



Revealing of Selection Signatures Underlying Adaptive and Production Traits in Hanwoo and Ethiopian Cattle Breeds

Zewdu Edea¹, Hailu Dadi², Tadelles Dessie³, and Kwan-Suk Kim^{1*}

¹Department of Animal Science, Chungbuk National University, Cheongju, Korea

²Department of Biotechnology, Addis Ababa Science and Technology University, P.O. Box 16417, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

³International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), P.O. Box 5689, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Abstract

The objective of the study was to identify signatures of divergent selection associated with production and adaptive traits in Ethiopian and Hanwoo cattle by using a high-density and informative SNPs (80K) specifically developed from *Bos indicus* breeds. The most highly differentiated regions representing the top 1% windows were used to define genomic regions under divergent selection. Based on population genetic differentiation (F_{ST}) analysis, a total of 334 genes were identified in the comparison of Ethiopian cattle with Korean cattle (Hanwoo). The genes are associated with thermo-tolerance (*DNAJB5/Hsp40*), pigmentation (*ALX3*, *DCTN2*, and *MYO1A*), reproduction/fertility (*INHBC*, *UBE2D3*, *ID3*, *PAIP2*, and *PSPC1*), and body stature and production traits (*MBP2*, *HERC3*, and *GJB3* and *POLR2A*) and carcass quality (*TFEC*, *MYOT*, and *PARPA*). Functional enrichment analysis further showed that the candidate genes were associated with pathways relevant for physiological adaptation, including vasopressin-regulated water reabsorption, Rap1 signaling, PIK3 signaling, and melanogenesis to extreme environments. By comparing cattle breeds with distinct evolutionary and breeding legacies, we spotted candidate genes under selection and pathways which may contribute to further understanding of the consequence of natural and/or artificial selection in molding the phenotypic diversity of modern cattle breeds.

Keywords : *Bos indicus*, Hanwoo, candidate genes, high-density SNPs, Indicus chip

Introduction

Bos taurus and *Bos indicus* cattle were domesticated independently in Near East and in Indian sub-continent from aurochs subspecies, respectively (Loftus et al., 1994). African cattle breeds were originated in Asia with a large introgression from wild African auroch (Decker et al., 2014). Since their introduction into the continent, African cattle have been exposed to a range of new and changing environments and human selective breeding (Hanotte et al., 2010). Due to its geographical proximity to the Horn and East Coast, Ethiopia is served as a genetic corridor for cattle introduction to the continent and center of hybridization (Hanotte et al., 2010). Ethiopia hosts more than 24 diversified cattle populations or strains which are largely composed of indicine genetic background (Rege, 1999, Hanotte et al., 2002, Edea et al.,

*Corresponding author: Kwan-Suk Kim.

Tel: +82-43-261-2547, Fax: +82-43-273-2240, E-mail: kwanskim@chungbuk.ac.kr

Received: 30 August, 2018, Revised: 21 September, 2018, Accepted: 21 September, 2018



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2015b). These cattle populations show striking variation in terms of morphology, coat colors, and production traits, which may reflect adaptation of the sub-populations to the prevailing diverse local environmental conditions. Cattle populations such as Borana, Begait and Ogaden are adapted to low-altitude areas with high annual temperatures (12 to 37 °C (23 years of data), low rainfall varying from 594 to 747 mm/years (27 years data), whereas other cattle populations (Arsi, Guraghe, Arado, and Fogera) are mainly distributed mid to high-altitude areas characterized by high rainfall (721 to 1360 mm/year) and relatively low annual temperature (7 to 27°C). On the other hand, over the last few years, Hanwoo cattle have been selected for beef traits, including carcass weight, eye muscle area, backfat thickness, and marbling score (Lee et al., 2014). Specifically, a yearling weight was increased from 315.54 kg to 355.06 kg over the last 13 years (Park et al., 2013). Hence, selection for environmental adaptation and commercial traits may have differently shaped the genome of these cattle breeds.

