



ISSN: 0974 - 0376

The Ecoscan : Special issue, Vol. VII: 07-12: 2015
AN INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES
www.theecoscan.in

PYRAMIDING OF THREE BACTERIAL BLIGHT RESISTANCE IN DUBRAJ RICE CULTIVAR USING MARKER-ASSISTED SELECTION

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KEYWORDS

Bacterial blight
Gene pyramiding
Marker assisted selection

**Proceedings of National Conference on
Harmony with Nature in Context of
Bioresources and Environmental Health
(HARMONY - 2015)**
November 23 - 25, 2015, Aurangabad,
organized by
Department of Zoology,
Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University
Aurangabad (Maharashtra) 431 004
in association with
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTALISTS ASSOCIATION, INDIA
www.neaindia.org



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ABSTRACT

Dubraj is a high yielding medium slender grain aromatic indica rice variety that is very popular with farmers and consumers across India. However, the variety is susceptible to several diseases and pests, including bacterial blight (BB). The pathogen, *Xanthomonas oryzae* pv. *oryzae*, causing BB disease is highly virulent to rice crop and is capable of evolving new races. The incorporation of single BB resistance gene leads to resistance breakdown within a short period to overcome these we have to introgressed three bacterial blight resistance genes *Xa21*, *xa5* and *xa13* into Dubraj from rice cultivar RP-Bio226 through MAS. The linked SSR marker pTA28, *xa5R/S* and RM6765 for *Xa21*, *xa5* and *xa13* were used to identify the genes in the parents and in F_2 pyramided population. This study demonstrated that Breeding lines with two or three resistance genes were developed and tested for resistance to the bacterial blight. They showed a wider spectrum and a higher level of resistance as compared to lines with only a single gene. All three genes in homozygous condition (*xa21Xa21/xa13xa13/xa5xa5*) showed resistance disease reaction whereas all these three gene in heterozygous condition (*Xa21xa21/Xa13xa13/Xa5xa5*) show MR reaction. Similarly two gene combinations gave more resistance reactions than single gene.

Abbreviations: BB Bacterial blight, Xoo: *Xanthomonas oryzae* pv. *Oryzae*, MAS Marker assisted selection, SSR Simple sequence repeats

INTRODUCTION

Rice (*Oryza sativa* L.) is the most important world food crops, serving as staple food for (Deepti Davia *et al.*, 2013) about 90 % rice in the world is grown and consumed by the population of the Asian countries which constitute 58 % population of the World (Samanta A. *et al.*, 2014). To ensure the global food security for increasing population growth, it is vital to control the various insect pests and diseases that damage rice (Normile, 2008). Bacterial blight disease is a systemic disease and can cause severe yield loss up to 50 % depending on growth stage, geographic localization and season (Nino-Liu *et al.*, 2006). Since Chemical control for bacterial diseases is not effective (Devadath, 1989). Therefore, host plant resistance offers the most effective, economical and environmentally safe option for management of BB (Khush *et al.*, 1989). Till date 40 BB resistance genes (*Xa* genes) conferring host resistances against various strains of Xoo have been identified (Bhasinet *et al.*, 2012; Natraj Kumar *et al.*, 2012; Zhang *et al.*, 2014; Suk Man Kim *et al.*, 2015). The recessive R gene, *xa13* was first characterized in the rice variety BJ1 and fine-mapped to a genomic region <4 cM on the long arm of rice chromosome 8 (Zhang *et al.*, 1996; Sanchez *et al.*, 1999). The *xa5* was mapped to the telomeric region on short arm of chromosome 5 localized to a 8.1 kb region revealing that a general transcription factor IIA gamma subunit (TFIIAc) was encoded by the *xa5* gene (Iyer A.S. 2004). The another broad spectrum bacterial blight resistance gene *Xa21* was introgressed from a wild species *O. longistaminata* onto *O. sativa* chromosome 11 (Khush *et al.*, 1989) which have been found to confer resistance to diverse BB pathotypes (Khush *et al.*, 1990; Ikeda *et al.*, 1991).

