DETERMINATION OF MAXIMUM TOLERATED DOSAGE OF
*HUANG LIAN* IN MICE AND ITS EFFECT ON MOUSE
INTESTINAL BACTERIA POPULATION:
QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF
*BIFIDOBACTERIA* SPECIES

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that this project is entirely my own work except where due references are made.

16th December 2015

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Abstract

*Bifidobacterium* can inhibit the growth of harmful bacteria and boost the immune system while *Huang Lian* is the traditional Chinese medicine with cold in nature and bitter in taste can use for heat clearance, detoxification and clear dampness. The aim of this study was to quantitatively analyze the impact of HL or HL with *Xiang Sha Liu Jun Zi* decoction (*XSLJZ*) on gastrointestinal *Bifidobacterium* population. The model rats were force fed with low dose (65mg/kg), moderate dose (250mg/kg) and high dose (500mg/kg) of HL alone or combine it with *XSLHZ* (50mg/kg) for duration of 4 weeks. Weight of mice was measured at 1st and 4th week. The general appearance of mice was observed daily. Administration low dose of HL for 4 weeks could increase significantly *Bifidobacterium* population. Weight increased in combination group was significantly higher than HL group. There were no obvious changes on the appearance of mice. Low dose of HL could promote the growth of *Bifidobacterium*. *XSLJZ* could enhance the function of HL to promote normal growth of mice.

Key words: Quantitative analysis; *Bifidobacterium, Huang Lian, Xiang Sha Liu Jun Zi* decoction; weight; general appearance
Table of Contents

DECLARATION II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT III
ABSTRACT IV
LIST OF TABLE VIII
LIST OF FIGURE IX
LIST OF ABBREVIATION X

CHAPTER

1. Introduction
   1.1. Probiotics 1
   1.2. Bifidobacteria 2
   1.3. Intestinal Microflora 3
   1.4. Relationship between Traditional Chinese Medicine
       Theories with Intestinal Microflora
       1.4.1. Holism 5
       1.4.2. Yin Yang and Five Element Theory 6
   1.5. Objective
       1.5.1. General Objective 7
       1.5.2. Specific Objective 7

2. Literature Review
   2.1. Bifidobacteria
       2.1.1. Discovery 8
       2.1.2. Function
           2.1.2.1. Enhance Immune System 9
2.1.2.2. Lower Blood Cholesterol
2.1.2.3. Antimicrobial Effect
2.1.2.4. Decrease Blood Glucose
2.1.2.5. Prevent Cancer

2.2. Huang Lian

Traditional Chinese Medicine Perspective

2.2.1. Discovery and Properties of Huang Lian
2.2.1.1. Xiao Ke Syndrome
2.2.1.2. Damp Heat Syndrome

2.2.2. Caution

Western Medicine Perspective

2.2.3. Properties of Berberine

2.2.4. Function of Berberine
2.2.4.1. Against Tumor
2.2.4.2. Improve Digestive System
2.2.4.3. Improve Cardiovascular System

2.2.5. Function of Huang Lian, and Its Mechanism
(Western Medicine perspective and Chinese Medicine perspective)
2.2.5.1. Antibiotic Effect
2.2.5.2. Improve Diabetes
2.2.5.3. Decrease Blood Pressure
2.2.5.4. Decrease Blood Cholesterol
2.2.5.5. Dermatological Disorder

2.2.6. Toxicity
2.2.7. Relationship between Properties of Huang Lian with Intestinal Microflora

2.2.8. How to Set Dosage of Huang Lian

2.3. Xiang Sha Liu Jun Zi Decoction

2.3.1. Chinese Medicine Perspective
2.3.1.1. Function
2.3.1.2. Reason of Using XSLJZ in This Experiment 27

2.3.2. Western Medicine Perspective
   2.3.2.1. Function 28
   2.3.2.2. Reason of Using XSLJZ in This Experiment 28

3. METHODOLOGY
   3.1. Ethnic Statement 29
   3.2. Material and Method
      3.2.1. Animal Studies 29
      3.2.2. Chemicals 29
      3.2.3. Treatment Protocol 29
      3.2.4. Determination of Optimal Dosage of HL Treated with XSLJZ. 30
      3.2.5. Quantitative Assessment of Gut Microbiota
         3.2.5.1. Fecal Sample Collection and Process 30
         3.2.5.2. Data Collection and Analyze 31

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
   4.1. Results 32
   4.2. Discussion 37

