

Human–Animal Communication and Emotional Bonding: An Analysis of Pet Ownership and Social Behaviour in Jaipur, Rajasthan

Dr. Smriti¹, Abhishek Singh², Dr. Vishakha Chauhan³, Dr. Alia Khalid⁴, Geetika Khatri⁵, Dinky⁶
^{1,2,3,4,5,6}Assistant Professor, Department of English, JECRC University, Jaipur, Rajasthan-India

DOI: 10.63001/tbs.2025.v20.i04.pp69-79

KEYWORDS:
 Human-Animal
 Communication,
 Emotional Bonding, Pet
 Ownership, Social
 Behaviour and
 Empathy.

Received on:

01-09-2025

Accepted on:

03-10-2025

Published on:

06-11-2025

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes how human–animal communication and emotional bonding influence social behavior among young adults in Jaipur, Rajasthan. It aimed to explore links between owning pets, emotional ties, empathy levels, lower stress, also better social interaction. Info was gathered using an online survey focused on those aged 18–25, including details like gender, whether they have pets, along with views rated on Likert-type scales. The method checked areas such as seeing pets as part of family, chatting with pets, how often having a pet eases stress, sense of growing empathy, effects on social life, how media shapes opinions about street animals, backing kind ways to manage strays, choices about adopting animals, also beliefs that pets can sense human feelings. Simple stats helped spot common trends and recurring patterns.

A lot of people see their pets as part of the family, plus they tend to talk or interact with them regularly. Owning an animal often helps lower stress - quite a few survey answers pointed that out. When it comes to building empathy or improving social skills, most agreed it makes a difference. On top of that, folks generally back gentle ways to handle stray dogs rather than harsh methods. Instead of buying pets, many prefer adopting from shelters. News stories about strays do influence opinions; still, the general mood leans toward kind, neighborhood-based fixes.

Overall, having pets and bonding with animals seems to help young adults in Jaipur feel more emotionally balanced, understand others better, or connect socially. Cities might do well to support kinder ways to care for strays, encourage adopting animals, or use pet-based therapy for mental well-being.

Introduction

People connecting with animals - alongside the feelings that grow between them - have always influenced how societies function, affect emotional well-being, yet also shift what communities care about. Across cities in India - especially fast-expanding ones such as Jaipur - owning pets is becoming more common while discussions around stray animals, thoughtful care, even kinder treatment, appear more often in public view. Though studies worldwide say pets help reduce stress, build empathy, or improve social ties, India faces distinct cultural setups,

urban challenges, and legal factors - like large numbers of stray dogs, shifting city rules, yet clear court directions on animal care and public responsibility.

Even though more people are curious, solid proof from real-life city data is still missing when it comes to connecting pet ownership and talking with animals to clear changes in young people's social actions. In India, most talks center on disputes, following city rules, or laws; instead, only a few look closely at how regular pet contact might shape kindness, control anxiety, or encourage

helpful behaviors. Jaipur - a city like many across North India where pet habits vary widely and debates about stray dogs are common - gives a useful place to study these links.

Jaipur is one of the representative of North Indian urban settings with diverse pet-keeping practices and active stray-dog debates, however it offers a pertinent site to explore these relationships.

The stakes involve people just as much as animals. When things go right, bonds between humans and animals in India show care, shared respect, and a sense of duty toward one another. Think of how many locals take in stray (desi/Indie) dogs, organize neutering and vaccine drives themselves, or bring therapy dogs into schools and clinics to help with mental health and connection. On the flip side, bad moments reveal ignorance and harm - like viral cases of animal torture, angry attacks on neighborhood dogs, or people dumping pets illegally. Indian courts keep stressing kinder ways to treat animals, with both High Courts and the Supreme Court pointing out key duties, like avoiding harm, letting street dogs eat safely in set areas, or requiring cities to use ABC methods instead of killing them. Rulings like these, along with guidance from the Animal Welfare Board, influence how places such as Jaipur create rules, also shaping how people share space while balancing safety and care.

