for the bacterial and fungal growth. Five wells were made on the inoculated plates with a cork borer (8 mm in diameter). The wells were properly labeled according to different number of the concentrations prepared. The wells were then filled up with the extracts about 0.2 mL per well. The plates were allowed to stay on the bench for 1 hour for the extract to diffuse on the agar. The Mueller Hinton agar plates for bacterial were incubated at 37°C for three days while the potato dextrose agar plates for fungi were incubated at room temperature (drawer) for three days. At the end of incubation period, all plates were observed for any evidence of inhibition, which will appear as clear zones that were completely devoid of growth around the wells (zone of inhibition). The diameters of the zones were measured with a transparent ruler.
Table 3: Showing Minimum Inhibitory concentration (MIC) and Minimum Bactericidal Concentration in milligram per millilitre (mg/ml) of Sample B

| Organism        | Method | MIC AND MBC (mg/ml) |          |          |          |          |          |             |             |
|-----------------|--------|---------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|-------------|
|                 |        | Chloroform          | Acetone  | Hexane   | Ethylacetate | Msc | OVC |             |             |
|                 | MIC    | MBC     | MIC    | MBC     | MIC   | MBC     | MIC | MBC |             |             |
| *P. aeruginosa* |        |         |        |         |       |         |     |     |             |             |
|                 | 100    | 200     | 100   | 200     | 100   | 200     | 100 | 200 |             |             |
| *S. aureus*     | 100    | 400     | 100   | 200     | 100   | 200     | 100 | 400 | 200         | 400         |
| *E. Coli*       | 100    | 200     | 100   | 200     | 100   | 200     | 00  | 200 | 100         | 200         |
| *A. Niger*      | 200    | 400     | 200   | 400     | 200   | 400     | 200 | 400 | 200         | 400         |
| *Penicillium Spp* | 100 | 200 | 100 | 400 | 100 | 400 | 100 | 400 | 200 | 400 | + | + |

Key: - Msc = Media Sterility Control OVC = Organism Viability Control
calibrated in millimeter (mm).

**Determination of Minimum Inhibitory Concentration (MIC)**

The minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) of the extract was determined using tube dilution method. Serial dilution of the extract was carried out in test tubes using Mueller Hinton Broth (MHB) and Potato Dextrose Broth (PDB) as diluents. The lowest concentration showing inhibition (clear zone) for each organism when the extract was tested during sensitivity test was serially diluted in test tubes containing Mueller Hinton Broth (MHB) and Potato Dextrose Broth (PDB). Each tube containing the broth and the extract was inoculated with the standardized organisms. A tube containing sterile broth (MHB and PDB) without any organism was used as a control. All tubes were then incubated at 37°C for 24 hours. After the incubation period, the tubes were examined for the presence or absence of growth using turbidity as a criterion. The lowest concentration (dilution) in the series without visible signs of growth was considered to be the minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC).

**Determination of Minimum Bactericidal Concentration (MBC)**

The results from the Minimum Inhibitory Concentration (MIC) were used to determine the Minimum Bactericidal Concentration (MBC). A sterile wire loop was dipped into the tubes that did not show turbidity in the MIC test, it was then streaked unto a freshly prepared sterile nutrient agar plates. The plates were incubated at 37°C for 24 hours. After the incubation period the plates were then examined for the presence or absence of growth. This was done to determine if the antimicrobial effect of the extract was bactericidal or bacteriostatic.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Results**

Table 1 presents the results of phytochemical screening of leaf solvent extracts of Tamarindus indica. The phytochemical screening of crude extracts of T. indica revealed the presence of alkaloids, flavonoids and tannins in all the extracts, while other phytochemicals screened for were not dictated.

**Discussions**

The phytochemical screening of crude yields of the chemical constituents of Tamarindus indica showed that alkaloids, flavonoids, and tannins are present in all the extracts are present in all the leaf extracts. These classes of secondary metabolites are known to show medicinal activity as well as exhibiting physiological activity (Sofowara, 1993). These classes of phytochemical compounds are known to show curative activity against several bacteria and it is not surprising that these plant extracts are used traditionally by herbalist to cure bacteria related ill-health (Njoku and Obi 2009). *Tamarindus indica* can be used as an analgesic, anaesthetic and as social drugs since it contains alkaloids. The alkaloids contained in plants are used in medicine as anaesthetic agents (Herout *et al.*, 1988). Harborne (1988) also reported on analgesic properties of alkaloids. Alkaloids has contributed to the majority of the poisons, neurotoxins and traditional psychedelics and social drugs [e.g. nicotine, caffeine, methamphetamine (ephedrine) cocaine, and opiates] consumed by humans (Zenk and Juenger 2007).

Okoli and Okere (2010) pointed out that flavonoids are potent water soluble super antioxidants and free radical scavengers which prevent oxidative cell damage, have strong anticancer activity and inhibit tumor growth. The beneficial effects of fruit, vegetables, and tea or even red wine have been attributed to flavonoid compounds rather than to known nutrients and vitamins (Félicien, 2008). Saponins causes complexation with cholesterol to form pores in cell membrane bilayers, e.g., in red cell (erythrocyte) membranes, where complexation leads to red cell lysis (hemolysis) on intravenous injection. (Francis *et al.*, 2002). There is tremendous, commercially driven promotion of saponins as dietary supplements and nutriceuticals. There is evidence of the presence of saponins in traditional medicine preparations (Xu *et al.*, 1996).

Activity of the crude hexane, chloroform, ethyl acetate acetone and methanol extracts from the leaf of *Tamarindus indica* were tested on five clinical isolates; *Pseudomonas aeruginosa, Staphylococcus aureus, Escherichia coli, Aspergillus niger and penicillium spp* Augmentin and mycotin were used as control drugs. The measured zones of inhibition of the pathogens by the crude extracts are presented in the Tables 2 and 3. All the crude extracts of the leaf inhibited or exhibited antibacterial activity against all the bacteria pathogens tested with a diameter that ranged between 8 – 26 mm. All the crude extracts of the leaf inhibited or exhibited antifungal activity
against *Penicillium Spp* with a diameter that ranged between 8 - 13 mm but did not show significant inhibition against *A. niger*. The minimum inhibitory activity (MIC) of the extracts of *Tamarindus indica* against tested microbes ranges from 400 to 100 mg/ml in all the extracts against the tested bacteria. The minimum inhibitory activity (MIC) of the extracts of *Tamarindus indica* against tested microbes ranges from 400 to 200 mg/ml in almost all the extracts for the tested fungi. These could explain the rationale for the use the plant in the treatment of the various conditions in traditional medical practice.

**Discussions**

**Acknowledgments**

The tertiary education trust fund (TETFUND INSTITUTION-BASED RESEARCH INTERVENTION) and Federal University Wukari (FUW) are thanked for providing financial support.

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