

Research Article

Antidiabetic and Antihyperlipidaemic Activity of Ethanol extract of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* (L.) Lam Whole Plant in Alloxan Induced Diabetic Rats

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ABSTRACT

The ethanol extract of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* whole plant (Family: Caryophyllaceae) was investigated for its antihyperglycemic and antihyperlipidaemic effect in Wistar Albino rats. Diabetes was induced in Albino rats by administration of alloxan monohydrate (150mg/kg, i.p). The ethanol extract of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* at a dose of 150 and 300mg/kg of body weight were administered at single dose per day to diabetes induced rats for a period of 14 days. The effect of ethanol extract of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* whole plant on blood glucose, serum insulin, urea, creatinine, glycosylated haemoglobin, serum lipid profile [total cholesterol (TC), triglycerides (TG), low density lipoprotein – cholesterol (LDL-C), very low density lipoprotein – cholesterol (VLDL-C), high density lipoprotein – cholesterol (HDL-C) and phospholipid (PL)] serum protein, albumin, globulin, serum enzymes [Serum Glutamate Pyruvate Transaminases (SGPT), Serum Glutamate Oxaloacetate Transaminases (SGOT), and Alkaline Phosphatase (ALP)], were measured in the diabetic rats. The ethanol extract of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* whole plant elicited significant reductions of blood glucose ($p < 0.05$), lipid parameters except HDL-C, serum enzymes and significantly increased HDL-C. The extracts also caused significant increase in serum insulin ($p < 0.05$) in the diabetic rats. From the above results, it is concluded that ethanol extract of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* possesses significant antihyperglycemic and antihyperlipidaemic effects in alloxan induced diabetic rats.

Keywords: *Polycarpaea corymbosa*, Antidiabetic, Antihyperlipidaemic, SGOT, SGPT and HbA_{1c}.

INTRODUCTION

Diabetes mellitus is a common and very prevalent disease affecting the citizens of both developed and developing countries. It is estimated that 25% of the world population is affected by this disease. Diabetes mellitus is caused by the abnormalities of carbohydrates metabolism which is linked to low blood insulin level or insensitivity of target organs to insulin¹. It is the most common endocrine disorder, affecting 16 million individuals in the United States and as many as 200 million worldwide. In addition to elevated blood glucose levels, diabetes is generally accompanied with lipid metabolism abnormality communally known as diabetic dyslipidaemia, increase the risk for coronary heart disease². In addition, prolonged hyperglycemia causes increased protein glycation, which has been known to be a source of free radicals.

Recently, the treatment of diabetes mainly involves a sustained reduction in

hyperglycemia by the use of biguanides, thiazolidinediones, sulfonylureas, d-phenylalanine and α -glucosidase inhibitors in addition to insulin. However, due to unwanted side effects in the efficacies of these compounds are debatable and there is a demand for new compounds for the treatment of diabetes³. Hence plants have been suggested as a rich, as yet unexplored source of potentially useful antidiabetic drugs. Many traditional plants treatment for diabetes are used throughout the world. Moreover, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 80% of people in developing countries depend on traditional medicine for their health needs and 85% of traditional medicine involves the use of plant extracts. In other words, about 4 billion people in the world rely on plants as source of drugs. This has led researchers to continue their search for the "miracle drug" for treatment of diabetes from plants⁴.

Polycarpaea corymbosa(L.) Lam. belongs to "Caryophyllaceae" is commonly known as "Pallipoondu" in Palliyar tribals of Sirumalai hills, Western Ghats Tamil Nadu. Paste prepared from the whole plant is taken once in a day for period of 2-3 weeks to treat jaundice by the palliyars⁵. Whole plant extract of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* were respond for the biological activities such as hepatoprotective and antiinflammatory^{6,7}. Literature reviews indicated that the antidiabetic activity of whole plant of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* has not been scientifically evaluated so far. Hence in the present study, the ethanol extract of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* whole plant has been investigated for antihyperglycemic and antihyperlipidaemic activity in alloxan induced diabetic rats.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Plant Material

The whole plant of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* (L.) Lam were collected from Agasthiarmalai Biosphere Reserve, Western Ghats, Tamil Nadu. With the help of local flora, a voucher specimen was retained in Ethnopharmacology Unit, Research Department of Botany, V. O. Chidambaram College, Tuticorin for further reference.

