



A study on factors influencing pet adoption decisions and responsible pet care practices

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Abstract

This paper investigates the factors that affect pet adoption and responsible pet care practices among individuals in India. With the rising number of pet owners in urban and semi-urban areas, it has become the need of the hour to understand the levels of awareness, behavioral attitudes, and perceptions of responsibility to improve animal welfare results. The purpose of this study was to determine adoption preferences, knowledge of grooming, vaccination, diet, and training procedures, and determine the relationship between adoption preferences and responsible pet care practices.

A quantitative and descriptive research design was employed using a structured questionnaire administered via Google Forms. The questionnaire included closed-ended and Likert-scale questions related to adoption preferences, preventive healthcare awareness, grooming behavior, diet, training attitudes, and long-term responsibility. A total of 168 valid responses were gathered using convenience sampling. Data analysis was conducted via frequency distribution, percentage analysis, and comparative analysis of the responses.

The results show a clear preference for ethical adoption, with a majority preferring shelter adoption or rescuing stray animals. The level of awareness regarding vaccination and grooming is moderately high, although there are clear gaps in preventive healthcare responsibility and nutrition. Attitudes towards training are generally positive, with a majority recognizing the importance of training in enhancing the human-animal relationship. Although responsible rehoming was generally supported, inconsistencies in attitudes towards vaccination and regular veterinary care suggest that there is a need for further public education on these issues.

In conclusion, the paper suggests that awareness about responsible pet ownership is on the rise, but there is a need for structured educational programs and awareness campaigns to address the gaps in knowledge and promote ethical pet care practices in the Indian scenario.

Keywords: Pet adoption determinants, responsible pet care practices, owner awareness and attitudes, preventive health compliance, companion animal welfare, behavioral training methods

Introduction

Background of the Study

Pet ownership has become a common phenomenon among urban and semi-urban populations, and it has had a positive impact on emotional well-being, friendship, and mental health. Pets like dogs and cats are not only domesticated animals but are also being recognized as family members. However, responsible pet ownership is not just about showing affection and care; it also involves making the right adoption choices, grooming, vaccination, healthy eating, training, and commitment.

Despite increasing awareness about animal welfare, problems like abandonment, unvaccinated pets, unhealthy eating habits, and untrained pets are still common. People often buy pets without being aware of the associated responsibilities, which can lead to neglecting and abandoning pets in shelters. On the other hand, animal shelters and stray animals are on the rise, which emphasizes the need for promoting responsible pet adoption.

It is important to understand the factors that affect adoption decisions and responsible pet care practices to improve animal welfare and encourage responsible pet ownership.

Research Objective

The main aims of this research are:

- To explore the factors that affect people's preferences in adopting pets (adopting from shelters, buying from breeders, or taking in strays).

- To evaluate the level of awareness about the necessary practices of pet care, including grooming, vaccination, diet, and training.
- To investigate the views on long-term commitment in pet-keeping.
- To determine the link between people's adoption behavior and their engagement in good pet-keeping practices

Significance of the Study

This research is important as it helps in understanding public attitudes and behaviors regarding pet adoption and responsible care.

The results of this study can be used to:

- Encourage shelter adoption and decrease the number of stray animals.
- Enhance awareness about vaccination, grooming, and nutrition.
- Support animal welfare groups in developing educational programs.
- Encourage responsible and ethical pet ownership in the community.

This research seeks to improve responsible pet care practices and overall animal welfare by helping to understand knowledge gaps and behavioral trends.

Literature Review

Pet Adoption in India

Source: Mondal, R., Bhadra, A., & Bhattacharjee, D. (2023) ^[2]. The Human-Animal Bond and At-Home Behaviours of Adopted Indian Free-Ranging Dogs. *Applied Animal Behaviour Science / ScienceDirect*.

Retrieved from: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0168159123001867>

Summary: This study investigated the in-house behavior and human-animal bonds among adopted free-ranging dogs (FRDs) in India using a mixed method approach, noting that pet keeping has been on the rise in India but most dogs are commercially acquired and are typically foreign breeds. ScienceDirect The researchers found that cultural biases — including perceptions of FRDs as aggressive or unhygienic — create barriers to their adoption. The study supports the argument that awareness campaigns and pre-adoption counseling are essential to shift public attitudes toward responsible adoption of indigenous animals.

Grooming Practices

Source: Research and Markets. (2020) ^[5]. India Pet Grooming & Healthcare Market Overview, 2020–2025. Business Wire / ResearchAndMarkets.com.

