



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Evaluation of Soybean [*Glycine max* (L.) Merrill] Germplasm for Yield and Attributing Traits for Rabi Season in the Southern Indian Zone

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Abstract

The present study was undertaken to assess the genetic variability and character associations for seed yield and component characters in 481 soybean (*Glycine max*, L.) germplasm accessions and identification of lines suitable for Rabi season cultivation. These lines were raised in an augmented block design in four blocks with five replicated checks during 2018. The analysis of variance revealed the presence of sufficient genetic variability in the gene pool. High PCV and high GCV were recorded for grain yield plot per plant, number of pods per plant and plant height. High heritability coupled with high genetic advance were observed for grain yield, followed by pods per plant, 100-seed weight and plant height, indicating the predominance of additive gene action in controlling the trait. Correlation and regression analysis indicated a significant positive effect of pods per plant, branches per plant and plant height on grain yield. Genetic diversity analysis grouped all germplasm accessions into 4 clusters. PCA revealed the first two principal components to explain 62.84% of total variation, mostly contributed by grain yield, seed size and number of pods. The agronomical variability and its genetic nature revealed from this study may be useful in present and future soybean breeding programmes. The promising accessions identified from the present study will help in strengthening the breeding program.

Keywords: Correlation, Genetic variability, Germplasm diversity, Off-season, Soybean.

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Introduction

Soybean (*Glycine max* L. Merrill) is the world's most important seed legume, which contributes to about one-fourth of the global edible oil and about two-thirds of the world's protein concentrate for livestock feeding (Agarwal *et al.*, 2013). It is considered to be nature's highest yielding usable protein source of plant origin, as three times more usable protein per unit area than other important food grains, i.e., rice, wheat, or maize (Kumar, 2005). Soybean is widely used in the preparation of diversified food and food ingredients, including full-fat soy flour, milk, cheese, curd, ice cream, sprouted and roasted snacks, soy fortified bakery, soy protein concentrate, dietary fiber, single-cell protein, citric acid, margarine, etc. (Kumar, 2005). It also has a spectrum of industrial and pharmaceutical applications in the manufacturing of soap, cosmetics, crayons, resins, plastics, inks, solvents and clothing. The crop further improves soil fertility by fixing atmospheric nitrogen through symbiotic association with soil bacteria *Bradyrhizobium japonicum*. Owing to its diverse and quintessential utility, the soybean has been christened as 'miracle bean' (Orf, 2010).

Soybean is a leading oilseed crop, accounting for the production of 358.77 million metric tons in 2018–19 (USDA, 2019). In India, it grows annually as rain rain-fed crop with a production

of 11.50 million metric tons in 2018–19 (USDA, 2019). In India, soybean growing regions have been divided into six zones, i.e., Central, Northern plain, Northern Hills, Eastern Zone, North eastern Hill Zone and Southern Zones. However, it is mainly grown in the Central Zone and the Southern Zone (AICRP 2019). Bangalore location in the Southern Zone is chosen to carry out the present experiment because of its congenial environment throughout the year for growing soybean germplasm multiplication and characterization. The Bangalore location is also being utilized in offseason generation advancement of segregation breeding material.

Remarkable progress made in plant genetic resource management in recent years has resulted in the collection of a huge set of plant germplasm that hinders the very purpose for which they exist (Odong et al., 2013). In India, ICAR- Indian Institute of Soybean Research, made an effort to bring core collection from USDA and more than 2500 accessions are being brought to Indian through ICAR-NBGR, New Delhi (ICAR-IISR Annual Report 2019). Germplasm accessions collected from different states of India and introduced from overseas have been conserved in the national gene bank under long-term storage at NBGR, New Delhi and medium-term storage (MTS) at ICAR-IISR, Indore. Soybean germplasm has been evaluated and characterized for different traits by in large experiments at Indore location (Central Zone) (Agarwal and Bhawsar 2013; Gireesh et al., 2015; Nataraj et al., 2020). However, we need to test the germplasm expression for various traits at Bengaluru station (Southern Zone), as no single report about germplasm evaluation.

Evaluation of germplasm at a particular location helps to identify the adapted genotypes with desired traits. The abundance of genetic diversity present in any genetic material indicates the scope for further improvement of the particular crop (Baig et al., 2018). The knowledge of genetic variability existing within the different parameters associated with yield is an important criterion for yield enhancement, but in highly self-pollinated crops like soybean, where natural variation results limited scope for selection opportunity (Jain et al., 2015). Similarly, understanding the nature of associations between yield and its attributes and their direct and indirect contributions to seed yield is necessary for efficient selection (Kumar et al., 2018). Therefore, the present study was carried out to evaluate the nature and magnitude of genetic diversity available in the soybean gene pool and find out associations between seed yield and its component characters in soybean germplasm accessions, which would help in the selection of efficient genotypes for further utilization in the breeding programme.

Materials and Methods

Plant material

The germplasm material used in this study comprised 481 Soybean (*Glycine max* (L.) Merrill) accessions collected and

conserved between 1986-2018 at an active germplasm site (ICAR-IISR, Indore) from different soybean growing states of India and different countries of the world, which were imported between 1970-2018 (Supplementary Table S1). Five morphological data on the germplasm accessions were recorded in the experimental fields at AICRP center of Soybean, UAS, GKVK, Bengaluru, during December 2018-March 2019. This experimental site is located at 12° 51' 17.75" N and 77° 35' 40.42" E and an elevation of 926.59 m above sea level. The soil of the experimental farm is sandy loam inclined more towards a skeletal nature, dry, shallow and moderately rich in organic matter. Average rainfall is 32.1 mm during the months from December to March. Therefore, the plants were given drip irrigation as and when required. Mean minimum and maximum temperature ranges between 13.1- and 33.7°C. The soybean crop was sown in one row of 4 m length with 45 cm row-to-row spacing and harvested. Standard cultivation practices recommended for the Southern zone were followed (ICAR-IISR, 2019). The trial was conducted in an Augmented Block Design (ABD) along with five checks, viz. DSb 21, JS 335, JS 93-05, KBS 23 and RKS 18 to estimate phenotype variation attributing to genetic factors with respect to the germplasm panel studied and five checks were repeated once in each block.

