

# Pet Attachment, Animal Empathy and Prosocial Behavior Among Dual Income, No Kid Couples

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**Abstract:** The study identified the impact of pet attachment on empathy toward animals, animal empathy on prosocial behavior, and pet attachment on prosocial behavior among Dual Income, No Kid (DINK) couples aiming to develop an effective program to enhance mental health and foster healthy human-pet relationships. This study utilized a quantitative research design specifically regression analysis and employed a purposive sampling technique with 101 DINK couples in Sta. Cruz, Laguna. The study adopted instruments such as the Lexington Pet Attachment Scale (LAPS), the Animal Empathy Scale (AES), and the Prosocialness Scale for Adults (PSA) for data gathering. Statistical tools used included a nine-point Likert scale for LAPS, a four-point Likert scale for AES, a five-point Likert scale for PSA, percentage, mean, and standard deviation formulas and regression analysis.

Findings indicated that pet attachment ( $\bar{x} = 2.27$ ) was very high, animal empathy ( $\bar{x} = 6.12$ ) was mildly high, and prosocial behavior ( $\bar{x} = 3.84$ ) was high among DINK couples. Analysis revealed a significant impact of pet attachment on both animal empathy ( $B = 0.657, p < .05$ ) and prosocial behavior ( $B = 0.283, p < .05$ ), whereas animal empathy did not significantly influence prosocial behavior ( $B = -0.090, p > .05$ ). In conclusion, strong pet bonds among DINK couples boost empathy and prosocial behavior, making pet attachment key to broader social engagement. Based on the results, the proposed program, “Pawsitive Impact: Cultivating Pet Bonds, Empathy, and Prosocial Growth,” was designed to help DINK couples to secure pet bonds, increase sensitivity to animal welfare, and promote prosocial behavior.

**Keywords:** *Pet Attachment, Animal Empathy, Prosocial Behavior, DINK Couples.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Positive psychology emphasizes the role of positive emotions and personal strengths in enhancing overall well-being. It provides valuable insights into various life-enhancing factors, including pet ownership. This perspective helps explain how owning a pet can contribute to improved mental and physical health. For example, Martin Seligman defined happiness as the experience of positive emotions, engagement in meaningful activities, and the pursuit of fulfillment, a framework that aligns well with the observed benefits of pet companionship. Indeed, pets, as domesticated animals thriving within human social contexts, not only bring companionship but also play a multifaceted role in bolstering both mental and physical health.

A study conducted by Jonasson (2022) showed that pets offered a source of unwavering affection and friendship, which could improve mood, alleviate stress, and increase the happiness of human beings by up to 25. Besides that, the daily routine of caring for pets, including feeding, walking, and playing—provided beneficial physical activity, positive distractions from unwanted thoughts, and imparted a strong

sense of purpose and meaning. Historically and culturally, pet ownership was prevalent and mainly driven by companionship. Pets also helped create lasting relationships by providing a simple way to start conversations, especially between pet owners.

In addition, according to the Joycepring (2024), a DINK, or Dual Income No Kids, referred to a couple in which both partners were financially independent and were child-free. From a global perspective, the phenomenon can be attributed to financial factors, as raising children is more expensive than pet ownership; career aspirations, since many couples prioritize professional advancement and view child-rearing as requiring greater commitment and energy; lifestyle preferences, as they favor flexibility and spontaneity in their schedules; and emotional fulfillment, as pets could fulfill emotional voids and offered companionship, responsibility, and unconditional love. Conversely, in the Filipino context, DINK couples and pet ownership are influenced by global trends but encounter societal pressure and expectations from the older generation, as the family-oriented culture value having children. The Philippines is also a Christian country that emphasized the importance of family and procreation.

Moreover, pet attachment is an emotional bond between humans and their pets, while the American Psychological Association defines empathy as understanding someone from their perspective rather than one's own. Faner et al. (2024) studied 343 Filipino participants and found a positive correlation between stronger pet attachment and increased animal empathy, resulting in higher prosocial attitudes towards humans. This suggested that the bond with pets cultivated empathy, influencing humans' understanding of others' needs and sense of responsibility. Bhowal (2024) claimed that DINK couples often viewed their pets as “fur babies,” filling the void of not having children. Without them, they might have encountered increased anxiety, loneliness, and emotional discomfort.

