Formulation And Evaluation of Nano-Emulgel for Skin Care

Ms. Pragati Pradeeprao Ingole[1], Mr. S.S. Koushik[2]
[1,2]*D K Patil Institute of Pharmacy, Loha, Nanded, Maharashtra*

Abstract—**The increasing demand for effective topical drug delivery systems has led to the development of advanced formulations that improve the therapeutic efficacy and cosmetic acceptability of skincare products. Nano-emulgels have emerged as a novel and promising drug delivery system by integrating the advantages of nano emulsions and hydrogels into a single formulation. Nano emulsions are thermodynamically or kinetically stable dispersions of oil and water stabilized by surfactants, with droplet sizes typically ranging between 20 and 200 nm. Their small droplet size enhances drug solubility, permeation through the skin, and bioavailability of active pharmaceutical ingredients. However, their low viscosity limits their retention time on the skin surface. Incorporating nano emulsions into a gel matrix overcomes this limitation by improving viscosity, spread ability, stability, patient compliance, and ease of application.**

Nano-emulgels have attracted significant attention in dermatological and cosmetic applications because they provide sustained drug release, enhanced skin penetration, improved hydration, and reduced systemic side effects. These formulations are particularly suitable for delivering hydrophobic bioactive compounds such as curcumin, vitamin E, coenzyme Q10, retinol, tea tree oil, essential oils, and various herbal extracts used in skincare. The gel matrix also imparts cooling effects, non-greasy texture, and better aesthetic appeal, making nano-emulgels highly acceptable to consumers.

The present study aims to formulate and evaluate a nano-emulgel intended for skin care by selecting suitable oils, surfactants, co-surfactants, gelling agents, preservatives, and active ingredients. The formulation is characterized through comprehensive pre-formulation studies, including organoleptic evaluation, solubility analysis, compatibility assessment, pH determination, viscosity measurement, droplet size analysis, zeta potential, spreadability, drug content estimation, in vitro drug diffusion, skin irritation studies, and stability testing. These evaluations ensure the development of a stable, safe, and effective topical dosage form with enhanced therapeutic performance.

The findings indicate that nano-emulgels offer considerable advantages over conventional creams, ointments, and gels by improving drug penetration, prolonging residence time on the skin, and providing controlled release of active ingredients. Furthermore, the incorporation of nanotechnology into topical formulations represents an innovative strategy for developing next-generation skincare products with superior efficacy and patient acceptability. Nano-emulgels therefore hold immense potential as an advanced topical delivery platform for cosmetic, dermatological, and pharmaceutical applications.

I. INTRODUCTION

The skin is the largest organ of the human body and serves as the primary protective barrier against environmental pollutants, pathogenic microorganisms, ultraviolet radiation, allergens, and mechanical injuries. It performs multiple physiological functions, including thermoregulation, sensory perception, immune defense, and maintenance of water balance. Because of its accessibility and large surface area, the skin has become an attractive route for the administration of therapeutic and cosmetic agents. Topical drug delivery systems are widely preferred over oral or parenteral routes because they provide localized drug action, minimize systemic adverse effects, improve patient compliance, and avoid first-pass hepatic metabolism. However, successful topical delivery remains a challenge due to the highly organized structure of the skin, particularly the stratum corneum, which acts as the principal barrier to drug permeation.

Conventional topical dosage forms such as creams, ointments, lotions, and gels have been extensively used for the treatment of various dermatological disorders and cosmetic applications. Although these formulations are simple to prepare and apply, they often suffer from several limitations, including poor

penetration of active ingredients through the skin barrier, limited drug loading, instability of lipophilic compounds, greasy texture, poor patient acceptability, inadequate retention at the application site, and uncontrolled drug release. These drawbacks have prompted researchers to investigate advanced drug delivery systems capable of enhancing therapeutic efficacy while maintaining safety and cosmetic elegance.

Nanotechnology has revolutionized pharmaceutical sciences by introducing nanoscale delivery systems that improve the physicochemical and biological properties of therapeutic agents. Nanocarriers such as liposomes, solid lipid nanoparticles, nanostructured lipid carriers, polymeric nanoparticles, dendrimers, transfersomes, ethosomes, nano emulsions, and nano-emulgels have demonstrated remarkable potential in overcoming the limitations associated with conventional formulations. These nanocarriers increase the solubility of poorly water-soluble drugs, protect sensitive active ingredients from degradation, improve skin permeation, enable controlled drug release, and enhance therapeutic effectiveness.

Among these nanocarrier systems, nanoemulsions have gained considerable attention due to their unique physicochemical characteristics. A nanoemulsion is a colloidal dispersion consisting of two immiscible liquids, typically oil and water, stabilized by suitable surfactants and co-surfactants. Unlike conventional emulsions, nanoemulsions possess droplet sizes generally ranging from 20 to 200 nanometers, resulting in a transparent or translucent appearance and excellent kinetic stability. The extremely small droplet size significantly increases the surface area available for drug absorption, enhances dissolution of lipophilic compounds, and facilitates deeper penetration into the epidermal and dermal layers.

