

# **HOW PET PREFERENCE VARIES WITH THE VARIATION IN TRUST & OTHER PERSONALITY FACTOR**



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## Abstract

**Background:** A very common reason of people adopt a pet is for companionship. Dogs can serve as a deterrent to intruders and can alert their owners to potential danger, cats are known for their ability to reduce stress and anxiety, making them a well-liked option for people seeking a relaxing presence in their house. While dogs are known for their loyal and protective nature, cats can provide a sense of calm and require less maintenance. The aim of the study is to examine the differences in trust and other personality traits between persons who prefer dogs and people who prefer cats.

**Method:** A comparative study was done among the 60 participants (33 dog owners 27 cat owners) using General Trust Scale & NEO-FIVE-FACTOR-INVENTORY.

**Result:** The result of t-test shows that there is a significant difference in dependency & faith item of trust factor among the dog owners & cat owners. The dog owners show high mean score in dependency and faith item of trust than the cat owners. Also the result of t-test shows that there is a significant difference in neuroticism, openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness among the dog owners and cat owners. The dog owners show high Mean score in openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness these three items than the cat owners. However, the cat owners also show high mean score on neuroticism than dog owners in personality factors.

**Keywords:** Dependency, faith, neuroticism, openness to experience, agreeableness, Conscientiousness.

## INTRODUCTION

We all are bonded in the food chain to live our life. But not only we share the food chain bond with the plants, animals & birds, we also share a powerful bond with them to live our life. From the ancient time we get the help from them through providing food and clothing, transportation, protection, companionship and friendship. From this till today the birds, animals all are playing a significant role to develop our lifestyle.

But it is a very common scenario for all of us that we are personally touched with our domestic animals. Those who have horse stable, cows barn, sheep's and goat's cattle sheds they all show a mental connection with their animals. They all show love care towards their domestic animals. From the fostering the domestic animals many Americans, Indians, & other countries people start to treat animals & birds as their pets, or as their family member. Specifically, the two animals' dogs and cats, as pets or family member or friends. Affection, companionship, and attention providing are the main purpose of the cats & dogs.

People adopt dogs for various reasons. One of the main reasons is for companionship. Dogs are known to be loyal animals and provide emotional support to their owners. Many people adopt dogs to help them feel less lonely or to have a friend to play with. Additionally, dogs can also provide a sense of security for their owners. With their strong sense of smell and hearing, dogs can alert their owners to any potential dangers or intruders. Dogs are renowned for being devoted to people. They have an innate ability to bond with humans, which is why they are often referred to as "man's best friend." This bond is not just limited to their owners, but also extends to other members of the household.

Research has shown that dogs have a natural inclination to form strong bonds with humans. This is because they have been domesticated for thousands of years and have evolved to live alongside humans. Dogs are social animals and thrive in environments where they are surrounded by people. They are highly attuned to human emotions and can sense when their owners are happy or sad.

The relationship between humans and dogs is not only psychological but also physical. Dogs have been trained to perform a variety of tasks, such as guiding the visually impaired and sniffing out drugs and explosives. They are also used in therapy to help people with mental health issues, as their presence can have a calming effect on humans. They can also help to reduce stress and anxiety, which is why they are often used in workplaces to improve employee morale.

On the other hand, people also adopt cats for companionship. However, cats are known for their independent nature, which can make them a better fit for someone who is looking for a low-maintenance pet. Cats also require less space and can be kept indoors, making them a good choice for those who live in apartments or smaller homes. Furthermore, cats are known for their ability to reduce stress and anxiety, making them a popular choice for those who are looking for a calming presence in their home. Cats are known for forming strong bonds with humans, often forming close and affectionate relationships with their owners. This bond is often built over time through regular interaction, including playing, grooming, and cuddling.

Cats are social creatures and enjoy spending time with their owners, often showing their affection through body language, such as purring, rubbing up against their owner, kneading, or giving gentle head butts. They may also follow their owners around the house, to show their attachment.

