

**Research Paper**

**Transdermal Nanogel formulation, development, and evaluation using a synergistic effect of anti-inflammatory drug with herbal extract**

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**KEYWORDS**

Analgesic drugs, herbal, Franz diffusion cell, drug release, transdermal

**ABSTRACT**

The study intended to design, develop, and assess a transdermal nanogel containing a synergistic combination of herbal extracts and anti-inflammatory and analgesic agents for effective pain and inflammation management. The nanogel was synthesised by a modified emulsion-ultrasonication method, with composition optimised via factorial design to attain the requisite physicochemical characteristics. The composition comprised 6-Gingerol resin and Capsaicin resin, with Nimesulide as the active ingredient and carbopol 940 serving as the gelling agent. Characterisation investigations indicated a mean particle size of 208.12 nm, a narrow particle size distribution of 0.231, and a zeta potential of -12.5 mV, thereby affirming the formulation's stability. The nanogel demonstrated superior viscosity, spreadability, and pH compatibility, rendering it appropriate for transdermal application. Stability experiments performed in accordance with ICH criteria validated the formulation's resilience under diverse situations. The results indicate that the formulated nanogel presents a promising, synergistic treatment strategy for alleviating pain and inflammation while improving patient adherence.

**INTRODUCTION:**

The transdermal drug delivery system (TDDS) has received much interest recently for its capacity to administer medicinal substances through the skin in a regulated and prolonged manner. In contrast to oral or injectable methods, transdermal drug delivery systems (TDDS) circumvent first-pass metabolism and offer a non-invasive, patient-compliant method for administering medication [1, 2]. Among diverse transdermal formulations, nanogels have

emerged as a viable carrier owing to their distinctive features, such as elevated water content, biocompatibility, and improved drug loading capacity. Nanogels, consisting of nanoscale hydrophilic polymer networks, provide exceptional versatility in the delivery of both hydrophilic and lipophilic pharmaceuticals, hence enhancing therapeutic efficacy [2-4].

Chronic pain and inflammation are prevalent health concerns that frequently necessitate extended pharmaceutical treatment. Traditional therapies, such as oral nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications (NSAIDs) and analgesics, while helpful, are linked to adverse effects such as gastrointestinal discomfort and systemic toxicity. Transdermal nanogels offer an optimal solution to these difficulties by facilitating localised medication delivery and minimising systemic exposure [3-5]. Moreover, integrating natural bioactive substances with synergistic properties can improve therapeutic results while reducing side effects. The anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties of herbal extracts, which are rich in phytochemicals, have made them useful in traditional medicine for centuries. The amalgamation of herbal extracts with traditional pharmaceuticals in nanogel formulations provides a synergistic strategy for the control of pain and inflammation. This combination enhances therapeutic effectiveness and corresponds with the growing inclination towards natural and holistic treatments [5-7].

The management of pain and inflammation is a significant difficulty in contemporary healthcare, especially in illnesses like arthritis, musculoskeletal disorders, and neuropathic pain. Contemporary pharmacological approaches frequently depend on oral or injectable medications, which, although efficacious, provide constraints such as systemic side effects, suboptimal patient adherence, and restricted effectiveness in localised analgesia. Transdermal drug delivery methods, especially nanogels, have emerged as a revolutionary solution to tackle these issues. Utilising the distinctive benefits of nanogels—such as improved permeation, regulated drug release, and targeted delivery—researchers can create formulations that are both efficacious and conducive to patient comfort [6-8].

This research centres on the formulation, development, and assessment of a transdermal nanogel incorporating a synergistic combination of a herbal extract and standard anti-inflammatory and analgesic medications. The selection of herbal extract is determined by its established anti-inflammatory and analgesic characteristics, providing a supplementary mode of action to synthetic medications. The interaction between natural and synthetic components is believed to improve therapeutic efficacy, decrease the necessary dosage of each component, and lessen potential side effects [7-9].

The creation of a nanogel necessitates careful optimisation of factors including polymer content, drug-to-extract ratio, and particle size. Essential assessments encompass physicochemical characterisation, *in vitro* drug release, skin permeation studies, and *in vivo* efficacy evaluations. The research highlights the formulation's stability under diverse storage circumstances, confirming its practical utility. This discovery not only addresses a critical medical necessity but also corresponds with the increasing trend of merging natural and synthetic medicines for comprehensive health care. The transdermal nanogel developed in this study, by integrating traditional medicine with contemporary pharmaceutical technology, has the potential to establish a new standard in pain and inflammation treatment [9-11].

