



## Heavy metal ( $Pb(NO_3)_2$ ) and Salt stress (NaCl) Alter the shoot length and activity of Amylase enzyme in *Vigna radiate*

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### Abstract

The study was undertaken to identify the responses of amylase enzyme activities and the morphological changes in *Vigna radiate* cultivars under Heavy metal ( $Pb(NO_3)_2$ ) and Salt stress (NaCl) conditions. Plants were grown under three different concentration regimes of  $Pb(NO_3)_2$  and NaCl respectively. The Chosen concentrations of  $Pb(NO_3)_2$  were 50mM, 100mM and 150 mM and for NaCl were 0.5 M, 1M and 1.5 M. These stress treatments preferentially decreased the shoot length in a concentration dependent manner. The Amylase activities was found to be decreased after the application of  $Pb(NO_3)_2$  and NaCl. The pattern of alternation of amylase activity was common for both  $Pb(NO_3)_2$  and NaCl treatment suggesting that similar biochemical pathways might be triggered by  $Pb(NO_3)_2$  and NaCl.

### Introduction

Plants often counter unfavorable abiotic factors, causing abiotic stresses - that play a major role in determining productivity of crop yields (1). Because of their sessile nature, plants must combat these conditions some examples of abiotic stresses that a plant may face include decreased water availability, extreme temperatures (heating or freezing), decreased availability of soil nutrients and/or excess of toxic ions, excess of light and increased hardness of drying soil that hamper roots growth (2). The ability of plants to adapt and/or acclimate to different environments is directly or indirectly related with the plasticity and resilience of photosynthesis, in combination with other processes, determining plant growth and development, namely reproduction (3). Plant adaptation involve a variety of responses to acclimatize to

environmental stresses. During evolution, plants have developed sophisticated mechanisms to sense the subtle changes of growth conditions, and trigger signal transduction cascades, which in turn activate stress responsive genes and ultimately lead to changes at the physiological and biochemical levels.

**Heavy metals** ( $Pb(NO_3)_2$ ) can be highly toxic when their concentrations are exceeded threshold value. Otherwise heavy metals at low doses are essential micronutrients for plants, but in higher doses they may cause metabolic disorders and growth inhibition for most of the plants species. A common feature of heavy metal is their ability for production of toxic oxygen derivatives (4). Reactive oxygen species (ROS) are continuously produced at low level during normal metabolic processes (4). But in biological systems, increasing the



synthesis of ROS is one of the initial responses to different stress factors (5).

High salinity (NaCl) in the soil and/or irrigation water becomes a common problem, and NaCl stress is a major factor limiting crop production since it affects almost all plant functions (6). Although the physiological and whole-plant responses to NaCl stress have been studied, the mechanisms which confer NaCl tolerance to non-halophytic plants are still poorly understood. The over salinity of the soil is one of the main factors that limits the spread of plants in their natural habitats. The property of salinity tolerance is not a simple attribute, but it is an outcome of various features that depend on different physiological interactions, which are difficult to determine. The morphological appearance presented by the plant in response to salinity, may not be enough to determine its effect so it is important to recognize other physiological and biochemical factors, including toxic ions, osmotic potential, lack of elements and other physiological and chemical disorders, as well as the interactions between these various stresses (7, 8,9 and 10).

*Vigna radiate*, Commonly known as the **moong bean, green gram, or mung** is a plant species in from the legume family. The *V. radiata* is mainly cultivated in India, China, Korea, and Southeast Asia. *V. radiata* beans are a high source of nutrients like: manganese, potassium, magnesium, folate, copper, zinc and various B vitamins. They are also a very filling food, high in protein, resistant starch and dietary fiber. Because of their high nutrient density, mung beans are considered useful in defending against several chronic, age-related diseases, including heart disease, cancer, diabetes and obesity. Keeping the above fact in mind, the present study was conducted in *V. radiata* to

analyze morphological and biochemical changes induced by  $\text{Pb}(\text{NO}_3)_2$  and NaCl.

## Material and method;

### Plant Material

Seeds of *V. radiata* were obtained from the local market of Jalandhar. Before start of experimentation seeds were thoroughly washed with water and surface-sterilized using 0.1% (*w/v*) solution of  $\text{HgCl}_2$  solution. The result presented in this study was obtained from three independent experiments with three replicate each.

