## **Research Article**

# Physiological and biochemical responses of lettuce plant to the allochemical compound of paraxanthine

Nastran Asadi and Seyed Mehdi Razavi\*
Department of Biology, Faculty of Science, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Ardabil, Iran
(Received: 23/03/2021-Accepted: 26/06/2021)

### Abstract

In this study, the effects of paraxanthin on lettuce were investigated. Paraxanthin is a group of purine alkaloids, secondary metabolites of plants. This compound is made up of the caffeine metabolism found in plants such as tea, coffee and cocoa. There have been previous reports of paraxanthine antihypertensive properties. Three different concentrations of paraxanthine as 10, 50 and 100 µg/ml were treated on lettuce seedlings and then some physiological and biochemical parameters were measured at 7 leave stage of the plants. The results showed that seed germination, radicle and plumule growth of lettuce plant decreased at different concentrations of the paraxanthine in a dose dependent manner. At the concentration of 100µg/ml of paraxanthine, all of the growth parameters were completely inhibited. Some measured parameters such as wet and dry weights of the shoots, photosynthetic rate, photochemical efficiency of photosystem II, leaf relative content and total protein decreased in the paraxanthine treated plants compared to the control group. However, some other parameters such as proline content, hydrogen peroxide and the activity of polyphenol oxidase, ascorbate peroxidase, catalase and protease in the treated plants increased. On the other hand, a significant change in electrophoretic pattern of the plant leaf proteins was observed. Some electrophoretic bands in the treated plants with 100µg/ml of paraxanthine removed in comparison with the control group. The present study demonstrated that the paraxanthine as an allelochemical causes some physiological and biochemical responses in the lettuce which are much similar to those appears under abiotic stress.

Key words: Allelochemicals, Allelopathy, Lettuce, Paraxanthine

# Introduction

In the recent decades, allelopathy and its related mechanisms has been increasingly subjected to study by biologists. The main purpose of this study has been aimed to designate bioherbicides that combats weeds effectively with more less harmful envirmental effects.

Allelopathy has been described as a positive or negative interaction between plants through chemicals released into the environment. The chemicals named as allelochemicals that release from source plant to suppress surrounding plants (Iqbal and Fry, 2012; Ashihara, 2006; Wang, 2012). An allelochemical can inhibit some plant functions such as respiration; photosynthesis; stomata function; cell membrane permeability; cell proliferation; chlorophyll content; protein synthesis and alteration of enzyme activity as described by Narwal (1996).

Purine alkaloids are regarded as plant secondary metabolites derived from purine nucleotides. Paraxanthine as a purine alkaloid is produced from caffeine metabolism pathway in some plant such as Tea, coffee and cacao (Ashihara, 2008). It is a dimethyl derivative of xanthine known as a caffeine structurally related compound. In addition to paraxanthine, other caffeine-like compounds found in human or animals

urine consuming tea or caffea (Rodriguez-Gil *et al.*, 2018). Explaned that paraxanthin is also commonly used anthropogenic marker and release from urbane sewage to environmental waters.

A previous report revealed that paraxanthin along with some other purin alkaloids such as caffein and theophyllin indicate considerable allelopathic potential. Some previous reports demonstrated allelopathic potential of a number of purine alkaloids such as paraxanthin on lettuce plants. It was shown that this compound inhibit seed germination and seedlind growth of lettuce plants (Muchtaridi *et al.*, 2021). It was also described that purine alkaloids in seed coat of tea plants indicated authotoxicity and stunt germination of contained seeds (Chen-Yang *et al.*, 2011). Sasamoto *et al.* (2015) demonstrated that purin alkaloids inhibit cell division and colonization of lettuce cells.

The current study aims to study the effects of various concentration of paraxanthine on some physiological and biochemical process of lettuce such as growth attributes, photosynthetic parameters, antioxidant machinery and osmo protectant systems.

## Material and methods

Treatments and measurement of growth

<sup>\*</sup>Corresponding Author, Email: razavi694@gmail.com

parameters: All of the planting process and experiments were performed at the University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Faculty of Science. Allelopathic test was performed on Lactuca sativa L cv. Siahoo. Four doses of paraxanthine were prepared by dilution of the paraxanthine with pure water. Seeds uncontaminated with NaClO (5%) for 5 min and then washed five times with pure water. Four replications of tests comprised of 25 seeds were prepared four each treatment using sterile petri dishes (90 mm) lined with a single filter paper (whatman, number 2). Five ml of different paraxanthine was added to each of petri dishes then prepared plate were placed in Incubator at 25°C. Each day the number of germinated seeds was counted and after 5 days germination percentage in treatment and control groups was calculated. After one weeks the lettuce seedlings were transplanted to pots containing peat and were irrigated with Hoagland nutrient solution containing paraxanthine with the concentration of 0.01, 0.05 and 0.1 mg/ml. After 28 days of applying the treatments, the plants were harvested for performing the experiments. The relation elongation ratio of root and shoot were calculated. In the case of cultured seedlings in above concentrations, the fresh and dry weight of shoots, in the treated group were compared to the control group.

