



**Research Paper / Makale**

**Synthesis, Crystallographic Structure, Spectral (FT-IR, UV) Properties, Hirshfeld Surface Analysis and Molecular Docking Studies of a New Cobalt-(II) Complex with Diclofenac Including Nitrogen Donor Ligands**

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**Abstract:** The new diclofenac-based cobalt (II) complex, namely bis {2- [2-(2,6-dichloro anilino) phenyl] acetato- $\kappa'O, O'$ } bis (2-methyl-1*H*-imidazole- $\kappa N^3$ )cobalt (II) has been synthesized and characterized by FT-IR, UV spectroscopies and single crystal X-ray diffraction techniques. The title complex crystallizes in the monoclinic space group I2/a with  $a = 19.0546(8) \text{ \AA}$ ,  $b = 13.7167(8) \text{ \AA}$ ,  $c = 14.7165(7) \text{ \AA}$ ,  $\alpha = 90^\circ$ ,  $\beta = 13.7167(8) \text{ \AA}$  and  $\gamma = 90^\circ$  and  $Z=4$ . According to the X-ray diffraction technique results, the cobalt ion is coordinated to diclofenac and methyl imidazole ligands and the title complex adopts a distorted tetrahedral geometry with  $\tau_4 = 0.75$ . The monomer is linked by conventional C-H $\cdots$ O and C-H $\cdots$ N intermolecular hydrogen bonds as well as C-H $\cdots$  $\pi$  interactions to form sheet structures in 3D space. Additionally, the intermolecular interactions in the title complex have examined using Hirshfeld surface analysis technique. The major interactions of the complex are H $\cdots$ H (46%), H $\cdots$ Cl (21%), C $\cdots$ H (17.2%) and O $\cdots$ H (7.6%). Finally, molecular docking studies with different two receptors (5U9D and 4XTA) have been performed to show whether the title molecule has anti-tumor and anti-inflammatory activity, respectively.

**Keywords:** cobalt (II), diclofenac, crystal structure, Hirshfeld surface analysis, molecular docking.

**Nitrojen Donör Ligantları İçeren Diklofenaklı yeni bir Kobalt-(II) Kompleksinin Sentez, Kristalografik Yapı, Spektral (FT-IR, UV) Özellikleri, Hirshfeld Yüzey Analizi ve Moleküler Kenetlenme Çalışmaları**

**Öz:** Yeni diklofenak bazlı kobalt (II) kompleksi, bis {2- [2-(2,6-dikloro anilino) fenil] asetat- $\kappa'O, O'$ } bis (2-metil-1*H*-imidazol- $\kappa N^3$ )kobalt (II) sentezlenmiş ve FT-IR, UV spektroskopileri ve tek kristal X-ışını kırınımı ile karakterize edilmiştir. Başlık kompleksi I2/a momoklinik uzay grubunda  $a = 19.0546(8) \text{ \AA}$ ,  $b = 13.7167(8) \text{ \AA}$ ,  $c = 14.7165(7) \text{ \AA}$ ,  $\alpha = 90^\circ$ ,  $\beta = 13.7167(8) \text{ \AA}$  ve  $\gamma = 90^\circ$  ve  $Z=4$  ile kristalleşir. X-ışını kırınım tekniğine göre, kobalt iyonu diklofenak ve metil imidazol ligandlarına koordine ve başlık kompleksi  $\tau_4 = 0.75$  ile çarpık bir tetrahedral formu benimsemektedir. Monomer, 3-boyutlu uzayda tabaka yapıları oluşturmak için C-H $\cdots$  $\pi$  etkileşimlerinin yanı sıra moleküller arası geleneksel C-H $\cdots$ O ve C-H $\cdots$ N hidrojen bağları yoluyla bağlanır. Ek olarak başlık kompleksindeki moleküller arası etkileşimler Hirshfeld yüzey analizi tekniği kullanılarak incelenmiştir. Kompleksin başlıca etkileşimleri, H $\cdots$ H (%46), H $\cdots$ Cl (%21), C $\cdots$ H (%17,2) ve O $\cdots$ H (%7,6) dir. Son olarak başlık molekülünün sırasıyla, anti-tümör ve anti-inflamatuar aktiviteye sahip olup olmadığını göstermek için iki farklı reseptör (5U9D ve 4XTA) ile moleküler kenetlenme çalışmaları yapılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** kobalt (II), diklofenak, kristal yapı, Hirshfeld yüzey analizi, moleküler kenetlenme.

