Antimicrobial activity of *Acalypha godseffiana* against selected urinary tract infection causing pathogens

S. Sahoo, B. K. Rout, S. K. Mekap and N. K. Dhal

**Abstract**

The aerial parts of *Acalypha godseffiana* Mast, belonging to family Euphorbiaceae was investigated to evaluate *in vitro* antimicrobial activity of petroleum ether, chloroform, methanolic and aqueous extracts against urinary tract infection causing pathogens consisting of *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Enterococcus faecalis*, *Escherichia coli*, *Klebsiella pneumonia*, *Proteus mirabilis*, *Candida albicans*, *Candida tropicalis*, *Candida krusei* and *Aspergillus niger*. The major UTI causing bacterial and fungal pathogens under investigation were tested by the disc diffusion assay method and the minimum inhibitory concentration was evaluated. Methanolic extract exhibited a significant and broader spectrum of inhibition followed by petroleum ether, aqueous and chloroform extract against bacterial pathogens. The results of antifungal activity revealed that aqueous and methanol extract inhibited fungal pathogens significantly with a broader spectrum of inhibition when compared to chloroform and petroleum ether extract. An attempt has been made to compare the activity of extracts with most potent standard antibiotics effective against selected UTI causing pathogens under test.

**Keywords:** *Acalypha godseffiana*, *in vitro* antimicrobial activity, disc diffusion assay, MIC, UTI

1. Introduction

*Acalypha godseffiana* Mast, belonging to family Euphorbiaceae [1, 2, 3] is a fast growing, evergreen, bushy shrub, with green leaf blades, creamy-white margins, pinkish tinge on young developing leaves, origin from pacific Islands [4]. In folklore the roots of the plant are used as cathartic and leaves were reported to have laxative and vulnerary [5] activity. The present study is intended to determine the antimicrobial activity of the plant against selected UTI causing pathogens.

2. Materials and Methods

The plant was collected from the State Govt. Nursery, Unit-IV of Bhubaneswar, Odisha in the early morning during the month of September (rainy season). The plant was authenticated in the herbarium of Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology, Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The aerial parts were shade dried for 4 days and dried aerial parts grinded by a mechanical grinder and the coarse powder obtained was taken for extraction in petroleum ether followed by chloroform, methanol and water by using Soxhlet assembly for 48 h each. The extracts were concentrated to dryness under vacuum. The percentage yield of extracts was found to be 1.2%, 1.2%, 1.5% and 2% of petroleum ether, chloroform, methanol and aqueous extracts respectively. *In vitro* screening was carried out using selected UTI causing pathogens, which include two gram positive bacteria (*Staphylococcus aureus*, *Enterococcus faecalis*) and three gram negative bacteria (*Escherichia coli*, *Klebsiella pneumonia* and *Proteus mirabilis*). Antifungal activity of *A. godseffiana* extracts were screened against *Candida albicans*, *C. tropicalis*, *C. krusei* and *Aspergillus niger*. The bacterial strains were obtained from the University Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Utkal University, Vani Vihar, Bhubaneswar, Orissa. The extracts were screened for their antimicrobial activity by disc diffusion assay method [6, 7].

The petroleum ether, chloroform, methanolic and aqueous extracts were dissolved in dimethyl formamide (DMF, 6%) which was previously tested for antibacterial and antifungal activity against all test organisms and found to have no antimicrobial activity. The extracts were made solution at a concentration of 1000, 500, 250 and 62.5 μg/ml and finally sterilized by filtration using 0.45 μm millipore filters.
The sterile discs (6 mm in diameter) were impregnated with the above extract solution to achieve the desired concentration. Nutrient agar and Sabouraud’s dextrose agar (SDA, HiMedia Laboratories Ltd., Mumbai) with DMF without extracts served as control sets throughout the study. The density of the bacterial suspension was standardized by standard McFarland method [8]. Disc diffusion assay was carried out by using a suspension of Candida species and A. niger by spread plate technique on freshly prepared SDA plates. The inoculated bacterial and fungal plates with the plant extract and standard discs on them were incubated at 37 °C for 24 h and 28 °C for 48 h respectively. The zone of inhibition exhibited by different extracts against the test bacteria and fungi by disc diffusion method [6, 7] was read using antibiotic zone reader which is given in Table 1 and Table 2 respectively. The minimum inhibitory concentrations (MIC) of the extracts were determined by two fold serial dilution assay [9] which is shown in Table 3.

Antimicrobial activity of A. godseffiana extracts were compared with ciprofloxacin (25 µg/disc) as standard antibiotic and clotrimazole (10 µg/disc) and terbinafine (25µg/disc) (HiMedia Laboratories Ltd., Mumbai.) as broad spectrum antifungal agent. A comparison of plant extracts with the most effective standards against bacterial and fungal pathogens causing UTI is given in Table 1 and 2 respectively.

### Table 1: In vitro antibacterial activity of A. godseffiana extracts against UTI causing pathogens by disc diffusion method

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Microorganisms</th>
<th>PE</th>
<th>CH</th>
<th>ME</th>
<th>AQ</th>
<th>CL</th>
<th>TF</th>
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<tr>
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<td>500</td>
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<tr>
<td>P. mirabilis</td>
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<td>500</td>
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<td>K. pneumonia</td>
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<td>1000</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>500</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. coli</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. albicans</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>500</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. tropicalis</td>
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<td>A. niger</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

MIC - Minimum Inhibitory concentration (µg/ml)

- Indicates no zone of inhibition.

### Results and Discussions

All extracts of A. godseffiana Mast. at 1000 µg/disc showed optimum activity against all tested UTI causing pathogens. However, results of the disc diffusion method as indicated in Table 1, Methanolic extract inhibited significant and broader spectrum of inhibition followed by petroleum ether, aqueous and choroform extract against the UTI pathogens. Methanolic extract showed maximum inhibition (18 mm) against K. pneumonia and minimum (12 mm) against E. coli. Chloroform extract showed highest inhibition (16 mm) against K. pneumonia and minimum (10 mm) against E. coli and E. faecalis. Petroleum ether showed maximum inhibition (18 mm) against P. mirabilis and minimum (13 mm) against E. coli. Aqueous extract showed highest inhibition (18 mm) against K. pneumonia and minimum (13 mm) against P. mirabilis.

The results of antifungal activities are indicated in Table 2, showed that the methanolic extract exhibit maximum and minimum zone of inhibition (18 and 15 mm) against C. tropicalis and C. albicans respectively. The chloroform and aqueous extracts showed similar zone of inhibition (17 and 10 mm) against C. albicans and C. tropicalis respectively, whereas the petroleum ether extract showed maximum and minimum (12 and 07 mm) inhibition against C. krusei and C. tropicalis respectively. A. niger was inhibited by A. godseffiana extracts with significant inhibition shown by methanol (17 mm), followed by aqueous, petroleum ether and chloroform extracts (12, 11 and 09 mm) respectively.

The MIC against the tested microorganisms, as indicated in Table 3 showed that methanolic and aqueous extracts inhibit microbial growth at comparative lesser concentrations than chloroform extract.
4. Conclusion
The findings of the present investigation revealed that the methanolic extract of aerial parts of *Acalypha godseffiana* was found to be more potent as compared to other three extracts against various UTI causing pathogens and fungal strains. Further investigation needs for isolation and characterization of active phytoconstituents from extracts which may yield few more compounds with greater antimicrobial potential.

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6. References
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