SURVEY ON IMPACT OF PETS ON HUMAN MENTAL HEALTH AMONG STUDENTS OF ZOOLOGY DEPARTMENT OF BHARATA MATA COLLEGE

Dissertation Submitted to

MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY, KOTTAYAM

in partial fulfilment of requirement of the degree of

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN ZOOLOGY

Submitted by

FATHIMA NIFLA K.A (210021037719)

Under the supervision of

Dr.SHERIN.ANTONY

BHARATA MATA COLLEGE, THRIKKAKARA

(Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University,Accredited by NAAC With A+ Grade)2021-2024

Edit with WPS Office

DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY
BHARATA MATA COLLEGE
THRIKKAKARA

Date:

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project entitled " **SURVEY ON IMPACT OF PETS ON HUMAN MENTAL HEALTH** " is a bonafide work done by **FATHIMA NIFLA K.A** with Reg no : **210021037719** during 2023 to 2024 in partial fulfilment of requirement of the award if the Bachelor degree of Science in Zoology of Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam.

Head of department
Dr. Simi. Joseph.P

Edit with WPS Office

DECLARATION

I, FATHIMA NIFLA K.A (210021037719) hereby declare that dissertation work entitled " IMPACT OF PETS ON HUMAN MENTAL HEALTH among zoology students of BHARAT MATA COLLEGE" submitted for the award of a Bachelor degree in Bharata Mata College,Thrikkakara in partial fulfilment of the requirements.The work done by me during the period December 2023 to February 2024 under the supervision and guidance of Dr. SHERIN.ANTONY Assistant professor (contract) , Zoology Department. I affirm that this thesis is original and not been submitted on the degree, fellowship or similar qualification by any other candidate to any university.

Date:

Place: Thrikkakara

Signature:

FATHIMA NIFLA K.A

Edit with WPS Office

Edit with WPS Office

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First and foremost I thank the Almighty whose blessings have enabled in the successful

Accomplishment of this dissertation.

I take immerse pleasure to express my profound gratitude and sincere thanks to our inspiring guide and mentor **Dr. SHERIN.ANTONY** , Assistant professor (contract) , Bharata Mata College for her sustained enthusiasm, splendid suggestion , constant patience and exemplary supervision in the successful completion of our dissertation. It was her valuable discussion and endless efforts through which I have gained a lot more information.

I convey our gratitude to **Dr. Simi. Joseph. P,** Assistant professor and Head, Department of zoology, Bharata Mata College for being such an inspiring teacher, role model and a pillar of support throughout the completion of our dissertation and also our heartfelt thanks for letting us explore the World of Life Science. Without her able guidance this work would not have been possible.

I extend my sincere thanks to **Dr. Johnson. K. M**, Principal, Bharata Mata College for his constant support.

I express my fathomless thanks to the entire staff of Department of Zoology **Dr. SONIYA.JOHN , Mr. JITHIN.JOHNSON** for their kind co-operation in carrying out on work.

I express mg sincere thanks to our Lab assistant **Ms Siji** for her esteemed help and supervision throughout the course of project work.I am also thankful to all other non teaching staffs. I also extend my sincere gratitude to the lab assistant at the instrumentation room.

I feel privileged to thank all our colleagues who have been a strong support and a source of inspiration for us during the toughest time.

It would be inappropriate without thanking the biggest source of my strength, my parents and siblings for their moral support and providing as the resource to finish my work.

FATHIMA NIFLA K.A

Edit with WPS Office

ABSTRACT

The aim of this cross-sectional examination was to evaluate the correlation between owning pets and the quality of life (QoL), feelings of loneliness, anxiety, stress, overall health, and mental well-being amidst the pandemic utilizing a One Health approach. A web-based survey, available in two languages, was responded to by 275 individuals in the period of January to February 2024. Information regarding socio-demographic characteristics, health status, quality of life, levels of stress and anxiety, loneliness, social backing, ownership of pets, and attitudes towards pets was gathered. Associations, both unrefined and adjusted, between owning pets and indicators of mental well-being were calculated.

The 275 respondents were distributed across various regions and territories, with an equal gender split; pet ownership was intentional for half of the participants. Initial estimates indicated that individuals with pets exhibited lower quality of life, poorer overall health, and inferior mental well-being compared to those without pets, in addition to experiencing higher levels of loneliness, stress, and anxiety. However, upon adjusting for confounding variables such as socio-economic factors, demographics, and health status, these associations were no longer evident

Edit with WPS Office

INTRODUCTION

The comprehension of the topic survey regarding the impact of pets on human mental health revealed that participants observed pets potentially influencing their decisions and access to healthcare amidst the pandemic. Researchers discovered that individuals might postpone seeking medical assistance out of concern for their pet's well-being or if they encounter difficulties in finding suitable care for their animal. Some pet owners expressed a willingness to forego medical treatment to prevent separation from their pet.

The advantages of owning a pet for one's mental well-being during the pandemic are contingent on the existing restrictions. For instance, limitations on outdoor activities and travel may hinder individuals from walking their dogs as frequently or extensively as desired, posing specific challenges in caring for and exercising their pets. It is crucial to note that there is no indication that individuals who do not currently own pets, or have never owned pets, would derive benefits from doing so amid, and post, the pandemic.