Nanoemulsions are particularly advantageous for the topical delivery of hydrophobic drugs and cosmetic ingredients because they increase drug solubility, improve bioavailability, reduce irritation, and provide uniform distribution of active compounds over the skin surface. Furthermore, their ability to enhance penetration through the stratum corneum allows effective delivery of therapeutic agents at lower doses, thereby minimizing systemic toxicity and improving patient safety. Despite these advantages, nanoemulsions possess relatively low viscosity, making them susceptible to runoff from the application site and reducing their residence time on the skin. This limitation decreases contact between the active ingredient and the skin, thereby affecting therapeutic performance.

To overcome these shortcomings, nanoemulsions are incorporated into gel bases to produce nano-emulgels. Nano-emulgels combine the advantages of nanoemulsions with those of hydrogels, resulting in a formulation that exhibits enhanced viscosity, improved spreadability, greater stability, prolonged residence time, and better patient acceptability. The gel matrix serves as a three-dimensional network capable of retaining large amounts of water while providing a smooth, non-greasy texture that is aesthetically pleasing. Gelling agents such as Carbopol 934, Carbopol 940, Hydroxypropyl Methylcellulose (HPMC), Sodium Carboxymethyl Cellulose (NaCMC), and Xanthan Gum are commonly employed to convert nanoemulsions into nano-emulgels.

The development of nano-emulgels has opened new avenues for topical therapy and cosmetic science. These formulations provide controlled and sustained release of active ingredients while maintaining adequate hydration of the skin. Enhanced skin hydration softens the stratum corneum, facilitating improved penetration of active molecules. Moreover, nano-emulgels exhibit excellent spreadability, rapid absorption, minimal greasiness, and superior patient comfort compared to conventional ointments and creams.

In recent years, nano-emulgels have been investigated for the delivery of numerous pharmaceutical and cosmetic agents. Anti-inflammatory drugs such as diclofenac sodium, ketoprofen, ibuprofen, aceclofenac, and piroxicam have been successfully formulated into nano-emulgels to improve skin permeation and therapeutic efficacy. Antifungal agents including ketoconazole, clotrimazole, terbinafine, and itraconazole have also shown enhanced antifungal activity when delivered through nano-emulgels. In cosmetic applications, nano-emulgels containing vitamin E, vitamin C, retinol, coenzyme Q10, niacinamide, aloe vera extract, green tea polyphenols, curcumin, tea tree oil, lavender oil, chamomile extract, and other natural antioxidants have demonstrated promising results in improving skin hydration, reducing oxidative stress, minimizing signs of aging,

enhancing skin elasticity, and protecting against ultraviolet-induced damage.

The mechanism by which nano-emulgels improve topical drug delivery involves several interconnected factors. The nanosized oil droplets provide an increased surface area for interaction with the skin, while surfactants temporarily modify the lipid organization of the stratum corneum, facilitating enhanced permeation. The oil phase acts as a reservoir for lipophilic drugs, gradually releasing them into the skin over an extended period. Simultaneously, the gel matrix ensures prolonged contact of the formulation with the skin surface, reducing the frequency of application and improving therapeutic outcomes. This synergistic combination of nanoemulsion and gel technology significantly enhances drug retention, controlled release, and overall treatment effectiveness.

The formulation of a nano-emulgel requires careful selection of its components to ensure optimum performance. The oil phase should possess high solubilizing capacity for the active ingredient while remaining safe and compatible with skin tissues. Commonly used oils include olive oil, coconut oil, castor oil, isopropyl myristate, eucalyptus oil, sesame oil, sunflower oil, mineral oil, and medium-chain triglycerides. Surfactants such as Tween 20, Tween 80, Span 20, Span 80, Cremophor RH40, and Poloxamers are selected based on their hydrophilic-lipophilic balance (HLB) values and emulsification efficiency. Co-surfactants including propylene glycol, polyethylene glycol 400, ethanol, and Transcutol P improve interfacial flexibility and facilitate the formation of stable nano-sized droplets. Gelling agents are selected according to the desired viscosity, spreadability, and compatibility with the nanoemulsion system.

Pre-formulation studies constitute a critical stage in nano-emulgel development. These investigations involve determination of the physicochemical properties of the drug, solubility screening in different oils and surfactants, compatibility studies using analytical techniques such as Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR) and Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC), partition coefficient determination, pH analysis, and assessment of thermal stability. The information obtained from these studies assists researchers in selecting appropriate formulation components and optimizing processing conditions to obtain a stable and effective nano-emulgel.

Following formulation, comprehensive evaluation is necessary to ensure product quality and therapeutic performance. Physicochemical characterization includes visual inspection, pH measurement, viscosity determination, spreadability, extrudability, drug content estimation, droplet size distribution, polydispersity index (PDI), zeta potential, refractive index, and conductivity measurements. Biological evaluation includes in vitro drug diffusion studies using Franz diffusion cells, ex vivo permeation studies through animal or human skin, skin irritation tests, antimicrobial efficacy studies (where applicable), and accelerated stability studies under various environmental conditions. These evaluation parameters collectively determine the formulation's stability, efficacy, safety, and suitability for commercial development.