Leaf relative water content (RWC): The youngest mature leaves were determined for RWC evaluation. After measurement of fresh weight, the leaves were hydrated by floating in distillated water for 48 h. The leaves were subjected to weighting again to get turgid weight (TW) and then incubated for 48h at 80°C. Finally dry weight (DW) was measured. (Deef and Fattah, 2008).

RWC (%) =  $[F(W-DW) / (TW-DW)] \times 100$ 

W: Fresh weight of leave sample TW: Turgid weight of leave sample DW: Dry weight of leave sample

Chlorophyll and carotenoids contents: One hundred mg of fresh leaves were extracted by 5 ml acetone 80%. Pigments content were measured using the spectroscopic method. Amounts of chlorophyll a, chlorophyll b and total chlorophyll and carotenoids were determined at A645, A663 and A440 using the following formula (Lichtenthaler and Buschmann, 2001).

Chla = (12.7.A663-2.69.A654) V/1000W Chlb = (22.9.A645-4.68.A663) V/1000W [Chls a+b] = 20.21.A645+8.62.A663

Car = 100(A470)-3.27(mg chl.a)-104(mg chl.b)/227

**SPAD unit of chlorophyll, photosynthesis rate and chlorophyll fluorescence:** Three lettuce plants from each treatment were chosen from different pots. Gas exchange parameter measurements were performed on youngest leaves. After 28 days, the photosynthesis rate was measured with an LI 6400 portable infrared gas analyzer IRGA. The chlorophyll content along with photosynthesis rate of expanded leaves were measured based on method of Lavresunior *et al.* (2012). 28 days

after initiating the treatment, relative chlorophyll content was determined in SPAD units, by chlorophyll meter. Prior to measurement of chlorophyll florescence, the leaf samples were dark-adapted at room temperature. Three leaves from each group were used. After adaptation in dark condition, each leaf sample was put in FMS leaf clip (7 mm aperture) and then Fv/Fm was measured using Fluorescence Monitoring System (FMS, Hansatech).

Free amino acids content: 0.5 g frozen leaves were homogenized in 50 mM phosphate buffer solution and then centrifuged in 3000 g for 20 min, then to the supernatant was added 350 mg ninhydrin solution and placed in warm water bath at 70-100°C and then the reaction was abolished using ice bath and the absorption read at 570nm. The total free amino acids content was evaluated using a standard curve prepared with known concentration of glycine (Wagner, 1979).

**Proline content:** Frozen leaves (0.5 g) were homogenized in 10 ml of sulphosalicyilc acid (3%) and then centrifuged 10000 g. the supernatant (0.5 ml) was mixed with 1ml of ninhydrin (2.5%). The mixture was kept at 100°C for 1 h and then the reaction was terminated by cooling the mixture in ice bath. The reaction mixture was extracted by 2 ml of toluene and finally the absorption was recorded at 520 nm. The proline concentration was calculated by using a standard curve (Bates et al., 1973).

Glycine betaine content (GB): Analysis of glycine betaine were determined according to the method of Grieve and Grattan (1983). 0.5 gr frozen leaves were powdered with liquid nitrogen and were homogenized with 20 ml of pure water. The homogenate was incubated for 24 in an incubator at 25°C. 0.5 ml of filtrated extract was blended with 2 N H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> solution and 0.1 ml of potassium tri-iodide solution (containing 3.72 g Iodine and 10 g potassium iodide in 50 ml of 1 N HCl) and then was shaken in an ice-cold water bath for 30 min. Finally, 14 ml of dichloroethane was added to the mixture and were quaked for 48 h at 25°C. The concentrations of glycine betaine were calculated using standard curve prepared with particular concentration of GB (Grieve and Grattan, 1983).

Hydrogen peroxide ( $H_2O_2$ ) content: Hydrogen peroxide level were identified according to Velikova *et al.* (2000). Frozen leaves (0.5 g) homogenized in an ice bath using 1 ml 0.1% TCA. The homogenate mixture was centrifuged at 10000 g for 15 min. Then to each tube were added 10 mM of potassium phosphate buffer (pH=7.0) and 100  $\mu$ L of 1 M KI. The absorption was recorded at 390 nm. Hydrogen peroxide content of leaves was calculated by using a standard curve prepared with various concentration of  $H_2O_2$  (Moradi *et al.*, 2018).

**Lipid peroxidation:** To estimate of malondialdehyde (MDA) content of leaves, as a measure of the amount lipid peroxidation, the thiobarbituric acid (TBA) assay was used (De voce, 1997). 0.3 g fresh leaves were homogenized with 5 ml

Downloaded from jispp.iut.ac.ir on 2025-10-31

of 0.1% trichloroacetic acid (TCA). The homogenate was centrifuged at 15,000 g for 15 min and 0.5 ml of the supernatant was mixed with 2 ml of TBA (0.5%) in TCA (20%). The mixture was incubated for 1 h at 100°C. When reaction stopped, the mixture was centrifuged at10,000 g for 5 min. The absorbance of the supernatant was screened at 532 and 600 nm (Moradi *et al.*, 2018). The level of lipid peroxidation was calculated by using the related extinction coefficient (155 mM<sup>-1</sup> cm<sup>-1</sup>).