## **MATERIAL AND METHODS:**

### **Material:**

The capsaicin resin and 6-gingerol plant extract was bought from Yucca Enterprises in Mumbai, India. From SDFCL in Mumbai, we got carbopol 934, mesulide, Tween 80, and polyvinyl alcohol. The Indian community store is where we bought the coconut oil. Pharmaceutical grade triethanolamine and all the other ingredients used in the nanogel mixture were used. A grade of solvents and chemicals meant for analysis were used. Deionised water was used for the whole study.

## Methods:

### Preparation of Nanoemulsion:

A nanogel was made using the Bandelin probe method and ultrasonication. It contains a man-made drug called Nimesulide and herbal extracts called Gingerol and Capsaicin resin. With the help of a micropipette, the exact amount of medicine was moved to the conical vessel and then mixed with the co-surfactant (polyvinyl alcohol) and surfactant (Tween 80). The nanoemulsion is then made by mixing water and coconut oil together. The ultrasonication process was done with an ultrasonic probe sonicator. With a Bandelin probe sonicator, the sample was sonicated three times over the course of fifteen minutes. You can get the qualities you want by changing the concentrations of all the surfactants and secondary surfactants in the right way [12-14]. The formula for the nanoemulsion is provided in Table 1.

**Table 1: Composition of Nanoemulsion**

Batches	Nimesulide (gm)	Gingerol (ml)	Capsaicin (ml)	Coconut oil (ml)	Surf: Cosurfactant (Tween 80:PVA)	Water (ml)
B1	0.2	0.3	0.020	0.5	3:3	2
B2	0.3	0.4	0.030	1	4:2	3
B3	0.3	0.5	0.025	1	3:3	3
B4	0.4	0.5	0.040	1.5	4:2	4
B5	0.5	0.5	0.025	2.0	3:3	5

### Characterization of nanoemulsion:

#### Mean particle size and PDI:

A Malvern particle size analyser and Malvern photon correlation spectroscopy tools were used to look at the nanoemulsion's particle size and how evenly the particles were spread out. After mixing the samples with the right amount of purified water, the Zetasizer machine used Dynamic Light Scattering to measure the particles' Brownian motion to find out how big they were [14-16].

#### pH of the formulation:

A digital pH meter was used to check the pH of the mixes that were made. The pH meter tip was put into the mixture for five minutes and then taken out to get data [15-17].

#### Spreadability study:

The study used two glass plates, one that was 5 cm by 20 cm and weighed 30 grammes each. About 100 mg of the test blend were spread out on a single glass plate. Next, the mixture was put between the two glasses plates, with the second plate placed on top of the first. To make sure the weight was spread out evenly, an extra 10g weight was put on top of the glass plate sandwich. After five minutes, a scale was used to measure how wide the range was. A mean was found for the values [16-18].

#### Preparation of nanogel:

For making a therapeutic gel, carbopol was chosen as the gel matrix base. Gingerol (5% w/w), capsaicin (0.025% w/w), nimesulide (0.3 w/w), and a combination of oil, detergents, and co-surfactants (0.4 w/w) were all components of the well-structured nanoemulsion that was combined with carbopol. A magnetic mixer set to 300 rpm slowly stirred the mixture for about 12 hours at room temperature. After that, 1 N NaOH was added to the sample to bring its pH level down to 7.0–7.5 so that gel could form [17-19].

#### In-vitro permeation study:

For the in vitro penetration examination of the transdermal nanogel, a Franz diffusion cell was

utilised, with a receiving chamber containing 10 mL of phosphate buffer solution (pH 6.8). Placing and holding the dialysis membrane between the donor and receiver chambers was the next step. The phosphate buffer solution (pH 6.8) in the donor chamber was constantly agitated and maintained a temperature of  $37 \pm 0.5$  °C. The formulation was put in the donor container and water was added to it. Diffusion happened over the course of six hours. The amount of medicine that passed through the membrane was measured by taking samples and replacing them with the same amount of phosphate buffer solution (pH 6.8) on a regular basis. A UV spectrophotometer with a good blank was used to measure the amount of medicine in each aliquot [20-22].

