

Sociology and Human-Animal Interaction: A Study of Lucknow

ABSTRACT OF Thesis

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Abstract

INTRODUCTION

Animals are indispensable, a 'social spot', 'social substitute' and 'relation of mutualism' in our lives, family, and everyday social interaction and activities in our lives. Very often, they are referred to in our private and public life. For example, they are genuinely a part of the family, community, and society from dawn to dusk like morning breakfast to evening dinner times, TV-watching, and occasion taking schedules such as birthday parties, anniversary, family rituals etc. The human-animal relationship varies from context to context, situation to situation and person to person. In that, it's anything but a two-sided relationship, wherein the two players humans and animals assume a significant part. When we link up with a buddy animal, interface with an animal that we know as an individual and whose reason in our lives is one of partner, companion, and even relative. Human-animal bonding is more complex and contingent upon various social, cultural, and interactional aspects. They contribute to society's social, economic, cultural, and religious aspects. In the social context, animals play an essential role in the socialisation of children, and to dispel the loneliness of adults, they are used as therapeutic agents for Asthmatic, mentally disabled people, Autism, and others. Animals and their by-products contribute to the economy through meat, eggs, dairy products, wool, silk, soaps, toiletries, cosmetics, leathers, and medications, as well as their use in ads and social media. People use animals to earn their livelihood. In the Harappan and Mohenjo-Daro civilisations, animal worship was one of the most common practices in a religious context. A person uses animals for their cultural activities/believes like (a) keeping black animals to overcome the negativity of house or surrounding areas, where they live, (b) use of

mares by the bridegroom in marriage ceremony, and (c) use in worships and sacrifice them due to superstition. (d) Every Indian God and Goddess has a *vahana*, which is an animal. This study explores the attributes and nature of relationships, social interaction, and bonding between humans and animals in society. Many research and studies have been conducted around humans, their social problems, their role, and their relationship with the environment. However, animal studies are ignored in sociology despite being an important area of study.

Background of the study

Animals and their presence and contributions encircle us. Like humans and human society, we are largely surrounded by animals, as people are personally associated with the existence of nonhuman animals. However, their presence makes the notion of society more enduring, holistic, and livable. Animals share our homes as associates and we treat them as members of our family, purchase clothing for them, celebrate their birthdays, and take them with us when we take some time off. Animal companionship is an integral part of the life of human beings. Humans have a long history of relationships with domestic and other animals to fulfil their utilitarian values and daily usual reciprocal necessity. Nowadays, pets often act as 'social substitutes' through bonding. Rig-Veda is one of the oldest documents, which support the relationship between humans and animals, was written in 4500-1600 BC. Further, domestic animals are treated as family members.

From domestication of animals to study the relationship between humans and animals and their interaction making a different sphere of society in the modern era of life is an excellent subject to the study and to know the increasing importance of animals in human life. Even though animals concerning climate pounds stress on society, the

new science and technology help us to deal with ease of life by a mutual relationship between animal and human.

Statement of the Problem

Sociology has a long history of anthropocentrism and an uneasy relationship with animals. The bio-centric attitude towards animals includes a more positive attitude, such as seeing the animal as a part of nature, being interested, and believing that people and animals should coexist peacefully. However, on the other hand, peoples have negative and utilitarian anthropocentric sentiments towards animals, and they consider them as pests and inherently inferior to humans. Sociologists dismissed animal behaviour as based on instinct, whereas humans had the influence of society and culture at the helm. The changing role of a companion animal in human lives has increased the emphasis on human-animal bond research. This research area would shed light on animals' central role in human culture and life. The contribution of humans and animals both is important for balancing our ecosystem. Every living organism dependent on each other has a symbiotic relationship, importance, and value. So, they all have a mutual bonding. Animals make an essential contribution to society and human life. Instead, they are considered excluded from society even though sociologists have not acknowledged animal studies' importance to a large extent. Animals play significant roles in human life and society.

Objectives of the Study

- i. To find out, what extent animal studies are the subject matter of Sociology.
- ii. To analyse the nature of relationship between humans and animals.
- iii. The study explores the role of animals in the sustenance of human beings and society.

- iv. To examine how animals are treated as a companion of human beings in a social environment.

