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SMALL MOLECULES MODULATORS OF HEDGEHOG -GLI (Hh) PATHWAY AS POTENTIAL THER PEUTIC AGENTS

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the Degree of Bachelor of Pharmacy

DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACY JAYPEE UNIVERSITY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WAKNAGHAT



CONTENTS

Chapter No.	Topics	Page No.
	CERTIFICATE FROM SUPERVISOR	3
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	4
	SUMMARY	5
	LIST OF FIGURES	6
	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	7
1	INTRODUCTION	8
2	REVIEW OF LITERATURE	9-15
2.0	THE HEDGEHOG PATHWAY	10
2.0.1	REGULATION OF HEDGEHOG PATHWAY	10
2.0.2	HEDGEHOG PATHWAY(DOWNSTREAMING)	10
2.1	THE ROLE OF HEDGEHOG PATHWAY	11
2.2	Hedgehog IN DISEASE	11-12
2.3	Hedgehog Antagonist and Agonists Aims of the study	13
2.4	LATEST DEVELOPMENT	14-15
3	AIM OF PROJECT	16
4	MATERIALS AND METHODS	17
5	REACTION RESULT AND DISCUSSION	18-25
6	NMR SPECTRA	26-30
7	CONCLUSION	31
8	BIBLIOGRAPHY	32-34

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled "SYNTHESIS OF SMALL MOLECULES MODULATORS OF HEDGEHOG -GLI (Hh) PATHWAY AS POTENTIAL THEREPEUTIC AGENTS", submitted by Achyut Kathuria (091757) and Ramanuj Sharma(091756) in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Pharmacy to the Jaypee University of Information Technology, Waknaghat is a record of bonafide research work carried out by them under my supervision and guidance. This work has not been submitted partially or wholly to any other University or Institute for the award of this or any other degree or diploma.

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SUMMARY

The Hedgehog (Hh) signaling pathway plays an important role in the regulation of cell differentiation and organ formation during normal vertebrate embryonic development, ensuring that developing tissues attain their correct size, location, and cellular content. 13, 14

Hh pathway becomes inactive in most adult tissues; with the exception of role in tissue maintenance and repair. ¹³Inappropriate reactivation of the pathway in adult tissues has been linked to the development of several human cancers. ¹³ The Hh signaling pathway therefore represents a potential therapeutic target for new anticancer treatments. On the other hand, the Hh pathway agonists might have therapeutic role in neurodegenerative diseases and cerebral ischemia by neuroprotection and neuroregenration.

We designed and synthesized small molecules modulator of Hedgehog Gli (Hh) pathway as potential therapeutic agents based on a hit discovered during design of Hh-Gli pathway inhibitors.(Mahindroo*et al.* unpublished data) Different amines and benzoic acids were coupled to prepare eight compounds which were purified by column chromatography and characterized by proton NMR.

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

S.NO	FIGURE / TABLES	PAGE NO.	
1	HEDGEHOG PATHWAY THROUGH TRANSDUCTION	10	
2	HEDGEHOG DOWNREGULATION	10	
3	HEDGEHOG SIGNALING AND CANCER	12	
4	STEM CELLS AND CANCER	12	
5	HEDGEHOG AGONIST AND ANTAGONIST	13	
6	GENERAL REACTION CHART	19-20	

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

Hh-Hedgehog

Shh-Sonic Hedgehog

Ihh-Indian Hedgehog

Dhh-Desert Hedgehog

PNS-Peripheral Nervous System

CNS-Central Nervous System

Ptch-Patched

GNPS-Granule Neuron Precursors

Smo-Smoothend

CGNP-Cerebellar Granular Neuron Precursors

Ci-CubitusInterrutus

HSC-Hedgehog Signaling Complex

Fu-Fused

Sufu-Suppressor of Fused

NMR-Non Magnetic Resonance

TLC-Thin Layer Chromatography

TEA-Tri Ethyl Amine

DIPEA- Diisoporpyl ethyl amine

DMF-Di Methyl Formamide

HBTU-O-Benzotriazole-N, N, N, N-Tetra-Methyl-Uronium-Hexafluro-Phosphate

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.0.1 Glossary and Abbreviations:-

