Research Article

Expression of Cytotoxicity, ROS, MMP and Quantitative PCR of *Barleria lupulina* Lindl. on THP-1 Cells

Reshma Kumari[a]*, Ramesh Chandra Dubey[a], Sanjay Kumar[b]
a. Department of Botany and Microbiology, Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidhyalaya, Haridwar-249404, India.
b. Department of Botany, Pt. Badridutt Pandey, Govt. P.G. College, Bageshwar-263642, India.
***Corresponding author's E-mail:** reshmagupta25@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Barleria lupulina Lindl. (Hop-headed) is a popular medicinal plant that has been used as drug plant since the ancient time. It is a large genus comprising of over 300 species of shrubs, and many of which are known for their ornamental and or medicinal values. The plant is commonly known as *Sornomukhi*, Hophead Philipine violet, *Vishalyakarni*, etc. It is native to India and widely distributed in Southern and Western India. The plant is a small shrub, possess potent anti-inflammatory, analgesic, anti-leukemic, antitumor, anti-hyperglycemic, anti-amoebic, virucidal, diuretic, bactericidal and antibiotic properties. Cytotoxicity, bioactive assay and genetic analysis of *Barleria lupulina* Lindl. were investigated in the present communication. The leaf extract of *B. lupulina* were investigated by MTT, NRU, DNA fragment, reactive oxygen species generation, mitochondrial membrane potential assay, gene expression analysis and cDNA synthesis to evaluate anti-cancerous potency using cancerous THP-1 cell lines in vitro and in vivo. HPTLC analysis reveals four spots and GC-MS analysis displayed the presence of eleven bioactive compounds among which benzofuranon, hexadecanoic acid, ethyl 9,12,15-octadecatrienoate, and 3,7,11,15-tetramethyl-2-hexadecanoic acid were the most prominent compounds. The ethanolic extract showed significant cytotoxicity ($P<0.5$) against THP-1 cell line at a concentration of 1mg/ml. The cells were also observed for apoptosis through DNA fragmentation in *B. lupulina* treated cells. It can be concluded that if the dose range was further refined within the range of 100-1000 µg/ml there could be dose at which the entire population of the THP-1 cell line would be apoptosis induced. The extract induced ROS in the cells after 30 minutes of exposure displaying cytotoxic effects and DNA fragmentation assay. The *B. lupulina* contain anti-cancerous activity so that it can be used as an alternative drug.

Keywords: Anti-cancer, anti-tumor, *Barleria lupulina*, cytotoxicity activity, MTT, NRU, THP-1 cell line.

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INTRODUCTION

Oncogenes stimulated the uncontrolled growth of cells resulting in tumor that is the causing cancer leading the death of the sufferers. About one-half of all men and one-third of all women in the world develop cancer. Now a days, millions of people are living with cancer or have cancer. It is quite dangerous for all people and an easy task to treat the ailment. Using herbals for the treatment of malignancies is common in many cultures especially in India, because some herbal products contain abundant anti-cancerous compound. In addition, useful compounds from these herbals are being used in production of various modern drugs. Herbal medicines constitute a major substitute for cancer prevention and treatment around the globe. The effect of plant extracts as anti-cancerous was widely studied owing to their low toxicity and side effects[1]. Hence, such studies investigating medicinal herbs have been steadily held with interests.

Barleria lupulina Lindl. (Family: Acanthaceae) is an important medicinal plant distributed in the mountains of southern, western and central India. The principle constituents of leaf and stem circumscribe the presence of glycosides i.e. barlerin, shanzhiside, methyl ester, etc**.** In folk medicine, *B. lupulina* has been used traditionally as an anti-inflammatory[2], antidiabetic, analgesic, antimicrobial and anti-ulcerogenic agent[3]. Some constituents of *B. lupulina* have been tested for antitumour activity in different carcinogenic models. *B. lupulina* has also been reported to possess a potent Antimicrobial[4-6], Anti-inflammatory[2, 7], Analgesic[7], Antiulcerogenic[7], Antidiabetic[8], Neuropharmacological[9], Antibacterial[10], Anticancer[11], Anti-artheritis[12], Acute and sub-chronic diuretic[12], Anti-viral[13].