Catalase (CAT) activity assay: Catalase activity assay was recorded by disappear H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> at 240 nm, the reaction mixture contains 50 mM K-phosphate buffer (pH=7) and 0.3 ml H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> 3%. The enzyme activity is determined by Beer Lambert Law with extinction co efficiency of 39.4 mM<sup>-1</sup>.cm<sup>-1</sup> (Cakmak and Marschner, 1992).

**Polyphenol oxidase (PPO):** The enzymatic activity of polyphenol oxidase, pyrogallol was used as a substrate. The reaction mixture consisted 2.5 mM potassium phosphate buffer (pH=6.8) and 0.2 mL of 4% pyrogallol. The mixture was incubated at 40°C and then the reaction was added 0.2 ml enzyme extraction and absorbance was recorded at 430 nm. The enzyme activity was determined by Beer Lambert Law with extinction co efficiency of  $\varepsilon$ :2.47 mM<sup>-1</sup>.cm<sup>-1</sup> (Moradi *et al.*, 2018).

Ascorbate peroxidase (APX): Ascorbate-peroxidation activity was measured according to the method of Nakano and Asada (1981) by reducing concentration of ascorbate at 290 nm. The reaction mixture contained 0.05 M potassium phosphate buffer (pH 7.0), 0.6 mM ascorbate and 0.2 ml of 3% hydrogen peroxide in a total volume of 6 ml. The reaction was initialized by adding hydrogen peroxide and the change in absorbance was measured at 290 nm with extinction co efficiency of 2.8 mM<sup>-1</sup>.cm<sup>-1</sup> (Moradi *et al.*, 2018).

**Protease active assay:** The procedure of Brik *et al.* (1962) as used for the determination of protease activity. The reaction mixture consisted of 1 ml of 1% Casein (prepared in 0.05 M phosphate buffer) and then incubated at 45 °C, for 1 h. The reaction was terminated by addition of 0.1 mL of 40% trichloro acetic acid (TCA). Absorbance was recorded 280 nm. The activity of protease enzyme was calculated by using the extinction coefficient of 21.5 mM<sup>-1</sup>.cm<sup>-1</sup> (Moradi *et al.*, 2018).

**Total protein content:** Protein concentration in the enzyme extract was evaluated using Folin Ciocalteu reagent by the method of Bradford (1976). Bovine Serum Albumin was used for preparation of standard curve. The absorption was measured at 540 nm using spectrophotometer (Moradi *et al.*, 2018).

**SDS-PAGE procedure:** Protein profiling studied on 10% SDS-PAGE. By adding sample buffer (5X) and protein samples in 1:4 ratio, the samples were prepared for electrophoresis. The same preparation method was also repeated for standard protein marker. Samples were subjected to boiling water bath for 2 to 3 min and then

were injected using a micro syringe into wells through electrode buffer. Also, the standard marker was injected into the gel to identify the molecular weight of the bands.

Each sample well was loaded with  $100~\mu g$  of protein in  $10~\mu l$  of sample buffer containing bromophenol blue as tracking dye. The prepared gel was run at 50~mA current and voltage of 150~V. Protein bands were detected by coomassie brilliant blue staining. Finally, the stained gel was then transferred to de staining solution (Methanol and glacial acetic acid in 5:1 proportion). SDS-PAGE destain solution is to de stain Coomassie dye from the gel (Ladizinsky and Hymowitz, 1979).

**Statistical analysis:** All of experiments were set at a complete randomized design with three replications. All of data were analyzed using ANOVA followed by a *Duncan* test (SPSS Version 16) at  $P \le 0.05$ .

#### Results

**Growth parameters:** The effect of paraxanthine on the growth parameters of lettuce showed that, paraxanthin significantly (P\le 0.05) reduced seed germination, root and shoot growth as well as shoot fresh-dry weights of lettuce (Table 1, Fig. 1). Paraxanthine decreased the seed germination by 5.26%, 10.5% and 18.7% compared to the control with the concentration of 10, 50 and 100 µg/ml, respectively. Significantly negative correlation existed between paraxanthine and root and shoot lengths, as well. The maximum inhibition in shoot and root length was found at 100 µg/ml of paraxanthine. The shoot and root length were minimized to 42.8% and at same concentration of paraxanthine, respectively. Also, our results indicated that dry and fresh weight shoot of lettuce seedlings were significantly lowered in the all concentration of paraxanthine. The highest of concentration (100 µg/ml) reduced fresh and dry weight of shoot by 47% and 43% compared with the control, respectively.

**Leaf relative water content (RWC):** The RWC of lettuce plants was significantly decreased from %74 in the control group to 60, 55 and 51% at 10, 50 and 100 µg/ml paraxanthine, respectively (Table 1, Fig. 2).

**Photosynthetic pigments:** Our results revealed that chla, chlb, total chlorophyll and carotenoids content of lettuce plants were significantly diminished at paraxanthine treatments at  $P \le 0.05$ (Table 1). At the highest concentration of the paraxanthine (100 µg/ml) the level of chla, chlb, total chlorophyll and carotenoids reduced by 91.5%, 38.5%, 57.5% and 74.4% compared with the control, respectively (Fig. 3).

