

**Ethnobiological Studies from *Manusmruti*: IX.
Niyoga Prathaa, A Natural Process of Artificial Insemination**

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ABSTRACT The biology of artificial insemination can be traced out in the legendary epic *Manusmruti*, which was expected to occur under restricted natural conditions of physical, social, psychological and ethical environment. This process was named as Niyoga Prathaa (engagement custom) and was prevalent in the ancient Indian society. The success and failure of the process, its social recognition as well and the acceptance of the alternative racial offspring as substitutes of the legitimate sons, is discussed in this paper.