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# Genetic variability, correlation and path analysis studies in pigeon pea [*Cajanus cajan* (L.) Millsp.]

# KG Baria, SS Patil, HD Pandya and SM Bhargav

#### Abstract

A set of 20 genotypes of pigeon pea [*Cajanus cajan* (L.) Millsp.] grown in a randomized block design with three replications during *kharif*, 2021-22 at College of Agriculture, Navsari Agricultural University, Campus Bharuch to assess their variability. Wide range of variability was observed for different traits indicating the scope for selection of suitable breeding material for further improvement. Based on the mean performance of genotypes for yield BP-16-201, GT-104, GNP-2 and GT-105 were identified as elite genotypes for improving yield along with good quality. Character association studies indicated that seed yield per plant in desirable direction at both genotypic and phenotypic levels was observed for plant height and pods per plant were strongly associated with seed yield per plant. Path coefficient analysis revealed that the high positive direct effect on seed yield per plant was recorded by pod length followed by 100 seed weight, days to maturity and protein content.

Keywords: Genetic variability, heritability, correlation, path coefficient analysis, pigeon pea

# Introduction

Pigeon pea [*Cajanus cajan* (L) Millsp.] is a versatile food legume, serving as a lifeline to resource poor farmers in tropical and subtropical regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America. It belongs to the family 'Fabaceae' and is also known as 'Arhar' or 'Tur', generally used in preparing '*Dal*' which is rich in protein (24-25%) and minerals and eaten by majority of Indian vegetarian population (Sodavadiya *et al.*, 2009) <sup>[21]</sup>. Pigeon pea is drought resistant, so can be grown in areas with less than 650 mm annual rainfall. It contains 22.3% protein, 1.7% fat, 3.5% minerals, 1.5% fibre, 57.6gm carbohydrate, 73 mg Ca and 0.5 mg Fe, respectively as per 100 g of pigeon pea (Subramani *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[22]</sup>. Its foliage is used as fodder and milling by products are used as feed for domestic animals. In India, pigeon pea occupies an area of 4.82 million ha with the production of 3.88 million tonnes and 804 kg/ha productivity (Anon., 2021) <sup>[2]</sup>. The area under pigeon pea cultivation in Gujarat is about 230350 ha with the production of 254.35 MT and 1104.18 kg/ha productivity (Anon., 2020) <sup>[1]</sup>.

A successful breeding programme for yield improvement through phenotypic selection is mainly dependent on the nature and magnitude of variation in the available material and part played by the environment in the expression of the plant characters. Genotypic correlation coefficients provide a measure of genotypic conjugation between characters. The method of partitioning the correlation into direct and indirect effects by path-coefficient analysis suggested by Wright (1921)<sup>[26]</sup> provides useful information on the relative merit of the traits in the selection criterion.

Thus, present study was carried out to assess the genotypic variability, correlation and path coefficient analysis. This information may be utilized in development of high yielding varieties of pigeon pea that are suited to under rainfed conditions.

### **Materials and Methods**

The present investigation was carried out at College of Agriculture, Navsari Agricultural University, Campus Bharuch during the *kharif* season of 2021-22. The experimental material consisted of 20 genotypes of pigeon pea. The genotypes were planted in Randomized block design. Each entry was presented by a single-row plot of fifteen plants, spaced at 90 x 20 cm. The morphological characters were studied by visual observation of individual plants or plant parts or by single observation of a group of plants in the plot depends upon the character under observation. The data for quantitative traits *viz.*, days to 50 percent flowering, days to maturity, plant height (cm), primary branches per plant, secondary branches per plant, pods per plant, pod length (cm), seeds per pod, 100 seed weight, seed yield per plant and protein content (%)

was recorded on five random plants in each row.

# **Results and Discussion**

The presence of genetic variability for economically important traits is major factor for improving local varieties with regard to specific traits. Present study was thus undertaken to study variability, heritability, genetic advance, correlation and path analysis. The data obtained were subjected to statistical analysis to find out mean, variance, genetic parameters, correlation and path coefficients among the different characters under study. Range, mean, genotypic, phenotypic and environmental variance, phenotypic and genotypic coefficient of variation, heritability and expected genetic advance as percentage of mean for eleven traits are presented in Table 1(a) and Table 1(b).

