

GENETIC POTENTIAL AND HERITABILITY STUDIES FOR SOME POLYGENIC TRAITS IN COTTON (*GOSSYPIUM HIRSUTUM* L.)

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Abstract

The research work comprising genetic potential and heritability in a 6 × 6 F₁ diallel cross of upland cotton was conducted during 2008 and 2009 at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Agricultural University, Peshawar, Pakistan. The parental cultivars used in the diallel crosses were CIM-473, CIM-496, CIM-499, CIM-506, CIM-554 and CIM-707. Genotypes manifested significant variations for plant height, monopodia plant⁻¹, sympodia plant⁻¹, bolls sympodia⁻¹, bolls plant⁻¹ and seed cotton yield plant⁻¹. On average, the F₁ hybrids manifested significant increase over parents for plant height (11.5%), sympodia plant⁻¹ (6.34%), bolls sympodia⁻¹ (4.83%), bolls plant⁻¹ (9.95%) and seed cotton yield plant⁻¹ (26.07%). Broad sense heritability was high with expected response to selection being for plant height (0.81 & 17.85 cm), monopodia plant⁻¹ (0.95 & 0.49), sympodia plant⁻¹ (0.92 & 4.00), bolls sympodia⁻¹ (0.90 & 0.74), bolls plant⁻¹ (0.90 & 9.45) and seed cotton yield plant⁻¹ (0.76 and 38.84 g), respectively. Seed cotton yield exhibited significant positive correlation with all traits except monopodia plant⁻¹. Parental cultivars CIM-506 and CIM-554 performed better in their specific cross combinations and revealed reasonable mean performance. The F₁ hybrids CIM-506 × CIM-554, CIM-473 × CIM-554, CIM-554 × CIM-506 and CIM-554 × CIM-707 manifested best genetic potential for majority of the traits. Results also revealed that the above four F₁ hybrids have the potential to be used for hybrid cotton production and can also be studied in segregating generations for further improvement and stability in their genetic potential for seed cotton yield and its components.

Introduction

Worldwide cotton (*Gossypium hirsutum* L.) is a major fiber crop and sixth largest source of vegetable oil in the world (Alishah *et al.*, 2008). Cotton contributing about 2% to GDP and 8.2% of value added in Agriculture and has leading role of around 70% share in edible oil industry of Pakistan (Khan, 2003). In this context, awareness among growers, millers and exporters is must for improving and maintaining cotton standards to compete in the international market (Khan *et al.*, 2009b & 2009c). Our yields are still very low and stagnant for the last several years as compared to other cotton growing countries. Factors responsible for the stagnant cotton production includes excessive rains at sowing time, high temperature and its fluctuations at the flowering stage, late wheat harvesting resulting a decline of area planted to cotton, incidence of cotton leaf curl virus (CLCuV) and lack of CLCuV resistant varieties, pest attack and improper production technology in the major cotton growing areas.

Heritability and genetic potential studies of different cultivars in form of their expression for different morpho-yield traits are earnestly needed for selection of parental lines for breeding programme (Ahmad, 2010; Khan *et al.*, 2010; Batool *et al.*, 2010; Batool, 2011). The yield is highly complex character and is directly influenced by the different morpho-yield traits. A thorough knowledge about the nature and genetic potential of different genotypes, inheritance pattern of different traits and extent of relationship and correlation of yield with various agronomic characters is crucial for breeder to tackle the problem and increase the yield successfully (Ahmad *et al.*, 2008; Makhdoom *et al.*, 2010; Makhdoom, 2011).

Cotton stability and adaptability have been studied and observed varied values for different morphological and yield related traits (Suinaga *et al.*, 2006; Taohua & Haipeng, 2006; Khan *et al.*, 2007; Meena *et al.*, 2007). Genetic variability and positive correlation were observed for yield traits in *G. hirsutum* (Khan *et al.*, 1999; Iqbal *et al.*, 2003; Wang *et al.*, 2004; Khan *et al.*, 2010; Makhdoom *et al.*, 2010; Makhdoom, 2011). Overall performance of a genotype may vary due to changes in environment and the higher the heritability, the simpler the selection process and greater the response to selection (Larik *et al.*, 1997 & 2000; Soomro *et al.*, 2008). Substantial genetic variances and high heritability estimates implied that characters could be improved through selection from segregating

populations (Baloch, 2004; Khan *et al.*, 2000; Khan *et al.*, 2009b; Batool *et al.*, 2010; Batool, 2011). Heritability estimates were generally found to be high in intraspecific crosses of *G. hirsutum* comparative to *G. barbadense* crosses except for days to flowering and lint % (Esmail, 2007).

