J. Chem. Sci. (2018) 130:55
https://doi.org/10.1007/s12039-018-1462-z

REGULAR ARTICLE

Convenient two-step one-pot synthesis of 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*a*]pyridines and imidazo[1,2-*b*]pyridazines

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MS received 4 January 2018; revised 9 April 2018; accepted 10 April 2018; published online 7 May 2018

Abstract. A convenient and novel two-step one-pot method for the synthesis of 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*a*]pyridines and 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*b*]pyridazines was developed through the reaction of heterocyclic amines and *N*, *N*-dimethylformamide dimethyl acetate with active electrophiles RCH_2Br (R = CO_2Et, CN, COPh, 4'-MeO-PhCO and 4'-F-PhCO). This protocol provides a simple and practical approach to 3-substituted fused imidazo-heterocyclic compounds in moderate to high yields.

Keywords. Imidazo[1, 2-*a*]pyridine; imidazo[1, 2-*b*]pyridazine; heterocyclic amine; active electrophiles.

1. Introduction

Imidazo[1,2-*a*]pyridines exhibit diverse biological properties such as anticonvulsant,[1] antimicrobial,[2] antiviral,[3] antiparasitic,[4] anti-inflammatory,[5] antituberculosis[6] and inhibitory effects on DNA oxidation and quenching radicals.[7] They are also ligands for major inhibitory neurotransmitter receptors.[8] Consequently, many useful synthetic methods have been reported in the literature. Generally, such nitro-containing fused heterocycles are prepared through the condensation of heterocyclic amines with α-haloketones in the presence of an inorganic base at high temperatures.[9] This method also produces 2-substituted products. Recently, some novel synthetic approaches have been developed to construct 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*a*]pyridines.[10] Although a number of investigations have been carried out, developing a convenient and library-friendly method is still desirable in hit-to-lead drug discovery, which requires quick follow-up to construct 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*a*]pyridines from readily accessible starting materials in a single operation under mild conditions. Herein, we report a two-step one-pot approach to the synthesis of 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*a*]pyridines. Commercially available 2-aminopyridine and its derivatives were reacted with DMF-DMA (*N*, *N*-dimethylformamide dimethyl acetate) to produce the corresponding intermediates in near quantitative yields, which were subsequently condensed with active electrophiles, such as ethyl bromoacetate, bromoacetonitrile, 2-bromoacetophenone, 2-bromo-4'-methoxyacetophenone or 2-bromo-4'-fluoroacetophenone in the same flask without isolation to afford the desired 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*a*]pyridines.

2. Experimental

2.1 *Materials and physical measurements*

All 2-aminopyridines **1a**–**1f**, 6-chloropyridazin-3-amine **6** and active electrophiles **3a**–**3e** were purchased from Nanjing Chemical Reagent Co., Ltd., (Nanjing, China, Purity more than 97%), all reagents and solvents were used as received. Column chromatography was performed using silica gel (200–300 mesh). Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) spectra were recorded on a Varian 400 MHz spectrometer (^{1}H: 400 MHz, ^{13}C: 100 MHz) at 25 °C, using $CDCl_3$ or DMSO-d_6 as the solvent. Chemical shifts (δ ppm) are reported with respect to tetramethylsilane (TMS) as an internal standard. Mass spectra were recorded using the Electrospray

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Electronic supplementary material: The online version of this article (https://doi.org/10.1007/s12039-018-1462-z) contains supplementary material, which is available to authorized users.

Ionization Method (ESI) on Agilent mass spectrometers (G1969A LC/MSD TOF and 6545 Q-TOF LC/MS). Melting points were measured on a WRS-1 apparatus and are uncorrected.

2.2 *Synthesis of 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-a]pyridines **4a-4n** and **5a-5f***

2.2a *Typical procedure for preparation of **4a–4h** (**4a** as an example):*: A solution of 0.094 g 2-aminopyridine (**1a**, 1 mmol) and 0.24 g DMF-DMA (2 mmol) in 2 mL DMF was stirred at 65 °C for 2 h. Then, 0.126 g $NaHCO_3$ (1.5 mmol) and 0.217 g ethyl bromoacetate (**3a**, 1.3 mmol) were added sequentially. The mixture was stirred at 85 °C. After the reaction was completed as monitored by thin layer chromatography (TLC), it was diluted with 20 mL water and extracted with EtOAc (3 × 20 mL). The combined organic extract was washed with water and brine, dried over anhydrous Na_2SO_4 and concentrated under reduced pressure. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (ethyl acetate/hexane, 1:6) to afford pure product **4a**.

2.2.1a *Ethyl imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carboxylate **4a***:[11] White solid; M.p.: 50–51 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 400MHz): 1.43 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H, CH_3); 4.42 (q, J = 7.2Hz, 2H, CH_2); 7.05 (t, J = 6.8 Hz, 1H, ArH); 7.42 (t, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H, ArH); 7.74 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H, ArH); 8.31 (s, 1H, ArH); 9.31 (d, J = 6.8Hz, 1H, ArH). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 180.58, 148.35, 141.42, 127.59, 127.39, 117.79, 115.77, 114.14, 60.38, 14.41. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{10}H_{11}N_2O_2(M+H)^+$: 191.0815, Found: 191.0811.

