**Research Article** 

# The effects of mercury stress on the photosynthesis and chlorophyll fluorescence of wheat (Triticum aestivum L.) genotypes

# Raheleh Rahbarian<sup>1\*</sup>and Zahra Talebzade<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor of Plant Physiology, Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran <sup>2</sup> Department of Environmental Protection, North Khorasan, Iran (Received: 2024/01/20-Accepted: 2024/07/02)

### Abstract

Mercury is one of the toxic and heavy metals that causes pollution in agricultural fields. Mercury aggregation disturbs cellular behaviors and stops plant growth. In order to examine the effects of mercury on wheat growth indexes, a study with 4 commercial genotypes of Iran, Sirvan, Sivand, Parsi and Sepahan in various levels of this element (0, 30, 70, 100 mg/kg soil) was conducted. This experiment has been conducted in a random factorial design with 3 replications and indices including CO<sub>2</sub> assimilation rate (A), transpiration rate (E), stomatal conductance (gs), water use efficiency (WUE), PSII photochemical efficiency (FV/FM), photosynthesis quantum yield (Y), electron transfer rate (ETR), intra-leaf  $CO_2$  concentration (Ci), chlorophyll a, chlorophyll b, total chlorophyll, chlorophyll a/b, chlorophyll stability index and carotenoids were measured after 60 days. The result indicated that all measured parameters except carotenoid were decreased as mercury concentration increased. In 100 mg/kg stress level, Sirvan genotype had the highest transpiration rate, chlorophyll a, b, total chlorophyll, carotenoid, PSII efficiency and Ci as compared to other investigated genotypes. Also, Sepahan genotype showed the highest increase in chlorophyll stability index, stomatal conductance, ETR and quantum yield of photosynthesis at a stress level of 100 mg/kg as compared with control plants. Parsi genotype had the lowest transpiration rate, stomatal conductance, PSII efficiency, ETR and Ci at a stress level of 100 mg/kg as compared to other investigated genotypes. Based on these results, Parsi genotypes can be introduced as sensitive genotypes, and Sivand and Sirvan genotypes can be introduced as tolerant genotypes to mercury treatment.

#### Keyword: Chlorophyll fluorescence, Mercury, Photosynthesis, Triticum aestivum

#### Introduction

Because of its high toxicity and lengthy persistence in the environment, mercury (Hg) is a major source of concerned (Pirrone et al., 2010). Hg in the ecosystem can be released by both natural and anthropogenic factors. Volcanic activity, lithosphere weathering, and forest fires are primary producers of Hg are related to natural sources (Fitzgerald et al., 1998). Whilst human impacts are coal-fired power stations (Yoshimoto et al., 2016), mineral extraction, industrial emissions, medical waste incineration, and municipal waste combustion (Pirrone et al., 2010; Sloss, 2016).

It is clear that the chemical properties and movement of mercury in the environment are affected by biological components and their properties. Therefore, special attention should be paid to the source of mercury inlets and the paths it takes in nature, including the intense amount of it by sources such as domestic and hospital sewage (Wang et al., 2017). Recently, researchers have shown that agricultural pesticides can be an important factor in the release of mercury into nature (Teimoory,

2019).

rice, covering one-third of the world's protein and caloric needs (Skovmand and Reynolds, 2000). By 2050, the FAO estimates that the world would require approximately 840 million tonnes of wheat. Wheat is expected to expand at a rate of 1.6 percent per year by 2020, owing to rising human consumption demand (Ortiz et al., 2008). Only a 2.5 percent increase in world wheat production annually would be enough to meet this goal (Singh et al., 2011). Notwithstanding, responses to various abiotic factors, such as drought, salinity, low soil fertility, and heavy metals, are responsible for inappropriate wheat growth and yield (up to 50%) (Khan and Ashraf, 2008, Rahaie et al., 2013). It remains vital to monitor heavy metal levels in soils due to increased industrial activity and use of pesticides and fertilizers (Parviz et al., 2015).

Wheat is the world's second most popular crop after

Mercury predominantly exists in the solid phase, and the ionic form  $(Hg^{2+})$  is the most common form of Hg in soils (Han et al., 2006). Considering Hg is widely used

as disinfectants for seed, fertilizers, and herbicides, understanding how it interacts with plant systems is critical (McLaughlin et al., 1996). Due to the interaction between plants and mercury, scientists have found that Hg plays a key role in the production of ROS in plant cells, including H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>, superoxide, and hydroxyl radicals (Israr et al., 2006; Patra and Sharma, 2000). In comparison to other heavy metals, Hg seems to have the most significant inhibitory and toxic effects on seed germination, root elongation, hypocotyl, and coleoptile growth in wheat (Munzuroglu and Geckil, 2002). According to the mentioned cases, the researchers analyzed the effects of mercury on the chlorophyll content of winter wheat (var. jinan no. 17). In addition, the Ca level and Hg bioaccumulation in wheat leaves were measured using an inductively coupled plasma sector field mass spectrometer (ICP-SF-MS). The results showed that both minimum and maximum Hg concentrations enhanced chlorophyll production in the beginning phases of wheat growth, whereas they restricted chlorophyll production in the later phases. Also, as proven by ICP-SF-MS, the concentrations of Hg and Ca in leaves and stems increased with regularly rising Hg concentration with enhancing plant age (Liu et al., 2010).

Increased chloroplasts in young leaves and chlorophyll content, β-carotene content and Chla/b ratio are also affected by heavy metals ions. Pigment-protein complexes depend on thylakoid chloroplast membranes, which are organized into two large collections: photosystem 1 and photosystem 11. Electron transfer in photosystem 11 connects to electron transport chain that has driven in photosystem I. The link for electron transfer from water oxidantion in the photosystem  $\Pi$ , ferredoxin and ultimately NADP+ reducing the photosystem 1 is necessary (Pazireh et al., 2022). Much of the fluorescence chlorophyll, which has resulted from the photosystem  $\Pi$  (Krause and Weise, 1991), can be used as a tool to measure the photosynthetic apparatus. According to the photosynthetic efficiency, the chlorophyll fluorescence occurs reflection of (Kromkamp and Forster, 2003). High relative fluorescence means slowing of electron stream from the chlorophyll reaction centers of PS II as an effect of lower activity of PS  $\Pi$  oxygen evolving complex and slower water splitting (Toth et al., 2007). Electron transfer rate (ETR) is affected by the quantum efficiency of the photosystem II. These parameters show PS Π /LHC (Baker, 2008; Roseqvist and Kooten, 2003). A significant change of Fv/Fm reflects the poor performance of photosystem II. Patsikka and coworkers (2002) showed that the oxidative damage caused by heavy metals resulted in a significant decrease in the performance of photosystem II (Patsikka et al., 2002). Limiting factors of photosynthesis are divided into two of stomatal and non-stomatal kinds factors (Siosemardeh et al., 2006). Stomatal factors point to a lack of water and abiotic stress in the plant. Siddique and Coworkers (1999) found mercury stress in wheat plants caused a significant reduction in the rate of photosynthesis (Siddique *et al.*, 1999) and stomatal conductance, reducing the development and growth of leaves. This led to the reduction of plant production. Non-stomatal factors limit carbon emissions, using the direct impact of water shortages on the biochemical processes (Siosemardeh *et al.*, 2006). Since, the part of the photosynthetic activity during abiotic stress can be attributed to the non-stomatal limitation to metabolic processes (Lawlor and Cornic, 2002).

Heavy metals, causing many problems for the plant that will lead to a change in the cellular level, the size and shape of the chloroplasts, an increase in the size of vacuoles, and lipid per oxidation, are also at the level of physiology; dysfunctional openings led to a decrease in water content in the cells; photosynthesis and respiration were affected (Islam et al., 2008). The increase in the stress of heavy metals causes a decrease in the efficiency index of the oxygen-releasing complex Fv/F0 (Ebrahimi Nokandeh et al., 2023). Nicolas et al. (1985) compared two varieties of wheat under abiotic stress conditions and showed that the rate of photosynthesis in tolerant genotypes was higher about 60% than the sensitive genotypes at the end of the stress period was critical (Nicolas et al., 1985; Austin, 1989). Furthermore, closing stomatal reduced the photosynthesis and stomatal conductance (Del Blanco et al., 2000; Condon et al., 2002; Koc et al., 2003). Water use efficiency equals dry matter production per unit of water (Pessarkli, 1999) and it increased with increasing yield or reducing water consumption (Entesari et al., 2007). Photosynthetic water use efficiency shows the efficiency as an indicator of the rate of photosynthesis, stomatal conductance per unit, and transpiration (Larcher, 1995).

