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Quantitative changes of heamocytes in *Spodoptera litura* Fab. (Lepidoptera: Noctuidae) larvae in response to different insecticides

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Abstract

Quantitative studies concerning abnormalities and hemolytic activity was performed under laboratory conditions for larvae of *Spodoptera litura* Fabricius (Lepidoptera: Noctuidae). Four insecticides (decarafurion 50EC, emamectin benzoate 1.9EC, chlorpyrifos 40EC and abamectin 1.8EC) were studied for the immunosuppressive activity of 5th instar larvae of *S. litura*. Immunosuppression was assessed by examining changes in total heamocytes count and differential heamocytes count. Newly ecdysed 5th instar larvae (normal) total heamocytes count of 1.6×10^3 cells/mm³. But a great decline in total heamocytes count was observed by the application of decarafurion and drastically increase due to the application of abamectin. From five different types of heamocytes, proheamocytes were found the most sensitive to insecticidal stress and rupturing of the cell wall was identified as the most common abnormality. The observations suggest that insecticides are capable of inducing multiple forms of cell death in *S. litura* larvae.

Keywords: *Spodoptera litura*, differential heamocytes, total heamocytes, insecticides

Introduction

Common cutworm, *Spodoptera litura* Fab. (Lepidoptera: Noctuidae) is considered as one of the most damaging and economic pests of many agricultural areas because of its high destruction and heavy losses to the cultivated crops^[16]. It is a polyphagous insect^[9] and has a wide host range like cotton, okra, potato, tomato and pumpkin^[25]. The larvae feed on the undersurface of the leaves and gregariously skeletonize them leaving only the midrib and veins in severe cases as well as damage flowers, and squares causing significant losses^[5]. *S. litura* can cause crop losses at the critical stage of the crop and due to its high level of infestation in the field^[3].

Most of the farmers use synthetic insecticides to suppress the population of *S. litura* in Pakistan. However, the application of insecticide also affect the hemolytic activity in the insect body and the response of heamocytes can vary to diverse pesticides with the passage of time and at the applied dose^[24, 21, 2]. The resistant mechanism of arthropods which contains cellular and humoral protection abilities; later on, comprise the encapsulation and phagocytosis^[15, 22]. The insect blood has considered a crucial pathway for the transmission of resources to different organs in the body. The heamocytes count in insect hemolymph may affect due to both internal as well as by external factors that depend on oldness, level, and gender detection technique for various body part and structures with respect to the approaches and devotions^[10]. Previously, findings indicate the seven main classification of heamocytes and later suggested six^[8]. These are known as plasmacytes, proheamocytes, granulocytes, plasmacytes spherulocytes, podocytes, oenocytoids, and granular plasmacytes. Vermiform and podocytes cells were categorized in a similar category as the podocytes^[13] due to the morphologically converted in sphere-shaped these cells having extensions through the evolution. These cells are dissimilar to the plasmacytes due to the characteristics^[12]. Due to having spreading properties on the glass slide granular plasmacytes known as plasmacytes. Due to variation in studying heamocytes, there was a difference in cell counting and in the method of detection^[20] time period and sexual characteristics of various insects^[6, 16]. Insects have only extracellular fluid, hemolymph, in contrast to vertebrates, so it severs the functions of both blood and lymph^[8].

The different type of hemocytes performs very important services in the insect structure. They provided direct nutritional material to different muscles and also work as a food reservoir. The most frequently mentioned phagocytosis enclosed the imported elements in the insect body, clotting the injured part to prevent hemolymph loss, node formation, transport of nutritional material carrying hormones, transport of food element and possibly hormones for the detoxification of metabolism^[15]. The study of hemolytic activity in response to the insecticidal application can be useful to check the resistance and susceptible insect species to those insecticides and at a different time interval. Similarly, %age of phagocytes in various hemocytes count could deliver important facts for the insect resistance for pesticides. The study related to the impact of insecticides on the hemolytic activity of insects is important to determine the control recommendations against that insect species. Keeping in view the differentiation in hemocyte categories and their counting due to insecticidal pressure, the experiment was conducted for the evaluation of THC, DHC and the deformities produced in *S. litura* larvae.

Materials and Methods

Insect

Collection of *S. litura* larvae was carried out from the experimental site department of Entomology, University of Agriculture Faisalabad. These insects were reared in sterilized cages diameter (46cm x 46cm x 46cm) at 32±2°C temperature and 65±5% relative humidity in the ecotoxicology laboratory of Entomology, where they were fed on fresh cotton leaves to get full grown larvae for research. The larvae were fed daily obtained molting success and the next generation of larvae was used for the further experiment.