The availability of genome high-density single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) has facilitated the mapping of signatures selection associated with domestication and selection. Several investigations have been performed to map selection sweeps in cattle (Bahbahani et al., 2017, Bahbahani et al., 2015a, Chan et al., 2010, Makina et al., 2015a). Evidence of positive selection for ecological adaptation has also been investigated in human (Scheinfeldt et al., 2012), sheep and goats (Lv et al., 2014, Kim et al., 2015) and pig (Ai et al., 2013). With the exception of few emerging case studies, the evidence of selection for local adaptation is limited in African cattle population in general and in Ethiopian cattle in particular. Moreover, selection signatures mapping and diversity studies in African cattle or zebu have been mainly performed using Illumina Bovine SNP50K BeadChip (Bahbahani et al., 2015a, Makina et al., 2015b, Edea et al., 2014, Randhawa et al., 2016), which were derived from western commercial cattle breeds. As well demonstrated in our previous studies, taurine origin chips were less informative in African zebu cattle and led to bias estimation of populations parameters compared to the indicine derived SNPs (Edea et al., 2013, Edea et al., 2015a, Edea et al., 2015c). In this study, we used a high density and informative SNPs (80K) specifically developed from *Bos indicus* breeds to identify divergent selection between Ethiopian and Hanwoo cattle.

Materials and Methods

Cattle breeds, SNP genotyping and Quality Control

We sampled 8 Ethiopian cattle populations (n = 245), and taurine reference breed Hanwoo (n = 22). The Ethiopian cattle samples represented 4 traditional breed groups: sanga (Raya-Azebo), zenga (Fogera and Arado), zebu (Begait, Borana, Arsi, Guraghe, and Ogaden). Unrelated animals were sampled from multiple herds and villages. Nasal samples were collected using Performagene LIVESTOCK's nasal swab DNA collection kit (DNA Genotek Inc., Kanata, ON, Canada). The Hanwoo (Korean cattle) samples were collected from commercial Hanwoo production farms.

All animals were genotyped using the 80K Indicine BeadChip (GeneSeek Genomic profiler; GeneSeek, Lincoln, NE, USA) derived mainly from *Bos indicus* breeds, which comprises 73,794 SNPs. Of 73,794

SNPs, we discarded 3,918 SNPs on the X chromosome, 74 on the Y-chromosome, 13 from mtDNA and 32 unmapped to any chromosome, leaving 69,758 autosomal SNPs mapped to the bovine genome. Autosomal markers were screened for the call rate <90% and minor allele frequency (MAF) <0.05. Additionally, in each population, individuals with a call rate < 90% were discarded. Finally, a total of 67,810 autosomal SNPs for 267 animals retained for the analysis. Quality control measures were performed using SNP and Variation Suite v8.5.0 (Golden Helix, Inc., Bozeman, MT, www.goldenhelix.com).

Detection of selection signals and functional analyses

The F_{ST} statistics for selection mapping has been widely applied in several studies, including in dog (Akey et al., 2010) and cattle (Ramey et al., 2013, Makina et al., 2015b, Bahbahani et al., 2015a). In order to search for genomic regions that have been under divergent selection in beef (Hanwoo) and Ethiopian cattle populations, genetic differentiation (F_{ST}) was calculated with unbiased estimator proposed by Weir & Cockerham (1984) using SNP and Variation Suite v8.5.0 (Golden Helix, Inc., Bozeman, MT, www.goldenhelix.com). To minimize the specious noise from single SNP based analyses, F_{ST} values were calculated with a sliding window of 10 SNPs as used in the previous study (Bahbahani et al., 2015b). As in (Porto-Neto et al., 2013), the most highly differentiated regions representing the top 1% windows of smoothed F_{ST} were treated as candidate selection regions. Genes within the specified selection regions were considered as candidate genes.

To annotate SNPs with respect to their functional classification of genes, we downloaded bovine gene annotation datasets (gene annotations and FASTA sequences) from the UCSC Genome Browser (<http://genome.ucsc.edu/>). The SNPs were annotated using the ANNOVAR tool (Wang et al., 2010). Enriched pathways analyses were performed using the web-based DAVID Bioinformatics resources (v. 6.8, <https://david.ncifcrf.gov/>). Fisher's exact test (EASE score) less than 0.05 was used to examine the significant term as recommended by the software.

Results and Discussion

The average genomic F_{ST} values averaged in sliding windows of 10 SNPs (F_{ST} -10SNPW) was 0.20 between the Ethiopian cattle and Hanwoo. There are 334 genes within the top 1% windows (135 windows, Tables S1). Some of the regions on BTA7 (52.26–53.09 Mb), BTA12 (35.54–35.94 Mb), BTA13 (57.82–58.13 Mb), and BTA19 (27.32–27.81; 42.78–43.46 Mb) (Table S1) coincide with genomic regions under positive selection in East African shorthorn zebu cattle (Bahbahani et al., 2015a). Within these regions, three candidate genes (*EFHA1*, *ALOX12/ALOX15*, and *SLC16A11*) concur with the present findings. *ALOX15* or *ALOX12* is near to QTL for scurs in cattle (Asai et al., 2004). Additionally, the candidate regions on BTA2 (64.62–64.93; 125.29–125.56 Mb), BTA7 (45.73–46.04; 50.62–50.98; 51.61–52.80 Mb), and BTA22 (36.62–37.03Mb) overlap with selection signals identified in West- African cattle breeds (Gautier et al., 2009).

