The Various Mating Rituals Observed in Social Gatherings

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Mating rituals may refer to the set of display characteristics whereby an animal tries to attract another of the same species but ordinarily different sex and manifests its desire to form a relationship, long-term or short-term, usually based on population. The behaviour can range from vocalisations to sounds, and it can display beauty or movements in a desirable manner. Being part of the Kingdom Animalia, human beings display these actions, too. The study of how human beings mate has been debated for a long time. Among those involved have been anthropologists and animal behaviourists who depended mainly on empirical observations to make conclusions about animal behaviours. This paper aims to find out, through observation, the various mating rituals, using observations gathered from social gatherings such as coffee shops.

Human Courtship and Mate Selection

Typically, human beings aim to form long-term relationships for marriage, casual relationships, or even friendships, and this results from the natural desire of human beings to have constant companionship with the people around them for various reasons. As many theorists agree, the drive for companionship is significantly contributed to by the sex drive. The human mating process is made up of the whole process from meeting a potential mate to assessing their fitness and suitability for what they want, such as whether the businessman one gets can be fit as a business partner or whether the woman a man meets is fit for marriage, to the ultimate decision to form an interpersonal relationship with that person. This whole process goes through some stages and is primarily based on the mating rituals.

Flirting as the Initial Ritual

Flirting is usually the very first step. Typically, this creates a bond between potential mates or expresses sexual interest. How this happens depends on the social and cultural beliefs of the potential mates. Flirting can either be for fun or intent. In the case of flirting with purpose, an individual displays signals of being available for sex and anticipates seeing the same interest manifesting in the other mate before proceeding to the next step. This flirting may take various forms, including non-verbal cues, hand-touching, or expressly saying it to the other party. This flirting plays a significant role in selecting a mate for both short-term and long-term sexual relationships and

even for marriage.

Dating and Relationship Assessment

The other step or aspect of the mating ritual is dating. It usually occurs when the question of selecting a spouse arises, or when one seeks to establish a long-term intimate relationship with another, which may not necessarily lead to marriage. In many social setups, it refers to the stage of the romantic relationships whereby the potential mates meet to assess each other's suitability. The rules governing how dating is carried out depend primarily on a given society's social norms and practices. Typically, however, it involves several activities carried out by the mates on their own or with others so that they can explore the possibilities of settling down with each other.

Factors Shaping Mating Success

Several factors influence the success of the mating ritual. For instance, it is almost conclusively accepted that men achieve higher reproductive success than females. This is because, unlike women with a higher parental investment than men, they (men) can manage to mate with multiple women, unlike the women who subsequently will not mate with as many men. This suggests that men are more likely to have higher success in mating with multiple women almost simultaneously, going through the process from flirting and dating to the very results of the mating rituals.

Gendered Preferences

It is almost generally agreed that men will tend to place a more excellent value on a female's youth and attractiveness, unlike women who will put more value on the male's ability to provide for the woman. This is because youth implies better reproductive value in females, who tend to reach the end of being able to reproduce as age progresses, unlike males, who can breed into old age. Theoretically speaking, men who selected and mated with fertile, healthy young women are likely to have more descendants remaining compared to the men who do not do so (Clark, 2015).

Short Term Mating Strategies

At times, for reasons best known to them, individuals may prefer mating tactics, whereby they will apply those mating techniques likely to suit the prevailing conditions (Conley et al., 2017). For instance, as explained earlier, men have more opportunities than women as a result of little investment in bringing children up. However, surprisingly, women too seek to have several casual, short-term intimate relationships. The reasons for this can only be speculated. It is believed that women from earlier times of civilisation entered into relationships with men that could transmit genetic benefits to women's children, such as good physical appearance, disease resistance, or

general good health (Schmitt, 2016).

Conclusion

The mating rituals among human beings are a complex subject that has been under discussion for ages. Though understood from the empirical point of view, observation renders facts about the whole mating ritual processes—the stages from flirting, dating, and match-making. Several factors determine the success or failure of the routines, key among them all being the gender of the initiator of the process, that is, being either male or female, which is in turn affected by the social norms and beliefs of a given society.

Work Cited

Conley, T. D., Moors, A. C., Matsick, J. L., Ziegler, A., & Valentine, B. A. (2011). Women, Men, and the Bedroom: Methodological and Conceptual Insights That Narrow, Reframe and Eliminate Gender Differences in Sexuality. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 20(5), 296-300