SPAD, photosynthesis rate, chlorophyll florescence: The results demonstrated that relative chlorophyll content (SPAD) significantly decreased in paraxanthine treated groups of lettuce plants than control ones (Table 1). At the concentration of 10, 50 and 100  $\mu g$  ml<sup>-1</sup> of paraxanthine SPAD unit of chlorophyll showed a decrease to 14.7%, 27.2% and

Table	1 Ana	lyces of	variance	table for	nhysiologic	al parameters
1 anie	1. Alla	110 69611	variance	table for	DHVSIOIOZIC	ai dalametels

Parameters SV	Shoot Length	Root Length	Shoot fresh weight	Root Fresh weight	RWC	Chl a	Chl b	SPAD	P.R.	Fv/Fm
Paraxanthin Treatment	13.30*	5.11*	0.37**	0.30**	7850.11*	34577.32*	807341.65*	0.86*	0.00086*	0.00033*
Error	2.501	0.820	0.021	0.025	603.812	2659.700	53822.712	0.091	0.000043	0.00003

<sup>\*\*, \*</sup> indicate significant at 1 and 5 % levels of probability, respectively

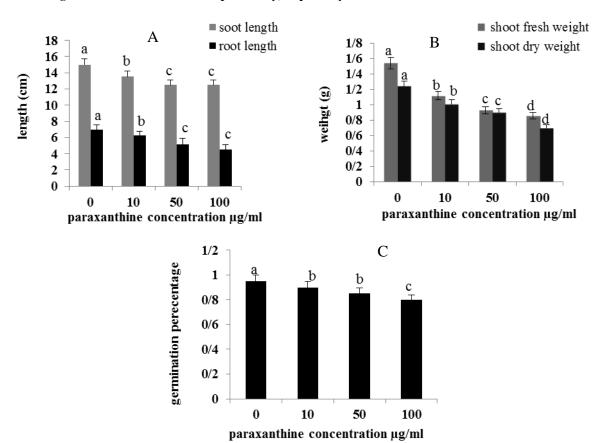


Figure 1. The effect of paraxanthine on root and shoot length (A). dry weight and fresh weight (B). Seed germination percentage (C) of lettuce. Columns with at least one similar letter are not statistically significant differences ( $P \le 0.05$ ).

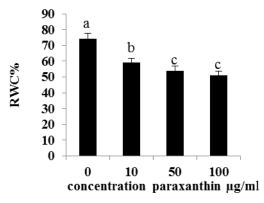
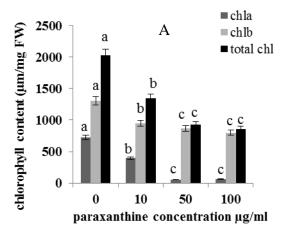


Figure 2. The effect of paraxanthine on the relative water content (RWC). Columns with at least one similar letter are not statistically significant differences ( $P \le 0.05$ ).

33.3% % in comparison to the control group (Fig. 4A). Significant relation was also observed between the lettuce plants in photosynthetic rate. Photosynthetic rate

was reduced after application of paraxanthine at 10, 50 and 100 µg ml<sup>-1</sup> of the compound about 60%, 60% and 80% of the control value, respectively (Fig. 4B).

Downloaded from jispp.iut.ac.ir on 2025-10-31



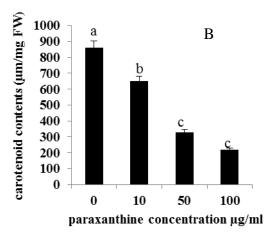


Figure 3. The effects of paraxanthine on (A) chlorophyll content (mg/g FW) and (B) carotenoid content (mg/g FW) of lettuce. Columns with at least one similar letter are not statistically significant differences (P≤0.05).

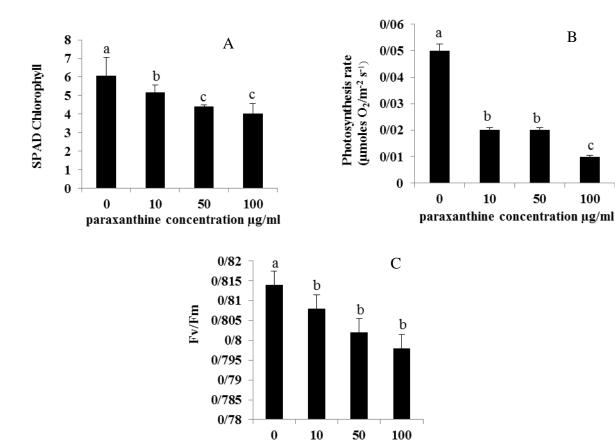


Figure 4. Effect of paraxanthine on chlorophyll content in SPAD units (A), Photosynthesis rate (µmoles O<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>-2</sup> s<sup>-1</sup>) (B) and Fv/Fm (C) in lettuce plants treated with xanthotoxin. Columns with at least one similar letter are not statistically significant differences (P≤0.05).

10

paraxanthine concentration µg/ml

Our results also displayed that paraxanthine photochemical efficiency diminished the photosystem II (Fv/Fm values) in treated lettuce plants. The rate falls below to 0.8 in the plant treated with 100 μg ml<sup>-1</sup>of paraxanthine implied to a stressful condition (Fig. 4C).