Some cats may form a deeper bond with a particular person or family member, while others may bond equally with everyone in the household. Either way, the bond between a cat and their owner is often rewarding for both parties, providing companionship and emotional support

Whether someone chooses to adopt a dog or a cat often depends on their lifestyle and personal preferences. While dogs are known for their loyal and protective nature, cats can provide a sense of calm and require less maintenance. Ultimately, both dogs and cats make great pets and can bring joy and companionship to their owners.

Even a recent issue of Time Magazine addressed the significance of the bond between people and their dogs (**Gibbs, 2008**). Gibbs talked about the President's dog's impact as well as the dog the President chose, whether or not he decided to have a dog at all, and where the dog would be obtained. In his discussion of the value Americans placed on these choices, Gibbs demonstrated the consideration individuals give to the symbolic value of human-animal connections in both popular and political culture. There are numerous myths and stories that Centre on this kind of relationship.

The relationship between Orion and his hound Sirius is a good example of this (**Apollodorus & Hard, 1999**). Sirius was so heartbroken when his loving master passed away that he was given a position next to him in the sky. The cat, known as Mau, was highly symbolic and revered in ancient Egyptian religion (**Malek, 1993/1997**). The Manekineko cats are a symbol of luck and wealth in Japan (**Wellman, 2004**).

A recent survey of 266 college-aged men and women at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, found that the majority of cat owners believe they are more independent and submissive than their feline companions (**Ransford, 2008**). The majority of dog owners believe that their personalities are pleasant and dominant, just like those of their pets. However, not all dogs and cats will exhibit the same qualities, according to the article reporting these findings. The most significant discovery was the correlation between people's perceptions of their own personalities and those of their pets' personalities.

According to the Eysenck Personality Inventory (**Eysenck & Eysenck, 1965**), Edelson and Lester (**Edelson & Lester, 1983**) examined participants' preference for and history of owning dogs, cats, fish, or birds, their connections with their parents, and their level of extraversion. They discovered that guys who had a leaning towards Extraversion were more likely to like dogs, as were boys who had deeper relationships with their fathers. Women were more likely to currently own cats than men, and they also expressed a greater intention to do so in the future. This study provides evidence that there may be a difference between people who tend to be extraverted and those who prefer a particular kind of pet.

A master's thesis at Humboldt State University (**Eggert, 2004**) looked for proof that there was a connection between a liking for dogs or cats and specific Five-Factor Model personality qualities. In Eggert's study, 200 people took part. 57 men and 143 women. They were all college students who were at least 18 years old. Eggert presented the NEO-FFI (Neuroticism- Extraversion- Openness-Five Factor Inventory) after administering a questionnaire meant to gauge participants' preferences for particular dogs.

According to the (**Perrine and Osbourne's research from 1998**), Males and females who liked dogs over cats assessed themselves more favorably on masculinity and independence. Their

findings corroborated the notion that individuals' perceptions of their own preferences for cats or dogs are related to their personality traits, and that people also attribute various personality traits to others who prefer cats or dogs.

**Martinez and Kidd's (1980)** study examined the history of pet ownership to various personality types and discovered differences in the area of self-reported well-being. But this study also suggested that there was a need for greater investigation into the connections between pets and personality. It concentrated on the ambiguity surrounding the human-animal link and the challenges in defining the distinctive qualities peculiar not only to that bond but also to the need or absence of such a bond within human-nature.

According to the 2007 Edition of the U.S. Pet Ownership and Demographics Sourcebook (**The American Veterinary Medical Association, 2007**), dog owners are more likely to be married with children than cat owners are; 67% of dog owners have children in the home compared to 61.8% of cat owners. Additionally, research revealed that 52.6% of dog owners have three or more family members, compared to 47% of cat owners. In addition, 82.7% of dog owners and 63.7% of cat owners, respectively, visit the veterinarian at least once a year (The American Veterinary Medical Association, 2007).