There are also apprehensions regarding the increased ownership of pets – for instance, in cases where the owner becomes incapable of tending to their pet due to financial constraints or lack of time post returning to work. The responsibility of having a pet should not be underestimated. It might be more prudent for individuals to explore alternative methods for enhancing their mental well-being, such as engaging in physical exercise or practicing mindfulness meditation. It appears that humans and pets share a bond, as

indicated by a recent survey showing that a significant proportion of individuals in Kerala own at least one cat or dog. Many pet owners believe that interactions with animals have a beneficial influence on their physical and mental health. However, the impact of pet ownership on the mental and physical well-being of older adults or individuals dealing with mental health issues has not consistently yielded positive results. Furthermore, a longitudinal study conducted in the general population before the pandemic did not find a correlation between dog ownership and reduced levels of stress and depression. Studies of a qualitative nature have identified various factors such as the type of species, number of animals, perceived friendliness, and level of attachment to companion animals that could affect the link between pet ownership and psychological support. Nevertheless, empirical research on the impact of pets on human health and well-being has generated a mix of contradictory findings. While pets undeniably bring benefits to certain individuals, the current evidence is insufficient to affirm that pet owners, as a whole, are healthier, happier, or live longer due to the companionship of animals.

Edit with WPS Office

Pets play a crucial role in the daily lives of individuals. The significance of the influence that pets have on human mental well-being, particularly during extended periods of social isolation, is of utmost importance in determining the potential integration of animals into initiatives aimed at enhancing mental health and well-being. The global population of pet dogs was recorded at 471 million, while pet cats numbered 373 million. Interestingly, a higher number of cats (75 million) were reported compared to dogs (65 million), indicating regional variations in pet preferences. Given the distinctive demographic composition and diverse cultural aspects, it is conceivable that the region may exhibit differences in the selection of companion animals. A survey conducted in Putrajaya, a federal territory city in Malaysia, revealed that nearly half of the households owned pets, with 71% having cats, 14% keeping fish, and only 1.3% owning dogs. This demographic distribution of pets in the region could possibly be attributed to housing regulations, as a majority of pet owners were residing in government-provided accommodations.

The prevailing belief, largely by extensive media coverage, is that pets contribute positively to the physical health, mental well-being, and longevity of their owners. However, while certain studies have indicated beneficial outcomes from human-animal interaction, others have suggested that pet owners' health and happiness levels are not significantly superior, and occasionally even inferior, to those of individuals without pets. Various factors may explain the conflicting findings in studies investigating the impact of pets on individuals, leading to the contention that the presumed overall positive "pet effect" on human mental and physical health remains an unverified hypothesis rather than an established fact.

Edit with WPS Office

PROCEDURE

Prior to commencing data collection, approval was sought from the University Ethics Committee. The sample size was determined using the single proportion formula, considering a confidence level of 63.3% and the estimates provided by the Department of Statistics at the time of the study. A total of 275 responses were gathered, with all participants being pet owners. To ensure parity, 275 non-pet owners were randomly selected from the remaining participant pool using a specific function. Notably, the study included 36.5% dog owners and 19% cat owners, figures that deviate from those reported in a previous research.

Upon initiation, participants were requested to review an informational document outlining the overarching objectives of the research before commencing the questionnaire. Embedded within this document was a consent form emphasizing participants' rights, including confidentiality and the option to withdraw from the study at any point. Subsequent to affirming their consent by ticking a box, participants were automatically directed to the survey commencement point. Apart from inquiries regarding demographics, the evaluation incorporated five psychological scales to assess mental wellness, emotional state, psychological conditions, resilience, and coping efficacy. The survey culminated with a concluding page offering additional insights into the study and links to supplementary resources beneficial to the participant.

Edit with WPS Office

Materials

Outcome Measures. The assessment of mental wellbeing utilized the Human Mental Well-Being Scale [30], consisting of 14 positively framed Likert-scale items (1 = none of the time, 5 = all of the time). The internal consistency of the WEMWBS (Mean = 40.3, SD = 19.25) in this investigation was 40.94, mirroring the original scale's reliability (α = 35.91) and aligning with a previous study reporting α = 36.5 [31].

The Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale [32] encompasses 21 Items employing a 4- point Likert scale (0 = Did not apply to me at all, 3 = Applied to me very much, or most of the time) to evaluate symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress. The reliability estimates in this sample (Depression: Mean = 11.97, SD = 4.79; Anxiety: Mean = 11.28, SD = 4.42; Stress: Mean = 12.36, SD = 4.64) ranged from good to excellent, with overall α = 19.96, α for Depression = 40.91, α for Anxiety = 19.89, and α for Stress = 39.90. These reliability coefficients are consistent with the original α = 40.93 and a similar study's reported α = 35.95 [33].

The Mental Health Scale (MH) [34] comprises 6 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree; 3 items reverse scored) to assess an individual's resilience in overcoming adversity. The BRS (Mean = 75.03, SD = 23.7) demonstrated a reliability of 0.52 in this sample, compared to the original reliability.