2.2.1b *Ethyl 6-bromoimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carboxylate **4b***:[10b] Light brown solid; M.p.: 109–110 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 400 MHz): 1.42 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H, CH_3); 4.42 (q, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H, CH_2); 7.50 (dd, J_1 = 9.2 Hz, J_2 = 1.8 Hz, 1H, ArH); 7.64 (d, J = 9.6 Hz, 1H, ArH); 8.29 (s, 1H, ArH); 9.51 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H, ArH). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 160.34, 146.73, 141.49, 130.92, 127.83, 118.35, 116.12, 109.22, 60.74, 14.39. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{10}H_{10}BrN_2O_2(M+H)^+$: 268.9920, Found: 268.9915.

2.2.1c *Ethyl 6-chloroimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carboxylate **4c***:[12] White solid; M.p.: 92 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 400 MHz): 1.44 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H, CH_3); 4.44 (q, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H, CH_2); 7.41 (dd, J_1 = 9.6 Hz, J_2 = 2.0 Hz, 1H, ArH); 7.70 (d, J = 9.6 Hz, 1H, ArH); 8.30 (s, 1H, ArH); 9.41 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H, ArH). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 160.33, 146.62, 141.69, 128.76, 125.67, 122.64, 118.05, 116.25, 60.72, 14.39. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{10}H_{10}ClN_2O_2(M+H)^+$: 225.0425, Found: 225.0417.

2.2.1d *Ethyl 6-fluoroimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carboxylate **4d***:[13] White solid; M.p.: 52–53 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 400 MHz): 1.42 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H, CH_3); 4.42 (q, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H, CH_2); 7.34 (td, J_1 = 8.8 Hz, J_2 = 2.4 Hz, 1H, ArH); 7.71 (dd, J_1 = 9.6 Hz, J_2 = 4.8Hz, 1H, ArH); 8.30 (s, 1H, ArH); 9.28 (dd, J_1 = 4.0 Hz, J_2 = 2.4 Hz, 1H, ArH). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 160.42, 154.06 (d, J_{C-F} = 237.3 Hz), 145.85, 141.95 (d, J_{C-F} = 2.5 Hz), 119.18 (d, J_{C-F} = 25.1 Hz), 118.11 (d, J_{C-F} = 8.9 Hz), 114.96 (d, J_{C-F} = 42.6 Hz), 109.99, 60.67, 14.39. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{10}H_{10}FN_2O_2(M+H)^+$: 209.0721, Found: 209.0713.

2.2.1e *Iimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carbonitrile **4e***:[14] White solid; M.p.: 160 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 400 MHz): 7.15 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H); 7.50 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H); 7.81 (d, J = 9.2 Hz, 1H); 8.20 (s, 1H); 8.40 (d J = 9.2 Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 147.20, 142.47, 128.32, 125.66, 118.69, 115.09, 111.13, 98.20. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_8H_6N_3(M+H)^+$: 144.0556, Found: 144.0550.

2.2.1f *(Imidazo[1,2-a]pyridin-3-yl)phenylmethanone **4f***:[10b] White solid; M.p.: 110–111 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in DMSO-d_6, 400 MHz): 7.33 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 1H); 7.57 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H); 7.68 (m, 2H); 7.87 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 3H); 8.24 (s, 1H); 9.63 (d, J = 7.2Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 184.82, 149.05, 145.63, 139.24, 132.04, 129.45, 128.88, 128.83, 128.59, 123.52, 117.73, 115.15. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{14}H_{11}N_2O$ $(M+H)^+$: 223.0866, Found: 223.0856.

2.2.1g *(Imidazo[1,2-a]pyridin-3-yl)(4'-methoxyphenyl) methanone **4g***:[10b] White solid; M.p.: 113–114 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 400 MHz): 3.91 (s, 3H, CH_3); 7.03 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H, ArH); 7.26 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H, ArH); 7.67 (t, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H, ArH); 7.89 (d J = 8.8 Hz, 2H, ArH); 7.99 (d, J = 9.2 Hz, 1H, ArH); 8.25 (s, 1H, ArH); 9.71 (d, J = 6.8 Hz, 1H, ArH). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 183.40, 163.45, 146.53, 140.41, 131.20, 131.01, 130.94, 129.04, 123.21, 116.63, 116.15, 114.14, 55.61. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{15}H_{13}N_2O_2(M+H)^+$: 253.0972, Found: 253.0947.