According to the **2017 Development of the cat-owner relationship scale (CORS) Tiffani J Howell, Jonathan Bowen, Jaume Fatjó, Paula Calvo, Anna Holloway, Pauleen C Bennett**, Owner-related and pet-related elements, which probably vary depending on the species, can have an impact on the human-animal bond's characteristics. Female cat owners who participated in Study 1293 completed a modified MDORS in which all instances of "dog" were changed to "cat." In this study involving 570 cat owners, the resulting cat-owner relationship scale (CORS) was put to the test. Internal consistency and factor structure, as well as other key psychometric aspects of the scale, were assessed. We contend that this scale can be utilized to precisely gauge how the owner perceives their partnership.

According to the **Mauro Ines, Claire Ricci-Bonot, Daniel S Mills (2021)** Although cats are well-liked as pets, little is known about their bonds and interactions with their owners. Using human attachment and social support theories as a foundation for the underlying link, the goal of this study was to discover and categories the various sorts of relationships that cats may have with their owners. their consistency in their interactions with the cat and sensitivity to its requirements. What we refer to as a "open relationship," "remote association," "causal relationship," "co-dependence," and "friendship" seems to be made up of them. Results The survey received 6965 responses in total. 6357 responses were left after responses with incorrect owner or cat age entries (such as multiple age entries submitted) were eliminated (dataset A). The majority of respondents (91.7%) were female, resided (71.1%), and had grown up (68.1%) in a two-person family (44.8%) in the United Kingdom. The majority of cats (94%) were neutered, had some type of outside access (70.5%), and either lived alone (40.9%) or in the same home as another cat (32.4%) (Supplementary Table S2).

In the current study, (**Iben meyer,2014**) we looked at how the Monash Dog Owner Relationship Scale (MDORS) assessment of the dog-owner relationship interacted with a number of dog and owner variables, including the dog's personality. 421 owner responses and their dogs' DMA test outcomes could be matched. Overall, only a small percentage of the variance in the MDORS scores was predicted by the variables examined, and it showed that owner attributes affected the dog-owner connection more than dog personality traits did. We discovered that owners' perceptions of

their relationships with their dogs were negatively impacted by having young children in the home and merely keeping the dog as a pet. Only fearfulness and issues with related behavior in dogs were found to predict the dog-owner connection.

According to the (Luca corrieri,2018) Since ancient times, dogs have roamed freely on Bali Island. Large groups of foreigners will occasionally adopt Bali dogs and confine them to their homes and yards, as is customary in contemporary western cultures. This gives us a rare chance to compare the personality qualities of dogs to their lifestyles as either companion animals for people or free-range animals while also examining the influence of demographic factors (including age, sex, and neuter status) on personality. We observed that taking into account a dog's personality and behavior had a beneficial impact on eventual owner satisfaction using a self-report questionnaire. Compared to owners who got a dog for any other reason, owners who adopted a dog for companionship were more likely to be satisfied. Additionally, it was discovered that the likelihood of eventual owner satisfaction increased with less contemplation beforehand, ideally less than one week.

**Aim:** The aim of the study is to examine the differences in trust and other personality traits between persons who prefer dogs and people who prefer cats.

### **Objective of the study:**

- To determine if there is any significant difference between dog owners and cat owners in terms of trust factor.
- To determine if there is any significant difference between dog owners and cat owners in their personality factors.
- To determine the relevant personality factors for specific pet preference.
- To determine the relevant trust factor for specific pet preference.

### **Method**

**Participants:** All 60 participants from different college populations and localities in Kolkata who own pets and whose ages range from 18 to 26 were invited to participate in this study. Of these, 33 dog owners and 27 cat owners.

### **TOOLS USED:**

**Consent Form:** At first the owners of both dogs & cats were given the consent form and explain the purpose of the study.

**Information Schedule:** It contained the information regarding participants age, sex educational qualification, mother tongue, socio-economic background, marital status, pet preference.

**General trust scale:** - The general trust scale was developed by Yamagishi, T., Rempel, J.K., Holmes, J.G. & Zanna, M.P. (1985).to assess the trust in close relationships. It consisting of 17 items. Each of the items on the scale are rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The scale divided up into the following subscales:

- 1.) Predictability- it consists the item (4,5,6,8,14)
- 2.) Dependability- it consists the item (1,7,13,15,17)
- 3.) Faith- it consists the item (2,3,9,10,11,12,16).