Ethiopian cattle are evolved to adapt to a wide range of stresses (extreme temperature, UV, diseases prevalence, feed scarcity) and natural selection may have left genomic footprints in the underlying genes involved in local adaptation. Interestingly, we detected *DNAJB5* (*Hsp40*) gene on BTA8:59.58–59.99 which

is known to be associated with thermo-tolerance (Table 1). Increased expression of *Hsp40* is observed in goat during hyperthermic condition (Archana et al., 2017). Further evidence suggests that *Hsp40* interact with *Hsp70* (Liberek & Georgopoulos, 1993, Schröder et al., 1993). Increased expression of the *Hsp40* genes was observed in *Drosophila melanogaster* subjected to heat-shock (Carmel et al., 2011). In addition to their well-known function of HSPs as molecular chaperones, recent evidence shows that the two heat shock proteins (*HSP70* and *HSP40*) also involved in antiviral immune responses (Dong et al., 2006). A QTL for body temperature has mapped on TA18 (Howard et al., 2014). The candidate gene *LOC100299171* overlapped with this region.

The adverse influence of heat stress on reproduction is less pronounced in *Bos indicus* than in *Bos taurus* (Paula-Lopes et al., 2013). These differences could be genetic and some of the top 1% windows harbor genes which are involved in embryonic development, or fertility, including *ID3*, *INHBC*, *UBE2D3*, *PSPC1*, *STAT5A*, and *PAIP2* (Table 1). *INHBC* is implied as the candidate gene for inhibin (IN) regulation, which is associated with testicular size and fertility in cattle (Fortes et al., 2013, Porto-Neto et al., 2014b). The gene *ID3* plays a vital role in the regulation of pre-implantation embryo development (Li et al., 2012a). Gene expression studies in high and low fertility heifers have revealed that *UBE2D3* is linked to fertility (Killeen et al., 2014). *PAIP2* was detected as under selection and associated with the reproductive traits in goats (Guan et al., 2016). *PSPC1* is abundantly expressed in the mouse testis and implicated in regulating nuclear events during spermatogenesis (Myojin et al., 2004). *STAT5A* contains QTL for early embryonic survival (Khatib et al., 2008), associated with fertilization rate (Khatib et al., 2009), and sire conception rate (Li et al., 2012b).

Ethiopian cattle populations are better survived and produce under high diseases and parasites loads. Four of the candidate genes (*AHCYL1*, *FAM13A*, *HERC3*, *PCID2*, and *CRYL1*) (Table 1) are related to the mastitis and somatic cell count in dairy breeds. In their study (Bonnefont et al., 2011) demonstrated that

Table 1. Candidate genes identified in the comparison of Ethiopian cattle with Hanwoo

BTA	Position	Gene	Trait/Gene function
2	129.60-130.15	<i>ID3</i>	Pre-implantation embryo development (Li et al., 2012a).
3	33.45-33.68	<i>AHCYL1</i> , <i>ALX3</i>	Mastitis and pigmentation (Bonnefont et al., 2011)
5	56.23-56.34	<i>INHB</i> , <i>DCTN2</i>	Testicular size and fertility (Fortes et al., 2013, Porto-Neto et al., 2014b) and pigmentation (Gutiérrez-Gil et al., 2007).
5	56.70-56.79	<i>MYO1A</i>	Pigmentation (Gutiérrez-Gil et al., 2007)
6	37.44-37.70	<i>FAM13A</i> , <i>HERC3</i>	Somatic cell counts (Kowalewska-Luczak & Kulig, 2013); yearling weight and carcass quality traits (Porto-Neto et al., 2014b)
7	44.58-44.94	<i>THEG</i>	Spermatogenesis (Yanaka et al., 2000)
7	50.62-50.98	<i>MYOT</i>	Carcass quality (Adoligbe et al., 2016)
7	51.61-53.09	<i>UBE2D3</i> , <i>PAIP2</i> , <i>TFEC</i>	Fertility (Labrecque et al., 2013), carcass quality (Mokry et al., 2013)
8	59.58-59.99	<i>DNAJB5</i> (<i>Hsp40</i>)	Thermo- tolerance, fertility (Carmel et al., 2011)
12	36.37-36.88	<i>PSPC1</i>	Male fertility/Spermatogenesis (Pan et al., 2005).
12	36.37-37.08	<i>PARPA</i>	role in regulating adipogenesis [32].
12	36.37-36.66	<i>GJA3</i>	Body size and development (Kim et al., 2016)
12	35.97-36.29	<i>CRYL1</i>	Somatic cell count (Bonnefont et al., 2011)
12	90.55-90.80	<i>PCID2</i>	Somatic cell count (Bonnefont et al., 2011)
13	49.23-49.58	<i>BMP2</i>	Body size and development (Kim et al., 2016)
19	27.32-28.04	<i>POLR2A</i>	Stature (Randhawa et al., 2015)