Plant characters and data observations

The data on six quantitative traits on these 476 germplasm accessions and five checks were recorded. Days to 50% flowering, plant height (cm), number of branches, number of pods, grain yield (g)/plot and 100 seed weight (g) were recorded using standard methods (IBPGR, 1984). Each genotype, at its R8 stage, was harvested and grain yield per plot was recorded. Three random samples of a hundred seeds of respective accession were taken for weighing to record the 100 seed weight. Plot yield (kg) was converted into yield per hectare (q/ha) using the formula (plot yield/1.8) ×10,000.

Statistical analysis

Adjusted means for all six traits under consideration of 476 accessions were estimated by using the R package 'augmented RCBD' (Aravind et al., 2018). Before undertaking statistical analysis on the basis of adjusted mean values, homogeneity of variance was tested as per Levene (1960). Frequency distribution graphs were obtained for the traits and the traits were further analysed for various descriptive statistical parameters, viz., mean, range, variance, etc., by using the R package 'augmentedRCBD'. Correlation analysis was performed by using the R function cor(), and linear regression analysis was performed using the R function lm(). Correlation plots were obtained by using the R packages 'corrplot' (Wei and Simko, 2017) and PCA was performed by using the R packages 'corrplot' (Wei and Simko, 2017), 'factoextra' (Kassambara and Mundt, 2017) and 'FactoMineR'

(Lê et al., 2008). The K-means cluster analysis was carried out R package 'factoextra' (Kassambara and Mundt, 2017).

Results

Variability and genetic parameters

The analysis of variance illustrated the existence of a remarkable amount of genetic variability among the soybean germplasm accessions for yield and yield-related parameters under study (Table 1). Analysis of variance for an augmented randomized block design revealed that mean squares of all six traits were significant for different sources of variations except mean squares due to blocks, ignoring the treatments & due to genotypes vs. checks for the trait of number of branches per plant. The mean, range, variance, coefficient of variance, heritability and genetic advance for all six agro-morphological characters are presented in Table 2. Among the traits, grain yield, 100-seed weight and number of pods per plant were found to have more variations than other traits. The mean value of grain yield per plot was recorded as 419.18 g with a range of 47.1 g (EC 100804) - 951.5 g (Shilajeet). The 100 seed weight ranged from 6.7 g (EC 172577) to 27.69 g (AGS 174) with an average value of 13.67 g. Grain yield per plot (41.03/39.38), plant height (37.82/36.28), number of pods per plant (32.28/29.81) and number of branches per plant (31.18/27.41) were found to have high PCV and GCV (Table 1). The heritability was highest for seed index (98.63%), days to 50% flowering (98.62%), grain yield (92.09%), and plant height (92.02%), and the lowest heritability was recorded for the number of branches (77.26%). Genetic advance as percent mean was recorded high for the traits viz., grain yield (77.95%), plant height (71.8%) and number of pods (56.81%), and it was lowest for days to 50% flowering (20.45%).

Frequency distribution of quantitative traits

Frequency distribution showed that around 10% of the accessions produced grain yield per plot of more than 650 g and around 20% of lines produced grain yield of 500 to 650 g/plot (data not shown). The number of pods also showed a large variation and 25% of the accessions were found to have

pods per plant in the range of 60 to 111. The trait 100-seed weight also showed a good amount of variability, where 30% of the lines produced 15 to 27 g seed. The frequency distribution of six quantitative traits is shown in Fig. 1.

Identification of promising accessions

Promising germplasm accessions were identified based on the best check values and critical difference (CD) value at the 5% level of significance. Accessions such as Shilajeet (951.5g) EC 481571(860.2 g), EC 550828 (852.8 g), EC 333924 (847.4 g), M 1059 (845.2 g), AGS 170 (829.6 g), MAUS-142 (825.2 g), EC 241650 (803.8 g), EC 251416 (792.6 g), EC 467282 (791.8 g) were found promising for grain yield per plot. Germplasm lines i.e. EC 291400 (111.1), EC 241778 (110.6), EC 550828 (106.1), EC 481571 (105.1) and EC 389164 (101.3) were found superior for number of pods per plant while genotypes EC 100804 (113.2 cm), NRC 2396 (113.1 cm), EC 390981 (113.0 cm), Bragg (111.7 cm) and EC 389164 (111.2 cm) found promising for good plant height. For high seed weight, accessions such as AGS 174, MACS 1034, EC 251432, EC 15553 and JSM245 were found promising among the germplasm accessions.

Correlation and regression

The correlation matrix showed significant positive correlation of grain yield with pods per plant (0.72), plant height (0.42), branches per plant (0.27) and days to 50% flowering (0.27); however, 100-seed weight showed a negative correlation (-0.09). 100-seed weight was found to be negatively correlated with all other yield-attributing traits. All traits except 100-seed weight were found to be positively correlated with each other. (Fig. 2). Simple linear regression analysis performed for grain yield versus other traits showed that pods per plant had the highest direct effect on 100-seed weight, followed by plant height and days to 50% flowering and branches per plant (data not presented).

