

# Happiness and pet attachment sociology essay

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CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW Happiness and Pet Attachment According to Schiffrin and Nelson (2008), the objective or pathway to achieve happiness often hampered by stress and based on this common view, it is assumed that by reducing the stress levels, it will indirectly enhance one's happiness. Besides, study done by them also showed that their participants who are categorized on having high level of stress reported that they is being less happy as compared to those with lower stress levels. Besides that, Black (as cited in Holen, 2012) found that as compared to adolescents that did not own any pet, adolescents that owned pets had significantly lower loneliness scores. This shows that pet attachment does influence the happiness level of the owner which also mentioned earlier that when loneliness in pet owner decrease, it indirectly affecting the happiness and quality of life as well. In addition, the finding was supported by Gunter (as cited in Geller, 2005) which mentioned that pet owner suffer lesser episodes of depression, better emotional well-being, enjoy their life more, experiencing more happiness and also generally more satisfied with their lives as compared to non-pet individuals. Furthermore, Cain (as cited in Al-Fayez, Awadalla, Templer, & Arikawa, 2003) reported that by simply acquiring a pet, it does increase family happiness in 70% of the families that involved in the survey and 60% of families shows increases in the frequency of their expression of affection an last but not least, pet also increase the amount of time family member spent together in 52% of the families. Finally, another supporting statement on the correlation between pet attachment and happiness is as mentioned by Sussman (as cited in Geller, 2005) that a pet is able to affect the improvement as well as development in individual's self-worth, social skills, life satisfaction, happiness in general and also their marital relationship. Sex

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and Pet Attachment In the study of sex and pet attachment, Prato-Previde, Fallani and Valsecchi (2006) mentioned that female does have a higher tendency to show love, care and attention as compared to male and this motherly behavior extended from towards babies to their pets. The finding also supported by their experiment which based on the Mary Ainsworth's Strange Situation, which indicate female spent more time talking to their dog, lower latency in initiating conversation and also higher frequency in interacting with their dog verbally before leaving the room. The reason for this outcome as proposed by Falk (2004) is that it could be resulted from the evolution of affective verbal communication through certain conditions by the primates' mothers which include human, as a result by the cutback of physical contact between the mother and infant for foraging. Other than that, study done by Vidovic, Vlahovic and Bratko (1999) revealed that higher score was obtained from female students than male students on the Child Pet Attachment Scale, which also supported by Triebenbacher (as cited in Al-Fayez et al., 2003) that also show that female achieved higher score than male on another pet attachment scale which is Companion Animal Bonding Scale. This results could be explained by Herzog (2007) which mentioned that female possesses higher level of positive attribute and approach towards animals such as protecting them, as opposed by male that have reversed attributes where they are found to be in higher levels of negative attitudes and behaviours such as hunting. Finally, Staats, Sears and Pierfelice (2006) revealed through their study that women have higher tendency to rely on their pet to help them deal through problems and they also reported that with the absence of their pet, they will feel lonely. Meanwhile, men were reported to be more inclined to mention more realistic

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reasons such as that their pet are for aiding in their daily activities such as hunting or guarding their fields or herds. Kidd and Kidd (1985), also found that boys were notably less likely than girls to shows their affection or attachment towards their pet and this according to Vidovic, Stetic, and Bratko (1999) is due to the nature that girls which have a more feminine side and active relationship. Ethnicity and Pet AttachmentIn the study of ethnicity and pet attachment by Kellert (as cited in Brown, 2002), African Americans displayed less interest in positive reception and affection towards animals in general and they also had higher score as compared to Whites in the "utilitarian", "dominionistic" and "negativistic" view towards the animals. This indirectly showed that Whites to be more emotionally involved with their pets and tend to convey affection on their relationship and treating their pets in a more sentimental and "anthropomorphic" way. On the other hand, African Americans as mentioned earlier, are more inclined to treat and have the utilitarian perception on animals. In Malaysia context, differences in between ethnicity and pet attachment shown by Hood (1998) which conducted study on the three major ethnic group consisting of Indians, Malays and Chinese. Malaysia's Indians which are largely Christian or Hindu and, Hinduism as explained, treated all animals as equal and all of them have their own purpose and utility value which also include their sacred animal which is cow. On the other hand, Malays which mostly are Muslim, refused to have any physical contact with dogs because, according to Al-Qu'ran, the dog's saliva believed to be hazardous to human health and thus, been considered as impure. Although been regarded as impure, the Al-Qu'ran did allow dogs to be used for hunting or protection purposes. The Malays also prefer cats as their pet and most of them tend to be feeding <https://assignbuster.com/happiness-and-pet-attachment-sociology-essay/>

stray cats and owning more than a cat as their pet. Last but not least, Hood (1998) also stated that Asian's pet attachment is in contrast to the "western-style" where conventionally, Asian's pet usually served more than simply being a companion animal and it is uncommon to be overly attached to their pet. However, the "western-style" bond which adapted by countries such as Australia, mostly are more closer and more attached bond that involved high affection and the relationship where the pet is reliant on the owner and at the same time, the owner treating the pet as their own family member. Attachment Theory Attachment theory by Ainsworth (1969) mentioned that the theory does not only imply to the human-human attachment but also as well as the human-animal attachment. Attachment is perceived as selective and particular which could happen at any stages of life and does not caused by the factor of vulnerability or immaturity in one's thinking. According to Rynearson (1978), the attachment theory is also supported by study done which claimed, there is a possibility of creating and engaging a relationship between both human and pet. The relationship itself could also result in a creation of attachment figure for each another. Besides that, Rynearson (1978) also further explained the relationship between attachment theory and pet attachment by stating that, the selection of pet among variety of animals by human was based on the animals' intrinsic or natural ability to show and perform attachment towards human. Petters and Waters (2010) mentioned that Bowlby's studies on human attachment could be use on human-pet attachment due to the similarity of characteristics. They also conducted a study by using the Strange Situation's experiment and found three patterns of attachment which is known as Avoidant attachment (type A), Secure attachment (type B) and also Ambivalent <https://assignbuster.com/happiness-and-pet-attachment-sociology-essay/>

attachment (type C) and another attachment pattern which been added to the group recently which is Disorganized attachment (type D). (1) Type A attachment are categorized by infants that refuse to get close to or gaze and also trying to stay away physically from their carer. Infants in this category will resume their play and exploration instantly but with minimal attention as compared to the secure infant. (2) Meanwhile, type B infants respond and communicate positively with their mothers on return and they too will get back to play quickly (3) Type C infants show more negative attitude and behavior such as hard to coax by their mothers and also expressing their temper towards their mothers. (4) Last but not least, type D infants which is the disorganized attachment category, will demonstrate behaviours and actions that could be classified as dazed, disoriented, lost of direction and other similar behaviours.