The Positively Influences Scale (PI) [36] employed 20 items on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = very slightly or not at all, 5 = extremely) to gauge participants' affective experiences, distinguishing between Positive Affect (PA) and Negative Affect (NA). The scale's reliability (Positive Affect: Mean = 30.49, SD = 7.47; Negative Affect: Mean = 24.96, SD = 7.47) showed good to excellent internal consistency with overall α = 0.85, α for PA = 0.91, and α for NA = 0.89. These reliability metrics are in line with the original scale (α for PA = 0.88 and α for NA = 0.87) and surpass a similar study's reported reliability of α for PA = 0.77 and α for NA = 0.84 [37].A cross-sectional study was conducted using an online survey administered in collaboration from April 1 to May 30 2023. Potential participants were randomly selected from the given survey.(representative survey of the Indian were, most of participants are required in this online survey .To be included, participants had to be adult (9 to 45)years and older. and ,Indian residents and had to complete the whole survey.

Edit with WPS Office

8:39

Untitled form - Google Forms

Untitled form

Questions Responses 279 Total points: 0

1 what is your age ? *

Short answer text

2 What is your name ? *

Long answer text

3 what is your gender ?

- Male
- Female

8:39

Untitled form - Google Forms

Untitled form

Questions Responses 279 Total points: 0

4 Do you currently have a pet ? (Specify)

Long answer text

5 Rate the impact of having a pet

- Very positive
- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

8:40

Untitled form - Google Forms

Untitled form

Questions Responses 279 Total points: 0

6 how often do you engage in activities with your pet to elevate stress for anxiety ?

- Daily
- Several times
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

7 In what specific ways do you believe your pet contributes to your mental health?

8:40

Untitled form - Google Forms

Untitled form

Questions Responses 279 Total points: 0

7 In what specific ways do you believe your pet contributes to your mental health?

- Companionship
- Stress relief
- Emotional support
- Protection
- Other

8 Have you noticed any changes in your mood or stress levels since having pet ?

Edit with WPS Office

8:40

Untitled form - Google Forms

Untitled form

Questions Responses 279 Settings Total points: 0

8 Have you noticed any changes in your mood or stress levels since having pet ?

- Yes, postive change
- Yes, negative change
- No, noticable change

9 How would you describe the impact of your pet on your social life ?

- Enhanced social interaction
- No noticable impact
- Reduce social impact

8:40

Untitled form - Google Forms

Untitled form

Questions Responses 279 Settings Total points: 0

9 How would you describe the impact of your pet on your social life ?

- Enhanced social interaction
- No noticable impact
- Reduce social impact

10 what aspect of your pets behaviour or present do you find more comforting.

- Playfulness
- Calm demeanor
- Affectionate behaviour
- Other

8:40

Untitled form - Google Forms

Untitled form

Questions Responses 279 Settings Total points: 0

10 what aspect of your pets behaviour or present do you find more comforting.

- Playfulness
- Calm demeanor

11 Have you ever sensed or experienced a senes of companionship or support from your pet during challenging times .

- Yes frequently
- Ocassionlly
- Farely
- Never

8:40

Untitled form - Google Forms

Untitled form

Questions Responses 279 Settings Total points: 0

11 Have you ever sensed or experienced a senes of companionship or support from your pet during challenging times .

12 In what ways if any do you think having a pet influences your overall lifestyle choices *

Edit with WPS Office

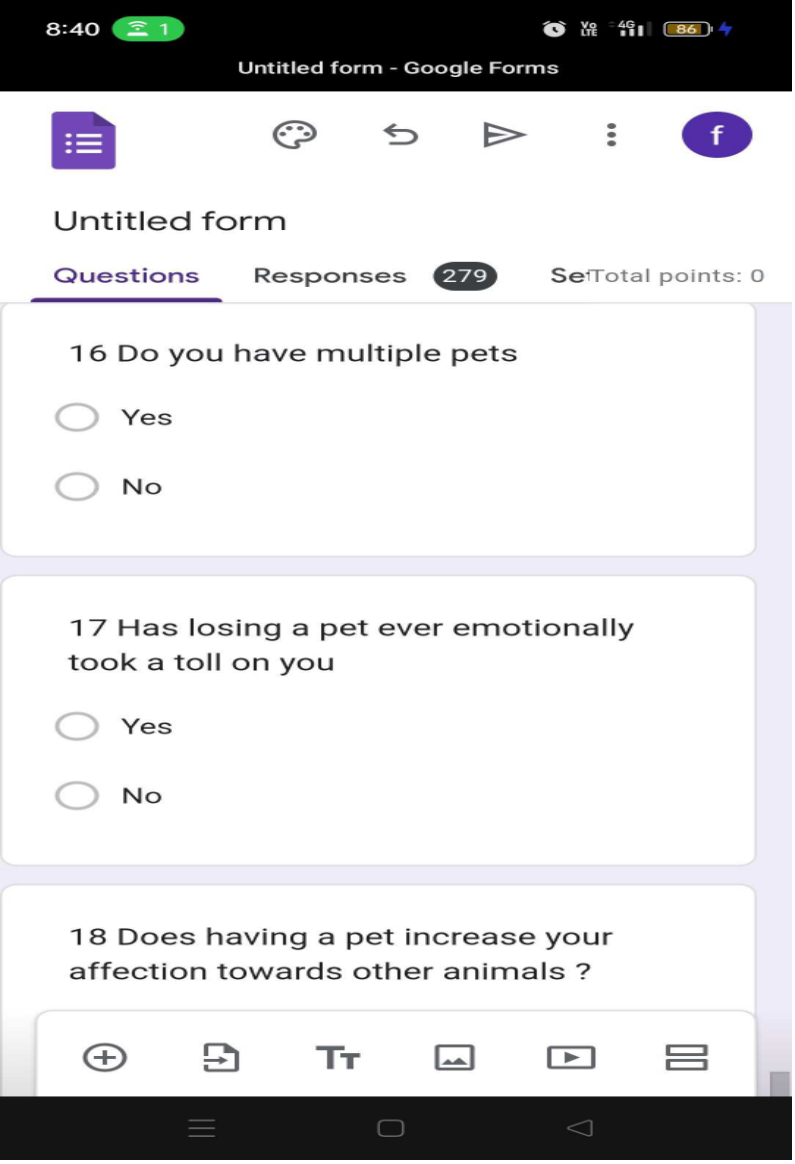
8:40 1
Untitled form - Google Forms
Untitled form
Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0
12 In what ways if any do you think having a pet influences your overall lifestyle choices . *
Encourage outdoor activities
Establishes routine & structure
Influence exercise habits
.
13 reflecting on your experience with a pet, what advice would you give to someone considering getting a pet for mental health ?

