Embracing the future: Harnessing the power of natural flavonoids in nanotechnology.

Dr Manojkumar O. Malpani
Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry
Shankarlal Khandelwal Arts, Science and Commerce College,
Akola 444002, India
Email: manojkumarmalpani78@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Now a days nanotechnology has revolutionized numerous industries, including medicine, electronics, energy, and material science. The ability to manipulate matter at the nano scale has given rise to countless possibilities and promises to shape the future in unimaginable ways. Future of plant-based medicine and nanotechnology holds great potential for advancements in healthcare. Medicinal plants have been used for centuries to treat various ailments and diseases due to their natural compounds with therapeutic properties. In recent years researchers have explored the potential of incorporating flavonoids from medicinal plants into nanomaterials, paving the way or a sustainable and environment friendly future. This article explain the trends in nanomaterial by utilising the inherent properties of natural flavonoids.
Keywords – medicinal plants; flavonoids; nanomaterials; healthcare; antiviral; anticancer.

I. INTRODUCTION

Now a days nanotechnology has revolutionized numerous industries, including medicine, electronics, energy, and material science. The ability to manipulate matter at the nano scale has given rise to countless possibilities and promises to shape the future in unimaginable ways. Future of plant-based medicine and nanotechnology holds great potential for advancements in healthcare. Medicinal plants have been used for centuries to treat various ailments and diseases due to their natural compounds with therapeutic properties. These compounds, often referred to as active ingredients, have potential applications in nanotechnology. Here are a few examples:

A. Curcumin

Curcumin is a compound found in turmeric, known for its anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. It has been studied for its potential in nanomedicine. Researchers have encapsulated curcumin in nanoscale carriers to improve its bioavailability and targeted delivery to specific cells or tissues.

B. Quercetin

Quercetin is a flavonoid found in various fruits and vegetables, valued for its antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects. Its incorporation into nanoscale delivery systems, such as nanoparticles or liposomes, can enhance its stability and targeted delivery, making it more effective in treating conditions like cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and neurodegenerative disorders.

C. Resveratrol

Resveratrol is a naturally occurring compound found in grapes, berries, and peanuts, known for its antioxidant and anti-aging properties. Nanoparticle-based delivery systems have been explored to improve the bioavailability and targeted delivery of resveratrol, enabling its use in the treatment of various diseases, including cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and neurological disorders.

D. Artemisinin

Artemisinin, derived from *Artemisia annua* (sweet wormwood), is widely used as an antimalarial drug. Nanotechnology approaches, such as nanostructured lipid carriers or nanoparticles, have been developed to improve the solubility, stability, and targeted delivery of artemisinin, enhancing its efficacy against malaria parasites.

These examples demonstrate how medicinal plant active ingredients can be harnessed and integrated into nanotechnology platforms to enhance their therapeutic potential.

Now a day's whole world is going towards the nature and its benefits by considering medicinal properties of medicinal plants due to their natural ingredients and having no side effects. Flavonoids is one of the medicinal potent natural ingredient present in medicinal plants. Flavonoids are a diverse group plant-derived compounds that are widely distributed in nature. They are part of larger class of compounds known as polyphenols, which are characterised by their chemical structure containing multiple phenolic rings. Flavonoids serve multiple health benefits towards mankind. There are six main subclasses of flavonoids, each with its unique chemical structure and properties. These subclasses include flavones, flavonols, flavanones, flavan-3-ols (catechins), anthocyanins, and isoflavones. Each subclass has different distribution patterns in plants and can be found in various food sources.

Each subclass has different distribution patterns in plants and can be found in various food sources. Flavonoids have gained significant attention due to their potential health-promoting effects. They have been associated with numerous health benefits, including antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, cardiovascular protection, anticancer activity, neuroprotective effects, and immune system modulation. These compounds have also been studied for their potential role in preventing chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, and neurodegenerative disorders [1-6].

