

Nonlinear Optical Properties (NLO) Study of Some Novel Fluorescent 2-Chloroimidazo [1,2-A] Pyridine Derivatives

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Abstract:

Extended styryl dyes based on 2-chloroimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carbaldehyde showed a large bathochromic shift in the range between 399 to 416 nm from starting aldehydes in range of 300 to 333 nm. Hyperconjugated electron donating methyl group and lone pair of nitrogen are in proper resonance with electron acceptor styryl group. These methylated dyes displayed 6 to 8 nm enhancement in broad absorption maximum in various nine solvents. Computational absorption wavelengths trends are matching with the experimental trends.

In HOMO-LUMO energy gap, methylated dyes showed a consistent decrease in the energy gap of 0.05 eV than nonmethylated dyes. Dyes were studied using various solvent polarity scales and multilinear regression analysis using Kamlet-Taft and Catalan scales. NBO analysis, a large number of stabilization energy $E(2)$ entries were observed higher than 20 kJ/mol in both dyes indicating sufficient delocalization in donor-acceptor sites. In this research work, dipole moment (μ), electronic polarizability (α), mean first hyperpolarizability (β_0) and second hyperpolarizability (γ) are computed with its fundamental limits and intrinsic values using density functional theory method in conjunction with 6-31G(d) basis set and vibrational NLO properties with 6-311++g(d,p) basis set. The dyes have fundamental limits and intrinsic properties within Hamiltonian limits. The fundamental limits provide a figure of merit for studied extended styryl dyes for future optical applications.

Keywords: Imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine, Photophysical, Solvatochromism, NLO, DFT, TDDFT

1. Introduction

Organic molecules display nonlinear electric susceptibilities with potential applications in telecommunications [1], organic field effect transistors (OFETs) [2], organic photovoltaics (OPVs) [3], anorganic light emitting diode (OLEDs) [4], optical information & environment sensitive fluorescent sensors [5]. Indoles and azaindoles are isomers of imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine moiety and possessing electron donating properties [6]. Recently, applications of imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine derivatives have been reported as multiple fluorescent chemosensors, in an electron transport layer of an organic light emitting device, biomarker of hypoxic tumor cells, as a receptor fluorescent high-affinity ligand in dopamine D3 [7] due to their promising NLO (nonlinear optical properties) [8]. Styryl dyes typically employed in advanced material such as laser dyes, solar cell sensitizer, optical or electro-optical devices or sensor materials [9], DNA probes and voltage-sensitive dyes in cardiac tissue [10–13]. Intramolecular charge transfer (ICT) properties of dyes are one of the key features to reduce the energy gap between HOMO and LUMO orbital of the molecule for broadening the range of absorption properties applied in high tech applications [14].

Imidazo[1,2-a]pyridines own the highest electron-density at C3 and this is typically the site of an attack in electrophilic aromatic substitution. The second position of imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine ring doesn't more affect by a donor-acceptor group [15]. Attaching an electron withdrawing active methylene core at the C3 position would lead to dyes with promising optical properties. Hence, easily accessible chloride is substituted at the second position of imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine. Polarizability and hyperpolarizability coefficients of organic molecules are increased by increasing extended conjugated π electrons and capacity of terminal donor and acceptor system [16]. In this context, well defined extended styryl rigid structures were studied. Intramolecular charge transfer moieties have potential applications as chromophores for nonlinear optics (NLO) [17]. The NLO properties of the molecules like mean polarizability (α_0), intrinsic polarizability (α_0^{int}), upper limit of polarizability (α_0^{max}), mean first hyperpolarizability (β_0), upper limit of first hyperpolarizability (β_0^{max}), intrinsic first hyperpolarizability (β_0^{int}), static second hyperpolarizability ($\bar{\gamma}$), upper negative ($\bar{\gamma}^{min}$) and positive ($\bar{\gamma}^{max}$) limit of second hyperpolarizability, static negative intrinsic second hyperpolarizability ($\bar{\gamma}_{int}^{min}$), static positive intrinsic second hyperpolarizability ($\bar{\gamma}_{int}^{max}$) were estimated and correlated with the structures of styryl dyes. Electron donor imidazopyridines and electron acceptor conjugated active malononitrile group has been used for the study. Significant, hyperconjugated electron donating effect and styryl electron withdrawing effect shown large change in nonlinear optical (NLO) properties in imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine derivatives.