Retrieved from: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20200525005167>

Summary: This market report noted that grooming products became a necessity to retain the healthy fur, skin, and texture of pets, with trending products in the Indian market including shampoos, conditioners, brushes, combs, and nail trimming tools. Business Wire The report also documented the rapid growth of professional pet grooming salons across Indian cities, driven by increasing awareness among urban pet owners about the health and hygiene implications of regular grooming. Leading Indian brands such as Himalaya, PetVeda, and Choostix have emerged to meet this growing domestic demand.

Vaccination and Veterinary Care

Source: Indian Retailer. (2023) ^[1]. Pet Healthcare in India is Set for Disruption, Will Cross \$5 Billion by 2030.

Retrieved from: <https://www.indianretailer.com/article/retail-business/trends/pet-healthcare-india-set-disruption-will-cross-5-bn-2030>

Summary: This industry report noted that the number of pets in India surpassed 32 million in the last quarter of 2022, up from around 22 million in 2019, and that pet parents are spending time and money on vaccinations, deworming, food, grooming, supplements, treats, and accessories for their animals. Indian Retailer The report also identified that preventive veterinary care — beyond basic vaccination — is gaining momentum in urban India, though access to quality veterinary services remains a significant challenge in semi-urban and rural areas. The findings underscore the growing but uneven landscape of pet healthcare awareness across different socioeconomic groups in India.

Nutrition and Feeding Practices

Source: Pattanaik, A.K., Sharma, K., & colleagues. (2022) ^[4]. Welfare Evaluation of Pet Dogs Through Feeding Protocols Followed, Nutritional Composition of Available

Feeds and Blood Metabolic Profile. *Indian Journal of Animal Nutrition / ICAR*.

Retrieved from: <https://epubs.icar.org.in/index.php/IJAN/article/view/166597>

Summary: This Indian study surveyed 91 adult pet dogs in Central Kashmir and found that approximately 63% were reared on homemade diets, with about 90% receiving a non-vegetarian type of diet, and only around 5% were exclusively fed commercial dog food brands. Indian Council of Agricultural Research The analysis of commercially available pet food further revealed that a significant proportion of brands fell below recommended nutritional standards for key nutrients such as protein, fat, and calcium. These findings point to a widespread gap in nutritional literacy among Indian pet owners and highlight the need for dietary education as part of responsible pet ownership.

Training and Behavioral Management

Source: Ojha, B., & Singh, S. (2023) ^[3]. DOGRAM: A Digital Platform Study on Dog Ownership Challenges in India. *International Journal of Progressive Research in Engineering Management and Science (IJPREMS)*.

Retrieved from: https://www.ijprems.com/uploadedfiles/paper/issue_3_march_2025/39435/final/fin_ijprems1743512676.pdf

Summary: This study found that among Indian households owning pets, over 63% own dogs, with over 33 million pet dogs in the country, and that key challenges for owners include accessibility to quality veterinary services, finding ethical adoption agencies, and accessing expert training services. Ijprems The researchers noted a significant absence of structured, expert-guided training resources tailored for the Indian pet owner, and found that behavioral problems arising from a lack of training were a common pain point cited by respondents. The study called for integrated digital and community-based platforms to bridge the training knowledge gap in the Indian pet care ecosystem.

Research Gap

Though recent research in India has explored certain aspects of pet ownership, like adoption trends (Mondal *et al.*, 2023) ^[2], grooming market development (Research and Markets, 2020), rising veterinary spending (Indian Retailer, 2023) ^[1], dietary patterns (Pattanaik *et al.*, 2022) ^[4], and training issues (Ojha & Singh, 2023) ^[3], these studies primarily explore pet care aspects in a disconnected manner, rather than an integrated behavioral perspective.

Most Indian studies either concentrate on market development trends or clinical and humanitarian analyses, without much focus on the interplay between awareness, attitudes, and decision-making patterns in relation to various aspects of responsible pet ownership. There is a conspicuous lack of organized academic research that explores adoption preference, vaccination knowledge, grooming habits, nutrition awareness, training attitudes, and long-term ownership in a single population sample.

Moreover, industry reports, though pointing towards the fast-growing Indian pet care market, lack much depth in understanding whether rising spending patterns are accompanied by educated and responsible ownership behaviors. The behavioral drivers of adoption, especially the interplay

between emotional and readiness factors, have not been explored much in the Indian socio-cultural setting. Thus, there is a definite research gap in understanding the correlation between pet adoption decisions and responsible pet care behaviors in the Indian setting through an in-depth, survey-based analytical framework. This study aims to fill this gap by bringing together various aspects of responsible pet ownership into a single framework, thus adding to a more comprehensive understanding of pet care behaviors in the Indian setting.