All the eleven characters had a wide range of variability. Among the evaluated 20 genotypes, BP-16-261, GT-104, GNP-2 and GT-105 were observed most potential high yielder genotypes. Moderate to high estimates of genotypic and phenotypic variances were observed for days to maturity, plant height, secondary branches per plant, pods per plant and seed yield per plant. Similar result was observed by Bhadru (2011)<sup>[3]</sup> for plant height and pods per plant, Birhan et al. (2013)<sup>[4]</sup> for pods per plant and seed yield per plant, Galian et al. (2016) [8] for days to maturity, plant height and primary branches per plant, Mallesh et al. (2017) [13] pods per plant, Hussain et al. (2021) for plant height, secondary branches per plant and pods per plant. Low estimates of genotypic and phenotypic variance were observed for the traits viz., primary branches per plant, pod length, seeds per pod, 100 seed weight and protein content. Similar result was observed by Bhadru et al. (2011)<sup>[3]</sup> for primary branches per plant, pod length, seeds per pod and 100 seed weight, Galian et al. (2016)<sup>[8]</sup> for seeds per pod, Mallesh et al. (2017)<sup>[13]</sup> for protein content and Fousiva et al. (2021)<sup>[7]</sup> for seeds per pod and protein content in pigeon pea. The moderate to high genotypic and phenotypic coefficient of variances were observed for plant height followed by secondary branches per plant, pods per plant and seed yield per plant. Similar results were also obtained by Mallesh et al. (2017) [13] for pods per plant, Galian et al. (2016) [8] for plant height, secondary branches per plant and pods per plant, Shruthi et al. (2019)<sup>[20]</sup> for plant height, pods per plant and seed yield per plant and Vannirajan et al. (2021)<sup>[23]</sup> for plant height.

The estimates of heritability in broad sense  $[h^2 (bs)]$  for all the characters under study are presented in Table 2. High estimates of heritability were recorded by plant height (99.17%), secondary branches per plant (95.49%), primary branches per plant (84.21%), pod length (80.53%), seed yield per plant (72.88%) and pods per plant (69.67%). whereas, moderate amount of heritability was recorded by 100 seed weight (50.01%), days to 50% flowering (44.14%), days to maturity (39.83%), protein content (38.78%) and seeds per pod (36.15%). The high genetic advance expressed as percent of mean was obtained for plant height (67.61%) and pods per plant (48.46%) and seed yield per plant (13.50%) reported moderate genetic advance expressed as percent of mean. High heritability coupled with high genetic advance as percent of mean were observed for plant height and pods per plant. Similar findings were earlier reported by Ranjani et al. (2018) <sup>[14]</sup> for plant height, Hemavathy et al. (2019) plant height and pods per plant, Sahu and Ekka (2020) for pods per plant, Gaur et al. (2020)<sup>[9]</sup> for pods per plant, Hussain et al. (2021)<sup>[11]</sup> for

pods per plant and plant height in pigeon pea.

The characters seed yield per plant showed high heritability coupled with moderate genetic advance as percent of mean. High heritability accompanied with moderate genetic advance as percent of mean indicated that the genotypes under study were diverse with immense genetic potential and further improvement in these traits were possible by practicing simple selection technique. Moderate heritability coupled with low genetic advance as percent of mean was observed for the characters days to 50% flowering, days to maturity, seeds per pod and protein content (%). It showed the predominance of non-additive variance in the expression of this trait. Hence, breeder should use suitable methodology to use additive or non-additive gene action simultaneously for significant improvement.