5. CONCLUSION 40

6. FUTURE DIRECTION 41

7. REFERENCES 42
LIST OF TABLES

Table | Page No
--- | ---
3.2.3: Different group of mice force feeding with different concentration of HL or HL and XSLJZ combination | 30
### LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.2.3: Chemical structure of Berberine</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.5: Summary of the relationship between <em>Huang Lian</em>, <em>XSLJZ</em>, <em>Bifidobacterium</em>, <em>Bifidobacterium</em> and <em>Huang Lian</em> share same functions.</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1 General appearance of <em>Bifidobacterium</em> in BSM agar.</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.2: Comparison of <em>Bifidobacterium</em> counts between The different treatment groups at week 4.</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.3: Comparison of the weights of mice in different treatment groups at week 1 and week 4.</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.4 The comparison of weight of the mice between <em>HL</em> and <em>combo</em> groups at week 1</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.5 The comparison of weight of the mice between <em>HL</em> and <em>combo</em> groups at week 4</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**LIST OF ABBREVIATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAO/WHO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations World Health Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rrna</td>
<td>Ribosomal ribonucleic acid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITS</td>
<td>Sequence analysis and internal transcribed spacer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFLP</td>
<td>Restriction fragment length polymorphism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCR</td>
<td>Multiplex polymerase chain reaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Arbitrary primed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAP</td>
<td>Triplet arbitrary primed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IgA</td>
<td>Immunoglobulin A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NK</td>
<td>Natural killer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL-1</td>
<td>Interleukin-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNF-α</td>
<td>Necrosis factor- α</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFN-γ</td>
<td>Interferon-γ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Nitric oxide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSH</td>
<td>Salt hydrolase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td>Colorectal cancer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GQD</td>
<td>Ge Gen Qi Lian Decoction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XSLJZ</td>
<td>Xiang Sha Liu Jun Zi decoction</td>
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<td>HL</td>
<td>Huang Lian</td>
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Probiotic

Probiotic is derived from the Greek language meaning ‘for life’. With the increasing interest in the use of viable bacterial supplements and in relation to the progress made in understanding their mechanisms of action, the definition of probiotic has evolved over time simultaneously. The term was originally used to describe substances produced by one microorganism that stimulated the growth of others. Later, it used to describe tissue extracts that stimulated microbial growth and animal feed supplements exerting a beneficial effect on animals by contributing to their intestinal flora balance (R. Fuller et al., 2004).

The definition of probiotic used at present is redefined as “live microorganisms which when administered in adequate amounts confer a health benefit on the host.” was given by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations World Health Organization (FAO/WHO., 2001).

The reported beneficial effects of probiotic consumption include improvement of intestinal health, amelioration of symptoms of lactose intolerance, and reduction of the risk of various other diseases, and several well-characterized strains of Lactobacilli and Bifidobacteria are available for human use (M. Tom et al., 2006)( S.J Salminen et al., 2005)

The application of bifidobacterium in foodstuff had been practiced in Germany since the old days (Mayer JB et al., 1948), and was actively adopted in Japan in the early 1980s (Ishibashi N et al., 1993). Later it was spread to Europe and is now used worldwide (Tamine AY et al., 1995). Bifidobacteria have been widely used in foods, medicine and animal feeds. The most representative application of bifidobacterium in foods is bifidobacterium yogurt. Another popular product is bifidobacterium milk which is non-fermented milk with the addition of bifidobacterium. The concept of applying
bifidobacterium in these foods is to supply viable *bifidobacterium* to improve the intestinal microflora (Ishibashi et al., 1997).

1.2 Bifidobacteria

*Bifidobacteria*, naturally present in the dominant colonic microbiota, represent up to 25% of the cultivable fecal bacteria in adults and 80% in infants (Picard et al., 2005). It plays an important role in maintain the mutual relationship between host and intestinal flora (Xu et al., 2012). For instance, the decrease or disappear in number of *bifidobacterium* will cause imbalance of intestinal flora and disharmony of gut microbiota which then lead to metabolic diseases. It is an important indicator of human health (Vanderwerf et al., 2001). The genus *Bifidobacteria* includes gram-positive bacteria belonging to the *Actinobacteria* phylum, which are characterized by non-motile, non-sporulating, non-gas-producing, anaerobic microorganisms.

Most *bifidobacterium* species described so far have been isolated from the gastrointestinal tract (GIT) of mammals, insects, or birds (Ventura et al., 2007). The form that *Bifidobacteria* cells take varies between species, but generally they are rod-shaped, slim, and with slightly bulbous or clubbed ends. When nutrients are short, *bifidobacterium* tend to fork at one or both ends (Hoover et al., 2002). Most of *bifidobacterium* are suitable growth at pH 6.5 to 7.0. It achieves optimum growth temperature at 38 ~ 41 °C. When the temperature is lower than 25 °C or above 46 °C, *bifidobacterium* are not growing. *Bifidobacteria* colonies on solid media round shaped, whitish opaque, smooth surface and not easy to form mycelium (Zhang et al., 2013).

The main by-products of the metabolism of *bifidobacterium* are acetic acid and lactic acid, in about equal proportion. These two acids lower the pH (increase acidity) within the intestine, especially in the caecum and the ascending (right-sided) colon. It is likely that the ability of *bifidobacterium* to increase the acidity of the intestine is a factor in their probiotic effects, as the growth of many harmful microbes are inhibited in a low pH environment (Rasic et al., 1983).
Members of the *bifidobacterium* genus are anaerobic and tend to live in large intestine. Large intestine are almost completely anaerobic due to small amounts of oxygen present in the small intestine are gradually consumed by aerobic bacteria. Therefore, *bifidobacterium* geneses thrive in large intestine. In addition, the large intestine has plenty of food suitable for bifidobacterium. They adapt at breaking down more complex carbohydrates, and these are abundant in the large intestine (Axelsson et al., 2004).

