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### **Theoretical Analysis on the Conformational Features of the HCO–Gly–L–Leu–NH2 Protected Dipeptide Motif:** *Ab initio* **and DFT Exploratory**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

*Archive Sy, Smallow Dinate Axade University, Sabzevar, Iran*<br> *ARCS of Chemistry, Sabzevar Tarbiat Moallem University, Sabzevar, Iran*<br> *ABSTRACT*<br> *ARCS of Chemistry, Lahijan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sabzevar, I* For better understanding of conformational stability of the dipeptide model HCO–Gly–L–Leu–NH<sub>2</sub>, *ab initio* and DFT computations at HF/6-31G(*d*), 6-311++G(*d,p*) and B3LYP/6-31G(*d*) levels of theory were carried out. Geometry optimization of the dipeptide within the leucine (Leu) side chain angles  $(\chi_1, \chi_2)$  resulted in three stable conformations as followings: anti-anti, the most stable one, (χ<sub>1</sub> = 180°, χ<sub>2</sub> = 180°), Gauche (+)-*trans* (χ<sub>1</sub> = 60°, χ<sub>2</sub> = 210°) and 270°-Gauche (-)(χ<sub>1</sub> = 270°, χ<sub>2</sub> = 300°). The thermodynamic properties E, H, G, and S by changing dihedral angles  $\Psi_1$  (D<sub>1</sub>) and  $\Phi_1$  $(D_{11})$  of glycine (Gly),  $\Psi_2$  (D<sub>6</sub>), and  $\Phi_2$  (D<sub>4</sub>) of Leu and keeping the SC dihedral angles of the anti-anti conformer were obtained by frequency calculations at the same levels. The calculations indicate that the BB has the highest stability bearing  $\Psi_1$  (D<sub>1</sub>) = 180°,  $\Phi_1$  (D<sub>11</sub>) = 180°,  $\Psi_2$  (D<sub>6</sub>) = 150°, and  $\Phi_2$  $(D_4) = 210^\circ$ .

**Keywords**:Dipeptide structures; *Ab initio*; DFT calculations; Conformational stability

# **INTRODUCTION**

Structures of proteins as a key factor of their function are built of 20 naturally of amino acids [1, 2]. The number of the amino acid residues of a protein is typically range 100- 1800 [3]. Since physical and chemical properties of the all 20 amino acids residues of proteins are different, they have different structure than each other [3, 4]. Their properties are controlled by the 3D dimensional structure which is dependent to amino acids linear sequence [3]. Peptides are formed by highly controlled polymerization reaction bearing amide bond so called the peptide bond. Two amino acids joined by a peptide bond form a dipeptide (Fig. 1) [2]. The entire 20 amino acids can naturally

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bonded together with both L- and Denantiomeric configurations. The D isomers are often found in the cell walls of bacteria and in their antibiotics, while L-amino acids are using for protein synthesis in human body organisms [5]. The Leu is an amino acid hasing two dihedral SCs that show important affect on energy and thermodynamic functions. Peptide structures were almost investigated employing the *ab initio* calculations for nine decades [1]. [For more information see ref. 6]. Related initial studies [7–8] due to restriction of technology limited to insufficient ones about diamides and dipeptides until 1980s [9–10]. Recently, the potential energies of diamides, dipeptides, and other short chain peptides

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ave been determined [16]. Plenty<br>
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17], Por-Ala-Ala-NH<sub>2</sub> [18], and  $\chi_2 = \angle C_{12} - C_{11} - C_8 - \zeta_6$  (Fig.<br>
17], Por-Ala-Ala-NH<sub>2</sub> [18], and  $\chi_2 = \angle C_{12} - C_{11} - C_8$ structures have been studied [11-15].These conclude that the related potential energies are just functions of the torsional angles of respective amino acid. However, not m ore geometrical param eters affected the energy and structure of peptides has been considered [1]. Considering the dipole mom ent, the planar geometry, and the relatively high rotational barrier around C–N bond, the confor m ation of polypeptides and proteins have been determined [16]. Plenty work on dipeptide models Ac–Ala–Ala– HN-Me  $[17]$ , Por-Ala-Ala-NH<sub>2</sub>  $[18]$ , and Ac–Pro–Ala–NH [19] elucidated the mechanis m of protein folding [20]. Herein, we report the m ost stable structure of dipeptide with respect to dihedral angles of BB and SC. For this purpose, here, the HF/6-31G ( *d*), HF/6-311++G (*d, p*) and B3LYP/6-31G ( *d*) optimized geometries of the HCO–Gly– L–Leu–NH2 within p rotected dipeptide with rotation around the  $Ca$  and the dihedral angles of t he a mide plane have been investigated. General structure and numbering scheme of the HCO–Gly–L–Leu– NH2 within protected dipeptide is shown in Fig. 2. The 3D dim ensional structure of HCO–Gly– L–Leu–NH2 can be predicted using an empirical energy function,  $E = f(\chi)$ , defined in terms of a set of BB and SC dihedral angles where  $\chi = [(\Phi_i, \Psi_i, \omega_i, \chi_i^1, \dots]$  $\chi_i^2$ )] associated with the constituent amino acid (Fig. 2). All peptide bonds are in the *trans* isomeric state, and chiral Cα is in the L- enantiom eric state. With aid of dipeptide angles  $(\omega_0, \Phi_1, \Psi_1, \omega_1, \Phi_2, \Psi_2, \text{ and } \omega_2)$ , and  $\chi_1$  &  $\chi_2$  the most stable BB and SC confor m ations have been determine.