Studied Dyes

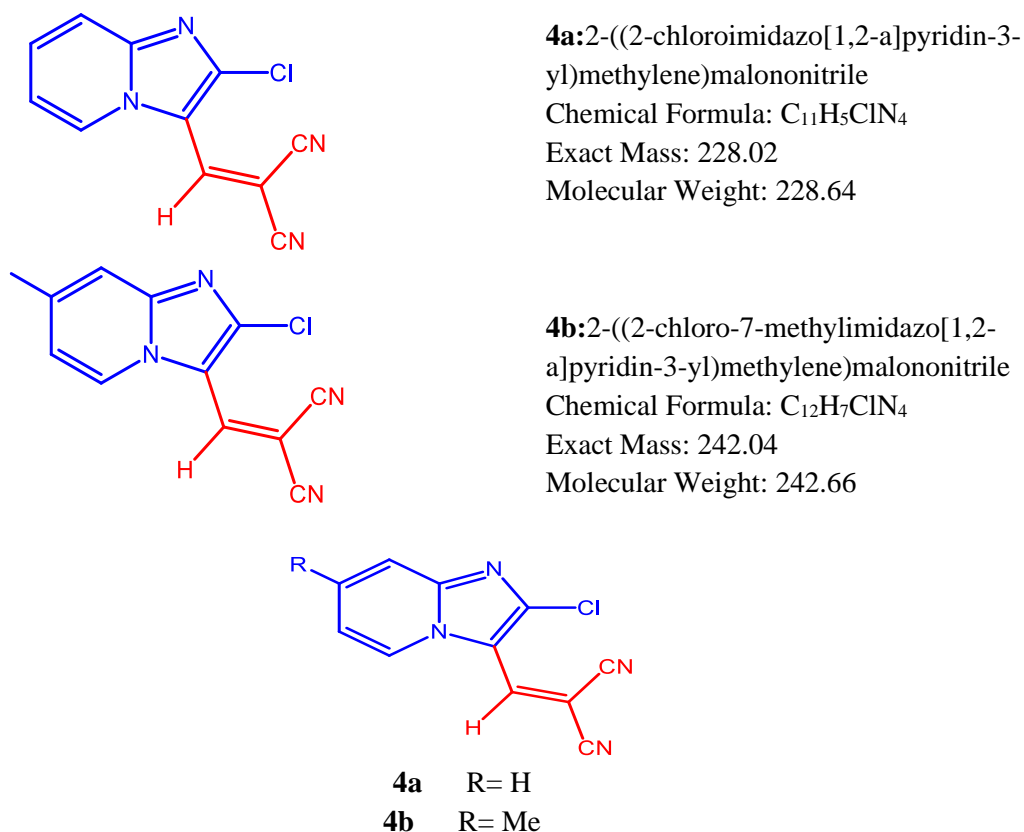


Figure 1. Molecular structures of extended 2-chloroimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carbaldehyde based styryl dyes.

2. Experimental

2.1 Materials and equipment and Computational Strategy

All the reagents were used as supplied from S. D. Fine Chemicals (India), Sigma Aldrich without any further purification. All the solvents were of the spectroscopic grade. Styryls were synthesized by using absolute ethanol & only piperidine as a catalytic amount used for the Knoevenagel condensation. Styryl dyes exhibited small fluorescence may be due to the presence of the twisting in the molecule. Styryls are soluble in common organic solvents, such as toluene, ethyl acetate (EA), acetonitrile, 1,4-dioxane (dioxane), dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO), N,N-dimethylformamide (DMF), acetone, chloroform and dichloromethane (DCM) but are insoluble in water. The visible absorption spectra of the dyes were recorded in polar and non polar solvents on a Perkin-Elmer Lambda 25 UV-Visible spectrophotometer. All the computations were performed with Gaussian 09 package [18]. Styryls were optimized in gas phase in ground state by DFT method while TDDFT for excited state optimization was employed. The hybrid functional namely B3LYP and 6-31G(d) basis sets were used and the 6-31G(d) basis set was used in various solvent environment [19–22].

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Photophysical Properties

Absorption spectra of starting material **3a**: 2-chloroimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carbaldehyde and **3b**: 2-chloro-7-methylimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carbaldehyde were shown in **Figure 2** and in various solvent medium.

