

RESEARCH PAPER

Study of lethal toxicity of Hilban® on freshwater catfish, Singhi (*Heteropneustes fossilis*; Bloch, 1794)

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The objective of the present study was to investigate the behavioural and morphological changes and acute toxicity of Hilban[®] in freshwater catfish, *Heteropneustes fossilis*. This study was conducted by exposing the fish to different concentrations of chlorpyrifos (0.5 to 150 µl/L) for 96 h along with control groups. The data were subjected to get LC₅₀ by probit analysis. The LC₅₀ values for chlorpyrifos for 24, 48, 72 and 96 h were 51.98, 18.91, 7.47 and 4.61 µl/L, respectively. Fish exposed to higher concentration showed uncoordinated alterations in behavioural responses, especially erratic and jerky swimming, frequent surfacing and ingulping, mucus secretion, an increase in opercular movement and copious secretion of mucus all over the body. It is concluded that Hilban[®] is highly toxic to catfish and severely affect their physiology and behaviour.

Key words : Acute toxicity, Chlorpyrifos, *Heteropneustes fossilis*, LC₅₀, Mortality**How to cite this paper** : Verma, Sneha, Rawat, Anurag and Mishra, Abha (2017). Study of lethal toxicity of Hilban® on freshwater catfish, Singhi (*Heteropneustes fossilis*; Bloch, 1794). *Asian J. Bio. Sci.*, 12 (2) : 156-164. DOI : 10.15740/HAS/AJBS/12.2/156-164.

INTRODUCTION

Chlorpyrifos (CPF) (O,O-diethyl-O (3, 5, 6-trichloro-2-pyridyl) phosphorothionate; an organophosphorus pesticide was first registered for use in the United States in 1965 (by Dow Chemical Company). It is a widely used and most preferred broad spectrum chlorinated organophosphate pesticide due to their high effectiveness and low persistence in the environment. They are frequently used for the eradication of a wide range of insect pests. Their worldwide indiscriminate use of agricultural and other activities poses great threat to the aquatic environment (Chernyak *et al.*, 1996; Livingstone, 2001 and Matsumoto *et al.*, 2006). CPF directly inhibits acetylcholinesterase enzyme activity in fishes and invertebrates (Fulton and Key, 2001 and Rao *et al.*, 2005) which may lead to decreased mobility of fish (Bretaud *et al.*, 2000) which include neurological, behavioural and possibly reproductive effects (Mueller-Beilschmidt, 1990

and Hill, 1995). Aquatic contamination of pesticides causes acute and chronic poisoning of fish and other organisms (Heger *et al.*, 1995 and Velmurugan *et al.*, 2007). The responses of fish towards the toxic chemicals are broad-ranged depending on the toxicant, exposure duration, water quality and the species (Fisher, 1991; Richmonds and Dutta, 1992 and Venkateswara, 2004).

Toxicity test gives first-hand information about the effects of such pesticides on organisms and the ecosystem as a whole. These tests are valuable in creating awareness regarding potential harmful effects of pesticide in the environment (Adedeji *et al.*, 2008 and Onyedineke *et al.*, 2010). The mortality of fish is not only the endpoint to consider the toxicity level. There is a growing interest in the development of behavioral markers to assess the toxicant affects because behavioural responses are the most promising and sensitive indicator of ecotoxicology (Drummond and Russom, 1990 and Scherrer, 1992). The behaviour study is becoming

prominent in toxicity assessment in a unicellular organism (Tadehl and Hader, 2001), insects (Martin, 2003 and Venkateswara *et al.*, 2004), fish (Hansen *et al.*, 1999 and Rao *et al.*, 2005) and even rodents (Dell'Omo *et al.*, 1997). Different studies reported that fish exposed to a wide range of pesticides exhibited abnormal behavioural and morphological alterations (Devi and Mishra, 2013). There were various reports on the toxicity of different organophosphate pesticides on fish (Gul, 2005 and Pandey *et al.*, 2005).