Total scores by calculating each domain with noticing which domain is higher than each other.

**NEO-FIVE-FACTOR-INVENTORY:** - The NEO FFI (Costa & McCrae, 1992) is a 60-item self-report instrument that assesses each of the five personality categories included in the FFM: N, E, O, A, and C (12 items per domain). The scores for each item are based on a Likert scale that ranges from 0 ("Strongly Disagree") to 4 ("Strongly Agree"). 28 of the 60 items (or nearly 50%) are reverse-worded. The five personality categories are-

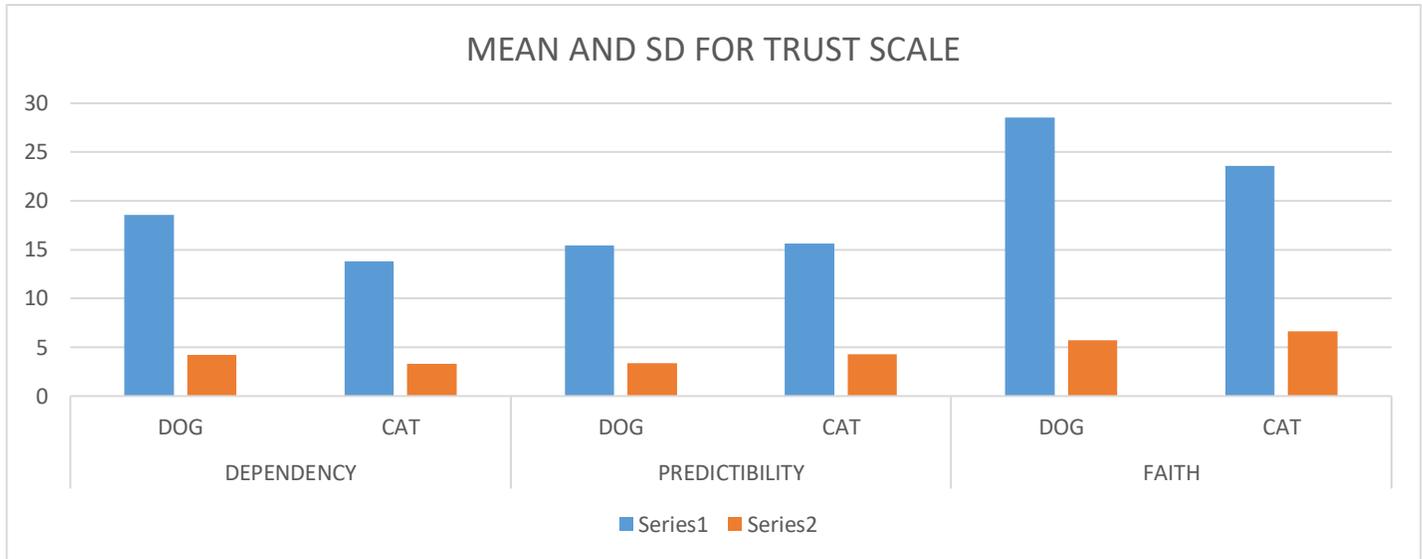
- 1)Neuroticism
- 2)Extraversion
- 3)Openness to experience
- 4)Agreeableness
- 5)Conscientiousness

**RESULT:**

**Table1:** Mean, SD and t value for difference between cat & dogs in terms of dependency, predictability & faith items:

		MEAN	SD	T-VALUE	SIGNIFICANT LEVEL
DEPENDENCY	DOG	18.5758	4.24286	4.788**	.001
	CAT	13.7778	3.33205		
PREDICTIBILITY	DOG	15.4242	3.34506	-.209	.835
	CAT	15.6296	4.26207		
FAITH	DOG	28.5152	5.73433	3.107**	.003
	CAT	23.5556	6.62938		

