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Ab-initio study of structural, spectroscopic, and electronic properties of (E)-1-(4- Methoxyanthracen-1-yl)-2-phenyldiazene azo dye molecule

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Abstract: (E)-1-(4-Methoxyanthracen-1-yl)-2-phenyldiazene or $C_{21}H_{16}N_2O$ is one of the tautomer azo dye molecules which is the most usable compound in several industries as a sensing molecule, nowadays. As we know, more than 90% of the existing commercial azo dye is tautomeric ones (Kelemen, 1981). The computational quantum chemistry methods can clarify the relationship between structures and electrochemical properties of molecular compounds for future applications. In this study, the main purpose is to characterize the structural geometries of the title molecule ((E)- 1-(4-Methoxyanthracen-1-yl)-2-phenyldiazene), spectroscopic and electronic properties by utilizing ab-initio method based on Density Functional Theory (DFT) (Becke, 1988; Becke, 1993). The molecular geometry and vibrational modes, in the ground state, have been computed by applying DFT/B3LYP method with the basis set of 6-311G (d,p). The structural properties, such as bond length, bond angle, and dihedral angle, are in excellent agreement with those of available experiment data (Crochet et al., 2011). 114 vibrational modes have been specified with stretching, in-plane-bending, out-of-plane-bending, and torsion vibrations (Scott and Radon, 1996). UV-Vis absorption spectrum within dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) solvent has been predicted by using Time-Dependent Density Functional Theory (TD-DFT) (Ronca et al., 2014). Moreover, ¹H and ¹³C-NMR chemical shifts have been computed in DMSO solvent by using the Gauge-Invariant Atomic Orbital (GIAO) approach within DFT/B3LYP method (Wolinskiet et al., 1998). Finally, the electronic properties of the title molecule have been also attained by using Koopman's Theorem enable to determine the Lowest Unoccupied Molecular Orbital - Highest Occupied Molecular Orbital (HOMO-LUMO) interaction (Sastri and Perumareddi, 1997). It can be reported that this molecule has gap energy (Eg) bigger than 1.5 eV which indicates thermodynamically stable and durable, low ionization potential energy (IP) which tends to be reducing agents because it is easily losing its electron, about 2.43 eV electron affinity (EA) which denotes that it has good conductive properties, high electronegativity (x) which shows that the title molecule is a polar character, low value of chemical hardness (η) and global electrophilicity index.

Keywords: DFT; UV absorption; chemical shifts; electronic properties; azo dye.

1. Introduction

The development of technology is growing rapidly day by day. Hence, the importance of fast data transmission and processing also become indispensable for nowadays society (Kelemen, 1981). Accordingly, ultrafast, smaller, environmentally friendly, and switchable components

become more important. Azo dye is an organic compound that contains a conjugated in a combined diazotize together with one more azo bond $(-N = N-)$ (Benkhaya et al., 2020; Tunay Taslı et al., 2020). One of the important kinds of azo dye is tautomers that generally differ only in the number of electrons and protons when only a transfer of proton reaction occurs between these compounds (Habibi et al., 2006; Shawali et al., 2002). The tautomerism, in azo dyes, is used for the development of certain characteristics such as light fastness, dye tinctorial power, etc (Alsantali et al., 2022; Bayer et al., 1976; Chen et al., 2012; Huang et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2010). Nowadays, more than 90% of the existing commercial azo dye is in a tautomeric form which makes the investigation of their characteristics growing popular. Especially, the structures and characteristics of azo dye have been interested in the applications of switching molecules (Benkhaya et al., 2020; Coelho et al., 2012).

Experimentally, (E)-1-(4-Methoxyanthracen-1-yl)-2-phenyldiazene has been synthesized and its crystal structures, such as bond lengths, bond angles and dihedral angles, have been estimated by using full covariance matrix by Crochet et al. (2011). However, its spectroscopic and electronic properties have not been cleared yet. A comparison of the experimental and theoretical calculations can be very useful in making correct assignments and understanding the relationship between molecular structures and their properties. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to characterize the title molecule, (E)-1-(4-Methoxyanthracen-1-yl)-2-phenyldiazene, by utilizing the computational quantum chemistry methods to understand its chemical and physical properties at the atomistic level, and the to identify the electronic properties of the title molecule.

