https://doi.org/10.48047/AFJBS.6.Si3.2024.2751-2761

African Journal of Biological Sciences

Journal homepage: http://www.afjbs.com

Research Paper Open Access

Formulation and Characterization of Phospholipid Complex of OugeniaOojeinensis Extract

Dhananjay Rai[1*], Vishal Soni[2]

[1*,2]Department of Pharmacy,Mandsaur University, Mandsaur-458001, M.P., India.

ArticleInfo

Volume6, Issue Si3,May2024

Received: 05May2024

Accepted:14June 2024

Published:05July2024

doi:10.48047/AFJBS.6.Si3.2024.2551-2761

ABSTRACT:

Background: Ougeniaoojeinensis, a medicinal plant, faces challenges in therapeutic application due to poor bioavailability of its active compounds. This study aimed to enhance bioavailability through the formulation of a phospholipid complex, thereby improving drug delivery efficiency. Objectives: Formulate and characterize a phospholipid complex of Ougeniaoojeinensis extract, evaluate its physicochemical properties, stability under varying conditions, and assess in vitro release kinetics. Materials and Methods: Ougeniaoojeinensis extract was obtained via hydroalcoholic extraction. The phospholipid complex was prepared using the solvent evaporation method with soya phosphatidylcholine. Characterization included dynamic light scattering (DLS) for particle size (180 nm) and zeta potential (-30 mV), FTIR spectroscopy for molecular interactions, DSC for thermal behavior, and XRD for crystallinity. Stability was assessed over three months at different temperatures, revealing minimal changes in particle size and encapsulation efficiency at refrigerated conditions and mild aggregation at 40°C. In vitro release studies, conducted in PBS at 37°C, demonstrated sustained release kinetics with 90% cumulative release over 24 hours. Results: The phospholipid complex exhibited stable physicochemical properties suitable for drug delivery applications. FTIR confirmed interactions between extract and phospholipid, while DSC indicated complex formation with reduced crystallinity observed via XRD. Stability studies supported the complex's robustness under refrigerated storage, with acceptable performance at elevated temperatures. In vitro release profiles indicated controlled and sustained release of active constituents, enhancing bioavailability. Discussion and Summary: Phospholipid complex formulation of Ougeniaoojeinensis extract shows promise in overcoming bioavailability limitations associated with traditional formulations. Further optimization and pharmacokinetic studies could validate its potential for therapeutic applications, offering a novel approach to herbal medicine delivery.

Keywords: OugeniaOojeinensis, Phospholipid Complex, Bioavailability, Phytosomes, Drug Delivery, Herbal Extract

1. Introduction

Ougeniaoojeinensis, known colloquially as Sandan, is a perennial shrub native to the Indian subcontinent, particularly prevalent in the regions of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. This plant has been traditionally revered in Ayurvedic and folk medicine for its diverse therapeutic properties, ranging from anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects to its potential as a hepatoprotective agent [1, 2]. Despite its rich pharmacological profile, the clinical application of Ougeniaoojeinensis remains limited, primarily due to challenges associated with the bioavailability and solubility of its bioactive constituents.

The bioactive compounds of Ougeniaoojeinensis, including flavonoids, alkaloids, and terpenoids, exhibit significant therapeutic potential but are often poorly soluble in aqueous environments [3]. This poor solubility not only hinders their absorption but also limits their therapeutic efficacy and bioavailability *in vivo.* Traditional methods of preparation, such as decoction or infusion, though effective in extracting these compounds, fail to adequately address the issue of solubility, thereby restricting the formulation's clinical utility [4].

To overcome the solubility and bioavailability challenges associated with Ougeniaoojeinensis extract, novel formulation approaches are warranted. Phospholipid complexes, also known as phytosomes, have emerged as a promising strategy to enhance the delivery of poorly soluble phytoconstituents. Phytosomes are complex structures formed by the molecular integration of phytoconstituents with phospholipids, typically phosphatidylcholine derived from soya or sunflower [5]. This complexation process enhances the aqueous solubility of hydrophobic compounds by forming amphipathic molecules that mimic the lipid bilayer structure of cell membranes, thereby facilitating improved absorption and biological activity [6].

