

**ANTIDIABETIC PROPERTIES OF METHANOL STEM BARK EXTRACT
OF *Parkia biglobosa* IN DIABETIC *Drosophila melanogaster***

Project Report

Submitted to the

**DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY,
USMANU DANFODIYO UNIVERSITY, SOKOTO, NIGERIA**

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of B.Sc. (HONS.)

Degree in Biochemistry

BY

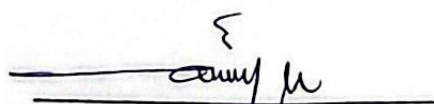
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December, 2025.

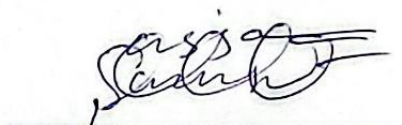
CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the research project reported here was conducted by Dahir Ibrahim Muhammed (2010304048) and has been approved as meeting part of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree In Biochemistry of Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto.



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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project, which represents a culmination of significant effort and learning, first and foremost to Allah (SWT), whose guidance , blessings, and strength made the completion of this journey possible.

Alhamdulillah.

I also dedicate this work to my parents. Your endless love, countless sacrifices, and unwavering faith in my potential have been the bedrock of my life

Last but not the least, I want to thank me, I want to thank me for believing in me, I want to thank me for doing all this hard work, I want to thank me for having no days off, I want to thank me for never quitting, I want to thank me for always being a giver and trying to give more than I receive.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All praises and adorations belong to Almighty Allah, the creator of all, for his support, guidance and protection throughout the course of this research.

I wish to express my profound gratitude to Prof. Sanusi Hassan Wara, my supervisor, for his guidance, patience, and invaluable insights throughout the course of this research. My sincere appreciation also goes to all lecturers and staff of the Department of Biochemistry, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, for their contributions to my academic development.

My profound gratitude goes to my cherished parents for their prayers, financial support, moral support and limitless love to me and my siblings. May Allah continue to bless them.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the antidiabetic properties of methanol stem bark extract of *Parkia biglobosa* in diabetic *Drosophila melanogaster*. Diabetes mellitus is a chronic metabolic disorder characterized by elevated blood glucose resulting from defects in insulin secretion, insulin action, or both. The use of *Drosophila melanogaster* as an in vivo model offers a cost-effective and genetically tractable alternative to mammalian models for studying diabetes and metabolic diseases.

Flies were induced with diabetes using a high-sucrose diet (120 g sucrose per 1.2 L diet) and subsequently treated with graded concentrations of *Parkia biglobosa* stem bark extract (3.16 mg/10 g, 6.32 mg/10 g, and 9.48 mg/10 g diet). Metformin served as a standard positive drug. The levels of glucose, glycogen, and trehalose were determined using enzymatic colorimetric methods.

Results revealed that diabetes induction caused a significant increase in glucose and trehalose levels and a decrease in glycogen content when compared to the normal control group. Treatment with *Parkia biglobosa* extract led to a dose-dependent reduction in glucose and trehalose levels, alongside restoration of glycogen content, similar to the metformin-treated group. The study concluded that the methanol stem bark extract of *Parkia biglobosa* exhibits antidiabetic potential in *Drosophila melanogaster*, possibly through mechanisms involving improved carbohydrate metabolism and insulin-like peptide regulation.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Diabetes mellitus is one of the most prevalent metabolic disorders affecting millions of individuals worldwide, characterized by chronic hyperglycemia resulting from defects in insulin secretion, insulin action, or both. It is widely recognized as a global health challenge, with its prevalence projected to rise significantly in both developed and developing countries due to sedentary lifestyles, dietary patterns, and genetic susceptibility (International Diabetes Federation, 2023). The condition is associated with disturbances in carbohydrate, lipid, and protein metabolism and is a major risk factor for complications such as cardiovascular diseases, nephropathy, neuropathy, retinopathy, and impaired wound healing (American Diabetes Association, 2023). As a multifactorial disease, diabetes is broadly classified into type 1 diabetes mellitus, which results from autoimmune destruction of pancreatic β -cells leading to absolute insulin deficiency, and type 2 diabetes mellitus, which is associated with insulin resistance and relative insulin deficiency.

The global burden of diabetes has stimulated interest in novel therapeutic strategies, particularly those derived from natural products. Traditional medicine has long utilized plants for the management of metabolic diseases, and many modern anti-diabetic drugs trace their origin to phytochemicals. For instance, metformin, the first-line drug for type 2 diabetes, is derived from *Galega officinalis* (French lilac) (Bailey & Day, 2019). This underscores the significance of studying indigenous plants for their potential in diabetes management. In sub-Saharan Africa, *Parkia biglobosa*, commonly referred to as the African locust bean tree, has been widely

recognized for its nutritional and medicinal applications, particularly in the management of diabetes (Akinmoladun *et al.*, 2020).

Parkia biglobosa belongs to the family Fabaceae and is extensively distributed across West Africa. It has been traditionally used in the treatment of hypertension, infections, and metabolic disorders, including diabetes. Phytochemical investigations reveal that the plant is rich in tannins, flavonoids, saponins, alkaloids, and phenolic compounds, which contribute to its diverse pharmacological activities (Oluwole *et al.*, 2021). Studies have demonstrated that extracts of *Parkia biglobosa* possess antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and hypoglycemic effects, making it a promising candidate for diabetes research (Salako *et al.*, 2021).

Drosophila melanogaster is increasingly used in metabolic disease research due to its short lifecycle, genetic tractability, and conserved insulin/insulin-like signaling pathways (Huang & Wang, 2023; Dou *et al.*, 2022). When exposed to a high-sugar diet (HSD), flies develop elevated glucose, trehalose, and glycogen similar to mammalian diabetic conditions (Wang *et al.*, 2022; Lee *et al.*, 2023). Monitoring these metabolites provides important insight into therapeutic effects and metabolic regulation.

Central to understanding diabetes and its management is the monitoring of metabolic markers such as glucose, glycogen, and trehalose. In *Drosophila*, glucose and trehalose serve as primary circulating sugars, with trehalose being a disaccharide unique to invertebrates that plays a crucial role in energy storage and stress tolerance (Zhou *et al.*, 2022). Glycogen, the storage form of glucose, reflects the balance between glucose utilization and storage. Alterations in these metabolites provide insights into the pathophysiological state of diabetes and the therapeutic potential of interventions (Hernández *et al.*, 2023).

Given these considerations, evaluating the anti-diabetic properties of *Parkia biglobosa* in *Drosophila melanogaster* offers an integrative approach that bridges ethnomedicine with modern biochemical research. This study will not only assess the ability of *P. biglobosa* to modulate glucose homeostasis but also provide mechanistic insights through the measurement of glucose, glycogen, and trehalose levels in diabetic flies.

