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PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM PRODUTOS NATURAIS E
SINTÉTICOS BIOATIVOS**

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**Avaliação da Atividade Antibacteriana, Antioxidante e
Toxicológica do Flavonoide isolado de *Lonchocarpus araripensis*
(Leguminosae): Estudos *in silico* e *in vitro***

**João Pessoa
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Orientadora: Prof^ª. Dr^ª. Edeltrudes de Oliveira Lima
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Dedico esta tese:

Aos meus exemplos de vida, meus pais: Joseilson Pessoa Dantas e Diana Maria Ribeiro Pessoa, que sempre me estimularam a dar este grande passo. Obrigada pelo amor, carinho, apoio nos momentos que mais precisei e por me ensinarem sempre a ter humildade durante toda minha vida.

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Filipenses 2, 1-5

RESUMO

Meireles, D.R.P. Avaliação da Atividade Antibacteriana, Antioxidante e Toxicológica do Flavonoide isolado de *Lonchocarpus araripensis* Bentham (Leguminosae): Estudos *in silico* e *in vitro*. 2017. Tese (Doutorado em Produtos Naturais e Sintéticos Bioativos, área de concentração: Farmacologia) CCS/UFPB, João Pessoa.

As infecções bacterianas, que acometem milhões de pessoas em todo o mundo, têm aumentado progressivamente nos últimos anos, impactando na taxa de morbidade e mortalidade. A disseminação de bactérias resistentes aos medicamentos é uma das mais graves ameaças para o sucesso do tratamento das doenças bacterianas, além disso, algumas drogas são muito tóxicas, dificultando a adesão ao tratamento. Nesse contexto, os flavonoides têm se destacado por apresentarem diversas atividades farmacológicas, tais como: bactericida, fungicida e antioxidante. Com base nisto, foram estudados os efeitos antibacteriano e antioxidante, a biodisponibilidade oral teórica e o perfil toxicológico do flavonoide 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetrametoxi-[1",2":6,7]-furanoflavana (TMFF), isolado do extrato hexânico das cascas das raízes de *Lonchocarpus araripensis*. Para a análise do potencial antimicrobiano do flavonoide foi utilizado a análise *in silico* com o software *Pass online*. Para a realização dos estudos antibacterianos utilizou-se o teste de microdiluição com diferentes cepas das bactérias *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Escherichia coli* e *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* para avaliação da Concentração Inibitória Mínima (CIM). Além disso, determinou-se também a Concentração Bactericida Mínima (CBM). No estudo de associação do flavonoide com antibióticos usados clinicamente, avaliou-se a capacidade do flavonoide em promover sinergismo, indiferença ou antagonismo, após a associação. Na realização dos estudos de atividade antioxidante *in vitro* utilizou-se a técnica do efeito quelante sobre o íon ferroso. Para a análise toxicológica *in silico* utilizou-se a ferramenta *admetSAR* e para a avaliação da biodisponibilidade por via oral teórica *in silico* utilizou-se o programa *Molinspiration Cheminformatics*. O estudo *in silico* demonstrou que o flavonoide apresentou uma grande probabilidade de ser ativo, frente a vários micro-organismos, incluindo bactérias. Os experimentos de atividade antibacteriana revelaram que o flavonoide apresentou um efeito bacteriano frente espécies gram-positivas e gram-negativas, com CIM₅₀ de 64 µg/mL para algumas cepas de *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, sobre diferentes cepas de *Staphylococcus aureus* o flavonoide apresentou CIM₅₀ de 256 µg/mL e sobre uma das cepas testadas de *Escherichia coli* a CIM₅₀ foi de 512 µg/mL. O flavonoide demonstrou ser bacteriostático para todas as espécies de bactérias testadas e também apresentou um efeito sinérgico. Nos estudos da atividade antioxidante, o flavonoide apresentou um efeito quelante sobre o íon ferroso. O flavonoide demonstrou uma baixa toxicidade teórica, bem como uma boa biodisponibilidade oral através da análise *in silico*. Estes resultados sugerem que o flavonoide apresenta efeito antibacteriano e antioxidante, com baixo efeito toxicológico.

Palavras-chave: *Lonchocarpus araripensis* Bentham, angelim, 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetrametoxi-[1",2":6,7]-furanoflavana; atividade antibacteriana; atividade antioxidante; toxicidade.

ABSTRACT

Meireles, D.R.P. Evaluation of the Antibacterial, Antioxidant and Toxicological Activity of Flavonoid isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis* Bentham (Leguminosae): *In silico* and *in vitro* studies. 2017. Tese (Doutorado em Produtos Naturais e Sintéticos Bioativos, área de concentração: Farmacologia) CCS/UFPB, João Pessoa.

Bacterial infections, which affect millions of people around the world, have progressively increased in recent years, impacting the rate of morbidity and mortality. The spread of drug-resistant bacteria is one of the most serious threats to successful treatment of bacterial diseases, in addition, some drugs are very toxic, making it difficult to adhere to treatment. In this context, flavonoids have been distinguished by their diverse pharmacological activities, such as: bactericide, fungicide and antioxidant. Based on this, the antibacterial and antioxidant effects, the theoretical oral bioavailability and the toxicological profile of the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy- [1", 2": 6,7] –furanoflavane (TMFF), isolated from the hexane extract of the bark of the roots of *Lonchocarpus araripensis*. To analyze the antimicrobial potential of flavonoid, *in silico* analysis with the *Pass online* software was used. For the accomplishment of the antibacterial studies the microdilution test with different strains of the bacteria *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Escherichia coli* and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* was used to evaluate the Minimum Inhibitory Concentration (MIC). In addition, the Minimum Bactericidal Concentration (MBC) was also determined. In the study of association of flavonoid with clinically used antibiotics, the ability of flavonoid to promote synergism, indifference or antagonism after association. In the accomplishment of the studies of antioxidant activity *in vitro* was used the technique of the chelating effect on the ferrous ion. For the *in silico* toxicological analysis the tool was used *admetSAR* and for the evaluation of oral bioavailability theoretically *in silico* was used the program *Molinspiration Cheminformatics*. The *in silico* study demonstrated that flavonoid presented a high probability of being active against several microorganisms, including bacteria. The experiments of antibacterial activity revealed that the flavonoid had a bacterial effect against gram positive and gram negative species, with MIC₅₀ of 64 µg/mL for some strains of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, on different strains of *Staphylococcus aureus*, the flavonoid presented MIC₅₀ of 256 µg/ml and on one of the tested strains of *Escherichia coli* the MIC₅₀ was 512 µg/ml. Flavonoid has been shown to be bacteriostatic for all bacterial species tested and also showed a synergistic effect. In the antioxidant activity studies, flavonoid presented a chelating effect on the ferrous ion. Flavonoid demonstrated low theoretical toxicity as well as good oral bioavailability through *in silico* analysis. These results suggest that flavonoid has an antibacterial and antioxidant effect, with a low toxicological effect.

Keywords: *Lonchocarpus araripensis* Bentham, angelim, 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7]-furanoflavan; antibacterial activity; antioxidant activity; toxicity.

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LISTA DE ABREVIATURAS E SIGLAS

ADME – Absorção, distribuição, metabolização e excreção

ADMET – Absorção, distribuição, metabolização, excreção e toxicidade

AMH - Ágar Mueller-Hinton

A-EPEC - *Escherichia coli* enteropatogênica atípica

ATCC - American Type Culture Collection

CBM - Concentração Bactericida Mínima

CIM - Concentração Inibitória Mínima

CLSI - Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute

DAEC – *Escherichia coli* de adesão difusa

DL₅₀ – Dose Letal Média

EAEC – *Escherichia coli* enteroagregativa

EHEC - *Escherichia coli* enterohemorrágica

EIEC – *Escherichia coli* enteroinvasiva

EPEC – *Escherichia coli* enteropatogênica

ETEC - *Escherichia coli* enterotoxigênica

nALH – número de aceptores de ligação de hidrogênio

nDLH – número de doadores de ligação de hidrogênio

PASS - Previsão do espectro de atividade para substâncias

PgPNSB – Programa de Pós-graduação em produtos Naturais e Sintéticos Bioativos

SINITOX – Sistema Nacional de Informações Toxicológicas

TMFF – 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetrametoxi-[1",2":6,7]-furanoflavana

TPSA - Área de superfície polar topológica

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Introdução

1 INTRODUÇÃO

As doenças infecciosas causadas por bactérias afetam milhões de pessoas em todo o mundo. Ao longo da história da humanidade, essas enfermidades continuaram sendo uma das principais causas de morbidade e mortalidade em todo o mundo (USHA et al., 2010; CHANDA; RAKHOLIYA, 2011).

A descoberta de antibióticos, durante o século XX, juntamente com avanços significativos no desenvolvimento de medicamentos antimicrobianos, melhorou a saúde humana, através de um melhor tratamento das infecções. No entanto, o uso prolongado de antibióticos levou à adaptação bacteriana, resultando no desenvolvimento de resistência bacteriana a múltiplos fármacos. Isso limitou significativamente a eficácia dos antibióticos (AMINOV, 2010; UPADHYAY et al., 2014).

A resistência pode ser considerada um fenômeno ecológico que ocorre como resposta da bactéria frente ao amplo uso de antibióticos e sua presença no meio ambiente. As bactérias multiplicam-se rapidamente, sofrem mutação e podem trocar material genético entre linhagens de mesma espécie ou de espécies diferentes. São consideradas micro-organismos de alta capacidade de adaptação a diversos fatores, como a exposição a agentes químicos potentes. Antes do século XXI, a resistência bacteriana ocorria predominantemente em ambientes hospitalares. Atualmente, a resistência bacteriana está associada a diversos ambientes e pode atingir indivíduos saudáveis (GUIMARÃES; MOMESSO; PUPO, 2010).

Staphylococcus aureus, *Escherichia coli* e *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* são bactérias bastante úteis nos estudos microbiológicos, por sua rápida proliferação, com diferentes espectros de resistência a agentes químicos, e, portanto são consideradas bactérias modelo, principalmente no estudo de resistência bacteriana a antimicrobianos (ENDLER et al., 2003).

O fenômeno da resistência bacteriana a diversos antibióticos e agentes quimioterápicos impõe sérias limitações às opções para o tratamento de infecções bacterianas, representando uma ameaça para a saúde pública (SILVEIRA et al., 2006).

Dessa forma, há uma urgente necessidade por novos agentes antibacterianos, sendo a comunidade científica convocada para achar soluções para contornar o problema da resistência bacteriana (PARAGINSKI et al., 2014). Paralelamente, os antimicrobianos de origem vegetal têm recebido uma atenção especial, já que as plantas possuem grande potencial em sintetizar substâncias químicas com estruturas

moleculares diversificadas muito superiores àquelas derivadas de produtos sintéticos, como sistema de defesa contra agentes patogênicos (RODRIGUES et al., 1997; PRADEEPA et al., 2014). Muitas plantas podem servir como alternativa terapêutica pela atividade antimicrobiana comumente associada aos flavonoides e outros constituintes químicos encontrados no reino vegetal (CHUKWUJEKWU et al., 2011; SANTOS et al., 2012).

Inúmeras pesquisas evidenciam que produtos naturais representam a principal fonte da diversidade química durante a condução de novas descobertas no ramo farmacêutico (FIRN; JONES, 2003; MISHRA; TIWARI, 2011). Assim, a natureza continua a influenciar na concessão de novas moléculas importantes no desenvolvimento de medicamentos para o tratamento de diversas enfermidades (LAM, 2007).

Embora sejam considerados de menor risco em comparação às drogas sintéticas, os produtos naturais podem causar toxicidade ou outros efeitos adversos. Como exemplos de efeitos tóxicos de substâncias presentes em plantas podem ser citados os efeitos hepatotóxicos de apiol, safrol, lignanas e alcaloides pirrolizidínicos (VEIGA-JUNIOR; PINTO; MACIEL, 2005), a nefrotoxicidade que pode ser causada por espécies vegetais que contêm terpenos e saponinas, e alguns tipos de dermatites, causadas por espécies ricas em lactonas sesquiterpênicas e produtos naturais do tipo furanocumarinas (CAPASSO et al., 2000). Outro exemplo é o confrei (*Symphytum officinale* L. - Boraginaceae), planta utilizada na medicina tradicional como cicatrizante devido à presença da alantoína, mas que também possui alcaloides pirrolizidínicos, os quais são comprovadamente hepatotóxicos e carcinogênicos (BUCKEL, 1998).

Uma das maiores e mais importantes famílias do reino vegetal é a Leguminosae, que possui aproximadamente 650 gêneros e 18.000 espécies e estão espalhadas em todo o mundo, especialmente nas regiões tropicais e subtropicais (LIMA, 2007; SILVA, 2013). Espécies desta família já demonstraram diversas atividades biológicas, dentre elas: antibacteriana, analgésica, antiinflamatória, antifúngica e antidiabética (SILVA et al., 2008; OLIVEIRA et al., 2009; SILVA, 2013). O gênero *Lonchocarpus* é conhecido por ser rico em compostos fenólicos, incluindo flavonas, chalconas, flavonóis, flavanas, flavanonas e auronas (LIMA et al., 2014).

Dentre tantas espécies desta família foi selecionada para estudo *Lonchocarpus araripensis*. A partir do fracionamento do extrato hexânico das cascas das raízes desta

planta foi isolado o flavonoide 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetrametoxi-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavanana (TMFF) (Figura 1).

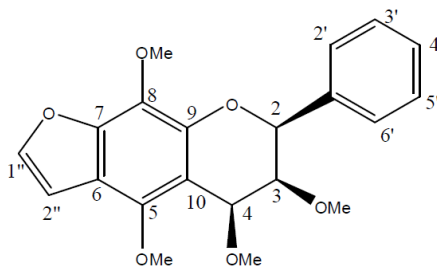


Figura 1. Estrutura química do flavonoide 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetrametoxi-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavana.

Sabendo-se da importância da descoberta de produtos naturais com efeitos terapêuticos, aliado aos poucos estudos científicos abordando a planta *Lonchocarpus araripensis* e a potência antimicrobiana e antioxidante dos flavonoides, este estudo teve como objetivo principal avaliar as propriedades farmacológicas do flavonoide TMFF oriundo desta espécie vegetal, bem como verificar a toxicidade deste composto isolado.

Referencial Teórico

2 REFERENCIAL TEÓRICO

2.1 Bactérias patogênicas

As bactérias são organismos unicelulares, procariotos, assumem várias formas possíveis (cocos, bacilos, espirilos, entre outras), se reproduzem por divisão binária e para sua nutrição usam compostos orgânicos e inorgânicos encontrados na natureza, bem como algumas podem fabricar seu próprio alimento por fotossíntese (TORTORA et al., 2010).

Esses organismos foram identificados pela primeira vez por van Leeuwenhoek por volta dos anos 1670. Porém, somente no século XIX a possibilidade destes micro-organismos serem causadores de processos infecciosos começou a ser considerada. Esta hipótese surgiu após os elegantes experimentos de Louis Pasteur, que demonstrou que algumas linhagens de bactérias eram importantes para processos de fermentação e, também, que as bactérias eram de ampla distribuição pelo meio ambiente. Após a segunda metade do século XIX, cientistas como Robert Koch identificaram micro-organismos responsáveis por doenças como tuberculose, cólera e febre tifoide. Nessa época, as pesquisas eram conduzidas na busca de agentes químicos que apresentassem atividade antibiótica. O pesquisador Paul Ehrlich, conhecido como o pai da quimioterapia – uso de substâncias químicas contra infecções – foi responsável pelos conceitos primários de que uma substância química poderia interferir com a proliferação de micro-organismos, em concentrações toleráveis pelo hospedeiro (GUIMARÃES; MOMESSO; PUPO, 2010).