The success of cotton breeding programme is primarily based on the choice and use of promising parental lines for hybridization, followed by selection for favorable gene combinations. Consequently, in plant breeding, the identification and use of genotypes with better genetic potential is a continuous pre-requisite for synthesis of physiologically efficient and genetically superior genotypes showing promise for increased production on per unit area under a given set of environments. The economic significance of hybrid cotton cultivation, and the importance of selected hybrids which have lower inbreeding depression and superior performance than well-adapted cultivars mandated a research project to evaluate the manifestation of genetic potential and heritability in a 6 × 6 F₁ diallel cross for different morpho-yield traits in upland cotton.

Materials and Methods

Breeding material and experimental procedure: The research work comprising genetic potential in 6 × 6 F₁ diallel hybrids and their parents and heritability in different traits of *Gossypium hirsutum* L., during 2008-2009 at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Agricultural University, Peshawar-Pakistan. Six diverse genotypes (CIM-473, CIM-496, CIM-499, CIM-506, CIM-554 and CIM-707) of upland cotton varying in pedigree, year of release, and morpho-yield traits, were hand sown during May, 2008 and were crossed in a complete diallel fashion. During May, 2009, the parents and 30 F₁s were also hand sown in a randomized complete block (RCB) design. Parents and F₁s were planted in a single row measuring six meter with four replications. The row and plant spacings were 75 and 30 cm, respectively. Thinning was performed after 15 to 20 days when the plant height reached up to 15 to 20 cm to ensure single plant per hill. Recommended cultural practices were carried out and the crop was grown under uniform field conditions to minimize environmental variations to the maximum possible extent. Picking was made during the month of November on individual plant basis.

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Traits measurement and statistical analyses: Data was recorded on individual plant basis on plant height, monopodia plant⁻¹, sympodia plant⁻¹, bolls sympodia⁻¹, bolls plant⁻¹ and seed cotton yield plant⁻¹. All the data were subjected to analysis of variance (ANOVA) technique according to Steel & Torrie (1980) to test the null hypothesis of no differences between various F₁ populations and their parental line means. The least significant difference (LSD) test was also used for means separation and comparison after significance. Heritability (broad sense) was calculated according to Singh & Chaudhary (1985). The simple correlation coefficient (r) of seed cotton yield with other yield components was also worked out according to Kwon & Torrie (1964).

Results and Discussion

According to analysis of variance (Table 1), the mean values of 30 F₁ diallel hybrids and their six parental cultivars manifested highly significant differences for plant height, monopodia per plant, sympodia per plant, bolls per sympodia, bolls per plant and seed cotton yield per plant. Results revealed that there are significant variations in the genotypes for majority of the traits and have room for further improvement also. The trait-wise results are given as under.

Plant height: Plant height varied from 75.84 to 119.8 cm among the parental cultivars, while 81.69 to 143.90 cm in their F₁ hybrids (Fig. 1). The highest plant height (143.90 cm) was observed in cross CIM-473 × CIM-554; however, it was found statistically at par with 10 other F₁ hybrids ranged from 107.00 to 136.80 cm. CIM-499 revealed minimum plant height (75.84 cm) and was found at par also with three parents and 15 F₁ hybrids ranged from 81.69 to 99.65 cm. Broad sense (bs) heritability and expected response to selection values for said trait were 0.81 and 17.85 cm, respectively (Table 2). The correlation of plant height was positively significant ($r = 0.563$) with seed cotton yield per plant (Table 3).

