

ASSESSMENT OF STRATEGIES FOR AUGMENTING KNOWLEDGE LEVEL OF DOG OWNERS ABOUT CORRECT HEALTH AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN PUNJAB

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The present study was conducted in Teaching Veterinary clinical complex, College of Veterinary & Animal Science, GADVASU Ludhiana and in different districts of Punjab on randomly selected 200 dog owners i.e., 100 from urban (Group I) and 100 from rural (Group II) background with the help of pretested interview schedule. There is a significant ($P < 0.05$) difference between Group I and Group II knowledge score about health and management practices. The Knowledge level of Group I and Group II dog owners fall under medium and low category respectively. The knowledge index about health and management practices is significantly ($P < 0.01$) correlated with extension contact, social participation and mass media exposure. The present study highlights the scope of effective communication systems in enhancing the knowledge level of dog owners about correct health and management practices. The study also emphasises on assessing the background of beneficiaries before executing any extension programme.

Keywords: Awareness, Communication, Dog, Health and management practices.

Dog has been associated with mankind since ages. Also, during the last decade, the interest of human population has increased towards keeping of companion animals like dog (Kumar *et al.*, 2004). This increased interest has also supported the welfare of pet population (Gujar, 2016). Responsible ownership means to rear a healthy dog and to identifying the health problems in dogs well in time. According to Kollataj *et al.*, 2012, negligence in hygiene and veterinary care of dogs; increases the potential risk of spreading zoonotic parasite diseases. Bingham *et al.*, 2010 reported that most of the respondents lacked knowledge and awareness about zoonotic diseases form dogs. A study was planned to document knowledge level of urban and rural dog owners of Punjab state and for assessment of extension contact, social participation and mass media exposure for augmenting knowledge regarding health and management practices.

Materials and Methods

The present study was conducted in Teaching Veterinary Clinical complex, College of Veterinary & Animal Science, GADVASU Ludhiana and in different

districts of Punjab. A total of 200 dog owners i.e., 100 from urban (Group I) and 100 from rural (Group II) were randomly selected. Initially, 18 items (questions) related to health and management practices were selected after consultation with Subject matter experts, scrutinising research journals and surfing internet. The interview schedule was pretested on 50 dog owners. After pretesting, 17 items fulfilled the criterion of difficulty index 25-75 and discrimination index > 0.20 and were kept in final interview schedule. Group I and Group II dog owners were personally interviewed with the help of this pre-tested interview schedule. The dog owners were categorized in to low, medium and high knowledge level for Health and management practices with knowledge scores 0- 5, >5 to 12 and more than 12 respectively. The Knowledge index was calculated by dividing the obtained score of dog owner by the maximum possible score and multiplying the result with 100.

The extension contacts of dog owners with Veterinary officer/University/Breeder were measured on two point continuum – no (score 0) and yes (score 1). So, the maximum score for extension contacts could be 6. The social participations of dog owner in Dog shows, Livestock championship, Pashu Palan Melas or Kisan Melas and Animal welfare

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camps were measured on two point continuum – yes (score 1) and no (score 0). So, the maximum score for social participation could be 8. The mass media exposure of dog owners with television, radio, newspaper, dog magazines, internet, phone and books were measured on two point continuum i.e. Yes (score 1) and no (score 0). So, the maximum score for mass media exposure could be 14. The collected data was tabulated and analysed with the help of SAS 9.3 system Carry N C, USA.

Results and Discussion

A perusal of Table-1 indicates that

only 26% of Group II dog owners were aware about vaccination schedule, 35 % aware about DHPPiL vaccine and 29% were aware about deworming schedule. In rural areas, negligence concern veterinary care, dewormings and dog hygiene. Nowadays, veterinary practices and the media have the important responsibility of educating dog owners about the potential risk of zoonotic parasites. Very few Group II dog owners have knowledge about Corona viral disease, common diseases and Zoonotic diseases. Therefore, it is more important to find the methods for providing information to public to correct this deficiency.