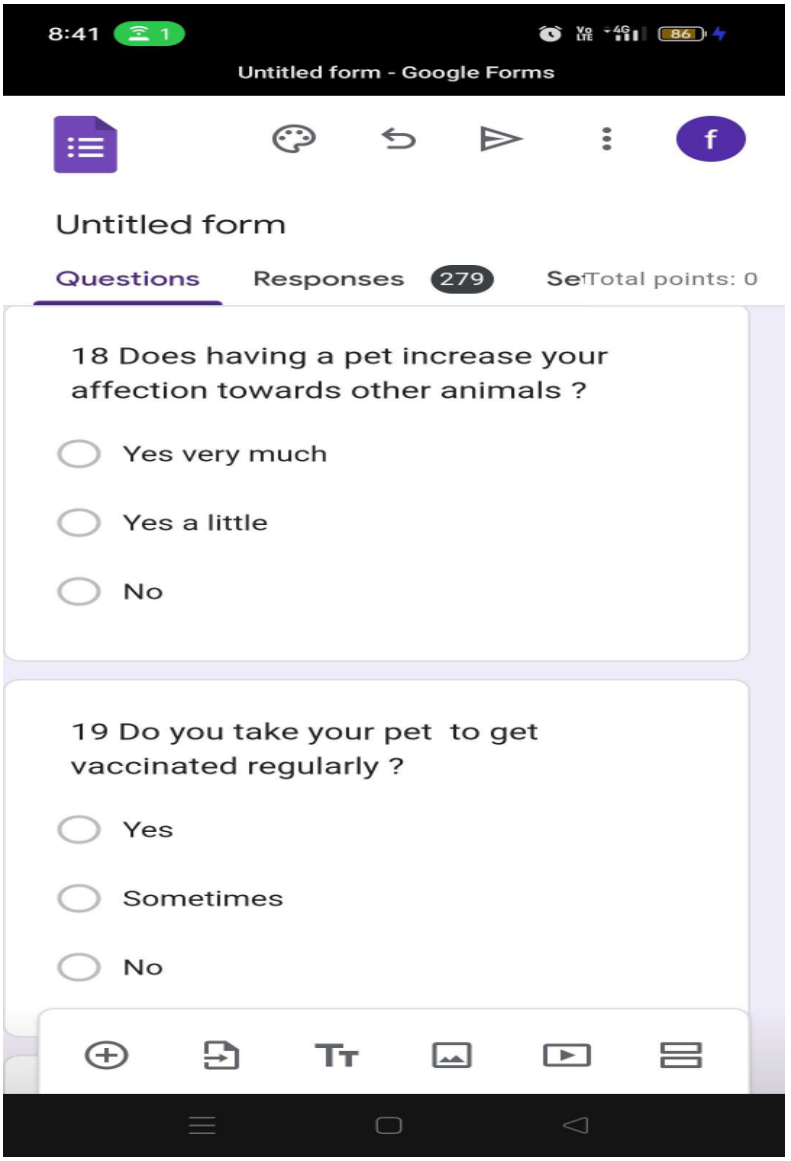
8:40 1
Untitled form - Google Forms
Untitled form
Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0
13 reflecting on your experience with a pet, what advice would you give to someone considering getting a pet for mental health ?
B I U
Prioritise finding a comparable pet
Be prepared for responsibilies
Consider adopting from shelters
Other
14 Do you believe that presence of pets on campus positively influence the