The deployment of rice cultivars that have multiple BB resistance genes is expected to lead to more durable resistance (Raman M. *et al.*, 2008). MAS has also been employed for moving genes from pyramided lines into new plant type (Sanchez *et al.*, 2000) as well as into improved varieties grown in India (Singh *et al.*, 2001). However, this strategy is difficult to accomplish by conventional breeding methods since the effect of individual resistance gene cannot be easily identified or measured in the presence of other resistance genes in a specific background. (Jiandi Xu 2013). Singh *et al.* (2001) pyramided three BB resistance genes *xa5*, *xa13* and *Xa21* in PR106 cultivar using MAS and during testing with 17X *anthomosnas oryzae* pv. *oryzae* (Xoo) isolates under artificial inoculation and field conditions in Punjab found that the combination of genes provided wider spectrum of resistance to the pathogen populations prevalent in the region. Molecular markers are widely applied in agriculture, and their application in rice improvement has been recently reviewed (Mackill and McNally, 2004, Jordan *et al.*, 2004, Toojinda *et al.*, 2005, Liu *et al.*, 2006 and Mackill, 2007). The markers tightly linked with gene used for selection have relatively high selection efficiency (Yunbi, 2010) and they can be used to indirectly select the trait that are expressed late in the life of the plant or that require progeny testing due to their recessive nature of a lack of heritability (Jung-Pil Suhet *et al.*, 2009). This study determined the association of BB resistance genes with disease reaction caused by the Xoo isolate collected from Dhamtari region and analyzed the gene expression levels of *Xa21*, *xa5* and *xa13* genes for resistance to Xoo isolate

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in F_2 segregating populations.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Dubraj aromatic popular rice cultivar was taken as the recurrent parent and RP-Bio 226 was used as the donor parent for three bacterial blight resistance genes *Xa21*, *xa5* and *xa13*. Cross was made between Dubraj (Medium slender grain, aromatic and BB susceptible cultivar) and RP-Bio 226 to obtain F_1 plants then generation advancement was done.

DNA extraction

Total genomic DNA was extracted from the leaf tissue for each rice cultivar/genotype following the miniPrep method described by Doyle and Doyle, 1987. The DNA samples were quantified using Nanodrop Spectrophotometer (ND 100) and the absorbance ratio (A260/A280) was recorded for each sample to find out the purity of DNA. Further concentration of DNA was adjusted to 40 ng/ μ L with TE buffer and stored at 4°C. The diluted DNA was subsequently used for PCR amplification.

DNA markers

Three gene specific markers for *Xa21*, *xa5* and *xa13* (Table 1) were used to monitor the presence of each gene and their different combinations. The plants homozygous for all three genes, and their homozygous and heterozygous combinations were identified.

Polymerase chain reaction (PCR)

PCR amplification was performed in 20 μ l reaction volume containing 40 ng template DNA, 10 μ M of forward and reverse primers, 1mM dNTPs, 10X PCR buffer and 1 unit/ μ l of *Taq* polymerase. The template DNA was initially denatured at 94°C for 5 min followed by 30 cycles of PCR amplification under the following parameters for *Xa21*, *xa5* and *xa13* each cycle with 30 Sec denaturation at 94°C, 30 Sec primer annealing at 55°C and 1min primer extension at 72°C. A final 7 min incubation at 72°C was allowed for completion of primer extension. The amplified product was resolved on 5% PAGE and visualized under UV light after staining with ethidium bromide.

Development and Confirmation of F_1 plants

F_1 seeds were raised in the main field by planting single seedling per hill at a spacing of 10 x 10cm during Rabi 2014. DNA isolated from all F_1 plants were used for genotyping of target genes. The seeds harvested from single hybrid plant carrying *Xa21*, *xa5* and *xa13* genes (Dubraj x RP-Bio226) were selfed and advanced to F_2 generation during Kharif, 2014. These segregating populations were screened by using gene linked SSR markers for three BB resistance genes viz., *Xa21*, *xa5* and *xa13*.

Disease Evaluation in F_2 Population

To determine segregation patterns of BB resistance genes, F_2 seedlings were inoculated with *X. oryzae* pv. *oryzae* (Xoo) isolate collected from Dhamtari. F_2 population was inoculated with bacterial culture at maximum tillering stages by using the leaf clipping method described by Kauffman *et al.* (1973). The inoculum was prepared by suspending bacteria, grown on potato Dextrose agar media for 2-3 days at 4°C, in sterile

distilled water at a final concentration of approximately 10⁸ cells/ml. and plant inoculation was carried out by clipping the tip (about 1 to 2 cm) of the fully expanded uppermost leaf with scissors that had been dipped into the inoculum.

The reactions/disease score of individual F_2 plants to the pathogen were evaluated 14-21 days after inoculation by measuring the lesion length. Five leaves per plant were taken for scoring and the plant reaction was rated according to standard evaluation system i.e SES (1980) developed at the International Rice Research Institute, the Philippines. The scale has six classes (coded as 0, 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9) with the standard of 0-1 as resistant (R), 3-5 as moderately resistant (MR) and 7-9 as susceptible (S).