Correlation coefficient provides information about nature and extent of association of different characters. For breeders, yield is the ultimate interest for any crop, so the knowledge of traits associated with yield help breeders to make the breeding program easy to some extent by direct selection of traits which are positively associated with yield. When two traits are positively correlated, selection of one trait will automatically affect selection of others trait. Whenever traits are negatively associated, it would be very difficult to get desirable combination, for this according to breeding objective, priority should be fixed. The genotypic  $(r_{\rm g})$  and phenotypic  $(r_p)$  correlation coefficients of eleven characters are presented in Table 3. In present investigation, Values of genotypic correlation coefficients were higher than those of their respective phenotypic correlation coefficients in most of the cases. In some cases, however, the phenotypic correlation was slightly higher than their genotypic counterpart, which implied that the non-genetic causes inflated the value of genotypic correlation because of the influence of environmental factors. Similar findings were reported by Satvanarayana et al. (2018)<sup>[17]</sup> and Verma et al. (2018)<sup>[24]</sup> in pigeon pea. Significant association of seed yield per plant in desirable direction at both genotypic and phenotypic levels was observed for various traits viz., plant height and pods per plant, while, days to 50% flowering, 100 seed weight and protein content show significant and positive association at genotypic level only, indicating that these attributes were mainly influencing the seed yield in pigeon pea. Similar results were also reported by Sawant et al. (2007) [18] for protein content, Saroj et al. (2013) <sup>[16]</sup> for plant height, Birhan *et al.* (2013)<sup>[4]</sup> for pods per plant, Verma *et al.* (2018) for 100 seed weight and Devi et al. (2020) [6] for days to 50% flowering. Hence, these characters should be given due consideration while selecting for increasing yield.

Path coefficient analysis could provide a more realistic picture of the interrelationship, as it considers direct as well as indirect effects of the variables by partitioning the correlation coefficient. In the present study, all the 10 characters were considered as causal variables of seed yield per plant. The results obtained for direct and indirect effects of different characters on seed yield per plant are presented in Table 4. In the present investigation, highest positive direct effect on seed yield per plant was recorded for pod length followed by 100 seed weight, days to maturity and protein content. This result is in accordance with Sawant *et al.* (2007) <sup>[18]</sup> for protein content, Saroj *et al.* (2013) <sup>[16]</sup> for 100 seed weight, Ranjani *et al.* (2018) <sup>[14]</sup> for pod length, Devi *et al.* (2020) <sup>[6]</sup> for days to maturity. Negative direct effects on seed yield per plant were unveiled by days to 50% flowering, plant height, primary branches per plant and pods per plant. Comparable outcomes were revealed by Saroj *et al.* (2013) <sup>[16]</sup> for plant height, Vijayalakshmi *et al.* (2013) <sup>[25]</sup> for pods per plant, Ranjani *et al.* (2018) <sup>[14]</sup> for days to 50% flowering, Sharma *et al.* (2021) <sup>[19]</sup> for primary branches per plant. An important consideration for formulating the path diagram is that all the important causal factors affecting the seed yield per plant are included.

In present study, the residual effect at genotypic level was 0.451 which suggested that there might be few component traits responsible to influence the seed yield per plant than those studied. The overall picture of path analysis revealed that for improving yield in pigeon pea, selection advantage should be given to pod length, 100 seed weight, days to maturity and protein content as they recorded high positive direct effect on seed yield per plant.

Sr. no.	Characters	Ra	Maan	
	Characters	Min.	Max.	Mean
1.	Days to 50% flowering	93.67	105.33	100.17
2.	Days to maturity	142.33	161.67	153.58
3.	Plant height (cm)	137	238.47	174.99
4.	Primary branches per plant	11.73	16.40	14.19
5.	Secondary branches per plant	18.87	32.27	24.72
6.	Pods per plant	121.67	230.13	180.47
7.	Pod length (cm)	4.12	6.13	5.44
8.	Seeds per pod	3.47	4.27	3.86
9.	100 seed weight (g)	7.34	10.93	9.08
10.	Seed yield per plant (g)	42.73	72.11	58.46
11.	Protein content (%)	23.57	26.10	24.70

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Table La:	Descriptive	statistics	of eleven	traits in	pigeon	pea
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Sr. no.	Changestand	Variance						
	Characters	Genotypic	Phenotypic	Environmental				
1.	Days to 50% flowering	7.19	16.30	9.10				
2.	Days to maturity	16.83	42.24	25.41				
3.	Plant height (cm)	1086.01	1095.01	9.00				
4.	Primary branches per plant	1.33	1.58	0.25				
5.	Secondary branches per plant	16.19	16.95	0.76				
6.	Pods per plant	794.28	1140.05	345.77				
7.	Pod length (cm)	0.21	0.26	0.05				
8.	Seeds per pod	0.03	0.09	0.06				
9.	100 seed weight (g)	0.46	0.93	0.46				
10.	Seed yield per plant (g)	58.94	80.87	21.93				
11.	Protein content (%)	0.36	0.94	0.58				