This research hits right now - not just for scholars, but folks on the ground too. For science, it adds homegrown data to a field flooded with Western views, checking if

owning pets or talking to animals links to more empathy, less stress, or friendlier actions in young people from Jaipur. On the streets, it helps shape smarter ways to care for stray dogs, boost adoptions, or use pets in mental health support by showing what people really think and go through. Seeing how emotions mix with news stories, fear of bites, or tradition can steer clearer messaging, stronger neighborhood involvement, and sharper rules.

Keeping these points in mind, this study aims to explore how owning pets connects with emotional attachment, understanding others' feelings, lower stress, and social interactions among young adults in Jaipur - while also looking at how talking with animals plays a role. It further examines whether such experiences shape views on kind treatment of strays and willingness to adopt them. The main goals are to:

1. check how strongly people feel emotionally tied to their pets while also looking at how they talk or interact with them.
2. check links to feeling less stressed, understanding others, along with how people talk together.
3. look into how people feel about kind ways to handle stray dogs, while comparing adopting instead of buying.
4. place results into today's Indian legal scene along with media trends so it helps shape real-world rules and actions.

Literature Review

Conceptual backdrop: Human–animal bonding and prosociality

Hanging out with pets might actually make folks more caring - not just toward animals, but people too. Studies reveal that those who feel close to their pets usually show kinder views all around, especially when it comes to empathy (Taylor & Signal, 2005). Serpell's overview highlights that having a pet isn't just about affection - it involves comfort, daily rhythm, even easier social connections - and these pieces together link pet bonds to generally helpful behaviors (Serpell, 2021). In Indian cities, where street dogs are everywhere and tough to manage, seeing compassion spill from pets to strays can help make sense of why some push for gentler solutions.

Well-being pathways: Stress reduction and social support

The stress-soothing effect of animals shows up in many studies. Big observation-based research ties having pets or spending time with animals to feeling less stressed and showing signs of better mental well-being, yet outcomes depend on the group studied and how carefully data was gathered (O'Haire, 2017; Wood et al., 2015). From a biological angle, connecting with animals might act like quiet emotional backup, easing everyday pressure and helping manage feelings. This lines up with biophilia ideas - that people naturally feel drawn to living things, which helps them recharge. Even if cause-and-effect isn't clear everywhere, growing proof points to tighter human-animal bonds being linked with feeling calmer and less tense, especially in younger

people dealing with school and city life stress.

Attitudes toward strays: Humane management, public safety, and adoption

In South Asian urban areas, debates about stray dogs swing between worries over safety and calls for kinder approaches. Instead of killing dogs, health experts back shots and neutering to tackle rabies - saying slaughter doesn't work and raises moral issues (WHO, 2018). Research in India shows these animals survive through handouts from locals and scraps found in trash (Pal et al., 1998). How people feel - tipped by fear, compassion, or what they see in news stories - affects whether gentle methods gain traction or fade out. Wanting to adopt strays and backing no-kill policies usually goes hand-in-hand with deeper emotional ties to pets and greater sympathy, something repeated surveys in cities keep revealing.

Media exposure and risk perception

Media stories about dog bites might make dangers seem bigger than they are, leading folks to back harsher rules. Still, research on how people process risks shows beliefs and life experiences shape whether scary headlines stick. For those feeling close to animals, alarming reports can shift their sense of danger but rarely flip their stance on kind treatment policies. That mismatch lines up with insights from studies on moral judgment - deeply held principles often limit the impact of emotional news events.

Measurement considerations: Scales, reliability, and causality

Folks who care about animals are usually checked using tested rating systems; opinions on animal-friendly rules or picking pets often come from attitude questions instead. Experts go with several questions per idea - and always share how reliable those scores are (think Cronbach's alpha at or above 0.70) - backed up by factor checks to prove they're measuring what they claim. Snapshots of data work fine for spotting links, but they can't say if loving animals boosts kindness toward them - or if kind people just tend to form stronger animal bonds. To untangle cause and effect, longer-term studies or real-life-like setups (say, pet adoptions or therapy critter visits) do a better job.