Statistical analysis

For inheritance studies of BB resistance in the segregating population, the goodness of fit of expected genetic ratios were tested by means of χ^2 -test (Singh *et al.*, 1977). The chi-square analysis for genotypic and phenotypic ratio was calculated by using following formula: $\chi^2 = \Sigma(O-E)^2/E$, where, Σ is observed value, E is expected value, and Σ - Summation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study was carried out with the objective to improve BB resistance through marker assisted selection. The primer pairs viz., *pTA 248* (Huang *et al.*, 1997), *RM6765* and *xa5S/R* were used for BB resistance genes viz., *Xa21*, *xa13* and *xa5* in marker assisted selection. SSR Markers can detect a significantly higher degree of polymorphism in rice (Okoshiet *al.*, 2004). The true hybrids were identified selfed and advanced to F_2 generation. Study of parental polymorphism is a prerequisite to begin marker assisted selection. Unless the parents are polymorphic for the traits of interest, the further selection of plants carrying the traits of interest is not possible in the progenies.

Pyramiding of BB resistance genes into Dubraj background through MAS

The Dubraj (BB susceptible) rice variety was crossed to RP-Bio226 (donor of the BB resistance genes *Xa21*, *xa5* and *xa13*). The F_1 plants were confirmed for their heterozygosity for the 'R' gene linked PCR based markers. For *Xa21*, *pTA248* an STS marker amplified a resistant parent specific 1200bp fragment. In case of *xa13* *RM6765* amplified a 300 bp fragment while for *xa5* linked marker *xa5R* amplified a 160bp band in resistant parent (RP-Bio226). The clear polymorphism existed between the parents, Dubraj and RP-Bio226 for *Xa21*, *xa13*, and *xa5* genes when amplified with *pTA 248*, *RM6765* and *xa5R/S* primer pairs, respectively. While *xa5S* and *xa5 R* give presence/absence of band for susceptible and resistance genotype. The present investigation clearly stated that three resistance genes viz., *xa13*, *Xa21* and *xa5* for BB were present in RP-Bio226. Since the polymorphism was very clear among the parents for the targeted genes, these markers were selected for selection in the segregating generations.

The F_2 population of 120 plants with single resistance gene and with combinations of two and three resistance genes was identified. The presence of BB resistance gene viz *xa13*, *Xa21* and *xa5* in F_2 segregating population were determined by using

Table 1: Markers used for marker-assisted selection of resistance genes to Xa21 xa13 and xa5]

Gene	Ch	Marker	Primer pair	Reference
Xa21	11	pTA28	F:5'AGACGCGGAAGGGTGGTTCCCGGA3' R:5'AGACGCGGTAATCGAAGATGAAA3'	Huang <i>et al.</i> , (1997)
xa5	5	xa5R	F:5'TGGTAAAGTAGATACCTTATCAAAGTGA3' R:5'TGACTTGGTTCTCCAAGGCTT 3'	Sundaramet <i>al.</i> , (2011)
		xa5S	F:5'GTCTGGAATTTGCTCGCGTTCG 3' R: 5'TGGTAAAGTAGATACCTTATCAAAGTGA3'	
xa13	8	RM6765	R:5'TCGTTGACTACGTTTGCAGC 3' F:5'TCGGAGAAAGCTGCAAGC 3'	-

Table 2: Segregation of F₂ plants at three marker loci linked to BB resistance genes

Markers	Observed frequency			Total	$\chi^2(1:2:1)$
pTA248	29	66	25	120	1.46
xa5 S/R	30	67	23	120	3.05
RM6765	27	62	31	120	0.82

Table 3: Phenotypic screening of pyramided lines against Dhamtari isolate.

Gene combinations	No. of plants	Mean lesion length	SD	Disease reaction
Homozygous for all 3 gene	1	2	1.0	R
Heterozygous for all 3 gene	13	2.93	1	MR
2 homozygous + 1 heterozygous				
xa21Xa21 + xa13xa13 + Xa5xa5	3	2.11	0.6	R
xa21Xa21 + + xa5xa5 + Xa13xa13	1	5.67	1.1	MS
xa13xa13 + xa5xa5 + Xa21xa21	1	3	1	R
2 gene heterozygous + 1 gene homozygous				
xa21Xa21 + Xa13xa13 + Xa5xa5	5	3.47	0.8	MR
xa13Xa13 + Xa21xa21 + Xa5xa5	9	2.37	0.9	R
xa5xa5 + Xa21xa21 + Xa13xa13	4	2.33	0.7	R
Dubraj	-	20	1	HS
RP-Bio226	-	1.1	0.3	R

*According to SES scale 1980; R, Resistant; MR, Moderately resistant; MS, Moderately susceptible; HS, Highly susceptible.

respective molecular marker (Fig. 1). These markers linked to resistance genes allowed efficient screening of the F₂ population. Scoring was done based on the banding pattern with reference to their parents, that is those bands similar to resistant and susceptible parents were scored as 1 type and 3 type respectively. While the plants having bands from both parents were scored as 2 (Heterozygous).