With the rising concerns over human/ecosystem health and very limited information about heavy metal pollution spatial Hg, the present study examined the cultivars that show acceptable performance and appearance in heavy metal mercury environment with maximum use of environmental facilities. The objectives are (i) to find the effect of Hg on the photosynthesis parameters (ii) to observe Hg uptake at various concentrations in sensitive and resistant wheat genotypes and, (iii) to identify the resistance of four wheat cultivars, including Parsi, Sepahan, Sivand, and Sirvan and activation of similar mechanisms to heavy metal stress of mercury at four levels 0, 30, 70, 100 mg in kg soil.

# Materials and methods

**Plant material:** In order to examine and identify effective indicators in improving tolerance traits to mercury, four genotypes including Sirvan (ws-85-10), Sivand (M-84-18), Parsi (84 M-17) and Sepahan (M-73-18), in four levels of mercury treatments (0, 30, 70, 100 mg per kg of soil) under controlled conditions in a factorial experiment design with three replications were evaluated. Growth chamber temperatures were

Coll toy turo	пЦ	$EC(dS m^{-1})$	Nutrients elements (ppm)				
Soli texture	рп	EC(us.m)	Hg	Р	Ν	K	
Silty- loam	7.75	1.14	3.47	7.1	298	118	

Fable 1. Physicochemica	l characteristics of t	he soil before starting	g the experiment
-------------------------	------------------------	-------------------------	------------------

maintained at 25°C during the day and 12°C during the night for 60 days, light intensity was 200  $\mu$ mol m<sup>-2</sup> s<sup>-1</sup> similar to normal field situations of wheat growth region. Sirvan, Sivand and Sepahan genotypes are resistant genotype to drought stress and Parsi genotype is sensitive to drought stress (Abdoli *et al.*, 2013; Najafian *et al.*, 2012).

In this experiment, 2-liter containers/pots were filled with sand, gravel, and vermiculite campus with equal proportions. Soil moisture was set by measuring the weight and adding water in each pot. A pot of wheat was kept in the greenhouse until the seed filling stage due to seasonal varieties. The mercury polluted soil was prepared by adding different dilutions of HgCl<sub>2</sub> in an aqueous solution to reach heavy metal concentrations of 30 mg/kg, 70 mg/kg, and 100 mg/kg in the dry soil (EscobarVargaset *et al.*, 2022).

**Gas exchange measurement:** Photosynthetic gas exchange was measured fromnon-detached young and fully expanded leaves using a portable infrared gas analyzer (IRGA, LCA4, ADC Bio. Scientific Ltd., Herefordshire, UK): leaf surface area 1 cm<sup>2</sup>, ambient CO<sub>2</sub> concentration 370 µmol mol<sup>-1</sup>, and PPFD 200 µmol m<sup>-2</sup>s<sup>-1</sup>. The leaf internal CO<sub>2</sub> concentration (Ci), CO<sub>2</sub> assimilation rate (A), transpiration rate (E) and stomatal conductance (gs) were recorded between 09.00 and 11.00 a.m. Water use efficiency (WUE) was calculated from the A/E ratio (Piper *et al.*, 2007).

Chlorophyll fluorescence: Photosystem Π photochemical efficiency (Fv/Fm) was measured using a porTable chlorophyll fluorometer (OS5-FL modulated chlorophyll fluorometer, ADC Bio Scientific Ltd.). Hoddesdon, Hert, EN11 0DB, England). Minimal fluorescence (Fo) was determined by applying weak modulated light (0.4 µmol m<sup>-2</sup>s<sup>-1</sup>) and maximal fluorescence (Fm) was induced by a short pulse (0.8 s) of saturating light (8000 µmol m<sup>-2</sup>s<sup>-1</sup>). Measurements were made from the same leaf used for gas exchange determination, after 20 min of dark adaptation (Maxwell and Johnson, 2000). All physiological measurements were obtained by examining plants that were being treated under drought stress and controlled conditions in four replications.

For measurement of photosynthetic quantum yield (Y) and electron transport rate (ETR), the instrument was set on Kinetic Mode and adjusted so that the initial Ft (instantaneous fluorescence signal) value in the control samples was approximately 210. The instrument detector gain was set between 75 and 85. Quantum yield was determined by the following light treatment: each cycle consisted of a 0.8 s pulse of saturating light generated with a laser diode actinic source to saturate PSII, followed by a 4 s far-red light pulse used to reoxidize PSII, and a 10 s delay allowing PSII to regain

steady-state conditions. A total of seven cycles were performed for each sample. ETR values were expressed as percents of the ETR average values observed in control treatments (Dayan and Zaccaro, 2012).

**Chlorophyll content:** Fresh leaves (0.1 g) were extracted with 15 ml 80% acetone and centrifuged at  $5000 \times \text{g}$  for 10 min. The absorbance of the supernatant was read at 663, 647 and 470 nm and calculated for chlorophyll a, chlorophyll b, total chlorophyll and carotenoid content according to Arnon (1949). The chlorophyll stability index (CSI) was determined according to Sairam and Srivastava. (2002) and calculated as follows:

 $CSI = (total chlorophyll under stress/total chlorophyll under control) \times 100$ 

Data measurement and recording data were analyzed using JMP software. Comparison was done by software MSTAT-C and figures were drawn by Microsoft Excel 22 (2019).

# Results

**CO<sub>2</sub> assimilation rate (A):** The increase in mercury concentration has significantly decreased the CO<sub>2</sub> assimilation rate in all examined genotypes (P<0.01) (Table 6). In a zero/no-stress condition, the highest and lowest assimilation rates were related to the Sepahan and Sirvan genotypes, respectively (P<0.05) (Table 6). No significant difference was shown in the treatment level of 30 mg/kg among Sirvan, Sivand, and Parsi genotypes, but Sepahan showed the highest CO<sub>2</sub> assimilation rate significantly (P<0.05) (Table 6). In stress levels of 70 and 100, no significant difference has been observed among all examined genotypes (Table 6). The interaction effect of genotype/mercury in all studied genotypes was statistically significant (P<0.01) (Table 2).

Stomatal conductance (gs): The effect of mercury treatment on the stomatal conductance was significant (P<0.01) (Table 2). In the control condition, Sivand had the highest and Sirvan the lowest stomatal conductance (P<0.05) (Table 6). In stress levels 30 70 and 100, genotype had the highest Sepahan stomatal conductance; also, this difference was not significant (Table 6). The interaction effect of genotype/mercury was not significant (Table 2). The stress level of 100 stomatal conductance in Sivand, Parsi, Sepahan and Sirvan genotypes, decreased by 90.99%, 90.18%, 85.8% and 82.66%, compared with the control, respectively (P<0.05) (Table 6).

**Transpiration rate (E):** The transpiration rate was decreased significantly in all examined genotypes as a result of an increase in mercury concentration (P<0.01) (Table 2). In the control condition, the rate of transpiration in Sepahan and Sirvan genotypes was

		Mean square							
Source	DF	А	Е	gs	WITE	Ci	v	ETR	PSII
		(µmol m <sup>-2</sup> s <sup>-1</sup> )	$(mmol m^{-2}s^{-1})$	$(m^{-2}s^{-1})$	WUE	(Vpm)	I	(µmol m <sup>-2</sup> s <sup>-1</sup> )	Fv/Fm
Mercury	3	76.73**	1.304**	$0.284^{**}$	37.810 <sup>ns</sup>	237001.2**	$0.000069^{**}$	146.99**	$0.057^{**}$
Genotype	3	6.15**	$0.095^{**}$	0.038 <sup>ns</sup>	$142.007^{*}$	192394.9**	$0.000025^{**}$	95.47**	$0.062^{**}$
Mercury×Genotype	9	10.66**	$0.148^{*}$	0.069 <sup>ns</sup>	$255.65^{*}$	146172.8**	0.253 <sup>ns</sup>	195.64**	0.009 <sup>ns</sup>
cv		13%	26%	31%	27%	3%	0.1%	0.1%	26.3%
Total	15								

Table 2. Analysis of variance CO<sub>2</sub> assimilation rate (A), transpiration rate (E), stomata conductance (gs), water use efficiency (WUE), internal CO<sub>2</sub> concentration (C<sub>i</sub>), quantum yield of photosynthesis (Y), electron transfer rate (ETR) and PSII photochemical efficiency (Fv/Fm) in different levels of Hg in wheat genotypes.

\*, \*\* and ns significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels and non significant, respectively.

Table 3. Analysis of variance chlorophyll a, chlorophyll b, chlorophyll a/b ratio, total chlorophyll and carotinoids in different levels of Hg in wheat genotypes.