II. FUTURISTIC ROLE OF FLAVONOIDS

In recent years researchers have explored the potential of incorporating flavonoids from medicinal plants into nano materials, paving the way or a sustainable and environment friendly future. This article explain the trends in nanomaterial by utilising the inherent properties of natural flavonoids. Flavonoids are a diverse group of plant derived compounds that exhibit various biological activities including antioxidant anti-inflammatory and anti-microbial property. Found abundantly in fruits, vegetables and other plants sources, this compounds have long been known for their health benefits. Recent studies have extended their utilisation to the field of Nanotechnology capitalising on their unique chemical structures and properties. Here are some futuristic trends of flavonoids in nanotechnology:

A. Nanoparticle synthesis

Flavonoids can act as reducing and stabilizing agents in the synthesis of metallic nanoparticles, such as silver, gold, and iron oxide nanoparticles. These nanoparticles can have unique properties and find applications in fields such as catalysis, sensing, and drug delivery.

B. Drug delivery systems

Flavonoids can be utilized in the development of nanocarriers for drug delivery. Their antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties make them attractive candidates for targeted drug delivery systems. By encapsulating drugs within flavonoid-based nanoparticles, controlled release and enhanced therapeutic efficacy can be achieved.

C. Photothermal therapy

Flavonoid molecules can be incorporated into nanomaterials, such as graphene oxide or carbon nanotubes, to enhance their photothermal properties. This could enable the development of efficient therapies for cancer treatment, where the flavonoid-nanomaterial hybrids can selectively generate heat upon exposure to near-infrared light, leading to localized tumour destruction.

D. Imaging agents

Flavonoids, with their inherent fluorescence properties, can be employed as imaging agents in the field of bioimaging. By incorporating flavonoids into nanocarriers, such as quantum dots or magnetic nanoparticles, they can act as reliable probes for various imaging modalities, including fluorescence imaging, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), or photoacoustic imaging.

E. Antimicrobial applications

Flavonoids possess antimicrobial properties, making them promising candidates for combating drug-resistant bacteria or developing new antimicrobial agents. By incorporating flavonoids into nanoparticles, their antimicrobial activity can be enhanced. These flavonoid-based nanomaterials can find applications in medical devices, wound dressings, or water treatment systems.

F. Environmental remediation

Flavonoids can play a crucial role in the removal of pollutants from water or soil. By immobilizing flavonoids on nanoparticles or nanocomposites, such as magnetic nanoparticles or activated carbon, their affinity for pollutants can be harnessed for the efficient removal of heavy metals, pesticides, or organic pollutants [7].

III. FUTURE PROSPECTS OF FLAVONOIDS IN INDUSTRIES

Natural flavonoids have a wide range of applications and show promising future prospects in various industries. Here are some key areas where natural flavonoids are being used and their potential future impact.

A. Pharmaceuticals

Flavonoids possess numerous pharmacological properties including antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, anti-cancer, anti-microbial and neuro-protective activities. These properties make them valuable for developing novel drugs and therapeutics. Flavonoids have already been incorporated into medicines for treating various diseases such as cardiovascular disorders, diabetes and cancer. In the future research on flavonoids may lead to the discovery of new drugs for a broader range of health conditions.

B. Functional foods and neutra-ceuticals

Flavonoids are widely present in fruits, vegetables, tea, cocoa and other plant based foods. They contribute to the health benefits associated with consuming a diet rich in fruits and vegetables. Flavonoids are known for their antioxidant activity which helps in protecting against oxidative stress and chronic diseases. In the future there is a growing interest in developing functional foods and neutra-ceuticals fortified with flavonoids to promote health and prevent various ailments.

C. Cosmetics and personal care products

Flavonoids have shown potential for use in skin care and personal care products due to their antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and skin protective properties. They can help in reducing skin damage caused by UV radiation improving skin texture and preventing signs of aging. Flavonoids like quercetin and epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) found in green tea are already being incorporated into skin care formulations. With further research and development more flavonoids may be utilised in cosmetic products to enhance their efficacy.

D. Agriculture and crop protection

Flavonoids play a role in plant defence against pathogens, UV radiation and environmental stress. They act as a natural plant protectants and contribute to the plants overall resilience. Utilising Flavonoids or their derivatives as a bio pesticides are natural insect repellents, can reduce reliance on synthetic chemicals, promoting sustainable agriculture practices. In the future flavonoids may find broader use in crop protection and paste management strategies.

E. Biomedical and biotechnological applications

Flavonoids have shown potential in various biomedical and biotechnological applications. They can be utilised as a natural antioxidants in food preservation, as a natural colouring agents in the food and beverage industry and as a bioactive compounds for drug delivery systems [8].

