

Impact Factor-8.632 (SJIF)

ISSN-2278-9308

B.Aadhar

Single Blind Peer-Reviewed & Refereed Indexed

Multidisciplinary International Research Journal

June-2023

ISSUE No - (CDXVIII) 418 & Vol.- A

ENVIRONMENT : ISSUES & CHALLENGES



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Phytotoxic Effect of Green synthesized Silver Nanoparticles (Ag Nps) on seed germination and seedling growth in *Allium cepa*

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ABSTRACT: -

Many scientists are working on NPs to find out their potential adverse effects on the environment and on human health. According to them NPs can cause a wide variety of toxicological effects on human, environment, bacteria and aquatic organisms. For synthesis of silver nanoparticles 10 mL of *Coccinia grandis* leaf extract was added to 90mL of 1mM aqueous AgNO₃ solution in 250 mL flask. Then the flasks were incubated in dark at room temperature. The silver nanoparticle solution thus obtained was observed for colour change. A control setup was also maintained without leaf extract. Then purification of silver nanoparticle solution was done by repeated centrifugation at 10,000 rpm for 15 min followed by separation of the pellet in distilled water. The structural and optical properties of NPs were found out by ultraviolet-visible spectrophotometer (UV-Vis), Fourier transform infrared (FTIR) spectroscopy and dynamic light scattering (DLS). UV peaks at 300–380 nm confirmed the presence of pure Ag NPs. DLS showed their size whereas FTIR further confirmed the presence of bio-active functional groups involved in the reduction of bulk zinc acetate to Ag NPs. In present investigation, different concentration AgNps were made and applied on onion seeds to study the effect on seed germination and early seedling growth. Seed germination decreased in treated seed as compared to control.

Keywords- AgNPs, *Coccinia grandis*, Seed germination

INTRODUCTION

Nanotechnology is one of the most active and vigorous areas of research in the field of modern material science. Due to the specific characteristics like size, distribution and morphology nanoparticles show distinct properties compared to bulk form of material (Shriram et al., 2014). Nanoparticles are very attractive materials to handle in biological system because of microscopic size with at least one dimension less than 1000nm. Nanoparticles are found to be very effective in sensing and detection of biological structures and systems (Singhet al., 2008). Appearance of Metal nanoparticles in different shapes such as nano-powder or nano-cluster or nano-crystal and variation in sizes ranging from 2 nm to 1000 nm.

Chemically synthesized nanoparticles have adverse effect on environment so there is need to work on method for synthesis of nanoparticles which is eco-friendly. In recent studies, it is observed that nanoparticles can be biologically synthesized by using plant which is not hazardous to environment and human health. Green synthesis of nanoparticles has gained attention due to its trustworthy and eco-friendly nature (P.Mohanpuria et al., 2008). Biosynthesis offers better control over the growth of nanoparticles crystals due to the slow rate of synthesis, stabilization and steric hindrance (Poulose et al., 2013). Synthesis of nanoparticles using biological components has importance due to their unusual photo electrochemical chemical, optical and electronic properties. The physical and chemical methods of silver nanoparticle synthesis were practised from many years, but they are very costly and they require various toxic chemicals for their synthesis so biological synthesis is best option for synthesis of silver nanoparticles.

Because silver has been known to have antimicrobial and disinfecting effect, Silver nanoparticles have important applications. It has been studied that silver nanoparticles are nontoxic to mankind and shows activity against viruses, bacteria, and other microorganisms without any side effects at low concentrations. same concentration silver is showing different result on human cells and micro-organisms, harmful to microorganism but not to human cell. (N. Savithramma et al., 2011). Silver nanoparticles play a significant role in field of medicine and biology. AgNPs are extensively used for its novel properties in catalysis, chemical sensing, bio sensing, photonics, electronic and pharmaceuticals (Vijaya raj et al., 2012). Silver nanoparticles used in biomedicine especially for



antibacterial and antiviral agents. Silver is nontoxic effective antimicrobial agent used for centuries. Silver shows a very high potential in wide range of biological applications. Most particularly it is used in form of nanoparticles.