Plant height is one of the important traits and has vital role in managing the seed cotton yield. Taller parents and hybrids showed medium to high number of bolls plant⁻¹. Results revealed that plant height has some association with bolls plant⁻¹. It was also noticed that bolls plant⁻¹ does not entirely depend on plant height, but plant height contribution cannot be ignored. In mean performance of F₁ hybrids, 11.5% increase over parents was observed. High broad sense heritability with expected response to selection also authenticated that the genetic variance play vital role in inheritance of the said trait. Khan *et al.*, (2009a & 2010) observed that genetic variances were greater than the environmental variances for majority of the traits with high heritability and genetic gain. Plant height was significantly positive correlated with seed cotton yield. Mustafa *et al.*, (2007) noticed that plant height, bolls per plant and ginning outturn were the most important components in determining lint yield. Mostly breeders are interested in short stature cotton plants for easy picking and to skip the lodging threat. However, plant height was found positively correlated with seed cotton yield, if lodging didn't occur (Khan *et al.*, 2003). Plant height was positively correlated with seed cotton yield and bolls per plant in upland cotton genotypes (Arshad *et al.*, 1993). Tyagi (1994) also observed positive correlation between plant height and seed cotton yield and their studies further revealed that characters such as plant height contributed 70% of total variability for seed cotton yield.

Monopodia plant⁻¹: Monopodia per plant varied from 0.38 to 1.03 among the parental genotypes while 0.22 to 1.59 in their F₁ hybrids (Fig. 2). The lowest monopodia per plant were recorded in CIM-496 × CIM-499 (0.22), which was also found

statistically equal with two parental cultivars and 11 F₁ hybrids ranged from 0.31 to 0.67. The hybrid CIM-506 × CIM-499 showed maximum monopodia (1.59) and was found at par with seven other F₁ genotypes ranged from 1.18 to 1.40. Monopodia per plant were mostly found negatively correlated with seed cotton yield; therefore the breeders are interested in less or no monopodia. Heritability (bs) and expected response to selection values for the monopodia were 0.95 and 0.49, respectively (Table 2) and the correlation with seed cotton yield per plant was negative (Table 3). Greater genetic variability with desirable significant decrease in monopodia was also observed in F₁ diallel hybrids as compared to their parental cultivars (Khan *et al.*, 1991, 2000; Ahmad *et al.*, 2008).

Monopodia, the vegetative branches were found negatively correlated with yield. Results revealed that if the number of monopodia increased the plants become bushy which ultimately decrease the flowering and boll bearing and eventually the seed cotton yield also decreased. However, Tariq *et al.*, (1992) derived positive correlation of seed cotton yield with six yield components including monopodia per plant in *G. hirsutum*. Mandloi *et al.*, (1996) concluded genotype × environmental interaction and observed significant differences for monopodia. Murthy (1999) worked out genotypic correlation and concluded that monopodia have positive correlation with bolls per plant. Plant height, monopodia and bolls per plant were observed to be significantly correlated with seed cotton yield (Hussain *et al.*, 2000). However, it is mentioned in most of the literature that monopodia, GOT and staple length had negative association with yield. The contradictions of findings with literature might be due different breeding material used under varied environments.

Sympodia plant⁻¹: Sympodia per plant varied from 11.09 to 18.51 among the cultivars, while 12.00 to 24.55 in F₁ cross combinations (Fig. 3). The maximum sympodia revealed by F₁ hybrid CIM-506 × CIM-554 (24.55). However, it was also found at par with 10 other F₁ hybrids with range of 16.80 to 23.41. The lowest sympodia per plant were shown by cultivar CIM-499, and were found at par with six other genotypes ranged from 12.03 to 13.03. All other genotypes showed medium values for fruiting branches per plant. Sympodia per plant were having direct relationship with bolls per plant seed cotton yield. The values for heritability (bs) and expected response to selection for sympodia per plant were 0.92 and 4.00, respectively (Table 2) and has significant positive correlation ($r = 0.712$) with seed cotton yield per plant (Table 3).

Sympodia, the fruiting branches has important role in managing yield through bolls per plant. Overall 6.34% increase in sympodia was noted in F₁ hybrids as compared to their parents. Results also revealed high heritability with expected genetic gain and positive correlation of sympodia with seed cotton yield. Mustafa *et al.*, (2007) observed that lint yield had a significant positive correlation with sympodial branches, bolls per plant and plant height. Higher magnitudes of genetic variability and heritability with selection response were observed for the said trait (Khan *et al.*, 1991, 1999, 2000 and 2009a). Hussain *et al.*, (2000) determined genetic correlation using 56 F₂ families and their eight parents of *G. hirsutum*. Plant height also showed positive and significant relationship with sympodial branches. Therefore, they suggested that plant height, sympodial branches and ginning outturn may be considered as selection criteria for improvement in seed cotton yield and fiber quality traits. Memon *et al.*, (2002) observed highly significant positive correlation between sympodia and seed cotton yield of upland cultivars. Greater genetic variability and significant positive correlation was observed between fruiting branches and seed cotton yield (Arshad *et al.*, 1993; Murthy, 1999; Djaboutou *et al.*, 2005).

