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**E-mail :**  
**editor.ijpast@gmail.com**  
**editor@ijpast.in**

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## ISOLATION, CHARACTERIZATION, DOCKING AND ANTI-CANCER ACTIVITY OF QUERCETIN FROM LEAVES OF *EUPHORBIA HETEROPHYLLA* LINN.

Ms. Nayela Ghazal<sup>1</sup>, Dr S. Satyanandam<sup>2</sup>, Mr. Mohammed Kafeel Urrahman Khan<sup>3</sup>

**ABSTRACT:** We conducted this work to identify and describe the bioactive component of *Euphorbia heterophylla*. Additionally, we tested the isolated molecule against the MCF-7 cell line, a breast cancer cell line, to determine its anticancer potential. Using column chromatography and ultra sonicator by gradient elution, the chemical was isolated from the ethanol extract. The foundation for establishing the structure of the isolated chemical was analytical procedures, spectroscopic evidence, and thin-layer chromatography. (infrared, <sup>1</sup>H nuclear magnetic resonance, <sup>13</sup>C nuclear magnetic resonance, liquid chromatography/tandem mass spectrometry, data base library search for identification). Using a solvent solution of n-butanol, acetic acid, and water (2:2:6) with an R<sub>f</sub> value of 0.7, the yellow molecule exhibits a positive test for flavonoids in thin layer chromatography. Quercetin was determined to be the isolated chemical by the use of LCMS spectral library search system and TLC. Isolated quercetin was docked against 5, 10 methenyltetrahydrofolate synthetase (MTHFS). You can see the results here. The development of breast cancer cells in human MCF 7 cells was demonstrated to be arrested by inhibiting (MTHFS), as shown by a docking score of -10.23. Therefore, quercetin was tested for its anti-cancer effects on the MCF-7 cell line in a controlled laboratory setting. The mean percentage of cytotoxicity was determined to be 89.77 and the percentage of viability to be 10.22 after 48 hours in a solution of 100 µg/ml.

**Keywords:** *Euphorbia heterophylla*, MTT assay, Quercetin, Molecular Docking, 5,10-Methenyltetrahydrofolate synthetase (MTHFS)

### INTRODUCTION:

The branching shrub *Euphorbia heterophylla* L. is found all over the world, including in India, South Asian nations, Africa, Mexico, and Thailand. It is a member of the Euphorbiaceae family. Common names for this decorative plant include poinsettia, Mexican fire plant, Tamil Paalperuki, and many more. According to reports, this plant has anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, wound-healing, and anticancer properties. Constipation, bronchitis, asthma, laxative, and lactogenic agent are some of its traditional medical uses. 4.

The pigment porcetin gives the leaves their crimson hue. Results included protein, starch, coumarin, terpenoids, quinones, alkaloids, and

sterol. Sugars, carbs, saponins, steroids, terpenoids, tannins, flavonoids, and alkaloids were collected from fresh leaves. In addition to being somewhat rich in protein and fiber, plants are excellent sources of water and energy. Anthraquinones, tannins, alkaloids, flavonoids, and phenols were the phytochemical components derived from the leaves. Alkaloids, flavonoids, tannins, sterols, quinones, lignin, and coumarin were some of the secondary metabolites extracted from the plant in an aqueous solution. Proteins (7.43 mg/g) and carbohydrates (10.29 mg/g) were detectable. It contained 3.26 mg/g of phenol and 1.14 percent ascorbic acid. 5.

Associate professor<sup>1,2</sup> Assistant professor<sup>3</sup>

Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry,

Global College of Pharmacy, Hyderabad. Chilkur (V), Moinabad (M), Telangana- 501504

