

**PRODUCTION OF CAPRINE AND BOVINE *IN VITRO*-
FERTILISED AS WELL AS PARTHENOGENETIC EMBRYOS
AND AN ATTEMPT TO VITRIFY *IN VIVO*- AND
IN VITRO-DERIVED EMBRYOS**

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this research was to determine the effects of oocyte grading and insemination duration on cleavage rate of embryos obtained from *in vitro* fertilisation (IVF) in bovine and caprine species. In addition, the effects of oocyte grading in bovine and caprine on production of parthenogenetic embryos as well as an attempt to cryopreserve embryos using vitrification technique were also evaluated. Bovine oocytes were obtained from abattoir while caprine oocytes were retrieved through laparoscopic oocyte pick-up (LOPU) or abattoir source. For laparoscopic oocyte pick-up goats, gonadotrophin injections were involved prior to surgery, which were Estrumate (125 µg), Pregnant Mare's Serum Gonadotrophin (PMSG) (1500 IU) and Ovidrel (250 IU). Following the washing in Phosphate Buffer Saline (PBS) (for laparoscopic oocyte pick-up oocytes) or TL-Hepes medium (for abattoir/ovariectomy oocytes), cumulus oocyte complexes (COCs) were washed with *in vitro* maturation (IVM) medium. Subsequently, the cumulus oocyte complexes were cultured according to the grades in the droplets of *in vitro* maturation medium which was pre-incubated overnight in carbon dioxide (5%) incubator at 38.5°C for 18 to 21, 24 to 27 and 22 to 24 hours, for laparoscopic oocyte pick-up caprine oocytes as well as abattoir/ovariectomy caprine oocytes and bovine oocytes, respectively. The grades of oocytes were based on the cumulus layers and the maturation of oocytes was based on the presence of the first polar body. For *in vitro* fertilisation (IVF), oocytes were partially denuded and co-incubated with post-thawed sperm (1×10^6 sperm/ml). *In vitro* culture (IVC) of presumptive zygotes was performed after 8 to 14 or 18 to 24 hours after fertilisation. The fertilisation rate was assessed by the presence of the second polar body. The cleavage rates of the embryos were then observed and recorded. For parthenogenetic activation (PA), matured oocytes were completely denuded and washed with 3 droplets of calcium ionophore, subsequently

incubated in it for 5 minutes. The oocytes were then washed with 3 droplets of 6-dimethylaminopyridine (6-DMAP) and incubated in it for 5 hours. After being washed with 3 droplets of preincubated *in vitro* culture droplets, the oocytes were cultured and the cleavage rates were recorded daily. In an attempt of vitrifying embryos, embryos were placed into holding medium (1 minute), followed by VS1 (3 minutes) and subsequently VS2 (45 seconds) before being plunged into liquid nitrogen. The vitrified embryos were devitrified by being immersed into TS (5 minutes), DS (5 minutes), and finally two holding medium (5 minutes each), stepwise. After being washed thrice in pre-incubated *in vitro* culture droplets, the oocytes were cultured and the survival rates were recorded daily. The data were analysed by using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT). In bovine *in vitro* fertilisation, the maturation rates of Grade A ($56.78 \pm 6.50\%$) and Mixed grade ($74.69 \pm 6.68\%$) oocytes were significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher than other grades of oocytes (Grades B: $46.58 \pm 5.92\%$ and C: 31.29 ± 7.11). The fertilisation rates of Grade A ($70.49 \pm 6.47\%$) and Mixed grade ($68.18 \pm 7.43\%$) oocytes and the insemination duration of 8 to 14 hours ($77.37 \pm 6.52\%$) were significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher. The cleavage rates of Grade A and Mixed grade oocytes were significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher than that of other groups. However, no significant difference ($P > 0.05$) was observed in both insemination durations of 8 to 14 and 18 to 24 hours. In caprine *in vitro* fertilisation, the maturation rate of Grade A ($74.19 \pm 5.79\%$) oocytes was significantly higher than Grades B ($54.66 \pm 7.42\%$) and C ($42.50 \pm 7.20\%$) oocytes. The fertilisation rate of Grade A oocytes ($40.54 \pm 8.23\%$) was significantly higher than that of Grade C ($16.26 \pm 5.99\%$) oocytes. The cleavage rates of Grades A ($38.39 \pm 8.89\%$) and B ($35.90 \pm 9.23\%$) oocytes were significantly higher than Grade C ($10.83 \pm 5.10\%$) oocytes; however, no significant differences ($P > 0.05$) were found in the fertilisation and cleavage rates among all grades of oocytes as well as with both insemination durations. In parthenogenetic activation,

the cleavage rate of bovine was significantly ($P<0.05$) higher than that of caprine with the percentages of 63.90 ± 7.30 and $26.77\pm 9.75\%$, respectively. For the developmental competence of caprine embryos exposed to vitrification solution (toxicity screening) at blastocyst, 75.00% of survival rate for blastocyst up to hatched blastocyst was obtained. The survival rate of 33.33% was achieved in the vitrification of blastocyst. In conclusion, *in vitro* fertilisation protocols for both bovine and caprine species have been successfully developed, producing satisfactory development of embryos *in vitro*. However, intrinsic and extrinsic factors (especially those pertaining to specific laboratory situation of a country) that influence the developmental competence of embryos after *in vitro* fertilisation should be studied in detail, to ensure optimum outcomes of subsequent cleavage, pregnancy and birth.

