



# Boron Compounds with Antibiofilm and Synergistic Effects on *Escherichia coli* Infection

*Escherichia coli* Enfeksiyonu Üzerine Antibiyofilm ve Sinerjistik Etkili Bor Bileşikleri

Ozgur Celebi<sup>1</sup>, Sumeyye Baser<sup>1</sup>, Cigdem Eda Balkan Bozlak<sup>2</sup>, Ali Taghizadehghalehjoughi<sup>3</sup>, Aydin Mahmoudnezhad<sup>1</sup>, Demet Celebi<sup>4,5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ataturk University, Faculty of Medicine, Department of Medical Microbiology, Erzurum, Türkiye; <sup>2</sup>Kafkas University, Faculty of Medicine, Department of Medical Microbiology, Kars Türkiye; <sup>3</sup>Seyh Edebali University, Faculty of Medicine, Department of Medical Pharmacology, Bilecik, Türkiye; <sup>4</sup>Ataturk University, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Department of Microbiology, Erzurum, Türkiye;  
<sup>5</sup>Ataturk University, Ataturk University Vaccine Application and Development Center, Erzurum, Türkiye

## ABSTRACT

**Aim:** *Escherichia coli*, a bacterium that forms a biofilm, is mainly responsible for intestinal and extraintestinal infections, such as urinary tract infections, peritonitis, meningitis, and septicemia. Different antibiotics (Aminoglycoside, Fluoroquinolones, etc.) treatments are routinely used to overcome *E.coli* infections. The presence of biofilm increases *E.coli* resistance against antibiotics. The study aims to evaluate the boron component's effect on the biofilm formation of *E.coli* in vitro via a liver (HepG-2) infection model.

**Material and Method:** The antibacterial activity of boron compounds on *Escherichia coli* was evaluated with Minimum inhibitory concentration. Antibacterial activity with the combination of boron compounds was assessed by fractional inhibitor concentration. The non-cytotoxic dose of boron compounds was determined in the infection model created with *Escherichia coli* in the cell line. Then, the effect on cell viability and pathological examinations were examined histopathologically.

**Results:** Synergistic effects ( $\leq 0.5$ ) were watched at 32 µg/mL Etidote + 32 µg/mL Sodium perborate metahydrate, at Etidote 32 µg/mL + 32 µg/mL Zinc borate, and at Zinc borate 32 µg/mL + 32 µg/mL Sodium perborate metahydrate. It was determined that 128 µg/ml Etidote + 512 µg/ml Sodium perborate metahydrate, Etidote 512 µg/mL + Zinc borate 1024 µg/mL, and Zinc borate 512 µg/mL + Sodium perborate metahydrate 128 µg/mL had antibiofilm activity. In the cell line, it was determined that although Zinc borate + Etidote reduced the infection, it did not completely reduce it in its combination. Histopathological analyses also paralleled these results.

**Conclusion:** Boron components can be used against biofilm-formed *E.coli*.

**Keywords:** biofilm; boron compounds; *Escherichia coli*; HepG-2; minimum inhibitory concentration; fractional inhibitory concentration

## ÖZET

**Amaç:** Biyofilm oluşturan bir bakteri olan *Escherichia coli*, esas olarak idrar yolu, peritonit, menenjit ve septisemi gibi bağırsak ve bağırsak dışı enfeksiyonlardan sorumludur. *Escherichia coli* enfeksiyonlarının üstesinden gelmek için farklı antibiyotikler (Aminoglizozid, Flurokinololar vb.) tedavileri rutin olarak kullanılmaktadır. Biyofilm varlığı *Escherichia coli* 'nin antibiyotiklere karşı direncini artırır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, *in vitro* karaciğer (HepG-2) enfeksiyon modelinde bor bileşeninin *Escherichia coli* biyofilm oluşumu üzerindeki etkisini değerlendirmeye çalışmaktadır.

**Materyal ve Metot:** *Escherichia coli* üzerine bor bileşiklerinin antibakteriyel etkinliği Minimum inhibitör konsantrasyonu ile değerlendirildi. Bor bileşiklerinin kombinasyonu ile gösterdiği antibakteriyel etkinlik Franksiyonel inhibitör konsantrasyonu ile değerlendirildi. Hücre hattında *Escherichia coli* ile oluşturulan enfeksiyon modelinde bor bileşiklerinin sitotoksik olmayan dozu belirlendi. Ardından hücre canlılığına etkisi ve patolojik incelemeler histopatolojik olarak incelenmiştir.

