

## Phytochemical, Antioxidant and Antibacterial Activity of *Chromolaena odorata* from Andaman Islands, India

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### Abstract

The present study was aimed to evaluate the phytochemical, antioxidant and antibacterial activity of *Chromolaena odorata* (*Eupatorium odoratum*). *In-vitro* phytochemical and antioxidant properties of methanolic extract of *C. odorata* exhibited the maximum amount of total phenol ( $39.72 \pm 5.25$  mg GAE/g), flavonoids ( $100.75 \pm 1.75$  mg RE/g), DPPH radical scavenging activity (82.83 %), ABTS (23.18 mg/g) and total antioxidant activity (75.42 mg/g). Besides, the methanol and DMSO dissolved extracts of *C. odorata* revealed the considerable amount of *in-vitro* antibacterial activity against almost all the seven tested fish and human pathogenic bacteria. The highest amount of antibacterial activity with zone of inhibition of 21 mm was recorded against *Aeromonas hydrophila* and *Pseudomonas fluorescens*. The present study showed that the presence of potential active constituents in *C. odorata* may assist in combating the free radicals and also inhibits the growth of microbes.

**Keywords:** *Chromolaena odorata*, *Eupatorium odoratum*, phytochemical, antioxidant, antibacterial, Andaman Islands

### Introduction

*Chromolaena odorata* (synonyms to *Eupatorium odoratum*) is a well known traditional medicinal herb belonging to the Family Asteraceae. Commonly called as siam weed, devil weed, French weed, Christmas bush, bitter bush, baby tea, Santa Maria and common floss flower (Prawiradiputra, 2007; Patel *et al.* 2010; Chakraborty *et al.* 2011; Vaisakh and Pandey, 2012). Even though it is an invasive species, possess various useful attributes such as antibacterial (Lavanya and Brahma Prakash, 2011; Ravikumar *et al.* 2011), anti-inflammatory (Owoyele *et al.* 2005; Ayyanar and Ignacimuthu, 2009; Vaisakh and Pandey, 2012), anti-malarial (Pisutthanan *et al.* 2005; Doss *et al.* 2011), anti-viral (Pisutthanan *et al.* 2005), anti-hepatotoxic (Alisi *et al.* 2011; Asomugha *et al.* 2014), anthelmintic (Vital and Rivera, 2009) and antioxidant (Venkata Raman *et al.* 2012) properties. It is also reported that the bioactive compounds present in *C. odorata* has the ability to treat a variety of diseases (Vital and Rivera, 2009; Harlina *et al.* 2013).

In Andaman and Nicobar Islands, *C. odorata* is abundant and also used to cure various ailments by the

local population including the indigenous tribes. The leaves of *C. odorata* are widely used by the indigenous tribes such as Nicobarese and Onges and they call it as 'Ureh bes' in Nicobari language which is used to treat against skin injuries, body ache, piles, centipede and snake bites (Chander *et al.* 2014; Chander and Vijayachari, 2018). Karen tribes call it as 'Sawpokwela' in their language and uses the leaves to cure fever, cough, skin injuries and breathing problems (Chander *et al.* 2015). In the wake of emerging antibiotic resistance and its subsequent transmission into food chain, the use of broad spectrum natural bioactive compounds without harmful side effects are highly encouraged for human and animal health management in the recent years. Studies on the phytochemical, antioxidant and antibacterial activity of *C. odorata* from Andaman and Nicobar Islands are scanty except the preliminary reports on its antimicrobial effect (Jai Sunder *et al.* 2012; Natheer *et al.* 2012). With this background, the present study was aimed at evaluation of phytochemical, antioxidant and antibacterial activity of *C. odorata* against fish and human pathogenic bacteria.

## Materials and methods

### (A). *In-vitro* phytochemical and antioxidant activity

#### Collection and preparation of sample

Fresh leaf samples of *C. odorata* were collected from ICAR-Central Island Agricultural Research Institute, South Andaman and shade dried at room temperature for 3-4 days. The dried leaves were homogenized with pestle and mortar and stored at 4 °C for further analysis.