Várias espécies de bactérias são patogênicas para o homem. Entre as mais importantes bactérias que causam doenças humanas, destacam-se as espécies *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Escherichia coli* e *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*.

O gênero *Staphylococcus* apresenta-se na forma de cocos Gram e catalase-positivos, com aproximadamente 0,5 a 1,5 µm de diâmetro, imóveis, não-esporulados e geralmente não-encapsulados. Essa bactéria pode apresentar-se em diversas formas, que vão desde isolados, aos pares, em cadeias curtas, ou agrupados irregularmente (com aspecto semelhante a um cacho de uvas), devido a sua divisão celular, que ocorre em três planos perpendiculares. O *Staphylococcus* foi descrito pela primeira vez em 1880, em pus de abscessos cirúrgicos, pelo cirurgião escocês Alexandre Ogston e atualmente é um dos micro-organismos mais comuns nas infecções piogênicas em todo o mundo (SANTOS et al., 2007).

O gênero *Staphylococcus* está subdividido em 40 espécies, que se dividem de acordo com a síntese ou não da enzima coagulase, sendo a maioria, coagulase-negativa, com exceção do *S. aureus*, *S. schleiferi* subsp. *coagulans*, *S. intermedius*, *S. hyicus* e *S. delphini* (BANERMAN et al. 2003). Dentre as espécies desse gênero, *S. aureus* é considerada a mais importante em função da sua maior patogenicidade ao homem (VON EIFF et al., 2001). A distribuição de *S. aureus* é muito ampla, visto que essa bactéria é significativamente capaz de resistir à dessecação e ao frio, podendo permanecer viável por longos períodos em partículas de poeira. Além disso, frequentemente é encontrada na pele e nas fossas nasais de pessoas saudáveis. Entretanto, pode provocar doenças, que vão desde uma simples infecção (espinhas, furúnculos e celulites) até infecções graves (pneumonia, meningite, endocardite, síndrome do choque tóxico, septicemia e outras) (SANTOS et al., 2007).

O gênero *Escherichia*, que recebeu o nome do pediatra alemão Theodor Escherich, é composto de bacilos gram-negativos facultativos e anaeróbicos pertencentes à família *Enterobacteriaceae*. A espécie de gênero *Escherichia coli* é amplamente distribuída e habita o intestino humano. Embora a maioria das cepas de *E. coli* viva inofensivamente no cólon e raramente cause doenças em indivíduos saudáveis, uma série de cepas patogênicas podem causar doenças intestinais e extra intestinais, tanto em indivíduos saudáveis como imunocomprometidos (GOMES et al., 2016). As infecções por *E. coli* patogênica podem ser limitadas às superfícies da mucosa ou podem se disseminar por todo o corpo. Três síndromes clínicas frequentes resultam de infecção com cepas de *E. coli* inerentemente patogênicas: infecção do trato urinário, sepse/meningite, e infecção gastrointestinal (NATARO; KAPER, 1998).

E. coli pode ser classificada por mecanismos de patogenicidade (toxinas, adesinas, invasibilidade), danos a animais de laboratório e padrões de adesão a células eucarióticas em cultura, e seus patótipos incluem: i) *E. coli* enteropatogênica (EPEC); ii) *E. coli* enteropatogênica atípica (A-EPEC); iii) *E. coli* enterotoxigênica (ETEC); iv) *E. coli* enterohemorrágica (EHEC); v) *E. coli* enteroinvasiva (EIEC); vi) *E. coli* de adesão difusa (DAEC); vii) *E. coli* enteroagregativa (EAEC) (SOUSA, 2006).

Pseudomonas aeruginosa é um bacilo gram-negativo e aeróbio. Raramente um membro da microbiota normal em seres humanos (GOOSSENS, 2003). As taxas de colonização para locais específicos em seres humanos são de 0 a 2% para a pele, 0 a 3,3% para mucosa nasal, de 0 a 6,6% para a garganta, e 2,6 a 24% em amostras fecais. No entanto, as taxas podem exceder 50% de colonização, durante a internação,

especialmente entre os pacientes que passam por trauma ou feridas na pele ou mucosa, pela ventilação mecânica, traqueostomia, uso de cateteres, cirurgia, queimaduras. Os pacientes com imunidade comprometida têm maiores riscos para a colonização por este micro-organismo, e o rompimento na microbiota normal como um resultado de terapia antimicrobiana tem sido também demonstrado para o aumento da colonização por *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. Apesar da ampla distribuição de *P. aeruginosa* na natureza e o potencial para infecções adquiridas na comunidade, infecções graves com *P. aeruginosa* são predominantemente hospitalares (LISTER et al., 2009; NEVES et al., 2011).

2.2 Produtos Naturais

Os produtos naturais obtidos de plantas, animais, micro-organismo e organismos marinhos constituem uma gama de metabólitos secundários com diversas estruturas químicas que foram e continuam desempenhando um papel vital no desenvolvimento de medicamentos (GUO, 2017). Assim, a natureza, de forma geral, tem produzido a maioria das substâncias orgânicas conhecidas. Entretanto, é o Reino Vegetal que tem contribuído de forma mais significativa para o fornecimento de substâncias úteis ao tratamento de doenças que acometem os seres humanos. A fantástica variedade e complexidade de metabólitos especiais biossintetizados pelas plantas ter-se-iam formado e evoluído, como mecanismo de defesa desses vegetais às condições ambientais ricas em micro-organismos, insetos, animais e também às condições de adaptação e regulação (MONTANARI; BOLZANI, 2001).

O Brasil, com a grandeza de seu litoral, de sua flora e, sendo o detentor da maior floresta equatorial e tropical úmida do planeta, não pode abdicar de sua vocação para os produtos naturais (PINTO et al., 2002). O conhecimento sobre plantas medicinais simboliza muitas vezes o único recurso terapêutico de muitas comunidades e grupos étnicos (MACIEL et al., 2002). Estudos com plantas medicinais ainda não receberam no Brasil, a atenção que o tema merece das agências financiadoras, embora já exista uma massa crítica de pesquisadores qualificados nas áreas de química e farmacologia. Até o presente momento, não houve um processo coordenado de todos os atores (indústria, farmacólogos, fotoquímicos, químicos sintéticos, farmacêuticos, médicos, etc.) visando o desenvolvimento de fármacos a partir de plantas (PINTO et al., 2002). Apesar disso,

grande parte dos medicamentos encontrados no mercado é derivada direta ou indiretamente de produtos naturais (BRANDÃO et al., 2010).

Aproximadamente 25% das drogas prescritas no mundo são de origem vegetal. O mercado mundial de medicamentos fitoterápicos vem crescendo e movimenta cerca de US\$ 43 bilhões por ano, sendo a Europa e os Estados Unidos os principais representantes. Estima-se que 70-80% da população mundial utilizem esses medicamentos, principalmente em regiões subdesenvolvidas e em desenvolvimento onde há uma grande difusão do uso de plantas medicinais (CRUZ, 2015).

Um dos fatores que mais contribuiu para a pesquisa do potencial bioativo de plantas é a problemática da resistência a antibióticos convencionais adquiridas por diversos micro-organismos. Esta resistência provém do uso inadequado desses medicamentos por parte da população. A resistência de bactérias e fungos a antibióticos convencionais constitui um problema de saúde pública (PONZI et al., 2010; LEAL et al., 2011). Paralelamente, linhas de pesquisas têm sido desenvolvidas com êxito por diversos pesquisadores, baseadas nas propriedades anti-infecciosas de muitas plantas de utilização consagrada pela medicina popular e poderão contribuir de forma inovadora na terapia antimicrobiana (SARTORI, 2005; SILVA, 2013).

Diversos compostos extraídos de plantas possuem atividade antimicrobiana comprovada. Dentre eles, podemos citar: os flavonoides, os alcaloides, os terpenos e os óleos essenciais (COWAN, 1999; ROMANO et al., 2013).

2.3 Flavonoides

Os flavonoides são um grupo diversificado de compostos fenólicos amplamente distribuídos no reino vegetal. Eles participam de importantes funções no crescimento, desenvolvimento e na defesa dos vegetais contra o ataque de patógenos e estão presentes na maioria das plantas, concentrados em sementes, frutos, cascas, raízes, folhas e flores (HARBORNE; WILLIAMS, 2000; DIHMAN et al., 2016). No entanto, estas concentrações podem ser influenciadas por diversos fatores naturais como radiação solar, raios UV, estações do ano e ainda outros fatores como poluentes que podem alterar o metabolismo da planta (HARBORNE; WILLIAMS, 2000; NIJVELDT et al., 2001).

Os flavonoides são compostos de baixo peso molecular, oriundos da rota biossintética mista envolvendo a via do ácido chiquímico e a via do acetato, possuem,

em sua grande maioria, 15 átomos de carbono em seu núcleo fundamental, constituído por dois anéis aromáticos (A e B) e uma junção destes com três átomos de carbono, que formam o anel C (PEREIRA et al., 2016). O primeiro anel benzeno (Anel A) é condensado com o sexto carbono do terceiro anel (Anel C), que na posição 2 carrega um grupo fenil como substituinte (Anel B) (BEECHER, 2003). Devido ao fato deste terceiro anel apresentar-se na forma de um anel pirona é responsável pela formação da maioria das diferentes classes destes compostos, recebendo a denominação de núcleo 4 – oxo – flavonoide (Figura 2) (SANDHAR et al., 2011).

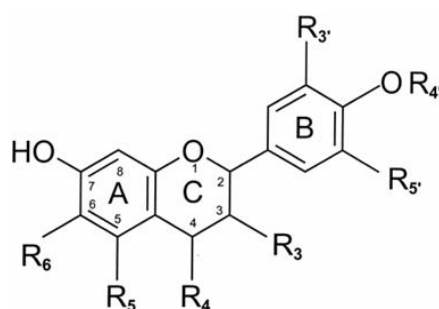


Figura 2. Estrutura base de um flavonoide com anéis e posições numeradas.

Os flavonoides podem ocorrer como agliconas, glicosídeos ou como parte de outras estruturas que contenham flavonoides, como as flavolignanas, porém frequentemente ocorrem como glicosídeos (BEHLING et al., 2004). Até o momento, mais de 8.000 flavonoides foram identificados e eles são classificados em pelo menos 10 classes de compostos, de acordo com seus padrões estruturais. No entanto, os estudos se concentraram em seis subgrupos de flavonoides: flavonas, flavonóis, flavan-3-ols (catequinas), procianidinas, flavanonas, e isoflavonas (THEODORATOU et al., 2007; TAPAS et al., 2008; DIHMAN et al., 2016).

Sabe-se que os flavonoides exercem uma ampla gama de atividades biológicas. Estas incluem: atividades anti-inflamatória, antibacteriana, antiviral, antioxidante, antialérgica, antitumoral e tratamento de doenças como diabetes e Alzheimer (MURRAY, 1998; SHARMA, 2006; BANSAL et al., 2009; SANDHAR et al., 2011).

Estes compostos fenólicos são conhecidos por serem sintetizados pelas plantas em resposta à infecção microbiana. Dessa forma, é muito comum encontrar flavonoides eficazes contra uma variedade de micro-organismos. A atividade antibacteriana deve-se

provavelmente à capacidade destes compostos em formar complexos com proteínas solúveis presentes nas paredes das células bacterianas. Por outro lado, a natureza lipofílica dos flavonoides é também capaz de romper as membranas das bactérias (FIRAS; HASSAN, 2008).

Vários estudos na literatura já evidenciaram a atividade antibacteriana de uma gama de flavonoides. Quercetina foi relatada por inibir completamente o crescimento de *Staphylococcus aureus* (HAVSTEEN, 1983). Quatro flavonoides isolados da espécie *Erythrina caffra* demonstraram inibição do crescimento de algumas cepas de bactérias gram-negativas e gram-positivas (CHUKWUJEKWU et al., 2011). Além disso, Favela-Hernández e colaboradores (2012) evidenciaram a atividade antibacteriana de flavonoides isolados da espécie *Larrea tridentata* contra 16 cepas de bactérias.

Outra atividade biológica importante dos flavonoides é a atividade antioxidante. Os flavonoides são antioxidantes efetivos devido às suas propriedades sequestrantes de radicais livres e por quelar íons metálicos, protegendo assim os tecidos dos radicais livres e da peroxidação lipídica. A propriedade antioxidante é direcionada sobre o radical hidroxil (OH) e o ânion superóxido (O^{2-}), que são espécies altamente reativas envolvidas na iniciação da peroxidação lipídica. Além destes efeitos importantes, os flavonoides têm propriedades estabilizadoras de membrana, podendo afetar alguns processos do metabolismo intermediário (KANDASWAMI; MIDDLETON, 1994; BEHLING et al., 2004). A quercetina é conhecida por seu papel antioxidante, pois sequestra radicais de oxigênio (OH e O^{2-}) e possui propriedades quelante e estabilizadora do ferro (SORATA et al., 1994). Além disso, a rutina, também chamada de vitamina P, exerce efeito antioxidante e quelante de íons metálicos (KAMALAKKANNAN; PRINCE, 2006).

2.4 Toxicidade de Produtos Naturais

As plantas consideradas medicinais beneficiaram, e continuam beneficiando a humanidade. Ainda hoje muitas são utilizadas para tratamento de enfermidades, mesmo havendo medicamentos sintéticos no mercado para o tratamento das mesmas doenças (FERREIRA; PINTO, 2010; ZHANG et al., 2012). No entanto, o conceito mais perigoso surgido por esta época foi o de que as plantas medicinais não representam quaisquer riscos para a saúde humana por serem naturais e terem sido testadas através de séculos de utilização pela população de todo o mundo (VEIGA-JÚNIOR, 2008).

A sociedade tem a percepção de que todo o produto natural é seguro e desprovido de efeitos secundários. No entanto, existem plantas que são venenos por conterem toxinas poderosas que podem levar à morte. Outras causam efeitos secundários, a depender da dose ou quantidade administrada, com diferente grau de toxicidade. E outras são, inclusive, incompatíveis com o uso de certos medicamentos devido a interações farmacológicas. Existe por isso uma grande falta de informação por parte dos consumidores relativamente aos medicamentos à base de plantas que podem causar danos irreversíveis à saúde (FERREIRA, 2010; TEIXEIRA, 2012).

Espécies consideradas tóxicas produzem metabólitos secundários que pela inalação, ingestão ou contato podem causar alterações patológicas em homens e animais. As plantas podem causar reações diversas, desde alergias na pele e mucosas, até distúrbios cardiovasculares, respiratórios, metabólicos, gastrintestinais, neurológicos e em alguns casos o óbito (CAMPOS et al., 2016).