**Bulgular:** Sinerjistik etkiler ( $\leq 0.5$ ), 32 µg/mL Etidote + 32 µg/mL Sodyum perborat metahidrat, Etidote 32 µg/mL + 32 µg/mL Çinko boratta ve Çinko borat 32 µg/mL + Sodyum perborat metahidrat 32 µg/mL'de izlenmiştir. 128 µg/ml Etidote + 512 µg/ml Sodyum perborat metahidrat, Etidote 512 µg/mL + Çinko borat 1024 µg/mL ve Çinko borat 512 µg/mL + Sodyum perborat metahidrat 128 µg/mL'nin antibiyofilm aktivitesine sahip olduğu belirlendi. Hücre hattında Çinko borat + Etidote'un enfeksiyonu azaltmasına rağmen kombinasyonun tamamen azaltmadığı belirlendi. Histopatolojik analizler de bu sonuçlarla paralellik gösterdi.

**Sonuç:** Bor bileşenleri biyofilm oluşturan *Escherichia coli*'ye karşı kullanılma potansiyeline sahiptir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** biyofilm; bor bileşikleri; *Escherichia coli*; fraksiyonel inhibitör konsantrasyonu; HepG-2; minimum inhibitör konsantrasyonu

**İletişim/Contact:** Demet Celebi, Ataturk University, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Department of Microbiology, 25240 Erzurum, Türkiye • Tel: +90 532 666 69 38 • E-mail: celebiidil@atauni.edu.tr • Geliş/Received: 10.02.2023 • Kabul/Accepted: 15.11.2023

**ORCID:** Ozgur Celebi, 0000-0003-4578-9474 • Sumeyye Baser, 0000-0003-2391-8191 • Cigdem Eda Balkan Bozlak, 0000-0003-3922-7758 • Ali Taghizadehghalehjoughi, 0000-0002-3506-0324 • Aydin Mahmoudnezhad, 0000-0001-8823-5530 • Demet Celebi, 0000-0002-2355-0561

## Introduction

*Escherichia coli* is imperative in diseases such as septicemia gastrointestinal and urinary tract diseases. Antibiotics such as ampicillin, amoxicillin-clavulanic acid, and ceftriaxone treat *Escherichia coli*. *E.coli* is a facultative, anaerobic, rod-shaped, Gram-negative bacterium<sup>1</sup>. Variables such as different extracellular expansions that contribute to the colonization of the surface of *E.coli* and their finely controlled expression and action lead to the arrangement of mature biofilms<sup>2</sup>. A biofilm could be a community of microorganisms living together, more often than not, joined to strong surfaces in damp environments<sup>3</sup>. The microorganisms in a biofilm discharge different defensive substances called extracellular polymeric substances (EPS) that increment their chances of survival<sup>3</sup>. Biofilm-forming pathogens are troublesome to treat with ordinary anti-microbials, and the microorganisms are less sensitive to antibiotics<sup>4,5</sup>. *E.coli* and *Klebsiella pneumoniae* have been recognized as the prevailing bacterial bunches related to the generation of extended-spectrum beta-lactamases (ESBLs). The danger of biofilms and multidrug-resistant pathogens underscores the need to create anti-microbial with modern components of action<sup>5</sup>.

Boron is a compound with numerous subordinates of boric corrosive, the mineral sodium borate, and ultra-hard precious stones of boron carbide and boron nitride<sup>6</sup>. As of late, the application of boron compounds has become more well-known due to their chemical properties<sup>7</sup>. Different theories have appeared on the antimicrobial, antifungal, antiviral, and anticancer movement of boron compounds<sup>8–15</sup>. Boron compounds such as boric corrosive, borax, sodium perborate metahydrate (SPM), zinc borate (ZB), and Etidote are broadly utilized in different areas, particularly in well-being care and as antimicrobial drugs. Boric corrosive and borax successfully decreased colony numbers of *Brucella* spp., *E.coli*, and *Staphylococcus* spp. in one study<sup>15</sup>. Research on sodium perborate metahydrate (SPM), zinc borate (ZB), and Etidote is constrained, and we examined the combination of boron components on HepG-2 for the first time.

## Material and Methods

### Chemicals and Reagents

Tryptic soy broth (Product No: 22092), Dulbecco's altered Eagle's medium (DMEM) (Product No: D5546), phosphate-buffered saline (PBS) (Product

No: P3813), fetal calf serum (FCS) (Product No: A1908), Etidote (Cas No: 1303-96-4), sodium perborate monohydrate (Cas No: 231-556-4), Zinc borate (Cas No: 10361-94-1), anti-microbial antimitotic arrangement (100×) (Product No: A5955), Mueller-Hinton broth (Product No: 70192), L-glutamine (CAS No: 56-85-9), trypsin-EDTA (Product No: T4049), paraformaldehyde (Cas No: 30525-89-4), and ethanol (CAS No: 64-17-5) were gotten from Sigma Aldrich (St. Louis, Missouri, USA).