Preparation of plant extract for phytochemical screening and antidiabetic studies

The *Polycarpaea corymbosa* whole plant was shade dried at room temperature and the dried whole plant was powdered in a Wiley mill. Hundred grams of powdered whole plant was packed in a Soxhlet apparatus and extracted with ethanol. The extracts were subjected to qualitative test for the identification of various phytochemical constituents as per the standard procedures^{8,9}. The ethanol extracts were concentrated in a rotary evaporator. The concentrated ethanol extract were used for antidiabetic studies.

Animals

Normal healthy male Wistar Albino rats (180-240g) were housed under standard environmental conditions at temperature (25±2°C) and light and dark (12: 12 h). Rats were fed with standard pellet diet (Goldmohur brand, MS Hindustan lever Ltd., Mumbai, India) and water ad libitum. Study was carried out as per IAFIC approval No: 82/PHARMA/SCRI, 2010.

Acute Toxicity Study

Acute oral toxicity study was performed as per OECD – 423 guidelines (acute toxic class

method), albino rats (n=6) of either sex selected by random sampling were used for acute toxicity study¹⁰. The animals were kept fasting for overnight and provided only with water, after which the extracts were administered orally at 5mg/kg body weight by gastric intubations and observed for 14 days. If mortality was observed in two out of three animals, then the dose administered was assigned as toxic dose. If mortality was observed in one animal, then the same dose was repeated again to confirm the toxic dose. If mortality was not observed, the procedure was repeated for higher doses such as 50,100, and 2000 mg/kg body weight.

Induction of Diabetes in Experimental animal

Rats were induced diabetes by the administration of simple intraperitoneal dose of alloxan monohydrate (150 mg/kg)¹¹. Two days after alloxan injection, rats screened for diabetes having glycosuria and hypoglycemia with blood glucose level of 200-260 mg/100 ml were taken for the study. All animals were allowed free access to water and pellet diet and maintained at room temperature in plastic cages.

Experimental Design

In the present investigation, a total of 30 rats (24 diabetic surviving rats and 6 normal rats) were taken and divided into five groups of 6 rats each.

Group I: Normal untreated rats

Group II: Diabetic control rats

Group III: Diabetic rats given ethanol extract of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* whole plant (150mg/kg body weight)

Group IV: Diabetic rats given ethanol extract of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* whole plant (300mg/kg body weight)

Group V: Diabetic rats given standard drug glibenclamide (600µg/kg body weight).

The animals were sacrificed at the end of experimental period of 14 days by decapitation. Blood was collected, sera separated by centrifugation at 3000g for 10 minutes.

Estimation of insulin, glucose, urea, creatinine and glycosylated haemoglobin

Serum glucose was measured by the Otoluidine method¹². Insulin level was assayed by Enzyme Linked Immuno Sorbant Assay (ELISA) kit¹³. Urea estimation was carried out by the method of Varley¹⁴; serum creatinine was estimated by the method of Owen et al¹⁵. Glycosylated haemoglobin (HBA1C)

estimation was carried out by a modified colorimetric method of Karunanayake and Chandrasekharan¹⁶.

Estimation of protein, albumin, globulin, SGPT, SGOT, ALP

Serum protein¹⁷ and serum albumins was determined by quantitative colorimetrically method by using bromocresol green. The total protein minus the albumin gives the globulin, serum glutamate pyruvate transaminase (SGPT) and serum glutamate oxaloacetate transaminase (SGOT) was measured spectrophotometrically by utilizing the method of Reitman and Frankel¹⁸. Serum alkaline phosphatase (ALP) was measured by the method of King and Armstrong¹⁹.

Estimation of lipids and lipoprotein

Serum total cholesterol (TC)²⁰, total triglycerides (TG)²¹, low density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C), very low density lipoprotein cholesterol (VLDL-C)²², high density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-C)²³ and phospholipids²⁴ were analyzed.