### Germination of Seeds and imposition of stress

Surface sterilized seeds were germinated in petri plate by placing on moist filter paper. Six days old seedlings was used for stress treatment. For NaCl treatment nine petri plates were taken, three plates were treated with 0.5 M NaCl, other three were treated with 1 M NaCl and last three was treated with 1.5 M NaCl

For  $\text{Pb}(\text{NO}_3)_2$  treatment nine petri plates were taken, three plates were treated with 50mM  $\text{Pb}(\text{NO}_3)_2$ , other three were treated with 100mM  $\text{Pb}(\text{NO}_3)_2$  and last three was treated with 150mM  $\text{Pb}(\text{NO}_3)_2$ .

For the entire period of experimentation, plants were kept at 25°C with 8hr light and dark cycle.

### Extraction of protein:

Protein was extracted using Sodium Phosphate Buffer (pH 7.5). For extraction of protein 3days, 6days and 9days old seedlings weighing 1g was taken and then the protein was extracted from each tissue (shoot, endosperm) separately. The total 10ml of extraction buffer was used per gram of tissue. The homogenate was centrifuged at 10,000 rpm for 20 minutes at 4°C. The

resultant supernatant was collected and stored at  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$  for protein estimation.

#### **Extraction of enzymes for enzymes assay:**

Tissue sample (1g) was homogenized in 10ml of extraction buffer (0.067M phosphate buffer) per gram of tissue. The homogenate was centrifuged at 10,000 rpm for 15 minutes at  $4^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Supernatant was collected carefully without disturbing the pellet and either immediately used for assay or kept at  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

#### **Enzymes assay:**

The  $\alpha$ -amylase activity is measured using a colorimetric method with 3,5-dinitrosalicylic acid (DNS) reagent. In this method, starch by  $\alpha$ -amylase is converted into maltose. Maltose released from starch is measured by the reduction of 3,5-dinitrosalicylic acid. Starch + H<sub>2</sub>O  $\alpha$ -Amylase Maltose (reducing agent) 9 Maltose reduces the pale yellow coloured alkaline 3, 5-Dinitro salicylic acid (DNS) to the orange-red colored. The intensity of the color is proportional to the concentration of maltose present in the sample. This intensity change in color is measured using a spectrophotometer as the absorbance at 540nm wavelength. Wave length is set to 540 nm because it is the region where orange-red color absorbs. This

procedure applies to all products that have a specification for  $\alpha$ -amylase

The assay mixture contained 200 $\mu\text{l}$  of guaiacol, 250 $\mu\text{l}$  Tris-HCL, 50 $\mu\text{l}$  enzyme extract and 500 $\mu\text{l}$  of H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>. The reaction was started with the addition of H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> and the absorbance at 470nm was recorded up to 5 min. The difference in absorbance was divided by the molar extinction coefficient 26.6/mM/cm and specific activity of enzyme is expressed as  $\mu\text{mol}$  of H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> oxidized/min/mg protein.

#### **Results and Discussion**

##### **Effect of lead nitrate on shoot length and amylase activity:**

Application of Pb(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> shows on germinating seedling resulted in decrease in shoot length in a concentration dependent manner during the entire period of experimentation (Fig:1&2 ). This decrease was 42.86% at 50mM, 48.57% at 100mM and 65.71% at 150mM during third day of germination. Similar trend was exhibited by 6 days and 9days treated seedlings of *V. radiata*, where the shoot length was decreased 77.77% and 80.74% respectively at conc. 150mM of Pb(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>. It was also observed that with increasing exposure time and concentration decrease in shoot length also exaggerated.

