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Synthesis of l-Aryloxy-Cyclohexane-2,3-Diols: A Novel Approach for Potential Antidiabetic Agents

Ramdarshan Parashar*, Vivek Chourasia and Manisha Masih Singh

School of Pharmacy, Mansarovar Global University, Kolar Road, Bhopal (M.P.) - India

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Abstract

The synthesis of l-aryloxy-cyclohexane-2,3-diols represents a novel approach for developing potential antidiabetic agents. This study focuses on the epoxidation of l-phenoxy-2-cyclohexene, followed by selective cleavage of the resulting epoxy ring to yield stereochemically defined diols. The synthesized compounds were characterized using NMR spectroscopy, confirming their structural integrity and stereochemistry. The biological activity of these diols was evaluated, showing promising potential as antidiabetic agents. These findings suggest that l-aryloxy-cyclohexane-2,3-diols could serve as lead structures for the development of new therapeutic agents targeting type-2 diabetes.
Key-words:l-aryloxy-cyclohexane-2,3-diols, epoxidation, stereochemistry, antidiabetic agents, synthesis, NMR spectroscopy.

Introduction

Type-2 diabetes is a chronic metabolic disorder characterized by insulin resistance and progressive pancreatic β-cell dysfunction. Various antihyperglycemic drugs are available to manage this condition, primarily focusing on enhancing insulin sensitivity or augmenting the body's natural insulin stores. Among these, biguanides such as metformin have emerged as first-line treatments due to their efficacy and cost-effectiveness. However, despite their widespread use, these medications can cause significant side effects, including lactic acidosis and gastrointestinal disturbances [1]. Therefore, there is an ongoing need to develop new antidiabetic agents with improved safety profiles and efficacy.

The discovery of metformin, a biguanide, traces back to the efforts of French scientist Jean Stern in the 1950s. Metformin functions by reducing hepatic glucose production and improving insulin sensitivity in peripheral tissues [2]. Despite its benefits, the search for novel antidiabetic agents continues, particularly those that can overcome the limitations associated with existing drugs.

In the quest for new therapeutic agents, we focused on two classes of compounds currently used for treating type-2 diabetes: thiazolidinediones, specifically pioglitazone and rosiglitazone. These drugs serve as leads for designing new molecules with enhanced biological activity and reduced side effects [3]. Our approach involves synthesizing structural variants of these compounds, focusing on the aryloxy-cyclohexane-2,3-diol scaffold.

***Corresponding Author**

Experimental Procedures

The experimental section provides detailed methodologies for synthesizing the intermediates and final products.

Synthesis of Cyclohexanol and its Derivatives

Cyclohexanol was synthesized via the reduction of cyclohexanone using sodium borohydride, followed by the dehydration of cyclohexanol to yield cyclohexene [4]. The halogenated derivatives, 1-chloro-2-cyclohexene and 1-bromo-2-cyclohexene, were prepared using standard procedures involving hydrochloric acid and N-bromosuccinimide, respectively [5].

Synthesis of l-Phenoxy-2-Cyclohexene

The key intermediate, l-phenoxy-2-cyclohexene was synthesized through the condensation of 1-chloro-2-cyclohexene with phenol in the presence of sodium hydroxide [6]. Epoxidation of this intermediate using m-chloroperbenzoic acid yielded a mixture of syn- and anti-epoxides, which were separated using column chromatography [7].

Epoxide Ring-Opening Reactions

Subsequent reactions involved the stereoselective opening of the epoxy ring using various nucleophiles, leading to the formation of the desired diols and their derivatives. These products were characterized using NMR, IR, and mass spectrometry, providing insights into their structural and stereochemical properties [8].

Results and Discussion

Synthesis of l-Aryloxy-Cyclohexane-2,3-Diols

The synthesis of l-aryloxy-cyclohexane-2,3-diols was initiated by the epoxidation of l-phenoxy-2-cyclohexene. The reaction, performed using m-chloroperbenzoic acid in methylene chloride, yielded an isomeric mixture of syn- and anti-epoxides in a 1:9 ratio [9]. The isomers were challenging to separate due to overlapping retention factors and boiling points. Column chromatography on silica gel was employed to isolate the pure epoxides, but significant amounts of trans-diol, resulting from oxirane ring cleavage, were also obtained [10][11].

Stereochemistry and Product Distribution

The stereochemistry of the resulting diols was confirmed using NMR spectroscopy, which revealed that the trans-diol obtained from the cleavage of the anti-epoxide exhibited trans-diaxial stereochemistry [12]. This finding aligns with the expected outcomes based on the steric effects of the substituents and the 1,3-diaxial interactions within the cyclohexane ring [13].

Subsequent reactions of the isolated epoxides with nucleophiles further highlighted the influence of stereochemistry on product distribution. For example, treatment of the syn-epoxide with piperidine in ethanol yielded 1-phenoxy-2-hydroxy-3-piperidylcyclohexane, while the anti-epoxide produced a 1,3-disubstituted-2-cyclohexanol derivative [14][15]. These products were confirmed via NMR spectroscopy and were found to be consistent with previous reports on similar systems [16].

Biological Activity and Potential as Antidiabetic Agents

The synthesized l-aryloxy-cyclohexane-2,3-diols were evaluated for their antidiabetic activity. Preliminary results indicated that these compounds possess significant potential in reducing blood glucose levels, with activity comparable to that of existing thiazolidinediones like pioglitazone [17]. The diols' ability to enhance insulin sensitivity and reduce hepatic glucose production suggests that they could serve as promising candidates for further drug development [18].

Stability and Structural Integrity

Stability studies revealed that the synthesized diols maintained their structural integrity over time, with no significant degradation observed under various storage conditions. The NMR spectra of stored samples showed no new peaks or changes in chemical shifts, confirming the stability of these compounds [19]. This stability is crucial for their potential application as therapeutic agents.

Conclusion

The synthesis of l-aryloxy-cyclohexane-2,3-diols presents a novel approach to developing potential antidiabetic agents. The study highlights the importance of stereochemistry in the design and synthesis of bioactive molecules, as well as the potential of these compounds as lead structures for further drug development. The promising biological activity of the synthesized diols warrants further investigation into their therapeutic potential as antidiabetic agents.

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