



## Alpha-Glucosidase Inhibitory Activity and Analysis of Eleuthoside B from *Eleutherine bulbosa* Urb. Bulbs Purified Extract from Lampo Donggala, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia

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### ABSTRACT

Diabetes mellitus is becoming a severe health problem with associated economic and societal impacts. Type 2 diabetes (T2D) is the most common, accounting for about 90% of all diabetes cases in the world, and the prevalence is projected to increase, reaching 643 and 783 million by 2030 and 2045, respectively. This disease is characterized by a diminished responsiveness of the liver and muscle cells to insulin, causing fluctuations in blood glucose levels. Bawang Dayak (*Eleutherine bulbosa* Urb.) is a traditional Indonesian medicinal plant proven to have many pharmacological properties, including antioxidant, and antidiabetic properties. Therefore, this study aimed to determine the  $\alpha$ -glucosidase inhibitory activity, and phytochemical analysis of *E. bulbosa* Urb. Bulbs purified extract from Lampo Donggala, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. The bulb extract of *E. bulbosa* Urb was assessed for its antidiabetic activity *in vitro* using the  $\alpha$ -glucosidase inhibitory activity assay. Thin-layer chromatography (TLC) and high-performance liquid chromatography photodiode array (HPLC-PDA) detection were used to characterize the phytochemical composition and quantify the analytes, with Eleuthoside B as a marker compound. The purified extract exhibited potent  $\alpha$ -glucosidase inhibitory activity with IC<sub>50</sub> value of 5.29 mg/mL. Eleuthoside B was detected in the purified extract by TLC with R<sub>f</sub> value of 0.71. A quantitative determination using HPLC-PDA yielded Eleuthoside B content of 34.7916  $\pm$  0.16 mg/g extract. The study concluded that the purified extract from the bulb of *E. bulbosa*, sourced from Lampo Donggala, Central Sulawesi, possess  $\alpha$ -glucosidase inhibitory activity, suggesting its potential as an antidiabetic agent.

**Keywords:**  $\alpha$ -glucosidase inhibitors, Phytochemical analysis, Eleuthoside B, *Eleutherine bulbosa* Urb., Lampo Donggala.

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### Introduction

Diabetes mellitus is a metabolic disease characterized by elevated blood glucose levels. This can be due to insufficient insulin production or insensitivity of insulin receptors or both.<sup>1</sup> Diabetes has become a severe health problem worldwide, with a prevalence of 536.6 million individuals in 2021. This number was projected to increase to 783.2 million by 2045.<sup>2</sup> Type-2 diabetes (T2D), the most common type of diabetes, comprises approximately 90% of all cases worldwide. T2D is characterized by decreased sensitivity to insulin within liver and muscle cells.<sup>3, 4</sup> This disease may result in severe complications such as cardiovascular problems, retinopathy, nephropathy, kidney failure, and peripheral neuropathy.<sup>5</sup> These serious life-threatening complications underscore the need for selective and effective therapeutic strategies. A suitable management strategy for T2D is inhibiting the  $\alpha$ -glucosidase enzyme found in the brush border of the small intestine.<sup>6</sup> The enzyme hydrolyzes carbohydrates into glucose, which is transported to the bloodstream.

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Alpha-glucosidase inhibitors prevent the conversion of dietary carbohydrates into glucose in the small intestine, reducing postprandial blood glucose levels. The inhibition of  $\alpha$ -glucosidase is a well-established method for managing T2D.<sup>7,8</sup> However, the adverse side effects and limited selectivity of the existing clinical drugs targeting this enzyme (i.e., acarbose),<sup>9</sup> necessitate the urgent need for new  $\alpha$ -glucosidase inhibitors.