Scope of the Study

Animals are an inherent part of human society, and they regularly interact with human beings. Nevertheless, this relationship and interaction are not focused on sociological research. Mainly sociologists are concerned about human interaction but less interested in exploring the human-animal relationship and their interaction. Further, sociological research has not acknowledged the importance of animals in society and their affirmative and symbiotic relationship. Hence, this study will try to unearth this unexplored area of the research and find out the meaningful interaction and relationship between animals and human beings. Human-Animal research, known as anthrozoology or animal research, is an interdisciplinary field that investigates the spaces that animals possess in human social and social universes and the communications people have with them. Integral to this field is an investigation of how animal lives meet with human social orders. Human-animal research is not tied in with examining animals essentially. Maybe, we study the collaborations among people and different animals, any place and at whatever point we discover them. Then again, our work is educated by those orders that accept animals as the object of study. Their work on the conduct of animals, animal learning, insight, correspondence, feelings, and culture has been immensely persuasive lately, both inside human-animal studies and outside of our field. By seeing more about practices and mental and passionate cycles of animals, we can more readily comprehend human communications with them.

Research Methodology

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| Research Design | The present study is designed to analyse several relevant questions to assess relationships and interactions between Human-Animal. The exploratory, descriptive and analytical research design was used for this study. It is important to find the nature and attributes of bonding and attachment between Human-Animal. The nature and meaning of the human-animal relationship are discussed qualitatively from multifaceted sources. The study is valuable for understanding the nature of the relationship, clarifying concepts pertaining to the Human-Animal relationship, gathering explanations about the respondent's attachment with their animal, and gaining insights. |
| The Locale of the Study | The present study is undertaken in the rural and urban areas of Lucknow, a district. It is also the capital of Uttar Pradesh, and the formation of the state was on 24 January 1950. It consists of 75 Districts. Lucknow is one of the very prominent and important districts as far as the Human and Animal demographic is concerned. |
| Universe and Sampling | The respondent to the study has been selected as animal owners and lovers from rural and urban settings of Lucknow. Mostly the respondents of this study are above the age of 18 years. The respondents have been selected by adopting purposive and convenient sampling. Moreover, it is also adopted snowball sampling to get the contact of the respondent. In this manner, the respondent has been selected and interviewed in the waiting room setting of the veterinary hospitals (Government) and private pet clinics at Lucknow. The researcher purposively selected 200 respondents, 100 from a rural area who reared milch (Cow, Buffalo), draught (Ox, horse, he – buffalo, Bovine), meat-producing (Goat, pig) animals, and poultry and 100 from the urban area who owned pet/ companion (Dog, rabbit, cat, birds) animals. |

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| | There are 10 Government veterinary hospitals and approximately 26 pet clinics operating in Lucknow, where animal owners regularly visit these hospitals for treatment and advice. |
| Unit of Analysis | The unit of analysis for the study are animal lovers and owners above the age of 18 years living in rural and urban areas of Lucknow. |
| Techniques of Data Collection | Both primary and secondary data have been used in this study. Keeping in mind, the objectives of the study, quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Quantitative data was collected through a structured interview schedule. It consists of both closed and open-ended questions. The focused interview method was used to get a more comprehensive picture of the relationship between respondents and their animals. The interview schedule was employed to explore the nature of the relationship and behavioural dimensions that underlie humans and their animals. The focused interview is used to substantiate the arguments of the study. The purpose of conducting a focused interview is to get more depth information and their relationship with animals and a fuller range of feelings and behaviour that are engendered. Similarly, secondary data has been collected from various institutions published and unpublished documents and the internet. |

Human - Animal Interaction: A Review

Humans have an inherent need for close relationships with humans and animals that are meaningful and satisfying from the beginning of life. This close relationship between humans and animals is not a new phenomenon, but studies reveal that such interaction, bonding, and relationship have emerged recently. However, our understanding of animal behaviour and how humans and animals influence each

other's behaviour have greatly expanded in the past few decades. The growing holistic approach to quality of life has prompted more research into how human-animal relationships may benefit human life in different ways. In this context, several theoretical approaches have been developed and used in social sciences research.

The theoretical framework used in sociological research is quite interesting and important to understand Human-Animal interaction and relationships. The theoretical framework underlies this study is based upon concepts relating to the interaction and bonding of animals to humans. It is an essential need of a companion to the human who is a significant other like a dog as significant other for human in the early stage of life. Every research needs to have theoretical and methodological approaches that give meaning to the study. Sociology and other discipline have some key theoretical approaches that are more amenable and applicable to study human-animal interaction, relationships, and bonding. So that human-animal studies are interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary.

Additionally, human-animal studies are likewise a field of study, like Sociology, and a method of seeing. Human-animal studies contemplate characterised by human-animal relationships, bonding and interaction yet, in addition to some degree, by the different manners by which we comprehend animals themselves. Albeit human-animal studies are not only understanding animal behaviour but also understanding in the context of human society and culture. We investigate the scholarly and artistic use of animals in works of literature and art, the bonding between pet animals and their human families, the usage of animals as symbol/sign in religion and language, the usage of animals in agribusiness or biomedical exploration, and individuals who work with animals.