1.1 Statement of the problem

The increasing prevalence of diabetes mellitus poses a significant challenge to healthcare systems, especially in developing nations where access to expensive medications such as metformin and insulin is limited. Furthermore, synthetic drugs often present undesirable side effects. Therefore, there is a need to explore locally available medicinal plants such as *Parkia biglobosa* that may offer effective and safe antidiabetic properties.

Despite traditional use and some rodent data supporting antihyperglycemic activity of *Parkia biglobosa*, scientific evidence that delineates its effects on systemic carbohydrate handling (including circulating glucose and trehalose, and glycogen stores) in validated experimental models is scarce. This evidence gap limits mechanistic understanding and rational progression to larger-scale preclinical or clinical evaluation. Moreover, accessible and reproducible screening using *Drosophila* can rapidly identify bioactivity, effective dose ranges, and potential toxicity prior to costly mammalian studies (Koyama *et al.*, 2022; Adebajo *et al.*, 2023).

1.3 Justification of the Study

The study is justified on several grounds:

1. *Parkia biglobosa* has shown promising pharmacological properties in traditional medicine but lacks comprehensive scientific validation in diabetes using *Drosophila* models.

2. The use of *Drosophila melanogaster* as a model organism provides an ethical, cost-effective, and time-efficient alternative for diabetes research compared to mammalian models.
3. Understanding the biochemical effects of *P. biglobosa* on glucose, glycogen, and trehalose metabolism may provide insight into its potential therapeutic mechanisms.

1.4 Aim of the study

To evaluate the antidiabetic potential of the methanol stem bark extract of *Parkia biglobosa* in a sucrose-induced diabetic model of *Drosophila melanogaster* by measuring its effects on glucose concentration, glycogen stores, and the insect-specific circulating sugar, trehalose level.

1.5 Objectives

The primary objective of this study was to evaluate the anti-diabetic properties of *Parkia biglobosa* in diabetic *Drosophila melanogaster*. The specific objectives were to:

1. Induce diabetes in *Drosophila melanogaster* using a high-sucrose diet and confirm diabetic phenotypes.
2. Administer varying concentrations of *Parkia biglobosa* extract to diabetic flies and assess its therapeutic efficacy.
3. Determine the levels of glucose, glycogen, and trehalose in treated and untreated groups.
4. Compare the effects of *P. biglobosa* with metformin, a standard anti-diabetic drug.

1.5 Significance of the study

This study will provide rigorous experimental data on *Parkia biglobosa*'s influence on core carbohydrate endpoints in a cost-effective in vivo model, helping validate traditional claims and prioritize leads for further mammalian pharmacology. Demonstrating restoration of glycogen reserves or normalization of trehalose/glucose balance would suggest mechanisms (e.g., insulin signaling modulation, enhanced glucose uptake, or altered carbohydrate metabolism) meriting mechanistic assays and possible fractionation of active constituents (Musselman *et al.*, 2011; Pasco & Léopold, 2012; Ajiboye *et al.*, 2024). Positive findings could underpin larger preclinical studies and eventual translation into accessible, plant-based adjunct therapies for metabolic disease in low-resource settings.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview of Diabetes Mellitus

Diabetes mellitus is a chronic endocrine and metabolic disorder characterized by impaired carbohydrate, fat, and protein metabolism, primarily due to absolute or relative insulin deficiency (ADA, 2023). The hallmark feature of diabetes is persistent hyperglycemia, which can lead to long-term organ damage. The World Health Organization (WHO) classifies diabetes into type 1, type 2, gestational diabetes, and other specific types associated with genetic defects or pancreatic diseases (WHO, 2021).

Type 1 diabetes mellitus is caused by autoimmune-mediated destruction of pancreatic β -cells, leading to absolute insulin deficiency. It commonly manifests in childhood or adolescence and requires lifelong insulin therapy. In contrast, type 2 diabetes mellitus accounts for over 90% of cases and is characterized by insulin resistance combined with impaired insulin secretion. It is strongly associated with obesity, sedentary lifestyle, and genetic predisposition (Forbes & Cooper, 2013). Gestational diabetes occurs during pregnancy and usually resolves after delivery, but it increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes later in life.

The pathophysiology of diabetes involves a complex interplay between genetic, environmental, and immunological factors. Insulin resistance leads to impaired glucose uptake in peripheral tissues, increased hepatic glucose production, and lipolysis, all of which contribute to hyperglycemia. Chronic hyperglycemia triggers oxidative stress, advanced glycation end products (AGEs), and low-grade inflammation, which in turn cause vascular damage and complications (Brownlee, 2001).

2.2 Biochemical Basis of Insulin Resistance and Hyperglycemia

Insulin regulates glucose homeostasis by promoting glucose uptake via GLUT4 transporters and inhibiting hepatic glucose output. In insulin resistance, signaling through the insulin receptor substrate (IRS)–PI3K–Akt pathway is impaired, decreasing glucose transport and glycogen synthesis (Kahn *et al.*, 2019). This leads to increased circulating glucose and compensatory hyperinsulinemia. Oxidative stress and chronic inflammation further aggravate insulin resistance by altering adipokine signaling and mitochondrial function (Zhao & Xu, 2021).

2.3 Animal Models in Diabetes Research

Animal models are essential tools in diabetes research, providing platforms to investigate the pathogenesis of the disease and evaluate therapeutic interventions. Traditional models include chemically induced diabetic rodents using agents such as streptozotocin (STZ) and alloxan, as well as genetic models like db/db mice. However, these models can be costly, ethically demanding, and time-consuming (King *et al.*, 2022).

Recently, alternative models such as *Drosophila melanogaster* have gained attention due to their conserved insulin signaling pathways, short lifespan, and cost-effectiveness (Miranda *et al.*, 2022). The fruit fly shares many homologous metabolic genes with humans, and exhibits hallmarks of type 2 diabetes when subjected to a high-sugar diet (HSD), including hyperglycemia, insulin resistance, obesity-like phenotypes, and reduced lifespan (Smith *et al.*, 2023). Importantly, glucose, glycogen, and trehalose levels can be directly measured in flies, making them a reliable surrogate for metabolic studies.

2.3.1 *Drosophila melanogaster* as a Model for Type 2 Diabetes

The *Drosophila* model of diabetes is induced primarily through dietary manipulation. High-sugar diets (HSDs) mimic excessive carbohydrate consumption in humans, leading to elevated glucose, trehalose, and glycogen storage. Miranda et al. (2022) demonstrated that larvae raised on an HSD showed developmental delay, smaller body size, and significantly elevated glucose, trehalose, and glycogen levels. Similarly, Smith et al. (2023) found that adult female flies on an HSD displayed insulin resistance in the fat body and reduced fertility. These features mirror mammalian T2DM pathophysiology, reinforcing the utility of *Drosophila* in metabolic research.