### Bacterial Strain

*Escherichia coli* 25922 strain was used in this consideration, and bacterial suspensions with turbidity of 0.5 McFarland were prepared.

### Bacterial Production

*Escherichia coli* 25922 strain was inoculated onto both blood agar and 5% sheep blood agar plates. These plates were then incubated at 37°C for 24 hours. Following incubation, bacterial colonies were visualized using a microscope. Subsequently, actively growing colonies were aseptically transferred into 5 ml of Tryptic Soy Broth (TSB) each, and the resulting cultures were further incubated at 37°C for another 24 hours. These enriched cultures served as the stock for subsequent analyses.

### Minimum Inhibitory Concentration (MIC)

The MIC values of sodium perborate metahydrate (SPM), zinc borate (ZB), and Etidote against the *E.coli* 25922 strain were detected by the microdilution method<sup>12,16</sup>. Concentrations of the substances were prepared in the range of 1024–0.97 µg/mL in the presence of Mueller Hinton Broth (MHB), and 180 µL was transferred to 96-well plates. At that point, 20 µL suspension of *E.coli* 25922 strain (10<sup>6</sup> CFU/mL) was included in each well and incubated at 37°C for 24 hours. After 24 hours, water-soluble 2,3,5-Triphenyltetrazolium chloride (TTC) saline (5 mg/mL), a natural pointer, was included in each well, and the plates were incubated for 2–3 hours. For control purposes, the medium was arranged as a negative control, while the wells containing bacteria served as a positive control. In the case of the negative control wells, *E.coli* 25922 was not introduced. This method was repeated in triplicate for the other ZBs and Etidote<sup>12,16</sup>.

### Biofilm Analysis

An add-up to 180  $\mu$ L of the compounds arranged with TSB medium, the MIC of which was decided, was transferred into a U-based 96-well plate. The glucose-enriched TSB medium was used as a negative control, and the *E.coli* 25922 strain was used as a positive control. At that point, 20  $\mu$ L ( $10^6$  CFU/mL) of *E.coli* 25922 strain was inoculated into each well without the negative well. Bacteria were incubated at 37°C for 48 hours. Biofilm examination was performed in three replicates<sup>12,16</sup>.

### Fractional Inhibitory Concentration (FIC)

The most successful MIC concentrations of SPM, ZB, and Etidote compounds were arranged in combination. The comes about were decided to agree to the formula<sup>16</sup>. This refers to the total value obtained by adding the Fractional Inhibitory Concentration (FIC) values of two or more substances when used together. Fractional inhibitory concentration is a measure of the concentration of each substance required to inhibit bacterial growth when used in combination. Fractional inhibitory concentration A and FIC B: These are the FIC values for the individual substances A and B.  $\Sigma$  FIC  $\leq$  0.5 (Summation of FIC values less than or equal to 0.5): When the total FIC value ( $\Sigma$  FIC) is 0.5 or less, it suggests synergism. In other words, the combined effect of substances A and B is greater than the sum of their individual effects. Synergy means that the combination is more effective at inhibiting bacterial growth than each substance alone. >0.5 and <1: If the total FIC value falls within this range, it indicates an additive effect. In an additive scenario, the combined effect is similar to what would be expected by simply adding the effects of the individual substances. It's effective, but there is no synergy.  $\geq$ 1 and  $\leq$ 4: When the total FIC value is greater than or equal to 1 but less than or equal to 4, it suggests ineffectiveness. In this case, combining substances is not significantly more effective than using each substance individually. The combination may not be a practical choice for treating bacterial infections. >4: If the total FIC value exceeds 4, it implies antagonism. Antagonism means that the combined effect of substances A and B is less effective at inhibiting bacterial growth than the effect of each substance used individually. In such cases, using the substances together may be counterproductive<sup>12,16</sup>.

### Cell Cultures

The HepG-2 cell line (HB -8065 ATCC) was obtained from Bilecik Seyh Edebali University, Faculty of Medicine, Department of Pharmacology (Bilecik, Türkiye). Cells were uncovered in a new medium (Dulbecco's altered Eagle's medium, DMEM), a combination of 10% fetal bovine serum (FBS) and 1% anti-microbial (Sigma Aldrich, St. Louis, Moment, Joined together States). Cells were seeded in 24-well plates (Corning, Joined together States) containing 5% CO<sub>2</sub> and cultivated at 37°C<sup>17</sup>. Upon reaching the intersection point of 85%, the presentation was organized utilizing a yellow 100- $\mu$ L pipette tip. At that point, the bacterial suspension was included in the cell line at McFarland 0.5. After 30 minutes of the treatment with the HepG2 cell line, SPM 62.5  $\mu$ g/mL + Etidote 125  $\mu$ g/mL, SPM 62.5  $\mu$ g/mL + ZB 31.25  $\mu$ g/mL, and ZB 31.25  $\mu$ g/mL + Etidote 125  $\mu$ g/mL were administered<sup>17,18</sup>.