Meanwhile, prosocial behavior covers the broad range of actions intended to benefit one or more people other than oneself—behaviors such as helping, comforting, sharing, cooperation, philanthropy, and community service. Without parental duties, DINK couples may have exhibited different positive behaviors, such as prioritizing personal growth aligned with their values and interests. The DINK couples' emotional bond with their pets helped them navigate modern life challenges and fostered compassion. However, as their friends began having children, they might have experienced social isolation, which hindered their social interactions and reduced positive social actions (Shu, 2021).

The drive to investigate initially arises from Filipinos' growing interest in this phenomenon, which implies a cultural shift in views on family dynamics and human–animal interactions. While much research has examined how pet ownership affected overall well-being in families, the impact of pet attachment and animal empathy on prosocial behavior in DINK couples remains underexplored, highlighting an empirical gap. This study also addressed population and spatial gaps in pet attachment, empathy, and prosocial behavior research by focusing on Dual Income, No Kids (DINK) couples in Sta. Cruz, Laguna, Philippines. Additionally, a literature gap was evident, as existing studies had primarily centered on Western contexts or broader populations. Furthermore, a conceptual gap was identified, as theoretical models integrating pet attachment, animal empathy, and prosocial behavior had not been sufficiently developed for DINK couples.

The research also strove to highlight the benefits of pets and the variables that promoted altruism, fostering a supportive environment for both people and animals. This might also have raised educational awareness about the significance of animal empathy by understanding the subtle cues that pets used to communicate their emotions. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the impact of pet attachment and animal empathy on prosocial behavior and the impact of pet attachment on animal empathy among DINK couples.

## II. METHODS

This study utilized a quantitative method design specifically regression analysis. This method was well-suited for the study as it objectively measured and quantified key variables, which were assessed using validated scales to allow for numerical data collection and analysis. This study used regression analysis to objectively quantify the extent to which differences in pet attachment and animal empathy contributed to variations in prosocial behavior among Dual Income, No Kid couples. This study also utilized three adopted questionnaires namely: Lexington Pet Attachment Scale (LAPS), the Animal Empathy Scale (AES), and the Prosocialness Scale for Adults (PSA) for data gathering. These tools were used to collect the data among Dual Income, No Kid couples in Sta. Cruz, Laguna. The data were analyzed using regression analysis.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study attempted to determine the level of pet attachment, animal empathy, and prosocial behavior, and the impact of pet attachment on animal empathy and prosocial behavior, and the impact of animal empathy on prosocial behavior among Dual Income, No Kid couples.

### ➤ *Problem Number 1: What is the Pet Attachment Level Among Dual Income, No Kid couples?*

As to the Pet Attachment Level among DINK couples, the overall mean was 2.26 with a standard deviation of 0.41, which was interpreted as Very High. The statement “I feel that my pet is a part of my family.” had the highest mean score of 2.50 and interpreted as Strongly Agree. Conversely, the statement “My pet means more to me than any of my friends.” had the lowest mean score of 1.92 and interpreted as High.

The result implies that DINK couples exhibit a very high level of attachment to their pets. It suggests that although DINK couples form very strong bonds with their pets, as expected from an evolutionary biophilic tendency, they maintain a balanced perspective, valuing both their pets and other social connections. In particular, the highest-rated statement implies that these couples view their pets as significant family members. Pets may provide the companionship and emotional connection that these couples naturally need and can even serve as a substitute for human attachment, especially in households without children. At the same time, the lowest-rated statement may reflect that these couples have a powerful bond with their pet, so the pet holds a more important place in their heart than their human friends.

The findings support the study done by Bosacki et. al (2022), which found that stronger pet attachments tend to be more emotionally responsive and compassionate. They tended to have a kinder, more supportive view of themselves, as evidenced by their lower tendencies to assess themselves negatively. In addition, Blanchard et. al (2024) found that individuals without children show a higher level of pet attachment. Their findings suggested that pets can fulfill emotional and familial roles, particularly where traditional

family structures (like having children) are absent, which in turn enhances the level of pet attachment.

➤ *Problem Number 2: What is the Animal Empathy Level Among Dual Income, No Kid Couples?*

The empathy level toward animals among DINK couples had a general assessment of 6.12 with a standard deviation of 1.07, interpreted as Mildly High. The indicator “I get very angry when I see animals being ill- treated.” had the highest mean scores of 7.99 and interpreted as High. Meanwhile, the indicator “Many people are over-affectionate towards their pets” had the lowest mean score of 3.08 and interpreted as Moderately Low.

