

Growth Performance of Mahseer Fingerlings (*Tor soro*) Fed with Addition of Potassium Diformate

ABSTRACT

Mahseer aquaculture activities are still relatively low because they are constrained by slow growth. Potassium Diformate can promote growth by improving digestion through improving the quality of enzymes and optimizing the pH of the digestive tract. This research aims to determine the optimum dose of potassium diformate addition to artificial feed for the best growth rate and survival in mahseer fingerlings. The research was conducted in July – August 2022, in Hatchery of the Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences, Padjadjaran University. The method used in this research is Completely Randomized Design (CRD) with four treatments and five replications. Test fish used were 4,5 – 5 cm mahseer size of 200 fish. The treatment used was the addition of potassium formate to artificial feed at a dose of 0% (A), 0,1% (B), 0,3% (C), dan 0,5% (D). The maintenance time is 40 days by feeding 3% of the fish body weight. Parameters observed included Specific Growth Rate (SGR), Feed Conversion Ratio (FCR), Feed Efficiency (PE), Survival Rate (SR), and water quality (dissolved oxygen, temperature, pH). The research results showed that the addition of 0.3% potassium diformate gave the best results with the highest DGR value of 0.75%, FCR of 3.80, EP of 26.87%, SR of 100%. It can be concluded that the addition of potassium diformate at a dose of 0.3% is the most optimal dose to increase the growth of mahseer fingerlings.

Keywords: Mahseer (Tor soro); Organic Acid; Growth

1. INTRODUCTION

Mahseer (*Tor soro*) is a potential local fish as a aquaculture commodity. Mahseer have cultural values among certain communities[1], as a consumption fish, this fish is popular with the public because it has a soft and thick meat texture and a tasty taste [2], in terms of nutritional content, mahseer has a high albumin protein content of $13 \pm 0.04 \text{ g } 100 \text{ mL}^{-1}$ [3]. This reason makes the mahseer one of the local fish with a high selling price. Domestically, the price of mahseer ranges from IDR 800,000.00 – IDR 1,000,000/kg.

Mahseer aquaculture activities are still relatively low, because mahseer have slow growth [4]. The slow growth rate causes high production costs that must be incurred, especially costs to meet feed needs. Feed is the largest component of production costs in an aquaculture business. One of the factors that can affect the growth of fish is feed. Quality feed will support fast growth and high feed efficiency. Economically, high feed efficiency can reduce production costs [5].

Growth is a change in shape resulting from an increase in length, weight and volume in a certain individual [6]. The growth rate of fish is strongly influenced by the quantity and quality of feed and environmental conditions [7]. In an optimal environment, the feed given is very influential on fish growth.

Improving feed quality can be done by using feed additives. Feed additives is an ingredient that does not include food substances added in relatively small amounts with the hope that it can help the process of absorbing nutrients in the digestive tract. Previously, in aquaculture, AGP was used (*Antibiotic Growth Promoter*) to accelerate growth, but the use of AGP has a negative impact because it causes the transfer of resistance against pathogenic bacteria to animals and humans who eat it [8]. Prohibition of the use of AGP in Indonesia has been regulated in Law no. 41 of 2014 concerning animal husbandry and health. Indonesia officially only started banning AGP in feed in January 2018. This ban was also strengthened through Permentan No. 22 of 2017 concerning registration and distribution of feed.

Potassium diformate is an organic acid used as an alternative to AGP. The mechanism of action of organic acids is to improve digestion by increasing the quality of enzymes and lowering the pH of the digestive tract, so that pathogenic bacteria in the digestive tract decrease [9]. Potassium diformate can reduce the population of pathogenic bacteria in the intestine and has been proven to increase growth performance and nutrient absorption in various aquatic species [10]. The use of potassium diformate has been proven to be able to increase the growth of cultivated commodity species such as carp, Nile tilapia, catfish, freshwater pomfret, catfish and vannamei shrimp.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Mahseer fingerlings size 4.5-5 cm in length with an average weight of 0.9 grams, totaling 250 fish, 200 fish were used for research and the rest as stock. Other ingredients are commercial feed PF1000, potassium diformate as a feed additive, and distilled water as a binder to bind potassium diformate salt to feed, so that potassium diformate can be mixed evenly. The method used in this research was a completely randomized design (CRD) with four treatments and five replications. The treatment used was the addition of potassium diformate to artificial feed at a dose of 0%, 0.1%, 0.3% and 0.5% per 100 grams of feed

