

IN-SILICO DESIGN, SYNTHESIS AND ANTI-MICROBIAL EVALUATION OF 2,4,6-TRISUBSTITUTED 1,3,5-TRIAZINE-BASED ALDEHYDE DERIVATIVES

ABSTRACT

Background & Objective: Cancer is a serious public health concern, particularly in developing countries. The current investigation was to discover novel EGFR and aromatase inhibitors utilizing ligand- and structure-based drug development techniques. This study also focuses on the antimicrobial action of the designed compounds. *In vitro* Anti-microbial evaluation of the designed compounds was assessed.

Materials and Methods: A series of triazine-based aldehyde substituted derivatives were designed and molecular docking studies were carried out against Aromatase inhibitors, HER-2, Dihydrofolate reductase targets by using Autodock 1.5.6. The designed compounds were synthesized by condensing triazine with various aldehydes and characterised using Mass spectrometry. *In vitro* Antimicrobial activity was studied for the synthesized compounds against the standard drug Ampicillin.

Results and Discussion: *In silico* study revealed that the designed compound had a 3D structure that is comparable to other well-studied anti breast cancer proteins. According to molecular docking, proteins exhibit high binding energy to enzymes. Minimum inhibitory concentration validated the efficiency of the designed compounds utilised for antibacterial activity testing. Antimicrobial susceptibility tests revealed that the compounds have an antimicrobial action.

Conclusion: The present study suggests that the synthesized compounds possessing drug-like properties as a plausible therapeutic candidate against microbial activity. However, the designed compounds could be employed as inhibitors of EGFR and aromatase after passing through *in vivo* and *in vitro* evaluation.

Keywords: Breast cancer, Triazine, Molecular docking, Aromatase, Pharmacological evaluation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Breast cancer is one of the most frequent cancer in women and, after lung cancer, it is the second most serious disease in terms of mortality [1]. Breast cancer patient cases are growing in both developed and developing nations

[2]. It is anticipated that by 2030, there would be 26 million new cases of cancer and 17 million deaths due to cancer worldwide [3]. Though the majority of breast cancers remain benign and treatable with surgery, one-quarter of these cancers have a dormant and insidious nature, developing slowly but metastasizing quickly. Current medicines considerably slow tumour development, but recurrence is unavoidable, resulting in high fatality rates. Breast cancer cell function is seeded in its inception. Embryonic mammary cells have motile and invasive capabilities, and mammary development is characterized by cell mobility and alterations in cell contact. Several measures, such as preventative behaviours in general and screening programs, are critical in terms of reducing the incidence rate of breast cancer and implementing early treatment. Currently, that Breast Health Global Initiative (BHGI) is in charge of developing appropriate recommendations and ways to give the most adequate breast cancer control worldwide. We focused on female breast cancer especially in the present study since, as previously said, it is now the most common disease among females [4,5]. Breast cancer patients have benefitted tremendously from surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, hormone treatment, and gene-targeted therapy. Current therapy and detection technologies have improved, contributing to a high rate of survival [6]. Breast cancer develops when the normal cells in the tissue of the breast expand and alter, becoming a mass of cells known as a tumor. The tumor that forms can be either benign or malignant. Breast cancer has several phases that reflect how the disease has progressed. Stages comprise I, II, and III [7]. Addressed treatment targeting the oestrogen receptor is important in systemic therapy; endocrine resistance pathways have also been addressed. Biological treatment targeting the HER2 receptor has recently been developed, as

a combination of antibody drug conjugates linking cytotoxic therapy to HER2 antibodies. The new efficient systemic medicines resulted in significant increases in survival, and patients with metastases are expected to live longer [8]. There are several pharmacologically active nitrogen-containing heterocyclic compounds, the most important of which being s-Triazine. It has anti-bacterial, anti-tubercular, anti-fungal, anti-malarial, antiplasmodial, antiviral, anticancer, respiratory stimulant, CNS depressant, and herbicidal properties, among others [9]. Different triazine moiety substitutions at different positions have been shown to have varied activities. Many researchers (1,3,5) advocate for the successive incorporation of different piperazine and piperidine substituents into the triazine ring [9]. Medical microbiology is the field of research that focuses on understanding how to prevent and treat diseases brought on by microbes. In order to tackle microbial resistance, there has been an increasing interest in investigating and creating novel antimicrobial agents from different sources. As a result, approaches for screening and measuring antimicrobial activity have received more attention