The result implies that DINK couples experience a mildly high vicarious emotional response when they observe clear instances of animal cruelty. It supports the idea that witnessing mistreatment triggers an emotional response that helps them understand and share in the suffering of others. In other words, when these couples see animal cruelty being mistreated, they do not just feel casually upset; they feel furious and emotionally moved. They experience a strong sense of moral injustice (moral outrage) because they believe animal cruelty is fundamentally wrong. At the same time, they feel genuine sympathy for the suffering animals. Meanwhile, the lowest score indicates that DINK couples may view over-affection towards pets as normal or unimportant compared to the real suffering of animals.

This claim can be supported by the study of Gomez-Leal et. al (2021). In their study, they found that pet owners demonstrated higher levels of empathy for animals compared to those who did not own pets. They found that pet owners tend to show higher animal-centered empathy because of their everyday experiences with animals. However, linked, human-centered empathy was distinct from animal-centered empathy. Moreover, Gujarathi and Chatterjee (2021) found that empathy was the ability to sense others' emotions and perceived stress as sentiments about one's current stress. In their study, they found that pet ownership boosted empathy and decreased stress. Pet-owning adults were more sympathetic and handled stress better. This suggested that pet-owning adults are likely to develop a more specialized form of animal empathy, meaning they are more attuned to the emotions of animals and potentially more motivated to support animal welfare initiatives.

➤ *Problem Number 3: What is the Prosocial Behavior Level Among Dual Income, No Kid Couples?*

The Prosocial Behavior Level among DINK Couples got a general assessment of 3.84 with a standard deviation of 0.58, which was verbally interpreted as High. The statement “I am willing to make my knowledge and abilities available to others.” had the highest mean scores of 4.26 and interpreted as High. On the other hand, the statement “I easily lend money or other things.” had the lowest mean score of 3.06 and interpreted as Moderately High.

This result implies that prosocial behavior level among DINK couples often engage in helpful actions on purpose, choosing to benefit others. The highest-scoring item reflects

a notable readiness to share skills and expertise, emphasizing the importance these couples place on intellectual and skill-based support. The lowest-scoring item highlights a relative reluctance to provide financial or material assistance, which may stem from personal boundaries or financial priorities. DINK couples highly engage in prosocial behaviors, particularly those that involve sharing knowledge, offering emotional support, and providing help in various non-material ways.

This can be supported by the study of Dinić and Bodroža (2021). They found that individuals offer valuable insights for crafting public information and knowledge to promote health-responsible behaviors. According to them, adherence to protective measures during COVID-19 could be considered prosocial and selfless behavior. Moreover, in the study of Dakin et al. (2022), they found that individuals contributed to the well-being of others throughout the day. They also suggested that while helping others, it can enhance happiness and may have an even stronger influence on an individual's overall sense of meaning in life.

➤ *Problem Number 4: Does Pet Attachment Level Significantly Impact the Animal Empathy Level Among Dual Income, No Kid Couples?*

Pet attachment level significantly impacted the empathy level towards animals. The probability values of .001 is less than the level of significance at .05, thus reject the null hypothesis. The pet attachment level significantly impacted the animal empathy level by 18.7%. For every one-unit increase in pet attachment, the animal empathy level is expected to increase by 0.657 units.

Based on the result, this implies that the higher the attachment DINK Couples had with their pets, the higher their levels of empathy toward animals tended to be. This may be due to the reason that DINK Couples have deep emotional bonds with pets that may enhance empathetic responses. When they perceive their pet as more than just an animal, almost like a family member or a best friend, they may naturally begin treating and understanding their pet's behaviors in ways similar to how they interpret human emotions. Also, because they developed a deep emotional bond with their pet, they tend to see and interpret its expressions, such as a wagging tail or even signs of sadness, as if the pet were communicating human-like. They draw parallels between their pet's behavior and their own or those of people they know, which makes it easier for them to empathize with their pet's feelings. For example, if your pet appears to be "sad" because of a particular event, you're more likely to genuinely feel concerned, much like you would if a close friend were feeling down. Additionally, strong pet attachment among DINK couples may be more likely to care about the welfare of all animals. Their love for their pets may push them to speak up for better treatment of animals and even influence others to follow suit, by supporting policies or initiatives that promote ethical treatment.

The results were consistent with the previous studies. According to the study by Faner et al. (2024), they confirmed that pet attachment influences empathy toward animals,

suggesting that individuals who develop strong emotional bonds with their pets exhibit a heightened capacity to resonate with and understand the animals' emotional states. Furthermore, in the study of Prato-Prevido et al. (2022), secure pet attachment generally fostered empathy and positive attitudes towards animals, which contributed to a healthy human-animal bond and promoted animal welfare.

