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Determination of lc_{50} of lead acetate for a fish *Oreochromis mossambicus* (Peters)

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Abstract

The contamination of water by heavy metal is a serious problem to the aquatic organisms. The present study was conducted to evaluate the 96 hr LC_{50} value of Lead acetate for the fish *Oreochromis mossambicus*. The acute toxicity test was performed according to the standard methods in APHA and the values calculated by probit analysis. The fish specimens were acclimatized in the laboratory conditions for 15 days. The average weight and length of fish used in the present investigation were 25-30 gm and 13-16 cm, respectively. The five groups of fishes were exposed to the wide range of lead acetate with different concentrations of 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30mg/L. All the exposed fishes were daily observed and dead fishes were removed immediately. The mortality was recorded on daily basis. The LC_{50} value at 96 hr was found to be 17.33mg/L to *Oreochromis mossambicus*. The susceptibility of *Oreochromis mossambicus* to the lethal effect of Lead acetate was dependent on duration as well as on concentration.

Keywords: Lead acetate, acute toxicity, *Oreochromis mossambicus*, 96 hr LC_{50}

1. Introduction

Aquatic toxicology is the study of the effects of chemicals and other toxic agents on aquatic organisms with special emphasis on adverse or harmful effects. A toxicant is an agent that can produce an adverse response in an organism, seriously damaging its structure or function and resulting in death^[1]. A pollutant or foreign substance may be introduced deliberately or accidentally into the aquatic ecosystem, ruin the quality of the water and making it adverse for aquatic life. Toxicity is a relative property of chemicals to have a harmful effect on a living organism. Toxicity tests are therefore, used to evaluate the unfavourable effects of a chemical on living organisms under standardized, reproducible conditions that permit comparison of similar data from different laboratories.

Heavy metal pollution is one of the most critical environmental problems today. Modern industries are to a large extent responsible for contamination of the environment^[2, 3]. Heavy metals are constant contaminants in the environment causing serious illness in fish, animals and human. Heavy metals are being introduced into the environment through industrial processes, sewage disposal, soil leaching and rainfall. Various effluents and related toxic substances present in the aquatic environment constantly affect the healthy growth of living organisms, mostly fishes of economic importance. Almost all types of heavy metals are present in the aquatic environment and fishes are extremely sensitive to some of these metals^[4]. Heavy metal pollutants cause massive fish kill and destruction of other aquatic life. Aquatic pollution is still a problem in many freshwater and marine environments as it causes negative effects for health of the respective organisms^[5, 6, 7, 8].

Lead is a naturally occurring metal found in small amounts in the earth crust. It can be found in all parts of our environment. Based on the studies of Department of health and services [DHHS] Lead acetate and Lead phosphate may reasonably be anticipated to carcinogens. Lead represents the main toxic elements in nature. However, most lead concentrations that are found in the environment are results of human activities. Lead (Pb) is one of the ubiquitous and toxic elements in aquatic environment. Considering that Lead toxicity is currently one of the serious problems worldwide, there is still no specific, reliable and safe treatment^[9].

Impact of contaminants on aquatic ecosystems can be evaluated by using fishes^[10]. Fishes are considered as one of the most significant indicators in freshwater systems for the evaluation of environmental pollution^[11, 12, 13]. *Oreochromis mossambicus* is a commercial fish and widely used for food, it is seen in fresh water as well as in brackish water.

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It has comparatively high resistance and hence *Oreochromis mossambicus* is used as experimental model.

2. Materials and methods

Oreochromis mossambicus was purchased from a hatchery at Murikkumpadam, Kerala average weight of 25-30gm, length 13-16 cm. The fishes were acclimatized to laboratory conditions in dechlorinated tap water for 15 days in an aquarium tank of 50 litre capacity equipped with filters and aerators. The water was changed after every 24 hours. The fishes were fed with artificial feed equal to 1/10th of their body weight. Unconsumed food and faecal wastes were siphoned off daily. The dead fish was immediately removed from the test tanks. The fishes were exposed to 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 mg/l of Lead acetate for 96 hours.

Toxicity test have been performed in accordance with the standard methods given in APHA [14]. The stock solution of Lead acetate was freshly prepared which was renewed after every 24 hours.