[10]. A logical and promising area of research in contemporary medicinal chemistry is the design of novel small molecules that resemble drugs and are based on pharmacologically active scaffolds [11]. In order to create innovative treatments compounds with a wide range of pharmacological actions, medicinal chemists have combined a number of biologically active pharmacophores to create a number of different molecules [12, 13]. One of the most fundamental and significant methods for drug discovery has been molecular docking studies. It enables the prediction of the molecular interactions that bind a protein to a ligand and keep them together [14]. Drug development is a difficult process, and choosing the proper lead molecule is critical to the project's overall success. According to a study conducted by the Tufts Center for the Study of Medicine Development, the cost of developing and bringing a new medicine to market has climbed by over 145% in the previous decade [15]. Moreover, while the average amount of time to get a medicine to clinical trials has been lowered, the success percentage of pharmaceuticals receiving FDA clearance has declined to 12% [15]. By guiding experimental research toward ideal molecules more rapidly, computer-aided drug design (CADD) has made it possible to cut the costs and time associated with drug development.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The reagents and solvents utilized in the synthesis were acquired from Supra Scientific Lab, and they were employed without additional purification. The melting points of synthesized compounds were determined using a precision melting point apparatus LH-109, which is a research-grade instrument equipped with a 128×64 graphical LCD display and an icon-based navigation menu. Thin-layer chromatography was carried out on pre-coated aluminum sheets. Various solvent systems were employed, and the spots were identified using UV light.

2.1 Synthesis of 4,6-dichloro-N-(pyridin-4-yl)-1,3,5-triazine-2-amine

A mixture of 2, 4, 6-trichloro 1,3,5-triazine (0.01 mol) in acetone with water ratio (1:1) and 4-aminopyridine (0.01 mol) was taken in a conical flask. To this mixture, 10% sodium carbonate was added drop-wise at 0-10°C temperature. The solution was stirred for 2h. The reaction mixture was then poured into crushed ice with constant stirring. The solid formed was filtered, washed with water, dried and recrystallized using acetone. Molecular formula C₈H₅Cl₂N₅, Molecular weight 242.0648 g/mol, Percentage yield 78%, R_f value 0.7, Melting point 150°C-155°C.

2.2 Synthesis of 4-chloro-N-(pyridin-4-yl)-6-(pyridin-4-yloxy)-1,3,5-triazine-2-amine

A mixture of 4,6-dichloro-N-(pyridin-4-yl)-1,3,5-triazin-2-amine (0.01 mol) in acetone with water ratio (1:1) and 4-hydroxypyridine (0.01 mol) was taken in a conical flask. To this mixture, 10% sodium carbonate was added drop-wise at room temperature and was stirred for 3hr. The reaction mixture was then poured onto crushed ice with constant stirring. The solid obtained was filtered, washed with water and recrystallized from acetone. Molecular formula C₁₃H₉ClN₆O, Molecular weight 300.031 g/mol, Percentage yield 64%, R_f value 0.8, Melting point 148°C-153°C.

2.3 Synthesis of 1-(4-{[4-phenoxy-6-(pyridin-4-ylamino)-1,3,5-triazine-2-yl]amino}phenyl)ethanone

A mixture of 4-chloro-*N*-(pyridin-4-yl)-6-(pyridin-4-yloxy)-1,3,5-triazin-2-amine (0.01 mole) and 4-aminoacetophenone (0.01 mole) were dissolved in acetone with water ratio (1:1) and the reaction mixture was refluxed for 12 hr. sodium carbonate 10% solution was added to neutralize the reaction mixture and it poured into crushed ice. The solid separated out was filtered, washed with water and purified by recrystallization. Molecular formula C₂₁H₁₇N₇O₂, Molecular weight 399.4058g/mol, Percentage yield 60, R f value 1.04, Melting point 171°C -176°C.