2.1 Procedur

2.1.1 Preparation of rearing containers

Prepare research facilities, such as 20 aquariums with a size of 40 x 30 x 30 cm, fiber tubs, hoses, and aeration stones. research facility which will be used washed with soap, then rinse with running water. After that, soaking with 30 ppm chlorine solution for 24 hours with strong aeration. then rinsed again using running water and dried. Each aquarium was filled with 20 L of water and given aeration, as a container for keeping fish during the research.

2.1.2 Test fish preparation

Fish are transported in the morning when the temperature is low. The transport plastic bag containing fish fingerlings is soaked in water in the fiber tub for 20 minutes to equalize the temperature of the water in the plastic with the water temperature in the fiber tub. The plastic bag is opened, the water in the fiber tub is mixed into the water in the plastic bag to slowly equalize the water quality until the fish comes out by itself. In the test fish, the acclimatization process was carried out twice, namely, 1) the fish were reared for 3 days in fiber tanks to ensure the test fish were healthy, by giving food 3 times a day regularly *optional*. 2) As many

as 10 fish that have been weighed are put into each aquarium by feeding according to the treatment with a maintenance time of 3 days, so that the fish can adjust to the feed that has been mixed with potassium diformate.

2.1.2 Feed preparation

Commercial feed was weighed as much as 100 grams for each treatment and the remaining feed was given to stock fish. Weighing potassium diformate 10 days). potassium diformate is mixed in the feed evenly. Mixed feed. potassium diformate is sprayed with distilled water as much as 10% of the total feed, which serves to glue potassium diformate to the feed. The feed that has been mixed with potassium diformate is air-dried. The feed mixture is weighed at 3% of the fish biomass for each aquarium, then packaged using plastic clips.

2.1.2 Research implementation

Mahseer that have gone through the grading and weighing process are stocked as many as 10 fish per aquarium (stocking density of 1 fish per 2 L), after going through the acclimatization process the mahseer are reared for 40 days. The frequency of feeding is three times a day at 08.00, 12.00 and 16.00 WIB. The amount of feed given is 3% of the total fish biomass in each aquarium.

Water quality maintenance is carried out by siphoning every 3 days in the morning. Sip water as much as 30% of the total volume of water in the maintenance container [11]. Siphoning is done to remove dirt or leftover feed that settles at the bottom of the aquarium, thereby minimizing water pollution in each aquarium.

2.2 Observation

2.2.1 Daily growth rate

Observation of the daily growth rate (DGR) was carried out once every 10 days during the research. To determine daily growth, weighing was carried out when the fish were put into the aquarium (day 0), and then carried out on the 10th, 20th, 30th and 40th days. Weighing is done on the fish in each aquarium by preparing a digital scale and a weighing container, namely a petri dish filled with water. The weighing container is placed on the scale that is already on, then calibrated by pressing the tare button, so that the weighing container does not count the biomass. As many as 10 fish were taken from each aquarium and then put into a petri dish filled with water and the biomass was weighed. Weighing is carried out in the morning to reduce stress on the fish fry so as not to affect the observations that take place during rearing. The daily growth rate is calculated using the formula (Effendie 1997):

$$\alpha = \frac{\ln W_t - \ln W_0}{t} \times 100\%$$

Explanation :

- α : Specific growth rate
- W_t : Average weight on the 40th day (g)
- W_0 : Average weight on day 0 (g)
- t : 40 days

2.2.2 Feed conversion ratio

To determine the feed conversion ratio is done by weighing the weight of the fish in each aquarium at intervals of 10 days during the rearing period. Dead fish were weighed and recorded. The total feed given to each aquarium is calculated and recorded. Feed conversion can be calculated using the formula (Effendie 1997):

$$FCR = \frac{F}{(W_t + D) - W_0}$$

Explanation :

FCR : Rasio Konversi Pakan
 W_t : Average weight on the 40th day (g)
 W₀ : Average weight on day 0 (g)
 D : Weight of fish that died during the study
 F : Total feed given (g)

