

Original Research Article

Combining ability doubled haploid lines for grain yield and yield attributing characters in maize (*Zea Mays* L.) under heat stress

Abstract:

29 and 48 DH lines derived from MPS 1 and MPS 2, respectively, were crossed with more than one testers belonging to opposite heterotic in L x T fashion. The resultant double haploid testcrosses, and their parents were evaluated along with checks during *kharif* 2019 at three locations. Among female lines of MPS1, DH line ZL19337 was identified as good general combiner and registered significant negative *gca* effect for days to 50 per cent anthesis and days to 50 per cent silking. While, DH lines ZL19641 and ZL19357 recorded significantly positive *gca* for plant height and grain yield, respectively. Among female lines of MPS 2, DH line ZL19492 was identified as good general combiner and recorded significant negative *gca* effects for days to 50 per cent anthesis, and days to 50 per cent silking. Similarly, DH lines, ZL19534 and ZL19572 were identified as good general combiners for grain yield and ear position, respectively. Among testers of MPS1, ZL1840 was identified as the good general combiner for days to 50 per cent anthesis, days to 50 per cent silking and plant height and CAL14113 for ear height and grain yield. Similarly, VL1010996 was identified as the good general combiner for days to 50 per cent anthesis, days to 50 per cent silking, plant height, ear height, ear position and grain yield in MPS 2. Hybrid ZH2063 exhibited desired *sca* effects for days to 50 per cent anthesis and days to 50 silking and ZH2010 was identified as a good specific combiner for days to 50 per cent anthesis and grain yield in MPS 1. Hybrid ZH20158 recorded desirable *sca* effects for the trait days to 50 silking, While, ZH20251 and ZH20183 were identified as good specific combiners for plant height and grain yield in MPS 2.

Key words: General combining ability, Specific combining ability, Multiparent synthetic population (MPS), Doubled Haploids.

Introduction

Maize (*Zea mays* L.), a leading cereal worldwide and staple food of many countries, is a multipurpose crop used for human food, animal feed and industry purposes. Maize has wider genetic adaptability to grow under different agro-ecological environments. Crop plants in general

are sensitive to high temperature at reproductive phase. High temperature beyond optimum level causes irreversible damages to plant growth, resulting in drop of crop productivity. Rapid changes in harsh climate resulted in huge decrease in cereal productivity, and so the world food production (Deryng *et al.*, 2014). High temperature (2°C) beyond threshold level has more drastic effects on crop yield compared to low (20%) precipitation (Lobell and Burke, 2010; Shahid *et al.*, 2017). Under stress environment, leaf temperature, water relations & stomatal conductance severely affect the plant growth. These three factors are collectively known as “magic triangle” for plants (Valladares and Pearcy, 1997; Reynolds-Henne *et al.*, 2010). Chen *et al.* (2010) reported that when maize plant reaches up to 8th leaf stage, it becomes susceptible to high temperature stress. The average yield of maize is low because of various biotic and abiotic stresses. High temperature associated with drought causes decline in yield at reproductive and grain filling stages of the maize crop. Spring maize crop, faces heat stress at anthesis and grain filling (soft-dough/ milky stage) period which reduces pollen viability, silk receptivity and grain weight. High temperature coupled with limited water urges breeder to develop hybrids, which can withstand heat stress without a remarkable decline in yield (Tester and Bacic, 2005). Few experiments based on research, to know the impact of high temperature on maize than other abiotic stresses. The primary goal in developing heat tolerant hybrids is; to cope with heat stress at reproductive and grain filling stages and harvest a successful crop. Development of heat resilient cultivars is a challenging task. Narrow base genetic diversity of crop acts as major hindrance in achieving this goal. Breeders got few successes in development of heat tolerant genotypes, because genetic basis of heat tolerance about various agronomic and physiological traits is largely unknown (Driedonks *et al.*, 2016). Heat tolerance is a complex and multigene inherited trait with slow progress because of G × E (Chen *et al.*, 2012).