- <u>Hedgehog (Hh):</u> It belongs to the family of protein ligands that regulate cell proliferation and differentiation during embryonic development ^[2].
- <u>Smoothened (SMO)</u>: A seven-transmembrane GPCR (G-protein coupled receptors)-like protein that transmits the Hh signal upon stimulation, leading to activation of the Gli transcription factors.
- Glioma-associated oncogene (Gli): Gli1 is a protein originally isolated in human glioblastoma. Zinc finger protein Gli2 also known as Gli family zinc finger 2 is a protein that in humans is encoded by the GLI2gene. The protein encoded by this gene is a transcription factor. Zinc finger protein Gli3 is a protein that in humans is encoded by the GLI3gene. This gene encodes a protein that belongs to the type of zinc finger proteins subclass of the Gli family. They are characterized as DNA-binding transcription factors and are mediators of sonic hedgehog (Shh) signaling [2,4].
- Patched (PTCH): The Hh receptor, a 12-transmembrane protein found at the cell surface or in primary cilia that binds to Hh to initiate ligand-dependent signaling [2].
- Sonic Hedgehog (SHh): It is one of the three proteins in the mammalian signaling pathway family called hedgehog. SHh is the best studied ligandof the hedgehog signaling pathway. It plays a key role in regulating vertebrate organogenesis, such as in the growth of digits on limbs and organization of the brain.
- <u>INDIAN HEDGEHOG</u> (IHh): It is a protein which in humans is encoded by the IHh gene.
- <u>Desert Hedgehog(DHh):</u> It is a gene .The protein encoded by this gene is involved in cell signaling. It is named for the Desert Hedgehog.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 THE HEDGEHOG(Hh) PATHWAY

In a growing embryo, cells develop differently in the head or tail end of the embryo. The hedgehog pathwayhelps in forming segments which develop into different body parts. This pathway gives cells information needed to develop the embryo properly. Different parts of the embryo have different concentrations of hedgehog signaling proteins. The pathway also has role in repair in the adults. The pathway malfunctioning leads to diseases like basal cell carcinoma.[1]The pathway takes its name from its polypeptide ligand, an intercellular signaling molecule called Hedgehog (Hh) found in fruit flies of the genus Drosophila. Hedgehog, a Drosophila's segment polarity gene product, is involved in establishing the basis of the fly body plan. The hedgehog molecule is also important in embryogenesis and metamorphosis. This pathway is a major regulator of embryonic development. Mutations that decrease its activity have been associated with severe defects in nervous system development. Hedgehog continues to function in normal as well as disease dadult tissues, regulating both cell proliferation and the production of growth and angiogenic factors. Thus modulation of hedgehog signaling might provide therapeutics for neural diseases, including neurodegenerative disorders; and brain tumors, particularly medulloblastoma. [2] The following sections describe the discovery and utility of small molecule agonists and antagonists of this pathway and their potential as novel types of therapeutics.

The hedgehog (Hh) pathway is one of a small collection of pathways that control the number and types of cells formed during development in species ranging from *Drosophila* to humans. The most well studied Hh-pathway ligand, sonic hedgehog (Shh), has been shown to participate in central nervous system (CNS) development. Another ligand, desert hedgehog (DHh), is essential for the proper formation of the peripheral nervous system (PNS)^[2].

