ORIGINAL ARTICLE

In-Silico Exploration of Phytoconstituents of *Gymnema Sylvestre* as Potential Angiotensin Receptor Inhibitors for The Treatment of Hypertension

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ABSTRACT

In both hypertensive and normotensive people, angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors significantly reduce mean arterial blood pressure, as well as systolic and diastolic blood pressure. Several randomized controlled trials have assessed the efficacy of angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors as antihypertensive agents. The exploration of plants for drug discovery is a significant area of interest and a primary contributor to contemporary medicine. Gymnema sylvestre has been documented in multiple studies as having efficacy against a range of conditions including arthritis, diuretic, anaemia, osteoporosis, hypercholesterolemia, cardiopathy, asthma, constipation, microbial infections, indigestion, and as an anti-inflammatory agent. Therefore in present study, we have investigated the major phytoconstituents of Gymnema sylvestre as potential ACE inhibitors. The selected phytoconstituents have been screened by in silico ADMET analysis followed by computational analysis. Out of docked phytoconstituents, Gymnema saponin-V, Gymnemasin-A, Gymnemic acid-I, and Stigmasterol found to be more potent than others. They inhibited the ACE significantly and can modulate its activity which can be result in lowering of blood pressure. Therefore from present investigation we concluded that, if phytoconstituents of Gymnema sylvestre isolated and treated as lead nucleus for further development of novel ACE inhibitors, we can get many potent molecules.

Keywords: ACE; Gymnema sylvestre; hypertension, Gymnemasaponin-V; Gymnemic acid-I; ADMET; molecular docking

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, herbal remedies have been utilized to address a diverse range of health ailments. However, in modern times, the primary focus pertains to the safety and effectiveness of these treatments[1]. The US Food and Drug Administration established a definition for "dietary supplement" in the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act of 1994, which refers to an orally ingested product that contains a "dietary ingredient" with the purpose of supplementing one's diet. The constituents of a diet may encompass a variety of elements, such as vitamins, minerals, herbs, botanicals, amino acids, enzymes, organ tissues, glandulars, and metabolites. Supplements can also refer to substances that have been extracted or concentrated[2]. The ease of accessibility of dietary supplements and the common misconception that all natural products are inherently safe may lead patients to opt for these agents as a means of regulating blood pressure. The practice of self-administering dietary supplements without the guidance and supervision of a healthcare professional can pose significant risks to one's health. It is imperative for healthcare practitioners to possess knowledge regarding the various supplements that are utilized to promote a healthy cardiovascular system[3–5].

In both hypertensive and normotensive people, angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors significantly reduce mean arterial blood pressure, as well as systolic and diastolic blood pressure. Several randomized controlled trials have assessed the efficacy of angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors as antihypertensive agents[6–8]. The exploration of plants for drug discovery is a significant area of interest and a primary contributor to contemporary medicine. Only 5–15% of plants have been studied for their potential as medicines, however around 25% of contemporary medications have a plant origin. Gymnema sylvestre is a member of the Apocynaceae family and has been historically utilized for the management of diverse medical conditions. This botanical specimen is a naturally occurring herbaceous plant that can be found growing in the wild within the geographical regions of India, Africa, Australia, and China. This particular botanical specimen is commonly referred to as 'Gurmur' and is acknowledged for its hypoglycemic effects[9-12]. The Ayurvedic system of medicine has recognized *Gymnema sylvestre* as a significant botanical for treating diabetes. Additionally, this plant has been included in the Indian Pharmacopoeia as an anti-diabetic agent. The plant in question has been found to be efficacious against a variety of serious illnesses, including but not limited to cardiovascular diseases, asthma, cancer, diabetes, and obesity. As a result, it has been incorporated into a range of preparations, including tea bags, health tablets, and food supplements. Gymnema sylvestre has been documented in multiple studies as having efficacy against a range of conditions including arthritis, diuretic, anaemia, osteoporosis, hypercholesterolemia, cardiopathy, asthma, constipation, microbial infections, indigestion, and as an antiinflammatory agent[13–15]. Therefore in present study, we have investigated the major phytoconstituents of *Gymnema sylvestre* as potential ACE inhibitors. The selected phytoconstituents have been screened by in silico ADMET analysis followed by computational analysis.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Pharmacokinetics Predictions of Phytoconstituents

Utilizing molinspiration and SwissADME servers, Lipinski rule of five and pharmacokinetic features of phytoconstituents were investigated [16,17]. An *in silico* toxicity prediction of phytoconstituents has been made using ProTox-II, a webserver that is freely available(http://tox.charite.de/protox_II)[18].