ABSTRAK

Objektif utama penyelidikan ini adalah untuk menentukan kesan penggredan oosit dan tempoh inseminasi ke atas kadar pembelahan embrio yang diperolehi daripada persenyawaan *in vitro* (IVF) dalam spesies bovin dan kaprin. Selain itu, kesan penggredan oosit dalam bovin dan kaprin ke atas penghasilan embrio partenogenetik serta sebagai suatu percubaan untuk mengkrioawet embrio dengan menggunakan teknik vitrifikasi juga dinilai. Oosit bovin telah diperolehi daripada rumah sembelihan manakala oosit kaprin diperolehi melalui *laparoscopic oocyte pick-up* (LOPU) atau sumber rumah sembelihan. Bagi kambing *laparoscopic oocyte pick-up*, suntikan gonadotrofin terlibat sebelum surgeri iaitu *Estrumate* (125 µg), *Pregnant Mare's Serum Gonadotrophin* (PMSG) (1500 IU) and *Ovidrel* (250 IU). Selepas pembersihan dalam *Phosphate Buffer Saline* (PBS) (untuk oosit *laparoscopic oocyte pick-up*) atau medium TL-Hepes (bagi oosit dari sumber rumah sembelihan/ovariektomi), kompleks oosit kumulus (COCs) dibasuh dengan medium pematangan *in vitro* (IVM). Kemudian, kompleks oosit kumulus dikultur mengikut gred dalam titisan medium pematangan *in vitro* yang telah dipreinkubasi semalaman dalam inkubator karbon dioksida (5%) pada 38.5°C selama 18 ke 21, 24 ke 27 dan 22 ke 24 jam, untuk oosit kaprin *laparoscopic oocyte pick-up* serta oosit kaprin dan bovin dari rumah sembelihan/ovariektomi, masing-masing. Gred oosit adalah berasaskan kepada lapisan kumulus dan pematangan oosit adalah berasaskan kepada kehadiran jasad kutub pertama. Bagi persenyawaan *in vitro* (IVF), oosit ditanggal sebahagian kumulusnya dan dieram bersama dengan sperma telah dinyahsejukkbeu (1×10^6 sperma/ml). Pengkulturan *in vitro* (IVC) zigot andaian dilakukan 8 ke 14 atau 18 ke 24 jam selepas persenyawaan. Kadar persenyawaan telah dinilai dengan kehadiran jasad kutub kedua. Kadar pembelahan embrio seterusnya diperhatikan dan direkodkan. Bagi pengaktifan partenogenetik (PA), oosit matang ditanggal

kumulatif sepenuhnya dan dibasuh dengan 3 titisan kalsium ionofor, dan seterusnya dieramkan di dalamnya selama 5 menit. Oosit tersebut kemudian dibasuh dengan 3 titisan 6-dimetilaminopiridin (6-DMAP) dan dieramkan di dalamnya selama 5 jam. Selepas dibasuh dengan 3 titisan daripada titisan kultur *in vitro* preinkubasi, oosit dikultur dan kadar pembelahan direkod setiap hari. Dalam suatu percubaan mengvitrifikasi embrio, embrio diletakkan ke dalam medium sementara (1 minit), diikuti dengan VS1 (3 minit) dan seterusnya VS2 (45 saat) sebelum dijunam ke dalam nitrogen cecair. Embrio divitrifikasi telah didevitrifikasi dengan cara rendaman ke dalam medium TS (5 minit), DS (5 minit), dan akhirnya dua medium sementara (5 minit setiap satu) secara berperingkat. Selepas dibasuh 3 kali dalam titisan kultur *in vitro* preinkubasi, oosit dikultur dan kadar hidup direkodkan setiap hari. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan *Analysis of Variance* (ANOVA) dan *Duncan Multiple Range Test* (DMRT). Dalam persenyawaan *in vitro* bovin, kadar pematangan bagi oosit Gred A ($56.78 \pm 6.50\%$) dan Gred Campuran ($74.69 \pm 6.68\%$) adalah lebih tinggi dengan signifikan ($P < 0.05$) berbanding dengan oosit gred lain (Gred B: $46.58 \pm 5.92\%$ dan C: 31.29 ± 7.11). Kadar persenyawaan oosit Gred A ($70.49 \pm 6.47\%$) dan Gred Campuran ($68.18 \pm 7.43\%$) serta tempoh inseminasi selama 8 ke 14 jam ($77.37 \pm 6.52\%$) adalah lebih tinggi dengan signifikan ($P < 0.05$). Kadar pembelahan bagi oosit Gred A dan Gred Campuran adalah lebih tinggi dengan signifikan ($P < 0.05$) berbanding dengan kumpulan lain. Walau bagaimanapun, tiada perbezaan signifikan ($P > 0.05$) diperhatikan dalam kedua-dua tempoh inseminasi selama 8 ke 14 dan 18 ke 24 jam. Dalam persenyawaan *in vitro* kaprin, kadar pematangan bagi oosit Gred A ($74.19 \pm 5.79\%$) adalah lebih tinggi dengan signifikan berbanding dengan oosit Gred B ($54.66 \pm 7.42\%$) dan C ($42.50 \pm 7.20\%$). Kadar persenyawaan oosit Gred A ($40.54 \pm 8.23\%$) adalah lebih tinggi dengan signifikan daripada oosit Gred C ($16.26 \pm 5.99\%$). Kadar pembelahan oosit Gred A ($38.39 \pm 8.89\%$) and B ($35.90 \pm 9.23\%$) adalah lebih tinggi dengan signifikan daripada