Proline, total free amino acids and glycine betaine content: Glycine betaine (GB) level and total free amino acids, in all the tested treatments are presented in Figure 5. All of the three measured amino acids content were significantly increased in all treatment at P≤0.05 (Table 2). Paraxanthine increased the GB content values in lettuce by 7.09%, 14.3% and 28.8% at 10, 50 and 100 µg ml<sup>-1</sup>, respectively. The influence of paraxanthine on total free amino acids and proline is showed in Figure 5. The total free amino acid

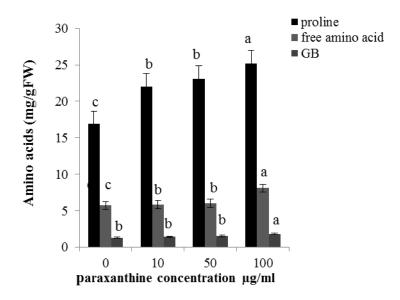


Figure 5. Proline content, total free amino acids and glycine betaine content in response to paraxanthine. Columns with at least one similar letter are not statistically significant differences ( $P \le 0.05$ ).

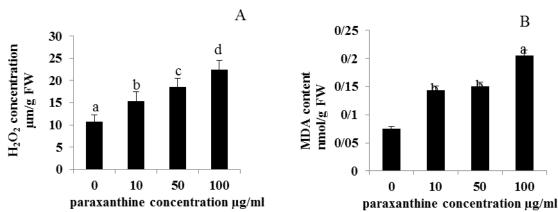


Figure 6. Hydrogen peroxide in response to paraxanthine (A). MDA content in response to paraxanthine (B). Columns with at least one similar letter are not statistically significant differences ( $P \le 0.05$ ).

content was increased after application of paraxanthine by 2.62%, 4.98% and 29.2% than control at 10, 50 and 100 µg ml<sup>-1</sup> of paraxanthine, respectively.

There was a significant increase in free proline accumulation with increasing of paraxanthine at  $P \le 0.05$ . Proline content was increased after application of paraxanthine at 10, 50 and 100  $\mu$ g ml<sup>-1</sup> as 23.3%, 26.7% and 32.9 compared with control group, respectively.

Hydrogen peroxide content and lipid peroxidation: Figure 6 shows the changes in  $H_2O_2$  and malondialdehyde (MDA) contents in lettuce after paraxanthine treatments.  $H_2O_2$  content and the lipid peroxidation marker (MDA content) were significantly increased by paraxanthine treatment at  $P \le 0.05$  (Table 2). The MDA concentration at treatment of 100  $\mu$ g ml<sup>-1</sup> of paraxanthin was higher than the control plants about 100%.

Treatment of paraxanthine increased  $H_2O_2$  content in lettuce plants by 29.4%, 41.6% and 90.9.% for 10, 50 and 100 µg/ml respectively, as well.

Antioxidant enzymes assay: The effect of

paraxanthine on specific activity of some antioxidant enzymes and protease is shown in Figure 7. The results indicated that the activity of catalase (CAT), polyphenol oxidase (PPO), ascorbate peroxidase (APX) increased in response to paraxanthine treatment (Table 2). The highest activity of CA, PPO and APX were recorded at 100µg/ml. CAT activity increased by 25%, 80% and 86.6% at 10, 50 and 100  $\mu$ g/ml of the control, respectively. Treatment with paraxanthine increased the activity of PPO by 29.3%, 53% and 72.3% for 10, 50 and 100 µg/ml concentration, respectively, as well. Also, paraxanthine increased the activity of APX by 48.5%, 68.9% and 77.3% for 10, 50 and 100 μg/ml concentration respectively. The level of protease activity in the leaves were altered in response to paraxanthine (Fig. 7). Treatment with paraxanthine increased the activity of protease by 8.75%. 27.5% and 39.15% in the plant treated with at 10, 50 and 100 µg/ml of paraxanthine, respectively.

**Protein content:** The paraxanthine induced a significant change in concentration of total proteins

Table 2. Analyses of variance table for biochemical parameters

Parameters SV	Proline Content	Free Amino acid	GB	Hydrogen Peroxide	MD	Protease	Ascorbate Peroxidase	Poly phenol oxidase	Catalase	Protein
Paraxanthin Treatment	45.13*	1.89*	0.17*	86.66**	0.016*	0.19**	0.004*	0.10*	0.076*	0.0033*
Error	3.210	0.211	0.021	4.330	0.901	0.012	0.003	0.010	0.006	0.0004

\*\*, \* indicate significant at 1 and 5 % levels of probability, respectively

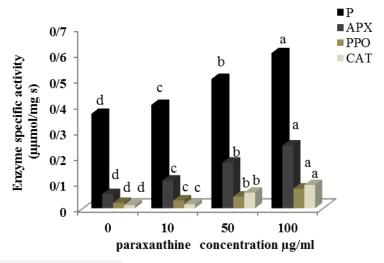


Figure 7. Specific activity of various enzymes, catalase (CAT), polyphenol oxidase (PPO), ascorbate peroxidase (APX) and protease (P) in respond to different concentration of paraxanthine in lettuce. Columns with at least one similar letter are not statistically significant differences ( $P \le 0.05$ ).

content in treated lettuce plants (Figure 8). The content of total proteins in 50 and 100  $\mu$ g/ml of paraxanthine had a significant difference with respect to the control at P $\leq$ 0.05. In general, the total protein content in different concentration of paraxanthine was decreased as 23.9% than control at 100  $\mu$ g/ml.

