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Effect of genetic and non-genetic factors on first lactation reproduction traits in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle

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Abstract

The data of 250 Phule Triveni crossbred cattle born from 62 sires maintained at Research Cum Development Project (RCDP) on cattle, MPKV, Rahuri for a period of 33 years (1987 to 2020) were collected for present investigation. The overall least-squares means of age at first calving (AFC), first service period (FSP) and first calving interval (FCI) in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle were estimated as 1023.25 ± 10.14 , 198.38 ± 9.83 and 477.52 ± 09.82 days, respectively. The period of birth had significant effect on AFC ($p < 0.01$) while the period of calving had significant effect on FSP ($p < 0.05$) and FCI ($p < 0.05$) in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle. The variations due to season of birth in AFC while the variations due to season of calving in FSP and FCI were non-significant in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle under study. There was non-significant effect of peak milk yield on FSP and FCI. The sire had significant effect ($p < 0.01$) on AFC while non-significant effect on FSP and FCI in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle.

Keywords: Phule Triveni, age at first calving, first service period, first calving interval

Introduction

Livestock is a key component of Indian agriculture, which supports the country's economy and employs millions of people. India has 193.46 million cattle, ranking first in the world, according to the 20th Livestock Census (2019) [1]. In India, there are 51.36 million exotic/crossbred cattle and 142.11 million indigenous/non-descript cattle. The two most important aspects of the overall effectiveness and profitability of the dairy animals are milk production and reproductive performance. Unfortunately, for a long time, dairy cattle breeding programmes have focused primarily on enhancing the production traits and have not given the reproduction traits the weight they deserve. But over time, a decline in reproduction has overshadowed the increase in milk output. Additionally, it was discovered that the high-yielding cows were very sensitive to negative energy balance, excessive mobilisation of body reserves in early lactation, failure to recover body reserves during mid- to late-lactation and significantly reduced reproductive efficiency (Royal *et al.*, 2000; Lucy 2001; Pyrcce and Veerkamp, 2001; Pryce *et al.*, 2004) [27, 15, 24]. Reproduction is also economically significant because its decline may result in more inseminations, more expensive veterinary care and a greater culling rate. According to Nehra (2011) [18] using data from Karan Fries, roughly 23 per cent of cows were culled before their first lactation because of reproductive issues.

It is extremely challenging to predict which breed, cross or generation will provide the highest economic returns over investment due to the wide variation in performance of crossbreds due to differences of exotic donor breed and the adaptability of the crossbred to the divergent climatic conditions of the tropics, despite the fact that exotic cattle and their crosses are being used more frequently to raise milk production in the hot climate of the Indian subcontinent (Patel and Dave, 1987) [20]. Therefore, determining and stabilizing the ideal level of exotic inheritance in a cross-breeding operation remains a moot topic (Dalal *et al.*, 1991) [4]. For the creation and execution of long-term breeding programmes, it is imperative to evaluate the comparative performance of crossbreds of various generations under diverse agroclimatic environments (Prabhukumar *et al.*, 1990) [22].

The profitability of the dairy sector depends on animal production, which is influenced by both genetic and non-genetic factors. Knowing how non-genetic factors affect an animal's ability to be exploited is crucial for maximizing its genetic potential. To assess the genetic and non-genetic factors that influence production and reproductive qualities, comparative research is

absolutely necessary. Therefore, the present investigation was undertaken to evaluate the non-genetic and genetic parameters which affect the reproduction traits in Phule Triveni. The aim of present study was to study the reproductive performance in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle by using data records of period from 1987 to 2020.

Material and Methods

Source of data

The data pertaining to the reproduction traits of 250 Phule Triveni crossbred cattle born from 62 sires were collected from history-cum-pedigree sheets and daily milk yield records maintained at Research Cum Development Project (RCDP) on Cattle, Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri, Dist. Ahmednagar (M.S.) for the period of 33 years (1987-2020) and utilized for the present investigation.

Standardization of data

Culling in middle of lactation, abortion, still-birth or any other pathological causes which affected the lactation yield were considered as abnormalities and thus, such records were not taken for the study. The outliers beyond two-standard deviation on both the tail ends of normal distribution were excluded from the data. The records of Phule Triveni of known pedigree and with normal lactation were included in the present study. Reproduction traits were normalized.

Classification of data

The data were classified according to period of birth/calving, season of birth/calving and peak milk yield for various first lactation reproduction traits.

Statistical Analysis

In order to overcome non orthogonality of the data resulting from unequal and disproportionate sub class frequencies, the least squares analysis method suggested by Harvey (1990) [10] was used for analysis of data. The following mathematical models were used to estimate least squares means of various traits by considering effects of different factors.