Genetic diversity and principal component analysis

Multivariate analysis among the germplasm lines was performed using genetic divergence and principal component analyses. All the 481 germplasm accessions,

Table 1: Statistical parameters of genetic variability in gene pool under study

| Trait | Mean + SE | Variance | Variance | Range | PCV (%) | GCV (%) | Heritability | Genetic advance as % of mean |
|---------------------------|--------------|----------|----------|-------------|---------|---------|--------------|------------------------------|
| | | (P) | (G) | | | | | |
| Days to flowering | 54.03 ± 0.26 | 29.51 | 29.1 | 33.25–64.35 | 10.05 | 9.98 | 98.62 | 20.45 |
| No. of branches per plant | 4.08 ± 0.06 | 1.62 | 1.25 | 0.83–12.88 | 31.18 | 27.41 | 77.26 | 49.71 |
| Plant height (cm) | 55.5 ± 0.96 | 440.54 | 405.37 | 13–113.2 | 37.82 | 36.28 | 92.02 | 71.8 |
| No of pods per plot | 51.29 ± 0.75 | 274.04 | 233.8 | 10.42–111.1 | 32.28 | 29.81 | 85.31 | 56.81 |
| 100-seed weight (g) | 13.67 ± 0.14 | 9.42 | 9.29 | 6.7–27.6 | 22.45 | 22.29 | 98.63 | 45.68 |
| Grain yield per plot (g) | 419.18 ± 7.8 | 29583.2 | 27242.5 | 47.1–951.5 | 41.03 | 39.38 | 92.09 | 77.95 |

Table 2: Analysis of variance of six quantitative traits

| Source | DF | Grain yield per plot (g) | 100 seed weight (g) | No. of pods per plant | No. of branches per plant | Days to flowering | Plant height (cm) |
|------------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Block (ignoring Treatments) | 3 | 38788.7*** | 38.96*** | 692.63*** | 0.99 ^{ns} | 27.68*** | 426.55*** |
| Treatment (eliminating Blocks) | 480 | 29528.48*** | 9.24*** | 270.06*** | 1.6** | 40.4*** | 446.03*** |
| Treatment: Check | 4 | 15286.3** | 12.01*** | 367.65** | 0.55 ^{ns} | 98.18*** | 288.73** |
| Treatment: Test and Test vs. Check | 476 | 29648.16*** | 9.22*** | 269.24*** | 1.61** | 39.92*** | 447.35*** |
| Residuals | 12 | 2340.67 | 0.13 | 40.24 | 0.37 | 0.41 | 35.17 |

ns-P > 0.05; * - P <= 0.05; **-P <= 0.01; ***- P <= 0.001

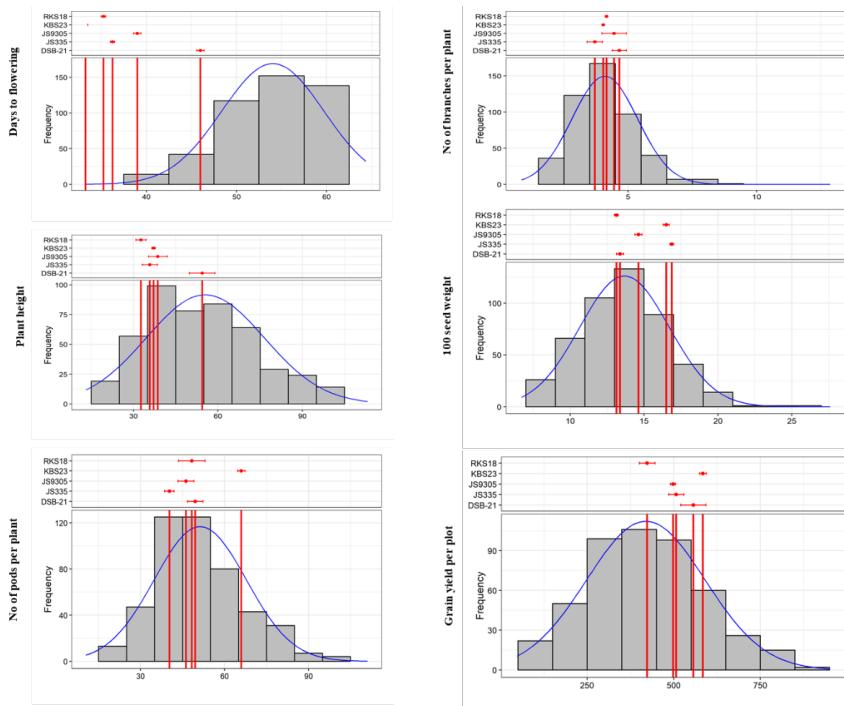


Fig. 1: Frequency distribution of traits under study

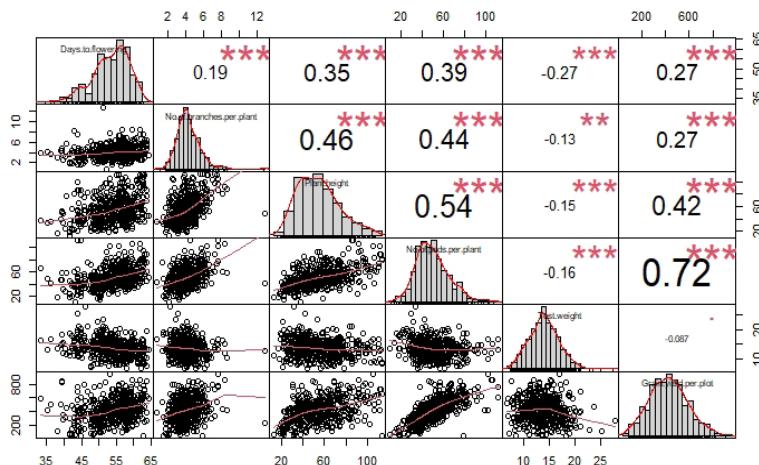


Fig. 2: Graphical depiction of correlation among the quantitative traits in germplasm accessions