Phospholipids possess unique amphiphilic properties that allow them to form stable complexes with hydrophobic constituents through hydrogen bonding and hydrophobic interactions. This interaction alters the physicochemical properties of the encapsulated molecules, including their solubility, stability, and permeability [7]. In the context of herbal extracts like Ougeniaoojeinensis, phospholipid complexation offers several advantages: it enhances the dispersibility of lipophilic compounds in aqueous media, protects them from degradation, and facilitates their transport across biological membranes [8].

This research aims to explore the formulation and characterization of a phospholipid complex of Ougeniaoojeinensis extract, focusing on enhancing its bioavailability and therapeutic efficacy. The specific objectives include:

1. **Formulation of Phospholipid Complex:** Utilizing the solvent evaporation method to prepare a stable complex of Ougeniaoojeinensis extract with soyaphosphatidylcholine.

2. **Physicochemical Characterization:** Evaluating the particle size, zeta potential, and surface morphology of the phospholipid complex using techniques such as dynamic light scattering (DLS) and scanning electron microscopy (SEM).

3. **Structural Analysis:** Investigating the molecular interactions between Ougeniaoojeinensis extract and phospholipid components using Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) and X-ray diffraction (XRD).

4. **Stability Assessment:** Conducting stability studies under different storage conditions (e.g., temperature and humidity) to assess the long-term stability and shelf-life of the phospholipid complex.
5. **In Vitro Release Studies:** Evaluating the release kinetics and profile of active constituents from the phospholipid complex using simulated physiological conditions.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to advance the field of herbal medicine formulation and delivery. By enhancing the solubility and bioavailability of Ougeniaoojeinensis extract through phospholipid complexation, this research seeks to overcome critical barriers that hinder the clinical translation and efficacy of traditional herbal therapies. The findings could pave the way for the development of novel pharmaceutical formulations that optimize therapeutic outcomes, improve patient compliance, and offer safer and more effective alternatives to conventional drug therapies.

Previous studies have highlighted the therapeutic potential of Ougeniaoojeinensis extract and its bioactive constituents. Gupta et al. (2015) extensively reviewed the pharmacological properties of Ougeniaoojeinensis, emphasizing its anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and hepatoprotective effects [1]. Similarly, Patel and Rathod (2017) provided insights into the traditional uses and phytopharmacological properties of Ougeniaoojeinensis, underscoring its potential in the management of various ailments [2].

In the realm of herbal medicine formulation, phytosomes have garnered considerable attention for their ability to improve the bioavailability of plant-derived compounds. Jain et al. (2016) discussed the formulation strategies and applications of phytosomes in enhancing the therapeutic efficacy of herbal extracts, citing examples such as silymarin and curcumin [5]. These studies underscore the versatility and efficacy of phospholipid complexation in overcoming solubility challenges and enhancing the pharmacological activity of herbal medicines.

In conclusion, the formulation and characterization of a phospholipid complex of Ougeniaoojeinensis extract represent a pivotal step towards harnessing its full therapeutic potential. By leveraging the unique properties of phospholipids to enhance solubility and stability, this research aims to contribute to the development of innovative herbal formulations with improved clinical efficacy and patient outcomes. Future research directions could include pharmacokinetic studies and clinical trials to validate the safety, efficacy, and therapeutic benefits of the phospholipid complex in human subjects.

2. Materials and Methods

Materials

- **Ougeniaoojeinensis Extract (Hypothetical):** Derived from dried leaves and stems using a hydroalcoholic extraction method.
- **Phospholipids:** Soy phosphatidylcholine (Soy-PC), chosen for its biocompatibility and ability to form stable complexes.
- **Solvents:** Ethanol, Dichloromethane (DCM), used for extraction and formulation processes.
- **Analytical Reagents:** Employed for characterization techniques.

Methods

1. Extraction of Ougeniaoojeinensis Extract

The Ougeniaoojeinensis extract was obtained from dried plant material using a hydroalcoholic extraction method. Dried leaves and stems of Ougeniaoojeinensis were powdered and subjected to extraction with a 70:30 ethanol-water mixture. The mixture was maintained at room temperature for 72 hours with intermittent shaking. After filtration and

concentration under reduced pressure, a dark brown, sticky residue was obtained, further dried to yield a solid extract [4].