The purpose of the present study was to determine toxic level of chlorpyrifos with special emphasis on behavioural and morphological responses on a freshwater catfish, *Heteropneustes fossilis* (Bloch, 1794).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample collection:

The fresh water *H. fossilis* of relatively same length (17 ± 2 cm) and weight (185 ± 20 g) were collected from commercial fisherman of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India. After formal quarantine treatment with 0.05 per cent potassium permanganate solutions to remove any dermal infection, fish were acclimatized in 120 L glass aquaria containing water having a pH of ≈ 7.5 , dissolved oxygen 5-6 mg/l under normal maintained temperature for two weeks. Water was renewed daily to remove faecal matter and waste metabolite of fish during acclimatization. During this period, fish were fed regularly with commercial fish food pellets and goat liver. An experiment was performed in accordance with local/national guidelines of ethical committee for experimentation in animals.

Toxicity bioassay:

For toxicity assessment of Hilban[®] (20% EC CPF), fish were exposed to varying concentrations (0.5 to 150 μ l/L) of Hilban[®] with five replicates. In each group, fish were in ten numbers. The control group was maintained side by side. The control and test solutions were renewed daily and dead fish were immediately removed. The physico-chemical parameters such as dissolved oxygen (DO), temperature, pH and hardness of the water were recorded daily for the 96 h exposure period following the standard methods (APHA, 1998).

The behavioural and morphological parameters *viz.*, schooling behaviour, swimming pattern, excitability and reflex responses, surfacing and ingulping, mucus secretion, opercular movement per minute, avoidance

behaviour, escaping tendency, jerky movement, drooping of fins and body colour changes were consistently monitored and recorded Gupta and Dua (2010) and Nimila and Nandan (2010). The frequency of occurrence of different malformations was recorded during first hour of treatment for group of exposed fish.

Data analysis :

The mortality data was recorded after every 24 h upto 96 h to get sub-lethal concentration of Hilban[®]. Significance level was checked by one way ANOVA. The sub-lethal concentration or LC₅₀ with 95 per cent confidence limits of 24, 48, 72 and 96 h was estimated by probit analysis (Finney, 1971) with the IBM SPSS (version 20) software.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The physico-chemical parameters of the tested water used in toxicity experiment were recorded daily for the 96 h exposure period as follows, dissolved oxygen (DO) (7.5 ± 0.16 mg/l), temperature (26.8 ± 0.12), pH (7.3 ± 0.05) and hardness of the water (116.49 ± 0.37 mg/l).

The acute toxicity test is widely used in order to investigate the effective concentration and effective exposure duration associated with the 50 per cent mortality of fish which was expressed as LC₅₀. The present investigation was reported that exposure of different concentrations of Hilban[®] to *H. fossilis* showed varied degree of mortality. The chlorpyrifos caused 100 per cent mortality at 25 μ l/l during 96 h exposure and LC₅₀ for 96 h was 4.61 μ l/l. The previously studied of acute toxicity of Hilban[®] (20% EC) for *Heteropneustes fossilis* revealed that LC₅₀ value for 96 h was found to be 1.2 μ l/l (Barbhuiya and Dey, 2014). The value of LC₅₀ 36 h of chlorpyrifos was determined as 2.84 ppm for *H. fossilis* in the laboratory condition (Khatun and Mahanta, 2014). LC₅₀ value of deltamethrin to *H. fossilis* was 1.86 μ g/l (Srivastav *et al.*, 2002). This is in agreement with that of Sprague (1969) who observed variation in LC₅₀ for the same species and toxicant depending on size, age, sex and condition of test species along with experimental factors. Several reports were given for different LC₅₀ values of various pesticides on freshwater fish (Chindah *et al.*, 2004; Rao *et al.*, 2005; Koprucu *et al.*, 2006; Patil and David, 2008 and Halappa and David, 2009). The range of 96h LC₅₀ of CPF was 0.57-3270 ppb for