	_			Mean square		
Source	DF	Chlorophyll a	Chlorophyll b	Chlorophyll a/h	Total chlorophyll	Carotinoids
		$(mg g^{-1} FW)$	$(mg g^{-1} FW)$	Chiorophyn a/b	$(mg g^{-1} FW)$	(mg g <sup>-1</sup> FW)
Mercury	3	28.816**	$4.8^{**}$	12.865 <sup>ns</sup>	47.378**	2.027**
Genotype	3	37.006**	3.459**	14.841 <sup>ns</sup>	54.999**	1.851**
Mercury×Genotype	9	2.603 <sup>ns</sup>	2.354 <sup>ns</sup>	21.57 <sup>ns</sup>	0.951 <sup>ns</sup>	0.463 <sup>ns</sup>
cv		16%	25%	43%	11%	18%
total	15					

\*, \*\* and ns significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels and nonsignificant, respectively.

higher than Parsi and Sivand genotypes (Table 6). At the stress level of 30, the highest transpiration rate was for Sepahan and parsi and the lowest for Sivand genotypes (P<0.05) (Table 6). There was no significant difference between Parsi and Sepahan genotypes in 30 mg/kg mercury concentration (Table 6). There was no significant difference between all examined genotypes in 70 mg/kg mercury concentration (figure 1). Maximum transpiration rate at the stress level of 100 was for Sirvan genotype by 0.146, and the minimum was for Parsi genotype by 0.056 (Table 6), but the difference was not statistically significant (Table 6). The interaction effect of genotype/mercury was significant (P<0.05) (Table 1).

Water use efficiency (WUE): The effect of different levels of mercury on water use efficiency was not significant (Table 2). Mercury treatment decreased water use efficiency in all genotypes, but it was only significant in Sivand genotype (P<0.05). Under control and 30 mg/kg mercury concentration, the most water use efficiency was assigned to Sirvand genotype, and the least amount was devoted to Sirvan genotype (P<0.05) (Table 4). In stress level 70, the highest water use efficiency was shown in Sepahan genotype, and the lowest was assigned to Sirvan genotype (Table 4). In Sirvan, Sivand, Parsi and Sepahan genotypes, WUS showed a decrease of 45%, 52%, 31% and 35% in 100 treatment levels compared with the controlled condition, respectively (Table 4). The interaction effect of genotype/mercury was statistically significant (P<0.05) (Table 2).

**PSII photochemical efficiency (Fv/Fm):** Theresults of the analysis of variance showed that the mercury and genotype effects on Fv/Fm were significant (P<0.01), but the interaction effect of genotype/mercury was not

significant (Table 2). In no stress condition, Sirvan and Sepahan genotypes, with a similar rate of 0.97, had more Fv/Fm than Parsi and Sivand genotypes, and there was no significant difference between Sirvan and Sepahan genotypes (Figure 1). At a stress level of 30, the maximum Fv/Fm was for Sirvan genotype, and the minimum was for Parsi and Sivand genotypes (P<0.05) (Figure 1). In stress levels 70 and 100 of mercury, Sirvan and Sepahan genotypes had the maximum Fv/Fm and Parsi and Sivand genotypes had the minimum Fv/Fm (Figure 1).

Electron transfer rate (ETR): The results of analyze of variance showed that mercury, genotype effects andthe interaction effect of genotype/mercury on ETR were significant (P<0.01) (Table 2). By the increasing of mercury stress ETR decreased in all genotypes (P<0.01) (figure 2). In no stress condition, ETR in Sivand genotype was significantly more than other genotypes (P<0.05) (figure 2) also no significant difference was seen between other genotypes (figure 2). The highest electron transfer rate belonged to Sivand genotype at the stress level of 30 but this difference was not significant (figure 2). In the stress level of 70, Sivand genotype showed the higher ETR than Sirvan (P<0.05), also there was no significant difference between Sepahan and Parsi genotypes (figure 1). At the stress level of 100, Sepahan genotype showed the higher ETR than Sivand, Sirvan and Parsi (P<0.05) (figure 2).

**Quantum yield of photosynthesis (Y):** The results of analyze of variance showed that mercury, genotype effects in all genotypes on the quantum yield of photosynthesis were significant (P<0.01) (Table 2) but interaction effect of mercury/genotype was not significant (Table 2). The quantum yield of photosynthesis decreased significantly in Sirvan, Sivand



Figure 1. Effects of Mercury stress on PSII photochemical efficiency (Fv/Fm) in different levels of Hg in wheat genotypes

Table 4. Mean of chlorophyll a, chlorophyll b, chlorophyll a/b ratio, total chlorophyll, carotinoids, chlorophyll stability inde	ex
(CSI), leaf internal CO <sub>2</sub> concentration (Ci) and water use efficiency (WUE) in different levels of Hg in wheat genotypes.	_

Genotype×Mercury	Chla	Chlh	Chl a/h	Total chl	Car		Leaf internal	
	Cill a			Total elli	Cai	Chlorophyll	$CO_2$	Water use
(Mg in soil)			mα α <sup>-1</sup> FW	C)		stability index	concentration	efficiency
			ingg i w	)			(Vpm)	
Sirvan+0	7.194 <sup>a</sup>	1.55 ac	4.77 <sup>ab</sup>	8.733 <sup>a</sup>	1.248 d-g	100 <sup>a</sup>	814.73 <sup>a</sup>	8.533 <sup>b-d</sup>
Sirvan+30	7.179 <sup>a</sup>	1.436 <sup>b-d</sup>	5.84 <sup>ab</sup>	8.6 <sup>a</sup>	1.709 <sup>a-c</sup>	98.4 <sup>b</sup>	804.33 ab	7.223 <sup>b-d</sup>
Sirvan+70	6.518 <sup>a-c</sup>	1.3 <sup>b-e</sup>	5.56 <sup>ab</sup>	7.81 <sup>ab</sup>	1.953 ab	89.4 <sup>f</sup>	796.96 a-c	4.753 <sup>d</sup>
Sirvan+100	5.411 <sup>b-e</sup>	1.063 <sup>c-f</sup>	5.15 <sup>ab</sup>	6.356 <sup>b-e</sup>	1.989 <sup>a</sup>	72.7 <sup>i</sup>	764.8 <sup>cd</sup>	4.67 <sup>d</sup>
Sivand+0	6.873 ab	2.157 a	3.4 <sup>b</sup>	9.056 <sup>a</sup>	1.518 <sup>b-f</sup>	100 <sup>a</sup>	832.86 <sup>a</sup>	12.44 <sup>a</sup>
Sivand+30	6.741 <sup>a-c</sup>	1.834 <sup>ab</sup>	3.71 ab	8.56 <sup>a</sup>	1.578 <sup>a-d</sup>	94.5 °	800.93 a-c	9.203 <sup>b-d</sup>
Sivand+70	5.93 <sup>a-d</sup>	1.566 a-c	3.78 <sup>ab</sup>	7.486 <sup>ab</sup>	1.723 <sup>a-c</sup>	82.6 <sup>f</sup>	738.46 de	6.956 <sup>b-d</sup>
Sivand+100	5.214 <sup>c-f</sup>	0.375 <sup>g</sup>	6.46 <sup>ab</sup>	5.58 <sup>de</sup>	1.795 <sup>d-g</sup>	61.6 <sup>k</sup>	635.6 <sup>f</sup>	5.9 <sup>c-d</sup>
Parsi+0	5.978 <sup>a-d</sup>	1.44 <sup>b-d</sup>	4.18 ab	7.406 <sup>a-c</sup>	1.089 fg	100 a	753.33 de	10.356 <sup>bc</sup>
Parsi+30	5.271 <sup>c-f</sup>	1.027 <sup>c-g</sup>	5.17 <sup>ab</sup>	6.293 <sup>b-e</sup>	1.107 e-g	84.9 <sup>e</sup>	753 <sup>de</sup>	9.13 <sup>b-d</sup>
Parsi+70	3.978 e-g	0.837 <sup>d-g</sup>	6.83 <sup>a</sup>	4.896 e-f	1.55 <sup>a-e</sup>	66.1 <sup>h</sup>	635.93 <sup>f</sup>	7.126 <sup>b-d</sup>
Parsi+100	3.853 f-g	0.656 e-g	5.65 ab	5.696 <sup>c-e</sup>	1.432 <sup>c-f</sup>	76.91 <sup>i</sup>	373.06 <sup>g</sup>	7.092 <sup>b-d</sup>
Sepahan+0	5.667 a-d	1.022 <sup>c-g</sup>	5.61 ab	6.683 <sup>b-d</sup>	0.879 <sup>g</sup>	100 a	796.4 <sup>a-c</sup>	10.933 ab
Sepahan+30	4.847 <sup>d-f</sup>	0.897 <sup>c-g</sup>	5.41 ab	5.73 <sup>c-e</sup>	1.353 <sup>c-f</sup>	85.7 <sup>e</sup>	775.76 <sup>b-d</sup>	7.906 <sup>b-d</sup>
Sepahan+70	4.535 <sup>d-g</sup>	0.69 <sup>e-g</sup>	6.74 <sup>a</sup>	5.22 <sup>d-f</sup>	1.408 <sup>c-f</sup>	78.1 <sup>j</sup>	738.30 de	7.243 <sup>b-d</sup>
Sepahan+100	3.113 <sup>g</sup>	0.624 fg	5.62 ab	3.733 f	1.579 <sup>a-d</sup>	55.8 <sup>g</sup>	721.3 <sup>e</sup>	7.085 <sup>b-d</sup>
LCD	1.553	0.674	3.301	0.886	0.459	2.03	37.81	3.089