However, very little is known regarding the molecular mechanisms by which they may exert their anti-tumourigenic effects. The leaf extracts have been reported to bear anti-cancerous properties on Hep G2 cell[14]. Present work was aimed to evaluate anti-cancerous potency of *B. lupulina* leaves using cancerous THP-1 cell lines *in vitro* and *in vivo*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Collection of leaf sample

B. lupulina leaves collected from the Botanical Garden, Department of Botany and Microbiology, Gurukula Kangri

Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar (India) in the month of April (2015) and identified by the experts of the Department (specimen identification No. Bot. & Micro/199/2016). The collected plant samples were washed with running tap water to remove the adhered dirt, dust and other foreign material. Plant materials were dried in shade at room temperature and homogenized to get fine powder that was stored separately in air tight plastic bags at room temperature for further studies.

Preparation for extract

The powdered material was subjected to hot extraction in Soxhlet continuous extraction apparatus with ethanol solvents for 48 - 72 h. The extract was filtered and evaporated under vacuum distillation unit at 60°C that considered as the stock concentration of extract.

Preliminary phytochemical analysis

The extracts of *B. lupulina* was screened for different classes of phytoconstituents viz. alkaloids, steroids, terpenoids, glycosides, flavonoids, tannins and, saponins, carbohydrates, proteins and amino acids using specific standard reagents[15].

High pressure thin layer chromatography (HPTLC) chemo-profiling of extracts

The samples of extract were separately dissolved in the respective solvents (2 mg/mL). Ethyl acetate (100): acetic acid (11): formic acid (11): water (27) was used as a mobile phase for 10 µL of extract. Extract solution was applied with the help of Linomat syringe (100 µL) using the Linomat applicator 5 on the HPTLC-plates (20.0 × 10.0 cm). 10 µL of sample was applied as a band of 6 mm. Pre-coated plate with silica gel acted as the stationary phases. The plates were developed in CAMAG twin trough chamber (20 × 10 cm) with the help of mobile phase. Then plates were taken out of the chamber and dried in air. CAMAG HPTLC Densitometer (Scanner 201377) was used as a scanner in absorbance mode at 366 nm in fluorescence and normal mode at 254 nm. The slit dimension was 6.00 × 0.30 mm. The scanner data was subjected to integration through the CAMAG Visualizer (201673) and plates were heated at 120°C for 20 min. The reagents were spreaded over the gel and spots on TLC plates were detected. Dragendorff'sreagent was used for alkaloids and anisaldehyde-sulphuric acid reagents for alkaloids and terpenoids group of compounds. The R_f values of phyto-constituent were noted.

Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectroscopy (GC-MS) analysis

GC-MS analysis of the extracts was carried out using a Varian-Bruker Scion SQ mass spectrometer system equipped with DB5 capillary column (0.25 mm thickness and 30 m in length). Extract was diluted (2 mg/mL) according to its respective solvents and 1 µL was taken as the injection volume. It was injected in the split mode with 20:1 ratio. The temperature was initially maintained at 40°C for 4 min which was gradually increased to 280°C at a rate of 20°C/5 minutes. The transfer line was maintained at a temperature of 280°C and total run time was 45 minutes. Helium was used as a carrier gas with a constant flow at 1 mL/minutes. The electron impact ionization was 70eV. The compounds were evaluated using total ion count (TIC) for constituent identification after comparison with database of spectrum of known component available in the computer library (NIST) attached to the GC-MS instrument.

Preparation of doses for cell line

Dose was prepared by diluting the dried extract in 40% (v/v) ethanol in distilled water at specific concentrations of 0 – 1000 µg/ml.

Cell line and culture condition

Cytotoxicity assay was performed using THP-1 (Leukemia Cancer-'THP-1 (ATCC^{R} TIB-202^{IM}). Cell line was obtained from National Centre for Cell Science (NCCS), Pune. The cell line was maintained and cultured in EMEM (Eagle's minimum essential medium) with 10% heat inactivated fetal bovine serum along with antibiotics. Desired cell growth was maintained at 37°C with 5% CO_2 saturation throughout the experiment and growth medium was changed frequently as desired. Cells were plated in a 96-well microtitre plate to get a cell density of 2×10^4 cells per well.