2.4 Synthesis of (2*Z*)-3-phenyl-1-[4-({4-[(pyridine-4-yl)amino]-6-(pyridine-4-yloxy)-1,3,5-triazine-2-yl}amino)phenyl]prop-2-en-1-one

A mixture of 1-[4-({4-[(pyridine-4-yl)-6-(pyridine-4-yloxy)-1,3,5-triazine]phenyl]ethan-1-one (0.01 mole) and substituted aromatic aldehyde (Benz aldehyde) (0.01 mole) was taken in 30ml DMF 40% KOH was added into the reaction mixture. The reaction mixture was stirred for 2 hr and later overnight. Above reaction mixture was poured into ice water, neutralized with HCL, filter, washed with water, and purified by recrystallization from methanol to yield product (1) compound the homogeneity of compounds was checked by TLC. Molecular formula C₂₈H₂₁N₇O₂, Molecular weight 487.5120g/mol, Percentage yield 56%, R f value 0.9.

2.5 Synthesis of 2-*N*-[4-(2-aminopyrimidin-4-yl)phenyl]-4-*N*-(pyridin-4-yl)-6-(pyridin-4-yloxy)-1,3,5-triazine-2,4-diamine

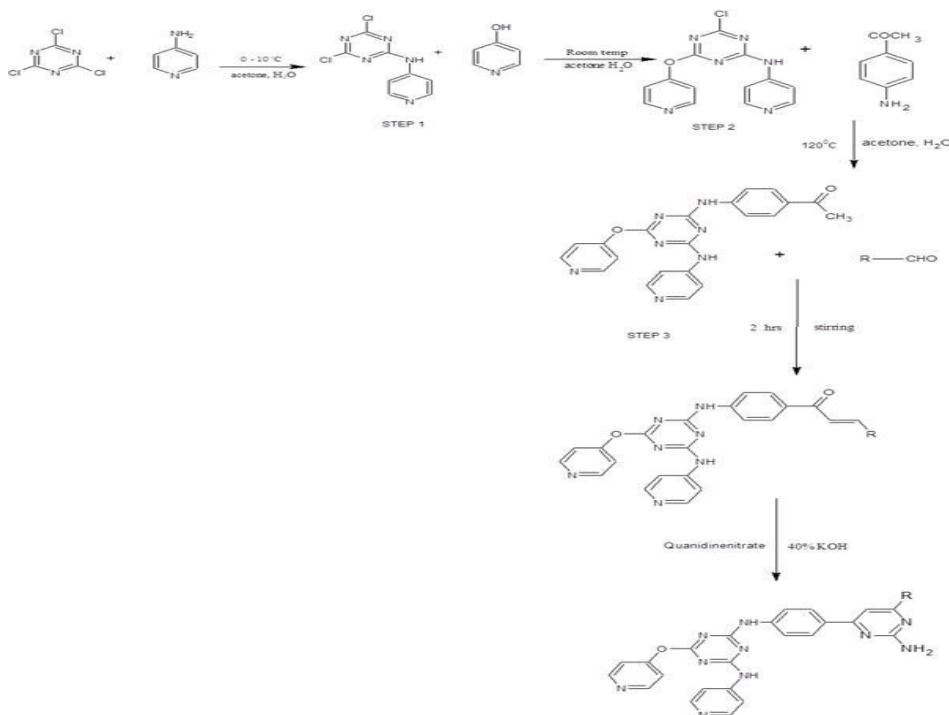


Fig. 1. SCHEME FOR THE SYNTHESIS OF DESIGNED DERIVATIVES

A mixture of (2*Z*)-3-phenyl-1-[4-({4-[(pyridine-4-yl)amino]-6-(pyridine-4-yloxy)-1,3,5-triazine-

2-yl}amino)phenyl]prop-2-en-1-one was taken in 25 mL of dioxigenanidinenitrate (0.01 mole) and 40% KOH (5 mL) was added and the mixture refluxed for 15 hr. then the reaction mixture was cooled and poured into ice cold water, filtered, dried and then purified by recrystallization from alcohol to give the final product.