Values with the same letter within column do not differ significantly (P<0.05).

and and Parsi genotypes in stress level 100 as compared to control condition (P<0.05) (figure 3). There was no significant difference in Sepahan genotype at all stress levels as compared to control condition (figure 3). Maximum quantum yield of photosynthesis belonged to Sivand genotype in control condition and 30 and 70 Hg stress levels (figure 3)

Leaf internal CO<sub>2</sub> concentration (Ci): Mercury stress decreased significantly leaf internal CO<sub>2</sub> concentration in all genotypes (P<0.05) (Table 4). Parsi genotype decreased significantly in all stress levels and reached from 753.33 vpm in control condition to 373.06 vpm in100 stress level, which was the highest decline rate among the genotypes (P<0.05) (Table 4). In control condition and all stress levels, the highest Ci belonged to Sivad genotype and the lowest Ci belonged to Parsi genotype (P<0.05) (Table 4). In the stress level of 100, Ci decreased in Parsi, Sivand, Sepahan, and Sirvan genotypes respectively by 50.5, 23.6, 9.41, and 6.1 percent as compared with control condition (P<0.05) (Table 4). The interaction effect of mercury/genotype was significant (P<0.01) (Table 2).

Chlorophyll a: The increase of mercury had significantly decreased concentration the chlorophyll a content in all genotypes (P<0.01) (Table 4). The interaction effect of mercury/genotype was not



Figure 2. Effects of Mercury stress on electron transfer rate (ETR) in different levels of Hg in wheat genotypes.



Figure 3. Effects of Mercury stress quantum yield of photosynthesis (Y) in different levels of Hg in wheat genotypes.

significant (Table 2). In the no-stress condition, the highest content of chlorophyll a was shown in Sirvan genotype and the lowest in Sepahan genotype (P<0.05) (Table 4). Sirvan genotype at the stress level of 30 and no-stress condition indicated no significant difference (Table 4). In all stress levels, the highest chlorophyll a was shown for Sirvan and Sivand genotypes, respectively (Table 4). The lowest chlorophyll a observed at a stress level of 70 mg per kg of soil was in Parasi genotype, and at the stress level of 100 it was for Sepahan genotype (P<0.05) (Table 4).

Chlorophyll b: Chlorophyll b content has dropped

significantly in Sivand genotype and reached from 2.157 µg/g in the control treatment to 0.375 µg/g fw at the stress level of 100, which was the highest decline rate in all studied genotypes (P<0.01) (Table 4). Mercury stress in other genotypes caused a decrease in terms of chlorophyll b content, as well (Table 4). The interaction effect of mercury/genotype was not significant (Table 3). In the no-stress condition and in mercury stress at the levels of 30 and 70, the highest chlorophyll b content was for Sivand genotype, while Sirvan genotype with 1.063 µg/g fw had the highest chlorophyll b content at the stress level of 100 (P<0.05)

(Table 4). The lowest chlorophyll b content in the stress condition at levels 30 and 70 and in the no-stress condition was for Sepahan genotype (P<0.05) (Table 4).

Chlorophyll a/b ratio: In the no-stress condition, the highest and lowest chlorophyll a/b ratios were for Sepahan and Sivand genotypes, respectively (Table 4). In Sirvan, Sivand, and Parsi genotypes, by increasing the stress of mercury up to 70, the chlorophyll a/b ratio has increased initially, but it declined at the stress level of 100 (Table 4). At the stress level of 30, the highest chlorophyll a/b ratio was for Sirvan genotype, and the lowest rate was for Sivand genotype (P<0.05) (Table 4). No significant difference was noted in all investigated genotypes at all stress levels as compared to the control condition (Table 4). The highest ratio of chlorophyll a/b ratio at the stress level of 70 was for Parsi genotype, and the lowest rate was for Sivand genotype (Table 4). The effect of mercury, genotype, and the interaction effect of mercury/genotype on the chlorophyll a/b ratio was not significant (P<0.01) (Table 3).

Carotenoid: In contrast to chlorophyll a and b, the content of carotenoids increased significantly in all genotypes by the increase of the mercury stress (P<0.05) (Table 4). The interaction effect of mercury/genotype was not significant (Table 3). The highest content of carotenoids in the no-stress condition was for Sivand and Sirvan genotypes (P<0.05) (Table 4). Sirvan genotype had the highest carotenoids in all stress conditions (Table 4). At the stress level of 100, the carotenoids content, in Sepahan, Sirvan, Parsi, and Sivand genotypes has been increased by 79, 59, 31, and 18 percent compared with control treatment, respectively (Table 4). The increase of carotenoid content in Sepahan and Sirvan genotypes was more than Parsi and Sivand genotypes (P<0.05) (Table 4). Sepahan genotype at the stress levels of 30 and 70 showed no significant difference (Table 4).

**Total chlorophyll:** In the no-stress condition, Sivand and Sirvan genotypes with 9.056 and 8.733  $\mu g/gfw$  higher chlorophyll content had higher chlorophyll content than Parsi and Sepahan genotypes with 7.406 and 6.683  $\mu gr/gr$  content (Table 4). No significant difference has been noted in Sirvan and Sivand genotypes in the no-stress condition and in all stress levels (Table 4). At the stress level of 70, the highest chlorophyll content was for Sirvan genotype, and the lowest amount was for Parsi genotype (P<0.05) (Table 3). At the stress level of 100, Sivand and Sepahan genotypes had the highest and lowest, respectively, total chlorophyll content (P<0.05) (Table 4). The interaction effect of mercury/genotype was not significant (Table 3).

**Chlorophyll stability index:** The increase in mercury concentration significantly decreased the chlorophyll stability index in all genotypes (P<0.05) (Table 4). In stress conditions of 30 and 70, the highest chlorophyll stability index was for Sirvan genotype, and the lowest rate in concentration of 30 was for Parsi and Sepahan genotypes by 78 percent and in concentration

of 70 for Parsi genotype by 66 percent (P<0.05) (Table 4). In stress conditions at all levels, the highest chlorophyll stability index was for Sirvan genotype (P<0.05) (Table 4). The stress level of the 100 chlorophyll stability index in Sepahan, Sivand, Sirvan and Parsi genotypes, decreased by 44.2, 38.4, 27.3 and 23.1 percent, compared with the control treatment, respectively (P<0.05) (Table 4).

Hg concentration in soil: Hg concentration in soil has picked up significantly in Sepahan genotype and reached from 0.29 ppm in control treatment to 101.6 ppm at the stress level of 100, which was the highest increase rate in all studied genotypes (P<0.05) (Table 6). Mercury stress in other genotypes made an increase in terms of Hg concentration in soil, as well (P<0.01) (Table 6). The interaction effect of mercury/genotype was significant (P<0.01) (Table 5). No significant difference was noted in all investigated genotypes in the no-stress condition (Table 5). At the stress level of 30, the highest Hg concentration in soil was for Parsi genotype with a rate of 41.7 ppm, which is much more than other genotypes, and a significant difference has been noted in other genotypes (Table 6). Also, at the stress levels of 70 and 100, the highest Hg concentration in soil was for Parsi genotype (P<0.05) (Table 6).

**Hg concentration in root:** The increase in mercury concentration significantly climbed up the Hg concentration in root in all genotypes (P<0.01) (Table 6). In the no-stress condition and at all stress levels, the lowest Hg concentration in the root belonged to Sirvan genotype (P<0.05) (Table 6). In the no-stress condition and stress levels of 30 and 70, no significant difference has been observed in Sirvan, Parsi and Sepahan genotypes (Table 6). The highest rate in concentrations of 30, 70 and 100 was for Sivand genotype (P<0.05) (Table 6). The interaction effect of genotype/mercury was significant (P<0.01) (Table 5).