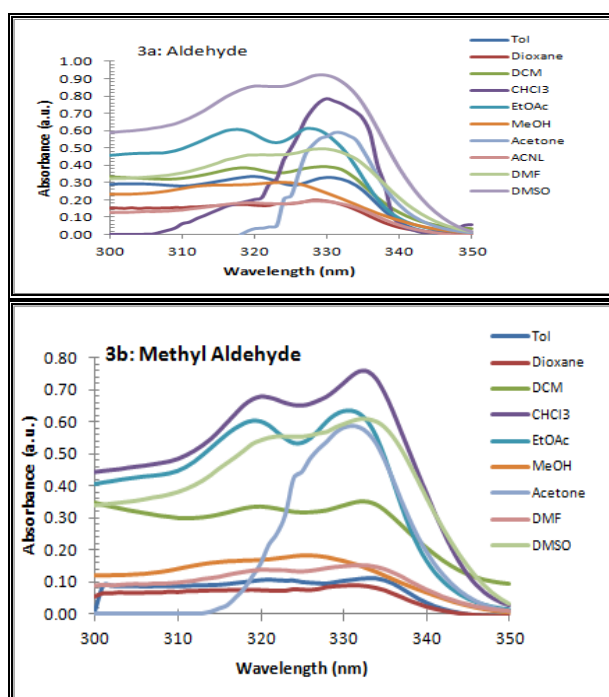


Figure 2. Effect of solvent polarity on absorption spectra starting aldehydes **3a** and **3b**.

Maximum absorption wavelength of starting aldehydes **3a**: 2-chloroimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carbaldehyde and **3b**: 2-chloro-7-methylimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carbaldehyde were in the range of 300 to 333 nm in various solvent mediums. In both aldehydes, absorption wavelengths were varying in small extent but their intensities were varied in large extent in series of polar and non-polar solvents. Non-polar solvents like Dioxane and Toluene show less absorption intensities, while polar solvents ethyl acetate and dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) show highest absorption intensities. Which supports solvent

dependent absorption behavior of both aldehydes in a wide range of nonpolar to polar environments. Absorption spectra of extended styryl dyes (**4a** and **4b**) are presented in **Figure 3** in various solvent medium.

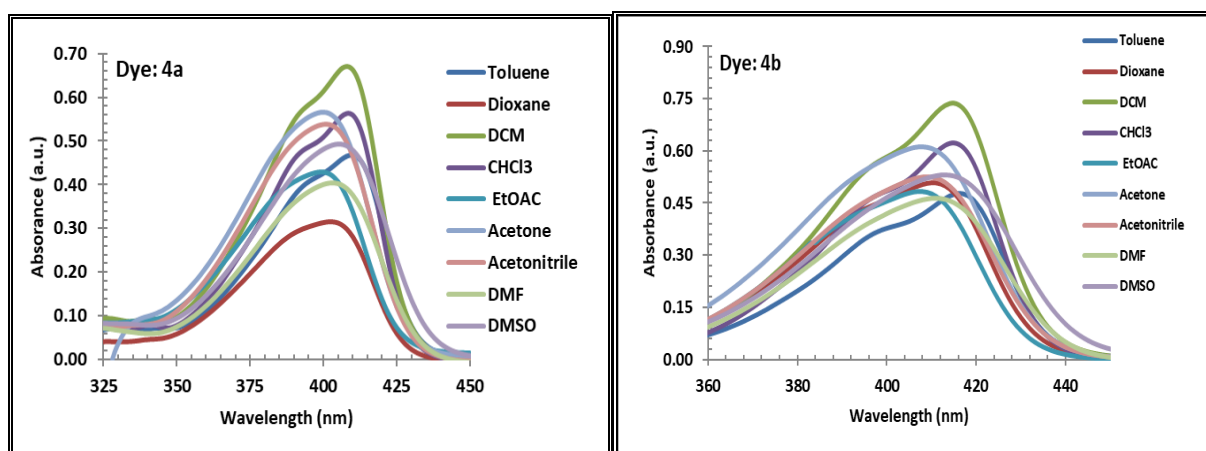


Figure3. Effect of solvent polarity on absorption spectra of styryl dyes **4a-4b**.

The solvent polarity effect on photophysical properties like experimental absorption wavelength (in nm and in cm^{-1}), transition dipole moment (μ_{ge}), oscillator strength (f), molar absorptivity (ϵ), full width half maximum (FWHM) and computational vertical excitation in nm, oscillator strength (f) and orbital contribution band gap (eV) in different solvents is summarized in **Table 1**.

