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Effect of potassium and zinc on yield and nutrient content of chickpea

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Abstract

A field experiment entitled “Effect of potassium and zinc on yield and nutrient content of chickpea and fractions of potassium and zinc in soil” was carried out on Agronomy Farm, B. A. College of Agriculture, Anand Agricultural University, Anand during rabi season of the year 2020-21. The experiment comprising nine treatment combinations consisted of three levels of potassium (0, 20 and 30 kg/ha) and three levels of zinc (0, 2.5 and 5.0 kg/ha). These treatments were evaluated in Randomized Block Design (factorial) with four replications. Results of the experiment revealed that seed yield and haulm yield were significantly influenced by different levels of potassium and zinc. The treatment K₂ (40 kg K₂O/ha) significantly increased seed yield (2334 kg/ha) and haulm yield (3767 kg/ha) of chickpea than other treatments except treatment K₁ (20 kg K₂O/ha) in case of haulm yield. Among different levels of zinc, significantly maximum seed yield (2251 kg/ha), haulm yield (3689 kg/ha) of chickpea were found under the treatment Z₂ (5.0 kg Zn/ha) which remained at par with the treatment Z₁ (2.5 kg Zn/ha). The interaction effect of different levels of potassium and zinc was significant seed yield (2504 kg/ha) was remarkably increased by the treatment combinations of K₂Z₂ (40 kg K₂O and 5.0 kg Zn/ha) than rest of the treatments excluding treatment combinations K₁Z₂ (20 kg K₂O and 5.0 kg Zn/ha) and K₂Z₁ (40 kg K₂O and 2.5 kg Zn/ha). The treatment K₂ (40 kg K₂O/ha) significantly increased the N, P, K and S contents in chickpea seed and haulm than other levels of potassium except treatment K₁ (20 kg K₂O/ha) in case of N and P contents in seed and N content in haulm. The Zn content in seed and haulm was significantly increased with treatment Z₂ (5.0 kg Zn/ha) and was remained at par with treatment Z₁ (2.5 kg Zn/ha). The overall results showed that combined application of K₂O at 40 kg/ha and zinc at 2.5 kg/ha found to be beneficial for achieving higher yield of chickpea as well as nutrient contents of chickpea.

Keywords: Potassium, zinc, yield, nutrient content, chickpea

Introduction

Chickpea (*Cicer arietinum* L.) is the crop belongs to legume family and third most important pulse crop in the world after dry bean and dry peas. It is a self-pollinated true diploid ($2n=2x=16$) cool season crop that ranks second in area and third in production among the pulses worldwide. India contributes about 65% of global area with 68% of global production of chickpea. India is the largest producer as well as importer of the leguminous crops. India ranks first in production of chickpea in world contributing 25-28 per cent world's total crop production but low in productivity of chickpea. India generally imports 2 million tons of pulse every year. India is the major chickpea producing country with 106 lakh ha area with the production of more than 111 lakh tons and productivity of 1056 kg/ha. It is basically grown in the dried region of India. In Gujarat, it is grown in about 2.95 lakh ha area with the production of 3.62 lakh tons and productivity of 967 kg/ha (Anonymous, 2018) [1].

Amongst the leguminous crops, chickpea occupies an important position due to its nutritious value (17-23% protein) in large vegetarian population of the country. Chickpea seed contains 20-30% protein, about 40% carbohydrates, 3-6% oil, 6% crude fiber and 3% ash (Gil *et al.*, 1996) [10]. Its protein quality is better than that of most other legume crops (Jukanti *et al.*, 2012 and Siddique *et al.*, 2012) [15, 35]. As with other legumes, chickpeas have ability to fix 80-120 kg of nitrogen per hectare through symbiotic nitrogen fixation (Papastylianous, 1987) [21].