AHCYL1, *PCID2*, and *CRYL1* genes were differentially expressed between mastitis resistant and susceptible lines of dairy sheep. Similarly, variation within in the *FAM13A* gene was reported to be related to increased levels of somatic cell counts in Jersey cattle (Kowalewska-Luczak & Kulig, 2013).

Ethiopian cattle population show striking variation in terms of coat color, whereas Hanwoo cattle predominantly display brown coat color (Choi et al., 2012). Accordingly, we detected genes related to coat color phenotypes (*ALX3*, *DCTN2*, and *MYO1A* (Table 1)). It has been shown that *Alx3*-mediated repression of *Mitf* in rodents (Mallarino et al., 2016). *MITF* is a master regulator of melanocyte differentiation (Hou & Pavan, 2008) and known to influence white spotting patterns in cattle (Qanbari et al., 2014), swap buffalo (Yusnizar et al., 2015), horses (Hauswirth et al., 2012), and dogs (Rothschild et al., 2006). Additionally, the candidate region on BTA6 (37.44–37.70 Mb) overlaps with QTL for the degree of spotting in cattle (Reinsch et al., 1999). *MYO1A* and *DCTN2* are reported to have an influence on pigmentation in Charolais × Holstein population (Gutiérrez-Gil et al., 2007). The regions on BTA5 (56.59–56.70 Mb) and BTA6 (29.72–30.03 Mb) contain QTLs for coat color and coat texture (Liu et al., 2009, Mészáros et al., 2015, Huson et al., 2014). Given the importance of coat color and texture in thermoregulation (Gebremedhin & Wu, 2001); these genes are potential candidates for zebu adaptation to hot tropical areas.

Our gene functional enrichment analysis revealed important pathways that may be involve in African cattle adaptation under tropical hot environments, including “vasopressin-regulated water reabsorption” ($P = 0.001$), “Rap1 signaling” ($P = 0.011$), “PI3K-Akt signaling” ($P = 0.035$), and “melanogenesis” ($P = 0.007$, Table 2). Water reabsorption is one of the physiological mechanisms for animal adaptation under dry habitats (CAIN III et al., 2006). A recent study involving Chinese sheep breeds evolved under arid environments detected highly enriched biological pathways for water reabsorption (Yang et al., 2016). In cattle, heat stress increased reactive oxygen species (ROS) formation at 40 °C (Singh et al., 2014). Generation of ROS is a response to stress conditions (Pastori & Foyer, 2002). The Rap1 signal was involved in the suppression of Ras-generated reactive oxygen species and protection against oxidative stress (Remans et al., 2004). The PI3K signaling pathway plays an important role in *Hsp90* chaperone function

Table 2. Results of enriched functional pathyas of the candidate genes

Term	Count	Fisher Exact
Pathways in cancer	17	0.00045
Ubiquitin mediated proteolysis	8	0.0023
Hepatitis B	8	0.0038
Vasopressin-regulated water reabsorption	5	0.0011
Rap1 signaling pathway	9	0.011
Melanogenesis	6	0.0069
Chagas disease (American trypanosomiasis)	6	0.013
Amoebiasis	6	0.012
Endocytosis	9	0.034
Signaling pathways regulating pluripotency of stem cells	6	0.032
PI3K-Akt signaling pathway	11	0.035
Estrogen signaling pathway	5	0.026
Hedgehog signaling pathway	3	0.0086
Adrenergic signaling in cardiomyocytes	6	0.037
Platelet activation	6	0.022

through regulating the expression of heat shock protein (*Hsp70*) (Chatterjee *et al.*, 2013, Tu *et al.*, 2000). Thus, these pathways are likely relevant for Ethiopian cattle adaptation under stressful environments.

