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PAGES: 173-179

ORIGINAL PDF URL: <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/577838>

GENETIC VARIABILITY, HERITABILITY AND GENETIC ADVANCE FOR YIELD AND QUALITY TRAITS IN M₂₋₄ GENERATIONS OF BREAD WHEAT (*Triticum aestivum* L.) GENOTYPES

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Received: 17.09.2018

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate genetic variability, heritability and genetic advance for grain yield and quality characters in the M₂, M₃ and M₄ populations of bread wheat (*Triticum aestivum* L.) in a Randomized Complete Block Design with 3 replicates during the 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 periods. Analysis of variance indicated that the mean squares for treatments were significant for all the characters except harvest index in the M₂; plant height, grain weight per spike, harvest index and gluten index in the M₃; sedimentation value and gluten index in the M₄. For the genotype, mean squares were also were significant for all the characters except gluten content in the M₃. The M₂ and M₃ showed a response to selection for grain yield and its components in bread wheat, while the M₄ generation was a response to selection for quality traits. Moderate phenotypic coefficient of variation (PCV) and genotypic coefficient of variation (GCV) estimated for the grain yield, the number of grains per spike, the grain weight per spike, the gluten index and the sedimentation value in three mutant generations indicated that the genotype could be reflected by the phenotype and the effectiveness of selection based on the phenotypic performance for these characters in the early mutant generations. Heritability for the plant height, the number of grains per spike and the sedimentation value could be due to additive gene effects, and selection might be effective for these characters due to high heritability with high genetic advance. The harvest index, the gluten content and the gluten index could be used in the early generation stages with their high to medium values of heritability estimates associated with moderate expected gain, but would be more effective if postponed to late generations.

Keywords: GCV, heritability, mutant, PCV, population, wheat

INTRODUCTION

The variation of all present forms of life has been driven by three main forces: i) mutation, the fundamental source of heritable variation; ii) environment, which influences the selection of mutations that survive and reproduce; and iii) time, during which the genotype and the environment constantly interact and evolutionary change is realized (Czyczyło-Mysza et al., 2013). To a start proper wheat breeding program to improve yield and quality, the source populations should possess sufficient genetic variability suitable for selection. Unfortunately, with present distribution of improved high yielding, pure line cultivars in all of the world's wheat growing areas, selection from established cultivars would rarely isolate a new genotype (Poehlman and Sleper, 1995). Genetic variation in major crops such as wheat has been successfully unlocked, shuffled, recombined, and sometimes created, by plant breeders over the last century to achieve yield increase. The success of induced variation will mainly depend on the precision in selection

techniques (MacKey, 1984; Konzak, 1987). The expected response to selection can be measured by determining the parameters like mean, coefficient of variation, standard deviation, heritability and genetic advance (Ibrahim and Sharaan, 1974; Scossiroli, 1977; Shabana et al., 1994; Amer et al., 2001).

Two breeding procedures, i.e., mutation and hybridization are used to induce new genetic variation. Controversy exists among the breeders on the relative incidence of induced polygenic variations (through induced mutagenesis) in negative or positive direction and shift of the mean in the M₂ and later generations (Rao et al., 1988; Siddiqui and Singh, 2010). Since mutagen derived variability for quantitative characters in crop plants is heritable and the response of the selection seems good, henceforth, many workers hold the view that induced mutations can be used to generate useful variation in the quantitatively inherited traits where appropriate selection is applied for improvement (Scossiroli, 1964; Brock, 1970; Chakrabarthi, 1975; Khan, 1984; Tickoo and

Chandra, 1999; Kozgar et al., 2009; MacKay, 2011; Mba, 2013). Changes in morphological, physiological and quality characters after mutagen application are common, and therefore it has been demonstrated that induced mutation can increase yield as well as other agronomic characters such as stiffness of straw, time of maturity, adaptability, shattering resistance, disease resistance, protein content, baking quality, malting quality and numerous other characters (Ibrahim and Sharaan, 1974; Borojevic, 1990; Brunner, 1991). Several achievements in crop improvement through mutation breeding have resulted in two major outcomes: improved varieties that are directly used for commercial cultivation and new genetic stocks with improved characters or with better combining ability of traits (Roychowdhury and Tah, 2013). More than 3,200 mutant varieties have been directly or indirectly derived through mutation induction, nearly 80 % of these crop varieties are seed propagated, almost half of which (48 %) are cereals (Jankowicz-Cieslak et al., 2017) including 274 bread wheat varieties (International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA, 2018) are being grown in different countries of the worldwide. Considering the improvements in mutation breeding in the world, unfortunately, there is no mutant wheat variety in our country yet.

