A STUDY ON PET FOOD BUYING BEHAVIOR AND EXTENT OF SATISFACTION EXPERIENCED WITH REGARDS TO ATTRIBUTES OF PET FOOD PRODUCTS

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A STUDY ON PET FOOD BUYING BEHAVIOR AND EXTENT OF SATISFACTION EXPERIENCED WITH REGARDS TO ATTRIBUTES OF PET FOOD PRODUCTS

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By

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Dedicated to My Dog

Bunny

To My Parrots

Ricky, Milli and Mithu

&

To My Tortoise

Sobu

ACKNOWLEDGEMET

FACULTY OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SCIENCES
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Ethical Compliance Certificate 2022-2023

This is to certify that **Ms. Shruti Kayastha's** study titled, **A Study on Pet Food Buying Behaviour and Extent of Satisfaction Experienced with regards to Attributes of pet food products.** has been approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee for Human Research (IECHR), Faculty of Family and Community Science, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. The study has been allotted the ethical approval number **IECHR/FCSc/M.Sc./2022/01.**

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled **"A STUDY ON PET FOOD BUYING
BEHAVIOR AND EXTENT OF SATISFACTION EXPERIENCED WITH
REGARDS TO ATTRIBUTES OF PET FOOD PRODUCTS"** submitted for
partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Masters in the Faculty of
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Ms. Shruti Kayastha, is her original bonafide work.

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CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
CONTENTS
LIST OF TABLES
LIST OF FIGURES
LIST OF APPENDICES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF APPENDICES

CHAPTER-I
INTRODUCTION

Pet ownership has become common place in modern society. Originally pets were domesticated for mutual benefit in hunting or keeping rodent populations down. (Larson and Burger, 2013). Yet recently, it has become socially acceptable to treats pets as children, due to the rise of the "pet parenting" trend. [1] This developing trend is wide spread, as shown by increasing pet ownership numbers around the world. (Lee et al., 2013). Pets are being treated as members of the family, as dog and cat ownership is becoming popular throughout the world. Recent tendencies have seen the term "pet" substituted by the phrase "companion animal" (Veevers, 1985). Pet owners believe they receive more companionship from their pets than from friends and presume pets are equal to family members and important relatives (Cain, 1985). In today's society a greater amount of time, money, and energy are now committed to satisfying pet's and pet owner's needs (Kellert and Serpell, 1983).

Pets have a designated role which is characterised by several interrelated traits. Pets are kept for their close association with their owners, treated as possessions, and regarded as subordinates (Veevers, 1985). Pets serve some important roles in a family such as pleasure, fun, and exercise, as a source of physical security and protection (Cain, 1985). Caring for pets provides benefits such as encouraging nurturance, adherence to a daily schedule, and responsibility. Friedmann and Thomas (1985) highlighted various health-promoting roles played by pets that are important for those individuals lacking support from families or close friends (Friedmann and Thomas, 1985). A research study has indicated that having two pets can lead to healthier lifestyles for both individuals and families. (Jennings and Wells, 2009). Some pet owners believe their dogs are similar to humans as they have valuable relationships with them (Sanders, 2003). Additionally, considering the importance of pets in our society pet owners have demonstrated an increased sensitivity and attention towards the health and nutrition of their pets.

Pet food has become the main source of nutrition supplements and is used as a way of safeguarding pets. Feeding pets is considered a key moment of the day among pet owners, as it strengthens the bond between the owner and their animal (Tobie et al., 2015). In order to satisfy different pets and owner's requirements, the pet food industry offers a range of products. Consequently, pet food production has become a competitive and economically significant part of the food processing industry (Di Donfrancesco et al., 2012). According to the pet owner's evaluations, pet dogs have more variable preferences than cats (Houpt & Smith, 1981). From the pet owner's point of view, maintaining health and providing optimal nutritional products is an important component of responsible pet ownership (Bontempo, 2005). As a result, dogs and cats are living longer and better fed than ever before (Reid & Peterson, 2000).

 The global pet food market remains active and dynamic. Commercial pet food can be categorised into three basic forms: dry, semi-moist, and moist or canned. [2] These different categorizations are based on the water content of the food, with dry foods containing usually less than 11% water, semi-moist foods containing 25 to 35% water, and moist or canned food containing 60 to 87% water (Zicker, 2008). According to Koppel (2014) dry dog food, dry cat food, wet cat food, and dog treats occupy the biggest share of the total pet food sale. The pet food industry continues to grow as a result of high disposable income and an increase in the popularity of pet ownership among millennials (Hobbs et al., 2018). In the developed countries the pet industry is comprised of three pet food products, pet breeding, pet veterinary care, and other pet-related services. Among them, the pet food industry contributes about 50% of the overall value (Xiao et al., 2021). Most commercial pet foods are formulated based on the nutritional composition of ingredients available in public databases (Morelli et al., 2021). Ingredient composition and pet food quality are key for many pet owners when choosing between raw, wet, or dry food (Montegiove et al., 2021), and they perceive certain ingredients as undesirable or unsafe (Sanderson et al., 2021). Ingredients such as wheat and corn may be perceived as low quality or fillers by some pet owners (Vinassa et al., 2020), although these claims are not scientifically based (Corsato et al., 2021).

However, they may still appreciate dry pet foods with cereals due to affordability and convenience (Park et al., 2021).

Pet Food characteristics such as price, ingredients, and quality have been identified by several studies as important considerations for pet food purchasers. Ingredients have been identified in multiple studies to be the most important factor for most pet owners when selecting a food for their pets (Boya et al., 2015). It appears that Pet owners prefer lower priced pet food, but value natural and organic ingredients (Simonsen et al., 2014). While most pet owners feed commercial pet food to their pets, many feed their pets other foods, such as home-prepared foods, table scraps, and raw meat-based diets. This may be in part due to an apparently growing perception that commercial pet foods may not be wholesome, nutritious, and safe, and that other sources of food may be more natural and more nutritious (Laflamme et al., 2008).

There are many brands with widen product category of the dog foods in this competitive market both from overseas and domestic. [3] The purpose of dog treating has been changing from the past regarding millennials behaviours particularly humanization of dogs. This has effects on dog food buying process to shift from simple consideration of the price and convenience from owners to more emotional value and educated quality consideration. [4]

The trend of humanization and premiumization of pet food are rapidly growing up in market. Pet owners look for healthy and dietary products to treat their pet regarding higher awareness that feed high quality pet foods that perceive positive health benefit to their pets. According to Packaged Facts report, 64 per cent of dog owner focus on safety in dog foods and consider about the organic dog foods that are safer than regular dog foods. In addition, some attributes of human food which are highly beneficial for pet's health such as the ingredient of chai, kale and quinoa are transmitted into pet foods. The pet owners are interested in the pet food that are labelled as natural and enhance the growth in sales. However, the organic pet foods relatively accounted for small portion in pet food market. These products will be sold higher if the market can provide sufficiently natural ingredient and keep the price lower in line. [5]

The purchasing process of pet owners involves a series of actions that extend beyond the actual transaction, starting with identifying their requirements and proceeding with information gathering, alternative evaluation, and ultimately making a purchase. This process occurs over an extended period, and the consequences can have a lasting impact.

Pet food buyers believe that they always consider pet food ingredients labels that actually provide little value in determining the quality of those ingredients and their nutritional value. The problem is that official terms used in ingredient lists of pet food products are often far different from what is believed and do not provide important qualifiers that would tell pet owners whether that the ingredient is of low or high quality.

Gallagher (2023) recommended certain points to be kept in mind while choosing pet food like **Veterinary recommendations:** The best information for choosing a quality pet food is the advice of a veterinary professional who knows the specific health needs of pet. **Brand reputation:** The statement implies that choosing a brand or manufacturer with a good reputation for quality is important for selecting a nutritious food for pets. While start-up brands may not have veterinary nutritionists on staff or facilities for conducting feeding trials to test nutritional quality, established and trusted brands are more likely to have quality assurance programs in place to ensure the safety and quality of their products. **Regulatory Statement:** Pet owners should look for the "AFFCO Statement," which is required by state pet food regulators to inform Pet owners' if the product provides at least the minimum nutritional level necessary for pet's particular life stage. **Manufactured "by" the Brand:** Pet owners should go with a product that is manufactured 'by" the company or brand and not manufactured "for" them. [6] Pet ownership involves a unique buying process, as it requires individuals to consider not just their own preferences, but also the health and well-being of the animal. Potential pet owners must research the breed or species, as well as the specific needs and care requirements, before making a decision. This often involves visiting shelters, adopting from a rescue group, or finding a reputable breeder. Additionally, pet ownership also involves ongoing expenses for food, veterinary care, and other supplies.

1.2 Pet Owner Buying Process

The key process in buying pet food, however, is the integration process by which knowledge is combined to evaluate two or more alternative behaviours and select one. The outcome of this integration process is a choice, represented as a behavioural intention. The pet food owners usually search his or her memory before seeking external sources of information regarding a given consumption related need. Past experience is considered an internal source of the pet owner which is likely to need to reach a decision. Many pet food owners are based on a combination of past experience, marketing and non-commercial information. (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004)

The buying process starts long before actual purchase and continues long after. Marketers need to focus on the entire buying process rather than on just the purchase decisions. The buyers buying process consists of the following five stages; Need recognition, Information Search, Evaluation of Alternatives, Buying Decision, and Post Buying Behaviour (Armstrong and Kotler, 2003). **Need recognition:** The buying process first start with the need recognition stage where the Pet owners diagnose the need for buying pet food. **Information search**: Pet owner may search for information about a product to fulfil the need. Some of the preliminary information will be gathered by the pet owners. The Information can come from family, friends or marketing channels. **Evaluation of alternatives:** The Pet owners evaluates the purchase alternatives depends upon the individual Pet owners' priorities and the specific buying situation, as well as the attributes which are important to them before buying pet food. B**uying decision:** In this stage the Pet owners decide where to buy the pet food from a number of choices available to them. **Post-buying behaviour:** The last stage consists of satisfaction or dissatisfaction regarding the pet food products. (Kotler, 2022)

Pet owners' satisfaction with the pet food product can be influenced by different attributes of the pet food, such as taste, nutritional quality, price, and brand reputation. Pet Owner is increasingly conscious of the quality of

the food they give to their pets, as exemplified by the trend of humanization and premiumization of pet food observed in the market. With a focus on safety and nutrition, pet owners are seeking out healthier dietary options that offer positive health benefits for their pets. The demand for natural and organic pet food is on the rise, with many pet owners looking for trusted labels that guarantee the use of natural ingredients. Prior to making a purchase, it is advisable for pet owners to consult with a veterinary professional to get personalized advice on which pet food best suits their pet's specific nutritional needs and health status. When considering a particular pet food brand, pet owners should conduct thorough research on the manufacturer's reputation for quality and reliability in producing safe and effective pet food products. While cost is a factor in the buying process, pet owners should balance affordability with the quality and nutritional value of the pet food to ensure their pet is receiving optimum nutrition for their particular life stage.

When the pet owner values taste as an important attribute, they may be satisfied with a pet food product that their pet enjoys eating. On the other hand, if nutritional quality is more important to them, they may be more satisfied with a pet food product that meets their pet's specific nutritional needs. Similarly, if a pet owner is price-sensitive, they may be more satisfied with a product that provides good value for money. In this way, the different attributes of the pet food can impact pet owners' overall satisfaction with the product.

1.3 Pet Owners Satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes:

The 'Pet Economy' is a rapidly growing industry, which has changed the perception of companion animals. This trend has led to the re-evaluation of products and marketing strategies to maximize the potential profits of the company. Pet food products differentiation is based on a variety of unique properties like colour, texture, odour, shape and external properties such as brand, country of origin, image is now being used. [7] The pet food shop owners need to be aware of pet owners' satisfaction associated with different pet food attributes to accommodate increasingly specialized pet

owner's needs. (Ampuero and vila, 2006) Pet owner satisfaction is often influenced by various attributes associated with pet ownership. From pet food quality to level of veterinary care, every attribute plays an important role in determining how satisfied pet owners are with pet food. A common theme among pet owners is their level of satisfaction with various attributes related to pet ownership are as follows:

Brand Reputation: Brand reputation plays an important role in pet owners' decision-making process when there is a lack of a clear signal for a particular product (Roman and Sanchez, 2018). Pet owners tend to prefer brands that they have a direct relationship with and that have a positive reputation, as these factors align with their values and priorities (Belen del Rio et al., 2001). The reputation of a brand can be influenced by positive or negative feedback or guarantees, which can impact pet owners' attitudes towards the brand and its related products. Having a strong and positive brand reputation can increase the likelihood of pet owners choosing a certain product, especially when other factors are unclear or unknown. [8]

Price Fairness: According to research by Bolton et al. (2003), price fairness is a significant factor that influences pet owners' perception of a product. Pet owners evaluate whether the offered price of a product is reasonable, justifiable, and acceptable, which can impact their overall impression of the brand. In addition, when determining the fairness of a price, pet owners tend to compare prices across different products, including transfer prices, selling costs, and prices offered by competitors. This means that the perceived fairness of a product's price can strongly influence pet owners' purchasing decisions and overall satisfaction with the brand.

Packaging Design: Packaging plays an important role in attracting pet owners' attention. Packaging provides food companies with a final opportunity to persuade pet owners to buy products just before they choose them in the context of current food retailing. Therefore, regarding purchasing a product, all packaging elements must be combined to attract pet owners. (McNeal and Ji, 2003) Food packaging can affect pet owners'

purchasing attitude and give rise to pet owners' expectation. (Deliza et al., 2003)

Product Healthiness: Pet food healthiness is important in defining Pet owners' acceptance of food, (Lange et al., 2000) which suggests that food healthiness affects food intake as well as attitude toward food. There is strong link between people perception and product healthiness and their willingness to purchase these products have a sign and positive impact on pet owners' behaviour. Pet owners' often have strong feelings about their health problems and health benefits has a significant impact on purchase intention. (Provencher et al., 2009)

Another important attribute of pet food that can impact pet owner satisfaction is the ingredient sources and transparency of the food. Pet owners are increasingly interested in knowing where the ingredients in their pet's food come from and whether they are of high quality. They may be concerned about the use of fillers, artificial preservatives, and other additives in their pet's food. In order to meet the satisfaction of pet owners, many pet food manufacturers are making efforts to be more transparent about the ingredients they use, providing detailed information about sourcing, processing, and quality control. Some manufacturers even use human-grade ingredients which includes the quality of ingredients sourced, how and where the food is cooked in their pet food to appeal to pet owners who want the highest quality food for their pets. By providing clear and transparent information about ingredient sources and quality, pet food manufacturers can build trust and loyalty among pet owners who are looking for the best possible food for their beloved pets.

Several attributes like Availability and convenience are important outside attributes of pet food that can impact pet owner satisfaction. Pet food should be readily available in stores, either in physical locations or online, and easy to purchase and transport. Convenience can also be enhanced through packaging and product design. Pet food that is packaged in easy-to-open containers, with clear feeding instructions and measuring tools, can make feeding pets more convenient for pet owners. Single-serve or pre-portioned

packaging can also make feeding more convenient for pet owners who are on-the-go or have busy schedules. By addressing the needs of pet owners for availability and convenience, pet food manufacturers can increase customer satisfaction and loyalty, leading to more repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

The texture and shape of pet food can have a significant impact on pet owner satisfaction and health. Different pets may have different preferences when it comes to the texture and shape of their food, and it's important to find a food that they enjoy and can easily digest. Some pets prefer soft or wet food, while others prefer crunchy or dry food. Soft or wet food can be easier to digest for pets with dental problems or older pets who may have difficulty chewing. However, soft or wet food can also spoil more quickly and may require refrigeration, which can be less convenient for pet owners. Crunchy or dry food can help to clean a pet's teeth as they chew, promoting dental health. However, some pets may have difficulty chewing crunchy food, or may not find it as palatable as wet food. The shape of different pet food is also a major factor contributing to pet owners' satisfaction. The shape of the kibble or treat can also impact how easily pets can eat and digest their food. Smaller kibble or treats may be easier for smaller pets to eat, while larger kibble may be more appropriate for larger pets. Some kibble may be shaped specifically to promote dental health, while others may be designed to be more easily digestible. Pet owners should consider their pet's individual needs and preferences, as well as any potential dental or digestive issues, when selecting a food with the appropriate texture and shape.

The taste and colour of pet food are two external attributes that can influence a pet's willingness to eat the food. While pets don't necessarily have the same appreciation for aesthetics as humans, the appearance and taste of their food can still play a role in their overall satisfaction with the food.

The taste of pet food is influenced by the ingredients used and the processing method employed. High-quality ingredients and gentle

processing methods can help to preserve the natural flavours of the food and make it more appealing to pets. Some pet food manufacturers also add flavour enhancers or natural flavours to their products to make them more palatable.

The colour of pet food can also impact a pet's willingness to eat the food. While pets may not be able to distinguish between different colours in the same way that humans can, the colour of their food can still signal to them that it is safe and appealing to eat. Many pet foods are formulated to mimic the natural colours of the ingredients used, such as the brown colour of meat or the green colour of vegetables.

Justification

Pet owners with the highest human traits scores place most importance on the health and nutrition, quality, freshness, and taste of pet food, and also value the taste and variety in their pets' diets. With the humanization of pets, trends in human food and nutrition often spill over into the pet food industry. Additionally, owners who are price conscious and loyal to their own food and brands of food are also more likely to be price conscious and loyal to their pets' food and brands.

The growing number of pet food options and pet owners' growing interest in feeding their pets the best nutrition possible has resulted in pet owners struggling to make appropriate pet food buying decisions. Pet owners are faced with a dizzying array of pet food choices and a growing tide of pet food misinformation online. Understanding how Pet owners make pet food buying decisions and which aspects of pet food matter most is essential information for veterinarians to help pet owners make more objective decisions about their pets' diet.

When pet owners buy meal for their pets, they mainly evaluate pet meal products as said by a mixture of genuine and outer product attributes. Internal product attributes specify the physical aspects of the product, such as chemical composition, aroma and nutritional properties, external attributes are narrated

to the product itself, but physically are not a component of it. Brand, price and product claims are those attributes of pet food products that are related to sustainability and animal welfare.

The importance of common place ingredients and worth for money, which in pet meal is often the perceived health advantages relative to cost. The overall, "natural" ingredients are the most important impute when determining pet meal of high quality. Pet meal appearance, smell, a higher cost, and details approximately protein content, the presence of modern meat, and being free of unwanted fillers are of interest for buyers of wet pet food. The importance of this type of meal is inexpensive and convenient.

Several studies were found through review of literature focusing on areas such "Customers buying behavior toward premium dog food brands", "Consumers acceptance of dry dog food variations", "An exploratory study on pet food purchasing behaviour of New Zealand pet owners", "The analysis of gender differences on influential factors for dog food purchasing", "A study to understand the selection criteria of millennials when buying dog food brands", "The study on consumer behaviour in purchasing dog food and perception towards biologically appropriate raw food (barf) for dogs in Bangkok metropolitan", "A study on the attachment in between owner and pet and its influence on consumption of pet food", "Determinates of pet food purchasing decision", "Understanding pet food attribute preferences of US consumers", "A study on the selection attributes affecting pet food purchase: After covid-19 pandemic", "Grains on the brains- A survey of dog owners purchasing habits related to grain-free dry dog foods", "The factors influencing brand loyalty in purchasing pet food in New Zealand", "A study on the customer behaviour of pet retailing towards dog food", " A study on marketing strategies of pet retail stores and their customer satisfaction- A one way analysis", "Pet owners level of awareness and considerations before owing a pet an analysis study". A dearth of research was found regarding pet food buying behaviour and extent of satisfaction experienced by the pet owners with regards to attributes of pet food products. Hence the present research was undertaken.