Table 1 b: Descriptive statistics of eleven traits in pigeon pea

 Table 2: Genotypic and phenotypic coefficient of variation, heritability, genetic advance and genetic advance as percent of mean for eleven traits of pigeon pea

Sr. No.	Characters	GCV %	PCV %	Heritability Broad Sense (%)	Genetic Advance	Genetic Advance (% of mean)
1.	Days to 50% flowering	2.68	4.03	44.14	3.67	3.66
2.	Days to maturity	2.67	4.23	39.83	5.33	3.47
3.	Plant height	18.83	18.91	99.17	67.61	38.64
4.	Primary branches per plant	8.13	8.85	84.21	2.18	15.36
5.	Secondary branches per plant	16.28	16.65	95.49	8.10	32.76
6.	Pods per plant	15.62	18.71	69.67	48.46	26.85
7.	Pod length	8.34	9.29	80.53	0.84	15.42
8.	Seeds per pod	4.64	7.72	36.15	0.22	5.75
9.	100 seed weight	7.50	10.61	50.01	0.99	10.93
10.	Seed yield per plant	13.13	15.38	72.88	13.50	23.10
11.	Protein content	2.45	3.93	38.78	0.77	3.14

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Characters		Days to 50% flowering	Days to maturity	Plant height (cm)	Primary branches per plant	Secondary branches per plant	Pods per plant	Pod length (cm)	Seeds per pod	100 seed weight (g)	Protein content (%)
Sood viold par plant (g)	rg	0.335**	0.052 <sup>NS</sup>	0.372**	0.139 <sup>NS</sup>	0.235 <sup>NS</sup>	0.915**	0.155 <sup>NS</sup>	0.102 <sup>NS</sup>	0.404**	0.345**
Seed yield per plaint (g)	rp	0.137 NS	$-0.053^{\text{ NS}}$	0.312*	0.118 <sup>NS</sup>	0.208 <sup>NS</sup>	0.657**	$0.076^{NS}$	0.025 <sup>NS</sup>	0.184 <sup>NS</sup>	0.229 <sup>NS</sup>
Dava to 50% flowering	rg	1	0.949**	0.450**	0.253 <sup>NS</sup>	0.058 <sup>NS</sup>	0.481**	-0.046 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.342**	0.189 <sup>NS</sup>	0.473**
Days to 50% nowening	rp	1	0.459**	0.307*	0.182 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.021 <sup>NS</sup>	0.274*	-0.039 <sup>NS</sup>	$-0.091^{NS}$	0.021 <sup>NS</sup>	$0.077^{NS}$
Davia to moturity	rg		1	0.306*	-0.109 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.068 <sup>NS</sup>	0.260*	-0.136 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.209 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.349**	0.610**
Days to maturity	rp		1	0.169 <sup>NS</sup>	$0.007^{NS}$	-0.019 <sup>NS</sup>	0.255*	-0.191 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.107 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.041 <sup>NS</sup>	$0.174^{NS}$
Dlant haight (am)	rg			1	0.684**	0.589**	0.486**	0.555**	-0.097 <sup>NS</sup>	0.468**	-0.169 <sup>NS</sup>
Plant height (Chi)	rp			1	0.624**	0.572**	0.401**	0.501**	-0.071 <sup>NS</sup>	0.330*	-0.095 <sup>NS</sup>
Deimana harrahar ara alart	rg				1	0.541**	0.156 <sup>NS</sup>	0.742**	-0.265*	0.591**	-0.051 <sup>NS</sup>
Primary branches per plant	rp				1	0.484**	0.173 <sup>NS</sup>	0.608**	-0.172 <sup>NS</sup>	0.417**	-0.102 <sup>NS</sup>
Sacandami branchas nor nlant	rg					1	0.297*	0.557**	0.157 <sup>NS</sup>	0.302*	-0.273*
Secondary branches per plant	rp					1	0.257*	0.479**	0.095 <sup>NS</sup>	0.212 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.129 <sup>NS</sup>
Dada nan ulant	rg						1	0.227 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.115 <sup>NS</sup>	0.390**	0.237 <sup>NS</sup>
Pous per plant	rp						1	0.102 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.070 NS	0.234 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.068 <sup>NS</sup>
Dod langth (am)	rg							1	-0.163 <sup>NS</sup>	0.151 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.589**
Pod length (Chi)	rp							1	-0.058 <sup>NS</sup>	0.152 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.253 <sup>NS</sup>
Sooda non nod	rg								1	-0.299**	0.332**
Seeds per pou	rp								1	-0.112 <sup>NS</sup>	0.181 <sup>NS</sup>
100 good weight (z)	rg									1	0.077 <sup>NS</sup>
100 seed weight (g)	rp									1	0.095 <sup>NS</sup>
<b>D</b> rotain contant $(0/)$	rg										1
Protein content (%)	rp										1