Molecular Docking Studies

In order to further optimization, the phytoconstituents were subjected for binding affinity studies with human angiotensin receptor. The Autodock vina 1.1.2 with PyRx Virtual Screening Tool 0.8 software of the Chimera version 1.10.2[19] and the Biovia Discovery studio was used to perform molecular docking[20]. The structures of phytoconstituents and native ligand were drawn using ChemDraw Ultra 8.0 version and saved in mol file format. The energy minimization was executed by Universal Force Field (UFF) in PyRx software[21]. The crystal structure of the XFEL structure of human angiotensin receptor (PDB ID: 4YAY) was obtained from the RCSB Protein Data Bank (https://www.rcsb.org/). The 3D ribbon view of angiotensin receptor with native ligand is illustrated in Fig. 1. The binding mode and binding affinity of native ligand was used to validate the results of phytoconstituents. With an exhaustiveness value of 8, the three-dimensional grid box (size_x = 49.1531A°, size_y = 38.5281A°, size_z = 42.6578A°) was modified for molecular docking simulations. The complete molecular docking approach was carried out in accordance with the methods outlined by S. L. Khan *et al.*[22–27].



Fig. 1. The 3D ribbon view of angiotensin receptor with native ligand

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Pharmacokinetics Predictions of Phytoconstituents

In present study we have investigated some natural phytoconstituents as potential human angiotensin receptor inhibitors [28]. The physicochemical properties of designed molecules Native ligands, Gymnemanol, Gymnemasaponin_V, Gymnemasin_A, Gymnemic acid_I_, Gymnemoside_A, Gymnestrogenin, Lupeol, Quercitol, Stigmasterol are tabulated in Table 1. In physicochemical analysis, values of all the molecules were calculated i.e. molecular weights, nHA, nHD, nRot, Van der Waals volume, and TPSA. In present investigation most of these parameters were within the acceptable range and displayed optimum oral bioavailability which indicates they can be developed to be delivered through oral route [29,30], but few molecules disobeyed Lipinski rule due to its high molecular weight, but still it can be a potential enzyme inhibitor.

The drug-likeness properties of molecules are exemplified in Table 2. The different parameters such as QED, NPscore, Lipinski rule, Pfizer rule, GSK rule, Golden Triangle, and Chelator rule were calculated. Typically, the natural product-likeness score, also known as the NPscore, falls somewhere in the range of -0.7 to 1. If the score is higher, then there is a greater likelihood that the molecule in question is an NP[31,32]. All the phytoconstituents displayed NP-like properties within the range. The compounds satisfying the GSK rule may have a more favorable ADMET profile but unfortunately, only Quercitol accepted the rule. The compound Gymnemanol accepted the Golden Triangle rule may have a more favorable ADMET profile.

The absorption parameters of the molecules are illustrated in Table 3. As a model of how medications are absorbed by the human digestive tract, the human colon epithelial cancer cell line known as Caco-2 is employed. Caco-2 permeability is optimum when the value is higher than -5.15 Log unit and fortunately all the molecules displayed optimum Caco-2 permeability[33]. Many of the molecules displayed Pgp-inhibitor and Pgp-substrate activity. All the phytoconstituents displayed excellent human intestinal absorption (HIA). F20% and F30% bioavailability of all the molecules were within the range of acceptable values.

The distribution and metabolism profile of molecules are depicted in Table 4. Plasma protein binding (PPB, <90%), drugs with high protein-bound may have a low therapeutic index; many of the molecules displayed PPB less than 90%. Volume distribution (VD, optimal 0.04-20L/kg) of all the molecules were within the range of acceptable limit. None of the molecule displayed BBB penetration potential. Cytochrome enzymes play an important role in drug metabolism therefore being its substrate or inhibitor contributes to the drug action. In present investigation, these molecules showed all the Cytochrome enzymes inhibition.[34].