The Department of Family and Community Resource Management, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, offers courses on "Consumer Education" at Bachelor's level. Hence, the information gathered through the present research would widen the data base and will help in strengthening the curriculum. Moreover, it will be helpful for Pet owners to make wise choice while buying pet food products. The results of the study will also be helpful to the pet food shop owners, to gain better understanding of the pet owners buying behaviour in terms of the attributes preferred so that they can make their products available accordingly in their shops. The findings of the study will also help the marketing managers as they would provide offerings of pet food products to different target groups of pet owners.

Statement of Problem

The present study aims to find out the pet food buying behaviour and extent of satisfaction experienced by the pet owners with regards to attributes of pet food.

Objectives

1. To find out the buying behaviour of pet owners for pet food.
2. To assess the extent of satisfaction experienced by the respondents with regards to attributes of pet food products.

Hypotheses

1. There exists a relationship between pet food buying behavior of the respondents with their selected personal variables [age (in years), educational qualifications, employment status, marital status] and family variables [type of family, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹)] and situational variables [age of pet, frequency of buying pet food, amount of money spent (in ₹), frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories and average time taken for buying pet food].
2. There exists a relationship between extent of satisfaction with regards to the attributes of pet food with their selected personal variables [age (in years), educational qualification, employment status and marital

status]and family variables [size of the family, type of family and family monthly income (in ₹)].

3. There exists a relationship between pet food buying behavior and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to the attributes of pet food of the respondents.

Delimitations

1. The study will be limited to selected pets (Dogs).
2. The study will be limited to those pet owners who had purchased their pets before 2 years from the time of data collection.
3. The study will be delimited to the pet dogs who are not having any sickness.
4. The respondents will be from Vadodara city only.

CHAPTER-II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Any scientific investigation starts with a review of literature. The main aim of the present research was to find out the buying behavior of pet owners for pet food, as well as to assess the extent of satisfaction experienced by the respondent with the attributes of pet foods. The major area of research of related literature, articles, survey, journals, book and other sources relevant to particular issues, areas of research, or theory, providing a description, summary, and critical evaluation of each work are presented here. In the order to make the review clear and understanding, the present chapter was divided into following section:

2.1 Theoretical orientation

2.1.1 Pet Ownership

2.1.2 Pet Owners Buying Behavior

2.1.3 Buying Decision Process

    2.1.3.1 Need Recognition

    2.1.3.2 Information Search

    2.1.3.3 Evaluation of alternatives

    2.1.3.4 Purchase Decision

2.1.4 Importance of pet food Market Segmentation

2.1.5 Variable for pet food Market Segmentation

    2.1.5.1 Segmenting the Pet Food Market by Species

    2.1.5.2 Segmenting the Pet Food Market by Pet Age

    2.1.5.3 Segmenting the Pet Food Market by Size

    2.1.5.4 Segmenting the Pet Food Market by Activity Level

    2.1.5.5 Segmenting the Pet Food Market by Diet

    2.1.5.6 Segmenting Pet Food Market by Price

    2.1.5.7 Segmenting Pet Food Market by Type/Ingredients

    2.1.5.8 Segmenting the Pet Food Market by Preferred Food Flavor

2.1 Theoretical Orientation

2.1.1 Pet Ownership

Pet ownership has become common place in modern society. Originally pets were domesticated for mutual benefit in hunting or keeping rodent populations down. (Larson and Burger, 2013). Yet recently, it has become socially acceptable to treats pets as children, due to the rise of the "pet parenting" trend. (Denniss et al., 2004) This developing trend is wide spread, as shown by increasing pet ownership numbers around the world. (Lee et al., 2013)

Global trends are encouraging increased expenditure on pets and increase pet ownership. This causes the pet food market to become an attractive one for manufactures. Pet food brands have been to increase their product range and include higher value premium products to sell to pet owners (Armstrong, 2014).

Global domestic pet numbers are difficult to estimate, however Coriolis (2014) suggested that a third of households worldwide own at least one domesticated animal. There are approximately 74 million domesticate dogs and 72 million domestic cats in the USA.

2.1.2 Pet Owners Buying Behavior

Pet owners buying behavior is a process which means to understand how pet owners select, buy and dispose of product, services, ideas or experiences in order to satisfy their needs and wants (Kotler and Keller 2006). Pet owners buying behavior is a complex process involving the activities pet owners engage in the seeking for, choosing, buying, using, evaluating and disposing of products and services with the goal of satisfying their needs, wants and desires. Pet owners buying decisions in great detail to answer questions about what pet owners buy, where they buy, how and how much they buy, when they buy, and why they buy (Kotler and Armstrong, 2001).

"Pet Owners buyer behavior refers to the buying behavior of pet owner who buy pet food products for their pet consumption." (Armstrong and

Kotler, 2003). The Pet Owners market consists of all the combinations of pet food products. Pet owners from all over the world buy a wide range of pet food products in terms of dry and wet pet food products.

Pet owners purchase a variety of items for their pets, including food, toys, accessories, and healthcare products. They can buy these items from various sources, including pet stores, supermarkets, online retailers, veterinary clinics, or directly from breeders. The buying decision can be influenced by factors such as product features, brand reputation, price, convenience, and advice from veterinarians, friends or family members. Pet owners may also purchase items based on their pet's specific needs, such as age, size, breed, or health condition. The frequency and the number of products bought by pet owners can vary based on their individual financial situation, lifestyle, and personal preferences. The buying decision is also guided by concerns for their pet's welfare and satisfaction.

2.1.3 Pet Owners Buying Decision Process

The pet owners usually search his or her memory before seeking external sources of information regarding a given consumption related need. Experience is considered an internal source of the pet owner is likely to need to reach a decision. Many pet owner decisions are based on a combination of past experience, marketing and non-commercial information (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004).

It is important to note that for most purchases consumers devote, as a matter of habit, very little effort to this process, and emotions and feelings often have as much or more influence on the outcome as compared to facts and product features. The results of the consumer decision process are the experiences which change or maintain the consumer's current or desired life style.

The buyer decision process consists of five stages; need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives purchases decisions, and post purchase behavior. Clearly, the buying process starts long before actual purchase and continues long after. Marketers need to focus on

the entire buying process rather than on just the purchase decision. The pet owners pass through all five stages with every purchase. Nevertheless, in more routine purchases, pet owner often skips or reverse some of these stages (Armstrong and Kotler, 2003).

2.1.3.1 Need Recognition

The need for buying pet food arises from the fact that pets, much like humans, require proper nutrition to maintain optimal health and wellbeing. Pet owners may purchase various types of pet food, including dry, wet, or specialized food such as semi-moist, raw, or freeze-dried diets, to meet their pet's nutritional needs. Pet food contains a balance of essential nutrients such as protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, and minerals that can help ensure optimal pet health.

Furthermore, different pets may require different types of food depending on their life stage, lifestyle, and any dietary restrictions or health conditions they may have. For example, baby animals require high-protein diets to support their growth, while older animals may require specialized diets to support joint health or maintain a healthy weight. Some pets, such as those with food allergies or intolerances, may require specific types of pet food that exclude certain ingredients. Overall, providing proper nutrition to pets is essential for promoting their overall health and wellbeing. By selecting high-quality pet food that meets their pet's nutritional needs and preferences, pet owners can ensure their pets are well-nourished and healthy. Smart pet shop owners can help pet owners meet their pets' needs by providing a wide range of pet food options and offering recommendations based on their individual needs. It is essential to evaluate the available alternatives carefully and consider the specific needs of the pet before making a purchase.

2.1.3.2 Information Search

When buying pet food, there are several things to consider, including the pet's age, lifestyle, and overall health. Pet owners may want to

consult with a veterinarian or do research online to find accurate information on pet nutrition. Reading the label carefully can also provide valuable information on the ingredients and nutritional content of the pet food.

Pet owners may want to consider the type of food, including dry, wet, raw, or specialized diets, and look for high-quality products that meet their pet's nutritional needs. Brands and reputations should also be considered, and reading reviews from other pet owners can provide insights into the quality of the product.

Price is another factor to consider, with premium brands often coming at a higher cost. However, it is essential not to compromise on the quality of the pet's food for the sake of cost. Finally, pet owners may want to consider the convenience of the product, such as ease of storage and preparation, along with any special requirements their pet may have, such as hypoallergenic options.

Additionally, pet owners may want to consider purchasing pet food from local, independent pet shops or online retailers, which may offer a wider range of options and unique brands. Reviews from other customers can also be helpful in evaluating alternative options and choosing high-quality pet food products

Overall, making an informed decision when buying pet food is essential for ensuring the pet's health and wellbeing, and pet owners should consider a range of factors before making a purchase.

2.1.3.3 Evaluation of alternatives

There are several alternative options to consider when purchasing pet food, including different brands, types of food, and ingredients. Pet owners may want to evaluate these alternatives based on several factors, including their pet's nutritional needs, personal preferences, and any specific health conditions or dietary requirements.

One alternative option is to choose specialized diets, such as grain-free or hypoallergenic pet food, which may be beneficial for pets with sensitivities or allergies. Another option is to select wet or raw food diets, which may provide added hydration and nutrients for pets.

2.1.3.4 Purchase Decision

Several parties can be involved in the decision-making process for buying pet food, depending on the specific circumstances. Here is an overview of who might be involved and why:

Myself: As a pet owner, you are naturally involved in making decisions about what to feed your pet. You will likely be the one doing the research, comparing products, and ultimately making the purchase.

Parents and myself: If you live with your parents and share responsibility for a family pet, they may also be involved in decision-making around pet food. In this case, it is important to ensure that everyone is in agreement about what to feed the pet and to consider the nutritional needs of the animal. Spouse and myself: If you share a pet with a spouse or partner, they will likely be involved in the decision-making process as well. It is important to work together to ensure that your pet is receiving the highest quality nutrition. Children and myself: If you have children, they may be involved in choosing foods or snacks for a family pet. However, it is important to supervise their choices and ensure that the food they select is appropriate and meets the pet's nutritional needs. Relative and myself: If you are caring for a pet on behalf of a family member or friend, they may be involved in the decision-making process to some extent. It is important to communicate openly about the pet's dietary needs and work together to select the best food. Friends and myself: Friends who also own pets may provide helpful advice or recommendations about pet food. However, it is important to do your own research and make your own decisions based on your pet's individual needs. Caretaker and myself: If you have a professional pet caretaker, such as a dog walker or pet sitter, they may be involved in feeding the pet and selecting its food. In this case, it is important to communicate clearly about the pet's dietary needs and agree on a plan for feeding. Veterinary doctor and myself: A veterinary doctor can provide valuable information and advice about the nutritional needs of your pet. They can help you select a food that is appropriate for your pet's age, health, and activity level, and may also

recommend specialized diets or supplements based on your pet's individual needs.

2.1.4 Importance of pet food market segmentation

Market Segmentation is the process of dividing a market into different groups, or segments, based on certain characteristics. By segmenting the pet food market, pet food manufacturers are able to understand what type of pet food is best suited for each segment. Pet owners within the same segment will share similar characteristics, such as their income level and lifestyle. Similarly, pets in the same segment will also share characteristics with each other.

Pet owners who are willing and able to spend more money on their pets will typically purchase premium pet foods, while those with lower incomes might not have the option of buying pricier brands. This type of Price Segmentation helps businesses maximize profits. Pet food manufacturers use such information to decide what type of products would be best suited for each segment. [9]

2.1.5   Variable for pet food market segmentation

Pet Food Companies generally segment the market based on the following variables which include Species, Age, Pet Size, Activity level, Diet, Price, Type/Choice of Ingredient, Preferred Food flavor, Location [9]

2.1.5.1 Segmenting the Pet Food Market by Species

One way to segment the pet food market is by Species. There are four types of pets that are typically considered when it comes to pet food marketing: Dogs, Cats, Fish and Birds. Different types of pets require different types of food. For example, dogs need meat-based diets, whereas cats require more grain-intensive food. Pet owners will usually purchase pet food that is similar in nutritional content to what the animal would eat if it was living in the wild. For example, dogs are omnivores and do well on vegetarian or vegan diets just like humans; while many dry dog foods contain cornmeal, wheat flour, and other plant-based ingredients, these are not necessary for the dog's health. Pet food

companies that produce vegetarian or vegan diets for dogs typically add synthetic vitamins and minerals to make up for any nutritional deficiencies. [9]

2.1.5.2 Segmenting the Pet Food Market by Pet Age

Another way to segment the pet food market is by the age of the pet. Pet food companies typically produce different types of pet foods for different age groups. There are three main age groups: Puppy/kitten, Adult and Older Pet. Puppy/kittens require a different type of diet than adult pets. Kitten food is usually higher in protein and fat, while puppy food contains more calcium and phosphorus to promote healthy bone growth. Adult pet food is designed for pets who are no longer growing, and typically contains a balanced mix of protein, fat, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals. Older Pet food is formulated for pets who are experiencing health problems associated with age. It often has fewer calories and less sodium than adult pet food. [9]

2.1.5.3 Segmenting the Pet Food Market by Size

It's also common to segment the pet food market based on the size of the animal. There are three main categories: toy breeds, small breeds and large/giant breeds. Pet food companies usually produce different types of diets for these different sized animals due to nutritional needs varying based on animal size. Toy breeds of dogs are the smallest type of dog and typically weigh less than 20 pounds when fully grown. They require a diet that is higher in protein and fat content to meet their energy needs. Small dog breeds are slightly larger than toy breeds, weighing between 20-40 pounds when fully grown. They also need a diet that is high in protein and fat to meet their energy needs. Large/giant breed dogs are the largest type of dog and weigh more than 40 pounds when fully grown. They require a diet that is low in calcium and phosphorus to prevent them from developing bone problems. [9]

2.1.5.4 Segmenting the Pet Food Market by Activity Level

It's also common to segment the pet food market based on the size of the animal. There are three main categories: toy breeds, small breeds and large/giant breeds. Pet food companies usually produce different types of diets for these different sized animals due to nutritional needs varying based on animal size. Toy breeds of dogs are the smallest type of dog and typically weigh less than 20 pounds when fully grown. They require a diet that is higher in protein and fat content to meet their energy needs. Small dog breeds are slightly larger than toy breeds, weighing between 20-40 pounds when fully grown. They also need a diet that is high in protein and fat to meet their energy needs. Large/giant breed dogs are the largest type of dog and weigh more than 40 pounds when fully grown. They require a diet that is low in calcium and phosphorus to prevent them from developing bone problems. [9]

2.1.5.5 Segmenting the Pet Food Market by Diet

Pet owners purchase different types of pet food depending on what type of diet their animal needs. The four main types of diets are: Wet, Dry, Raw and Organic. Wet diets are mostly made up of canned or fresh meat, with a small percentage of grains or vegetables. They are usually higher in fat and protein content compared to other types of pet food. Dry diets are mostly made up of kibble, with a small percentage of canned or wet food. They are lower in fat and protein content than wet diets, but higher in carbohydrates. Raw diets are mostly made up of raw meat, with a small percentage of grains or vegetables. They are the most expensive type of pet food and can be difficult to prepare. Organic diets are made up of organic ingredients only. Pet food companies that produce organic diets typically add synthetic vitamins and minerals to make up for the lack of nutrients. [9]

2.1.5.6 Segmenting Pet Food Market by Price

Pet owners purchase different types of pet food depending on how much they are willing to spend. The four main price points are Economy, Mid-Range, Premium and Super Premium. Economy-priced

pet foods are made with cheaper ingredients and typically have a shorter shelf life than other types of pet food. Mid-Range priced pet foods are made with more expensive ingredients and have a longer shelf life than economy-priced pet foods. Premium-priced pet foods are made with the most expensive ingredients and typically have the longest shelf life of all four types of pet food. Super premium-priced pet foods are the most expensive type of pet food and usually have the best quality ingredients. [9]

2.1.5.7 Segmenting Pet Food Market by Type/Ingredients

Pet owners purchase different types of pet foods depending on what they are looking for in a product, which can be determined through their price point and ingredients list. The six main types are: premium, economy, holistic/natural, organic, grain-free and limited ingredient. Premium pet food is the most expensive type of pet food and typically contains high-quality ingredients. Economy pet food is the least expensive type of pet food and typically contains low-quality ingredients. Holistic/natural pet food does not contain any artificial colors, flavors or preservatives. Organic pet food is made up of organic ingredients only. Grain-free pet food does not contain any grain, such as wheat or corn, which are common allergens for dogs and cats. Pet owners often purchase this type of product for pets that have allergies to grains. Limited ingredient pet food typically contains about five key ingredients in their kibble, making them a good choice for pets with allergies or sensitivities. [9]

2.1.5.8 Segmenting the Pet Food Market by Preferred Food Flavor

Pet owners purchase different types of pet food depending on what type of flavor their animal prefers. The four main flavors are: Chicken, Beef, Fish and Vegetarian. Pet food companies typically produce different types of diets for these different flavor preferences. [9]

2.1.5.9 Segmenting the Pet Food Market based on Location

Pet owners purchase different types of pet foods in different parts of the world. Pet owners prefer to purchase locally sourced food for their pets by buying local brands. And so Pet Food Manufacturers have started to offer pet food products that are region-specific. [9]

2.1.6   Psychographic segmentation of pet owners

It is well and good to segment the pet food market based on the characteristics of the pet. But pet food purchase decisions are made by the pet's owner. And so, it's equally important to understand the psychographic profile of the pet owner so that we can segment them based on the relationship they have with their pet. [9]

2.1.6.1 Active

This group is health-conscious and buys natural or organic pet foods without artificial flavors or preservatives. They prefer local brands to support their community. [9]

2.1.6.2 Busy

Busy Pet Owners is time-pressed and will buy whatever pet food is most convenient, which often includes grocery store foods or big box brands. [9]

2.1.6.3 Single

This group buys economy-priced pet foods to save money and typically only has one pet. [9]

2.1.6.4 Luxury

This group buys the most expensive, premium pet food for their pets to treat them like family members. [9]

2.1.6.5 Loyal

Loyal Pet Owners buys the same pet food every time and stick with a single brand, even if it means paying more. [9]

2.1.7 Pet Owners Satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes

The 'Pet Economy' is a rapidly growing industry, which has changed the perception of companion animals. This trend has led to the re-evaluation of products and marketing strategies to maximize the potential profits of the company. Product differentiation based on a variety of unique properties like colour, texture, odour, shape and external properties such as brand, country of origin, image is now being used. [7] The pet shops owners need to be aware of pet owners' satisfaction associated with different pet food products attributes to accommodate increasingly specialized pet owner's needs. (Ampuero and vila, 2006)

2.1.7.1 Brand Reputation:

Brand reputation of food products helps pet owners' make decisions, especially when a special signal is lacking. (Roman and Sanchez, 2018) Pet owners prefer brands that have a direct relationship with and a good reputation, (Belen del Rio et al., 2001) which directly concern values and are important to them. Positive or negative guarantees for food brands can affect brand reputation, which affects pet owners' attitudes toward brands and products related to the brand. [8]

2.1.7.2 Price Fairness:

Price fairness is a major factor that affects product impression. (Bolton et al., 2003) Pet owners' assessment of whether the offer price of the seller's products is justifiable, acceptable, or reasonable. In particular, customers tend to make better judgments about selling costs, transfer prices, and competitive prices when evaluating price fairness by referring to a variety of products.