2.2.3 Feed efficiency

Observation of feed efficiency was carried out by calculating the weight of fish in each aquarium every 10 days, and weighing the weight of dead fish. The total feed given to each aquarium is calculated and recorded. Feed efficiency can be calculated using the formula (Effendie 1997):

$$EP = \frac{(W_t + D) - W_0}{F} \times 100\%$$

Explanation :

EP : Feed efficiency (%)
 W_t : Average weight on the 40th day (g)
 W₀ : Average weight on day 0 (g)
 D : Weight of fish that died during the study
 F : Total pakan yang diberikan (g)

2.2.4 Survival rate

Survival rate observations were carried out every day during the study. If at the research implementation stage there are dead fish, the fish's weight is measured and then recorded and discarded. Survival or survival rate (SR) is calculated using the formula (Effendie 1997):

$$SR = \frac{N_t}{N_0} \times 100\%$$

Explanation :

SR : Degree of survival (%)
 N_t : Number of live fish, 40th day (individual)
 N₀ : Number of live fish, day 0 (individual)

2.2.5 Water quality

Observation of water quality is carried out once every 10 days for 40 days of maintenance time. Observations were made in the morning. Parameters of water quality observed included dissolved oxygen (DO), temperature, and pH.

2.3 Data Analysis

Observation of water quality is carried out once every 10 days for 40 days of maintenance time. Observations were made in the morning. Parameters of water quality observed included dissolved oxygen (DO), temperature, and pH.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Daily Growth Rate

The results of observations on growth showed that the addition of potassium diformate to the feed obtained significant results. The growth obtained at each sampling (10 days) showed an increase, especially on the 20th to 40th day, meaning that the addition of potassium diformate to the feed resulted in a fairly good response to growth (Fig. 1).

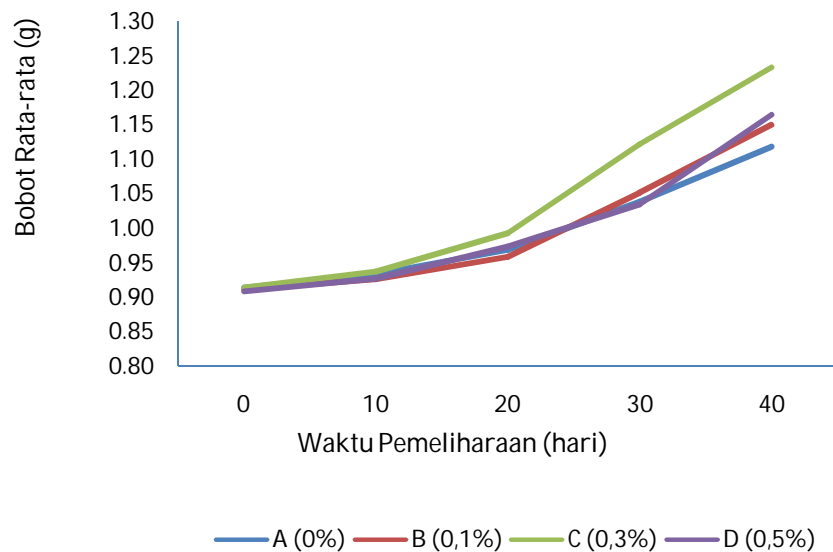


Fig. 1. Growth Chart Every 10 Days during Maintenance

To find out the percentage of fish weight growth per day, it is done by calculating the daily growth rate. Daily Growth Rate (DGR) is the percentage of fish weight growth per day in a predetermined time. DGR calculations in the mahseer in this research were carried out for 40 days. The calculation results can be seen in the graph (Fig. 2).