Table1. Effect of solvent on photophysical properties of styryl dyes **4a-8b**.

Dyes	Solvents	Experimental					Computed (TDDFT)			
		$^a\lambda_{\text{abs}}(\text{nm})$	$^a\lambda_{\text{abs}}(\text{cm}^{-1})$	ϵ Molar absorptivity ($\text{dm}^3\text{mol}^{-1}\text{cm}^{-1}$)	f^b	FWHM (M)	μ_{ge} (Debye)	Vertical excitation (nm) ^c	f^b	Orbital contribution band gap (eV)
4a	Toluene	410	2439	10635.6	0.159	46	3.73	385.51	0.681	3.2161
	Dioxane	402	2487	7163.9	0.108	48	3.05	383.46	0.665	3.2333
	DCM	408	2451	15249.5	0.219	44	4.37	387.14	0.666	3.2025
	CHCl ₃	408	2451	12782.9	0.180	44	3.96	386.46	0.671	3.2082
	EtOAc	399	2506	9770.9	0.168	49	3.79	385.06	0.654	3.2198
	Acetone	400	2500	12872.2	0.207	50	4.20	386.24	0.649	3.2101
	ACN	401	2493	12249.5	0.192	49	4.05	386.12	0.645	3.2111
	DMF	403	2481	9206.7	0.143	50	3.51	388.48	0.665	3.1915
	DMSO	405	2469	11228.5	0.186	51	4.01	388.22	0.662	3.1937
4b	Toluene	416	2403	11581.2	0.148	42	3.63	390.31	0.741	3.1766
	Dioxane	410	2439	12311.6	0.172	46	3.88	388.19	0.725	3.1939
	DCM	415	2409	17841.3	0.224	42	4.46	392.22	0.729	3.1611
	CHCl ₃	415	2409	15038.1	0.174	41	3.93	391.47	0.733	3.1671
	EtOAc	407	2457	11668.3	0.159	47	3.72	390.07	0.717	3.1785

Aceto	408	2451	14825.4	0.209	49	4.27	391.28	0.714	3.1687
ACN	409	2445	12680.7	0.179	48	3.96	391.14	0.710	3.1698
DMF	411	2433	11208.2	0.158	49	3.73	393.57	0.730	3.1502
DMS	413	2421	12865.6	0.194	50	4.14	393.29	0.727	3.1525

^aExperimental absorption wavelength.

^bOscillator strength.

^cComputed absorption wavelength.

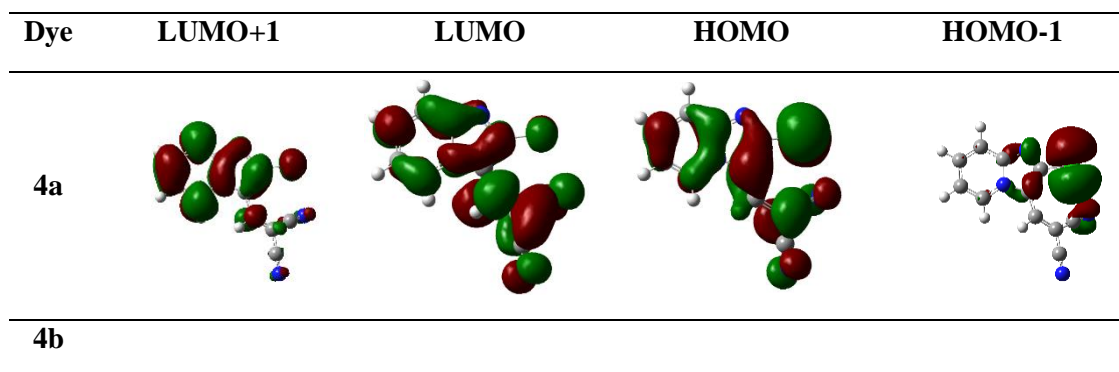
In experimental results, all styryl dyes showed alarge bathochromic shift in the range between 399 to 416 nm which is higher than starting aldehydes in range of 300 to 333 nm. In both dyes, toluene showed highest absorption wavelength, whereas ethylacetate, acetonitrile and acetone showed lowest absorption wavelengths. Generally, the extension of the π -systems and the strong electron withdrawing or donating ability exert an important influence on the absorption spectra. In these styryls, which may be attributed to the additional double bond in acceptor moiety with good conjugation in the acceptor-donor system. Especially due to hyperconjugation effect of the introduction of a methyl group at seventh position, **4b** dye showed red-shifted absorption wavelength in all solvents as shown in **Table 2** in comparison with its parent **4a** dye.