Compared with Ethiopian cattle populations which are characterized by a short stature, and low productivity, Hanwoo cattle have undergone selection for yearling weight and beef quality traits, including carcass weight, eye muscle area, and backfat thickness (Lee *et al.*, 2012, Flori *et al.*, 2009). Intriguingly, we detected some candidate genes (*TFEC*, *HERC3*, *POLR2A*, *BMP2*, *GJA3*, *PARP4*, and *MYOT*) (Table 1) within the top 1% windows related to stature, body size, and beef quality traits. *TFEC* and *HERC3* are associated with a backfat thickness and yearling weight in beef cattle, respectively (Mokry *et al.*, 2013, Porto-Neto *et al.*, 2014a). Polymerase (RNA) II (DNA directed) polypeptide A (*POLR2A*) contains functional variants contributing to the genetic control of bovine stature (Randhawa *et al.*, 2015). *BMP2* and *GJA3* are well-known genes for body size and development (Fan *et al.*, 2011) and undergone selection in sheep and goat breeds adapted to hot arid environments (Kim *et al.*, 2016). More importantly, the *GJA3* gene is identified as under recent selection in brown Hanwoo cattle (Lim *et al.*, 2016). Genetic variation within the *PARP4* has found to be associated with carcass weight in commercial Hanwoo cattle (Edea *et al.*, 2018) and regulates adipogenesis. *MYOT* is involved in myofibril assembly and actin binding in the muscle tissue (Schessl *et al.*, 2014). Recent functional analysis revealed the association of mutations within *MYOT* with loin muscle area, backfat thickness and intramuscular fat in cattle (Adoligbe *et al.*, 2016).

In conclusion, by comparing cattle breeds with distinct evolutionary and breeding legacies, we

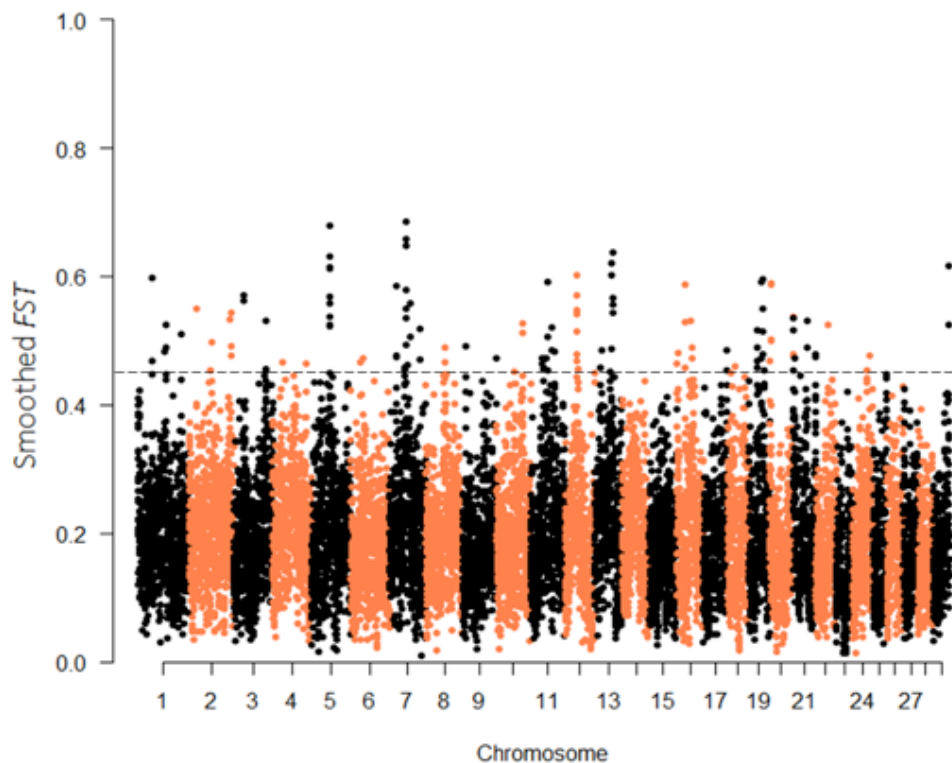


Fig. 1. Manhattan plots of genome-wide smoothed F_{ST} values. The dotted gray line indicates the top 1% F_{ST} values of the genome-wide empirical distribution.

identified candidate genes under directional selection and pathways which may contribute to further understanding of the consequence of natural and/or artificial selection in shaping the diversity of modern cattle breeds.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest with any financial organization concerning the material discussed in the manuscript.

Acknowledgements

This study was supported by the grant from Korea Institute of Planning and Evaluation for Technology in Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (No. 318015031SB010) in Korea.

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