oosit Gred C ($10.83 \pm 5.10\%$); walau bagaimanapun, tiada perbezaan signifikan ($P > 0.05$) yang ditemui dalam kadar persenyawaan dan pembelahan antara semua gred oosit serta bagi kedua-dua tempoh inseminasi. Dalam aktivasi partenogenetik, kadar pembelahan bovin adalah lebih tinggi dengan signifikan ($P < 0.05$) daripada kaprin dengan peratusan 63.90 ± 7.30 dan $26.77 \pm 9.75\%$, masing-masing. Bagi keupayaan untuk hidup untuk embrio kaprin yang telah didedahkan kepada larutan vitrifikasi (penskrinan ketoksikan) pada tahap blastosit, 75.00% kadar hidup bagi blastosis ke blastosis tetas telah dicapai. Kadar hidup sebanyak 33.33% telah dicapai dalam vitrifikasi blastosis. Kesimpulannya, protokol persenyawaan *in vitro* bagi kedua-dua spesies bovin dan kaprin telah berjaya dibangunkan, menghasilkan perkembangan embrio *in vitro* yang memuaskan. Walau bagaimanapun, faktor-faktor intrinsik dan ekstrinsik (terutamanya yang berkaitan dengan keadaan makmal-makmal khusus bagi sesebuah negara) yang mempengaruhi keupayaan perkembangan embrio selepas persenyawaan *in vitro* patut dikaji dengan terperinci, bagi memastikan penghasilan optimum pada pembelahan, kebuntingan dan kelahiran berikutnya.

UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA

ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION

Name of Candidate : Tan Wei Lun IC No.: 850528-07-5862
Matric No. : SGR 080107
Name of Degree : Master of Science
Title of Dissertation : Production of caprine and bovine *in vitro*-fertilised as well as parthenogenetic embryos and an attempt to vitrify *in vivo*- and *in vitro*-derived embryos
Field of Study : Reproductive Biotechnology

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	ii
ABSTRAK	v
DECLARATION	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS	xi
LIST OF TABLES	xviii
LIST OF FIGURES	xxvi
LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS	xxviii
CHAPTERS	
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 BACKGROUND	1
1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS	4
1.3 JUSTIFICATION	5
1.4 APPLICATION	7
1.5 OBJECTIVES	7
2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE	9
2.1 BACKGROUND	9
2.2 OESTRUS SYNCHRONISATION AND SUPEROVULATION	13
2.2.1 Methodology of Oestrus Synchronisation and Superovulation in Goats	14
2.2.2 Age of Donor	19
2.3 RETRIEVAL OF OOCYTES AND EMBRYOS	20
2.3.1 Laparoscopic Oocyte Pick-up (LOPU)	20
2.3.2 Ovary Slicing and Follicle Aspiration	21
2.3.3 Classification and Selection of Oocyte	21

2.3.4 Embryo Flushing	25
2.4 <i>IN VITRO</i> MATURATION (IVM)	25
2.4.1 Medium	25
2.4.2 Duration	28
2.4.3 Follicle and Oocyte Size	29
2.5 <i>IN VITRO</i> FERTILISATION (IVF)	31
2.5.1 Sperm Preparation Methods	31
2.5.2 Sperm Preparation Medium	33
2.5.3 Sperm Capacitation	34
2.5.4 Acrosome Reaction	38
2.5.5 Oocyte Quality	39
2.5.6 Co-incubation Duration	40
2.6 PARTHENOGENETIC ACTIVATION	41
2.6.1 Activation Chemicals	41
2.6.2 Mechanisms Inhibiting Parthenote Development	43
2.7 <i>IN VITRO</i> CULTURE (IVC)	44
2.7.1 Medium Supplementation	44
2.7.2 Co-culture	45
2.7.3 Gas Atmosphere	49
2.8 VITRIFICATION	49
2.8.1 Cryoprotectant	50
2.8.2 Cooling and Warming Rate	53
2.8.3 Embryo Cell Stage	56
3.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS	58
3.1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION	58
3.2 FACILITIES	58