Though both stresses (biotic and abiotic) have adverse effects on maize yield, a low correspondence in maize cultivars identified individually for tolerance to heat stress. Heat stress is likely to become an increasing constraint to maize production. A study has shown that an increase in temperature of 2 °C would result in a greater reduction in maize yields than a decrease in precipitation of 20%. Similarly, a recent study is conduct indicated that increasing temperatures would result in a greater reduction in maize yields than increased intra-seasonal variability in precipitation. These studies highlight the need to incorporate tolerance to heat into maize hybrids to onset predicted yield losses due to heat stress. Therefore, an attempted was

made to assess the general combining ability and specific combining ability among the selected superior parental lines and double haploid testcrosses for grain yield and yield attributing characters in maize (*Zea Mays* L.) under heat stress.

Material and Methods

The material for the present study consisted of 29 and 48 DH (Double haploid) lines respectively, from Multiparent synthetic population (MPS1) and Multiparent synthetic population (MPS2) which were crossed to more than one testers belonging to opposite heterotic group in L x T design during late *kharif* 2019. The resultant double haploid testcrosses were evaluated in alpha lattice design with two replications under heat stress at three locations *viz.*, IIMR, Begusarai, BISA, Ludhiana and Main Agricultural Research Station, Raichur, during *spring* 2020. These DH testcrosses were planted with a spacing of 60 cm between rows and 20 cm between plants. After thorough land preparation, seeds were hand dibbled at the rate of one seed per hill. The crop was applied with a recommended dose of fertilizers (150 kg N, 75 kg P₂O₅ and 40 kg K₂O beside organic manures). Standard agronomic practices were followed to raise the healthy crop. The data on various quantitative traits *viz.*, days to 50 per cent anthesis (d), days to 50 per cent silking (d), anthesis-silking interval (d), plant height (cm), ear height (cm), ears per plant, ear position, and grain yield (t ha⁻¹) were recorded on five randomly selected plants. The mean data was analysed using META-R and AGD.

Results and Discussion

Analysis of variance for combining ability of DH lines derived from MPS 1 crossed with different testers under heat stress

The variance due to females was highly significant for days to 50 per cent anthesis, days to 50 per cent silking, anthesis to silking interval, plant height, ear height, ear position and grain yield (Table 1). The variance due to testers was highly significant for 50 per cent anthesis, days to 50 per cent silking, plant height, ear height, ear position and grain yield indicated that the DH lines and testers used for the study exhibited a lot of variability. The variances due to line × tester interactions were highly significant for plant height, ear height and grain yield indicated scope of exploitation of heterosis. The variance due to site × genotype was highly significant for grain yield indicating differential expression of yield at different locations. The variance due to site ×

line was highly significant for plant height and grain yield. The variance due to site \times tester was highly significant for grain yield. The variance due to site \times line \times tester was highly significant for anthesis to silking interval, ear height and grain yield. These results are in accordance with the findings of Archana (2017) and Divya (2018) in their study.

Analysis of variance for combining ability of DH lines derived from MPS 2 crossed with different testers under heat stress

The variances due to lines were highly significant for days to 50 per cent anthesis, days to 50 per cent silking, ear position, ears per plant, ear height, plant height and grain yield indicating the variability among the DH lines. The variance due to tester was highly significant for 50 per cent anthesis, days to 50 per cent silking, ear position, ear height, plant height and grain yield indicating the presence of variability among testers. The variance due to line \times tester interaction was highly significant for ear height, plant height and grain yield indicated scope of exploitation of heterosis. The variance due to site \times genotype was highly significant for ears per plant, plant height, ear height and grain yield, indicating differential expression of yield at different locations. The variance due to site \times line was highly significant for days to 50 per cent anthesis, ears per plant, ear height, plant height and grain yield. The variance due to site \times tester was highly significant for ear height and grain yield. The variance due to site \times line \times tester was highly significant for grain yield (Table 2). Archana (2017) and Divya (2018) also reported similar results under heat stress.