Potassium (K) is one of the 17 vital nutrients required for the growth and reproduction of crops. It plays an important role in maintenance of cellular organization by regulating permeability of cellular membranes and keeping protoplasm in proper degree of hydration by stabilizing emulsion of high colloidal properties. Potassium has a great buffering action and stabilizes various enzymes system. It regulates photosynthesis, protein synthesis and stomatal movement in crops. Among essential nutrient elements, Potassium is the third major element taken up by the plants.

Plants absorb it in larger amounts as compared to other mineral elements except nitrogen. It has utmost importance for imparting drought and disease resistance and has synergistic effect on crops with nitrogen and phosphorus (Das, 1999) [7]. Higher yields and crop quality can be obtained at optimal N: K nutritional ratios. It is an essential macronutrient required for proper development of plants. Potassium has been considered as the “quality element” for crop production. Pulse growing Agroecological region of India vary widely in their K supplying capacity. Based on the number of field studies, it can be suggested that the application of 20- 40 kg K₂O/ha and foliar application of 1-2% of KNO₃ is beneficial for higher pulse production (Ali and Srinivasa Rao, 2001) [2].

Most of the Potassium in soil exists in various insoluble rocks, minerals and sedimentary materials. Based on its availability to plants, soil potassium can be classified into three main groups *i.e.*, unavailable, readily available and slowly available K. The bulk of soil potassium (about 98% of total K) usually exists in unavailable form and is found in primary (micas and feldspars) and secondary (illite group) clay minerals (Attoe and Truog, 1945) [3]. The readily available K constitutes only 1-2% of total K and exists in soil in two forms, *viz.*, solution and exchangeable K adsorbed on soil colloidal surface (Brady and Well, 2002) [4]. It is not a constituent of organic structures, but regulates enzymatic activities (over 60 enzymes require K for activation), translocation of photosynthesis and considerably improves seed yield of chickpea if applied as a fertilizer (Samiullah and Khan, 2003, Singh *et al.*, 1994 and Verma, 1994) [25, 32, 34].

Among the micronutrients, zinc plays a vital role in plant growth and development. Zinc has been the micronutrient needed by crops especially pulses in sufficiently large quantity. Zinc also catalyses the biosynthesis of indole acetic acid, acting as metal activator of the enzyme, thereby ultimately increasing the crop yield. The plants exhibited lower rate of protein synthesis and protein accumulation under zinc deficiency. Zinc also plays important role in physiological process of plants through synthesis of hormones essential for growth and reproduction. Zinc plays an important role in metabolism both in plants as well as in animals by acting as essential component of enzyme, RNA, electron carrier *etc.*, and acts as a functional, structural and regulatory cofactor of a large number of enzymes. The accumulation of zinc in edible parts of plant serves as zinc source for primary consumers. Unfortunately, about 50% of Indian soils are deficient in zinc and expected to further increase up to 63% by 2025 which imparting zinc malnutrition in population especially in children (Shukla *et al.*, 2014) [29], (Singh, 2010) [36] reported that one third of the world population is at the risk of zinc malnutrition due to inadequate dietary intake of zinc resulting from wide spread hidden hunger of zinc in seeds and feeds. Also, the intensive cropping systems of high yielding varieties have led to depletion of micronutrients, especially zinc.

Material and Methods

A field experiment was carried out on Agronomy Farm, B. A. College of Agriculture, Anand Agricultural University, Anand (Gujarat) during rabi season of the year 2020-21. The soil of the experimental plot was loamy sand in texture, alkaline in reaction, low in organic carbon and available nitrogen, medium in available phosphorus, potassium and zinc. The experiment comprising nine treatment combinations consisted

of three levels of potassium (0, 20 and 40 kg/ha) and three levels of zinc (0, 2.5 and 5.0 kg/ha). These treatments were evaluated in Randomized Block Design (factorial) with four replications. The fertilizer application was done with fixed dose of nitrogen at 20 kg/ha and phosphorus at 40 kg/ha. Potassium and Zinc application was done according to the treatments. The nutrient of N, P, K and Zn were applied by using source of Urea, DAP, MOP and Zinc Sulphate respectively. The chickpea variety “Gujarat Gram 5” was sowing in first fourth night of November with spacing of 45 m × 10 m and seed rate of 60 /kg/ha. The crop was raised with all the standard package of practices and protection measures also timely carried out as they required. The experimental data recorded for yield and nutrient content were statistically analyzed for level of significance.