*Traditional African medicine and other tropical nations make extensive use of Euphorbia heterophylla. Traditional African medicine uses a mixture of the plant's stems and either fresh or dried leaves to alleviate constipation, ease stomachaches, and flush out worms from the digestive tract. Washing with a leaf infusion helps with a variety of skin issues, including as fungal infections and abscesses. 6. In Nigeria, skin tumors are treated with latex and concoctions made from the plant's leaves and roots. The East Africans utilize the roots to cure gonorrhoea and encourage more milk supply in nursing mothers. Even though it may be used as a rubefacient and to eradicate warts, latex is irritating to the eyes and skin. On the other hand, if you're allergic to the latex of other species of Euphorbia, you may use this latex as an antidote. To alleviate aches and pains, people in peninsular Malaysia ingest an extract from a leaf. Arrow poison and fish poison are both made using latex. There have been reports that the leaves of E. heterophylla contain quercetin. There have been reports of diterpenoids in E. heterophylla root as well. 8. E. heterophylla leaf linn 9. There have been reports of the skin-irritant, tumor-promoting, anti-tumour/cancer, and, more recently, anti-HIV, properties of Euphorbia species.*

*A study was conducted in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India, using materials and methods that included collecting the leaves of Euphorbia heterophylla and preparing an extract. Dr. Sasikala Ethirajulu, a botanist and research official at the Central Plant Research Authority of Tamil Nadu (CCRAS), Chennai, India, verified the identity of the plants and their authenticity. To prepare the leaves for grinding, they were dried in the shade, separated, and then put through a 40-mesh sieve. The Soxhlet apparatus, which uses ethanol as a solvent, was used to extract the dried powder of the leaves. A rotary evaporator was used to concentrate the extract.*

*Separation and Analysis: The ethanol extract*

*was separated using the wet packing process and then submitted to column chromatography. At the beginning, hexane fills three quarters of the column.*

*proceed to gradually include silica gel (100 - 200 mesh size) in order to get consistent packing. A gradient elution was used to chromatograph 12 gm of ethanol extract over a 240 gm silica gel column. For the column's development, we eluted it with 100% hexane, then with various ratios of hexane to chloroform (80:20, 70:30, 50:50, 30:70), and finally with 100% chloroform. Mixed with methanol in the following ratios: 80:20, 70:30, and 50:50).*

*Purification and Extraction by Ultrasonication: There are many health advantages associated with quercetin and quercetin glycosides, which are molecules of flavonols that are physiologically active. The polarity of the solvent used for extraction is one of the variables that affect the success of removing these compounds from plant matrices. The majority of the quercetin and glycosides were recovered by methanol, even though it was one of many solvents tested with different dielectric constants. The ideal conditions for extracting quercetin and its glycosides when using ultrasonication were 15 minutes of exposure to certain ultrasound wavelengths. 10.*

*Action to take: The ratio of chloroform to methanol is 70:30. Using a ratio of 2:2:6, the fraction containing flavonoids (n-butanol, acetic acid, water; toluene, ethyl acetate, formic acid, methanol; 5.5:3:1:0.5) demonstrates a positive reaction in thin-layer chromatography. At an R<sub>f</sub> value of 0.85 for UV and 0.7 for iodine, it reveals the presence of blue and reddish-brown fluorescence spots, respectively. In order to extract flavonols linked to quercetin, the aforementioned fraction was chosen.*

*The fraction (Chloroform: methanol 70:30) was subjected to 15 minutes of ultrasonic*

wavelengths in order to assist the extraction process. A total of 30 ml was used, with various fractions collected, using various chloroform: methanol ratios, including: 28:2, 26:4, 24:6, 22:8, 20:10, 18:12, 16:14, 14:16, 12:18, and 10:20. The results showed that the ratios of chloroform to methanol were as follows: 20:10, 18:12, 16:14, and 14:16. As a result, the yellow fraction was obtained by combining all of these fractions.

**Recrystallization:** The portion with the yellow tint is reconstituted by heating it in ethanol, letting it cool, and then filtering it with whatman filter paper. To get yellow crystal quercetin, the filtrate is placed in a desiccator that is filled with calcium chloride. Chemical analysis and thin-layer chromatography (Table 1) both indicate that the isolated molecule contains flavonoids.

**TABLE 1: TLC SOLVENT SYSTEM FOR ISOLATED COMPOUND**

Solvent system	No. of Spot	R <sub>f</sub> value
n-butanol:acetic acid: water(2:2:6)	1	0.80
Tolueneethylacetate(9:1),(8:2),(5:5)	1	0.85 0.80 0.70

**Chemical Identification of Constituents:** Little amount of the isolated constituent are dissolved in alcohol and perform the following tests

**Shinoda Test (Magnesium Hydrochloride Reduction Test):** To the test solution, add few fragments of Magnesium ribbon and add concentrated Hydrochloric acid dropwise and observe the color.