2.6 PROPOSED SCHEME DETAILS

2.6.1 ANTIBACTERIAL ACTIVITY

The compounds we synthesized (TZ1-TZ3) were subjected to testing against both gram-positive bacterial strains, which include *B. subtilis* and *S. aureus* (MTCC-96), as well as three gram-negative strains, specifically *E. coli* (MTCC-443) and *P. aeruginosa* (MTCC-424). We followed the standard protocol for the agar well diffusion method on Mueller-Hinton agar (MHA). To initiate the testing, we selected isolated colonies from cultures grown on agar plates for 18 to 24 hours, typically using a non-selective medium like blood agar. In aseptic conditions, we punched holes with diameters ranging from 6 to 8 mm, positioning them at a distance of 25 mm apart from each other. Subsequently, we introduced 10 μ L volumes of the tested compounds dissolved in DMSO into these wells. Afterward, the plates were incubated at 37°C for a duration of 24 hours. To ensure that the solvent did not hinder bacterial growth, we also screened a DMSO control (at a concentration of 5% v/v). We measured the inhibition zones with precision to the nearest whole millimeter using a meter ruler, and we conducted these experiments multiple times for consistency. Furthermore, we determined the Minimum Inhibitory Concentration (MIC) values using the agar dilution method. The MIC represents the lowest concentration at which bacterial growth is inhibited. For this purpose, we diluted the stock solution to various concentrations, including 200, 400, 600, 800, and 1000 μ g/mL.

2.7 MOLECULAR DOCKING

Docking is a method which predicts the preferred orientation of one molecule to a second molecule when bound to each other to form a stable complex in three dimensional spaces. Auto dock is a software used for modeling flexible small molecule such as drug molecule binding to receptor proteins. ADT is used to prepare, run and analyse the docking stimulation, in addition to its several features necessary for modeling studies.

Building the receptor: In this step the 3D structure of the receptor should be downloaded from PDB and modified. This should include removal of water molecules from the cavity, stabilizing charges, filling in the missing residue, generation of side chain etc., according to the parameters available. After modification the receptor should be biologically active and stable.

Identification of active site: After the receptor is built, the active site within the receptor should be identified. The receptor may have many active sites but the one of the interests should be selected.

Ligand preparation: Ligand can be obtained from various databases like ZINC, PubChem or can be sketched using tools like chemsketch. While selecting the ligand, the Lipinski rule of 5 should be applied. The rule is very important for drug development where the pharmacologically active lead structure is optimized stepwise

for increased activity and selectivity as well as drug-like properties.

Docking: This is a last step, where the ligand is docked into the receptor and the interaction is checked. The scoring function generates depending on which ligand with the best fit was selected.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

In this current study, we digitally designed a collection of small chemical libraries consisting of amino pyrimidine derivatives with triazine-based aldehyde substitutions. Three compounds were synthesized by the condensation of amino pyrimidine with different aldehydes, specifically chlorobenzaldehyde, ortho-nitrobenzaldehyde, and dimethylaminobenzaldehyde. The completion of these reactions was verified through Thin-

Layer Chromatography (TLC) using a mobile phase consisting of chloroform and methanol in an 8:2 ratio. The spots were

visualized using a UV chamber. The structure of the synthesized compound was characterized by MASS spectroscopy and results were found to be consistent with the predicted structure.

To sum up, the correlation shown between docking scores and inhibition zones for dimethylaminobenzaldehyde, ortho-nitrobenzaldehyde, and chlorobenzaldehyde shows the significance of chemical structure in determining antimicrobial action. The interaction between electron-donating and electron-withdrawing groups greatly affects binding affinity as well as chemical reactivity. Subsequent investigations ought to concentrate on clarifying particular modes of action for these substances by means of experimental verification in conjunction with computational modeling.

3.1 IN-VITRO ANTIBACTERIAL ACTIVITY

A synthesized series of triazine derivatives was evaluated for their antibacterial activity through an in vitro screening method, specifically the agar well diffusion technique on Mueller Hinton agar. The assessment encompassed the inhibition of the growth of selected pathogens, including eight Gram-positive bacterial strains (such as *B. subtilis* and *S. aureus*) and three Gram-negative bacterial strains (namely *E. coli*, *P. aeruginosa*, and *K. pneumonia*). The percentage of inhibition against both Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacteria is presented in a table. The size of the inhibition zones was measured in millimeters using the established agar well diffusion method. These values were compared against a control (Ampicillin), which was prepared in the same manner with DMSO as the solvent. Additionally, the minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) values were determined using the agar dilution method. The various features in synthesized compounds like triazine units at the central and inclusion of various benzaldehydes on the terminal amino pyrimidine unit and 4,6-branching at the central triazine substitution etc., showed highest proximity for molecular docking. *In-silico* study showed that the compounds 2 and 3 were found to possess very good antimicrobial. From the Antibiotic susceptibility, MIC for compound **2B** was found to be 1000 µg/mL against *K. pneumonia*