**Hg concentration in leaf:** The increase in mercury concentration has significantly increased the Hg concentration in leaf in all genotypes (P<0.01) (Table 6). In no stress condition, the highest and the lowest Hg concentration in leaf were for Sepahan and Sivand genotypes, respectively (P<0.05) (Table 6). In stress levels of 70 and 100, no significant difference has been observed between Sirvan, Sirvand and Sepahan genotypes (Table 6). Maximum and minimum Hg concentration in leaf at all stress levels was devoted to Sivand genotype (P<0.05) (Table 6). In no-stress and stress levels of 30, 70 and 100, no significant difference has been observed in Sirvan genotype (Table 6). The interaction effect of genotype/mercury was significant (P<0.05) (Table 4).

**Hg concentration in seed:** Mercury stress increases Hg concentration in seed in all genotypes (Table 6). Under control and stress condition in all stress levels and the least amount of Hg concentration in seed assigned to Sivand genotype (P<0.05) (Table 6). In the no-stress condition, the highest amount of Hg concentration in the seed was assigned to Sepahan

		Mean square					
Source	DF	Hg concentration in	Hg concentration in	Hg concentration in	Hg concentration in		
		Soil (ppm)	Root (ppm)	leaf (ppm)	seed (ppm)		
Mercury	3	2407.3**	41210.2**	0.269**	0.0306**		
Genotype	3	84.84 <sup>ns</sup>	13962.2**	0.095**	$0.0147^{**}$		
Mercury×Genotype	9	$450.78^{**}$	7209.77**	$0.11^{*}$	$0.0202^{**}$		
CV		27%	17%	26%	28%		
total	15						

Table 5. Analysis of variance H	g concentration in soil.	root. leaf and seed in	different levels of Ha	g in wheat gend	otypes
	<b>,</b>			, , , , ,	

\*, \*\* and ns significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels and nonsignificant, respectively.

Table 6. Mean concentration of Hg in soil, root, leaf and seed and CO<sub>2</sub> assimilation rate (A), stomatal conductance (gs) and transpiration rate (E) in different levels of Hg stress in wheat genotypes.

enotype	Hg (mg in soil)	Hg in soil (ppm)	Hg in root (ppm)	Hg in leaf (ppm)	Hg in seed (ppm)	Stomatal conductance (gs)	assimilation rate (A)	Transpiration rate (E)
Sirvan	0	0.14 <sup>i</sup>	0.07 <sup>ef</sup>	0.081 <sup>c-e</sup>	0.081 <sup>c-e</sup>	0.150 <sup>bc</sup>	2.596 <sup>d</sup>	0.573 <sup>b</sup>
	30	0.51 <sup>i</sup>	0.13 <sup>ef</sup>	0.094 <sup>b-e</sup>	0.094 <sup>b-e</sup>	0.093°	2.393 <sup>d</sup>	0.3.6 <sup>de</sup>
	70	19.5 <sup>i</sup>	0.13 <sup>ef</sup>	0.12 <sup>bc</sup>	0.12 <sup>bc</sup>	0.073°	1.643 <sup>e</sup>	0.230 <sup>ef</sup>
	100	24.6 <sup>h</sup>	0.16 <sup>de</sup>	0.137 <sup>b</sup>	0.137 <sup>b</sup>	0.026 <sup>c</sup>	0.673 <sup>g</sup>	0.146 <sup>f-h</sup>
Sivand	0	0.32 <sup>i</sup>	0.04 f	0.058 <sup>e</sup>	0.058 <sup>e</sup>	0.333ª	3.636 <sup>g</sup>	0.413 <sup>cd</sup>
	30	37.3 <sup>fg</sup>	0.25 <sup>b-d</sup>	0.075 <sup>c-e</sup>	0.075 <sup>c-e</sup>	0.056 <sup>c</sup>	2.656 <sup>d</sup>	0.213 <sup>ef</sup>
	70	76.6 <sup>d</sup>	0.33 <sup>ab</sup>	0.088 <sup>c-e</sup>	0.088 <sup>c-e</sup>	0.060 <sup>c</sup>	1.313 <sup>ef</sup>	0.193 <sup>e-g</sup>
	100	88.3 <sup>bc</sup>	0.4 <sup>a</sup>	0.95 <sup>b-e</sup>	0.95 <sup>b-e</sup>	0.030 <sup>c</sup>	$0.610^{g}$	0.103 <sup>f-h</sup>
Parsi	0	028 <sup>i</sup>	$0.08^{\text{ef}}$	0.072 de	0.072 de	0.163 <sup>a-c</sup>	4.496 <sup>b</sup>	0.453 <sup>bc</sup>
	30	41.7 <sup>f</sup>	0.12 <sup>ef</sup>	0.08 <sup>c-e</sup>	0.08 <sup>c-e</sup>	0.120 <sup>c</sup>	2.576 <sup>d</sup>	0.366 <sup>cd</sup>
	70	79.9 <sup>cd</sup>	0.17 <sup>de</sup>	0.094 <sup>b-e</sup>	0.094 <sup>b-e</sup>	0.066 <sup>c</sup>	1.520 <sup>e</sup>	0.186 <sup>e-h</sup>
	100	92.5 <sup>ab</sup>	0.28 <sup>ab</sup>	0.106 <sup>b-d</sup>	0.106 <sup>b-d</sup>	0.016 <sup>c</sup>	$0.836^{\mathrm{fg}}$	0.056 <sup>h</sup>
Sepahan	0	0.29 <sup>i</sup>	0.1 <sup>ef</sup>	0.088 <sup>c-e</sup>	0.088 <sup>c-e</sup>	0.303 <sup>ab</sup>	5.136 <sup>a</sup>	0.723 <sup>a</sup>
	30	26.6 <sup>gh</sup>	0.17 <sup>de</sup>	0.086 <sup>c-e</sup>	0.086 <sup>c-e</sup>	0.176 <sup>a-c</sup>	4.096 <sup>bc</sup>	0.376 <sup>cd</sup>
	70	55.4 <sup>e</sup>	0.18 <sup>c-e</sup>	0.098 b-e	0.098 b-e	0.106 <sup>c</sup>	1.386 <sup>e</sup>	0.220 <sup>ef</sup>
	100	101.6 <sup>a</sup>	0.34 <sup>a-c</sup>	0.225 <sup>a</sup>	0.225 <sup>a</sup>	0.043°	0.510 <sup>g</sup>	$0.070^{\text{gh}}$

Values with the same letter within column do not differ significantly (P<0.05).

genotype (P<0.05) (Table 6). In stress level 30, there was no significant difference among all genotypes (Table 6). In stress levels 70 and 100, the highest Hg concentration in seed was shown in Sirvan and Sepahan genotypes, respectively (P<0.05) (Table 6). The interaction effect of genotype/mercury was significant (P<0.01) (Table 5). In stress level of 100 Hg concentration in seed in Sepahan, Sivand, Sirvan and Parsi genotypes, raised by 155, 98.2, 69.1 and 47.2 percent, compared with the control treatment, respectively (P<0.05).

# Discussion

In the past few decades, breeders have been in search of new species of plants that sustain well in different habitats. But the interaction effect of environment and genotype has made choosing plants difficult with acceptable performance in all environmental conditions (including desirable and undesirable conditions). This issue has caused us to identify genotypes that present acceptable performance and demonstration by maximal usage of environmental facilities (Golabadi *et al.*, 2007). In the considered study, Mercury stress caused to decrease transpiration level, stomatal conductance, carbon assimilation and photosystem II efficiency in all genotypes and their level was significantly higher in genotypes likely to suffer Sirvan, Sepahan and Sivand stress than Parsi sensitive genotypes. Chlorophyll decreasing and carotenoids increasing were observed in the conducted study. The probable Sirvan genotype allocated the highest chlorophyll a and b, total chlorophyll, chlorophyll stability index and carotenoid as compared with other studied genotypes. Toxic effects of Mercury on wheat photosynthesis are created by different mechanisms, which can be referred to as chlorophyll biosynthesis decreases via decreasing essential element concentrations of magnesium and iron in leaves, generating complexes by photosynthetic proteins, and increasing chlorophyllase activity to decompose chlorophyll (Sahu et al., 2012). Mirsa and Tandon with tests on wheat and corn showed that increasing mercury concentrations, reduced the amount of chlorophyll a and chlorophyll b and increased the levels of carotenoids (Misra and Tandon, 2009). The present study results indicated that chlorophyll number was decreased as mercury concentration was increasing in the growth environment. Decreasing photosynthetic pigments in plants subjected to mercury treatment can be because of oxidative damage. This decrease is also due to inhibitive effect of different stages of chlorophyll photosynthesis (Noorani and Kafilzadeh, 2012). Heavy metals disturb the formation of this complex via inhibiting complex LHC II proteins biosynthesis at the transcription level (Vajpayee et al., 2000). In the present