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## 1. Introduction

Cobalt ion that is less toxic than other metal ions like platinum [1,2] is used in coordination chemistry and pharmacology for different therapeutic drugs development, due to its different geometries and coordination numbers [3]. Many cobalt complexes have been reported to date that is showing antitumor, antiproliferative [4,5], antimicrobial [6,7], antifungal [8], antiviral [9] and antioxidant [10] activity. Achieving the desired or needed structural and chemical properties can only be possible with appropriate ligand selection [11]. The diclofenac is an important ligand group because it is active molecule as biological and so is used in the treatment of many diseases. In addition, it is used as an analgesic, anti-inflammatory and antipyretic drug for injuries, pains, rheumatic inflammations and osteoarthritis [12–15]. On the other hand, imidazole ligands are nitrogen-based ligands and these ligands can be useful in coordination chemistry and are important for pharmacologic investigations [16,17]. Molecular docking can provide information to the researcher about the realizability of biochemical reactions before experimental researches. Therefore molecular docking study of the title complex has been performed to analysis its antitumor and anti-inflammatory aspects against the target 5U9D and 4XTA proteins, respectively. Furthermore, a new cobalt complex with diclofenac including nitrogen donor ligands has been characterized by single-crystal X-ray diffraction, FT-IR and UV spectroscopic techniques. Additionally, Hirshfeld surface analysis technique has also used for understanding the intermolecular interactions of the crystal structure in this paper.

## 2. Experimental Methods

### 2.1. Synthesis

$\text{CoNO}_3 \cdot 6\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (0.15 g, 0.5 mmol) and  $\text{NaCl}$  (sodium diclofenac) (0.32 g, 1 mmol) were dissolved in methanol ( $15\text{cm}^3$ ), separately. These solutions were mixed with continuous stirring at  $50^\circ\text{C}$ . Then, 2-methylimidazole (0.08 g, 1 mmol) was added to the mixture. The resulting solution was allowed to evaporate slowly at  $25^\circ\text{C}$ . A few days later, purple crystallization occurred, suitable for X-ray experimentation. Yield: 95%; Analytical data for  $[\text{C}_{36}\text{H}_{32}\text{N}_6\text{O}_4\text{Cl}_4\text{Co}]$ : Found: C, 53.21; H, 4.02; N, 10.28%; Calcd: C, 53.16; H, 3.96; N, 10.33%.

### 2.2. Instrumentation

The FT-IR spectrum of the title complex was recorded by using a Bruker Vertex 80 V FT-IR spectrophotometer ( $450\text{--}4000\text{ cm}^{-1}$ ). The ultraviolet absorption measurement of the title complex was examined using a Unicam UV2 in  $200\text{--}900\text{ nm}$  range in methanol (MeOH).

### 2.3. X-Ray Crystallography

The X-ray diffraction data of  $\text{C}_{36}\text{H}_{32}\text{CoN}_6\text{Cl}_4\text{O}_4$  were illuminated by the same procedure as previous publication [18], using the relevant programs [19–22]. The X-ray experiment details and parameters of the refinement process were showed in Table 1.

## 3. Results and Discussion

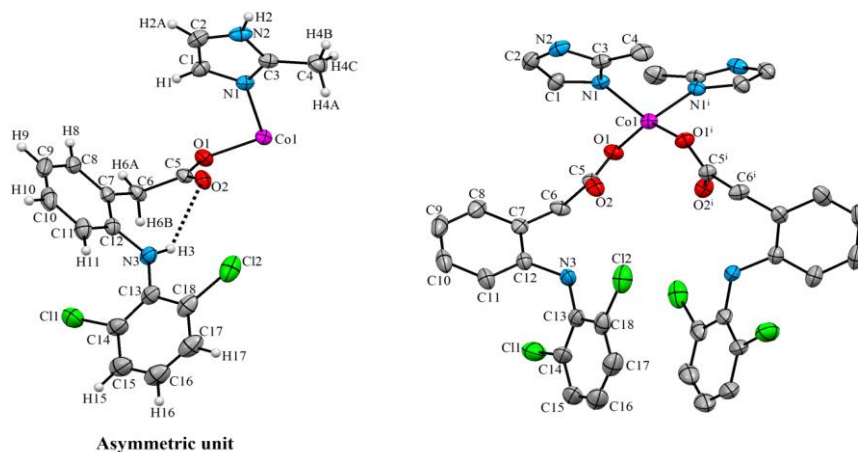
### 3.1. Crystal Structure

The Ortep diagram of  $\text{C}_{36}\text{H}_{32}\text{CoN}_6\text{Cl}_4\text{O}_4$  is shown in Fig. 1. Selected bond distances and bond angles are tabulated in Table 2. Detailed structure parameters are listed in Table 1. The complex crystallizes in monoclinic space group  $I2/a$ . The Co (II) ion is coordinated by two oxygen atoms from diclofenac ligands and two nitrogen atoms from the methyl imidazole parts of the complex. The structural

distortion indexes tau ( $\tau_4$ ) [23] and ( $\tau'_4$ ) [24] are calculated as 0.81, 0.75 for the title molecule and the Co (II) centre has a distorted tetrahedral geometry with two monodentate methylimidazole ligand and two monodentate diclofenac ligands, in this way forming a  $\text{CoN}_2\text{O}_2$  chromophore. While the Co1–N1 bond length [2.030 (2) Å] is compatible with the literature [25], Co1–O1 bond length [1.987(1) Å] is slightly shorter than the value in the literature [26,27]. The reason for this may be that the studied complex adopted a distorted tetrahedral geometry.