The computational quantum chemistry methods are very powerful tools to determine and analyze the structural properties of chemical molecules. The interest in this method is increasing progressively in recent years, because of their efficiency and low cost with great accuracy. This method simplifies the many-body electron problems by adding quantum interactions (Lee and Yang, 1959). Recently, much interest has been devoted to clarify the physical and chemical properties of different azo dye molecules. Tunay Tasli et al. (2020) have obtained the structural and vibrational properties of newly synthesized azo dye material by using the ab-initio method based on the Density Functional Theory (DFT). Yıldırım et al. (2021) have investigated some spectroscopic properties of Amino-pyrazoles by the computational study. Karabacak Atay et al. (2019) have studied the structural characterization and absorption properties of newly synthesized mono azo dye both experimentally and theoretically by using DFT. All these studies have shown that the structural and spectroscopic properties of azo dye molecules have been obtained successfully by the computational quantum chemistry method.

In this point of view, the structural properties of the title molecule interested in this study, such as the bond lengths, bond angles and dihedral angles, have been calculated by using DFT method with the basis set B3LYP/6-311G (d,p) in the ground state (Kohn and Sham, 1965; Becke, 1993). To investigate the compatibility between the calculational and experimental results of the bond lengths, bond angles and dihedral angles from the optimized geometries have been compared by using linear regression analysis (Cameron and Windemeijer, 1995). For further characterization of the title molecule, FT-IR, UV-Vis, 1 H-NMR and 13 C-NMR spectroscopic properties as well as some electronic properties have been revealed by utilizing the ab-initio simulation method based on DFT. To the best of our knowledge, this work presents the theoretical characterization of the title molecule.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Materials

The structural, spectroscopic, and electronical properties of the title molecule ((E)-1-(4- Methoxyanthracen-1-yl)-2-phenyldiazene) synthesized by Crochet et al. (2011) are clarified by using the computational quantum chemistry methods. The schematic view of the title molecule experimentally by Crochet et al. (2011) as well as the optimized structure of the title molecule via GaussView 5.0 (Frisch, 2016) are shown in the Figure 1.

Figure 1. (a) The schematic view of the title molecule synthesized by Crochet et al. (2011) and **(b)** the optimized structures of the title molecule via GaussView 5.0.

2.2. Computational method

This research is based on the ab-initio method, which is a computational method without needing any empirical data about the molecular system of the title molecule. Theoretical studies are carried out by the Gaussian 09W (Frisch, 2016) package program based on the computational quantum chemistry methods (John, 1988; Reichenbacher and Popp, 2012; Tunay Taşlı, 2022).

 The structure of the title molecule is optimized by the DFT at B3LYP hybrid function that represents the Beckee-3-parameter, Lee-Yang-Parr with 6-311G (d,p) basis set, in the ground state (Becke, 1988; Becke, 1993; Mclean and Chandler, 1980). The bond length, bond angle, and dihedral angle as the structural properties obtained from the DFT calculation have been compared with the experimental data by linear regression analysis. The vibrational properties such as the Fourier Transform Infrared (FT-IR) spectra and some molecular vibrational behaviors have been investigated in the ground state by the DFT method with B3LYP/6-311G (d,p) basis set (Scott and Radon, 1996). The wavenumbers are found to be positive which indicates the success of the optimization process of the molecule. Each vibrational frequency has been analyzed via VEDA4 (Vibrational Energy Distribution Analysis) Program by using the Potential Energy Distribution (PED) (Jamroz and Dobrowolski, 2001; Jamroz, 2013). Because the DFT method overestimates the vibrational modes, the vibrational frequencies should be multiplied by the scaling factor of 0.966 for the used basic set (Jamroz, 2013). The UV-Vis absorption spectra have been revealed by utilizing the time-dependent density functional theory (TD-DFT) with B3LYP/6-311G (d,p) basis set (Ronca et al. 2014; The Beer-Lambert Law, 2022). ¹H and ¹³C-NMR chemical shifts of the title

molecule have been predicted by employing GIAO method in the medium of DMSO (Scott and Radon, 1996; Wolinski et al., 1998).