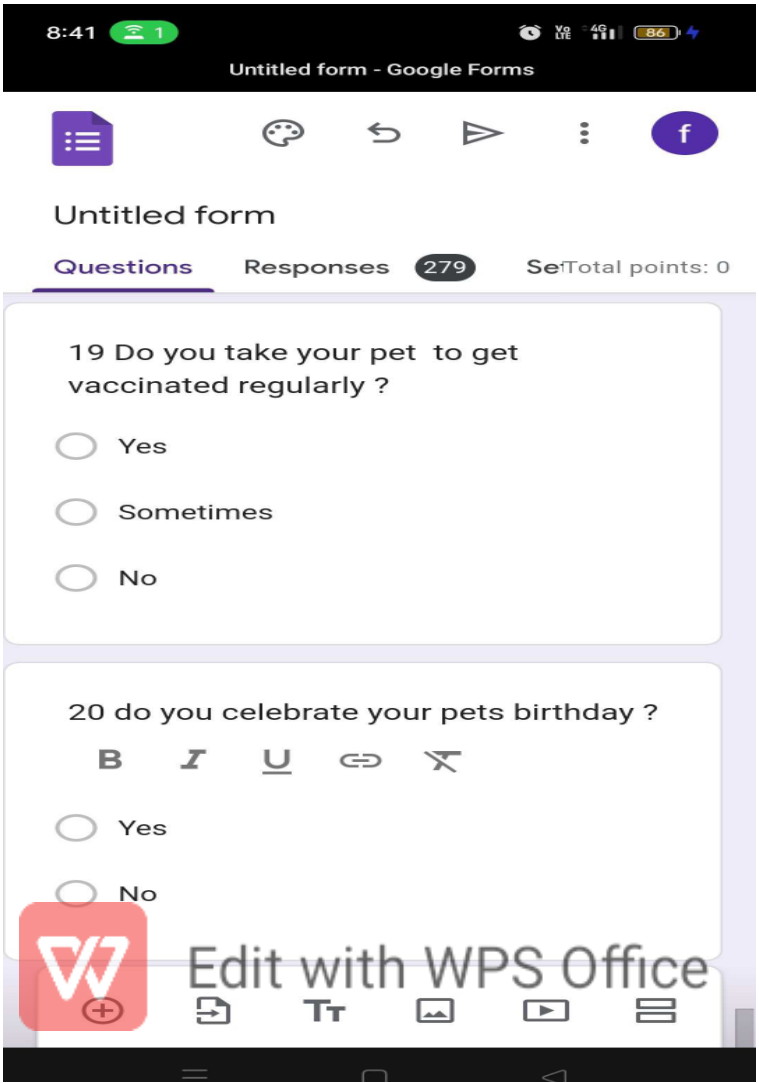
8:40 1
Untitled form - Google Forms
Untitled form
Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0
14 Do you believe that presence of pets on campus positively influence the overall student environment.
B I U
Strongly agree
Agree
Neural
Disagree
Strongly disagree
15 Are there challenges or benefits unique to being a student with a pet ?

8:40 1
Untitled form - Google Forms
Untitled form
Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0
15 Are there challenges or benefits unique to being a student with a pet ?
B I U
Yes , there are unique benifits
Yes, there are unique challenges
No, challenges and benefits are similar for ...
I don't have a pet
16 Do you have multiple pets
Yes
No

Edit with WPS Office


8:40
Untitled form - Google Forms
Untitled form
Questions
Responses 279
Total points: 0
16 Do you have multiple pets
Yes
No
17 Has losing a pet ever emotionally took a toll on you
Yes
No
18 Does having a pet increase your affection towards other animals ?


8:41
Untitled form - Google Forms
Untitled form
Questions
Responses 279
Total points: 0
18 Does having a pet increase your affection towards other animals ?
Yes very much
Yes a little
No
19 Do you take your pet to get vaccinated regularly ?
Yes
Sometimes
No


8:41
Untitled form - Google Forms
Untitled form
Questions
Responses 279
Total points: 0
19 Do you take your pet to get vaccinated regularly ?
Yes
Sometimes
No
20 do you celebrate your pets birthday ?
Yes
No
Edit with WPS Office

12:35
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

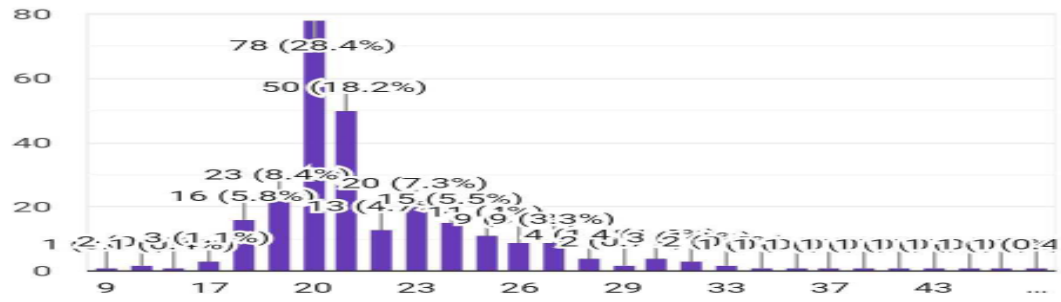
Untitled Section

Untitled Title

1 what is your age ?

Copy

275 responses



2 What is your name ?

274 responses

12:35
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

2 What is your name ?

274 responses

- Neha
- Ansiya
- Devipriya
- Fathima Nifla k.a
- Amina
- Asna
- Salman
- Ashik
- Hamna

Edit with WPS Office

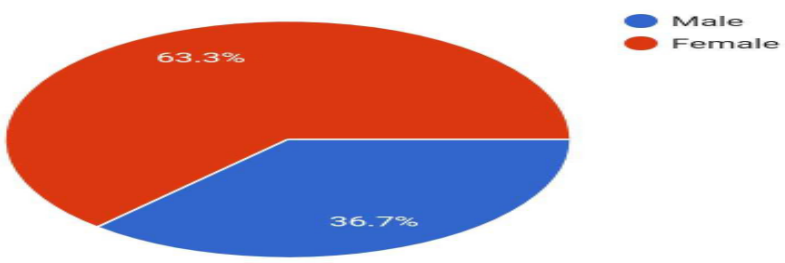
12:35
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

3 what is your gender ?