mosquito fish, Bluegill, Fathead minnow, Rainbow trout, Nila tilapia, Goldfish (Holcombe *et al.*, 1982; Gul, 2005; Wang *et al.*, 2009). The organophosphorus compound coroban (20% EC- CPF) LC₅₀ for 96h was 2.2 mg/l of *H. fossilis* (Srivastav *et al.*, 1997). 24h, 48h, 72h and 96h LC₅₀ value of trichel (20% EC-CPF) for *Labeo bata* as 257.03µg/l, 208.92µg/l, 177.82µg/l and 109.64µg/l, respectively (Samjadar and Mandal, 2015). The LC₅₀ value of other organophosphate pesticide, dimethoate for *Clarius batrachus* was 65mg/l (Begum and Vijayaraghavan 1995), 17.9mg/l in *Channa punctatus* (Pandey *et al.*, 2005) and 1.61mg/l for *Cyprinus carpio* (De Mel *et al.*, 2005).

The percentage of mortality was significantly increased with the increase in concentrations of the toxicant (Hilban[®]) as well as duration of the experiment (F=52.27 at P < 0.05) (Fig. 1). On the basis of mortality, LC₅₀ value was 51.98, 18.91, 7.47 and 4.61µl/l for 24, 48,

72 and 96 h, respectively (Table 1).

The behavioural manifestation can be considered as symptoms of stress on account of the toxic nature of the environment. The observation of behavioral changes was started within 30 min after treatment with Hilban[®]. The response time was decreased as the toxicant concentration increased. The behavioural alterations were positively correlated with the toxicant concentration (Table 2). Hilban[®] influence the behaviour pattern of fish by interfering with the nervous systems and sensory receptors (Keizer *et al.*, 1995; Pan and Dutta, 1998 and Cong *et al.*, 2009) and this incident may impair the identification of situation and development of appropriate response by fish exposed to pesticide. The control group showed a normal behaviour and tend to move together. They came to the surface at intervals to gulp air. In low concentrations of Hilban[®] (0.5 and 1µl/l) fish behave similar to control group.