Table2. Hyperconjugation methyl group effect on the wavelength of **4a-8b** styryl dyes.

Dye / Solvents	Toluene	DIOX	DCM	CHCl3	EtOAc	Acetone	ACN	DMF	DMSO
4a to 4b	6	8	7	7	8	8	8	8	8

Styryl dyes showed a large red shift in the polar solvent due to hyperconjugation effect of the methyl group. This large change maximum absorption (λ_{max}) is observed due to the increasing acceptor strength and conjugation of dyes. Transition dipole moments of the dyes ranging from 3.05 to 4.46, which indicates better charge transfer in dyes. Computational oscillator strength is ranging from 0.6451 to 0.7411 which is higher than experimental values which are ranging from 0.1087 to 0.1948.

3.2 Frontier Molecular Orbitals: The absorption leading to the electronic excitation from the HOMO or HOMO-1 to the LUMO orbital can constitute the charge transfer from the imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine donor unit to the various acceptor unit malononitrile. In case of all the dyes, the HOMOs are mainly located on chloro-imidazole ring and π bridge while the LUMOs are located on the pyridine ring and acceptor units and represented in **Figure 4**.



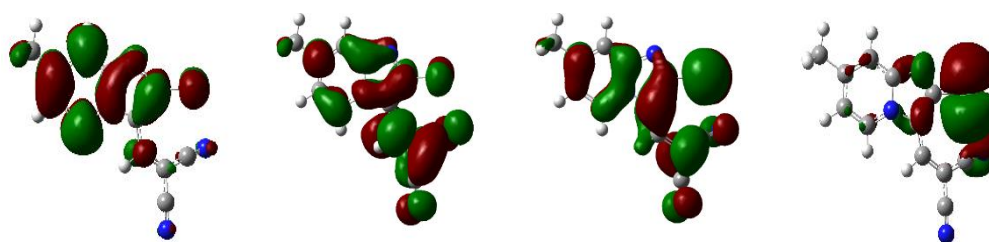
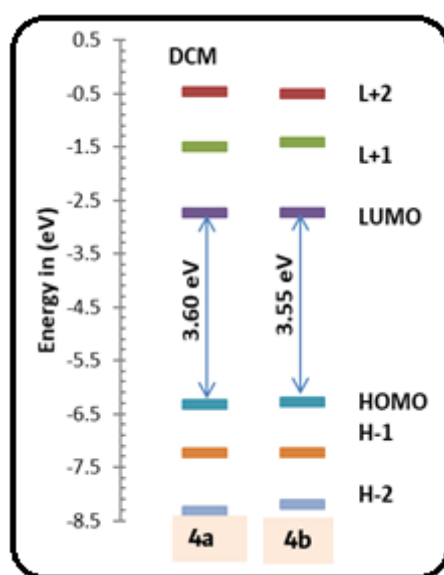


Figure 4. Frontier molecular orbitals of dyes **4a-8b** in DMSO solvent medium.

The HOMO and LUMO energy level diagram give a quantitative idea of electronic structure and excitation properties. In derivatives of malononitrile (**4a** and **4b**), HOMO-1 is located on chloroimidazole ring and small extent on cyano group and completely transferred to pyridine ring in LUMO+1. **Figure 5** tells that the calculated HOMO-LUMO energy band gap of the dyes **4a** and **8b** are 3.60 eV and 3.55 eV respectively.



3.3 Natural Bond Order (NBO) Analysis

Natural charges molecule enabled to know the interactions and intramolecular charge circulation. Acceptor fragment carries a positive charge while donor carries a negative charge. In nitrogen atom, acceptor nitrogen carries negative charge while donor nitrogen atom carries a positive charge[23]. Optimised Structural diagram of dye **4a** and **4b** in DCM shown in **Figure 7**.