General combining ability (*gca*) effects of parents of DH lines under heat stress

Top three desirables doubled haploid lines and testers were selected from the trial based on their *gca* effects for selected traits and presented in Table 3 along with their mean performance status under heat stress condition. The *gca* effects from MPS 1 suggested that doubled haploid line ZL19337 was a good general combiner and registered significant negative *gca* effect for days to 50 per cent anthesis and days to 50 per cent silking. While, doubled haploid lines ZL19641 and ZL19357 recorded significantly positive *gca* for plant height and grain yield, respectively, among female lines. In a similar way, ZL1840 was identified as the good general combiner for the traits days to 50 per cent anthesis, days to 50 per cent silking and plant height and CAL14113 for the traits *viz.*, ear height and grain yield among testers. Previously, Dinesh *et al.* (2016), Geetha *et al.* (2019), Gazala *et al.* (2017), and Krishnaji *et al.*

(2018) also identified good general combiners for various traits including grain yield, under heat stress conditions.

The *gca* effects from MPS 2 crossed with different testers suggested that line ZL19492 was a good general combiner and showed significant negative *gca* effects for days to 50 per cent anthesis, and days to 50 per cent silking (Table 3). Double haploid lines *viz.*, ZL19534 and ZL19572 were identified as good general combiners for grain yield and ear position among female lines. Among testers, VL1010996 was identified as the good general combiner for the traits *viz.*, days to 50 per cent anthesis, days to 50 per cent silking, plant height, ear height, ear position and grain yield. In accordance with the present findings, previously, Gazala *et al.* (2017), Krishnaji *et al.* (2018) and Geetha *et al.* (2019) identified good general combiners for various traits including grain yield, under heat stress conditions.

Specific combining ability (*sca*) effects of hybrids in under heat stress

Top three desirables hybrids were selected from the trial based on their *sca* effects for selected traits and presented in Table 4 along with their mean performance status under heat stress condition. The cross combinations, ZL19656 x ZL19290 = ZH2063 exhibited desired *sca* effects for traits *viz.*, days to 50 per cent anthesis and days to 50 silking. While, the hybrid combination ZL19304 x CAL14113 = ZH2010 was identified as a good specific combiner for days to 50 per cent anthesis and grain yield. Previously, Gazala *et al.* (2017), Krishnaji *et al.* (2018) and Geetha *et al.* (2019) identified good specific combiners for grain yield and its contributing traits under heat stress conditions.

The *sca* effects for MPS2 are presented in Table 5 along with their mean performance status under heat stress condition. The cross combination, ZL19456 x CAL1733 = ZH20158 exhibited desirable *sca* effects for the trait days to 50 silking, while ZL19791 x ZL155542 = ZH20251 was a good specific combiner for plant height and ZL19572 x ZL155542 = ZH20183 was a good specific combiner for grain yield. Previously, Gazala *et al.* (2017), Krishnaji *et al.* (2018) and Geetha *et al.* (2019) identified good specific combiners for grain yield and its contributing traits under heat stress conditions. The DH lines/testers of the above testcrosses and new combinations could be considered for producing new hybrids with the proven seed parents already available with the programme.

Reference:

- Archana, K. A., 2017. Effect of genotype x environment interaction on combining ability under heat stress in maize (*Zea mays* L.). M.Sc. (Agri.) Thesis, Univ. Agric. Sci., Raichur, Karnataka (India).
- Dinesh, A., Ayyanagouda, P., Zaidi, P. H., Prakash, K. H., Vinayan, M. T. and Seetharam, K., 2016. Line x testers analysis of tropical maize inbred lines under heat stress for grain yield and secondary traits. *Maydica*, 1-4.
- Divya, 2018. Stability analysis of maize (*Zea mays* L.) hybrids across locations under heat stress for grain yield. M.Sc. (Agri) Thesis, Univ. Agric. Sci., Raichur, Karnataka (India).
- Gazala, P., Kuchanur, P. H. Zaidi, P. H., Arunkumar, B., Ayyanagouda Patil, Seetharam, K. And Vinayan, M. T., 2017. Combining ability and heterosis for heat stress tolerance in maize (*Zea mays* L.). *J. Farm Sci.*, 30(3): 326-333.
- Geetha, N., Kuchanur, P. H., Zaidi, P. H., Arunkumar, B., Dhanoji, M. M., Seetharam, K., Vinayan, M. T., 2019. Combining ability and heterosis of maize (*Zea mays* L.) doubled haploid lines derived from heat tolerant populations. *Maize J.*, 8(2): 77-8.
- Krishnaji, J., Kuchanur, P.H., Zaidi, P. H., Ayyanagouda, P., Seetharam, K., Vinayan, M. T. and Arunkumar, B., 2018. Genetic analysis of heat adaptive traits in tropical maize (*Zea mays* L.) *Int. J. Curr. Microbiol. App. Sci.*, 7(1): 3237-3246.