The lowest unoccupied energy and the highest occupied energy of the orbitals (LUMO-HOMO energy) are computed by utilizing DFT/B3LYP/6-311G (d,p). Furthermore, the bandgap energy (E_a) of the molecule can be calculated from the energy level difference between HOMO and LUMO. Moreover, according to the Koopman's theorem (Sastri and Perumareddi, 1997), the energies of HOMO (E_{HOMO}) and LUMO (E_{LUMO}) have a relation with the ionization potential energy (IP), electron affinity (EA), electronegativity (x) (Pearson, 1986; Reichenbacher and Popp, 2012), chemical hardness (η) (Kaya, 2015), and global electrophilicity index (ω) (Perez et al., 2007), respectively, by the following relations;

$$
IP = -E_{HOMO},\tag{1}
$$

$$
EA = -E_{LUMO},\tag{2}
$$

$$
x = \frac{1 + EA}{2},\tag{3}
$$

$$
\eta = \frac{1 - EA}{2},\tag{4}
$$

and

$$
\omega = \frac{x^2}{2\eta} \,. \tag{5}
$$

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Optimized structure

The optimized structure shown in the Figure 1(b) has total 40 atoms (21 carbon, 16 hydrogen, 2 nitrogen, and 1 oxygen) and own 114 fundamental vibrational modes. The structural parameters such as bond length, bond angle, and dihedral angle are given in the Table 1, along with the comparison with the corresponding experimental results. The title molecule has 43 bond lengths, 69 bond angles and 50 dihedral angles.

Table 1. The optimized geometrical parameters via DFT/B3LYP/6-311G (d,p) and the corresponding experimental values (Crochet et al., 2011) of the molecule: the bond length data (Å) bond angles data (°) and dihedral angles (°).

$\bf No$	Atom Labels	Bond Length (Å)			$C2-H3$	1.0835	0.9500
		DFT	Exp		$C2-C4$	1.3910	1.3940
	$C1-C2$	1.3996	1.3790		$C4-H5$	1.0841	0.9500
	$C1-C10$	1.4038	.3890	-	$C4-C6$	1.3932	1.3730
	$C1-N38$	1.4151	.4350		C ₆ -H ₇	1.0842	0.9500

 C12-C13-C28 118.8308 117.9 C14-C13-C28 118.5280 118.8 C13-C14-H15 118.5107 119.2 C13-C14-C16 121.8734 121.7 H15-C14-C16 119.6159 119.2 C14-C16-C17 122.1120 122.4 C14-C16-C25 119.3505 119.5 C17-C16-C25 118.5374 118.1 C16-C17-H18 118.5419 119.5 C16-C17-C19 120.9014 121.0 H18-C17-C19 120.5567 119.5 C17-C19-H20 120.1256 119.7

In addition, to get the proper correlation between the experimental and calculation result, linear regression analysis is considered. The linear regression is provided by the linear equation of $y = ax + b$, where a and b are the fit parameters. The results are presented in Figure 2. The regression values of bond length, bond angle, and dihedral angle are calculated as 0.99516, 0.92783 and 0.99967, respectively, which indicates that they have a good agreement between the calculation and experimental results and verify that the DFT method produces the compatible data for the title molecule (Cameron and Windmeijer, 1995; Kohn and Sham 1965).

Figure 2. Linear regression between the DFT and experimental values of **(a)** bond lengths (Å), **(b)** bond angles (°) and **(c)** dihedral angles (°).

3.2. FT-IR and vibrational modes

Infrared spectroscopy (IR) shows important information about the nature of the chemical and molecular bond and intramolecular forces acting between the atoms and intermolecular forces in a condensed phase. A molecule can vibrate in many ways, called a vibrational mode (Spectroscopy Data Tables: Infrared Tables). Generally, the simulated FT-IR spectra are used to determine the molecular structure and identify the chemical compounds, and states of the title molecules. The title molecule has 40 (N) atoms with 114 ($(3 \times N) - 6$) fundamental vibrational modes. The FT-IR spectra are depicted in Figure 3. The basic vibrational modes such as stretching, bending and torsion modes are analyzed as: Of these 114 basic vibration modes, 39 $(N - 1)$ as stretching modes, 38 ($N-2$) as bending modes, and 37 ($N-3$) as torsion modes (Jamroz and Dobrowolski, 2001).