Table 3: K-means clustering of genotypes under study

| Cluster | No of genotypes | Genotype code |
|-----------|-----------------|--|
| Cluster 1 | 79 | 3, 14, 18, 26, 27, 32, 45, 52, 59, 65, 67, 70, 75, 77, 85, 86, 88, 89, 102, 118, 122, 126, 130, 131, 145, 148, 149, 151, 156, 157, 158, 169, 176, 181, 182, 183, 185, 197, 199, 205, 207, 219, 220, 238, 242, 250, 251, 259, 264, 266, 267, 272, 274, 284, 291, 295, 296, 303, 328, 329, 357, 358, 381, 388, 392, 412, 416, 424, 444, 445, 446, 448, 450, 456, 464, 467, 473, 475 and 476 |
| Cluster 2 | 165 | 2, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 20, 28, 29, 34, 36, 39, 48, 49, 55, 56, 61, 62, 64, 68, 71, 7, 81, 83, 87, 98, 99, 101, 103, 107, 110, 112, 113, 116, 120, 134, 137, 138, 140, 154, 155, 159, 160, 162, 164, 165, 168, 172, 174, 177, 178, 180, 184, 187, 189, 196, 201, 202, 203, 206, 209, 212, 217, 221, 224, 227, 229, 232, 233, 236, 239, 240, 247, 249, 254, 255, 256, 257, 263, 268, 277, 280, 281, 288, 290, 299, 302, 304, 308, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 323, 326, 330, 331, 332, 333, 336, 337, 338, 340, 341, 343, 348, 353, 354, 355, 359, 360, 361, 362, 369, 373, 374, 375, 376, 383, 389, 391, 398, 399, 400, 402, 404, 408, 411, 413, 414, 418, 419, 423, 428, 429, 430, 431, 434, 436, 437, 439, 440, 441, 442, 449, 451, 452, 453, 454, 458, 460, 462, 463, 466, 470, C1, C2, C3, C4 and C5 |
| Cluster 3 | 73 | 8, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 31, 42, 46, 47, 51, 53, 57, 60, 74, 92, 93, 95, 100, 105, 106, 121, 135, 139, 142, 143, 163, 167, 179, 194, 195, 204, 211, 214, 215, 223, 228, 230, 243, 244, 245, 252, 265, 270, 271, 278, 289, 293, 294, 298, 312, 321, 335, 345, 347, 349, 386, 387, 390, 396, 405, 415, 421, 425, 426, 427, 455, 465 and 472 |
| Cluster 4 | 164 | 6, 7, 9, 13, 15, 16, 17, 30, 33, 35, 37, 38, 40, 41, 43, 44, 50, 54, 58, 63, 66, 69, 73, 76, 78, 79, 80, 82, 84, 91, 90, 96, 104, 108, 109, 111, 114, 115, 117, 119, 123, 124, 125, 127, 128, 129, 132, 133, 136, 141, 144, 146, 147, 152, 170, 171, 173, 175, 186, 190, 191, 192, 193, 198, 200, 210, 216, 218, 222, 225, 226, 234, 235, 237, 241, 246, 253, 258, 260, 261, 262, 269, 273, 276, 279, 282, 283, 285, 286, 287, 292, 297, 300, 301, 305, 306, 307, 310, 311, 313, 322, 324, 325, 327, 334, 342, 344, 346, 350, 351, 352, 356, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 370, 371, 372, 377, 378, 379, 380, 382, 384, 385, 393, 394, 395, 397, 401, 406, 407, 409, 410, 417, 420, 422, 432, 433, 435, 443, 447, 457, 459, 461, 471 and 474 |

including checks, were grouped into 4 clusters using k-means clustering. Cluster 1 (C1), cluster 2 (C2), cluster 3 (C3) and cluster 4 (C4) were found to have 79, 165, 73 and 164 accessions respectively (Table 3 and Fig. 3). The mean value of accessions grouped into each cluster (Supplementary Table S2) showed that accessions in C1 and C2 produced high grain yield per plot and pods per plant whereas cluster 3 was found to have the highest 100-seed weight. Plant height, number of branches and days to 50% flowering reported maximum mean in cluster 1, whereas minimum mean in cluster 3 (Table 4).

PCA revealed that all six quantitatively measured traits have been loaded on six components; however, a major portion of variance (~63%) in germplasm accessions is explained by the first two components with eigenvalue >1 (Table 5). The first component (PC1) accounted for 45.54% of variation largely through grain yield, number of pods and plant height, while PC2 contributed 17.30% through 100-seed weight and days to 50% flowering. PC3, PC4, PC5 and PC 6 contributed 13.56, 11.36, 8.10 and 4.14% of total variation, respectively. Biplotting of PC1 and PC2 indicated 100-seed weight (44.73%) contributed the highest to the first two principal components, followed by number of pods (19.35%) and grain yield (18.14%) (Figure 4).

Discussion

Soybeans are one of the most important oilseeds in the international market, being the fourth most produced and consumed crop worldwide (Gesteira et al., 2018). It has been studied and enhanced for most of its economically important traits, i.e., yield and attributing traits. Yield is

Table 4: Cluster means for different traits under study

| Cluster variables | C1 | C2 | C3 | C4 |
|-------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Days to flowering | 56.25 | 54.79 | 50.44 | 53.79 |
| Plant height | 72.7 | 56.07 | 43.31 | 52.05 |
| No. of branches | 4.639 | 4.195 | 3.695 | 3.87 |
| No. of pods | 69.97 | 56.99 | 34.05 | 44.21 |
| Seed index | 13.62 | 13.41 | 14.45 | 13.62 |
| Grain yield | 686.62 | 491.17 | 163.37 | 331.79 |

considered a complex trait, governed by many genes and the particular environment and their interaction. Development of adapted varieties for a particular location necessitates the deployment of well-adapted high-yielding genotypes in hybridization programmes. Characterization and evaluation of germplasm accessions is the most important activity of any plant gene bank. This is also a bottleneck between the genetic diversity conserved in a gene bank and its utilization in breeding programmes of a particular area. Therefore, most of the soybean breeding programmes are based on very few trait-specific parental lines, which have resulted in poor genetic gains and cause for the creation of a narrow genetic base in the released cultivar. Modern soybean varieties, which account for the major share of total soybean production in India, have been developed exploiting only a small spectrum of soybean variability. Therefore, the limited variability within the modern cultivars has become a restrictive factor for yield increase and increased incidence of many biotic and abiotic stresses. However, this study shows that the soybean (*Glycine max*) gene pool has a great amount