2.1.7.3 Packaging Design:

Packaging plays an important role in attracting pet owners' attention. Packaging provides food companies with a final opportunity to persuade pet owners to buy products just before they choose them in the context of current food retailing. Therefore, regarding purchasing a

product, all packaging elements must be combined to attract pet owners. (McNeal and Ji, 2003) Food packaging can affect pet owners' purchasing attitude and give rise to pet owners' expectation. (Deliza et al., 2003)

2.1.7.4 Product Healthiness:

Pet food healthiness is important in defining Pet owners' acceptance of food, (Lange et al., 2000) which suggests that food healthiness affects food intake as well as attitude toward food. There is strong link between people perception and product healthiness and their willingness to purchase these products has a sign and positive impact on pet owners' behaviour. Pet owners' often have strong feelings about their health problems and health benefits has a significant impact on purchase intention. (Provencher et al., 2009)

2.2   Related Researches
2.2.1 Researches Conducted Outside India

Rebecka et al. (2010) carried a study on "Customers' buying behaviour toward premium dog food brands". The purpose of the research was to contribute to knowledge of customers' buying behaviour toward premium dog food by examining their brand associations and how these are shaped by using Bozita Robur as a case study. The research design was exploratory and survey used to collect data from the respondents. The sample size of the study was 142.The findings revealed that Swedish customers have built a positive image associated with premium dog food brands, where superior quality was the primary association. On the brand schem level, each of the premium dog food brands investigated holds specific associations in pet owner minds, whereas the strength of these associations depends much on brand recognition levels. Bozita Robur, though less familiar among respondents, was found to have a positive brand schema and is associated with Swedish Ness and high quality. Customers of premium dog food brand actively search for information when making a purchasing decision towards a dog food brand. Dog owners are influenced by various social groups,

among which breeders and specialty store staff have the strongest influence when it comes to purchasing advice of the dog food brands.

Birch and Tesfom (2010) conducted research on "Do they buy for their dogs the way they buy for themselves?". The objective of the research was to determine whether dog owners buy the pet food for their dogs the way they buy food for themselves. The tool used in this research was survey in those 138 women and 57 men were respondents. The findings of the study show that dog owners are more serious about buying healthy dog food than buying healthy human food and they suggested that manufacturers and marketers of dog food and vet care service providers can gain some insight about the type of food and medical services dog owners might buy for their dogs by studying dog owners' food and medical service consumption decision patterns.

Brizio (2014) carried out a study on "Consumer acceptance of dry dog food variations." The objectives of the study were to compare the acceptance of different dry dog food products by consumer, determine consumer cluster for acceptance and identify the characterises of dog food that drive consumer acceptance. Eight dry dog food samples available in the US market were evaluated by pet owners. In this study, consumers evaluated overall liking, aroma, and appearance liking of the products. Consumers were also asked to predict their purchase intent, their dog's liking, and cost of the samples. The results indicated that appearance of the sample, especially the colour, influenced pet owner's overall liking more than the aroma of the product. Overall liking clusters were not related to income, age, gender, or education, indicating that general consumer demographics do not appear to play a main role in individual consumer acceptance of dog food products.

Surie (2014) undertook research on "An exploratory study on pet food purchasing behavior of New Zealand pet owners". The aim of the research was to understand the behaviors of pet food purchasers, pet owner characteristics and identify different purchasing behavior between

cats and dogs' owners. The tool of the research was questionnaire in which interviews was held. The sample size was 103 respondents. The findings of this study provide insight into what pet food New Zealand pet owners were purchasing and the reasons behind their purchasing decisions. It also presents that the idea of "pet parenting" trend that has a presence in New Zealand by linking involvement to attribute importance and pet ownership compositions.

Bearden (2015) carried out study on "Selected Determinants of Consumer Satisfaction and Complaint Reports." Data obtained from 375 members of a consumer panel in a two-phase study of consumer experiences with automobile repairs and services were used to examine the antecedents and consequences of consumer satisfaction. The results support previous findings that expectations and disconfirmation are plausible determinants of satisfaction, and suggest that complaint activity may be included in satisfaction/dissatisfaction research as suggested by earlier descriptions of consumer complaining behavior.

Wattanasen and Udomkit (2016) undertook research on "The analysis of gender differences on influential factors for dog food purchasing". The objective of the research was to explore the demographic characteristics of wet dog food pet owners, to analyse influential factors that impact their purchasing and to explore whether or not males and females are different in their spending of wet dog food and if they were influenced by influential factors differently. The sample technique used was convenience sampling method. The tool used was questionnaire in that sample size were 431 responses. The findings of the research assessed that males and females are different in their spending of wet dog food, in relation to different aspects like breeders, veterinarians, specialty store staff, online dog forums, family and friends, and the four marketing mixes.

Chautchuwong (2017) carried out study on "A study to understand the selection criteria of millennials when buying dog food brands." The

purpose of the study was to determine the key factors that lead millennial to purchase dog food brand and develop effective marketing strategy to convince millennial customer to purchase. The tool in this research was interview and online survey with 101 respondents. The research design was exploratory research design. This research was descriptive research in nature. The key findings of this study can be utilized to capture key influencing attributes of dog food brand that lead millennial to purchase the brand as well as the effective marketing strategies and influent channel that convince millennials interest in dog food brands. As well as this study can be represented new insightful information that dog food brand can use to utilize and develop the brand, better understand in consumer preference and identify realistic opportunities for business.

Suchinda (2017) conducted a study on "The study on consumer behaviors in purchasing dog food and perception towards biologically appropriate raw food (barf) for dogs in Bangkok metropolitan." The objectives of the research were to understand the key attributes that affect purchasing decision for dog food, consumer profile for dog food in Bangkok Metropolitan region, understand consumer perception towards BARF for dogs and identify influencing attitudes and their impacts on willingness for BARF trial. The research design included both exploratory and descriptive researches. The tool in the research was survey questionnaire and sample size were 100 respondents. The result also shows that consumers who are unsure about the benefits of BARF are less willing to try BARF. On the contrary, the consumers who agree that "food which is traditionally optimal for a wolf is optimal for dogs" and "cooking destroys enzymes needed for digestion" are more willing to try feeding BARF to their dogs. In addition, value seeker and health driven segment do not think that BARF is more expensive than commercial pet food. Consumers in smart shopper and value seeker were not sure if their dogs would eat BARF.

Pauliuc and Yao Fu (2018) conducted research on "A study on the attachment in between owner and pet and its influence on the

consumption of pet food". The purpose of this was to influence some of the behaviors and motivation of owners when purchasing food for their pets. The tool in this research was questionnaire and sample size were 300 respondents. The sampling method was random sampling method. The research design was descriptive in nature. The findings of the study assessed that the attachment can influence the motivation of owners when purchasing the pet food. The motivation behind the purchase was divided into safety reason, physiological reason, belonging reason, self-esteem, and self-actualisation motives. The study confirms as well that attachment which plays a vital role in the type of relationship owners and pets have, influences as well the purchase behaviour of emerging types of pet food such as high-end food, more functional food and healthier food such as organic pet food.

Cash et al. (2019) conducted research on "Determinants of pet food purchasing decision". The objective of this study was to identify determinants of pet food purchasing decisions. The tool in this study were online survey in that 2181 pet owners were respondent. The findings of the study assessed that the behaviour of pet owners with regards to their decision-making process for purchasing pet food in order to assess whether pets received proper nutrition.

Meike and David (2021) carried out study on "It keeps the good boy healthy from nose to tail: understanding pet food attribute preferences of US consumers." This study proposes a model that investigates the importance pet owners place on convenience, natural ingredients, and value and health claims as product attributes. The tool was online survey (Qualtrics) method in that sample size was 206 pet owning US residents as respondents. The findings of the study were of relevance to many participants in the pet industry, particularly veterinarians, animal welfare organizations, and marketing managers in specialized pet food stores or pet supplies retailers. Pet owners could not provide sufficient food for

their pets, that impacts pet food anxiety, which leads to changes in pet food shopping and pet feeding behavior.

Kwak and Cha (2021) undertook a research on "A study on the selection attributes affecting pet food purchase: After COVID-19 pandemic". The aim of the research was to test empirically a theoretical; model defining the selection attributes of pet food, which are increasing notably in Korea. In this study tool was survey and questionnaire in that 450 respondents were selected. The findings of the study showed that package design, price fairness, brand reputation, and perception of product healthiness positively affected both recommendation and attitude. Moreover, purchase intention was enhanced by recommendation and attitude.

Rombach and Dean (2021) carried out a study on "Just love me, feed me, never leave me: Understanding pet food anxiety, feeding and shopping behavior of us pet owners in covidian times". The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of pet owner's perception of their pet, their engagement with their pet. The tool in this research study was online survey in that 206 US residents were the respondents. The findings of the study were that pet owners could not provide sufficient food for their pets, that had an impact on pet food anxiety, which leads to changes in pet food shopping and pet feeding behavior.

Banton et al. (2021) carried out research on "Grains on the brains: A survey of dog owner purchasing habits related to grain free- dry dog foods". The objective of the research was to identify the variables that are predictive of a dog owner's choice of a grain-free dry food across North America and Europe. The tool chosen was the survey that had 3298 respondents. The findings of the research assessed that many factors contributed to a pet owner selecting a grain-free dry dog food. In the current study, some factors such as: sex, perception of allergies, a pet owner's own dietary routine, different pet food information resources,

the importance of the ingredient list and looking for specific claims, may be more predictive than others.

Dean and Rombach (2021) carried out a study on "It keep the good boy healthy from nose to tail: understanding pet food attribute preferences of US pet owners". The purpose of the study was to investigate the importance pet owners place on convenience, natural ingredients, and value and health claims as product attributes. The tool in this research was online survey in that 206 pet- owning US residents were the respondents. The findings of the study are of relevance to many participants in the pet industry, particularly veterinarians, animal welfare organizations, and marketing managers in specialized pet food stores or pet supplies retailers. Veterinarians and animal welfare organizations could be investing in awareness campaigns and best practice advice related to healthy feeding strategies and help clarify what is fact or fiction when it comes to choices related to raw or dry pet food. This may help to avoid undesirable feeding practices and improve animal health and wellbeing.

Kodagoda (2022) undertook a research on "The factors influencing brand loyalty in purchasing pet food in New Zealand". The objective of the research was to identify the factors that determine the decision-making process in purchasing pet food, to understand the contribution of communication mix in building brand loyalty and to analyse the factors of switching pet food products. The research design was descriptive in nature. The sampling technique was convenience sampling technique. The research employed a mixed method approach to collect data from the study participants that is survey questionnaire and semi-interview in that 123 respondents were the sample. The findings of the study indicated that the majority of New Zealand pet owners were females and cats were the most popular pet in New Zealand and pet owners were brands conscious when purchasing and switching pet food brands.

2.2.1 Researches Conducted within India

Lavanya (2015) conducted research on "A study on the customer behaviour of pet retailing towards dog food". The objective of the study was to know the most preferred brand of pet foods, to investigate the influence of peers and family on the buying behaviour of the respondents, to examine the influence of the quality of the product on the purchase behaviour of the respondents, to understand the influence of advertisement on their purchase behaviour. It was descriptive research where data were collected through questionnaires in that 425 retail investors were taken and 235 were collected. The findings of the study were that royal Canin was the most preferred dog food by the respondents followed by pedigree, Nutra nuggets and drools.

Kanimozhi (2017) undertook a study on "A study on marketing strategies of pet retail Stores and their customer satisfaction– A two-way analysis." The objectives of the study include to examine the marketing strategies adopted by pet store keepers, to study the customers (pet owners) motivational factors and their purchase. The research design was descriptive research design. The sampling technique is purposive sampling technique. The tool used was questionnaire. The sample size were 336 pet owners and 57 pet stores. The findings of the study revealed that the retail pet store owners to fix a fair price, provide and maintain a good shop ambience and shop layout. The demands of different segments of customers must be satisfied to increase the sales and to fetch more profits. Both customers and pet store owners have given more importance to product strategies meant for pets and promotion strategies which are the important cells of marketing strategies. the respondents are highly satisfied with the quality of the training given to their pets but they are dissatisfied with the discount offers provided in their pet store.

Judith and Muniappan (2021) undertook research on "Pet owners' level of awareness and considerations before owning a pet-an Analysis study". The objective of the study was to analyse the level of awareness and

consideration of pet owners before buying pet. In this research convenience sampling technique sampling was used to collect the data from 130 respondents. The findings of the study were based on the pet owner's awareness level towards owning a pet. The respondents were maximum aware of their home needs before owning a pet and minimum aware of the various activities for the pet. The respondents were highly aware of their personal needs first before owning a pet.

2.3 Conclusion

After going through the various available literature, the investigator came across various research conducted outside India which focused on Pet owners buying behavior and satisfaction.

The research conducted in India focused on pet owners buying and marketing strategies and retail strategies. The investigator did not come across any research on Pet food buying behavior and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food products. This motivated the researcher to adopt present study to find out pet food buying behavior and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food buying behavior. Hence, the present research was undertaken.

Chapter-III

METHODOLOGY

The present research was undertaken to gather information regarding pet food buying behavior and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food products. In order to achieve the aim of the present study, a detailed plan work and sequential procedure was followed which is presented in this chapter. The chapter deals with Research Design, Operational Definition, Sample and Sampling Technique, Selection of Tool, Data Collection and Data Analysis, which are explained in brief under the following headings:

3.1 Research Design

3.2 Variables and conceptual framework under study

3.3 Operational Definitions

3.4 Locale of the Study

3.5 Unit of Inquiry

3.6 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

3.7 Selection, Development and Description of the tool.

3.8 Data Collection

3.9 Data Analysis

3.1 Research Design

The major purpose of descriptive research design was describing state of affairs as it exists. Descriptive research design was adopted for the present research because it gathered data on pet food buying behavior and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food products.

3.2 Variables and conceptual frame work under study

There were two sets of variables under present research study viz. independent variables and Dependent Variables. The selected independent variables classified for the study were personal variables viz. Age (in years), educational qualification, employment status, marital status, Family Variables viz. type of family, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹). Situational Variables viz. age of pet, Frequency of buying pet food, Amount of money spent (in ₹), frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories and average time taken for buying pet food. The Dependent Variable was pet food buying behavior and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food products.
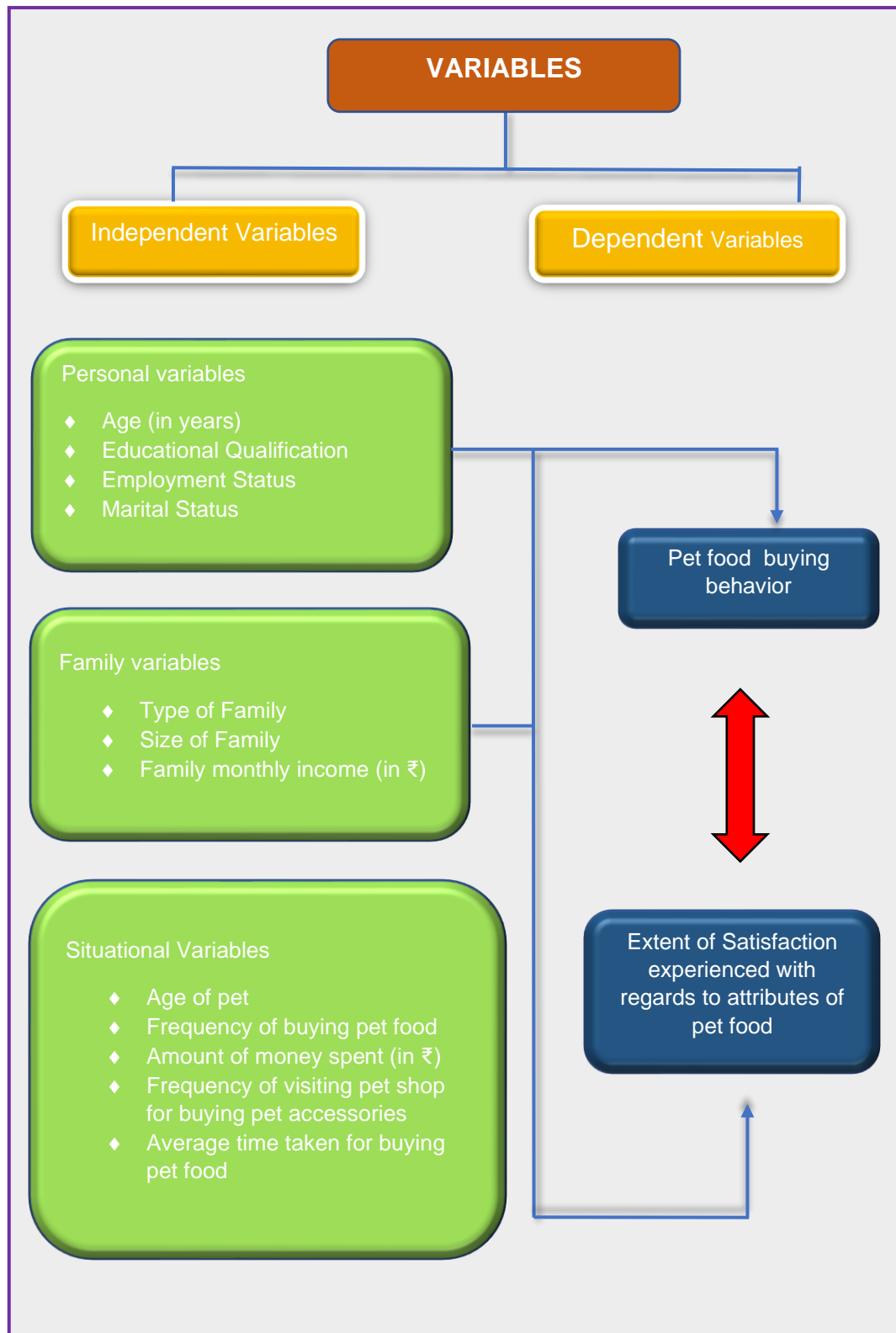
Figure 1: A schematic framework to show hypothetical relationship among variables under study

3.3 Operational Definitions

The term used in present research study were operationally defined which are as follow:

3.3.1 Pet owners:

For the present research, pet owners were operationally defined as those individuals who own dogs as pets.

3.3.2 Pet food:

For the present study, it was operationally defined as the food which is purchased by a pet owner for feeding their pets.

3.3.3 Pet food attributes:

For the present study, pet food attributes were operationally defined as those internal attributes present in the pet food that will include size, colour, odour, shape, freshness, texture and external attributes will include price, design, packing, ingredients and weight.

3.3.4 Buying behavior:

It was operationally defined as the sequential decision-making process involved by the pet owners beginning from need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, buying decision and post buying behavior with regards to pet food products.

3.3.5 Extent of satisfaction with pet food attributes:

It was operationally defined as the extent to which the respondents are contended with the internal and external attributes of pet food products bought by them for their pets.

3.4 Locale of the study

The locale of the study was Vadodara city.

3.5 Unit of Inquiry

The unit of inquiry were the key informants of the family who takes decisions for buying pet food products in the family.

3.6 Sample size and Sampling Procedure

The sample size will be 120 respondents. The Purposive sampling technique will be adopted by researcher to select the respondents for the present research.

3.6.1 Inclusion Criteria

♦ The study will be limited to pet owner who own dog as pet.
♦ The study will be limited to those respondents who have owned a dog as pet from past 2 years and more.
♦ The study will include those respondents who feed home food as well as outside food to their pets.

3.6.2 Exclusive Criteria

♦ Those respondents who own pets other than dogs were not included as sample.
♦ The present study excluded those respondents who were not willing to participate in the survey.

3.7   Selection, Development and Description of the Tool
3.7.1 Selection of the Tool

In the light of the objectives framed for the present study, data collection tool was developed namely questionnaire. Questionnaire was developed to collect information on pet food buying behavior of pet owners and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food products.

3.7.2 Development of the Tool

Based on the information obtained through review of literature, the questionnaire was prepared. While preparing the tool, care was taken to include all such questions that would elicit the information needed to attain the objective of the study. It was selected because,

1. It was relatively inexpensive than other method as a researcher only need to distribute the questionnaire forms.
2. It was free from biasness as misreading of questions were reduce by explaining the questions.
3. It allowed collection of wide range of information related to pet owners buying behavior and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food products.