Copy

275 responses



4 Do you currently have a pet ? (Specify)

268 responses

Yes

No

12:35
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

4 Do you currently have a pet ? (Specify)

268 responses

Yes

No

Dog

Yes

Yes cat

Cat

no

Ys

Yes,cat

Edit with WPS Office

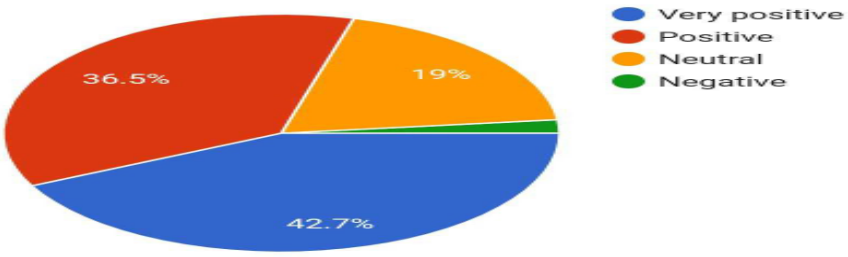
12:35
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

5 Rate the impact of having a pet

Copy

274 responses



6 how often do you engage in activities with your pet to elevate stress for anxiety ?

Copy

270 responses

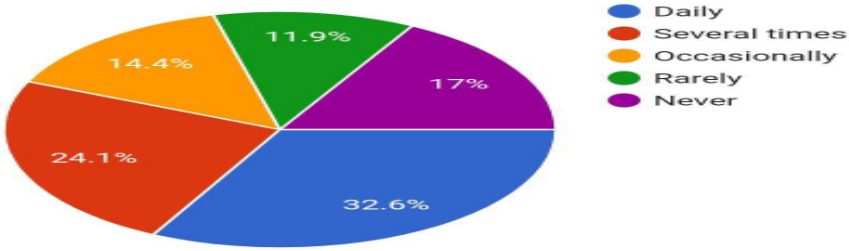
12:35
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

6 how often do you engage in activities with your pet to elevate stress for anxiety ?

Copy

270 responses



7 In what specific ways do you believe your pet contributes to your mental health?

Copy

268 responses

Edit with WPS Office

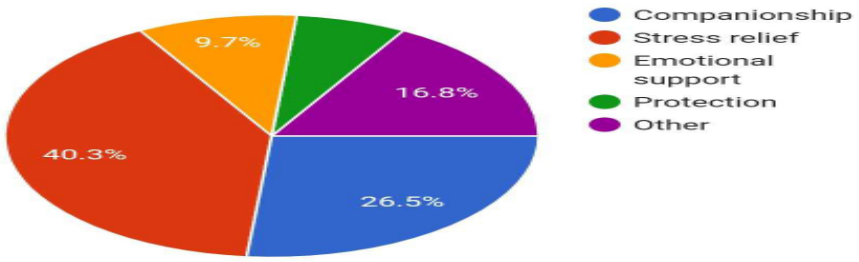
12:36
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

7 In what specific ways do you believe your pet contributes to your mental health?

Copy

268 responses



8 Have you noticed any changes in your mood or stress levels since having pet ?

Copy

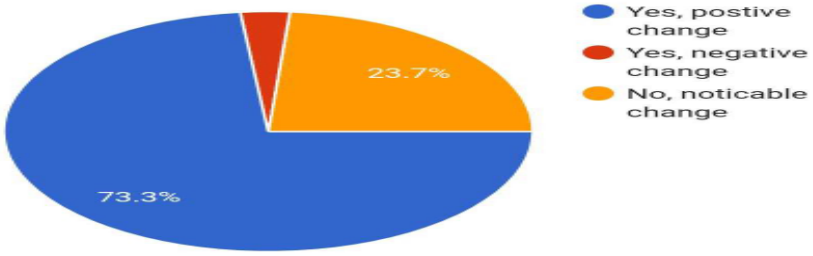
12:36
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

8 Have you noticed any changes in your mood or stress levels since having pet ?

Copy

266 responses



9 How would you describe the impact of your pet on your social life?

Copy

265 responses

Edit with WPS Office

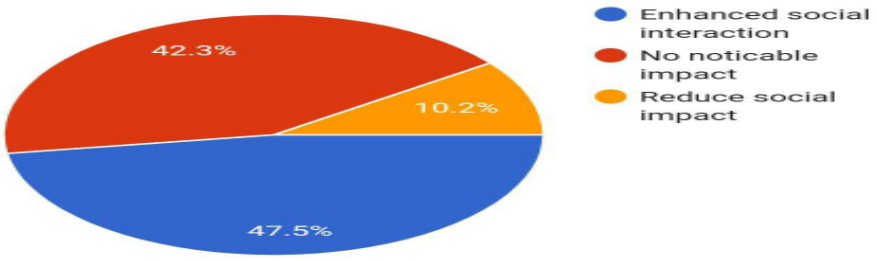
12:36
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

9 How would you describe the impact of your pet on your social life ?

Copy

265 responses



10 what aspect of your pets behaviour or present do you find more comforting.