Nature is a veritable treasure trove of novel bioactive compounds, with over half of the approved pharmaceuticals originating from natural sources.<sup>10</sup> Acarbose and Voglibose, two compounds recently used as  $\alpha$ -glucosidase inhibitors, are exemplary naturally derived medicines.<sup>11, 12</sup> Plants are traditionally rich in bioactive compounds and scientific literature has documented over 400 plant species with hypoglycemic properties.<sup>13-16</sup> Indonesia is renowned for its exceptional biodiversity, including approximately 11% of the world's recognized flowering plant species. According to the results of previous studies, approximately half of these species are endemic to Indonesia.<sup>17, 18</sup>

*Eleutherine bulbosa* Urb. is a species of Iridaceae, commonly known as Bawang Dayak by the Dayak people residing in Kalimantan. This species, a native of South America, also flourishes in Africa, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines. The bulbs of *E. bulbosa* are commonly used in traditional preparation, where about seven bulbs are boiled and consumed.<sup>19</sup> *E. bulbosa* shows remarkable adaptability to various climatic and soil conditions. The Dayak tribe also uses this species to treat various ailments, including cancer, hypertension, diabetes mellitus, cholesterol, and ulcers.<sup>20-22</sup> Several studies have investigated the bioactivities and chemical constituents of *E. bulbosa*. A study by Shibuya identified naphthalene

compounds in the extract of *E. bulbosa*, including eleuthoside, eleutherol, eleutherin, and isoeleutherin.<sup>23</sup> The isolation of fifteen naphthalene derivatives from *Eleutherine palmifolia* has been reported.<sup>24</sup> These derivatives exhibited inhibitory activity on the Wnt/beta-catenin protein, a vital system in regulating cell development.<sup>24</sup> According to Kusuma *et al.* (2010),<sup>21</sup> *E. bulbosa* inhibits melanogenesis in melanoma cells through *in vitro* tests, suggesting that the species is a safe skin toning agent suitable for cosmetic use.<sup>21</sup> Three naphthalene derivatives from *Eleutherine americana* extract were reported to inhibit  $\alpha$ -glucosidase, with Eleutherinoside A showing the most promising activity, with an IC<sub>50</sub> of 0.5 mM.<sup>25</sup>

*E. bulbosa*, also known as Bawang Dayak, is cultivated in Lampo Donggala and is used by society as traditional tea. The Indonesian government promotes the traditional plants to become standardized herbal medicine. An example is *E. bulbosa* from Lampo Donggala. In this study,  $\alpha$ -glucosidase inhibitory activity assays and phytochemical analysis, including the concentration of eleuthoside B as a marker compound, were conducted to ascertain the purity and quality of a standardized herbal medicine derived from *E. bulbosa* from Lampo Donggala, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. This is the first study that investigated the marker compound of *E. bulbosa* from Lampo Donggala, Central Sulawesi. These investigations are part of our effort to develop a standardized herbal-based medicine with antidiabetic properties from Indonesian medicinal plants and provide valuable insights into developing *E. bulbosa* in the future, mainly cultivated in Lampo Donggala.

## Materials and Methods

### Plant Collection and Identification

*E. bulbosa* plant was obtained from LPHD Lampo (6PVG+6V) Lumbudolo, Donggala, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023. The plant taxonomy was determined as *E. bulbosa* Urb. (L.) in The Plant Biosystematics Laboratory, Department of Biology, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Tadulako University. Herbarium specimen voucher 668 was kept in the Department of Pharmacy, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Tadulako University, Indonesia.

### Plant Material Extraction and Purification

The bulbs section was extracted and purified using the Ieyama *et al.* (2011) procedure with minor modifications.<sup>25</sup> A 500-gram dried sample was macerated in 2000 mL of 50% methanol (Brataco Chem., Indonesia) at room temperature for 24 h. The liquid extract was collected, filtered, and concentrated at 40°C using a rotary evaporator at 40 rpm to yield a crude extract. The crude extract was purified using column chromatography with Diaion HP-20 (Merck, Germany) as the stationary phase, and water and methanol as the mobile phase. Furthermore, the methanol-eluted fraction was partitioned between ethyl acetate and water, and finally, the water-soluble component was evaporated to obtain the purified extract.