3.7.3 Description of the Tool

The selection of the tool developed for the study are described in details as follow:

Section I Background information of the respondents: This section contained questions regarding the background information of the respondents viz. age, educational qualification, employment status, marital status, type of family, size of family and family monthly income.

Section II Information about pet and pet food: This section contained questions regarding the pet and pet food information viz age of pet, frequency of buying pet food, amount of money spent, visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories, average time taken for buying pet food.

Section II Pet owners buying behavior: The section will include questions regarding the need for buying pet food products, sources of information explored by respondents before buying pet food products, alternatives evaluated before buying the pet food products and satisfaction experienced in buying decision for pet food owners.

Section III Extent of Satisfaction experienced with the attributes of pet food products: This section included items which elicited information

regarding the extent of satisfaction derived by the internal as well as external attributes of pet food products. This was assessed through a summated rating scale where the respondents were asked to state the extent to which they were "Highly Satisfied", "Neutral", "Highly Dissatisfied" with the attributes of pet food products. The score ascribed was 3 to 1 respectively to the responses. High scores reflected a high extent of satisfaction with the attributes of pet food products and vice versa.

3.7.4 Establishment of content validity of the tool

The scales prepared by the researcher for the present study viz. Pet owners buying behavior and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards with regards to attributes of pet food products were given to the panel of judges from Department of Family and Community Resource Management, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara. They were requested to check the clarity and relevance of the content of each scale. A consensus of 80% among the judges was taken as a yardstick for the final tool. Minor modification as suggested by the experts were incorporated in the final tool.

3.7.5 Establishment of reliability

The reliability was established for selected scales prepared by the researcher.

Pretesting: A pilot study were conducted to find out the feasibility and clarity of the scales developed. Therefore, the developed scale was pretested on a sample of 30 key decision maker of the family who were involved in decision making for buying pet food products.

Reliability of the scales: The reliability of the scale was established through internal consistency, based on the average inter-item correlation to establishing reliability. The Cronbach's alpha test has been applied on 30 samples. The formula of Cronbach's alpha is as below:

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N-1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

Where, N is the number of items, c̄ = average covariance between item-pairs, v̄ = average variance. In order to get overview of each of the scale used in present study, the reliability coefficient was as given below (Table 1). The reliability values were found to be high for all the scales as reported below.

Table 1: Overview of the scales with reliability values

Sr. no.	Scales	Reliability values
1	Need Recognition	0.889
2	Evaluation of Alternatives	0.886
3	Extent of Satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food	0.952

3.8 Data collection

The data was gathered by the researcher between November 2022 to December 2022. The questionnaire was used as a tool for data collection. The purpose of the research was explained and rapport was built to gather true responses. The questionnaire was personally given by the researchers to the respondents. The data was collected only by the respondents who enthusiastically and willingly gave the needed information for the study.

3.9 Data Analysis

The procedure that was used to analyses the data was categorization, electronic coding, and tabulation.

3.9.1 Categorization

The following categories were made to enable the researcher to analyze the data for further statistical application:

I. **Age of the respondents (in years):** Age was completed in years and collected at the time of data collection. The obtained range of

age of the respondents was based on equal intervals and was categorized as follows:

    1. 16-32

    2. 33-52

    3. 53-66

II. **Educational Qualification of the respondents:** The educational qualifications obtained by the respondents were categorized as follows:

    1. Higher secondary

    2. Graduation

    3. Post-Graduation

    4. Ph.D.

    5. Diploma

III. **Employment status of the respondents:** It referred to the employment status at the time of data collection and was categorized as follows:

    1. Employed

    2. Unemployed

IV. **Marital Status:** It referred to the marital status of the respondents at the time of data collection and was categorized as follows:

    1. Unmarried

    2. Married

V. **Type of family:** It referred to the type of the family of the respondents and was categorized as follows:

    1. Joint

    2. Nuclear

VI. **Size of family members:** The families were categorized based on the number of family members staying together in a house. It was categorized as follows:

       1. Small (2-4 members)

       2. Medium (5-7 members)

       3. Large (8 and more)

VII. Family monthly income (in ₹): It referred to the monthly income acquired by the family from various sources and was categorized as follows:

       1. ≤ ₹50,000

       2. ₹50,001-₹1,00,000

       3. ≥ ₹1,00,001

VIII. Age of Pet (in years): The obtained range of age of pet was based on equal intervals and was categorized as follows:

       1. 1-5

       2. 6-10

       3. 11-14

IX. Frequency of buying pet food: It referred to how frequently respondents brought pet food and was categorized as follows:

       1. Once a week

       2. Once a fortnight

       3. Twice a month

       4. Once a month

       5. Once every two months

       6. Once every three months

       7. More than three months

X. Amount of money spent (in ₹): It referred to the money spent by the respondents for buying pet food and was categorized as follows:

       1. ≤ ₹1500

       2. ₹1501-₹2000

       3. ≥ ₹2001

XI. Frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories: It referred to how frequently respondents visited pet food shop for buying pet accessories and was categorized as follows:

1. Weekly
2. Fortnight
3. Once a month
4. As and when required

XII. Frequency of average time taken: It referred to the amount of time taken by the respondents while buying pet food and was categorized as follows:

1. Less than 30 minutes
2. More than 30 minutes

XIII. Preferences given for type of pet food: It referred to the preference given for buying type of pet food which was categorized as follows:

1. Dry
2. Wet
3. Combination of dry and wet

XIV. Extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to the attributes of pet food: This section contained statements reflecting the satisfaction level of the respondents with regards to the attributes of pet food and was categorized as "High Extent", "Moderate Extent", and "Low Extent" based on the range score.

Table 2: Categorization and scores range for Extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to the attributes of pet food

Sr.no.	Extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to the attributes of pet food	Range scores
1	To high extent	38-48
2	To moderate extent	27-37
3	To low extent	16-26

The scale consisted of 16 items related pertaining to various attributes of pet food. The respondent was asked to response on 3-point scale in terms of "highly satisfied", "neutral" and "highly dissatisfied" which were scored 3 to 1 respectively. The total number of items for entire scale were 16, hence minimum score was 16 and maximum was 48. Minimum and maximum possible score were divided into 3 categories on the basis of equal interval which were "high extent", "moderate extent" and "low extent" of satisfaction.

3.9.2 Weighted mean score

The weighted mean is a type of mean that is calculated by multiplying the score (or probability) associated with a particular statement.

$$W = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n}(xi * wi)}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} wi}$$

Where, w= weighted mean n= number of terms to be averaged, wi = weights applied to x values and xi = data values to be averaged.

3.9.3 Coding

Score were given to each response and then the information from questionnaire were transferred on excel sheet.

3.9.4 Tabulation

The data were transferred from excel sheet into tabular form to give clear picture of findings.

3.9.5 Statistical analysis

Descriptive statistics: The data were presented in frequencies, percentage, mean, standard deviation and weighted mean.

Relational statistics: Analysis of variance (ANOVA), t-test and co-efficient of correlation (r-test) were computed test the hypothesis formulated for the study.

Table 3: Relational statistics applied to test of the hypotheses

Test	Independent, Dependent and Situational variables
(ANOVA) **f-test**	**Independent variables:** Age (in years), educational qualifications, employment status, marital status, type of family, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹), age of pet, frequency of buying pet food, amount of money spent (in ₹), frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories and average time taken for buying pet food **With** **Dependent variables:** Pet food buying behavior **And** **Independent variables:** Age (in years), educational qualifications, employment status, marital status, type of family, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹) **With** **Dependent variables:** Extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food
t-test	**Independent variables:** Age (in years), educational qualifications, employment status, marital status, type of family, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹), age of pet, frequency of buying pet food, amount of money spent (in ₹), frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories and average time taken for buying pet food **With** **Dependent variables:** Pet food buying behavior **And** **Independent variables:** Age (in years), educational qualifications, employment status, marital status, type of family, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹) **With** **Dependent variables:** Extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food
Co-efficient of **correlation** **(r-test)**	**Dependent variables:** Pet food buying behavior **with** **Dependent variables:** Extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food

Chapter- IV

FINDINGS

An attempt was made to find out the pet food buying behavior and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food products. This chapter deals with presentation, interpretation and discussion of the finding obtained through the analysis of the data collected via questionnaire. The result is presented under following sub sections:

Section I: Background Information of the Respondents

Section II: Information About Pet and Pet Food

Section III: Pet Food Buying behavior

Section IV: Satisfaction Experienced with Regards to Attributes of Pet Food Products

Section V: Testing of Hypothesis

Background Information

4.1 Background Information of the Respondents

This section deals with the background information of the respondents as pet owners of pet food products. The results regarding personal information such as Age (in years), Gender, Educational Qualification, Occupation, Martial Status and family information such as Type of Family, Size of Family, Family Monthly income (in rupees) are presented here. The data were collected from 120 respondents who bought pet food products. The time of data collection was from the period November 2022 to December 2022 done through questionnaire by the researcher.

4.1.1 Personal Information:

This section contained information regarding Age (in years), Gender, Educational Qualification, Occupation and Marital Status of the respondents.

Table 4: Distribution of the respondents according to their personal information

Sr.no.	Personal Information of the Respondents	Respondents (n=120)	
		f	**%**
1	**Age (in years)**		
	16-32	**98**	81.7
	33-49	17	14.2
	50-66	5	4.1
	Mean	26.71	
	S.D.	9.596	
2	**Gender**		
	Male	**70**	58.3
	Female	50	41.7
3	**Educational Qualification**		
	Higher secondary	19	15.8
	Graduation	**66**	55
	Post-Graduation	26	21.7
	Ph.D.	2	1.7
	Diploma	7	5.8
4	**Employment Status**		
	Employed	**65**	54.2
	Unemployed	55	45.8
5	**Marital Status**		
	Unmarried	**84**	70
	Married	36	30
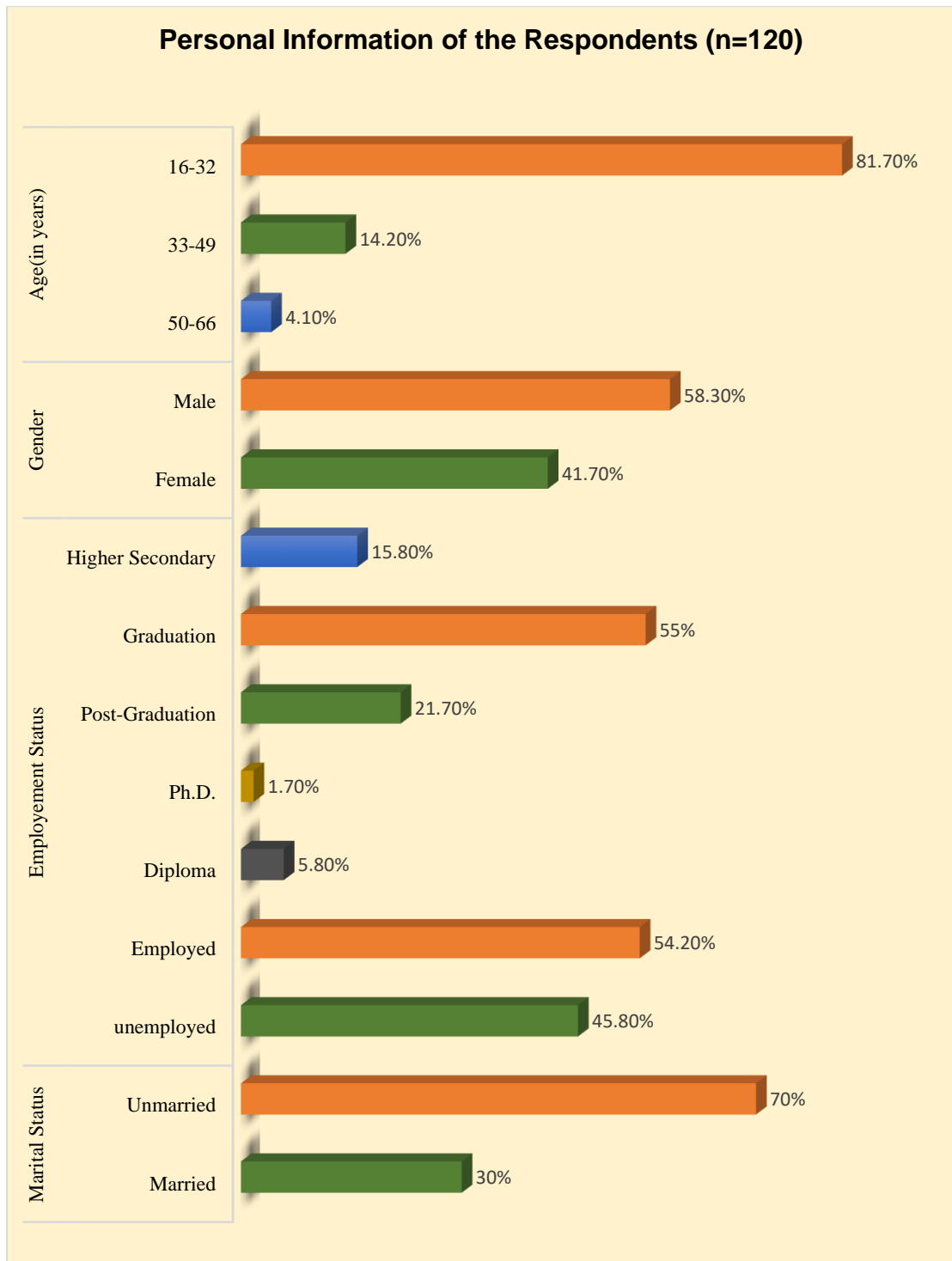
Figure 2: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their personal information

Age (in years): The data in **Table 4** revealed that the age of the respondents ranged between 16 to 66 years. The mean age of the respondents was 26.17 years. Majority (81.7%) of the respondents belonged to the age group of 16-32 years. Very few (14.2%) of the respondents belonged to the age group of the

33-49 years. A very negligible portion (4.1%) of the respondents belonged to the age group of 50-66 years.

Gender: More than one-half (58.3%) of the respondents were Males and less than one- half (41.7%) of the respondents were females.

Educational Qualification: A little more than one-half (54.2%) of the respondents were graduates, more than one-fifth (21.7%) of the respondents were post-graduates, less than one-fifth (15.8%) pursued education up to higher secondary. A very negligible portion of the respondents had acquired other qualification namely; diploma and doctorate degree.

Employment status: More than one-half (54.2%) of the respondents were employed and less than one-half (45.8%) were unemployed.

Marital Status: The data revealed that the 70 per cent of the respondents were unmarried and 30 per cent of the respondents were married.

4.1.2 Family Information:

This section contained information related to type of family, size of family and family monthly income (in ₹) of the respondent.

Table 5: Distribution of the respondents according to their family information

Sr. no.	Family Information of the Respondents	Respondents (n=120)	
		f	%
1	**Type of family**		
	Joint	24	20
	Nuclear	**96**	80
2	**Size of family**		
	Small (2-4 members)	**73**	60.8
	Medium (5-7 members)	43	35.8
	Large (more than 8)	4	3.3
3	**Family monthly income (in rupees)**		
	≤ ₹50,000	37	30.8
	₹50,001-₹1,00,000	**68**	56.7
	≥ ₹1,00,001	15	12.5
	Mean	₹75650.00	
	S.D	₹37749.651	
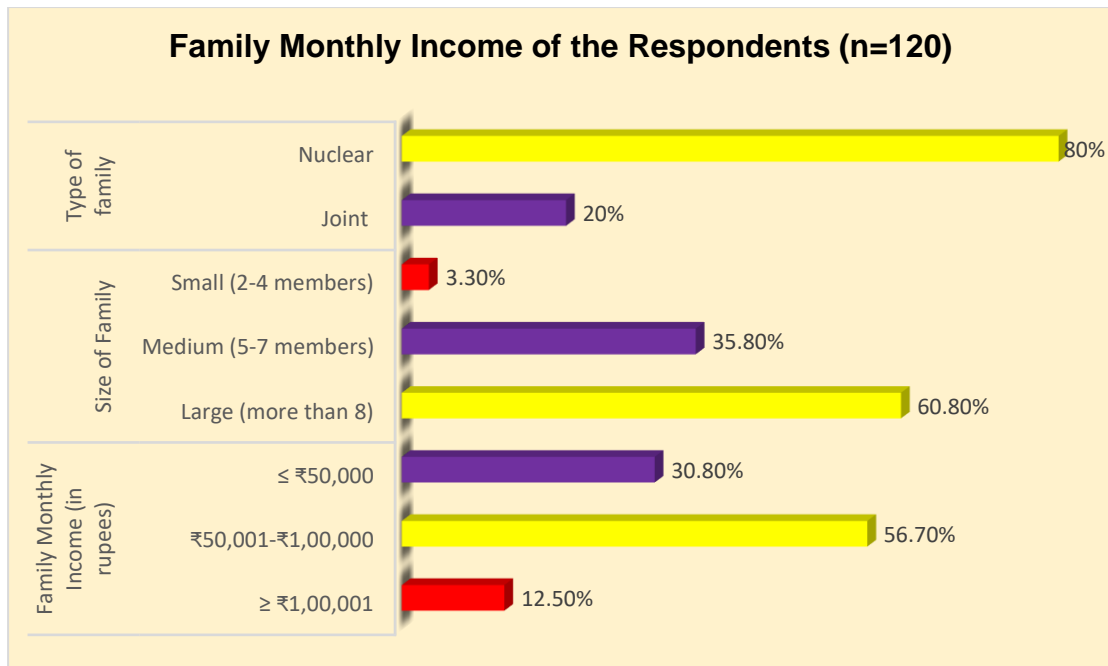
Figure 3: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their family information

Type of Family: The data revealed that 80 per cent of the respondents belonged to nuclear family and 20 per cent of the respondents belonged to joint family.

Size of the family: The size of the family was categorized as small, medium and large based on the number of the family members. It was found that more than one-half (60.8%) of the respondents had a small sized family with 2-4 members. The data and figure revealed that slightly more than one-third (35.8%) of the respondents had a medium sized family with 5-7 members. It was reported that a negligible portion (3.3%) of the respondents had a large sized family with more than 8 family members.

Family monthly income (in rupees): The family monthly income ranged between ₹ 18,000 to ₹2,00,000 with the mean ₹ 75650.00. It was found that more than one-half (56.7%) of the respondents had family monthly income between ₹50,001-₹1,00,000. Less than one-third (30.8%) of the respondents were having family monthly income below or equal to ₹50,000 and 12.5 per cent of the respondents had family monthly income equal to or above ₹1,00,001.

Section-II

Pet Information

4.2 Information about pet and pet food:

This section deals with information of pet and pet food of the respondents namely age of pet, frequency of buying pet food, amount of money spent, frequency of visiting pet food shop for buying pet accessories, average time taken for buying pet food, preference given for type of pet food, Preference of attributes given in pet food are presented here.

4.2.1 Age of pet (in years):

The data revealed that the age of the pet ranged between 1-14 years with the mean age 4.30 years. It was found that more than three-fourth (76.7%) of the pet were in the age group of 1-5 years. Less than one-fifth (19.2%) of the pet were in the age group of 6-10 years. 4.1 per cent of the pet were in the age group of 11-14 years.