2.2.1h *(4'-Fluorophenyl)(imidazo[1,2-a]pyridin-3-yl)methanone **4h***:[10b] White solid; M.p.: 132–133 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 400 MHz): 7.16–7.26 (m, 3H); 7.60 (t, J = 7.8 Hz, 1H); 7.83(d J = 8.8 Hz, 1H); 7.90–7.95 (m, 2H); 8.21 (s, 1H); 9.73 (d, J = 6.8 Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in DMSO-d_6, 100 MHz): 182.32; 164.37 (d, J_{C-F} = 198.6 Hz); 148.54; 145.36; 135.31; 131.56 (d, J_{C-F} = 7.2 Hz); 130.17; 128.45; 122.81; 117.52; 115.76 (d, J_{C-F} = 17.4Hz); 115.74. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{14}H_{10}FN_2O$ $(M+H)^+$: 241.0772, Found: 241.0757.

2.2b *Typical procedure for preparation of **4i–4n** (**4i** as an example)*: A solution of 0.173 g 2-amino-5-bromopyridine (**1b**, 1 mmol) and 0.24 g DMF-DMA (2 mmol) in 2 mL DMF was stirred at 65 °C for 3 h. Then, 0.126 g $NaHCO_3$ (1.5 mmol), 0.033 g KI (0.2 mmol) and 0.156 g bromoacetonitrile (**3b**, 1.3 mmol) were added sequentially. The mixture was stirred at 85 °C. After the reaction was completed as monitored by TLC, it was diluted with 20 mL water and extracted with $CHCl_3$ (3 × 20 mL). The combined organic extract was washed with water, dried over anhydrous Na_2SO_4 and concentrated under reduced pressure. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (chloroform/hexane, 3:1) to afford pure product **4i**.

2.2.2a *6-Bromoimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carbonitrile **4i***:[10d] White solid; M.p.: 194–196 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in

$CDCl_3$, 400 MHz): 7.47 (dd, $J_1 = 9.8$ Hz, $J_2 = 2.0$ Hz, 1H); 7.74 (d, $J = 9.6$ Hz, 1H); 8.17 (s, 1H); 8.42 (d, $J = 2.4$ Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 145.85, 142.66, 132.00, 125.81, 119.20, 110.52, 110.08, 98.54. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_8H_5BrN_3(M+H)^+$: 221.9661, Found: 221.9652.

2.2.2b *6-Chloroimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carbonitrile* ***4j***: [15] Light yellow solid; M.p.: 195–198 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 400 MHz): 7.53 (dd, $J_1 = 9.6$ Hz, $J_2 = 1.8$ Hz, 1H); 7.68 (d, $J = 9.6$Hz, 1H); 8.15 (s, 1H); 8.52 (d, $J = 1.6$ Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 145.66, 142.77, 132.00, 129.90, 123.64, 119.20, 118.96, 110.45, 109.99. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_8H_5ClN_3(M+H)^+$: 178.0167, Found: 178.0158.

2.2.2c *6-fluoroimidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carbonitrile* ***4k***: [16] White solid; M.p.: 173–176 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in DMSO-d_6, 400 MHz): 7.70 (td, $J_1 = 10.0$ Hz, $J_2 = 2.0$ Hz, 1H); 7.92 (dd, $J_1 = 9.8$ Hz, $J_2 = 5.2$ Hz, 1H); 8.48 (s, 1H); 8.98 (t, $J = 3.0$ Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 154.50 (d, $J_{C-F} = 241.6$ Hz), 144.79, 143.02 (d, $J_{C-F} = 2.4$ Hz), 120.43 (d, $J_{C-F} = 25.1$ Hz), 119.23 (d, $J_{C-F} = 8.9$ Hz), 112.99 (d, $J_{C-F} = 41.2$ Hz), 110.53, 99.61. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_8H_5FN_3(M+H)^+$: 162.0462, Found: 162.0459.

2.2.2d *(6-Bromoimidazo[1,2-a]pyridin-3-yl)phenylmethanone* ***4l***: [10b] White solid; M.p.: 143–145 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 400 MHz): 7.57 (t, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 2H); 7.67 (t, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 1H); 7.79–7.86 (m, 4H); 8.25 (s, 1H); 9.70 (s, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 184.70, 147.34, 145.40, 138.78, 132.70, 132.29, 128.96, 128.80, 128.65, 123.53, 118.20, 110.05. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{14}H_{10}BrN_2O$ $(M + H)^+$: 300.9971, Found: 300.9955.

2.2.2e *(6-Chloroimidazo[1,2-a]pyridin-3-yl)phenylmethanone* ***4m***: [10c] White solid; M.p.: 138 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in DMSO-d_6, 400 MHz): 7.59 (t, $J = 7.4$ Hz, 2H); 7.69 (t, $J = 7.4$ Hz, 1H); 7.78 (dd, $J_1 = 9.2$ Hz, $J_2 = 2.0$ Hz, 1H); 7.88 (d, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 2H); 7.94 (d, $J = 9.6$ Hz, 1H); 8.31 (s, 1H); 9.68 (d, $J = 1.6$ Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in DMSO-d_6, 100 MHz): 183.78, 146.75, 145.38, 138.26, 132.36, 130.49, 128.78, 128.72, 126.01, 123.16, 122.32, 118.26. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{14}H_{10}ClN_2O$ $(M + H)^+$: 257.0476, Found: 257.0454.