➤ *Problem Number 5: Does Animal Empathy Level Significantly Impact the Prosocial Behavior Level Toward Animals Among Dual Income, No Kid Couples?*

Empathy level towards animals did not impact the prosocial behavior level among DINK couples. The probability value was .340 which was greater than the level of significance at .05, thus accepting the null hypothesis.

Animal empathy does not significantly predict prosocial behavior among DINK couples. This implies that other factors may influence prosocial behavior among these couples. This also implies that these couples reflect a practical view, they tend to focus only on whether the animals' basic needs are met, the specifics of its behavior or conditions are seen as less significant. For instance, when people view zoo confinement as acceptable if the animals are warm and fed, or see cats' meowing as merely routine behavior, they respond in a detached manner. Likewise, these couples view dogs when whimpering indicates ambivalence or lack of strong emotional response. This demonstrate that when attitudes toward animals are assessed in a detached or purely evaluative manner, they may not evoke the strong emotional reactions needed to inspire broader prosocial actions toward people. Other factors that may be considered are empathy toward humans or a combined empathy toward the well-being of both humans and animals might be more influential. Additionally, certain personality traits like being very responsible and organized (conscientiousness) or sociable and outgoing (extraversion) and feeling satisfied with life can strongly influence how likely a person is to do good things or help others. These traits and a positive outlook might motivate them to engage in prosocial actions. Additionally, this absence of an apparent effect appears to be mainly due to a prominent "non-empathic factor" in the animal empathy scores. Some respondents exhibited minimal animal empathy, which pulled down the overall mean score. As a result, any potential positive influence of high animal empathy on prosocial behavior may have been obscured even if a group of highly empathetic individuals demonstrated greater prosocial tendencies, the presence of many less empathetic participants statistically concealed that effect. Several possible issues could account for this high non-empathic factor. It might stem from shortcomings in the way animal empathy was measured, the impact of unmeasured variables affecting both empathy and prosocial behavior, or even the possibility that the method for assessing prosocial behavior lacked the sensitivity to pick up on subtle differences associated with animal empathy. Therefore, the study's conclusion of no impact may not accurately represent the actual relationship, indicating a need for further research with a more carefully selected, homogeneous sample and more robust measurement tools for both animal empathy and prosocial behavior.

This result was aligned in the study by Nathania et al. (2019). They revealed no relationship between empathy and prosocial behavior among children. The study underscored that prosocial behavior was a multifaceted construct influenced by personal and situational factors. They concluded that children required adequate empathy to function properly in their daily lives, thereby making it necessary to create and foster an educational environment that supported empathy development. However, no other studies were reported particularly with animal empathy. The present study and the study by Nathania et. Al (2019), both show that empathy alone whether general or animal-specific does not automatically result in prosocial behavior. Instead, various factors like personal values, social norms, and situational influences determine if empathy turns into actual helpful behavior. Consequently, prosocial behavior is driven by a complex interplay of these elements, suggesting that further research is needed to understand the conditions under which empathy leads to prosocial actions among specific populations.

➤ *Problem Number 6: Does Pet Attachment Significantly Impact the Prosocial Behavior Among Dual Income, No Kid Couples?*

The pet attachment significantly impacted the prosocial behavior. The probability value of .046 is less than the level of significance at .05, thus reject the null hypothesis. The pet attachment level significantly impacted the prosocial behavior level by 4.0%. For every one-unit increase in pet attachment, the prosocial behavior level is expected to increase by 0.283 units.

The findings suggest that DINK couples who form strong attachments to their pets develop a greater capacity for prosocial behavior, making them more likely to help or support others. Since these couples may not have children, their emotional bonding and biophilic tendencies could be directed toward their pets. This bond may contribute to a heightened sense of responsibility and social connectedness, which, in turn, influences their prosocial tendencies. Further, when these couples form a strong, family-like bond with their pets, they gain not only personal fulfillment and trust but also enhance their capacity for care and empathy. In essence, by treating their pets as close friends or family members, they accumulate emotional strength and confidence in building nurturing relationships. This emotional boost then extends to their interactions with others, making them more inclined to help, support, and show kindness in their everyday lives.