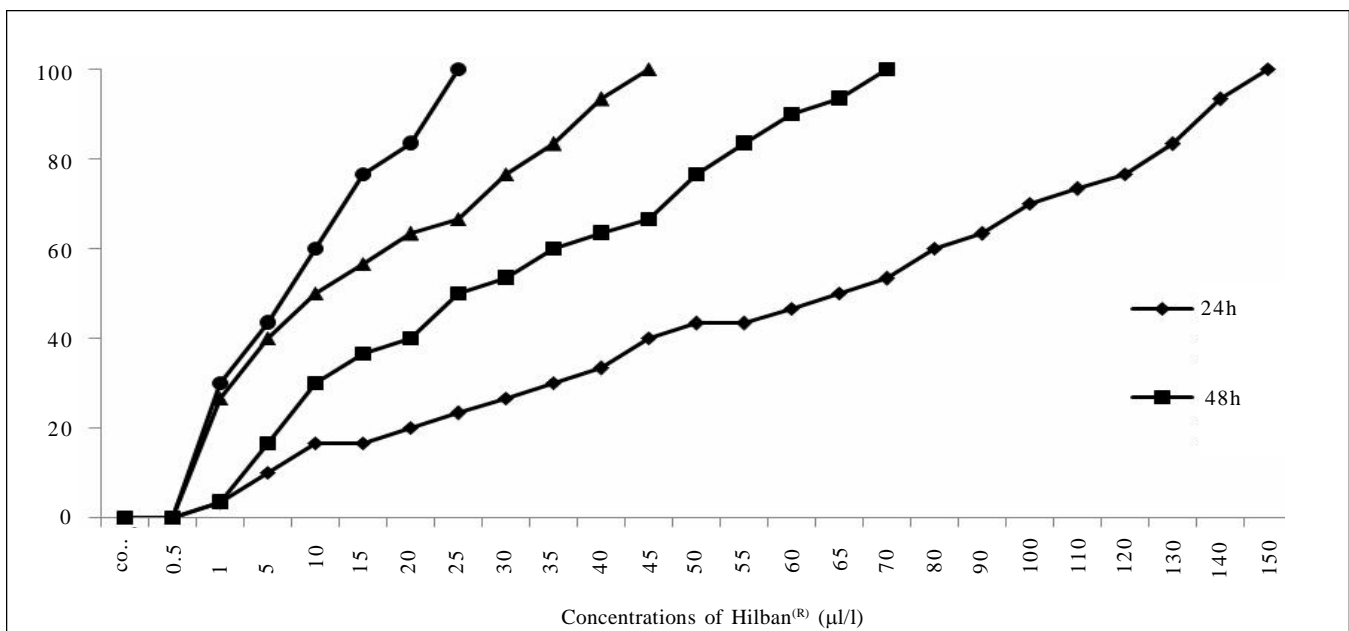


Fig. 1 : Per cent mortality of freshwater catfish *Heteropneustes fossilis* exposed to different concentrations of Hilban® for 24, 48, 72 and 96 hexperimental duration. Values are means ± SEM of percentage of mortality of ten fish in five replicate. Data were analyzed by one way ANOVA (P < 0.001)

Table 1: LC₅₀ values for Hilban® (with 95% confidence limit) exposed to freshwater catfish *H. fossilis* (Bloch, 1794).

Probit value	24 h	48 h	72 h	96 h
LC ₅₀ (µl/l)	51.98 µl/l	18.91µl/l	7.47µl/l	4.61 µl/l
95% confidence limits				
Upper limit	62.62	25.25	11.69	9.02
Lower limit	42.79	13.06	4.04	1.82

The LC₅₀ values were estimated by finney probit analysis. Experiment was performed with five replicates of ten fish in each concentration

The exposed group of fish were lethargic or motionless in all the concentrations. They showed a number of abnormalities in their swimming pattern. The swimming speed of fish was higher in higher concentration. Fish were calm down in lower concentration after some time, but in higher concentration, they showed restlessness throughout the experimental period. The restlessness and hyperactivity may occur due to the inactivation of acetylcholinesterase, leading to acetylcholine accumulation at synaptic junctions (Fulton and Key, 2001) and stimulation of peripheral nervous system which results in to increased metabolic activities and more oxygen utilization (Rao, 1989).

The schooling behaviour of fish was also disturbed in comparison to control, followed by hyper-excitability, pectoral fin forwarded, frequent surfacing and ingulping, avoidance behaviour, escaping tendency, drooping of fins and loss of buoyancy by vertically hanging in the aquaria after treatment and moreover progressively became sluggish and lethargic and finally lead to death in exposed group of fish, supported by Venkata *et al.* (2008) who studied which showed that abnormal swimming and loss of balance was caused by the deficiency in nervous and muscular co-ordination due to stress by toxicant. Convulsion prior to death were most evident, the severity of which paralleled the concentration of CPF. On initial

exposure at higher concentration, the fish exhibited characteristic avoidance behaviour by rapid swimming, stretching half of their body out of the water surface and trying to jump out. The abrupt, erratic and jerky swimming and hanging vertically indicates the loss of physiological equilibrium may be due to inhibition of the acetylcholinesterase in the brain and neuromuscular junctions (Rao *et al.*, 2005 and Patil and David, 2008).

The opercular movements or beats are major indicators of stress. The opercular beats increased upto 130/min in Hilban^(R) exposed fish group from 85-90/min obtained in the control group (Fig. 2). The opercular movement in fish showed increasing trend with the increase in concentration of toxicant. It was showing significant linearity with concentration ($r^2=0.9846$). It was first increased after the exposure of Hilban^(R) and followed by decreased opercular movement with the exposure time and similar finding was observed by Pandey *et al.* (2005); Omitoyin *et al.* (2006); Yadav *et al.* (2007); Koprucu *et al.* (2006) and Srivastava *et al.* (2010), in *Channapunctatus*, *Clariasgariepinus*, *Channastraita*, *Silurusglanis* and *Heteropneustes fossilis* exposed to mercuric chloride and malathione, lindane, fertilizer, diazinon and dimethoate, respectively. Rapid opercular movement was also confirmed by Wasu *et al.* (2009) in *Clariasbatrachus* treated with carbaryl and malathion.

