

Understanding dog–human companionship

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Abstract

This article reports a survey of 749 dog owners. The survey focuses on owners' interactions with their dogs. This research identifies seven underlying dimensions that comprise the construct of dog companionship. The dimensions include symbiotic relationship, dog-oriented self concept, anthropomorphism, activity/youth, boundaries, specialty purchases, and willingness to adapt. Results suggest that certain demographic variables – in particular gender, age, and education level, as well as length of dog ownership, amount of quality time spent with the dog, and whether the dog is purebred or mixed breed – relate to these dimensions.

Keywords: Dog companionship; Dog-human relationships