Moreover, flies treated with anti-diabetic drugs such as metformin have shown significant glucose-lowering responses, further validating their translational relevance (Chakraborty *et al.*, 2021). The capacity to monitor metabolites like glycogen and trehalose, which play important roles in energy homeostasis, makes *Drosophila* especially valuable in screening plant extracts for anti-diabetic activity.

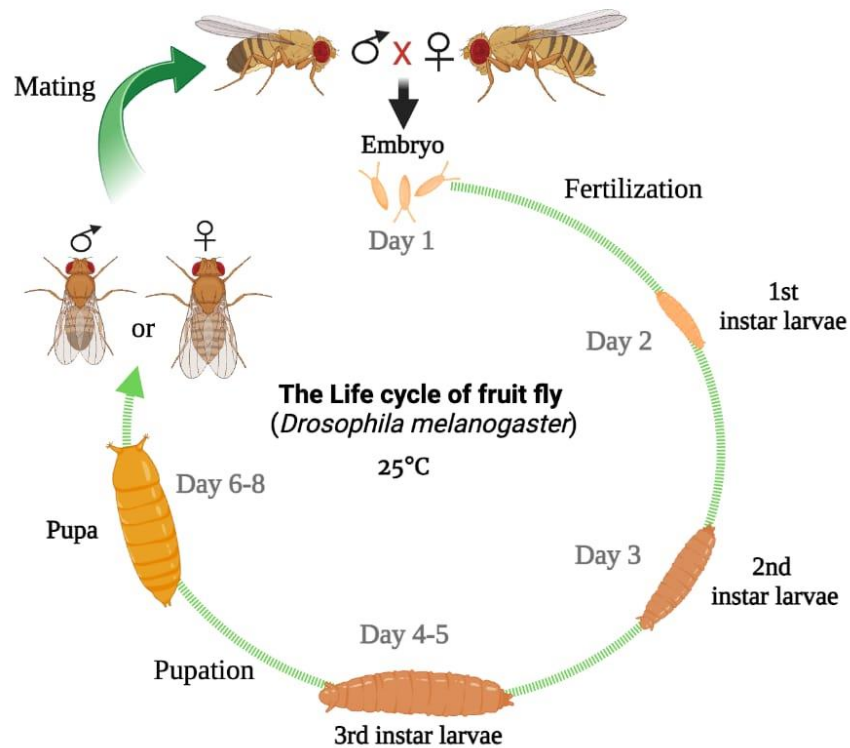


Figure 2.3.1: Life cycle of *Drosophila melanogaster* (Paul, 2025).

2.3.2 Advantages of Using *Drosophila melanogaster*

1. Genetic Similarity: About 75 % of human disease-related genes have orthologs in *Drosophila*.
2. Short Generation Time: Rapid breeding permits high-throughput experiments.
3. Low Cost and Ethical Simplicity: Requires minimal space and no animal ethics board.
4. Conservation of Metabolic Pathways: The insulin/TOR and AMPK pathways are evolutionarily conserved.

2.4 Trehalose, Glycogen, and Glucose in *Drosophila* Metabolism

Trehalose is the major circulating sugar in insects, functioning as an energy reserve and stress protectant. It is synthesized in the fat body (analogous to the mammalian liver and adipose tissue) and hydrolyzed by trehalase to yield two glucose molecules when needed (Kumar & Gupta, 2021). This disaccharide plays a critical role in maintaining energy balance, osmoregulation, and survival under stress conditions.

Glycogen serves as the primary glucose storage polymer and is distributed in the fat body, muscles, and other tissues. It provides a rapid source of glucose during periods of energy demand. In diabetes models, glycogen stores are often depleted due to impaired insulin signaling, reflecting metabolic dysfunction (Yamaguchi *et al.*, 2019).

Glucose, on the other hand, is a key metabolic fuel. Its levels in *Drosophila* hemolymph are tightly regulated by insulin-like peptides secreted from specialized neurosecretory cells. Dysregulation of glucose levels, as seen in diabetic flies, mirrors mammalian hyperglycemia (Zhao & Xu, 2021). Monitoring these metabolites thus provides crucial insights into the anti-diabetic potential of interventions.

2.5 Conventional Therapy and Metformin as Comparator

Conventional diabetes treatments include insulin and oral hypoglycemic agents such as sulfonylureas, thiazolidinediones, and biguanides (including metformin). Metformin remains the first-line therapy for T2DM due to its safety, affordability, and effectiveness in lowering blood glucose (Rena *et al.*, 2022). Its primary mechanism involves reducing hepatic gluconeogenesis and improving insulin sensitivity through AMP-activated protein kinase (AMPK) activation.

Recent work has expanded understanding of metformin's effects beyond glucose lowering. Gonzalez et al. (2025) demonstrated that metformin modulates adipogenesis and cellular signaling pathways, suggesting broader metabolic benefits. Additionally, a 2024 review highlighted emerging indications for metformin beyond diabetes, including cardiovascular protection and anti-aging effects (Zhou *et al.*, 2024). Because of its well-established efficacy, metformin serves as a gold-standard comparator when assessing novel anti-diabetic agents such as plant extracts.

2.6 Medicinal Plants in the Management of Diabetes

Medicinal plants have historically been central to diabetes management due to their bioactive compounds, such as flavonoids, alkaloids, tannins, and phenolics. These compounds exert anti-diabetic effects through mechanisms including stimulation of insulin secretion, inhibition of carbohydrate-digesting enzymes (α -amylase, α -glucosidase), antioxidant activity, and improvement of glucose uptake in tissues (Kooti *et al.*, 2023).

A renewed focus on plant-based therapies stems from the side effects and limited accessibility of conventional drugs. Several recent studies have shown that plant extracts can reduce blood glucose and improve insulin sensitivity in both rodent and invertebrate models. For example, *Momordica charantia* (bitter melon) and *Azadirachta indica* (neem) have demonstrated consistent glucose-lowering effects across multiple studies (Kazeem *et al.*, 2022). Against this background, *Parkia biglobosa* has gained attention as a promising candidate.