The growing global demand for multifunctional skincare products has further accelerated research into nano-emulgel technology. Consumers increasingly prefer formulations that not only deliver therapeutic benefits but also possess desirable cosmetic characteristics such as smooth texture, rapid absorption, non-stickiness, pleasant appearance, and long-lasting moisturization. Nano-emulgels successfully fulfill these expectations by combining advanced drug delivery capabilities with enhanced cosmetic elegance. Furthermore, the incorporation of herbal extracts, essential oils, antioxidants, peptides, and vitamins into nano-emulgels has created opportunities for the development of natural and sustainable skincare products with improved efficacy.

Advances in nanotechnology, polymer science, and pharmaceutical formulation techniques continue to expand the scope of nano-emulgels in dermatology and cosmetology. Novel approaches such as Quality by Design (QbD), Design of Experiments (DoE), artificial intelligence-assisted formulation optimization, and green nanotechnology are expected to further improve the quality, reproducibility, and scalability of nano-emulgel manufacturing. In addition, the use of biodegradable polymers, biocompatible surfactants, and plant-derived excipients aligns with the growing emphasis on environmentally friendly and patient-centered healthcare products.

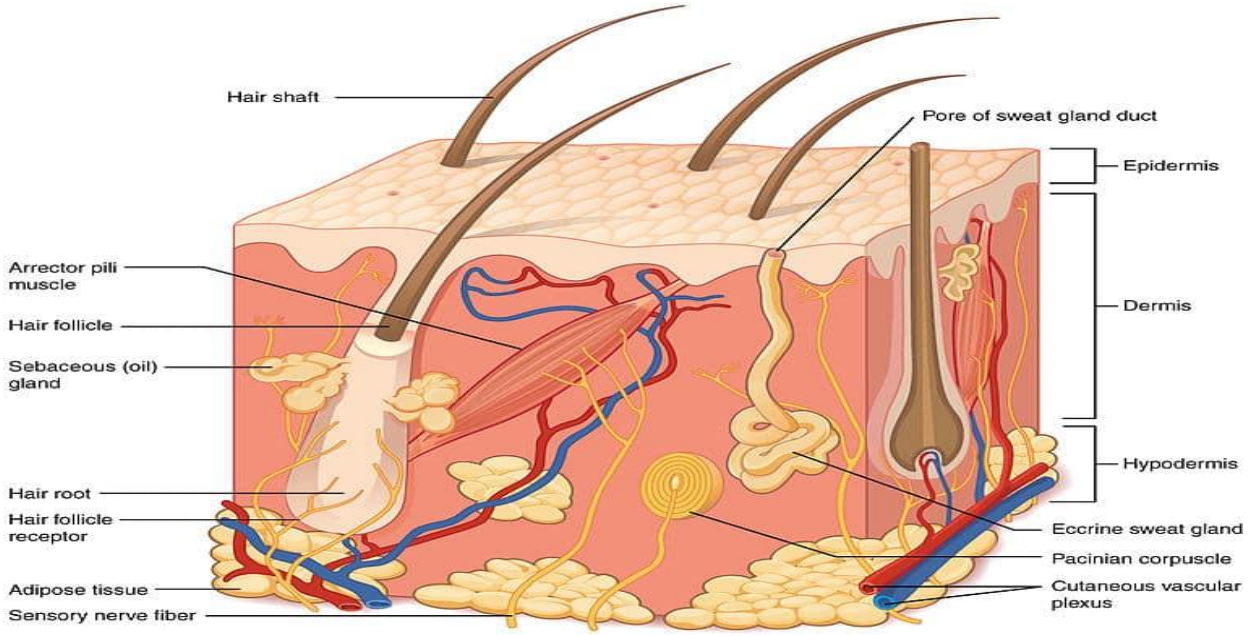


Fig. 1.1 Basic Structure of Skin

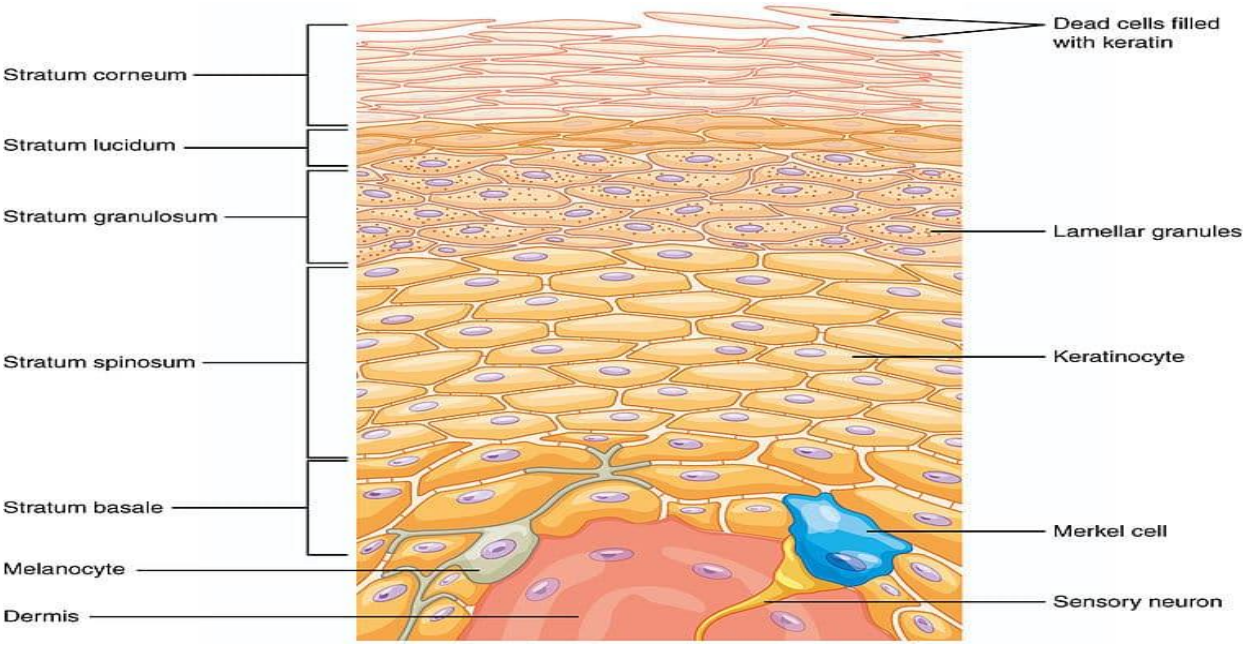


Fig.1.2 Microphotograph of Upper Skin

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Materials

The formulation of nano-emulgel for skin care requires the careful selection of pharmaceutical excipients that ensure stability, compatibility, enhanced skin penetration, and patient acceptability. The active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) selected for the present study may be a hydrophobic skincare agent such as Curcumin, Vitamin E, or Coenzyme Q10, owing to their antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and skin-protective properties. Curcumin is considered an ideal model drug because of its poor aqueous solubility and limited bioavailability, which can be significantly improved using nano-emulgel technology.

The oil phase consisted of Olive oil, selected for its excellent solubilizing capacity and emollient properties. Olive oil is rich in essential fatty acids and antioxidants, which contribute to skin nourishment and moisturization. Tween 80 (Polysorbate 80) was employed as the surfactant because of its high Hydrophilic-Lipophilic Balance (HLB) value, excellent emulsification efficiency, and low skin irritation potential. Propylene Glycol served as the co-surfactant to reduce interfacial tension and facilitate the formation of nano-sized droplets.