### Alpha-glucosidase Inhibition Assay

The  $\alpha$ -glucosidase inhibition assay was conducted using the purified extract according to methods previously described with minor modifications.<sup>26-30</sup> In summary, the assays were carried out on a 96-well microtiter plate. The reaction mixture consisted of 50  $\mu$ L of 0.1 M phosphate buffer (Merck, Germany) (pH 7.0), 25  $\mu$ L of 0.5 mM 4-nitrophenyl  $\alpha$ -D-glucopyranoside (Sigma, Germany) (dissolved in 0.1 M phosphate buffer (Merck, Germany), pH 7.0) and 10  $\mu$ L of the test sample (concentration: 1000, 2000, 4000, 6000, and 8000  $\mu$ g/mL). A total of 25  $\mu$ L of  $\alpha$ -glucosidase ( $\alpha$ -glucosidase from *Bacillus stearothermophilus*, Sigma, Germany) solution (a stock solution of 1 mg/mL in 0.01 M phosphate buffer (Merck, Germany), pH 7.0 was diluted 0.04 Units/mL with the same buffer, pH 7.0 just before assay) were also contained in the mixture. The reaction mixture was incubated at 37°C for 30 minutes. The reaction was terminated by adding 100  $\mu$ L of 0.2 M sodium carbonate (Sigma, Germany). Enzymatic hydrolysis was monitored by measuring p-nitrophenol (Sigma, Germany) at 410 nm using a microplate reader (BioTek Epoch Microplate

Spectrophotometer, Agilent, United States). All experiments were carried out in triplicate.

The inhibition of the  $\alpha$ -glucosidase enzyme was calculated as follows (equation 1):

$$\text{Percentage inhibition} = \left( \frac{\text{Slope blank} - \text{Slope sample}}{\text{Slope blank}} \right) \times 100\%$$

### Phytochemical Analysis

#### Thin Layer Chromatography (TLC) analysis

TLC analysis was carried out according to the previously described procedure.<sup>19, 31, 32</sup> The TLC elution process was performed in a chromatography chamber containing hexane (Brataco Chem., Indonesia) and ethyl acetate (Brataco Chem., Indonesia) (1:2) as mobile phase. Purified extract and Eleuthoside B ( $\geq 95\%$ , Merck, Germany) were spotted on the silica gel GF<sub>254</sub> TLC plate of size 8.5 x 1.5 cm (Merck, Germany). After the elution was completed, the plate was observed under a UV light (Camag, Germany) at 254 nm and 366 nm.

#### High-Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC) analysis

HPLC (Waters, Arc HPLC, United States) analysis was carried out according to the procedure previously described, with slight modifications.<sup>33, 34</sup> A mixed standard solution with concentrations of 250.0, 125.0, 100.0, 50.0, 25.0, and 12.5  $\mu$ g/mL, each with six appropriate concentrations, was injected into the HPLC and replicated three times. The measurements were made using HPLC, and a calibration curve was produced to represent the relationship between concentration and area, resulting in the equation;  $y = bx + a$ . The limit of detection (LOD) and limit of quantification (LOQ) were calculated using the linear equation of the calibration curve. The 1 mg/mL purified extract was prepared by dissolving 25 mg in 25 mL of methanol and sonicated for 20 minutes. Subsequently, the content of the extract was determined using HPLC-PDA, equipped with a Waters C18 column (Reliant, 5 $\mu$ m, 150x4.6 mm). The mobile phase consisted of two components, namely, (A) water (Ikapharmindo Putramas, Indonesia) and (B) acetonitrile (Merck, Germany), which flowed through a membrane filter at a flow rate of 1 mL/min. The mobile phase (B) composition range was set at 20% from 0.0 to 8.0 minutes, then increased to 100% between 8.0 and 12.0 minutes, and returned to 20% from 12.0 to 17.0 minutes. The column was maintained at a temperature of 30°C, with a mobile phase flow rate of 1 mL/min. The detector was set at a wavelength of 210 nm. The UV-Vis detector detected the compounds based on the elution time of the sample. The data obtained from the detector were then analyzed using chromatogram software (Waters, Empower Software Solutions, United States).