Mehataet al 2016 stated that the interaction between nanomaterials and plants is still unknown. According to Kaegi et al.,2010 and Nowack 2010 research on the effect of silver nanoparticles (AgNPs) on plants is continued. Husen and Siddiqi 2014 reported that dissimilarities in terms of translocation, biotransformation, accumulation, absorption and toxicity of nanomaterials in plants. Cheng et al., 2010; Tripathi A. et al.,2017 observed the effect of AgNPs on plants shows variation as per change in NP size and its concentration, age and plants species, the method and duration of experimental exposure and various experimental conditions. Studies have shown that AgNPs release ionic silver into surrounding which generate reactive oxygen species (ROS) this cause oxidative stress and inhibition of respiratory enzymes. Cell damaged by oxidative stress produced by NPs and It has been proven that this is very common mechanism of cell damage marked in many NPs toxicity studies (Yang et al.,2009). Particles may produce intracellular oxidative stress by disturbing the balance between oxidant and anti-oxidant processes upon entering the cell.

On the basis of various study, it is not clear that toxic effect of AgNPs is caused by its intrinsic property or by shedding ionic silver. Present day literature showing limited research on the effect of AgNPs on plants and also their positive and negative effect on environment is not clear so there is need to check their impact on Plant and Environment.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

3.1 MATERIALS

Silver Nitrate, Onion seeds, *Coccinia grandis* leaves.

3.1.1 Plant samples Collection

The fresh leaves of *Coccinia grandis* were collected from Rajgurunagar area, Pune, Maharashtra. To remove dust particles, the leaves were washed with distilled water thrice and then dried under direct sunlight for one to two weeks for complete removal of moisture (Velavan et al., 2012).

3.2 METHODS

3.2.1 Leaf extract Preparation

The dried leaves were crushed well with mortar and pestle to make a powder. Then 25 grams of powder sample was added into 100 mL of distilled water and the mixture was boiled for 30 min at 75°C. The leaf extract was cooled down and filtered with Whatman No. 1 filter paper. Then filtrate was collected and stored at 4°C for further use (Arunachalma et al., 2012).

3.2.2 Biosynthesis of silver nanoparticles using plant extract

For synthesis of silver nanoparticles 10 mL of *Coccinia grandis* leaf extract was added to 90 mL of 1mM aqueous AgNO₃ solution in 250 mL flask. Then the flasks were incubated in dark at room temperature. The silver nanoparticle solution thus obtained was observed for colour change. AgNO₃ solution without leaf extract is control. Then By repeated centrifugation at 10,000 rpm for 15 min, silver nanoparticle solution was purified, followed by re-dispersion of the pellet in distilled water. The AgNPs were stored at 4°C for further use.

3.2.3 Characterization of synthesized silver nanoparticles

Characterization of AgNPs is important for evaluation of functional properties of synthesized nanoparticles. It is also important for determination of size, Shape, distribution and morphology. Various analytical techniques like UV-Visible spectroscopy, Dynamic Light Scattering (DLS), FTIR, are used for characterization of silver nanoparticles. In present study, AgNPs synthesized from plant leaves extract of *Coccinia grandis* were characterized by the UV-Vis spectroscopy, FTIR and DLS.

3.2.3.1 UV-Visible spectroscopy

UV-Visible spectroscopy is very useful technique for the primary characterization of synthesized nanoparticles. Optical property of AgNPs was determined by UV-Vis spectroscopy. Colour change is observed due to the reduction of silver ions into silver nanoparticles during exposure to plant extract. The colour change is due to the surface Plasmon resonance phenomenon. The colour change was recorded with help of UV-Visible spectroscopy between 300 to 700 nm.

3.2.3.2 Fourier transform Infrared spectroscopy

Identification of types of chemical bonds in a molecule by producing an infrared absorption spectrum that is like a molecular fingerprint is done by FTIR which is a powerful tool for identification of such types of chemical bonds in a molecule. FTIR was used for detection of functional group in synthesized AgNPs. The spectra were recorded on FTIR spectrophotometer at range of 3500-500 cm^{-1} . The chemical composition of synthesized nanoparticles was studied by using FTIR spectroscopy (T. Sriram et al., 2014).

3.2.3.3 Dynamic Light Scattering(DLS)

hydrodynamic diameter is measured by DLS. DLS is used to analyze the particle size of silver nanoparticle. Brookhaven Instruments Ltd. was used to determine size of particle by determining dynamic fluctuations of light scattering intensity caused by Brownian motion of the particles.