**Table 1.** Crystal data and structure refinement parameters for the title compound.

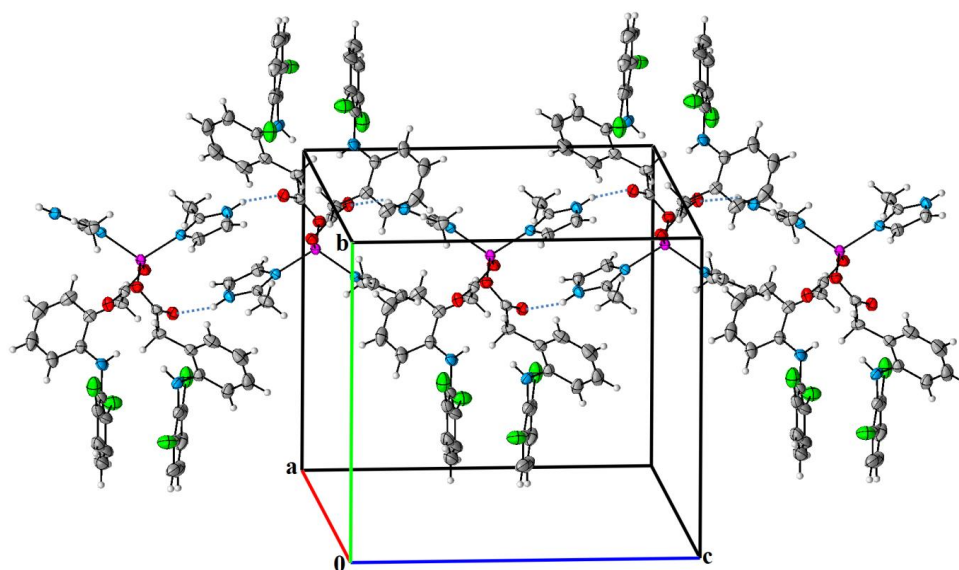
Chemical formula	$\text{C}_{36}\text{H}_{32}\text{CoN}_6\text{Cl}_4\text{O}_4$
Color/shape	Violet/Plate
Formula weight	813.42
Temperature	293 K
Crystal system	Monoclinic
Space group	I2/a
Unit cell parameters	$a = 19.0546(8)$ Å $b = 13.7167(8)$ Å $c = 14.7165(7)$ Å $\alpha = 90^\circ$ $\beta = 90.948(4)^\circ$ $\gamma = 90^\circ$
Volume	$3845.9(3)$ Å <sup>3</sup>
Z	4
Density	1.405 g/cm <sup>3</sup>
Absorption coefficient	0.77 mm <sup>-1</sup>
$T_{\min}$ , $T_{\max}$	0.639, 0.945
$\theta$ range for data collection	1.76° to 28°
Unique reflections measured	22933
Independent/observed reflections	3074/3749
Data/restraints/parameters	3074/13/232
Goodness of fit on $F^2$	1.056
$R [I > 2\sigma(I)]$ , $wR$	0.0436, 0.1052
CCDC Number	19775551



**Figure 1.** ORTEP 3 diagram for bis {2- [2-(2,6-dichloro anilino) phenyl] acetato- $\kappa'O, O'$ } bis (2-methyl-1*H*-imidazole- $\kappa N^3$ )cobalt (II).

**Table 2.** Some selected bond lengths and angles of  $C_{36}H_{32}CoN_6Cl_4O_4$  (Å, °)

Parameters		Parameters	
Co1–N1	2.030(2)	C18–Cl2	1.728 (5)
Co1–O1	1.987(1)	O1–Co1–N1	101.10 (9)
N1–C1	1.383 (4)	C1–N1–C3	106.0 (2)
N1–C3	1.320 (3)	O2–C5–O1	122.5 (2)
C5–O2	1.237 (3)	C12–N3–C13	123.7 (2)
C5–C6	1.509 (3)	C1–N1–Co1–O1	–139.2 (2)
C12–N3	1.410 (4)	C6–C5–O1–Co1	178.0 (2)
C14–Cl1	1.716 (5)	C11–C12–N3–C13	18.8 (5)

**Fig. 2.** A partial packing diagram of  $C_{36}H_{32}CoN_6Cl_4O_4$ . N2—H2...O2 interactions are indicated by dashed lines.**Table 3.** Hydrogen-bond geometry (Å, °).