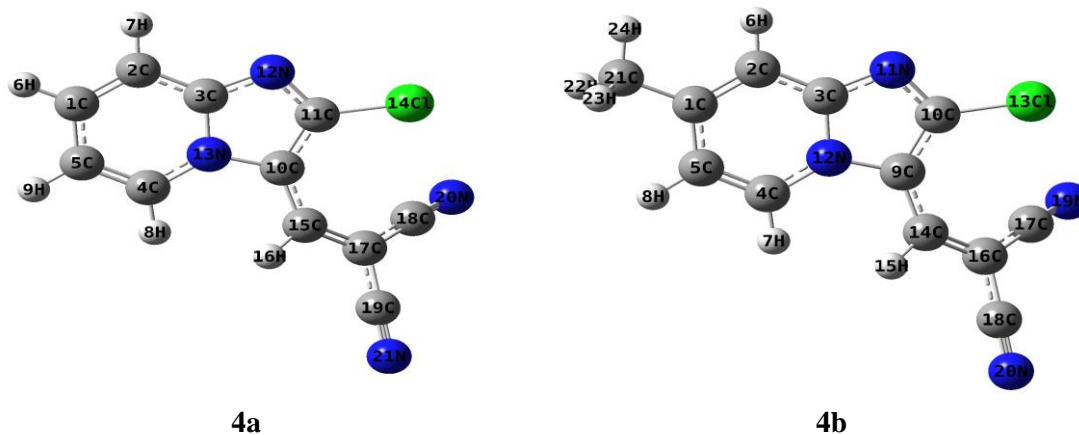


Figure 5. Optimised Structural diagram of dye **4a** and **4b** in DCM.

The Natural charges on atoms except for hydrogen in dye **4a** and **4b** have been shown in **Table 3**. **Table 3.** Natural charges on atoms of dyes **4a** and **4b** except for hydrogen atoms in DCM.

4a					
Atom No	Charges		Atom No	Charges	
C 1	-0.0156		C 11	0.1820	
C 2	-0.2126		N 12	-0.5188	
C 3	0.3911		N 13	-0.3376	
C 4	0.0599		Cl 14	0.0745	
C 5	-0.2303		C 15	-0.0585	
C 10	0.0119				
C 17			C 17	-0.3112	
			C 18	0.3107	
			C 19	0.3189	
			N 20	-0.3449	
			N 21	-0.3598	
4b					
C 1	0.0269		C 10	0.1831	
C 2	-0.2226		N 11	-0.5218	
C 3	0.3996		N 12	-0.3417	
C 4	0.0652		Cl 13	0.0727	
C 5	-0.2266		C 14	-0.0595	
C 9	0.0096		C 16	-0.3167	
			C 17	0.3114	
			C 18	0.3195	
			N 19	-0.3491	
			N 20	-0.3642	
			C 21	-0.5994	

The delocalization energy $E(2)$ describes the donor(i)- acceptor(j) interactions and given by

$$E(2) = q_i \frac{F(i,j)^2}{\epsilon_j - \epsilon_i}$$

Where, q_i is the occupation number of the donor orbital, ϵ_j and ϵ_i are diagonal elements and equal to the orbital energies. Hence, $F(i,j)$ is the off-diagonal of Fock matrix[23]. The donor-acceptor interactions and stability of imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine styryl dyes were investigated by the second order Fock matrix using B3LYP/6-311+G(d,p). Intermolecular charge transfer and stabilization energies of dye **4a** and **4b** were represented in **Table 4**.

Table 4. Second-order perturbation energies $E(2)$ (Donor→Acceptor interactions) of dye **4a** and **4b** in DCM medium.

Donor(i)	^a ED(e)	Acceptor (j)	^a ED(e)	^b E(2) kJ/mol	^c E(j)-E(i) a.u.	^d F(i,j) a.u.
Dye 4a						
LP(1)(N13)	1.4739	$\pi^*(C03-N12)$	0.5472	49.96	0.25	0.080
		$\pi^*(C04-C05)$	0.2338	33.43	0.30	0.097
		$\pi^*(C10-C11)$	0.4987	28.39	0.27	0.079
$\pi(C01-C02)$	1.707	$\pi^*(C03-N12)$	0.5472	28.06	0.25	0.080
$\pi(C03-N12)$	1.707	$\pi^*(C10-C11)$	0.4987	34.84	0.29	0.095
$\pi(C10-C11)$	1.682	$\pi^*(C15-C17)$	0.2880	22.44	0.29	0.073
Dye 4b						
LP(1)(N12)	1.4820	$\pi^*(C04-C05)$	0.2241	33.52	0.30	0.224
		$\pi^*(C09-C10)$	0.5008	28.25	0.27	0.080
$\pi(C01-C02)$	1.6910	$\pi^*(C03-N11)$	0.5489	30.15	0.24	0.080