3.2.3.4 Seed Germination Assay

In present investigation, effect NPs AgNPs on germination and seedling growth in onion was studied. To study of effect of NPs on seed germination and early seedling growth the graded concentrations (1mM, 3mM and 5mM) of AgNPs was added aseptically to sterilized petriplates containing 50 surface sterilized onion seeds under laboratory condition ($25 \pm 3^\circ\text{C}$).

On 10th day, seedlings were separated into shoots and roots. Seedling growth in terms of root length, shoot length, fresh weight and dry weight was recorded. Data obtained through germination studies and early seedling growth were used for calculation of parameters such as germination percentage, radicle length, plumule length and growth indices as given by Ashraf et al. (2006). Parameters like PHSI (Plant height stress tolerance index), RLSI (Root height stress tolerance index), DMSI (Dry matter stress tolerance index) were calculated. Experiments were carried out in triplicates (Raskar Shilpa V. and Laware S.L. (2014).

RESULTS

4.1 Biosynthesis of Silver nanoparticles

Biosynthesis of silver nanoparticles from silver nitrate and plant extract where Plant extract is used as a reducing agent (Velvan et al., 2012, Gulab et al., 2021). The synthesis of AgNP was confirmed by visual observation. The colour of the leaf extract and silver nitrate containing solution changed from dark green to dark brown after 24 hours of incubation. Thus, confirming the synthesis of AgNPs (M. Mala et al., 2017). colour arises in the solution due to surface plasmon vibrations.

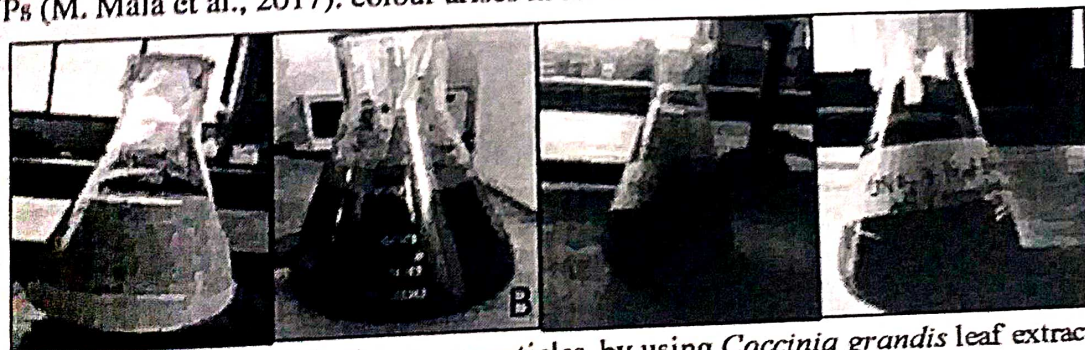


Fig 4.1 Biosynthesis of silver nanoparticles by using *Coccinia grandis* leaf extract (A-AgNo3 Sol, B- Plant extract, C- Plant extract and AgNO3 before synthesis of NPs, D- Color change due to synthesis of Ag NPs)

4.2 Characterization of silver nanoparticles

4.2.1 UV-Visible Analysis

Primarily-the nanoparticles were characterized by UV-visible spectroscopy, which proved to be a very useful technique for the analysis of nanoparticles. The UV-vis spectra of reaction medium recorded as a function of reaction time using silver nitrate and *Coccinia grandis* leaf extract. It is observed that the maximum absorbance of Ag nanoparticles occurs in range of 300-700nm (fig 4.2). This band corresponds to the absorption by colloidal silver nanoparticles in the region (300-380 nm) due to the excitation of surface plasmon vibration.