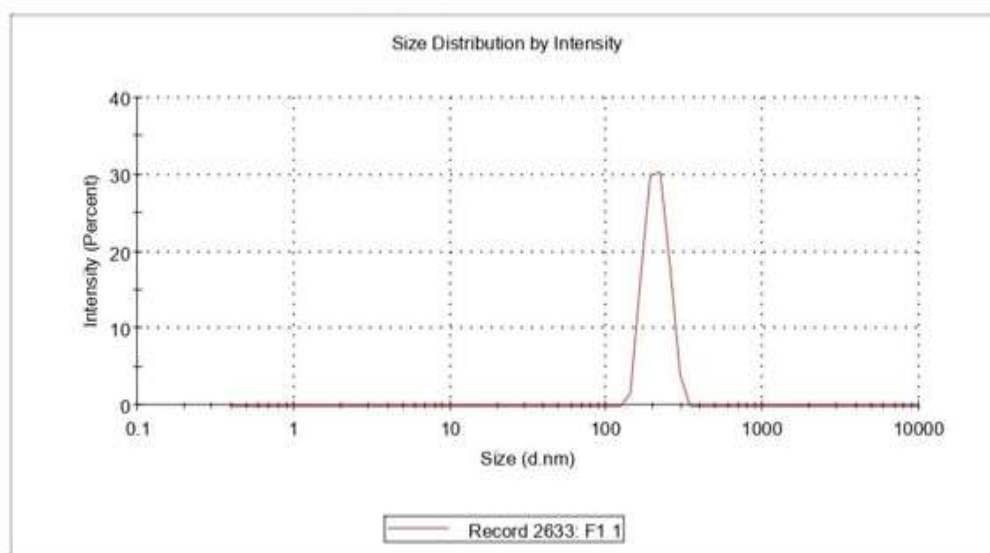
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

### Nanoemulsion formulation:

We used the self-emulsification approach to make the nanoemulsions. Coconut oil made up the interior, while Tween 80 and PVA served as detergents and cosurfactants. The exterior was water. The nanoemulsion was created by combining distilled water, oil, surfactants, and co-surfactants in a precise ratio before subjecting the mixture to sonication using a Bandelin Probe sonicator. Formulations that failed to exhibit obvious symptoms of flocculation, sedimentation, or phase separation were selected as stable samples. After monitoring the nanoemulsion's droplet size for 30 days at room temperature, samples with significantly larger particles were also eliminated from further screening.

### Mean particle size and PDI:

The measurement was conducted while ensuring that an angle of 90 degrees was preserved in relation to the incoming beam. A laser Doppler nemometer integrated with the device was utilised to assess the zeta potential. The formulation produced exhibited a consistent and stable composition, evidenced by a particle size measurement of 208.12 nm and a particle size distribution of 0.231 [23-26].



**Figure 1: Analysis of particle size and particle size distribution for the B3 batch**

### Characterization of nanoemulsion:

#### Spreadability:

Essential to the product's behaviour when dispensed from the tube, the gel's spreadability determines how well the product works. Table 2 displays the spreadability values, which reveal that all of the polymers utilised to make the gels had very low shear requirements and were easy to spread. Formulation B3 had expanded circles that were 3.7 cm in diameter, while

carbopol gel had circles that were 3.9 cm in diameter. The spreadability, as measured by the diameter of the spread circle, was shown to decrease when the concentration of any gelling agent increased, as shown in Table 2 [27-31].

**Table 2: Characteristics of Nanoemulsion gel**

Batches	Colour	Spreadability (cm)	pH
B1	Translucent	3.5	6.2
B2	Translucent	3.6	6.3
B3	Translucent	3.9	6.5
B4	Translucent	3.8	6.6
B5	Translucent	3.6	6.4

#### pH:

The prepared products' pH values ranged from 5 to 6.5, which is deemed enough for reducing the possibility of skin irritation when applied. The data can be found in Table 2, although the drug content determination (without pectin gel) yielded a pH of approximately 6.5.