D—H...A	D—H	H...A	D...A	D—H...A
N3–H3...O2	0.86	2.37	2.951(3)	125
N2–H2...O2 <sup>(i)</sup>	0.86	1.93	2.750(3)	158
C4–H4a...O1 <sup>(ii)</sup>	0.96	2.54	3.251(5)	131
C6–H6a...Cl1 <sup>(iii)</sup>	0.97	2.93	3.872(3)	164
C4–H4B...π <sup>(i)</sup>	0.96	2.88	3.757(4)	153
C16–H16...π <sup>(iv)</sup>	0.93	2.71	3.545(5)	149

(i)  $-x+3/2, -y+3/2, -z+3/2$ ; (ii)  $-x+3/2, y, -z+1$ ; (iii)  $-x+1, -y+1, -z+1$ ; (iv)  $x+1, y, z+1$

The dihedral angles of  $71.48(10)^\circ$ ,  $80.83(10)^\circ$  and  $66.86(11)^\circ$  are between the (C13–C18) and (C7–C12), (C7–C12) and the imidazole ring (C1/C2/N2/C3/N1), (C13–C18) and (C1/C2/N2/C3/N1), respectively. In the crystal, there is N3–H3...O2<sub>carboxyl</sub> intramolecular hydrogen bond which generates S (7) ring motif [D...A = 2.951 Å]. This intramolecular interaction affects the conformation of the ligand (Table 3).

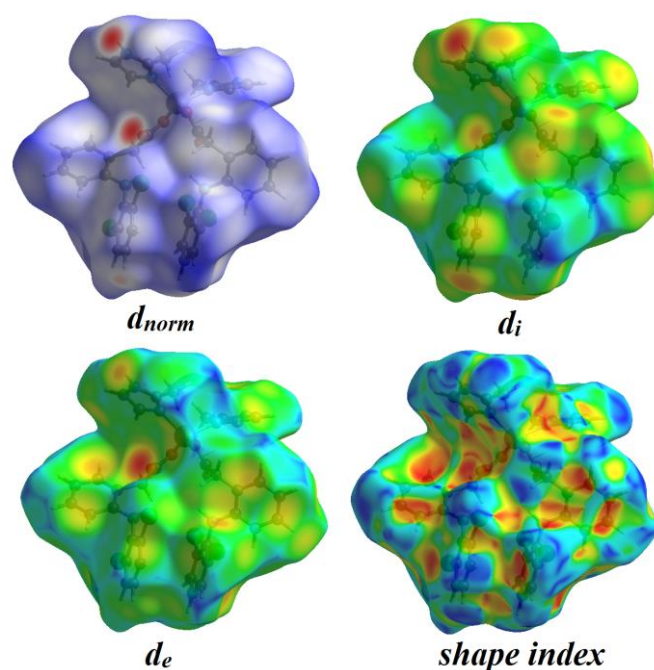
The atoms C4, N2 and C6 in the title complex at (x, y, z) are hydrogen-bond donor, by atom H4a, H2 and H6a, to atoms O1 at (3/2-x, y, -z+1), O2 at (3/2-x, 3/2-y, 3/2-z) and Cl1 at (-x+1, -y+1, -z+1), respectively. These interactions, which are also tabulated in Table 3 and shown in Fig. 2, play major role for the 3D supramolecular structure of the complex as well as C-H $\cdots$  $\pi$  interactions.

### 3.2. Hirshfeld Surface (HS) Analysis

The HS analysis is a very successful technique in describing the intermolecular interactions and contributions from atoms in the crystal structure. [28–31]. The fingerprint plots are represented as a 2D image of the HSs.  $d_{norm}$  represent the normalized contact distance that is the function of  $d_i$ ,  $d_e$  and van der Waals (VdW) radii of the atoms in the molecule and is expressed by the equation [32,33].

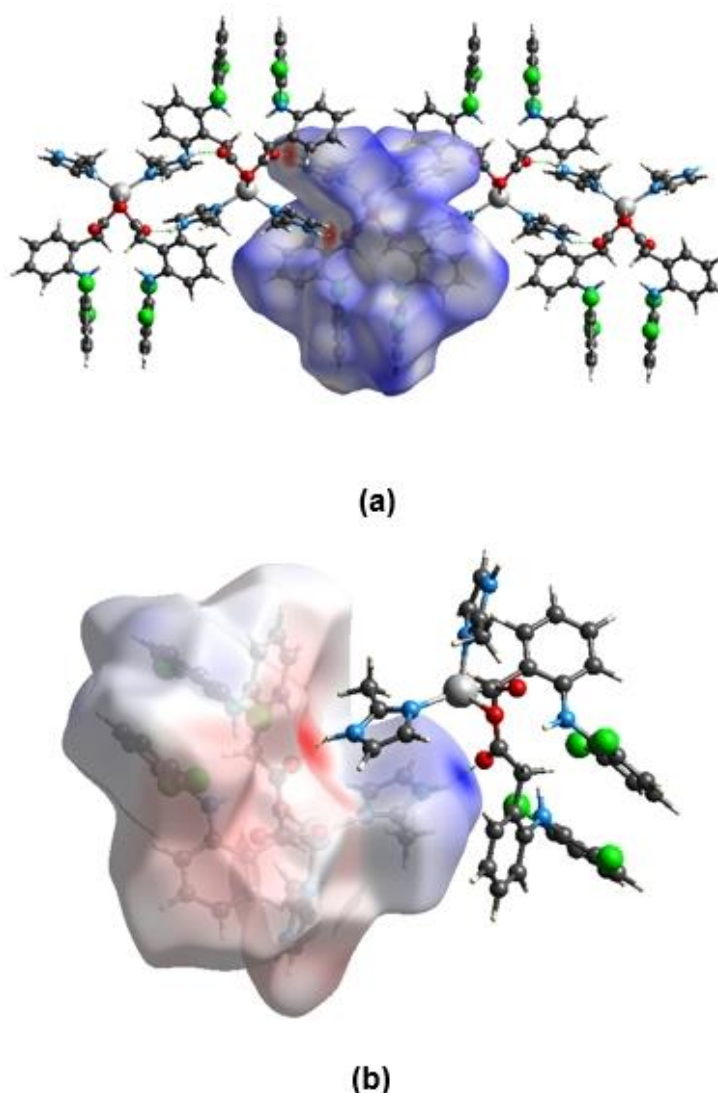
$$d_{norm} = \frac{d_i - r_i^{VdW}}{r_i^{VdW}} + \frac{d_e - r_e^{VdW}}{r_e^{VdW}} \quad (1)$$