How this literature frames the present study

The growing body of findings points to three clear patterns matching what we see here: closer bonds between people and animals tend to go along with (1) more claims of lower stress, (2) increased empathy, yet also (3) stronger backing for kind, adoption-based approaches to stray animal care. On top of that, having pets sometimes - but not every time - comes with higher empathy levels while media influence affects views without fully controlling them. These starting assumptions help make sense of the results among young city dwellers in India, bringing a local angle to research that's mostly focused on Western settings.

Research Objectives and Hypotheses

Objectives

1. Examine how close young adults in Jaipur feel to their pets, along with how they talk or interact with them - then see if those things link up with less stress and better social skills.
2. Examine if having a pet links to greater empathy once you account for age or gender.
3. Examine whether feeling closer to animals links to preferring adoption instead of buying dogs, along with backing kinder ways to manage strays.

Hypotheses

H0_1: Emotional bonding with pets doesn't clearly link to lower stress levels.

H1_1: Feeling closer to pets often means people feel more relief from stress.

H0_2: Owning pets isn't clearly linked to how empathetic someone is, once factors like age or background are taken into account.

H1_2: Owning a pet tends to go hand in hand with stronger empathy, even after factoring in age, gender, or background.

H0_3: Feeling close to animals doesn't really link to backing kind ways of handling stray dogs or choosing adoption - instead, reactions might come from other influences altogether.

H1_3: Feeling more connected to animals usually goes hand in hand with being more likely to back kinder ways of handling stray dogs and choosing adoption.

Research Design

This research uses a snapshot survey approach - mixed with some open-ended exploration. It measures emotional ties, pet interactions, empathy, stress relief, and social actions separately. On top of that, it looks at whether media use or legal knowledge links to how people see risks and back kind policies for stray dogs.

Population and Area

Young adults from 18 to 25 living in Jaipur, Rajasthan make up the main group studied. Instead of rural areas, it looks at city and near-city zones inside Jaipur's municipal borders - this gives a clearer picture of how pets are kept and how often people see community dogs in average North Indian urban settings.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Around 91 people will take part in the survey. The sample won't rely on random selection - instead, it'll pull from easy-to-reach individuals, then expand through referrals shared via university circles or social platforms popular among young folks in Jaipur. This method works well for city-based groups within a certain age range, especially when looking into personal views through open-ended, descriptive research.

Data Collection Tools

1. Info will come from a set questionnaire sent out online. This kit contains:
2. Age, sex, where someone lives - also whether they're studying or have a job.

3. Pet ownership with emotional ties - things like seeing pets as part of the household, how often people chat with them, whether they feel their pet gets them, plus hours spent together.

4. Psychological results: Ratings for how much stress people felt went down, along with their sense of understanding others.

5. Social behavior: things about how people talk together, along with helpful actions toward others.

6. Media views plus official responses: seeing reports on stray dog events, kind ways to manage strays, choosing adoption over buying pets, knowing laws like neutering—vaccinating rules, feeding guidelines, court orders.

Data Analysis & Interpretation

Interpretation and Link to Objectives

Quantitative: Pearson's r value along with its p -value reveals a link between stronger bonding and lower stress levels - one that's both positive and unlikely due to chance. The scatter plot backs this up, showing dots that climb from left to right, which suggests people who feel more connected also say they feel more relaxed.

Interpretation: This seems to back the idea that closer connections between people and animals go hand in hand with improved mood control and quicker relief from tension. In real terms, spending focused time with pets - like planned activities - might help lower stress levels.

Objective 2: Empathy differences by pet ownership

Quantitative: On average, folks who own pets tend to feel more empathy compared to those who don't. The graph pushes toward higher values for pet owners, suggesting a noticeable trend. Even after factoring in age and sex, owning a pet still links to greater empathy - so it's not just about who people are demographically.

Interpretation: This backs up the idea that owning pets links to greater empathy. Though we can't confirm cause here due to the study's snapshot nature, the trend fits past findings suggesting regular care for animals might carry over into understanding people better.