Table 1. Mean squares and CV for different traits in a 6 × 6 F₁ diallel cross of upland cotton.

Parameters	Mean squares		CV%
	Genotypes	Error	
Plant height	733.70**	135.15	11.37
Monopodia plant ⁻¹	0.42**	0.02	17.90
Sympodia plant ⁻¹	28.79**	2.14	9.18
Bolls sympodia ⁻¹	1.06**	0.10	14.85
Bolls plant ⁻¹	139.56**	15.73	14.86
Seed cotton yield plant ⁻¹	3009.42**	701.61	26.13

** Significant at $p \leq 0.01$, CV = Coefficient of variation

Table 2. Heritability (bs) and expected response to selection (Re) for various traits in a 6 × 6 F₁ diallel cross of upland cotton.

Parameters	Heritability (bs)	Re
Plant height	0.81	17.85 cm
Monopodia plant ⁻¹	0.95	0.49 #
Sympodia plant ⁻¹	0.92	4.00 #
Bolls sympodia ⁻¹	0.90	0.74 #
Bolls plant ⁻¹	0.88	9.25 #
Seed cotton yield plant ⁻¹	0.76	38.84 g

Table 3. Correlation of seed cotton yield with other traits in a 6 × 6 F₁ diallel cross of upland cotton.

Parameters	Correlation with seed cotton yield	Std. Error
Plant height	0.56**	0.19
Monopodia plant ⁻¹	-0.015 ^{NS}	11.46
Sympodia plant ⁻¹	0.71**	0.95
Bolls sympodia ⁻¹	0.46**	6.14
Bolls plant ⁻¹	0.602**	0.43