3.3	EXPERIMENTAL ANIMALS	59
3.4	MATERIALS	59
3.4.1	Equipment and Instruments	59
3.4.2	Glass-wares, Lab-wares and Disposable Items	60
3.4.3	Chemicals, Reagents and Media	60
3.5	METHODS	60
3.5.1	Maintenance of Research Laboratory	60
3.5.2	Preparation of Stocks and Media	61
3.5.2.1	Preparation of oestrus goat serum (OGS)	62
3.5.2.1 (a)	Blood collection	62
3.5.2.1 (b)	Heat-inactivation	63
3.5.2.2	Preparation of media for laparoscopic oocyte pick-up	63
3.5.2.2 (a)	Heparinised saline	64
3.5.2.2 (b)	Flushing medium	64
3.5.2.3	Preparation of media for ovary slicing	65
3.5.2.3 (a)	Saline	65
3.5.2.3 (b)	TL-Hepes	65
3.5.2.4	Preparation of <i>in vitro</i> maturation (IVM) medium	67
3.5.2.5	Preparation of <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation (IVF) medium for caprine	68
3.5.2.5 (a)	Preparation of synthetic oviductal fluid (SOF) medium	68
3.5.2.5 (b)	Medium for sperm preparation (sperm-SOF medium)	70
3.5.2.5 (c)	Medium for <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation (IVF-SOF medium)	70
3.5.2.6	Preparation of <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation medium for bovine	71
3.5.2.6 (a)	Preparation of Brackett-Oliphant (BO) medium	71
3.5.2.6 (b)	Medium for sperm preparation (BO-sperm preparation medium)	72
3.5.2.6 (c)	Medium for <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation (BO-IVF medium)	73

3.5.2.7	Preparation of medium for parthenogenetic activation	73
3.5.2.7 (a)	Preparation of calcium ionophore (CI)	73
3.5.2.7 (b)	Preparation of 6-dimethylaminopyridine (6-DMAP)	74
3.5.2.8	Preparation of <i>in vitro</i> culture (IVC) medium	75
3.5.2.8 (a)	IVC-SOF medium	75
3.5.2.8 (b)	KSOM medium	75
3.5.3	Preparation of Hand-controlled Pipette and Mouthpiece	76
3.5.3.1	Cleaning and sterilisation of pipette	77
3.5.3.2	Preparation of hand-controlled pipette	77
3.5.4	Preparation of Silicone Oil	78
3.5.5	Oocyte Retrieval and Embryo Flushing	79
3.5.5.1	Preparation of donor goat for laparoscopic oocyte pick-up	79
3.5.5.1 (a)	Oestrus synchronisation of donor goat for laparoscopic oocyte pick-up	79
3.5.5.1 (b)	Hyperstimulation of donor goat for laparoscopic oocyte pick-up	81
3.5.5.2	Preparation of donor goat for embryo flushing	81
3.5.5.2 (a)	Oestrus synchronisation and hyperstimulation of donor goat for embryo flushing	82
3.5.5.2 (b)	Detection of oestrus and mating	82
3.5.5.3	Setting up of surgical instruments, CO ₂ insufflator system, light system, imaging device and aspiration-flushing system for laparoscopic oocyte pick-up	82
3.5.5.4	Setting up of surgical instruments, CO ₂ insufflator system, light system and imaging device for embryo flushing	86
3.5.5.5	Sedation and anaesthetisation of donor goat	87
3.5.5.6	Laparoscopic oocyte pick-up (LOPU)	87
3.5.5.7	Ovariectomy	89
3.5.5.8	Abattoir	91
3.5.5.9	Embryo flushing	92

3.5.5.10	Post-surgery management	97
3.5.6	<i>In Vitro</i> Production (IVP) of Embryos	97
3.5.6.1	<i>In vitro</i> maturation (IVM)	97
3.5.6.2	<i>In vitro</i> fertilisation (IVF)	99
3.5.6.2 (a)	Sperm swim-up	100
3.5.6.2 (b)	Sperm washing	100
3.5.6.2 (c)	Assessment of sperm concentration	101
3.5.6.2 (d)	Preparation of oocytes for <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	103
3.5.6.2 (e)	Sperm capacitation and insemination	104
3.5.6.3	<i>In vitro</i> culture of <i>in vitro</i> fertilised zygotes	104
3.5.6.4	Parthenogenesis	105
3.5.7	Vitrification of Embryos	105
3.5.7.1	Preparation of vitrification and warming solutions	105
3.5.7.2	Construction of cryoleaf	106
3.5.7.3	Vitrification	107
3.5.7.4	Warming	108
3.6	EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN	111
3.6.1	Effect of Oocyte Grading and Insemination Duration on Cleavage Rate of Embryos Obtained from <i>In Vitro</i> Fertilisation in Bovine (Experiment 1)	111
3.6.2	Effect of Oocyte Grading and Insemination Duration on Cleavage Rate of Embryos Obtained from <i>In Vitro</i> Fertilisation in Caprine (Experiment 2)	113
3.6.3	Effect of Oocyte Grading in Bovine and Caprine on Production of Parthenogenetic Embryos (Experiment 3)	115
3.6.4	An Attempt to Cryopreserve Caprine and Bovine Embryos Using Vitrification Technique (Experiment 4)	115
3.7	STATISTICAL ANALYSIS	116
4.0	RESULTS	118