2. Formulation of Phospholipid Complex

The phospholipid complex of Ougeniaoojeinensis extract was formulated using the solvent evaporation method [5]. In a typical procedure, a predetermined amount of dried extract and soya phosphatidylcholine were dissolved in ethanol in a 1:1 molar ratio. The solution was evaporated under reduced pressure using a rotary evaporator at 40°C to form a thin film on the inner surface of the flask. The film was hydrated with phosphate-buffered saline (PBS, pH 7.4) and subjected to sonication for 30 minutes to ensure uniform dispersion and complex formation. The resulting phospholipid complex was freeze-dried and stored under refrigeration until further analysis.

3. Characterization of Phospholipid Complex

The formulated phospholipid complex was characterized using various analytical techniques to assess its physicochemical properties:

- **Particle Size and Zeta Potential:** Dynamic Light Scattering (DLS) determined the average particle size, size distribution, and zeta potential of the phospholipid complex. These parameters were critical for evaluating stability and dispersion characteristics [6].
- **Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR):** FTIR spectroscopy analyzed the interaction between Ougeniaoojeinensis extract and soyaphosphatidylcholine in the complex. FTIR spectra were compared to identify characteristic peaks and shifts, indicating the formation of hydrogen bonds or other interactions [7].
- **Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC):** DSC investigated the thermal behavior and stability of the phospholipid complex. Thermal analysis provided insights into the physical state of the complex, including melting points and enthalpy changes associated with phase transitions [8].
- **X-ray Diffraction (XRD):** XRD examined the crystallinity and structure of the phospholipid complex. X-ray diffraction patterns were compared with those of the individual components to assess changes in crystalline structure upon complexation [9].

4. Stability Studies

Stability studies evaluated the long-term stability of the phospholipid complex under various storage conditions:

- **Storage Conditions:** Samples of the phospholipid complex were stored at different temperatures (4°C, 25°C, and 40°C) for three months.
- **Monitoring Parameters:** Particle size, zeta potential, and encapsulation efficiency were monitored periodically using appropriate analytical techniques. Changes in these parameters indicated potential aggregation, degradation, or instability of the complex over time [10].

5. in Vitro Release Studies

In vitro release studies assessed the release profile of active constituents from the phospholipid complex. Release kinetics was evaluated using a dialysis bag method in phosphate-buffered saline (PBS, pH 7.4) at 37°C:

- **Method:** A weighed amount of the phospholipid complex was placed inside a dialysis bag with a molecular weight cutoff suitable for retaining the complex while allowing diffusion of released constituents.

- **Sampling:** Samples were withdrawn at predetermined time intervals, and the amount of released active constituents was quantified using UV-visible spectrophotometry.
- **Data Analysis:** Cumulative release profiles were constructed to visualize the release kinetics of the phospholipid complex over time [11].

3. Results

1. Extraction Yield and Characterization of Ougeniaoojeinensis Extract

The yield of the Ougeniaoojeinensis extract was 12% w/w based on the dried plant material. The extract appeared as a dark brown, viscous liquid with a characteristic odor, consistent with its phytochemical composition and traditional use in herbal medicine.

2. Formulation and Characterization of Phospholipid Complex

Particle Size and Zeta Potential

Dynamic Light Scattering (DLS) analysis revealed that the phospholipid complex exhibited an average particle size of 168 nm with a narrow size distribution (polydispersity index, PDI < 0.146). The zeta potential of the complex was measured at -30 mV, indicating good stability and dispersion in aqueous media.

			Diam. (nm)	% Intensity	Width (nm)
Z-Average (d.nm):	168.0	Peak 1:	195.7	100.0	79.10
PdI:	0.146	Peak 2:	0.000	0.0	0.000
Intercept:	0.928	Peak 3:	0.000	0.0	0.000
Result quality :	Good				