** = Highly significant, N.S. = Non-significant

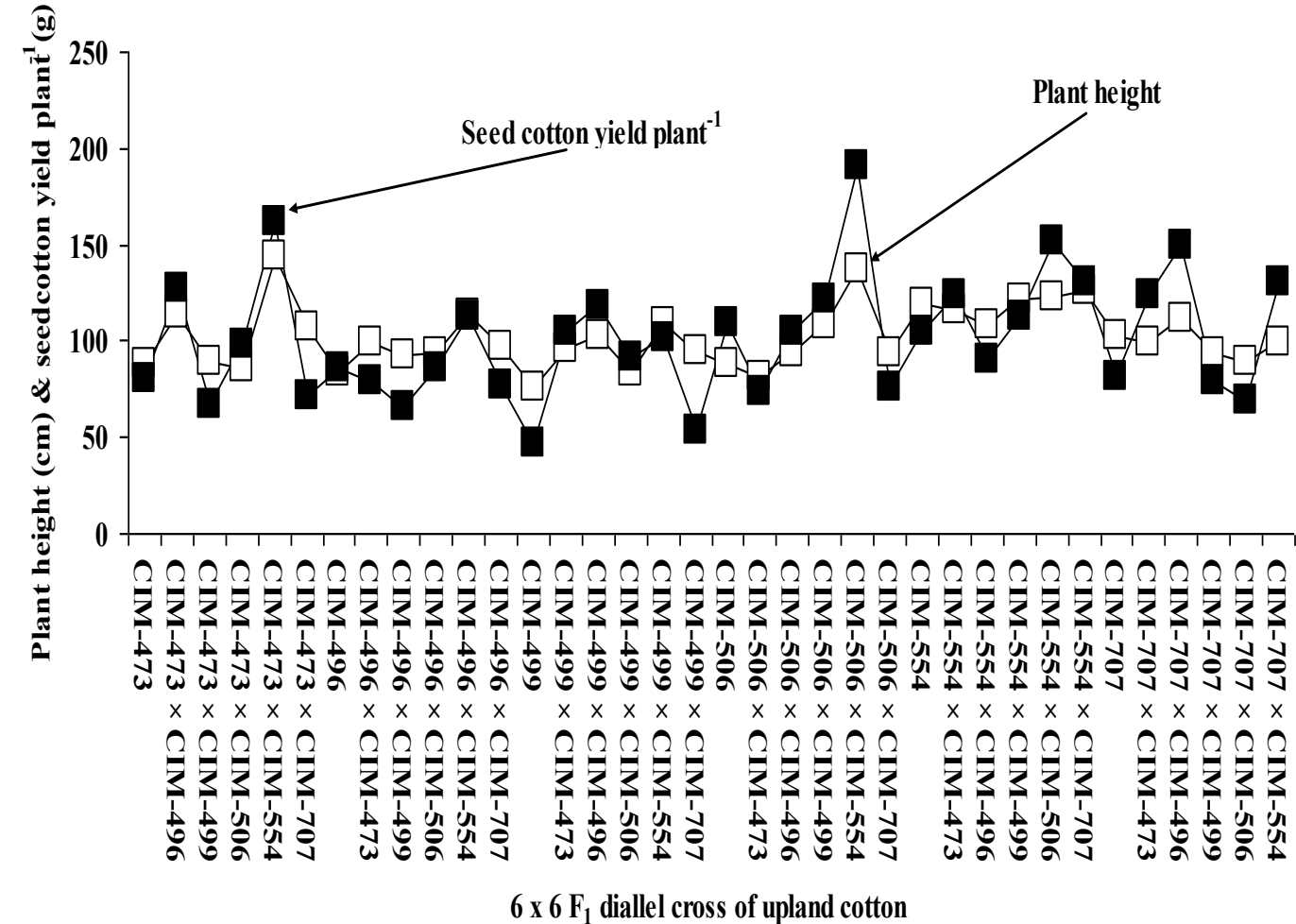


Fig. 1. Mean performance for seed cotton yield plant⁻¹ and plant height in a 6 × 6 F₁ diallel cross of upland cotton.