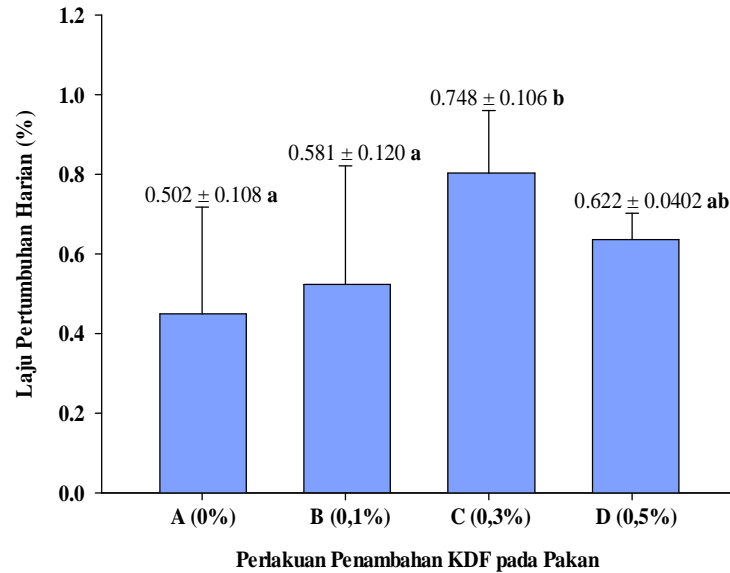


Fig. 2. Daily Growth Rate Graph

The DGR results obtained in this research ranged from 0.50 - 0.75%, this value was quite good when referring to research conducted by Pasaribu [12] with results ranging from 0.49 - 0.92% in mahseer treated with growth hormone (rGH) in commercial feed for 60 days.

The highest DGR in this research was obtained in treatment C (0.3%) with a value of 0.748% per day. DGR results from treatments B (0.1%), C (0.3%), and D (0.5%) when compared to treatment A (0.5%) indicated that the addition of potassium diformate to feed with the range of doses used does not cause a negative impact on the growth of mahseer. At a dose of 0.5% it produces a smaller DGR compared to a dose of 0.3%, this proves that the higher potassium diformate dose does not always have a better effect on fish growth. The use of potassium diformate which is an organic acid salt with excessive doses will cause fish osmoregulation disorders, so that fish use more energy to get rid of excess salt in the body while the energy used for growth will decrease.

Potassium diformate as a growth promoter can increase feed digestibility by lowering the pH of the digestive tract. The addition of potassium diformate at a dose of 0.3% to feed was able to reduce the pH of the tilapia stomach and intestine (*Oreochromis niloticus*). The use of potassium diformate of 0.3% was able to lower the pH of the carp gut (*Cyprinus carpio* L.) from 6.97 to 6.26 [13] The greater the additional dose of potassium diformate in the feed, the lower the intestinal pH will be. Under acidic environmental conditions, the digestive tract will absorb more nutrients, because pepsin enzyme activity can be optimum at a low pH, thereby optimizing pepsin activity in breaking down proteins into peptides [14]. A decrease in pH contributes to an increase in the growth and utilization of minerals.

The low pH value of the digestive tract of fish can cause pathogenic bacteria in the digestive tract to die and commensal bacteria to develop very well. Pathogenic bacteria live and thrive at a pH of 6.9 – 7.8 while commensal bacteria develop at a pH of 5.4 – 6.8 [15]. Based on the research results obtained, potassium diformate is able to increase the growth of mahseer by lowering the pH of the digestive tract so that it can optimize the activity of the pepsin enzyme in the process of breaking down protein.

The best growth in this research was obtained by adding 0.3% potassium diformate. That the addition of 0.3% potassium diformate gave the best results for the Nile tilapia growth rate (*Osteochilus hasselti*) by 2.7% [16]. Similar results were obtained from research conducted by Yustiatietet *et al.* [13] the addition of 0.3% potassium diformate resulted in the highest growth rate for carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) of 3.21%. The addition of potassium diformate at a dose of 0.3% was the highest treatment to increase the DGR of tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*sebesar) 2.07% [17].

3.2 Feed Conversion Ratio

Feed conversion ratio (FCR) is a measure that states the ratio of the amount of feed needed to produce 1 kg of cultivated fish. The FCR of Mahseer in this research can be seen in the following graph.