In here,  $d_i$  and  $d_e$  are the distances from the HS to the nearest atoms inside and outside the surface, respectively,  $r_e^{VdW}$  and  $r_i^{VdW}$  is Van der Waals radii of atoms. For the title complex, the the Crystal Explorer program [34] was used for HS analysis. There are three colours on the  $d_{norm}$  surface where the red and blue regions represent shorter and longer intercontacts, respectively. Also, white regions show the contacts are equal to the sum of the van der Waals radii [35,36].



**Fig. 3.** The Hirshfeld surface of  $C_{36}H_{32}CoN_6Cl_4O_4$  mapped with  $d_{norm}$ ,  $d_i$ ,  $d_e$  and shape index.

For  $C_{36}H_{32}CoN_6Cl_4O_4$ ,  $d_{norm}$ ,  $d_i$  and  $d_e$  shape indices are  $-0.6302$  to  $1.7680$ ,  $0.7232$  to  $2.8591$  and  $0.7256$  to  $2.7349$  Å, respectively and are illustrated in Fig. 3. The red regions on the surface are the regions where the molecular interaction tends to be strongest. (Fig. 4). The N2–H2 $\cdots$ O2<sup>i</sup> and C4–H4a $\cdots$ O1<sup>ii</sup> intermolecular hydrogen bonds are shown on the  $d_{norm}$ ,  $d_i$  and  $d_e$  surfaces as red spots for title complex (Fig. 3). Also, Figure 5 is illustrated the 2D fingerprint plots for the title complex. The major interactions of the complex are H $\cdots$ H (or van der Waals) with 46%, H $\cdots$ Cl (or H $\cdots$  $\pi$ ) with 21%, C $\cdots$ H with 17.2%, O $\cdots$ H with 7.6%. The other important interactions are Cl–C, C–C, C–N, Cl–O and N–H with 2.7%, 1.2%, 0.7%, 0.4% and 2.8%, respectively.



**Fig. 4.** The Hirshfeld surface for the intercontacts of  $C_{36}H_{32}CoN_6Cl_4O_4$  (a) mapped with  $d_{norm}$  and (b) electrostatic potential surface

### 3.3. FT-IR and UV Spectroscopy

For the title complex, Fig. 6 shows FT-IR spectrum and the most important bands are illustrated in Table 4. The N–H stretching mode which is comparatively broad absorption band due to hydrogen bonding is centred at  $3180\text{ cm}^{-1}$  which as reported for the ligand [37]. While the aromatic C–H stretching mode is observed at  $3111\text{ cm}^{-1}$  as a weak band the C–Cl stretching mode has appeared at  $768\text{ cm}^{-1}$  as a strong band. It is known that the asymmetric and symmetric vibration modes of the carboxylate group are important characteristic vibrations in the FT-IR spectra of the diclofenac complexes [38]. For the title complex, these modes are observed at  $1594$  and  $1383\text{ cm}^{-1}$ , respectively. The calculated value of the difference between the  $\nu_{as}(\text{OCO})$  and  $\nu_s(\text{OCO})$  stretching vibrations is  $211\text{ cm}^{-1}$ . The  $\Delta(\text{OCO})$  value is consistent with a monodentate ligand [39].

The electronic absorption spectrum of the complex was recorded at room temperature in methanol (Fig. 7). No transitions above  $450\text{ nm}$  were observed in the absorption spectrum of complex. In the UV spectrum of the Co (II) complex, the intense band in  $448\text{ nm}$  is due to charge transfer transition. A  $d-d$  transition belonging to the Co (II) is not observed.