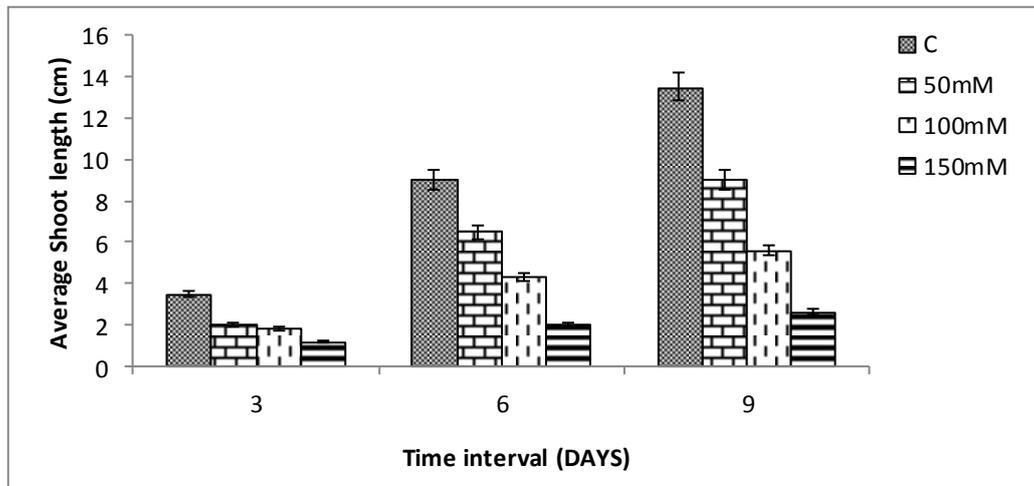
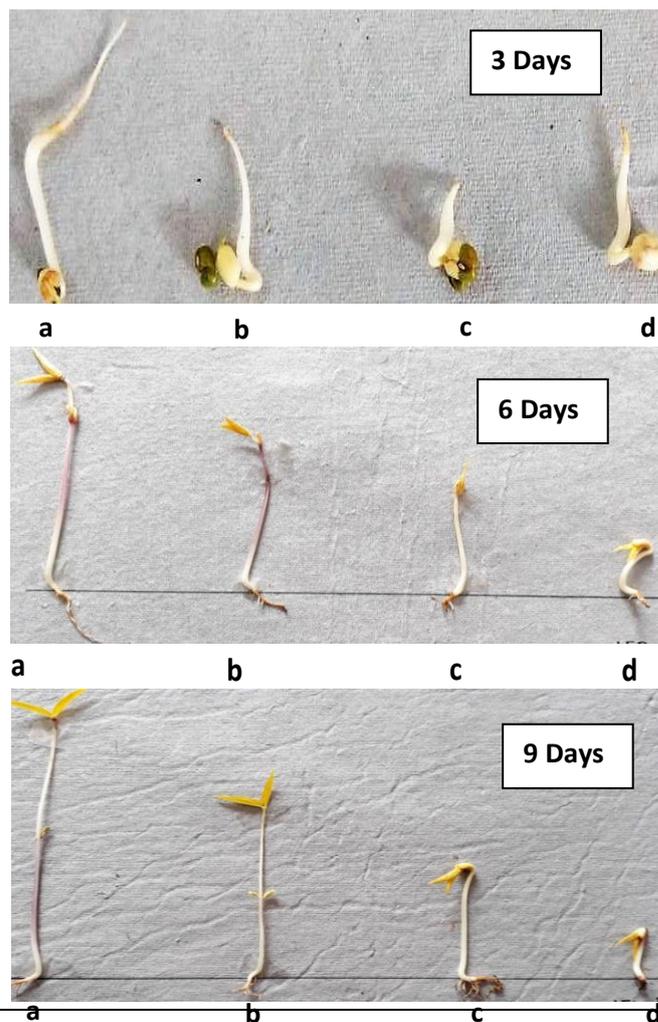


Fig 1: Average shoot length of *V. radiata* seedlings treated with lead nitrate.. The seedlings were treated with different concentrations of  $Pb(NO_3)_2$  i.e., 50mM, 100mM and 150mM. The shoot length was measured at 3, 6 and 9 days respectively. (Errors bars indicate mean  $\pm$  SD (n=3) with P value  $\leq$  0.005).



**Fig 2: Effect of lead nitrate on shoot length in seedlings of *V. radiata*.** The seedlings were treated with different concentrations of  $Pb(NO_3)_2$  i.e., 50mM, 100mM and 150mM herein represented as b, c and d in each panel. The respective control is represented by "a" in all the panels. The Different panels represent different time points as mentioned on each panel.