De acordo com dados do Sistema Nacional de Informações Toxicológicas (SINITOX), no ano de 2014, no Brasil foram registrados 854 casos de intoxicação humana por uso de plantas sendo que desses, um foi a óbito (SINITOX, 2014). Apesar de intoxicações humanas fatais causadas por plantas serem raras e o número total de ocorrências registradas serem baixo, os dados estatísticos devem ser analisados com cautela, pois muitos casos não são registrados ou são notificados como exposição a agente tóxico desconhecido (OLIVEIRA et al., 2003; MONSENY et al., 2015; CAMPOS et al., 2016).

Diante disso, é evidente a importância da avaliação do balanço entre a atividade farmacológica *versus* toxicidade de um determinado produto natural, como por exemplo um flavonoide, para verificar sua aplicabilidade terapêutica.

Cerca de 50% das razões que levam à insuficiência do desenvolvimento de um fármaco estão associadas com o perfil farmacocinético e toxicológico. Assim, a determinação do perfil farmacocinético (ADME) juntamente com a toxicidade (ADMET) são parâmetros importantes na definição de biodisponibilidade e efeitos tóxicos de uma molécula, ajudando na redução do tempo e do custo do processo de investigação e desenvolvimento de novas drogas (HANSCH et al, 2004).

Modelos de previsão assistida por computador, as chamadas ferramentas de previsão, desempenham um papel essencial no repertório proposto de métodos alternativos para a avaliação das características farmacológicas e toxicológicas de um composto, além de modelos *in vitro*. Por isso, essas ferramentas são usadas para estudar

os compostos existentes e hipotéticas, que são rápidos, reprodutíveis e são normalmente baseados em biorreguladores humanos (ANGELO et al, 2006; SRINIVAS et al, 2014).

Neste contexto, destaca-se os estudos com modelos *in silico*, que estão sendo aplicados para a avaliação da toxicidade de um composto no meio metabólico de mamíferos, e cuja utilização dentro de um ambiente regulatório também tem sido incentivada pela legislação recente (MARCHANT, 2012; ANVISA, 2014).

2.5 *Lonchocarpus araripenses* Bentham: Considerações gerais

Dentre as famílias de plantas medicinais existentes destaca-se a família Leguminosae, que é a terceira maior família de Angiospermas já relatadas. Compreende cerca de 730 gêneros que reúnem mais de 19400 espécies, espalhadas em todo o mundo especialmente nas regiões tropicais e subtropicais (JUCHUM, 2007; SILVA, 2013).

De modo geral, plantas dessa família caracterizam-se como plantas anuais ou perenes, eretas, prostradas, difusas ou escadentes, subarbustos, arbustos eretos e árvores de pequeno, médio e grande porte com sistema radicular bem desenvolvido e predominância da raiz principal sobre suas ramificações (MAIA, 2008; SILVA, 2013).

O uso medicinal das plantas dessa família pela população de diversas partes do mundo tem encontrado respaldo nos estudos científicos que comprovam a eficácia dessas plantas em diversos modelos experimentais. Já foram relatados na literatura diversos efeitos biológicos de plantas da família Leguminosae, entre eles, podemos citar: efeito antibacteriano, analgésico, anti-inflamatório, antidiabético e antifúngico (SILVA et al., 2008; OLIVEIRA et al., 2009; SILVA, 2013).

O gênero *Lonchocarpus* pertence às Papilionoideae, que compreende a subdivisão mais evoluída das Leguminosae (LIMA, 2007). Este gênero é representado por aproximadamente 100 espécies distribuídas na América Tropical, África, e Ilhas do Caribe. Investigações fitoquímicas anteriores mostraram que este gênero é uma rica fonte de compostos fenólicos, incluindo flavonas, chalconas, flavonóis, flavanas, flavanonas e auronas (NASCIMENTO et al., 1976; MAGALHÃES et al., 1996; MAGALHÃES et al., 1999; ALVAREZ-SOLANO et al., 2000; BORGES-ARGAEZ et al., 2002; LAWSON et al., 2006; LIMA et al., 2009).

Popularmente conhecida como angelim, *L. araripensis* é uma espécie endêmica da região Nordeste do Brasil, sendo encontrada nos estados do Ceará, Rio Grande do Norte, Paraíba, Piauí e Maranhão. É uma árvore de pequeno a médio porte, geralmente

de 3-5 metros de altura, encontrada em formações vegetais diversas como tabuleiros, nas matas do litoral, em carrascais, cerrados e campos (FERNANDES, 1964; LIMA, 2007).

A investigação fitoquímica do extrato hexânico das cascas das raízes de *L. araripensis* conduziu ao isolamento de oito flavonoides, dentre os quais dois foram relatados pela primeira vez na literatura. Foram também isolados dois triterpenos: o ácido betulínico e o lupeol (LIMA, 2007). Em outro estudo fitoquímico realizado com esta espécie, Lima et al. (2014) isolaram dois compostos novos de *L. araripensis*. São eles: 6a,11a-dihidro-9-metoxi-6H-benzofurano[3,2-C] benzopiran-3-ol e 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetrametoxi-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavona.

Embora não se tenha evidências do uso popular atribuído a planta *L. araripensis*, já foram demonstradas importantes atividades para alguns de seus compostos isolados como as atividades antioxidante e gastroprotetora do flavonoide 3,6-dimetoxi-6'', 6''-dimetil-[2'',3'':7,8]-cromenoflavona isolado da casca das raízes (CAMPOS et al., 2008), atenuação das alterações características de inflamação alérgica do triterpenoide lupeol (VASCONCELOS et al., 2008) e a atividade anti-inflamatória de uma lectina isolada das sementes de *L. araripensis* (RODRIGUES, 2012).

Objetivos

3 OBJETIVOS

3.1 Geral

Avaliar as atividades farmacológicas e toxicológicas do flavonoide 2,4-*cis*-3,4-*cis*-3,4,5,8-tetrametoxi-[1",2":6,7]-furanoflavana isolado de *Lonchocarpus araripensis*.

3.2 Específicos

- ✓ Avaliar a atividade antimicrobiana *in silico* do flavonoide TMFF;
- ✓ Determinar a Concentração Inibitória Mínima (CIM) do flavonoide TMFF frente a diferentes cepas de bactérias;
- ✓ Determinar a Concentração Bactericida Mínima (CBM) do flavonoide TMFF frente a diferentes cepas de bactérias;
- ✓ Avaliar o perfil de associação do flavonoide TMFF com diferentes antibióticos frente às diferentes cepas de bactérias analisadas;
- ✓ Avaliar o potencial antioxidante *in silico* do flavonoide TMFF;
- ✓ Avaliar a atividade antioxidante *in vitro* do flavonoide TMFF frente o radical ferroso;
- ✓ Avaliar a biodisponibilidade oral teórica *in silico* do flavonoide TMFF;
- ✓ Investigar o perfil toxicológico *in silico* do flavonoide TMFF.

Material e Métodos

4 MATERIAL E MÉTODOS

4.1 Estudos *in silico*

4.1.1 PASS online

Previsão do espectro de atividade para substâncias (PASS) online é um software projetado para avaliar o potencial biológico geral de uma molécula orgânica sobre o organismo humano. Ele fornece previsões simultâneas de muitos tipos de atividades biológicas com base na estrutura dos compostos orgânicos. O espectro de atividade biológica de um composto químico é o conjunto de diferentes tipos de atividade biológica, que refletem os resultados de interação do composto com várias entidades biológicas. *Pass online* dá várias facetas da ação biológica de um composto, obtendo os índices Pa (probabilidade "de ser ativo") e Pi (probabilidade "de ser inativo") estimando a categorização de um composto potencial em ser pertencente à subclasse de compostos ativos ou inativos, respectivamente (SRINIVAS et al., 2014). Este programa é gratuito e pode ser acessado em: <http://www.pharmaexpert.ru/passonline>.

4.1.2 Análise teórica da toxicidade e dos parâmetros farmacocinéticos

Para o estudo dos parâmetros farmacológicos e toxicológicos teórico deste composto, foi realizada a avaliação *in silico* dos parâmetros ADMET (Absorção, Distribuição, Metabolismo, Excreção e Toxicidade).

Na análise dos parâmetros farmacológicos, foi avaliado a biodisponibilidade oral teórica do produto, pela “Regra dos Cinco” de Lipinski, que estabelece que pelo menos três de quatro requisitos devam ser apresentados para que o composto possua uma boa biodisponibilidade. Assim, para que compostos sejam absorvidos, devem possuir miLogP menor ou igual a 5,00; MM menor ou igual a 500 $\text{g}\cdot\text{mol}^{-1}$; Área de superfície polar topológica (TPSA) menor ou igual a 140 Å² ou a soma do número de aceptores e doadores de ligação de hidrogênio menor que 12; Máximo de 10 grupos aceptores de ligação de hidrogênio (nALH), que é expresso pela soma de átomos de N e O; Máximo de 5 grupos doadores de ligação de hidrogênio (nDLH), expresso pela soma de OH e NH na molécula (LIPINSKI et al., 2001). Para esta predição, foi empregado o

programa *Molinspiration Cheminformatics* (<http://www.molinspiration.com/cgi-bin/properties>).

Alguns parâmetros relacionados à absorção, toxicidade e metabolização foram avaliados pela ferramenta *admetSAR*. Esses parâmetros são permeabilidade na barreira hematoencefálica, permeabilidade Caco-2, absorção no intestino, se são substratos e inibidores das enzimas do citocromo, se são inibidores de transporte renal de cátions, o estudo teórico sobre o efeito carcinogênico, o teste de AMES e a toxicidade oral aguda (LIPINSKI et al., 2001; CONEJO, 2016).

A toxicidade oral aguda teórica foi classificada com base nas quatro categorias da Agência de Proteção Ambiental dos Estados Unidos que divide os compostos de acordo com a dose letal mediana (DL_{50}). A categoria I contém os compostos com valores de DL_{50} inferior ou igual a 50 mg/kg, a Categoria II contém compostos com DL_{50} valores superiores a 50 mg/kg e inferior a 500 mg/kg, a Categoria III inclui compostos com DL_{50} valores superiores a 500 mg/kg e inferior a 5000 mg/kg e a Categoria IV consiste de compostos com DL_{50} valores superiores a 5000 mg/kg. O programa é gratuito e foi acessado em: <http://lmmmd.ecust.edu.cn:8000/>.

4.2 Estudos *in vitro*

4.2.1 Micro-organismos

Para os ensaios de atividade antibacteriana, foram utilizadas as seguintes cepas: *Escherichia coli* – ATCC 8539, *Escherichia coli* – EC 101, *Escherichia coli* – EC 102, *Escherichia coli* – EC 103, *Escherichia coli* – EC 104, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* - ATCC 8027, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* – PA 101, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* – PA 102, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* – PA 103, *Staphylococcus aureus* – ATCC 25925, *Staphylococcus aureus* – SA 101, *Staphylococcus aureus* - SA 102, *Staphylococcus aureus* - SA 103 e *Staphylococcus aureus* – SA 104.

Todas as cepas de bactérias foram obtidas no Laboratório de Microbiologia da Unidade Acadêmica de Ciências Biológicas da Universidade Federal de Campina Grande. As bactérias foram mantidas em Agar Muller-Hinton (MH) a 4°C. Os inóculos foram obtidos a partir de culturas de 24 horas em ágar nutriente a 37°C e diluídas em salina estéril 0,9% para obter concentração final de aproximadamente $1,5 \times 10^8$ unidades formadoras de colônias por mL (UFC/mL), ajustado pela turvação comparando-se com

uma suspensão de sulfato de bário e ácido sulfúrico do tubo nº 0,5 da escala McFarland (BAUER et al. 1966; CLEELAND; SQUIRES, 1991; BONA et al., 2014).

4.2.2 Meios de Cultura

Os meios de cultura utilizados nos ensaios para avaliação da atividade antimicrobiana foram o caldo Muller Hinton e o meio ágar Muller Hinton. O meio de cultura foi adquirido na Difco® e preparado de acordo com as instruções do fabricante.

4.2.3 Obtenção da substância teste

Foi utilizado o flavonoide TMFF, isolado do extrato hexânico das cascas das raízes de *Lonchocarpus araripensis*, gentilmente fornecido pelo Professor Doutor Almi Freire de Lima, do Centro de Formação de Professores (Cajazeiras/UFCG). Para a realização dos ensaios farmacológicos, a substância foi solubilizada em cremofor e diluída em água destilada. A concentração de cremofor foi inferior a 0,1% v/v.

4.2.4 Antibióticos

Os antibióticos utilizados na execução dos testes foram ceftazidima (30 µg), cefalotina (30 µg), levofloxacino (5 µg), norfloxacino (10 µg), amicacina (30 µg), ampicilina (10 µg) e oxacilina (1 µg) adquiridos da Laborclin® (Paraná-Brasil).

4.2.5 Determinação da Concentração Inibitória Mínima (CIM)

A CIM foi determinada utilizando a técnica de microdiluição em placa de 96 poços com fundo em “U”. Em uma placa de 96 cavidades, foi adicionado 100 µL caldo Mueller Hinton, duplamente concentrado, e 100 µL do flavonoide TMFF em estudo, nas concentrações de 1024 a 16 µg/mL. A determinação da CIM foi conduzida com 10 µL do micro-organismo em cada cavidade, aproximadamente $1,5 \times 10^8$ UFC/mL. O penúltimo poço com 200 µL do caldo contendo micro-organismo foi considerado o controle negativo, e o último poço recebeu 200 µL do caldo contendo micro-organismo e clorafenicol (100µg/ml), foi considerado o controle positivo. O ensaio foi realizado

em duplicata. As placas foram incubadas a 35-37 °C durante 24-48 horas. Após o tempo de incubação adequado dos ensaios com as bactérias, foi realizada a primeira leitura dos resultados. Em seguida, foram adicionados 20 µL de solução de resazurina sódica (SIGMA) em água destilada esterilizada na concentração de 0,01 % (p/v) reconhecida como indicador colorimétrico de óxido-redução para bactérias. A leitura se procedeu, visualmente, pela ausência ou presença de crescimento do micro-organismo pela formação de aglomerado de células (botão). E também pela observação da mudança da coloração da solução, de azul para rosa, indicando crescimento do mesmo. Foi feita uma nova incubação a 35-37 °C. A CIM foi determinada como a menor concentração do produto que inibiu o crescimento visível do micro-organismo e também pela observação da mudança da coloração da solução, de azul para rosa, indicando crescimento do micro-organismo. Portanto, foi determinada como CIM, a menor concentração do produto capaz de inibir o crescimento do micro-organismo ensaiado, verificado por uma não mudança da coloração do corante indicador (ELOFF, 1998; MANN; MARKHAM, 1998; PALOMINO et al., 2002).

4.2.6 Determinação da Concentração Bactericida Mínima (CBM)

Após a leitura dos resultados, foram feitos inóculos (10 µL) de três diluições a partir da CIM para o meio de caldo Mueller-Hinton (100 µL/cavidade) em placa de microdiluição esterilizada para a determinação da CBM. Após a incubação a 35 °C por 24 horas foi adicionado 20 µL de resazurina. Os ensaios foram incubados a temperatura de 35°C por mais 24 horas para confirmação da concentração capaz de inibir o crescimento total das espécies bacterianas, verificado por uma não mudança da coloração do corante indicador (MANN; MARKHAM, 1998; PALOMINO et al., 2002).