Table-1: Awareness of dog owners about health and management practices

Awareness about	Group I (n=100)	Group II (n=100)	Overall (n=200)
Vaccination schedule	51 (51)	26(26)	77(38.5)
Rabies vaccine	95(95)	70(70)	165(82.5)
DHPPiL vaccine	76(76)	35(35)	111(55.5)
Corona viral disease	15(15)	3(3)	18(9)
Deworming schedule	50(50)	29(29)	79(39.5)
Common diseases	24(24)	12(12)	36(18)
Zoonotic diseases	16(16)	7(7)	23(11.5)
Age of training	33(33)	18(18)	51(25.5)
Exercise	65(65)	53(53)	118(59)
Combing	55(55)	28(28)	83(41.5)
Bathing	53(53)	30(30)	83(41.5)
Ear cleaning	29(29)	12(12)	41(20.5)
Face cleaning	53(53)	30(30)	83(41.5)
Nail trimming	47(47)	25(25)	72(36)
Daily routine	30(30)	19(19)	49(24.5)
Handling material	80(80)	71(71)	151(75.5)
Record keeping	55(55)	25(25)	80(40)
Mean percentage	48.65	29.0	38.82

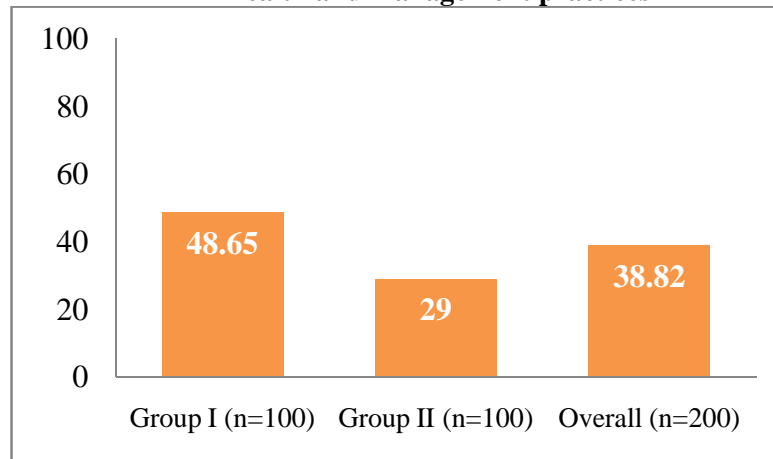
Figure in parenthesis indicate percentage

Group I dog owners were more aware of the practices like exercise, combing, bathing, ear cleaning, face cleaning, nail trimming and record keeping than Group II. 81% of Group II dog owners were not aware of dog daily routine. Figure-1 depicts that Awareness mean percentage of Group I was more than their counter parts, Group II about Health and management practices.

It is clear from Table-2 and Figure-2 that there is a significant ($P<0.05$) difference

between Group I and Group II dog owners with respect to Health and management knowledge score. The Knowledge level of Group I and Group II dog owners fall under medium and low category respectively. It indicates that there is dire need of strengthening the existing extension education system and to devise newer strategies for educating the dog owners about health and management aspects. Also, the

Figure-1: Awareness of dog owners (Mean percentage) about Health and management practices



knowledge score of Group I and Group II are significantly different. It highlight that respondents' background (urban or rural) should be taken in to consideration, while formulating an extension programme.

Table-3 indicate the distribution of dog owners according to communication profile. It is clear from the table that majority

of dog owner's fall under low and medium category with all communication profiles. So, it indicates that there should be reframing of current extension education system for more dissemination of knowledge to dog owners and for more participation in extension activities.