\* p<0.05 level, \*\*p<0.01 level



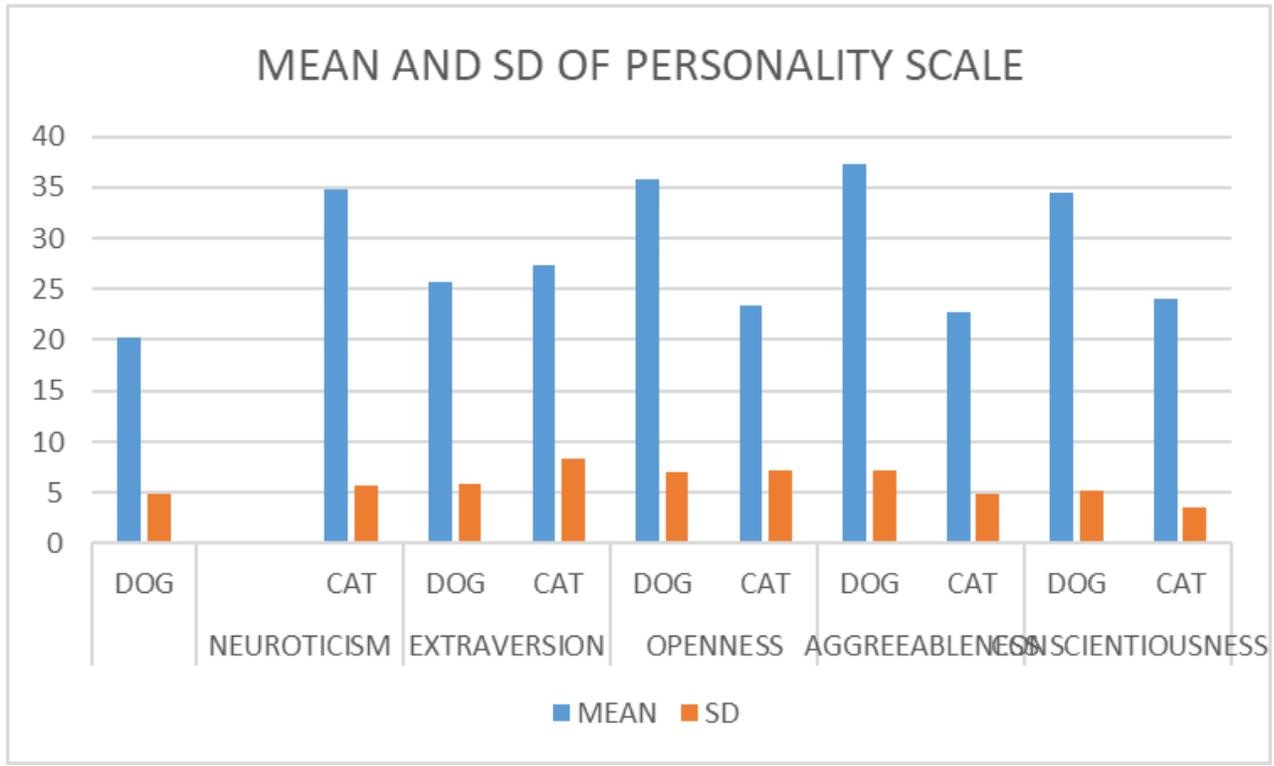
**T-Test:**

The results (Table1) show that the mean score of Dependency in dog owners are 18.5758 and in cat owners are 13.7778. In case of Predictability dog owner had a mean score of 15.4242 and cat owners had a mean score of 15.6296. In Faith the dog owners obtained a mean score of 28.5152 and in cat owners it was seen to be 23.5556. For the two variables Dependency & Faith dog owner had a greater mean score than cat owners, but the difference is high and significant that this had effect on the variables.