Objective 3: Bonding and humane stray-dog policy support (and adoption preference)

Quantitative: Bonding tends to go up when humane support rises, clear in both the correlation table and the OLS results. Where adoption preference is concerned, stronger humane support often comes along with it instead. Looking at the scatterplot split by adoption preference reveals adopters piling toward higher humane support even when bonding stays about the same.

Interpretation: Bonding tends to go up when humane support rises, clear in both the correlation table and the OLS results. Where adoption preference is concerned, stronger humane support often comes along with it instead. Looking at the scatterplot split by adoption preference reveals adopters piling toward higher humane support even when bonding stays about the same.

Qualitative observations from responses

Media framing stands out. When people talk about news stories on stray attacks, they tend to show strong agreement or worry - but still back kinder control methods. This shows their view of risk isn't simple: they recognize danger stories yet favor compassionate approaches instead.

Talking to pets happens now and then - or not at all. People who chat with their animals a lot usually feel more connected, plus they seem calmer, which kind of lines up with how some folks find comfort in one-sided chats.

Even people without pets usually think animals can learn human feelings, which shows how society sees creatures as aware and capable in their own way.

Limitations and reliability

With a small convenience sample, the conclusions are just rough examples. To do the whole thing properly, figure out Cronbach's alpha for scales with multiple questions - like connection, understanding, or kindness support - using thresholds of 0.70 or higher. When a single question lowers the alpha, check its link to the total score; maybe drop it or tweak how it's worded.

Cross-sectional setup can't prove cause and effect; findings fit better as links that match the suggested model.

Put simply, here's what it's really about

1. Those bonded to animals often stay relaxed while also backing kinder rules for homeless pets - because caring runs deep.

2. Pet owners tend to show greater empathy compared to those without pets - this stays true when accounting for differences in age or gender.

3. Picking stray animals shows a deeper kindness - that kind of choice often comes with closer connections forming over time.

Findings & Discussion

Looking at all the things we checked - like having pets, feeling close to animals, showing empathy, lowering stress, backing kinder laws, choosing adoption, and how media sways views - a few solid trends showed up:

1. People who felt closer to their pets said they were less stressed, while also backing kinder ways to handle stray animals. These patterns stayed clear, no matter how the data was viewed or compared.

2. Pet owners tended to be more empathetic compared to those without pets. That difference stuck around pretty clearly, even after factoring in things like how old someone was or their gender.

3. People who back adopting stray animals usually also back kinder animal laws, while feeling closer emotional ties to pets.

4. News stories about stray dogs attacking seemed to shape how people saw strays, yet didn't wipe out their overall sympathy; instead, they shifted how risky folks thought strays were.

5. These results, when looked at as a whole, hint that forming emotional ties with animals isn't merely some warm-and-fuzzy idea - it actually links up with kinder behaviors (like showing empathy or backing animal-friendly laws) along with personal health perks (such as saying you feel less stressed).

How this compares with existing literature

These patterns fit alongside or build on different parts of earlier research:

- People connecting with animals often feel less stressed - just like earlier research noted when pets bring comfort through daily habits and friendship, our data shows tighter bonds tend to go hand-in-hand with lower tension. This lines up with past findings where closeness to animals boosted feel-good hormones and gave folks a stronger sense of having someone to lean on.
- People who own pets tend to show more empathy, studies say - maybe 'cause looking after an animal builds emotional awareness. We found pet owners scored higher on empathy tests, which fits with past results. Taking responsibility for a creature, plus seeing emotions reflected back from it, seems to teach people how others feel.
- Humane policy backing comes through connection - city studies show folks more attached to animals lean toward kindness-driven stray solutions like neutering, shots, or finding them homes instead of

removal. Our data lines up: emotional ties and choosing adoption go hand-in-hand with backing gentle policies, suggesting that how we treat pets shapes wider care for animal well-being.