Table 1. Anti-bacterial Susceptibility test for synthesized compounds

Code	Zone of Inhibition (in mm) at 10 mg/10 ml				
	Gram positive		Gram negative		
	<i>B. Subtilis</i>	<i>S. aureus</i>	<i>E. Coli</i>	<i>K. pneumoniae</i>	<i>P. aeruginosa</i>
Compound TZ1	14	16	13	10	14
Compound TZ2	17	18	21	15	23
Compound TZ3	13	15	19	21	16
Ampicillin	25	26	27	25	19

MINIMUM INHIBITORY CONCENTRATION OF SYNTHESIZED COMPOUNDS

3.2 Estimation of MIC by agar dilution method

Minimum inhibitory concentrations (MICs) were determined by agar dilution technique. The procedure for determining the Minimum Inhibitory Concentration (MIC) is identical to the method used for measuring the Zone of Inhibition. Based on the results obtained from the Zone of Inhibition assay, it was observed that compound 2A exhibited superior activity when compared to the other synthesized compounds. As a result, compound 2A was selected for further investigation in Minimum Inhibitory Concentration (MIC) studies against *Klebsiella pneumoniae*. Various concentrations, including 200 µg/mL, 400 µg/mL, 600 µg/mL, 800 µg/mL, and 1000 µg/mL, were employed in these MIC studies. The result of MIC was tabulated in table and the figure represented the zone of inhibition of compound at various concentrations.

Table 2. Minimum Inhibitory concentration of synthesized compounds

Tested compound	Zone of Inhibition (in mm)				
	200 µg/ml	400 µg/ml	600 µg/ml	800 µg/ml	1000 µg/ml
<i>Klebsiella pneumoniae</i>					
Compound	15	16	19	20	22

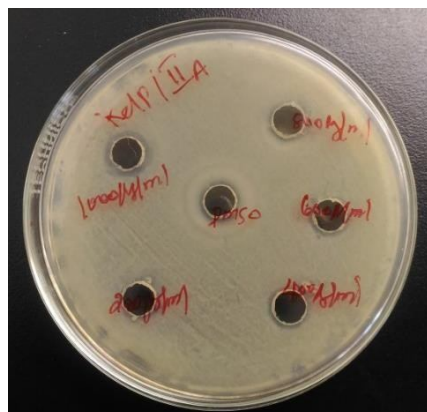


Fig. 2. Minimum Inhibitory concentration of synthesized compounds

3.3 MOLECULAR DOCKING

The synthesized compounds underwent preliminary Quantitative Structure-Activity Relationship (QSAR) studies using MOLINSPIRATION software, and the results are provided in the table. Some of the synthesized compounds adhered to Lipinski's Rule. Furthermore, docking studies were conducted for all the designed compounds employing AUTODOCK version 1.5.6 software. These studies aimed to predict the interactions between the designed ligands and the anti-cancer enzyme Dihydrofolate reductase. In regard to Aromatase cytochrome P450, the binding energies of the compounds fell within the range of -11.4 to -11.7. Notably, compound TZ2 exhibited the highest binding affinity with a score of -11.74, surpassing the standard LETROZOLE, which had a binding energy of -8.34. For the HER2 (erbb2) receptor, the binding energies of the compounds varied from -8.0 to -10.0. Notably, compound TZ3 displayed the highest binding affinity with a score of -10.31, outperforming the standard NERATINIB, which had a binding energy of -6.38. In the case of Dihydrofolate reductase, the binding energies of the compounds ranged from -13.2 to -13.4. Remarkably, compound TZ2 exhibited the highest binding affinity with a score of -13.48, surpassing the standard METHOTREXATE, which had a binding energy of -10.81. All of the synthesized compounds demonstrated favorable binding energy against various enzymes. Regarding the ADME properties, the designed compounds were evaluated using SWISSADME software. These compounds were found to be polar with good to moderate water solubility, suggesting that they are likely to possess good oral absorption and bioavailability. Furthermore, the toxicity profiles of all the designed compounds were assessed using the pKCSM web server. Encouragingly, none of the synthesized compounds were found to exhibit Amestoxicity. However, it's worth noting that all three compounds displayed hepatotoxicity in the study. This impl

ies that further investigation and potential modifications may be necessary to mitigate this adverse effect while preserving the desired therapeutic properties.