Results and Discussion

Effect of potassium and zinc on seed and haulm yield of chickpea

Seed yield

Effect of potassium

The results indicated that the different levels of potassium significantly influenced the seed yield of chickpea. The treatment of Application of 40 kg K₂O/ha (K₂) produced significantly the highest seed yield of chickpea (2334kg/ha) than rest of the treatments. The higher seed yield in the treatment might be due to improvement in the entire yield contributing characters *viz.* number of pods/plants and seed index. Similar results have been reported by Mondal *et al.* (2005) [19], Rathore *et al.* (2013) [22], Ganga *et al.* (2014) [9], Kumar *et al.* (2018) [18] and Jadeja *et al.* (2019) [13].

Effect of zinc

The results showed that the seed yield of chickpea was differed significantly with different levels of zinc. Remarkably higher seed yield (2251 kg/ha) was recorded with the treatment containing application of 5.0 kg Zn/ha (Z₂) which was being at par with the treatment Z₁ (2.5 kg Zn/ha). The increase in seed yield might be may be due to more photosynthetic activity, uptake of nutrients, photosynthate translocation from source to sink and higher reproductive activity. Similar results were obtained by Sangwan and Raj (2004) [26], Singh *et al.*, (2012) [31], Shivay *et al.* (2014) [28], Singh *et al.* (2016) [30], Krishna *et al.* (2017) [16], Kuldeep *et al.* (2018) [17] and Davara Monali *et al.* (2019) [8].

Interaction effect

The interaction between different levels of potassium and zinc influenced significantly on seed yield of chickpea

Among the different treatment combinations, the treatment combination K₂Z₂ (40 kg K₂O and 5.0 kg Zn/ha) produced significantly maximum seed yield of chickpea (2504 kg/ha) than rest of the treatment combination but was found to be statistically at par with treatment combination K₁Z₂ (20 kg K₂O and 5.0 kg Zn/ha) and K₂Z₁ (40 kg K₂O and 2.5 kg Zn/ha) was recorded seed yield (2444 kg/h and 2406kg/ha).

The increase in yield ascribed attributed to the reason that potassium along with zinc possibly increased the concentrations of N, P and K ions of soil solution and ultimately affected vigorous root development of plant leading to higher photosynthesis to the sink which in turn resulted in better development of yield. The results are in agreement with those reported by Sutaria *et al.* (2013) [33] in forage sorghum, Maleki *et al.* (2014) [20] in maize.

Haulm yield

The data on haulm yield of chickpea as influenced by different levels of potassium and zinc effect along with statistical inferences are furnished in Table

Effect of potassium

The results recorded in Table 1 indicated that the haulm yield of chickpea differed significantly due to different levels of potassium. The treatment receiving an application of 40 kg K₂O/ha (K₂) recorded maximum haulm yield (3767 kg/ha) over control but was found to be at par with treatment K₁ (20kg K₂O/ha).

The positive effect of potassium on haulm yield of chickpea might be because of potassium helps in the resistance to crops against pests and diseases, which, in turn, increased the yield. Potassium also make a pronounced role in carbohydrates synthesis, photosynthesis cell elongation, stomatal activity and higher nutrient uptake under this level resulted in higher plant height and number of branches per plant and ultimately helped in the realization of higher haulm yield. The results are in conformity with the findings of Ganga *et al.* (2014) [9], Jadeja *et al.* (2016) [14], Ingle *et al.* (2018) [12] and Jadeja *et al.* (2019) [13].