# **Table 3:** Genotypic and phenotypic correlations of seed yield per plant with other characters in eleven genotypes of pigeon pea

# Table 4: Direct and Indirect effects of ten causal variables on seed yield per plant in twenty genotypes of pigeon pea

Characters	Days to 50% flowering	Days to maturity	Plant height	Primary branches per plant	Secondary branchesper plant	Pods per plant	Pod length	Seeds per pod	100 seed weight	Protein content	Seed yield per plant
Days to 50% flowering	-1.628	-1.544	-0.733	-0.412	-0.093	-0.783	0.075	0.556	-0.307	-0.769	0.335**
Days to maturity	1.919	2.024	0.619	-0.221	-0.136	0.526	-0.275	-0.423	-0.707	1.234	0.052 <sup>NS</sup>
Plant height (cm)	-0.077	-0.052	-0.171	-0.117	-0.100	-0.083	-0.095	0.016	-0.080	0.028	0.372**
Primary branches per plant	-0.664	0.287	-1.796	-2.626	-1.419	-0.410	-1.949	0.696	-1.552	0.132	0.139 <sup>NS</sup>
Secondary branches per plant	0.003	-0.004	0.036	0.033	0.061	0.018	0.034	0.009	0.018	-0.016	0.235 <sup>NS</sup>
Pods per plant	-0.137	-0.074	-0.139	-0.044	-0.084	-0.286	-0.065	0.032	-0.111	-0.067	0.915**
Pod length (cm)	-0.126	-0.372	1.520	2.033	1.526	0.621	2.739	-0.445	0.415	-1.612	0.155 <sup>NS</sup>
Seeds per pod	-0.018	-0.011	-0.005	-0.014	0.008	-0.006	-0.009	0.055	-0.016	0.018	0.102 <sup>NS</sup>
100 seed weight (g)	0.500	-0.927	1.243	1.569	0.800	1.034	0.402	-0.792	2.654	0.203	0.404**
Protein content (%)	0.564	0.728	-0.201	-0.060	-0.326	0.283	-0.703	0.396	0.091	1.194	0.345**



Genotypic path diagram based on the different morphological characters of pigeon pea

# Conclusion

Sufficient genetic variability is observed in the experimental material studied, suggesting that there is ample scope to develop early maturing and high yielding genotypes. Based on the mean performance, BP-16-261, GT-104, GNP-2 and GT-105 were identified as elite genotypes for improving yield along with good quality. The trait seed yield per plant showed high heritability coupled with moderate genetic advance as percent of mean indicating that the genotypes, under study were diverse with immense genetic potential. Significant association of seed yield per plant in desirable direction at both genotypic and phenotypic levels was observed for plant height and pods per plant. The overall picture of path analysis revealed that for improving yield in pigeon pea, selection advantage should be given to pod length, 100 seed weight, days to maturity and protein content as they recorded high positive direct effect on seed yield per plant. However, consumer preference must be taken into consideration while the selection of the trait. Moreover, the traits protein content and 100 seed weight had the high positive direct effect along with highly significant correlation with seed yield per plant. Further, it is interesting to note that highly significant correlation of 100 seed weight and protein content came from their own high positive direct effect. Hence, direct selection for these traits may be useful for further improvement of seed yield in pigeon pea.

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