IV. Important roles of flavonoids in therapeutics

Flavonoids are characterized by their chemical structure, which includes a flavone backbone and various functional groups. Flavonoids have been extensively studied for their potential role in therapeutics.

A. Antioxidant activity

Flavonoids exhibit strong antioxidant properties, meaning they can neutralize harmful free radicals and protect cells from oxidative damage. This antioxidant activity has been linked to various health benefits, including cardiovascular protection, neuroprotection, and anti-aging effects.

B. Anti-inflammatory effects

Flavonoids have been shown to possess anti-inflammatory properties by inhibiting the production of inflammatory mediators, such as cytokines and enzymes like cyclooxygenase (COX) and lipoxygenase (LOX). By reducing inflammation, flavonoids may help alleviate symptoms in conditions such as arthritis, allergies, and inflammatory bowel disease.

C. Cardiovascular protection

Certain flavonoids, such as quercetin and resveratrol, have been found to have cardiovascular benefits. They can help improve blood vessel function, reduce blood pressure, inhibit platelet aggregation, and lower LDL cholesterol levels. These effects may contribute to a reduced risk of heart disease and stroke.

D. Anticancer properties

Flavonoids possess various anticancer activities, including antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects, inhibition of tumour cell proliferation, induction of cancer cell apoptosis (cell death), and inhibition of angiogenesis (formation of new blood vessels that supply tumours). While more research is needed, flavonoids show promise as potential chemo preventive and therapeutic agents against different types of cancers.

E. Neuroprotective effects

Flavonoids have been investigated for their neuroprotective properties in conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and stroke. They can modulate neuronal signalling, reduce oxidative stress, inhibit neuroinflammation, and promote neurogenesis (the formation of new neurons), potentially enhancing brain health and function.

F. Anti-allergic effects

Certain flavonoids, particularly those found in fruits and vegetables, have been found to possess anti-allergic properties. They can inhibit the release of histamine and other allergy-related compounds, which may help alleviate symptoms of allergic conditions such as hay fever and asthma.

It's important to note that while there is substantial evidence supporting the health benefits of flavonoids, their therapeutic applications are still being researched, and more studies are needed to fully understand their mechanisms of action and optimal usage. Additionally, the bioavailability of flavonoids can vary, and their effectiveness may depend on factors such as dose, formulation, and individual variations in metabolism [9].

V. FLAVONOIDS AS AN ANTIVIRAL AGENT

Flavonoids have been studied for their potential antiviral properties and have shown promising results against a range of viral infections. Here are some ways in which flavonoids have been explored for their use as antiviral agents:

A. Antiviral activity against specific viruses

Different flavonoids have demonstrated activity against a wide range of viruses, including influenza viruses, herpes simplex viruses, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis viruses, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). These compounds have been shown to inhibit viral replication and reduce viral load in experimental studies.

B. Immuno-modulatory effects

Flavonoids possess immuno-modulatory properties, meaning they can modulate the immune response to viral infections. They can enhance the activity of immune cells, such as natural killer (NK) cells, macrophages, and T cells, which play a crucial role in fighting viral infections. By boosting the immune response, flavonoids may help control viral replication and reduce the severity of viral infections.

C. Antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects

Many flavonoids exhibit potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities. Viral infections often induce oxidative stress and trigger inflammation, which can contribute to tissue damage and worsen disease outcomes. Flavonoids' antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties can help mitigate these harmful effects, thereby supporting the body's defence against viral infections.

D. Synergistic effects with antiviral drugs

Flavonoids have been investigated for their potential to enhance the effectiveness of antiviral drugs. Studies have shown that certain flavonoids can act synergistically with antiviral medications, increasing their antiviral activity and reducing drug resistance. This combination approach holds promise for improving the efficacy of existing antiviral therapies.

VI. SOME FLAVONOIDS HAVING ANTIVIRAL ACTIVITY

Here are a few examples of flavonoids that have shown potential antiviral activity in some studies:

A. Epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG)

EGCG is a flavonoid found in green tea. It has been investigated for its antiviral activity against various viruses, including influenza, HIV, hepatitis B and C viruses, and herpes simplex viruses. EGCG has been found to inhibit viral attachment, entry, and replication in several studies.