4.2.7 Estudo da associação do produto com antibacterianos

Para o estudo de associação do flavonoide TMFF com os antibacterianos, foi realizado por meio da técnica de difusão em disco em meio sólido utilizando discos de papel filtro (BAUER et al., 1966; OLIVEIRA et al., 2006). Uma alíquota de 20µL da CIM do flavonoide foi transferida para os discos contendo os antibacterianos nas suas respectivas concentrações, sendo em seguida alocados em placas de Petri estéreis lisa

(140x15) contendo o meio AMH que, previamente foram inoculados com swabs estéreis, um volume aproximadamente de 1mL das suspensões bacterianas. Posteriormente, as placas foram incubadas a 35°C por 24-48h, seguido da realização de sua leitura (OLIVEIRA et al., 2006; KONEMAN et al., 2008; OSTROSKY et al., 2008). O efeito interferente da combinação do produto mais antibacterianos foi avaliado conforme a metodologia descrita por Cleeland; Squires (1991):

- **Efeito sinérgico:** ocorre quando o halo de inibição ao crescimento microbiano, apresenta um diâmetro maior ou igual a 2mm, em comparação ao do antibacteriano isolado;
- **Efeito antagônico:** considera-o quando a combinação do produto com o antibacteriano resulta em um halo de inibição com um diâmetro menor do que o obtido pelo o antibacteriano.
- **Efeito indiferente:** determina-o, quando a formação do halo de inibição resultante da combinação, obtém o mesmo diâmetro do antibacteriano quando avaliado individualmente.

Os ensaios foram realizados em duplicata e os resultados foram obtidos pela média aritmética dos diâmetros formados nos dois ensaios paralelamente.

4.2.8 Determinação da atividade antioxidante sobre o íon ferroso (Fe^{2+})

A técnica utilizada foi descrita por El e Karakaya (2004). Para verificar o efeito quelante do íon ferroso pelo produto, diferentes concentrações do flavonoide TMFF, 5, 10, 50, 100 e 500 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$, foram misturadas com 0,05 mL de FeCl_2 (2 mM) e 0,2 mL de ferrozina (5mM). Depois esta mistura foi incubada durante 10 minutos à temperatura ambiente e a absorbância foi então medida a 512nm. O controle negativo foi feito com a utilização de FeCl_2 , ferrozina e veículo, já para o controle positivo foi utilizada a solução-padrão de ácido ascórbico. A porcentagem de inibição foi determinada a partir da seguinte fórmula: % inibição = $100 \times (\text{controle} - \text{experimental}) / \text{Controle}$.

4.3 Análise Estatística

Para a análise dos dados utilizou-se o programa estatístico GraphPad Prisma versão 5.0[®]. Foi utilizado ANOVA one-way, seguido do teste de Bonferroni. Os resultados foram considerados significativos quando $p < 0,05$.

Resultados e Discussão

5.1 Antimicrobial analysis of flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7] - furanoflavan isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis*: an *in silico* approach

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**Antimicrobial analysis of flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]
- furanoflavan isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis*: an *in silico* approach**

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Abstract

Introduction: Flavonoids are known to exhibit a variety of effects in different biological systems, for example, antimicrobial effects. Objective: In the study, the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7] – furanoflavan (TMFF) isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis* were evaluated for their antimicrobial effects.

Methods: The online PASS program was used in the study for *in silico* activities. Microdilution method was used for antibacterial assay of the flavonoid and one bacteria strain *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* was used. **Results:** The analysis of percentage value of "Pa" for antimicrobial *in silico* activity in 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7] - furanoflavan with antibacterial activity were Pa: 0.353 and Pi: 0.052. In addition, MIC was 64 µg/ml for the *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* strain. **Conclusions:** The *in silico* study showed that flavonoid was likely to be active against several microorganisms, such as bacteria and fungi.

Keywords: *Lonchocarpus araripensis*; Flavonoids; antimicrobial effect; *in silico*.

INTRODUCTION

Historically, natural products have been used since ancient times and in folklore for the treatment of many diseases and illnesses. Classical natural product chemistry methodologies enabled a vast array of bioactive secondary metabolites from terrestrial and marine sources to be discovered. Many of these natural products have gone on to become current drug candidates (Dias et al., 2012).

Among these products of the secondary metabolism of plants we can highlight the flavonoids, which are derivatives of 2-phenyl-benzyl- γ -pyrone, present ubiquitously throughout the plant kingdom. Over 9000 compounds of this group are known. Their biosynthesis pathway (part of the phenylpropanoid pathway) begins with the condensation of one p-coumaroyl-CoA molecule with three molecules of malonyl-CoA to yield chalcone (4',2',4',6'-tetrahydroxychalcone), catalyzed by chalcone synthase (CHS). The next step is isomerization of chalcone to flavanone by chalcone isomerase (CHI). From this step onwards, the pathway branches to several different flavonoid classes, including aurones, dihydrochalcones, flavanonols (dihydroflavonols), isoflavones, flavones, flavonols, leucoanthocyanidins, anthocyanins and proanthocyanidins (Buer et al., 2010; Mierziak et al., 2014).

Flavonoids have a number of biological activities, including antiviral, antibacterial, antiprotozoal and antiinflammatory, etc. These compounds have been recognized as potential natural sources of antimicrobial drugs. They can inhibit the growth and replication of a variety of pathogenic bacteria that cause human illness, such as *Escherichia*, *Gingiva*, *Pseudomonas* and *Staphylococcus* genera (Sharma, 2006; Friedman, 2007; Xiao et al., 2014).

Therefore, considering the informations described, this work proposes the evolution of the antimicrobial activity of of flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-

tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7] – furanoflavan (TMFF) isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis* through *in silico* study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Isolation of 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan

The aerial parts of *Lonchocarpus araripensis* were collected in at Acarape County, State of Ceará, Brazil. A voucher of the plant which was identified by Prof. Edson P. Nunes is deposited at the herbarium Prisco Bezerra of Department of Biology, Federal University of Ceará, Brazil, under number 11074.

The process of isolation and identification of the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7] - furanoflavan was performed according to Lima et al., 2014.

PASS online

Prediction of Activity Spectra for Substances (PASS) online is designed to evaluate the general biological potential of an organic drug-like molecule. It provides simultaneous predictions of many types of biological activities based on the structure of organic compounds. The biological activity spectrum of a chemical compound is the set of different types of biological activity that reflect the results of the compound's interaction with various biological entities. PASS online gives various facets of the biological action of a compound. Pa (probability "to be active") and Pi (probability "to be inactive") estimates the categorization of potential compound is belonging to the sub-class of active or inactive compounds respectively (SRINIVAS et al., 2012).

PASS gives hits based on the probability of new effects and mechanism of action with required activity spectra among the compounds from in-house, old and commercial databases. PASS online predicts the biological activity spectrum for the modified imprints on the basis of its structural formula, along with different

descriptors like antineoplastic, antioxidant, hematotoxic etc., so it is possible to estimate if new compounds have a particular effect (SRINIVAS et al., 2012). This program can be accessed at: <http://www.pharmaexpert.ru/passonline>.

Determination of minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC)

For methodology by antibacterial activity, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (ATCC 8027) was selected. The microorganism strain was obtained from Laboratory of Microbiology of the Academic Unit of Biological Sciences of the Federal University of Campina Grande. The antibacterial activity assay was carried out according to the protocols from Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI) (2008).

The microplate bioassay was used to determine the flavonoid TMFF minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC). For this purpose, 96-well plates were prepared by dispensing 100 μ L of double strength Mueller Hinton Broth (MHB) inoculated with the bacteria (10 μ L) into each well prior to the assay. An aliquot (100 μ L) of the flavonoid solutions, at their respective concentrations, was transferred into six consecutive wells. The final volume in each well was 200 μ L. The highest substance concentration solution was added into the first well and the one having the smallest concentration into the antepenultimate well. The penultimate and the last well, containing 200 μ L of the NB inoculated with the microorganism suspension and Chloramphenicol (100 μ g/mL), were used as the negative control and positive control, respectively. The microplate was aseptically sealed, followed by mixing on a plate shaker (300 rpm) for 30 seconds and incubated at 37 °C for 24 hours (Viljoen et al., 2003; Sahin et al., 2004; CLSI, 2008).

The antibacterial activity was detected using the colorimetric method by adding 200 μ L of resazurin staining (0.1 g.100 mL⁻¹) aqueous solution in each well at the end of the incubation period. MIC was defined as the lowest flavonoid concentration able to inhibit the bacterial growth as indicated by resazurin staining (dead cells were not able

to change the staining color by visual observation – blue to red) (Burt; Reinders, 2003). All experiments were carried out at least twice with consistent results.

RESULTS

The analysis of the possibilities of flavonoid TMFF activity through PASS online tool revealed that the flavonoid presents values of Pa greater than Pi for all the activities related to the antimicrobial potential, for example: antibacterial activity (Pa: 0.323 and Pi: 0.052), antifungal activity (Pa: 0.433 and Pi: 0.043), antiviral (Rhinovirus) activity (Pa: 0.452 and Pi: 0.047), antiparasitic activity (Pa: 0.449 and Pi: 0.022) and antihelminthic activity (Pa: 0.460 and Pi: 0.009) (Table 1).

Table 1 - *In silico* analysis of the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7] - furanoflavan with the Pass online software.

Pa	Pi	Biological Activity
0,323	0,052	Antibacterial
0,433	0,043	Antifungal
0,460	0,009	Antihelminthic
0,294	0,085	Antimycobacterial
0,161	0,085	Antimycoplasmal
0,449	0,022	Antiparasitic
0,163	0,153	Antiprotozoal
0,211	0,165	Antiprotozoal (Coccidial)
0,273	0,122	Antiprotozoal (Leishmania)
0,250	0,059	Antiviral
0,162	0,027	Antiviral (Hepatitis)
0,179	0,117	Antiviral (Hepatitis B)
0,138	0,023	Antiviral (Hepatitis C)
0,387	0,041	Antiviral (Herpes)
0,119	0,115	Antiviral (HIV)
0,289	0,246	Antiviral (Picornavirus)
0,452	0,047	Antiviral (Rhinovirus)

Analyzing the results of the MIC for the strain of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (ATCC 8027) it can be observed that the flavonoid presented MIC of 64 µg/mL for the test performed once and repeated. The positive control (Chloramphenicol) inhibited the growth of bacteria in the tested concentration.

DISCUSSION

Computational (*in silico*) methods have been developed and widely applied to pharmacology hypothesis development and testing. These *in silico* methods include databases, quantitative structure-activity relationships, similarity searching, pharmacophores, homology models and other molecular modeling, machine learning, data mining, network analysis tools and data analysis tools that use a computer. Such methods have seen frequent use in the discovery and optimization of novel molecules with affinity to a target, the clarification of absorption, distribution, metabolism, excretion and toxicity properties as well as physicochemical characterization (Ekins et al., 2007).

Thus, so-called predictive tools play an essential role in the proposed repertoire of alternative methods beyond *in vitro* models. In this study, flavonoid was likely to be active against several microorganisms, including bacteria and fungi.

Several studies show the antimicrobial activity of flavonoids. Souza Filho (2004) demonstrated the antibacterial activity of the flavonoid ramnosil-O-vitexina isolated from the species *Lupinus lanatus* against *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae* and *Escherichia coli*. Oliveira Filho et al. (2013) elucidated the activity of flavonoid 5,7,4'-trimethoxyflavone isolated from *Praxelis clematidea* against gram-negative and gram-positive bacteria, including *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. In addition, the antifungal activity of six flavonoids was evidenced against strains of *Candida albicans* and *Candida cruzi* (Orhan et al., 2010)

The antibacterial effect of the study flavonoid was confirmed by *in vitro* tests against the strain *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (ATCC). The antibacterial activity against other strains of bacteria should be studied. In addition, further research on possible antifungal activity is recommended for future trials.

CONCLUSION

The study of TMFF *in silico* showed that this compound has several antimicrobial properties, but with marked bioactivity against bacterial agents, which was confirmed by *in vitro* antibacterial assays against *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. Therefore, this profile shows flavonoid is a potential candidate for a new natural antibacterial drug.

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5.2 Antibacterial effect of flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7] - furanoflavan against *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*

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**Antibacterial effect of flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7] -
furanoflavan against *Pseudomonas aeruginosa***

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Abstract

Flavonoids belong to a large group of substances consisting of natural polyphenolic structures and are known to exhibit biological effects. In the study, the 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis* was evaluated for its antibacterial and modulating activity. Microdilution method was used for antibacterial assay of the flavonoid and four bacteria strains *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* were used in the study for activities and the modulatory effect of flavonoid on antibiotics for clinical use was evaluated by the modified agar diffusion test. The results were also compared with the standard drug, Chloramphenicol (100 µg/mL). The results obtained showed activity of the flavonoid against different strains *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and this was considered bacteriostatic. In addition, it showed a synergistic modulating effect when associated

with antibiotics used in traditional therapy, which shows that flavonoid is a strong candidate for the development of drugs with antimicrobial activity.

Keywords: antibacterial activity, flavonoid, *Lonchocarpus araripensis*

INTRODUCTION

Flavonoids are low molecular weight phenolic compounds, secondary metabolites found in fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, herbs, spices, stems and flowers as well as in tea and red wine¹. The basic structural feature of flavonoid compounds is the 2-phenyl-benzo[α]pyrane or flavane nucleus, which consists of two benzene rings (A and B) linked through a heterocyclic pyrane ring (C)². Based on the variation in the type of heterocycle involved, flavonoids may be divided into six subclasses: flavonols, flavones, flavanones, flavanols, anthocyanins and isoflavones³.

Cushnie & Lamb (2005)⁴, for century's preparations containing flavonoids and the physiologically active constituents were used by medics and healers in an attempt to curb various human diseases. For example, the plant *Tagetes minuta* (containing quercetagenin-7-arabinosyl-galactoside) has been used extensively in Argentine folk medicine to treat infectious disease⁵.

The healing properties of propolis (or 'tzori' in Hebrew) are referred to throughout the Old Testament, and this balm was prescribed by Hippocrates (460–377 BC) in Ancient Greece for the treatment of sores and ulcers⁶. The antimicrobial properties of propolis have been attributed to its high flavonoid content and in particular the presence of the flavonoids galangin and pinocembrin⁷. Huangchin (*Scutellaria baicalensis*) is yet another example. This herbal medicine has been used systemically and topically for thousands of years in China for the treatment of periodontal abscesses

and infected oral wounds. The flavone baicalein is reported to be largely responsible for this plant's antimicrobial effects⁸.

Pseudomonas aeruginosa is a ubiquitous organism present in many diverse environmental settings, and it can be isolated from various living sources, including plants, animals, and humans. The ability of *P. aeruginosa* to survive on minimal nutritional requirements and to tolerate a variety of physical conditions has allowed this organism to persist in both community and hospital settings⁹. Despite the wide distribution of *P. aeruginosa* in nature and the potential for community-acquired infections, serious infections with *P. aeruginosa* are predominantly hospital acquired¹⁰.

P. aeruginosa presents a serious therapeutic challenge for treatment of both community-acquired and nosocomial infections, and selection of the appropriate antibiotic to initiate therapy is essential to optimizing the clinical outcome¹¹.