Table 1. Analysis of variance for combining ability for various traits under heat stress conditions across locations in DH lines derived from MPS 1 (HGA) crossed with different testers

Source	Degrees of freedom	Days to 50% anthesis (d)	Days to 50% silking (d)	Anthesis to silking interval (d)	Plant height (cm)	Ear height (cm)	Ears per plant	Ear position	Grain yield (t ha ⁻¹)
Site	2	15956**	15156.7**	171.93**	4248.42**	11303.66**	0.12*	0.68**	66.73**
Rep (Site)	3	117.63**	135**	0.81	1218.63**	906.72**	0.08	0.02**	29.24**
Genotypes	132	14.18**	15.90**	0.62	413.41**	146.57**	0.04	0**	3.01**
Line	28	24.16**	29.26**	0.81*	1048.49**	331.99**	0.05	0.01**	4.19**
Tester	5	110.9**	122.73**	0.99	2207.82**	449.65**	0.05	0.01**	7.98**
Line:tester	99	6.44	6.61	0.55	142.92**	78.93*	0.05	0	2.29**
Site:Genotypes	264	4.69	5.25	0.55	99.05	59.90	0.04	0	1.92**
Site:Line	56	5.05	5.95	0.52	141.25**	64.51	0.04*	0	2.27**
Site:Tester	10	2.55	3.42	1.16	124.63	131.49	0.05	0**	4.31**
Site:Line:Tester	198	4.69	5.14	0.53**	85.82	54.98**	0.04	0	1.69**
Residuals		5.11	5.14	0.49	81.11	55.69	0.03	0	1

*, ** significant at 5 % and 1 % level of probability, respectively

Table 2. Analysis of variance for combining ability for various traits under heat stress condition in DH lines derived from MPS 2 (HGB) crossed with different testers

Source	Degrees of freedom	Days to 50% anthesis (d)	Days to 50% silking (d)	Anthesis to silking interval (d)	Plant height (cm)	Ear height (cm)	Ears per plant	Ear position	Grain yield (t ha ⁻¹)
Site	2	9037.84**	8428.09**	134**	8520.19**	14263.96**	0.24**	0.45**	9.99**
Rep (Site)	3	55.97**	64.06**	0.67	1198.26**	1057.13**	0.29**	0.01**	30.56**
Genotypes	160	13.21**	14.43**	0.38	580.90**	406.47**	0.03*	0.01**	3.22**
Line	47	24.07**	26.82**	0.45	803.58**	594.07**	0.04**	0.01**	4.74**
Tester	4	98.46**	106.26**	0.23	9467.55**	6330.97**	0.05	0.08**	11.62**
Line:tester	109	5.43	5.73	0.35	159.17**	108.53**	0.02	0**	2.19**
Site:Genotypes	320	5.71	5.81	0.53	110.95*	92.39**	0.03**	0**	2.17**
Site:Line	94	6.53*	6.18	0.51	147.20**	94.40**	0.03**	0	2.56**
Site:Tester	8	6.07	7.56	0.60	164.32	260.05**	0.03	0**	4.84**
Site:Line:Tester	218	5.34	5.59	0.53	93.36	85.38*	0.03*	0**	1.91**
Residuals		4.76	5.06	0.47	88.28	65	0.02	0	1.05**

*, ** significant at 5 % and 1 % level of probability, respectively

Table 3: Top three DH lines derived from MPS 1 (HGA), MPS 2 (HGB) and testers that exhibited desirable *gca* effects for selected traits under heat stress