3. Results and Discussion

From the present investigation the 96 hr LC50 of Lead acetate for the fish *Oreochromis mossambicus* was found to be 17.33mg/l. The relation between percentage mortality and concentration of Lead acetate are shown in (Table 1) by Finney's Probit analysis method and SPSS Statistical Software. Figure 1 shows the regression line between the log concentration of Lead acetate and probit kill of *Oreochromis mossambicus*.

Table 1: Relationship between concentration of lead acetate and percentage of mortality of fish

S. No.	Concentration in ppm	Log concentration	No. of Fishes exposed	No. of Fishes died at 96hr	Percentage mortality	Probitmortality
1	10	1.0000	10	1	10.00	3.718
2	15	1.1761	10	3	30.00	4.476
3	20	1.3010	10	5	50.00	5.000
4	25	1.3979	10	8	80.00	5.842
5	30	1.4771	10	10	100.00	-

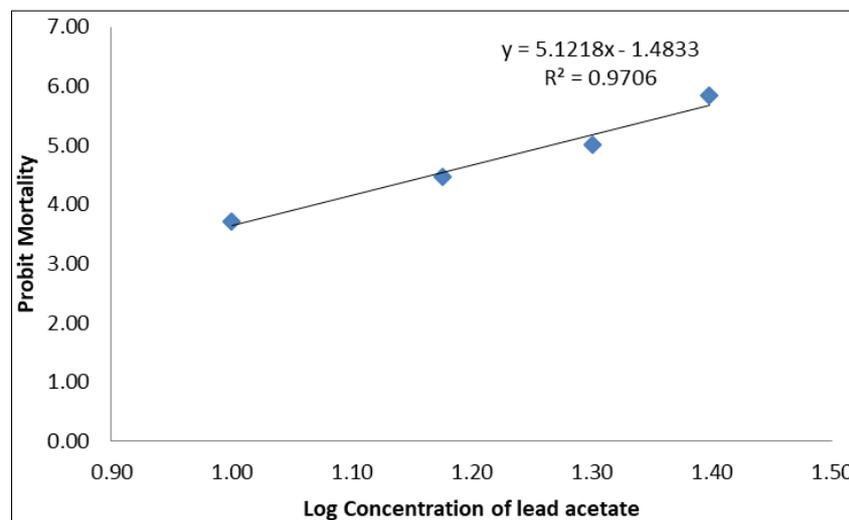


Fig 1: Graphical representation of probit mortality vs Log concentration

In earlier studies LC50 value of lead acetate for *Oreochromis mossambicus* is 20.03 mg/l [15], 18.7mg/l [16]. Different values of the same heavy metal for the same fish species were found. This may be due to the differences in age, feeding habit, sex and also experimental conditions [17, 18]. Following are the similar observations recorded by different investigators experimented with different metals and different fish species - 96 hr LC50 value of *Clarias gariepinus* for lead acetate is 122mg/l [19], and for the fish *Arassius auratus gibelio* is 29.07mg/l [20]; 96-hr LC50 values of Lead Nitrate for certain fishes are - *Oreochromis niloticus* 44mg/ml [21], *Labeo rohita* 34.20 mg/l [22], *Panguine hypophthalmus* 48.06mg/l and *Ciprinus carpio* 77.33 mg/l [23]; In *Anabas testudines* LC50 value of Lead chloride (pbcl2) was found to be 1.051mg/l [24]. The 24, 48, 72 and 96 hours LC50 values of Nickel in the fish *Oreochromis mossambicus* were reported as 131.78, 84.58, 58.19 and 51.39 ppm respectively. For Cadmium the 24, 48, 72 and 96 h LC50 values were recorded 151.91, 121.36, 106.88 and 96.57 ppm respectively [27]. The behavioural changes and mortality rate of *Oreochromis mossambicus*

during the present experiment was found to depend on both duration of exposure and increase in concentration of the toxicant.

The mortality was found to be increasing with increase in exposure time. During the exposure, though fishes could withstand the effect of toxicants in the initial period of exposure, they were found succumbing to the toxic effect as the exposure time prolonged. The mortality rate was found to be directly proportional to the dose of heavy metal.

4. Conclusion

It is concluded that some organisms are sensitive to heavy metals in the aquatic ecosystem and that cause deleterious effects to them. Fishes are more frequently exposed to these pollutants because it is believed that regardless of where the pollution occurs, it will eventually end up in the aquatic environment. The LC50 value of Lead acetate was appeared as 17.33mg/L. Toxicity studies helps to determine possible limit of a toxicant in an ecosystem and helps to propose policies to protect the aquatic system.

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