An excretion and toxicity profile of molecules are tabulated in Table 5. All of the molecules displayed high clearance rate (CL, High: >15 mL/min/kg; moderate: 5-15 mL/min/kg; low: <5 mL/min/kg). All the molecules exhibited short half-life ($T_{1/2}$, <3h). Toxicity profile of the molecules suggested favorable properties and displayed many of the values were within the range. None of the molecules showed Human Hepatotoxicity. Drug Induced Liver Injury was seen. Maximum Recommended Daily Dose, AMES Toxicity, Rat Oral Acute Toxicity was shown with all the polymers. None of the molecules showed Carcinogenicity and Respiratory Toxicity. An environmental toxicity profile (Bio concentration factors, IGC₅₀, LC₅₀FM, and LC₅₀DM) of designed molecules are demonstrated in Table 6. An environmental toxicity profile of the molecules were optimum and within the acceptable range.

Commound name	Physicochemical Property									
compound name	Molecular Weight	Volume	nHA	nHD	nRot	TPSA	logS	logP		
NL	438.22	458.603	7	1	6	87.66	-5.961	3.695		
Gymnemanol	490.37	525.968	5	5	2	101.15	-3.914	3.614		
Gymnemasaponin_V	1122.58	1073.861	24	16	14	397.52	-2.741	0.402		
Gymnemasin_A	910.49	900.461	17	10	11	282.59	-3.558	1.976		
Gymnemic acid_I_	820.46	828.122	14	7	10	229.74	-4.008	2.903		
Gymnemoside_A	806.45	810.826	14	7	10	229.74	-4.017	2.76		
Gymnestrogenin	518.4	560.56	5	5	2	101.15	-3.817	3.319		
Lupeol	426.39	490.807	1	1	1	20.23	-6.643	6.753		
Quercitol	164.07	147.727	5	5	0	101.15	-0.08	-2.116		
Stigmasterol	412.37	479.432	1	1	5	20.23	-7.059	6.909		

Table 1. Lipinski rule of 5 and Veber's rule calculated for molecules

	Medicinal Chemistry									
Compound name	QED	NPscore	Lipinski Rule	Pfizer Rule	GSK Rule	Golden Triangle	Chelator Rule			
NL	0.478	-1.033	Accepted	Accepted	Rejected	Accepted	0			
Gymnemanol	0.376	3.008	Accepted	Accepted	Rejected	Accepted	0			
Gymnemasaponin_V	0.075	1.797	Rejected	Accepted	Rejected	Rejected	0			
Gymnemasin_A	0.064	2.776	Rejected	Accepted	Rejected	Rejected	0			
Gymnemic acid_I_	0.081	2.918	Rejected	Accepted	Rejected	Rejected	0			
Gymnemoside_A	0.081	3.13	Rejected	Accepted	Rejected	Rejected	0			
Gymnestrogenin	0.337	2.603	Accepted	Accepted	Rejected	Rejected	0			
Lupeol	0.421	3.054	Accepted	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	0			
Quercitol	0.266	1.517	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted	Rejected	0			
Stigmasterol_	0.457	2.802	Accepted	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	0			

Table 2: Drug-likeness properties of designed derivatives

Table 3: An absorption parameters of developed molecules

	Absorption							
Compound name	Caco-2 Permeability	MDCK Permeability	Pgp-inhibitor	Pgp-substrate	HIA	F20%	F30%	
NL	-5.074	2.4e-05	0.997	0.989	0.04	0.003	0.364	
Gymnemanol	-5.09	1.4e-05	0.011	0.009	0.009	0.929	0.121	
Gymnemasaponin_V	-6.406	0.000102	0.000102	0.058	0.999	0.999	1.0	
Gymnemasin_A	-5.953	7.3e-05	0.984	0.063	0.919	0.361	0.975	
Gymnemic acid_I_	-5.549	6.2e-05	0.959	0.074	0.783	0.109	0.841	
Gymnemoside_A	-5.571	6.6e-05	0.921	0.06	0.828	0.567	0.907	
Gymnestrogenin	-5.272	9e-06	0.079	0.005	0.014	0.956	0.889	
Lupeol	-5.095	1.3e-05	0.031	0.0	0.003	0.731	0.877	
Quercitol	-5.264	0.00052	0.002	0.652	0.807	0.012	0.969	
Stigmasterol_	-4.623	1.5e-05	0.287	0.019	0.021	0.953	0.599	