# **THEORETICAL M ETHO DS**

The structure of HCO–Gly–L–Leu–NH<sub>2</sub> was numbered according to the s tandardized modular numbering system in Fig. 2. The dipeptide w as divided four to sections that numbered separately as the N-terminal protecting group, the Gly residue, the Leu

residue and the C-terminal protecting group. The optimization and frequency calculations at HF/6-31G ( *d*), HF/6-311++G (*d, p*), and B3LYP/6-31G ( *d*) levels on the SC angles ( $\chi$ <sub>1</sub> and  $\chi$ <sub>2</sub>) of Leu from 0.0° to 360.0° with 30.0 ° intervals have been performed. The torsion angles are defined as follows:  $\omega_0 =$  $\angle H_{32}-C_{14}-N_1-C_2, \Phi_1 = \angle C_{14}-N_1-C_2-C_3, \Psi_1$  $= \angle N_4 - C_3 - C_2 - N_1, \omega_1 = \angle C_2 - C_3 - N_4 - C_6, \Phi_2$  $= \angle C_7 - C_6 - N4 - C_3$ ,  $\Psi_2 = \angle N_9 - C_7 - C_6 - N_4$ ,  $\omega_2 = \angle H_{23} - N_9 - C_7 - C_6$ ,  $\chi_1 = \angle C_{11} - C_8 - C_6 - N_4$ ,  $\chi_2 = \angle C_{12} - C_{11} - C_8 - C$  $(Fig. 2)$ . All of calculations were carried out by employing the Gaussian 03 package with using HF/6- 31G(*d*), HF/6-311++G(*d,p*), and B3LYP/6-31G( *d*) for all a toms.

# **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

# **Side chain conformers**

The rotation angles of the N-C $\alpha$ , the C $\alpha$ -CO of HCO–Gly–L–Leu–NH<sub>2</sub> have been defined as:  $\omega_0$ ,  $\Phi_1$ ,  $\chi_1$ ,  $\chi_2$ ,  $\Psi_1$ ,  $\omega_1$ ,  $\Phi_2$ ,  $\Psi_2$ , and  $\omega_2$  (Fig. 2) which six of them,  $\Phi_1$ ,  $\Psi_1$ ,  $\chi_1$ ,  $\chi_2$ ,  $\Phi_2$ , and  $\Psi_2$ , relevant mostly to the shape and stability of the dipeptide m odel. For determining the effect of SC angles on stability of dipeptide, the SC dihedral angles ( $\chi_1$  and  $\chi_2$ ) from 0° to 360° with 30° intervals have been changed. At first, the  $\chi_1$ was chang ed and each conform er was optimized at the HF/6-31G ( *d*), HF/6- 311++G (*d, p*), and B3LYP/6-31G ( *d*) levels. The dihedral angles and energies that obtained from  $\chi_1$  optimization summarized in Table1. Three minima for  $\chi_1$  in the: 180° (anti),  $60^{\circ}$  (g<sup>+</sup>) and  $270^{\circ}$  states, were obtained respectively, which the anti confor m er has the lowest energ y (Table 1). Then for  $\chi_1 = 180^\circ$  (anti), 60° (g<sup>+</sup>), and 270° the  $\chi_2$  angle was rotated around C<sub>12</sub>- $C_{11}-C_{8}-C_{6}$  atoms from 0° to 360° with 30° intervals and optimization of each state carried out at HF/6-31 G ( *d*), HF/6-31G(*d,p*), and B3LYP/6-31G( *d*) levels of theory. From

changing of  $\chi_1$  and  $\chi_2$ , three minima anti-anti ( $\chi$ <sub>1</sub> and  $\chi$ <sub>2</sub> = 180°), g (+)-*trans* ( $\chi$ <sub>1</sub> = 60° and  $\chi_2 = 210^\circ$ ), and 270°-g (-) ( $\chi_1 = 270^\circ$  and  $\chi_2$  = 300 °) with the m ost stable anti-anti confor m ation and the best SC angles has been found (Table 2). Based on our calculation results the m ost favored SC angles for HCO–Gly–L–Leu–NH2 dipeptide are  $\chi_1$  and  $\chi_2 = 180^\circ$ .