Table 6: Distribution of the respondents according to their age of pet

Sr.no.	Age of Pet (in Years)	Respondents (n=120)	
		f	**%**
1	1-5 years	**92**	76.7
2	6-10 years	23	19.2
3	11-14 years	5	4.1
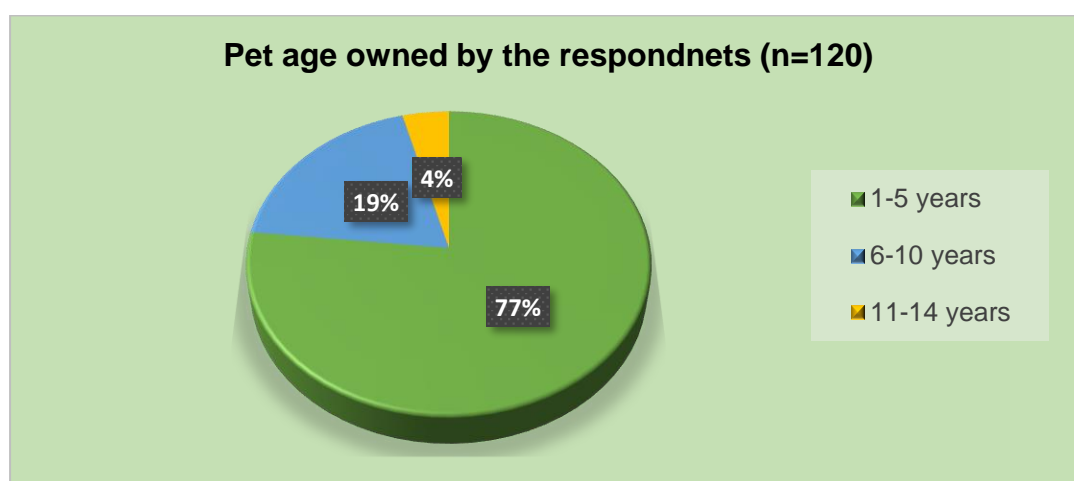
Figure 4: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their age of pet

4.2.2 Frequency of Buying Pet Food:

In this section respondents were asked to state the frequency with which they bought pet food. The frequency of buying pet food were categorized as "once a week", "once a fortnight", "twice a month", "once a month", "once every two months", "once every three months" and "more than three months".

Table 7: Distribution of the respondents according to their frequency of buying pet food

Sr.no.	Frequency of Buying Pet Food	Respondents (n=120)	
		f	**%**
1	Once a week	13	10.8
2	Once a fortnight	5	4.2
3	Twice a month	15	12.5
4	Once a month	**56**	46.7
5	Once every two months	20	16.7
6	Once every three months	4	3.3
7	More than three months	7	5.8

It was observed that the data in **Table 7** reflected that less than one-half (46.7%) of the respondents bought pet food once a month, less than one-fifth (16.7%) of the respondents bought pet food once every two months, 12.5 per cent of the respondents bought pet food twice a month and 10.8 per cent of the respondents bought pet food once a week. It was found that 7 per cent of the respondents bought pet food more than three months, 5 per cent of the respondents bought pet food once a fortnight and 4 per cent of the respondents bought pet food once every three months.
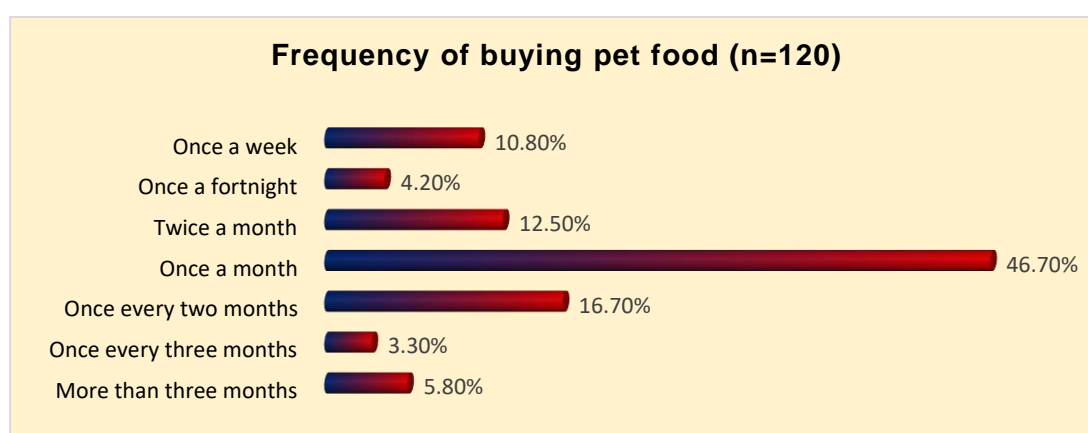
Figure 5: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their frequency of buying pet food

4.2.3 Amount of money spent for Buying Pet Food:

This contains information related money spent for buying pet food by the respondents. The money spent by the respondents ranged from ₹1500 to ₹2001. It was found that more than one-third (40%) of the respondents had spent money equal to or above ₹2001. One-third (33.3%) of the respondents had spent money below or equal to ₹1500 and slightly more than one-fifth (26.7%) of the respondents spent money between ₹1501 to 2000₹.

Table 8: Distribution of the respondents according to their amount of money spent for Buying Pet Food

Sr.no.	Money spent for Buying Pet Food	Respondents (n=120)	
		f	%
1	≤ ₹1500	40	33.3
2	₹1501-₹2000	32	26.7
3	≥ ₹2001	**48**	40
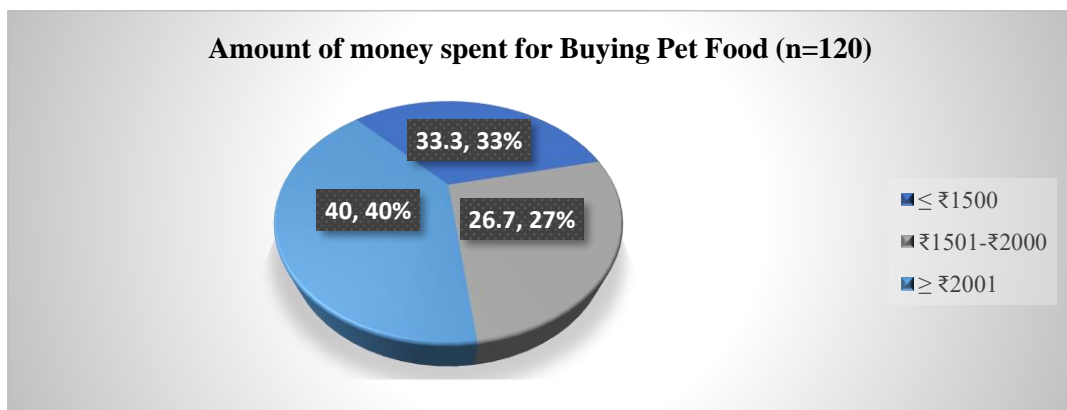
Figure 6: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their amount of money spent for pet food

4.2.4 Frequency of Visiting Pet Shop for buying pet accessories:

This contains information related to visiting pet food shop by the respondents. The frequency of visiting pet food shop was categorized as "weekly", "fortnight", "once a month" and "as and when required.

Table 9: Distribution of the respondents according to their frequency of Visiting Pet Shop for buying pet accessories

Sr.no.	Visiting Pet Food Shop	Respondents (n=120)	
		f	%
1	Weekly	14	11.6
2	Fortnight	6	5.0
3	Once a month	40	33.3
4	As and when required	**60**	50.0
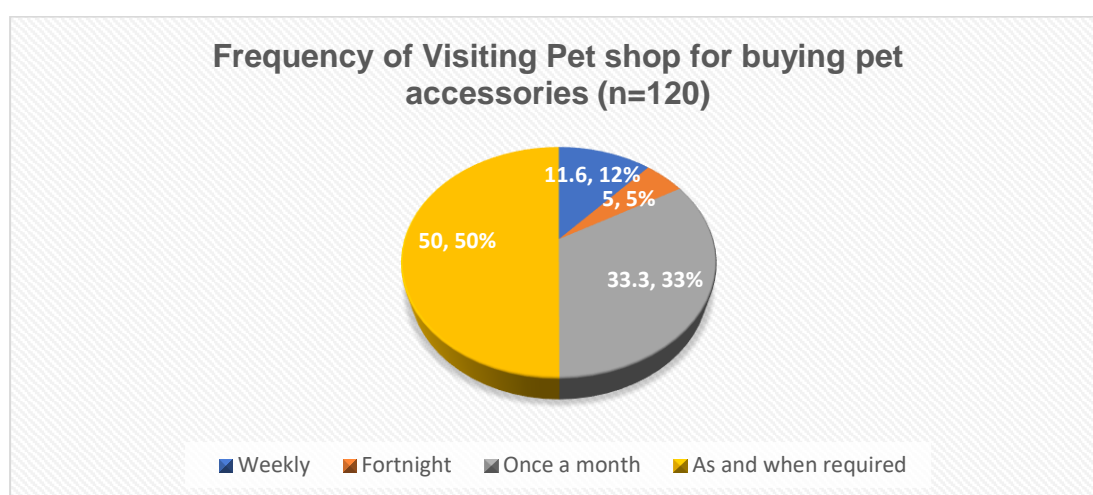
Figure 7: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories

It can be observed that data in **Table 9 and Figure 7** that one-half (50.0%) of the respondents visited pet food shop for buying other pet products as and when required and one-third (33.3%) of the respondents visited pet food shop once a month. More than one-tenth (11.6%) of the respondents visited pet food shop weekly and less than one-tenth (5.0%) of the respondents visited pet food shop fortnight.

4.2.5 Frequency of Average Time Taken for Buying Pet Food:

The data revealed that 83.3 per cent of the respondents took less than 30 minutes for buying pet food and 16.7 per cent of the respondents took more than 30 minutes for buying pet food.

57

Table 10: Distribution of the respondent of average time taken for buying pet food

Sr.no	Average Time Taken for Buying Pet Food Products	Respondents (n=120)	
		f	**%**
1	Less than 30 minutes	**100**	83.3
2	More than 30 minutes	20	16.7
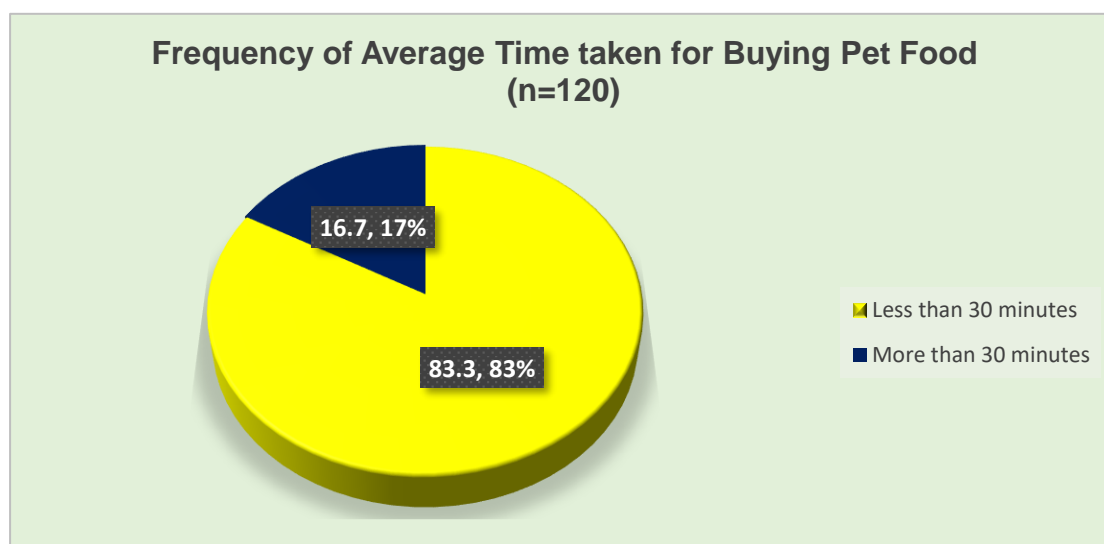
Figure 8: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their average time take for buying pet food

4.2.7 Preference given for type of Pet food:

This contains information related to preference given for type of pet food. The data revealed that more than one-half (57.5%) of the respondents preferred dry food and less than one-half (42.5%) of the respondents preferred combination of dry and wet pet food for their pets.

Table 11: Distribution of the respondents according to their preferences of type of Pet food

Sr.no	Type of Pet food	Respondents (n=120)	
		f	**%**
1	Dry	**69**	57.5
2	Wet	51	42.5
3	Combination of dry and wet	51	42.5

*Multiple responses

58
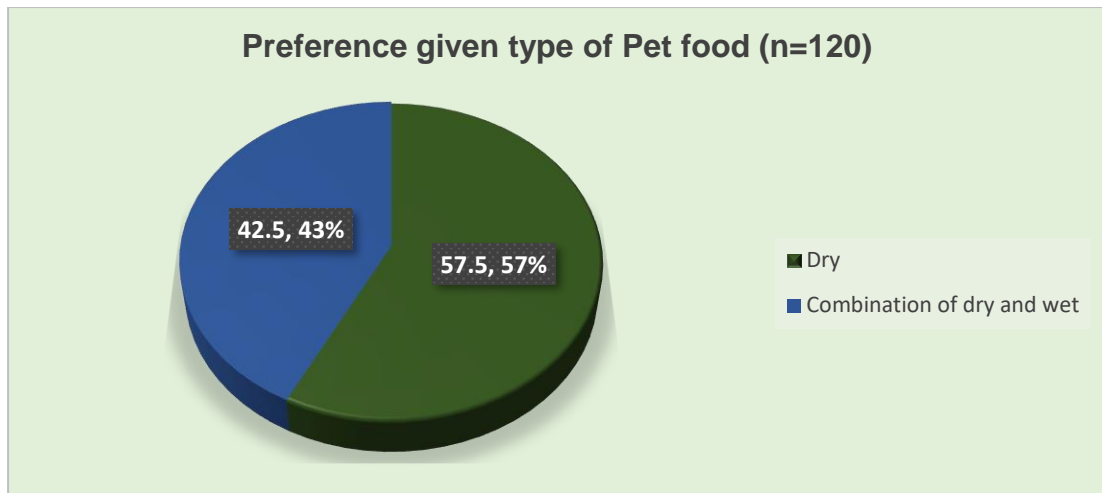
Figure 9: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their preference of type of pet food

4.2.8 Preference of attribute about pet food:

This contains findings related to preference of attributes given in pet food by respondents. It had a 3-point continuum for the responses "Always", "Sometimes", "Never" which were scored 3 through 1 respectively. High score reflected high preference of attributes by the pet owners for pet food products and vice versa.

Table 12: Distribution of the respondents according to their preference of attribute in pet food

Sr. no.	Preference of attributes in pet food	Respondent (n=120)						Weighted mean (3-1)
		Always		Sometimes		Never		
		f	%	f	%	f	%	
1	Brand	**96**	**80**	24	20	0		**2.80**
2	Price	53	44.2	50	41.7	17	14.2	2.30
3	Quantity	84	70	29	24.2	7	5.8	2.64
4	Ingredients used	67	55.8	40	33.3	13	10.8	2.45
5	Packaging	50	41.7	44	36.7	26	21.7	2.20
6	Standardized quality mark	73	60.8	27	22.5	20	16.7	2.44
7	Type of pet food (veg or non-veg)	89	74.2	15	12.5	16	13.3	2.61

The findings reflected more than three-fourth (80%) of the respondents always gave preference to the brand of the pet food product they bought, followed by 74.2% of the respondents who gave respondents for the type of pet food products they bought.

Preference of attributes about pet food (n=120)

Category		Always	Sometimes	Never
Brand	Always	80%		
	Sometimes		24%	
	Never			0%
Price	Always	44.20%		
	Sometimes		41.70%	
	Never			14.20%
Quantity	Always	70%		
	Sometimes		24.20%	
	Never			5.80%
Ingredient used	Always	55.80%		
	Sometimes		33.30%	
	Never			10.80%
Packaging	Always	41.70%		
	Sometimes		36.70%	
	Never			21.70%
Standardized quality mark	Always	60.80%		
	Sometimes		22.50%	
	Never			16.70%
Type of pet food (veg or non-veg)	Always	74.20%		
	Sometimes		12.50%	
	Never			13.30%

Figure 10: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their Preference of attributes about pet food

Section -III

4.3 Pet Food Buying Behavior:

This section contains findings related to pet food buying behavior. The buying behavior consists of four steps beginning from need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives and buying decision. The information related to need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternative and buying decision are presented here under following sub headings.

4.3.1 Need Recognition:

This consists information related to reasons for buying pet food by the respondents. It had a 3-point continuum for the responses "Always", "Sometimes", "Never" which were scored 3 through 1 respectively. The reasons identified for buying pet food were categorized into statements like providing pet with the best nutrition possible, buying pet food that has consistent quality, feeding diet that is best for pet's health, trying to get the best quality for the best price when buying pet food, following veterinarian's advice regarding nutrition for pet, buying pet food as it is ready to use.

The data in **Table 13** revealed that majority (90.8%) of the respondents bought pet food Always so as to provide the best nutrition possible for their pet, followed by 81.7 per cent of the respondents who bought pet food as it had consistent quality

Table 13: Distribution of the respondents according to their need recognition

Sr. no.	Need Recognition	Respondents (n=120)						Weighted Mean (3-1)
		Always		Sometimes		Never		
		f	%	f	%	f	%	
1	Providing pet with the best nutrition possible	**109**	**90.8**	11	9.2	0	0	**2.91**
2	Buying pet food that has consistent quality	98	81.7	20	16.7	2	1.7	2.80
3	Feeding diet that is best for pet's health	95	79.2	22	18.3	3	2.5	2.77
4	Trying to get the best quality for the best price when buying pet food	82	68.3	35	29.2	3	2.5	2.66
5	Following veterinarian's advice regarding nutrition for pet	81	67.5	36	30.0	3	2.5	2.65
6	Buying pet food as it is ready to use	63	52.5	40	33.3	17	14.2	2.38
7	Giving pet food as it consumes less time	52	18.3	46	38.3	22	18.3	2.25
8	Buying pet food because of lack of time to cook homemade food	31	25.8	37	30.8	52	43.3	1.83
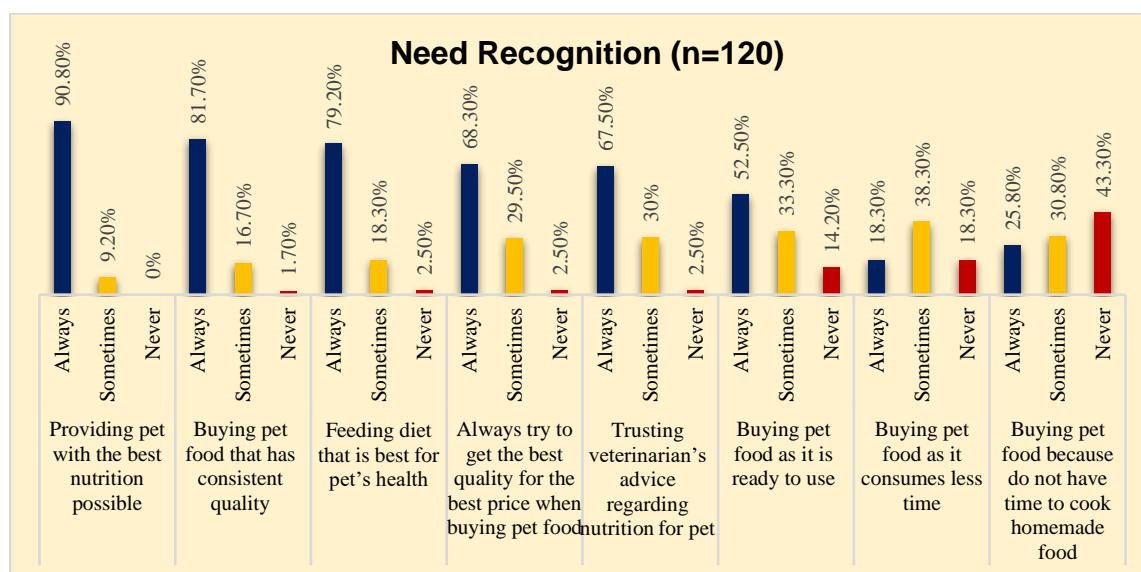
Figure 11: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their need recognition

4.3.2 Information Search:

This consisted of the facts related to information search of the respondents for buying pet food. The information search consisted of questions related to two aspects namely; source of information respondents had searched before buying as well as attributes of pet food in which they had gathered information.