Table 4: Distribution and metabolism profile of developed molecules

	Distribution				Metabolism									
					CYP	CYP1A2 CYP2C19				CYP2C9 CYP			CYP	'3A4
Compound name	РРВ(%)	VD	BBB Penetration	Fu	Inhibitor	substrate	Inhibitor	substrate	Inhibitor	substrate	Inhibitor	substrate	Inhibitor	substrate
NL	97.3 6	0.76 5	0.19 8	1.29 9	0.79	0.25 1	0.94 9	0.05 8	0.93 9	0.86 8	0.62 8	0.07 2	0.92 4	0.62 9
Gymnemanol	87.5 0	0.73 5	0.48 4	11.5 3	0.009	0.11 2	0.00 5	0.79 7	0.06 2	0.05 3	0.00 3	0.09 3	0.72 8	0.23 2
Gymnemasaponi n_V	55.3 8	- 0.38 2	0.1	17.9 0	0.0	0.08 3	0.0	0.06 2	0.0	0.00 1	0.0	0.03 3	0.04	0.00 2
Gymnemasin_A	79.5 5	0.42 8	0.12 7	7.20 1	0.001	0.06 2	0.00 1	0.24	0.00 2	0.01 7	0.00	0.05 6	0.10 3	0.02 5
Gymnemic acid_I_	83.3 0	0.39	0.06 6	5.64 0	0.003	0.09	0.00 2	0.42 6	0.01 2	0.02 7	0.00 6	0.06 1	0.12 2	0.06
Gymnemoside_A	86.0 3	0.40 6	0.07 7	6.26 6	0.000 2	0.07 1	0.00 2	0.37 1	0.01 6	0.03 6	0.01 2	0.07 7	0.15 9	0.08
Gymnestrogenin	85.4 6	0.77 6	0.53 5	12.4 7	0.002	0.22 8	0.01	0.90 1	0.06 7	0.04	0.00 3	0.02 6	0.89 3	0.69 4
Lupeol	98.4 6	1.45 4	0.34	1.79 1	0.039	0.59 7	0.07 9	0.95 4	0.09 9	0.61 5	0.07 1	0.90 2	0.24 9	0.45 2
Quercitol	11.0 3	0.50 6	0.37 7	76.0 2	0.039	0.04	0.01	0.12 5	0.00 1	0.65 4	0.00	0.11 7	0.00 4	0.01 4
Stigmasterol_	91.4 5	2.18 3	0.51 6	1.03 8	0.056	0.66 2	0.11	0.95	0.14 5	0.2	0.07 8	0.84 9	0.5	0.83 5

	etion	Toxicity										
Compound name	CL	T1/2	H-HT	DILI	AMES Toxicity	Rat Oral Acute Toxicity	FDAMDD	Skin Sensitization	Carcinogenci ty	Eye Corrosion	Eye Irritation	Respiratory Toxicity
NL	1.063	0.042	0.811	0.88	0.983	0.257	0.891	0.804	0.064	0.016	0.003	0.008
Gymnemanol	4.875	0.609	0.064	0.012	0.004	0.958	0.994	0.323	0.27	0.021	0.019	0.991
Gymnemasaponin_V	-0.099	0.84	0.126	0.004	0.061	0.097	0.544	0.316	0.029	0.003	0.007	0.369
Gymnemasin_A	0.726	0.765	0.245	0.084	0.037	0.051	0.981	0.203	0.093	0.003	0.007	0.912
Gymnemic acid_I_	1.067	0.712	0.274	0.34	0.018	0.143	0.944	0.169	0.025	0.003	0.008	0.751
Gymnemoside_A	1.187	0.678	0.387	0.23	0.029	0.108	0.934	0.047	0.033	0.003	0.008	0.573
Gymnestrogenin	3.841	0.244	0.625	0.009	0.009	0.888	0.986	0.325	0.773	0.006	0.016	0.988
Lupeol	4.871	0.049	0.091	0.081	0.001	0.206	0.926	0.608	0.005	0.932	0.593	0.621
Quercitol	1.531	0.679	0.034	0.044	0.065	0.014	0.004	0.135	0.018	0.012	0.805	0.064
Stigmasterol_	4.851	0.023	0.145	0.124	0.01	0.454	0.961	0.266	0.032	0.003	0.015	0.415