### Data Analysis

Primary data were collected from the area under the curve (AUC) and the concentration of Eleuthoside B. These data were then used to develop a calibration curve by plotting standard concentration on the X-axis versus the Y-axis's peak area (AUC). The eleuthoside B content was estimated from the linear equation of the calibration curve.

## Results and Discussion

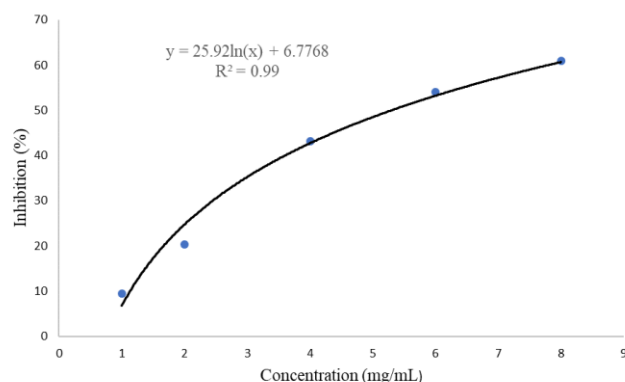
The present study used a 50% methanol solution to extract *E. bulbosa* bulb, followed by column chromatography with resin Diaion HP-20 as the stationary phase, and water and methanol as the mobile phases. The methanol column fraction was subjected to liquid-liquid extraction with ethyl acetate and water, and subsequent concentration of the water resulted in a purified extract. The purified extract exhibited antidiabetic activity through inhibition of the  $\alpha$ -glucosidase enzyme. The  $\alpha$ -glucosidase inhibitory activity of the purified extract of *E. bulbosa* is presented in Table 1. The result showed that the extract demonstrated a concentration-dependent inhibition of  $\alpha$ -glucosidase with the highest percentage inhibition of 61.014% at 8 mg/mL. The half-maximal inhibitory concentration (IC<sub>50</sub>) was obtained from the logarithmic equation of concentration versus percentage inhibition (Figure 1). From the equation, the IC<sub>50</sub> was obtained as 5.29 mg/mL, which indicated that the purified extract of *E. bulbosa* possesses strong  $\alpha$ -glucosidase inhibitory activity. Therefore, the IC<sub>50</sub> value can be used as a standard

concentration for further investigation. These results were supported by the findings from previous studies, which showed that *E. bulbosa* exhibits  $\alpha$ -glucosidase inhibitory activity,<sup>25, 35</sup> hence could be a potential source of antidiabetic agents. This investigation is the first report of the  $\alpha$ -glucosidase inhibitory activity of *E. bulbosa* bulbs extract from Lampo Donggala, confirming the purified extract's potential antidiabetic activity.

**Table 1:** Alpha-glucosidase inhibitory activity of purified extract of *E. bulbosa*

Concentration (mg/mL)	Percent inhibition (%) <sup>*</sup>
1	9.409 ± 0.179
2	20.350 ± 0.179
4	43.217 ± 0.236
6	54.121 ± 0.136
8	61.014 ± 0.186

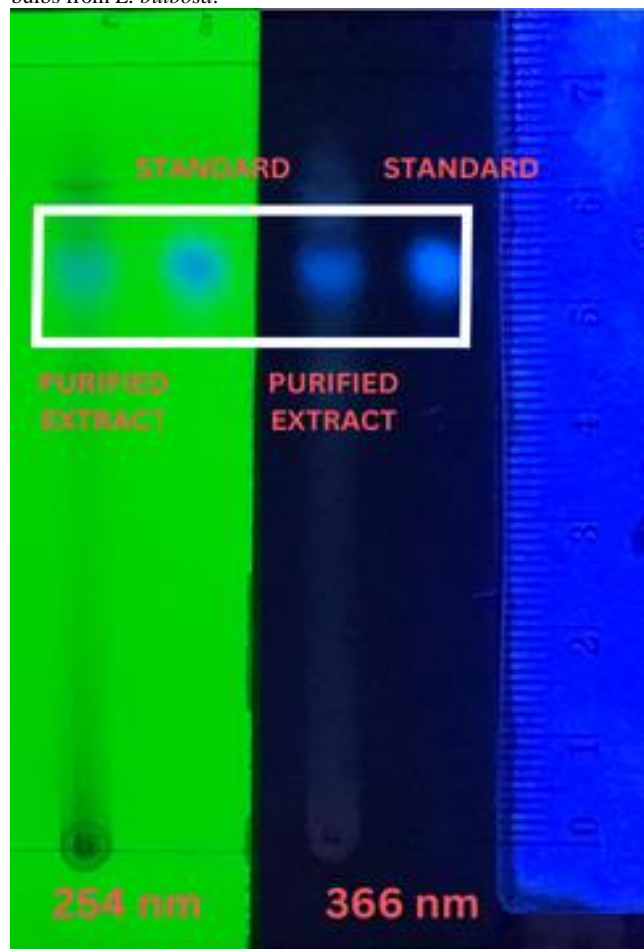
<sup>\*</sup>Values are mean ± standard deviation (SD), (n = 3).



