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## Survey on Socio-demographic profile of pet owners in Mizoram

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### Abstract

Mizoram is one of the North-eastern states of India and it stands in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> place in terms of pet dogs with 99.90% and stray dogs with 0.10% population, which is very less when compared to other states of India (20<sup>th</sup> Livestock census, 2019). The current study was conducted with the aim to determine the Socio-demographic profile among pet owners and the maintenance of pets in the Aizawl district, Mizoram. A cross-sectional study design and multistage sampling procedures were used. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 800 pet (dog and cat) owners, using pretested and structured questionnaires. The questionnaire sought information on the socio-demographics of pet owners, their association with pets, and the maintenance of their pets. The frequency distributions of both dependent and independent variables were determined by using descriptive statistics (Frequencies and percentages). Out of the total (N=800) respondents, the majority of the respondents were; young age 61.50%, 53.88% were females, 40% were qualified graduates/above, 24.90% were housewives & retired people, 76.25% had kept a dog as their pet and 77.80% of them considered pets as their companion, 69.80% vaccinated their pet after attaining 3 months but 47.80% regularly vaccinated their pet every year.

**Keywords:** Survey, socio-demographic profile, pet owners, and Mizoram

### Introduction

For an insight into policy-making and economic development, in-depth understanding of the stakeholders is perceived as crucial for its effectiveness. Data plays a crucial role in this aspect. The absence of timely, relevant, and credible data hampers decision-making. "Data are central to inclusive and effective governance. You need to know where you are starting from, what you are aiming at, and whether you are getting there in the most efficient manner" (Paris21). Lack of data regarding updated census is impacting government schemes and programs and results in unreliable estimates from other surveys on consumption, health, and employment, which depend on census data to determine policy and welfare measures. As many as 100 million people are likely being excluded from the government's food subsidy program-the Public Distribution System (PDS)--as the population figures used to calculate the number of beneficiaries is from the 2011 census (Srihari-2022) [20]. With an objective to fill the data gap pertaining to Pet owners in Mizoram district the study is conducted which is aimed to serve as the basis for analysing their socio-demographic characters for Policymaking.

### Materials and Methods

Aizawl district was selected as the study area and the Multi-stage cluster sampling method was applied for the division of the study area. Aizawl district was broadly divided into two areas i.e., Urban area {Aizawl Municipal Corporation – (AMC)} comprising four (4) divisions (Aizawl North, Aizawl South, Aizawl East, and Aizawl West) and Rural area {Rural Development (RD) blocks} comprising of four (4) RD blocks namely Aibawk, Darlawn, Thingsulthliah and Tlangnuam block as shown in figure 1. The four (4) divisions of the urban area were sub-divided into eighty (80) local councils where 5 respondents were selected from each of the local councils (80 X 5 = 400) and the four (4) RD blocks were subdivided into 20 village councils where 20 respondents were selected from each village council (20 x 20 = 400)

### Results and Discussion

#### Age

In the present study, out of the total respondents (N=800), the maximum respondents were young age with 61.50% (492/800), followed by middle age at 27.63% (221/800) and old age at

10.87% (87/800) as shown in Table 1

These results were in the line with the findings of Ali *et al.*, 2013 [2] from Ethiopia who reported that the majority i.e., 63.90% (792/1240) were in the young age group and Khan *et al.*, 2019 [5] from Bangladesh also reported that majority i.e., 77.60% (337/434) belongs to young age category. However, the results differ from the findings of Hagos *et al.*, 2020 [4] from Ethiopia who reported that the majority i.e., 42.80% (271/633) were in middle age and Lacson *et al.*, 2020 [7] from the Philippines reported that the majority i.e., 58.50% (265/453) were in middle age group.

The present study concluded that the reason the majority of the respondents were young age group is due to the fact that, in Mizoram's population young age people were more in number when compared to middle and old age people (Mizoram population pyramid, 2021).

### Gender

Among the total respondents (N = 800), the majority of them were females 53.88% (431/800) and the remaining were males 46.12% (369/800) as shown in Table 1.

These results were in agreement with the findings of Kiratitana-olan *et al.*, 2021 [6] from Thailand who reported that the majority i.e., 63.40% (882/1392) were female and Lanada *et al.*, 2019 [8] from the Philippines also reported that the majority i.e., 63.04% (725/1161) were female. However, the findings of the present study differ from the findings of Ahmed *et al.*, 2020 [1] from Pakistan who reported that the majority i.e., 63.90% (937/1466) were male and Nigatu *et al.*, 2016 [11] from Ethiopia also reported that majority i.e., 57.70% (240/416) were male. The possible reason behind more female respondents is that in the present study a household survey was conducted where women were readily available for participation in the survey and most of the caretakers of pets at home were female.

### Educational qualification

In the present study, out of the total respondents (N = 800), the maximum number of respondents were qualified as graduated and/ above 40% (320/800) followed by Intermediate education 20.90% (167/800), middle school 15.90% (127/800), high school 15.30% (122/800), primary school 4.60% (37/800) and illiterates 3.40% (27/800) as shown in Table 1

Similar findings were reported by Rine *et al.*, 2017 from Nigeria that 42.50% (85/200) were highly educated. Another researcher Odeh *et al.*, 2014 [12] from Nigeria also reported that the majority of the respondents i.e., 65.60% (105/160) had tertiary education. However, the present results disagree with the findings of Rinchen *et al.*, 2019 [16] from Bhutan who reported that the majority of the respondents were illiterates i.e., 62% (349/562), and Sivagurunathan *et al.*, 2021 [19] from India reported that the majority i.e., 77.50% (271/350) were educated up to Higher Secondary Certificate.