study, decreasing chlorophyll has caused to growth and photosynthesis reduction. Also, an increase in mercury in the growth environment might limit nutrient elements absorption required for producing chlorophyll (Hegedus et al., 2001). In this study, chlorophyll a/b ratio influenced by reduced mercury concentration indicated that the mechanism influenced by heavy metals on photosynthetic pigments may be because: Penetrating heavy metals into chloroplasts and their high accumulation in this organelle, oxidative stress may occur that cause damages such as chloroplast peroxidation (Seregin and Kozhevnikova, 2006). Heavy metals can also influence chloroplasts morphology and functioning directly by bonding to sulfhydryl groups of disrupted enzymes and overall chlorophyll biosynthesis (Srivastava et al., 2006). Also, heavy metals restrain other essential elements absorption and transportation, such as Fe<sup>2+</sup>, Mu<sup>2+</sup>, and Zn<sup>2+</sup> by means of antagonist effects, and thereby pigment synthesis capacity in plants is influenced (Gardea-Torresdey et al., 2004). In addition, heavy metals have direct inhibitive impacts on one of the enzymatic stages, and furthermore, copper induces additional leaf chlorosis, which is due to cleave peroxidative pigments and membrane lipids and to decrease pigment contents (Meloni et al., 2003).

Carotenoids increase in this study implies their protective role against oxidative stress. These pigments contribute to detoxifying chlorophyll and to decreasing the toxic effects of free radicals by accumulating in plant tissue during stress in soil (Sanitata et al., 1999). Chlorophyll analysis in the presence of heavy metals can also be regarded as important factors to decrease chlorophyll (Hegedus et al., 2001). In stress conditions, chlorophyll molecule collapse is obvious (Barati and Bijanzadeh, 2022). Following green pigment collapse (chlorophyll), the plant appears chromatic because of increasing and being visible protective pigments like carotenoids and anthocyanins (Wojcik et al., 2006). Carotenoids play a protective role against oxidative stress. These pigments have a role in chlorophyll detoxification, and their aggregation in plant tissue during stress leads to decreased toxic effects of free radicals (Sanitata et al., 1999). The decrease in the performance of photosystem II and the decrease in the amount of chlorophyll caused a decrease in plant growth and a decrease in the production of insoluble carbohydrates. (Talebzadeh et al., 2022).

The studies of Raisi Sadati *et al.* (2015) showed that in two wheat cultivars, Gonbad and Tejn, mercury chloride treatment caused a significant decrease in the amount of soluble sugar and polyphenol oxidase enzyme, an increase in the amount of total protein, soluble sugar and lysine, and an increase in the amount of proline and methionine.

The studies of Balochi *et al.* (2016) on pinto beans (*Phaseolus vulgaris* L.) showed that heavy metals decreased the rate of photosynthesis compared to the control and caused an increase in ion leakage, proline, soluble sugar and malondialdehyde.

Gregersen and Holm (2007) stated that abiotic stress decreases chlorophyll content, and numbers with high chlorophyll content have more resistance in stress conditions. Also, chlorophyll can be associated with peroxidation of the chloroplast membrane by heavy metals. Antolin *et al.* (1995) found that leaf chlorophyll decreased as non-biotic stress was increasing, but chlorophyll a/b ratio was increased. Chlorophyll b showed a smaller reduction in stress conditions than chlorophyll a, so the a/b ratio increased. It seems that increased chlorophyll a/b ratio leads to leaves darkness and increased chlorophyll meter number. Also, other researchers confirmed chlorophyll a/b increase as a result of non-biotic stress (Ahmadi and Baker, 2000).

Mn-excess devastated the whole photosynthetic electron transport chain from the transferor side of PSII up to the reduction of end acceptors of PSI, thus limiting the production of reducing equivalents, and hence the rate of CO<sub>2</sub> assimilation (Li et al., 2010). Moreover, the decreased rates of CO<sub>2</sub> assimilation can also be partly attributed to the corresponding decrease of the photosynthetic unit concentration, i.e., the reduction in Chl content regulated by Cd (Chaneva et al., 2010). Pourrut et al. (2011) stated that Lead (Pb) inhibits transpiration, chlorophyll production, and water and protein content, causing alterations in chloroplast, obstructing electron transport chain, inhibition of Calvin cycle enzymes, impaired uptake of essential elements, Mg and Fe, and induced deficiency of CO2 due to stomatal closure and Lead was negatively affected by the process of photosynthesis and carbon fixation reduces.

Chlorophyll fluorescence value and photosynthesis quantum performance indicate intact thylakoid membrane and electron relative efficiency from photosystem II to I (Moffatt et al., 1990). It was found that the dominant decrease of chlorophyll b by heavy metals potentially damages energy trapping efficiency through PSII and decreases electron transfer (Dube et al., 2003). Intracellular CO<sub>2</sub> concentration decreases because of closing stoma and also inhibiting ATP synthesis. Rubisco enzyme activity is considered one of the main reasons to decrease carbon assimilation in abiotic stress conditions (Asadi and Hatami, 2020). Mercury influences plant behavior in addition to changing carbon assimilation decrease via photosystem II structure collapse and fluorescence chlorophyll increase (Rahbarian et al., 2011).

Since it is assumed that dryness tension and heavy metals responses are the same, Sirvan and Sepahan genotypes as numbers likely to dryness stress, the resistant genotype to heavy metals stress, and Parsi genotype as sensitive number to dryness stress, are introduced as sensitive genotypes to heavy metals stress.

The interaction of heavy metals and soil chloride is a key factor in the absorption of heavy metals by plants of different groups: Agricultural, halophytes of salt marsh, desert, etc Blue macrophytes. Based on the results of studies by Rahbarian *et al.* (2019) on chromium ether on

plants Loleracea Portulaca with increasing chromium concentration in the cultivation environment, concentration VI (Cr) in aerial parts and root increased. The results of the research showed that the highest amount of soil mercury under mercury stress is in Sepahan genotype, and the highest amount is under