2.0.1Hedgehog Pathway Regulation [9]

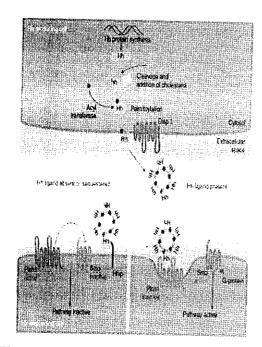


Figure 1:Hh pathway regulation

The regulation of Hh protein is through transduction mechanism. Following translation, the full length Hh protein auto catalytically cleaves and a cholesterol moiety is added in the process. Further, palmitoyl group is added by a dedicated acyl transferase. There secretion into the extracellular space in the form of multimers is mediated by the action of Disp1. In the absence of Hh ligand, or when Hh is sequestered by an inhibitory protein like Hhip, Ptch1 represses Smo and the downstream pathway is inactive. In the presence of Hh that is free to bind to Ptch1, the repression of Ptch1 Smo is released and Smo activates downstream pathway components through Gproteins [9] which mediates the gene expression by controlling transcription factors.

2.0.2 HEDGEHOG PATHWAY Regulation

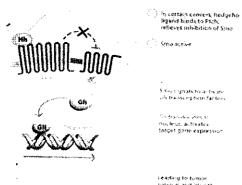


Figure 2:Hh pathway role in cancer

The signaling is initiated by the biding of the Hedgehog ligand to the receptors present on Patched(Ptch) which is 12-transmemberane protein receptor this activates smoothened (SMO) a 7-membrane spanning receptor. Downstream of SMO is multi-protein complex known as HSC(Hedgehog signaling complex) which comprises of transcriptional factors Gli. Hence transcriptional factors are activated.

The Gli translocates to the nucleus and activates gene expression of CyclinD1 and BCL hence due to over expression of this gene can lead to growth of tumor and other dysfunctions.

2.1 The role of the Hedgehog pathway in embryonic development $^{[20]}$

It functions by time- and position-dependent expression patterns to ensure that developing tissues attain their correct size, location and cellular content.

Skin

It is responsible for forming a variety of epidermal structures that differ among vertebrates. During the development of a normal hair follicle, Sonic Hedgehog is expressed in the thickening embryonic epithelial layer, and its receptor Patched (PTCH) is expressed in the underlying dermal layer [20]

Cerebellum

The granule cells regulate the activity of Purkinje cells, which are large neurons responsible for motor coordination output in the cerebellum cortex. The binding of Sonic Hedgehog to PTCH relieves the repression of target gene activation and results in the proliferation of GNPs (Granule neuron precursor) [20]

Pancreas

Down regulation of Hh expression is required to initiate mammalian pancreatic development Beta cell role. [20]

Gut

The gastrointestinal tract develops from the embryonic gut tube, which is composed of two different germ layers: endoderm, which differentiates into the epithelial lining, and mesoderm.^[20]

2.2 HEDGEHOG IN DISEASES

Hedgehog pathway and neurodegenerative diseases [18]

The importance of the Hh pathway in embryonic neural development has been thoroughly documented but the role of Hh signaling in the adult brain is less well understood.

Hedgehog pathway and Parkinson disease [19]

It is caused by the loss of dopaminergic neurons. Activation of Hh can protect them against toxic effect during embryonic development.

Hh and peripheral neuropathy

Treatment with Hh protein has been shown to be protective and/or enhance regeneration in PNS injury models. Diabetes mellitus is a chronic metabolic disease accompanied, in a significant number of cases, by peripheral neuropathies (pain and loss of sensation as the main symptoms) and ultimately, by nerve-fiber degeneration.

Hh pathway and cancer

Misregulations of Hh signaling causes cancer in various tissues. Ptch mutations are associated with basal cell carcinoma as well as medulloblastoma and rhabdomyosarcoma^[20]. Ptch can be considered as tumor suppressor, similarly loss of function mutation in suppressor of fused (Sufu) have been identified in some medulloblastoma cells.