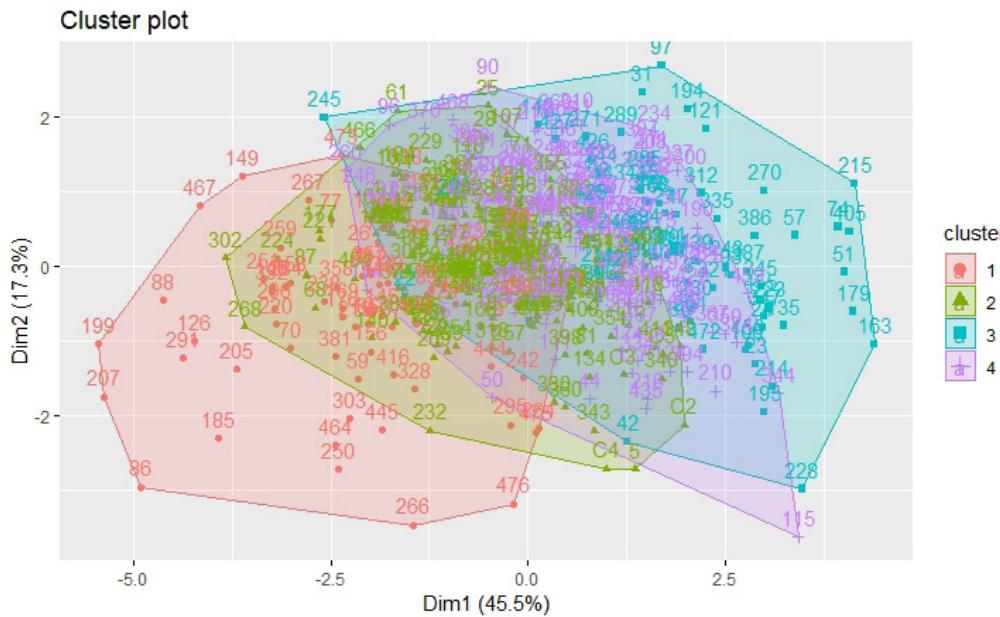


Fig. 3: Biplot of germplasm accessions into different clusters

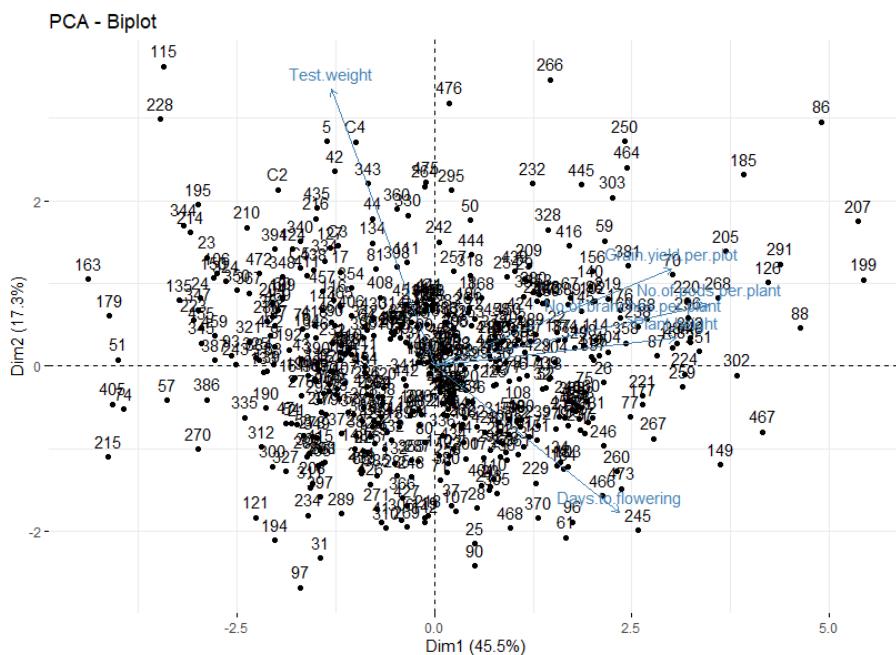


Fig. 4: Principal Component Analysis of different traits under study

of useful variability for yield-attributing traits.

In this study, ANOVA represented variability for all traits except for the number of branches. Similar results were also reported by Kumar *et al.* (2018) for the number of branches and Bhartiya and Aditya (2016) for the number of pods per plant, indicating sufficient genetic diversity for all traits except the number of branches. High PCV and GCV were recorded for grain yield, plant height and number of pods/plant. High heritability coupled with high genetic

advance were observed for plant height, 100-seed weight, number of pods per plant and seed yield per plot, indicating governance of additive gene action for these traits. Similar results have been reported by Kumar *et al.* (2015) for plant height and 100-seed weight, for seed yield per plant, Ekka and Gabrial (2016), for plant height Kumar *et al.* (2018), for 100-seed weight and seed yield per plant Shivakumar *et al.* (2019) for number of nodes and plant height in soybean nested association mapping population.

Table 5: Eigen values, variance contribution (%), variables coordinates and percent contribution of each variable on the individual five principal components of germplasm accessions

| | | Days to flowering | Plant height | 100 seed weight | No. of branches | No. of pods | Grain yield (g) | Eigen values | Variance (%) |
|-----|------------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| PC1 | Coordinates | 0.58 | 0.76 | -0.32 | 0.63 | 0.87 | 0.75 | 2.73 | 45.54 |
| | Contribution (%) | 12.49 | 21.22 | 3.86 | 14.46 | 27.43 | 20.54 | | |
| PC2 | Coordinates | -0.44 | 0.08 | 0.83 | 0.14 | 0.18 | 0.29 | 1.04 | 17.3 |
| | Contribution (%) | 18.83 | 0.68 | 67.15 | 1.79 | 3.29 | 8.24 | | |
| PC3 | Coordinates | 0.3 | -0.23 | 0.11 | -0.68 | 0.19 | 0.4 | 0.81 | 13.56 |
| | Contribution (%) | 11.37 | 6.56 | 1.59 | 56.47 | 4.24 | 19.77 | | |
| PC4 | Coordinates | 0.57 | 0.22 | 0.42 | 0.02 | -0.16 | -0.31 | 0.68 | 11.36 |
| | Contribution (%) | 48.29 | 6.8 | 26.41 | 0.09 | 3.88 | 14.53 | | |
| PC5 | Coordinates | 0.2 | -0.56 | 0.07 | 0.35 | 0.08 | 0.05 | 0.49 | 8.1 |
| | Contribution (%) | 8.12 | 64.23 | 0.93 | 24.64 | 1.47 | 0.6 | | |