Research Design

This study used a quantitative and descriptive research design to investigate the factors that affect pet adoption and responsible pet care. The survey method was used because it enables the systematic collection of data from a larger population and the use of statistical analysis of attitudes, awareness, and behavior.

The study used a cross-sectional design since the data was collected at one point in time from respondents with varying levels of pet ownership. This design allowed the study to compare the variations in awareness, attitudes, and levels of responsibility among the different categories of ownership.

Research Approach

The quantitative research methodology was adopted through a survey approach, using a structured questionnaire designed in line with the research objectives and hypotheses.

- The questionnaire was designed to capture the following important dimensions:
- Pet adoption preferences
- Grooming practices and awareness
- Vaccination knowledge
- Nutrition and feeding practices
- Training practices
- Sense of long-term responsibility

The survey was conducted using only closed-ended questions, which included:

- Multiple-choice questions
- Likert scale statements (5-point scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree)

Tabulation

Question	Response Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Interpretation
1] What is your current pet ownership status?	I currently own a pet	64	38.1%	A significant portion of respondents are active pet owners, indicating that the study includes practical, experience-based perspectives.
	I previously owned a pet	35	20.83%	A considerable group has past ownership experience, allowing reflective insights into responsible care practices.
	I am planning to own a pet	45	26.79%	One-fourth of respondents represent potential future pet owners, making their attitudes important for preventive awareness.
	I have never owned and don't plan to own a pet	24	14.29%	A smaller segment shows no engagement with pet ownership, serving as a comparative group for awareness levels.
2] If you were to get a pet, which would you prefer?	Adopt from a shelter	75	44.64%	The highest proportion supports ethical adoption, reflecting growing awareness about rescue and animal welfare.
	Buy from a pet store or breeder	46	27.38%	A notable percentage still prefer commercial purchase, indicating continued demand for pedigree animals.

This helped to ensure the collection of data that is measurable and standardized for statistical analysis. The use of closed-ended questions also helped to ensure consistency in the responses and the ability to analyze the data using percentages and comparisons across variables.

As the study was conducted on quantifiable behavioral patterns and attitudes, a purely quantitative approach was deemed appropriate for the achievement of the research objectives.

Data Collection Method

The data was collected using Google Forms, which enabled effective distribution and recording of responses. The link to the survey was distributed digitally via social media platforms and messaging apps to reach a wide range of respondents.

A total of 168 valid responses were collected for analysis.

Sampling Technique

The research employed a convenience sampling technique, where the participants were chosen based on their accessibility and willingness to participate in the study.

The sample included:

- Present pet owners
- Former pet owners
- People who intend to get one
- People who have never owned pets before

Research Instrument

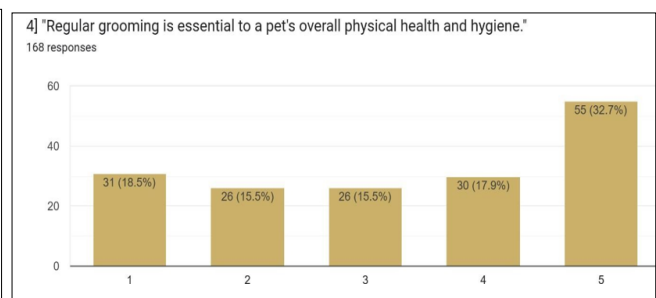
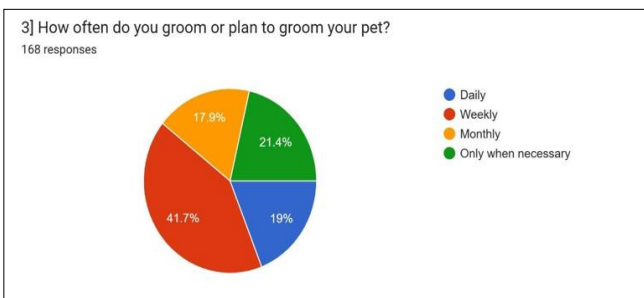
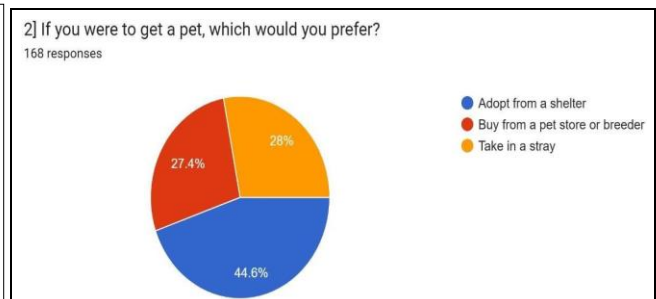
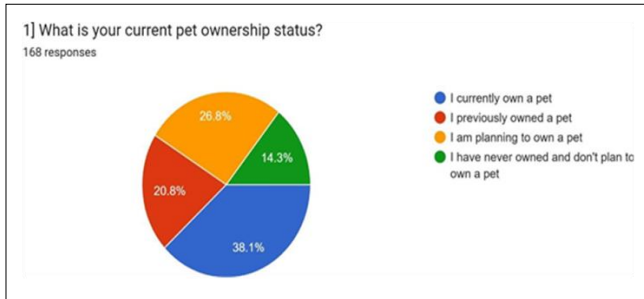
The main research tool was a structured questionnaire with 15 questions, categorized into the following groups:

- Pet Ownership Status
- Adoption Preferences
- Grooming Practices
- Vaccination and Veterinary Care Awareness
- Nutrition and Feeding Practices
- Training Methods
- Long-Term Responsibility

The questions were in the form of statements using the Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) to determine the level of respondents' attitudes towards responsible pet care practices.

	Take in a stray	47	27.98%	A substantial group is willing to rescue stray animals, reflecting compassion and social responsibility.
3] How often do you groom or plan to groom your pet?	Daily	32	19.05%	Indicates strong commitment to hygiene among a smaller but dedicated group.
	Weekly	70	41.67%	The majority follow a consistent grooming routine, reflecting responsible physical care
	Monthly	30	17.86%	Moderate grooming awareness but possibly dependent on breed or convenience.
	Only when necessary	36	21.43%	Suggests irregular care patterns among some respondents.
4] "Regular grooming is essential to a pet's overall physical health and hygiene."	Strongly Disagree	31	18.45%	Nearly one-third underestimate grooming's importance, indicating awareness gaps.
	Disagree	26	15.48%	
	Neutral	26	15.48%	Some uncertainty exists regarding grooming benefits.
	Agree	30	17.86%	Over half recognize grooming as essential for health and
	Strongly Agree	55	32.74%	hygiene.
5] Are you aware of the core vaccines required for common pets such as dogs and cats ?	Somewhat aware	65	38.69%	Many have partial knowledge But may lack detailed understanding.
	Not aware at all	23	13.69%	A small but concerning percentage lacks awareness entirely.
	Yes, Fully aware	80	47.62%	Half of respondents demonstrate strong awareness of vaccination requirements.
6] "Vaccination and regular veterinary visits are non- negotiable responsibilities of every pet owner."	Strongly Disagree	37	22.02%	Nearly one-third do not strongly support vaccination responsibility, which is concerning.
	Disagree	18	10.71%	
	Neutral	27	16.07%	Indicates uncertainty among some respondents.
	Agree	35	20.83%	Slight majority acknowledge vaccination as essential.
Strongly Agree	51	30.36%		
7] What type of food do you give or plan to give your pet?	Commercial Pet food (dry/wet)	55	32.74%	Indicates trust in standardized nutritional products.
	Home- cooked meals	57	33.93%	Slightly higher preference for homemade diets, reflecting cultural feeding patterns.
	Raw diet	40	23.81%	Shows growing interest in alternative feeding trends.

Graphs/Charts



High Engagement with Pet Ownership

Nearly 85% of respondents are current, former, or prospective pet owners, ensuring that the data reflects informed perspectives rather than hypothetical opinions.

Strong Preference for Ethical Adoption

A majority (44.64%) prefer shelter adoption, and an additional 27.98% prefer rescuing strays, indicating growing

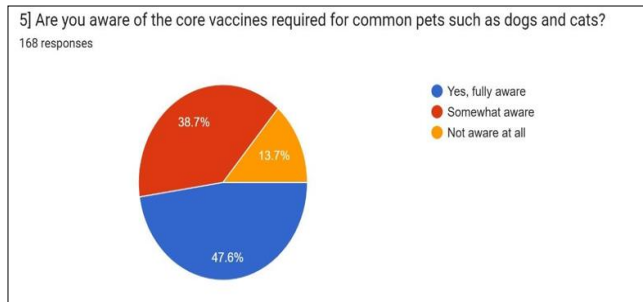
awareness toward animal welfare over commercial purchase.

Moderate to Strong Grooming Responsibility

Most respondents (60%+) follow regular grooming routines (daily/weekly), though a notable segment still practices irregular grooming.

Mixed Awareness About Grooming Importance

While over 50% agree grooming is essential, nearly one-third underestimate its importance, highlighting awareness gaps.