4.3.2.1 Sources of information before buying pet food:

The respondent collected information through various source before buying pet food. Nine sources of information were identified which were categorized under pet food shop, tv commercials, paper advertisements, social media, online commercials, word of mouth, friend recommendations, family recommendations and veterinary recommendations.

Table 14: Distribution according to their sources of information search before buying Pet Food

Sr.no.	Sources of information search before buying Pet Food	Respondents (n=120)			
		Yes		No	
		f	%	f	%
1	Pet Food Shop	**102**	**85.0**	18	15.0
2	Tv commercials	45	37.5	75	62.5
3	Paper advertisements	18	15.0	102	85.0
4	Social media	55	45.8	55	45.8
5	Online Commercials	46	38.3	74	61.7
6	Word of mouth	71	59.2	49	40.8
7	Friend recommendations	67	55.8	53	44.2
8	Family recommendations	59	49.2	61	50.8
9	Veterinary recommendations	98	81.7	22	18.3
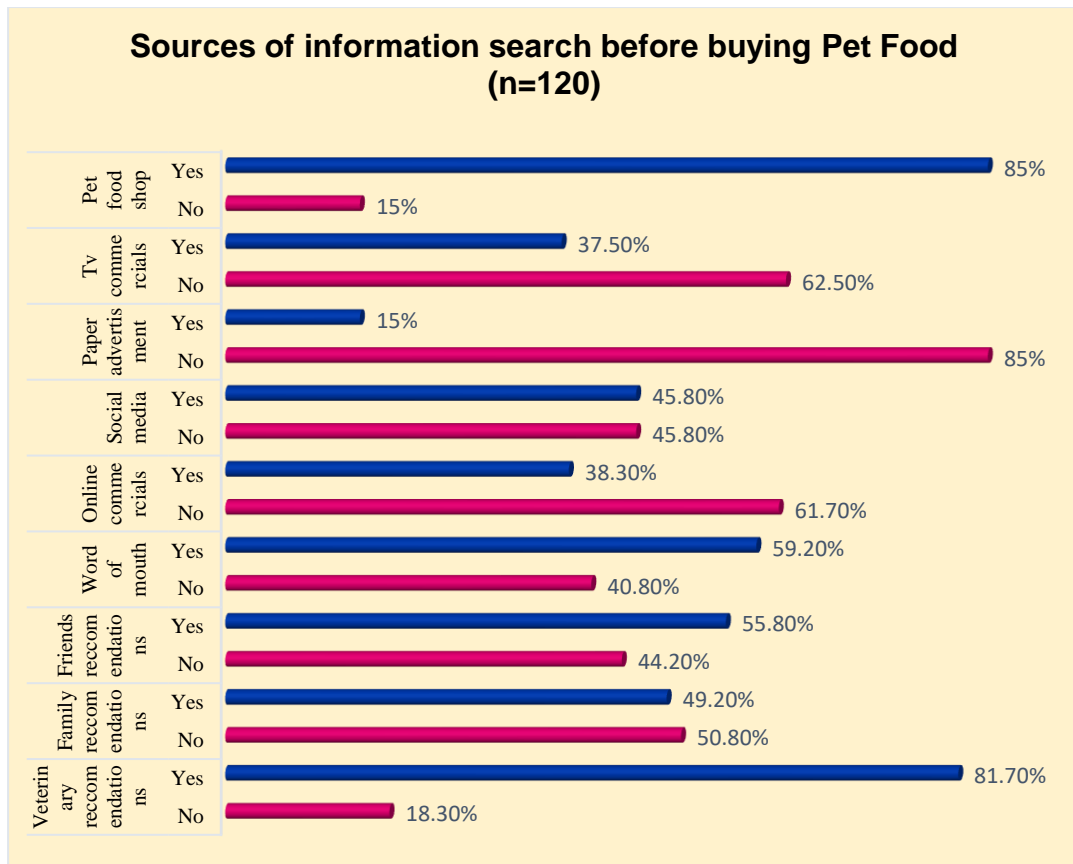
Figure 12: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their sources of information search before buying Pet Food

The data in **Table 14** revealed that more than three-fourth (85%) of the respondents collected information about pet food from pet food shop, followed by 81.7 per cent of them collected information about pet food through veterinary recommendations. More than one-half (59.2%) of the respondents collected information about pet food through word of mouth, followed by 55.8 per cent of the respondents who collected information about pet food through recommendations from friends.

4.3.2.2 Attributes of pet food in which information was gathered:

The findings on different attributes highlighted that less than two-third (65.8%) of the respondents gathered information regarding date of manufacturing and date of expiry, followed by 60 per cent of the respondents who gathered information regarding attributes like availability of brand and health benefits.

Table 15: Distribution of the respondents according to their attributes of pet food in which information was gathered

Sr.no	Attributes of pet food in which information was collected	Respondents (n=120)			
		Yes		No	
		f	%	f	%
1	Availability of Brand	72	60.0	48	40.0
2	Price range	61	50.8	59	49.2
3	Size of the product	67	55.8	53	44.2
4	Nutritive value	71	59.2	49	40.8
5	Health benefits	72	60.0	48	40.0
6	Freshness of the food	59	49.2	61	50.8
7	Color of the product	33	27.5	87	72.5
8	Substitutes available	60	50.0	60	50.0
9	Ingredients used	59	49.2	61	50.8
10	Date of manufacturing	**79**	**65.8**	41	34.2
11	Date of expiry	**79**	**65.8**	41	34.2
12	Odor of the food	39	32.5	81	67.5
13	Quantity of the product	64	53.3	56	46.7
14	Ease of accessibility	57	47.5	63	52.5

Information gathered for different attributes of pet food (n=120)

Attribute	Response	Percentage
Availability of Brand	Yes	60%
	No	40%
Price range	Yes	50.80%
	No	49.20%
Size of the product	Yes	55.80%
	No	44.20%
Nutritive value	Yes	59.20%
	No	40.80%
Health benefits	Yes	60%
	No	40%
Freshness of the food	Yes	49.20%
	No	50.80%
Color of the product	Yes	27.50%
	No	72.50%
Substitutes available	Yes	50%
	No	50%
Ingredients used	Yes	49.20%
	No	50.80%
Date of manufacturing	Yes	65.80%
	No	34.20%
Date of expiry	Yes	65.80%
	No	34.20%
Odor of the food	Yes	32.50%
	No	67.50%
Quantity of the product	Yes	53.30%
	No	46.70%
Ease of accessibility	Yes	47.50%
	No	52.50%

Figure 13: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their information gathered for different attributes in pet food

4.3.3 Evaluation of Alternatives:

This consist items describing the aspects that were considered by the respondents while evaluating alternatives for pet food. It had a 3-point continuum for the responses "Always", "Sometimes", "Never" which were

scored 3 through 1 respectively. The aspects included brand, package, price, shelf life, discount offers, variety of pet food available in market, types of pet food in terms of water content, freshness, color, texture, shape, odor of the product and veterinary recommendation.

Table 16: Distribution of the respondents according to their aspects considered for evaluation of alternatives before buying pet food

Sr. no	Evaluating Alternatives	Respondents (n=120)						Weighted Mean (3-1)
		Always		Sometimes		Never		
		f	%	f	%	f	%	
1	Brand of the product	**96**	**80.0**	24	20.0	0	0	**2.80**
2	Package of the product	67	55.8	47	39.2	6	5.0	2.51
3	Price of the product	70	58.3	41	34.2	9	7.5	2.51
4	Shelf life of the product	79	65.8	31	25.8	10	8.3	2.58
5	Discounts and offers	46	38.3	53	44.2	21	17.5	2.21
6	Variety of pet food available in the market	60	50.0	38	31.7	22	18.3	2.32
7	Types of pet foods available in terms of water content	45	37.5	33	27.5	42	35.0	2.03
8	Freshness of the product	79	65.8	25	20.8	16	13.3	2.53
9	Color of the product	38	31.7	46	38.3	36	30.0	2.02
10	Texture of the product	46	38.3	40	33.3	34	28.3	2.10
11	Shape of the product	38	31.7	38	31.7	44	36.7	1.95
12	Organic pet foods	58	48.3	44	36.7	18	15.0	2.33
13	Veterinary recommendations	94	78.3	22	18.3	4	3.3	2.75

The data in **Table 16** revealed that more than three-fourth (80%) of the respondents considered brand, followed by 78.3 per cent who also always considered veterinary recommendations before buying pet food. It was also found that more than one-half (65.8%) of the respondents evaluated freshness of the product as well as shelf life of the product.

Evaluation of Alternatives before buying pet food (n=120)

	Always	Sometimes	Never
Brand of the product	80%	20%	0
Package of the product	55.80%	39.20%	5%
Price of the product	58.30%	34.20%	7.50%
Shelf life of the product	65.80%	25.80%	8.30%
Discounts and offers	38.30%	44.20%	17.50%
Variety of pet food available in the market	50%	31.70%	18.30%
Types of pet foods available in terms of water content	37.50%	27.50%	35%
Freshness of the product	65.80%	20.80%	13.30%
Color of the product	31.70%	38.30%	30%
Texture of the product	38.30%	33.30%	28.30%
Shape of the product	31.70%	31.70%	36.70%
Organic pet foods	48.30%	36.70%	15%
Veterinary recommendations	78.30%	18.30%	3.30%

Figure 14: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their aspect considered for evaluation of alternatives before buying pet food

4.3.4 Buying Decision:

This elicits the information related to who all are involved in decision making with regards to buying pet food.

Table 17: Distribution of the respondents according to their involvement of informants in Decision Making with Regards to Buying Pet Food

Sr. no.	Informants involved in decision making for buying of pet food	Respondents (n=120)	
		f	%
1	Respondent	39	32.5
2	Respondent with parents	**46**	**38.3**
3	Respondent with spouse	13	10.8
4	Respondent with veterinary doctor	13	10.8
5	Respondent with Children	6	5.0
6	Respondent with relative	1	0.8
7	Respondent with friends	1	0.8
8	Respondent with caretaker	1	0.8
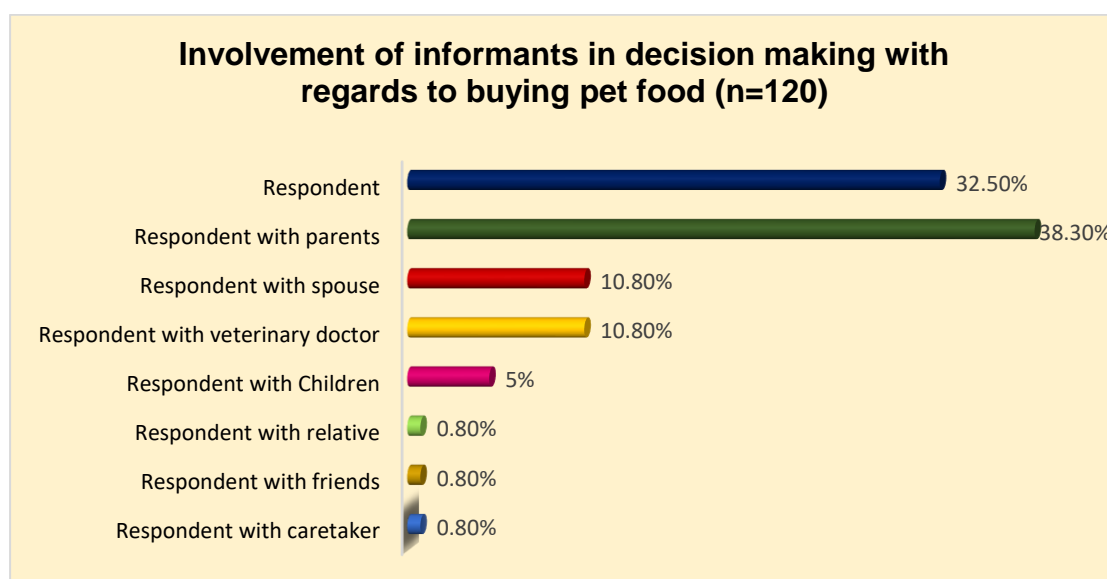
Involvement of informants in decision making with regards to buying pet food (n=120)

- Respondent — 32.50%
- Respondent with parents — 38.30%
- Respondent with spouse — 10.80%
- Respondent with veterinary doctor — 10.80%
- Respondent with Children — 5%
- Respondent with relative — 0.80%
- Respondent with friends — 0.80%
- Respondent with caretaker — 0.80%

Figure 16: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their involvement of informants in Decision Making with Regards to Buying Pet Food

The analysis of data disclosed that more than one-third (38.3%) of the respondents s took decision for buying pet food with parents and less than one-third (32.5%) of the respondents took decision themselves. More than one-tenth (10.8%) of the respondents took decision in buying pet food with spouse and veterinary doctor.

<div align="center">**Section IV**</div>

4.4 Satisfaction Experienced with Regards to Attributes of Pet Food

This section contained information regarding satisfaction of the respondents with the attributes of pet food. The attributes of pet food were categorized as nutritional considerations, quality of the food, ingredients of the food, freshness of the food, color of the food, color of the product, packaging, brand, price range of the product, shelf life of the product, texture of the food, shape of the food, type of pet food in terms of water content, size of the food, quantity of the product, odor of the food.

The analysis of the data in **Table 18** revealed that more than one-half (90%) of the respondents were Highly Satisfied with the brand of the product, followed by 89.2 per cent with the Quality of food and 86.6 per cent with the nutritional considerations.

The weighted mean computed for each attribute of pet food revealed that score for "brand of the product", "quality of the food", "nutritional considerations" were found to be highest among all the attributes. The attributes such as "type of pet food available in terms of water content", "odor of the food", "shape of the food", scored the lowest. The overall weighted mean on the entire scale was 2.64.

Table 18: Satisfaction of the respondents with regards to attributes of pet food

Sr.no.	Attributes of Pet Food	Satisfaction						Weighted mean
		HS		N		HD		
		f	%	f	%	f	%	(3-1)
1.	Nutritional considerations	**104**	86.6	15	12.5	1	0.8	**2.85**
2.	Quality of the food	**107**	89.2	12	10.0	1	0.8	**2.88**
3.	Ingredients of the food	98	81.7	22	18.3	0	0	2.81
4.	Freshness of the food	93	77.5	25	20.8	2	1.7	2.75
5.	Color of the food	71	59.2	42	35.0	7	5.8	2.5
6.	Color of the product	72	60	39	32.5	9	7.5	2.5
7.	Packaging of the product	90	75	23	19.2	7	5.8	2.6
8.	Brand of the product	**109**	90	10	8.3	1	0.8	**2.9**
9.	Price range of the product	96	80	19	15.8	5	4.1	2.75
10.	Shelf life of the product	99	82.5	19	15.8	2	1.7	2.80
11.	Texture of the food	67	55.9	43	7.5	10	8.3	2.4
12.	Shape of the food	67	55.9	41	34.2	12	10	2.45
13.	Types of pet food available in terms of water content	67	55.9	34	28.3	19	15.8	2.4
14.	Size of the food	81	67.5	32	26.7	7	5.8	2.61
15.	Quantity of the product	86	71.6	25	20.8	9	7.5	2.64
16.	Odor of the food	63	52.5	43	35.8	14	11.7	2.41
	Overall Weighted Mean							**2.64**

Key: HS: Highly Satisfied N: Neutral HD: Highly Dissatisfied

4.4.1 Extent of satisfaction with regards to attributes of pet food

The extent of satisfaction with the attributes of pet food was analyzed in the terms of "High extent", "Moderate extent" and "Low extent" scores obtained on entire scale. The response was "Highly Satisfied", "Neutral" and "Highly Dissatisfied" where the scores were ascribed as 3 to 1 respectively to the responses. The total number of items were 16 and, hence minimum score was 16 and maximum score was 48. The scores on entire scale were possible range of minimum 16 and maximum 48 scores were divided into three categories intervals. High score revealed high extent of satisfaction with attributes of pet food and vice versa.

Table 19: Extent of satisfaction with regards to attributes of pet food

Sr. no.	Extent of satisfaction with regards to attributes of pet food	Range of scores	Respondents (n=120)	
			f	**%**
1	To high extent	38-48	**92**	77.7
2	To moderate extent	27-37	27	22.3
3	To low extent	16-26	0	0
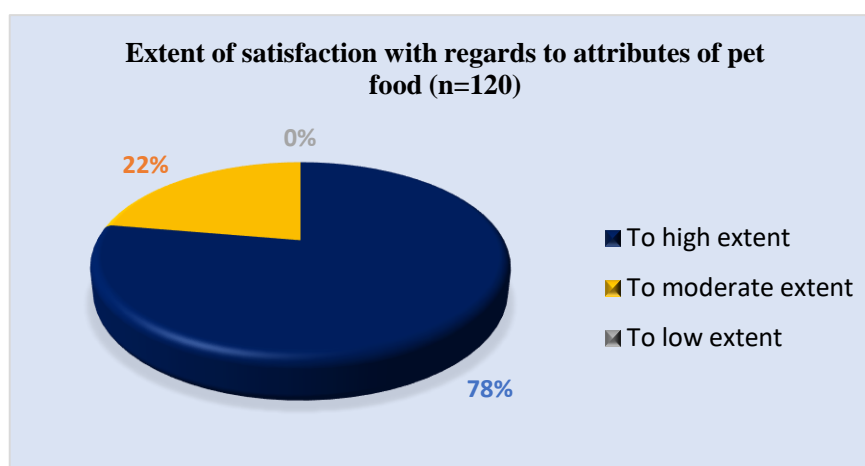
Figure 16: Percentage distribution of the respondents according to their extent of satisfaction with regards to attributes of pet food

The data in **Table 19** revealed that 77.7 per cent of the respondents were satisfied to a high extent and 22.3 per cent of the respondents were satisfied to a moderate extent with the attributes of pet food bought.

4.7 Testing Hypotheses

Several hypotheses were formulated to find the relationship between selected variables for the present research study. In the present investigation, as per the nature of variables f-test (ANOVA), t-test and coefficient of correlation (r-test) were computed. For the purpose of statistical analysis, the hypotheses were formulated in null form. The result is presented in this section.

Ho_1: There exists no relationship between pet food buying behavior of the respondents with their selected personal variables [age (in years), educational qualifications, employment status, marital status] and family variables [type of family, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹)] and situational variables [age of pet, frequency of buying pet food, amount of money spent (in ₹), frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories and average time taken for buying pet food].

The broad hypotheses were made into several specific hypotheses.

$Ho_{1.1}$: There exists no relationship between Need Recognition of the respondents with reference to pet food buying behavior with their age (in years), educational qualification, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹), age of pet (in years), frequency of buying pet food, amount of money spent (in ₹) and frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was computed to test the variation of need recognition with their age (in years), educational qualification, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹), age of pet (in years), frequency of buying pet food,

amount of money spent (in ₹) and frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories of the respondents.

Table 20: Analysis of variance showing variation in the need recognition with reference to pet food buying behavior with their selected personal, family and situational variables

Sr. no.	Selected variables	df	Sum of squares	Mean squares	f-value	Level of significance
1	Age (in years)					
	Between groups	2	19.166	9.583	1.493	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	750.826	6.417		
2	Educational qualification					
	Between groups	3	20.117	6.706	1.037	N.S.*
	Within groups	116	749.874	6.464		
3	Size of family					
	Between groups	2	28.080	14.040	2.214	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	741.911	6.341		
4	Family monthly income (in ₹)					
	Between groups	2	9.720	4.860	0.748	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	760.271	6.498		
5	Age of pet (in years)					
	Between groups	2	15.002	7.501	1.162	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	754.990	6.453		
6	Frequency of buying pet food					
	Between groups	6	47.308	7.885	1.233	N.S.*
	Within groups	113	722.684	6.395		
7	Amount of money spent (in ₹)					
	Between groups	2	24.419	12.209	1.916	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	745.573	6.372		
8	Frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories					
	Between groups	3	47.570	15.863	2.547	N.S.*
	Within groups	116	722.402	6.228		

Note: df =Degree of Freedom, *N.S. = Not Significant

74

The f- value was not found significant for variables like age (in years), educational qualification, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹), age of pet (in years), frequency of buying pet food, amount of money spent (in ₹) and frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories of the respondents. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted (**Table 20**).