Based on the antimicrobial potential of flavonoids and by the complicated capacity of *P. aeruginosa* to develop resistance to multiple classes of antibacterial agents, even the course of treatment of an infection, the present study aimed to investigate the activity of flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7] -furanoflavan isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis* against different strains and also evaluated the association profile of flavonoid with different antibiotics against different strains of bacteria analyzed.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Isolation of 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]- furanoflavan

The aerial parts of *Lonchocarpus araripensis* were collected in at Acarape County, State of Ceará, Brazil. A voucher of the plant which was identified by Prof. Edson P. Nunes is deposited at the herbarium Prisco Bezerra of Department of Biology, Federal University of Ceará, Brazil, under number 11074.

The process of isolation and identification of the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7] - furanoflavan was performed according to¹².

Bacterial strains

For antibacterial activity assays, 4 strains of bacteria (*Pseudomonas aeruginosa* - ATCC 8027 and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* – PA 101, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* – PA 102, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* – PA 103), were selected. All the microorganism strains were obtained from the Laboratory of Microbiology of the Academic Unit of Biological Sciences of the Federal University of Campina Grande.

Bacteria were kept on Muller-Hinton Agar (MHA) slants at 4 °C. Inoculate were obtained from overnight cultures grown on NA slants at 37 °C and diluted in sterile saline solution (NaCl 0.85% w/v) to provide a final dilution of approximately $1,5 \times 10^8$ colony-forming unit per mL (cfu.mL⁻¹) adjusted according to the turbidity of 0.5 McFarland scale tube.

Antibiotics

The antibiotics used in the tests will be ceftazidime, levofloxacin and norfloxacin purchased from Laborclin® (Paraná-Brasil).

Antibacterial assay

Determination of minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC)

The microplate bioassay was used to determine the flavonoid minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC). For this purpose, 96-well plates were prepared by dispensing 100 µL of double strength Muller-Hinton Broth (MHB) inoculated with the bacteria (10 µL) into each well to the assay. An aliquot (100 µL) of the flavonoid solutions, at their respective concentrations, was transferred into six consecutive wells. The final volume in each well was 200 µL. The highest substance concentration solution was added into the first well and the one having the smallest concentration into the

antepenultimate well. The penultimate and the last well, containing 200 μL of the MHB inoculated with the microorganism suspension and Chloramphenicol (100 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$), were used as the negative control and positive control, respectively. The microplate was aseptically sealed, followed by mixing on a plate shaker (300 rpm) for 30 seconds and incubated at 37 °C for 24 hours^{13,14,15}.

The antibacterial activity was detected using the colorimetric method by adding 200 μL of resazurin staining (0.1 g.100 mL⁻¹) aqueous solution in each well at the end of the incubation period. MIC was defined as the lowest flavonoid concentration able to inhibit the bacterial growth as indicated by resazurin staining (dead cells were not able to change the staining color by visual observation – blue to red)¹⁶. All experiments were carried out at least twice with consistent results.

Determination of minimum bactericidal concentration (MBC)

After reading the results, inoculum (10 μL) of dilutions from MIC to Mueller-Hinton broth medium (100 $\mu\text{L}/\text{well}$) shall be made into a sterilized microdilution plate for determination of MBC. After incubation at 35 °C for 24 hours, 20 μL of resazurin will be added. The assays will be incubated at 35 °C for a further 24 hours to confirm the concentration capable of inhibiting the total growth of bacterial species, as verified by a non-change in staining of the indicator dye^{17,18}.

Study of product association with antibiotics

The study of the association of the flavonoid with the antibiotics agents was carried out by means of the disc diffusion technique in solid media using filter paper discs^{19,20}. A 20 μL aliquot of the flavonoid MIC was transferred to the disks containing the antibiotics in their respective concentrations and then allocated to smooth sterile Petri dishes (140x15) containing the AMH medium which were previously inoculated with sterile swabs, a volume approximately of 1mL of the bacterial suspensions. After

wards, the plates were incubated at 35 ° C for 24-48h, followed by their reading^{20,21,22}. A synergistic effect was considered when the combination determined an increase in growth inhibition halo (HI) diameter ≥ 2 mm; An antagonistic effect when the diameter of the HI determined by the combination was lower than that of the isolated antimicrobial activity of antibiotics (ATM); And, indifferent effect, when the combination determined an increase in ATM diameter of $ATM < 2mm^{23}$. The tests were performed in duplicate and the results obtained by the arithmetic mean of the diameters formed in the two tests in parallel.

RESULTS

The results for antibacterial activity of the 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7]- furanoflavan with MIC and MBC value are show in Table 1 and the activity was measured in terms of presence of microorganism growth.

Analyzing this result can be observed that the flavonoid showed a significant inhibitory effect against different strains growth of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, with MIC value equal to 64 $\mu\text{g/mL}$ for two *P. aeruginosa* strains. The flavonoid has MBC value over 1024 $\mu\text{g/mL}$ for all different strains of *P. aeruginosa* tested.

Table 1 – Antibacterial activity of the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7]- furanoflavan. (- inhibited growth; + did not inhibit growth).

Substance/Bacteria strain	MIC	MBC	Negative control	Positive control (Chloramphenicol)
<i>P. aeruginosa</i> ATCC 8027	64 $\mu\text{g/mL}$	>1024 $\mu\text{g/mL}$	+	-
<i>P. aeruginosa</i> PA 101	64 $\mu\text{g/mL}$	>1024 $\mu\text{g/mL}$	+	-
<i>P. aeruginosa</i> PA 102	1024 $\mu\text{g/mL}$	>1024 $\mu\text{g/mL}$	+	-
<i>P. aeruginosa</i> PA 103	512 $\mu\text{g/mL}$	>1024 $\mu\text{g/mL}$	+	-

In the determination of the effect of product association with antibiotics, flavonoid presented varied interactions in the action of antibiotics, with modulations for synergism, indifference and antagonism (Table 2; Figure 1).

Table 2 – Effect of the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7]- furanoflavan modulator on activity antimicrobial use of antibiotics for clinical use on *P. aeruginosa*.

Antibiotics		Microorganisms			
		<i>P. aeruginosa</i> ATCC 8027	<i>P. aeruginosa</i> PA 101	<i>P. aeruginosa</i> PA 102	<i>P. aeruginosa</i> PA 103
Ceftazidime	HIATM	27 mm	28 mm	7 mm	27 mm
	HIFLAV-ATM	32 mm ↑	10 mm ↓	8 mm *	33 mm ↑
Levofloxacin	HIATM	26 mm	0 mm	0 mm	16 mm
	HIFLAV-ATM	26 mm *	28 mm ↑	0 mm *	30 mm ↑
Norfloxacin	HIATM	29 mm	0 mm	0 mm	17 mm
	HIFLAV-ATM	31 mm ↑	26 mm ↑	0 mm *	30 mm ↑

Average of two experiments. HI: diameter of growth inhibition halo in mm. HIFLAV-ATM: halo diameter of inhibition of growth determined by the FLAV-ATM association. HIATM: diameter of growth inhibition halo determined by the isolated antibiotic. Synergistic effect (↑); Antagonistic effect (↓); Indifferent effect (*).

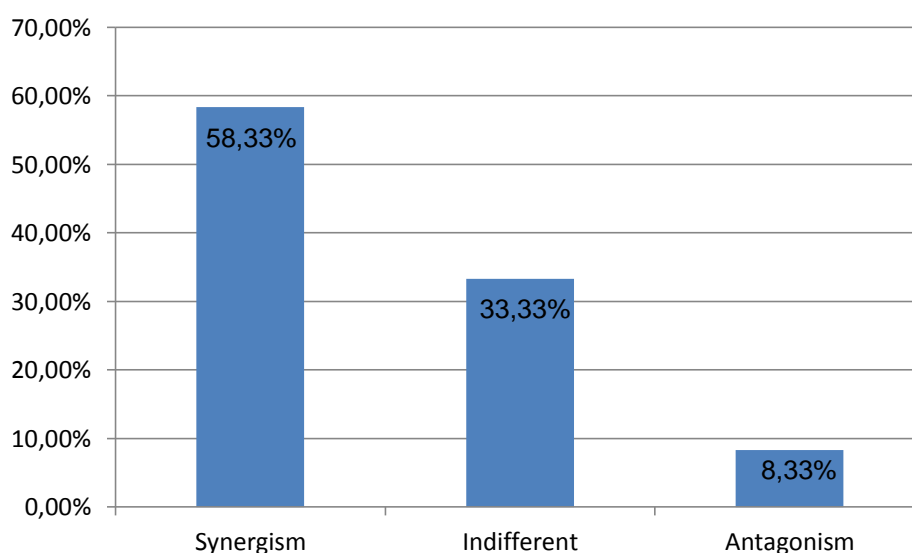


Figure 1 – Percentage of effect of the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7]- furanoflavan modulator on activity antimicrobial use of antibiotics for clinical use on *P. aeruginosa*.

DISCUSSION

Flavonoids belong to a broad class of naturally occurring chemicals whose synthesis does not occur in humans. However, they present a series of pharmacological

properties that allow them to act in biological systems and thus favor human health²⁴. These have anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antibacterial, anticancer and spasmolytic properties¹. These also have indications for the treatment of circulatory diseases such as hypertension²⁵.

Sartoratto et al.²⁶ proposed a classification of the antimicrobial potential for plant products based on the MIC results, considering as: strong antimicrobial power - products with MIC of 0.05 to 0.5 mg / mL; Moderate antimicrobial potency - MICs between 0.6 and 1.5 mg / mL and weak antimicrobial potency - MICs above 1.6 mg / mL.

According to this classification and with the results presented the 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7] - furanoflavan, showed a considerable antibacterial effect against the different strains bacteria species studied. Its activity is probably due to their ability to complex with extracellular and soluble proteins and to complex with bacterial cell walls, as described for quinones. More lipophilic flavonoids may also disrupt microbial membranes²⁷.

The antibacterial activity of flavonoids is being increasingly documented. Flavonoids are known to be synthesized by plants in response to microbial infection; thus flavonoid rich plant extracts from different species have been reported to possess antibacterial activity^{28,29}. Several flavonoids including apigenin, galangin, flavone and flavonol glycosides, isoflavones, flavanones, and chalcones have been shown to possess potent antibacterial activity²⁸.

It is known the synergistic action of natural products together with antimicrobials normally used in therapeutic treatment^{30,31}. Some papers report the modulating effect of flavonoids and alkaloids when in combination with classical antimicrobials^{32,33}.

The 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7]- furanoflavan was able to modulate the antibiotics of different antibiotics for clinical use through synergistic or antagonistic action, and in some did not interfere with the action of antimicrobials alone. For all tested strains of *P. aeruginosa*, 58,3% synergism, 33,3% indifference and 8,3% antagonism were observed.

This reinforces the importance of continuing to study antibacterial 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7] - furanoflavan compared to other species of bacteria pathogenic for humans.

CONCLUSION

The results obtained in this study suggest that the flavonoid presents a considerable antibacterial effect against different strains of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. Thus, further studies are necessary to explore this effect and discover the mechanism of action of the 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7] - furanoflavan.

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5.3 Antibacterial activity of flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis* against *Escherichia coli*

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furanoflavan isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis* against *Escherichia coli***

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Abstract

Recently, many biological properties of flavonoids have been confirmed. And their reports of antimicrobial action increase proportionally to the emergence of known antimicrobial resistant strains of pathogenic bacteria. In the study, the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan (TMFF) isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis* was evaluated for its antibacterial and modulating activity. The microdilution method was used for the antibacterial flavonoid assay and four strains of *Escherichia coli* bacteria were used in the study for the activities and the modulatory effect of flavonoid on antibiotics for clinical use was evaluated by the modified agar diffusion test. The results were also compared with the standard drug, chloramphenicol (100 µg/mL). The results obtained showed flavonoid activity against different *Escherichia coli* strains and this was considered bacteriostatic. Its synergistic modulating effect when associated with antibiotics for clinical use, demonstrates that flavonoid is a strong candidate for the development of drugs with antimicrobial activity.

Keywords: *Lonchocarpus araripensis*, flavonoids, antibacterial activity.

INTRODUCTION

Escherichia coli is a facultative anaerobic gram negative bacterium that is part of the intestinal microbiota of man and most of the animals belonging to the enterobacteriaceae family (Orskov and Orskov, 1992). Some *E. coli* strains can cause a wide range of intestinal and extra-intestinal diseases such as: diarrhea, urinary tract infections, septicemia and neonatal meningitis, which demonstrates their genetic variability in the presence of virulence factors and allows classification them in different patterns (Clermont et al., 2000; Trabulsi and Alterthum, 2004).

Natural products have been used by mankind since time immemorial. The search for relief and cure of diseases by ingestion of herbs and leaf may have been one of the first ways of using natural products (Viegas Júnior et al., 2008). Most of the drugs found on the market are derived directly or indirectly from plants, microorganisms, marine organisms, vertebrates and terrestrial invertebrates (Brandão et al., 2010).

In parallel, one of the factors that contributed most to the research on the bioactive potential of plants is the problem of resistance to conventional antibiotics acquired by various microorganisms. This resistance stems from the inadequate use of these drugs by the population. Resistance of bacteria and fungi to conventional antibiotics is a public health problem (Ponzi et al., 2010; Leal et al., 2011). At the same time, research lines have been successfully developed by several researchers, based on the anti-infective properties of many plants of use consecrated by popular medicine and can contribute in an innovative way in antimicrobial therapy (Sartori, 2005; Silva, 2013).

Flavonoids are group of about 4000 naturally occurring polyphenol compounds, found universally in all the plants (Harborne, 1986; Nayaka et al., 2014). These are primarily recognized as the pigments responsible for the colors of leaves, especially in autumn. Flavonoids are widely distributed in fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, herbs, spices, stems, and flowers as well as tea and red wine. They are chemically defined as low molecular weight substances, composed of a nucleus, which consists of three rings containing 15 carbon atoms (Havsteen, 2002; Tapas et al., 2008). Flavonoids are divided into six main subclasses: flavonols, flavones, flavanones, flavan-3-ols, isoflavones and anthocyanidins (Dzialo et al., 2016). These flavonoids display a remarkable array of biochemical and pharmacological actions, namely, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antiallergic, hepatoprotective, antithrombotic, antiviral, antibacterial and anticarcinogenic activities (Middleton and Kandaswami, 1983; Nayaka et al., 2014).

Based on the antibacterial potential of flavonoids and bacterial resistance, even the course of treatment of an infection, the present study aimed to investigate the activity of flavonoid TMFF isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis* against different strains of *E. coli* and also evaluated the association profile of flavonoid with different antibiotics against different strains of bacteria analyzed.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Isolation of 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan

The aerial parts of *Lonchocarpus araripensis* were collected in at Acarape County, State of Ceará, Brazil. A voucher of the plant which was identified by Prof. Edson P. Nunes is deposited at the herbarium Prisco Bezerra of Department of Biology, Federal University of Ceará, Brazil, under number 11074.

The process of isolation and identification of the flavonoid TMFF was performed according to Lima et al., 2014.