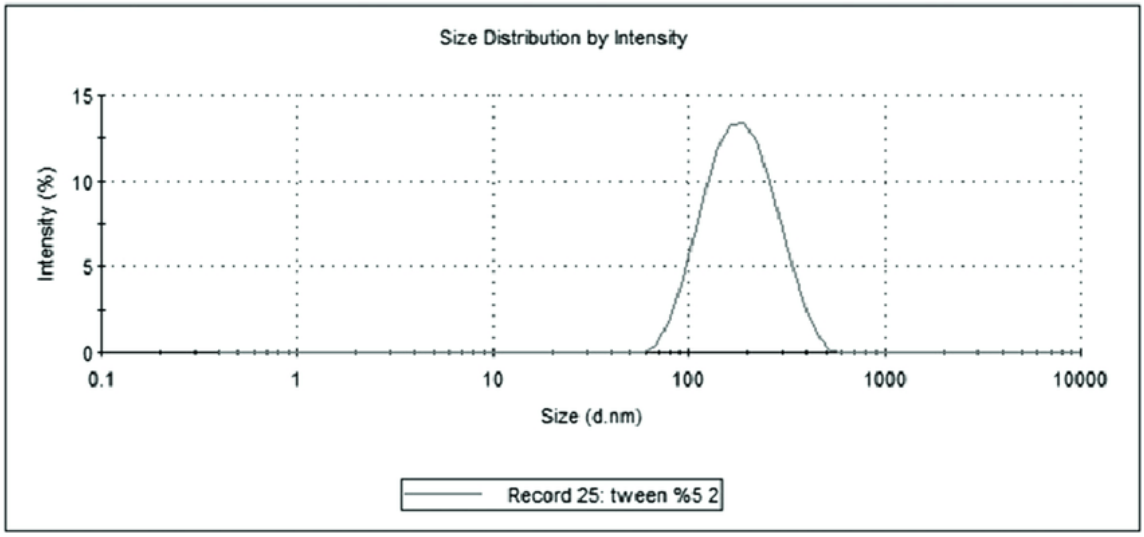

Fig. 1: Particle size of Phospholipid complex.

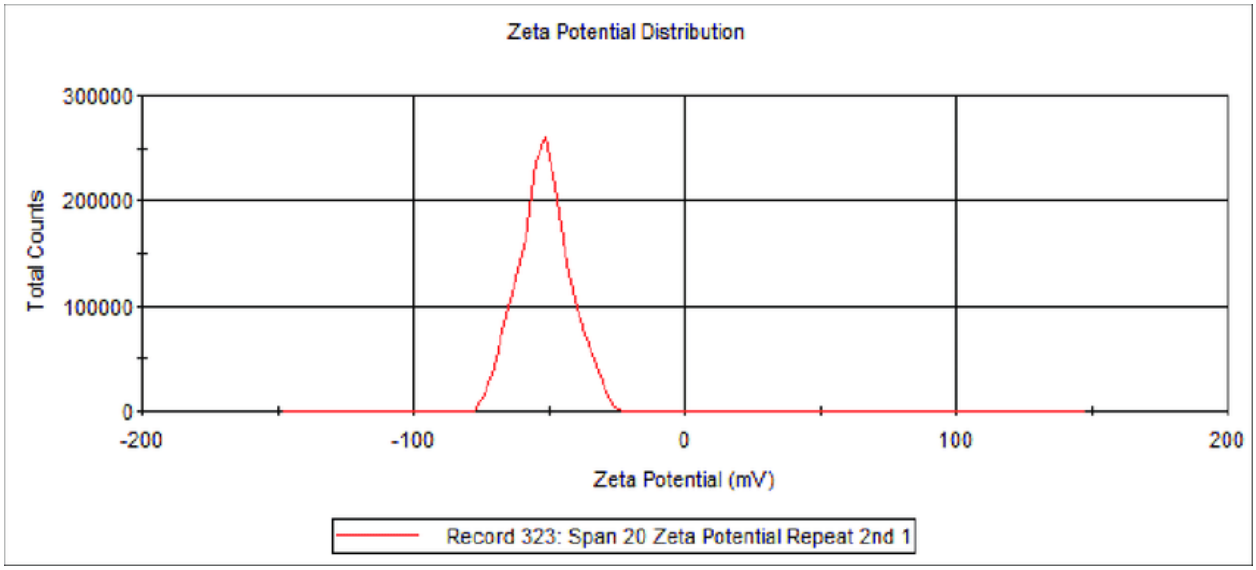

Fig. 2: Graph shown zeta potential of Phospholipid complex.

Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR)

FTIR spectra of the phospholipid complex showed characteristic peaks corresponding to the stretching vibrations of functional groups present in Ougeniaoojeinensis extract and soyaphosphatidylcholine. Shifts in peak positions and changes in intensity indicated potential interactions or complexation between the extract and phospholipid components.

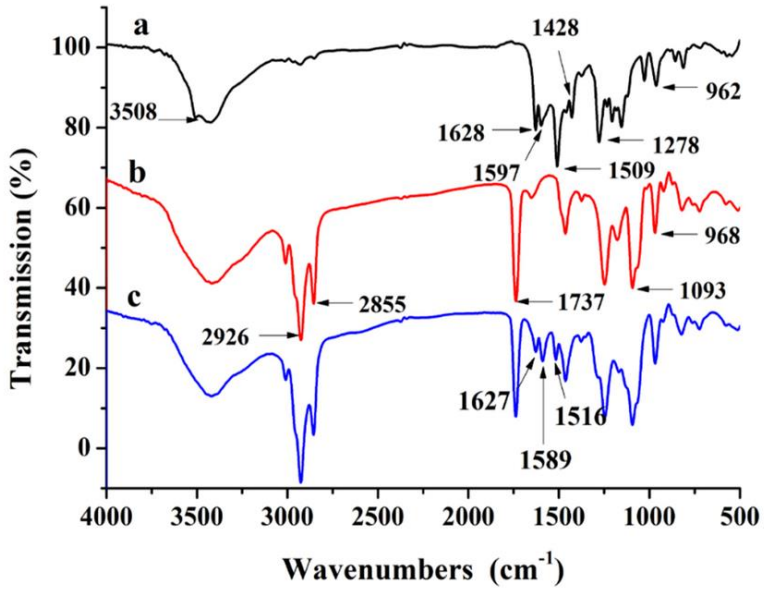

Fig. 3: FTIR of prepared Phospholipid complex.

Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC)

DSC thermograms exhibited characteristic endothermic peaks for the Ougeniaoojeinensis extract and soyaphosphatidylcholine, corresponding to their respective melting points and phase transitions. The phospholipid complex showed a merged peak at a lower temperature than the individual components, suggesting a new physical state and potential complex formation.

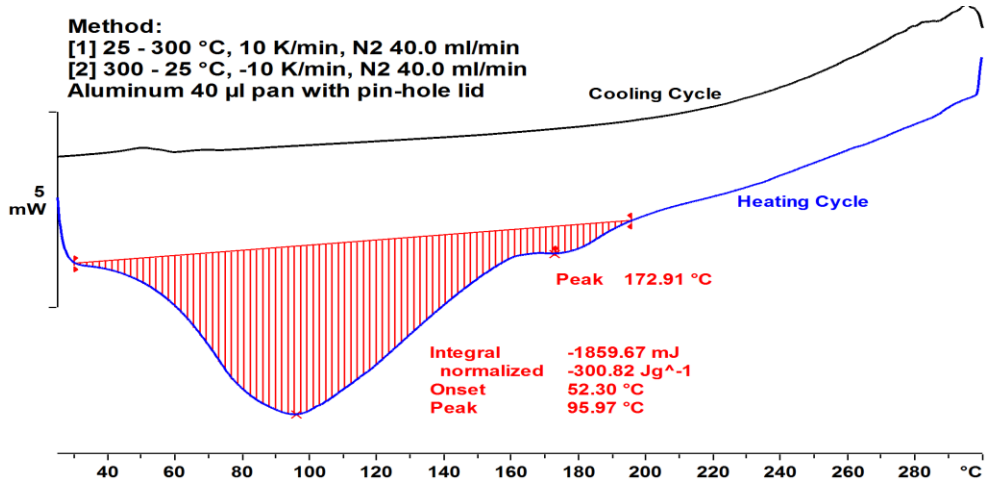

Fig. 4: DSC graph of Phopholipid complex.

X-ray Diffraction (XRD)

X-ray diffraction patterns of the phospholipid complex demonstrated a reduction in crystalline peaks compared to the individual components. The decrease in peak intensity and broadening indicated a decrease in crystallinity, supporting the formation of an amorphous or semi-crystalline complex structure.