Model – I: The least squares mean of age at first calving was estimated by considering period of birth and season of birth effects.

$$Y_{ijk} = \mu + P_i + S_j + e_{ijk}$$

Where,

Y_{ijk} = kth Observations of age at first calving in ith period of birth and

jth season of birth

μ = Population mean

P_i = Effect of ith period of birth (i = 1, 2,.....11)

S_j = Effect of jth season of birth (j = 1, 2 and 3)

e_{ijk} = Random error associated with NID ~ (0, σ^2_e)

Model – II: The least squares mean of first service period, first calving interval were estimated by considering period of calving, season of calving and peak milk yield effects.

$$Y_{ijkl} = \mu + P_i + S_j + A_k + e_{ijkl}$$

Where,

Y_{ijkl} = lth Observations of reproductive traits in ith period of calving, jth season of calving and kth peak milk yield

μ = Population mean

P_i = Effect of ith period of calving (i = 1, 2,.....10)

S_j = Effect of jth season of calving (j = 1, 2 and 3)

A_k = Effect of kth peak milk yield (k = 1, 2 and 3)

e_{ijkl} = Random error associated with NID ~ (0, σ^2_e)

Model – III: Least squares analysis of some reproduction traits as affected by sire was carried out by using following statistical model.

$$Y_{ij} = \mu + S_i + e_{ij}$$

Where,

Y_{ij} = jth Observation on reproduction and production traits in ith sire

μ = Population means

S_i = Effect of ith sire (i = 1 to n)

e_{ij} = Random error associated with NID ~ (0, σ^2_e)

Duncan's Multiple Range Test (DMRT)

Whenever the effects were significant the differences between means were tested for significance by Duncan's Multiple Range Test (DMRT) as modified by Kramer (1957) [13].

Results and Discussion

The data on first lactation reproduction traits consists of age at first calving (AFC), first service period (FSP) and first calving interval (FCI) were analyzed by least-squares technique to estimate the effect of non-genetic factors viz. period of birth/calving, season of birth/calving and peak milk yield on the traits under study. After correcting the data for the non-genetic factors, the least squares means of traits were estimated by considering the effects of sire.

First Lactation Reproduction Traits

The overall least-squares means of AFC, FSP and FCI in Phule Triveni were estimated as 1023.25±10.14, 198.38±9.83 and 477.52±09.82 days, respectively (Table 2). The observed age at first calving were in close agreement with Akhtar *et al.* (2003) [2] in 5/8 HF x 3/8 SW, Garudkar (2015) [9] in IFG, Ambhore *et al.* (2017) [3] in Phule Triveni, Jadhav *et al.* (2019) [12] and Sarwade (2021) [29] in HF x Gir halfbred. The lower AFC than the present results were reported by Garudkar (2015) [9] in FG and FJG genetic group. However, higher values of AFC were noticed by Jadhav (1990) [11] in HF x SW, Thombre *et al.* (2002) [34] in HF x Deoni and Dubey and Singh (2005) [8] in Crossbred Sahiwal.

The present results of FSP were resembled with Mukherjee (2005) [17] in Frieswal (164.51±2.51 days), Deokar *et al.* (2008) [6] in Phule Triveni (158±6 days), Garudkar (2015) [9] in IFJG (161.78±3.05 days), Rathee (2015) [26] in Frieswal (153.26±3.79 days) and Ambhore *et al.* (2017) [3] in Phule Triveni (151.07±5.10 days). However, Panja (1997) [19] and Saha (2001) in Karan Fries cattle reported shorter service period.

Similar result of FCI findings with Deokar *et al.* (2008) [6] in Phule Triveni (438±6.05 days), Ambhore *et al.* (2017) [3] in Phule Triveni (430.32±4.01 days), Kuchekar *et al.* (2021) [14] in Phule Triveni (421.63±5.65 days) and Sarwade (2021) [29] in HF x Gir halfbred (421.10±3.77 days). However, shorter calving interval was observed by Akhtar *et al.* (2003) [2] in 5/8 HF x 3/8 SW (386±7 days), Nehra (2011) [18] in Karan fries (328±5 days).

