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The Evolution Of Pet Care Services: Meeting The Demands Of Modern Pet Owners

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ABSTRACT

The outbreak of COVID-19 led to profound shifts in societal behaviours, including a notable uptick in pet adoption as individuals sought companionship during periods of lockdown. This research investigates the consequent expansion of the pet care industry in urban India, with a particular focus on its anticipated market growth and underlying consumer trends. Projections suggest that by 2025, the Indian pet care market could burgeon to a valuation of \$2.8 billion, propelled chiefly by heightened pet ownership rates, especially in major metropolitan hubs like Bengaluru. This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data analysis with qualitative insights garnered from interviews, surveys, and industry experts. By examining the perspectives of both pet owners and service providers, it aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the evolving pet care landscape in urban India post-lockdown. The research elucidates the concerns of pet owners transitioning back to work routines, necessitating reliable and tailored pet care solutions to balance their professional commitments with the needs of their pets. Key findings underscore a burgeoning demand for convenient and personalized pet care services encompassing pet sitting, grooming, veterinary care, and behavioural training.

1. Introduction

The city of Bengaluru, often referred to as the Silicon Valley of India, has witnessed a significant rise in pet ownership over the past few decades. With this surge in pet ownership comes the demand for various pet care services to ensure the well-being and health of these beloved companions. This research paper aims to explore the landscape of pet care services in Bengaluru, analysing the current scenario, identifying gaps, and proposing potential solutions to address the challenges faced by both pet owners and service providers. BARKS & PURRS is a full-service animal care facility offering a range of services, including daycare, overnight care, in-home care, pet grooming, and more. The company aims to provide high-quality, convenient, and comprehensive pet care solutions in a fun, clean, and safe environment. Bengaluru, a major metropolitan city, is a prime pet hub with a high pet ownership rate and a growing appetite for convenient, comprehensive pet care solutions. 55% Bangaloreans spent a monthly average of INR 3000. The pet care market in Bengaluru is fragmented, dominated by standalone providers, creating a space for differentiated offerings like BARKS & PURRS. Customers seek high-quality services delivered by qualified and experienced professionals who understand animal behaviour and individual needs. The company's mission is to provide excellent animal care in a pet-friendly atmosphere while ensuring customers, both pet and owner, receive excellent service in a playful, safe environment. The company's keys to success include superior customer service, a clean, upscale environment, convenience, location, and a wide range of services in one environment. BARKS & PURRS aims to address the challenges faced by busy pet owners by offering a holistic and personalized approach to pet care, tailored to the specific needs and preferences of each pet and owner.

2.Literature Review

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly influenced societal behaviors, particularly in the realm of pet adoption and the subsequent expansion of the pet care industry. As individuals sought companionship during lockdowns, there was a notable increase in pet ownership, which has implications for the pet care market in urban India. This literature review synthesizes existing research on pet adoption trends during the pandemic, the dynamics of human-animal relationships, and the evolving needs of pet owners.

Impact of COVID-19 on Pet Adoption. Research indicates that the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic led to a surge in interest in pet adoption globally. A study by Jezierski et al. (2021) reported that relative search volumes for dog and cat adoptions peaked during the early months of the pandemic, reflecting a 250% increase compared to the same period in 2019²³. This trend was particularly pronounced in countries like the UK, where shelters experienced unprecedented adoption rates, leading to empty facilities². However, while initial adoption rates soared, concerns arose regarding potential abandonment as restrictions eased and life returned to normal. The relationship between human well-being and pet ownership was also highlighted during this period. Companion animals have been shown to provide significant mental health benefits, alleviating feelings of loneliness and anxiety amidst social isolation (Goumenou et al., 2020)¹. Conversely, studies noted that economic pressures and health concerns related to COVID-19 could lead to increased relinquishment rates among newly adopted pets.

Behavioral Changes in Pets The pandemic's impact extended beyond adoption rates; it also affected pet behavior. A longitudinal study revealed that while many pets exhibited positive behavior changes due to increased interaction with their owners, some experienced anxiety and behavioral issues as owners transitioned back to work⁴. Specifically, dogs adopted during lockdown were reported to have higher instances of fear-related behaviors due to limited socialization opportunities during their formative months.

Consumer Trends in Pet Care. As pet ownership increased, so did the demand for diverse pet care services. The anticipated growth of the Indian pet care market is projected to reach \$2.8 billion by 2025, driven by rising ownership rates and an increasing need for services such as grooming, veterinary care, and behavioral training²³. Interviews with service providers indicated a shift towards more personalized and convenient care solutions as pet owners sought ways to balance their professional commitments with their pets' needs.

Challenges Faced by Pet Owners. Pet owners expressed concerns about managing their pets' needs as they returned to pre-pandemic routines. The potential for separation anxiety among pets was a significant issue highlighted by various studies. Additionally, the availability of veterinary care was disrupted during lockdowns, raising concerns about the long-term health implications for pets that may have missed essential services.