B. Baicalin

Baicalin is a flavonoid derived from the roots of Scutellaria baicalensis, a traditional Chinese medicinal herb. It has been studied for its antiviral effects against respiratory viruses, including influenza and coronaviruses. Baicalin has shown inhibitory activity against viral replication and has been investigated as a potential treatment option for respiratory viral infections.

C. Hesperidin

Hesperidin is a flavonoid primarily found in citrus fruits. It has been evaluated for its antiviral properties against several viruses, including herpes viruses, dengue virus, and influenza virus. Hesperidin has shown inhibitory effects on viral entry and replication in some studies.

D. Quercetin

Quercetin has been studied for its antiviral effects against a range of viruses, including influenza, herpes viruses, HIV, and coronaviruses. Quercetin has been shown to interfere with viral replication and inhibit viral entry into host cells. Some studies have suggested that quercetin may have a synergistic effect when combined with antiviral drugs.

It's important to note that while flavonoids show potential as antiviral agents, further research is needed to fully understand their mechanisms of action, optimal dosages, and potential side effects. Clinical trials are necessary to evaluate their effectiveness and safety in human subjects. Overall, flavonoids have emerged as an exciting area of research for their potential antiviral properties. Their ability to inhibit viral replication, modulate the immune response, and mitigate oxidative stress and inflammation make them promising candidates for the development of new antiviral therapies or as adjuncts to existing treatments [10-11].

VII. Enhancing Nanomaterials with flavonoids

By incorporating flavonoids into nano materials researchers aim to improve their performance stability and functionality. Flavonoids possess remarkable structural flexibility which allows them to act as a building blocks for the creation of Nano composites. This composite can be designed to possess specific properties such as enhance strength electrical conductivity or even targeted Drug Delivery mechanism.

Additionally flavonoids acts as an effective stabilizers for nanoparticles preventing aggregation and announcing their dispersibility. This attribute is a particularly valuable in application such as solar cells and catalysis where stability and control over Nano particle size are crucial factors for optimal performance.

One of the most significant advantages of using natural flavonoids in nanomaterials is there bio compatibility and sustainability. Unlike synthetic materials flavonoids derived from Natural Sources are less likely to induce adverse reactions in biological systems. Their compatibility with living organisms makes them ideal candidates for applications in bio imaging drug delivery systems and tissue engineering.

Moreover utilising natural flavonoids with the principles of Green Chemistry promoting sustainability and reducing the environmental impact associated with conventional manufacturing processes. By incorporating naturally derived materials we can reduce the Reliance on non-renewable resources and minimise the production of toxic by-products.

One of the futuristic trends in chemistry within the field of nanotechnology is the development of nanomaterials with tailored properties. Researchers are exploring ways to manipulate the structure and composition of nanoparticles, nanomaterials, and nanocomposites to achieve desired properties and functionalities. This involves designing advanced chemical synthesis methods, such as bottom-up approaches, to control the size, shape, and surface chemistry of nanomaterials.

Another trend is the utilization of nanocatalysts for more efficient and sustainable chemical reactions. Nanoparticles can exhibit unique catalytic properties due to their high surface area and enhanced reactivity. By designing catalysts at the nanoscale, chemists can enhance reaction rates, reduce energy requirements, and promote selective reactions. This has the potential to revolutionize various industries, including energy production, pharmaceuticals, and environmental remediation.

Furthermore, the development of smart materials and nanodevices is another exciting trend. Chemists are working on integrating various functionalities into nanomaterials, allowing them to respond to external stimuli or perform specific tasks. For instance, smart nanomaterials could be designed to release drugs selectively at specific sites within the body or to sense and respond to changes in environmental conditions.

In summary, chemistry in nanotechnology is advancing towards the development of tailored nanomaterials, more efficient catalysis, and smart nanodevices. These futuristic trends hold promise for a wide range of applications, from advanced manufacturing to healthcare and beyond [12-13].

VIII. Plant based medicine and nanotechnology

Future of plant-based medicine and nanotechnology holds great potential for advancements in healthcare. Here are a few potential futuristic trends:

A. Nanoparticle-based drug delivery systems

Nanotechnology can enable targeted and controlled drug delivery by encapsulating plant-based medicines in nanoparticles. These nanoparticles can be engineered to release the medicine at specific sites within the body, increasing effectiveness and reducing side effects.