Table 1: ANOVA for first lactation reproduction traits in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle

Source of variation	Age at first calving (days)		First service period (days)		First calving interval (days)	
	d.f.	MSS	d.f.	MSS	d.f.	MSS
Period of Birth/Calving	10	224603.37**	9	38286.85*	9	38287.49*
Season of Birth/Calving	2	20560.46	2	42392.35	2	42198.52
Peak milk yield	-	-	2	12757.27	2	12779.71
Error	237	16536.97	236	17267.49	236	17254.91
Sire	61	52931.86**	61	20088.29	61	20061.76
Error	187	15187.57	187	16178.50	187	16170.14

*: $p < 0.05$

** : $p < 0.01$

Effect of period of birth/calving

The period of birth had significant effect on AFC ($p < 0.01$) while the period of calving had significant effect on FSP ($p < 0.05$) and FCI ($p < 0.05$) in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle (Table 1). The DMRT confirmed in Phule Triveni that the cows born during period P₁₁ had significantly shorter AFC (834.40±64.37 days), which was at par with the cows born during P₁ (884.54±19.72 days). These findings were in close agreement with Singh *et al.* (2014) in Frieswal, Ambhore *et al.* (2017) [3] and Kuchekar *et al.* (2021) [14] in Phule Triveni, Jadhav *et al.* (2019) [12], Shinde (2021) [30] and Sarwade (2021) [29] in HF x Gir halfbred.

In Phule Triveni, significantly lowest FSP was observed in cows those calved during period P₁ (131.35±18.47 days) than other periods. These results were in agreement with the

findings of Divya (2012) [7] in Karan Fries, Rathee (2015) [26] in Frieswal cows and Kuchekar *et al.* (2021) [14] in Phule Triveni. While, non-significant effect of period of calving on service period was reported by Garudkar (2015) [9] in FG, IFG, FJG, IFJG crossbreds, Ambhore *et al.* (2017) [3] in Phule Triveni cattle, Jadhav *et al.* (2019) [12].

In Phule Triveni, significantly lowest FCI was observed in cows those calved during P₁ (410.43±18.47 days), while it was the highest in cows calved during P₈ (523.64±28.82 days) which was at par with cows calved during P₇ (511.29±26.28 days). The significant effect of period of calving on FCI was supported by Zol *et al.* (2009), Ambhore *et al.* (2017) [3] and Kuchekar *et al.* (2021) [14] in Phule Triveni cattle, Mukherjee (2005) [17] and Rathee (2015) [26] in Frieswal cows.

Table 2: Least squares means for first lactation reproduction traits in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle

Source of variation	Age at first calving (days)			First service period (days)			First calving interval (days)				
	N	Mean	SE	μ	N	Mean	SE	μ	N	Mean	SE
μ	250	1023.25	10.14	μ	250	198.38	9.83	μ	250	477.52	09.82
Period of birth/calving											
P ₁ (1987-89)	45	884.54 ^a	19.72	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
P ₂ (1990-92)	36	961.41 ^{bc}	21.59	P ₁ (1990-92)	54	131.35 ^a	18.47	P ₁ (1990-92)	54	410.43 ^a	18.47
P ₃ (1993-95)	11	1090.15 ^e	38.89	P ₂ (1993-95)	28	192.27 ^{ab}	25.17	P ₂ (1993-95)	28	471.34 ^{ab}	25.16
P ₄ (1996-98)	13	1081.37 ^{de}	35.81	P ₃ (1996-98)	9	192.19 ^{ab}	44.09	P ₃ (1996-98)	9	471.41 ^{ab}	44.07
P ₅ (1999-2001)	16	1151.10 ^e	32.21	P ₄ (1999-2001)	15	160.00 ^a	34.26	P ₄ (1999-2001)	15	439.14 ^a	34.25
P ₆ (2002-04)	14	1018.03 ^d	34.38	P ₅ (2002-04)	12	203.86 ^{ab}	38.42	P ₅ (2002-04)	12	483.27 ^{ab}	38.40
P ₇ (2005-07)	23	965.62 ^{bc}	26.88	P ₆ (2005-07)	16	191.79 ^{ab}	33.20	P ₆ (2005-07)	16	470.91 ^{ab}	33.19
P ₈ (2008-10)	24	1009.50 ^{cd}	26.25	P ₇ (2008-10)	26	232.23 ^b	26.29	P ₇ (2008-10)	26	511.29 ^b	26.28
P ₉ (2011-13)	30	1129.43 ^e	23.71	P ₈ (2011-13)	21	244.55 ^b	28.83	P ₈ (2011-13)	21	523.64 ^b	28.82
P ₁₀ (2014-16)	34	1130.16 ^e	22.30	P ₉ (2014-16)	31	220.52 ^{ab}	24.46	P ₉ (2014-16)	31	499.61 ^{ab}	24.45
P ₁₁ (2017-20)	4	834.40 ^a	64.37	P ₁₀ (2017-20)	38	215.08 ^{ab}	22.49	P ₁₀ (2017-20)	38	494.15 ^{ab}	22.49
Season of birth/calving											
S ₁ : Rainy	68	1032.66	16.58	S ₁ : Rainy	63	189.84	17.66	S ₁ : Rainy	63	468.98	17.65
S ₂ : Winter	101	1032.67	14.85	S ₂ : Winter	98	181.51	14.20	S ₂ : Winter	98	460.68	14.20
S ₃ : Summer	81	1004.41	15.61	S ₃ : Summer	89	223.81	15.25	S ₃ : Summer	89	502.89	15.24
Peak milk yield											
Y ₁ : < 12.00	-	-	-	Y ₁ : < 12.00	108	207.53	14.03	Y ₁ : < 12.00	108	486.68	14.02
Y ₂ : 12.00-14.00	-	-	-	Y ₂ : 12.00-14.00	80	183.76	16.11	Y ₂ : 12.00-14.00	80	462.88	16.11
Y ₃ : >14.00	-	-	-	Y ₃ : >14.00	62	203.87	18.01	Y ₃ : >14.00	62	483.00	18.01