#### Investigation of drug permeability *in-vitro*:

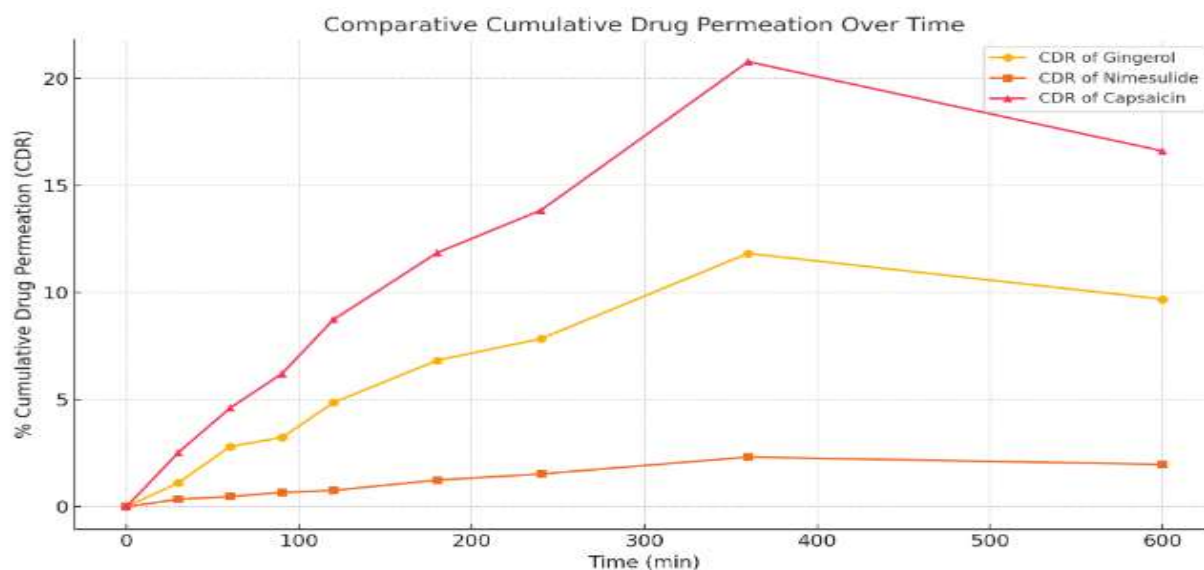
The data for the *in-vitro* drug release of the transdermal nanogels that were synthesised in a phosphate buffer solution (pH 6.5) are shown in detail in Figure 2 and Table 3. Within the drug delivery paradigm, the release of the pharmacological agent from its formulation is critical and has a substantial impact on the intervention's therapeutic efficacy. Research into the effects of polymer concentration on drug release has shown that the concentration of the polymer used determines the drug release *in vitro* [32-38].

**Table 3: Drug penetration of B3 nanoemulsion-loaded gel *in-vitro***

Time	Cumulative drug permeation (%)		
	Gingerol	Nimesulide	Capsaicin
0 min	0	0	0
30 min	1.115	0.348	2.523
60 min	2.812	0.478	4.612
90 min	3.235	0.668	6.210
120 min	4.867	0.764	8.745
180 min	6.835	1.246	11.862
240 min	7.846	1.531	13.845
600 min	9.694	1.978	16.614
360 min	11.831	2.320	20.784

The B3 transdermal nanogels were tested for *in vitro* drug release for a duration of 6 hours. The formulations' rates of medicine release were dependent on the amounts of polymer they included. The drug release was better in formulations with a lower concentration of polymer as compared to those with a larger concentration of polymer [39-43]. The formulations' drug release rates were found to be lower when the polymer content was increased. The transdermal gel's viscosity is enhanced with an increase in polymer concentration, which makes the diffusion path length longer and further inhibits the release of medication. Because drug molecules need time to penetrate the transdermal gel and reach the dissolving liquid, the pace and quantity of drug release demonstrate an inverse correlation with the thickness of the gel. Since drug molecules need time to penetrate the transdermal gel and reach the dissolving solvent, the thickness of the gel has an inverse link with the rate and quantity of drug release. Based on the results, formulation B3 was considered best [44-48].





**Figure 2: In-vitro drug penetration of B3 nanoemulsion-loaded gel**

### CONCLUSION:

This research produced a nanoemulsion comprising synthetic pharmaceuticals and natural extracts for topical use, employing coconut oil as the delivery vehicle. The transdermal nanoemulsion was synthesised via the Bandelin probe method, utilising carbopol-934 as both a surfactant and co-surfactant alongside a gelling agent. The system demonstrated an increased diffusion rate attributed to the smaller particle size. After optimising the parameters affecting the formulation's efficacy, ultrasonication proved to be a straightforward and effective method for reducing particle size. The characterisation of the nanoemulsions was performed utilising particle size and formulation optimisation ranges. A study was conducted to characterise the nanoemulsion incorporated into the transdermal gel by examining the permeability of a dialysing membrane, spreadability, pH, mean and distribution of particle sizes, and appearance. The B3 formulation achieved the target drug release rate over a six-hour period.

### Funding:

None

### Conflict of Interest:

None

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