2.2.2f *(6-Fluoroimidazo[1,2-a]pyridin-3-yl)phenylmethanone* ***4n***: [10c] Light yellow solid; M.p.: 131–132 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in DMSO-d_6, 400 MHz): 7.58 (t, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 2H); 7.68 (t, $J = 7.4$ Hz, 1H); 7.80 (td, $J_1 = 8.6$ Hz, $J_2 = 2.4$ Hz, 1H); 7.87 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 2H); 7.97 (dd, $J_1 = 9.6$ Hz, $J_2 = 5.2$ Hz, 1H); 8.30 (s, 1H); 9.62 (dd, $J_1 = 5.0$ Hz, $J_2 = 2.6$ Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 184.72; 154.80 (d, $J_{C-F} = 239.7$ Hz); 145.14; 143.56 (d, $J_{C-F} = 1.7$ Hz); 138.38; 132.62; 128.80 (d, $J_{C-F} = 2.9$ Hz); 121.94 (d, $J_{C-F} = 24.9$ Hz); 117.48 (d, $J_{C-F} = 9.7$ Hz); 116.601; 116.172. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{14}H_{10}FN_2O$ $(M + H)^+$: 241.0772, Found: 241.0767.

2.2c *Typical procedure for preparation of* ***5a–5f*** *(****5a*** *as an example)*: A solution of 0.11 g 2-amino-3-hydroxypyridine (**1e**, 1 mmol) and 0.24 g DMF-DMA (2 mmol) in 2 mL DMF was stirred at 65 °C for 2 h. Then, 0.252 g $NaHCO_3$ (3 mmol) and 0.417 g ethyl bromoacetate (**3a**, 2.5 mmol) were added sequentially. The mixture was stirred at 85 °C. After the reaction was completed as monitored by thin layer chromatography (TLC), it was diluted with 20 mL water and extracted with $CHCl_3$ (3 × 30 mL). The combined organic extract was washed with water, dried over anhydrous Na_2SO_4 and concentrated under reduced pressure. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (chloroform/hexane, 1:1) to afford pure product **5a**.

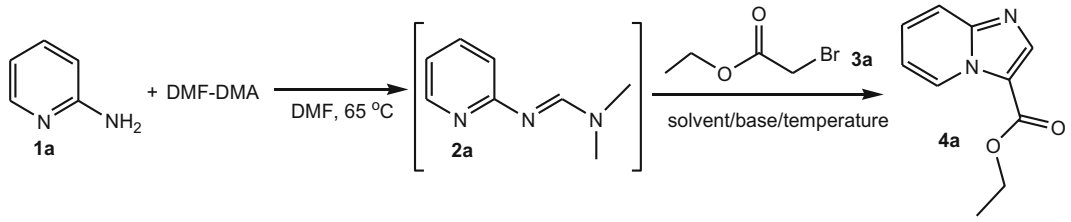
2.2.3a *Ethyl 8-(2-ethoxy-2-oxoethoxy)H-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carboxylate* ***5a***: White solid, M.p.: 93–95 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 400 MHz): 1.29 (t, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 3H, CH_3), 1.43 (t, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 3H, CH_3), 4.28 (q, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 2H, CH_2), 4.42 (q, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 2H, CH_2), 4.98 (s, 2H, CH_2), 6.72 (d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 1H, ArH), 6.93 (t, $J = 7.4$ Hz, 1H, ArH), 8.26 (s, 1H, ArH), 9.00 (d, $J = 6.8$ Hz, 1H, ArH). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 168.11, 160.57, 147.02, 142.34, 140.37, 121.44, 116.87, 113.88, 107.16, 66.28, 61.51, 60.51, 14.40, 14.11. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{14}H_{17}N_2O_5$ $(M+H)^+$: 293.1132, Found: 293.1123.

2.2.3b *8-(Cyanomethoxy)H-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carbonitrile* ***5b***: Light brown solid; M.p.: 229–230 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in DMSO-d_6, 400 MHz): 5.47 (s, 2H, CH_2), 7.23 (m, 2H, ArH), 8.39 (d, $J = 5.2$ Hz, 1H, ArH), 8.43 (s, 1H, ArH). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in DMSO-d_6, 100 MHz): 145.96, 142.68, 140.85, 121.56, 116.40, 115.42, 111.67, 109.08, 99.22, 54.99. HRMS-ESI: Calcd.. for $C_{10}H_7N_4O$ $(M + H)^+$: 199.0614, Found: 199.0608.