Human-Animal Studies

Human-animal studies are the newest discipline arising in academic research in the past few years. Yet, unlike fields like social sciences, humanities, literature, and topography, human-animal studies are multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary. That is human-animal studies cross-disciplinary limits and created various disciplines. Human-animal studies are only disciplined to conspicuously place the relationship between human and nonhuman animals, regardless of whether genuine or virtual. As human reliance on nonhuman animals intensifies and as our relationship with animals is changing in the twenty-first century, it seems bizarre if this relationship is not examined within the context of academic research, particularly given the expanded presence of animal advocacy in our surroundings

Human-Animal Interaction in Perspectives

As discussed, earlier sociologists have largely ignored the Human-Animal interaction and relationship area because they think it is mainly in anthropology, zoology, and other fields. Still, like human society, animal society also exists. So that, the sociology of animals is the subject of sociology and should be studied by sociologists. The lack of interest in this area within the sociologist is an inability to employ the language and verbal communication of animals with humans. Sociologists ascribe many perspectives which affiliations guide their understanding of social processes. The social world of study is confined to humans. However, a growing body of research argues that in human experience, nonhuman Animals play a significant role in human interactions and have undoubtedly shaped our environment. Several sociologists have recognised that other species' oppression appears to mirror the oppression of marginalised human groups and even aggravate them. Still, some have suggested that

nonhuman animals deserve consideration in their own right, regardless of the effects on humans.

Sociology and the Human-Animal relationship are one of the important subject matters of Sociology, and it is indispensable for sociologists to take their studies in the Indian context. Further, there are many perspectives in Sociology; such perspectives help to understand the Human-Animal relationship, hence, analysing several perspectives, mixed perspectives can be useful for Human-Animal Studies. Still, the primary functional perspective is more useful in the context of animal studies besides role reference and dialectical perspective. Therefore, in this study, a mixed theoretical framework is used in different chapters, depending on the need and type of data and analysis.

Human-Animal: A General Profile

Humans and Animals are inseparable units of any society, and to understand this relationship; there is a need for the basic information and analysis of both units. Most sociological studies revolve around the interaction and domination of human-to-human relationships, but animals are always excluded in such studies, especially in the Indian context. Therefore, the present research focuses on human-animal interaction by having a sample of 200 respondents/animal owners rearing different types of animals in their rural and urban locals of Lucknow. This chapter consists of two parts – the first part consists of the respondent's profile. The second part includes the animals' profile like population, rural-urban consistency, age-wise and breeds-wise distribution, etc. The analysis presents the basic facts about the respondents, especially their socio-demographic profile, which includes age, sex, education, marital status, family structure, occupation, income pattern, etc. In one way or other, these social factors influence and help mould the respondent's personality and attitude and determine the state of living. Therefore, these essential demographic particulars

are beneficial to check the level of relationship of the respondent with their animals. This chapter also mentions the livestock population and companion animals in Lucknow, which show the relationship of animals and their proportionate demographic status to humans. Further, the data indicate that the animal population is decreasing over the years, indicating an imbalance between the human-animal population and ecosystem. These changes need a proper sociological exploration and analysis to have a society based on social equilibrium and homeostasis principles.

The chapter attempted to explore the prelude of the study area of humans and animals. Understanding the sociological, demographical, and personal approaches of the relationship of humans with the pet animals. Further, the chapter has discussed the area profile of the state and district where the study has been conducted. The main area is Lucknow which is the capital of the fourth largest state of the country i.e. Uttar Pradesh. Also understanding the demographic features of the location along with the livestock population in the country and in that specific region. A special emphasis was given and has been presented in the chapter to understand that since how many generations the families are staying together and how many animals they have kept in each generation. This has helped us to understand the frequency of keeping animals with the family and to predict the trend as to whether this frequency has increased, decreased or has stayed static and the same has been presented in the cross-tabulation in this chapter. In addition to this, the chapter also focuses on identifying from the respondent's point of view that for what duration they have been keeping animals with them. Overall, it can be said that the social relationships among humans and animals have been reflected to be optimistic and suitable in the present scenario. However, the choice of selecting and having animals has gradually changed over a period of time and with the change of generation.

Human – Animal Interaction: Purpose and Responsibility

Animals have been a companion to human being since a long time when the human species were in the process of civilization. The purpose of human-animal interaction has always been to the benefit of each other. Humans have used animals in various activities such as harvesting, farming, transportation, safety and security, companionship, medical and psychological treatment, the products of many other purposes. In the same way, animals have also been benefited from this relationship for food, shelter and security. Therefore, in order to achieve a sustainable human-animal interaction and relationship, it becomes necessary to protect the animals and their rights in the present scenario. In addition to this, the care and protection of animals also depend on various attributes of human beings such as belief, benefit, and attitude. Since the interaction is a two-way process, it mostly depends on how people understand and treat the animals. Against this backdrop, the chapter discusses various approaches to understand the human-animal interaction with a focus on the purpose and responsibility of keeping animals, and further, the context in which animals are important in our day-to-day life is explored and analysed.