Bacterial strains

For antibacterial activity assays, 5 strains of bacteria (*Escherichia coli* – ATCC 8539, *Escherichia coli* – EC 101, *Escherichia coli* – EC 102, *Escherichia coli* – EC 103 and *Escherichia coli* – EC 104), were selected. All the microorganism strains were obtained from the Laboratory of Microbiology of the Academic Unit of Biological Sciences of the Federal University of Campina Grande.

Bacteria were kept on Muller-Hinton Agar (MHA) slants at 4 °C. Inoculate were obtained from overnight cultures grown on NA slants at 37 °C and diluted in sterile saline solution (NaCl 0.85% w/v) to provide a final dilution of approximately $1,5 \times 10^8$ colony-forming unit per mL (cfu.mL^{-1}) adjusted according to the turbidity of 0.5 McFarland scale tube.

Antibiotics

The antibiotics used in the tests will be cephalothin, levofloxacin, norfloxacin, amikacin and ampicillin purchased from Laborclin® (Paraná-Brasil).

Antibacterial assay

Determination of minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC)

The microplate bioassay was used to determine the flavonoid TMFF minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC). For this purpose, 96-well plates were prepared by dispensing 100 μL of double strength Mueller Hinton Broth (MHB) inoculated with the bacteria (10 μL) into each well prior to the assay. An aliquot (100 μL) of the flavonoid solutions, at their respective concentrations, was transferred into six consecutive wells. The final volume in each well was 200 μL . The highest substance concentration solution was added into the first well and the one having the smallest concentration into the

antepenultimate well. The penultimate and the last well, containing 200 μL of the NB inoculated with the microorganism suspension and Chloramphenicol (100 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$), were used as the negative control and positive control, respectively. The microplate was aseptically sealed, followed by mixing on a plate shaker (300 rpm) for 30 seconds and incubated at 37 °C for 24 hours (Viljoen *et al.*, 2003; Sahin *et al.*, 2004; CSLI, 2008).

The antibacterial activity was detected using the colorimetric method by adding 200 μL of resazurin staining (0.1 g.100 mL⁻¹) aqueous solution in each well at the end of the incubation period. MIC was defined as the lowest flavonoid concentration able to inhibit the bacterial growth as indicated by resazurin staining (dead cells were not able to change the staining color by visual observation – blue to red) (Burt and Reinders, 2003). All experiments were carried out at least twice with consistent results.

Determination of minimum bactericidal concentration (MBC)

After reading the results, inoculum (10 μL) of three dilutions from MIC to Mueller-Hinton broth medium (100 $\mu\text{L}/\text{well}$) shall be made into a sterilized microdilution plate for determination of MBC. After incubation at 35 °C for 24 hours, 20 μL of resazurin will be added. The assays will be incubated at 35 °C for a further 24 hours to confirm the concentration capable of inhibiting the total growth of bacterial species, as verified by a non-change in staining of the indicator dye (Mann and Markhan, 1998; Palomino *et al.*, 2002).

Study of product association with antibiotics

The study of the association of the flavonoid with the antibiotics agents was carried out by means of the disc diffusion technique in solid media using filter paper discs (Bauer *et al.*, 1966; Oliveira *et al.*, 2006). A 20 μL aliquot of the flavonoid MIC was transferred to the disks containing the antibiotics in their respective concentrations and then allocated to smooth sterile Petri dishes (140x15) containing the AMH medium

which were previously inoculated with sterile swabs, a volume approximately of 1mL of the bacterial suspensions. After wards, the plates were incubated at 35 ° C for 24-48h, followed by their reading (Koneman et al., 2008; Ostrosky et al., 2008; Oliveira et al., 2006). A synergistic effect was considered when the combination determined an increase in growth inhibition halo (HI) diameter ≥ 2 mm; An antagonistic effect when the diameter of the HI determined by the combination was lower than that of the isolated antimicrobial activity of antibiotics (ATM); And, indifferent effect, when the combination determined an increase in ATM diameter of ATM < 2mm. (Cleeland and Squires, 1991). The tests were performed in duplicate and the results obtained by the arithmetic mean of the diameters formed in the two tests in parallel.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Flavonoids belong to a broad class of naturally occurring chemicals whose synthesis does not occur in humans. However, they present a series of pharmacological properties that allow them to act in biological systems and thus favor human health (Peterson, 1998).

Most of the flavonoids are considered as constitutive antimicrobial ingredients, especially those belonging to prenylated flavonoids and isoflavones (Mukne et al., 2011). Numerous research groups have sought to elucidate the antimicrobial mechanisms of action of selected flavonoids. The activity of quercetin, for example, has been at least partially attributed to inhibition of DNA gyrase (Cushnie and Lamb, 2006). Recently, a number of reports published in Phytotherapy Research have demonstrated that flavonoids extracted from plants such as *Larrea tridentate*, *Erythrina caffra* and *Melampyrum arvense* exerted antiviral (Alvarez et al., 2012; Choi et al., 2012), antibacterial (Chukwujekwu et al., 2011; Favela-Hernández et al., 2012; Tomczyk et al., 2011) and antiprotozoal activities (Kirmizibekmez et al., 2011; Salem et al., 2011).

The results for antibacterial activity of the flavonoid TMFF with MIC and MBC value are show in Table 1 and the activity was measured in terms of presence of microorganism growth.

Table 1 – Antibacterial activity of the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7]-furanoflavan.

Substance/Bacteria strain	MIC	MBC	Negative control	Positive control (Chloramphenicol)
<i>E. coli</i> ATCC 8539	1024 µg/mL	>1024 µg/mL	-	+
<i>E. coli</i> EC 101	1024 µg/mL	>1024 µg/mL	-	+
<i>E. coli</i> EC 102	1024 µg/mL	>1024 µg/mL	-	+
<i>E. coli</i> EC 103	1024 µg/mL	>1024 µg/mL	-	+
<i>E. coli</i> EC 104	512µg/mL	>1024 µg/mL	-	+

Sartoratto et al. (2004) proposed a classification of the antimicrobial potential for plant products based on the MIC results, considering as: strong antimicrobial power - products with MIC of 0.05 to 0.5 mg / mL; Moderate antimicrobial potency - MICs between 0.6 and 1.5 mg / mL and weak antimicrobial potency - MICs above 1.6 mg / mL.

According to this classification and with the results presented the flavonoid TMFF, showed a moderate antibacterial effect against the different strains bacteria species studied, with MIC₅₀ value equal to 1024 µg/mL for the *E. coli* strains. However, the flavonoid has MBC value over 1024 µg/mL for all different strains tested.

Natural products can modulate antimicrobial agents, either through an antagonistic or synergistic. Thus, the concomitant use of these products and conventional medicines (antibiotics) to our attention (Sales et al., 2014; Tintino et al., 2015).

In the determination of the effect of product association with antibiotics, flavonoid presented varied interactions in the action of antibiotics, with mainly modulations for synergism and indifference (Table 2; Figure 1).

Table 2 – Effect of the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7]- furanoflavan modulator on activity antimicrobial use of antibiotics for clinical use on *E. coli*.

Antibiotics/ Microorganisms		<i>E. coli</i>	<i>E. coli</i> EC	<i>E. coli</i>	<i>E. coli</i> EC	<i>E. coli</i> EC
		ATCC 8539	101	EC 102	103	104
Cephalothin	HIATM	20 mm	10 mm	0 mm	10 mm	21 mm
	HIFLAV-ATM	24 mm ↑	0,8 mm ↓	0 mm *	10 mm *	24 mm ↑
Levofloxacin	HIATM	28 mm	23 mm	30 mm	24 mm	26 mm
	HIFLAV-ATM	30 mm ↑	27 mm ↑	30 mm *	28 mm ↑	30 mm ↑
Norfloxacin	HIATM	28 mm	23 mm	25 mm	30 mm	25 mm
	HIFLAV-ATM	35 mm ↑	25 mm ↑	26 mm *	28 mm ↓	28 mm ↑
Ampicillin	HIATM	22 mm	22 mm	10 mm	22 mm	20 mm
	HIFLAV-ATM	27 mm ↑	22 mm *	0,7 mm ↓	11 mm ↓	23 mm ↑
Amikacin	HIATM	26 mm	26 mm	25 mm	24 mm	26 mm
	HIFLAV-ATM	31 mm ↑	26 mm *	25 mm *	22 mm ↓	26 mm *

Average of two experiments. HI: diameter of growth inhibition halo in mm. HIFLAV-ATM: halo diameter of inhibition of growth determined by the FLAV-ATM association. HIATM: diameter of growth inhibition halo determined by the isolated antibiotic. Synergistic effect (↑); Antagonistic effect (↓); Indifferent effect (*).

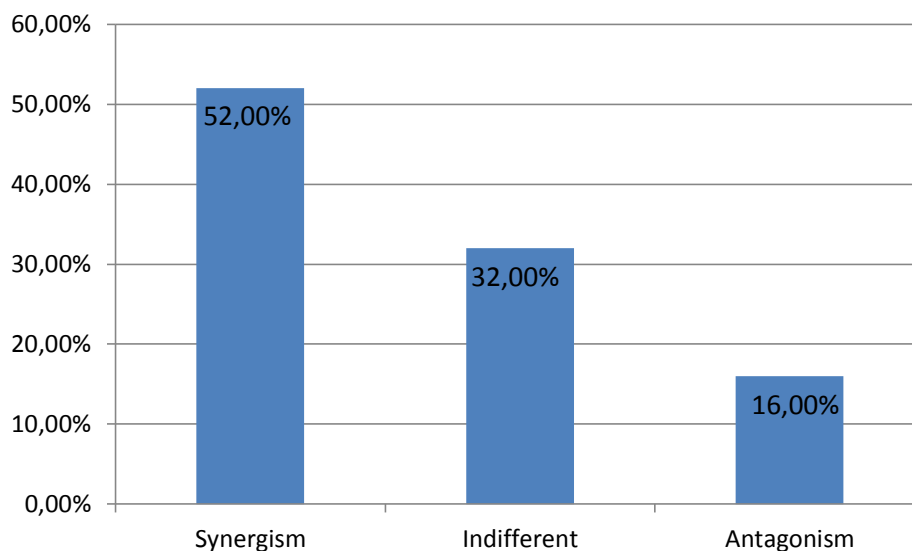


Figure 1 – Percentage of effect of the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan modulator on activity antimicrobial use of antibiotics for clinical use on *E. coli*.

The flavonoid TMFF was able to modulate the antibiotics of different antibiotics for clinical use through synergistic or antagonistic action, and in some did not interfere with the action of antimicrobials alone. For all tested strains of *E. coli*, 52% synergism, 32% indifference and 16% antagonism were observed.

Some papers report the modulating effect of natural products when in combination with classical antimicrobials (Oliveira et al., 2006; Zago et al., 2009; Sales et al., 2014).

This reinforces the importance of continuing to study antibacterial flavonoid TMFF compared to other species of bacteria pathogenic for humans.

CONCLUSION

The results obtained in this study suggest that the flavonoid presents a moderate antibacterial effect against different strains of *E. coli*. Thus, further studies are necessary to explore this effect and discover the mechanism of action of the flavonoid TMFF.

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5.4 Antibacterial activity of flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7] - furanoflavan isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis* against *Staphylococcus aureus*

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Abstract

Flavonoids are low molecular weight phenolic compounds, occur both in the free state and as glycosides and exert several important pharmacological actions of potential clinical interest. In the study, the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy - [1'',2'':6,7] – furanoflavan (TMFF) isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis* was evaluated for its antibacterial and modulating activity. Microdilution method was used for antibacterial assay of the flavonoid and five bacteria strains *Staphylococcus aureus* were used in the study for activities and the modulatory effect of flavonoid on antibiotics for clinical use was evaluated by the modified agar diffusion test. The results were also compared with the standard drug, chloramphenicol (100 µg/mL). The results obtained showed activity of the flavonoid against different strains *Staphylococcus aureus* and this was considered bacteriostatic. The flavonoid when associated with antibiotics for clinical use presented a synergistic modulating effect, proving to be a strong candidate for the development of drugs with antimicrobial activity.

Keywords: *Lonchocarpus araripensis*, flavonoid, antibacterial activity, antibiotics.

INTRODUCTION

Flavonoids are a very extensive class of natural products distributed by the plant kingdom. They are present in all parts of plants, from the roots to the flowers and fruits, being found in the vacuoles of the cells. They can be found in free form (aglycone) or in a linked form (glycosides) (Harborne, 1994; Yao et al., 2004). The basic structural feature of flavonoid compounds is the 2-phenyl-benzo[α]pyrane or flavane nucleus, which consists of two benzene rings (A and B) linked through a heterocyclic pyrane ring (C) (Brown, 1980). Based on the variation in the type of heterocycle involved, flavonoids may be divided into six subclasses: flavonols, flavones, flavanones, flavanols, anthocyanins and isoflavones (Pandey and Rizvi, 2009).

This broad class of substances of natural origin, whose synthesis does not occur in the human species, has important pharmacological properties that act on the biological system, such as antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antiallergic, antiviral and anticarcinogenic action (Manthey and Buslig, 1998; Nagasawa et al., 1995).

Recently, a number of reports have demonstrated that flavonoids extracted from plants such as *Larrea tridentate*, *Erythrina caffra* and *Melampyrum arvense* exerted antiviral (Alvarez et al., 2012; Choi et al., 2012), antibacterial (Chukwujekwu et al., 2011; Favela-Hernández et al., 2012; Tomczyk et al., 2011) and antiprotozoal activities (Kirmizibekmez et al., 2011; Salem et al., 2011). Interestingly, Choi and colleagues showed that quercetin 3-rhamnoside, given orally, decreased mortality in influenza A/WS/33 virus-infected mice, the effect being associated to a delayed development/progression of pulmonary histological lesions (Choi et al., 2012).

The healing properties of propolis (or 'tzori' in Hebrew) are referred to throughout the Old Testament, and this balm was prescribed by Hippocrates (460–377 BC) in Ancient Greece for the treatment of sores and ulcers (Cowan, 1999). The antimicrobial properties of propolis have been attributed to its high flavonoid content and in particular the presence of the flavonoids galangin and pinocembrin (Hegazi et al., 2000). Huangchin (*Scutellaria baicalensis*) is yet another example. This herbal medicine has been used systemically and topically for thousands of years in China for the treatment of periodontal abscesses and infected oral wounds. The flavone baicalein is reported to be largely responsible for this plant's antimicrobial effects (Tsao et al., 1982).

The genus *Staphylococcus* is subdivided into 40 species, which are divided according to the synthesis or not of the coagulase enzyme, being the majority, coagulase-negative, with the exception of *S. aureus*, *S. schleiferi subsp. Coagulans*, *S. intermedius*, *S. hyicus* and *S. delphini* (Bannerman, 2003). Among the species of this genus, *S. aureus* is considered the most important because of its greater pathogenicity to man (Von Eiff et al., 2001). Virtually any organ system is prone to *S. aureus* infection, the most important infections are bacteremia, endocarditis, and respiratory tract infections (Kanafani and Fowler, 2006). Bacteremia and endocarditis are often associated with serious complications and a high death rate (Petti and Fowler, 2003).