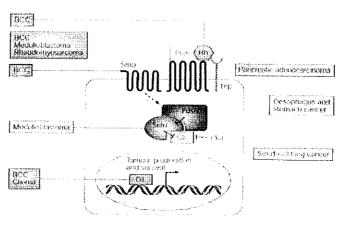


Figure 3^[15,16]:Hhsignaling, Stem Cells and Cancer

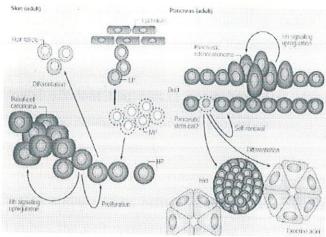


Figure 4^[17]:Hh signaling in skin and pancreas.

Ep=epithelium progenitor.Mp=multipotent.Hp=hair follicle progenitor.

2.3Agonist and Antagonist of Hh pathway [27]

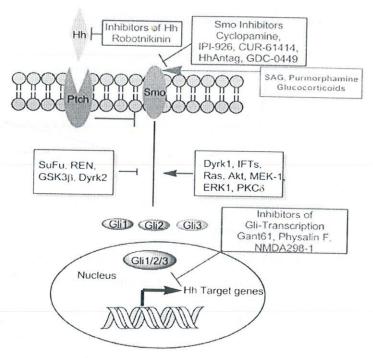


Figure 5: Hh pathway modulators.

2.3.1 Robotonikinin^[5] (1)

A small-molecule chemical inhibitor of Sonic hedgehog (SHh) signaling, that blocks hedgehog signaling through specific binding and blockade of SHh signaling factor. It is the first characterized hedgehog inhibitor whose molecular mechanism of action is through blockade of

SHh protein and not a factor of the hedgehog signaling cascades.Robotnikinin is an embryogenesis inhibitor such as in the growth in digits on limbs and organization of the brain.

2.3.2 Cyclopamine^[3]

Cyclopamine is a steroidal alkaloid that blocks sonic hedgehog signaling. It demonstrates teratogenic properties, as well as, promising anti-tumor properties.

2.3.3 Saridegib (IPI-926)[5]

Saridegib (IPI-926) is an orally bioavailable, cyclopamine-derived inhibitor of the Hedgehog (Hh) pathway with potential antineoplastic activity. Specifically, Hedgehog pathway inhibitor IPI-926 binds to and inhibits the cell membrane-spanning G-protein coupled receptor SMO, which may result in the suppression of Hh pathway signaling and a decrease in tumor cell proliferation and survival. SMO is activated upon binding of Hh ligand to the cell surface receptor (PTCH); inappropriate activation of Hh signaling and uncontrolled cellular proliferation may be associated with SMO mutations. The Hh signaling pathway plays an important role in proliferation of neuronal precursor cells in the developing cerebellum and other tissue

2.3.4 CUR 61414

CUR 61414 is a proline derivative used as a mediator of hedgehog signaling pathways(G-024856/CUR-61414).

2.3.5 Vismodegib(GDC-0449)(2)

Vismodegib is a drug for the treatment of basal-cell carcinoma (BCC). The approval of vismodegib on January 30, 2012, represents the first Hedgehog signaling pathway targeting agent to gain U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval. The drug is also undergoing clinical trials for metastatic colorectal cancer, small-cell lung cancer, pancreatic cancer, medulloblastoma and chondrosarcoma as of June 2011. The drug was developed by the biotechnology / pharmaceutical company Genentech, which is headquartered at South San Francisco, California, USA

2.3.6 GANT61⁽³⁾

GLI antagonist that inhibits GLI1 and GLI2-induced transcription .Inhibits the hedgehog (Hh) signaling pathway downstream of SMO and SUFU causing GLI1 nuclear accumulation.Displays antiproliferative and antitumor activity *in vivo*.