Correlation studies revealed that traits such as number of pods and plant height had the highest significant positive effect on grain yield; similar kinds of trends were also observed by Gireesh *et al.* (2015), Yashpal *et al.* (2019) and Shivakumar *et al.* (2019). Grain yield was positively correlated with the number of pods in other legumes like Mung Bean [*Vigna radiata* (L.) Wilezek] (Dar *et al.*, 2025). In the current study, 100-seed weight was found to be negatively correlated with other yield attributes, and has also been reported by Iqbal *et al.* (2010) and Kumar *et al.* (2018). PCA can evaluate the relative contribution of different elements to the total divergence together with the nature of forces operating at intra- and inter-cluster levels (Sharma *et al.*, 2009). In the current study, the first three components (PCs) explained >75% of the total variation. In the first two PCs, the maximum percent of variation is contributed by grain yield, 100-seed weight and number of pods. Therefore, these traits are important in explaining the genetic variation in the germplasm accessions. The results are in agreement with various other studies that reported the maximum contribution of grain yield in soybean (Dubey *et al.*, 2018; Maranna *et al.*, 2019). The PCA was also employed in studying variability in other legumes like Horse Gram [*Macrotyloma uniflorum* (Lam.) Verdc.] (Kumari *et al.*, 2025). Cluster analysis grouped the 481 accessions into 4 clusters, with cluster C4 comprising the maximum number of germplasm lines, indicating close relatedness of these genotypes. A similar way of grouping for yield traits of 900 NAM RILs of soybean into 10 clusters was reported by Shivakumar *et al.* (2019). Genotypes having the highest grain yield per plant, plant height and number of pods fall under cluster C1, whereas the lowest days to 50% flowering and the largest seed-sized germplasm accessions fall under cluster C3. This study identified a number of promising accessions that can be further utilized in soybean hybridization programmes for improving the yield potential of new varieties.

Conclusion

Progress in breeding high-yielding varieties of soybean has been reserved and one of the constraints shown by many soybean breeders is the narrow genetic base present in the released varieties. Given this limitation, plant breeders require genetically diverse germplasm not only for yield but also for its contributing traits. In this direction, this study generated information on a large number of soybean germplasm accessions evaluated in the southern region of India. From this study, it is evident that a wide range of genetic variability for different yield attributes and several diverse and promising germplasm accessions were identified for future use in the hybridization program to create new breeding material with a broad genetic base.