**Table2:** Mean, SD and t value for mean difference between cats & dogs in terms of neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness & Conscientiousness:

		MEAN	SD	t VALUE	SIGNIFICANT LEVEL
NEUROTICISM	DOG	20.1818	4.83771	-10.769**	0.002
	CAT	34.7407	5.63364		
EXTRAVERSION	DOG	25.6364	5.82998	-.970	.336
	CAT	27.4074	8.28000		
OPENNESS	DOG	35.7879	7.05672	6.667**	0.001
	CAT	23.4444	7.22886		
AGGREEABLENESS	DOG	37.2121	7.15785	8.976**	0.000
	CAT	22.7407	4.80058		
CONSCIENTIOUSNESS	DOG	34.5152	5.14855	8.912**	0.001
	CAT	24.0741	3.58336		

\*  $p < 0.05$  level, \*\*  $p < 0.01$  level



### **T-Test:**

The results (Table 2) show that the mean score of Neuroticism in dog owners are 20.1818 and in cat owners are 34.7407. In case of Extraversion dog owner had a mean score of 25.6364 and cat owners had a mean score of 27.4074. In Openness to experience the dog owners obtained a mean score of 35.7879 and in cat owners it was seen to be 23.4444. The mean score of Agreeableness in dog owners are 37.2121 and in cat owners are 22.7407. In case of Conscientiousness dog owner had a mean score of 34.5152 and cat owners had a mean score of 24.0741. For the three variables Openness to experience, agreeableness & conscientiousness dog owner had a greater mean score than cat owners. In contrast the variable Neuroticism cat owners had a great mean score than dog owners, but the difference is high and significant that this had effect on the variables.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The purpose of the study is to investigate the differences in trust and other personality traits between persons who prefer dogs and people who prefer cats.

The finding suggests that those who preferred dogs as their pets shows more dependency & faith than cats preferred pet owners. This finding is supported by other research that have shown that Participants who had a reduction in stress after a interaction with dogs showed increased trust in

strangers (**Benjamin A Curry, Brianne Donaldson, Moana Vercoe, Matthew Filippo, Paul J Zak, 2015**). This suggests that dog lovers may have a stronger emotional attachment to their pets, relying on them for companionship and support.

Dog owners were more likely to view their pets as family members, (**Carri Westgarth, Robert M Christley, Garry Marvin, Elizabeth Perkins,2019**), while cat owners tended to view their pets as independent animals. Dog owners were more likely to engage in activities with their pets, such as playing fetch or going for walks, while cat owners tended to let their pets entertain themselves, these findings suggest that dog ownership may be associated with a stronger sense of emotional connection and responsibility towards pets, this finding is supported by other research that have shown that The feelings of responsibility were rooted in the valued unconditional and reciprocal love that owners believed underpinned their human–dog bond. Dogs were described as dependents, similar to, but different from, children (**Carri Westgarth, Robert M Christley, Garry Marvin, Elizabeth Perkins,2019**), while cat ownership may be characterized by a more independent and hands-off approach. this finding is supported by other research that have shown that the sample engaged in one or more cat semi-ownership behaviors; primarily feeding, and the belief that cats are independent (**Samia R Toukhsati, Pauleen C Bennett, Grahame J Coleman,2007**). Dogs require a lot of attention and care, which means that dog owners are more likely to be responsible and reliable individuals who are willing to commit to relationships. This sense of responsibility and commitment often leads to a higher level of trust in relationships, as dog owners tend to be more willing to work through problems and difficulties with their partners. Another factor that contributes to the higher dependency and faith in relationships among dog lovers is the emotional bond that they share with their pets. Dogs are known for their faith and loyalty towards their owners, and this often leads to a stronger emotional connection between dog owners and their pets. This emotional bond can translate into a greater capacity for love and trust in human relationships as well.

In contrast, cat owners tend to be more independent and self-sufficient, which may lead to a lower level of dependency in relationships. While cats can also be loving and affectionate pets, they do not require the same level of attention and care as dogs. This may lead to a more distant relationship between cat owners and their pets, which could translate into a more distant relationship with humans as well. Dog lovers have a higher level of dependency and faith in relationships compared to cat lovers is supported by several factors. These include the social nature of dogs, the sense of responsibility and commitment that comes with owning a dog, and the emotional bond that dog owners often share with their pets. While there are certainly exceptions to these generalizations, the evidence suggests that dog lovers may indeed be more likely to exhibit a strong sense of dependency and faith in relationships. The other research study shows the result that they are in fact much more independent than canine companions." (**Alice Potter, Daniel Simon Mills, 2015**)

So from this study cats are independent in nature and this lead to our study that who own a cat have a lower level of dependency in their trust factor.