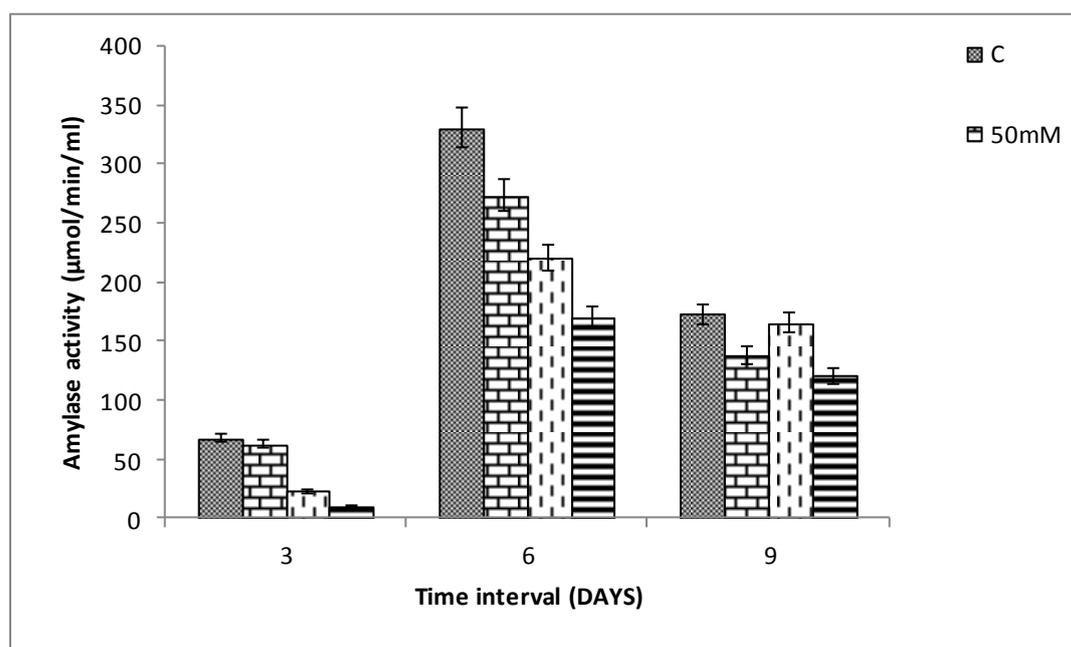
The exact mechanism of this type of behaviour in shoot growth is not known, but it might be due in part to a quicker deposition of lead in the roots and shoots (11). Inhibition of seed germination by lead had been documented in *Spartiana alterniflora* (12), *Pinus helipensis* (13). Schulz – Baldes and Lewin (14) reported that Pb reduced cell division and uptake of crucial elements as it accumulate on the cell membrane and hence inhibited seedling growth. In the present study, application of different concentrations of  $Pb(NO_3)_2$  in *V. radiata* seedlings adversely decreased their growth pattern (shoot length) as compared with normal growth conditions. Our studies were observed to be similar and consistent with previous studies reported in rice (*Oryza sativa. L*) by Sara *et al.*, (15), *Brassica campestris* by (16). Early seedling growth was also

inhibited by lead in soya bean (17), rice (18), maize (19), barley (20) and certain legumes (21). The primary cause of cell growth inhibition arise from a lead induced simulation of indole- 3 acetic acid (IAA) oxidation.

Exposure of lead nitrate resulted in decrease of amylase activity. The value of this decrease at 3 days was 7.40%, 66.67% and 85.19% at conc. 50mM, 100mM and 150mM of  $Pb(NO_3)_2$  as compared to untreated seedlings (**Table:1, Fig:3**). The same trend was observed at 6 and 9 days of treatment. It was observed that higher the conc. of  $Pb(NO_3)_2$  lower the activity of amylase. At highest conc. of  $Pb(NO_3)_2$  150mM the activity of amylase was decreased by 48.48% and 30.43% in 6 and 9 days seedlings respectively as compared to respective control.

**Table 1: Amylase activity in seedlings of *V.radiata* treated with lead nitrate. The seedlings were treated with different conc. of  $Pb(NO_3)_2$  i.e., 50mM, 100mM and 150mM. Enzyme activity in unit ( $\mu\text{mol}/\text{min}/\text{ml}$ ) determined by DNS assay at every 3 days interval.**

| TREATMENT | AMYLASE ACTIVITY (units) |            |            |
|-----------|--------------------------|------------|------------|
|           | 3 DAYS                   | 6 DAYS     | 9 DAYS     |
| Control   | 67.66±2.2                | 330.82±2.3 | 172.93±2.8 |
| 50mM      | 62.65±2.5                | 273.18±2.6 | 137.84±2.8 |
| 100mM     | 22.55±2.3                | 220.43±2.7 | 165.41±2.5 |
| 150mM     | 10.02±2.3                | 170.42±2.7 | 120.30±2.8 |



