Available online at www.ijpab.com

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.18782/2320-7051.5090

ISSN: 2320 – 7051

Int. J. Pure App. Biosci. **6 (1):** 279-283 (2018)

International Journal of Pure & Applied Bioscience

Research Article

OPEN ACCESS

Correlation and Path Analysis Studies in F_2 Population of Cowpea (*Vigna unguiculata* (L.) Walp.)

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Received: 29.06.2017 | Revised: 25.07.2017 | Accepted: 2.08.2017

ABSTRACT

An investigation was carried out in F_2 population of cross IT-38956-1 and KBC-2 and their parents to understand the association among the yield components and their direct and indirect effects on the seed yield. Grain yield per plant recorded significant and positive correlation with pod length, days to maturity, plant height, primary braches per plant, secondary braches per plant, pods per plant and seeds per pod.Pod length recorded highest magnitude of direct effects on seed yield per plant followed by secondary branches per plant and plant height. Hence, selection on the basis of pod length, days to maturity, plant height, primary braches per plant, secondary braches per plant, pods per plant and seeds per pod in segregating populations of cowpea will be more effective in the development of promising genotypes.

Key words: *Correlation, Cowpea, Path analysis, Segregating population.*

INTRODUCTION

Cowpea (*Vigna ungiculata* (L). Walp) belongs to the family leguminoceae, sub family papilinoceae having chromosome number 2n=22. The cultivated species in cowpea is sub divided in to three sub species *i.e.* cowpea (sub species *ungi-culata*), catjung (sub species *catjung)* and yardlong bean (sub species *sesquiepedalis*). Cowpea is an important versatile legume grown in tropics, sub tropics of Asia, Africa, central and southern America, parts of the southern Europe and Asia. In India, cowpea is grown as a sole crop, inter crop, mixed crop and in agroforestry combinations. Cowpea cultivated as pulse and vegetable crop which is good source of protein (22.24 %), carbohydrate (56.66 %), crude fiber (5.9-7.3 %), fat (1.3-1.5 %), phosphorous (0.14 to 0.6 %), calcium (0.076 to 0.104 %) and iron (0.005 %). Cowpea seed is used as a nutritious component in human diet, cheap livestock feed, and the matured pods are used as a vegetable. The seeds also contain small proportion of β-carotene, thiamin, riboflavin, vitamin -A, niacin, folic acid and ascorbic acid. Development of cultivars with early maturity, acceptable grain quality, resistance to some important diseases and pest has significantly increased the yield and cultivated area of cowpea[7].

Cite this article: Lokesh, G.Y. and Murthy, N., Correlation and Path Analysis Studies in F_2 Population of Cowpea (*Vigna unguiculata* (L.) Walp.), *Int. J. Pure App. Biosci.* **6(1):** 279-283 (2018). doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.18782/2320-7051.5090

Grain yield is a complex trait and is influenced by many other important yield contributing characters controlled by polygenes and environmental factors. Correlation analysis is a handy technique which provides information that selection for one character results in progress for other positively correlated characters. The importance of correlation studies in selection pro-grammes is appreciable when highly heritable characters are associated with the important character like yield. Correlation coefficients, although, very useful in quantifying the size and direction of trait associations can be misleading if the high correlation between two traits is a consequence of the indirect effect of other traits[4]. Path coefficient is an excellent means of studying direct and indirect effects of interrelated components of a complex trait. Path-coefficient analysis measures the direct influence of one variable on another[6]. By determining the inter-relationships among grain yield components, a better understanding of both the direct and indirect effects of the specific components can be attained[5].

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present experiment was carried out at Dry Land Agriculture Project, Gandhi Krishi Vignana Kendra, GKVK campus of the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore. Two diverse cowpea genotypes/varieties *viz.,* IT-38956-1 and KBC-2 were selected and used as parents for hybridization to produce three cross combinations and Different generations of above crosses *viz.,* F_1, F_2 and F_3 along with their respective parents formed the material for the present study. The observation was recorded for ten quantitative characters like Days to first flowering, Days to maturity, Plant height (cm), Primary branches per plant, Secondary branches per plant, Number of pods per plant. Pod length (cm), Seeds per pod, Seed yield per plant (g) and Hundred seed weight (g).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of correlation among ten characters were presented in Table 1. In the present study, Seed yield per plant was significant and positively correlated with pod length (0.846), days to maturity (0.645), plant height (0.626), primary braches per plant (0.556), secondary braches per plant (0.400), pods per plant (0.236) and seeds per pod (0.235). These results are in close agreement with earlier workers Alege and Mustapha[2] and Khadre *et al.*[10] . Hence, simultaneous selection based on these characters could be suggested for improvement of yield in segregating populations. Although yield is principal goal of many crop breeding programs, but multiple traits package determines varietal/cultivar acceptability by cowpea farmers and/or primary consumers.Yield is a complex trait, governed by many traits, morphological characters that associated with higher seed yield or which make a significant contribution to yielding ability would be useful in the improvement of seed yield. Among the seed yield and its attributing characters in the cross, positive and significant association of days to first flowering with days to maturity, plant height, biomass, secondary branches per plant, pods per plant, pod length and test weight; days to maturity with plant height, secondary branches per plant, pods per plant, seeds per pod and test weight; plant height with secondary branches per plant , pod length, pods per plant and hundred seed weight; primary branches per plant with secondary branches per plant, pod length, seeds per pod and hundred seed weight; secondary branches per plant with pod length, seeds per pod and hundred seed weight; pod length with seeds per pod and hundred seed weight; seed per pod with hundred seed weight. These findings are in conformity with the report of Khadre *et al.*[10], Jana *et al.*[9] Vardhan and Savithramma[13] and Vidya and Oomen[15]. Contrary to association of days to flowering and number of seeds per pod recorded negative direct effect were reported by Venkatesan[14] and Kharde *et al.*[10].Selection based on the traits viz., secondary branches per plant, pods per plant, pod length and seeds per pod, improve the grain yield in cowpea. The correlation coefficients were inadequate to interpret the