Table 2 : The behavioural and morphological observations of freshwater catfish <i>Heteropneustes fossilis</i> (Bloch, 1794) after 96 h exposure of Hilban®								
Behavioural and morphological observations	Control	Concentration of CPF (μ l/l)						
		0.5	1	5	10	15	20	25
Opercular movement	-	-	-	+	++	++	+++	+++
Ingulping	-	-	-	+	+	++	+++	+++
Surfacing	-	-	-	+	+	++	+++	+++
Frequent swimming	-	-	-	-	++	++	+++	+++
Avoidance behaviour	-	-	-	+	+	++	+++	+++
Hyperactivity	-	-	-	+	+	++	+++	+++
Pectoral fin forward	-	-	-	+	+	++	+++	+++
Convulsions	-	-	-	+	+	++	+++	+++
Abrupt swimming	-	-	-	+	+	++	+++	+++
Escaping tendency	-	-	-	+	++	++	+++	+++
Loss of buoyancy	-	-	-	+	++	++	+++	+++
Lethargic	-	-	-	+	++	++	+++	+++
Mucus secretion	-	-	-	+	++	++	+++	+++
Discoloration of skin	-	-	-	+	++	++	+++	+++
Fins drooping/ necrosis	-	-	-	+	+	++	+++	+++
Lesions of skin	-	-	-	+	++	+++	+++	+++

Normal (-), Mild (+), Moderate (++) , Maximum behaviour (+++)