**Figure 1:** Plots of  $\alpha$ -glucosidase inhibitory activity versus concentration of purified extract of *E. bulbosa*

The chemical composition of the purified extract of *E. bulbosa* was determined by thin-layer chromatography (TLC) using silica gel 60 F254 plate and n-hexane:ethyl acetate (1:2) as eluting solvent. Eleuthoside B, a naphthalene derivative, was identified as a major component of *E. bulbosa* bulb; it was detected as a single spot with an R<sub>f</sub> value of 0.71 (Figure 2). The biological activities of extracts are usually attributed to their chemical components. *E. bulbosa* majorly contains naphthalene components, including eleutherol, eleutherinoside A, and eleuthoside B.<sup>35</sup> Naphthalene, derived from *E. bulbosa* plant, exhibits diverse pharmacological properties, including anti-cancer, anti-diabetic, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, anti-viral, anti-inflammatory, and dermatological activities. Furthermore, its antioxidant and anti-fertility effects have been substantiated through a previous study.<sup>35</sup> Three naphthalenes, namely eleutherol, eleutherinoside A, and eleuthoside B have been shown to inhibit the  $\alpha$ -glucosidase enzyme.<sup>25</sup> The potent inhibition of the  $\alpha$ -glucosidase enzyme in the purified extract can be related to the amount of naphthalene derivatives, specifically eleuthoside B. Further quantitative standardization using high-performance liquid chromatography and photodiode array detection (HPLC-PDA) with Eleuthoside B as the standard compound revealed a distinct peak for the purified extract, closely resembling the standard Eleuthoside B (retention time: 8.0) (Figure 3). The HPLC-PDA method was selected due to its reputation for reproducibility and accuracy in analyzing organic acids extracted from plants and edible mushrooms.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, eleuthoside B was used as a chemical marker to standardize