2.2.3c *2-(3-BenzoylH-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridin-8-yloxy)-1-phenylethanone* ***5c***: White solid, M.p.: 209–211 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in DMSO-d_6, 400 MHz): 5.97 (s, 2H, CH_2), 7.20 (m, 2H, ArH), 7.60 (t, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 4H, ArH), 7.71 (m, 2H, ArH), 7.90 (d, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 2H, ArH), 8.06 (d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 2H, ArH), 8.19 (s, 1H, ArH), 9.28 (d, $J = 6.8$ Hz, 1H, ArH). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in DMSO-d_6, 100 MHz): 194.19, 184.39, 147.38, 144.49, 142.71, 139.16, 134.54, 134.44, 132.64, 129.35, 129.16, 128.36, 124.11, 121.53, 116.12, 109.65, 71.45. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{22}H_{17}N_2O_3(M + H)^+$: 357.1234, Found: 357.1225.

2.2.3d *Ethyl6-bromo-8-(2-ethoxy-2-oxoethoxy)H-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carboxylate* ***5d***: White solid, M.p.: 92–94 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 400 MHz): 1.31 (t, $J = 7.0$ Hz, 3H, CH_3), 1.43 (t, $J = 7.0$ Hz, 3H, CH_3), 4.30 (q, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 2H, CH_2), 4.43 (q, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 2H, CH_2), 4.97 (s, 2H, CH_2), 6.81 (s, 1H, ArH), 8.21 (s, 1H, ArH), 9.17 (s, 1H, ArH). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 400 MHz): 167.60, 160.29, 146.66, 140.95, 140.27, 121.59, 117.03, 111.40, 108.55, 66.42, 61.80, 60.80, 14.36, 14.11. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{14}H_{16}BrN_2O_5(M+H)^+$: 371.0237, Found: 371.0231.

2.2.3e *6-Bromo-8-(cyanomethoxy)H-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridine-3-carbonitrile* ***5e***: Light brown solid, M.p.: 207–208 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in DMSO-d_6, 400 MHz): 5.50 (s, 2H, CH_2), 7.46 (s, 1H, ArH), 8.43 (s, 1H, ArH), 8.66 (s, 1H, ArH). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in DMSO-d_6, 100 MHz): 145.70, 142.83,



Scheme 1. Synthesis of ethyl imidazo[1,2-*a*]pyridine-3-carboxylate **4a**.

139.63, 121.70, 116.11, 112.31, 111.16, 108.89, 99.79, 55.29. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{10}H_6BrN_4O$ $(M + H)^+$: 276.9719, Found: 276.9715.

2.2.3f *2-(3-Benzoyl-6-bromoH-imidazo[1,2-a]pyridin-8-yloxy)-1-phenylethanone* ***5f***: Light yellow solid, M.p.: 212–215 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in DMSO-d_6, 400 MHz): 6.01 (s, 2H, CH_2), 7.51 (s, 1H, ArH), 7.61 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 4H, ArH), 7.71 (m, 2H, ArH), 7.90 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H, ArH), 8.06 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H, ArH), 8.21 (s, 1H, ArH), 9.42(s, 1H, ArH). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in DMSO-d_6, 100 MHz): 193.50, 184.50, 147.52, 144.25, 141.47, 138.81, 134.55, 134.40, 132.86, 129.26, 129.19, 128.43, 124.25, 121.17, 112.64, 109.83, 71.84. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{22}H_{16}BrN_2O_3$ $(M + H)^+$: 435.0339, Found: 435.0332.

2.2d *Typical procedure for preparation of 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-b]pyridazines* ***8a–8c****(****8a*** *as an example)*: A solution of 0.130 g 6-chloropyridazin-3-amine (**6**, 1 mmol) and 0.24 g DMF-DMA (2 mmol) in 2 mL DMF was stirred at 65 °C for 3 h. Then, 0.126 g $NaHCO_3$(1.5 mmol), 0.033 g KI (0.2 mmol) and 0.217 g ethyl bromoacetate (**3a**, 1.3 mmol) were added sequentially. The mixture was stirred at 85 °C. After the reaction was completed as monitored by TLC, it was diluted with 20 mL water and extracted with $CHCl_3$ (3 × 20 mL). The combined organic extract was washed with water, dried over anhydrous Na_2SO_4 and concentrated under reduced pressure. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (chloroform/hexane, 3:1) to afford pure product **8a**.

2.2.4a *Ethyl 6-chloroimidazo[1,2-b]pyridazine-3-carboxylate* ***8a***: Light brown solid; M.p: 92–93 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 400 MHz): 1.45 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H, CH_3); 4.48 (q, J = 7.0 Hz, 2H, CH_2); 7.28 (d, J = 9.2 Hz, 1H, ArH); 8.03 (d, J = 9.6 Hz, 1H, ArH); 8.39 (s, 1H, ArH). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 158.20, 148.38, 140.93, 140.67, 127.40, 121.51, 120.48, 61.08, 14.33. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_9H_9ClN_3O_2$ $(M + H)^+$: 226.0378, Found: 226.0377.

2.2.4b *6-Chloroimidazo[1,2-b]pyridazine-3-carbonitrile* ***8b***:[11] Light yellow solid; M.p.: 143–144 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 400 MHz): 7.34 (d, J = 9.6 Hz, 1H); 8.07 (d, J = 9.6 Hz, 1H); 8.26 (s, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 159.83, 149.39, 141.72, 139.61, 127.74, 123.00, 109.12. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_7H_4ClN_4$ $(M+H)^+$: 179.0119, Found: 179.0113.