**Fig.3: Effect of lead nitrate on Amylase activity in seedlings of *V.radiata*.** The seedlings were treated with different conc. of  $Pb(NO_3)_2$  i.e., 50mM, 100mM and 150mM. Enzyme activity in unit ( $\mu\text{mol}/\text{min}/\text{ml}$ ) determined by DNS assay at 3,6 and 9 days respectively. (Errors bars indicate mean  $\pm$  SD (n=3) with P value  $\leq$  0.005)

Enzymes associated with starch degradation, sucrose synthesis and utilization of glucose play a key role in seedling growth which further determine the final yield of the crop. **Amylase** (EC 3.2.1.1) catalyses hydrolytic cleavage of internal  $\alpha$ -1,4-glucan bonds of starch releasing fragments that can be further broken down by  $\beta$ -amylase (EC 3.2.1.2) into maltose (22,23). In contrast to the antioxidant enzymes the heavy metals treatments caused significant reduction in the hydrolysis enzymes activity (amylase). This type of inhibitions might be correlated with impaired hydrolysis of storage products, which, in turn, leads to starvation of the germinating embryo (24). In the present study we observed that, Amylase enzyme activity in the control germinated grains increased with time during the study as it reached the highest value at 6 days seedlings, whereas in case of the heavy metals treatment this activity was highly

inhibited than the control and decreased with increasing the age of the germinating grains the lowest activity of amylase was in case of the highest concentration of  $Pb(NO_3)_2$ . Reduced starch mobilization from reserve tissues was also observed in germinating *Phaseolus vulgaris L.* seedlings under cadmium (25) and copper toxicities (25) which was attributed to reduced amylase activities. Earlier, Karmous I, Khadija J *et al.*, reported the Pb decreased activity of proteases and  $\alpha$ -amylases in rice endosperm (26).

#### Effect of Sodium Chloride on shoot length and amylase activity:

Application of NaCl also decreased shoot length of *V. radiata* (Fig:4&5). Decrease in the shoot length was increased with the increase in the concentration of NaCl as compared to respective controls except at 3 days of treatment. The effect of Exposure to 0.5M conc. of NaCl (3days) decreased the

shoot length by 40.91% as compared to control and then a sudden increase was observed 13.63% at 1.0M conc. which further increased 36.63% at the maximum conc. of NaCl i.e., at 1.5M.

In contrary to this, the shoot length decreased gradually for 6 and 9 days treated seedlings of *V. radiata*. The shortest shoot length was recorded at the highest conc. 1.5M of NaCl 42.23% for 6 days and 43.33% for 9 days.

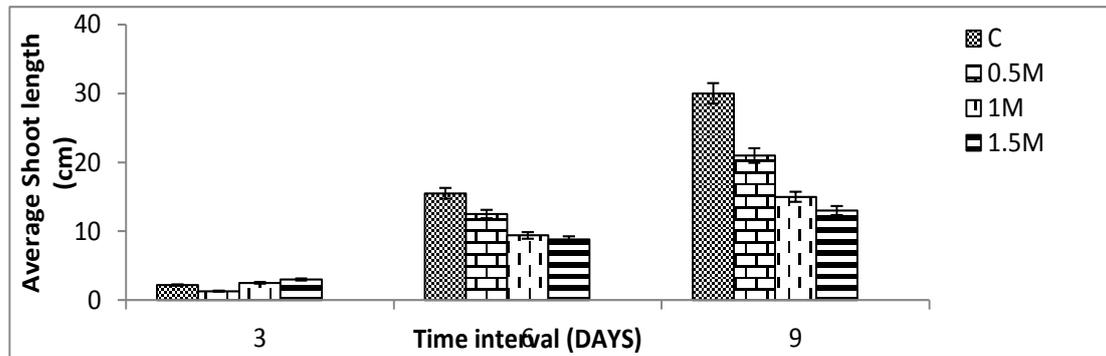
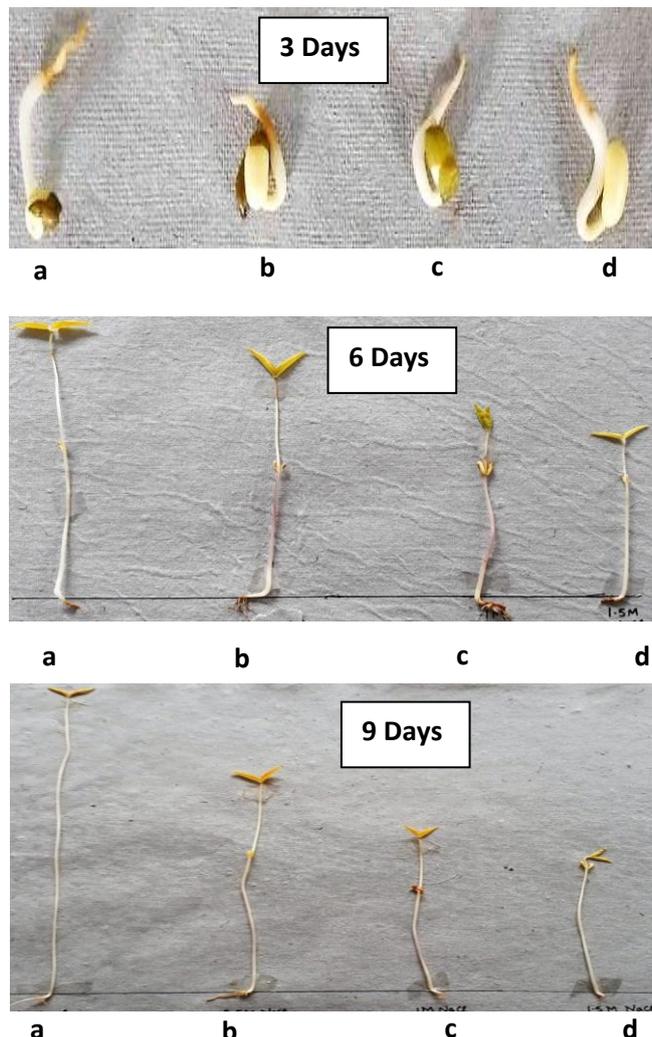