Acknowledgments

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Supplementary Tables

Table S1: Details of the genotypes evaluated in the current study

| Code | Name | Code | Name | Code | Name | Code | Name |
|------|----------|------|-----------|------|---------------|------|-----------|
| C1 | DSb-21 | 117 | EC 274683 | 238 | EC 589400 | 359 | JS 80-21 |
| C2 | JS335 | 118 | EC 457464 | 239 | EC 572019 | 360 | JS 93-05 |
| C3 | JS9305 | 119 | EC 467282 | 240 | EC 391172 | 361 | SQL 3 |
| C4 | KBS23 | 120 | EC 615160 | 241 | EC 309537 | 362 | SQL-40 |
| C5 | RKS18 | 121 | EC 550828 | 242 | EC 389399 | 363 | SQL -12 |
| 1 | AGS 218 | 122 | EC 251817 | 243 | EC 456556 | 364 | SQL-98 |
| 2 | AGS 166 | 123 | EC 251378 | 244 | EC 538828 | 365 | SQL 11 |
| 3 | AGS 108 | 124 | EC 572086 | 245 | TGX 802-150D | 366 | SQL-5 |
| 4 | AGS 128 | 125 | EC 175321 | 246 | TGX 86-34 | 367 | SQL-81 |
| 5 | AGS 174 | 126 | EC 93601 | 247 | TGX 702-4-8 | 368 | SQL 93 |
| 6 | AGS 156 | 127 | EC 287754 | 248 | TGX 298-7D | 369 | SQL-106 |
| 7 | AGS 116 | 128 | EC 481571 | 249 | TGX 899-285D | 370 | SQL 83 |
| 8 | ABL-1 | 129 | EC 250591 | 250 | ABL-14 | 371 | SQL -31 |
| 9 | AGS 143 | 130 | EC 34060 | 251 | TGX 722-110E | 372 | PK 722 |
| 10 | AGS 190 | 131 | EC 095297 | 252 | TGX 825-1E | 373 | SQL 97 |
| 11 | AGS 230 | 132 | EC 39511 | 253 | TGX 824-35 | 374 | PK 474 |
| 12 | AGS 38 | 133 | EC 113770 | 254 | TGX 814-148D | 375 | PK 1284 |
| 13 | AGS 205 | 134 | EC 175329 | 255 | TGX 863-26F | 376 | P 318 |
| 14 | AGS 83 | 135 | EC 250588 | 256 | TGX 849-309A | 377 | SQL 18 |
| 15 | AGS110 | 136 | EC 241650 | 257 | TGX 849-47F | 378 | PK 566 |
| 16 | AGS 158 | 137 | EC 274701 | 258 | TGX 803-99E | 379 | PK1225 |
| 17 | AGS 02 | 138 | EC 100778 | 259 | TGX 854-42D | 380 | SPL-4 |
| 18 | AGS 105 | 139 | EC 615187 | 260 | TGX 863-2C | 381 | PLSO-79 |
| 19 | ABL-2 | 140 | EC 251498 | 261 | TGX 722-155F | 382 | P-318 |
| 20 | AGS102 | 141 | EC 232275 | 262 | TGX 814-78D | 383 | PS 1029 |
| 21 | AGS 193 | 142 | EC 41319 | 263 | TGX 539-2D-7 | 384 | SL 142 |
| 22 | AGS 166 | 143 | EC 18672 | 264 | TGX 822--10E | 385 | K 53 |
| 23 | AGS 157 | 144 | EC 602288 | 265 | TGX 984-18A | 386 | L 129 |
| 24 | AGS 42 | 145 | EC 309522 | 266 | TGX 849-309F | 387 | KB 249 |
| 25 | AGS 153 | 146 | EC 325102 | 267 | TGX 849-294D | 388 | B-160-3 |
| 26 | AGS 186 | 147 | EC 103334 | 268 | TGX 885-44E | 389 | T-49 |
| 27 | AGS 170 | 148 | EC 291399 | 269 | TGX 1070-F6 | 390 | VLS-63 |
| 28 | AGS 150 | 149 | EC 250577 | 270 | TGX 802-150E | 391 | WT 169 |
| 29 | AGS 41 | 150 | EC 241756 | 271 | TGX 849-207 D | 392 | GP 493 |
| 30 | AGS 142 | 151 | EC 274712 | 272 | TGX 854-71E | 393 | VLS 75 |
| 31 | AMSS34 | 152 | EC 241995 | 273 | TGX 1016-5F | 394 | V 55 |
| 32 | AKSS 65 | 153 | EC 251402 | 274 | TGX 854-60A | 395 | EC 538814 |
| 33 | AK 887 | 154 | EC 171536 | 275 | TGX 860-11D | 396 | HAL |
| 34 | AKSS 143 | 155 | EC 25082 | 276 | TGX 855-53D | 397 | WT 150 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|----------------|-----|-----------------|
| 35 | ACC 1026 | 156 | EC 95815 | 277 | TGX 814-148F | 398 | HARDEE |
| 36 | AKSS 63 | 157 | EC 251446 | 278 | TGX 996-5F | 399 | LESOY 273 |
| 37 | AGS 104 | 158 | EC 39177 | 279 | TGX 984-18E | 400 | GC 12 |
| 38 | B 1666 | 159 | EC 45732 | 280 | TGX 855-44G | 401 | ELGIN(S) |
| 39 | B 471 | 160 | EC 172663 | 281 | TGX 803-99D | 402 | HIMSO-175 |
| 40 | B 252 | 161 | EC 100772 | 282 | TGX 1016-19F | 403 | NANKING |
| 41 | BR 10 | 162 | EC 18673 | 283 | TGX 85B-48 | 404 | SEHORE-1 |
| 42 | B 1665 | 163 | EC 100804 | 284 | TGX854-429 | 405 | INDORE-2 |
| 43 | BRG 1 | 164 | EC 457052 | 285 | TGX 702-4-2 | 406 | NRC -1 |
| 44 | DS 366 | 165 | EC 39376 | 286 | TGX 844-313-B | 407 | NRC 37 |
| 45 | BRG 12 | 166 | EC 24200 | 287 | TGX 713-1F | 408 | NRC 57 |
| 46 | DS 321 | 167 | EC 241310 | 288 | TGX 293-65E | 409 | NRC 2396 |
| 47 | BR 15 | 168 | EC 172577 | 289 | TGX 854-77D | 410 | NRC 105 |
| 48 | DE 201 | 169 | EC 241778 | 290 | TGX -813-14D | 411 | NRC 2346 |
| 49 | B 1667 | 170 | EC 18593 | 291 | TGX -855-32E | 412 | NRC 2007-1-3 |
| 50 | DS 205 | 171 | EC 251886 | 292 | ABL-15 | 413 | NRC 86 |
| 51 | EC 333908 | 172 | EC 325113 | 293 | TGX B-1435E | 414 | NRC 2320 |
| 52 | AGS 74 | 173 | EC 291453 | 294 | TGX -312-012F | 415 | N 928 |
| 53 | AGS 74A | 174 | EC 242091 | 295 | TGX -8116-21D | 416 | M-1085 |
| 54 | EC 341822 | 175 | EC 30968 | 296 | TGX -825-3D | 417 | M-1052 |
| 55 | EC 343310 | 176 | EC 528620 | 297 | TGX 802-100F | 418 | M-1059 |
| 56 | EC 333924 | 177 | EC 76759 | 298 | TGX 317-37E | 419 | MAUS-142 |
| 57 | EC 343312 | 178 | EC 589409 | 299 | TGX 298-7E | 420 | MACS-150B(VG) |
| 58 | EC 242108 | 179 | EC 287469 | 300 | TGX 573-209 | 421 | MAUS 47 |
| 59 | EC 114527 | 180 | EC 393231 | 301 | TGX 239-43D | 422 | MACS 1034 |
| 60 | EC 333940 | 181 | EC 389173 | 302 | TGX 849-D 13-4 | 423 | MAUS 41 |
| 61 | EC 481571 | 182 | EC 289161 | 303 | TGX 573-219D | 424 | MACS 227 |
| 62 | EC 308328 | 183 | EC 538801 | 304 | TGX560-20D | 425 | MACS 250 |
| 63 | EC 241712 | 184 | EC 396067 | 305 | TGX 416-06C | 426 | MACS 708 |
| 64 | EC 251529 | 185 | EC 393224 | 306 | TGX 297-16F | 427 | MACS 1028 |
| 65 | EC 333859 | 186 | EC 15553 | 307 | TGX 849-14-3D | 428 | MACS 58(S) |
| 66 | EC 241761 | 187 | EC 572108 | 308 | TGX 330-325D | 429 | MACS 330 |
| 67 | EC 251405 | 188 | EC 396065 | 309 | TGX 854-420-1 | 430 | IC 24532A |
| 68 | EC 251388 | 189 | EC 93413 | 310 | ABL-16 | 431 | IC 0596790 |
| 69 | EC 313974 | 190 | EC 572130 | 311 | TGX 302A-68D | 432 | IC 16821 |
| 70 | EC 245988 | 191 | EC 391181 | 312 | ABL-17 | 433 | IC 13051 |
| 71 | EC 528623 | 192 | EC 391346 | 313 | TGX 780-5A | 434 | PI 283327 |
| 72 | EC 287464 | 193 | EC 572187 | 314 | ABL-18 | 435 | PI 340900 |
| 73 | EC 2206 B | 194 | EC 251456 | 315 | TGX 849-813 | 436 | PI 200465 |
| 74 | EC 309513 | 195 | EC389156 | 316 | TGX 825-17E | 437 | IC 4882 |
| 75 | EC 287460 | 196 | ABL-8 | 317 | TGX 854-4F | 438 | ICS84/86-858-41 |
| 76 | EC 251413 | 197 | EC 13054 | 318 | TGX 576-21-9 | 439 | ICAL 122 |
| 77 | ABL-3 | 198 | EC 389167 | 319 | TGX 814-13E | 440 | EC 287457 |