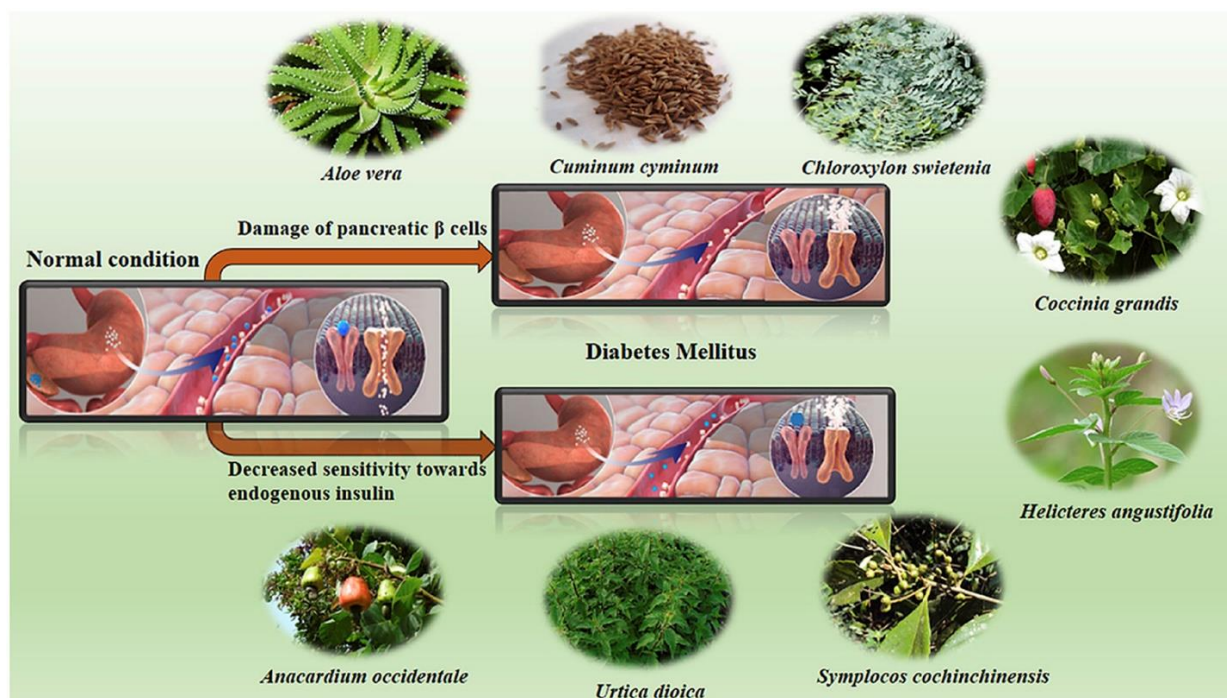


Figure 2.6: Medicinal plants in management of diabetes (Hira *et al.*, 2017)

2.7 *Parkia biglobosa*: Ethnomedicinal and Pharmacological Perspectives (“Dawadawa” in Hausa)

Parkia biglobosa (African locust bean tree) is a perennial leguminous tree widely distributed in West Africa. It is traditionally valued for both nutritional and medicinal purposes. The fermented seeds, known as “iru” in Yoruba and “dawadawa” in Hausa, are consumed as a condiment rich in proteins, vitamins, and minerals (Akinmoladun *et al.*, 2020).

Medicinally, various parts of the plant (leaves, stem bark, pods, seeds) are used in treating hypertension, infections, and metabolic disorders, including diabetes. Phytochemical studies reveal the presence of bioactive compounds such as flavonoids, tannins, alkaloids, saponins, and phenolic acids, many of which exhibit antioxidant and hypoglycemic effects (Oluwole *et al.*, 2021).

Experimental studies have reported that extracts of *P. biglobosa* improve glucose tolerance, enhance antioxidant enzyme activity, and protect against lipid peroxidation in diabetic models (Salako *et al.*, 2021). Its potential mechanisms may involve stimulation of insulin secretion, enhancement of glucose uptake, inhibition of carbohydrate-digesting enzymes, and modulation of oxidative stress pathways.

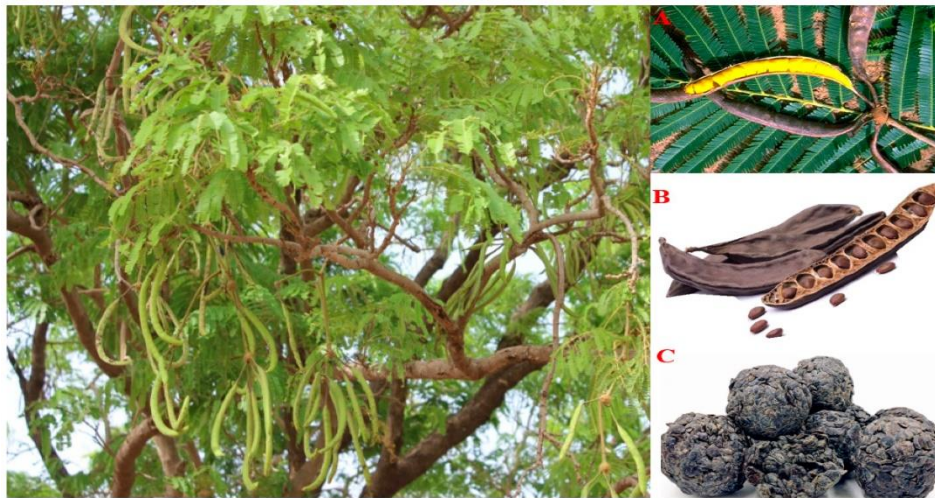


Figure 2.7: *Parkia biglobosa* (Komolafe *et al.*, 2024)

2.7.1 Rationale for Using *Parkia biglobosa* in *Drosophila* Diabetes Model

Despite increasing evidence of the anti-diabetic potential of *Parkia biglobosa*, most studies have been conducted in rodent models. There is limited research evaluating its effects in invertebrate models such as *Drosophila melanogaster*, which offer unique advantages for metabolic studies, including low cost, genetic tractability, and rapid generation times. Furthermore, while glucose levels have often been studied, fewer works have evaluated the impact of *P. biglobosa* on trehalose and glycogen metabolism in diabetic models, even though these parameters are crucial for understanding carbohydrate storage and energy regulation in *Drosophila*.

This study, therefore, aims to bridge this gap by investigating the anti-diabetic properties of *Parkia biglobosa* in induced diabetic *Drosophila melanogaster*, focusing on glucose, glycogen, and trehalose levels. By using metformin as a comparator, this work seeks to provide robust evidence on the potential of *P. biglobosa* as a plant-based therapy and contribute to the growing body of research on affordable, accessible alternatives for diabetes management.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study posits that dietary induction of diabetes in *Drosophila melanogaster* through high-sucrose feeding disrupts normal carbohydrate metabolism, resulting in elevated glucose and trehalose and reduced glycogen. Administration of *P. biglobosa* methanol stem bark extract is expected to restore carbohydrate balance by modulating insulin-like peptide signaling and enhancing antioxidant defense mechanisms.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 Materials and Methods

3.1 Materials

The materials used in this research included:

Plant material: Stem bark of *Parkia biglobosa* (African locust bean tree).

Experimental organism: *Drosophila melanogaster* (fruit flies).

Chemicals and reagents: sucrose, corn flour, agar agar, yeast, methyl paraben, ethanol, distilled water, and glucose standard solution.

Drug: Metformin (used as positive drug).

Equipment: Analytical balance, micropipettes, glass beakers, conical flasks, centrifuge, water bath, spectrophotometer, muslin cloth, sterile jars, Eppendorf tubes, and biochemical assay kits (for glucose, glycogen, and trehalose).