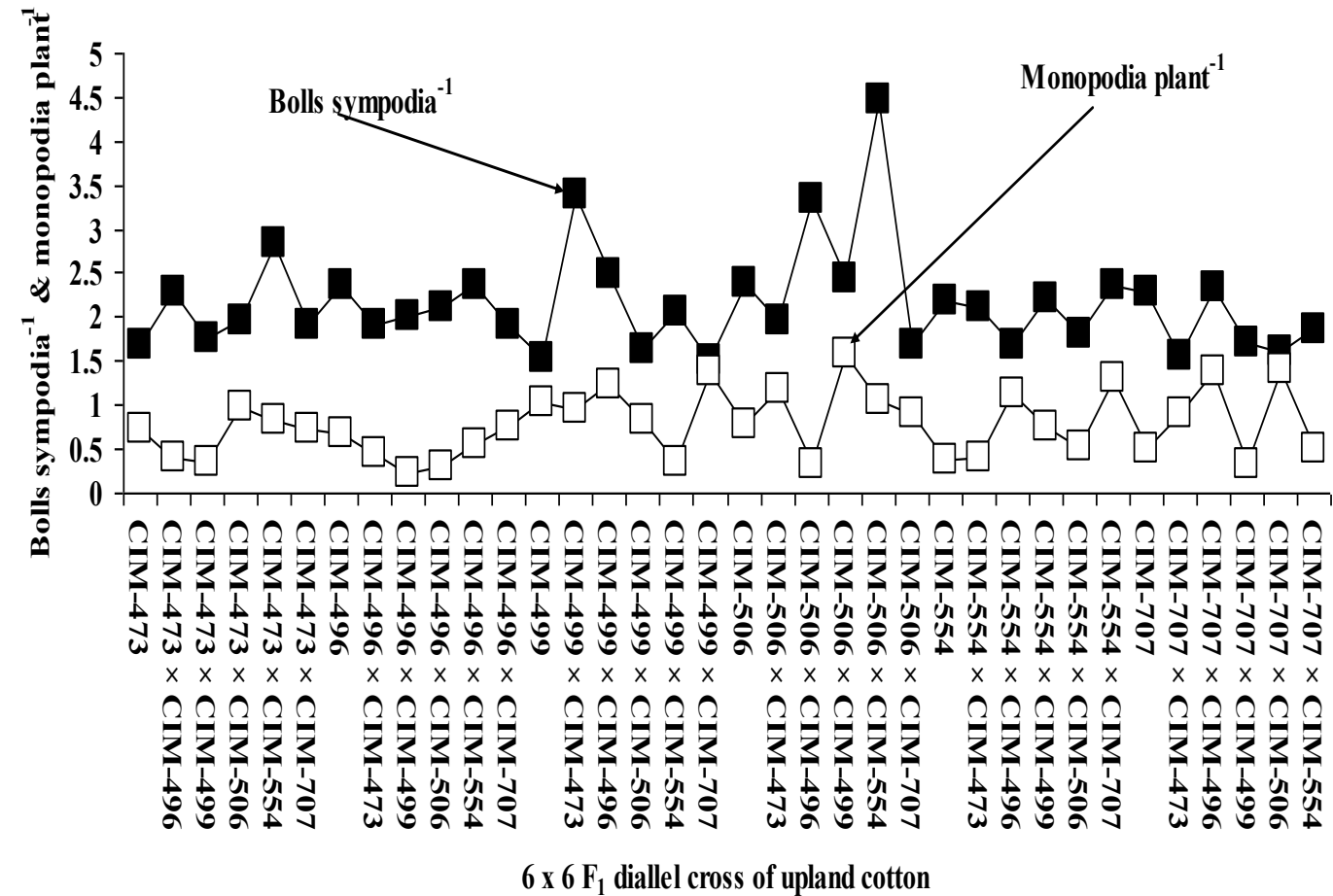


Fig. 2. Mean performance for bolls sympodia⁻¹ and monopodia plant⁻¹ in a 6 x 6 F₁ diallel cross of upland cotton.