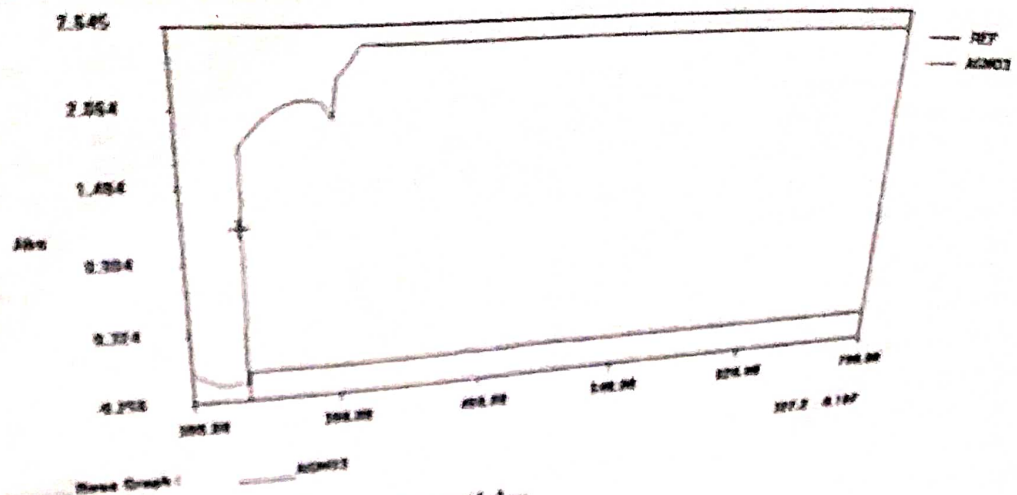


Fig: 4.2 UV-Visible spectra of Silver nanoparticles
4.2.2 Fourier Transform infrared spectroscopy analysis (FTIR)

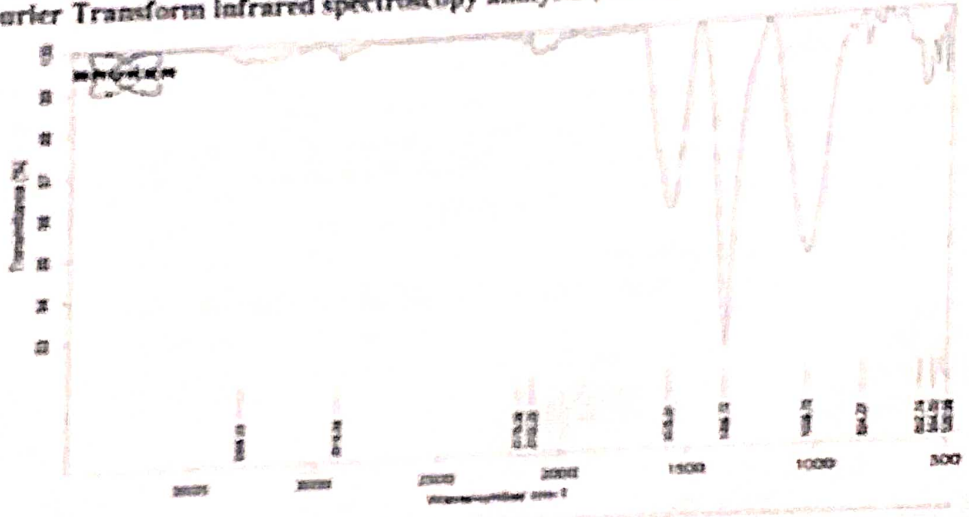


Fig4.3: FTIR spectrum of AgNPs synthesized by reduction of Ag+ ions by *C.grandis* leaf extract
FTIR spectrum of Ag nanoparticles examined to identify the possible biomolecules responsible for capping and efficient stabilization of the Ag nanoparticles synthesized by leaf extract. The peaks observed (Fig 4.3) for Ag nanoparticles formed through reduction by *Coccinia grandis* and phenols, C-N like amine, C-O like phenols adsorbed on the surface of Ag nanoparticles. The analysis of IR spectrum also provided an idea about biomolecules bearing different functionalities which are present in the underlying system. The results of FTIR analysis confirmed the presence of -NH₂, -OH, C=C and CH groups.