The aim of this study was to study the mutational genetic variation. Knowledge of high value of heritability and predicted genetic advance clarifies that the selection among genotypes would be effective for yield and yield components (Shabana et al., 1994; Tammam et al., 2000; Kashif and Khaliq, 2004; Baloch et al., 2013). High heritability in broad sense associated with high genetic advance reveals strong contribution of additive genetic variance for expression of the traits and the selection based on these traits could play a vital role in improving grain yield (Laghari et al., 2010). Therefore, the present work was planned to estimate genetic variation, heritability (h_{bs}^2) and genetic advance (% mean).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Plant material

Three bread wheat (*Triticum aestivum* L.) genotypes, Bezostaja 1 (tall, mid-early, awnless, superior in flour quality for bread making, but inferior in lodging resistance and yield capacity), Kate A-I (tall, mid-early, awnless and inferior in flour quality for bread making, lodging and disease resistance and superior in yield capacity) and IBWSN4 (tall, early, awned and inferior in flour quality for bread making, disease resistance and superior in lodging and yield capacity) were used as the experimental material.

Gamma ray irradiation

The moisture contents of seeds of wheat (*Triticum aestivum* L.) genotypes used in this study were 11.4% for the Bezostaja 1, 11.7% for the Kate A-I and 12.0% for the IBWSN4. Each seed sample for the each genotype were divided into six groups (A, B, C, D, E and F), which contain 2000 grains. From them group A was kept un-

irradiated (control), while the other groups were irradiated with various levels of gamma ray (100, 200, 300, 400 and 500 Gy). Gamma treatment was obtained from ^{60}Co balt, Ob-Servo Sanguis Co-60 Research Irradiator with isotope model, while the dose rate was 2.190 kGy h^{-1} in before the 2010-2011 growing season sowing at the Turkish Atomic Energy Authority, Sarayköy Nuclear Research and Training Center, Ankara, Turkey. After the irradiation, the experiment was set up using with 15 M_0 combination seeds along with the un-irradiated (control) in the experimental field of the Field Crops Department of the Faculty of Agriculture of Tekirdağ Namık Kemal University during the 2009-2010. The experiment was carried out in a randomized complete block design (RCBD) with 3 replicates. Plots were sown on Nov.15, 2010 by hand at the rate of 350 seeds per m^2 into the 2 m in length x 1.0 m wide, with 6 rows 0.2 m on row distance. Nitrogen and P_2O_5 at 160 and 50 kg ha^{-1} , respectively, were incorporated into the soil as compound fertilizer (20-20-0) before sowing, urea during tillering and ammonium nitrate before heading stage. The crop was kept free of weeds by hand hoeing as the necessary. The remaining seeds were sown in the greenhouse in order to guarantee the work. The seeds obtained from the harvested plants in M_1 generation were sown to be able to get of the M_2 in 2011-12; to be able to get of the M_3 in 2012-13 and to be able to get of the M_4 in 2013-14 from the plots which are 20 cm row distance in 5 meters of 6-row parcels as 400 seeds in the each row with 4 replicates. Morphological and yield characters were recorded on 15 randomly selected plants to study the effect of irradiation doses on the studied genotypes. Grain yield (GY) and some yield components such as plant height (PH), spike length (SL), number of grains per spike (NGPS), grain weight per spike (GWPS) and harvest index (HI) were measured (Gençtan, 1988).

After harvest, the grain samples were cleaned. Physical characteristics of the grain such as thousand kernel weight (TKW) and test weight (TW) were determined following the official methods of the Approved Methods of the American Association of Cereal Chemists (AACC, 2000). The quantity of grain protein content (PC) (ICC, 1995) was determined by a near infrared reflectance spectrophotometer calibrated against Kjeldahl data. Gluten content (GC) and gluten index (GI) of wheat flours were analyzed according to the revised standard ICC method No. 155 (ICC, 1994) by using the Glutomatic 2200 system (Perten Instruments AB, Huddinge, Sweden). Sedimentation value (SV) was determined following ICC method No: 166/1 (ICC, 1972).

Statistical analyses

All data obtained were subjected to analysis of variance (ANOVA) by using JUMP 5.0.1 statistical software. The genotypic and phenotypic variances and their corresponding coefficients of variations were estimated, using the pertinent mean square expectations, according to the method, suggested by Johnson et al. (1955). In addition, broad-sense heritability (h_{bs}^2), genetic

advance (GA) as % of mean were calculated following Hanson et al. (1956) and Allard (1999).