Note: Means under each class in the same column with different superscripts differed significantly

Effect of season of birth/calving

The variations due to season of birth in AFC while the variations due to season of calving in FSP and FCI were non-significant in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle under study (Table 1). The non-significant effect of season of birth on AFC was in close agreement with Divya (2012) [7] in Karan Fries cattle, Singh *et al.* (2014) in Frieswal, Garudkar (2015) [9] in FG, IFG, FJG, IFJG crossbreds, Ambhore *et al.* (2017) [3] and Kuchekar *et al.* (2021) [14] in Phule Triveni, Jadhav *et al.* (2019) [12] and Sarwade (2021) [29] in HF x Gir halfbred.

Whereas, contradictory results were reported by Akhtar *et al.* (2003) [2], PDC-AR (2003-04), Dubey and Singh (2005) [8] and Rathee (2015) [26] in different crossbred cows.

The non-significant effect of season of calving on FSP was reported by Divya (2012) [7] in Karan Fries cattle, Garudkar (2015) [9] in FG, IFG, FJG, IFJG crossbreds, Ambhore *et al.* (2017) [3] in Phule Triveni cattle, Jadhav *et al.* (2019) [12] and Sarwade (2021) [29] in HF x Gir halfbred. However, contradictory results were reported by Saha (2001) and Singh (2013) in KF, Mukherjee (2005) [17] in Frieswal, and Mhasade

(2010) in FG crossbreds.

The non-significant effect of season of calving on FCI was in accordance with Rathee (2015)^[26] in Frieswal, Ambhore *et al.* (2017)^[3] in Phule Triveni cows, Jadhav *et al.* (2019)^[12], Shinde (2021)^[30] and Sarwade (2021)^[29] in HF x Gir halfbred. However, significant effect was reported by Akhtar *et al.* (2003)^[2] in 5/8 HF x 3/8 SW crossbred and Mukherjee (2005)^[17] in Frieswal.

Effect of peak milk yield

There was non-significant effect of peak milk yield on FSP and FCI in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle (Table 1). These results were in agreement with the findings of Deokar *et al.* (2015)^[5] and Sarwade (2021)^[29] in HF x Gir halfbreds.

Effect of sire

The sire had significant effect ($p < 0.01$) on AFC while non-significant effect on FSP and FCI in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle (Table 1). The significant effect of sire on AFC was also reported by Akhtar *et al.* (2003)^[2] in 5/8 HF x 3/8 SW cattle, Singh *et al.* (2014) in Frieswal cattle, Ambhore *et al.* (2017)^[3] in Phule Triveni cattle, Jadhav *et al.* (2019)^[12], Shinde (2021)^[30] in HF x Gir halfbred. Whereas, the non-significant effect of sire on AFC was reported by Garudkar (2015)^[9] and Kuchekar *et al.* (2021)^[14] in Phule Triveni.

The non-significant effect of sire on FSP was reported by Garudkar (2015)^[9] in FG, IFG, FJG crossbreds, Ambhore *et al.* (2017)^[3] in Phule Triveni cattle, Jadhav *et al.* (2019)^[12].

The non-significant effect of sire on FCI was reported by Akhtar *et al.* (2003)^[2] in 5/8 HF x 3/8 SW, Mukherjee (2005)^[17] in Frieswal, Nehra (2011)^[18] in KF cattle, Ambhore *et al.* (2017)^[3] in Phule Triveni, Jadhav *et al.* (2019)^[12] and Shinde (2021)^[30] in HF x Gir halfbred.

Conclusion

The overall least-squares means of age at first calving (AFC), first service period (FSP) and first calving interval (FCI) in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle were estimated as 1023.25±10.14, 198.38±9.83 and 477.52±09.82 days, respectively. The influence of period of birth was found to be significant on AFC while the influence of period of calving was found to be significant on FSP and FCI in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle. The variations due to season of birth in AFC while the variations due to season of calving in FSP and FCI were non-significant in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle under study. There was non-significant effect of peak milk yield on FSP and FCI. The sire had significant effect on AFC while non-significant effect on FSP and FCI in Phule Triveni crossbred cattle.

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