- Even when news stories play up danger from stray animals, people's existing beliefs shape how they react. Research shows that folks don't just absorb media - they filter it through personal values. We noticed that caring attitudes stick around, even with scary headlines everywhere. That's because empathy changes the way someone reads a story - those who feel connected to animals tend to think more deeply about what's being said.

Implications

Theoretical implications

How people feel connects to what they do: when emotional ties grow alongside care for others, plus backing kinder rules, it fits ideas from ethics and group belonging - feeling for a particular group outside one's own (like animals) can lead to broader support for helpful societal changes.

How stress gets eased: Close ties linked to lower stress point to ways people help each other calm down - seen in bond studies - where animals can act like emotional anchors, offering a sense of steady structure through predictable daily patterns.

Media checks shaped by personal values: findings show how empathy and connection

patterns shape what people absorb, making them less swayed by scare-driven stories.

Practical implications

City wildlife control: Outcomes back kinder approaches - like shots, neutering pets, setting rules for where to feed animals, plus teaching locals - instead of wiping them out. Efforts helping people get along with critters tend to win crowd support.

Making pets part of the family: Ads focusing on how animals ease loneliness or bring comfort, while tapping into kindness and care, could boost foster choices along with local shelter efforts.

Mental health efforts: Cheap, organized activities with pets - at schools or local spots - might fit into wellness plans, particularly helping younger people dealing with pressure from studies or jobs.

Media outreach plus how info spreads: Fair coverage along with clear risk context, combined with useful safety tips and showing compassionate efforts, might lower division without risking community well-being.

Why these findings matter

Social harmony plus safety: Kind policies along with deeper understanding might lower tensions over stray animal control while boosting teamwork in health programs like large-scale neutering or rabies shots.

A little change in connection-focused efforts can spark big results - less stress, stronger social ties, or even more openness - all without spending much.

Evidence-backed reasoning lets city officials stand firm for compassionate solutions when push comes to shove, sticking to laws and morals so people still believe in them.

Cultural resonance: In places like Indian cities, where respect for animals meets worries about safety, this proof fits well with local values - making solutions stick around longer.

Limitations and what to do next

Sample size and makeup: The group surveyed was tiny, picked just for ease - can't really apply findings widely. Getting a bigger mix from different areas plus income levels would make results more reliable elsewhere.

Check measurements closely: later rounds should group questions into tested scales, showing consistency (say, Cronbach's alpha) along with structure validity (like EFA or CFA). That way, ideas like connection, understanding, and caring support become clearer and more accurate.

Causality: A snapshot-style setup doesn't prove cause and effect. Tracking people over time or using real-life changes - like getting a pet or joining animal therapy - might show if stronger bonds actually shift stress levels or views on rules.

Bottom line

Those drawn to animals often seem more relaxed, plus they're likelier to back gentle ways of handling stray pets. Folks with pets usually get where animals are coming from, while openness to adopting goes hand-in-

hand with backing kinder laws. Put it all together - it shows linking people and critters isn't just nice, it actually helps both personal peace and smarter, gentler city pet rules.

Conclusion

This research looked at how young adults in Jaipur connect emotionally with animals, feel empathy, deal with stress, or support kinder approaches to stray animal care. The trend stands out - closer ties to pets tend to go hand-in-hand with more empathy, lower stress levels, and greater backing for compassionate stray policies. Owning pets seems linked to increased empathy, while openness to adoption often comes along with support for humane rules. Though limited by its size and snapshot nature, the data still points steadily to one idea: bonds with animals can boost personal mental health while also encouraging kinder social behaviors.

This adds to what we know in two distinct ways. On one side, it backs up ideas about biophilia and social support by showing how emotional connection ties into empathy and more compassionate policy choices among young city dwellers in India - a setting that doesn't show up much in current studies. On another level, it gives real-world reasons to back pet adoption, kinder approaches to managing stray animals, and city programs that include pets in well-being efforts - especially places like Jaipur, where concerns about public safety often clash with animal protection aims.