Application of insecticides

Four different insecticides were used under the recommended concentrations in the field condition (Table 1). The fully grown (5th instar) caterpillars were placed in Petri dishes, and pesticides were applied typically on the thoracic region of larvae with a micro-applicator. The effect on total hemocytes count (THC), differential hemocytes count (DHC), and in terms of deformities was noted just after application, after 30 and 60 minutes of the insecticides exposure. Samples of hemolymph were dissected with a sterilized micro-needle syringe by removing the abdominal leg carefully with a sterilized pair of scissors^[10]. The thin film after the air-dried treated for five to seven minutes in methyl alcohol with second time drying. The thin layers were absorbed in the Giemsa stain for 15 minutes and clean it with sanitized H₂O. Finally, the slides were attached with Canada balsam to fix the blood.

Differential hemocytes counts (DHC)

The fixed hemolymph was examined under oil immersion phase microscope and was identified the different types of hemocytes and counted by tele-counter battlement method^[16]. The smear was divided into three transverse fields along the edge, two fields up, two in the center of the smear and two down, starting from the thin end. The percentages of different types of hemocytes were calculated from 200 examined cells from these fields^[10].

Total hemocytes count (THC)

The pesticides application carried out on the full-grown larvae in a petri dish, first and second drops of hemolymph were

drawn on slide^[11] and then quickly dipped in Thoma White Blood Cell Pipette up to 0.5 marks and then diluting solution (Glacial acetic acid, one ml; distilled water, 100 ml; gentian violet, 0.3 percent) was added in pipette up to mark II, thus making the 20 time dilution of the solution. After discarding the first three drops, one-two drops of the solution were placed on the Neuberg's chamber (Thoma-Zeiss hemocytometer) with a coverslip for total hemocytes counts (THC). The cells' counting was started from the corners containing 16 cubes (white cell) for each division of two chambers. THC was calculated by using the formula suggested by Jones^[10]. Five counts were made as replication for each treatment to assess the increase or decrease in THC in standard environments at different time intervals.

The experiment was repeated twice with four replications for each under the arrangement of completely randomized design (CRD). The data were subjected to statistical analysis using analysis of variance technique to check the significance of insecticides application at different time interval on insect hemolytic activity.

Results

Built on size and shape of nucleus and soma, presence of cytoplasm, type, size, and number of inclusion, five different hemocytes [granulocytes (GR), prohemocytes (PR), oenocytoids (OE), spherulocytes (SP) and plasmoheamocytes (PL)] were identified in hemolymph of *S. litura* larvae. Plasmacytes were small to large polymorphic cells. The nucleus may be round or elongate and centrally located. Spherulocytes (SP) cells were rounding generally larger than granulocytes and nucleus were small, centrally or eccentrically located. Prohemocytes (PR), was oval, round or elliptical and were smaller than the other cells. The nucleus was compact, large in relation to cell size. Oenocytoids (OE) were varied in size and shape. The cytoplasm was granular, thick and homogeneous. Granulocytes (GR) were small to large, oval or spherical cells and cytoplasm was granular.

There was a significant variation in the hemolytic movement of *S. litura* larvae after application of different insecticides after a different time interval. There was also a significant interaction between the treatment and time interval (Table 2).

Hemocytes in normal larvae

There were 16450 blood cell/mm³ of total hemocytes count in normal *S. litura* larvae (Table 2). Differential hemocytes count in normal *S. litura* larvae showed the maximum 44.5% of prohemocytes, tracked by prohemocytes 31.88%, granulocytes 14.5%, oenocytoids 6.8% and spherulocytes 2.31% (Figure 1).

Toxicity of decarfluron on THC and DHC of *S. litura*

Total hemocyte count (THC) decreased to 10450 blood cell/mm³ immediately after insecticide exposure and continuously decreased to 8850 cells/mm³ and 8050 cell/mm³ after 30 and 60 minutes of exposure (Table 3). The %age proportion of prohemocytes, granulocytes, and oenocytoids was maximum than the average i.e., 44.5%, 14.5% and 6.81% to the percentage of 62.25%, 18%, and 9.18% respectively after exposure of decarfluron (Table 4).

Toxicity of chlorpyrifos on THC and DHC of *S. litura*

Total hemocyte count (THC) increased to 19775 cell/mm³ immediately after application of chlorpyrifos and this increasing trend continued with the passage of time. After 30

minutes, THC reached up to 18987.5 cell/mm³ and increased more to 21012.5 cell/mm³ after 60 minutes of exposure (Table 3). The percent amount of plasmatocytes, oenocytoids, and spherulocytes increased by the common i.e., 31.8%, 6.81% and 2.31% to the %age of 37.12%, 8.81%, and 2.93% respectively after chlorpyrifos exposure (Table 4).

