

Relationship Between Pet Attachment and Empathy Among Young Adults

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Present research was intended to investigate the relationship between pet attachment and empathy among young adults. CENSHARE Pet Attachment Survey (Holcomb, Williams, & Richards, 1985) was used to measure pet attachment and Multi-Dimensional Scale of Emotional Empathy (Caruso & Mayer, 1998) was used to measure empathy. Sample which included young adults ($N = 250$) within the age range of 18 to 26 years ($M = 21.16$; $SD = 2.10$), was taken from both public and private universities. The results showed significant positive relationship between pet attachment and empathy. Further, the result showed women scoring higher on pet attachment and empathy as compared to men. Pet owners spending less time with their pets showed stronger pet attachment. Significant predicting role of pet attachment was shown for empathy, with highest variance shown with intimacy component of pet attachment for the empathy dimension of feeling for others, then responsive crying, empathy and emotional attention respectively. Lastly, significant moderating role of gender for the effect of pet attachment on empathy was shown, with women scoring higher than men on empathy with increasing pet attachment.

Keywords. Empathy, pet attachment, young adults, responsive crying, intimacy.