4.2.3 Dynamic Light Scattering (DLS)

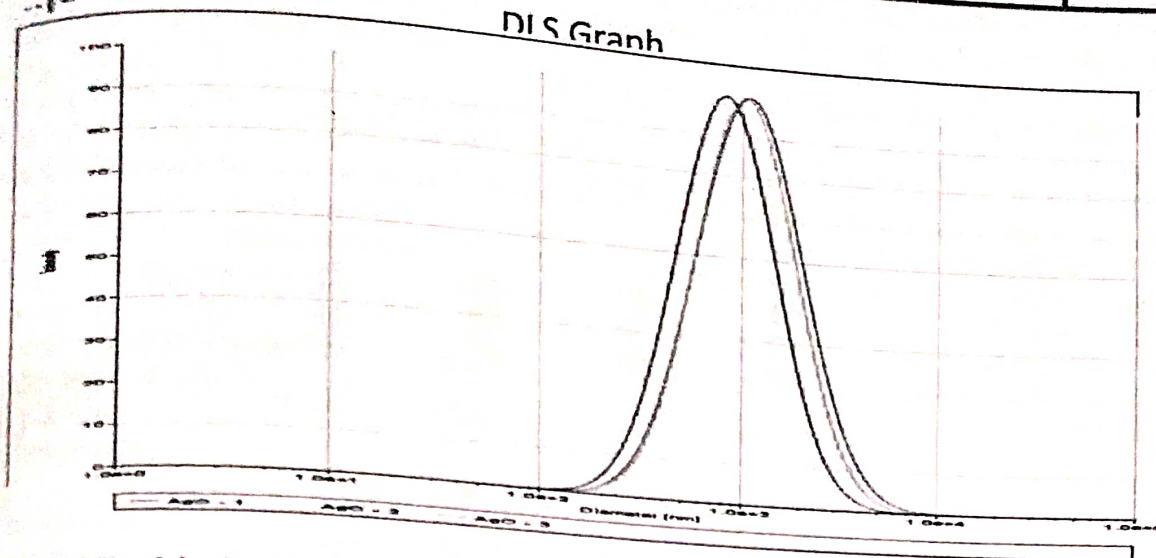


Fig 4.4-Particle size distribution of the biosynthesized AgNPs by DLS

DLS measures the size distribution and particle size characteristics by measuring random changes in light intensity scattered from a suspension or solution (Amini N *et al* 2017). The DLS size distribution image of biosynthesized silver nanoparticles is shown in Fig.4.4. This technique can be used to determine the average size of nanoparticles in liquids. The average size of the synthesized AgNPs was 985 nm and 0.4 PDI value.

4.2.4 Seed Germination Assay

Effect of Ag NPs on seed germination and seedling growth of Onionseedlings-

Highest concentration (5mM) of AgNPs showed significantly low germination percentage i.e., 40% whereas untreated seeds showed 76% seed germination. In case of AgNPs, 1mM and 3mM concentrations show 76 and 70% seed germination respectively. Results pertaining to seed germination and early seedling growth clearly indicate that Ag NPs decrease seed germination and seedling growth linearly from 1mM to 5mM concentrations; higher concentrations (3mM and 5Mm) of Ag NPs showed decreased root length, shoot length and total seedling height (Fig 4.5)