4.1	EFFECT OF OOCYTE GRADING AND INSEMINATION DURATION ON CLEAVAGE RATE OF EMBRYOS OBTAINED FROM <i>IN VITRO</i> FERTILISATION IN BOVINE (EXPERIMENT 1)	118
4.2	EFFECT OF OOCYTE GRADING AND INSEMINATION DURATION ON CLEAVAGE RATE OF EMBRYOS OBTAINED FROM <i>IN VITRO</i> FERTILISATION IN CAPRINE (EXPERIMENT 2)	130
4.3	EFFECT OF OOCYTE GRADING IN BOVINE AND CAPRINE ON PRODUCTION OF PARTHENOGENETIC EMBRYOS (EXPERIMENT 3)	138
4.4	AN ATTEMPT TO CRYOPRESERVE CAPRINE AND BOVINE EMBRYOS USING VITRIFICATION TECHNIQUE (EXPERIMENT 4)	151
5.0	DISCUSSION	155
5.1	EFFECT OF OOCYTE GRADING AND INSEMINATION DURATION ON CLEAVAGE RATE OF EMBRYOS OBTAINED FROM <i>IN VITRO</i> FERTILISATION IN BOVINE (EXPERIMENT 1)	155
5.2	EFFECT OF OOCYTE GRADING AND INSEMINATION DURATION ON CLEAVAGE RATE OF EMBRYOS OBTAINED FROM <i>IN VITRO</i> FERTILISATION IN CAPRINE (EXPERIMENT 2)	163
5.3	EFFECT OF OOCYTE GRADING IN BOVINE AND CAPRINE ON PRODUCTION OF PARTHENOGENETIC EMBRYOS (EXPERIMENT 3)	168
5.4	AN ATTEMPT TO CRYOPRESERVE CAPRINE AND BOVINE EMBRYOS USING VITRIFICATION TECHNIQUE (EXPERIMENT 4)	171
5.5	GENERAL DISCUSSION	175
5.5.1	Oestrus Synchronisation and Hyperstimulation	175
5.5.2	Temperature	176
5.5.3	<i>In Vitro</i> Maturation	178
5.5.4	<i>In Vitro</i> Fertilisation	179
5.5.5	Parthenogenetic Activation	180
5.5.6	Follicle Diameter	184

5.5.7	<i>In Vitro</i> Culture	185
5.5.8	Vitrification	187
6.0	CONCLUSIONS	191
	REFERENCES	193
	APPENDICES	247
	APPENDIX 1: LIST OF MATERIALS	247
	APPENDIX 2: STATISTICAL DATA	250
	APPENDIX 3: SELECTED PUBLISHED ARTICLE	353

LIST OF TABLES

	Page	
Table 2.1	Timeline of selected significant findings of oestrus synchronisation, oocyte recovery, <i>in vitro</i> maturation, fertilisation and culture, parthenogenetic activation and vitrification in caprine and bovine	9
Table 2.2	Grading of oocytes based on the cumulus investment and cytoplasmic distribution (adapted from Kharche <i>et al.</i> , 2009)	23
Table 2.3	Grading of oocytes based on the cumulus investment and cytoplasmic distribution (adapted from Li <i>et al.</i> , 2009)	23
Table 2.4	Classification of bovine COC ^a	24
Table 3.1	Composition of heparinised saline solution	64
Table 3.2	Composition of flushing medium	65
Table 3.3	Composition of saline supplemented with streptomycin and penicillin	65
Table 3.4	Composition of TL-Hepes stock with a shelf life of 2 weeks (stored at 4°C)	66
Table 3.5	Composition of TL-Hepes working solution with a shelf life of 1 week (stored at 4°C)	66
Table 3.6	Preparation of stock solutions for <i>in vitro</i> maturation medium	67
Table 3.7	Composition of <i>in vitro</i> maturation medium	68
Table 3.8	Composition of Stock-A for SOF medium (10x) with a shelf life of 3 months (stored at 4°C)	69
Table 3.9	Composition of Stock-B for SOF medium (10x) with a shelf life of 1 week (stored at 4°C)	69
Table 3.10	Composition of Stock-C for SOF medium (100x) with a shelf life of 1 week (stored at -20°C)	69
Table 3.11	Composition of Stock-D for SOF medium (100x) with a shelf life of 3 months (stored at 4°C)	70
Table 3.12	Composition of sperm-SOF medium (10 ml)	70
Table 3.13	Composition of IVF-SOF medium (10 ml)	71

Table 3.14	Composition of BO stock solution with a shelf life of 3 months (stored at 4°C)	72
Table 3.15	Composition of BO working solution with a shelf life of 2 weeks (stored at 4°C)	72
Table 3.16	Composition of BO-sperm preparation medium with a shelf life of 2 weeks (stored at 4°C)	73
Table 3.17	Composition of BO-IVF medium with a shelf life of 1 week (stored at 4°C)	73
Table 3.18	Composition of calcium ionophore stock solution	74
Table 3.19	Composition of calcium ionophore working solution	74
Table 3.20	Composition of 6-dimethylaminopyridine stock solution	74
Table 3.21	Composition of 6-dimethylaminopyridine working solution	74
Table 3.22	Composition of IVC-SOF medium (10 ml)	75
Table 3.23	Composition of KSOM stock solution with a shelf life of 1 month (stored at 4°C)	76
Table 3.24	Composition of KSOM working solution with a shelf life of 1 week (stored at 4°C)	76
Table 3.25	Oocyte grading based on the cumulus cellular vestments and cytoplasm uniformity	98
Table 3.26	Calculating sperm concentration	103
Table 3.27	Solutions for vitrification and warming procedures	106
Table 3.28	Experimental outline of vitrification	107
Table 3.29	Experimental outline of warming	109
Table 4.1	Percent distribution (mean±SEM) of oocyte quality in bovine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	122
Table 4.2	Maturation rate (% , mean±SEM) of bovine oocytes at different grades in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	122
Table 4.3	Fertilisation rate (% , mean±SEM) of bovine oocytes at different grades in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	123
Table 4.4	Cleavage rate (% , mean±SEM) of bovine oocytes at different grades in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	124