#### References

- Abdoli, M., Saeedi, M., Jalali-Honarmand, S., Mansourifar, S., & Ghobadi, M. E. (2013). Evaluation of some physiological and biochemical traits and their relationship with yield and its components in improved wheat cultivars under water stress after pollination. *Journal of Environmental Stress on Crop Science*, 6(1), 47-63. http://dx.doi.org/10.22077/escs.2023.4707.2059
- Ahmadi, A. & Baker, D. A. (2000). Stomatal and non-stomatal factors limiting photosynthesis in wheat under drought stress. *Journal of Agricultural Sciences Iran*, 31(4), 825-813.
- Antolin, M. C., Yoller, J., & Sanchez-Diaz, M. (1995). Effects of temporary drought on nitrate-fed and nitrogen-fixing alfalfa plants. *Plant Science*, 107, 159-165. DOI: 10.1016/0168-9452(95)04108-7
- Arnon, D. I. (1949). Copper enzymes in isolated chloroplasts. Polyphennol oxidase in *Beta vulgaris*. *Plant Physiology*, 4, 1-15. DOI: 10.1104/pp.24.1.1
- Asadi, A. A. & Hatami, A. (2020). Effect of water deficit stress on physiological characteristics in wheat (*Triticum aestivum* L.). *Plant Process and Function*, 10(41), 115-127. http://dorl.net/dor/20.1001.1.23222727.1400.10.41.9.9
- Austin, R. B. (1989). Genetic variation in photosynthesis. Journal of Agricultural Science, 112, 287-293.
- Baker, N. R. (2008). Chlorophyll fluorescence: A probe of photosynthesis in vivo. Annual Review of Plant Biology, 59, 89-113. DOI: 10.1146/annurev.arplant.59.032607.092759
- Balochi, H., Amini, F., Mohadi Dehnavi, M., & Attarzadeh, M. (2016). The effect of different planting media on the physiological and biochemical traits of pinto beans (*Phaseolus vulgaris* L.) under heavy metal stress. *Plant Process* and Function, 6(21), 27-39.
- Barati, V. & Bijanzadeh, E. (2022). Photosynthetic traits of triticale in grain filling period as affected by nitrogen fertilizer, silicon foliar application and water stress. *Plant Process and Function*, 12(53), 153-169. http://dorl.net/dor/20.1001.1.23222727.1402.12.53.10.8
- Chaneva, G., Parvanova, P., Tzvetkova, N., & Uzunova, N. (2010). Photosynthetic response of maize plants against cadmium and paraquat impact. *Water, Air, and Soil Pollution, 208, 287-293.* DOI: 10.1007/s11270-009-0166-x
- Condon, A. G., Richards, R. A., Rebetzke, G. J., & Farouhar, G. D. (2002). Improving intrinsic water use efficiency and crop yield. *Crop Science*, 42, 122-131. DOI:10.2135/cropsci2002.0122
- Dayan, F. E. & Zaccaro, M. (2012). Chlorophyll fluorescence as a marker for herbicide mechanisms of action. *Pesticide Biochemistry and Physiology*, 102, 189-197. DOI:10.1016/j.pestbp.2012.01.005
- Del Blanco, I. A., Rajaram, S., Kronstad, W. E., & Reynolds, M. P. (2000). Physiological performance of synthetic hexaploid wheat-derived populations. *Crop Science*, 40, 1257-1263. https://doi.org/10.2135/cropsci2000.4051257x
- Dube, B. K., Tawari, K., Chatterjee, J., & Chatterjee, C. (2003). Excess chromium alters uptake and translocation of certain nutrients in citrullus. *Chemosphere*, 53, 1147-1153. DOI:10.1016/S0045-6535(03)00570-8
- Ebrahimi Nokandeh, S., Razavi, S. M., & Afshar Mohammadian, M. (2023) Investigating some morphological characteristics, chlorophyll fluorescence and photosynthetic indices in swamp palm (*Cyperus alternifolius*), *Vetiveria zizanioides* and *Aloe vera* plants under irrigation with urban and industrial effluents. *Plant Process and Function*, 21(35), 337-354. 20.1001.1.23222727.1402.12.53.21.9
- Entesari, M. R., Heydari, N., Kheyrabi, J., Alaei, M., Farshi, E. A., & Vaziri, A. (2007). Water use efficiency in greenhouse production. The National Committee on Irrigation and Drainage.
- Escobar-Vargas, S., Vargas Aguirre, C. F., & Rivera Paez, F. A. (2022). Arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi prevent mercury toxicity in *Lactuca sativa* (L.) seed germination. *Pollution 2022*, 8(3), 1014-1025. DOI:10.22059/POLL.2022.337840.1338
- Fitzgerald, W. J., Engstrom, D. R., Mason, R. P., & Nater, E. A. (1998). The case for atmospheric Hg contamination in remote areas. *Environmental Science and Technology*, *32*, 1-7. 10.1021/es970284w
- Gardea-Torresdey, J. L., Peralta-Videa, J. R., Montes, M., Rose, G. D., & Corral-Diaz, B. (2004). Bioaccumulation of cadmium, chromium and copper by (*Convolvulus arvensis* L.): Impact on plant growth and uptake of nutritional elements. *Bioresource Technology*, 92, 229-235. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biortech.2003.10.002
- Golabadi, M., Maibody, M., & Arzani, A. (2007). Assessment of drought tolerance in segregating Populations in durum wheat. African Journal of Agricultural Research, 1(5), 162-17.
- Gregersen, P. L. & Holm, P. B. (2007). Transcriptome analysis of senescence in the flag leaf of wheat. *Plant Biotechnology*, 5, 192-206. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-7652.2006.00232. x
- Han, F. X., Su, Y., Monts, D. L., Waggoner, C. A., & Plodinec, J. M. (2006). Binding, distribution, and plant uptake of mercury in a soil from Oak Ridge, Tennessee, USA. *Science of The Total Environment*, 368, 753-768.

mercury stress in leaves and roots in Sivand, since the absorption of mercury in the plant is more, less amount of mercury remains in the soil.

- Hegedus, A., Eradel, S., & Horvath, G. (2001). Com parative studies of H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> detoxification enzymes in green and greening barely seedling under lead stress. *Plant Science*, *160*, 1085-1096. DOI:10.1016/S0168-9452(01)00330-2
- Islam, E., Liu, D., Li, T. Q., Yang, X. E., Jin, X. F., Mahmooda, Q., Tian, S., & Li, J. (2008). Effect of Pb toxicity on leaf growth, physiology and ultrastructure in the two ecotypes of Elsholtziaargyi. *Journal of Hazardous Material*, 154, 914-920. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhazmat.2007.10.121
- Israr, M. & Shivendra, V. S. (2006). Antioxidative responses to mercury in the cell cultures of *Sesbania drummondii*. *Plant Physiology and Biochemistry*, 44(10), 590-595.
- Khan, A. & Ashraf, M. (2008). Exogenously applied ascorbic acid alleviates salt-induced oxidative stress in wheat. *Environmental and Experimental Botany*, 63(1-3), 224-231.
- Klassen, R. & McLaughlin, C. (1996). The impact of environmental management on firm performance. *Management Science*, 42, 1199-1214. 10.1287/mnsc.42.8.1199
- Koc, N., Barutcular, C., & Genc, I. (2003). Photosynthesis and productivity of old and modern durum wheat in a Mediterranean environment. *Crop Science*, 43, 2089-2098. https://doi.org/10.2135/cropsci2003.2089
- Krause, G. H. & Weis, E. (1991). Chlorophyll fluorescence and photosynthesis: The basics. Annual Review of Plant Physiology and Plant Molecular Biology, 42, 313-349. DOI: 10.1146/annurev.pp.42.060191.001525
- Kromkamp, J. C. & Forster, R. M. (2003). The use of variable fluorescence measurements in aquatic ecosystems: Differences between multiple and single turnover measuring protocols and suggested terminology. *Review European Journal of Phycology*, 38, 103-112. https://doi.org/10.1080/0967026031000094094
- Larcher, W. (1995). Physiological plant ecology (3rd ed.). Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York.
- Lawlor, D. W. & Cornic, G. (2002). Photosynthetic carbon assimilation and associated metabolism in relation to water deficits in higher plants. *Plant Cell Environment*, 25, 275-294. https://doi.org/10.1046/j.0016-8025.2001.00814.x
- Li, Q., Chen, L. S., Jiang, H. X., Tang, N., Yang, L., Lin. Z., Li, Y. & Yang, G. (2010). Effects of manganese-excess on CO<sub>2</sub> assimilation, ribulose-1,5-bisphosphate carboxylase/oxygenase, carbohydrates and photosynthetic electron transport of leaves, and antioxidant systems of leaves and roots in *Citrus grandis* seedlings. *Bio Med Central Plant Biology*, 7, 10-42. DOI: 10.1186/1471-2229, 10-42
- Liu, Y. T., Hao, H. P., Xie, H. G., Lai, L., Wang, Q., Liu, C. X., & Wang, G. J. (2010). Extensive intestinal first-pass elimination and predominant hepatic distribution of berberine explain its low plasma levels in rats. *Drug Metabolism* and Disposition: the Biological Fate of Chemicals, 38(10), 1779-84. 10.1124/dmd.110.033936
- Maxwell, K. & Johnson, G. N. (2000). Chlorophyll fluorescence: A practical guide. *Experimental Botany*, *51*, 659-668. https://doi.org/10.1006/jare.2000.0638
- Mc Laughlin, M. R. & Marion, D. W. (1996). Cerebral blood flow and vasoresponsivity within and around cerebral contusions. *Journal of Neurosurgery*, 85(5), 871-6. Doi: 10.3171/jns.1996.85.5.0871
- Meloni, D. A., Martinez, C. A., & Cambraia, J. (2003). Photosynthesis and activity of superoxide dismutase, peroxidase and glutathione reductase in cotton under salt stress. *Environmental and Experimental Botany*, 49, 69-76. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0098-8472(02)00058-8
- Misra, P. T. & Tandon, P. K. (2009). Studies on effect mercury in Wheat (*Triticum aestivum* L.) and Maise (*Zea mays* L.) seedings. *Research in Environment and Life Sciences*, 2(4), 231-234.
- Moffatt, J., Sears, M. R. G., & Paulsen, G. (1990). Wheat height temperature tolerance during reproductive growth. *Evaluation by Chlorophyll Fluorescence*, 881-885.
- Munzuroglu, O. & Geckil, H. (2002). Effects of metals seed germination, root elongation and coleoptiles and hypocotyls growth in *Triticum aestivum* and *Cucumis sativus*. Archives of Environmental Contamination and Toxicology, 43, 61-73.
- Najafian, G., Khodarahmi, M., Amini, A., & Afshari, F. (2012). Sirvan, new varieties of drought-tolerant wheat bread and bakery with good quality for cultivation in irrigated field's temperate regions of Iran. *Journal Promoted Research on Crops and Garden*, 1(1).
- Nicolas, M. E., Lambers, H., Simpson, R. G., & Dalling, M. J. (1985). Effect of drought on metabolism and partitioning of carbon in two wheat varieties differing in drought-tolerance. *Annals of Botany*, 55, 727-742. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.aob.a086951
- Noorani Azad, H. & Kafilzade, F. (2012). The effect of cadmium toxicity on growth, soluble sugars, photosynthetic pigments and some of enzymes in safflower (*Carthamus tinctorius* L.). *Iranian Journal of Biology*, 24(6).
- Ortiz, R., Govaerts, B., Gupta, R. K., & Sayre, K. D. (2008). Climate change: Can wheat beat the heat? Agriculture *Ecosystems and Environment*, 126(1-2), 46-58. DOI:10.1016/j.agee.2008.01.019
- Parviz, M., Eshghi, N., Asadi, S., Teimoory, H., & Rezaei, M. (2015) Investigation of heavy metal contents in infusion tea samples of Iran. *Toxin Reviews*, 157-160.
- Patra, M. & Sharma, A. (2000). Mercury toxicity in plants. The Botanical Review, 66, 379-422.
- Patsikka, E., Kairavuo, M., Sersen, F., Aro Eva-Mari, & Tyystjarvi, E. (2002). Excess copper predisposes Photosystem II to photoinhibition in vivo by outcompeting Iron and causing decrease in leaf chlorophyll. *Plant Physiology*, 129, 1359-1367. DOI: 10.1104/pp.004788