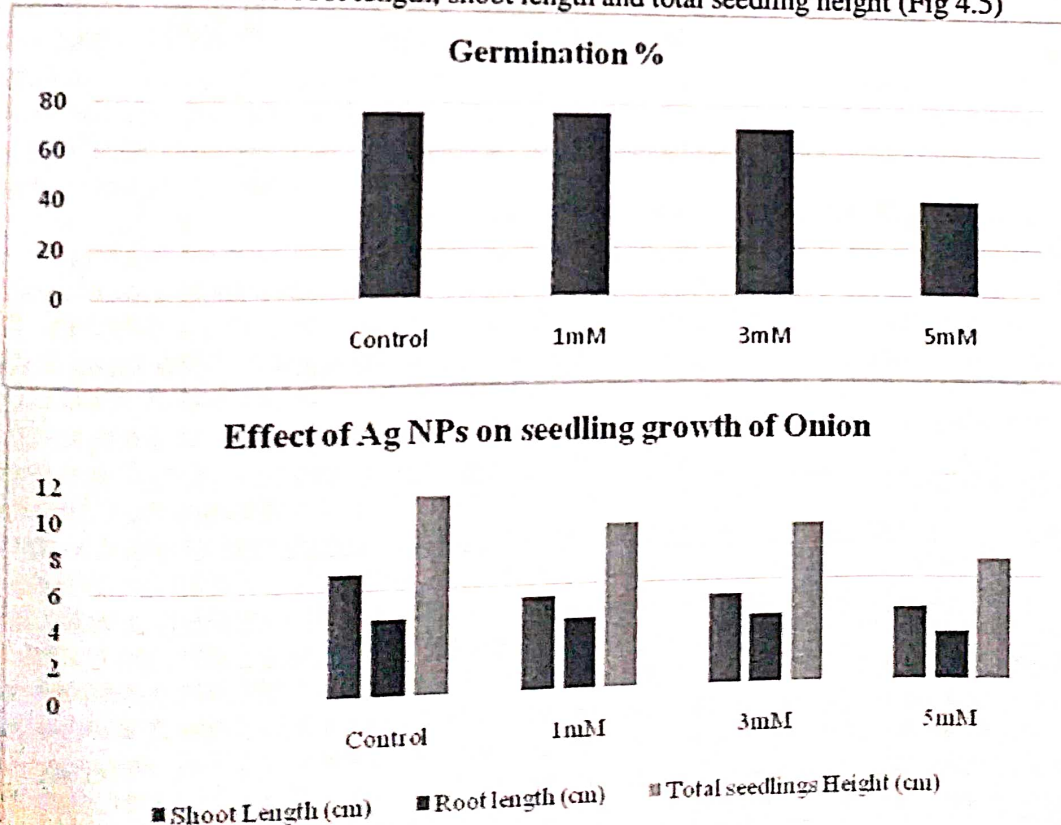




Fig-4.5 Effect of Ag NPs on seed germination and seedling growth of Onion seedlings
Effect of Ag NPs on fresh weight and dry weight of Onion seedlings
 As concentration of AgNPs increases up to 5mM, fresh weight and dry weight of seedlings decreases from 270mg to 260mg and 43.2mg to 35mg (Fig-4.6)

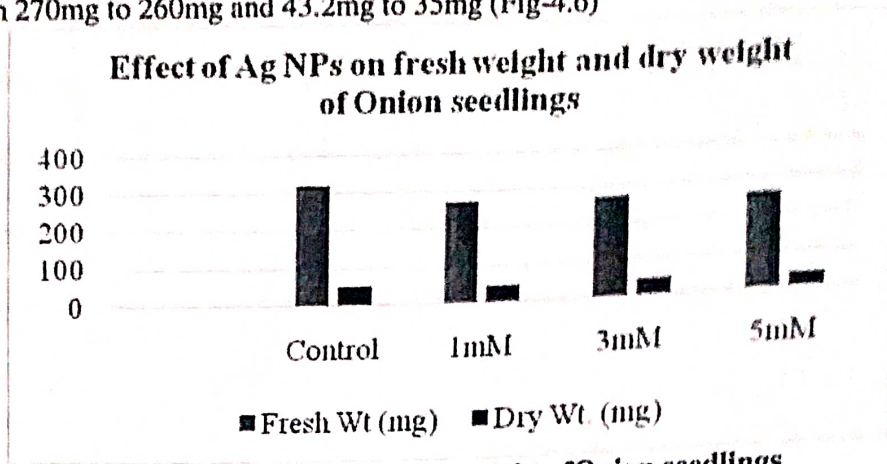


Fig- 4.6 Effect of Ag NPs on fresh weight and dry weight of Onion seedlings
Effect of Ag on PHSI, RLSI, and DMSI of Onion

Plant height stress tolerance index (PHSI), Root length stress tolerance index (RLSI) and Dry matter stress tolerance index (DMSI) showed the similar trend i.e., PHSI showed decreases from 83.48 to 62.94, RLSI showed 93 to 65 and DMSI showed 84.3 to 68.3 in 1mM, 3mM and 5mM concentration of AgNPs (Fig-4.7).