Statistical analysis

The data were analyzed using student's t-test statistical methods. For the statistical tests a p values of less than 0.01 and 0.05 was taken as significant.

RESULTS

Preliminary phytochemical screening and acute toxicity

The ethanol extract of whole plant of *P.corymbosa* subjected for phytochemical study showed the presence of alkaloids, coumarin, glycosides, flavonoids, steroids, saponin, phenols, tannins and xanthoprotein. The acute toxicity study carries out in wistar albino rats showed that ethanol extract of *P.corymbosa* whole plant was safe up to 2000mg/kg body weight. No death was observed until the end of the study.

Fasting Blood Glucose (FBG) Levels

The measured blood glucose levels of nondiabetic and alloxan induced diabetic rats are shown in Table 1. The administration of ethanol extract of *P.corymbosa* whole plant to diabetic rats produced a significant ($p<0.05$) reduction in blood glucose levels in a dose dependent manner as compared with alloxan induced control group (Group II).

Blood glucose level and other parameters levels

Table 2 shows the levels of blood glucose, serum insulin, urea, creatinine and

glycosylated hemoglobin of normal, diabetic control and drug treated rats. There was a significant ($p<0.01$) increase blood glucose level in alloxan induced diabetic rats (Group II) when compared with normal rats (Group I). Administration of whole plant extract of *P.corymbosa* (Group III & IV) and glibenclamide (Group V) tends to bring the parameters significantly ($p<0.05$, $p<0.01$) towards the normal. Serum insulin level of diabetic control group was significantly ($p<0.01$) decreased when compared to normal control group (Group I). The extract and glibenclamide group of diabetic rats significantly ($p<0.01$) increased the serum insulin. A significant ($p<0.05$) elevation in urea and creatinine was observed in alloxan induced diabetic rats (Group II), when compared to control rats. The *P.corymbosa* extracts were administrated orally to diabetic rats for 14 days reversed the urea and creatinine level to near normal. Administration of ethanol extract of *P.corymbosa* whole plant (300mg/kg) and glibenclamide significantly ($p<0.05$) reduced HbA1C level compared to diabetic control rats.

Biochemical parameters levels changes in diabetic rats

The decreased protein, albumin and globulin levels were noticed in diabetic control rats (Group II) compared to control rats. Administration of ethanol extract of *P.corymbosa* whole plant 150 and 300mg/kg and glibenclamide increased protein, albumin and globulin levels compared to diabetic control rats (Table 3). Also, the serum SGOT, SGPT and ALP levels were elevated significantly ($p<0.05$) in alloxan induced diabetic rats compared to control rats. Both the doses of ethanol extract of *P.corymbosa* whole plant and glibenclamide treatment reduced above parameters compared to diabetic control rats.

Lipid profiles levels changes in diabetic rats

In the present study, induction of diabetes, significantly ($p<0.01$) altered the normal lipid profile levels compared to control rats. Administration of both doses of ethanol extract of *P.corymbosa* whole plant and glibenclamide significantly ($p<0.05$) decreased TC, TG, LDL, VLDL, PL levels and also significantly increased the HDL level compared to diabetic control rats (Table 4).

DISCUSSION

Alloxan is widely used for the induction of diabetes mellitus in experimental animals. It is

postulated to induce diabetes by degeneration and necrosis of β - cells of the islets of Langerhans of pancreas, which leads to reduction in insulin release²⁵. It has been reported that using medicinal plant extract to treat alloxan induced diabetic rats result in activation of β -cells and insulinogenic effects²⁶. *P.corymbosa* whole plant may also have brought about hypoglycemic action through stimulation of surviving β -cells islets of langherhans to release more insulin. This was clearly evidenced by the increased levels of plasma insulin in diabetic rats treated with *P.corymbosa*. Since the percentage fall in plasma glucose levels was different in models with varying intensity of hyperglycaemia, it implies that the antihyperglycaemic effect of that plant is dependent on the dosage of diabetogenic agent, which in turn leads to β -cells destruction²⁷. A number of other plants have also been observed to exert hypoglycemic activity through insulin release stimulatory effects²⁸⁻³⁰.