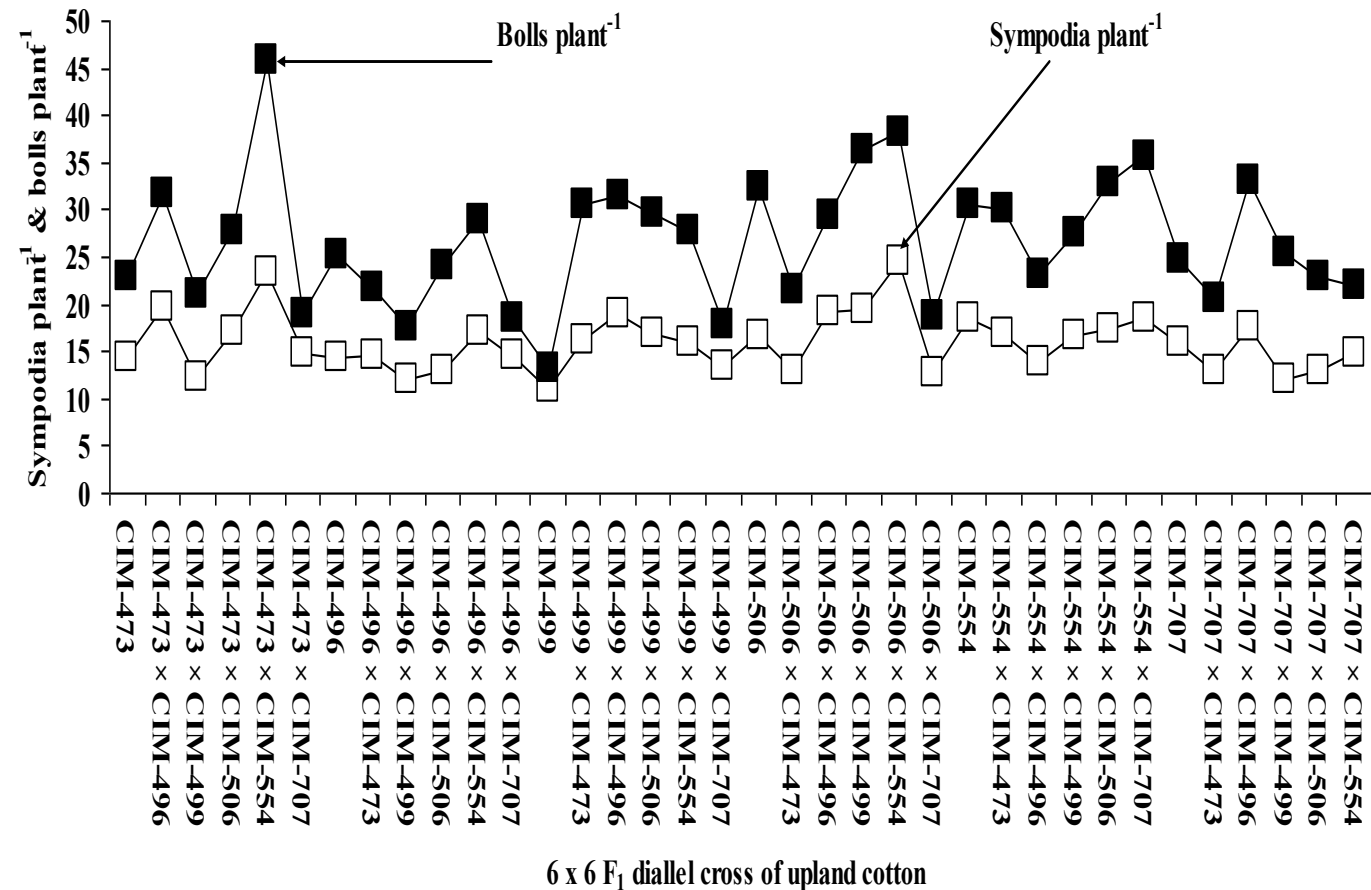


Fig. 3. Mean performance for bolls plant⁻¹ and sympodia plant⁻¹ in a 6 x 6 F₁ diallel cross of upland cotton.

Bolls sympodia⁻¹: Bolls per sympodia varied from 1.54 to 2.38 among the parent cultivars, while 1.52 to 4.48 in their F₁ diallel hybrids. Maximum bolls per sympodia were recorded in cross CIM-506 × CIM-554 (4.48) (Fig. 2). Four other F₁ cross combinations with range of 2.50 to 3.38 followed the said promising hybrid. The minimum bolls per sympodia were revealed by cross combinations CIM-499 × CIM-707 (1.52) and CIM-707 × CIM-506 (1.53) and were also found at par with three parental cultivars and 18 F₁ hybrids having range of 1.53 to 2.20. Other genotypes have medium number of bolls per sympodia. The estimates of heritability (bs) and expected genetic gain for boll per sympodia were 0.90 and 0.74, respectively (Table 2) and also has significant positive correlation ($r = 0.46$) with seed cotton yield per plant (Table 3).

Bolls per sympodia also play an important role in managing seed cotton yield and act as a major yield component and showed 4.83% increase in F₁ hybrids as compared to parents. Results exhibited that bolls per sympodia were found positively correlated with seed cotton yield, therefore, the cultivars having maximum bolls per sympodia also provided increased seed cotton yield. The heritability and expected response to selection also exhibited that bolls per sympodia were mostly administered by genetic variance and has span for further improvement. Tariq *et al.*, (1992) observed positive correlation between seed cotton yield and six other yield components including bolls per sympodia in *G. hirsutum* cultivars. Arshad *et al.*, (1993) and Baloch (2004) observed positive correlation among plant type characteristic like bolls per sympodia and seed cotton yield. Plant height showed positive and significant relationship with fruiting branches and that association may be considered as selection criteria to have indirect improvement in seed cotton yield (Hussain *et al.*, 2000).

Bolls plant⁻¹: Regarding the mean performance, the bolls per plant varied from 13.30 to 32.23 among the parent cultivars, while 17.55 to 45.83 in F₁ cross combinations (Fig. 3). Maximum bolls per plant revealed by cross CIM-473 × CIM-554 (45.83) and was also found statistically at par with three cross combinations CIM-506 × CIM-554 (38.18), CIM-506 × CIM-499 (36.43) and CIM-554 × CIM-707 (35.67). The minimum bolls per plant were exhibited by parental genotype CIM-499 (13.30) and were closely followed by one parent and 10 F₁ genotypes (17.55 to 22.96). The remaining genotypes showed medium values for bolls per plant. The heritability (bs) and genetic gain values for bolls per plant were 0.88 and 9.25, respectively (Table 2) and has significant positive association ($r = 0.602$) with seed cotton yield (Table 3).