Toxicity of emamectin benzoate on THC and DHC of *S. litura*

After exposure to emamectin benzoate, THC decreased to 15000 cell/mm³ immediately and reached 13250cells/mm³ and 12450 cell/mm³ after 30 and 60 minutes respectively (Table 3). The percent prohaemocytes, granulocytes, with the increase of oenocytoids than the average amount i.e., 44.5%, 14.5% and 6.81% to the percentage of 50.56%, 18.94%, and

10.68% respectively after exposure of emamectin benzoate (Table 4).

Toxicity of Abamectin on THC and DHC of *S. litura*

THC drastically increased to 24187.5 cell/mm³ immediately after exposure and decreased slowly to 20550cells/mm³ and 18267.5 cell/mm³ after 30 and 60 minutes of exposure but THC was higher as compared to normal larvae containing 16450 cell/mm³ (Table 3). Only the percentage of plasmatocytes and oenocytoids was maximum to 40.13% and 11.06% from normal having 31.88% and 6.81% respectively. The percent amount of prohaemocytes, granulocytes, and spherulocytes decreased to 36.5% 11.43% and 0.87% as compared to normal larvae having 44.5%, 14.5%, and 2.31% respectively (Table 4).

Table 1: Detail of insecticides and their concentrations used in the experiment

Trade Name	Dose (100 L of water/acre)	Concentration (%)
Decarafluron (Match 50EC)	250ml	0.25
Chlorpyrifos (Lorsban 40EC)	1000ml	1
Emamectin benzoate (Timer 1.9EC)	200ml	0.2
Abamectin (Curel.8EC)	200ml	0.2

Table 2: Toxicity of different insecticides on heamolymph of *S. litura* larvae after a different time interval

S.O.V	d.f	F value	P value
Treatments (A)	4	460.6	<i>P</i> <0.001
Time interval (B)	2	36.7	<i>P</i> <0.001
A x B	8	12.4	<i>P</i> <0.001
Error	45		
Total	59		

P<0.001 showed the significance

Table 3: Toxicity of different insecticides on the total hemocyte count of *S. litura* larvae

Insecticides	Time Interval	THC (cells/ mm ³)
Decarafluron	Immediately	10450
	After 30 minutes	8850
	After 60 minutes	8050
Emamectin benzoate	Immediately	15000
	After 30 minutes	13250
	After 60 minutes	12450
Chlorpyrifos	Immediately	19775
	After 30 minutes	18987.5
	After 60 minutes	21012.5
Abamectin	Immediately	24187.5
	After 30 minutes	20550
	After 60 minutes	18267.5
Control		16450

THC=total hemocytes count

Table 4: Percentage of differential hemocytes count (DHC) of *S. litura* larvae after exposure to different insecticides

Insecticides	PR (%)	PL (%)	GR (%)	OE (%)	SP (%)
Decarafluron	62.25	9.5	18	9.18	1.06
Emamectin benzoate	50.56	19	18.94	10.68	0.81
Chlorpyrifos	39.56	37.12	11.56	8.81	2.93
Abamectin	36.5	40.13	11.43	11.06	0.87
Control	44.5	31.88	14.5	6.81	2.31

PR= prohaemocytes, PL= plasmohaemocytes, GR=granulocytes, OE=oenocytoids, and SP= spherulocytes

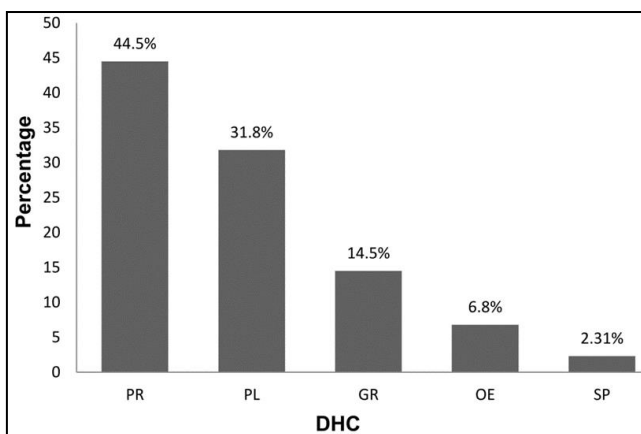


Fig 1: Differential hemocytes count in normal *S. litura* larvae, DHC=differential hemocytes count, PR= prohaemocytes, PL= plasmohaemocytes, GR=granulocytes, OE=oenocytoids and SP=spherulocytes