### *3-(4.5-Dimethylthiazol-2-yl)-2.5-Diphenyltetrazolium Bromide (MTT) Assay*

After 24 hours of the treatment with Etidot, SPM, and zinc borate, 10  $\mu$ L of *3-(4.5-Dimethylthiazol-2-yl)-2.5-Diphenyltetrazolium bromide (MTT)* arrangement (Sigma Aldrich, St. Louis, Moment, USA) was added to each plate. After incubating the plates for 4 hours, 100  $\mu$ L of dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) arrangement (Millipore Sigma) was inoculated to all wells to break up the formazan precious stones. The optical thickness of the arrangements was determined at 570 nm employing a Multiskan™ GO Microplate Spectrophotometer Reader (Thermo Fisher, Porto Salvo, Portugal)<sup>19</sup>.

### Immunofluorescence

Cells developed within the HepG2 cell line were brooded in a paraformaldehyde arrangement for 30 minutes. Hence, the cells were brooded in 3% hydrogen peroxide for 5 minutes. The cells were blended with a 1% Triton-X arrangement, washed with PBS, and hatched for 15 minutes. At that point, protein pieces were dropped onto the cells and put away within the dull for 5 minutes. The essential counteracting agent (8-OHdG Cat. No.: sc-66036, Santa Cruz Biotechnology, Texas, USA, weakening proportion: 1/100) was included and incubated. An immunofluorescent auxiliary counteracting agent was used as a secondary marker (FITC, cat. no.: ab6785, Abcam, Boston, USA) and brooded for 45 minutes within the

dim. Areas were at that point sprinkled with DAPI mounting medium (Cat. No.: D1306, Thermo Fisher, Porto Salvo, Portugal, weakening proportion: 1/200) and brooded for 5 minutes within the dull. The areas were fixed with a coverslip. The recolored areas were inspected beneath a fluorescence magnifying instrument (Zeiss AXIO, Germany)<sup>16</sup>.

### Statistical Analysis

Results were calculated as cruel ± standard blunder. Factual comparisons between bunches were performed utilizing the one-way strategy ANOVA and Tukey's LSD strategy. All calculations for factual examination were performed with the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program version 20. P <0.05 was acknowledged as a critical contrast for all tests.