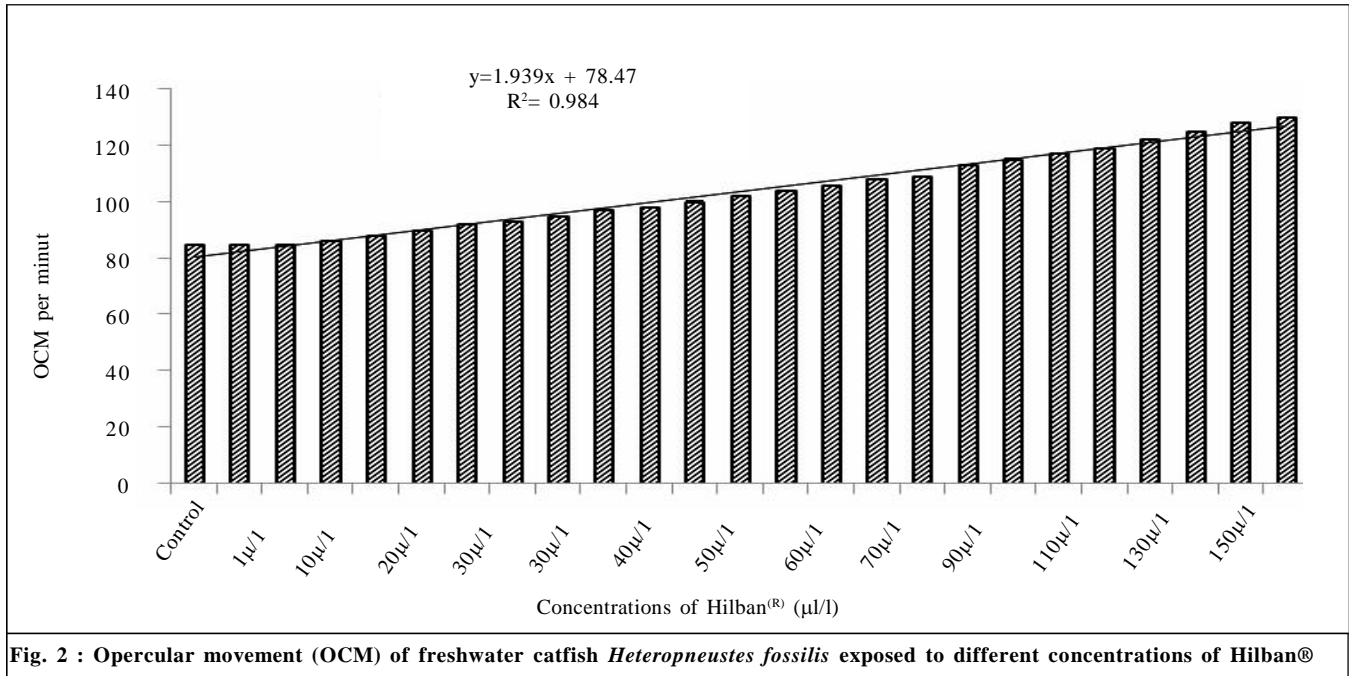


Fig. 2 : Opercular movement (OCM) of freshwater catfish *Heteropneustes fossilis* exposed to different concentrations of Hilban®

Shivakumar *et al.* (2006) also observed increased opercular movement in *Cyprinus carpio* exposed to endosulfan, cypermethrin and fenvalerate. Chindah *et al.* (2004) reported an initial increase in opercular beat frequency in chlorpyrifos exposed tilapia, followed by a marked decline with exposure time and explained the initial increase as sudden response to shock. *Heteropneustes fossilis* showed a unique adaptive feature to avoid toxicant intake by decreasing the opercular movement after the few hour of exposure. The changes in behaviour of *H. fossilis* may be due to a direct manifestation of CPF to the disturbances in physiological mechanism which according to Merler and Hamilton (1996) initiate, maintain and terminate behaviour. The observed behavioural changes showed by the exposed fish to the chlorpyrifos are similar to those observed in other fish exposed to organophosphate pesticides (Ahmed, 1975 and Shukla, 1995). When the oxygen was reduced in toxic medium, fish showed surfacing for demand of higher oxygen level during the exposure period due to hydro toxic condition (Katja *et al.*, 2005) and air ingulping which may help to avoid contact of toxic medium (Katja *et al.*, 2005). Similar observation has been reported by Patil and David (2008) in malathion treated fish *Labeorohita* and these results are supported by Cook *et al.* (2005); Halappa and David (2009) and Shivakumar *et al.* (2006).

Abnormal morphological features include pale yellow body colour, discoloration of skin, lesion of skin, eye deformities and fin deformities as compared to control which confirm the presence of stress due to toxicant (Koprucu *et al.*, 2006; Wasu *et al.*, 2009 and Ree and Paney, 1997). Barbels were also losing their colour. Pandey *et al.* (1990) also reported depigmentation in toxicant exposed fish and attributed it to reduction in number and size of chromatophores. All those observed abnormalities may directly affect the fish growth. High mucus secretion and its coagulation all over the body was reported during the study. Researchers have reported the same alterations in *Oryzias latipes*, *Cyprinus carpio*, *Labeorohita*, *Oncorhynchus tshawytshe*, *Crrihinus mrigala*, *Oreochromis niloticus*, *Clarius gariepinus* treated with CPF (Rice *et al.*, 1997 and Halappa and David, 2009), malathion (Patil and David, 2008), diazinon (Scholz *et al.*, 2000), endosulfan (Gormley and Teather, 2003), fenvalerate (Mushigeri and David, 2005), Fenitrothion (Benli and Ozkul, 2010). The fish were found to be lying down motionless at the bottom before death and died by opening their mouth. Same behaviour were found by Koprucu *et al.* (2006); Patil and David (2008) and Susan *et al.* (2010).

Conclusion :

The present study of chlorpyrifos toxicity of air-

breathing catfish *Heteropneustes fossilis* concluded that this fish is very sensitive to the organophosphorus insecticide. The observations indicated that CPF caused many behavioural alterations, such as those observed in this study may result in severe physiological problems, ultimately leading to the death of fish. Therefore, this investigation demonstrated a relation among pesticidal stress, behavioural disorders, survival and mortality rates. Thus, this study can be used as a tool for creating awareness among the local farmers so that the use of the highly toxic pesticide in agriculture can be minimized.

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