Effect of zinc

The data presented in Table 1 showed that the haulm yield of chickpea was significantly influenced due to different levels of zinc. Significantly the higher haulm yield (3689 kg/ha) was recorded in the treatment Z₂ (5.0 kg Zn/ha) which was remained at par with treatment Z₁ (2.5 kg Zn/ha). Similar results were observed by Chavan *et al.* (2012) [5], Sharma *et al.* (2014) [27], Rahman *et al.* (2015) [23] and Kuldeep *et al.* (2018) [17].

Interaction effect

The haulm yield of chickpea did not differ significantly due to Interaction of different levels potassium and zinc (Table 1).

Effect of potassium and zinc on nutrient content in chickpea

Nutrient content in seed

The data furnished in Table 3 indicated that N, P, K and S content in chickpea seed was significantly influenced by different levels of potassium and zinc and their interaction.

Effect of potassium

Different levels of potassium had significantly influenced on N and P content in chickpea seed. The treatment receiving an

application of 40 kg K₂O/ha (K₂) obtained significantly higher N content (3.38%) and P content (0.70 %) which was found to be at par with treatment of application of 20 kg K₂O/ha (K₁). were as potassium and sulphur content was found maximum K content (0.86 %) and S content (0.145%) in chickpea seed than rest of the treatments. Similar results have been reported by Chavan *et al.* (2012) [5], Rathore *et al.* (2013) [22] and Chaudhary *et al.* (2017) [6].

While the data pertaining to the effect of potassium on micronutrient (Fe, Mn, Zn and Cu) content in seed did not differ significantly by treatment containing application of potassium.

Effect of zinc

The data presented in Table 3 showed that N, P, K, S and micronutrient content in chickpea seed did not differ significantly due to different levels of zinc. While, different levels of zinc had significantly influenced on Zn content in seed. Significantly higher Zn content (21.54 mg/kg) was found with the treatment Z₂ (5.0 kg Zn/ha) but it was found statistically at par with treatment Z₁ (2.5 kg Zn/ha).

Nutrient content in Hulm

Effect of potassium

The data illustrated in Table 3 indicated that significantly the highest N (1.28 %), P (0.41%), K (1.01 %) and S (0.125 %) content in haulm was recorded with the treatment containing application of 40 kg K₂O/ha (K₂) than other treatments. Similar results were found by Mondal *et al.* (2005) [19] and Ranpariya *et al.* (2017) [24]. While, micronutrient (Fe, Mn, Zn nad Cu) content was recorded non-significant with the different level of potassium treatment.

Effect of zinc

An appraisal of data given in Table 3 revealed that the N, P, K and S and micronutrient (Fe, Mn and Cu) content in chickpea haulm did not differ significantly by the application of different levels of zinc. but in case of zinc treatment receiving application of 5 kg Zn/ha obtained remarkably maximum Zn content (15.68 mg/kg) in haulm over control (Z₀) but was found on same bar of treatment of application of 2.5 kg Zn/ha (Z₁).

Interaction effect

The interaction of different levels of potassium and zinc had not exerted any significant difference in N, P, K S and micronutrient (Fe, Mn, Zn and Cu) content in seed and hulm.

Table 1: Effect of potassium and zinc on seed and haulm yield of chickpea

Treatments	Seed yield (kg/ha)	Haulm yield (kg/ha)
K levels (kg/ha)		
K ₀	1734	3102
K ₁	2190	3548
K ₂	2334	3767
S. Em±	44	97
CD (P = 0.05)	129	282
Zn levels (kg/ha)		
Z ₀	1877	3231
Z ₁	2130	3498
Z ₂	2251	3689
S. Em±	44	97
CD (P = 0.05)	129	282
K × Zn	Sig.	NS
CV (%)	7.33	9.63