Figure 3. The FT-IR spectrum of the title molecule by using DFT method.

The normal mode assignments of the vibrational frequencies of the title molecule are listed in Table 2. Based on the spectroscopy data in the literature (Spectroscopy Data Tables: Infrared Tables), the peaks from $3100 - 3000$ cm⁻¹ indicates an unsaturated system (alkenes, sp²), while the range from $3000 - 2850$ cm⁻¹ belongs to saturated systems (alkanes, sp³) of carbon hydrogen atoms. The carbon and carbon atoms show at about $1700 - 1500$ cm⁻¹ or the vibrational mixed modes at $1400 - 1300$ cm⁻¹. Moreover, the azo group shows the stretching modes in the main region at about of $1600 - 1300$ cm⁻¹. The chemical group of oxygen and carbon atoms presents the stretching modes at $1250 - 1000$ cm⁻¹. As for interest in the results of the DFT simulation, the C-H stretching (v CH) mode appears mostly between 3105.4 and 2911.86 cm⁻¹. The C-C stretching (v CC) mode in an aromatic group shows in two peaks at the regions of $1598.58 - 1545.44$ cm⁻¹ and $1363 - 1324.3$ cm⁻¹. The stretching modes (v NN) of the azo compound of the title molecule present in a single peak at 1424.8 cm⁻¹, while the stretching mode between oxygen and carbon (v OC) exhibits at 1253.3 and 1069.9 cm⁻¹.

Mode	DFT/B3LYP $/6 - 311G$ (d,p)		$I^{\rm IR}$	Assignment [PED]>10%	
	Unscaled	Scaled			
	16.800	16.260	0.0703	τ NNCC (41) + τ CCNN (44)	
$\mathbf{2}$	40.490	39.150	0.9518	τ CCCC (11) + τ CCNN (12) + τ CNNC (30) + γ CCNC $(14) + \gamma$ NCCC (10)	
3	48.140	46.550	0.5250	δ NNC (29) + δ CCN (11) + δ CNN (31)	
$\overline{\mathbf{4}}$	69.800	67.500	2.2645	τ CCCN (21) + τ CCCC (15) + τ COCC (24)	
5	84.360	81.580	0.5143	τ NNCC (18) + τ CCCC (43)	
6	94.950	91.820	1.0294	τ NNCC (11) + τ CCCC (31)	
7	126.06	121.90	2.0733	τ COCC (51)	
8	146.72	141.88	4.9566	δ CCC (24) + δ OCC (19)	
9	168.66	163.09	1.2546	δ NCC (11)	

Table 2. The vibrational wavenumbers $(cm⁻¹)$ of the title molecule by DFT/B3LYP/6-311G (d,p) , IR intensities (km.mol⁻¹), and assignment with PED percentage in the square brackets. Scaled factor is taken as 0.967 for DFT/6-311G (d, p) .

torsion.

3.3. ¹H and ¹³C-NMR spectra

The characteristic of chemical shifts, obtained from magic-angle spinning NMR (Nuclear Magnetic Resonance) spectra, provide valuable information on the crystallography or structure of the molecules (Claramunt et al., 2006; Harris, 2004). The types of the spectra observed depend on the activation energy identifying the tautomer group (determining the lifetimes of the states) and the variation in the chemical shift. The results are given in Table 3.

Table 3. The chemical shifts of the ${}^{1}H$ and ${}^{13}C$ -NMR in the medium of DMSO solvent by employing DFT/B3LYP/6-311G (d,p) (all values in ppm).

