Abnormal behavior in different species

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Different captive animals whether they are contained in laboratories or zoos show different abnormal behaviors. These behaviors have persistent occurrence in different captive animals. A behavior is considered abnormal if it is different from behaviors characteristically observed in the wild. It differs both in terms of kind and degree among species. However, these behaviors in excessive can cause different injuries and hurt animals. It is also difficult to treat these behaviors once acquired. Though additional cage toys increased cage space have significantly reduced these behaviors. This paper will analyze the behavior of different species; species of Old World monkeys, captive rhesus monkeys and captive nonhuman primates such as baboon. It will further point out the similarities and differences among these animals.

Abnormal behavior can be seen in different captive nonhuman primate species such as in prosimians, Old World monkeys in addition to apes (C. K. Lutz, 2018). Some examples of abnormal behaviors in baboon are; motor stereotypies such as pacing and rocking), self-directed behaviors such as hair-pulling and abnormal appetitive behavior such as coprophagy. These behaviors are not rare and nearly 89–100% of singly housed macaque monkeys show these abnormal behaviors (C. K. Lutz, Williams, & Sharp, 2014).

Lutz, Williams, and Sharp in their study of abnormal behavior and associated risk factors in captive baboons observed different abnormal behaviors in the baboon. The subjects of the study were 144 baboons (Papio hamadryas spp.); 25 males and 119 females (C. K. Lutz et al., 2014) who were singly housed for 9 days for the study. Categories of behavior that were included in the study were motor stereotypy, self-directed behavior and abnormal appetitive. Data was gathered and statistical analyses were performed to generate results. The results showed (26%) of the subjects showing at least one abnormal behavior during the 15-minute observation. among this most common behavioral category was motor stereotypy.

In addition, captive rhesus monkeys also show different abnormal behaviors such as self-directed stereotypies as well as self-injurious behavior (SIB). The type and frequency of these behaviors are extremely capricious among these animals. A study was conducted by Lutz, Well, & Novak in 2003 to have behavioral assessments in captive rhesus monkeys. For this purpose, the New England Regional Primate Research Center (NERPRC) collected 362 individually housed rhesus monkeys (C. Lutz, Well, & Novak, 2003). Among these 362 animals, there were 321 that show at least one abnormal behavior such as pacing. In this study sex differences were also specious as males showed more abnormal behavior as compared to females. Different factors were affecting the behavior of these animals; intrinsic such as sex effects and rearing conditions along with research protocols (C. Lutz et al., 2003).

Furthermore, Lutz also conducted a study to assess the abnormal behavior in three species of singly housed old world monkeys. Motor stereotypy such as pacing, rocking, flipping, swinging, and head tossing was used as a category of abnormal behavior in the study. The study included singly-housed cynomolgus macaques, rhesus macaques, and baboons for 30–120 days (C. K. Lutz, 2018). One-zero sampling was used to record the 5-min observation for each animal. Macaques showed higher levels of abnormal behavior than baboons; 29% and 14% respectively. However, macaque species with 28%; showed no differences (C. K. Lutz, 2018). Thus, there are differences in abnormal behavior across closely-related primate species. Consequently, it is not authentic to use single species as a model for abnormal behavior.

Animals control their environment with their normal behaviors. However, captive environments interfere with these normal behavioral retorts and change different physiological parameters for the animal. Care of captive nonhuman primates can be improved by focusing on factors that lead to abnormal behaviors. These behaviors are different within the species due to different intrinsic factors. Thus, for the welfare of animals, these factors must be eliminated.

References

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