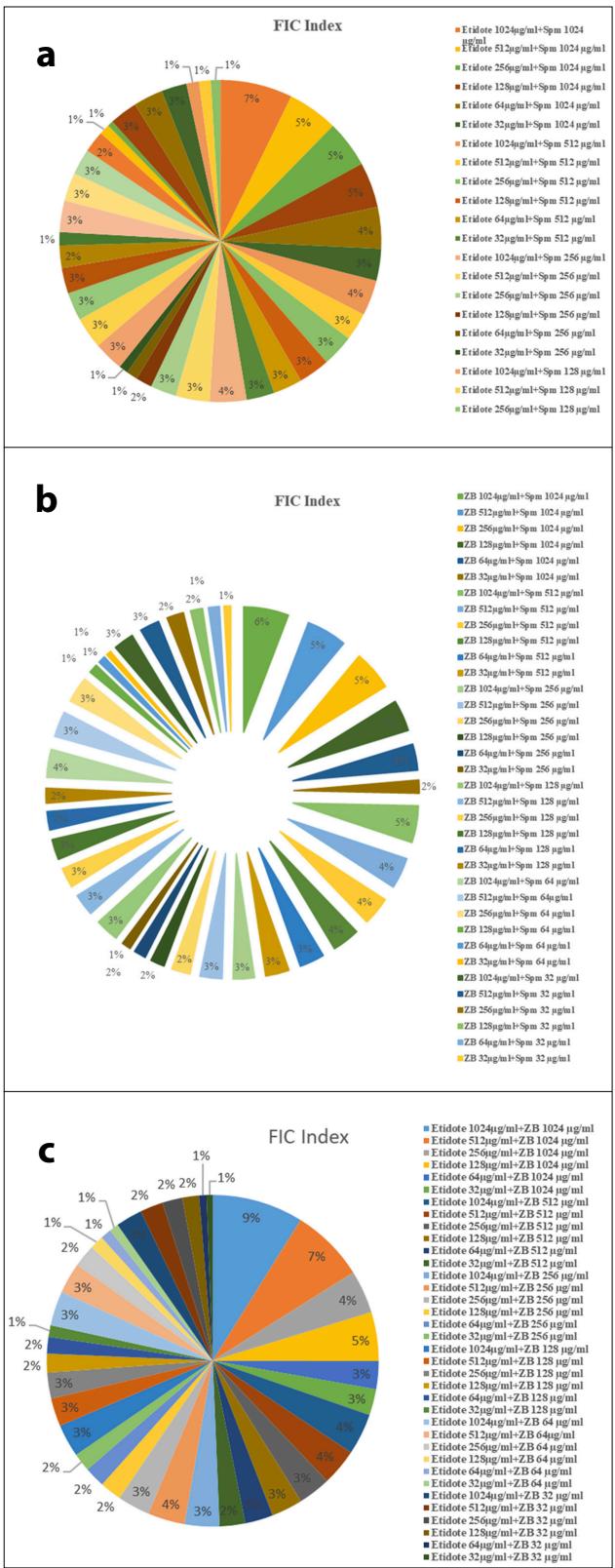
## Results

### Microbiological Analysis

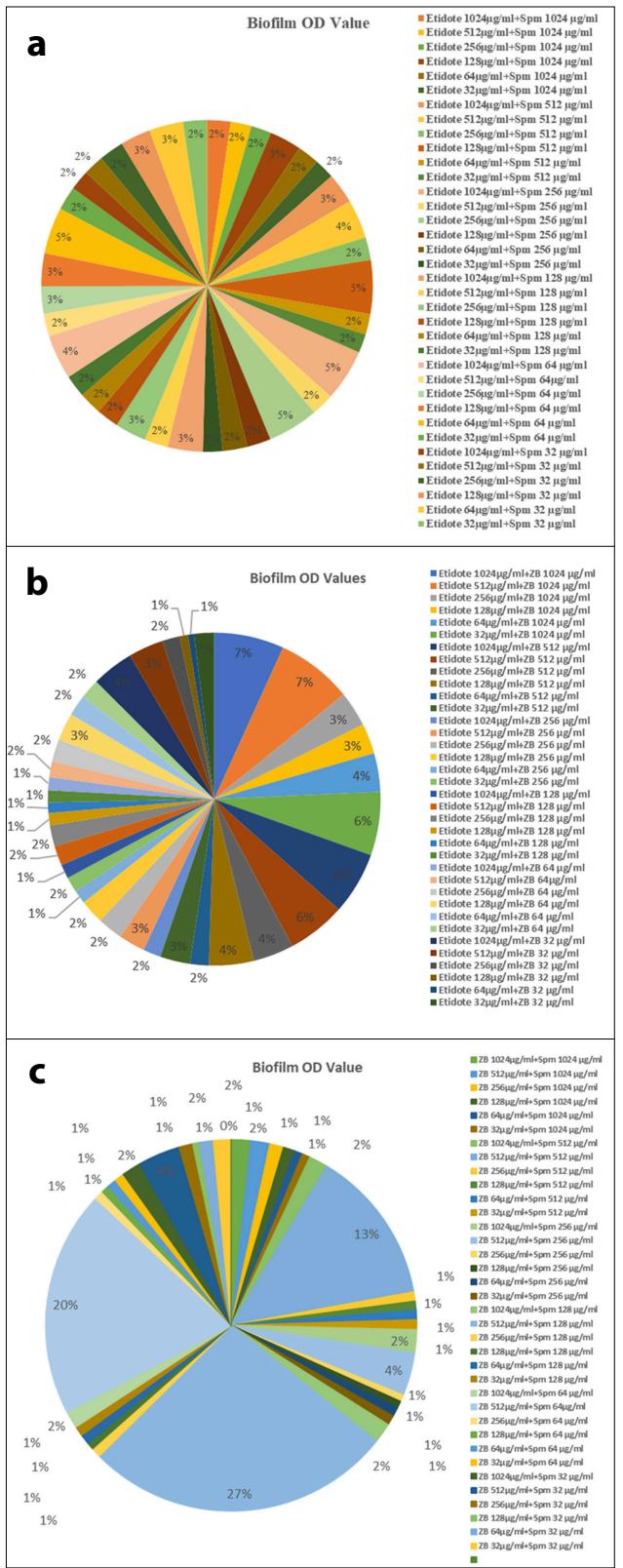
Boron compounds' MIC values were measured between 1024–0.97 µg/mL. It was found to have an impact on these ranges. The comes about of fragmentary inhibitory concentrations appear in Table 1 and Fig. 1. Synergistic impacts ( $\leq 0.5$ ) were observed at 32 µg/mL Etidote + 32 µg/mL SPM, at 32 µg/mL Etidote + 32 µg/mL ZB, and 32 µg/mL ZB + 32 µg/mL SPM. Optical thickness (wavelength 570 nm) is summarized in Fig. 2 to evaluate biofilm arrangement. Amid the measure, sterile TSB was inspected and assessed as a negative control. The concentration of 128 µg/ml Etidote + 512 µg/ml SPM had the most noteworthy impact on biofilm arrangement (Fig. 2). In Figure 2B, the most noteworthy impact on biofilm arrangement was found at the concentration of 512 µg/mL Etidote + 1024 µg/mL ZB. In Fig. 2, the most remarkable impact on biofilm arrangement was found at 512 µg/mL ZB + 128 µg/mL SPM.