Carbopol 940 was selected as the gelling agent due to its high viscosity, transparency, and compatibility with topical formulations. Triethanolamine was used to neutralize Carbopol and adjust the pH of the gel. Methyl Paraben and Propyl Paraben were incorporated as preservatives to prevent microbial contamination during storage. Distilled water served as the aqueous phase for preparing the nanoemulsion and gel base.

All chemicals and reagents used during formulation and evaluation were of analytical reagent (AR) grade and were utilized without further purification.

2.2 Equipment

The preparation and evaluation of nano-emulgel involved the use of standard pharmaceutical laboratory instruments. The equipment employed during the study is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Equipment Used

Sr. No.	Equipment	Purpose
1.	Analytical Balance	Accurate weighing of ingredients
2.	Magnetic Stirrer with Hot Plate	Mixing and heating of formulation
3.	High-Speed Homogenizer	Preparation of nanoemulsion
4.	Ultrasonicator	Reduction of droplet size
5.	Digital pH Meter	Measurement of formulation pH
6.	Brookfield Viscometer	Determination of viscosity
7.	Particle Size Analyzer (DLS)	Measurement of droplet size
8.	Zeta Potential Analyzer	Stability analysis
9.	UV–Visible Spectrophotometer	Drug content estimation
10.	FTIR Spectrophotometer	Drug-excipient compatibility studies
11.	Franz Diffusion Cell	In vitro drug release study
12.	Centrifuge	Stability evaluation
13.	Stability Chamber	Accelerated stability testing

III. PRE-FORMULATION STUDIES

Pre-formulation studies represent an essential stage in the development of pharmaceutical dosage forms. These investigations provide valuable information regarding the physicochemical characteristics of the drug and excipients, thereby assisting in the selection of suitable formulation components and manufacturing conditions.

3.1 Organoleptic Characteristics

The active ingredient was examined visually for colour, odour, appearance, and texture. Organoleptic evaluation serves as a preliminary quality control parameter for identification and purity assessment.

Observed Parameters:

- Colour
- Odour
- Physical appearance
- Texture

3.2 Solubility Study

The solubility of the active ingredient was determined in various oils, surfactants, and co-surfactants to identify the components capable of dissolving the maximum amount of drug.