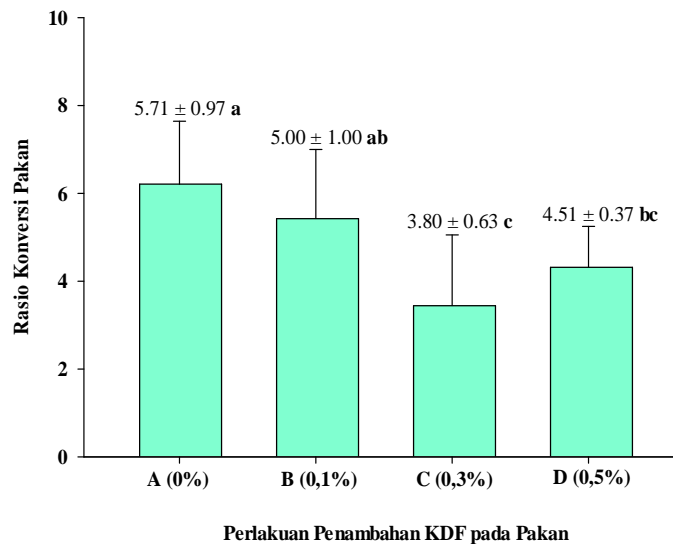


Fig. 3. Feed Conversion Rate Chart

Based on the graph (Fig. 3) the value of the feed conversion ratio obtained ranges from 3.80 – 5.71 meaning that by feeding as much as 3.80 – 5.71 kg will produce 1 kg of meat. FCR in this research is quite good when referring to research conducted by Radona *et al* [18], fish fingerlings *Tor* sp. measuring 1.5 cm in length produced an FCR ranging from 4.58 to 7.46 which was fed with different protein content for 40 days of rearing. The size of the FCR value is influenced by the absorption of nutrients which are different for each species, size, and aquaculture system.

The results of the analysis of variance showed that the addition of KDF to Mahseer showed significant differences between the treatments on the FCR value. A low FCR value or close to 1 shows the best value. In this research, the lowest FCR value was obtained in treatment C (3%), namely 3.80. Based on Duncan's test, the addition of KDF in treatment C (0.3%) was significantly different from treatment A (0%).

The low FCR in treatment C shows the optimal ability of fish to digest and absorb feed with the addition of 0.3% KDF given during rearing, so as to optimally convert feed into meat. The low FCR value indicates that the feed given is good enough and in accordance with the needs of fish to support growth [19].

The ability of fish to use feed nutrients depends on various factors, one of which is the activity of digestive enzymes. The use of KDF can optimize pepsin enzyme activity by lowering the pH of the digestive tract. The optimal pepsin enzyme activity is a key factor for increasing protein digestibility and accelerating absorption, so that a low feed conversion value is obtained. Based on the FCR value obtained, the addition of KDF to feed at a dose of 0.3% is the optimal dose to produce the lowest FCR. KDF at a dose of 0.3% was able to reduce the FCR by 66.55% from the treatment without the addition of KDF, thereby reducing production costs.

3.3 Feed Efficiency

Feed efficiency shows the percentage of feed that can be converted by fish into weight gain. The higher the value of feed efficiency, the faster the growth and the better the fish in utilizing the feed consumed so that their body weight increases. A low feed efficiency value indicates that fish require a larger amount of feed for their growth. The value of feed efficiency in mahseer can be seen in the graph (Fig.4).