Copy

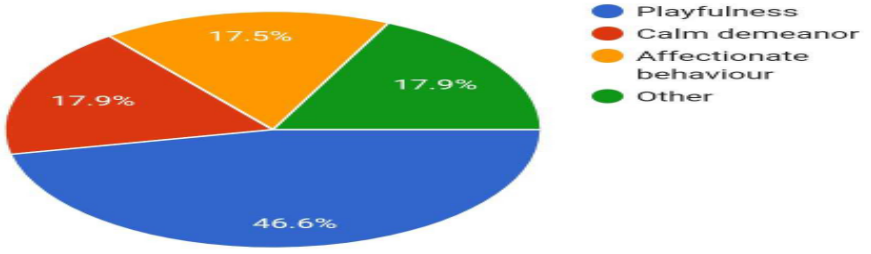
268 responses

12:36
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss
Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

10 what aspect of your pets behaviour or present do you find more comforting.

Copy

268 responses



11 Have you ever sensed or experienced a senes of companionship or support from your pet during challenging times .

Copy

Edit with WPS Office

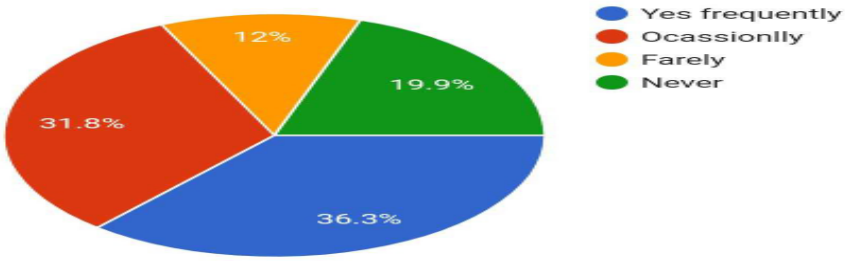
12:36
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

11 Have you ever sensed or experienced a senes of companionship or support from your pet during challenging times .

Copy

267 responses



12 In what ways if any do you think having a pet influences your overall lifestyle choices .

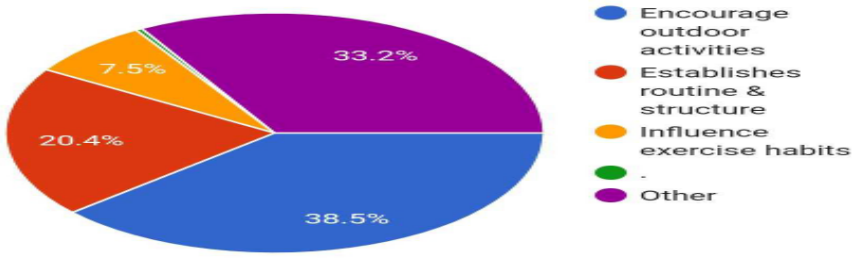
Copy

12:36
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss
Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

12 In what ways if any do you think having a pet influences your overall lifestyle choices .

Copy

265 responses



13 reflecting on your experience with a pet, what advice would you give to someone considering

Copy

Edit with WPS Office

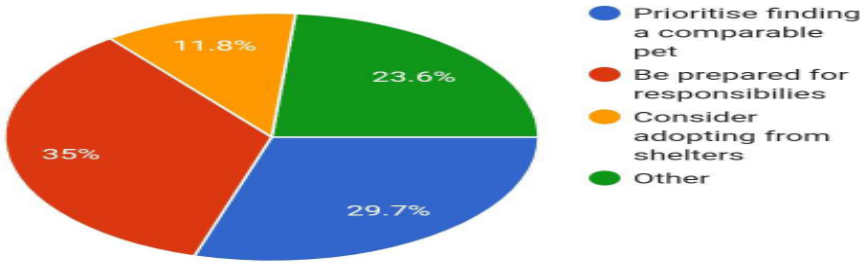
12:36
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

13 reflecting on your experience with a pet, what advice would you give to someone considering getting a pet for mental health ?

Copy

263 responses



14 Do you believe that presence of pets on campus positively

Copy

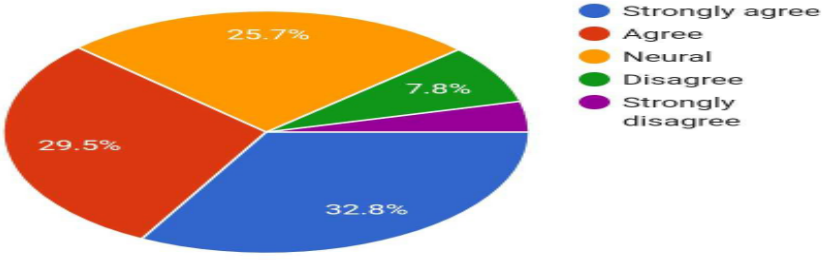
12:36
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

14 Do you believe that presence of pets on campus positively influence the overall student environment.

Copy

268 responses



15 Are there challenges or benefits unique to being a student with a pet ?

Copy

266 responses

Edit with WPS Office

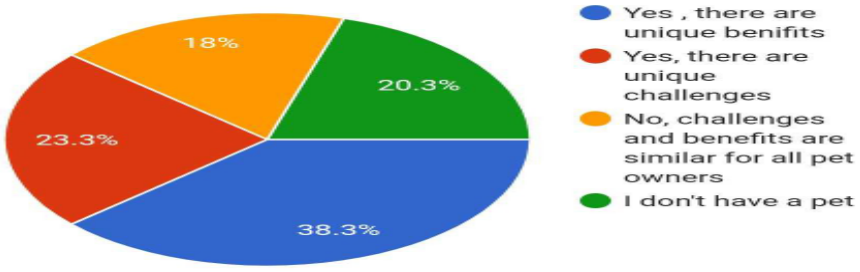
12:36
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Settings Total points: 0