Trypan blue exclusion dye

Cell suspension at a high concentration (approx10^6 cells/ml) was prepared. Clean hemocytometer slide was taken and cover slip was fixed in place. 100 µl /well of aliquots of cell suspensions (0.5-2.0×10^5 cells/ml) were seeded in 96 well microtiter plates and incubated at 37˚C to allow for cell attachment. The spent medium was removed from each well. Drug mixed with medium was added to each well and allowed to incubate for 24 h. The contents of the well were emptied and 10 µl of trypan blue was added. After 30 sec, trypan blue was completely removed from the well and observed under microscope. Cells were counted. The number of stained cells and the total number of cells were counted[16]. Viable cells excluded trypan blue, while dead cells got stained blue due to trypan blue uptake.

Cytotoxicity test: 3-(4,5-dimethylthiazol-2-yl)-2,5 diphenyltetrazollium bromide (MTT) assay

Cytotoxicity of ELE of *B. lupulina* on THP-1 was determined by MTT assay as described by Mosmann[17] with some modification. After 24 h incubation of seeded THP-1, medium of 96 well plates were replaced with fresh medium and treated with different concentrations of extract (0-1000 µg/mL) along with negative control of untreated cells. The plate was incubated at 37°C in 5% CO_2 incubator for 24 hours. MTT (0.5 mg/mL) solution (0.5 µL) was added to each treated well and incubated again as earlier for 2-3 hours prior to the termination of experiment. At the end, the culture supernatant containing MTT was removed and 100 µL of DMSO was

added to each plate containing THP-1 cells. The plate was gently rotated to solubilize the purple crystal formazan[18], absorbance was read after 10 minutes using a plate reader (Bio Tek Instruments Inc, Vermont, U.S.A.) at 550 nm and 660 nm. The 50% of inhibitory concentration (IC_{50}) of extract was determined according to concentration effect of regression line.

Neutral red uptake (NRU) assay

Cytotoxicity of ethanolic leaf extracts of *B. lupulina* on THP-1 cell line was also determined by NRU assay. Cells were seeded in 96 well tissue culture plates and treated with different concentrations of extract (0-1000 µg/mL) for 24 hours. This assay was performed similar to MTT assay. NRU was added to cell culture at 0.5 mg/ml concentration 2-3 hours prior to the termination of experiment. Then the culture supernatant was removed and cell layer was dissolved in 1% glacial acetic acid in 40% alcohol and further read after 10 minutes using a plate reader (BioTek Instruments Inc, Vermont, USA) at 550nm and 660nm.

DNA fragment assay

The cells were cultured (1×10^5 cells/mL) in the 6-well microtitre plate. After incubation for 24h, different concentrations of extracts were treated followed by pipetting out the confluent cells in the plate without scratching. Lysing buffer was added once about 100 µL for extracting the cells through scratching. Same step was followed again and collected in labeled Eppendroffs. Then 2µL RNAse was added in each Eppendroffs tube and kept for incubation for 1 h. Then 2µL proteinase K was added and the Eppendroff incubated for 1 h. Buffered phenol/chloroform/isomyl propanol was added followed by centrifugation at 10,000 rpm for about 10 minutes. The supernatant was isolated to which 50 µL sodium acetate and 200 µL isopropanol were added followed by centrifugation. The pellets were isolated, 70% ethanol was added and the contents were centrifuged. The collected pellets were kept for air drying. Thereafter, Tris-EDTA buffer was added to the dried pellets and was used for quantifying DNA using nanodrop.

The loading samples were created according to amount of DNA in Eppendroffs and dye was added. Gel electrophoresis unit was prepared. The gel was casted and the samples and the ladder (as a control) were loaded into gel at 80-100 volt. Further, the gel was analyzed under gel documentation system.

Reactive oxygen species generation

Cell suspension (100 µL) was seeded in each well of 96 well plate (20,000 cells per well) and was given the treatment No. 4 (100 µg/mL) of *B. lupulina* extract (5µL) with different time intervals (i.e. 0 minute, 30 minutes, 1, 3, 6 and 24 h). Thereafter, medium was removed and 2µL of DCFDA was added and incubated for 30 minutes. Fresh 1×PBS in each well was added after removing the previous one. The florescence was recorded at 485/528 nm with the help of microplate reader (Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS) detection reagents.