Characters	MPS 1 (HGA)				MPS 2 (HGB)			
	Females		Males		Females		Males	
Days to 50% anthesis	ZL19300	-1.02*	ZL1840	-1.62	ZL19492	-2.08**	VL1010996	-1.18
	ZL19729	-1.22**	ZL18129	-0.26	ZL19507	-1.27*	CAL1733	-0.02
	ZL19337	-0.77	ZL19290	0.05	ZL19602	-0.97*	ZL155186	0.03
Days to 50% silking	ZL19300	-1.05*	ZL1840	-1.75	ZL19492	-2.44**	VL1010996	-1.19
	ZL19337	-1.07*	ZL18129	-0.34	ZL19483	-1.55**	CAL1733	-0.08
	ZL19729	-1.52**	ZL19290	0.12	ZL19507	-1.27*	ZL155186	0.11
Plant height	ZL19641	14.52**	ZL18129	4.79	ZL19524	7.36**	CAL1733	10.61
	ZL19897	9.42**	ZL1840	4.58	ZL19820	7.07**	ZL1861	1.95
	ZL19731	7.93**	ZL19290	0.24	ZL19753	7.00*	ZL155542	0.76
Ear height	ZL19309	-7.32**	ZL11959	-1.49	ZL19483	-9.48**	ZL155186	-10.07
	ZL19337	-4.61**	CAL14113	-1.20	ZL19630	-8.51**	VL1010996	-3.32
	ZL19299	-3.19*	ZL19290	-0.29	ZL19479	-7.60**	ZL1861	2.95
Grain yield	ZL19357	0.17	CAL14113	0.03	ZL19534	0.25	CAL1733	0.16
	ZL19304	0.15	ZL18129	0.03	ZL19572	0.25	ZL155542	0.05
	-	-	-	-	ZL19611	0.23	ZL1861	-0.02
Ear position	-	-	-	-	ZL19479	-0.03**	ZL155186	-0.03
	-	-	-	-	ZL19534	-0.02**	VL1010996	-0.01
	-	-	-	-	ZL19572	-0.02*	ZL1861	0.01

*, ** significant at 5 % and 1 % level of probability, respectively.

Table 4 and 5: Top three hybrids that exhibited desirable *sca* effects for selected traits in MPS 1 (HGA) and MPS 2 (HGB)

Characters	MPS 1 (HGA)				MPS 2 (HGB)			
	Parents	Hybrids	<i>sca</i> effect	Mean performance	Parents	Hybrids	<i>sca</i> effect	Mean performance
Days to 50% silking (d)	ZL19656 x ZL19290	ZH2063	-0.44	61.48	ZL19456 x CAL1733	ZH20158	-0.01	60.61
	ZL19666 x ZL1840	ZH2070	-0.39	61.95	ZL19507 x CAL1733	ZH20161	-0.01	61.25
	ZL19362 x ZL1840	ZH2025	-0.39	62.55	ZL19611 x ZL155186	ZH20199	-0.01	61.77
Plant height (cm)	ZL19428 x ZL1840	ZH2050	6.25	154.99	ZL19791x ZL155542	ZH20251	3.66	162.60
	ZL19641 x ZL18129	ZH2073	3.59	151.02	ZL19753 x ZL1861	ZH20216	3.32	142.91
	ZL19731 x ZL11959	ZH2089	3.40	157.96	ZL19939 x VL1010996	ZH20275	3.19	166.70
Ear height (cm)	ZL19309 x CAL14113	ZH20105	-2.56	75.22	ZL19939 x CAL1733	ZH20276	-1.96	77.09
	ZL19361 x CAL14135	ZH2021	-2.43	67.64	ZL19991 x CAL1733	ZH20283	-1.40	91.83
	ZL19321 x ZL18129	ZH20112	-2.32	77.55	ZL19630 x CAL1733	ZH20208	-1.16	83.88
Grain yield (t ha ⁻¹)	ZL19304 x CAL14113	ZH2010	0.69	4.70	ZL19572 x ZL155542	ZH20183	0.35	4.30
	ZL19424 x ZL1840	ZH2045	0.48	4.85	ZL19596 x CAL1733	ZH20188	0.32	4.68
	ZL19361 x ZL18129	ZH2019	0.36	4.76	ZL19619 x CAL1733	ZH20204	0.30	4.41
Days to 50% anthesis (d)	ZL19656 x ZL19290	ZH2063	-0.44	59.01	-	-	-	-
	ZL19304 x CAL14113	ZH2010	-0.43	59.60	-	-	-	-
	ZL19357 x ZL18129	ZH20134	-0.42	58.91	-	-	-	-