SDS-PAGE protein profile: The results of SDS-PAGE analysis of lettuce leaves proteins showed that there was a considerable difference in electrophoretic patterns of protein bands in paraxanthine treated plants with control group. As it is shown in figure 9, some electrophoretic bands with molecular wight of 25-60 KD presented in control group, were disappeared at the treated group with  $100 \, \mu g/ml$  of paraxanthine.

# Discussion

The results of present work demonstrated that paraxanthine reduced seed germination, shoot-root lengths and shoot weight of lettuce plants. It might be attributed to the effects of paraxanthine in diminishing mitotic divisions of plant cells. A previous work implied on role of purine alkaloids on proliferation of lettuce cells obtained from protoplasts. (Sasamoto *et al.*, 2015). It can be assumed that purine alkaloids such as paraxanthine with a purine base skeleton resembles to cytokinins and may exhibit a possible interact with this hormones receptors. It was shown that plant cells may be promoted to synthesis purine alkaloids at stressful conditions like intense light that might be related to metabolism shifting from cytokinin biosynthesis to the

alkaloids (Ashihara et al., 2011; Ashihara et al., 2013).

It was previously described that allelochemicals cause decreasing in all of growth parameters (Sarkara *et al.*, 2012; Liu *et al.*, 2021). It may be due to a hormonal balance disturbance between ABA and ethylene in germination seeds, inhibition of water uptake and a reduction in nutrient uptake in plant roots resulting a decrease in leaves relative water contents (Alam and Islam, 2002; Cheng and Cheng, 2015).

It is obvious from the results that chlorophyll a, chlorophyll b, total chlorophyll and carotenoid content significantly decreased in lettuce plants effected with paraxanthine. Chlorophyll and carotenoid photosynthetic pigments was previously reported that exhibit a reduction under allelochemical stress (Singh et al., 2009). It could be related to blocking of chlorophyll biosynthesis or induction of chlorophyll degradation through allelochemical (Kapoor et al., 2016). Decrease in photosynthetic pigments in allelochemical stress tends to a low photosynthetic rate, as well as. These alternations could be caused a reduction in plant growth allelochemical stress condition (Babu Kandasamy, 2008). Hence, it could be inferred that the high concentrations of paraxanthine have inhibitory effect on growth and photosynthesis through decrease in chlorophyll synthesis (Li et al., 2020). The reduction in chlorophyll content and growth parameters was also observed by Srivastava (2010) in cowpea under condition stress of allelochemicals.

It was also found that paraxanthine induces a

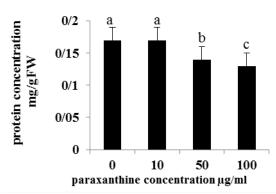


Figure 8. Effect of paraxanthine on total proteins of lettuce. Columns with at least one similar letter are not statistically significant differences ( $P \le 0.05$ ).

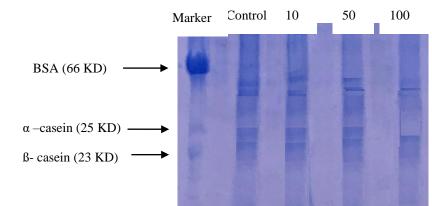


Figure 9. SDS-PAGE analysis of lettuce proteins treated with different concentration of paraxanthine. Lanes from left side represents marker, control and treated groups with 10, 50 and 100 µg/ml of paraxanthine, respectively.

secondary stress named oxidative stress in lettuce plants characterized by high level of reactive oxygen species. Hydrogen peroxide as a reactive oxygen species raised in the paraxanthine treated plants. It may lead to lipid peroxidation process resulting serious damage to organelle and cytoplasmic membranes. The membrane disruption in thylakoid membrane can be responsible for diminish in photochemical efficiency of photosystems II index (Fv/Fm). This reduction, in turn, can be regarded as another reason for photosynthesis rate falling. Measurement of chlorophyll fluorescence parameters such as Fv/Fm index is a powerful technique to estimate the rate of linear electron transport and recognize a stressful condition for plants (Dayan and Zaccaro, 2012).

Our results showed that free amino acids content and osmo protection markers proline and glycine betaine level raised in lettuce plants after paraxanthine treatment. The accumulation of this compatible osmolytes is a certain response in different plants to endure water loss under various environmental stresses. In addition to osmotic adjustment, these solutes may serve a protection role in plants at stress conditions (Demiral and Turkan, 2006). These compatible solutes may be protecting plants against reactive oxygen species and their harmful damages on cellular membranes and cell components such as DNA, proteins

and sugars (Scandalios, 1993; Song et al., 2013).

Plant has its own defense mechanisms in response to the generation of ROS by induction of antioxidant enzymes and nonenzymatic antioxidants (weir *et al.*, 2004; Rocio *et al.*, 2007; Sweetlove, 2002). The present work revealed that some antioxidant enzymes such as catalase (CAT), polyphenol oxidase (PPO), ascorbate peroxidase (APX) increased in response to paraxanthine that might be tend to minimize paraxanthine created oxidative stress.