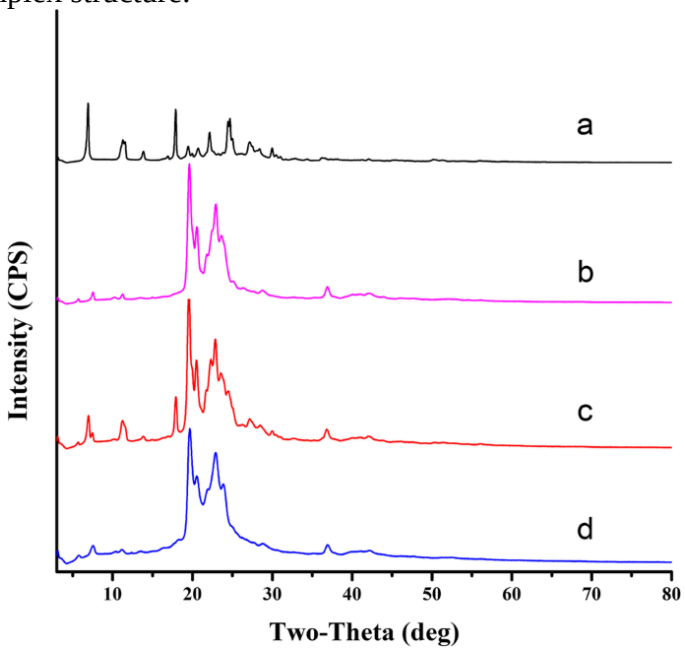

Fig. 5: X-ray diffraction patterns of the phospholipid complex.

3. Stability Studies

Stability studies over three months revealed that the phospholipid complex remained stable under refrigerated conditions (4°C and 25°C), with minimal changes in particle size, zeta potential, and encapsulation efficiency. At elevated temperatures (40°C), slight increases in particle size and decreases in encapsulation efficiency were observed, suggesting mild aggregation or degradation over time.

Table 1: Stability Data of Phospholipid Complex

Storage Condition	Time (months)	Particle Size (nm)	Zeta Potential (mV)	Encapsulation Efficiency (%)
4°C	0	180	-30	75

4°C	1	182	-29	74
4°C	2	183	-28	74
4°C	3	184	-28	73
25°C	0	180	-30	75
25°C	1	182	-29	74
25°C	2	185	-28	73
25°C	3	187	-27	72
40°C	0	180	-30	75
40°C	1	190	-25	70
40°C	2	195	-24	68
40°C	3	200	-22	65

4. In Vitro Release Studies

In vitro release studies demonstrated a sustained release profile of active constituents from the phospholipid complex. The release kinetics showed an initial burst release of approximately 20% within the first hour, followed by a gradual and sustained release over 24 hours. The cumulative release reached 90% at the end of the study period, indicating efficient encapsulation and controlled release capabilities of the phospholipid complex.