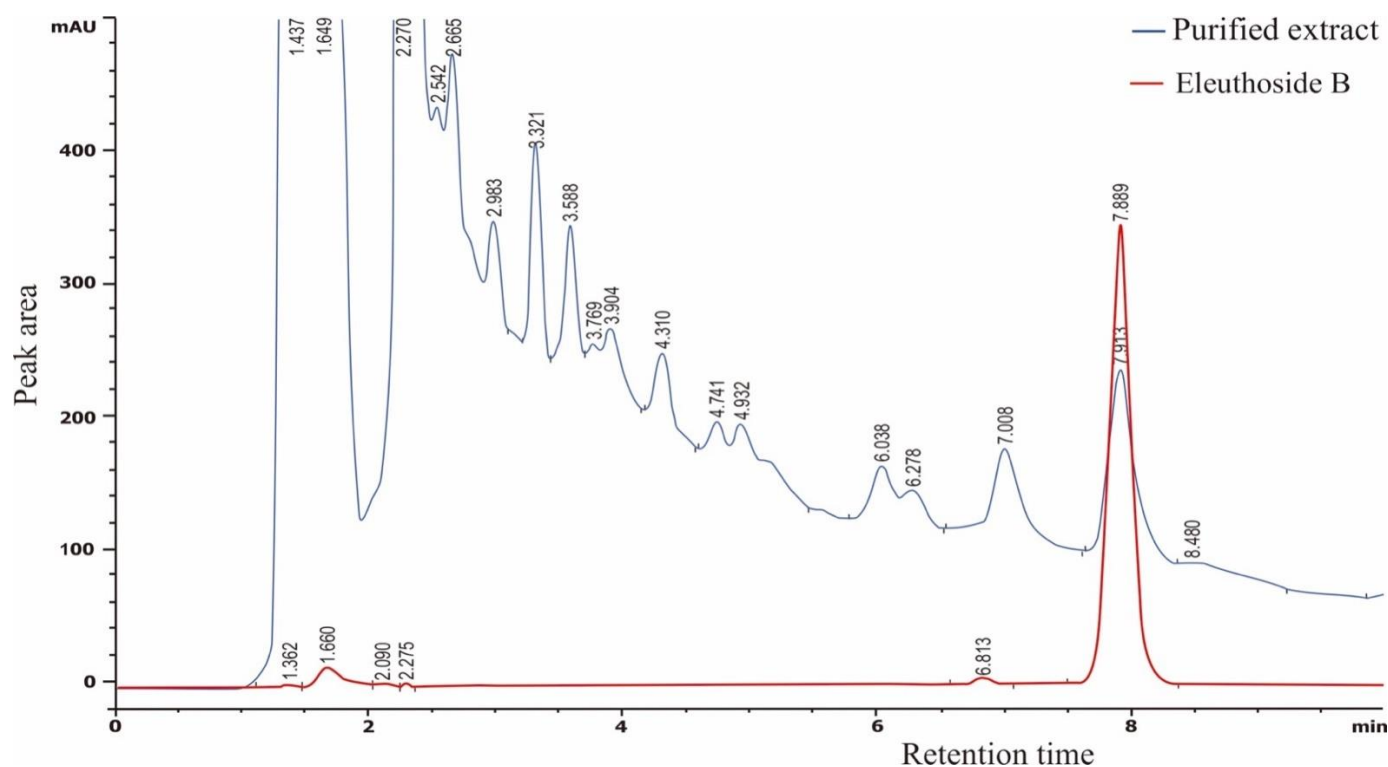
bulbs from *E. bulbosa*.



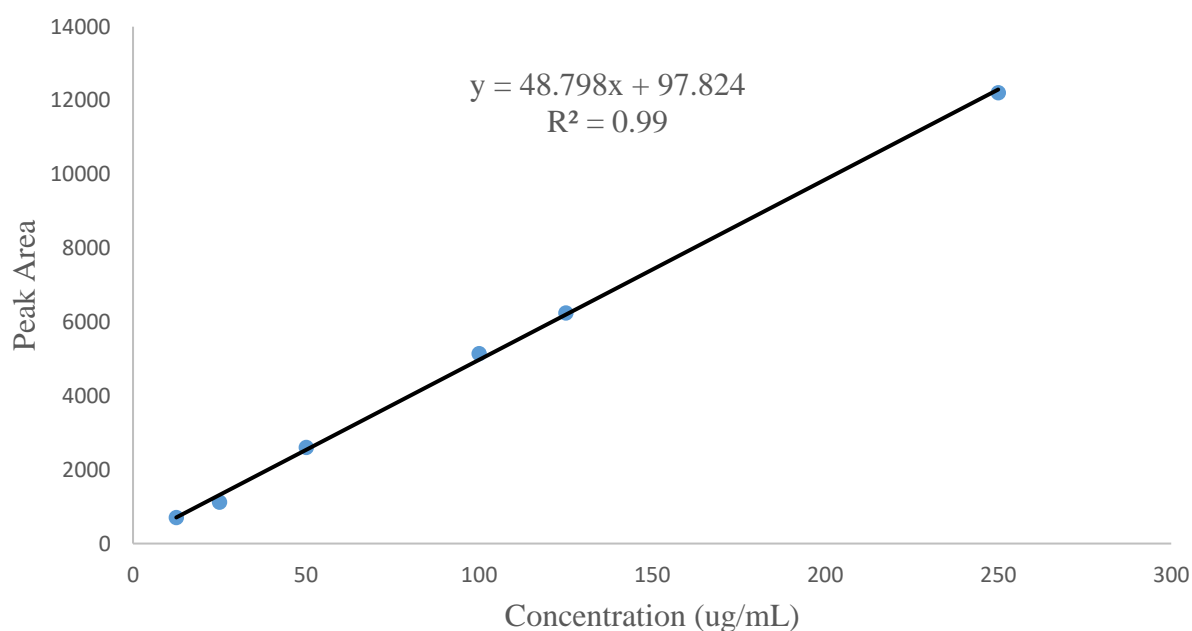
**Figure 2:** TLC chromatogram of purified extract of *E. bulbosa* from Lampo Donggala with Eleuthoside B standard