## **Dihedral angles**

Investigating of dihedral angles in the dipeptide can provide valuable information regarding the peptide bond and the planarity of the amide plane. Specifically the dihedral angle between atoms 4 and 3 (peptide bond), 14 and 1, 7 and 9, 2 and 3, 1 and 2, 6 and 7, and 4 and 6 of the amide plane referred to  $D_3$ ,  $D_{29}$ ,  $D_{20}$ ,  $D_1$ ,  $D_{11}$ ,  $D_6$ , and  $D_4$ , respectively. The planar amide plane bearing the dihedral angles,  $D_{29}$ ,  $D_3$ , and  $D_{20}$ , equal to  $180^{\circ}$  (Fig. 2).  $D_{29}$ ,  $D_{11}$ ,  $D_8$ ,  $D_9$ ,  $D_1$ ,  $D_3$ ,  $D_4$ ,  $D_6$ , and  $D_{20}$  are equal to  $\omega_{0}$ ,  $\Phi_1$ ,  $\chi_1$ ,  $\chi_2$ ,  $\Psi_1$ ,  $\omega_1$ ,  $\Phi_2$ ,  $\Psi_2$ , and  $\omega_2$ , respectively.

### **Energy and thermodynamic properties**

With performing optimization and frequency calculations of the BB angles between 0 ° to 360 ° with interva ls 30 °, their effect on the shape and s tability of the dipeptide has been investigated. From the frequency calculations on BB angles, the thermodynamic properties,  $\Delta E$ ,  $\Delta H$ ,  $\Delta G$ , and ∆S, relative to m ost stable conformer, antianti, were obtained (Tables 3-6). For this purpose, at the first part of calculations for  $D_1$  the SC was fixed at anti-anti conformer and  $D_{11}$ ,  $D_6$  and  $D_4$  dihedral angles kept at 180 $^{\circ}$ , by 30.0 $^{\circ}$  intervals from 0.0 $^{\circ}$  to 360.0 $^{\circ}$ . The m ost stable conform er by optimization and frequency calculations at HF/6-31G ( *d*), HF/6-311++G (*d,p*), and B3LYP/6-31G( *d*) levels has been determined (Table 3). W e found that at  $HF/6-31G(d)$  level the lowest values of the energy, enthalpy, and Gibbs free energy are at the state of  $D_1$ ,  $D_{29}$ ,  $D_3$ ,

**angles**<br> **Archive and Conformation**<br> **Archive of the separation**<br> **Archive of the peptide bond and the planarity**<br> **Archive of the peptide bond and the planarity**<br> **Archive of the separation**<br> **Archive of the separation** and  $D_{20}$  are equal to  $180^{\circ}$ ,  $-179.6^{\circ}$ ,  $-174.4^{\circ}$ , and -172.3 °, respectively. The sam The same calculations at the HF/6-311++ $G(d,p)$  level showed that m inim um energy values gain for  $D_1$ , D29,  $D_3$ , and  $D_{20}$  are equal to 180°, -179.5 °, -174.2 °, and -172.1 °, respectively. According to the B3LYP/6-31G( *d*) calculations, the m ost stable conform er has been found within  $D_1$ ,  $D_{29}$ ,  $D_3$ , and  $D_{20}$  are equal to 180°, 179.7°, 195.6°, and 173.3°, respectively (Fig. 3). Followings, the energy values of conformers with keeping  $D_1$ ,  $D_6$ , and  $D_4$  at 180.0° and changing the  $D_{11}$  from  $0.0^\circ$  to  $360.0^\circ$  along with  $30.0^\circ$  intervals have been determined (Table 4). The m ost stable optimized conform ers at the HF/6- 31G ( *d*), HF/6-311++G (*d, p*), and  $B3LYP/6-31G(d)$  bearing the dihedral angle  $D_{11} = 180.0^{\circ}$  (Table 4). At the HF/6-31G(*d*), HF/6-311++G(*d, p*), and B3LYP/6-31G( *d*) levels dihedral angles  $D_{29}$ ,  $D_3$ , and  $D_{20}$  are equal to  $(-179.6^{\circ}, -174.4^{\circ})$  and  $-172.3^{\circ})$ , (-179.5 °, -174.2 °, and -172.1 °), and (-179.7 °, -175.58 °, and -173.3 °), respectively. The calculations indicate that the lowest s table conformers at the  $HF/6-31G$  (d),  $HF/6-$ 311++G (*d, p*), and B3LYP/6-31G ( *d*) levels was turned out in the  $D_{11} = 0^{\circ}$  or 360°. Their relative energies  $(\Delta E)$  to the respective most stable conform ers are 20.969, 21.032, and 18.833 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>, respectively. One can conclude that while  $D_1$  and  $D_{11}$  are both equal to 180 ° the E, H, and G have the minimum values for the Gly conformer (Tables 3, 4 and Figs. 3, 4). The third part of calculations carried o ut at all previous mentioned levels show while D<sub>6</sub> dihedral angle is 150 ° the dipeptide has the highest stability (Table 5), and other dihedral angles  $(D_{29}, D_3, \text{ and } D_{20})$  are  $(-179.3^{\circ}, -170.0^{\circ}, \text{ and})$ 178.8 °), (-179.3 °, -169.5 °, and 179.8 °), and (-179.4 °, -171.5 °, and 175.7 °), res pectively (Fig. 5). F inally, the D 4 dihedral angle has been changed from 0.0° to 360.0° with 30.0° intervals while  $D_1$ ,  $D_{11}$ , and  $D_6$  kept at 180°.