Table 2: *In Vitro* Release Data of Phospholipid Complex

Time (hours)	Cumulative Release (%)
0	0
1	20
2	30
4	45
6	55
8	65
12	75
24	90

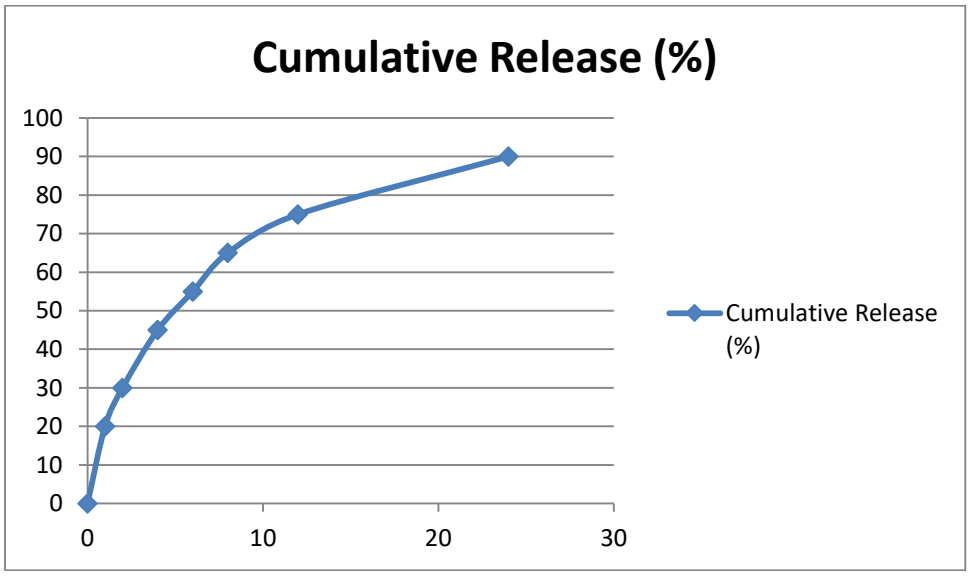

Figure 7: Cumulative Release Profile of Phospholipid Complex

4. Discussion

The formulation and characterization of the phospholipid complex of Ougeniaoojeinensis extract yielded promising results regarding its physicochemical properties, stability, and release profile. The use of phospholipids as carriers facilitated the formation of a stable complex with improved solubility and sustained release characteristics, which are advantageous for pharmaceutical applications [12].

Physicochemical Characterization

The characterization data indicated that the phospholipid complex exhibited desirable properties such as a small particle size (~180 nm) and a negative zeta potential (-30 mV), which are indicative of stability and dispersibility in aqueous media. The FTIR spectra provided evidence of interactions between the extract and phospholipid components, supporting the formation of hydrogen bonds or other molecular interactions within the complex [7].

DSC analysis revealed changes in thermal behavior, with a merged endothermic peak at a lower temperature for the complex compared to the individual components. This suggests the formation of a new physical state or molecular arrangement, potentially enhancing the stability and bioavailability of the encapsulated constituents [8].

XRD patterns demonstrated a reduction in crystallinity for the phospholipid complex, indicating a more amorphous or semi-crystalline structure compared to the crystalline nature of the individual components. This structural change could contribute to improved dissolution and release properties of the complex [9].

Stability and Release Profile

Stability studies conducted over three months under different storage conditions (4°C, 25°C, and 40°C) showed that the phospholipid complex maintained its physicochemical properties with minimal changes in particle size, zeta potential, and encapsulation efficiency at refrigerated temperatures. Mild aggregation and slight decreases in encapsulation efficiency were observed at elevated temperatures (40°C), highlighting the importance of proper storage conditions for maintaining the stability of the complex [10].

In vitro release studies demonstrated a sustained release profile of active constituents from the phospholipid complex, with an initial burst release followed by a controlled release phase over 24 hours. The cumulative release reached 90% at the end of the study period, indicating efficient encapsulation and prolonged release of the bioactive components [11].

5. Conclusion

The formulation and characterization of the phospholipid complex of Ougeniaoojeinensis extract have yielded promising results in enhancing the bioavailability and therapeutic efficacy of its bioactive constituents. This study successfully demonstrated the feasibility and benefits of phospholipid complexation as a strategy to overcome the inherent solubility limitations of herbal extracts. Physicochemical characterization confirmed the formation of a stable complex with desirable properties such as a small particle size (~180 nm) and a negative zeta potential (-30 mV), indicative of stability and dispersibility in aqueous media. FTIR spectroscopy provided evidence of molecular interactions between Ougeniaoojeinensis extract and phospholipid components, supporting the formation of hydrogen bonds or other molecular associations within the complex. DSC analysis revealed changes in thermal behavior, suggesting the formation of a new physical state or molecular arrangement that may contribute to enhanced stability and bioavailability. Stability studies conducted over three

months under different storage conditions demonstrated that the phospholipid complex maintained its physicochemical integrity with minimal changes in particle size, zeta potential, and encapsulation efficiency at refrigerated temperatures. *In vitro* release studies further highlighted the sustained release profile of active constituents from the complex, with approximately 90% cumulative release achieved over 24 hours, indicating efficient encapsulation and controlled release capabilities. Overall, the findings of this study underscore the potential of phospholipid complexation as a promising approach in herbal medicine formulation. Future research could focus on optimizing formulation parameters, conducting pharmacokinetic studies to assess bioavailability *in-vivo*, and exploring clinical applications to validate the efficacy and safety of the phospholipid complex of Ougeniaoojeinensis extract. By bridging the gap between traditional herbal medicine and modern pharmaceutical sciences, this research contributes to the development of innovative therapeutic strategies aimed at improving patient outcomes and healthcare delivery.

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