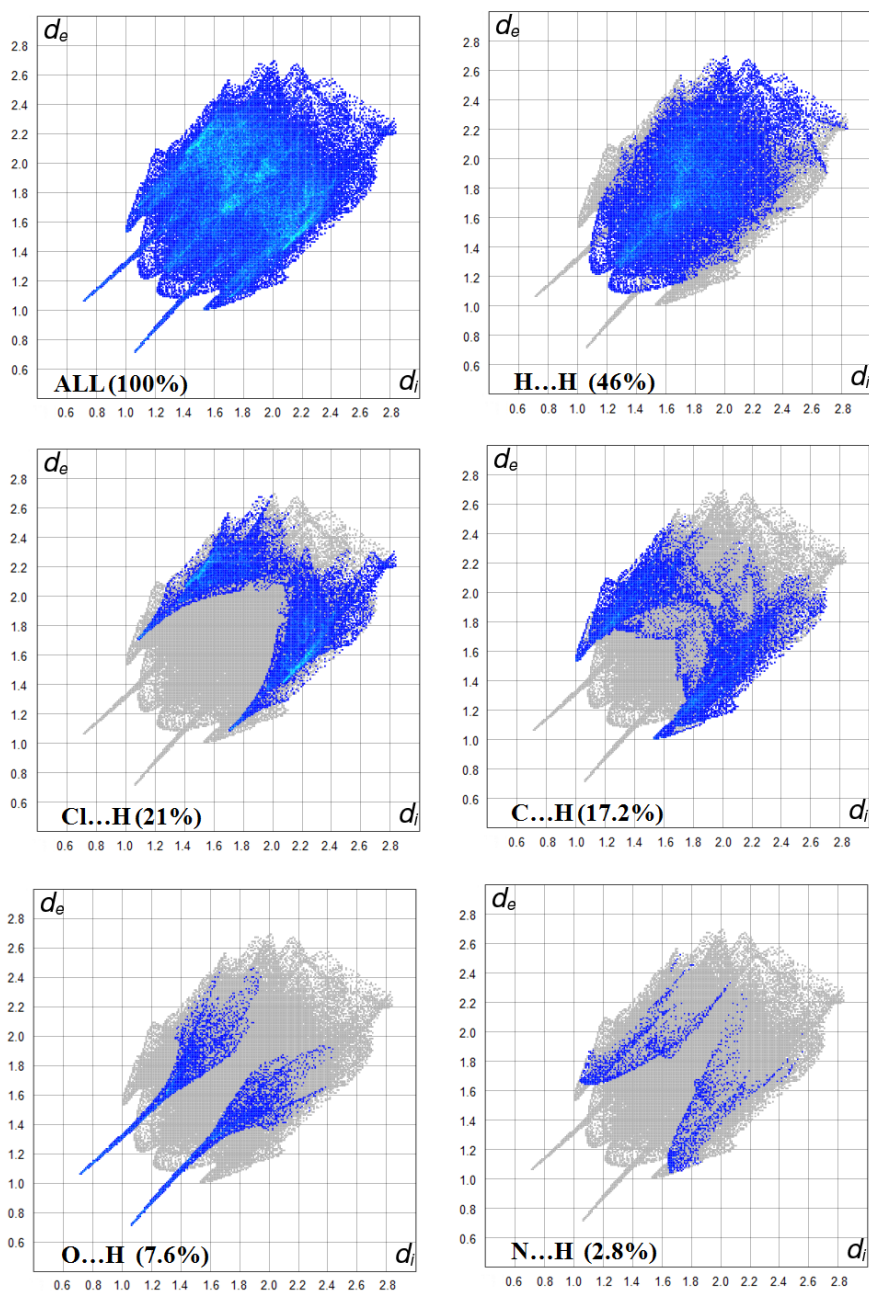


Fig. 5. Fingerprint plots (d<sub>e</sub> vs d<sub>i</sub>) of the title compound.