	13 C-NMR	¹ H-NMR			
Atomic Symbol	DFT/B3LYP/6-311G (d,p)	Atomic Symbol	DFT/B3LYP/6-311G (d,p)		
C ₂₉	167.1392	H15	10.001		
C1	157.2794	H ₂₇	9.2718		
C12	144.3755	H11	8.4099		
C ₂	137.5361	H33	8.4098		
C16	136.3036	H18	8.4097		
C6	135.5350	H ₂₄	8.4068		
C13	135.5037	H3	8.3398		
C ₂₅	134.5380	H ₅	7.8861		
C ₄	133.4310	H20	7.8643		
C ₂₃	133.3690	H ₂₂	7.8182		
C8	132.9520	H ₉	7.7848		
C17	132.7623	H7	7.7089		
$\overline{C19}$	131.1299	H31	6.9611		
C ₂₁	130.0430	H36	4.5001		
C ₂₈	127.9057	H35	4.0718		
C ₂₆	126.0042	H37	4.0620		
C14	125.1764				
C10	116.0638				
C32	114.5191				
C30	104.1893				

The chemical shifts of ¹³C-NMR are presented between 167.14 ppm – 55.90 ppm. The carbon aromatic group appears between $167.14 - 104.19$ ppm, as seen in Table 3. On the other hand, those of ¹H-NMR are predicted as $10 - 4$ ppm. The hydrogen aromatic ring $(Ar - H)$ exists in the interval of $10 - 6.96$ ppm.

3.4. Absorbance spectrum

Ultraviolet-Visible (UV-Vis) absorption spectroscopy is the measurement of a beam reduction after being reflected from a sample surface or passed through a sample. It is also associated with the resonating structures in the molecules. The UV-Vis quantitative determination is based on the Beer-Lambert law, which is generally used in any solvent (Behera et al., 2014; The Beer-Lambert Law, 2022). It can be reported from Figure 4 that the maximum absorption peak appears at 506.33 nm in the visible region (blue).

Figure 4. The absorbance spectrum of the title molecule in the excited state by using TD-DFT method.

3.5. Electronic properties

The electronic properties of the title molecule can be analyzed by utilizing HOMO-LUMO energy interactions. The HOMO-LUMO energy levels are shown in Figure 5 and the values of the electronic properties of the molecule considered in this study are collected in Table 4.

The bandgap energy is found as 2.85 eV which represents that the molecule shows a semiconductor behavior. The ionization potential energy is associated with the amount of required energy to remove an electron from an isolated atom or the capability of a molecule to enter chemical reactions. It is predicted as about 5.28 eV (low IP). The electron affinity (EA) of the title molecule indicating the amount of energy when an electron is added to a neutral atom to form a negatively charged ion is calculated as 2.43 eV. The electronegativity (x) is obtained as 3.86 eV (near Fluorine), which gives the ability of the polarization of the title molecule. The chemical

hardness and the global electrophilicity index of the title molecule are evaluated as 1.42 eV (low η) and 5.21 eV, respectively (John, 1988).

Table 4. The electronic properties (all values in eV) of the title molecule.

Figure 5. The HOMO-LUMO levels of the title molecule.

4. Conclusion

The characterization of the title molecule is conducted theoretically for the first time in this study. The structural properties are computed by the DFT method such as bond length, bond angle and dihedral angle are in excellent agreement with those observed. The FT-IR spectra show that the title molecule has 114 vibrational modes specified with the stretching, in-plane-bending, out-ofplane-bending, and torsion vibrations. The chemical shifts of the ${}^{1}H$ and ${}^{13}C$ -NMR for the aromatic groups in the medium of DMSO solvent are identified. The UV-Vis spectra show that the molecule absorbs energy in the visible region. The HOMO-LUMO energy level represents that the molecule displays a semiconductor character. As a result, in this study, the structural and spectroscopic properties of the title molecule whose only structural properties have been measured (Crochet et al., 2011) are evaluated by the ab-initio calculations to provide a complete understanding of the molecule behavior. The results computed in this study are expected to be valuable information for future experiments and research.

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Conflict of interest

All authors state that there is no conflict of interest.

CRediT Author Statement

Author 1 (AQA): Formal analysis, Investigation, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft.

Author 2 (PTT): Conceptualization, Methodology, Validation.

Author 3 (SOK): Conceptualization, Methodology, Validation, Resources, Project Administration, Supervision, Writing – Review & Editing.

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