Table 2: Interaction effect of potassium and zinc on seed yield of chickpea

K levels (kg/ha)	Seed yield (kg/ha)		
	Zn levels (kg/ha)		
K × Z	Z ₀	Z ₁	Z ₂
K ₀	1687	1709	1806
K ₁	1851	2276	2444
K ₂	2094	2406	2504
S. Em ±	76		
CD (P =0.05)	223		

Table 3: Effect of potassium and zinc on nitrogen and phosphorus content in chickpea

Treatments	N content (%)		P content (%)		K content (%)		S content (%)	
	Seed	Haulm	Seed	Haulm	Seed	Haulm	Seed	Haulm
K levels (kg/ha)								
K ₀	3.19	1.14	0.65	0.33	0.79	0.92	0.129	0.097
K ₁	3.30	1.23	0.67	0.38	0.83	0.97	0.138	0.114
K ₂	3.38	1.28	0.70	0.41	0.86	1.01	0.145	0.125
S. Em±	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.002	0.002
CD (P = 0.05)	0.09	0.05	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.006	0.005
Zn levels (kg/ha)								
Z ₀	3.25	1.19	0.66	0.36	0.81	0.96	0.135	0.109
Z ₁	3.28	1.21	0.68	0.37	0.83	0.97	0.137	0.113
Z ₂	3.33	1.24	0.69	0.38	0.84	0.97	0.140	0.115
S. Em±	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.002	0.002
CD (P = 0.05)	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
K × Zn	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
CV%	3.12	4.47	4.90	5.96	3.57	4.06	4.91	5.45

Table 4: Effect of potassium and zinc on Fe and Mn content in chickpea

Treatments	Fe content (mg/kg)		Mn content (mg/kg)		Zn content (mg/kg)		Cu content (mg/kg)	
	Seed	Haulm	Seed	Haulm	Seed	Haulm	Seed	Haulm
K levels (kg/ha)								
K ₀	52.47	74.49	16.30	46.37	19.70	14.64	4.89	7.28
K ₁	54.70	76.13	16.55	47.60	20.43	15.12	5.00	7.32
K ₂	55.51	77.77	17.00	48.17	20.93	15.21	5.07	7.52
S. Em±	0.88	0.98	0.21	0.55	0.34	0.21	0.05	0.09
CD zP = 0.05)	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
Zn levels (kg/ha)								
Z ₀	53.45	74.68	16.42	46.98	18.86	14.19	4.91	7.28
Z ₁	54.21	76.30	16.64	47.34	20.67	15.10	4.99	7.36
Z ₂	55.02	77.41	16.79	47.82	21.54	15.68	5.06	7.48
S. Em±	0.88	0.98	0.21	0.55	0.34	0.21	0.05	0.09
CD (P = 0.05)	NS	NS	NS	NS	0.98	0.62	NS	NS
K × Zn	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
CV%	5.61	4.47	4.33	4.02	5.70	4.92	3.45	4.16

Conclusion

The treatment receiving application of 40 kg K₂O/ha (K₂) recorded remarkably maximum seed yield of chickpea (2334 kg/ha) over different levels of potassium whereas significantly maximum haulm yield (3767 kg/ha) was recorded with the treatment receiving application of 40 kg K₂O/ha (K₂) as compared to control but remained statistically at par with the treatment receiving application of 20 kg K₂O/ha (K₁).

the different levels of potassium significantly increased the nutrient contents in chickpea except micronutrient contents. The treatment containing application of 40 kgK₂O/ha (K₂) obtained significantly maximum N, P, K and S contents in chickpea seed than other treatments of potassium but was at par with the treatment of application of 20 kg K₂O/ha (K₁) in case of N and P contents in seed. However, the treatment of K₂ (40 kg K₂O/ha) recorded significantly higher N, P, K and S in chickpea haulm in comparison with rest of the treatments. The micronutrient contents *viz.*, Fe, Mn, Zn and Cu content in

chickpea seed and haulm did not differ significantly due to various levels of potassium

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