Mitochondrial membrane potential assay

Cell suspension (100 µL) was seeded in each well of 96 well plate (20,000 cells per well) and left in CO_2 incubator for 24 h. After overnight incubation, treatment No. 4 (100 µg/mL) of *B. lupilina* extracts (5 µL). The plates were treated and incubated for 24 h. The medium was removed and 100 µL of 1× PBS was added in each well and 5 µL of Rhodamine 123 (dissolved in 1000 µL of DMSO and 1000 µL of 1 × PBS) was added in the control and treatment wells and incubated for 30 minutes. Thereafter, the plate was read at 500 nm (excitation) and 526 nm (emission) with the help of microplate reader[19].

Gene expression analysis with quantitative PCR

The cells were cultured (1×10^5 cells/ml) in the 6 well plate and was treated with 100µg/ml concentration of *B. lupulina* in each well. The control and the treated cells were pooled from the plate and was treated with Trizol reagent and was stored at -20ºC.

After the removal of growth medium from the culture dish, 1ml Trizol reagent was added to the cells. 0.2 ml chloroform was added per 1ml of Trizol reagent used for homogenization. It was incubated for 3 min at room temperature followed by centrifugation at 1200g for 15 minute at 4°C. The aqueous phase of the sample was removed by angling at 45 degree and pipetting the solution out. The aqueous phase was placed into the new tube and the spots for RNA isolation was preceded including RNA precipitation, RNA wash, and RNA resuspension[20].

cDNA Synthesis

After isolation of total RNA, 1µg RNA was used for synthesis of cDNA with the help of Thermo Scientific Verso cDNA kit. 1µg RNA was first mixed with the primers of interest and was heated at 65°C for 5 mins and then 5X cDNA synthesis buffer, dNTP mix, RT enhancer (DNAse enzyme) and verso enzyme mix were added in a PCR tube and final volume was made up to 20µl. First strand synthesis (cDNA synthesis) was carried out by putting the mixture at 42°C for 1 hour. Synthesized cDNA was quantified using nanodrop.

Quantitative PCR setup

Synthesized cDNA (100 mg) was mixed with β-Actin/ c-MYC primers (0.5 µM), SYBR green master mix 2X and final volume was made upto 20 µl. Sample was acquired in Life Technologies Real Time PCR System and results were presented as CT, values calculated from the amplification plot and nonspecific products were observed with the melt curve analysis.

Statistical analysis

The experiments were executed in triplicates. Data were expressed as mean standard deviation (SD). One-way analysis of variance ANOVA were performed by using

GraphPad Prism5 and statistical significance of results measured by using Duncan's multiple range, significance test ($P < 0.05$).

RESULTS

Preliminary phytochemical test

Ethanolic leaf extracts revealed the presence of alkaloids, steroids, saponins, cardiac glycosides, tannins, amino acids, sugars and flavonoids.

HPTLC analysis

HPTLC analysis of extracts revealed the presence of alkaloid and terpenoid group of compounds in different spots observed at 366 nm in fluorescence and normal modes (254 nm). These spots showed different phyto-constituents along with their R_f values were 0.2, 18.6, 18.3, 3.1 (Fig.1) and their area of percentages were, 14.06, 21.79, 40.80, 23.35.

Figure 1: Different phyto-constituents of *B. Lupulina* ethanolic leaf exract at 366 nm on HPTLC plat with 10 µL of extracts.

Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry (GC-MS) Analysis

On the basis of NIST library various phytoconstituents were identified through GC-MS analysis from ethanolic leaf extract such as tetradecane, 1,H-3a-7-methanoazulene, cis-thiopsine, benzofuranon, hexadecane, 3,7,11,15, tetramethyl-2-hexadecanoic acid, 3-eicosyne, hexadecanoic acid, oxiranehexadecyl (phytol), ethyl 9,12,15 octadecatrienoate and squalene (Fig. 2).