2.4 LATESTDEVELOPMENTS

2.4.1 Naturally occurring small molecule inhibitor of Hh-gli pathway.

The aberrant hedgehog (Hh)/GLI signaling pathway causes the formation and progression of a variety of tumors. To search for Hh/GLI inhibitors, compounds were screened for naturally occurring inhibitors of the transcriptional activator GLI1 by using a cell-based assay. It was identified zerumbone, zerumboneepoxies, staurosporinone, 6-hydroxystaurosporinone, arcyriaflavinC and 5, 6-dihydroxyarcyriaflavin A as inhibitors of GLI-mediated transcription. These compounds also inhibited GLI2-mediated transactivation. Semi quantitative RT-PCR and Western blotting analysis further revealed that they decreased Hh-related component expressions.

2.4.2 Zerumbone^[21]

Zerumbone is one of the compounds that suppress the expression of the antiapoptotic protein Bcl2. The suppression of Bcl2 expression might be due to the inhibition of GLI-mediated transcription. Zerumbone is a sesquiterpene phytochemical from a type of edible ginger known as "ZingiberZerumbet Smith" grown in Southeast Asia or "Zingiberaromaticum". Zerumbone is currently being explored for its effects on cancer in general, Leukemia in particular, as well as HIV.

2.4.3 Staurosporine^[23]

Staurosporine is a natural product originally isolated in 1977 from the bacterium *Streptomycin staurosporeus*. Potential inhibitor of Hhpathway, same as cyclopamine acts on smo and deactivates it hence no further activation of transcriptional factors occurs.

AIM OF THE PROJECT

The main goal of this project is to synthesize such modulators (agonist/antagonist) molecules that can affect Hedgehog-Gli pathway and can be used as therapeutic agents.

Our main aim is to go target Gli-mediated transcription with small molecule modulators of this pathway rather than targeting at level of Smo, upstream in the Hh-gli pathway against which most of the current modulators are designed. The lead compound (NMDA225^[26]) was discovered during earlier project by Mahindroo et al. (unpublished data). It showed Hh-Gli agonist activity. We concentrated in synthesizing NMDA225 ^[26] analogues keeping linker part constant and changing the head part and tail part of the compound.

MATERIALS

4.1	MATERIALS:		
i.	RBF 50,100,250 ml	х.	PARRAFIN FILM
ii.	FUNNELS	xi.	SEPERATING FUNNEL
iii.	BEAKERS 20,50,100,250,500 ml	xii.	TLC PLATES
iv.	MEASURINĠ CYLINDERS	xiii.	TEST TUBES
v.	GLASS RODS	xiv.	MICROPIPPETE
vi.	FILTER PAPERS	XV.	EPPENDORF
vii.	ROTATORY EVAPORATOR	xvi.	CAPILLARY TUBES
viii.	HEATING BATH TUB	xvii.	HEATING OVEN
ix.	COLUMN		

4.2CHEMICALS

i.	TYRAMINE		xvi.	SILICA GEL GF254		
ii.	2-CHLOROBENZOIC ACID		xvii.	SILICA GEL FOR COLUMN		
iii.	3-CHLORO BENZOIC ACID			CHROMATOGRAPHY		
iv.	4-CHLOROBENZOIC ACID		xviii.	ETHYL ACETATE		
v.	2-FLUROBENZOIC ACID		xix.	HEXANE		
vi.	3-FLUROBENZOIC ACID		XX.	METHANOL		
vii.	4-FLUROBENZOIC ACID		xxi.	DCM		
viii.	CYCLOPENTANONE		xxii.	ETHANOL		
ix.	TRYPTOPHAN		xxiii.	HBTU		
x.	ISATIN		xxiv.	DMF		
xi.	DI ETHYL ETHER		xxv.	ACTEOPHENONE		
xii.	N-BUTANOL		xxvi.	DIETHYLAMINE		
xiii.	DIPEA		xxvii.	HCL		
xiv.	SODIUM BICABONATE		xxviii.	GLACIAL ACETIC ACID		
xv.	SODIUMSULFATE	AN	xxix.	HYDRAZINE HYDRATE		
	HYDROUS		XXX.	CYCLOHEXALAMINE		