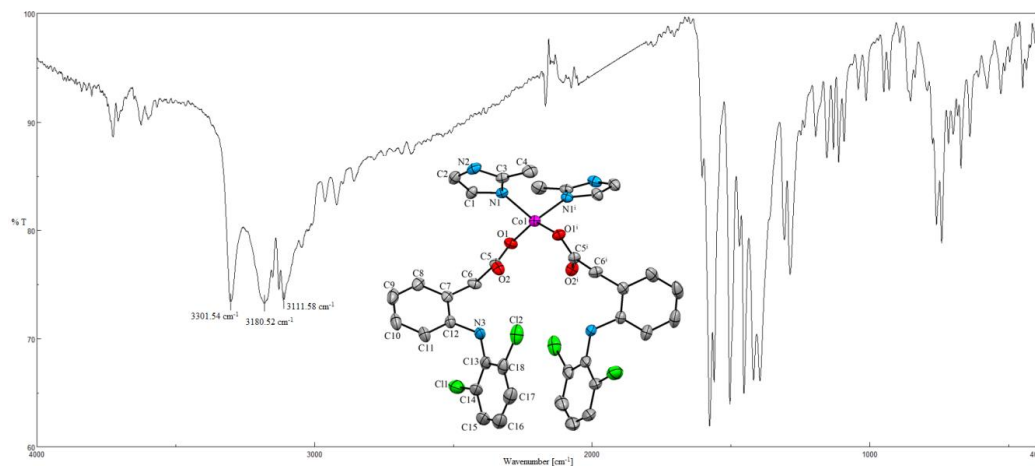
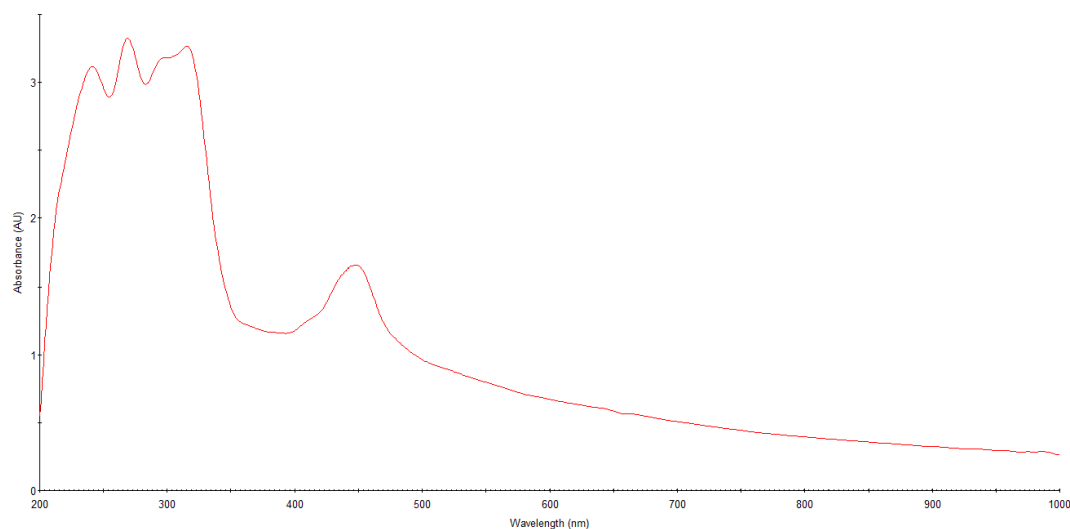


Fig. 6. The experimental FT-IR spectrum of C<sub>36</sub>H<sub>32</sub>CoN<sub>6</sub>Cl<sub>4</sub>O<sub>4</sub>

**Table 4.** Selected IR spectral data for  $C_{36}H_{32}CoN_6Cl_4O_4$ 

Assignment	( $cm^{-1}$ )
$\nu$ (N–H) <i>str.</i>	3301
$\nu$ (N–H) <i>str.</i>	3180
$\nu_{ar}$ (C–H) <i>str.</i>	3111
$\nu_{as}$ (OCO) <i>str.</i>	1594
$\nu_s$ (OCO) <i>str.</i>	1383
$\nu$ (C–Cl) <i>str.</i>	740

*str.*: stretching, *ar.*: aromatic, *s.*: symmetric, *as.*: asymmetric

**Fig. 7.** The experimental UV spectrum of  $C_{36}H_{32}CoN_6Cl_4O_4$ 

### 3.4. Molecular Docking

The title molecule was tested to be docked into the active sites of the protein PDB ID: 5U9D which belongs to the protein classification as antitumor and PDB ID: 4XTA which belongs to the protein class interacts with non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. All docking calculations were done using AutoAock 4.2 software along with the graphical interface AutoDockTools (ADT) version 1.5.6 [40]. The water molecules in the proteins were removed and polar hydrogens were added.