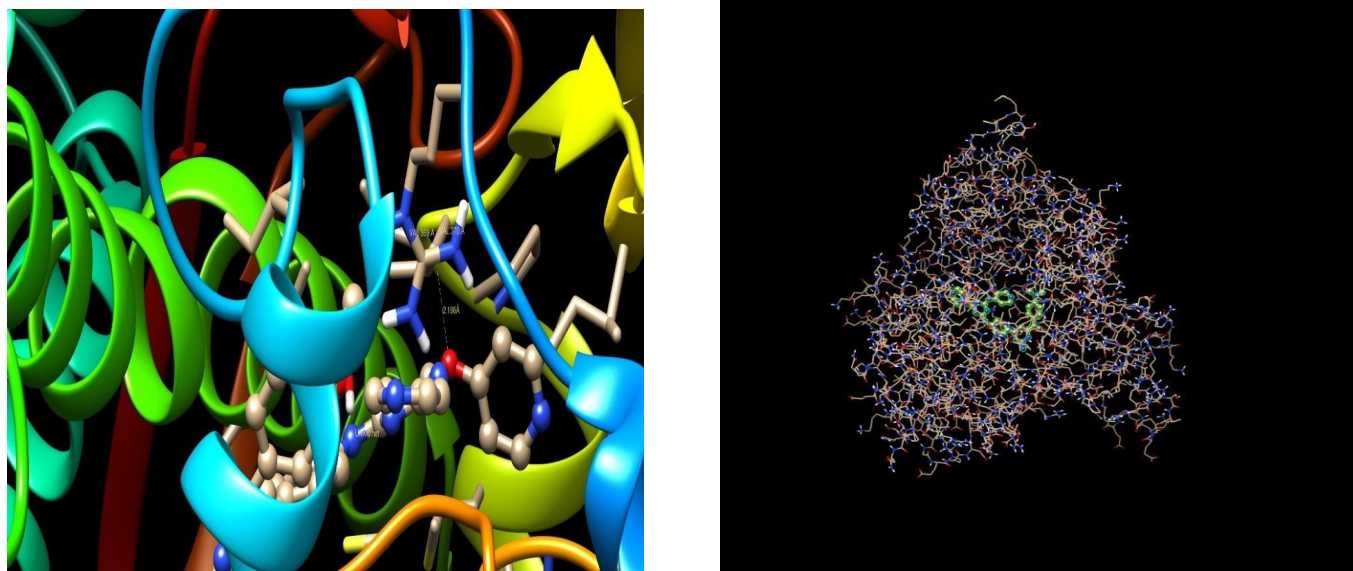


Fig. 3.

Docked poses of the synthesized triazine (TZ3) in the active site of Target protein (3EQM)

Table – 3: Energy Minimalization

COMPOUND CODE	LIGAND EFFICIENCY	INHIBITORY CONSTANT	INTERMOLE ENERGY	Vdw-hb-DESOLVATION ENERGY	BINDING ENERGY
TZ13 EQM	-0.27	4.19	-14.11	-14.49	-11.43
TZ2	0.26	2.47	-14.73	-15.36	-11.74
TZ3	-0.26	3.79	-14.47	-15.03	-11.49

STANDARD	- 0. 38	776. 48	-9.23	-9.27	-8.34
TZ13 PP0	- 0. 2	667. 68	-11.11	-10.51	-8.42
TZ2	- 0. 2	306. 38	-11.87	-10.45	-8.89
TZ3	- 0. 23	27.6 3	-13.29	-9.71	-10.31
STANDARD	- 0. 16	20.9 4	-9.37	-8.91	-6.38
TZ14 KAK	- 0. 32	188. 7	-15.95	-14.98	-13.27
TZ2	- 0. 3	132. 36	-16.46	-16.21	-13.48
TZ3	- 0. 3	150. 99	-16.38	-14.5	-13.4
STANDARD	-	12.0	-13.49	-11.82	-10.81