In diabetes, elevated levels of serum urea and creatinine are observed which may be due to renal damage caused by abnormal glucose regulation or elevated glucose and glycosylated protein tissue levels³¹. In present study, significant increase in serum urea and creatinine levels were observed in diabetic rats compared to normal control rats which indicate impaired renal function in diabetic rats. The treatment with ethanol extract of *P.corymbosa* lowered the above parameters significantly compared to diabetic control rats and it showed protective effect of ethanol extract of *P.corymbosa* on the kidneys.

In diabetes, HbA1C is considered as a diagnostic marker and helps to know about degree of protein glycation, long-term blood sugar level and correlation of diabetes associated complications^{32, 33}. Glycosylated haemoglobin has been found to be increased over a long period of time in diabetes. During diabetes, the excess of glucose present in blood reacts with haemoglobin to form glycosylated haemoglobin³⁰. The rate of glycation is proportional to the concentration of blood glucose. In present study, alloxan induced diabetic rats showed significant increase ($p < 0.01$) glycosylated haemoglobin (HbA1C) level compared with normal rats. The ethanol extract of *P.corymbosa* whole plant treated rats showed a significant decrease ($p < 0.05$) in the content of glycosylated haemoglobin that could be due to an improvement in glycemic status.

Elevation of serum biomarker enzymes such as SGOT, SGPT and ALP was observed in diabetic rats indicating impaired liver function, which is obviously due to hepatocellular necrosis. The decreased total protein content in alloxan induced diabetic rats also substantiated the hepatic damage by alloxan. Diabetic complications such as increased gluconeogenesis and ketogenesis may be due to elevated transaminase activities³⁴. The 14 days treatment with ethanol extract of *P.corymbosa* whole plant restored all the above mentioned hepatic biochemical parameters towards the normal levels in a dose dependent manner.

The concentration of lipids, such as cholesterol, TG, LDL-Cholesterol was significantly increased, whereas HDL-Cholesterol was decreased in the diabetic rats than normal rats. The impairment of insulin secretion results in enhanced metabolism of lipids from the adipose tissue to the plasma. A variety of derangements in metabolic and regulatory mechanisms, due to insulin deficiency, are responsible for the observed accumulation of lipids. Further it has been reported that diabetic rats treated with insulin shows normalized lipid levels³⁵. Diabetic rats treated with ethanol extract of *P.corymbosa* whole plant and glibenclamide also normalized lipid levels. Thus, the results indicate that ethanol extract of *P.corymbosa* whole plant also may possess insulin like action by virtue of the ability to lower the lipid levels. These results are similar to earlier reports observed with the other plant³⁶.

In conclusion, the preliminary investigation on the antidiabetic efficacy of ethanol extract of *P.corymbosa* whole plant will be significant to proceed further in this path for the isolation of active principles responsible for antidiabetic activity. The present study emphasizes that the ethanol extract has more antidiabetic effect than aqueous extract and it contains potent and safe antihyperglycemic principles unlike synthetic drugs. Further studies will be carried out to elucidate the exact mechanism of action of ethanol extract of *P.corymbosa* whole plant on diabetes and its antiperoxidative effect.

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Table 1: Effect of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* whole plant extract on the body weight and fasting blood glucose in normal, diabetic and diabetic treated rats

Treatment groups	Mean initial body weight (g)	Mean final body weight (g)	Mean weight Gain (G↑) / loss(L↓) (g)	Fasting Blood glucose (mg/dl)	
				Initial	Final(after 2wks)
Group I	189.54±5.11	197.65±6.36	8.12↑	69.88±1.92	73.95±1.64
Group II	192.63±8.24	173.94±5.24	18.69↓**	248.56±2.84	263.16±5.36
Group III	208.44±7.66	216.80±5.08	8.36↑a	228.36±5.96	146.14±4.56b
Group IV	201.34±8.54	211.05±6.27	9.71↑a	221.93±5.28	131.64±5.16b
Group V	196.58±9.34	216.42±7.39	19.84↑a	229.66±6.16	104.53±4.35b