Table 5: Excretion and toxicity profile of developed molecules

Table 6: Environmental toxicity profile of designed molecules

	Environmental toxicity							
Compound name	Bioconcentration Factors IGC50		LC50FM	LC50DM				
NL	2.281	4.423	3.403	5.095				
Gymnemanol	0.718	4.492	5.919	6.621				
Gymnemasaponin_V	1.276	4.693	5.377	6.01				
Gymnemasin_A	0.701	4.518	5.695	6.04				
Gymnemic acid_I_	0.934	5.091	6.608	6.727				
Gymnemoside_A	0.755	4.762	6.11	6.521				
Gymnestrogenin	0.737	3.844	4.648	5.451				
Lupeol	2.804	5.746	7.098	6.983				
Quercitol	0.226	0.89	1.1	2.769				
Stigmasterol_	3.147	5.142	6.572	6.704				

Molecular Docking Studies

The molecular interactions of the titled compounds are exemplified in Table 7. Table 8 depicts the most potent compounds' 2D-and 3D-docking orientations. The binding affinities of phytoconstituents with the enzymes with crystal structure **4yay** are discussed in the below section.

Native Ligand exhibited -11 kcal/mol of binding affinity and formed two conventional hydrogen bonds with Ala21 and Trp84. It also formed electrostatic and hydrophobic interactions (Pi-Anion, Pi-pi stacked, and Pi-alkyl) with Asp, Tyr92, Trp84, Val108, and Ile288. Gymnemanol showed docking score of -9.3 kcal/mol and formed four conventional hydrogen bonds with Cys180 and Arg167. Gymnemasaponin_V exhibited -10.8 binding affinity and formed hydrogen bonds (Conventional hydrogen bond and carbon hydrogen bond) with Cys18, Asp281, Asp263, Phe182, Arg167, Gln267, His256, Ser105 and Ala181. Gymnemasin_A exhibited -10.4 kcal/mol of binding affinity and formed three conventional hydrogen bonds and two carbon hydrogen bonds with Asp263, Cys18, Lys20, Ser15, Val108, Ile288, Phe77 and Tyr292. Gymnemic acid_I showed -10 kcal/mol of binding affinity and formed five hydrogen bonds (conventional hydrogen bond and carbon hydrogen bond) with Leu13, Cys18, Lys20, Arg167, and Ser15. It also formed hydrophobic Interactions (Pi-sigma) with Trp84.

Gymnemoside_A exhibited -8.9 kcal/mol of binding affinity and formed eight conventional hydrogen bonds with Cys18, Asp281, His256, Lys20, Ala21, and Tyr92. It also formed hydrophobic Interactions (Pi-Sigma) with Tyr92. Gymnestrogenin showed -9.6 kcal/mol of binding affinity and formed three hydrogen bonds (Conventional and carbon hydrogen bonds) with Cys18 and Pro19. It also formed hydrophobic Interactions with Tyr92. Lupeol_259846 exhibited -9.8 kcal/mol of binding affinity and formed one conventional hydrogen bond with Gln267. Quercitol exhibited docking score of -4.7 kcal/mol and formed one conventional hydrogen bond with Arg167. It also formed hydrophobic Interactions (Pi-pi stacked, Pi-alkyl) Trp84, Val108, Ile288. Stigmasterol showed -10.3 kcal/mol of binding affinity and formed hydrophobic Interactions (Pi-sigma, Alkyl, Pi-alkyl) with Tyr92, Trp84, Val179, Val108, Ile288, Met284, Pro285, Tyr35, Trp84 and Tyr92. Out of docked phytoconstituents, Gymnemasaponin-V, Gymnemasin-A,

Gymnemic acid-I, and Stigmasterol found to be more potent than others. They inhibited the ACE significantly and can modulate its activity which can be result in lowering of blood pressure.