Mean squares were used to estimate;

$$\sigma_g^2 = (\text{MSS-MSE})/r$$

$\sigma_{ph}^2 = \sigma_e^2 + \sigma_g^2$, where broad-sense heritability (h_{bs}^2) was estimated as follows:

$h_{bs}^2 = (\sigma_g^2 / \sigma_{ph}^2) \times 100$ and the phenotypic (PCV) and genotypic (GCV) coefficients of variation were computed as follows:

$$\text{PCV} = 100 \times \sqrt{\sigma_{ph}^2 / \bar{X}}$$

$$\text{GCV} = 100 \times \sqrt{\sigma_g^2 / \bar{X}}$$

Expected genetic advance (GA): Expected genetic advance from direct selection for all studied traits was calculated according to Singh and Chaudhary (1999) as follows:

$$\text{GA\% at 10\% (selection intensity)} = 100 \times k \times h_{bs}^2 \times \sigma_{ph} / \bar{X},$$

Where, \bar{X} : general mean and k is selection differential (k= 1.76 for 10% selection).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The significances of variance components obtained from the analysis of variance (ANOVA) for all of the characters in the bread wheat mutated populations of the M₂, M₃ and M₄ is presented in Table 1. ANOVA results show that the mean squares for treatments were significant for all the characters except HI in the M₂, PH, GWPS, HI and GC in the M₃, and SV and GI in the M₄ (Table 1). Regarding the genotype, mean squares were also were significant for all the characters except GC in the M₃. This indicates that genotypes and treatments under study varied significantly for all the quantitative characters. Highly significant mean squares attributable to genotypes also revealed that significant genetic variability existed among the used genotypes. Treatment x genotype interaction mean squares were significant for all the characters except the PH, GWPS, TW, SV and PC in the M₂, PH, GY, TW and PC in the M₃ and SL and SV in the M₄, indicating that genotype did not perform uniformly across different gamma rays. Non-significant interaction for the PH, SL, GWPS, TW, SV and PC in mutated population generations indicated a consistency in performance of each genotype across different irradiation treatments.

Table 1. ANOVA results of the 12 examined characters in the M₂, M₃ and M₄

Characters	Replication d.f.= 2			Treatments (T) d.f.= 5			Genotype (G) d.f.= 2			T x G d.f.= 10		
	M ₂	M ₃	M ₄	M ₂	M ₃	M ₄	M ₂	M ₃	M ₄	M ₂	M ₃	M ₄
PH (cm)	*	ns	**	*	ns	**	**	**	**	ns	ns	**
SL (cm)	ns	ns	*	**	**	**	*	**	*	**	**	ns
NGPS (no)	ns	ns	ns	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
GWPS (g)	ns	ns	ns	**	ns	**	**	**	**	ns	**	**
HI (%)	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	**	**	**	**	*	**	**
GY (kg da ⁻¹)	ns	ns	ns	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	ns	*
TGW (g)	*	ns	ns	*	**	*	**	**	**	**	*	**
TW (kg hl ⁻¹)	ns	ns	*	**	**	**	**	**	**	ns	ns	**
GC (%)	**	ns	ns	**	**	*	**	ns	**	**	**	**
GI (%)	ns	ns	ns	*	ns	ns	**	**	**	*	*	**
SV (ml)	*	ns	*	**	**	ns	**	**	**	ns	*	ns
PC (%)	**	ns	ns	**	**	**	**	**	**	ns	ns	*

d.f.: degrees of freedom, ** and *: Significant at 0.01 and 0.05s, ns: Non-significant

The pool of genotypes was therefore, assessed for variability analysis. The existence of wide diversity among the constituent genotypes with regard to characters under study was confirmed through various statistical parameters. The basic material, therefore, offers positive opportunities for investigation furtherance of the aforesaid objectives. The general range, grand mean, coefficient of variation along with genotypic and phenotypic coefficient of variation, heritability and genetic advance for the GY and its components and some quality characters in the M₂, the M₃ and the M₄ generations are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

The ranges obtained in the M₂ generation were wider than that in the other both generations for the PH (77.6-115.5 cm), the SL (8.7-11.9 cm), the NGPS (31.0-60.0), the GWPS (1.570-3.070 g), the TGW (26.5-36.5 g), the TW (68.0-78.5 kg hl⁻¹) and the PC (9.10-13.90 %), while the M₃ and the M₄ generations showed wider ranges for generation for HI (27.27-41.10) and the GY (453.0-795.0 kg da⁻¹), and the GC (31.5-42.0 %), the GI (45.0-80.0 %) and the SV (33.0-63.0 ml) respectively (Table 2 and Table 3). The wider range of variation observed for all the characters suggested enough variation to be exploit the variability. These results indicated that the M₂ and M₃ mutated generations showed a response to selection for

grain yield and its components in the bread wheat, while the M₄ generation was a response to selection for quality traits. As mentioned by Rao and Siddiq (1977) the

increase of variation of quantitative characters for given generations can depend on the trait investigated.