**Zinc Hydrochloride Reduction Test:** To the test solution add a mixture of Zinc dust and conc. Hydrochloric acid. Heat the solution and observe the color<sup>11,12</sup>.

**Molecular Docking Study:** The computational studies were performed by performed by maestro 9.3 (Maestro" v-9.3.515 (Schrodinger, LLC, New York, NY), Table 2 running on Intel Core i5 3230 M with Radeon (tm) HD Graphics 1.90 GHz, RAM Memory 4GB under Windows 8

system. The target enzyme 5,10-Methylenetetrahydrofolate synthetase (MTHFS) retrieved from the Protein Data Bank (PDB ID-3HY3<sup>13</sup>).

**TABLE 2: MOLECULAR DOCKING STUDY OF ISOLATED COMPOUND**

Task	
Ligand molecules keptched	ChemDraw® Ultra, Version 8.0, CambridgeSoft Corporation, USA
Ligand Preparation	"LigPrep" v-2.5 (Schrodinger®)
Protein Preparation	ProteinPreparation Wizard" from the Workflows of "Maestro" v-9.3.515 (Schrodinger®) platform
Binding Site Analysis	"SiteMap" v-2.6 (Schrodinger®)
Molecular Docking	"Glide" v-5.8 (Schrodinger®)

**MTT Assay:** *In vitro* cytotoxic effect of quercetin isolated from *Euphorbia heterophylla* was evaluated by MTT assay against MCF-7 cell line (Breast Cancer Cell line). In brief, the trypsinized cells from T-25 flask were seeded in each well of 96-well flat-bottomed tissue culture plate at a density of 5 × 10<sup>3</sup> cells/well in growth medium and cultured at 37 °C in 5% CO<sub>2</sub> to adhere. After 48 hr incubation, the supernatant was discarded and the cells were pretreated with growth medium and were subsequently mixed with different concentrations of quercetin (3.125, 6.25, 12.5, 25, 50, 100 µg/ml) in triplicate to achieve a final volume of 100 µl and then cultured for 24 and 48 hr.

The quercetin was prepared as 1.0 mg/ml concentration stock solutions in PBS. Culture medium and solvent DMSO are used as controls. Each well then received 5 µl of fresh MTT (0.5 mg/ml in PBS) followed by incubation for 2 hr at 37 °C. The supernatant growth medium was removed from the wells and replaced with 100 µl of DMSO to solubilize the colored formazan product. After 30 min incubation, the absorbance (OD) of the culture plate was read at a wavelength of 650 nm on an ELISA reader, Anthos 2020 spectrophotometer was used. The mean percentage cytotoxicity and percentage viability is determined at various concentrations used<sup>14,15</sup>.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

**Infra-Red Spectrophotometer:** 3290.58, O-H stretching vibration of phenol, 1668.24, C=O Aryl ketonic stretch, 1612.16, C---CAromatic ring stretch, 1516.26, C=O aromatic str



etc  
h, 1429.54, C=C aromatic stretch, 1359.37, O-H bending of phenols, 1315.58, C-H bending in aromatic hydrocarbon, 1240.55, C-O stretch of Aryl ether, 1210.97, C-O stretch of phenol, 1163.60, C-CO-C stretch and bending in ketone 932.70, 815.46, 705.65, 596.88.

### Spectral Characterization:

<sup>1</sup>H NMR:  $\delta$ 6.18 (s, 1H, Ar-H),  $\delta$ 6.40 (s, 1H, Ar-H),  $\delta$ 6.87-6.89 (d, 1H, Ar-H),  $\delta$ 7.53-7.55 (m, 1H, Ar-H),  $\delta$ 7.67-7.68 (d, 1H, Ar-H),  $\delta$ 9.37-9.58 (m, 3H, OH),  $\delta$ 10.77 (brH, 1H, OH),  $\delta$ 12.49 (s, 1H, OH).