Table 4.5	Maturation rate (% , mean±SEM) of bovine oocytes for different insemination durations in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	125
Table 4.6	Fertilisation rate (% , mean±SEM) of bovine oocytes for different insemination durations in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	125
Table 4.7	Cleavage rate (% , mean±SEM) of bovine oocytes for different insemination durations in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	126
Table 4.8	Maturation rate (% , mean±SEM) of bovine oocytes with different gradings and insemination durations in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	126
Table 4.9	Fertilisation rate (% , mean±SEM) of bovine oocytes with different gradings and insemination durations in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	127
Table 4.10	Cleavage rate (% , mean±SEM) of bovine oocytes with different gradings and insemination durations in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	128
Table 4.11	Percent distribution (mean±SEM) of oocyte quality in caprine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	133
Table 4.12	Maturation rate (% , mean±SEM) of caprine oocytes at different grades in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	133
Table 4.13	Fertilisation rate (% , mean±SEM) of caprine oocytes at different grades in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	133
Table 4.14	Cleavage rate (% , mean±SEM) of caprine oocytes at different grades in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	134
Table 4.15	Maturation rate (% , mean±SEM) of caprine oocytes for different insemination durations in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	134
Table 4.16	Fertilisation rate (% , mean±SEM) of caprine oocytes for different insemination durations in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	135
Table 4.17	Cleavage rate (% , mean±SEM) of caprine oocytes for different insemination durations in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	135
Table 4.18	Cleavage rate (% , mean±SEM) of caprine oocytes with different gradings and insemination durations in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	136
Table 4.19	Distribution rate (% , mean±SEM) of oocyte quality in bovine parthenogenesis	142
Table 4.20	Maturation rate (% , mean±SEM) of bovine oocytes at different grades in parthenogenesis	142

Table 4.21	Cleavage rate (% , mean±SEM) of bovine oocytes at different grades in parthenogenesis	143
Table 4.22	Distribution rate (% , mean±SEM) of oocyte quality in caprine parthenogenesis	144
Table 4.23	Maturation rate (% , mean±SEM) of caprine oocytes at different grades in parthenogenesis	144
Table 4.24	Cleavage rate (% , mean±SEM) of caprine oocytes at different grades in parthenogenesis	145
Table 4.25	Cleavage rate (% , mean±SEM) of oocytes in parthenogenesis for different species	146
Table 4.26	Cleavage rate (% , mean±SEM) of Grade A oocytes in parthenogenesis for different species	146
Table 4.27	Cleavage rate (% , mean±SEM) of Grade B oocytes in parthenogenesis for different species	147
Table 4.28	Cleavage rate (% , mean±SEM) of Grade C oocytes in parthenogenesis for different species	147
Table 4.29	Cleavage rate (% , mean±SEM) of mixed grades oocytes in parthenogenesis for different species	148
Table 4.30	Developmental competence of bovine embryos exposed to vitrification solution (TS, toxicity screening) at different developmental stages	151
Table 4.31	Developmental competence of caprine embryos exposed to vitrification solution (TS, toxicity screening) at different developmental stages	151
Table 4.32	Developmental competence of bovine embryos vitrified at different developmental stages	152
Table 4.33	Developmental competence of caprine embryos vitrified at different developmental stages	152
Appendix Table 1.1	List of equipment and instruments	247
Appendix Table 1.2	List of glass-wares, lab-wares and disposables	248
Appendix Table 1.3	List of chemicals, reagents and media	248
Appendix Table 2.1	Number of oocytes per ovary in bovine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	250

Appendix Table 2.2	Percent distribution of bovine oocyte in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	251
Appendix Table 2.3	Maturation rate of different grades of oocytes in bovine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	252
Appendix Table 2.4	Fertilisation rate of different grades of oocytes in bovine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	253
Appendix Table 2.5	Cleavage rate of bovine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation with different grades of oocytes in different embryo developmental stages	254
Appendix Table 2.6	Cleavage rate of bovine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation in different grades of oocytes	257
Appendix Table 2.7	Maturation rate of bovine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation in different insemination durations	260
Appendix Table 2.8	Fertilisation rate of bovine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation in different insemination durations	261
Appendix Table 2.9	Cleavage rate of bovine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation with different insemination durations in different embryo developmental stages	262
Appendix Table 2.10	Cleavage rate of bovine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation in different insemination durations	264
Appendix Table 2.11	Maturation rate of bovine oocytes <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation with different gradings in different insemination durations	266
Appendix Table 2.12	Maturation rate of bovine oocytes <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation with different insemination durations in different oocyte gradings	268
Appendix Table 2.13	Fertilisation rate of bovine oocytes <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation with different gradings in different insemination durations	270
Appendix Table 2.14	Fertilisation rate of bovine oocytes <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation with different insemination durations in different oocyte gradings	272
Appendix Table 2.15	Cleavage rate of bovine oocytes <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation with different gradings and different insemination durations in different embryo developmental stages	274
Appendix Table 2.16	Cleavage rate of bovine oocytes <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation with different insemination durations and oocyte gradings	279
Appendix Table 2.17	Number of oocytes per ovary in caprine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	284