The SDS-PAGA analysis of the lettuce plants treated with paraxanthine indicated that some proteins bands disappeared in the plant group treated with 100 μg/ml of the compound. The missed bands with molecular weights of 25-60 KD may be related to photosystem II complex proteins. The proteins that have molecular weights of 25 to 70 KD and are damaged by reactive oxygen species (Fujii *et al.*, 2016). Further investigation is need to confirm the hypothesis. Rice *et al.* 1984 demonstrated that allelochemicals diminished the incorporation of certain amino acids into proteins and free amino acids increased due to proteins degradation and reduction rate of proteins.

Briefly, it can be speculated that paraxanthine induced an alleloochemical stress in lettuce plants causing some damages and promote a responses in the plants resemble some other environmental stress such as

Downloaded from jispp.iut.ac.ir on 2025-10-31

drought, salinity and so on. The plants responses aim to eliminate ROS and free radicles, osmoregulation and osmoprotection process.

#### Conclusion

It can be concluded that paraxanthine might be regarded as a potent allelochemical to induce some physiological and biochemical changes on lettuce as a model plant in allelopathic studies. It may release from tea, coffee or cacao leaches to environment and effect surrounding plants. The substance may also leak from some urban sewage to farms through surface, underground or irrigation waters and effects farming or native plants.

#### References

- Alam, S. M. and Islam, E. U. (2002) Effect of aqueous extract of leaf stem and root of nettle leaf goosefoot (*Chenopodium murale* L.) and NaCl on germination and seeding growth of rice (*Oryza sativa* L.). Pakistan Journal of Science and Technology 1: 47-52.
- Ashihara, H. (2006) Metabolism of alkaloids in coffee plants. Brazilean Journal of Plant Physiology 18: 1-8.
- Ashihara, H., Yokota, T. and Crozier, A. (2013) Biosynthesis and catabolism of purine alkaloids. Advances in Botanical Research 68: 111-138.
- Ashihara, H., Ogita, S. and Crozier, A. (2011) Purine alkaloid metabolism. In: Plant Metabolism and Biotechnology (eds. Ashihara, H., Crozier, A. and Komamine, A.) Pp. 163-189. John Wiley and Sons, Ltd, Chichester, UK.
- Ashihara, H., Sano, H. and Crozier, A. (2008) Caffeine and related purine alkaloids: Biosynthesis, catabolism, function and genetic engineering. Phytochemistry 69: 841-856.
- Babu, R. C. and Kandasamy, O. S. (2008) Allelopathic effect of *Eucalyptus globules* Labill on *Cyperus rotumdus* L. S. *Cynodon dactylon* L. Pers. Journal of Agronomy and crop Science 179: 123-126.
- Bates, L. S., Waldren, R. P. and Teare, I. D. (1973) Rapid determination of free proline for water-stress studies. Plant and Soil 39: 205-207.
- Bradford, M. M. (1976) A rapid and sensitive method for the quantitation of microgram quantities of protein utilizing the principle of protein-dye binding. Analytical Biochemistry 72: 248-254.
- Brik, Y., Harpaz, I., Ishaya, A. and Bhondi, A. (1962) Studies on proteolytic activity of beetles Tenebrio and Tribolium. Journal of Insect Physiology 8: 417-429.
- Cakmak, I. and Marschner, H. (1992) Magnesium deficiency and high light intensity enhance activities of superoxide dismutase, ascorbate peroxidase and glutathione reductase in bean leaves. Plant Physiology 98: 1222-1227.
- Chen-Yang, Z., Ji-Giang, J., Ming-Zhe, Y. and Liang, C. (2011) Progress on purine alkaloids metabolismin tea and other plants. Journal of Tea Science 31: 87-94.
- Cheng, F. and Cheng, Z. (2015) Research progress on the use of plant allelopathy in agriculture and the physiological and ecological mechanisms of allelopathy. Frontiers in Plant Science 6: 1020.
- Dayan, F. E. and Zaccaro, L. M. (2012) Chlorophyll fluorescence as a marker for herbicide mechanisms of action. Pesticides Biochemistry and Physiology 2012: 189-187.
- Deef, H. E. and Fattah, A. (2008) Allelopathic effects on water extract of *Artemisia priceps* var. orientalis on wheat under two type of soils. Academic Journal of Plant Science 1: 12-17.
- Demiral, T. and Turkan, I. (2006) Exogenous glycine betaine affects growth and proline accumulation and retards senescence in two rice cultivars under NaCl stress. Environmental and Experimental Botany 56: 72-79.
- Fujii, R., Yamano, N., Hashimoto, H., Misawa, N. and Ifuku, K. (2016) Photoprotection vs. photoinhibition of photosystem II in transplastomic lettuce (*Lactuca sativa*) dominantly accumulating astaxanthin. Plant Cell Physiolology 57: 1518-1529.
- Iqbal, A. and Fry, S. C. (2012) Potent endogenous allelopathic compounds in *Lepidium sativum* seed exudate: Effects on epidermal cell growth *in Amaranthus caudatus* seedlings. Journal of Experimental Botany 63: 2595-2604.
- Grieve, C. M. and Grattan, S. R. (1983) Rapid assay for the determination of water solublequaternary ammonium compounds. Plant and Soil 70: 303-307.
- Kapoor, G., Rinzim, A., Tiwari, A., Seghal, A., Landi, M., Brestic, M. and Sharma, A. (2016) Exploiting the allelopathic potential of aqueous leaf extracts of *Artemisia absinthium* and *Psidium guajava* against *Parthenium hysterophorus*, a widespread weed in India. Plants 8: 1-13.
- Ladizinsky, G. and Hymowitz, Z. (1979) Seed protein electrophoresis in taxo and evolutionary studies. Theorical and Applied Genetics 54: 145-151.
- Lavresunior, J., Cabral, C. P., Rossi, M. L., Nogueira, T. A. R., Nogueira, N. L. and Malavolta, E. (2012) Deficiency symptoms and uptake of micronutrients by castor bean grown in nutrient solution. Revista Brasileira de Ciencia do Solo 36: 233-242.
- Lichtenthaler, H. K. and Buschmann, C. (2001) Chlorophylls and carotenoids: Measurement and characterization by UV-VIS spectroscopy. Current Protocols in Food Analytical Chemistry 1: F4.3.1–F4.3.8.
- Li, N., Tong, M. and Gilbert, P. M. (2020) Effect of allelochemicals on photosynthetic and antioxidant defense system of *Ulva prolifera*. Aquatic Toxicology 224: 105513.