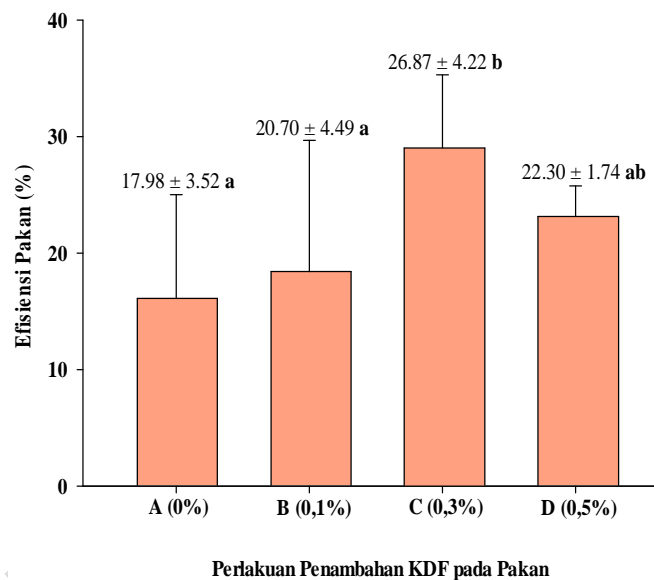


Fig. 4. Feed Efficiency Chart

Feed efficiency obtained in this research reached 17.98 – 26.70%. The results of the analysis of variance with the addition of KDF at different doses had a significant effect on feed efficiency. The highest feed efficiency was obtained in treatment C (0.3%) which was 26.87%. The results of the Duncan test showed that the addition of KDF in treatment C (0.3%) was significantly different from treatment A (0%). Feed can be categorized as good if the efficiency value of feeding is more than 50%. The efficiency of the feed for Mahseer is still very far from this reference value, but it can be said to be good when compared to research by Radona *et al.* [18] on Mahseer measuring 1.5 ± 0.1 cm and weighing 0.08 ± 0.01 g fed the treatment of feeding with different protein content obtained feed efficiency results ranging from 13.41 to 21.85%. The size of the feed efficiency value can be influenced by several factors including species, quality and quantity of feed, and water quality.

Based on the results of calculating feed efficiency in this research, values varied between treatments. Feed efficiency tends to increase at a dose of 0.3% and decreases at a dose of 0.5%, so that the addition of KDF at a dose of 0.3% is the optimal dose for the utilization of mahseer feed. Doses of adding KDF that exceed the optimum limit will reduce the value of feed efficiency, because it is thought to affect the osmoregulation system so that most of the energy is used to balance osmoregulation.

The food eaten by fish is not only used for growth, some are used for maintenance, activity and reproduction. The amount of feed given does not guarantee the process of digestion and absorption of nutrients to be effective, because the provision of large amounts of feed at long intervals will result in the feed consumed not being properly metabolized.

The high and low efficiency of feed is directly proportional to the growth produced, the higher the value of feed efficiency means that fish make good use of the feed provided so as to produce high growth as well. Feed efficiency is tested to assess feed quality, the higher the feed efficiency value proves that the feed quality is better.

Feed efficiency increases with the addition of KDF compared to control. This is because the addition of KDF to the feed can improve the quality of the feed. According to Silva *et al* [8], organic acids and salts contained in KDF can contribute in terms of nutrition, because they play a role in the production of ATP to produce energy in the body's metabolism. In accordance with Kordo's statement (2009) that feed efficiency is tested to assess feed quality, the higher the feed efficiency percentage proves the better feed quality.

3.4 Survival Rate

Survival rate become one of the factors that can determine the success of a fish farming business. In fish farming, Survival rate is used as a benchmark to see the tolerance of fish to their environment. The greater the percentage value of the survival rate obtained, the higher the fish's ability to survive.

Based on the results of observations of the survival rate of mahseer for 40 days of rearing, it shows various values (Fig. 5). This result is obtained from the total number of live fish at the end of rearing divided by the number of fish at the beginning of rearing expressed in percent units. Based on the analysis of variance that has been carried out, the provision of potassium diformate to feed has no significant effect between treatments on the survival rate of godfish.

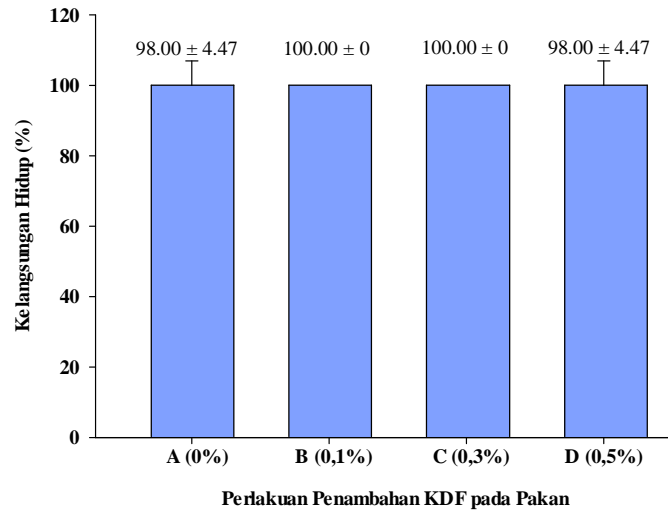


Fig. 5. Survival Rate Chart

Survival rate the highest was obtained in treatments B and C of 100% and the lowest in treatments A and D of 98%. If referring to SNI No. 01 – 6137 -1999 survival rate of mahseer from all treatments has a value of > 80% which is considered quite high, indicating that the mahseer gave a positive response to the feed added to potassium diformate. The results of this research can also be said to be good when compared to the results of Pasaribu research [12] with the results of survival rates in mahseer fingerlings ranging from 95.55 - 100%.