The discussion above intended to specify and elaborate a picture square of human-animal interaction with a perspective of its purpose, utility and responsibilities and context. The narration made an attempt to discuss and elaborate on various levels of human-animal interaction including social, personal, professional and cultural. Further, discussing the presence and surroundings of animals in our lives and various important roles played by them usually gets unnoticed.

Human – Animal Interface

Human life and the conception of society is difficult to conceive without the presence and existence of animals. There is the interdependence of human beings, animals, and

the environment, and it needs to be understood concerning each other. Like human beings, animals are not only homogenous, but they are heterogeneous, having different types and categories. Some swim, some fly, some breath air, and some breath underwater. Some have skeletons, and others don't. These different characteristics of different animals represent a different categorical picture of their characterization to understand them better. However, the classification of animals is still a long debatable topic even after many years. Many researchers have given various categories and our interaction with animals even after thousands of years. Classification of animals and variation in their type is important from a scientific perspective and from a sociological point of view to understand the close relationship between humans and animals. For quite a long time, the act of naming and ordering of living beings have been classified into bunches. Aristotle (384BC-322BC) built up the previously known technique for ordering animals, gathering life forms by their methods of transport like air, land, and water. Various naturalists followed with other arrangement frameworks. Collective animals grouping is a significant framework for seeing how all living beings are connected. The present chapter was commenced with an initiative to exfoliate various supportive aspects of human-animal interaction such as discussing various types of animals, the activities which are performed by them for oneself, for humans, with humans and vice-a-versa, and further identifying the approaches of the care of animals. The chapter also gave an insight into animal classification and categorization based on various scales in which the primary focus was on sociological scale leading to two primary classifications i.e., great, and awful animals. the exfoliation went ahead on discussing the domestication of pets, its evidence from ancient Indian culture and its various effects in the field of human-animal relations as it is quickly getting one of the hottest topics of discussion in social

science and is starting to involve the middle stage. When it comes to elaborate the professional dependency on animals and their contribution to human life, it is undeniable that from animal cultivation and the food business to pet keeping, animal and the travel industry, animal and sports, and changes in preference for animal and fish as food varieties are some solid examples to support the argument. At last, the study highlights respondents' activities with their animals and vice-a-versa to understand the existing relationship and identify the factors that contribute to strengthening the relationship between animals and their owners. We need to know that it is essential that we clean up the ambiguity. We focus on a unique understanding of what our beloved animals are telling us and ensure that both animals and humans and the animal-human bond are honoured in the way it's meant to be.

MAJOR FINDINGS

1. Despite the indispensability of the animals in our society, animal interaction is not very much studied by the sociologists and it is not given much more importance as a subject matter of sociology. Keeping animal as a traditional practice of our society and is very much required for many purposeful requirement and need. But the study of such interaction is rare. Hence it is limited and sporadic in the field of Sociology, especially in India.
2. The relationship between Human-Animal is contextualised in different contexts and situations, which varies from geo-local set up to socio-economic and cultural requirements.
3. There are different existential entities of animals which are utility based. It unravels a significant relationship with humans which is need-based having emotional, and psychosocial relationship. The utilitarian relationship is most prevalent in rural areas, and the emotional, psychosocial and security relations are prominent in urban areas.

4. It is evident by the above discussion that there is a strong bond and meaningful interaction between humans and animals, which is required to be the subject matter of sociology and utmost importance and priority of sociologist to study and analyse to have a holistic analysis of society.
5. The nature of interaction between humans and animals are very much social. The need-based utilisation of animals has made their contribution much more significant in society. People use animals in a variety of ways, for example, food, attire, draft power, transport, amusement, and short distance conveyance. There are many reasons to be associated and related with animals from societal, economic and cultural context. Individuals have a solid inclination to characterise animal lives as far as human reasons are concerned.
6. Relationships are shaped and constrained by the existence of companion animals. Animals are frequently used as surrogate humans as substitute children for childless and elderly adults and companions for the elderly and disabled.
7. One of the most important interactions between people and animals is that humans slay animals to eat them. In various ways, all societies demonstrate this interdependence. Domestication of large ruminant animals valued by humans as sources of meat, milk, and, most significantly, labour evolved human civilization.
8. Animals play a significant role in the life of humans. Be it their social, personal, or professional life, animals always squeeze themselves into the story in one way or another.