Table-2: Health and management Knowledge score of dog owners

Dog owners	Health and management Knowledge score (Mean ± S.E.)	Knowledge level
Group I (n=100)	8.27 ^a ± 0.34	Medium
Group II (n=100)	4.93 ^b ± 0.38	Low
Over all (n=200)	6.60 ± 0.28	Medium

Values with different superscript differ significantly at P < 0.05

Figure-2: Health and management knowledge score of dog owners

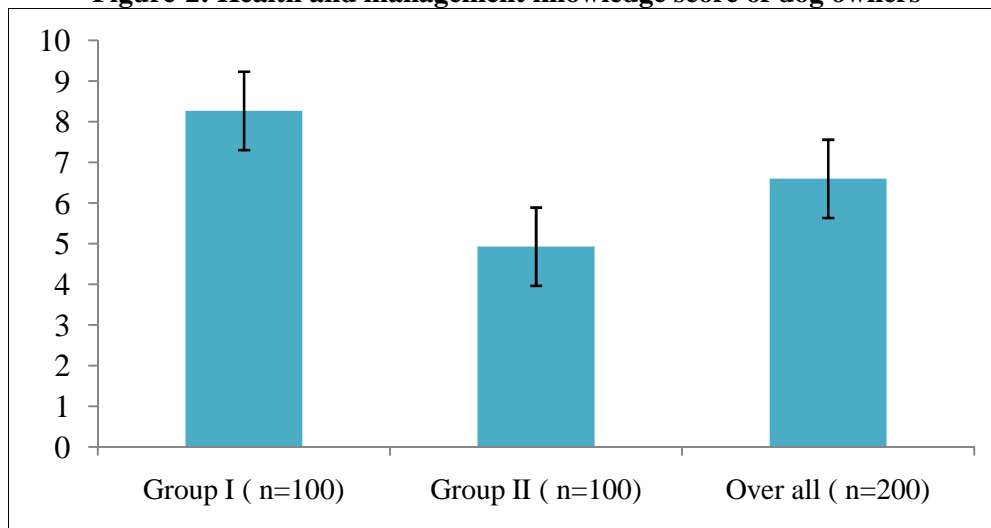


Table-3: Distribution of dog owners according to communicational profile

Attribute	Parameter	Group I (n=100)	Group II (n=100)	Over all (n=200)
Extension contacts	Low (0-2)	50(50)	70(70)	120(60)
	Medium (3-4)	33(33)	27(27)	60(30)
	High (>4)	17(17)	3(3)	20(10)
Social participation	Low (0-3)	50(50)	76(76)	126(63)
	Medium (4-6)	40(40)	22(22)	62(31)
	High (>6)	10(10)	2(2)	12(6)
Mass media exposure	Low (0-5)	30(30)	50(50)	80(40)
	Medium (6-10)	40(40)	35(35)	75(37.5)
	High (>10)	30(30)	15(15)	45(22.5)

Figure in parenthesis indicate percentage

Table-4 indicates that there is a significant positive ($P < 0.01$) correlation of health and management knowledge index of dog owners with extension contact, social participation and mass media exposure. More the communication profile parameters, more will be the knowledge to dog owners regarding health and management practices. This shows that communication profile plays an important role for improving knowledge level of dog owners. In agreement to our

study, Raval *et al.* (2015) have also reported that the extension contact, exposure to extension mass-media, management orientation and innovation proneness among dog owners of 3 urban cities of Gujarat state had significant relationship with knowledge of dog owners. So, various communication parameters such as extension contacts, social participation and mass media exposure should be strengthened for augmenting the knowledge level of dog owners.

Table 4: Spearman Correlation coefficient of Health and management Knowledge index of all dog owners with Communication Profile

Spearman Correlation Coefficients, N = 200	Health and management Knowledge Index	Extension contact	Social participation	Mass media exposure
Health and management Practice Knowledge Index	1	0.58225*	0.50098*	0.69959*
Extension contact	0.58225*	1	0.56284**	0.31778*
Social participation	0.50098*	0.56284*	1	0.42269*
Mass media exposure	0.69959*	0.31778*	0.42269*	1

Values with superscripts "*"] significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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