Survival rate High mahseer in this research can be obtained because it uses good quality fingerlings. The percentage of survival rate is influenced by other factors such as water and feed quality. The quality of the water in this research has met the standard for cultivating divine fish which refers to SNI no. 01 – 6137 – 1999. This research was carried out in a controlled laboratory so that the survival rate of fish is higher compared to rearing in an open place. In addition, the feed given is in accordance with the needs of the mahseer fingerlings both in terms of size, amount, frequency, and nutritional content.

Several studies have proven that the addition of potassium diformate to feed is not only able to stimulate growth but also can increase the survival rate of fish. potassium diformate is a feed additive that can kill pathogenic bacteria which can improve fish health resulting in a high survival rate. Survival rate Nile tilapia (*Osteochilus hasselti*) was highest after the bacterial challenge test was performed *Aeromonas hydrophila* a value of 81.67% was obtained with the addition of 0.3% potassium diformate [20].

Immunity of fish against disease will increase with the addition of the right dose of potassium diformate [21]. The addition of potassium diformate to feed with high doses that exceed the optimum dose becomes less effective for the survival rate of fish, because the use of potassium diformate at too high a dose can disrupt the osmoregulation system of fish. The use of potassium diformate must be considered so as not to exceed the optimum dose, so that the salt level is not higher than the salt level in the fish's blood because it will cause water to leave the fish's body and salt to enter the blood which results in dehydrated fish and eventually it will die[22].

3.5 Water quality

Water quality has an important role in supporting the success of aquaculture because it has a big influence on the survival of fish. Good water quality for aquaculture is defined as water that supports the life and growth of fish, water as a aquaculture medium has several important parameters to control during aquaculture activities, namely temperature, dissolved oxygen (DO), and degree of acidity (pH). Water quality data for 40 days of fish rearing is presented in tabular form (Table 1).

Table 1. Water Quality Range Value

| Parameter | Unit | Range Value | Quality standard |
|-------------|------|-------------|------------------|
| Temperature | °C | 23,4 – 25,1 | ≤ 28 |
| pH | - | 6,50 – 7,95 | 6,5 – 8,5 |
| DO | mg/L | 5,76 – 6,84 | ≥ 5 |

Based on measurements of water quality in the rearing medium during the research, it was still in the range of water quality standards referring to SNI no. 01 – 6137 – 1999. Water temperature affects metabolic processes in fish. At high temperatures that can still be tolerated, fish can increase their metabolic rate so that fish are more active in searching for food, while at low temperatures, the activity of living organisms decreases. Fish growth will decrease if the temperature is low below 13°C, while at temperatures below 5°C growth will decrease rapidly and stop eating[23].

Dissolved oxygen (DO) is an important parameter that determines fish life, in waters with low oxygen content fish will easily get stressed which can eventually lead to death. Based on the results of observations of DO in the medium for fish rearing ranged from 6.26 to 6.78 mg/L. Generally, the dissolved oxygen content that is good for fish farming ranges from 4 - 9 mg per L [24]. This shows that the fish's need for DO is met during rearing. Fulfillment of DO needs during maintenance is supported by the installation of aeration as a supply of oxygen to the rearing medium.

The degree of acidity (pH) of the water during preservation is still within the quality standard range. Ideal waters for fish survival have a pH ranging from 6.5 to 8.5 [25]. At pH between 4 - 6.5 and pH between 9 - 11 can result in slow fish growth. When the water becomes very acidic (pH < 4) or very alkaline (pH > 11) it will generally result in fish dying.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on research data, it can be concluded that the addition of 0.3% potassium diformate to feed is the optimum dose to obtain the highest growth performance of Mahseer 0.748% per day, the lowest feed conversion ratio is 3.80, the highest feed efficiency is 26.87%, with survival by 100%.

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