REACTION RESULT AND DISCUSSION 1.1 GENERAL REACTION

$$\begin{array}{c|c} & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\$$

5.2REACTION MECHANISM

O-Benzotriazole-N,N,N',N'-tetramethyl-uronium-hexafluorophosphate

Figure: Mechanism of reaction of HBTU coupling

HBTU (C₁₁H₁₆F₆N₅OP)

5.3REACTION CHART:

S.No	REACTANT	REACTANT 2	PRODUCT	PRODUCT	TLC	Rf
	1		CODE	STRUCTURE	Conditions	
1.	OH		JUIT-PY-	H O N	30%	0.5
	CI	NH ₂	RS001		ETHYL	
		но		HO,	ACETATE	
					IN	
					HEXANE	
2.	ОН О≕		JUIT-PY-	H O N A	25%	0.5
		NH ₂	AK003		ETHYL	
	_ ___	но		OH	ACETATE	
	F			·	IN	
					HEXANE	
3.	ОУОН		JUIT-PY-	H 0 N A	20%	0.5
	F.	NH ₂	AK004		ETHYL	
		но		0	ACETATE	
				, and the second	IN	
					HEXANE	
4.	ОН		JUIT-PY-	0 / N	25%	0.6
	0=	NH ₂	AK005	OH OH	ETHYL	
		но		OH ₃ C	ACETATE	
	\/				IN	
	OH₃C				HEXANE	

5.	ОН		JUIT-PY-		25%	0.6
	O=\	NH ₂	AK006	H O ₂ N ₂ A	ETHYL	
		но		J J OH	ACETATE	
) <u> </u>				IN	
					HEXANE	

6.	O ○ OH		JUIT-PY-	H O _N N	15%	0.5
		NH ₂	RS003	ОН	ETHYL	
		но			ACETATE	
				Ċı	IN	
	Ci				HEXANE	
7.	ООН	NH ₂	JUIT-PY-		20%	0.4
	CI		AK007	NH———CI	ETHYL	
		CI		CI	ACETATE	
		CI			IN	
					HEXANE	
8.	ОН		JUIT-PY-		15%	0.6
		NH ₂	RS004	ci,	ETHYL	
	CI			NH NH	ACETATE	
				ö	IN	
					HEXANE	
9.	О₩		JUIT-	H O N	25%	
		NH ₂	PY-AK008	OH	ETHYL	
	____\\	но		но	ACETATE	
	но				IN	
					HEXANE	

General Procedure

Appropriate benzoic acid (1eq) was dissolved in DMF and HBTU (1.5 eq) and DIPEA (3 eq) were added to it. The mixture was allowed to stand for 30 min and then appropriate amine (2 eq.) was added to it. The reaction was monitored by TLC and on completion was worked up by adding water followed by extraction with ethyl acetate. The organic layer was washed successively with water and brine and dried over anhydrous sodium sulphate. The solvent was removed in vacuo and the residue was chromatographed over silica gel (60-120 mesh size) eluting with hexane ethyl acetate gradient. The column was monitored by TLC. The fractions that

contained the product were combined and solvent was removed in vacuo to get the desired product.

5.4JUIT-PY-RS001

5.8 JUIT-PY-AK003



Result:-

The compound was synthesized using the general procedure. TLC condition 25% ethyl acetate in hexane. R_f was 0.5

5.9 JUIT-PY-AK004

Result:-

The compound was synthesized using the general procedure. TLC condition 20% ethyl acetate in hexane. R_f was 0.5

¹H NMR (DMSO.d₆, δ, ppm): 7.3350-7.7194(8H, m, Ar-H), 3.459(1H, s, NH) 3.4734-3.4229 (2H, dd, J=6.72, 13.44, CH₂), 2.7255-2.6880 (2H, t, J=14.68, CH₂).

5.10JUIT-PY-AK005

Result:-

The compound was synthesized using the general procedure. TLC condition 25% ethyl acetate in hexane. R_f was 0.6.