#### Solvent extraction

One gram of *C. odorata* leaf powder was dissolved in 50 ml of 80 % methanol and incubated for 24 hours at room temperature. After incubation, the sample was centrifuged for 10 minutes and the supernatant was filtered into a fresh tube using Whatman no. 40 filter paper. The final crude methanol extract was used for phytochemical and antioxidant analysis.

#### Total phenolic content

Total phenolic content of the crude methanolic extract was determined using Folin-Ciocalteu (FC) assay as described by Singleton and Rossi (1965) with minor modification and the final results were expressed as Gallic acid equivalents (GAE)/ g of sample.

#### Total flavonoids

Total flavonoids content of the crude methanol extract was determined by spectrophotometric method of Zishen *et al.* (1999) with slight modification and the flavonoid content was expressed as mg Rutin equivalents per gram of dried extract (mg RE/ g).

#### Antioxidant assays

Crude methanolic extract of *C. odorata* was tested for its antioxidant activity. Different concentration of the extracted test samples (0.1, 0.2, 0.4, 0.6, 0.8 and 1.0 mg/ml) were used for the assay. Standards were also taken in their respective concentrations.

#### DPPH (1, 1-diphenyl-2-picrylhydrazyl) radical scavenging activity

The scavenging effect of crude methanol extract was determined according to the method of Farasat *et al.* (2013) with minor modification. The half-maximal inhibitory concentration (IC50) was calculated by the linear regression analysis and expressed as mean of determinations. Ascorbic acid was used as positive control.

#### ABTS (2, 2-azinobiz-3-ethylbenthiazoline-6-sulfonic acid) radical cation scavenging assay

Free radical scavenging activity of the methanolic extract was determined by following the method of Seenivasan *et al.* (2013) with minor modification. Trolox was used as standard.

#### Total antioxidant activity (TAA)

Total antioxidant activity of the crude methanolic extract obtained from *C. odorata* was determined according to Prieto *et al.* (1999) with slight modification. Total antioxidant activity was expressed as the number of equivalents of ascorbic acid in milligram per gram of extract.

### (B). *In-vitro* antibacterial activity

#### Preparation of extracts

In order to investigate *in-vitro* antibacterial activity, one gram of dried leaf powder of *C. odorata* was dissolved in 25 ml of 80 % methanol and kept for overnight incubation in an orbital shaking incubator. The sample was centrifuged at 4500 rpm for 10 minutes and then the supernatant was filtered with Whatman no. 1 filter paper. The filtrate was evaporated at 50 °C in hot air oven for complete evaporation of the solvent and based on the yield; the extract was diluted in 80 % methanol and DMSO separately, to obtain a concentration of 10 mg/ml. The final solution was tested for its antibacterial activity against the selected bacteria.

### Preparation of inoculum and plates for *in-vitro* antibacterial activity

Pure cultures of *Aeromonas hydrophilla* (ATCC 35654), *Staphylococcus aureus* (ATCC 25923), *Escherichia coli* (ATCC 4157), *Streptococcus pneumonia* (ATCC 49619), *Vibrio alginolyticus* (ATCC 17749), *Edwardsiella tarda* (ATCC 15947) and *Pseudomonas fluorescens* (ATCC 13525) were procured from Microbiologics, USA. The *in-vitro* antibacterial activity (Holder and Boyce, 1994). Bacterial strains were inoculated in nutrient broth and incubated at 37° C for 18-24 hours. Mueller Hinton agar plates were prepared and 50 µl of respective bacterial culture (10<sup>7</sup> cfu/ml) was evenly spread throughout the plate using sterile glass L-rod spreader. Wells were made in each agar plate by using a sterile cork borer (diameter of 5.5 mm). Both methanol and DMSO dissolved extracts (50 µl) were loaded separately into the wells in duplicate. Fifty µl of streptomycin (10 mg/ml) was used as positive control and the respective solvent alone of same volume was used as negative control. The plates were incubated at 37 °C and the zone of inhibition was measured after 24 hrs of incubation.