> **Ho$_{1.2}$: There exists no variation in the Need Recognition of the respondents with reference to pet food buying behavior with their employment status, marital status, type of family and average time taken for buying pet food**

t- test was computed to test the variation of need recognition with their employment status, marital status, type of family and average time taken for buying pet food of the respondents.

Table 21: t- test showing difference in the need recognition with reference to pet food buying behavior with their selected personal, family and situational variables

Sr. no.	Selected variables	Mean scores	t-value	df	Level of significance
1	Employment status				
	Employed	20.0727	0.668	118	N.S.*
	Unemployed	20.3846			
2	Marital status				
	Married	20.2500	0.23	118	N.S.*
	Unmarried	20.2381			
3	Type of family				
	Joint	20.2917	0.429	118	N.S.*
	Nuclear	20.0417			
4	Average time taken for buying pet food				
	Less than 30 minutes	20.1500	0.882	118	N.S.*
	More than 30 minutes	20.7000			

Note: df =Degree of Freedom, *N.S. = Not Significant

The computation of t-value exhibited no significant difference in the need recognition for employment status, marital status, type of family and average

time taken for buying pet food of the respondents. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted (**Table 21**).

> **Ho$_{1.3}$: There exists no relationship between Information Search of the respondents with reference to pet food buying behavior with their age (in years), educational qualification, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹), age of pet (in years), frequency of buying pet food, amount of money spent (in ₹) and frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories**

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was computed to test the variation of information search with age (in years), educational qualification, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹), age of pet (in years), frequency of buying pet food, amount of money spent and frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories of the respondents.

The computation of f-value exhibited significant variation in the information search with the amount of money spent (in ₹) at 0.01 level of significance. The f- value was not fount significant for other variables like age (in years), education qualification, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹), age of pet (in years), frequency of buying pet food and frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories of the respondents. Hence, the null hypothesis was partially accepted (**Table 22**).

Table 22: Analysis of variance showing variation in the information search with reference to pet food buying behavior with their selected personal, family and situational variables

Sr. no.	Selected variables	df	Sum of squares	Mean of squares	f-value	Level of significance
1	Age (in years)					
	Between groups	2	3.306	1.653	0.340	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	568.686	4.861		
2	Educational qualification					
	Between groups	3	21.339	7.113	1.498	N.S.*
	Within groups	116	550.625	4.747		
3	Size of family					
	Between groups	2	0.006	0.003	0.001	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	571.986	4.889		
4	Family monthly income (in ₹)					
	Between groups	2	0.946	0.473	0.097	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	571.046	4.881		
5	Age of pet (in years)					
	Between groups	2	1.466	0.733	0.150	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	570.525	4.876		
6	Frequency of buying pet food					
	Between groups	6	97.871	16.312	3.888	N.S.*
	Within groups	113	474.120	4.196		
7	Amount of money spent (in ₹)					
	Between groups	2	39.237	19.619	4.309	**0.01**
	Within groups	117	532.754	4.553		
8	Frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories					
	Between groups	3	59.760	19.920	4.511	N.S.*
	Within groups	116	512.232	4.416		

Note: df =Degree of Freedom, *N.S. = Not Significant

Table 23: Scheffe's test showing the mean difference between information search of the respondents and the amount of money spent

Sr.no.	Amount of money spent (in ₹)	Mean	df	Level of significance
1	Less than ₹1500	20.87	117	
2	₹1501- ₹2000	19.84		**0.05**
3	More than ₹2000	19.97		
Significantly differed pairs: 1) Less than ₹1500 3) More than ₹2000				

The result of Scheffe's test on information search stated that respondents who spent more than ₹2000 for buying pet food differed significantly with those who spent less than ₹1500 for buying pet food.

> **$Ho_{1.4}$: There exists no variation in the information search of the respondents with reference to pet food buying behavior with their employment status, marital status, type of family and average time taken for buying pet food**

t- test was computed to test the variation of information search with their employment status, marital status, type of family and average time taken for buying pet food of the respondents.

The computation of t-value showed significant difference in the information search with reference to pet food buying behavior with employment status and marital status at 0.01 of level significance of the respondents. The t- value was not found to be significant in the other selected variables like type of family and average time taken for buying pet food Hence, the null hypothesis was partially accepted. (Table 23).

Table 24: t- test showing difference in the information search with reference to pet food buying behavior with their selected personal, family and situational variables

Sr. no.	Selected variables	Mean scores	t-value	df	Level of significance
1	Employment status				
	Employed	5.1636	1.883	118	**0.01**
	Unemployed	4.4154			
2	Marital status				
	Married	4.1944	1.864	118	**0.01**
	Unmarried	5.0000			
3	Type of family				
	Joint	4.6979	0.602	118	N.S.*
	Nuclear	5.0000			
4	Average time taken for buying pet food				
	Less than 30 minutes	4.7800	0.241	118	N.S.*
	More than 30 minutes	4.6500			

Note: df =Degree of Freedom, *N.S. = Not Significant

Ho$_{1.5}$: There exists no relationship between evaluation of alternatives with reference to pet food buying behavior of the respondents with their age (in years), educational qualification, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹), age of pet (in years), frequency of buying pet food, amount of money spent and frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was computed to test the variation of evaluation of alternatives with age (in years), educational qualification, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹) age of pet (in years), frequency of buying pet food, amount of money spent and frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories.

Table 25: Analysis of variance showing variation in the evaluation of alternatives with reference to pet food buying behavior

Sr. no.	Selected variables	df	Sum of squares	Mean of squares	f-value	Level of significance
1	Age (in years)					
	Between groups	2	20.278	10.139	0.321	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	3700.088	31.625		
2	Educational qualification					
	Between groups	3	326.816	108.939	3.724	0.01
	Within groups	116	3393.551	29.255		
3	Size of family					
	Between groups	2	104.611	52.306	1.693	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	3636.755	30.904		
4	Family monthly income (in ₹)					
	Between groups	2	83.733	41.866	1.347	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	3636.634	31.082		
5	Age of pet (in years)					
	Between groups	2	31.767	15.883	0.504	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	3688.600	31.526		
6	Frequency of buying pet food					
	Between groups	6	495.355	82.559	2.893	0.01
	Within groups	113	3225.011	28.540		
7	Amount of money spent (in ₹)					
	Between groups	2	413.804	206.902	7.321	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	3306.562	28.261		
8	Frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories					
	Between groups	3	327.752	109.251	3.735	0.01
	Within groups	116	3392.614	29.247		

Note: df =Degree of Freedom, *N.S. = Not Significant

The computation of f-value showed significant variation in evaluation of alternatives with their educational qualification, frequency of buying pet food and Frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories at 0.01 level of significance respectively. The f-value was not found to be significant for

variables like age (in years), size of family, family monthly income (in ₹), age of pet (in years) and amount of money spent (in ₹). Thus, the null hypothesis was partially accepted (**Table 24**).

Table 26: Scheffe's test showing the mean difference between evaluation of alternative of the respondents and educational qualifications, frequency of buying pet food and Frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories

Sr.no.	Evaluation of alternatives	Mean	df	Level of significance
A	Educational Qualifications			
1	Higher secondary	27.89	116	
2	Graduation	31.49		
3	Post-Graduation	29.26		**0.05**
4	Diploma	32.83		
5	Ph.D.	31.00		
Significantly differed pairs: 4) Diploma 2) Graduation				
B	Frequency of buying pet food			
1	Once a week	35.23	113	
2	Once a fortnight	27.00		
3	Twice a month	29.37		
4	Once a month	32.40		**0.05**
5	Once every two months	30.10		
6	Once every three months	32.25		
7	More than three months	31.28		
Significantly differed pairs: 1) Once a week 4) Once a month				
C	Frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories			
1	Weekly	34.00	116	
2	Fortnight	30.00		
3	Once a month	31.77		**0.05**
4	As and when required	29.19		
Significantly differed pairs: 1) Weekly 3) Once a month				

The result in scheffe's test on educational qualifications stated that respondents who had acquired graduate degree significantly differed with those who had acquired a diploma.

The mean scores reflected that the respondents who were buying pet food once a month significantly differed with those who were buying pet food once a week.

Furthermore, the results also revealed that the respondents who visited pet shop for buying pet accessories once a month significantly differed with those respondents who visited pet shop for buying pet accessories weekly.

Ho$_{1.6}$: There exists no variation in the evaluation of alternatives with reference to pet food buying behavior with their employment status, marital status, type of family and average time taken for buying pet food

t- test was computed to test the variation of evaluation of alternatives with their employment status, marital status, type of family and average time taken for buying pet food by the respondents.

Table 27: t- test showing difference in the evaluation of alternatives with reference to pet food buying behavior with their selected personal, family and situational variables

Sr. no.	Selected variables	Mean scores	t-value	df	Level of significance
1	Employment status				
	Employed	30.6545	0.068	118	N.S.*
	Unemployed	30.5846			
2	Marital status				
	Married	29.8611	0.969	118	N.S.*
	Unmarried	30.9405			
3	Type of family				
	Joint	30.6771	0.236	118	N.S.*
	Nuclear	30.3750			
4	Average time taken for buying pet food				
	Less than 30 minutes	30.0500	2.539	118	**0.01**
	More than 30 minutes	33.4500			

Note: df =Degree of Freedom, *N.S. = Not Significant

The computation of t-value exhibited significant difference in the evaluation of alternatives with reference to pet food buying behavior with average time taken for buying pet food at 0.01 level of significance of the respondents. The t- value was not found to be significant in the variables like employment status, marital status and type of family. Thus, the null hypothesis was partially accepted **(Table 27).**

Ho$_2$: There exists no relationship between extent of satisfaction with regards to the attributes of pet food with their selected personal variables [age (in years), educational qualification, employment status and marital status]and family variables [size of the family, type of family and family monthly income (in ₹)].

The broad hypotheses were made into several hypotheses.

Ho$_{2.1}$: There exists no relationship between extent of satisfaction with regards to the attributes of pet food with their age (in years), educational qualification, size of the family, and family monthly income (in ₹).

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was computed to test the variation of extent of satisfaction with regards to the attributes of pet food with their age (in years), educational qualification, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹) of the respondents.

The computation of f-value showed significant variation in extent of satisfaction with regards to the attributes of pet food with the educational qualification and family monthly income (in ₹) at 0.01 level of significance. The f-value was not found significant for variables like age (in years) and size of family. Thus, the null hypothesis was partially accepted. (**Table 28**).

Table 28: Analysis of variance showing variation in the extent of satisfaction with regards to the attributes of pet food with their selected personal and family variables

Sr. no.	Selected variables	df	Sum of squares	Mean of squares	f-value	Level of significance
1	Age (in years)					
	Between groups	2	9.919	4.959	0.039	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	14888.881	127.255		
2	Educational qualification					
	Between groups	3	1091.077	363.692	3.055	**0.01**
	Within groups	116	13804.723	119.032		
3	Size of family					
	Between groups	2	261.875	130.937	1.047	N.S.*
	Within groups	117	14636.925	125.102		
4	Family monthly income (in ₹)					
	Between groups	2	887.206	443.603	3.704	**0.01**
	Within groups	117	14011.594	119.757		

Note: df =Degree of Freedom, *N.S. = Not Significant

Table 29: Scheffe's test showing the mean difference in extent of satisfaction with regards to the attributes of pet food of the respondents with their educational qualifications

Sr.no.	Selected variables	Mean	df	Level of significance
A	**Educational Qualifications**			
1	Higher secondary	61.26	116	
2	Graduation	66.20		
3	Post-Graduation	61.69		**0.05**
4	Diploma	68.33		
5	Ph.D.	67.00		
Significantly differed pairs: 4) Diploma 2) PH.D.				
B	**Family Monthly Income (in ₹)**			
1	≤ ₹50,000	62.76	117	
2	₹50,001-₹1,00,000	68.65		**0.05**
3	≥ ₹1,00,001	66.33		
Significantly differed pairs: 2) ₹50,001-₹1,00,000 3) ≥ ₹1,00,001				

The result in Scheffe's test on educational qualifications stated that respondents who had acquired graduate degree significantly differed with those who had acquired a doctorate degree.

The mean scores reflected that the respondents who had family monthly income (in ₹) ranging between more than ₹1,00,001significantly differed with those who had an income ranging between ₹50,001-₹1,00,000.

Ho$_{2.2}$: There exists no variation in the extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to the attributes with their employment status, marital status and type of family

t- test was computed to test the variation in the extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to the attributes of pet food with their employment status, marital status and type of family of the respondents.

Table 30: t- test showing difference in the extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to the attributes of pet food with reference to pet food with their selected personal and family variables of the respondents

Sr. no.	Selected variables	Mean scores	t-value	df	Level of significance
1	Employment status				
	Employed	63.6727	1.106	118	N.S.*
	Unemployed	65.9385			
2	Marital status				
	Married	64.1667	0.468	118	N.S.*
	Unmarried	65.2143			
3	Type of family				
	Joint	65.0833	0.358	118	N.S.*
	Nuclear	64.1667			

Note: df =Degree of Freedom, *N.S. = Not Significant

The computation of t-value exhibited no significant difference in the extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to the attributes of pet food for

employment status, marital status and type of family of the respondents. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted (**Table 30**).

Ho$_3$: There exists a relationship between pet food buying behavior and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to the attributes of pet food

Co-efficient of correlation was computed to test the relationship between pet food buying behavior of the respondents and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to the attributes of pet food

Table 31: Co-efficient of correlation showing relationship between pet food buying behavior and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to the attributes of pet food

Sr.no.	Selected variables	n	r- value	Level of significance
1	Pet food buying behavior of the respondents			
	Extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to the attributes of pet food	120	0.583	**0.01**

The co-efficient of correlation displayed a significant relationship between pet food buying behavior and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to the attributes of pet food at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, null hypotheses was rejected **(Table 29).**

CHAPTER -V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Pet ownership has become common place in modern society. Originally pets were domesticated for mutual benefit in hunting or keeping rodent populations down. Yet recently, it has become socially acceptable to treats pets as children, due to the rise of the "pet parenting" trend. This developing trend is wide spread, as shown by increasing pet ownership numbers around the world. Pets are being treated as members of the family, as dog and cat ownership is becoming popular throughout the world.

Recent tendencies have seen the term "pet" substituted by the phrase "companion animal". Pet owners believe they receive more companionship from their pets than from friends and presume pets are equal to family members and important relatives. Pets have a designated role which is characterised by several interrelated traits. Pets are kept for their close association with their owners, treated as possessions, and regarded as subordinates. Pets serve some important roles in a family such as pleasure, fun, and exercise, as a source of physical security and protection. Caring for pets provides benefits such as encouraging nurturance, adherence to a daily schedule, and responsibility.

Additionally, considering the importance of pets in our society pet owners have demonstrated an increased sensitivity and attention towards the health and nutrition of their pets. Pet food has become the main source of nutrition supplements and is used as a way of safeguarding pets. Feeding pets is considered a key moment of the day among pet owners, as it strengthens the bond between the owner and their pet. In order to satisfy different pets and owner's requirements, the pet food industry offers a range of products. Consequently, pet food production has become a competitive and economically significant part of the food processing industry. Commercial pet food can be categorised into three basic forms: dry, semi-moist, and moist or canned. These different categorizations are based on the water content of the food, with dry

foods containing usually less than 11% water, semi-moist foods containing 25 to 35% water, and moist or canned food containing 60 to 87% water.

Food characteristics such as price, ingredients, and quality have been identified by several studies as important considerations for pet food purchasers. Ingredients have been identified in multiple studies to be the most important factor for most pet owners when selecting a food for their pets. It appears that Pet owners prefer lower priced pet food, but value natural and organic ingredients. While most pet owners feed commercial pet food to their pets, many feed their pets other foods, such as home-prepared foods, table scraps, and raw meat-based diets. This may be in part due to an apparently growing perception that commercial pet foods may not be wholesome, nutritious, and safe, and that other sources of food may be more natural and more nutritious.

The research conducted in India focused on pet owners buying and marketing strategies and retail strategies. The investigator did not come across any research on Pet food buying behavior and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food. This motivated the researcher to adopt present study which find out pet food buying behavior and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food buying behavior. Hence, the present research was undertaken.

The Department of Family and Community Resource Management, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, offers courses on "Consumer Education" at Bachelor's level. Hence, the information gathered through the present research would widen the data base and will help in strengthening the curriculum. Moreover, it will be helpful for Pet owners to make wise choice while buying pet food products. The results of the study will also be helpful to the pet food shop owners, to gain better understanding of the pet owners buying behaviour in terms of the attributes preferred so that they can make their products available accordingly in their shops. The findings of the study will also help the marketing managers as they would provide offerings of pet food products to different target groups of pet owners.

Statement of Problem

The present study aims to find out the pet food buying behaviour and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food.

Objectives

1. To find out the buying behaviour of pet owners for pet food.
2. To assess the extent of satisfaction experienced by the respondents with regards to attributes of pet food products.

Hypotheses

1. There exists a relationship between pet food buying behavior of the respondents with their selected personal variables [age (in years), educational qualifications, employment status, marital status] and family variables [type of family, size of family, family monthly income (in ₹)] and situational variables [age of pet, frequency of buying pet food, amount of money spent (in ₹), frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories and average time taken for buying pet food].

2. There exists a relationship between extent of satisfaction with regards to the attributes of pet food with their selected personal variables [age (in years), educational qualification, employment status and marital status]and family variables [size of the family, type of family and family monthly income (in ₹)].

3. There exists a relationship between pet food buying behavior and extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to the attributes of pet food of the respondents

Delimitation

1. The study will be limited to selected pets (Dogs).
2. The study will be limited to those pet owners who had purchased their pets before 2 years from the time of data collection.
3. The study will be delimited to the pet dogs who are not having any sickness.

4. The respondents will be from Vadodara city only.

Methodology

The research design for the present investigation was descriptive in nature. The sample for the present study were collected personally by the researcher from the pet owners. The sample were collected from Vadodara city. The data were collected from 120 respondents who have bought pet food. Therefore, purposive sampling technique was used for the collecting the respondents. For the present study questionnaire was developed. The question was divided into 4 sections. Section 1 includes the background information of the respondent. Section 2 deals with information about pet and pet food. Section 3 deals with the pet food buying behaviour which comprised of need recognition for buying pet food by the respondents. The information search consisted of question related to source of information the respondent had gone through before buying it. Alternative of items describing the aspects that were considered by the respondents while evaluating alternatives. Buying decision were involvement of members in decision making while buying pet food. Section 4 deals with extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food and it was analysed in terms of high, moderate and low scores obtained on entire scale. The total number of items were 16 and, hence minimum score was 16 and maximum score was 48. The responses were "Highly Satisfied", "Neutral" and "Highly Dissatisfied" where the scores were ascribed as 3 to 1 The scores on entire scale were possible range minimum and maximum scores were divided into three categories of equal intervals. High scores revealed high extent of satisfaction experienced with regards to attributes of pet food and vice versa.

Major findings

The major findings of the study are presented here:

Section I Background Information: The findings related to personal information and family information are reported here.

Personal Information: It was found that majority (81.7%) of the respondents belonged to the age group of 16-32 years. More than one-half (58.3%) of the respondents were males and less than one- half (41.7%) of the respondents were females. More than one-half (54.2%) of the respondents were graduates. More than one-half (54.2%) of the respondents were employed. 70 per cent of the respondents were unmarried and 30 per cent of the respondents were married.