¹H NMR (DMSO.d₆, δ, ppm): 7.023-7.7194(8H, m, Ar-H) , 3.8353(1H , s, NH), 3.6489-3.67980(2H,dd, J=6.96, 12.88, CH₂), 2.8424-2.88768 (2H, t, J=13.76, CH₂).

5.10JUIT-PY-AK008

RESULT:-

The compound was synthesized using the general procedure. TLC condition 25% ethyl acetate in hexane.

5.11JUIT-PY-AK007

Result:-

The compound was synthesized using the general procedure. TLC condition 20% ethyl acetate in hexane.Rf was 0.4

5.12 JUIT-PY-RS003

Result:-

The compound was synthesized using the general procedure. TLC condition 15 % ethyl acetate in hexane.Rf was 0.5

¹H NMR was done of this compound.

5.13REACTION: JUIT-PY-RS004

Result:-

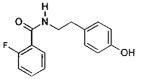
The compound was synthesized using the general procedure. TLC condition 15 % ethyl acetate in hexane.Rf was 0.5

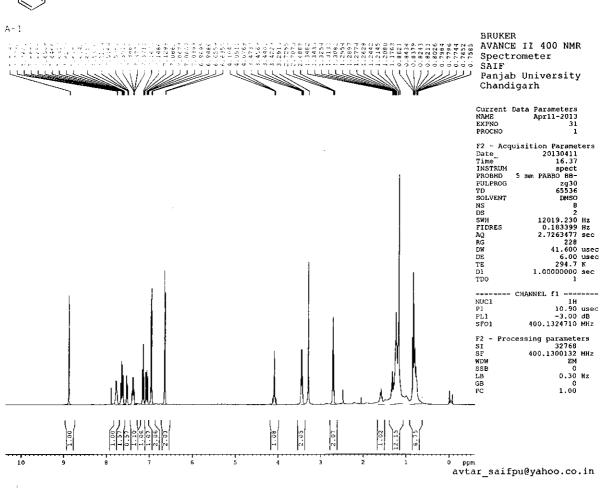
¹H NMR was done of this compound. CDC3 (1H NMR (Bases) .d₆, δ, ppm): 7.6733-7.7004(2H, m, Ar-H), 7.3703-7.4108(2H, m, Ar-H)

6.00(1H, s, NH) 1.1571 - 2.1732 (11 Hz , m, CH & CH2).