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|-----|------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------------|-----|-------------------|
| 78 | EC 581521 | 199 | EC 389148 | 320 | TGX 802-100D | 441 | EC 333870 |
| 79 | EC 34115 | 200 | EC 389166 | 321 | TGX 442-20D | 442 | EC 280129 |
| 80 | EC 343311 | 201 | EC 538802 | 322 | TGX 311-59E | 443 | EC 389153 |
| 81 | EC 34079 B | 202 | EC 572160 | 323 | TGX 573-97D | 444 | EC 457161 |
| 82 | EC 389152 | 203 | EC 380522 | 324 | TGX 342-376 | 445 | RAUS -5 |
| 83 | EC 37104 | 204 | ABL-9 | 325 | TGX 297 | 446 | ALANKAR |
| 84 | EC 241715 | 205 | EC 457280 | 326 | TGX 86-24-10 | 447 | MONETTA |
| 85 | EC 100027 | 206 | EC 289099 | 327 | TGX 293-47E | 448 | PALAM SOYA |
| 86 | EC 251514 | 207 | EC 572035 | 328 | TGX 86-24-6E | 449 | IMPROVED PLICAN |
| 87 | EC 274713 | 208 | EC 389165 | 329 | TGX 293-46E | 450 | INDRA SOYA9 |
| 88 | EC 389154 | 209 | EC 644409 | 330 | TGX 996-4F6 | 451 | KHSb2 |
| 89 | EC 325104 | 210 | EC 572071 | 331 | JSM 288 | 452 | PS 1347 |
| 90 | EC 357998 | 211 | EC 389179 | 332 | JSM 258 | 453 | PUSA 22 |
| 91 | EC 341115 | 212 | EC 592195 | 333 | JSM 302 | 454 | ADT-1 |
| 92 | EC 389164 | 213 | EC 390979 | 334 | JS 82 | 455 | PK 308 |
| 93 | EC 333880 | 214 | EC 390981 | 335 | JS 355 | 456 | ANKUR |
| 94 | EC 274711 | 215 | EC 456574 | 336 | JS (SH) 2001-64 | 457 | CO-SOYA-2 |
| 95 | EC 250601 | 216 | ABL-10 | 337 | JS 94-52 | 458 | GUJARAT SOYBEEN-1 |
| 96 | EC 291400 | 217 | EC 309529 | 338 | JS 20-49 | 459 | CO-1 |
| 97 | EC 289091 | 218 | EC 251416 | 339 | JS 95-52 | 460 | KALILAR |
| 98 | EC 333876 | 219 | EC 333899 | 340 | JS 20-37 | 461 | SL-295 |
| 99 | EC 309541 | 220 | EC 357990 | 341 | ABL-21 | 462 | SHIAJEET |
| 100 | EC 329157 | 221 | EC 389391 | 342 | JS 20-76 | 463 | LEE |
| 101 | EC 309543 | 222 | EC 333872 | 343 | JS 20-38 | 464 | BNAGG |
| 102 | EC 251401 | 223 | EC 589407 | 344 | JS 98-02 | 465 | SHIVATIK |
| 103 | ABL-4 | 224 | EC 528622 | 345 | JS 94-67 | 466 | DURGA |
| 104 | EC 309511 | 225 | EC 572127 | 346 | JS 79-82 | 467 | PUNJAB |
| 105 | EC 389160 | 226 | EC 546881 | 347 | JS 20-86 | 468 | PUSA 16 |
| 106 | EC 242003 | 227 | ABL-11 | 348 | JS 97-52 | 469 | PS 1024 |
| 107 | EC 251432 | 228 | ABL-12 | 349 | JS(SH)99-02 | 470 | PK 472 |
| 108 | ABL-5 | 229 | EC 18673 | 350 | JS 20-73 | 471 | PK 262 |
| 109 | EC 2579 | 230 | EC 606917 | 351 | TGX 802-265D | 472 | MACS -13 |
| 110 | ABL-6 | 231 | EC 538807 | 352 | TGX 311-101F | 473 | MACS 450 |
| 111 | ABL-7 | 232 | EC 389178 | 353 | TGX 239-6D | 474 | MACS 58 |
| 112 | EC 547464 | 233 | EC 39573 | 354 | TGX 573-209-23 | 475 | ABL-19 |
| 113 | EC 23003 | 234 | ABL-13 | 355 | TGX 328-049 | 476 | ABL-20 |
| 114 | EC 245986 | 235 | EC 389163 | 356 | TGX 536-1009 | | |
| 115 | EC 291397 | 236 | EC 528666 | 357 | JSM 245 | | |
| 116 | EC467282 | 237 | EC 542431 | 358 | JS 20-72 | | |