B. Bioactive compounds from plants

With the help of nanotechnology, scientists can extract and utilize bioactive compounds from plants more efficiently. Nanoparticles can enhance the absorption, stability, and bioavailability of these compounds, making them more potent and effective as natural remedies.

C. Nanosensors for personalized medicine

Nanotechnology can enable the development of nanosensors capable of detecting biomarkers in the body. These sensors can help monitor the progression of diseases and provide personalized treatment options using plant-based medicine.

D. Nanomedicine for targeted cancer therapy

Nanoparticles can be functionalized with specific plant-based compounds to target cancer cells selectively. This targeted approach can improve treatment outcomes while minimizing damage to healthy cells, resulting in more effective and safer cancer therapies.

E. Tissue Engineering

Plant-based nanomaterials for tissue engineering nanotechnology can enable the development of plant-based nanomaterials with unique properties for tissue engineering. These have enhanced biocompatibility and promote tissue regeneration, potentially revolutionizing the field of regenerative medicine.

F. Biodegradable nanocarriers for sustainable drug delivery

Nanotechnology can aid in the development of biodegradable nanocarriers for plant-based medicines, reducing the environmental impact of pharmaceuticals. These carriers can be made from biocompatible and sustainable materials, ensuring a more eco-friendly approach to healthcare. It is important to note that these trends are speculative and hypothetical, as the development and implementation of these technologies require significant research and regulatory approval. However, these potential applications demonstrate the exciting possibilities that lie ahead in the plant-based medicine and nanotechnology [14].

IX. Role of nanotechnology in flavonoid mediated anticancer therapy

Nanotechnology has emerged as a promising approach in drug delivery and has shown potential in enhancing the efficacy of flavonoid-mediated anticancer therapy. Here are some key roles of nanotechnology in this context:

A. Enhanced solubility and stability

Many flavonoids have poor solubility and stability, which limits their effectiveness as therapeutic agents. Nanotechnology can address these issues by encapsulating flavonoids in nanoparticles, such as liposomes or polymeric nanoparticles, which improve their solubility and protect them from degradation. This enhances the bioavailability and stability of flavonoids, ensuring their sustained release at the target site.

B. Targeted delivery

Nanoparticles can be designed to specifically target cancer cells or tumor tissues, improving the accumulation of flavonoids at the site of action. Surface modifications of nanoparticles with ligands or antibodies that recognize cancer-specific markers allow for selective binding and internalization into cancer cells. This targeted delivery approach minimizes off-target effects and enhances the therapeutic efficacy of flavonoids while reducing their systemic toxicity.

C. Controlled release

Nanoparticles can be engineered to release flavonoids in a controlled manner, allowing for sustained drug release over an extended period. This controlled release profile ensures a consistent concentration of flavonoids at the tumor site, maximizing their therapeutic effect. It also reduces the frequency of administration, improving patient compliance and minimizing side effects.

D. Synergistic effects

Nanotechnology enables the combination of flavonoids with other therapeutic agents, such as chemotherapeutic drugs or targeted therapies, in a single nanoparticle system. This approach can lead to synergistic effects, where the combined therapy has enhanced anticancer activity compared to individual treatments. Nanoparticles can simultaneously deliver multiple agents, facilitating their cooperative action and potentially overcoming drug resistance mechanisms.

E. Imaging and diagnostics

Nanoparticles can be engineered to carry both therapeutic agents and imaging agents, allowing for simultaneous diagnosis and treatment. These nanoparticles can be used to visualize tumours through various imaging modalities, such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) or fluorescence imaging. This enables real-time monitoring of treatment response and provides valuable information for personalized medicine approaches.

F. Overcoming biological barriers

Nanoparticles can bypass biological barriers, such as the blood-brain barrier or multidrug resistance mechanisms, which can limit the effectiveness of flavonoid therapy. The small size and surface modifications of nanoparticles can facilitate their transport across these barriers, improving the delivery of flavonoids to the desired site of action.

While nanotechnology offers significant advantages for flavonoid-mediated anticancer therapy, there are still challenges to address, such as the scale-up of manufacturing processes, long-term safety concerns, and regulatory considerations. However, the field of nanotechnology continues to advance, and ongoing research holds promise for the development of effective and targeted flavonoid-based therapies for cancer treatment [15].

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