2.2.4c *(6-Chloroimidazo[1,2-b]pyridazin-3-yl)(phenyl)methanone* ***8c***:[10a] Light yellow solid; M.p.: 257–258 °C. ^{1}H NMR (δ, ppm in DMSO-d_6, 400 MHz): 7.59 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 2H); 7.69 (t, J = 9.6 Hz, 2H); 7.99 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H); 8.28 (s, 1H); 8.44 (d, J = 9.6 Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (δ, ppm in $CDCl_3$, 100 MHz): 182.53, 149.32, 140.31, 140.19, 137.69, 133.36, 129.43, 128.79, 126.95, 126.85, 123.59. HRMS-ESI: Calcd. for $C_{13}H_9ClN_3O$ $(M + H)^+$: 258.0429, Found: 258.0420.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 *Optimization of the reaction conditions of* ***4a***

Initially, we found that treatment of 2-aminopyridine **1a** with DMF-DMA in DMF at 65 °C resulted in the formation of (*E*)-*N*, *N*-dimethy-*N*′-(pyridin-2-yl)-formamidine **2a** clearly by TLC in consistence with literature report.[17]

Then, we turned our attention to the optimization of reaction conditions of the second step, namely the cyclization process between the intermediate **2a** and ethyl bromoacetate **3a**, to establish an efficient two-step one-pot procedure for the synthesis of ethyl imidazo[1,2-*a*]pyridine-3-carboxylate **4a** (Scheme 1). As shown in Table 1, different bases and solvents were investigated at varied temperatures. The reaction was found to proceed smoothly in the presence of 1.5 equivalent of $NaHCO_3$ in DMF at 85 °C, delivering the product **4a** in 83% yield (Table 1, entry 1). Decrease or increase in temperature had no positive effect on the reaction efficiency (Table 1, entry 2–3). Switching to other solvents such as EtOH and dioxane, led to inferior results (Table 1, entries 4–5). Other inorganic and organic bases were also found to promote this transformation albeit in relatively low yields (Table 1, entry 6–12). Taken together, we found that the optimal protocol for the second step of preparing **4a** was to conduct the reaction in DMF at 85 °C with 1.5 equivalent of $NaHCO_3$ as a base. The complete synthesis of **4a** was adopted as a two-step one-pot procedure.

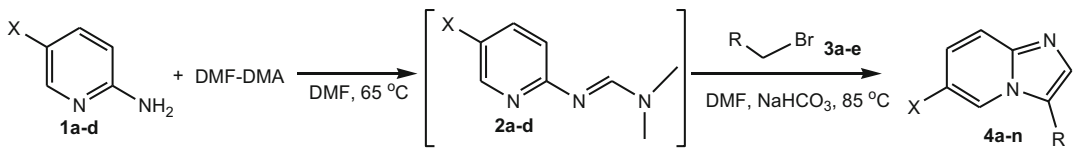
3.2 *Synthesis of 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-a]pyridines* ***4a–4n***

With the above optimized two-step one-pot procedure, the reactions of 2-aminopyridine **1a** and DMF-DMA with several active electrophiles RCH_2Br

Table 1. Optimization of the reaction conditions for the second-step condensation of **4a**[a].

Entry	Base	Solvent	Time (h)[b]	Temperature (°C)[c]	Yield (%)[d]
1	$NaHCO_3$	DMF	1	85	83
2	$NaHCO_3$	DMF	1.5	75	81
3	$NaHCO_3$	DMF	1	95	79
4	$NaHCO_3$	EtOH	3	reflux	63
5	$NaHCO_3$	Dioxane	1.5	85	65
6	Na_2CO_3	DMF	2	85	70
7	Na_2CO_3	EtOH	3	reflux	51
8	Na_2CO_3	Dioxane	2	85	56
9	K_2CO_3	DMF	1	85	65
10	NaOH	DMF	1	85	47
11	C_5H_5N	DMF	7	85	39
12	Et_3N	DMF	5	85	46

[a]Reaction conditions: 2-Aminopyridine **1a** (1.0 mmol) and DMF-DMA (2.0 equiv) were mixed and stirred in DMF (2 mL) at 65 °C for 2 h. Then, ethyl bromoacetate **3a** (1.3 equiv) and base (1.5 equiv) were added and the stirring continued for additional 1–7 h. [b]Reaction time for the second step. [c]Reaction temperature for the second step. [d]Isolated yield based on **1a**.



Scheme 2. Synthesis of 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*a*]pyridines **4a**–**4n**.