Based on the antimicrobial potential of flavonoids and by the complicated capacity of *S. aureus* to develop resistance to multiple classes of antibacterial agents, even the course of treatment of an infection, the present study aimed to investigate the activity of flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7]-furanoflavan isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis* against different strains and also evaluated the

association profile of flavonoid with different antibiotics against different strains of bacteria analyzed.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Isolation of 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan

The aerial parts of *Lonchocarpus araripensis* were collected in at Acarape County, State of Ceará, Brazil. A voucher of the plant which was identified by Prof. Edson P. Nunes is deposited at the herbarium Prisco Bezerra of Department of Biology, Federal University of Ceará, Brazil, under number 11074.

The process of isolation and identification of the flavonoid TMFF was performed according to Lima et al., 2014.

Bacterial strains

For antibacterial activity assays, 5 strains of bacteria (*Staphylococcus aureus* – ATCC 25925, *Staphylococcus aureus* – SA 101, *Staphylococcus aureus* - SA 102, *Staphylococcus aureus* - SA 103 and *Staphylococcus aureus* – SA 104), were selected. All the microorganism strains were obtained from the Laboratory of Microbiology of the Academic Unit of Biological Sciences of the Federal University of Campina Grande.

Bacteria were kept on Muller-Hinton Agar (MHA) slants at 4 °C. Inoculate were obtained from overnight cultures grown on NA slants at 37 °C and diluted in sterile saline solution (NaCl 0.85% w/v) to provide a final dilution of approximately $1,5 \times 10^8$ colony-forming unit per mL (cfu.mL⁻¹) adjusted according to the turbidity of 0.5 McFarland scale tube.

Antibiotics

The antibiotics used in the tests will be cephalothin, ceftazidime, oxacillin, amikacin and ampicillin purchased from Laborclin® (Paraná-Brasil).

Antibacterial assay

Determination of minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC)

The microplate bioassay was used to determine the flavonoid TMFF minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC). For this purpose, 96-well plates were prepared by dispensing 100 μL of double strength Mueller Hinton Broth (MHB) inoculated with the bacteria (10 μL) into each well prior to the assay. An aliquot (100 μL) of the flavonoid solutions, at their respective concentrations, was transferred into six consecutive wells. The final volume in each well was 200 μL . The highest substance concentration solution was added into the first well and the one having the smallest concentration into the antepenultimate well. The penultimate and the last well, containing 200 μL of the NB inoculated with the microorganism suspension and Chloramphenicol (100 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$), were used as the negative control and positive control, respectively. The microplate was aseptically sealed, followed by mixing on a plate shaker (300 rpm) for 30 seconds and incubated at 37 °C for 24 hours (Viljoen et al., 2003; Sahin et al., 2004; CLSI, 2008).

The antibacterial activity was detected using the colorimetric method by adding 200 μL of resazurin staining (0.1 g.100 mL⁻¹) aqueous solution in each well at the end of the incubation period. MIC was defined as the lowest flavonoid concentration able to inhibit the bacterial growth as indicated by resazurin staining (dead cells were not able to change the staining color by visual observation – blue to red) (Burt and Reinders, 2003). All experiments were carried out at least twice with consistent results.

Determination of minimum bactericidal concentration (MBC)

After reading the results, inoculum (10 μL) of three dilutions from MIC to Mueller-Hinton broth medium (100 $\mu\text{L}/\text{well}$) shall be made into a sterilized microdilution plate for determination of MBC. After incubation at 35 °C for 24 hours, 20 μL of resazurin will be added. The assays will be incubated at 35 °C for a further 24

hours to confirm the concentration capable of inhibiting the total growth of bacterial species, as verified by a non-change in staining of the indicator dye (Mann and Markhan, 1998; Palomino et al., 2002).

Study of product association with antibiotics

The study of the association of the flavonoid with the antibiotics agents was carried out by means of the disc diffusion technique in solid media using filter paper discs (Bauer et al., 1966; Oliveira et al., 2006). A 20 μ L aliquot of the flavonoid MIC was transferred to the disks containing the antibiotics in their respective concentrations and then allocated to smooth sterile Petri dishes (140x15) containing the AMH medium which were previously inoculated with sterile swabs, a volume approximately of 1mL of the bacterial suspensions. After wards, the plates were incubated at 35 ° C for 24-48h, followed by their reading (Koneman et al., 2008; Ostrosky et al., 2008). A synergistic effect was considered when the combination determined an increase in growth inhibition halo (HI) diameter ≥ 2 mm; An antagonistic effect when the diameter of the HI determined by the combination was lower than that of the isolated antimicrobial activity of antibiotics (ATM); And, indifferent effect, when the combination determined an increase in ATM diameter of ATM < 2mm (Cleeland and Squires, 1991). The tests were performed in duplicate and the results obtained by the arithmetic mean of the diameters formed in the two tests in parallel.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results for antibacterial activity of the flavonoid TMFF with MIC and MBC value are show in Table 1 and the activity was measured in terms of presence of microorganism growth.

Table 1 – Antibacterial activity of the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7] - furanoflavan.

Substance/Bacteria strain	MIC	MBC	Negative control	Positive control (Chloramphenicol)
<i>S. aureus</i> ATCC 25925	1024 µg/mL	>1024 µg/mL	-	+
<i>S. aureus</i> SA 101	256µg/mL	>1024 µg/mL	-	+
<i>S. aureus</i> SA 102	256µg/mL	>1024 µg/mL	-	+
<i>S. aureus</i> SA 103	256µg/mL	>1024 µg/mL	-	+
<i>S. aureus</i> SA 104	512µg/mL	>1024 µg/mL	-	+

Analyzing this result can be observed that the flavonoid showed a significant inhibitory effect against different strains growth of *S. aureus*, with MIC₅₀ (MIC capable of inhibiting 50% of strains) value equal to 256 µg/mL for *S. aureus* strains. However, the flavonoid has MBC value over 1024 µg/mL for all different strains of *S. aureus* tested.

Sartoratto et al. (2004) proposed a classification of the antimicrobial potential for plant products based on the MIC results, considering as: strong antimicrobial power - products with MIC of 0.05 to 0.5 mg / mL; Moderate antimicrobial potency - MICs between 0.6 and 1.5 mg / mL and weak antimicrobial potency - MICs above 1.6 mg / mL.

According to this classification and with the results presented the flavonoid TMFF, showed a considerable antibacterial effect against the different strains bacteria species studied.

The antibacterial activity of flavonoids is being increasingly documented. Flavonoids are known to be synthesized by plants in response to microbial infection; thus flavonoid rich plant extracts from different species have been reported to possess antibacterial activity (Pandey et al., 2010; Mishra et al., 2011; Mishra et al., 2013). Several flavonoids including apigenin, galangin, flavone and flavonol glycosides,

isoflavones, flavanones, and chalcones have been shown to possess potent antibacterial activity (Kumar and Pandey, 2013).

Drug synergism between known antimicrobial agents and natural products is a new concept (Chanda and Rakholyia, 2011). They can modulate antimicrobial agents, either through an antagonistic or synergistic. Thus, the concomitant use of these products and antibiotics to our attention (Sales et al., 2014; Tintino et al., 2015).

The result of the effect of the association of flavonoid TMFF with antibiotics was varied interactions in the action of antibiotics, with mainly modulations for synergism and indifference (Table 2; Figure 1).

Table 2 – Effect of the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1",2":6,7]-furanoflavan modulator on activity antimicrobial use of antibiotics for clinical use on *S. aureus*.

		Microorganisms				
Antibiotics		<i>S. aureus</i> ATCC 25925	<i>S. aureus</i> SA 104	<i>S. aureus</i> SA 101	<i>S. aureus</i> SA 102	<i>S. aureus</i> SA 103
Cephalothin	HIATM	26 mm	24 mm	30 mm	30 mm	24 mm
	HIFLAV-ATM	25 mm *	27 mm ↑	30 mm *	27 mm ↓	28 mm ↑
Ceftazidime	HIATM	20 mm	20 mm	14 mm	16 mm	10 mm
	HIFLAV-ATM	19 mm *	20 mm *	16 mm ↑	20 mm ↑	9 mm *
Oxacillin	HIATM	0 mm	0 mm	13 mm	12 mm	0 mm
	HIFLAV-ATM	0 mm *	0 mm *	18 mm ↑	16 mm ↑	0 mm *
Ampicillin	HIATM	21 mm	23 mm	14 mm	20 mm	11 mm
	HIFLAV-ATM	26 mm ↑	27 mm ↑	20 mm ↑	17 mm ↓	12 mm *
Amikacin	HIATM	26 mm	26 mm	25 mm	20 mm	22 mm
	HIFLAV-ATM	26 mm *	28 mm ↑	27 mm ↑	26 mm ↑	22 mm *

Average of two experiments. HI: diameter of growth inhibition halo in mm. HIFLAV-ATM: halo diameter of inhibition of growth determined by the FLAV-ATM association. HIATM: diameter of growth inhibition halo determined by the isolated antibiotic. Synergistic effect (↑); Antagonistic effect (↓); Indifferent effect (*).

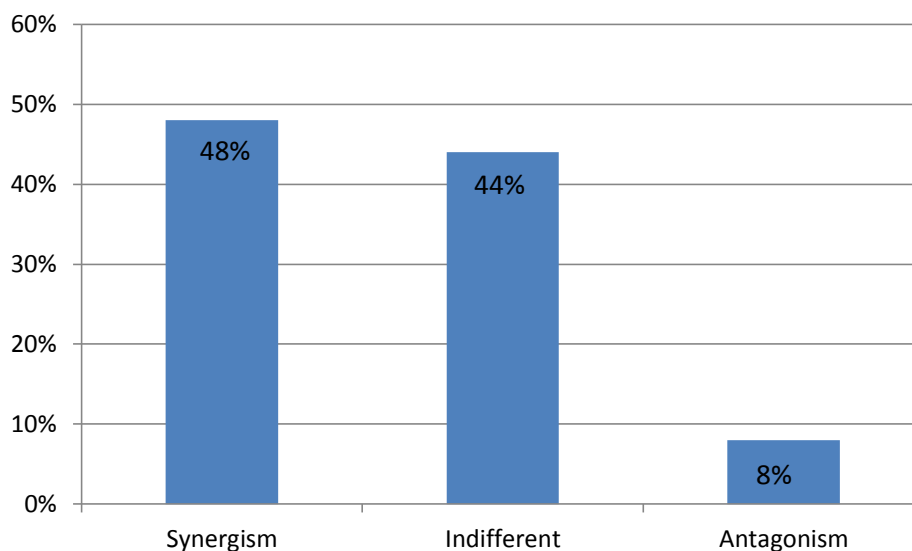


Figure 1 – Percentage of effect of the flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan modulator on activity antimicrobial use of antibiotics for clinical use on *S. aureus*.

The flavonoid TMFF was able to modulate the antibiotics of different antibiotics for clinical use through synergistic or antagonistic action, and in some did not interfere with the action of antimicrobials alone. For all tested strains of *S. aureus*, 48% synergism, 44% indifference and 8% antagonism were observed.

Several researchers investigate the synergistic activity of antibiotics with natural products against various strains of bacteria³⁷. For example, Toroglu (2011) investigated *in-vitro* synergistic effects of different spices and herbs (*Rosmarinus officinalis*, *Coriandrum sativum*, *Micromeria fruticosa* L., *Cuminum cyminum*, *Mentha piperita*) with gentamicin, cephalothin, ceftriaxone and nystatin against 13 microbial species. This study suggested that essential oils of tested spices and herbs could protect some bacterial strains and the combination of plant extract with antibiotics further reduced drug resistance. The synergistic effects obtained could lead to new choices for the treatment of infectious diseases.

This reinforces the importance of continuing to study antibacterial flavonoid TMFF compared to other species of bacteria pathogenic for humans.

CONCLUSION

The results obtained in this study suggest that the flavonoid presents a considerable antibacterial effect against different strains of *Staphylococcus aureus*. Thus, further studies are necessary to explore this effect and discover the mechanism of action of the flavonoid TMFF.

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5.5 Pharmacological and toxicological analysis of flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis*: *in vitro* and *in silico* approach

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ABSTRACT

Flavonoids are known to exhibit a variety of effects in different biological systems, for example, antioxidant activity. In the study, flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy [1'',2'': 6,7] -furanoflavan (TMFF) was evaluated for its antioxidant activity and its pharmacological and toxicological effects. The PASS online was used in the study to predict *in silico* antioxidant activity. The technique used to verify the chelating effect of ferrous ion was used to define antioxidant activity *in vitro*. Already the molinspiration and admetSAR programs were used to give indications of the toxicity and pharmacokinetic profile of compound. The results showed that the molecule was drug-like with various possible antioxidant activities with $Pa > Pi$. This result corroborates the results of *in vitro* antioxidant activity, where flavonoid showed antioxidant activity in all tested concentrations. Often, the inability to develop a drug is associated with pharmacokinetic profile and toxicology. According to the program

molinspiration e admetSAR this flavonoid presents low theoretical risk of toxicity and a good pharmacokinetic profile.

Keywords: Flavonoid, Antioxidant, Toxicological

1. INTRODUCTION

Numerous researches show that natural products represent the main source of chemical diversity during the conduction of new discoveries in the pharmaceutical industry (FIRN; JONES, 2003; MISHRA; TIWARI, 2011). And often this arsenal has been reflected in the obtaining of new molecules with biological activity and mechanism of action elucidated. As a result, natural products, particularly those derived from plants, are widely used for the treatment of various diseases (LAM, 2007; KINGHORN et al., 2009).

However, the discovery of new drugs, such as those from medicinal plants, is a more complex problem than it was in the past. The problem is actually the complexity of the molecules from medicinal plants. In this context, *in silico* studies, which use computational systems that store, manipulate and show chemical structures and the information associated with them, have become an important tool of increasing use in research (RICHON, 1994).

It is estimated that in order to obtain a new safe and effective drug for human consumption, it is necessary between 15-25 years, spending between 800 and 1.4 billion dollars (GELDENHUYS et al., 2006). In this context, computation proves to be promising because it allows the early detection of molecules with problems and for guiding the research towards the molecules with the highest potential (TROULLER et al., 2002; COLLINS et al., 2003; HANSCH et al., 2004).

Flavonoids are polyphenolic compounds biosynthesized from the phenylpropanoid and acetate pathway. Its basic structure consists of a nucleus composed of fifteen carbon atoms in three rings (C₆-C₃-C₆), two phenolic rings (A and B) and a pyran (heterocyclic C chain) coupled to ring A (DORNAS et al., 2007). The flavonoids are further divided into subclasses based on the connection of the B ring to the C ring, as well as the oxidation state and functional groups of the C ring (JAGER; SAABY, 2011).

Flavonoids exhibit different biological activities influencing on numerous metabolic pathways. Due to their radical scavenging, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, anti-allergic, anticancer, antiatherosclerotic, antiaggregational and detoxification activities they might be useful for prevention and treatment of many human diseases (MAJEWSKA et al., 2011).

Thus, based on information on the therapeutic potential of flavonoids from medicinal plants and the importance of the use of *in silico* and *in vitro* studies, this work aims to evaluate the possible antioxidant activities of flavonoid 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan (TMFF) isolated from *Lonchocarpus araripensis*, its pharmacological and toxicological potential.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Reagents

The reagents used in the laboratory experiments are ferrous chloride and ferrozine (3-(2-pyridyl)-5,6-bis(4-phenylsulfonic acid)-1,2,4-triazine). They were purchased from the Sigma-Aldrich (Brazil) industry.