*Bifidobacteria* are very high levels in the intestines of breast-fed infants. On average they constitute about three-quarters of all the bacterial cells in the gut of such infants, which compares with a much lower proportion (about 3%) found in the gut microflora of adults (Macfarlane et al., 1995). Breast milk stimulates the growth of *bifidobacterium*, and this effect is a clear indication that *bifidobacterium* are protective of vulnerable individuals (Ballongue et al., 1998).

### 1.3 Intestinal Microflora

The human large intestine is a densely populated microbial ecosystem. Intestinal floras are referred as complex group of vital bacteria microorganism which resist in the digestive tract. They are harmless microorganisms such as bacteria, yeasts, and fungi that inhabit and grow in the intestines. To ensure normal function of the digestive tract, these microorganisms play an important role on it and certain species of intestinal flora are beneficial to the human body. These “good” bacteria often have a symbiotic relationship with the human body as both derive benefit from one another. For instance, intestinal floras provide a steady supply of nutrients, a stable environment, and protection and transport. The host obtains from the normal intestinal flora certain nutritional and digestive benefits, stimulation of the development and activity of immune system, and protection against colonization and infection by pathogenic microbes (Todar et al., 2008)
The intestinal microflora performs an essential role in the immune system maturation and normal gastrointestinal function development. The composition of the intestinal microflora is remarkably stable over time but appears to be influenced to some degree by factors such as diet, geographical conditions and age. Race, socioeconomic circumstances and environmental factors such as climate and temperature could also play a role. A variety of endogenous host-associated factors including the transit time of colonic contents and nutrient supply, the pH of stomach contents, redox potential and oxygen tension, as well as the presence of certain diseases, may also affect the composition of microflora (Orrhage K et al., 2000).

There are several ways to analyze intestinal microflora. There are two culture techniques for intestinal microflora such as non selective culture method and selective culture method. Classical techniques for analyzing intestinal microflora include both culture-dependent and culture-independent approaches. The classical culture independent technique includes direct microscopy analysis and enzyme /metabolic analysis. Enzyme or metabolic analysis indicating the increases or decreases in specific enzymes in feces can also point to the metabolic activities of certain groups of bacteria (Daniel J et al., 2000). Recently Wolin et al., (1998) developed a detection method for 13CH3 13COOH from 3-13C-Glucose, which is a characteristic end product from bifidobacterium glucose fermentation, in the fecal suspensions of infants. This potentially may be a very useful and accurate indicator of bifidobacterium metabolism in the intestine (Wolin et al., 1998). Besides, there are molecular advances for typing and phylogenetical characterization of intestinal microflora such as 16S ribosomal ribonucleic acid (Rrna) sequence analysis and internal transcribed spacer (ITS) sequence analysis, and recA gene sequence analysis. On the other hand, there are modern approaches for monitoring the distribution and prevalence of specific microbes in the Intestine. For example, phenotypic fingerprint analysis, genetic fingerprint analysis, pulse field gel electrophoresis, ribotyping, restriction fragment length polymorphism (RFLP) of the 16S rRNA Gene, multiplex polymerase chain reaction (PCR), arbitrary primed (AP) PCR and triplet arbitrary primed (TAP) PCR (Daniel J et al., 2000). For
instance, colony hybridization with nucleic acid probes is one of the genetic fingerprint analysis by using either a shotgun or a directed approach. The shotgun approach is to randomly isolate DNA fragments and test them for probe reactivity against a bank of isolated strains. This approach has been used to obtain strain- and species-specific probes for *bifidobacterium* (Ito et al., 1992) (Mangin et al., 1995).

The use of fecal material as a representation of the entire gut microbiota should be considered with caution. In fact, the fecal microbiota consists of not only the mucosa-adherent members of the human GIT microbiota but also bacteria that are considered to be transiently present, being derived from diet or other environmental contaminations (Neng et al., 1986).

1.4 **Relationship between Traditional Chinese Medicine Theories with Intestinal Microflora**

1.4.1 **Holism** - Human and environment are interrelated theory with intestinal microflora

The book of Gold Chamber Emperor stated that human and environment are interconnected. Human body is holism. Physiological functions of body are interconnected and affect each other. Meanwhile, human and environment are affected each other. It belongs to holism which cannot be separated. Once changes happened in environment, human body will adapt to changes in the environment. Therefore, human and environments are interconnected which belongs to holism ideology in Traditional Chinese Medicine (Luo et al., 2009).

Microbiology assumes that all living things are opposite but unite with environment. In microbiology, we can apply ‘Human and environment are interconnected-holism’ as guiding ideology. We must be careful in regulating the dynamic balance within the environment of human body and microbial, regulating the balance between human (include intestinal microflora) with environment (Luo et al., 2009).