Trypan blue exclusion dye

The effect of ethanalic leaf extract was very effective after the treatment of Trypan blue dye on THP-1 cell line. The highest percentage of viable cells was 90.09 at 0.1 µg/ml and the lowest was 25.13 µg/ml after 24 h treatment while, the number of viable cells were 95.25 in control well at 0 h shown in (Fig. 3 and Fig. 4).

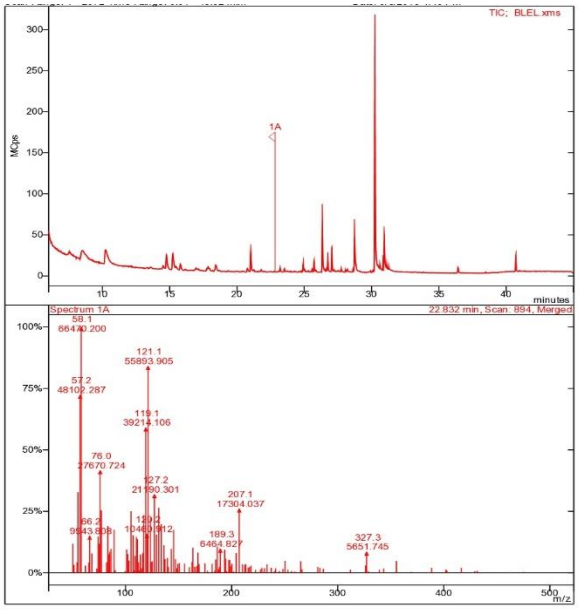

Figure 2: Chromatograph representing the peak areas of phyto-constituent of *B. Lupulina* ethanolic leaf extract matched with NIST library.

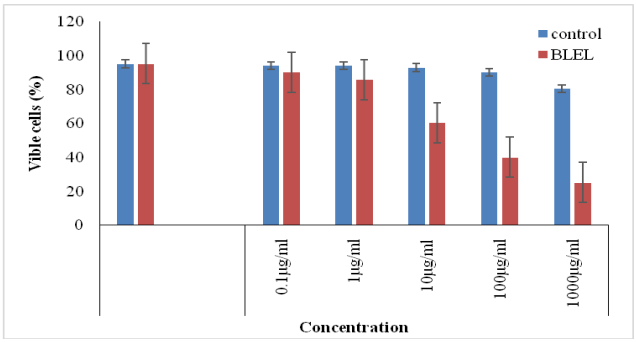

Figure 3: The bar diagram shows the effect of *B. lupulina* ethanolic leaf extract *in vitro* cytotoxicity against THP-1 cell. Data are expressed as the Mean ± SEM.

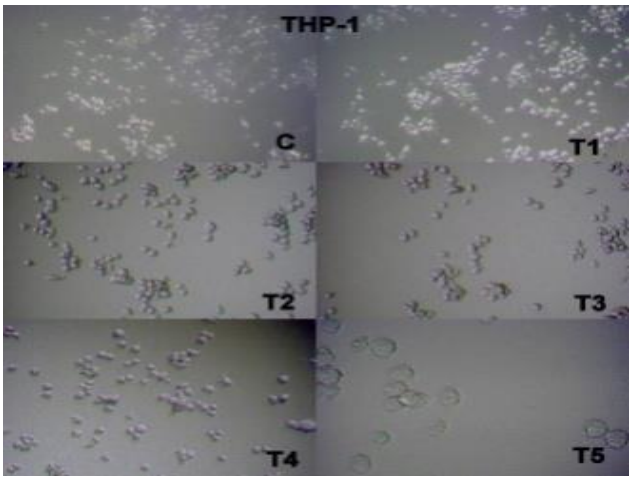

Figure 4: Cell viability and treatment of ethanolic leaf extract of *B. lupulina* on THP-1 cell line; (c) control cells; (T1) treatment 1; (T2) treatment 2; (T3) treatment 3; (T4) treatment 4; (T5) treatment 5.

MTT assay and NRU assay

The ethanolic extract of *B. lupulina* induced cytotoxic effects on THP-1 cell line at concentration of 500- 1000 µg/mL and IC_{50} at 820 µg/mL (Fig. 5a). Different types of the cytopathic effect of leaf extracts including cytoplasm vacuolation, cell shrinkage, lysis and death in THP-1 cells (leukemia cell line) were observed.