<sup>13</sup>C-NMR: Ar-C=O-176.79, Ali-C-OH-93.80, Ali-C-O-98.63, ArC-(103.46-147.25), Ar-C-OH-(148.15-164.45), C-OH-4(Ar), C-OH-1(Ali), C-O-2(Ali), ArC(8).

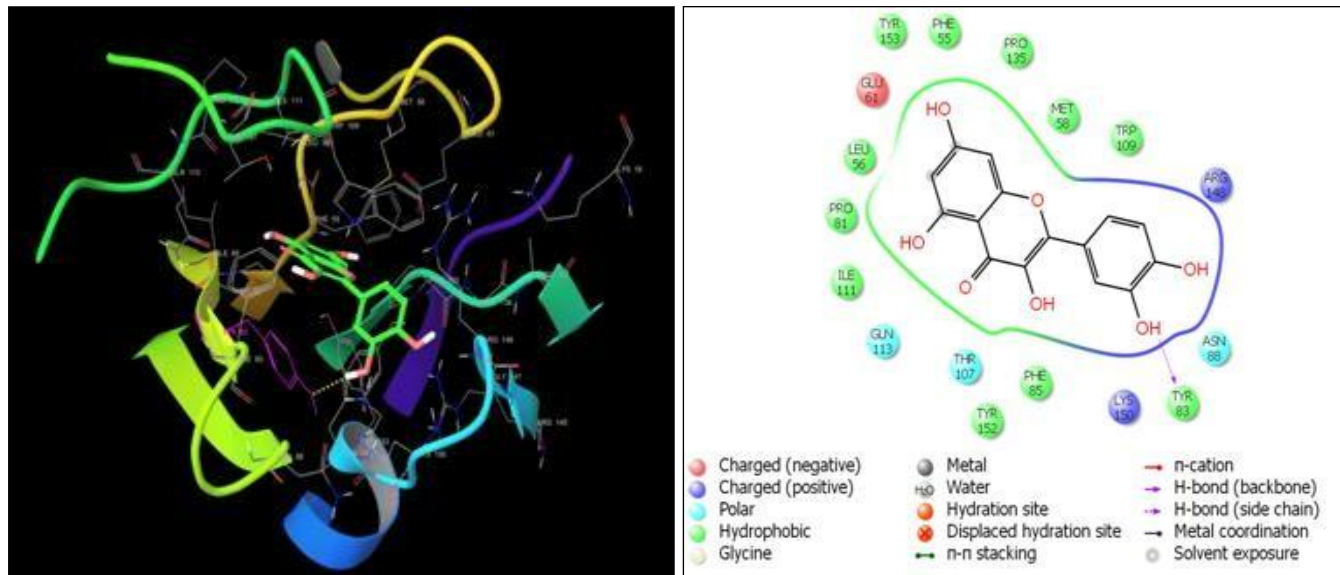
### Liquid Chromatography/Tandem Mass Spectrometry (LC/MS/MS Identification):

The isolated compound was analyzed by LC-MS-MS. It has been successfully applied for a quick separation and identification of the isolated compound from leaves of *Euphorbia heterophylla*. The fragment pattern  $m/z$  303.0493 ( $M^+H$ )<sup>+</sup> was found in mass spectrum, and it corresponds to the molecular weight of quercetin (302.2). From the use of mass spectral library search system, it is confirmed that the isolated compound is found to be quercetin.

**Docking:** MTHFS catalyzes the initial irreversible conversion of 5-formyltetrahydrofolate to 5, 10-methylenetetrahydrofolate. **Fig. 1.** The reaction is ATP dependent and is subject to feedback inhibition by the product. 5, 10-Methylenetetrahydrofolate synthetase (MTHFS) regulates the flow of carbon through the one-carbon metabolic network, which supplies essential components for the growth and proliferation of cells. Inhibition of MTHFS in human MCF-7 breast cancer cells has been shown to arrest the growth of cells. The reaction proceeds via the formation of two intermediates<sup>16</sup>.