**Table 1.** Summarise all doses used in FIC and MIC analysis

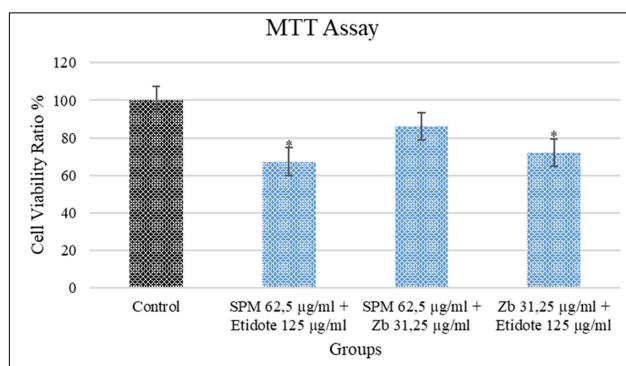
Boron Compound		
Etidote 1024µg/ml+Spm 1024 µg/ml	ZB 1024µg/ml+Spm 1024 µg/ml	Etidote 1024µg/ml+ZB 1024 µg/ml
Etidote 512µg/ml+Spm 1024 µg/ml	ZB 512µg/ml+Spm 1024 µg/ml	Etidote 512µg/ml+ZB 1024 µg/ml
Etidote 256µg/ml+Spm 1024 µg/ml	ZB 256µg/ml+Spm 1024 µg/ml	Etidote 256µg/ml+ZB 1024 µg/ml
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Etidote 32µg/ml+Spm 32 µg/ml	ZB 32µg/ml+Spm 32 µg/ml	Etidote 32µg/ml+ZB 32 µg/ml



**Figure 1.** a–c. FIC index results. Etidote + SPM combination fixation index (a), Etidote + ZB combination fixation index (b), ZB + SPM combination fixation index (c). Value ranges of boron combinations corresponding to  $\Sigma$  FIC index  $\leq 0.5$ : synergism,  $>0.5$  and  $<1$ : additive and  $\geq 1$  and  $\leq 4$ : ineffective (inhibition).



**Figure 2.** a–c. Biofilm OD results. Etidote+SPM (a), Etidote+ZB (b), ZB+SPM biofilm OD values (c). The minimum and maximum OD values of Etidote+SPM, Etidote+ZB, and ZB+SPM are at 570 OD.