3.2 Methods

3.2.1 Sample Collection

The stem bark of the *Parkia biglobosa* were collected from a local market in Sokoto state, Nigeria. The botanical identification and authentication was carried in Botany Unit, Department of Biological Sciences, Usmanu Danfodio University Sokoto (UDUS), and a voucher specimen was deposited in the herbarium for future reference.

3.2.2 Sample Preparation

The stem bark was thoroughly washed to remove dirt and contaminants. It was air-dried under shade at room temperature for several days to preserve the integrity of its phytochemicals. The dried stem bark was pulverized into fine powder using a mechanical grinder and stored in airtight containers until extraction.

3.2.3 Sample Extraction

A 700ml of methanol was used to dissolve 300g of *Parkia biglobosa* stem and was mixed thoroughly. The mixture was covered and stored at room temperature for 72 hours and was later filtered using muslin cloth. The filtrate was concentrated using rotary vacuum evaporator (50 °C) and the percentage yield of the extract was then calculated.

3.3 Fly Culturing

At the Center for Advanced Medical Research and Training (CAMRET), UDUTH, Sokoto, *Drosophila melanogaster* flies were obtained and maintained in culture bottles containing freshly prepared diet under controlled laboratory conditions at 25 ± 1 °C with a 12-hour light/dark cycle and relative humidity of approximately 60–70% (Huang & Wang, 2023; Lee *et al.*, 2022). Flies were regularly transferred to fresh diet every 3–4 days to prevent overcrowding, mold growth, and nutritional depletion (Morris & Cho, 2021). For experimental use, adult flies were collected from the incubator and subjected to anesthesia using carbon dioxide (CO₂) gas, which rendered them immobile for handling (Kremer *et al.*, 2024). To further facilitate separation, the ice-cold method was employed: anaesthetized flies were placed on a polythene sheet laid over an ice block. This cooling method kept the flies dormant without causing mortality (Sahu *et al.*, 2023).

3.4 Composition of *Drosophila melanogaster* Diet

3.4.1 Composition of 180 mL of *Drosophila melanogaster* Diet

Corn flour: 10 g

Agar: 1 g

Yeast: 1 g

Methyl paraben: 0.1 g (dissolved in 0.5 mL ethanol)

Distilled water: 320 mL (scaled appropriately for 180 mL preparations).

3.4.2 Preparation of 180 mL of *Drosophila melanogaster* Diet

To prepare 180 mL of *Drosophila melanogaster* diet, distilled water was first brought to a gentle boil in a clean beaker. Agar-agar, which had been pre-dissolved in a small volume of warm distilled water, was then introduced into the boiling water and stirred continuously for at least one minute to ensure complete dispersion. Corn flour was gradually added into the hot agar solution while the mixture was stirred thoroughly to avoid the formation of lumps and to achieve a smooth and consistent slurry. Yeast, pre-mixed with a small amount of distilled water to activate it, was added into the mixture and stirred for an additional minute to ensure uniform blending. The heat source was then switched off and the mixture was allowed to cool to approximately 50 °C while being stirred intermittently to prevent premature solidification. At this stage, methyl paraben that had been dissolved in ethanol was added as a preservative, and the mixture was homogenized thoroughly (Okeke *et al.*, 2024).

The diet was then dispensed into labeled jars while still in a pourable state. For treatment jars, the appropriate additives were incorporated before dispensing: metformin for the metformin

control group, and *Parkia biglobosa* stem bark extract at concentrations of 3.16, 6.32, and 9.48 mg/10 g of diet were administered to the treatment groups (Usman *et al.*, 2025). Control groups received either normal diet or induction diet without additives. The jars were covered with muslin cloth to allow aeration while preventing contamination, and the diets were left to set at room temperature before the introduction of the flies (D'Angelo *et al.*, 2023).

3.5.1 Survival Assay

For preliminary toxicity analysis, flies were exposed to diets containing varying volumes of extract (2 mL, 3 mL, 4 mL, and 5 mL per 10 mL of diet mixture). Forty flies (both male and female) were placed in each treatment jar. Mortality was recorded daily for seven days (Khan & Ribeiro, 2022; Mendes *et al.*, 2024).

3.5.2 Determination of LD₅₀

The LD₅₀ was estimated using the mortality rate recorded during the survival assay, mean dead (MD), dose difference (DD) and lethal dose that kill all animals (Lorke, 1983).

3.6 Induction of Type II Diabetes

High sucrose diet (HSD) was used to induce type II diabetes in *Drosophila melanogaster* by adding 30% sucrose to the normal diet. The high sucrose diet was prepared by adding 3g of sucrose to 7g of normal diet, which was administered to the *Drosophila melanogaster* for 14 days. The glucose concentration of the fly was then quantified to ensure that they have become diabetic (Tennessen *et al.*, 2014).

Flies fed on this HSD showed hallmarks of diabetes, including, delayed development, reduced body size, and decreased locomotor activity.

3.7 Experimental Groups

Six groups of flies (40 flies per group, in triplicates) were used:

Group I (Normal Control): Non-diabetic flies fed on normal diet.

Group II (Negative Control): Diabetic flies fed only on induction diet (HSD).

Group III (Positive Control): Diabetic flies treated metformin incorporated into diet.

Group IV: Diabetic flies treated *Parkia biglobosa* stem bark extract at 3.16 mg/10 g diet.

Group V: Diabetic flies treated *Parkia biglobosa* stem bark extract at 6.32 mg/10 g diet.

Group VI: Diabetic flies treated *Parkia biglobosa* stem bark extract at 9.48 mg/10 g diet.

3.8 Preparation of Sample for Biochemical Assay

The samples used for the biochemical assay were prepared on the eighth day, after the treatment of the flies. The flies in each group were anesthetized with ice and brushed with cold potassium phosphate buffer solution (pH 7.4, 0.1 M) to remove traces of diet attached to the flies (Zhang *et al.*, 2021). Ten flies were randomly selected in each group and transferred to pre-weighed Eppendorf tubes according to their various concentrations. The weight of the flies was recorded, then the flies were homogenized in 0.1 M phosphate buffer (pH 7.4) at a ratio of 0.1 mg to 10 μ L (Obafemi *et al.*, 2022). The homogenates were centrifuged at 4000 g for 10 minutes at 4 °C using a refrigerated centrifuge (Thermo Fisher Sorvall Legend Micro 17R, Fresco), and the resulting supernatants were transferred into clean Eppendorf tubes for biochemical analyses (Molina & Roberts, 2023).

3.9 Biochemical Analyses

3.9.1 Determination of Glucose

Glucose concentration was determined using the Glucose Oxidase-Peroxidase (GOD-POD) method. Absorbance was read at 550 nm, and glucose levels were calculated according to the kit protocol (Elabsience, 2024; Rahman *et al.*, 2022).

Table 3.9.1: Procedure for Glucose Test

Reagents	Blank	Standard	Sample
Working reagents	100	100	100
(μL)			
Standard (μL)	-	2	-
Sample (μL)	-	-	2

Each mixture was mixed and kept at room temperature for 20minutes, then the absorbance was read and taken at 550nm.