- Pazireh, S., Maghsoudi Moud, A. A., Tohidi Nejad, E., & Mohayeji, M. (2022). Effect of terminal drought stress on photosynthetic pigments and nutritional value of bread wheat cultivars (*Triticum aestivum* L.) in Kerman. *Plant Process and Function*, 12(23), 355-369. DOI: http://dorl.net/dor/20.1001.1.23222727.1402.12.53.22.0
- Pessarkli, M. (1999). Hand Book of Plant and Crop Stress. Marcel Dekkor Inc.
- Piper, F. I., Corcuera, L. J., Alberdi, M., & Lusk, C. (2007). Differential photosynthetic and survival responses to soil effects of drought stress on tolerant and sensitive chickpea genotypes 55 drought in two evergreen Nothofagus species. *Annals of forest Sciences*, 64, 447-452. DOI: 10.1051/forest:2007022
- Pirrone, N., Cinnirella, S., Feng, X., Finkelman, R. B., Friedli, H. R., Leaner, J., Mason, R., Mukherjee, A. B., Stracher, G. B., Streets, D. G., & Telmer, K. (2010). Global mercury emissions to the atmosphere from anthropogenic and natural sources. *Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics*, 10, 5951-5964. 10.5194/acp-10-5951-2010
- Pourrut, B., Shahid, M., Dumat, C., Winterton, P., & Pinelli, E. (2011). Lead uptake, toxicity, and detoxification in plants. *Reviews of Environmental Contamination and Toxicology*, 213, 113-36. DOI: 10.1007/978-1-4419-9860-6\_4 .hal-00717188
- Rahbarian, R., Khavari-Nejad, R., Ganjeali, A., Bagheri, A., & Najafi, F. (2011). Drought stress effect on photosynthesis, chlorophyll fluorescence and water relations in tolerant and suseptible Chickpea (*Cicer arietinum* L.) genotypes. *Acta Biologica Cracoviensia Series Botanica*, 53(1), 47-56. DOI: 10.2478/v10182-011-0007-2
- Raisi Sadati, S. Y. & Jahanbakhsh Gedeh Kehriz, S. (2015). Effect of cadmium chloride and mercury on the amount of soluble sugar, total protein, amino acids proline, lysine, and some enzymes in two varieties of bread wheat (*Triticum aestivum* L.). *Plant Process and Function*, 5(16), 143-156. DOI: 10.2478/v10182-011-0007-2
- Rosenqvist, E. & Van Kooten, O. (2003). Chlorophyll fluorescence: A general Description and nomenclature. In: Practical Applications of Chlorophyll Fluorescence in Plant Biology (Eds. DeEll, J. R. and Toivonen, P. M. A.) Pp. 31-37. Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Sahu, G., Upadhyay, S., & Sahoo, B. B. (2012). Mercury induced phytotoxicity and oxidative stress in wheat (*Triticum aestivum* L.) plants. *Physiology Molecular Biology Plants*, 18(1), 21-31. 10.1007/s12298-011-0090-6
- Sairam, R. K. & Srivastava, G. C. (2002). Changes in antioxidant activity in sub-cellular fractions of tolerant and susceptible wheat genotypes in response to long term heavy metals stress. *Plant Science*, 162, 897-904. 10.1016/S0168-9452(02)00037-7
- Sanitata, D., Toppi, L. & Gabbriella, R. (1999). Response to Cd in higher plant- Review. *Environmental and Experimental Botany*, 45, 105-130. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0098-8472(98)00058-6
- Seregin, I. V. & Kozhevnikova, A. D. (2006). Physiological role of nickel and its toxic effects on higher plants. *Russian Plant Physiology*, 53, 257-277. DOI: 10.1134/S1021443706020178
- Siddique, M. R. B., Hamid, A., & Islam, M. S. (1999). Drought stress effect on photosynthetic rate and leaf gas exchange of wheat. *Botanical Bulletin of Academia Sinica*, 40, 141-145.
- Singh, S., Kushwaha, B. P., Nag, S. K., Mishra, A. K., Bhattacharya, S., Gupta, P. K., & Singh, A. (2011). *In vitro* methane emission from Indian dry roughages in relation to chemical composition. *Current Science*, 101(1), 57-65.
- Siosemardeh, A., Ahmadi, A., Poustini, K., & Mohammadi, V. (2006). Evaluation of drought resistance indices under various environmental conditions. *Field Crops Research*, 98, 222-229. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fcr.2006.02.001
- Skovmand, B. & Reynolds, M. P. (2000) Increasing yeild potential for marginal aeras by exploring genetic resources collections. The eventh regional Wheat workshop for eastern, centeral and southern Africa. Addis Ababa Ethiopia, 18(22), 67-77.
- Sloss, L. L. (2015). Issue of mercury emissions from an EU perspective. Scientific and industrial conference: Mercury emission and possibilities of reducing it in the polish energy sector, *Krakow*, 13-14.
- Srivastava, S., Mishra, S., Tripathi, R. D., Dwivedi, S., & Gupta, D. K. (2006). Copper induced oxidative stress and responses of antioxidants and phytochelatins in *Hydrilla verticillata* (L.f.). *Royle Aquatic Toxicology*, 80(4), 405-415. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aquatox.2006.10.006
- Talebzadeh, Z., Rahbarian, R., Nadaf, M., & Sobhanian, H. (2022). Evaluation of the interaction effects of salinity and chromium on photosynthetic pigments and photochemical performance of *Portulaca oleracea* L. *Journal of Plant Environmental Physiology*, 65(1), 109-126. DOI: 10.30495/iper.2021.679568
- Teimoory, H. (2019). Spatial Distribution of Heavy Metals in Surface Sediments of Kalametiya Lagoon in Sri Lanka and Accumulation of Heavy Metals by *Typha angustifolia*; Eco-sustainable Phytoremediation for wetland management Thesis MSc. in Tropical Biodiversity and Ecosystems.
- Toth, S. Z., Schansker, G., Garab, G., & Strasser, R. J. (2007). Photosynthetic electron transport activity in heat-treated barley leaves: The role of internal alternative electron donors to photosystem II. *Biochim Biophys Acta, Bioenerg* 1767, 295-305. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bbabio.2007.02.019
- Vajpayee, P., Tripathi, R. D., Rai, U. N., Ali, M. B., & Singh, S. N. (2000). Chromium (VI) accumulation reduces chlorophyll biosynthesis, nitrate reductase activity and protein content in *Nymphaea alba*. *Chemosphere*, 41(7), 1075-1082.
- Wang, K., Feng, X., Chai, L., Cao, S., & Qiu, F. (2017). The metabolism of berberine and its contribution to the pharmacological effects. *Drug Metabolism Reviews*, 49(2), 139-157. 10.1080/03602532.2017.1306544

Wojcik, M., Skorzynska-Polit, E., & Tukiendorf, A. (2006). Organic acids accumulation and antioxidant enzyme activities in *Thlaspica erulescens* under Zn and Cd stress. *Plant Growth Regulation*, 48(2), 145-155. 10.1007/s10725-005-5816-4