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MOLECULAR CHARACTERIZATION AND ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE OF *Escherichia coli* ISOLATED FROM RETAIL CHICKEN MEAT

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to investigate the prevalence of E. coli in retail chicken meat and to determine the drug resistance profile of E. coli in Dinajpur district, Bangladesh. A total of 38 chicken meat samples were collected from different markets of Dinajpur city. E. coli were isolated and identified by colony characteristics on selective agar like Eosine-methylene blue (EMB) agar, Gram staining, biochemical test and Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR). Universal Primers (16SrRNA) were used for molecular characterization of E. coli during PCR. The amplified size of PCR product was 1000 bp and after NCBI BLAST of the sequence which was obtained by Sanger sequencing method was mostly matched (98%) to Escherichia coli IAI39. The overall prevalence of E. coli in chicken meat was 60.5%. Antibiotic sensitivity test showed that E. coli isolated from chicken meat were resistant to amoxicillin (91.4%), erythromycin (73.9%), and susceptible to Ciprofloxacin(82.6%), Gentamicin (78.2%) and Azithromycin (60.8%). One of the major findings of the study was that 43.5% isolated E. coli were resistant against colistin (one of the last-resort antibiotics). The higher prevalence of E. coli in chicken meat indicated unhygienic production and processing of these meat samples. Presence of multi-drug resistant E. coli in these chicken meat samples might pose serious public health threats. The antibiogram profile of the isolated E. coli will help therapeutic decision making in the treatment of colibacillosis in Bangladesh.



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