$\pi(\text{C03-N11})$	1.6977	$\pi^*(\text{C09-C10})$	0.5008	35.35	0.29	0.100
$\pi(\text{C09-C10})$	1.6821	$\pi^*(\text{C14-C16})$	0.2983	23.24	0.29	0.070
$\pi(\text{C14-C16})$	1.7982	$\pi^*(\text{C17-N19})$	0.1015	20.79	0.38	0.080
$\pi(\text{C14-C16})$	1.7982	$\pi^*(\text{C18-N20})$	0.1055	22.18	0.38	0.080

Where, ^aED is the electron density, ^bE(2) means the energy of hyperconjugative interactions (stabilization energy), ^c Energy difference between donor and acceptor i and j NBO orbitals, ^dF(i, j) is the Fock matrix element between i and j NBO orbitals

A large number of stabilization energy E(2) entries were observed higher than 20 k J/ mol in both dyes indicating sufficient delocalization in donor-acceptor sites. In **dye 4a**, lone pair (N13) interacted with C03-N12, C04-C05 and C10-C11 with E(2) energy higher than 28.39 kJ/mol. At the same time pi interaction in C01-C02 to C03-N12, C03-N12 to C10-C11 and C10-C11 to C15-C17 with E(2) energy higher than 22.44 kJ/mol. Clearly, this direction of flow of electron is from pyridine to pyrrole and then pyrrole to styryl group means in acceptor direction. Similarly in **dye 4b**, the direction of delocalizations C01-C02 to C03-N11, C03-N11 to C09-C10, C09-C10 to C14-C16, C14-C16 to C17-N19 and C14-C16 to C18-N20 were clearly from pyridine bonds to pyrrole, pyrrole to styryl unit then styryl unit to both cyano acceptor groups.

3.4 Correlation with multiparameter solvent polarity scales: Understanding the effect of microenvironment on the spectroscopic properties of imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine dyes looks to be very important for a better consideration of the solute-solvent interactions. Theoretical explanation of the solute-solvent interactions has been given by many scientists [24]. One of the most powerful and popular model, proposed by Kamlet and Taft [25], assumes that the solute-solvent interactions are frequently of two kinds: non-specific (dipolarity/polarizability) and specific (hydrogen bond donor and hydrogen bond acceptor complexing) interactions [26,27]. Multiple parameters are arranged in order to characterize the solute-solvent interactions, in the term of Eq. (4.1)

$$y = y_0 + a_\alpha \alpha + b_\beta \beta + c_{\pi^*} \pi^* \quad (\text{Kamlet-Taft}) \quad (4.1)$$

where y signifies the solvent dependent physicochemical property in a given solvent, y_0 represents the statistical quantity conforming to the value of property in gas phase., α signifies the effect of acidity (hydrogen-bond donating ability) of solvent, β signifies effect of basicity (hydrogen-bond accepting ability) of solvent and π^* signifies the collective effect of solvent polarity (also known as dipolarity) and polarizability and a_α , b_β , c_{π^*} are susceptibility of constants. But if acidity or basicity of solvents is not affecting on the value of y, then among polarity and polarizability, it is difficult to sort out which factor is exactly influencing the studied physicochemical property y. Hence, polarity scale (π^*) proposed by Kamlet and Taft has been further separated by Catalán into two independent parameters: solvent polarizability (SP) and dipolarity (SdP) scales and proposed another expression equation (2) [28,29] ...

$$y = y_0 + a_{SA} SA + b_{SB} SB + c_{SP} SP + d_{SDP} Sdp \quad (\text{Catalan}) \quad (4.2)$$

Where SA denotes solvent acidity/solvents hydrogen bond donor strength, SB denotes solvent basicity/hydrogen bond acceptor strength, SP denotes solvent polarizability and SdP denotes solvent dipolarity. The multi-linear analysis is carried out to study our red-shifted absorption spectra for all imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine styryl derivatives in nine polar and nonpolar solvents. we used both, the well-established Kamlet-Taft as well as its improved version by Catalan simultaneously to understand exactly which factor i.e. solvent basicity, acidity, polarizability or dipolarity is mainly affecting the altered

photophysical properties of these styryl derivatives in solvents of different polarities. Estimated coefficients for all dyes by Kamlet-Taft and Catalan method are represented in **Table 7** for **4a-8b** dyes.