The cytotoxicity of ethanolic leaf extract was analysed by NRU assay on THP-1 leukemia cell line. It revealed the cytotoxic effects of ELE of *B. lupulina* at all the doses from 0.1 µg/mL to 1000 µg/mL effective on the THP-1 leukemia cell line (Fig. 5a and 5b).

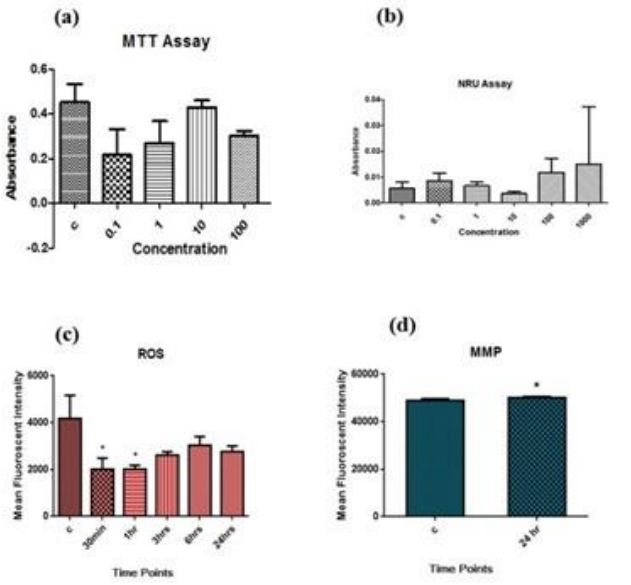

Figure 5: (a) Effect of ethanol soluble leaf extract of *B. lupulina* on live THP-1cell line with relative percentage using MTT assay (b) NRU assay (c) ROS production and (d) MMP measurements (in nm).

DNA Fragmentation assay

The DNA was isolated from the treated cells and subjected to agarose gel electrophoresis. A ladder formation is the characteristic of apoptosis. The ladder is formed due to the fragmentation of DNA by the cytotoxic effect (THP-1 leukemia cell line) of ethanolic leaf extract (ELE) of *B. lupulina*. The fragmentation was visible at the 100 µg/mL concentration of extract. DNA of THP-1 showed intact form in all the concentrations except in the concentration of 100 µg/mL which showed some amount of contamination in form of RNA or proteins. Figure 6 shows that DNA band in all the concentration is in the pure form.

Reactive oxygen species (ROS) generation

Exposure of xenobiotic compounds induces a stress signal in the cells and as defense system cells start producing reactive oxygen species (ROS) which in turn helps the cells to eliminate the negative effect of the xenobiotic compounds. However, in the case of continuous production of cellular ROS, cellular system starts deteriorating and thus inducing apoptosis in the cells. In the present study, *B. lupulina* extract at 100 µg/mL induced ROS in the cells after 60 minutes of exposure and its effect continued up to 180 minutes (Fig. 5c).

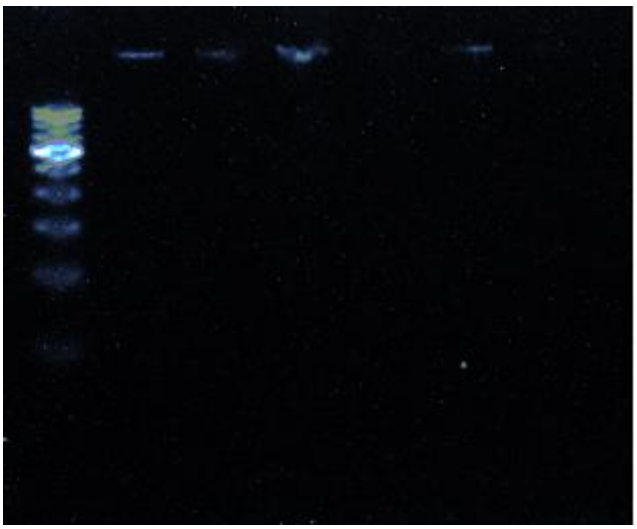

Figure 6: Showing DNA fragmentation of treated cells of THP-1.