This assertion is supported by the findings of the study. As claimed by Chen et. al (2023), the idea that pet ownership alone does not necessarily lead to increased prosociality, unless the owner actively cares for and interacts with their pet. Pet attachment might be more beneficial for prosocial development when the relationship involves responsible caretaking tasks like consistent feeding, grooming, and playing, rather than passive coexistence. This could mean that companionship and caretaking responsibilities in any setting lead to similar prosocial outcomes. Additionally, as revealed by Li et al. (2022), an interactive connection between children's pet attachment, prosocial behavior, and social

support wherein they concluded that children with stronger attachments to their pets demonstrated greater prosocial tendencies and received more social support among the participating primary and secondary school students. Those who reported higher levels of pet attachment also exhibited greater prosocial behaviors.

➤ *Problem Number 7: Based on the Findings, what Program may be Proposed?*

The primary objectives of this study were to determine the impact of pet attachment and animal empathy on prosocial behavior and the impact of pet attachment to animal empathy among Dual Income, No Kid Couples in Sta. Cruz, Laguna. Thus, this will educate and enhance awareness about the aforementioned variables.

With the findings of the study, the program is created to actively promote meaningful and supportive engagement regarding the methods and approach to increase educational awareness about attachment to their pets, empathy towards animals, and prosocial behavior towards humans. The “Pawsitive Impact: Cultivating Pet Bonds, Empathy, and Prosocial Growth” program for DINK Couples will use approaches designed to enhance the relationship between humans and their pets, increase empathy toward animals, and promote prosocial behavior through sustained community engagement. This initiative derived from the findings of the study, which indicate that pet attachment and animal empathy impact prosocial behavior. Additionally, the proposed program addresses the low scores observed on key indicators and it was derived from these findings.

The first key area, “Mental Health,” harnesses the benefits of pet attachment to improve mental well-being by enhancing animal empathy and encouraging prosocial behavior. The key focus is on addressing issues like stress and social isolation through strengthening the bond between pets and their owners. To achieve this, it sets specific, measurable objectives such as establishing baseline metrics for pet attachment, mental health, and prosocial actions, and then using targeted interventions to boost these indicators while cultivating skills that extend personal benefits into community engagement. This is a semiannual workshop entitled “Pawsitive Pathways: Enhancing Mental Well-Being Through Pet Attachment” encompasses both educational and experiential learning, featuring creatively named workshops, like “Pawsitive Pathways,” and community events that provide hands-on experiences in empathy-building and social connectivity. The initiative will be supported by mental health professionals, psychologists, animal behaviorists, community representatives, and the target group itself.

The next key area, Healthy Relationships for Humans and Pets, focuses to increase awareness of the psychological benefits of strong pet-owner relationships. This key area is a quarterly workshop entitled “Fur Ever Connected: Unleashing the Emotional Power of Pet Bonds” followed by a pet meet up called “Forever Paws at Local Play Dates,” held on the first Saturday of January, April, July, and October. Facilitated by a psychology practitioner, this workshop targets DINK couples with pets or other pet owners to increase positive

human-animal interactions. Success is assessed using post-workshop surveys designed to capture improvements in the quality of these interactions.

The next area of concern is the Animal Empathy Level, which aims to foster a deeper empathetic understanding and raise awareness of animal welfare. A workshop entitled “Pawsitive Empathy: A Journey into Pet Emotions” workshop, which takes place quarterly but on the last Saturday of January, April, July, and October. This initiative is designed to challenge and transform non-empathic views towards animals by conducting rigorous pre- and post-program assessments that measure changes in attitudes and beliefs. Expert facilitation is provided jointly by an animal behavior specialist and a psychology practitioner, ensuring the workshop is comprehensive and effective in enhancing empathy. This initiative addresses the low mean scores observed on key indicators related to animal empathy, specifically the non-empathic views (reverse-coded items) of DINK couples. It is based on findings indicating that pet attachment did not influence animal empathy.

Lastly, the key area in the Prosocial Behavior Level is built to engage these couples in the community through continuous, interactive events that promote prosocial actions toward animals. It includes two major activities: the annual “Paws in Motion: A Community Pet Fun Run & Walk,” held on April 11th (National Pet Day), and “Pawsitive Impact: A Furry Fashion Affair,” another community-based event. Both activities are designed to boost community participation and stimulate prosocial behaviors, with their success measured by tracking event participation and gathering detailed feedback via surveys. The program features regular quarterly workshops alongside these annual events and involves a team of psychology practitioners, animal behavior experts, event organizers, and pet-owning DINKs. Its design is directly informed by initial assessments that revealed low mean scores on key indicators, highlighting the urgent need to improve areas related to pet attachment and animal empathy.