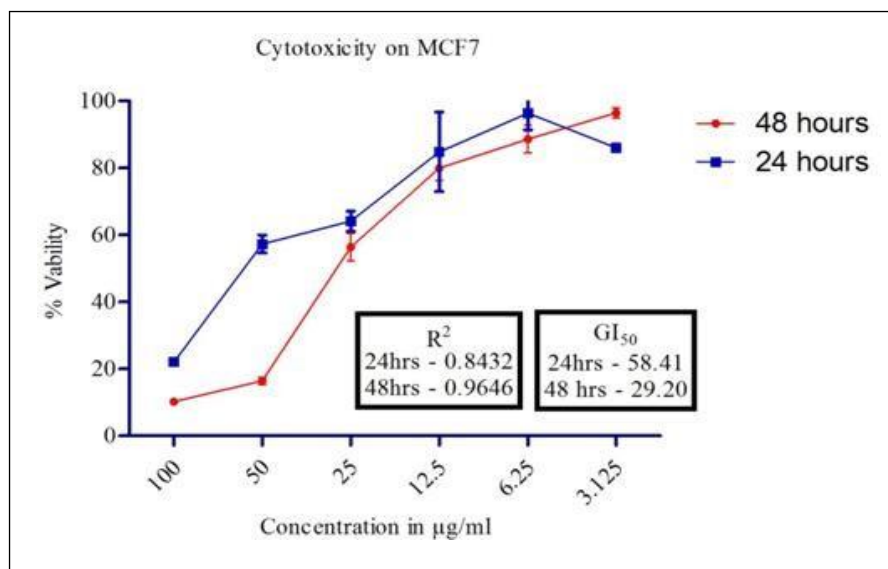
The amino acid residue Tyrosine 83 forms hydrogen bonding with hydroxyl group of quercetin. The electrostatic interactions of active sites of amino acid residues and hydrogen bonding lead to the good docking score of -10.22 **Fig. 2.**

**In vitro Cytotoxicity:** Quercetin shows good cytotoxic activity against MCF-7 cell line. **Table 3** depicts, at 50 and 100  $\mu$ g/ml the mean percentage cytotoxicity was found to be 83.58 and 89.77 respectively. The percentage viability at 50 and 100  $\mu$ g/ml was found to be 16.41 and 10.22 respectively. It clearly indicates that quercetin possesses good anticancer activity against Breast Cancer cells. At 48 hrs the GI<sub>50</sub> value of quercetin against MCF-7 cell line was found to be 29.20 **Fig. 3.**



**TABLE3: EFFECT OF QUERCETIN AGAINST MCF-7 CELL LINE AT DIFFERENT CONCENTRATIONS**

Concentration (µg/ml)	Singlet	Duplicate	Triplicate	Mean	SD	SEM	% Viability	100-toxicity
DMSO	0.143	0.161	0.159	81.9817	1.168308	0.674523	18.0183	
3.125	0.8294	0.8472	0.8020	3.500097	2.659445	1.535431	96.4999	
6.25	0.7858	0.8012	0.6889	11.39186	7.110735	4.105385	88.60814	
12.5	0.6762	0.6364	0.7411	20.04283	6.172754	3.563841	79.95717	
25	0.4303	0.5488	0.4687	43.63247	7.061766	4.077112	56.36753	
50	0.1585	0.1336	0.1296	83.58186	1.828963	1.055952	16.41814	
100	0.0892	0.0809	0.0926	89.77224	0.702969	0.405859	10.22776	



**FIG.3: CYTOTOXICITY OF QUERCETIN AGAINST MCF-7 CELL LINE**

**CONCLUSION:** From the above study, quercetin was isolated and characterized from the methanolic extract of *Euphorbia heterophylla* Linn. and this is a flavonoid constituent. Quercetin has anticancer, anti-inflammatory, antiviral, fibromyalgia, metabolic syndrome *etc.* Quercetin is frequently used as a therapeutic

agent in allergic conditions, including asthma and hay fever, eczema, and hives. In this study, the molecular docking was applied to explore the binding mechanism and to correlate its docking score with the activity of Quercetin compound. However, its use also may be important in cancer therapeutics. Quercetin is recognized as an antioxidant and has been studied for its gastro-

ctive effects, inhibition of carcinogenicity either alone or in combination with chemotherapeutic agents, reducing risk of cataract. Again, the ability of quercetin to inhibit inflammatory leukotriene production may be a key to its beneficial impact.

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