Mitochondrial membrane potential (MMP)

Mitochondrial membrane potential was estimated with Rhodamine 123 dye to evaluate the effect of *B. lupulina* extract on THP-1 cell line. Rhodamine 123 absorption indicates the integrity of mitochondrial membrane. Thus, it is a direct measurement of apoptosis. Results indicated that *B. lupulina* extract slightly increased the mitochondrial membrane potential in the THP-1 cells at 100 µg/mL and in dose-dependent manner (Fig. 5d).

Gene expression analysis

Amplification plot indicated the suppression of c-Myc gene by 20-fold as compared to control. Melt curve of the samples revealed the presence of few non-specific products that may be due to annealing temperature of the primer.

DISCUSSION

Preliminary phytochemical test

In medicinal plants different types of phytochemicals constituents are found in medicinal plants viz., alkaloids, saponins, tannins, flavonoids, steroids, glycosides, etc. But the chemicals components of plants may differ in different environmental/stress conditions. Extractions of bioactive compounds also depend on the solubility of organic solvents. In primary screening, different phyto-constituents of ethanolic leaf extract of *B. lupulina* were separated on HPTLC plates that were terpenoid and alkaloid groups of compounds. The extract revealed four spots on HPTLC plate and similar bioactive compounds were found by Sur[21]. They also reported the presence of steroid, terpenoid, glycoside, flavonoid, tannin and carbohydrate which were corresponds to six spots from ethanolic extract of *B. lupulina* under UV (254 nm) in preparative TLC.

Some other bioactive compounds viz., benzene (1-methyl decyle), benzoic acid 4-methoxy-methyl ester, propenoic acid, benzyl benzoate and 2 (4H)-benzofuranone were identified from acetone and methanol-soluble extracts of *B. lupulina* through GC-MS[11]. Besides, slightly different constituents such as, tetradecane, 1,H-3a-7-methanoazulene, cis-thiopsine, benzofuranon, hexadecane, 3,7,11,15, tetramethyl-2-hexadecanoic acid, 3-eicosyne, hexadecanoic acid, oxiranehexadecyl (phytol), ethyl 9,12,15 octadecatrienoate and squalene have been found in this communication. These all-bioactive compounds have antimicrobial effects. More or less similar phyto-constituents have been reported by Kumari and Dubey[14].

Trypan blue exclusion dye

The percentage of viable cells decreased with the increase in the concentration of extract on the THP-1 cell line. The extract has the ability to caused apoptosis in THP-1 cell line which was observed as cell membrane blebbing under the microscope. The bio-active components of extract may be responsible for the apoptotic elimination of cancer cell.

Choudhury et al.[22] have also reported the highest inhibition at 100 µg/ml on DLA cell line. Ethanolic extract of *B. lupulina* and *Calotropsis gigantean* leaf mixture exhibited the minimum number of DLA-cell viability. In this observation, THP-1 cell viability started decreasing at minimum concentration (0.1 µg/mL) of extract. This is the first report on THP-1 cells line because in above experiments method was same but cell line was different.

Cytotoxicity assay

NRU assay revealed cytotoxic effects of ethanolic extract of *B. lupulina* even at the lowest dose (i.e. 0.1 µg/mL) and the IC_{50} values was 580 µg/mL. The IC_{50} value of ethanolic extract of 650 µg/mL against Hep G2 cells earlier been reported. The lowest IC_{50} value was recorded against THP-1 than Hep G2 cells. Therefore, THP-1 cells were more affected with the treatment of ethanolic extract than the Hep G2 cells[14].

The morphological changes in the cells were observed in treated cells which showed extensive cell death. The cell viability of the cancerous cells exposed to *B. lupilina* extracts decrease in the cells.

The methods, temperature and time of extraction, solvent type, concentration of solvent, etc. affect the extraction of phytochemical constituents. Ethanolic extract of *B. lupulina* exhibited the highest selective index (SI) (781.5) with lowest (IC_{50}) 50% inhibitory concentration dose (0.02 µg/mL) against HSV-2 cells[23]. It was the lowest IC_{50} value. In contrast, IC_{50} value was higher because cell lines and solvent system were different and extraction procedure was also different. However, it has been proved that every cell line contains ability to survive in stress condition as well as exposure of treatment of extracts.