The present study concluded that the reason for the majority of the respondent's educational qualification was graduation and/or above is due to the fact that Mizoram state stood 2<sup>nd</sup> after Kerala stood first in the literacy rate in India, 2022 as per the National Statistical Office (NSO) data, 2021 which might influence to a great extent for the higher qualification of the respondents in the present study (Literacy rate in India, 2012).

### Occupation

In the present study, out of the total respondents (N = 800), a

significant proportion of them belongs to others (House-wife & retired people) at 24.90% (199/800) followed by business people at 21.40% (171/800) at, students 19.80% (158/800), government service 13.40% (107/800), farmers'/animal husbandry workers 10.40% (83/800) and private jobs 10.30% (82/800) as shown in Table 1.

These results were in line with Ali *et al.*, 2013 [2] from Ethiopia who reported that 27.30% (344/1260) of respondents were housewives, and Serebe *et al.*, 2014 from Ethiopia too reported that 24.50% (34/139) of respondents were housewives. However, the findings of the present study were in disagreement with Rinchen *et al.*, 2019 [16] from Bhutan who reported that the majority of the respondents were farmers i.e., 88% (495/562), and Rahaman *et al.*, 2020 [14] from Bangladesh also reported that majority of the respondents were businessman i.e., 41.03% (151/368).

The present study concluded that most of the housewives and retired persons kept their pet animals for companionship 77.80% (622/800), Conclusively the majority of the respondents occupation was being a housewife and retired persons

### Purpose of pet

In the present investigation, out of the total respondents (N = 800), the maximum number of respondents had kept a pet for a companion purpose 77.80% (622/800) followed by security 10.30% (82/800), more than one purpose 8.60% (69/800), eating 2.10% (17/800), selling as meat 0.90% (7/800) and hunting 0.40% (3/800) as shown in Table 1

The present findings were in accordance with the findings of Friedmann *et al.*, 2020 [3] from the United States who reported that 66% (250/378) of respondents kept pets for companionship, and Staats *et al.*, 2008 [22] from the United States also reported that the majority i.e., 39.90% (134/336) kept their pets as a companion. But, the results differ from the findings of Mapatse *et al.*, 2022 [9] who reported that 68.80% (143/208) of the respondents kept their pets in order to protect their crop fields from monkeys because monkeys disturb a lot in their crop cultivation. Another researcher Sambo *et al.*, 2014 [17] stated that 78% (4010/5141) of the respondents had pets for security purposes.

The present study concluded that pet animals play a very important role in the life of the Mizo society, especially for the housewife and retired persons as companion animals.

### Species of pet

Among the total respondents (N = 800), the majority of them were exclusively dog owners 76.25% (610/800) followed by both dog & cat owners 12% (96/800) and exclusively cat owners 11.75% (94/800) as shown in Table 1.

The present findings were in accordance with the findings of Monje *et al.*, 2020 [10] from Uganda who reported that the majority of the respondents i.e., 65.71% (23/35) preferred a Dog as their pet and Lanada *et al.*, 2019 [8] from the Philippines reported that 61.06% (709/1161) were Dog owners. However, the current findings disagree with Rana *et al.*, 2021 [15] from Bangladesh who reported that the majority of the respondents i.e., 53.07% (95/179) preferred a Cat as their pet.

From the current study, it was concluded that a dog was the choice of pet for the majority (76.25%) of the respondents due to its unconditional love, better companion for housewives and retired people, emotional and playful attachment for

children, guarding nature and to some extent for eating and selling of puppies.

### Residence

In the present investigation, there was an equal percentage of respondents i.e., 50% (400/800) from both urban and rural areas of Aizawl district, Mizoram as shown in Table 1. This is due to the reasons that the framework of the present study was exclusively designed for an equal number of respondents from both the areas as rural areas and urban areas.

**Table 1:** Socio-demographic characteristics of pet owners

Sl. No	Socio-demographic characteristics	Total (N = 800) (n) (%)	
1.	Age		
	Young age (18 – 44yrs)	492	61.50
	Middle age (45 – 60yrs)	221	27.63
	Old age (> 60yrs)	87	10.87
2.	Gender		
	Male	369	46.12
	Female	431	53.88
3.	Educational qualification		
	Illiterate	27	3.40
	Primary	37	4.60
	Middle	127	15.90
	High School	122	15.30
	Intermediate	167	20.90
	Graduation/Above	320	40.00
4.	Occupation		
	Business	171	21.40
	Private Job	82	10.30
	Agriculture/Animal Husbandry	83	10.40
	Government Service	107	13.40
	Student	158	19.80
	Others (House-wife & Retired)	199	24.90
5.	Purpose of pet keeping		
	Companionship	622	77.80
	Security	82	10.30
	Hunting/Protect from wild animals	3	0.40
	Eating	17	2.10
	Selling for slaughter	7	0.90
	More than one purpose	69	8.60
6.	Species of Pet		
	Dog	610	76.25%
	Cat	94	11.75%
	Dog & Cat	96	12.00%
7.	Residence		
	Rural	400	50%
	Urban	400	50%

### Conclusion

With Young Age Pet owners higher in number who are Literates and Graduates, for a rapid public health initiatives and awareness, mediums like social media and Print can be effective. Psychological connect and Companionship with the petweres perceived as high which is a favorable finding for entrepreneur interventions in the Pet industry as well as an alarming feature to further understand the vaccination behavior and create awareness of Zoonotic diseases if data gaps are studied in these areas.

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