Active amino	Bond	Bond Type	Bond category	Ligands	Docking
acids	length		NI	energy	score
ΔΙ Δ21	2 54263	Hydrogen	NL Conventional Hydrogen	692 35	-11
TRP84	2.66233	Bond	Bond	072.33	11
ASP281	4.55309	Electrostatic	Pi-Anion		
TYR92	3.85004	Hydrophobic	Pi-Pi Stacked		
TRP84	3.90583				
TRP84	4.0323				
VAL108	4.74971		Pi-Alkyl		
ILE288	4.97557				
ILE288	5.473				
	0.40044	(lymnemanol	0.65.40	
CYS180	2.40311	Hydrogen	Conventional Hydrogen Bond	965.18	-9.3
	2.88409	Donu	Bolid		
	1.8603				
ARG167	2.37925				
CVC10	2 1 5 0 9 9	Gym	nemasaponin-V	071 01	10.0
460201	2.13088	Bond	Bond	021.01	-10.0
ASP281	2.4214				
ASP263	2.62656	-			
ASP263	2.62962				
PHE182	2.32531				
	2.35018				
ASP263	1.98957				
ARG167	2.95648				
GLN267	2.16173				
HIS256	3.6103		Carbon Hydrogen Bond		
SER105	3.67666				
ALA181	3.43372				
		Gy	ymnemasin-A		
ASP263	2.27182	Hydrogen	Conventional Hydrogen	847.37	-10.4
CYS18	2.28703	Bond	Bond		
LYS20	2.0451				
SER15	3.55133		Carbon Hydrogen Bond		
SER15	3.5314				
VAL108	4.28831	Hydrophobic	Alkyl		
ILE288	4.23766				
PHE77	4.87218		Pi-Alkyl		
TYR292	4.13672				
		Gy	mnemic acid-I		
LEU13	1.92618	Hydrogen	Conventional Hydrogen	962.63	-10
CYS18	2.45668	Bond	Bond		
LYS20	2.25491]			
ARG167	2.06373]			

Table 7. The active amino residues, bond length, bond category, bond type, ligand energies, and docking scores

-8.9
-8.9
-8.9
-8.9
-8.9
-9.6
-9.8
<u> </u>
-4.7
-10.3









CONCLUSION

Angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors have been observed to significantly decrease mean arterial blood pressure, systolic blood pressure, and diastolic blood pressure in individuals with both hypertension and normotension. Numerous randomised controlled trials have evaluated the effectiveness of angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors in treating hypertension. The investigation of botanical specimens for the purpose of identifying potential therapeutic agents is a crucial field of inquiry and a key driver of modern healthcare. Numerous studies have documented the efficacy of Gymnema sylvestre in treating a variety of conditions, such as arthritis, diuretic, anaemia, osteoporosis, hypercholesterolemia, cardiopathy, asthma, constipation, microbial infections, indigestion, and as an anti-inflammatory agent. The current study aims to explore the primary phytoconstituents found in *Gymnema sylvestre* and their potential as inhibitors of angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE). The phytoconstituents that were chosen underwent in silico ADMET analysis and subsequent computational analysis. Among the phytoconstituents that were docked, Gymnema saponin-V, Gymnemasin-A, Gymnemic acid-I, and Stigmasterol were identified as exhibiting greater potency compared to the remaining compounds. The ACE was significantly inhibited by the compound under investigation, potentially leading to a modulation of its activity and subsequent reduction in blood pressure. Thus, based on the findings of our study, it can be inferred that utilizing the phytoconstituents of Gymnema sylvestre as a lead nucleus for the development of novel ACE inhibitors has the potential to yield numerous potent molecules.

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