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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Diabetes is a disease which affects the metabolism of carbohydrates, proteins, and fat due to absolute or relative deficiency of insulin secretion with or without varying degree of insulin resistance (Asadujjaman *et al.*, 2011). The number of individuals with diabetes has been increasing due to population growth, aging, urbanization, and increasing prevalence of obesity and physical inactivity (Sarah *et al.*, 2004). The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated the diabetic population to increase up to 300 million or more by the year 2025 (Patel *et al.*, 2012). The most important distinctive feature of diabetes is an elevated blood glucose concentration, but this abnormality is just one of a number of biochemical and physiological changes that occur (Olaitan, 2012). Hypercholesterolemia and hyper triglyceridemia are common complications of diabetes mellitus (Akhtar *et al.*, 2007). The treatment of diabetes mainly involves the use of hypoglycaemic drugs in addition to insulin but the unwanted side effects of these drugs prompted a demand for new compounds for the treatment of diabetes (Asadujjaman *et al.*, 2011). The drive for change from orthodox to herbal medicines is to an extent due to the adverse reactions, undesirable side effects of synthetic drugs, the cost of buying modern antidiabetic drugs, which is beyond the reach of the lower class citizens and the belief that natural products are safer to the biological systems (Mohammed *et al.*, 2007). It has now become necessary to search for new compounds in order to overcome these problems, and several traditional medicines are now used to manage diabetes mellitus in different societies all over the continents (Raju *et al.*, 2011).

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