Appendix Table 2.18	Percent distribution of caprine oocyte in <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	285
Appendix Table 2.19	Maturation rate of different grades of oocytes in caprine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	286
Appendix Table 2.20	Fertilisation rate of different grades of oocytes in caprine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation	287
Appendix Table 2.21	Cleavage rate of caprine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation with different grades of oocytes in different embryo developmental stages	288
Appendix Table 2.22	Cleavage rate of caprine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation in different grades of oocytes	290
Appendix Table 2.23	Maturation rate of caprine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation in different insemination durations	293
Appendix Table 2.24	Fertilisation rate of caprine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation in different insemination durations	294
Appendix Table 2.25	Cleavage rate of caprine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation in different insemination durations	295
Appendix Table 2.26	Cleavage rate of caprine <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation with different insemination durations in different embryo developmental stages	297
Appendix Table 2.27	Cleavage rate of caprine oocytes <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation with different gradings and different insemination durations in different embryo developmental stages	299
Appendix Table 2.28	Cleavage rate of caprine oocytes <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation with different insemination durations and oocyte gradings	304
Appendix Table 2.29	Number of oocytes per ovary in bovine parthenogenetic activation	309
Appendix Table 2.30	Percent distribution of bovine oocyte in parthenogenetic activation	310
Appendix Table 2.31	Maturation rate of bovine oocyte in parthenogenetic activation	311
Appendix Table 2.32	Cleavage rate of bovine oocyte in parthenogenetic activation in different embryo developmental stages	312
Appendix Table 2.33	Cleavage rate of bovine oocyte in parthenogenetic activation with different oocyte gradings	317

Appendix Table 2.34	Number of oocytes per ovary in caprine parthenogenetic activation	321
Appendix Table 2.35	Percent distribution of caprine oocyte in parthenogenetic activation	322
Appendix Table 2.36	Maturation rate of caprine oocyte in parthenogenetic activation	323
Appendix Table 2.37	Cleavage rate of caprine oocyte in parthenogenetic activation in different embryo developmental stages	324
Appendix Table 2.38	Cleavage rate of caprine oocyte in parthenogenetic activation with different oocyte gradings	329
Appendix Table 2.39	Cleavage rate of oocyte in parthenogenetic activation in different species in different embryo developmental stages	334
Appendix Table 2.40	Cleavage rate of oocyte in parthenogenetic activation for different species	336
Appendix Table 2.41	Cleavage rate of Grade A oocyte in parthenogenetic activation for different species in different embryo developmental stages	338
Appendix Table 2.42	Cleavage rate of Grade A oocyte in parthenogenetic activation for different embryo developmental stages in different species	340
Appendix Table 2.43	Cleavage rate of Grade B oocyte in parthenogenetic activation for different species in different embryo developmental stages	342
Appendix Table 2.44	Cleavage rate of Grade B oocyte in parthenogenetic activation for different embryo developmental stages in different species	344
Appendix Table 2.45	Cleavage rate of Grade C oocyte in parthenogenetic activation for different species in different embryo developmental stages	346
Appendix Table 2.46	Cleavage rate of Grade C oocyte in parthenogenetic activation for different embryo developmental stages in different species	348
Appendix Table 2.47	Cleavage rate of mixed grades oocyte in parthenogenetic activation for different species in different embryo developmental stages	349

Appendix	Cleavage rate of mixed grades oocyte in parthenogenetic	351
Table 2.48	activation for different embryo developmental stages in different species	

LIST OF FIGURES

		Page
Figure 2.1	Gradings of oocytes.	24
Figure 3.1	Blood collection was being carried out.	63
Figure 3.2	Hand-controlled pipette with mouthpiece.	77
Figure 3.3	A schematic representation of the treatments performed on a donor goat for laparoscopic oocyte pick-up.	79
Figure 3.4	Devices used during CIDR insertion.	80
Figure 3.5	A schematic representation of the treatments performed on a donor goat for embryo flushing.	81
Figure 3.6	Setting up of surgical instruments on surgical trolley for laparoscopic oocyte pick-up.	85
Figure 3.7	Setting up of surgical instruments on surgical trolley for embryo flushing.	86
Figure 3.8	Laparoscopic oocyte pick-up was being carried out.	89
Figure 3.9	The slicing of ovary.	92
Figure 3.10	The uterine horn and ovaries were exteriorised for observation of the ovarian morphology.	94
Figure 3.11	A 2-way Foley catheter was inserted through the puncture towards the utero-tubal junction and the catheter balloon was sufficiently inflated to completely obstruct the lumen at the caudal end of each uterine horn.	95
Figure 3.12	Teflon intravenous catheter placement unit was inserted at the anterior end of the uterine horn.	96
Figure 3.13	Photomicrographs of immature oocyte at different grades.	99
Figure 3.14	The 'Neubauer' type chamber of haemocytometer.	102
Figure 3.15	Assessment of sperm concentration using haemocytometer.	103
Figure 3.16	Hand-made cryoleaf.	107
Figure 3.17	A schematic representation of the steps involved in vitrification procedure.	110
Figure 3.18	A schematic representation of the steps involved in warming procedures.	110