Calculations;

$$\text{Glucose conc.} \left(\frac{\text{mg}}{\text{dl}} \right) = \frac{\text{Absorbance of Sample}}{\text{Absorbance of Standard}} \times \text{concentration of standard}$$

3.9.2 Determination of Glycogen

Glycogen concentration was measured using the anthrone method (Elabscience Kit Protocol, 2023). Absorbance was taken at 620 nm.

Table 3.9.2: Procedure for Glycogen Test

Reagents	Blank	Standard	Sample
Distilled water	100	-	90
(μL)			
Glucose Standard	-	100	-
(μL)			
Sample (μL)	-	100	10
Reagent (μL)	200	200	200

Calculation:

$$\text{Glycogen (mg/g)} = \frac{\Delta A_{\text{sample}}}{\Delta A_{\text{standard}}} \times \frac{m \times f \times CF}{W}$$

Where:

$$\Delta A_{\text{sample}} = A_{\text{sample}} - A_{\text{blank}}$$

$$\Delta A_{\text{standard}} = A_{\text{standard}} - A_{\text{blank}}$$

m = standard content,

f = dilution factor,

CF = Conversion factor from glucose-equivalents to glycogen (1.11 per kit),

W = tissue mass (0.02g).

$$\text{Glycogen (mg/g)} = r \times \frac{m \times f \times CF}{W}$$

$$r = \frac{\Delta A_{\text{sample}}}{\Delta A_{\text{standard}}}$$

$$\text{Glycogen (mg/g)} = r \times \frac{0.01 \times 100 \times 1.11}{0.02}$$

$$\text{Glycogen (mg/g)} = r \times 55.5$$

3.9.3 Determination of Trehalose

Trehalose levels were determined enzymatically using trehalose digestion and glucose quantification according to manufacturer standards (SunBio Laboratory Manual, 2022).

Concentrations were calculated using:

$$\text{Trehalose (mg/g ml)} = 10 \times y$$

$$Y = \frac{A_{\text{sample}} - A_{\text{blank}}}{A_{\text{standard}} - A_{\text{blank}}} \times C_s$$

Where:

- y = Trehalose concentration read from the standard curve (mg/mL, based on absorbance).
- C_s = Concentration of Standard

Values were expressed as mg/mL and also converted to μg per fly based on homogenate volume and fly number.

3.10 Statistical Analysis

Data were expressed as mean $\pm$ standard deviation (SD). Statistical significance was determined using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) followed by Tukey's post-hoc test. A p value < 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Toxicity Study of *Parkia biglobosa* Stem bark Extract in *Drosophila melanogaster*

The survival assay revealed a dose- and time-dependent increase in mortality among flies exposed to different concentrations of the extract over seven days. Table 4.1 shows the cumulative number of dead flies across treatment groups.

Table 4.1: Mortality Record of *Drosophila melanogaster* Exposed to Varying Extract Concentrations

Day	2 mL Extract	3 mL Extract	4 mL Extract	5 mL Extract
1	14	8	4	0
2	17	8	5	0
3	20	8	5	3
4	22	13	6	3
5	28	22	10	7
6	33	28	13	9
7	39	33	16	11

Mortality increased progressively with extract concentration and exposure duration, yet the survival rate remained above 50 % at the highest concentration (5 mL/10 g diet). This indicated that the methanol stem bark extract of *Parkia biglobosa* is relatively non-toxic to *Drosophila melanogaster* at the tested doses. The estimated LD₅₀ value was >5 mL/10 g diet, showing the extract's safety for subsequent biochemical studies.

4.2 Lethal Dose (LD₅₀)

Table 4.2: Lorke's method of estimation of LD₅₀

Groups	No. of flies	Dose (mg/diet)	Dead
1	40	10	39
2	40	15	33
3	40	20	16
4	40	25	11

$$LD_{50} = \sqrt{X \times Y}$$

$$LD_{50} = \sqrt{25 \times 10}$$

$$= 15.8\text{mg}$$

Key:

X = highest dose with lower death

Y = Lower dose with highest death

4.3 Effect of *Parkia biglobosa* Extract on Glucose Concentration

Following induction with a high-sucrose diet, diabetic flies exhibited significantly elevated glucose levels compared to the non-diabetic control. Treatment with *Parkia biglobosa* stem bark extract reduced glucose concentration in a dose-dependent manner (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3: Glucose level of normal and diabetic *Drosophila melanogaster* administered *Parkia biglobosa* stem bark extract

Flies	Glucose (mg/dl)
Normal Flies	36.66 ± 0.18
Diabetic Flies	106.93 ± 0.03 ^a

Statistical comparison between the two groups was performed using an independent t-test.

$t(2) = -545.5;$

$p < 0.0001$ vs normal flies.

4.4 Effect on Glycogen Content

The glycogen content decreased markedly in diabetic flies but was restored toward normal levels following treatment with *P. biglobosa* extract (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Glycogen level of the diabetic *Drosophila melanogaster* administered *Parkia biglobosa* stem bark extract

Groups	Glycogen (mg/g)
I	50.77 ± 6.70
II	58.35 ± 5.48 ^c
III	42.01 ± 5.68 ^b
IV	31.03 ± 1.72 ^{a, b}
V	ND (Not Detected)
VI	35.53 ± 3.64 ^{a, b}

Data are presented as mean ± standard deviation of triplicates

a = P<0.05 Vs Group I

b = P<0.05 Vs Group II

c = P<0.05 Vs Group III

Bonferroni compare all pairs of columns, analysis of variance (ANOVA), Instant software, Santiago (USA).

Group 1 represents normal flies

Group 2 represents untreated diabetic flies

Group 3 represents diabetic flies treated with 10mg metformin

Group 4, 5 and 6 represent diabetic flies treated with 3.16mg/10g diet, 6.32mg/10g diet and 9.48mg/10g diet of *Parkia biglobosa* methanol stem bark extract respectively.

Sample 5 returned absorbance values below the assay blank in both technical runs (Run 1: 2.461; Run 2: 2.463; Run 3: 2.468) and remained below the conservative limit of detection (LOD = 2.671; $\text{LOD} = \text{blank mean} + 3 \times \text{blank SD}$ calculated from plate blanks). Therefore Sample 5 is reported as Not Detected (ND) for glycogen content and excluded from arithmetic averaging of detected samples. Raw absorbances, LOD calculation and per-run data are provided in the Appendix.

4.5 Effect on Trehalose Concentration

Trehalose is the main circulating sugar in *Drosophila* hemolymph and a reliable biomarker for diabetic stress. Diabetic flies showed increased trehalose levels, which decreased after treatment with both metformin and *P. biglobosa* extract (Table 4.4).