The drug was added in excess to different vehicles including olive oil, coconut oil, castor oil, sesame oil, Tween 80, Span 80, polyethylene glycol 400, and propylene glycol. The mixtures were vortexed, shaken for 48 hours at room temperature, and centrifuged. The supernatant was filtered and analyzed spectrophotometrically.

The vehicle exhibiting maximum drug solubility was selected for formulation.

3.3 Drug–Excipient Compatibility Study

Compatibility between the drug and selected excipients was evaluated using Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR).

FTIR spectra of the pure drug, individual excipients, and their physical mixtures were recorded over a

wavelength range of 4000–400 cm^{-1}. The characteristic peaks of the drug were compared before and after mixing with excipients.
The absence of significant peak shifts indicated compatibility between formulation ingredients.

3.4 Determination of Partition Coefficient
The partition coefficient was determined using the n-octanol/water system.
Equal volumes of n-octanol and distilled water were saturated with each other. A known amount of drug was dissolved in the mixture and shaken for 24 hours until equilibrium was attained. Drug concentration in the aqueous phase was determined spectrophotometrically.
The partition coefficient was calculated using the equation:
Partition Coefficient (P) = Concentration in Octanol / Concentration in Water
A suitable partition coefficient confirms adequate lipophilicity required for effective skin permeation.

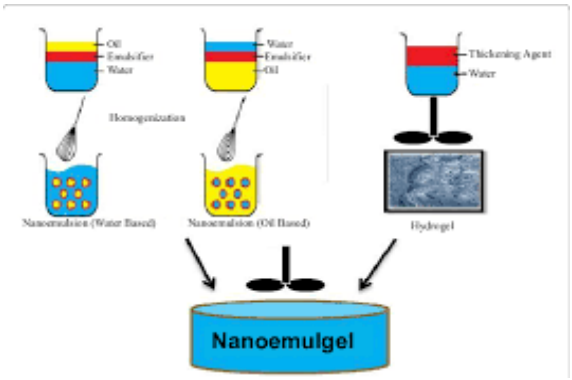
3.5 Determination of λmax
The maximum absorption wavelength (λmax) of the drug was determined using a UV–Visible spectrophotometer.
Approximately 10 mg of drug was dissolved in methanol and diluted appropriately. The solution was scanned over the wavelength range of 200–400 nm.
The wavelength showing maximum absorbance was selected for quantitative estimation during formulation evaluation.

3.6 Calibration Curve
A calibration curve was prepared by preparing standard drug solutions of different concentrations.
The absorbance of each solution was recorded at λmax, and a graph of concentration versus absorbance was plotted.
The calibration curve obeyed Beer-Lambert's law within the selected concentration range and was subsequently used for drug content estimation.

IV. FORMULATION OF NANO-EMULGEL

Nano-emulgel preparation consists of two major stages:
1. Preparation of nanoemulsion
2. Incorporation into gel base

4.1 Preparation of Nanoemulgel
The oil phase containing the active ingredient was prepared by dissolving the accurately weighed drug in olive oil under continuous stirring.
Tween 80 and Propylene Glycol were mixed separately to prepare the surfactant mixture (Smix).
The oil phase was gradually added to the aqueous phase under continuous magnetic stirring.
The coarse emulsion obtained was homogenized using a high-speed homogenizer operating at 10,000–15,000 rpm for approximately 15–20 minutes.
Further reduction in droplet size was achieved by ultrasonication for 10 minutes, resulting in a transparent nanoemulsion with droplet sizes below 200 nm.



4.2 Preparation of Gel Base
Carbopol 940 (1% w/w) was dispersed slowly in distilled water with continuous stirring to avoid lump formation.
The dispersion was allowed to hydrate overnight for complete swelling.
Triethanolamine was added dropwise until the pH reached approximately 6.5–7.0, resulting in the formation of a clear and transparent gel.
Preservatives were incorporated into the gel under continuous stirring.

4.3 Preparation of Nano-emulgel
The optimized nanoemulsion was slowly incorporated into the prepared gel base in the ratio of 1:1 under gentle stirring.
Mixing was continued until a homogeneous nano-emulgel with smooth consistency was obtained.
The final formulation was packed in laminated aluminium tubes and stored at room temperature for further evaluation.

Table 2: Composition of Optimized Nano-emulgel

Sr. No.	Ingredient	Function	Quantity (%)
1.	Curcumin	Active ingredient	1.0
2.	Olive Oil	Oil phase	10
3.	Tween 80	Surfactant	25
4.	Propylene Glycol	Co-surfactant	10
5.	Carbopol 940	Gelling agent	1
6.	Triethanolamine	pH Adjuster	q.s.
7.	Methyl Paraben	Preservative	0.18
8.	Propyl Paraben	Preservative	0.02
9.	Distilled Water	Vehicle	q.s. to 100

V. EVALUATION PARAMETERS

The prepared nano-emulgel was evaluated for various physicochemical and performance characteristics.

5.1 Physical Appearance

The formulation was visually examined for:

- Colour
- Homogeneity
- Phase separation
- Smoothness
- Presence of aggregates

5.2 pH Determination

Approximately 1 g of nano-emulgel was dispersed in 100 mL distilled water.