Fig.4: Average shoot length of *V. radiata* seedlings treated with Sodium chloride. The seedlings were treated with different concentration of NaCl i.e., 0.5M, 1M and 1.5M. The shoot length was measured at 3, 6 and 9 days respectively. (Errors bars indicate mean  $\pm$  SD (n=3) with P value  $\leq$  0.005).



**Fig.5: Effect of Sodium chloride on shoot length in seedlings of *V. radiata*.** The seedlings were treated with different concentrations of NaCl i.e., 0.5M, 1M and 1.5M herein represented as b, c and d in each panel. The respective control is represented by "a" in all the panels. The Different panels represent different time points as mentioned on each panel.

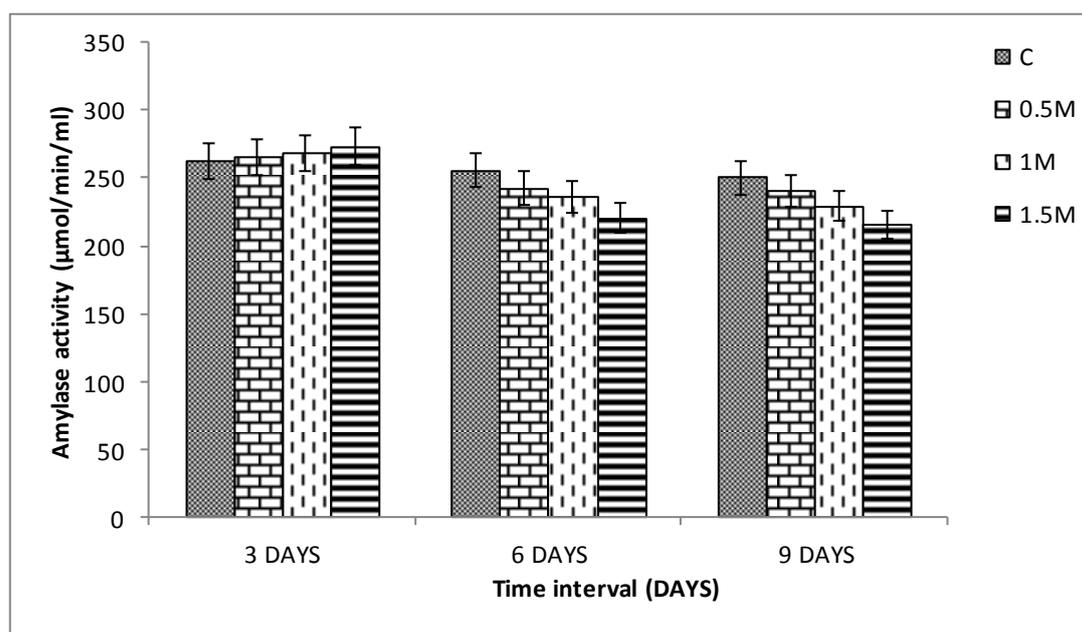
Shoot length of *V. radiata* seedlings was greatly inhibited by NaCl. The degree of inhibition increased as the NaCl concentration level increased. In the present study, application of different concentration of NaCl in *V. radiata* seedlings adversely decreased shoot length as compared to respective control. These observations are similar and consistent with previous studies reported in *Zea mays* by Hamada (27). Our results and work by different Scientist around the globe suggested that there might be a connection between the decrease in plant length and increase in the concentration of NaCl (28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 and 34).