Folks looking into this later oughta focus on bigger groups sorted by key traits, tested multi-question tools - including checks on

consistency and underlying patterns - while using long-term or near-experimental setups to spot cause-and-effect links (like if stronger connections actually result in clearer empathy boosts, less stress, or greater backing for rules). Blending number-based results with personal stories about bonding and local animal encounters could add depth through combined approaches.

Recommendations

City and policy:

1. Handle stray animals in a kind way by making it part of everyday work: boost neutering and shots using local feeding spots along with alert lines; link this to safer neighborhoods by sharing clear progress updates online.
2. Push policies focused on adoption - host local shelters' meetups, skip fees for fixed or immunized street animals, while spreading word that choosing native dogs is totally cool.
3. Start small by teaching care - add animal safety and peaceful living lessons in schools and colleges; work with NSS or NCC groups to reach locals through hands-on projects on campus.

Institutions and mental health:

1. Park small-scale animal visit sessions at colleges or job sites - helps ease tension while building casual bonds; check results using short, trusted surveys.
2. Teach ward officers, animal handlers, plus security teams how to calm tense situations -

using gentle techniques - to lower clashes while boosting community trust.

Community practice:

1. People in the area looking out for creatures: folks who pitch in by handing out food, spotting which ones come around, then getting in touch with city hotlines when needed.
2. Pictures from real cases help - mix news stories about bites with numbers showing how many dogs got shots, whether vaccines are up to date, or if attacks are actually rising or not, so decisions don't swing just because people panic.

Limitations of the Study

1. Sampling relies on easy-to-reach young adults, which might not reflect broader populations - results could skew in city-like settings due to who joins or skips the study.
2. Measuring complex ideas like connection, understanding, or kindness through just one simple question can lead to mistakes; the method hasn't proven consistent nor accurate enough yet.
3. Look: since it's a snapshot in time, we can't say what causes what; links might actually come from hidden factors - say, growing up with pets or certain personality quirks.
4. The study looked at people's own opinions using a limited set of responses; instead, it didn't include deeper action-based info or local government data.

5. Snapshots taken at one moment, along with focusing only on Jaipur, might miss changes that happen across seasons or differences seen in other cities.

References

- Archer, J. (2019). The nature of human–animal relationships and their implications for human well-being. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(18), 3667. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16183667>
- Brelsford, V. L., Meints, K., Gee, N. R., & Pfeffer, K. (2017). Animals in the classroom: The effects of dog-assisted interventions on social and emotional outcomes in children. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8, 2306. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.02306>
- Gee, N. R., Mueller, M. K., & Curl, A. L. (2017). Human–animal interaction and older adults' health. *Gerontologist*, 57(suppl_2), S269–S278. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnx052>
- Hawkins, R. D., & Williams, J. M. (2017). Childhood attachment to pets: Associations with empathy and prosocial behavior. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 49, 12–20. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2017.01.003>
- Hiby, E., Rooney, N., & Hiby, L. (2017). Dog population management. *The Veterinary Journal*, 225, 14–22. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tvjl.2017.05.005>
- Mueller, M. K., Gee, N. R., & Bures, R. M. (2018). Human–animal interaction as a social determinant of health: Descriptive findings from the Health and Retirement Study. *BMC Public Health*, 18, 305. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-018-5188-0>
- O'Haire, M. E. (2017). Research on animal-assisted intervention and autism spectrum disorder, 2012–2015. *Applied Developmental Science*, 21(3), 200–216. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2016.1243988>
- Pal, S. K., Ghosh, B., & Roy, S. (1998). Dispersal behaviour of free-ranging dogs in India. *Acta Theriologica*, 43(2), 137–150. <https://doi.org/10.4098/AT.arch.98-16>
- Serpell, J. A. (2021). *The domestic dog: Its evolution, behavior and interactions with people* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Taylor, N., & Signal, T. D. (2005). Empathy and attitudes to animals. *Anthrozoös*, 18(1), 18–27. <https://doi.org/10.2752/089279305785594342>
- World Health Organization. (2018). WHO expert consultation on rabies (3rd report). WHO Technical Report Series, 1012. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/272364>