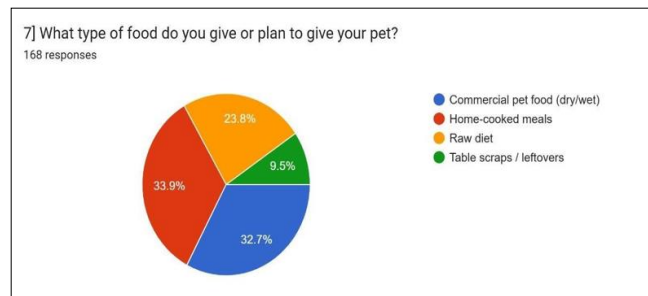
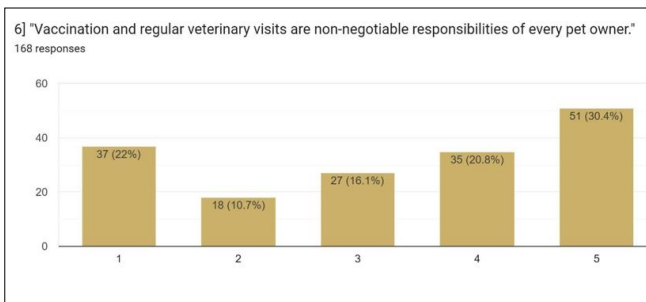


Good but Incomplete Vaccination Awareness

Around 86% show at least some awareness of core vaccines; however, about 14% lack awareness entirely, which is concerning.

Divided Attitudes Toward Veterinary Responsibility

Although a slight majority recognize vaccination and vet visits as essential, nearly one-third do not strongly support it, indicating inconsistency in responsibility perception.



Diverse Feeding Practices

Preferences are almost equally split between commercial and home-cooked diets, reflecting cultural feeding patterns and varying levels of nutritional literacy.

In general, the results show that the respondents have a positive attitude towards ethical pet adoption and responsible pet care. Although the level of awareness about grooming, vaccination, nutrition, and training is moderately high, there are some noticeable gaps in health literacy and responsibility perception. The preference for shelter adoption and responsible rehoming of pets shows encouraging trends in attitudes towards animal welfare. However, the variation in the responses also shows that there is a need for educational programs to improve informed pet ownership practices.

Technology Stack

- **HTML5:** Used to create the structural backbone of all web pages, including index.html, adopt.html, and login.html.
- **CSS3:** Employed for styling through external stylesheets (style.css) and internal <style> tags to design responsive layouts and vibrant color themes.
- **JavaScript (Vanilla JS):** Extensively used for client-side interactivity and dynamic updates, such as handling adoption forms, managing the shopping cart, and triggering UI animations.

- **Canvas API:** Utilized within index.html and login.html to render high-performance floating particle backgrounds using HTML5 Canvas and JavaScript logic.
- **Animate.css & Google Fonts:** Integrated as external libraries to provide smooth entrance animations and professional, readable typography across the platform

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I am also sincerely grateful to all the respondents who generously contributed their valuable time to participate in the survey. Their honest feedback and valuable inputs formed the basis of this quantitative analysis and helped in validating the research objectives and hypotheses effectively.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the support, motivation, and encouragement provided by my family and friends. Their understanding and faith in me helped me stay focused and determined throughout the completion of this research work.

Conclusion

This research aimed to identify the factors that affect pet adoption and responsible pet care practices among the respondents. The results show a moderate to high level of awareness regarding responsible adoption, grooming, vaccination, nutrition, and training practices. A large number of respondents either own pets or plan to own one in the future, showing a rising interest in companion animal care.

The results show that adopting from shelters is the most preferred option, showing a rising awareness about animal welfare and the shelter culture. However, a large number of respondents still prefer buying pets, showing that commercial breeding practices still have a strong impact. Awareness about vaccination and veterinary care is moderately high, but a large number of respondents either lack complete knowledge or do not strongly consider

vaccination as a non-negotiable responsibility. This shows that there is a need for better public awareness.

Grooming and nutrition practices show mixed results, with a large number of respondents following regular practices and balanced diets, but a large number of them still following irregular grooming practices or potentially harmful feeding practices such as table scraps. Training practices show largely positive attitudes, with a large number of respondents understanding its importance in improving behavior and enhancing the human-animal bond. Encouragingly, a large number of respondents still prefer responsible rehoming if they are unable to care for their pets.

Practical Implications

- Increased awareness campaigns on vaccination and preventive healthcare
- Encouraging ethical adoption rather than commercial buying
- Educational sessions on scientific nutrition and proper feeding habits
- Training workshops for the public to promote humane training
- Community-based activities to promote responsible rehoming

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