cause and effect relationships. However, Partitioning of the total correlation into direct and indirect effects would provide actual information on the contribution of traits and thus form the basis for selection to improve grain yield (Table 2).Pod length recorded highest magnitude of direct effects on seed yield per plant followed secondary branches per plant and plant height. Though, pods per plant and seeds per pod exhibited low positive direct effect, its indirect effect *via.,* days to first flowering, days to maturity and primary branches per plant exhibited negative correlation with the seed yield per plant. The similar results were reported by Idahosa *et al*.[8], Manggoel *et al.*[11] and Nwosu *et al.*[12]. While the pod length exerted high positive indirect effect via plant height followed by seeds per pod and secondary branches per plant The days to first flowering showed the indirect high positive effect towards the seed yield per plant through the pod length followed by plant height, low positive effect towards the seed yield through the pods per plant, secondary branches per plant and primary branches per plant. These results are in accordance with the earlier reports of Venkatesan[14], Alege and Mustapha[2], Abadyomi and Abidoye[1] and Kharde *et al.*[10]. Indirectly selection of this character through other yield component characters will help in selecting better genotypes. It is obvious from the present study that selection on the basis of secondary branches per plant, pods per plant, pod length and seeds per pod and seed yield per plant in segregating populations of cowpea will be more effective in the development of promising genotypes.

Table 1: Correlation co-efficients among seed yield per plant and its attributing traits in F_2 generation of cowpea cross IT-38956-1 × KBC-2

Character	X_1	X_2	X_3	X_4	X_5	X_6	X_7	X_8	X_9	X_{10}
X_1	**1.000**	0.951**	0.950**	-0.045	0.582**	0.572**	0.506**	0.489**	0.283**	**0.397****
X_2		**1.000**	0.996**	0.002	0.681**	0.517**	0.639**	0.605**	0.250**	**0.645****
X_3			**1.000**	-0.030	0.676**	0.527**	0.620**	0.578**	0.260**	**0.626****
X_4				**1.000**	0.387**	-0.483**	0.529**	0.599**	0.141	**0.556****
X_5					**1.000**	-0.259**	0.751**	0.744**	0.293**	**0.400****
X_6						**1.000**	0.241**	0.478**	0.158**	**0.236****
X_7							**1.000**	0.924**	0.211**	**0.846****
X_8								**1.000**	0.221**	**0.115**
X_9									**1.000**	**0.235****
X_{10}										**1.000**

Significant at P = 0.05, **Significant at P = 0.01

X_1: Days to first flowering
X_2: Days to maturity
X_3: Plant height (cm)
X_4: Primary branches per plant
X_5: Secondary branches per plant
X_6: Pods per plant
X_7: Pod length (cm)
X_8: Seeds per pod
X_9: Hundred seed weight (g)
X_{10}: Yield per plant (g)

Table 2: Direct and indirect effects of component characters on seed yield per plant in F_2 generation of cowpea cross IT-38956-1 × KBC-2

Character	X_1	X_2	X_3	X_4	X_5	X_6	X_7	X_8	X_9	'r' Seed yield per plant
X_1	**-0.1364**	-0.1653	0.2879	0.0041	0.0286	0.0336	0.3972	-0.0406	-0.0118	**0.397****
X_2	-0.1297	**-0.4895**	0.2066	-0.0002	0.1334	0.0303	0.7543	0.1503	-0.0104	**0.645****
X_3	-0.1297	-0.4876	**0.4081**	0.0027	0.0332	0.0309	0.7314	0.0481	-0.0108	**0.626****
X_4	0.0061	-0.001	-0.0121	**-0.0903**	0.1129	-0.0284	0.6246	-0.0498	-0.0059	**0.556****
X_5	-0.0793	-0.3334	0.2759	-0.0349	**0.4912**	-0.0152	0.8287	-0.0618	-0.0122	**0.400****
X_6	-0.0781	-0.1553	0.2151	0.0436	-0.0127	**0.1587**	-0.0488	0.1028	0.0105	**0.236****
X_7	-0.1697	-0.3127	0.1528	-0.0477	0.1369	-0.2024	**1.1206**	0.2768	-0.1088	**0.846****
X_8	-0.0667	-0.2961	0.2361	-0.0541	0.1365	-0.0056	0.0914	**0.0831**	-0.0092	**0.115**
X_9	-0.0386	-0.1225	0.1062	-0.0128	0.1144	-0.0007	0.2491	-0.0184	**-0.0416**	**0.235****

Residual effect= 0.072 * Significant at P = 0.05 **Significant at P = 0.01

X_1: Days to first flowering **X_5**: Secondary branches per plant **X_9**: Hundred seed weight (g)

X_2: Days to maturity **X_6**: Pods per plant

X_3: Plant height (cm) **X_7**: Pod length (cm)

X_4: Primary branches per plant **X_8**: Seeds per pod

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