### Statistical analysis

All the data were expressed as mean ± standard error in triplicates and the statistical analysis was executed using SPSS 16.0 software. One-way ANOVA and Duncan's multiple range tests were applied to check the significant difference among the mean and P value < 0.05 was regarded as significant.

### Results and discussion

Andaman and Nicobar Islands are known for considerable amount of floral diversity and *Chromolaena odorata* is one among the species with ethno medicinal value and widely used to cure various ailments by the indigenous tribes (Chander and Vijayachari, 2018). In the present study, the leaves of *C. odorata* was selected for the investigation as it provides significantly higher percentage of yields than its other plant parts (Hanphakphoom et al. 2016). Methanol was employed for extraction as it is a high polar organic solvent reported to provide high extraction yield and high content of phytochemicals from the leaves of *C. odorata* (Stanley et al. 2014; Hanphakphoom et al. 2016).

The *in-vitro* phytochemical and antioxidant properties of *C. odorata* are provided in table 1, which depicts the total phenol (39.72 ± 5.25 mg GAE/g), flavonoids (100.75 ± 1.75 mg RE/g), DPPH radical scavenging activity (82.83 %), ABTS (23.18 mg/g) and total antioxidant activity (75.42 mg/g). The total phenol and flavonoid content obtained in the present study is much higher than the earlier study where the phenol content was reported to be in the range of 1.54 to 3.42 mg GAE/g and flavonoid content to be 2.52 to 9.85 mg RE/g for the leaf extract of *C. odorata* by using various solvents (Hanphakphoom et al. 2016). On the other hand, various studies revealed the presence of total phenolic contents and few studies could not detect the flavonoid contents and vice versa for *C. odorata* leaf extracts (Anyasor et al. 2011; Mondal et al. 2012; Danlami et al. 2013). But the present study revealed the higher amount of flavonoid than total phenol content as reported earlier (Hanphakphoom et al. 2016).

**Table 1: *In-vitro* phytochemical and antioxidant activity of *Chromolaena odorata*.**

Data are represented as mean ± SE (n= 3).

Phytochemical & antioxidant activity	Results
Total Phenol	39.72 ± 5.25 mg GAE/ g
Flavonoid	100.75 ± 1.75 mg RE/ g
DPPH	82.83 %
TAA	75.42 mg/ g
ABTS	23.18 mg/ g

As far as DPPH radical scavenging activity of *C. odorata* is concerned, the result obtained in this present study is comparable with the earlier reports where it was found in the range of 5.65-87.93 % (Amatya and Tuladhar, 2011) and 24.68-61.78 % (Parameswari and Suriyavathana, 2012) for the ethanolic leaf extracts. Likewise, DPPH radical inhibition was observed to be 59.10% and 52.13% for the ethanolic and methanolic leaf extracts, respectively (Bhargava et al. 2013). Besides, the ABTS scavenging activity of ethanolic leaf extract of *C. odorata* was recorded as 29.92-63.34 % by Parameswari and Suriyavathana, (2012) and the total antioxidant activity of 10.39 µg/ml ascorbic acid equivalent (AAE) was observed for the methanolic leaf extracts of *C. odorata* (Krishanti et al. 2010).

The differences in the phytochemical contents and its biological activity might be due to the type of extraction methods used, efficiency of the solvent used for extraction, ratio between the plant sample to solvent, different parts of the plant taken for analysis and the differences in their geographic location, climate, season and its growth phase (Maji et al. 2010; Kothari et al. 2012).

The fish pathogens viz. *Aeromonas hydrophila* causes haemorrhagic septicaemia and red pest disease; *Edwardsiella tarda* causes edwardsiellosis and emphysematous putrefactive disease; *Pseudomonas fluorescens* causes abdominal dropsy and fin rot disease and *Vibrio alginolyticus* causes vibriosis in fishes (Noga, 2010; Roberts, 2012). The human pathogenic bacteria such as *Escherichia coli* causes neonatal meningitis, enteric and systemic infections; *Staphylococcus aureus* causes endocarditis and staphylococcal food borne diseases and *Streptococcus pneumonia* causes pneumonia and meningitis in humans (Mitchell and Mitchell, 2010; Bachir and Abouni, 2015; Tong et al. 2015). All these pathogens are belonging to the gram negative group except, *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Streptococcus pneumonia* which falls under the gram positive category. In the recent past, ethno-medicine based treatment measures are getting prominence to control the above mentioned fish and human pathogenic infections in the light of emerging antimicrobial resistance.