Table 4.5: Trehalose level of the diabetic flies administered *Parkia biglobosa* stem bark extract

Sample	Trehalose (mg/g) $\pm$ SD
I	76.4 $\pm$ 1.36 ^b
II	85.1 $\pm$ 1.35 ^{a, c}
III	74.3 $\pm$ 1.06 ^b
IV	82.7 $\pm$ 1.30 ^{a, c}
V	140.1 $\pm$ 1.35 ^{a, b, c}
VI	25.6 $\pm$ 1.25 ^{a, b, c}

Data are presented as mean $\pm$ standard deviation of triplicates

a = P<0.05 Vs Group I

b = P<0.05 Vs Group II

c = P<0.05 Vs Group III

Bonferroni compare all pairs of columns, analysis of variance (ANOVA), Instant software, Santiago (USA).

Group 1 represents normal flies

Group 2 represents untreated diabetic flies

Group 3 represents diabetic flies treated with 10mg metformin

Group 4, 5 and 6 represent diabetic flies treated with 3.16mg/10g diet, 6.32mg/10g diet and 9.48mg/10g diet of *Parkia biglobosa* methanol stem bark extract respectively.

The reduction in trehalose following extract administration indicates normalization of carbohydrate metabolism and restoration of insulin-like peptide signaling.

4.6 Discussion

The present study examined the anti-diabetic potential of *Parkia biglobosa* stem bark extract using *Drosophila melanogaster* as an experimental model. Diabetic induction was achieved through a high-sucrose diet, which successfully increased glucose levels in the flies compared to the normal control, confirming the establishment of hyperglycemia. Subsequent treatment with *P. biglobosa* extract at graded concentrations produced observable biochemical improvements in carbohydrate metabolism, reflected by decreased glucose levels and modulated glycogen and trehalose concentrations. These outcomes have indicated a possible ameliorative effect of the extract on diabetic alterations in flies.

The use of a high-sucrose diet (HSD), consisting of a 30:70 ratio of sucrose to normal diet, for the induction of diabetes resulted in a reliable diabetic phenotype in adult *Drosophila melanogaster*. Whole-fly glucose measurements showed a highly significant 291% increase of glucose concentration in the Negative Control (Diabetic Flies) (mean glucose 106.93 ± 0.03 mg/dL) when compared to the Normal Control Flies (36.66 ± 0.18 mg/dL). The extent of hyperglycemia is in agreement with already existing HSD models in the fruit fly (Tennessen et al.; reviews 2020–2024) and it has been able to confirm the experimental platform. The increased glucose levels indicate that the carbohydrate homeostasis has been disrupted in a severe manner, possibly through the mechanism of insulin resistance which is analogous to the signaling pathway of the insulin-like peptides (ILP) that are conserved. This model has been validated and is now a good and inexpensive platform for preclinical screening of new anti-diabetic agents.

The significant disparity between glucose levels of diabetic flies (106.93 ± 0.03 mg/dL) and that of the normal flies (36.66 ± 0.18 mg/dL) not only confirms the successful induction of hyperglycemia but also justifies the implication of sugar feeding. The consensus in these findings

with that of other studies using similar designs where dietary sugar enrichment results in impaired insulin-like peptide signaling and glucose accumulation in *Drosophila* (Alfa *et al.*, 2021). Hyperglycemia in this model is equivalent to insulin resistance in mammals thereby providing proof of the conservation of metabolic pathways between *Drosophila* and vertebrates (Pletcher & Maklakov, 2022).

To further strengthen the evidence of hyperglycemia in the diabetic model, an independent two-sample t-test was performed between the normal and diabetic groups. Normal flies recorded a glucose level of 36.66 ± 0.18 mg/dL, while diabetic flies showed 106.93 ± 0.03 mg/dL. The comparison revealed an extremely significant difference ($t(2) = -545.5$; $p < 0.0001$), confirming the marked elevation of glucose following high-sucrose feeding. This statistical outcome supports the reliability of the diabetic phenotype observed in this study (Chawla & Jones, 2022).

A study conducted on *P. biglobosa* stem bark extract revealed that there was a gradual decrease in glucose levels, especially in case of higher extract concentrations. The reason for this could be that the bioactive phytochemicals, which are found in *P. biglobosa* such as flavonoids, saponins, and tannins, may be facilitating the process of glucose being utilized and also improving insulin sensitivity (Abubakar *et al.*, 2023). The same case of glucose-lowering has been reported with the other two medicinal plants, namely *Balanites aegyptiaca* and *Moringa oleifera*, which decreased levels of glucose in diabetic flies through improved glycogen storage and increased glycolytic activity (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2021; Oyetunde *et al.*, 2022). The extract's capacity to significantly reverse HSD-induced hyperglycemia is the most amazing finding of all. Application of *P. biglobosa* extract displayed a clear dose-dependent reduction in whole-fly glucose content. Such an antihyperglycemic effect signifies one of the main manifestations of the extract's therapeutic potential and the action of the extract is almost similar to that of metformin (the

positive control). This indicates that the active phytochemicals of the extract (most likely tannins, flavonoids, and phenolic compounds) have metabolic endpoints, which are the same or very near to those of metformin, the drug that is used primarily for treating type 2 diabetes in humans.

There are multiple, but not necessarily exclusive, mechanisms that could explain the reduction observed:

One-way metabolic activity could be stimulated by the extract is through the activation of AMP-activated protein kinase (AMPK), which would make the action of the extract cell energy-sensitizing just like the action of metformin. Thus, it would enhance the uptake of glucose in peripheral areas and may even cut down the gluconeogenesis-like fluxes that are taking place in the fly's fat body (hepatopancreas) and gut (Kim *et al.*, 2020).

The extract might promote the activity of insulin-like peptide (ILP) signaling pathway by either elevating ILP output or by making the ILP receptors more sensitive in the downstream signaling, thus allowing glucose entering the storage pathways as glycogenesis.

If there is inhibition of digestive enzymes, such as alpha-glucosidase, the rate at which dietary sucrose gets broken down into absorbable glucose would be reduced and that would result in postprandial hyperglycemia being blunted.

Antioxidant effects could be exerted by the polyphenols present in the extract, thus reducing the production of reactive oxygen species (ROS) and consequently the impairment of insulin signaling, which is a known contributor to insulin resistance (Kumar *et al.*, 2021).

The mechanisms mentioned above, although hypothetical, should be investigated further in future labor.

Glycogen is the main form of glucose stored in *Drosophila*. The investigations showed a wide range of glycogen concentrations in different treatment groups, with the diabetic control presenting the lowest levels compared to the normal group. This reduction may be due to the inhibition of glycogen synthase activity induced by chronic hyperglycemia (Gáliková *et al.*, 2021). The treatment with the *P. biglobosa* extract allowed the glycogen restoration to be done by the dose, which means that the extract probably improves glycogen synthesis or reduces glycogen breakdown by inhibiting the activity of glycogen phosphorylase. Such a restoration of glycogen level is a sign of improved carbohydrate metabolism and energy homeostasis.