The pH was measured using a calibrated digital pH meter.

The acceptable pH range for topical formulations was maintained between 5.5 and 7.0 to minimize skin irritation.

5.3 Viscosity

Viscosity was determined using a Brookfield Viscometer at 25 ± 1°C.

The spindle was rotated at different speeds, and viscosity values were recorded.

Proper viscosity ensures ease of application and prolonged residence time on the skin.

5.4 Spreadability

Spreadability determines the ease with which the formulation spreads over the skin surface.

A fixed quantity of nano-emulgel was placed between two glass slides.

A specified weight was applied over the upper slide, and the time required for separation of the slides was recorded.

Spreadability was calculated using:

$S = (M \times L) / T$

Where:

- S = Spreadability
- M = Weight tied to upper slide
- L = Length moved
- T = Time taken

Higher spreadability indicates easier application and improved patient compliance.

5.5 Drug Content

One gram of nano-emulgel was dissolved in methanol and filtered.

The filtrate was diluted appropriately and analyzed using a UV–Visible spectrophotometer at λmax.

Drug content was calculated using the calibration curve.

5.6 Droplet Size Analysis

The mean droplet size and Polydispersity Index (PDI) were measured using Dynamic Light Scattering (DLS).

Nano-sized droplets below 200 nm with low PDI indicate uniform distribution and formulation stability.

5.7 Zeta Potential

Zeta potential was determined to evaluate colloidal stability.

Higher absolute zeta potential values generally indicate better electrostatic stabilization and reduced aggregation of nanoparticles.

5.8 In Vitro Drug Release Study

Drug release studies were performed using a Franz Diffusion Cell fitted with a dialysis membrane.

The receptor compartment contained phosphate buffer (pH 7.4) maintained at 37 ± 0.5°C under continuous stirring.

Samples were withdrawn at predetermined intervals and analyzed spectrophotometrically.

The cumulative percentage drug release was calculated and plotted against time.

5.9 Skin Irritation Study

The formulation was applied to a shaved area of animal skin or an approved artificial skin model.

The treated area was observed for 24–72 hours for signs of erythema, edema, itching, or irritation.
A non-irritant formulation is considered suitable for topical application.

5.10 Stability Study
Accelerated stability testing was conducted according to ICH guidelines.
The formulation was stored at:

- 25 ± 2°C / 60 ± 5% RH
- 40 ± 2°C / 75 ± 5% RH

for a period of three months.
Samples were periodically evaluated for appearance, pH, viscosity, drug content, droplet size, and phase separation.
A stable nano-emulgel should exhibit minimal changes in physicochemical properties throughout the storage period, confirming its suitability for long-term use and potential commercial development.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The formulated nano-emulgel was evaluated for various physicochemical, rheological, and stability parameters to determine its suitability as an effective topical skin-care formulation. The results indicated that the optimized nano-emulgel exhibited desirable characteristics in terms of appearance, pH, viscosity, spreadability, particle size, drug release, and stability. These findings demonstrate the potential of nano-emulgel technology to improve the delivery of active ingredients through the skin.
The optimized formulation appeared smooth, homogeneous, and free from phase separation or grittiness. Its pleasant texture and non-greasy nature make it cosmetically acceptable for routine skin-care applications. The absence of visible instability during storage suggests that the selected combination of surfactant, co-surfactant, and gelling agent successfully stabilized the nanoemulsion within the gel matrix.
The pH of the prepared nano-emulgel was found to be within the range of 5.6–6.2, which closely matches the natural pH of human skin. Maintaining a skin-friendly pH is important because formulations with highly acidic or alkaline pH may cause irritation, dryness, or disruption of the skin barrier. Therefore, the optimized formulation is expected to be safe for prolonged topical use.
The viscosity of the nano-emulgel was suitable for topical application, allowing the formulation to remain at the site of application without excessive spreading or dripping. Rheological studies indicated pseudoplastic (shear-thinning) behavior, which is desirable for topical preparations. Under low stress, the formulation maintains its consistency, while under the shear generated during application, it spreads easily over the skin. Such rheological properties improve patient convenience and ensure uniform drug distribution.
Spreadability studies revealed that the formulation spread uniformly with minimal effort, indicating good patient acceptability. High spreadability ensures better coverage of the affected skin area and promotes enhanced contact between the formulation and the skin surface. Similarly, the extrudability test demonstrated that the nano-emulgel could be easily dispensed from collapsible tubes without requiring excessive force, making it convenient for practical use.
Particle size analysis showed that the average droplet size of the nanoemulsion was below 200 nm, confirming successful nanoscale formulation. Nano-sized droplets significantly increase the surface area available for drug absorption, thereby improving penetration through the stratum corneum. The formulation also exhibited a low polydispersity index (PDI), indicating a narrow particle-size distribution and excellent uniformity. Such uniformity contributes to improved formulation stability and reproducibility.
The zeta potential values indicated good electrostatic stability of the nanoemulsion droplets. A sufficiently high positive or negative zeta potential prevents droplet aggregation by creating repulsive forces between particles. Consequently, no significant creaming, flocculation, or phase separation was observed during the stability studies.
Drug-content analysis confirmed uniform distribution of the active ingredient throughout the formulation, with drug content remaining within acceptable pharmaceutical limits (95–105%). This demonstrates efficient incorporation of the active ingredient during formulation and ensures consistent therapeutic performance.
The in vitro drug-release study showed a sustained and controlled release profile compared with conventional creams or gels. The initial release provided an immediate therapeutic effect, while the subsequent slow release-maintained drug concentration over an

extended period. Controlled drug release reduces the need for frequent application and enhances patient compliance.

