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Obstacles in pet dog management: A critical analysis in Kurnool district

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Abstract

A study was executed in Kurnool district to explore the constraints faced by pet parents while managing dogs. The data was collected using pre tested structured interview schedule among 120 pet owners in Kurnool district who were selected by using simple random sampling technique. Garret ranking technique was used to score the limitations faced by the pet dog owners. The results of the study conveyed that, as per the Garret Mean Score, cent percent of the respondents were facing the problem of availability of certified dog sellers followed by emotional attachment with the pets (77.89%), improper dog behaviour (74.0%) and availability of quality time to spend with the pet dog (60.67%) etc.

Keywords: Dog management, constraints, certified dog sellers, dog welfare

1. Introduction

India is one of the nations with the fastest economic growth in the world. According to historical evidence, animals that naturally reside in socially hierarchical groups are the most suited for domestication (Mathialagan *et al.*, 2015) [3]. The acceptance of a western lifestyle has increased the number of nuclear families, which in turn has increased the adoption of companion animals. The dog (*Canis lupus familiaris*) is the most preferred domestic mammal reared as pet, living in home as a much-loved family member (Vijaykumar *et al.*, 2006) [8] in modern times. Indian household dog population is increasing by 26 percent every year and about 17 percent of the households own a pet dog (Sudarshan *et al.*, 2006) [7]. Similarly, increasing trend of pet dog rearing has also been observed in Andhra Pradesh state and has recorded a population of 3.9 lakhs (BAHS, 2019). Kurnool, one of the most prominent and largest districts of undivided Andhra Pradesh has highest population of pet dogs (33,468) as compared to the other districts of Rayalaseema zone (SAAP, 2020). It was observed that social, cultural and religious practices, may also influence the management of pet dogs and these become a major limitation in rearing a pet. With this context in consideration, it was felt that in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the dog rearing system and to develop appropriate intervention policies, it was necessary to understand the obstacles faced by the respondents. Therefore, the goal of the current study was to determine the limitations of dog rearing among the pet dog owners in Kurnool district.

2. Materials and Methods

The study was conducted among randomly selected 120 respondents owning pet dogs in Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh. A pre tested structured interview schedule was used to collect data on constraints faced in pet dog management and the results were recorded. To list the outcomes, frequency and percentage, tables were created. To rate the limitations that the dog owners had indicated, the Garret ranking technique was applied which is presented in Table 1.

3. Results and Discussion

The constraints enlisted in Table 1 were ranked based on Garrett's ranking technique. As per Garrett's mean score it was reflected from the present results that, all the respondents were facing the problem of availability of certified dog sellers and ranked first place. This might be due to the reason that, respondents may face the problem with purity of dog while buying followed by emotional attachment with the pets (77.89%) because the owners feel highly

emotional in the absence of dog. These findings were in agreement with Bhadesiya and Raval *et al.* (2014)^[2]. Meanwhile, owners were also tired of improper dog behaviour (74.0%) and this might be corrected with the proper training and awareness among pet dog owners. About 60.67 percent of respondents were unable to spend quality time with the pet dog due to the fact that, respondents were busy with their professional schedule. Also about 60 percent of pet dog owners were facing the problem of vaccination because of negligence or the pet owners were not aware of the importance of vaccination against several diseases and their effects. Followed by another constraint i.e., cost of feeding (51.33%), as the feeding nature of dog is carnivorous. Owners find it expensive to feed meat daily and at the same time they expressed that commercial foods are highly expensive. Difficulty in giving basic training was also constraint for 51.11 percent of the respondents which might be the reason of improper dog behaviour. Majority of pet parents were not

aware of the basic or advance training and its importance in dog's life. These results coincide with the findings of Ramyasri (2019)^[4]. However, few pet dog owners also perceived deworming (50.0%), disease outbreak (48.33%), availability of different breeds (45.55%), high cost of breed (38.0%) and sale of pups (15.84%) as constraints as they were unaware of importance of deworming and related incidences of diseases in dogs. The concept of welfare of pet dog and quality of life were totally unknown and were considered and practiced by few respondents. Hence about 42.22 percent found it as an obstacle. About 37.33 percent of respondents were of the opinion that location of veterinary hospital was the major drawback found as it might be that these owners were residing in the remote rural areas and were finding difficulty to approach veterinarians and vet clinics. These findings were in line with Sakshi *et al.* (2017)^[6] who majorly reported similar constraints.