*In-vitro* antibacterial activity of methanol and DMSO dissolved extracts of *C. odorata* was presented in table 2. Antibacterial activity of *C. odorata* was observed against all tested gram negative and gram positive bacteria except for the DMSO dissolved extract against *Escherichia coli*. Likewise, the highest amount of antibacterial activity with 21 mm of zone of inhibition was recorded against both *Aeromonas hydrophila* and *Pseudomonas fluorescens*. The zone of inhibition (mm) obtained in this present study against *E. coli*, *P. fluorescens*, *S. aureus* and *S. pneumonia* is much higher than the inhibition recorded in the earlier study for the same bacteria (Natheer et al. 2012). It was also reported that the ethanol and methanolic extracts of *Eupatorium odoratum* revealed antibacterial and anti-fungal activities against various tested organisms (Jai Sunder et al. 2012). Further, excellent antibacterial activity was exhibited by the extracts of *E. odoratum* against ten fish bacterial pathogens (particularly *Vibrio* sp.) isolated from the diseased ornamental fishes (Ravikumar et al. 2011). Likewise, methanolic extract of *C. odorata* showed the highest antibacterial activity against *V. harveyi* and also the artificial diet incorporated with bioactive compounds of *C. odorata* improves the survival rate of tiger prawn, *Penaeus monodon* (Harlina et al. 2015 & 2019). The reason behind the *in-vitro* growth inhibition of these microbes might be due to the presence of active constituents in the extracts which may act as alone or in combination (Natheer et al. 2012).

Free radicals (reactive oxygen species) are considered to be involved in many of the life threatening ailments. To combat the free radicals, plant based bioactive compounds (phyto-antioxidants) are considered as safe when compared to the synthetic antioxidants (Krishanti et al. 2010). Further, it is well documented that the antimicrobial compounds present in *C. odorata* such as flavonoids are helpful to inhibit the biosynthesis of cell wall of pathogens which in turn restrict its growth (Anyasor et al. 2011; Lavanya and Brahmaprakash, 2011). The above mentioned bioactive compounds present in *C. odorata* may be responsible for its curing activity against various ailments as evident by the earlier reports (Akinmoladun et al. 2007). As Andaman Islands

are known for its rich marine biodiversity, the present study elucidated that the terrestrial herbs present in these Islands such as *C. odorata* also possess the potentially considerable amount of phytochemical, antioxidant and antibacterial activity when compared to the earlier reports on seaweeds and mangroves (Sivaramakrishnan *et al.* 2017a,b & 2019). The present study revealed the potential

of *C. odorata* to be used as a therapeutic against various ailments of humans as well as animals. However, further studies and in depth analysis on various compounds and its properties need to be elucidated towards its potential industrial application on a large scale for the benefit of animal and human mankind.

**Table 2: In-vitro antibacterial activity of methanol and DMSO dissolved extracts of *Chromolaena odorata***

Bacteria	Zone of inhibition (mm)					
	Methanol extract (50 µl) 10 mg/ ml	Positive control (50 µl) (Streptomycin) 10 mg/ ml	Negative control (50 µl) (Methanol)	DMSO extract (50 µl) 10 mg/ ml	Positive control (50 µl) (Streptomycin) 10 mg/ ml	Negative control (50 µl) (DMSO)
<i>Aeromonas hydrophila</i>	18	42	0	21	30	0
<i>Escherichia coli</i>	15	24	0	0	21	0
<i>Vibrio alginolyticus</i>	6	24	0	14	27	0
<i>Edwardsiella tarda</i>	14.5	26	0	15.5	24	0
<i>Pseudomonas fluorescens</i>	21	26	0	9.5	23	0
<i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>	11.5	18	0	10	18	0
<i>Streptococcus pneumonia</i>	10	29	0	14.5	27	0

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