(R = CN, CO_2Et, COPh, 4'-MeO-PhCO and 4'-F-PhCO) **3a**–**3e** were carried out successfully to give corresponding 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*a*]pyridines **4a**, **4e**–**4h** in good yields (Scheme 2, Table 2, entry 1, 5–8). 2-Amino-5-halopyridines **1b**–**1d** and DMF-DMA with ethyl bromoacetate **3a** also participated well in this conversion (Scheme 2, Table 2, entry 2–4). However, further expansion of the two-step one-pot process to the reaction of 2-amino-5-halopyridines **1b**–**1d** and DMF-DMA with bromoacetonitrile **3b** or 2-bromoacetophenone **3c** under the same reaction conditions gave the desired bicyclic products in very low yields (< 20%), along with some unknown by-products. Fortunately, the addition of 20 mol% KI into the second-step reaction mixture significantly improved the yields because bromide group in **3b**–**3c** could be substituted with iodide to generate more reactive iodoacetonitrile and 2-iodoacetophenone. With KI as an additive in the second step, we successfully conducted the reactions of **1b**–**1d** and DMF-DMA with bromoacetonitrile **3b** or 2-bromoacetophenone **3c** to afford the corresponding 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*a*]pyridines **4i**–**4n** in moderate to good yields (Scheme 2, Table 2, entries 9–14).

The results presented in Table 2 demonstrated that electron-withdrawing groups in the pyridine ring reduced the reactivity to form the products. 2-Aminopyridine **1a** afforded the desired products in high yields ranging from 74% to 89% (Tables 2, entry 1 and 5–8). On the other hand, the reactions of **1b**–**1d** (containing Br, Cl and F, respectively) and DMF-DMA with **3a** required longer reaction time and the yields were slightly lower compared with **1a** (Tables 2, entry 1–4). As for the reactions of **1b**–**1d** and DMF-DMA with less reactive electrophiles **3b** and **3c**, 20 mol% KI was necessary for better yields (Tables 2, entry 9–14), most likely through more reactive iodide species.

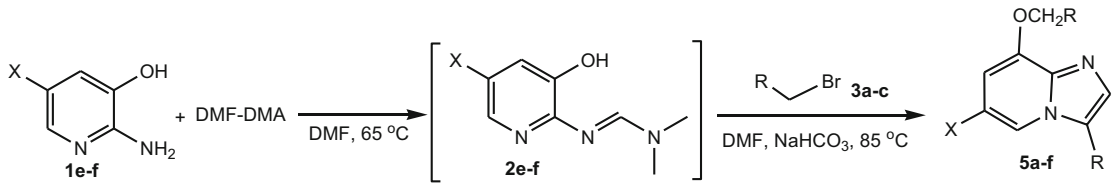
3.3 *Synthesis of 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-a]pyridines **5a–5f***

During the course of expanding the substrate scope of the two-step one-pot reaction, we found that the reaction of 2-amino-3-hydroxypyridine **1e** and DMF-DMA with ethyl bromoacetate **3a** under the optimal reaction conditions (without KI) gave rise to the formation of an unexpected product **5a** in which the hydroxyl group underwent a substitution reaction with the active electrophile along with the imidazole ring formation. However, intermediate **2e** was detected as the major product by TLC analysis. Notably, the substitution reaction still occurred inevitably without $NaHCO_3$ or adding the solution of 0.8 equivalent of **3a**–**3c** in DMF dropwise in the second step of the reaction. Finally, when 2.5 equivalent of **3a**–**3c** and 2.5 equivalent of

Table 2. Substitution of compounds **1-4** according to Scheme 2[a].

Entry	1	X	3	Time(h)[b]	Product	Yield (%)[c]
1	**1a**	H	**3a** (R = CO_2Et)	1	**4a**	83
2	**1b**	Br	**3a** (R = CO_2Et)	3	**4b**	80
3	**1c**	Cl	**3a** (R = CO_2Et)	3	**4c**	76
4	**1d**	F	**3a** (R = CO_2Et)	4	**4d**	73
5	**1a**	H	**3b** (R = CN)	1	**4e**	78
6	**1a**	H	**3c** (R = COPh)	1	**4f**	89
7	**1a**	H	**3d** (R = 4′-MeO-PhCO)	1	**4g**	74
8	**1a**	H	**3e** (R = 4′-F-PhCO)	1	**4h**	87
9[d]	**1b**	Br	**3b** (R = CN)	3	**4i**	75
1[d]	**1c**	Cl	**3b** (R = CN)	3	**4j**	71
11[d]	**1d**	F	**3b** (R = CN)	4	**4k**	59
12[d]	**1b**	Br	**3c** (R = COPh)	1.5	**4l**	87
13[d]	**1c**	Cl	**3c** (R = COPh)	1.5	**4m**	78
14[d]	**1d**	F	**3c** (R = COPh)	2	**4n**	68

[a]Reaction conditions: 2-Aminopyridine or its derivatives **1a**–**1f** (1.0 mmol) and DMF-DMA (2.0 equiv) were mixed and stirred in DMF (2 mL) at 65 °C for 2–3 h. Then, active electrophiles **3a**–**3e** (1.3 equiv) and $NaHCO_3$ (1.5 equiv) were added and the stirring continued at 85 °C for additional 1–4 h. [b]Reaction time for the second step. [c]Isolated yield based on **1a**–**1f**. [d]The second step of the reaction was run with 0.2 equivalent of KI.