Yoosook et al.[6] found the higher IC_{50} values of *B. lupulina* using methanol than ethanol[23]. They accepted these differences because of use of different methods of extraction and anti-viral assay. The antiviral activity of *B. lupulina* extract against five HSV-2 isolates (IC_{50} of 442.2-987.7 µg/mL) was exhibited by Yoosook et al.[6] but not standard strain (HSV-2 G strain). *Clinacanthus nutans* did not show any activity against these virus strains and proved that *B. lupulina* have the antiviral capability to kill HSV-2 strains.

Similar work was reported by Jayavasu[24] who found that *C. nutans* extract was much higher than *B. lupulina*. The IC_{50} values of *B. lupulina* extract determined by Yoosook et al.[6] were much higher than those by Wirotesangthong and Rattanakiat[23] who reported 0.02-200.46 µg/mL. It was due to the differences in the method of extraction, method of anti-viral assay, extract solvent and the HSV strains.

Multifarious ways of cytotoxicity of *B. lupulina* extracts alone or in combination with other plant extracts has also been reported by Maity et al.[25]. Who reported the effect of combined mixtures of ethanolic extracts (EECGL+EEBLL) and water extract (WECGL+WEBLL) of *Calotropis gigantea* latex and *B. lupulina* leaf extract on short-term *in vitro* cytotoxicity on DLA cell line. The extracts at two doses (100, and 150 µg/mL) and 5-flurouracil (0.5µg/mL) showed significantly fewer viable tumour cells than the DLA-control group. The combined mixtures of ethanolic extract of *B. lupulina* and *C. gigantea* showed the minimum number of DLA-cell viability. The *Allium cepa* leaf extract has *in vitro* cytotoxic, apoptotic and antiproliferative potential on Dalton's Ascitic lymphoma cell as well as DLA-bearing Swiss albino mice.

A Similar work has recently been published by Kumari and Dubey[14] on the cytotoxic effect of ethanolic extracts of *B. lupulina* on Hep G2 cell line. They found inhibitory effect of a single extract of *B. lupulina* on cancerous cells, Hep G2 and THP-1. Therefore, these differences caused the different results. Methanolic leaf extract of *Barleria strigosa* has been found to possess *in vitro* cytotoxicity against the P-388 murine leukemia cell line with CC_{50} of 413.89 µg/mL[26].

Anti-inflammatory activities of *B. lupulina* and *Clinacanthus nutans* extracts induced powerful dose-dependent inhibitory effects in both edema models in rats[2], who found a significant inhibition of myeloperoxidase (MPO) activity in the inflamed tissue indicating the association of anti-inflammatory effect of the extracts associated with reduced neutrophil migration. Although both extracts did not affect neutrophil viability or apoptosis, treatment of neutrophils with the extracts concentration-dependently inhibited fMLP-induced chemotaxis, superoxide anion generation, MPO and elastase release. These findings suggest the powerful anti-inflammatory properties of *B. lupulina* and *C. nutans* extracts are mediated by inhibition of neutrophil responsiveness.

Apoptosis has been studied with the ROS production and mitochondrial membrane potential measurements. ROS

production induced the intracellular damages including the DNA damage. During apoptosis, mitochondrial membrane became more permeable and thus released caspase and membrane activity was lost. In relation to cytotoxic effects and DNA fragmentation assay, *B. lupilina* extract induced ROS in the cells from 30 minutes of exposure. *B. lupilina* extract lowered the mitochondrial membrane potential significantly and thus inducing the apoptosis in the cells. The ethanolic leaf extract had potential effect on cancerous cell line.

It may be concluded that *B. lupulina* extract decreased in the cell viability of the cancerous cells. The present study also provides preliminary screening of this plant to have potent cytotoxicity against the cancerous cells. We believe that the reported improved method of DNA ladder assay will be very useful for numerous laboratories that routinely study cell death or carry out routine experimental/clinical screening of drugs and chemotherapeutics Therefore, it can be stated that *B. lupilina* may act as an anti-cancer drug.

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