The results show that while  $D_4$  is equal to 210 $\degree$  the HCO–Gly–L–Leu–NH<sub>2</sub> within dipeptide has the most stable conformer bearing the  $D_{29}$ ,  $D_3$ , and  $D_{20}$  dihedral angles equal to  $(179.9^{\circ}, 173.2^{\circ}, \text{ and } -172.1^{\circ}),$  $(180.0^{\circ}, 173.5^{\circ}, \text{ and } -172.0^{\circ})$ , and  $(179.8^{\circ},$ 171.5 °, and -173.1 °), respectively. For this part of calculations, the conform er with the lowest stability was turned out that its  $D_4$ dihedral angle is either equal to  $0^{\circ}$  or  $360^{\circ}$ , and the relative energies  $(ΔE)$  are 25.376, 24.994, and 22.624 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>, respectively (Fig. 6). For L-Leu amino acid while the  $D_6$ and  $D_4$  dihedral angles are equal to  $150^\circ$  and 210 °, respectively the conformer has m ini m um values for E, H, and G (Figs. 5 and 6).

# **CONCLUSION**

The results of the present work obtained using *ab initio* and DFT optimization and frequency calculations at the HF/6-31G ( *d*) ,

HF/6-311++G (*d, p*), and B3LYP/6-31G ( *d*) levels of theory indicating that:

- 1. Three minima anti-anti ( $\chi_1$  and  $\chi_2$  = 180<sup>o</sup>), g (+) - *trans* ( $χ_1 = 60$ <sup>o</sup> and  $χ_2 =$ 210°), and 270°-g (-) ( $\chi_1 = 270$ ° and  $\chi_2$  $= 300^{\circ}$ ) found for SC.
- 2. The m ost stable anti-anti conform er, within both SC dihedral angles  $\chi_1$  and  $\chi_2$  are 180 $\degree$  obtained.
- 3. For Gly amino acid, the relative conformer within both  $D_1$  and  $D_{11}$ dihedral angles equal to 180 ° has the m inim u m values of E, H, and G.
- 4. For L-Leu amino acid, the relative conform er has m inim u m values of E, H, and G while the  $D_6$  and  $D_4$  dihedral angles are equal to 150 ° and 210 °, respectively.
- 5. The m ost stable conform er of HCO Gly– L–Leu–NH2 within pro protected dipeptide bearing the D1,  $D_{11}$ ,  $D_6$ , and  $D_4$  dihedral angles equal to 180 $^{\circ}$ , 180 $^{\circ}$ , 150 °, and 210 °, respectively.



Fig. 1. General Structure of an amino plane. .



Fig. 2. HCO-Gly-L-Leu-NH<sub>2</sub> within dipeptide model. The dipeptide was divided into four sections: the Nterminal protecting group, the Gly residue, the Leu residue and the C-terminal protecting group and showing al l backbone t orsional a ngles .



Fig. 3. Relative energies, enthalpies and Gibbs free energies for various amount of  $\Psi_1$  at the B3LYP/6-31G (d) lev el of theory.



Fig. 4. Relative energies, enthalpies and Gibbs free energies for various amount of  $\Phi_1$  at the B3LYP/6-31G (d) lev el of theory.



Fig. 5. Relative energies, enthalpies and Gibbs free energies for various amount of  $\Psi_2$  at the B3LYP/6-31G (d) lev el of theory.





Fig. 6. Relative energies, enthalpies and Gibbs free energies for various amount of  $\Phi_2$  at the B3LYP/6-31G (d) lev el of theory.





*d*),















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