2.2 Isolation of 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan

The aerial parts of *Lonchocarpus araripensis* were collected in at Acarape County, State of Ceará, Brazil. A voucher of the plant which was identified by Prof. Edson P. Nunes is deposited at the herbarium Prisco Bezerra of Department of Biology, Federal University of Ceará, Brazil, under number 11074.

The process of isolation and identification of the flavonoid TMFF was performed according to Lima et al., 2014.

2.3 PASS online

Prediction of Activity Spectra for Substances (PASS) online is designed to evaluate the general biological potential of an organic drug-like molecule. It provides simultaneous predictions of many types of biological activities based on the structure of organic compounds. The biological activity spectrum of a chemical compound is the set of different types of biological activity that reflect the results of the compound's interaction with various biological entities. PASS online gives various facets of the biological action of a compound. Pa (probability "to be active") and Pi (probability "to be inactive") estimates the categorization of potential compound is belonging to the sub-class of active or inactive compounds respectively (SRINIVAS et al., 2012).

PASS gives hits based on the probability of new effects and mechanism of action with required activity spectra among the compounds from in-house, old and commercial databases. PASS online predicts the biological activity spectrum for the modified imprints on the basis of its structural formula, along with different descriptors like antineoplastic, antioxidant, hematotoxic etc., so it is possible to estimate if new compounds have a particular effect (SRINIVAS et al., 2012). This program can be accessed at: <http://www.pharmaexpert.ru/passonline>.

2.4 Determination of the antioxidant activity of 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan on the ferrous ion (Fe²⁺)

The technique used was described by El and Karakaya (2004). To verify the chelating effect of the ferrous ion by the flavonoid TMFF, different concentrations of the natural product, 50,100,200,400,800 and 1000 $\mu\text{g/mL}$, were mixed with 0.04 mL of FeCl_2 (2mM) and 0.08 mL of ferrozine (5mM). The mixture was stirred vigorously and held at room temperature for ten minutes. The absorbance of the solution was measured spectrophotometrically at 562 nm. The negative control was done using FeCl_2 , ferrozine and vehicle.

2.5 Molinspiration Cheminformatics

In the analysis of pharmacological parameters, the theoretical oral bioavailability of the product was evaluated by Lipinski's Rule of Five, which states that at least three of the four requirements must be presented in order for the compound to have a good bioavailability. Thus, for compounds to be absorbed, they must have miLogP less than or equal to 5.00; MM less than or equal to 500 g.mol^{-1} ; Polar surface area (TPSA) less than or equal to 140 \AA^2 or the sum of the number of acceptors and hydrogen bonding donors less than 12; Maximum of 10 hydrogen bonding acceptor groups (nALH), which is expressed by the sum of N and O atoms; Maximum 5 donor hydrogen bonding groups (nDLH), expressed by the sum of OH and NH in the molecule (LIPINSKI et al., 2001). For this prediction, the Molinspiration Cheminformatics program (<http://www.molinspiration.com/cgi-bin/properties>) was used.

2.6 admetSAR

Theoretical pharmacokinetic and toxicological analyzes (ADMET - Absorption, Distribution, Metabolization, Excretion and Toxicity) were calculated with the purpose of analyzing if the flavonoid has characteristics essential to be considered as a possible drug. Some parameters related to absorption, toxicity and metabolization were guided by the admetSAR tool. Studies are essential for obtaining permeability in the blood-

brain barrier, permeability to Caco-2, absorption in the intestine, whether the compound is a substrate or inhibitor of cytochrome enzymes, if it is a renal transport inhibitor, the promiscuity of cytochrome inhibition, the risk of toxicity by the Ames test, the carcinogenicity risk and the classification for acute oral toxicity (LIPINSKI et al., 2001; CONEJO, 2016). This program can be accessed at <http://Immd.ecust.edu.cn:8000/>.

Acute oral toxicity was classified based on the four categories of the United States Environmental Protection Agency that divides the compounds according to the median lethal dose (DL₅₀). Category I contains compounds with DL₅₀ values less than or equal to 50 mg/kg, Category II contains compounds with DL₅₀ values greater than 50 mg/kg and less than 500 mg/kg, Category III includes compounds with higher DL₅₀ values At 500 mg/kg and below 5000 mg/kg and Category IV consists of compounds with DL₅₀ values greater than 5000 mg / kg.

2.7 Statistical analysis

All tests were performed in triplicate. Values were expressed as mean \pm s.p.m. And were considered statistically significant when presented $p < 0.05$. Statistical analysis was performed using simple linear regression using the one-way ANOVA method and GraphPad Prism 5.0 software.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In silico models (computational study) have been used in the initial stages of research and development of molecules for analysis of potential therapeutic activity. These models should be associated with *in vitro* and *in vivo* studies aimed at reducing the number of molecules evaluated and optimizing the identification of new chemical entities (MODA, 2007).

The analysis of the possibilities of flavonoid TMFF activity through PASS online tool revealed that the flavonoid presents values of Pa greater than Pi for all the activities related to the antioxidant potential, for example: cardioprotectant activity (Pa: 0.274 and Pi: 0.105), cytoprotectant activity (Pa: 0.307 and Pi: 0.179), hepatoprotectant activity (Pa: 0.677 and Pi: 0.008), oxidoreductase inhibitor activity (Pa: 0.543 and Pi: 0.058), vasodilator activity (Pa: 0.445 and Pi: 0.029) and vasodilator, coronary activity (Pa: 0.450 and Pi: 0.036) (Table 1).

Table 1 - *In silico* analysis of the flavonoid 5-hydroxy-4',7-dimethoxyflavone with the Pass online software.

Pa	Pi	Biological Activity
0,274	0,105	Cardioprotectant
0,178	0,062	Catalase stimulant
0,307	0,179	Cytoprotectant
0,216	0,064	Free radical scavenger
0,677	0,008	Hepatoprotectant
0,143	0,119	Nitric oxide scavenger
0,543	0,058	Oxidoreductase inhibitor
0,445	0,029	Vasodilator
0,450	0,036	Vasodilator, coronary
0,256	0,196	Vasodilator, peripheral
0,344	0,113	Vasoprotector

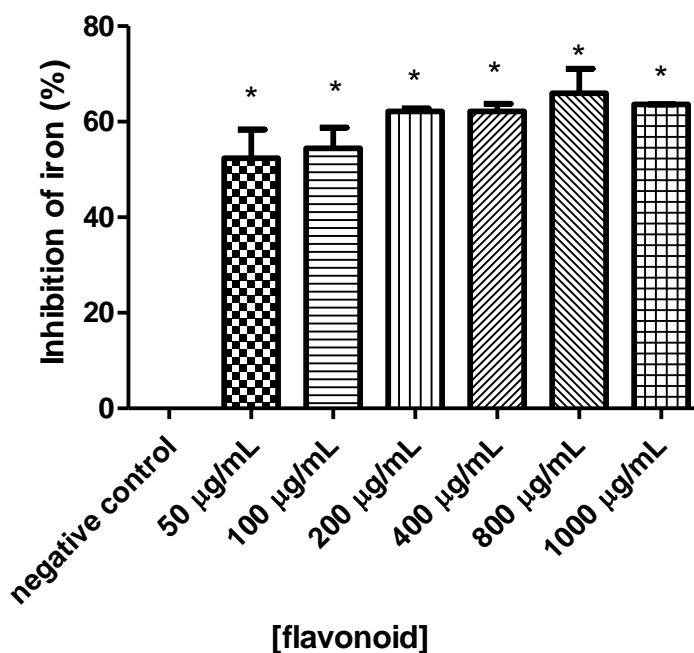
These results of the *in silico* analysis corroborate with other data from the scientific literature that points to flavonoids as secondary metabolites with a large number of pharmacological activities among them the antioxidant activity (WILLIAMS et al., 2004; LEE-HILZ et al., 2006; CELIK; ARINÇ, 2010). Therefore they are used for the treatment of various diseases and for centuries they have been the targets of scientific research.

Some flavonoids are associated with protection against diseases of aging. This may be justified by its action as an antioxidant, since the formation of free radicals by oxygen is supposed to be the key to the development of cancer and coronary diseases, together with the protective function of the cell membrane. Free radicals can attack

biomolecules, among which are the lipids, proteins or DNA itself, which can be preserved by the action of antioxidants (DEGÁSPARI et al.,2004).

An interesting antioxidant activity technique is the one that evaluates the chelation effect of iron ion II, in this technique, ferrozine, a chromogenic reagent, makes the solution pink according to the amount of iron available in solution. Thus, the higher the ion chelation in the sample, the lower the absorbance (SANTOS et al., 2007). In this method, flavonoid presented antioxidant activity at all concentrations, especially in the highest concentration (Figure 1). These data go according to Sandhar and collaborators (2011), in this work, the authors review the recent advances in the research of the chemical and pharmacological properties of flavonoids, elucidating, above all, the antioxidant capacity of these compounds.

Graph 1 - Percentage inhibition of iron by 2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan. * $p < 0.05$ concentrations of flavonoid versus negative control.



The computational analysis of flavonoid under study using Molinspiration software revealed properties set forth in Table 2.

Table 2- *In silico* analysis of flavonoid 5-hydroxy-4', 7-dimethoxyflavone with Molinspiration software.

Comp.	miLogP	MM	nALH	Ndlh	nviolations	TPSA	Nrotb
Flavonoid	3.55	370.4	6	0	0	59.31	5

Comp. - compound; miLogP - octanol/water partition coefficient; nALH - number of hydrogen bond acceptor groups; nDLH - number of hydrogen bonding donor groups; n violations - number of violations; TPSA - polar topological surface area; Nrotb - number of rotatable bands.

The Rule of Five of Lipinski says that a compound should present the following results, to have good oral bioavailability: miLogP less than or equal to 5.00; MM less than or equal to 500 g.mol⁻¹; Polar surface area (TPSA) less than or equal to 140 Å² or the sum of the number of acceptors and hydrogen bonding donors less than 12; Maximum of 10 hydrogen bonding acceptor groups (nALH), which is expressed by the sum of N and O atoms; Maximum 5 donor hydrogen bonding groups (nDLH), expressed by the sum of OH and NH in the molecule (LIPINSKI, 2001; CONEJO, 2016). Compounds that inflict more than one of these parameters may present bioavailability problems. The results obtained (table 2) were compared with the rule of the five of Lipinski. After the comparison it can be observed that the study flavonoid does not violate any of the Lipinski Five Rules, that is, the product has a good theoretical oral bioavailability. These results corroborate the *in vivo* study by Liu & Hu (2002), which showed that flavone apigenin, the study flavonoid, was well absorbed in the gut.

In addition to these analyzed parameters there is also the parameter number of rotatable bands (nrotb), which is related to the flexibility of the molecule for the prediction of bioavailability, because the greater its flexibility, the easier the interaction with the enzyme. The flexibility of the molecule is associated with the number of

rotatable bonds corresponding to the number of single bonds, outside a ring, attached to a non-terminal atom. The more single bonds the molecule has, the greater the interaction with the enzyme facilitating the barrier transposition, the greater the bioavailability of the drug. By some studies, Veber et al. (2002) established that compounds with a TPSA less than or equal to 140 \AA^2 and a number of rotatable bonds less than or equal to 10 had a high probability of good oral bioavailability (CONEJO, 2016).

Through the admetSAR program we can analyze that the flavonoid presented a positive blood-brain partition coefficient, indicating that this compound penetrates the blood-brain barrier (BBB). Still analyzing the parameter absorption, it was observed that for the absorption models in the human intestine and permeability to Caco-2, flavonoid was considered positive absorption for the two models evaluated (table 3).

The cellular mechanisms of renal transport involve a transport system for organic anions, a transport system for organic cations and a multi-drug transporter or P-glycoprotein (GIACOMINI et al., 2011). For the model studied, renal transport of organic cations, it was observed that flavonoid was classified as non-inhibiting and of this system. In addition, it did not inhibit the P-glycoprotein and it was also observed that this compound is not a substrate of this protein (table 3).

Table 3- *In silico* analysis of flavonoid 5-hydroxy-4', 7-dimethoxyflavone with admetSAR software.

Models evaluated	2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan
Blood-brain barrier	BBB+
Absorption human intestine	HIA+
Permeability Caco-2	Caco+
Renal transport of organic cations	NI
P-glycoprotein	NI

As regards its affinity for cytochrome P450 enzymes, we can classify flavonoid as: non-inhibitor of the isoforms CYP4502C9 and CYP4502D6, inhibitor of the isoforms CYP4502C19 and CYP4503A4 and not substrate of the isoforms CYP4502C9, CYP4502D6 and CYP4503A4. In this way, the tool classified the compound with high inhibitory promiscuity of cytochrome P450 enzymes (table 4). This negatively implies the elimination of xenobiotics from our body, that is, it increases the risk of drug toxicity.

Table 4 - *In silico* analysis of flavonoid 5-hydroxy-4', 7-dimethoxyflavone with admetSAR software.

Models evaluated	2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan
CYP4502C9	NI, NS
CYP4502D6	NI, NS
CYP4502C19	I
CYP4503A4	I, NS
CYP inhibitory promiscuity	High

NT – Non inhibitor; I – inhibitor; NS – Non substrate

As for the toxicological aspects, it can be observed that the flavonoid had no toxicity by the AMES test, it was not classified as carcinogenic and the category of acute oral toxicity is category 2 (Table 5). These results corroborate with data from the literature showing that flavonoids present no risk of mutagenicity and carcinogenicity. Instead, they play an anti-carcinogenic and anti-mutagenic role (FERREIRA, 2002; DEGÁSPARI; WASZCZYNSKY, 2004).

Table 5 - *In silico* analysis of flavonoid 5-hydroxy-4', 7-dimethoxyflavone with admetSAR software.

Models evaluated	2,4-cis-3,4-cis-3,4,5,8-tetramethoxy-[1'',2'':6,7]-furanoflavan
Toxicity AMES	NT
Carcinogenic	NC
Acute oral Toxicity	II

NT – Non Toxic; NC – Non carcinogenic

4. CONCLUSION

In silico study of flavonoid TMFF demonstrated that this compound has several possible biological effects on the human body as well as good oral bioavailability and category II toxicity theoretical risk.

CONSENT

All the authors declare that no consent was obtained for this study.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

Not applicable.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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Considerações Finais

6 CONSIDERAÇÕES FINAIS

Os estudos com o flavonoide TMFF demonstraram:

- Diversos efeitos antimicrobianos *in silico*, sendo o efeito antibacteriano um dos mais proeminentes;
- Uma potente atividade antibacteriana *in vitro* contra cepas de *Escherichia coli*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* e *Staphylococcus aureus*;
- Atividade bacteriostática para todas as cepas de bactérias testadas;
- Um efeito predominantemente sinérgico quando associado com antibióticos usados clinicamente, frente as cepas de bactérias testadas;
- Atividade antioxidante *in silico* e *in vitro*. A atividade antioxidante *in vitro* do flavonoide foi evidenciada pelo seu efeito quelante do íon ferroso em todas as concentrações testadas;
- Uma boa biodisponibilidade oral teórica e um risco teórico de toxicidade categoria II, com base nos estudos *in silico*.

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