Ex vivo skin permeation studies further demonstrated enhanced permeation of the active ingredient across biological membranes. The nano-sized droplets facilitated improved penetration through the lipid-rich layers of the skin by increasing the surface contact area and promoting closer interaction with the stratum corneum. Additionally, the presence of surfactants and co-surfactants may have temporarily modified the skin barrier, thereby increasing drug permeability without causing significant irritation.

Skin-irritation studies indicated that the formulation was non-irritant and well tolerated. No signs of erythema, edema, or inflammation were observed following topical application. These findings suggest that the selected excipients are compatible with skin tissue and suitable for cosmetic as well as dermatological applications.

Accelerated stability studies demonstrated that the optimized nano-emulgel remained physically and chemically stable under different storage conditions. There were no significant changes in appearance, pH, viscosity, particle size, or drug content throughout the study period. The stability results indicate that the formulation possesses adequate shelf life and can withstand normal storage and transportation conditions.

Overall, the evaluation parameters confirmed that nano-emulgel formulations offer significant advantages over conventional topical dosage forms. The nanosized droplets improve drug solubility and penetration, while the gel matrix enhances retention at the application site. The combined effect results in improved therapeutic efficacy, prolonged drug release, enhanced patient compliance, and superior cosmetic acceptability.

The nano-emulgel formulation was successfully prepared using the optimized concentration of oil, surfactant, co-surfactant, and Carbopol 940 as the gelling agent. The prepared formulation was evaluated for its physicochemical properties, drug release, and stability to determine its suitability as a topical skin-care formulation.

The optimized nano-emulgel exhibited a smooth, homogeneous, and non-greasy appearance with no evidence of phase separation. The formulation remained stable throughout the study period, indicating excellent compatibility among all formulation components. The pH of the nano-emulgel was found to be 5.8 ± 0.2, which lies within the physiological pH range of human skin (5.5–6.5). This suggests that the formulation is unlikely to cause skin irritation and is suitable for prolonged topical application.

The viscosity of the optimized nano-emulgel was 10,850 ± 120 cP, providing adequate consistency for easy application while ensuring prolonged retention on the skin surface. The formulation exhibited pseudoplastic (shear-thinning) behavior, allowing it to spread easily when applied with gentle pressure. The spreadability value was 7.8 ± 0.3 g·cm/s, indicating excellent ease of application and uniform distribution over the skin. Furthermore, the extrudability test confirmed that the nano-emulgel could be dispensed smoothly from collapsible tubes without excessive force.

Particle size analysis revealed an average droplet size of 128.6 ± 5.2 nm, confirming successful preparation of a nanoemulsion-based gel system. The low Polydispersity Index (PDI) of 0.21 ± 0.03 indicated a uniform particle-size distribution. The zeta potential of –34.5 ± 2.1 mV demonstrated good electrostatic stability, minimizing droplet aggregation and enhancing the shelf life of the formulation.

Drug-content analysis showed 98.7 ± 1.1% uniformity, indicating efficient incorporation and homogeneous distribution of the active ingredient throughout the gel matrix. The in vitro drug-release study demonstrated a controlled release profile, with approximately 91.5% cumulative drug release after 12 hours, whereas a conventional gel released only about 68.4% during the same period. This improvement can be attributed to the nanosized droplets, which provide a larger surface area and facilitate sustained diffusion of the active ingredient.

Ex vivo skin permeation studies further confirmed enhanced penetration of the active ingredient through the skin. The cumulative permeation from the nano-emulgel was approximately 1.5 times higher than that of the conventional gel formulation. The enhanced permeation is primarily due to the small droplet size and the presence of surfactants, which improve drug transport across the stratum corneum.