Discussion

There were observed five various forms of *S. litura* larvae and the hemocytes differential counts fluctuated after insecticides exposure with the passage of time. For DHC, the only oenocytoids percentage increased from normal in all case of insecticides. Prohaemocytes and granulocytes percentage was maximum after the applying of decarafluron and emamectin benzoate but decreased after application of chlorpyrifos and abamectin as compared to normal. However, the percent amount of spherulocytes recorded more than average only when applying chlorpyrifos while decreased in case of all other insecticides. Previously research done on the effect of insecticides on different insect species also showed the changes in DHC of different insect species. According to Sexana *et al.* [23] plumbagin decreased the plasmatocyte percentage in *Dysdercus koenigii* Fb. Similarly, Khan [11] observed that granulocytes and oenocytoids decreased from normal due to the application of curacron 500EC. Rizwan-ul-

Haq *et al.* [18] indicated the reduction of all DHC from normal of *D. koenigii* Fb. after application of endosulfan 35EC. After insecticide exposure, the increase in hemocytes count might be due to the recovery of the immune system to hazards [19, 4]. Furthermore, the decline in hemocyte counts might depend on test insect, different instar of insects, insecticide, and concentration tested [24]. Such variation in different hemocytes count under exposure to different test insecticides was also observed by Al-Hariri & Suhail, [1], Fatima *et al.* [4]. Plasmatocytes and granulocytes are considered as important constituent among all hemocytes in cell-mediated immunity, while there was an interaction between other hemocyte categories with plasmatocytes and granulocytes that participate in the immunity reaction [14]. Together plasmatocytes and granulocytes accomplish the immunity function linked with phagocytosis and encapsulation in most of lepidopterous and some coleopterous insects [15, 17]. Generally, findings for THC revealed an instant decline with decarafluron and emamectin benzoate and while the maximum was in others remain. After half an hour, THC also decreased in decarafluron and emamectin benzoate and increased for other pesticides. Similar results for THC were observed after one hour of insecticides exposure. The changes in the counting of cells may depend on the procedure of hemocytes reviewing, an inspection of permanent and changed hemocytes [20] and different instars of insects [6]. To increase the hemocytes count under insecticides stress indicates their capability to endure the exterior conservational pressures [16, 9]. Hemocytes as sensitive objects in the hemolymph of insect have a variable response to a different type of insecticides. It may oscillate increased or decreased and showed the response to a resistant mechanism for the pesticides stresses [15]. The abnormalities observed later on the applying of various pesticides were bursting of the cell wall, cohesion of the cells, cells enlargement, cells denucleation and displaced the nucleus on one side of the cell. Most of the researchers Ayub [2], Al-Hariri & Suhail, [1]. Confirmed abnormalities in hemocyte under insecticide stress. Iqbal [27], Sabri and Tariq [28] documented prohemocytes sufficient quantity in the larvae blood, these results are in accordance with the current study against the larvae. Alhariri [29], Sharma *et al.* [30], Gelbi *et al.* [31] who reported the similar classifications of insect blood cells for particular individuals. Zhang *et al.* [26] also supported the current study they concluded that hemocytes in the pool of hemolymph are complexed portions. Gad and Abdel-Megeed [34] who recorded decreased in hemocytes total and differential counts by the spinosad and emamectin benzoate against the *S. littoralis*. These results are also in agreement with Zibae *et al.* [33], Sayah [35]. That after the application of pyriproxyfen the reduction in the hemocytes circulation occurred including the maximum quantity of plasmatocytes and granulocytes. These findings are also in line with Abdel-Rahman and Abou-Taleb [32]. They revealed that lufenuron and chlorfluazuron showed significant results against *S. litura* 2nd instar larvae when counting the hemocytes.

Conclusions

The impact of insecticides on total and differential hemocytes counts and abnormalities in *S. litura* larvae showed variable response when detected immediately, thirty and sixty minutes of exposure. THC showed an immediate decrease when decarafluron and emamectin benzoate was applied while increased in all other insecticides. However,

THC value was greater than normal after application of chlorpyrifos and Abamectin, even after one hour. Intended for differential hemocyte counts, only oenocytoids exposure was maximum to all applied pesticides. Furthermore, different abnormalities such as agglutination of the cells, cells enlargement and cells denucleation were observed. Bases on this study it is concluded that the insecticides significantly affect the hemolymph and immune system of insects and cause abnormalities in the insect body. The current experiment findings can be advantageous to select an appropriate insecticide for the management of *S. litura*.

Abbreviations

THC	: total hemocytes count
DHC	: differential hemocytes count
PR	: prohemocytes
PL	: plasmoemocytes
GR	: granulocytes
OE	: oenocytoids
SP	: spherulocytes

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