Application of NaCl decreased the activity of amylase except at 3 days seedlings of

*V. radiata* (Table:2, Fig:6). Therefore It may be inferred that intial exposure of NaCl might elicit the activity of amylase the observed values at 3 days was increased by 1.24%, 2.40% and 4.30% at conc. 0.5M, 1.0M and 1.5M of NaCl as compared to respective control. On contary, the reverse trend was observed in 6 and 9 days old seedlings. It was observed that at 6 days of treatment activity of amylase decreased to 5.25%, 7.81% and 13.85% at conc. 0.5M, 1.0M and 1.5M as compared to untreated seedlings. At 9 days of treatment maximum decrease in activity of amylase was observed at conc. 1.5M of NaCl as compared to respective control.

**Table. 2: Effect of sodium chloride on Amylase activity in seedlings of *V. radiata*.** The seedlings were treated with different concentrations of NaCl i.e., 0.5M, 1.0M and 1.5M. Enzyme activity in unit ( $\mu\text{mol}/\text{min}/\text{ml}$ ) determined by DNS assay at every 3 days interval.

| TREATMENT | AMYLASE ACTIVITY (units) |                  |                  |
|-----------|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|
|           | 3 DAYS                   | 6 DAYS           | 9 DAYS           |
| Control   | 262.29 $\pm$ 2.3         | 256.02 $\pm$ 2.3 | 250.25 $\pm$ 2.6 |
| 0.5M      | 265.56 $\pm$ 2.5         | 242.56 $\pm$ 2.4 | 240.21 $\pm$ 2.8 |
| 1.0M      | 268.59 $\pm$ 2.6         | 236.00 $\pm$ 2.5 | 229.16 $\pm$ 2.9 |
| 1.5M      | 273.57 $\pm$ 2.8         | 220.56 $\pm$ 2.5 | 215.60 $\pm$ 2.7 |



**Fig.6: Effect of sodium chloride on Amylase activity in seedlings of *V. radiata*. The seedlings were treated with different concentrations of NaCl i.e., 0.5M, 1.0M and 1.5M. Enzyme activity in unit ( $\mu\text{mol}/\text{min}/\text{ml}$ ) determined by DNS assay at 3, 6 and 9 days respectively. (Errors bars indicate mean  $\pm$  SD (n=3) with P value  $\leq$  0.005).**

In the present study, data suggested slight increase in amylase activity at 3 days after the application of NaCl, However after increase in duration of treatment with NaCl the amylase activity decreases as compared to untreated seedlings. Ahemad Adda *et al.* (2014) observed increase in amylase activity in two genotypes of *Phaseolus vulgaris* L. seedlings when exposed to salt stress, similar to present results obtained at 3 days interval(35). But with the increase in duration of germination the amylase activity decreases and sugar content increases. Similar results were found in NaCl stressed rice seeds by Kim SK *et al.*, (36). The higher concentration of NaCl induced significant increase in total carbohydrate content of black gram (37). The similar results were observed and reported that the salinity can affect the carbohydrate metabolism and overall production of carbohydrate (38, 39). The significant increase in carbohydrate fraction and decrease in amylase activity in

*Zea mays* was observed (Hassaein 40). Salt and water deficit stresses caused a significant increase in soluble carbohydrate content of barley leaves. With increasing salt doses, the rate of increase in soluble carbohydrate content was increased, indicating a role of soluble carbohydrate in the osmotic adjustment. The accumulation of sugars in plants under stress conditions might be involved in the osmotic adjustment was reported (41). A decrease in starch content and an increase in both reducing and nonreducing sugars is due to increase in amylase activity has been reported in leaves of *Bruguiera parviflora* (42).

It might be concluded from above study that heavy metal and salt stress exerted same type of effect on shoot length and amylase activity. It might be possible that these abiotic factor trigger the similar pathway of plant defense. To confirm these assumption further study is needed.

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