Figure 3 shows a satisfactory separation of Eleuthoside B, with sufficient peak resolution, suggesting that the employed method is highly selective for identifying Eleuthoside B. The standard curve, constructed by analyzing solutions at six different concentrations of Eleuthoside B standard, as depicted in Figure 4, exhibited a strong linear relationship within the specified concentration range (12.5 – 250 µg/mL). The correlation coefficient ( $R^2 = 0.999$ ) is remarkable, showing an excellent fit. Furthermore, Eleuthoside B content was determined to be  $3.47916 \pm 0.16\%$  (w/w). Table 2 shows the Limit of Detection (LOD) and Limit of Quantitation (LOQ) values of Eleuthoside B. The LOD quantifies the lowest analyte concentration in a sample that can still be detected, generating a distinct response from the blank or background noise. The present study has established a detection limit (LOD) for eleuthoside B at 0.0853 µg/L. The LOQ quantifies the lowest concentration of an analyte that can be accurately and precisely measured using a specific analytical method. Furthermore, LOQ serves as a measure of the method's sensitivity. In this study, the LOQ of eleuthoside B was determined to be 0.2585 µg/L.

Plant-based compounds have been extensively recognized as a significant source of antidiabetic agents. The primary objectives of evaluating antidiabetic activity from plant extracts are to identify bioactive compounds with potential as lead molecules for antidiabetic drug development and to develop standardized herbal medicine for use as antidiabetic agents.<sup>19,36,37</sup> Precise identification, quantification, and rigorous purity assessment of active principles of herbal medicines and comprehensive quality evaluation of initial materials are essential for ensuring their safety and efficacy.<sup>38,39</sup>



**Figure 3:** HPLC chromatogram of purified extract of *E. bulbosa* from Lampo Donggala showing the presence of Eleuthoside B



**Figure 4:** Calibration curve of standard Eleuthoside B

**Table 2:** Data obtained from the HPLC analysis of the purified extract of *E. bulbosa* from Lampo Donggala

Sample	Standard	Detector	Content (mg/g)	Content (%)	LoD (ug/mL)	LoQ (ug/mL)	Linear Regression equation (r <sup>2</sup> )
Purified extract	Eleuthoside B	UV max 210 nm	34.7916 ± 0.16	3.47916 ± 0.16	0.0853	0.2585	$y = 48.798x + 97.824$ (0.99)

## Conclusion

The purified extract of *E. bulbosa* bulbs exhibited inhibitory effects against the  $\alpha$ -glucosidase enzyme, likely attributed to the presence of eleuthoside B. However, the purification process encountered limitations, resulting in low yields. This study provides valuable preliminary information for assessing the purity and quality of *E. bulbosa* extract as a potential starting material for herbal medicine formulation. Furthermore, the findings from this study pave the way for transforming *E. bulbosa* bulb extract into functional foods, supplements, and standardized herbal formulations with anti-diabetic properties.

## Conflict of Interest

Authors declare no conflict of interest.

## Authors' Declaration

The authors hereby declare that the work presented in this article is original and that any liability for claims relating to the content of this article will be borne by them.

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