Table 2. Range, mean, PCV, GCV, heritability and the expected genetic advance (GA) for investigated characters in the M₂, M₃ and M₄

Characters	Generations	Range	Grand mean	Coefficient of variation (%)		h_{bs}^2 (%)	GA mean (10%)
				PCV	GCV		
PH (cm)	M ₂	77.6-115.5	92.9	9.74	7.42	58.1	90.02
	M ₃	94.5-124.7	111.1	7.36	6.56	79.5	84.20
	M ₄	77.3-114.0	99.1	9.19	8.69	89.4	131.58
SL (cm)	M ₂	8.8-12.1	10.3	6.93	5.61	65.6	5.71
	M ₃	8.7-11.9	10.2	6.10	4.54	55.3	3.69
	M ₄	8.8-11.7	10.3	6.62	5.62	72.2	5.74
NGPS (no)	M ₂	31.0-60.0	42.0	18.13	16.50	82.8	201.24
	M ₃	29.5-53.2	41.5	14.94	14.00	87.8	143.21
	M ₄	33.3-57.3	46.3	11.28	10.20	81.8	84.79
GWPS (g)	M ₂	1.570-3.070	2.210	16.00	12.96	65.6	6.53
	M ₃	1.080-2.140	1.546	18.86	15.31	66.1	6.40
	M ₄	0.740-1.750	1.322	15.69	11.47	53.9	3.09
HI (%)	M ₂	28.65-40.30	35.37	7.78	6.09	61.3	23.09
	M ₃	27.27-41.10	35.54	10.63	9.93	87.3	61.69
	M ₄	35.81-45.12	41.85	5.08	4.39	74.9	14.22
GY (kg da ⁻¹)	M ₂	326.0-632.0	468.2	15.12	11.65	59.4	1119.64
	M ₃	453.0-795.0	619.3	14.61	11.21	58.8	1368.43
	M ₄	553.0-824.0	663.8	10.82	8.16	56.9	777.66

Genetic variability is the tendency of individuals in a population, to vary from one another. Variability is different from genetic variation, which is the actual amount of phenotypic variation seen in a particular population. Genetic variability in a population is very important because, without variability, it becomes difficult for a population to adapt to environmental changes and plays a very important role in any crop breeding program. Frey (1969) reported that mutagen derived variability for quantitative characters in crop plants was heritable and that the response to selection was good. Statistically, the total variability was expressed in terms of the PCV and the genotypic variability is expressed in terms of the GCV. The GCV and PCV values were categorized as low (<10%), moderate (10 to 20%) and high (>20%) as indicated by Subramaniam and Menon (1973). The GCV and PCV values obtained in our study were moderate and low for the grain yield and quality characters. Accordingly, the moderate PCV and GCV were estimated for the GY, NGPS, GWPS, GI and SV in three mutated generations (Table 2 and Table 3). This indicated that the genotype could be reflected by the phenotype and the

effectiveness of selection based on the phenotypic performance for these characters in early mutated generations. Report of Birhanu et al. (2016) is in line with the occurrence of GCV and PCV media in this study. Low estimates of the GCV were recorded for the PH, SL, HI, TGW, TW, GC, GI and PC. The result indicated that the environmental factors had more influence on the expression of these characters than the genetic factors, suggesting the limited scope for improvement of these characters by direct selection of high performing genotypes. This was in agreement with report of Naik et al. (2015). On the other hand, the values of phenotypic coefficient of variation (PCV) were slightly higher than their corresponding values of the GCV for all traits which reflect somewhat environmental influence on the expression of characters in mutated generations. These results indicated that the selection would be effective to improve these traits among the tested genotypes. However, the NGPS, GWPS and GY revealed high difference between the GCV and the PCV in comparison to other characters, suggested that environmental effect was prominent for the NGPS, GWPS and GY.