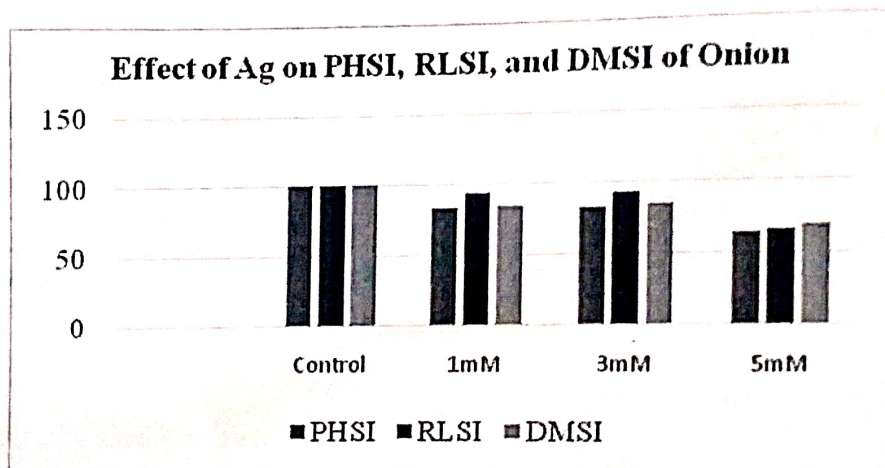


Fig-4.7 Effect of Ag on PHSI, RLSI, and DMSI of Onion seedlings
Discussion-

Seed germination results indicate that AgNPs at their lower concentrations and higher concentrations showed slight adverse effects. Adverse effect of TiO₂ NPs in *Nicotina tabacum* observed by Ghosh *et al.*, 2010. They attributed such inhibition to DNA injury induced by TiO₂ NPs. This evidence supports that some engineered NPs could exert physical or chemical toxicity on plants, depending on their chemical composition, size, surface energy and plant species (Casals *et al.*, 2008). NPs' toxicity has been shown affected by Particle size, coating and surface charge (Choi and Hu, 2008; Elechiguerra *et al.*, 2005; El Badawy *et al.*, 2011). As the concentration of NPs increased there was decrease in seed germination, promptness index and seedling growth (Raskar S. and Laware S. L. 2013; S.V. Raskar and S.L. Laware 2014; Jagtap S. M. and Laware S. L. (2018)).

In present investigation seed germination is less affected than seedling growth. In a seed culture study, this was clearly demonstrated that seed germination was not affected by Ag NPs but both shoot and root growth was much more sensitive to Ag exposure than seed germination (Yin *et al.*, 2012). Lin *et al.* (2009) also reported that the seeds treated with five types of multi-walled NPs such as carbon nanotube, aluminum, alumina, zinc, and zinc oxide have no effects on the germination in *Raphanus sativus*, *Brassica napus*, *Lactuca sativa* and *Cucumis sativus*. However, they observed that the seed germination was inhibited by ZnO NPs in *Lolium multiflorum*. (Raskar Shilpa V. and



Laware S.L. (2014). Effect of copper nanoparticles on bean (*Phaseolus radiatus*) and wheat (*T.aestivum*) plants observed decrease in growth parameters in the seedlings (Lee et al., 2008). Growth of watermelon and zucchini seedlings was positively influenced by AgNPs however, AgNPs create toxicity on corn root elongation, (Almutairi and Alharbi, 2015). Alteration in shoots and root growth of *Brassica* Species were also observed, small decrease in length of shoot and root of seedlings under AgNPs treatment was observed (Kanchan Vishwakarms et al., 2017) However, few other studies by Krizkova et al., 2008 have noticed that association of Ag⁺ ions with roots distorted its epidermis structure and changed anatomical properties of sunflower plant. Blaser et al., 2008 further supported that it might be because of uptake of AgNPs through seeds and changes in membrane and other cell structures, as well as defensive mechanisms, and modification in cell division and/or cell elongation (Singh et al., 2014). Furthermore, Krizkova et al., 2008 in the same plant was observed arrested growth of various parts of plant along with damaged root hairs, while treatment with alumina and copper NPs have retarded the growth of seedlings (Yang and Watts, 2005 and Lee et al., 2008).

Conclusion

Results show that Ag NPs at lower to higher concentrations decreased seed germination, and seedling growth in onion though these are green synthesized AgNPs, Mild stress condition on the growth and metabolism of mustard seedlings imposed due to interaction of biologically synthesized AgNPs. Silver shows a very high potential in wide range of biological applications. Most particularly it is used in form of nanoparticles. In the present investigation it is observed that even biologically synthesized Ag NPs are harmful to the plant so there should be control on free release of Ag NPs in Environment.

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