Bolls per plant is a major yield component and has extra ordinary role in supervision of seed cotton yield. By comparing with parent cultivars, 9.95% enhancement for bolls per plant was noticed in F₁ hybrids. Greater genetic variability and significant increase in bolls per plant was also noticed in F₁ hybrids as compared to their parental cultivars and positive correlation between bolls and seed cotton yield (Desalegn *et al.*, 2009; Khan *et al.*, 1999, 2000 & 2007). Correlation analysis showed that bolls per plant had the closest relation with lint yield. Moreover, there were significantly positive correlations among bolls per plant, boll weight and lint %, which indicated that these three yield traits, can be simultaneously improved. High positive and significant correlation was observed between bolls plant⁻¹ and seed cotton yield, along with heritability and expected response to selection. Correlations of bolls per plant and boll weight with seed cotton yield were significantly positive and had profound direct positive influence on yield (Azhar *et al.*, 1997). Alam & Islam (1991) and Desalegn *et al.*, (2009) derived that high lint %, more bolls per plant and a small seed size were positively

correlated to high lint yield. High heritability and genetic gain were recorded for bolls sympodia⁻¹, bolls plant⁻¹ and seed cotton yield (Elsiddig *et al.*, 2007; Khan *et al.*, 2009a). This type of correlation is desirable by cotton breeders and little genetic gain in bolls per plant, boll weight and bolls per sympodia will be a great accomplishment.

Seed cotton yield plant⁻¹: Seed cotton yield per plant ranged from 46.77 to 109.56 g among the parental cultivars, while 53.68 to 190.88 g in F₁ hybrids (Fig. 1). The maximum seed cotton yield per plant (190.88 g) was owned by F₁ hybrid CIM-506 × CIM-554. It was also found statistically at par with three F₁ cross combination i.e., CIM-473 × CIM-554 (162.12 g), CIM-554 × CIM-506 (151.29 g) and CIM-707 × CIM-496 (149.12 g). The lowest seed cotton yield was noted in parent cultivar CIM-499 (46.77 g) and F₁ hybrid CIM-499 × CIM-707 (53.68 g). Other genotypes showed medium values for seed cotton yield per plant. The broad sense heritability and expected genetic advance for seed cotton yield were 0.76 and 38.84 g, respectively (Table 2). Khan *et al.*, (1999 & 2000) also observed greater genetic variability and significant increase in seed cotton yield in F₁ hybrids as compared to their parental cultivars.

Seed cotton yield is an ultimate goal in growing cotton besides lint and overall 26.07% increase was noted in F₁ hybrids as compared to parents. Results revealed that heritability was high with desired expected response to selection and has positive correlation with majority of the yield components. It further authenticated that there is an opportunity for further improvement in seed cotton yield. Alam & Islam (1991), Baloch (2004) and Khan *et al.*, (2007) observed that seed cotton yield exhibited positive and significant genotypic and phenotypic correlations with bolls per plant and boll weight. Path coefficient analysis revealed that bolls per plant had the maximum direct positive effect on seed cotton yield followed by boll weight. Selection for these two characters seemed to be most effective in the present materials. Genetic correlation of bolls per plant and boll weight with seed cotton yield was significantly positive (Azhar *et al.*, 1997). Direct selection for greater number of big bolls will increase seed cotton yield. Bolls per plant and lint % had significant positive relationship with seed cotton yield (Hussain *et al.*, 2000). Genetic variability, heritability, genetic advance and correlation of seed cotton yield at both phenotypic and genotypic levels was found significantly positive with bolls per plant and lint yield (Elsiddig *et al.*, 2007; Desalegn *et al.*, 2009; Khan *et al.*, 2009a & 2009b).

Conclusion

The parental cultivars CIM-506 and CIM-554 performed better in their specific cross combinations (CIM-506 × CIM-554, CIM-473 × CIM-554, CIM-554 × CIM-506 and CIM-554 × CIM-707) by crossing with each other or as paternal/maternal parent with other parental cultivars. These F₁ hybrids manifested best genetic potential and highest genetic variability for majority of the traits which can be used for hybrid cotton production and for selection in segregating generations for further improvement.

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