The observed and expected frequencies of the various marker genotypes were calculated using the chi square test. The homozygotes and heterozygotes were scored and goodness of fit was tested using the χ^2 value for the segregation data (Table 2). In Dubraj x RP-Bio226 Chi square (χ^2) value for pTA 248, 29 plants were found to be homozygous resistant, 66 in heterozygous and 25 in homozygous susceptible conditions and which are significant. The χ^2 -square analysis (Table 2) indicated that the Xa21 gene segregated in a genotypic ratio 1Xa21Xa21: 2Xa21xa21:1xa21xa21 and exhibited a good fit to the expected segregation ratio for single gene model with χ^2 -square value 1.46 at 5% level. Such selection of plant carrying desirable gene is possible through MAS using genetic analysis of pTA248 which clearly exhibited a goodness of fit to the expected segregation ratio of 1Xa21 Xa21: 2Xa21xa21: 1xa21xa21 for single gene model for Xa21 gene.

Phenotypically it is not possible to differentiate all the genotypes. Similarly xa5S/R and RM6765 have computed χ^2 value was 3.050 and 82 less than the critical value. The data for all three genes Xa21 (pT248), xa5 (xa5R/S) and xa13 (RM6765) showed significance at both the level of 5% and 1% as the computed value was less than 5.99 (5% level) and 9.21 (1% level).

Reaction of pyramided genotypes against BB pathogen

The parental lines and 120 plants of F₂ were analyzed using molecular markers having different combinations of the three or two genes and also screened for phenotypic evaluation. The Phenotypic screening of pyramided lines are presented in Table 3.

Higher levels of resistance in gene pyramid lines containing multiple BB resistance genes as compared to lines having single (or fewer) resistance genes have been reported earlier (Yoshimura *et al.*, 1996). The plants possessing three genes in homozygous (xa5xa5 + + xa13xa13 + Xa21Xa21) condition showed BB resistance of Score 2, where as all these three gene in heterozygous condition (Xa5xa5 + Xa13xa13 + Xa21xa21) show moderately resistance disease reaction.

For two genes homozygous and one gene heterozygous, plants

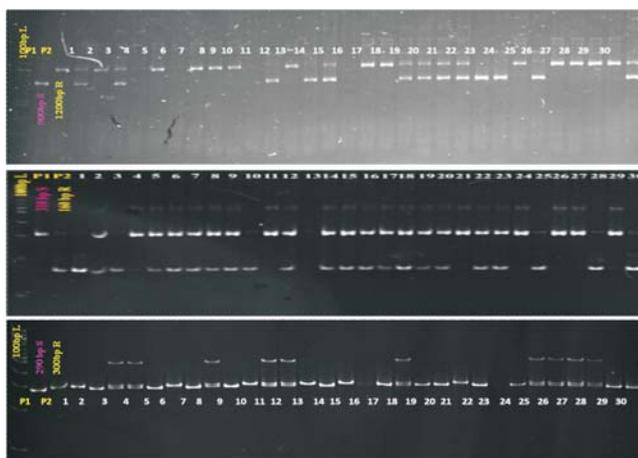


Figure 1: PCR amplification of markers to resistance genes Xa21, xa5 and xa13, using primers A) pAT248, B) xa5S/R and C) RM6765 of F₂ population.

carrying both dominant and recessive genes in the homozygous condition xa13/Xa21 in homozygous condition show resistance towards BB disease (Table 3), while xa5/Xa21 in homozygous state were less resistance or moderately susceptible. But those plants carrying single dominant (Xa21/Xa21) resistance gene in homozygous state were less resistant than plants having single recessive resistant gene (xa13xa13/xa5 xa5) along with heterozygous dominant resistant gene (xa13 xa13 or xa5 xa5 + Xa 21 xa21 + xa13 xa13). As expected, both the parents i.e. Dubraj and RP-Bio 226 were recorded as susceptible and resistance disease reactions respectively. As above result showed that when three gene present in homozygous condition (xa21 xa21/xa13 xa13/xa5 xa5) show resistance disease reaction, While all these three gene in heterozygous condition (Xa21 xa21/xa13 xa13/Xa5xa5) show MR reaction. Similarly two gene combinations show more resistance reactions than single gene reactions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The financial assistance from Department of Plant Molecular Biology And Biotechnology IGKV, Raipur is gratefully acknowledged

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