Table 1: Constraints perceived by pet dog owners in Kurnool district

Sl. No.	Constraints of pet parents in dog rearing	Garrett's mean score	Rank
1	Cost of feeding	51.33	VI
2	Vaccination	60.0	V
3	Deworming	50.0	VIII
4	Disease outbreak	48.33	IX
5	Dog welfare	42.22	XI
6	Dogs behaviour	74.0	III
7	Emotional attachment	77.89	II
8	Availability of quality time to spend with the pet dog	60.67	IV
9	Location of veterinary hospital	37.33	XIII
10	High cost of breed	38.0	XII
11	Availability of different breeds	45.55	X
12	Sale of pups	15.84	XIV
13	Availability of certified dog sellers	100.0	I
14	Difficulty in giving basic training	51.11	VII

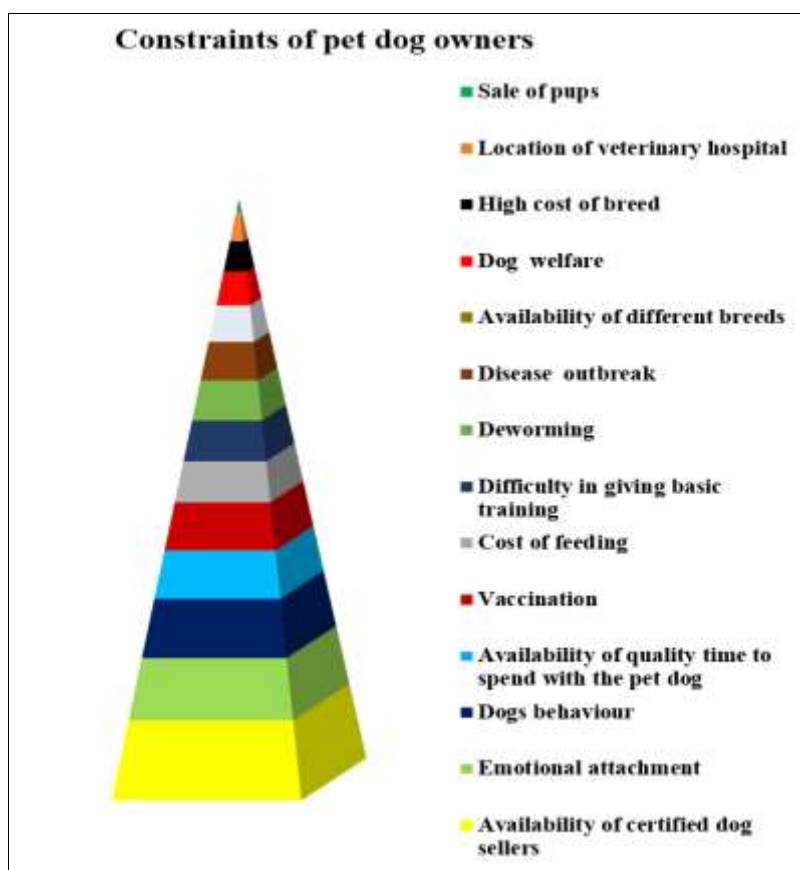


Fig 1: Extent of constraints faced by pet dog owners

4. Conclusion

With the current results it could be concluded that all the respondents were facing the problem of availability of certified dog sellers. Further they also expressed that emotional attachment towards their dogs made it very painful whenever they had to be away from the dog and hence considered this also as a constraint. Finally, few respondents felt improper dog behaviour as a limitation in their ideal life style. The current study lists the drawbacks in pet care and provides examples of the difficulties pet owners encounter. This requires appropriate support from scientists and intellectuals in the form of programmes that increase pet owners' ability and actions to eliminate barriers to pet care.

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