Table 5. Estimated (y_0 , a , b , c , d) their standard errors and correlation for the multi-linear analysis of absorption of dyes **4a-8b** as a function of Kamlet-Taft and Catalan solvents scales.

Kamlet-Taft	$y_0 \times 10^3$	a_α	b_β	c_{π^*}	r
4a	25.04 ± 0.40	0.74 ± 0.65	1.10 ± 0.49	-1.04 ± 0.65	0.51
4b	24.62 ± 0.33	0.51 ± 0.53	0.86 ± 0.40	-0.94 ± 0.53	0.50

Catalan	$y_0 \times 10^3$	a_{SA}	b_{SB}	CSdP	dSP	r
4a	27.00 ± 0.39	3.09 ± 1.64	0.79 ± 0.12	-0.29 ± 0.15	-3.29 ± 0.48	0.97
4b	26.18 ± 0.25	1.94 ± 1.07	0.59 ± 0.08	-0.22 ± 0.10	-2.71 ± 0.32	0.98

Where α or SA = solvent acidity, β or SB = solvent basicity, π^* = collective parameter of solvent dipolarity and polarizability according to Kamlet-Taft equation, SdP and SP = solvent dipolarity and polarizability respectively according to Catalan equation.

In all dyes, Catalan parameters show better correlation coefficient ($r = 0.81-0.99$) than Kamlet-Taft parameters ($0.49-0.80$). Large standard errors observed on both Kamlet-Taft and Catalan parameters for solvent acidity and basicity, factors suggest that mainly solvent dipolarity or polarizability are accountable for the slightly red-shifted absorption spectra.

Dicyanovinylene (**4a** and **4b**) derivatives showed negative values for solvent dipolarity and polarizability (π^*) by Kamlet-Taft analysis and solvent polarizability (SdP) by Catalan analysis supports absorption.

4. Nonlinear optical properties with its fundamental limits and intrinsic properties

Nonlinear optical properties of extended styryl dyes based on 2-chloroimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carbaldehyde in the different DCM solvent medium were evaluated using B3LYP functional with 6-311+G(d,p) basis set of the finite-field approach and solvatochromic method as well. The fundamental limit is the function of an energy difference between the ground and first excited state and number of electrons [30]. Mean polarizability (α_0), the mean first hyperpolarizability (β_0) and static second hyperpolarizability (γ) estimated and quantum sum rules applied to calculate the absolute maximum bound values of off-resonant electronic α , β and γ NLO properties allowed by nature [30–34].

Polarizability and hyperpolarizability with its fundamental limits and intrinsic values for dye **4a-8b** in DCM solvent by the CAM-B3LYP method represented in **Table 8**.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, styryl dyes based on 2-chloroimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carbaldehyde showed a significant red shift in absorption wavelength. In dye **4b**, change in HOMO-LUMO energy gap is observed in range 3.624-3.539 eV and lower in polar solvent whereas higher in the gas phase as well as in lower polarity solvent. Dyes are more stable in a polar solvent. In both dyes, the negative value observed for all three solvent parameters like basicity, dipolarity and polarizability both by Kamlet-Taft and Catalan analysis supports red-shifted absorption. NBO analysis for the dye **4a**, lone pair (N13) interacted with C03-N12, C04-C05 and C10-C11 with E(2) energy higher than 28.39 kJ/mol. At the same time pi interaction in C01-C02 to C03-N12, C03-N12 to C10-C11 and C10-C11 to C15-C17 with E(2) energy

higher than 22.44 kJ/mol. Clearly, this direction of flow of electron is from pyridine to pyrrole and then pyrrole to styryl group means in acceptor direction.

Observed range for intrinsic polarizability is 0.2229 – 0.2336 and intrinsic first hyperpolarizability is 0.0269- 0.0324 which is within the limit of optimized range i.e. less than or equal to (\leq) 0.71. Observed range for negative second hyperpolarizability is -0.0137 - -0.0144 and positive second hyperpolarizability is 0.0034 - 0.0036 while optimized range is $-0.15 \leq \gamma \leq 0.6$. All the intrinsic property values are higher values for extended styryls derivatives indicating strong candidature for optical applications.

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