Scheme 3. Synthesis of 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*a*]pyridines **5a**–**5f**.

Table 3. Substitution of compounds **1**, **2** and **5** according to Scheme 3[a].

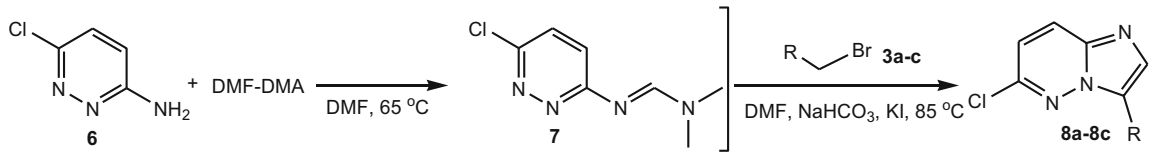
Entry	1	X	3	Time (h)[b]	Product	Yield (%)[c]
1	**1e**	H	**3a** (R = CO_2Et)	1	**5a**	84
2	**1e**	H	**3b** (R = CN)	1	**5b**	74
3	**1e**	H	**3c** (R = COPh)	1	**5c**	75
4	**1f**	Br	**3a** (R = CO_2Et)	1	**5d**	72
5	**1f**	Br	**3b** (R = CN)	3	**5e**	64
6	**1f**	Br	**3c** (R = COPh)	3	**5f**	67

[a]Reaction conditions: 2-Amino-3-hydroxypyridine **1e**–**1f** (1.0 mmol) and DMF-DMA (2.0 equiv) were mixed and stirred in DMF (2 mL) at 65 °C for 1 h. Then, active electrophiles **3b**–**3c** (2.5 equiv), $NaHCO_3$ (3 equiv) were added and the stirring continued at 85 °C for additional 1–3 h. [b]Reaction time for the second step. [c]Isolated yield based on **1e**–**1f**.

$NaHCO_3$ were used in the second step of the reaction, various 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*a*]pyridines **5a**–**5f** were obtained in good yields (Scheme 3, Table 3).

3.4 *Synthesis of 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-b]pyridazines **8a**–**8c***

For further investigation, 6-chloropyridazin-3-amine **6** was also tested to synthesize the corresponding 3-substituted fused imidazo-heterocyclic compounds. Intermediate (*E*)-*N*′-(6-chloropyridazin-3-yl)-*N*, *N*-dimethyformamidine **7** that formed in near quantitative yield, as detected by TLC,[17] subsequently reacted with **3a**–**3c** in situ and afforded the desired 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*b*]pyridazines **8a**–**8c** in moderate yields with $NaHCO_3$ as a base and KI (20 mol%) as an additive at 85 °C (Scheme 4, Table 4). This reaction represents a novel approach for the synthesis of 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*b*]pyridazines.



Scheme 4. Synthesis of 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*b*]pyridazines **8a**–**8c**.

Table 4. Synthesis of 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*b*]pyridazines **8a**–**8c**[a].

Entry	**3**	Time (h)[b]	Product	Yield (%)[c]
1	**3a** (R = CO_2Et)	3	**8a**	73
2	**3b** (R = CN)	4	**8b**	60
3	**3c** (R = COPh)	3	**8c**	57

[a]Reaction conditions: 6-Chloropyridazin-3-amine **6** (1.0 mmol) and DMF-DMA (2.0 equiv) were mixed and stirred in DMF (2 mL) at 65 °C for 3 h. Then, active electrophiles **3a**–**3c** (1.3 equiv), $NaHCO_3$ (1.5 equiv) and KI (0.2 equiv) were added and the stirring continued at 85 °C for additional 3–4 h. [b]Reaction time for the second step. [c]Isolated yield based on **6**.

4. Conclusions

In summary, we have developed a convenient and straight-forward two-step one-pot method for the preparation of a wide variety of 3-substituted imidazo [1,2-*a*]pyridines and 3-substituted imidazo[1,2-*b*]pyrid azines from readily available starting materials. The second step of the reaction is based on the condensation of intermediate (*E*)-*N*,*N*-dimethy-*N*′-(pyridin-2 -yl)-formamidine and its derivatives or (*E*)-*N*′-(6-chloro pyridazin-3-yl)-*N*, *N*-dimethyformamidine with active electrophiles RCH_2Br (R = CN, CO_2Et, COPh, 4'-MeO-PhCO and 4'-F-PhCO) in the presence of $NaHCO_3$.

Supplementary Information (SI)

Copies of the original spectra (^1H NMR, ^{13}C NMR, mass, etc.) of all the molecules reported in the experimental section are included in Supplementary Information. Supplementary Information is available at www.ias.ac.in/chemsci.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support by the research project (ZR2014BM014) from Shandong Provincial Natural Science Foundation and Shandong Youbang Biochemical Technology Co., LTD.

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