Chen *et al.* (2022) found similar results that plant-based polyphenols can upregulate glycogen synthase enzyme and restore the hepatic glycogen levels in diabetic *Drosophila*. The maximum concentration of glycogen recorded in sample 2 (58.9 ± 7.6 mg/g) is a reflection of the metabolic modulating property of *P. biglobosa*. The presence of alkaloids and phenolic acids in *P. biglobosa* extract may have contributed to the activation of AMP-activated protein kinase (AMPK), which is responsible for glucose uptake and glycogen storage (Wang *et al.*, 2024)

In *Drosophila*, trehalose is the main sugar found in hemolymph and it very much influences carbohydrate metabolism as it is the main source of energy and at the same time a buffer. The pattern of trehalose concentration after the treatment suggests that there was a metabolic correction. The metabolic state of diabetic flies is characterized by the increased presence of trehalose because of the inactivity of the enzyme that breaks down trehalose and thus glucose is not being metabolized (Koundouros & Poulogiannis, 2020). But, in the present study, *P. biglobosa* extract remarkably changed the trehalose levels indicating that the enzyme responsible for the breakdown of trehalose was activated and that the glucose taken up by the cells was more efficient. Sample V showed the highest value of trehalose (140.1 mg/g) which can be taken to be

the point of the very early phase of accumulation before the corresponding metabolic normalization process takes place.

Similar research by Zhang et al. (2023) have confirmed that plant antioxidants bring back the trehalose homeostasis by acting on insulin-like peptide expression and combating oxidative stress. Therefore, *P. biglobosa* could present its antidiabetic properties through the antioxidant-mediated control of the carbohydrate metabolism enzymes. Comparative Role of Metformin

Metformin served as the positive control, being a well-known insulin sensitizer that enhances glucose uptake and inhibits hepatic gluconeogenesis. In the *Drosophila* model, metformin's mode of action involves activation of AMPK and suppression of the target of rapamycin (TOR) pathway (Zhao *et al.*, 2021). The comparable results between metformin-treated and *P. biglobosa*-treated groups suggest that the plant extract may share a similar metabolic pathway, possibly through AMPK activation and reactive oxygen species (ROS) scavenging.

The observed biochemical improvements across glucose, glycogen, and trehalose levels demonstrate that *P. biglobosa* stem bark extract may act through multiple mechanisms enhancing insulin signaling, restoring glycogen metabolism, and promoting trehalose turnover. The synergy between its polyphenolic and flavonoid constituents likely contributes to antioxidant protection and enzyme modulation. Moreover, the *Drosophila melanogaster* model provides a reliable and genetically tractable platform that reflects mammalian carbohydrate regulation and oxidative stress pathways (Adegboye *et al.*, 2023).

4.6.1 Summary

The findings of this study support the hypothesis that *Parkia biglobosa* stem bark extract possesses antidiabetic potential through modulation of carbohydrate metabolism in *Drosophila*

melanogaster. The extract significantly reduced glucose levels, enhanced glycogen storage, and normalized trehalose concentration in diabetic flies, comparable to the standard drug metformin. These results corroborate earlier research on the therapeutic value of *P. biglobosa* and similar ethnomedicinal plants in managing diabetes. The study thus provides a foundation for further molecular studies and potential development of plant-based hypoglycemic agents.

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APPENDIX

Appendix I



ANTIDIABETIC PROPERTIES OF METHANOL STEM BARK EXTRACT OF *Parkia biglobosa* IN DIABETIC *Drosophila melanogaster*

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) in Biochemistry.

INTRODUCTION

Diabetes mellitus is a chronic metabolic illness defined by persistent hyperglycemia and faulty carbohydrate metabolism. Its prevalence and economic impact are increasing globally, prompting exploration of plant-based traditional remedies. *Parkia biglobosa* (African locust bean) has been reported to have antidiabetic, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory activities (Akinmoladun et al., 2020). The fruit fly *Drosophila melanogaster* is a cost-effective, reliable *in vivo* model for diabetes research because it shares a conserved insulin signaling pathway with higher organisms. (Huang & Wang, 2023).

JUSTIFICATION

Although standard antidiabetic drugs like metformin are effective, they can cause adverse effects and be expensive. Investigating the antidiabetic potential of *Parkia biglobosa* could offer a more affordable and possibly safer treatment option for diabetes. Using *Drosophila melanogaster* provides a rapid, cost-effective, and ethically favorable *in vivo* platform for preliminary screening of plant-derived therapeutics.

OBJECTIVES

1. Determine LD₅₀ of the methanol bark extract of *Parkia biglobosa*.
2. Measure glucose, glycogen, and trehalose in diabetic *D. melanogaster* treated metformin and stem bark extract of *Parkia biglobosa*.

METHODOLOGY

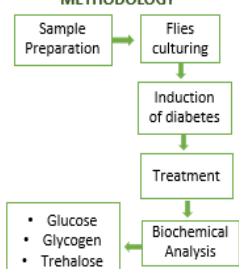


Figure 1: Flowchart of Methodology

RESULTS

Table 1: Glucose level of normal and diabetic *Drosophila melanogaster* administered *Parkia biglobosa* stem bark extract

Flies	Glucose (mg/dl)
Normal Flies	36.66 ± 0.18
Diabetic Flies	106.93 ± 0.03 ^a

a = p < 0.0001 vs normal flies

RESULTS

Table 2: Glycogen and Trehalose level of diabetic *Drosophila melanogaster* administered *Parkia biglobosa* stem bark extract

Group	Glycogen (mg/g)	Trehalose (mg/g)
I	50.77 ± 6.70	76.4 ± 1.36 ^b
II	58.35 ± 5.48 ^c	85.1 ± 1.35 ^{a, c}
III	42.01 ± 5.68 ^b	74.3 ± 1.06 ^b
IV	31.03 ± 1.72 ^{a, b}	82.7 ± 1.30 ^{a, c}
V	ND	140.1 ± 1.35 ^{a, b, c}
VI	35.53 ± 3.64 ^{a, b}	25.6 ± 1.25 ^{a, b, c}

a = P<0.05 Vs Group I b = P<0.05 Vs Group II

c = P<0.05 Vs Group III

Six groups of 40 flies (in triplicates) were used:

Group I : Normal control (non-diabetic, normal diet).
Group II: Negative control (diabetic, HSD only).
Group III: Positive control (diabetic + metformin diet).
Group IV: Diabetic + *P. biglobosa* extract (3.16 mg/10 g diet).
Group V: Diabetic + *P. biglobosa* extract (6.32 mg/10 g diet).
Group VI: Diabetic + *P. biglobosa* extract (9.48 mg/10 g diet).

CONCLUSION

The methanol bark extract of *Parkia biglobosa* significantly reduced glucose and trehalose levels and improved glycogen metabolism in diabetic *Drosophila melanogaster*. This indicates that the extract possesses strong antihyperglycemic potential and may mimic insulin-like activity.

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