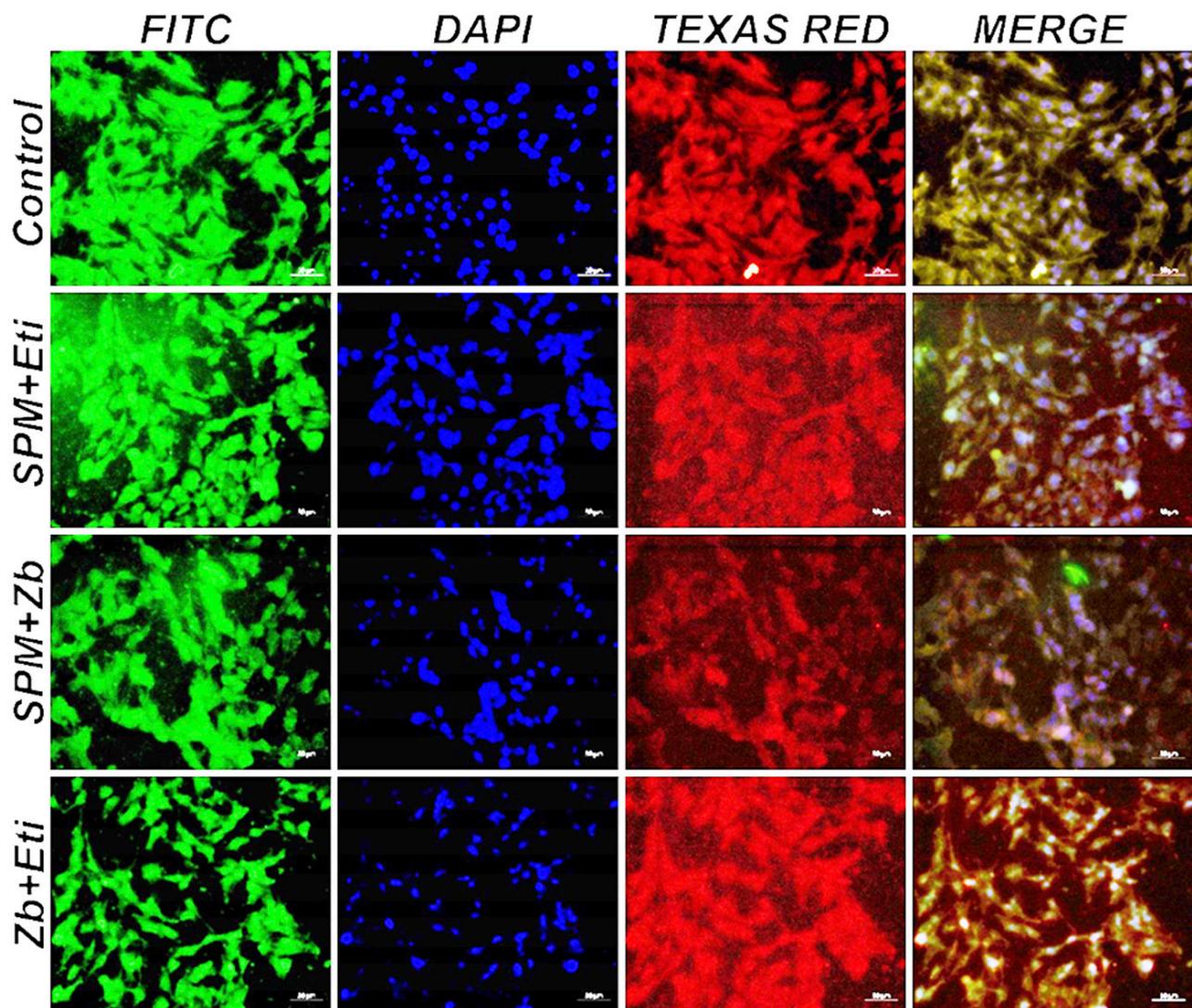
**Figure 3.** MTT assay results for the HepG2 cell lines, control group (received only medium), *Escherichia coli* bacteria were cocultured for 24 h with SPM 62.5 µg/mL + Etidote 125 µg/mL, SPM 62.5 µg/mL + ZB 31.25 µg/mL and ZB 31.25 µg/mL + Etidote 125 µg/mL. (\*P<0.05 compared to the control group).

### Cell Viability

The impact of ZB, SPM, and Etidote on the viability of HepG-2 cells is depicted in Fig. 3. Notably, the viability of HepG-2 cells was not significantly compromised when exposed to the combination of ZB + Etidote. Furthermore, it was observed that the combinations of SPM + Etidote and SPM + ZB exhibited inadequate efficacy in protecting against *E.coli* contamination, and these observations held statistical significance (P <0.05) (Fig. 3).

### Immunofluorescence Analysis

The co-administration of ZB and Etidote demonstrated a notable reduction in bacterial motility, a protective effect on HepG2 cells, and a reduction in DNA damage. Detailed findings regarding these outcomes are provided in Table 2 and graphically illustrated in Fig. 4.



**Figure 4.** Cell lines, 8-OHdG expression (FITC), and H2A. X expression (Texas Red), IF, Bar: 50 µm.

**Table 2.** Statistical analysis of immunofluorescent staining findings

Groups	8-OHDG	H2A.X
<b>Control</b>	24.84±5.42 <sup>a</sup>	18.43±4.38 <sup>a</sup>
<b>SPM + Etidote</b>	42.86±6.18 <sup>b</sup>	33.54±4.58 <sup>b</sup>
<b>SPM + ZB</b>	32.45±5.18 <sup>ab</sup>	26.18±5.69 <sup>ab</sup>
<b>ZB + Etidote</b>	39.76±4.16 <sup>b</sup>	31.44±3.2 <sup>b</sup>

a, b, c: different letters in the same column were considered statistically significant differences ( $P<0.05$ ).