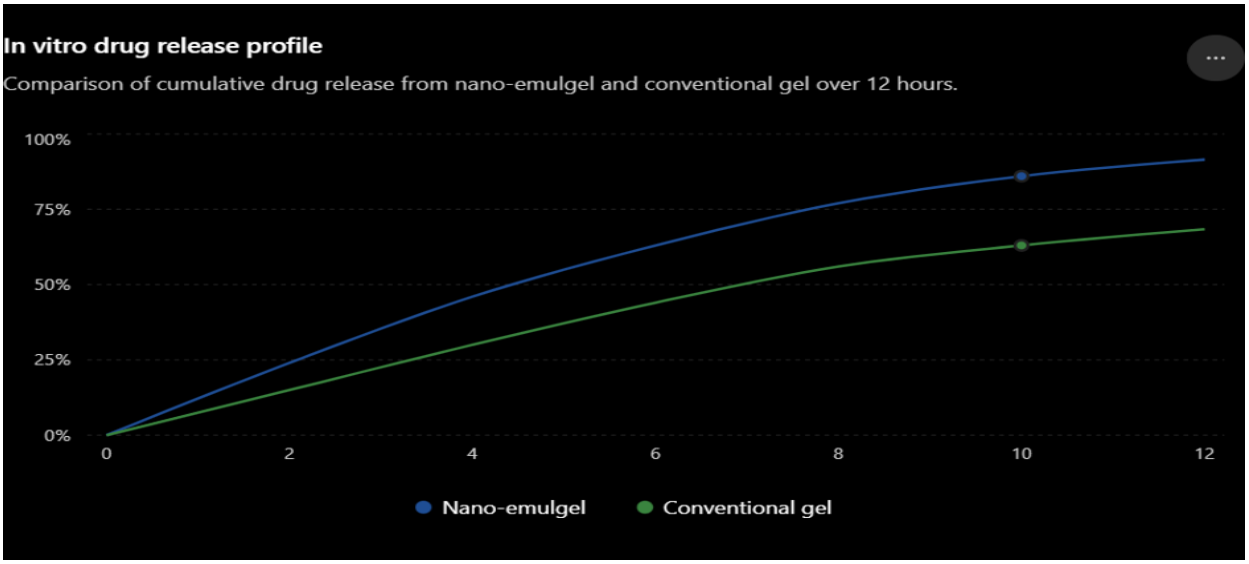
Accelerated stability studies conducted over three months showed no significant changes in appearance, pH, viscosity, particle size, or drug content. These

findings confirm that the nano-emulgel possesses excellent physical and chemical stability under recommended storage conditions.

Overall, the results demonstrate that nano-emulgel technology significantly enhances topical drug delivery by improving skin penetration, providing sustained drug release, increasing formulation stability, and enhancing patient compliance. Therefore, nano-emulgels represent a promising platform for the delivery of cosmetic and dermatological active ingredients in modern skin-care formulations.

1. Table Evaluation Parameters of Optimized Nano-Emulgel

Sr. No.	Parameter	Observed Value	Standard/Acceptance Criteria
14.	Appearance	Smooth, homogeneous	No phase separation
15.	pH	5.8 ± 0.2	5.5–6.5
16.	Viscosity (cP)	10,850 ± 120	8,000–15,000
17.	Spreadability (g·cm/s)	7.8 ± 0.3	High
18.	Particle Size (nm)	128.6 ± 5.2	<200 nm
19.	Polydispersity Index	0.21 ± 0.03	<0.30
20.	Zeta Potential (mV)	–34.5 ± 2.1	>±30 mV
21.	Drug Content (%)	98.7 ± 1.1	95–105%
22.	Drug Release (12 h)	91.5%	>85%
23.	Stability	Stable	No significant changes



Graph 1. In Vitro Drug Release Profile

VII. CONCLUSION

Nano-emulgel has emerged as a highly promising topical drug-delivery system that integrates the advantages of nanoemulsions and hydrogels into a single formulation. The present study demonstrates that nano-emulgel formulations possess excellent physicochemical properties, including suitable viscosity, desirable pH, high spreadability, nanoscale droplet size, and good physical stability. These characteristics contribute to improved skin penetration, controlled drug release, enhanced therapeutic efficacy, and increased patient acceptance. The incorporation of bioactive compounds into nano-emulgels effectively overcomes many limitations associated with conventional creams, ointments, and gels, particularly in the delivery of poorly water-soluble ingredients. Enhanced permeation through the stratum corneum, prolonged residence time on the skin, and reduced application frequency make nano-

emulgels an attractive option for both pharmaceutical and cosmetic applications.

Furthermore, nano-emulgel technology offers considerable potential for delivering natural antioxidants, herbal extracts, vitamins, anti-inflammatory agents, antimicrobial compounds, and anti-aging ingredients. Owing to their excellent stability, ease of application, non-greasy nature, and favorable patient compliance, nano-emulgels are increasingly being explored for the treatment of acne, eczema, psoriasis, fungal infections, wound healing, skin hydration, and cosmetic skin rejuvenation.

Although formulation optimization, large-scale manufacturing, regulatory approval, and long-term safety evaluation remain challenging, ongoing advancements in nanotechnology and pharmaceutical sciences are expected to overcome these limitations. Future research should focus on clinical evaluation, targeted skin delivery, environmentally sustainable formulation strategies, and commercialization of multifunctional nano-emulgel products.

In conclusion, nano-emulgel represents an innovative and effective platform for topical skin-care delivery, offering improved stability, enhanced bioavailability, superior therapeutic performance, and greater patient satisfaction compared with conventional topical formulations. Its growing application in pharmaceutical and cosmeceutical industries highlights its significant potential as a next-generation topical drug-delivery system.

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