

## ***Is pet ownership associated with values and attitudes towards animals?***

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### **Abstract**

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*In Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, the number of pets and pet owners has been increasing in recent years. The experiences people have with pets might impact their relationships with animals in general and especially attitudes towards animal protection and use. However, research on the impact of pet ownership on values and attitudes towards animals is relatively scarce. We analyse associations of pet ownership with different values and attitudes towards animals. We derived seven attitude constructs towards animals from three different datasets using Principal Component Analyses. Data were collected using standardised online surveys with German residents (dataset 1 = 1,049 respondents; dataset 2 = 414 respondents; dataset 3 = 1,048 respondents). All three samples are non-probability quota samples. The seven attitudinal constructs represent values and attitudes towards animals ranging from general values and attitudes towards, eg animal protection, to more specific attitudes towards, eg eating animals. We analysed the relationship of pet ownership, sex, and age with these constructs using ANOVA. Our results show that effect sizes are small to medium. Pet ownership has the strongest association with more general values and attitudes towards animals, with pet owners being, eg more involved in animal protection and more in favour of awarding fundamental rights to animals. In contrast, we found that more specific attitudes, such as the evaluation of current pig farming systems or attitudes towards eating meat, were more related to sex than pet ownership. Our findings indicate that having pets relates to their owners' attitudes towards animals, but that this association varies depending on the specificity of attitudes.*

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