## Discussion

Biofilm-forming and multidrug-resistant (MDR) microorganisms speak to a worldwide well-being issue. Over the past decade, growing interest in alternative therapies has expanded the pool of potential candidates for antibacterial agents. Numerous analysts have explored boron compounds' anti-inflammatory, antifungal, and antibacterial viability. Be that as it may, the adequacy of these compounds on microorganisms has been examined *in vitro*, and cell viability and cytotoxicity are constrained<sup>20,21</sup>. In this consideration, we examined the impact of boron compounds on the human HepG-2 cell line amid disease with *E.coli*. Tetraacetylenediamine and sodium perborate, constituents of boron compounds, find application as endodontic disinfectants owing to their antimicrobial efficacy against various bacterial species, particularly at elevated concentrations. It is additionally used in numerous ponders to decrease the adequacy of thick bacterial biofilms, which may be related to the development of microbial species within the endodontic environment, expanded resistance to antimicrobial operators, and safe periapical periodontitis<sup>22–25</sup>.

Shakouie et al.<sup>26</sup> decided on the antimicrobial movement of tetraacetylenediamine sodium perborate versus sodium hypochlorite against *Enterococcus faecalis*. Tetraacetylenediamine sodium perborate and 5% sodium hypochlorite had comparative antibacterial action against *Enterococcus faecalis*, but tetraacetylenediamine sodium perborate, 2% had more prominent antibacterial action than five sodium hypochlorite. In our thinking, the least inhibitory concentrations (MIC) of the compounds were decided for 32 µg/mL SPM + 128 µg/mL Etidote, for 32 µg/mL SPM + 64 µg/mL ZB, and 64 µg/mL ZB + 128 µg/mL Etidote. Sayin et al.<sup>14</sup> decided the antibacterial and antbiofilm impacts of boron on different microbes, and it was found that the MICs of boric corrosive and etidote extended from 0.77–3.09 mg/mL and 0.644–10.312 mg/mL, separately. *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and a clinical confine of *Lactococcus garvieae* were more likely to make a biofilm than others when the microplate strategy was used. In their consideration, Celebi et al.<sup>16</sup> decided on the

inhibitor concentration, fragmentary inhibitor concentration, and optical thickness of the biofilm of boron compounds against *Klebsiella pneumonia*. HepG2 cells within the measurement ranges decided. The non-toxic dosage extension was chosen for the line, and immunofluorescence recoloring was performed, appeared, and evaluated. The boron components for sodium perborate monohydrate and etidote have low and tall least inhibitory concentrations, individually. In expansion, sodium perborate monohydrate was viable on biofilm arrangement. It appears that boron compounds are combined. They were more effective when utilized within the HepG2 cell line. Within the harmfulness demonstration, it was found that the cytotoxic impact of boron compounds diminished due to their antibacterial effects. In our consideration, the most elevated biofilm impact was observed at the concentrations of 128 µg/mL Etidote + 512 µg/mL Spm, 512 µg/mL Etidote + 1024 µg/mL ZB, and 512 µg/mL ZB + 128 µg/mL SPM. Simbula et al.<sup>27</sup> compared the cytotoxicity of tetraalkyldiamine sodium perborate and sodium hypochlorite within the L929 fibroblast cell line. Both compounds cause a dose-dependent misfortune of cell practicality; it was found that tetraacetylenediamine sodium perborate was less cytotoxic comes about than sodium hypochloride beneath all test conditions tried. The most punctual harmful impact supporting the known cytotoxic impact of sodium hypochloride on refined fibroblasts was illustrated by the MTT test, where a cell misfortune of 60% was watched 2 hours after treatment within the nearness of sodium hypochlorite concentrations  $\geq 0.025\%$ . In expansion, a dynamic diminishing in cell practicality was observed at all sodium hypochlorite concentrations tried at 4, 6, and 24 hours, but for the 0.0025% measurements, which did not influence cell practicality compared with untreated cells. Concurring to our MTT and immunofluorescence comes about. Combining ZB and Etidote diminished bacterial movement, ensured HepG-2 cells, and diminished DNA fracture. In any case, SPM + Etidote and SPM + ZB did not successfully secure against *E.coli* disease ( $P < 0.05$ ). We did not know why the SPM combination did not impact *Escherichia coli* microbes. Be that as it may, it might depend on the Gram-negative properties of the bacteria.

## Conclusion

The MICs of all combinations are distinctive; be that as it may, the FIC values are the same, appearing to have a synergistic impact with no noteworthy contrasts. All combinations anticipate the biofilm arrangement of *E.coli*. The ZB + Etidote combination diminished bacterial movement, secured HepG2 cells, and diminished DNA fracture. Zinc borate + Etidote may be a compelling combination against *E.coli* infections in HepG-2 cells.

**Limitation of the thought:** The end of the ponder should assess the quality expression level of miRNA. Moreover, apoptosis state and oxidative stretch levels distinguish which component is more viable for the antimicrobial action of the boron component and body cell security.

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