Blurred Boundaries and Intersectionality Between Humans and Urban Street Animals in Dhaka - Jarif Billah.pdf

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IARCO RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Blurred Boundaries: Intersectionality Between Humans and Urban Street Animals in Dhaka

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Introduction:

Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, has a total population of over 18 million people, and it is also one of the biggest cities in the world [1]. Humans have never been the only animals to live in cities and, as the world becomes ever more urbanized, the number and array of animal species in the urban setting are only increasing [2]. In Bangladesh, the most common animals are cats, dogs, and birds. In Dhaka, we can see them all over the streets [3]. We are interacting with them daily. In Dhaka, these animals mostly live in busy streets, markets, and homes. They play an important role in our daily lives. Street animals like cats, dogs, and birds provide comfort and emotional support. They also bring people together in a community. These animals also help in waste management and controlling pests [4]. Which supports our natural environment and balances our ecosystem

In recent years, street animals in Bangladesh are facing more abuse, being ignored, neglected, mistreated, abandoned, and also often treated cruelly [5]. Even though Bangladesh has various laws related to animals, like the Animal Welfare Act 2019 and the Cruelty to Animals Act 1920, these laws are not properly followed [6]. The government, local officials, and people don't take enough action to make sure they are properly followed [7].

This study looks into how people in Dhaka think about urban street animals. We want to find out how different social groups, cultures, and genders have different viewpoints. It will also explore how animals are treated, what problems they cause, and how education affects the way people take care of street animals.

Research Questions:

1. How do residents of Dhaka perceive street animals?
2. How do people's opinions, behaviors, and knowledge change/affect street animals, depending on age, gender, income, education, religion, and neighborhood?
3. How do urban residents treat street animals, and what social, environmental, and health challenges arise from their presence in Dhaka city?
4. What type of solutions will they propose to manage, care, rescue, or protect these street animals?

Literature Review

Cities are the places where humans and animals live together, and animals play an important role in shaping the social and natural environment of the cities. Research in Dhaka shows how the types of land cover and the economic and social conditions in neighborhoods influence the variety of birds in crowded urban areas [8]. The study also shows the positive effects of pets and animals on our social and mental health [8].

Also, street animals in Bangladesh cities offer comfort and help people connect with each other, but they also bring up health issues. In Dhaka, research shows that owning birds at home is linked to breathing problems in children under five. Also, it can spread diseases and affect health in crowded places. A survey on dogs and other pilot projects in Dhaka found that there are many stray dogs, which can cause the spread of different types of diseases.

A report on Bangladesh shows that there is a big gap between the laws on stray dogs. Even though there are many rules and policies, there are still many people who try to move or kill them. Also, there are many reports that say that people are mistreating or not taking care of stray dogs in Dhaka [3], [9].

Studies on wildlife conservation in Bangladesh show that older people and people with more education have better knowledge and are more likely to support conservation efforts [10]. This pattern probably also applies to how people feel about street animals and what they think about managing them.

Intersectionality frameworks used in Bangladeshi health and urban studies show how different social factors like income, gender, religion, and place affect how people are exposed to risks and their ability to provide care and how they interact with authority figures [11]. This has an important effect on how people deal with animals and how well policies are accepted.

Research from other countries shows that people's feelings about animals in cities depend on things like neighborhood layout, how information is shared, and available services. This means Dhaka's busy market and mixed neighborhoods need specific strategies that connect public health with animal welfare.

Methodology:

This research will be done by using a cross-sectional quantitative approach with systematic random sampling to gather primary data through structured questionnaires from residents in five selected areas of Dhaka.

Site Selection and Justification: Khilgaon: Total population of 380,747 [12]. A mix of high and middle-income homes, a busy place for buying and selling goods, with narrow streets, and mostly middle-class people live here. The literacy rate is 85.33% [13].

Mirpur: Total population of 546,212 [14]. A mix of people from different places. Also, it has planned buildings and areas that grew without planning. About 12.19% of people live below the poverty line [15]. The average literacy rate is 73.73% [16].

Gulshan: Total population of 110,216 [17]. A luxurious place for homes and government offices. Only 3.2% of people live below the poverty line, so it is a wealthy area [15]. The literacy rate is higher among the rich residents.

Puran Dhaka: Very dense traditional neighborhoods in the old part of the city. Mix of different incomes with old businesses and packed housing [18].

Dhanmondi: Total population of 75,150 [19]. A wealthy area for homes and shops. Also, a place for culture and events. Only 1.5% of people live below the poverty line [15]. High level of education and literacy.

Rationale for Area Selection: These five areas will be selected because they show economic variety, different levels of population density, cultural mix, and also educational level.

Sample Size and Distribution: To calculate the number of people to survey in each area of Dhaka, we will use a sample size formula to estimate a population proportion at 95% confidence level and 5% marginal error.

Number of People to Survey in Each Area: Khilgaon 384 respondents, Mirpur 384 respondents, Gulshan 383 respondents, Puran Dhaka 383 respondents, and Dhanmondi 383 respondents. Total Sample Size: 1,917 respondents.

Ethical Considerations: This survey protocol will undergo review and approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), to ensure compliance with ethical standards. Prior to participation, all individuals will be verbally informed about the purpose of the study, procedures involved, potential risks and benefits, and measures taken to protect their confidentiality. Participants will be clearly advised that their involvement is voluntary, that they may decline or withdraw at any point without consequence, and that their privacy will be respected throughout. Verbal informed consent will be obtained from each participant before initiating the survey.

Data Collection Procedure: Sampling will be conducted using a street intercept survey. Primary data will be collected using 33 structured questionnaires, both open-ended and closed-ended.

Data Analysis Plan: Data will be analyzed using Excel and SPSS. Excel will be used for data cleaning and coding, as well as generating descriptive statistics (frequency distributions and percentages) and conducting cross-tabulations of demographic variables with perception categories. Where SPSS will be used for chi-square tests to identify significant associations between demographic factors and attitudes, multiple regression analysis will be done.

Expected Outcome: This study should show how things like age, gender, education, income, and neighborhood affect how people see and treat street animals. Results will highlight differences across areas of Dhaka. It will reveal common problems residents are facing and also find out the solution people like the most.

Limitation: This intercept sampling may overrepresent individuals who are more accessible, and since participants are not randomly selected, the sample may not be statistically representative of the broader Dhaka population.

Conclusion: This research will provide valuable insights into the intersection of social identities and urban context in shaping human-animal relations in Dhaka city. The findings can guide policymakers and urban planners to design humane, inclusive, and sustainable approaches for managing street animals in Dhaka City.

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