Each Value is SEM of 5 animals * $p < 0.05$ comparison with Normal control vs diabetic and drug treated : a $p < 0.05$ Diabetic control vs drug treated : b $p < 0.05$ comparison with initial vs final

Table 2: Effect of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* whole plant extracts on the serum insulin, glucose, urea, creatinine and HbA1c level of normal, diabetic induced and drug treated rats

Parameter	Insulin (mlu/ml)	Glucose (mg/dl)	Urea (mg/dl)	Creatinine (mg/dl)	GlycolytedHb (%)
Group I	21.83±1.13	73.81±3.54	12.05±1.04	0.73±0.12	4.61±0.52
Group II	9.19±0.948**	198.39±2.61**	29.63±1.85*	2.45±0.35*	9.89±0.25**
Group III	13.26±1.56a	136.32±1.21a	22.06±1.14	1.94±0.36	7.08±0.36ns
Group IV	16.85±1.86a	124.43±1.73a	16.84±1.84	1.38±0.24	6.27±0.16ns
Group V	19.73±1.09aa	109.38±1.84aa	13.05±1.56a	1.05±0.11a	5.21±0.62a

Each Value is SEM of 5 animals : * Comparison made between normal control to diabetic control and drug treated groups; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$ a, Comparison made between diabetic control to drug treated groups .a: $p < 0.05$; aa $p < 0.01$; ns :Not significant

Table 3: Effect of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* whole plant extracts on the serum protein, albumin, globulin, SGOT, SGPT and ALP level of normal, diabetic induced, and drug treated rats

Groups	Protein (g/dl)	Albumin (g/dl)	Globulin (g/dl)	SGPT (u/l)	SGOT (u/l)	ALP (u/l)
Group I	7.93±0.16	4.63±0.14	3.30±0.11	18.53±1.62	20.16±1.33	184.93±3.65
Group II	6.02±0.19*	3.84±0.21*	2.18±0.24	97.18±3.54*	89.25±1.91*	226.16±4.84*
Group III	6.84±0.13ns	4.02±0.13	2.82±0.11	42.14±2.14	46.62±2.36	203.14±3.14 ^a
Group IV	7.54±0.24ns	4.14±0.34	3.40±0.39	33.64±2.14	38.63±2.64	213.19±3.63ns
Group IV	7.96±0.38ns	4.03±0.45	3.93±0.24	21.94±1.12	25.88±1.65	173.94±2.16 ^a

Each Value is SEM of 5 animals:* Comparison made between normal control to diabetic control and drug treated groups; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$ a, Comparison made between diabetic control to drug treated groups . a: $p < 0.05$; ns :Not significant

Table 4: Effect of *Polycarpaea corymbosa* whole plant extracts on the serum Lipid profile of normal, diabetic induced, and drug treated rats

Groups	TC (mg/dl)	TG(mg/dl)	HDL(mg/dl)	LDL-C (mg/dl)	VLDL (mg/dl)	PL (mg/dl)
Group I	103.34±2.18	93.61±1.64	42.98±2.16	41.64±1.32	18.72±1.03	159.97±3.51
Group II	214.26±4.76**	198.16±4.27**	26.36±1.65**	148.27±3.68**	39.63±1.26*	258.69±5.33**
Group III	174.36±1.76 ^a	166.28±1.51 ^{aa}	32.08±1.96 ^a	102.10±0.96 ^a	33.36±1.28 ^a	214.11±1.78 ^a
Group IV	163.16±1.94 ^a	181.33±2.19ns	39.65±2.44 ^a	87.24±1.39a	36.27±1.34*	213.21±2.83 ^a
Group V	119.57±1.21 ^{aa}	124.74±2.68 ^{aa}	23.54±1.88	71.08±1.21 ^{aa}	24.95±1.23 ^a	174.41±1.92 ^{aa}

Each Value is SEM of 5 animals : * Comparison made between normal control to diabetic control and drug treated groups; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$ a, Comparison made between diabetic control to drug treated groups . a: $p < 0.05$; aa $p < 0.01$; ns :Not significant

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