Family Information: It was found that 80 per cent of the respondents belonged to nuclear family and 20 per cent of the respondents belonged to joint family. It was found that more than one-half (60.8%) of the respondents had a small sized family with 2-4 members. The mean of family monthly income of the respondents was ₹ 75650.00. It was found that more than one-half (56.7%) of the respondents had family monthly income between ₹50,001-₹1,00,000.

Section II Information related to pet and pet food: The findings related to age of pet, frequency of buying pet food, amount of money spent, frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories, frequency of average time taken, preference given for type of pet food and preference about attribute of pet food are reported here.

Age of Pet: It was found that more than three-fourth (76.7%) of the pet were in the age group of 1-5 years. The mean of pet age of the respondents was 4.30 years.

Frequency of buying pet food: It was found that less than one-half (46.7%) of the respondents bought pet food once a month.

Amount of money spent for buying pet food: It was found that more than one-third (40%) of the respondents had spent money equal to or above ₹2001.

Frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories: One-half (50.0%) of the respondents visited pet food shop for buying other pet products as and when required.

Average time taken for buying pet food: 83.3 per cent of the respondents took less than 30 minutes for buying pet food.

Preference given for type of pet food: More than one-half (57.5%) of the respondents preferred dry food.

Preference of attribute about pet food: More than three-fourth (80%) of the respondents always gave preference to the brand of the pet food product they bought.

Section III Pet Food Buying Behavior: The findings related to Need recognition, Sources of information before buying pet food, **Attributes of pet food in which information was gathered,** Evaluation of Alternatives and Informants involved in decision making for buying of pet food.

Need Recognition: It was found that majority (90.8%) of the respondents bought pet food "Always" so as to provide the best nutrition possible for their pet.

Sources of information before buying pet food: It was found that more than three-fourth (85%) of the respondents collected information about pet food from pet food shop.

Attributes of pet food in which information was gathered: It was found that less than two-third (65.8%) of the respondents gathered information regarding date of manufacturing and date of expiry.

Evaluation of Alternatives: It was found that more than three-fourth (80%) of the respondents considered brand, followed by 78.3 per cent who also always considered veterinary recommendations before buying pet food.

Informants involved in decision making for buying of pet food: It was found that more than one-third (38.3%) of the respondents s took decision for buying pet food with parents and less than one-third (32.5%) of the respondents took decision themselves.

Section IV: Extent of Satisfaction Experienced with Regards to Attributes of Pet Food: The analysis of the data revealed that more than

one-half (90%) of the respondents were Highly Satisfied with the brand of the product, followed by 89.2 per cent with the Quality of food and 86.6 per cent with the nutritional considerations. The weighted mean computed for each attribute of pet food revealed that score for "brand of the product", "quality of the food", "nutritional considerations" were found to be highest among all the attributes. The attributes such as "type of pet food available in terms of water content", "odor of the food", "shape of the food", scored the lowest. The overall weighted mean on the entire scale was 2.64.

Testing of Hypotheses

- The results of ANOVA revealed a significant relationship between information search and amount of money spent (in ₹) by the respondents. The result of Scheffe's test on information search stated that respondents who spent more than ₹2000 for buying pet food differed significantly with those who spent less than ₹1500 for buying pet food.

- The results of t-test revealed a significant relationship between information search with employment status and marital status of the respondents.

- The results of ANOVA revealed a significant relationship between evaluation of alternative and educational qualifications, frequency of buying pet food, frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories of the respondents. The result in scheffe's test on educational qualifications stated that respondents who had acquired graduate degree significantly differed with those who had acquired a diploma. The mean scores reflected that the respondents who were buying pet food once a month significantly differed with those who were buying pet food once a week. Furthermore, the results also revealed that the respondents who visited pet shop for buying pet accessories once a month significantly differed with those respondents who visited pet shop for buying pet accessories weekly.

- The results of t-test revealed a significant relationship between evaluation of alternative with average time taken for buying pet food of the respondents.

- The results of ANOVA revealed a significant relationship between extent of satisfaction with regards to the attributes of pet food and educational qualifications and family monthly income (in₹) of the respondents. The result in Scheffe's test on educational qualifications stated that respondents who had acquired graduate degree significantly differed with those who had acquired a doctorate degree. The mean scores reflected that the respondents who had family monthly income (in ₹) ranging between more than ₹1,00,001significantly differed with those who had an income ranging between ₹50,001-₹1,00,000.

Conclusion

The present research was undertaken with objectives to find out the buying behavior of pet owners for pet food and to assess the extent of satisfaction experienced by the respondents with regards to attributes of pet food products. It was found that majority (81.7%) of the respondents belonged to the age group of 16-32 years. More than one-half (58.3%) of the respondents were males and less than one- half (41.7%) of the respondents were females. More than one-half (54.2%) of the respondents were graduates. More than one-half (54.2%) of the respondents were employed. 70 per cent of the respondents were unmarried and 30 per cent of the respondents were married. It was found that 80 per cent of the respondents belonged to nuclear family and 20 per cent of the respondents belonged to joint family. It was found that more than one-half (60.8%) of the respondents had a small sized family with 2-4 members. The mean of family monthly income of the respondents was ₹ 75650.00. It was found that more than one-half (56.7%) of the respondents had family monthly income between ₹50,001-₹1,00,000. The mean of pet age of the respondents was 4.30 years. It was found that more than three-fourth (76.7%) of the pet were in the age group of 1-5 years. It was found that less than one-half (46.7%) of the respondents bought pet food once a month. It was found that more than one-third (40%) of the respondents had spent money equal to or above ₹2001. One-half (50.0%) of the respondents visited pet food shop for buying other pet products as and when required. 83.3 per cent of the respondents took less than 30 minutes. More than one-half (57.5%) of the respondents preferred dry food.

More than three-fourth (80%) of the respondents always gave preference to the brand of the pet food product they bought. It was found that majority (90.8%) of the respondents bought pet food always so as to provide the best nutrition possible for their pet. It was found that more than three-fourth (85%) of the respondents collected information about pet food from pet food shop. It was found that less than two-third (65.8%) of the respondents gathered information regarding to attributes of pet food for date of manufacturing and date of expiry. It was found that more than three-fourth (80%) of the respondents considered brand, followed by 78.3 per cent who also always considered veterinary recommendations before buying pet food. It was found that more than one-third (38.3%) of the respondents s took decision for buying pet food with parents and less than one-third (32.5%) of the respondents took decision themselves.

The analysis of the data revealed that more than one-half (90%) of the respondents were Highly Satisfied with the brand of the product, followed by 89.2 per cent with the Quality of food and 86.6 per cent with the nutritional considerations. The weighted mean computed for each attribute of pet food revealed that score for "brand of the product", "quality of the food", "nutritional considerations" were found to be highest among all the attributes. The attributes such as "type of pet food available in terms of water content", "odor of the food", "shape of the food", scored the lowest. The overall weighted mean on the entire scale was 2.64.

The results of ANOVA revealed a significant relationship between information search and amount of money spent (in ₹) by the respondents. The result of Scheffe's test on information search stated that respondents who spent more than ₹2000 for buying pet food differed significantly with those who spent less than ₹1500 for buying pet food. The results of t-test revealed a significant relationship between information search with employment status and marital status of the respondents. The results of ANOVA revealed a significant relationship between evaluation of alternative and educational qualifications, frequency of buying pet food, frequency of visiting pet shop for buying pet accessories of the respondents. The result in scheffe's test on educational

qualifications stated that respondents who had acquired graduate degree significantly differed with those who had acquired a diploma. The mean scores reflected that the respondents who were buying pet food once a month significantly differed with those who were buying pet food once a week. Furthermore, the results also revealed that the respondents who visited pet shop for buying pet accessories once a month significantly differed with those respondents who visited pet shop for buying pet accessories weekly. The results of t-test revealed a significant relationship between evaluation of alternative with average time taken for buying pet food of the respondents. The results of ANOVA revealed a significant relationship between extent of satisfaction with regards to the attributes of pet food and educational qualifications and family monthly income (in₹) of the respondents. The result in Scheffe's test on educational qualifications stated that respondents who had acquired graduate degree significantly differed with those who had acquired a doctorate degree. The mean scores reflected that the respondents who had family monthly income (in ₹) ranging between more than ₹1,00,001significantly differed with those who had an income ranging between ₹50,001-₹1,00,000.

Implications of the Study

The findings of the present study had the following implications:

For the field of Family and Community Resource Management

The field of Family and Community Resource Management offers a course on "Consumer Education" at Bachelor's level. The study's findings will provide insights into the buying behavior of pet owners when it comes to buying pet food, which will enable students to gain a better understanding.

For Pet Owners

The research findings contribute valuable information to the existing knowledge base regarding pet owner buying behavior when it comes to selecting pet food. The study demonstrated that pet owners prioritize their pet's preferences and convenience when selecting pet food, with attributes such as brand reputation, nutritional value, quality, size, price, ingredients, freshness, color, shape,

texture, water content, packaging, shelf life, and odor being important factors in their decision-making. By understanding these key considerations, companies can better cater to pet owner preferences and generate more successful marketing strategies for promoting their pet food products.

For Pet Food Shop Owners

The results of this study hold valuable insights that can assist pet food shop owners in meeting the demands and ensuring the satisfaction of pet owners. This research can also serve as a useful tool to evaluate the buying behavior and degree of contentment with pet food among pet owners. By gaining a better understanding of pet owners' buying habits and what factors contribute to their satisfaction with pet food products, business owners and marketers can develop more effective approaches to meet the needs of this market.

Recommendation for future studies

1. A comparable study can be conducted on satisfaction of pet owners with regards to the attributes between different brands of pet food available in the market.
2. Comparison of buying behavior and satisfaction levels between pet owners who shop at physical stores versus those who shop online could also be undertaken.
3. The comparative study between pet owners' buying behavior and their perception of their pet's quality of life can also be conducted.
4. Comparison of buying behavior and satisfaction levels between pet owners who purchase premium pet products versus those who purchase budget-friendly pet food products can also be conducted.
5. Similar study can also be conducted with a larger sample size.
6. Similar study could also be undertaken for different pets owned by the pet owners.

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APPENDIX-I

FACULTY OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SCIENCES
THE MAHARAJA SAYAJIRAO UNIVERSITY OF BARODA

Ethical Compliance Certificate 2022-2023

This is to certify that **Ms. Shruti Kayastha's** study titled, **A Study on Pet Food Buying Behaviour and Extent of Satisfaction Experienced with regards to Attributes of pet food products.** has been approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee for Human Research (IECHR), Faculty of Family and Community Science, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. The study has been allotted the ethical approval number **IECHR/FCSc/M.Sc./2022/01.**

Prof Shagufa Kapadia
Chairperson
IECHR

Prof Mini Sheth
Member Secretary
IECHR

APPENDIX-II

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY & COMMUNITY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
FACULTY OF FAMILY & COMMUNITY SCIENCES
THE MAHARAJA SAYAJIRAO UNIVERSITY OF BARODA, VADODARA
ACCREDITED GRADE A+ BY NAAC

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

The Department of Family and Community Resource Management, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara, supports the practice of protection of human participants in research. The following will provide you with information about the research survey that will help you decide whether or not you wish to participate. If you agree to participate, please be aware that you are free to withdraw at any point throughout the duration of the research without any penalty. In this study you will be asked about your background information (Name, Age, Gender, Educational qualification, Occupation, Family monthly income, etc.), Information about pet and pet food, Buying Behaviour of pet owners and Extent of satisfaction with the attributes of pet food products. All the information will remain confidential and not be associated with your name. Your participation in this study will require approximately 10-15 minutes. If you have any further questions concerning this research, please feel free to contact Ms. Shruti Kayastha through Phone +91 7622062243, Email id: kayasthashruti12@gmail.com

Please indicate with your signature on the space below that you understand what participation in the study involves and agree to participate. Your participation is strictly voluntary. All information will be kept confidential and your name will not be associated with any research findings.

Haya Sheth

Name & Signature of the Participant

Shruti Kayastha
M.Sc. (F.C.Sc.) Student
Department of FCRM
FFCSc., MSU

Dr. Mona Mehta
Supervisor & Assistant Professor
Department of FCRM
FFCSc., MSU

APPENDIX-III

QUESTIONNAIRE

Section I: Background Information of the respondents

1. Name: _____

2. Age (in years): _____

3. Gender

    A. Male ☐

    B. Female ☐

    C. Other ☐

4. Educational Qualification

    A. Higher Secondary ☐

    B. Graduation ☐

    C. Post-Graduation ☐

    o Any other , please specify_____

5. Occupation

    A. Unemployed ☐

    B. Employed ☐

6. Marital Status

    A. Married ☐

    B. Unmarried ☐

    C. Divorced ☐

    D. Widowed ☐

7. Type of Family

    A. Nuclear ☐

    B. Joint ☐

8. Size of family members

    A. Small (2-4 members) ☐

    B. Medium (5-7 members) ☐

    C. Large (more than 8) ☐

9. Family Monthly Income (in rupees): _____

Section II: Information About Pet and Pet Food

1. Which breed of pet do you have? _____

2. What is the age of your pet? _____

3. How often do you buy pet food?

    A. Once a week ☐

    B. Once a fortnight ☐

    C. Twice a month ☐

    D. Once a month ☐

    E. Once every two months ☐

    F. Once every three months ☐

    G. More than three months ☐

4. On an average how much do you spend on pet food per month?

    A. Less than ₹500 ☐

    B. ₹501-₹1000 ☐

    C. ₹1001-₹1500 ☐

    D. ₹1501- ₹2000 ☐

    E. More than ₹2000 ☐

5. **How often do you visit pet food shop?**

    A. Weekly   ☐

    B. Fortnight   ☐

    C. Once a month   ☐

    D. As and when required   ☐

    E. Any other, please specify_____

6. **How much time do you spend on an average for buying pet food products? (Please give your answer in minutes or hours)**

    _____

7. **What type of pet food product do you prefer to purchase?**

    A. Dry   ☐

    B. Wet   ☐

    C. Combination of both dry and wet food   ☐

8. **What do you look for first when buy a pet food product?**

Sr. No	First Look	Always	Sometimes	Never
1	Brand			
2	Price			
3	Size			
4	Ingredients used			
5	Packaging			
6	Standardized quality mark			
7	Type of pet food (veg or non-veg)			

Section III: Buying behavior

a. Need Recognition

The following statements reflect the need for buying pet food. Please tick mark (√) against appropriate statement as applicable to you.

1) Give your reasons for buying pet food?

Sr. no	Information search	Always	Sometimes	Never
1	I want to provide my pet with the best nutrition possible			
2	I buy pet food that has consistent quality			
3	I feed diet that is best for my pet's health			
4	I always try to get the best quality for the best price when buying pet food			
5	I trust my veterinarian's advice regarding nutrition for my pet			
6	I buy pet food as it is ready to use			
7	I buy pet food as it consumes less time			
8	I buy pet food because I do not have time to cook homemade food			

b. Information search

The following statements are related to sources of information explored by you before buying pet food. Please tick mark (√) against appropriate items as applicable to you.

1) From where do you find information about pet food?

Sr. no	Information search	Yes	No
1	Pet Food Shop		
2	Tv commercials		
3	Paper advertisements		
4	Social media		
5	Online Commercials		
6	Word of mouth		
7	Friend recommendations		
8	Family recommendations		
9	Veterinary recommendations		

Any other, please specify_____

2) Which information gather regarding which aspects did you collect the information?

Sr. no	Aspects	Yes	No
1	Availability of Brand		
2	Price range		
3	Size of the product		
4	Nutritive value		
5	Health benefits		
6	Freshness of the food		
7	Color of the product		
8	Substitutes available		
9	Ingredients used		
10	Date of manufacturing		
11	Date of expiry		
12	Odor of the food		
13	Quantity of the product		
14	Ease of accessibility		

Any other, please specify_____

c. Evaluation of alternative

The following statements are related to evaluating attributes before buying pet food products. Please tick mark (√) against appropriate items applicable to you

110

1) **Which of the following attributes did you evaluate before buying the pet food products?**

Sr. no	Attributes	Always	Sometimes	Never
1	Brand of the product			
2	Package of the product			
3	Price of the product			
4	Shelf life of the product			
5	Discounts and offers			
6	Variety of pet food available in the market			
7	Types of pet foods available in terms of water content			
8	Freshness of the product			
9	Color of the product			
10	Texture of the product			
11	Shape of the product			
12	Organic pet foods			
13	Veterinary recommendations			

Any other, please specify_____

d. Buying decision

The following statements are related to buying the products to who would be the final decision maker for buying pet food products. Please tick mark (√) against appropriate items as applicable to you.

1) Who all are involved in making final decision of buying pet food?

A. Myself ☐

B. Parents and myself ☐

C. Spouse and myself ☐

D. Children and myself ☐

E. Relative and myself ☐

F. Friends and myself ☐

G. Care taker and myself ☐

H. Veterinary doctor and myself ☐

I. Any other, please specify_____

Section IV: Extent of satisfaction with the attributes of pet food products

The following items are related to extent of satisfaction that you experience with the attributes of pet food products. Please tick mark (√) against appropriate item applicable to you. The response structure will be in terms of H.S: Highly satisfied, N: Neutral, H.D: Highly Dissatisfied.

Sr. no	Extent of satisfaction with the attributes of pet food products	HS	N	HD
1.	Nutritional considerations			
2.	Quality of the food			
3.	Ingredients of the food			
4.	Freshness of the food			
5.	Color of the food			
6.	Color of the product			
7.	Packaging of the product			
8.	Brand of the product			
9.	Price range of the product			
10.	Shelf life of the product			
11.	Texture of the food			
12.	Shape of the food			
13.	Types of pet food available in terms of water content			
14.	Size of the food			
15.	Quantity of the product			
16.	Odor of the food			

Others, please specify

ABSTRACT

The importance of pet owners in our society have demonstrated an increased sensitivity and attention towards the health and nutrition of their pets. Pet food has become the main source of nutrition supplements and is used as a way of safeguarding pets. Feeding pets is considered a key moment of the day among pet owners, as it strengthens the bond between the owner and their pet. In order to satisfy different pets and owner's requirements, the pet food industry offers a wide range of products. Consequently, pet food production has become a competitive and economically significant part of the food processing industry. Commercial pet food can be categorised into three basic forms: dry, semi-moist, and moist or canned. These different categorizations are based on the water content of the food, with dry foods containing usually less than 11% water, semi-moist foods containing 25 to 35% water, and moist or canned food containing 60 to 87% water.

Food characteristics such as price, ingredients, and quality have been identified by several studies as important considerations for pet food purchasers. Ingredients have been identified in multiple studies to be the most important factor for most pet owners when selecting a food for their pets. It appears that Pet owners prefer lower priced pet food, but value natural and organic ingredients. While most pet owners feed commercial pet food to their pets, many feed their pets other foods, such as home-prepared foods and raw meat-based diets. This may be in part due to an apparently growing perception that commercial pet foods may not be wholesome, nutritious, and safe, and that other sources of food may be more natural and more nutritious.

The objective of the study was to find out the buying behavior of pet owners for pet food and to assess the extent of satisfaction experienced by the respondents with regards to attributes of pet food products. The research design for the present investigation was descriptive in nature. The sample for the present study were collected personally by the researcher from the pet owners. The sample were collected from Vadodara city. The data were collected from 120 respondents who have bought pet food. Therefore, purposive sampling technique was used for the collecting the respondents.

It was concluded that males who had acquired graduate degree and were employed ranging between 16-32 years were satisfied with the attributes of pet food.

Hence, it could conclude that most respondents were highly satisfied with brand and nutritional consideration of pet food.