Table 3. Range, mean, PCV, GCV, heritability and the expected genetic advance (GA) for the quality characters in the M₂, M₃ and M₄

Characters	Generations	Range	Grand mean	Coefficient of variation (%)		h_{bs}^2 (%)	GA mean (10%)
				PCV	GCV		
TGW (g)	M ₂	26.5-36.5	30.6	8.45	7.73	83.6	32.17
	M ₃	31.5-40.9	35.8	5.86	4.86	68.9	14.90
	M ₄	39.7-49.0	44.2	4.88	4.33	78.6	14.54
TW (kg hl ⁻¹)	M ₂	68.0-78.5	73.3	3.39	2.62	60.0	8.88
	M ₃	70.2-78.2	75.5	2.59	2.32	80.1	7.16
	M ₄	77.9-84.1	81.5	1.99	1.83	84.6	4.81
GC (%)	M ₂	18.0-29.1	24.0	8.39	6.92	67.9	20.20
	M ₃	31.5-42.0	35.9	5.37	3.91	53.1	9.66
	M ₄	37.1-49.0	43.9	6.83	4.66	46.6	16.78
GI (%)	M ₂	77.0-94.0	86.5	5.78	5.26	83.0	42.18
	M ₃	55.0-85.0	70.3	12.52	9.62	59.0	114.51
	M ₄	45.0-80.0	62.6	15.17	11.60	58.5	148.35
SV (ml)	M ₂	30.4-50.90	37.5	12.96	11.73	81.9	90.76
	M ₃	33.0-55.0	44.3	16.44	15.03	83.6	176.16
	M ₄	33.0-63.0	46.7	17.67	15.35	75.5	193.82
PC (%)	M ₂	9.10-13.90	11.19	6.95	5.04	52.6	5.00
	M ₃	12.20-14.90	13.70	4.88	4.14	72.0	4.13
	M ₄	13.20-15.40	14.39	3.59	2.99	69.7	2.28

The variation in 3 mutated populations for grain yield and quality traits indicated that selection for these traits might be effective. However, the high PCV or the GCV did not provide a clear picture of the extent of genetic gain to be achieved from selection, for the phenotypic traits unless the heritable fraction of the trait was known (Kumar et al., 2017). Since, the efficiency of selection would depend upon the magnitude of variability that is heritable and caused by genetic factors the higher values, therefore, heritability accompanied by high genetic advance for the characters studied should be quite valuable (Johnson et al., 1955). According to Singh (2001), heritability of a trait was considered as high when the value is 80% or moderate when it ranged from 40-80% and when it was less than 40%, it was low. Deshmukh et al. (1986) classified genetic advance as percent of mean as low (<10%), moderate (10-20%) and high (>20%). In our study, moderate to high estimates of heritability were estimated for characters studied. High heritability was coupled with high genetic advance as percent of mean observed for the PH (89.4%), the NGPS (87.8 %) and the SV (83.6 %) (Table 2 and Table 3). This indicated that most likely the heritability of these characters was due to additive gene effects, and selection might be effective for these characters (Salman et al., 2014; Rahman et al., 2016). High to medium values of heritability estimates were found associated with moderate expected and actual gain for the HI (14.22-61.69 %), the GC (9.66-20.20 %) and the GI (42.18-148.35 %). These obtained results indicated that, these traits could be used in the early generation, but would be more effective if postponed to late generation (Kumar et al., 2017). As in many other crops, GY had the lowest heritability estimate with a relatively low value for expected genetic advance (Budak, 2000 and Kashif and Khaliq, 2004). The variations were observed of value of heritability and genetic advance for the SL (55.3-72.2 % and 3.69-5.74 %), GWPS (53.9-66.1

% and 3.09-6.53 %), GY (56.9-59.4 % and 777.66-1368.43 %), TW (60.0-84.6 % and 4.81-8.88 %) and PC (52.6-72.0 % and 2.28-5.00 %) (Table 2 and Table 3). The variations of the values of heritability and genetic advances were found to be independent for almost all the yield and quality attributing traits in the mutagenized population, thereby reflecting that high heritability was not always associated with high genetic advance (Najeeb et al., 2009; Ali et al., 2012).

As a conclusion, ANOVA indicating significant variability among the genotypes for all traits; the mean sum squares for 12 characters were highly significant thereby suggesting the presence of considerable amount of heritability in bread wheat mutated populations of the M₂, M₃ and M₄. The M₂ and M₃ generations can be useful from point of view for selecting higher yielding plants in early generation, while the M₄ generation is appropriate for quality characters. Non-gradual increases in genetic parameters were observed in consecutive mutated generations. Heritability estimates and genetic advance showed considerable increase indicating that the PH, NGPS, HI, and GC, GI and SV can be transmitted to advance generations and significant gain could be gained by selection method(s) in the early generations with multidisciplinary (particularly plant physiology, mutation breeding, agronomy etc.) under the greenhouse and field conditions in the long and near future.

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