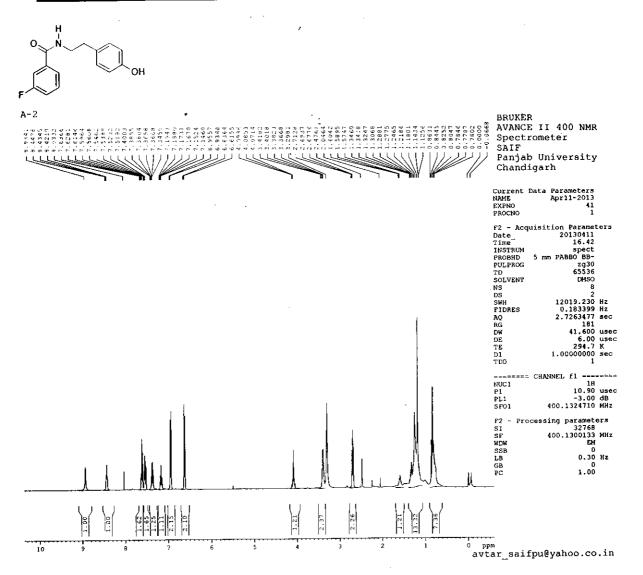
NMR SPECTRA

6.1 SPECTRA JUIT-PY-AK004

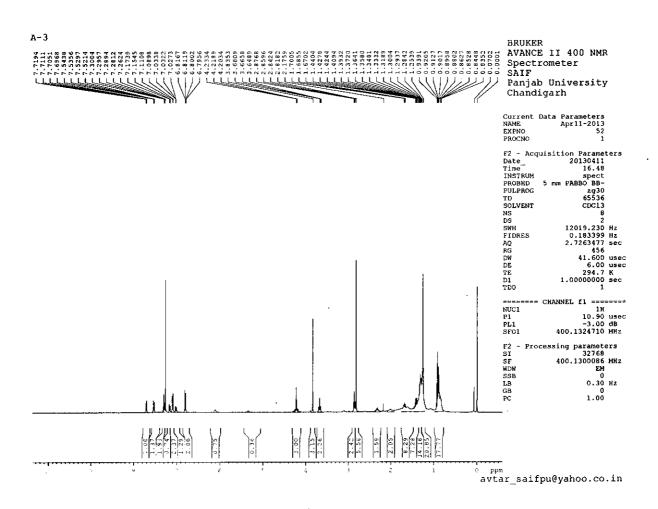




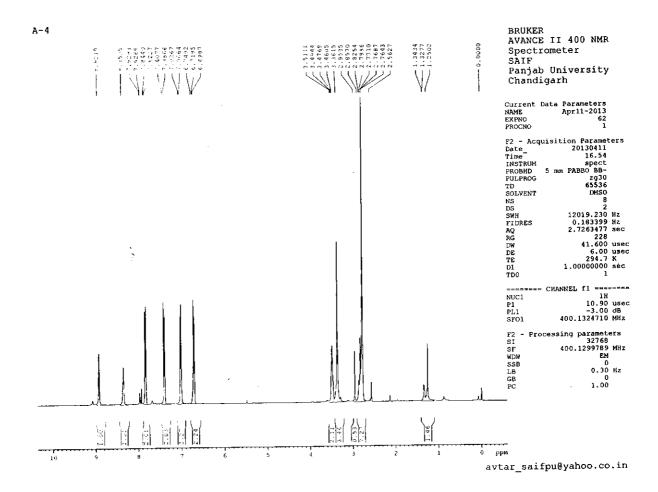
6.2 SPECTRA JUIT-PY-AK003



6.3 SPECTRA JUIT-PY-AK005

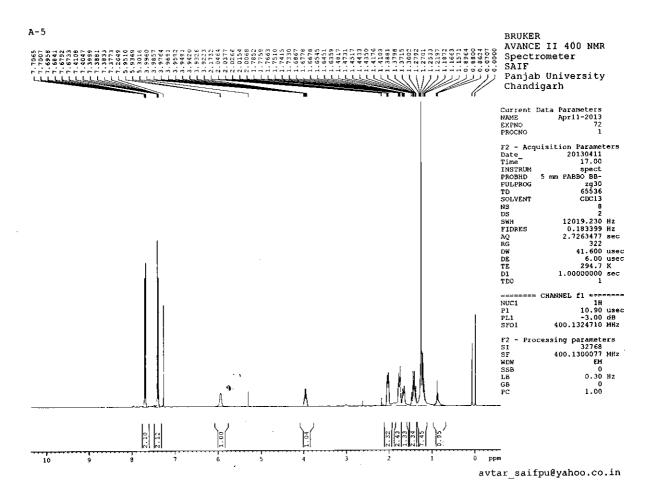


6.4 SPECTRA JUIT-PY-RS003



6.5 SPECTRA JUIT-PY-RS004





CONCLUSION

In this study, we report the synthesis of novel modulators (agonists/antagonist) of Gli1-mediated transcription that can act as potential therapeutics in Neurodegenerative disorder and for Neurorestoration. The NMR of five compounds out of nine were done in order to characterize the compunds and confirm the structure (JUIT-PY-AK001, JUIT-PY-AK002, JUIT-PY-AK003, JUIT-PY-RS004). The compounds would be evaluated for biological activity.

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