In the findings of the personality traits, Cat lovers have been found to exhibit higher levels of neuroticism as compared to dog lovers. Neuroticism is a personality trait that is characterized by feelings of anxiety, worry, and insecurity. This finding supported by other research that have shown that there is a link between two variables (**Cheryl M Straede, Richard G Gates,1993**).

This finding suggests that cat owners may be more susceptible to neuroticism because cats are more independent and less predictable than dogs.

One possible explanation for the higher levels of neuroticism among cat lovers is the nature of cats themselves. Cats are often described as independent and aloof animals that do not require as much attention and affection as dogs do. This may lead to feelings of insecurity and anxiety among cat owners, who may feel that their pets are not as attached to them as they would like.

Another possible explanation is that people who are naturally more neurotic are drawn to cats as pets. Neurotic individuals may prefer the quiet and calm nature of cats as compared to the more energetic and demanding nature of dogs. (A study published in **the journal Anthrozoos**, cat lovers tend to score higher in neuroticism than dog lovers. Neuroticism is one of the five major personality factors, and it refers to a tendency towards negative emotions such as anxiety, fear, and worry, **Jenn Granneman,2019.**)

Dog lovers tend to show higher levels of openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness in their personality factors compared to cat lovers. This is due to a number of reasons that have been studied by researchers in the field of psychology. This finding supported by other research that have shown that there is a link between two variables (**Samuel D Gosling, Carson J Sandy, Jeff Potter,2010**). female dog owners who got their dog from a Rescue or Shelter had significantly higher Agreeableness scores than female dog owners who got their dog from a Breeder. **Julia Rifenberg University of Central Florida, 2021**).

Overall, while there is no definitive answer as to why dog lovers tend to exhibit certain personality traits, the evidence suggests that owning a dog may be associated with higher levels of openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.

Further research is needed to fully understand the relationship between pet ownership and personality traits.

### **IMPLICATION:**

The present study showed that a significant difference between dog owners & cat owners in terms of trust factors, those who preferred dogs as their pets shows more dependency & faith than cats preferred pet owners. It is also showed that there is a significant difference between dog owners and cat owners in terms of personality factors, those who preferred cats as their pets show more neuroticism than dogs preferred pet owners and in contrast dog owners show more openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness than cat owners. This information can be used to plan and design appropriate interventions for modify their trust factors in their personal & social life for better their relationship with others & we can use their pets to modify their personality as a therapy and can provide emotional support to them.

### **LIMITATIONS:**

- Due to restrictions on time, we were not able to reach further details of this discussion.
- Due to restrictions of time we were not able to take Larger sample size & could have been seen area difference in this study.
- Gender difference could have been seen in this study.

### **FURTHER SCOPE OF THE STUDY:**

- The present study being a dissertation work is short and has limitations. This study can be further elaborated in different dimensions which will yield much better knowledge.
- The predictability domain of trust can be further elaborated while analysis.
- The extraversion domain of personality can be further elaborated while analysis.
- A bigger sample can be taken which will be a better representation of the population.
- This can be used as a preliminary study or larger and more elaborate research.
- We can see the cultural difference, state wise difference & socio economic difference in this research.

### **CONCLUSION:**

- In the findings of the personality traits, Cat owners have been found to exhibit higher levels of neuroticism as compared to dog owners.
- Dog lovers tend to show higher levels of openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness in their personality factors compared to cat lovers.
- In the findings of the trust factor, dog owners have been found to exhibit higher level of dependency and faith than cat owners. This emotional bond can translate into a greater capacity for love and trust in human relationships as well. People who prefer dogs may also be more social and enjoy spending time with others.



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