Simultaneously, the effectiveness of the intervention will be assessed through systematic feedback collection via surveys and monitoring participant attendance through Google Forms. A targeted outreach strategy focuses on DINK couples and other pet owners to maximize engagement. To maximize engagement, a targeted outreach strategy focuses on DINK couples and other pet owners.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the significant findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

- That DINK couples exhibit a very high level of attachment to their pets, reinforcing the idea that pets are considered significant members of their family. While their bond with pets is strong, they maintain a balanced perspective, still valuing human relationships alongside their attachment to animals.
- That when DINK couples witness animal cruelty, they feel furious and genuine concern for the animals, showing

their natural empathy. However, they don't react as strongly to overly affectionate behavior towards pets because they see it as usual compared to actual animal suffering.

- That DINK couples are inclined to help others intentionally and actively, mainly by sharing their skills, knowledge, and emotional support rather than offering financial or material aid. This suggests they prioritize intellectual and relational assistance over monetary contributions, likely due to personal or financial reasons.
- That the stronger the emotional bond DINK couples have with their pets, the more empathetic they tend to be toward animals. This high attachment not only enhances their sensitivity to animal welfare but also motivates them to advocate for better treatment of animals and influence others to do the same.
- That empathy toward animals does not influence prosocial behavior among DINK couples. Instead, their willingness to help others is more likely influenced by other elements such as empathy toward humans (or a combined empathy for both humans and animals) along with personality traits like conscientiousness, extraversion, and overall life satisfaction. These aspects seem to play a more critical role in motivating them to engage in helpful actions.
- That DINK couples who are very attached to their pets tend to be more caring and helpful toward others. Without children, these couples may channel their nurturing feelings into their pets, which in turn strengthens their sense of duty and social connection, encouraging more prosocial behavior.
- That the proposed program can be useful to foster more meaningful and supportive interactions between DINK couples and their pets, to provide educational awareness about the significance of animal empathy and to sustain the prosocial behavior by establishing continuous community engagement.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered for further improvement and development of this study:

- DINK couples may continue to nurture their strong attachment to their pets while also actively maintaining and enhancing their social connections. This balanced approach supports emotional well-being by ensuring they benefit from both the companionship of their pets and the valuable support derived from interpersonal relationships. By participating in community events such as group walks or pet-friendly gatherings they can simultaneously enjoy the emotional support of their pets and reinforce their human connections.
- Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) may develop an online platform to teach DINK couples how to read animal behavior, including body language and subtle communication cues, thereby enhancing their awareness of animal empathy.
- DINK couples may be encouraged to use their skills and knowledge to empower others by leading group

discussions rather than focusing solely on financial support.

- Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) may consider including programs that maintain pet attachment, such as educational initiatives on animal behavior and pet care and community engagement activities that may cultivate empathy towards animals. Through these, they may improve animal well-being and serve as role models in their communities.
- Investigating factors such as nurturing empathy toward humans or a combined empathy for humans and animals, along with reinforcing personality traits like conscientiousness, extraversion, and overall life satisfaction, may further boost prosocial behavior.
- DINK couples may channel their deep affection for their pets into community initiatives that benefit both animals and people. For instance, they may volunteer, participate in charitable activities, and support any programs that benefit others while also encouraging social connections and fostering prosocial attitudes toward humans.
- DINK couples may consider the proposed program entitled "Pawsitive Impact: Cultivating Pet Bonds, Empathy, and Prosocial Growth" since this may be a beneficial tool that serves as a guide to foster meaningful human and animal interactions and community engagement. Continuous evaluation may ensure effectiveness and efficiency that promotes the welfare and well-being of these couples and their pets.
- Future researchers may build on these findings by integrating human and animal empathy with the variables mentioned above. They may use the current study as a foundation and extend their research locally to gather more comprehensive data, potentially underscoring the importance of fostering positive relationships between humans and animals for their mutual well-being. Future researchers may consider revising the Animal Empathy Scale to address some of the assumed challenges of reverse scoring. Reverse-coded items can sometimes lead to respondent confusion and potential measurement inconsistencies. Future researchers may develop or use a tool to measure how people feel about animals that is specifically tailored to the Filipino cultural context. This approach would consider local traditions, attitudes, and practices related to animals, ensuring that the scale accurately reflects the unique perspectives and experiences of Filipino respondents.

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