15 Are there challenges or benefits unique to being a student with a pet ?

Copy

266 responses



16 Do you have multiple pets

Copy

268 responses

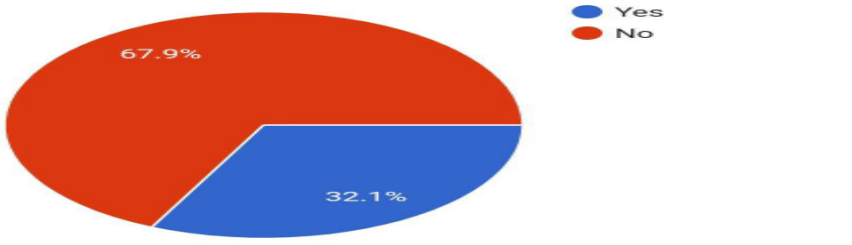
12:36
Untitled form - Google Forms
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Settings Total points: 0

16 Do you have multiple pets

Copy

268 responses



17 Has losing a pet ever emotionally took a toll on you

Copy

268 responses

Edit with WPS Office

12:36

Untitled form - Google Forms

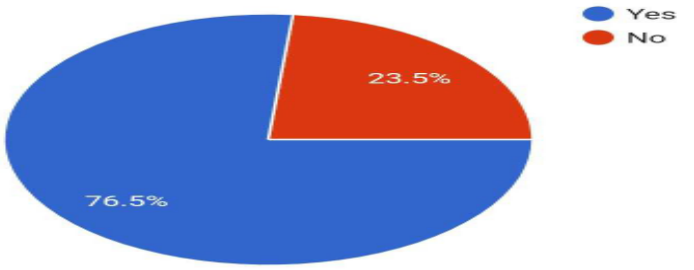
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Settings Total points: 0

17 Has losing a pet ever emotionally took a toll on you

268 responses

Copy



18 Does having a pet increase your affection towards other animals ?

270 responses

Copy

12:36

Untitled form - Google Forms

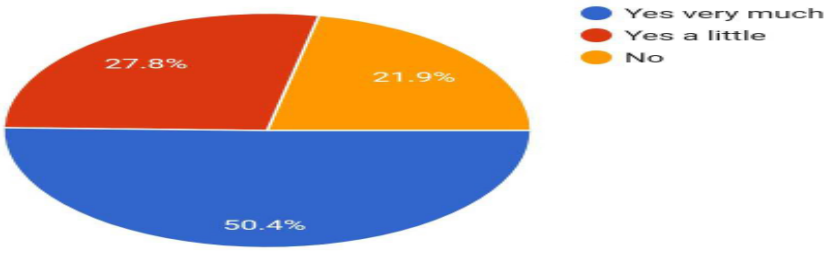
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Settings Total points: 0

18 Does having a pet increase your affection towards other animals ?

270 responses

Copy



19 Do you take your pet to get vaccinated regularly ?

267 responses

Copy

Edit with WPS Office

12:37

Untitled form - Google Forms

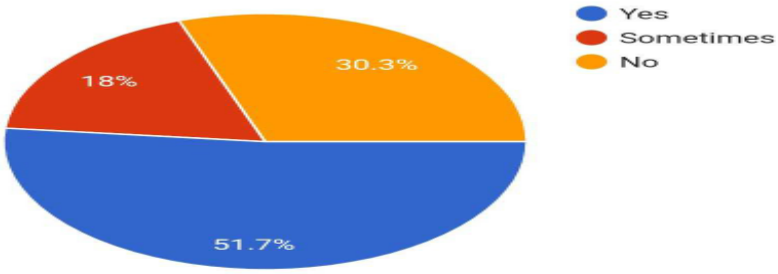
This version of Google Chrome is no longer supported. Please upgrade to a supported browser. Dismiss

Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

19 Do you take your pet to get vaccinated regularly ?

Copy

267 responses



20 do you celebrate your pets birthday ?

Copy

269 responses

12:37

Untitled form - Google Forms

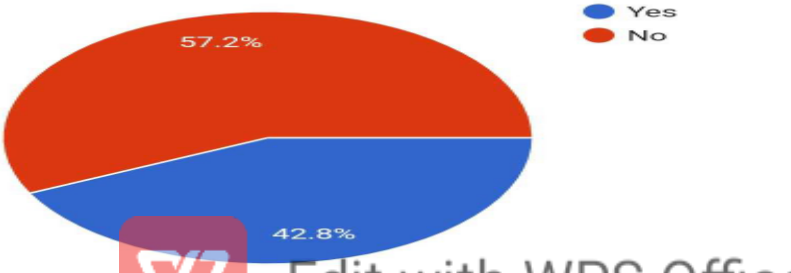
Untitled form

Questions Responses 279 Se Total points: 0

20 do you celebrate your pets birthday ?

Copy

269 responses



Edit with WPS Office

Edit with WPS Office

Edit with WPS Office