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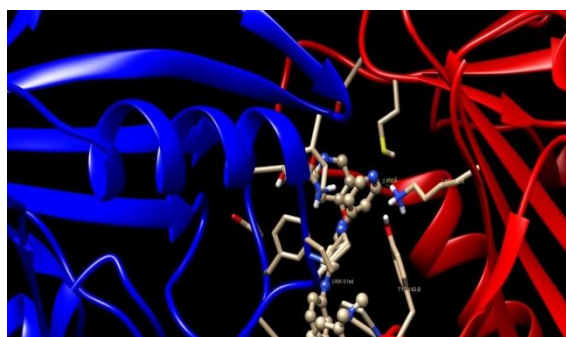
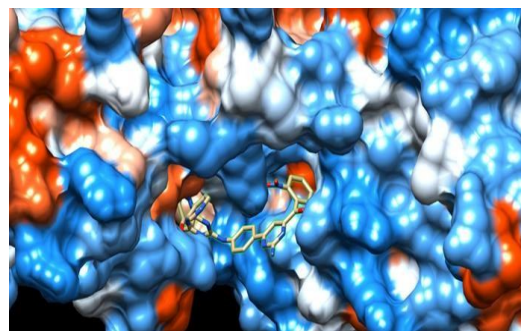
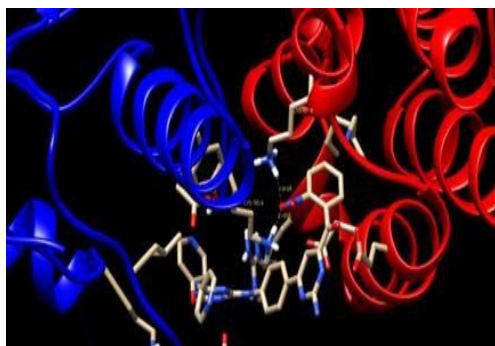


Figure- 4: docked poses of the synthesized triazine (TZ2) in the active site of Target protein (3PP0)

3.4 PRELIMINARY QSAR STUDIES

Table 4. DRUG LIKENESS PROPERTY USING MOLINSPIRATION WEB TOOL

Compound code	GPCRL LIGAND	IONCHANNE L MODULATO R	KINASE I N HIBITOR	NUCLEAR RECEPTOR LIGAND	ENZYME I N HIBITOR	PROTEASE INHIBITOR
TZ1	0.15	-0.54	0.32	-0.41	0.07	-0.07
TZ2	0.03	-0.78	0.15	-0.56	-0.11	-0.10

TZ3	-0.06	-0.79	0.05	-0.62	-0.15	-0.15
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Table 5. TOXICITY PROFILE USING pKCSM WEB TOOL

COMPOUND CODE	AMESTOXICITY	HEPATOTOXICITY	<i>T. PYROFORMIS</i> TOXICITY (log μ g/l)	MINNOW TOXICITY (logmM)
TZ1	NO	YES	0.285	0.948
TZ2	NO	YES	0.285	0.948
TZ3	NO	YES	0.285	-0.752

Table 6. Molecular property of Designed Compound- SWISSADME

Compound	Molecular Weight g/mol	Tpsa A ²	Log p	No. of Hydrogen Bond Acceptor	No. of Hydrogen Bond Donor	Water Solubility	GI Absorption	BBB Penetration
T21	491.54	112.03	3.39	5	4	Moderately Soluble	High	No
T22	487.51	109.03	3.31	4	4	Moderately Soluble	High	No
T23	516.51	162.68	3.80	9	3	Poorly Soluble	Low	No

4. CONCLUSION

In summary, the fusion of benzaldehydes with a compact triazine pharmacophore has yielded a fresh category of triazine derivatives. These compounds showcase notable antibacterial capabilities and demonstrate encouraging potential in molecular docking assessments against a crystalline structure. These outcomes further

inspire us to embark on an expanded synthetic exploration, with the objective of uncovering the Structure-Activity Relationship (SAR) within this fascinating group of compounds. Designed compounds possessing drug-like properties as a plausible therapeutic candidate against microbial activity. However, the designed compounds can be employed as inhibitors of EGFR and aromatase after passing through *in vivo* and *in vitro* evaluation.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interest.

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