- Liu, Z. Z. Y., Yuan, L., Weber, E. and Kleunen, M. V. (2021) Effect of allelopathy on plant performance: A metaanalysis. Ecology Letters 2: 348-362.
- Moradi, K., Razavi, S. M. and Zahri, S. (2018) The ameliorating effects of polyamine supplement on physiological and biochemical parameters of *Stevia rebaudiana* Bertoni under cold stress. Plant Production Science 21: 123-131.
- Muchtaridi, M., Lestari, D., Ikram, N. K. K., Gazzali, A. M. and Hariono Wahab, H. A. (2021) Decaffeination and neuraminidase inhibitory activity of arabica green coffee (*Coffea arabica*) beans. Chlorogenic Acid as a Potential Bioactive Compound, Molecules 26: 3402.
- Nakano, Y. and Asada, K. (1981) Hydrogen peroxide is scavenged by ascorbate specific peroxidase in spinach chloroplasts. Plant Cell Physiology 22: 679-690.
- Narwal, S. S. (1996) Suggested Methodology for Allelopathy Laboratory Bioassay. Allelopathy: Field Observation and Methology. Joudpur Scientific Publisher.
- Rice, E. L. (1984) Allelopathy. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Academic Press.
- Rocio, C. O., Aurora, L. N. and Ana, L. A. (2007) Allelochemical stress can trigger oxidative damage in receptor plants. Plant Signaling Behavior 2: 269-270.
- Rodriguez-Gil, J. L., Caceres, N., Dafouz, R. and Valcarcel, Y. (2018) Caffeine and paraxanthine in aquatic systems: Global exposure distributions and probabilistic risk assessment. The Science of the Total Environment 612: 1058-1071.
- Sarkara, E., Chatterjee, S. N., Chakraborty, P. (2012) Allelopathic effect of *Cassia tora* on seed germination and growth of mustard. Turkish Journal of Botany 36: 488-494.
- Sasamoto, H., Fujii, Y. and Ashihara, H. (2015) Effect of purine alkaloids on the proliferation of lettuce cells derived from protoplasts. Natural Product Communication 10: 751-754.
- Scandalios, L. G. (1993) Oxygen stress and superoxide dismutase. Plant Physiology 101: 7-12.
- Singh, A., Singh, D. and Singh, N. (2009) Allelopathic stress produced by aqueous leachate *Nicotian aplumbaginifolia*. Viv. Plant Growth Regulator 58: 163-171.
- Song, M., Xu, W. J., Peng, X. Y. and Kong, F. H. (2013) Effects of exogenous proline on the growth of wheat seedlings under cadmium stress. Ying Yong Sheng Tai Xue Bao 1: 129-134.
- Srivastava, J., Raghava, N., Raghava, R. P. and Singh, L. (2010) Potential use of parthenium extract on growth parameters, chlorophyll content and total soluble sugar of cowpea. Biomedical and Pharmacolgy Journal 3: 357-363.
- Sweetlove, L. J., Heazlewood, J. L. and Herald, V. (2002) The impact of oxidative stress on *Arabidopsis mitochondria*. Plant Journal 32: 891-904.
- Velikova, V., Yordanov, I. and Edreva, A. (2000) Oxidative stress and some antioxidant system in acid rain treated bean plants: Protective role of exogenous polyamines. Plant Science 151: 59-66.
- Wagner, G. J. (1979) Content and vacuole extravacuole distribution of neutral sugars, free amino acids, and anthocyanins in protoplast. Plant Physioliology 64: 88-93.
- Wang, Q., Xic, B., Wu, C., Gue, C., Wang, Z., Cui, J., Hu, T. and Wiatark, P. (2012) Models analyses for allelopathic effects of chicory at equivalent coupling of nitrogen supply and pH level on *F. arundinacea*, *T. repens* and *M. sativa*. Plos one 7: e31670.
- Weir, T. L., Park, S. W. and Vivanco, J. M. (2004) Biochemical and physiological mechanisms mediated by allelochemicals. Current Opinion of Plant Biology 7: 472-479.