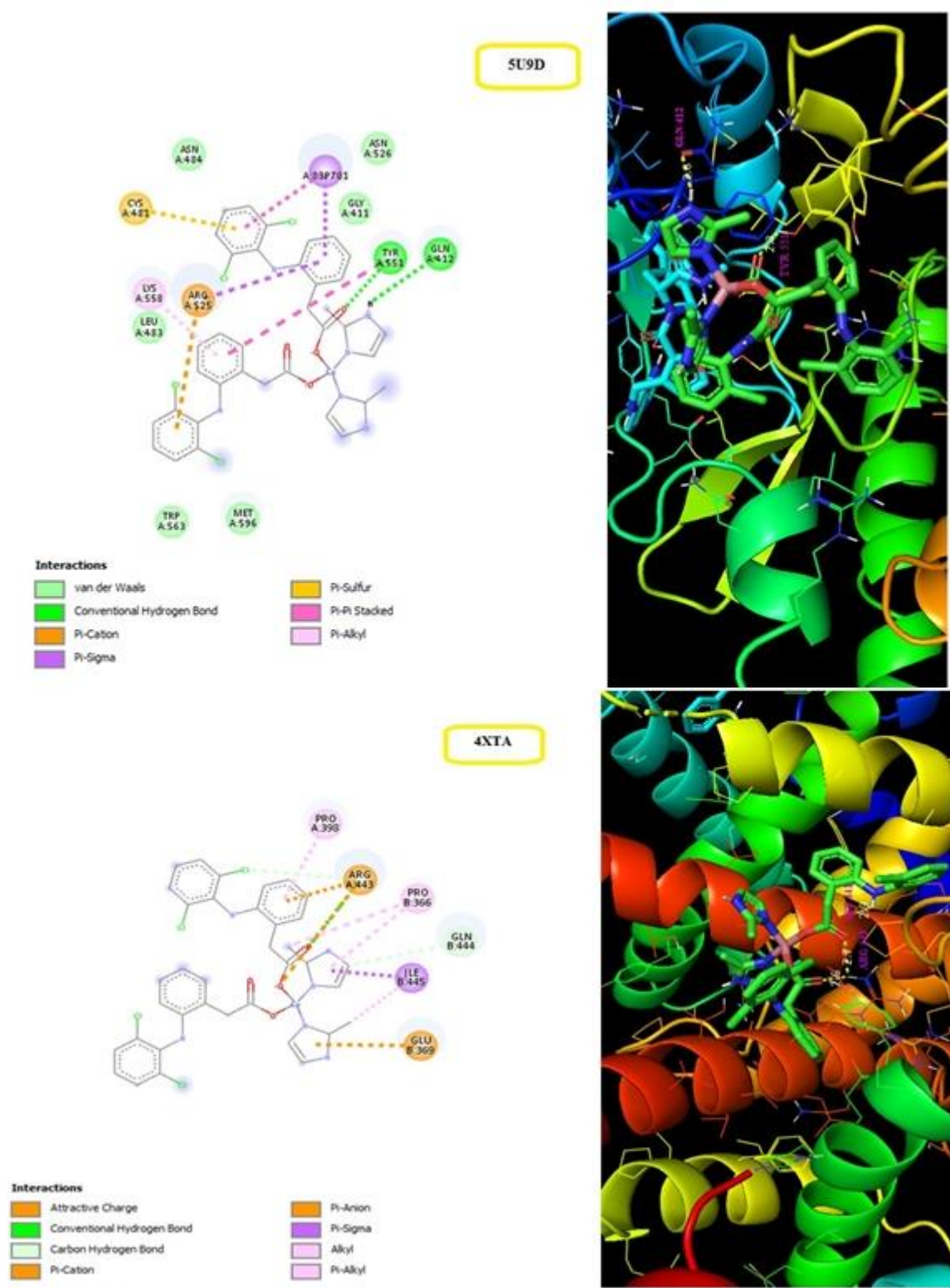
**Table 5.** Binding affinity number of hydrogen bond residues and hydrogen bond distances of 5U9D and 4XTA proteins

Protein [PDB ID]	Bond distances (Å)	Bonded residues	Binding energy (kcal/mol)
5U9D	2.6 / 2.3	GLN 412 / TYR 551	-7.0
4XTA	2.7, 2.6 / 2.9	ARG 443 / ASP 441	-7.0

The protein binding sites were restricted to a grid box size of  $40 \times 40 \times 40 \text{ \AA}^3$  with  $0.375 \text{ \AA}^3$  grid spacing. The other docking parameters were obtained using standart protocols in previous study [41]. The Discovery Studio 4.0 (BIOVIA Discovery Studio 2016) [42] was used for visualized to obtained results. Fig. 8 created using the PyMol software shows the protein-complex interactions [43]. The



title compound exhibits same binding energy (-7 kcal/mol) at the position where it makes hydrogen bonds with amino acid residues (GLN 412, TYR 551) of 5U9D protein and (ARG 443, ASP 441) of 4XTA protein. Table 5 illustrated to binding energy, bonded distance and bonded residues of the protein-ligand interactions of two diferent protein.



**Figure 8.** 2D surfaces (left) and the hydrogen bond interactions (right) between the title molecule and protein 5U9D, 4XTA.

#### 4. Conclusions

In the present work, the molecular and structural properties of newly synthesized  $C_{36}H_{32}CoN_6Cl_4O_4$  complex determined by FT-IR, UV and single-crystal X-ray diffraction techniques. According to the results of the X-ray experiment, the title complex contains the cobalt ion coordinated with the ligands of diclofenac and methyl imidazole and has a distorted tetrahedral geometry. C–H···O and N–H···O intermolecular hydrogen bonds and C–H··· $\pi$  interactions play a major role in the stability of the crystal structure in 3D space. From FT-IR results, the difference of the asymmetric and symmetric vibration modes of the carboxylate group indicates that the ligand coordinates to Co (II) ion as monodentate. Additionally, the HS and fingerprint plots of the complex specifies that the major contributions for the crystal packing are from H···H (46%), H···Cl (21%), C···H (17.2%), O···H (7.6%). As a result of the molecular docking study of the title compound, it has established good inhibitory nature against 5U9D and 4XTA with -7 kcal/mol binding energies for both proteins. This work may help to researchers for development of new anti-tumor and anti-inflammatory agents.

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#### Authors' Contributions

All studies of the article were done by SU.  
Author read and approved the final manuscript.

#### Competing Interests

The author declares that I have no competing interests.

#### Refereneecs

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