Figure 3.19	A flow chart for schematic overview of the experimental design.	117
Figure 4.1	Photomicrographs of bovine embryos produced via <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation at different developmental stages.	129
Figure 4.2	Photomicrographs of caprine embryos produced via <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation at different developmental stages.	137
Figure 4.3	Photomicrographs of bovine embryos produced via parthenogenesis at different developmental stages.	149
Figure 4.4	Photomicrographs of caprine embryos produced via parthenogenesis at different developmental stages.	150
Figure 4.5	Photomicrographs of caprine embryos survived after toxicity screening at blastocyst stage.	153
Figure 4.6	Photomicrograph of caprine embryos survived after vitrification-devitrification at blastocyst stage.	154

LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AI	artificial insemination
ANOVA	analysis of variance
ART	assisted reproductive technology
BCB	Brilliant cresyl blue
BD	1, 3 butanediol
bFGF	basic fibroblast growth factor
BO	Brackett-Oliphant
BRL	buffalo rat liver
BSA	bovine serum albumin
cAMP	cyclic adenosine monophosphate
CB	cytochalasin B
CCD	charge coupled devices
CHX	cycloheximide
CI	calcium ionophore
CIDR	Controlled Intravaginal Drug Release device
CO ₂	carbon dioxide
COCs	cumulus oocyte complexes
CSF	cytostatic factor
CTC	chlortetracycline
6-DMAP	6-dimethylaminopurine
dDMAP	dimethylaminopurine
D-MRT	Duncan's multiple range tests
DMSO	dimethyl sulfoxide
DNA	deoxyribonucleic acid
E ₂	oestradiol
eCG	equine chorionic gonadotrophin
EDI	electrodeionisation
EG	ethylene glycol
EGF	epidermal growth factor
EMiL	Embryo Micromanipulation Laboratory
ET	ethanol
FCS	foetal calf serum
FF	follicular fluid
FGA	flurogesterone acetate
FSH	follicle stimulating hormone
g	gramme(s)
<i>g</i>	Gravity, acceleration due to
G6PDH	glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase
GnRH	gonadotrophin releasing hormone
GOEC	goat oviduct epithelial cells
GSH	glutathione
GVBD	germinal vesicle breakdown
hCG	human chorionic gonadotrophin
HIS	high ionic strength
HM	holding medium
hr	hour
ICSI	intracytoplasmic sperm injection
IGF-I	insulin-like growth factor
i.m.	intramuscularly
IP3	inositol 1, 4, 5-triphosphate

IPPP	Institute of Research, Management and Consultancy
ISB	Institute of Biological Sciences
IU	international unit
I.V.	intravenous
IVM	<i>in vitro</i> maturation
IVMFC	<i>in vitro</i> maturation, fertilisation and culture
IVF	<i>in vitro</i> fertilisation
IVC	<i>in vitro</i> culture
IVEP	<i>in vitro</i> embryo production
IVP	<i>in vitro</i> embryo production
kg	kilogramme(s)
KSOM	Potassium Simplex Optimised Medium
LH	luteinising hormone
LN ₂	liquid nitrogen
LOPU	laparoscopic oocyte pick-up
M	molar
MAP	methylacetoxypregesterone
MAPK	mitogen activated protein kinase
mg	milligramme(s)
MGA	medroxyprogesterone acetate
MII	metaphase II
ml	millilitre(s)
mm	millimetre(s)
MOET	multiple ovulation and embryo transfer
MPF	maturation promoting factor
mtDNA	mitochondrial deoxyribonucleic acid
MTM	modified Tyrode's medium
n	number
NaTuRe	Nuclear Transfer and Reprogramming Laboratory
ng	nanogramme(s)
OGS	oestrus goat serum
OPS	open pulled-straw
OR	oocyte recovery
OSFs	oocyte secreted factors
PA	Parthenogenetic activation
PBS	Phosphate-buffered saline
PDGF	platelet derived growth factor
pg	picogramme(s)
PHE	penicillamine, hypotaurine and epinephrine
PKA	protein kinase A
pLH	porcine luteinising hormone
PMSG	pregnant mare's serum gonadotrophin
PVA	polyvinyl alcohol
PVP	polyvinylpyrrolidone
PZM-3	porcine zygote medium
RO	reverse-osmosis
ROS	reactive oxygen species
sAC	soluble adenylyl cyclase
SiO ₂	silica
SM	sucrose medium
SOF	synthetic oviductal fluid
Sr	strontium

SSV	solid surface vitrification
TALP	Tyrode's albumin-lactate-pyruvate
TGF β 1 β 2	transforming growth factor
TS	thawing solution
UV	ultraviolet
vs.	versus
μ g	microgramme(s)
μ l	microlitre(s)
μ M	micromolar(s)
%	percentage