Study Site methodology

The selection of study site for research paper on pet care services depends on several factors, including the specific focus on your research and the type of data you need to collect. Based on the type of data that you want to collect; you can reach to several segments regarding the pet care services. Pet stores can provide the good opportunity to survey pet care owners about their pet care needs and preferences. You can collect what type of problems that pet owners are currently facing, what type of services are required to make their pet happy as well as the satisfaction of owners. You can also collect data of types of pet care services that are offered by the pet stores and what are the other services should be provided so that we can enhance the pet owner satisfaction. What type of problems are currently the established pet cares are facing. Veterinary clinics can also provide the data about the health needs of pets and types of diseases that are causing more trouble in present days. As we know that how the covid adverse effect on the society you can also collect the data about the covid virus, is there is any chance of infecting the pets from the owners and, if it is possible what actions are required to protect the pets from such contagious diseases. You can also know about the what are upcoming problems of pets and animals. You can also know about the food habits of animals and what type of food ingredients should be included and avoided in their diet. You can also survey the veterinarians about their perspectives on the pet care industry. So, that you can aware of what type of services should be added to make the pet hygiene and healthy. Online pet communities are also one of the good data sources on the pet owner experience, how much they are satisfied with the current services existing in the pet care industry, so you can aware of what types of additional services they are expecting. You can also survey the pet owners here to know about the pain point of the pet owners, facing problems in taking care of their pets, how the current pet cares are offering in terms of services, what are the improvements they

are looking for, what changes in the pet industry can increase the reach of the customers. Pet care apps are helps in identifying the current trends in the industry. You can also survey the users of these apps about the current trends and their experiences.

Methodology:

The research methodology employed in this paper is a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data analysis with qualitative insights. This approach allows for a well-rounded understanding of the pet care landscape in Bengaluru by capturing both the broader trends and the lived experiences of pet owners and service providers. Our research methodologies are the survey and questionnaire methods. We conduct the surveys from the pet stores to gather the information about the pet owner demographics, challenges faced in pet care and preferred services. It also provided the easy access to a concentrated group of pet owners likely seeking supplies and potentially pet care services. **Pet Care Challenges:** Questions can delve into the difficulties faced by pet owners, such as lack of time due to busy schedules, travel commitments, or limitations in finding reliable pet care services. This sheds light on the pain points that pet care services can address.

Referred Services: Understanding owner preferences for pet care services is crucial. Surveys can inquire about interest in services like pet sitting, dog walking, grooming, veterinary care, or behavioural training. This data helps identify the most sought-after services and potential gaps in the current market offerings. Veterinary clinics provide a rich source of data on pet health, pet health needs, common pet illness and owners perspective on the pet care industry like what type of services is to be added in the pet care centres to enhance the Here are two potential data collection methods:

Veterinarian Surveys: Veterinarians can offer valuable insights through surveys. Questions can explore the most common pet health issues in Bengaluru, potential effects of COVID-19 on pet health, and general observations on pet care trends. This data is vital for understanding the overall health of pets in the city and pinpointing areas where pet care services can play a supportive role. **Owner Interviews:** Conducting interviews with pet owners visiting veterinary clinics allows for in-depth exploration of their experiences. The researcher can delve into topics like Satisfaction levels with current pet care options, Specific concerns regarding pet health or well-being, Information gaps or areas where pet owners feel they need additional support

By combining veterinarian surveys with owner interviews, the research can build a strong foundation of pet health data alongside owner perspectives within the Bengaluru pet care landscape. The vast world of online pet communities offers a treasure trove of qualitative data. Here, we can explore pet owner experiences through: **Online Forums and Social Media Groups:** Engaging with these groups allows researchers to pose questions and analyse ongoing discussions about pet care services in Bengaluru. This reveals real-time challenges, service satisfaction levels, and desired improvements within the industry. **Sentiment Analysis:** By analysing the sentiment expressed in online pet communities, researchers can gauge the overall mood and concerns of pet owners. This can reveal areas where pet owners feel frustrated or have unmet needs, informing potential service improvements. Social listening through online pet communities offers a dynamic perspective on pet care experiences, complementing the more structured data collected through surveys.

Results and Discussion :

Based on the previous discussion and explanations, we found that the pet owners are facing numerous obstacles in their efforts to keep their pets safe and sound. Due to various factors, including long work hours, travel commitments, and limited access to dependable pet care services, pet owners often experience stress and guilt over neglecting or not caring for their pets. Additionally, as pet ownership increases, the demand for comprehensive and reliable pet care services that meet the unique needs of individual pets and their owners increases.

Key Problems:

- **A lack of time:** Many pet owners, owing to their busy work and social life, have little time left to care for their pets.
- **Poor Quality Care:** It can be hard to find good pet care for pets living in areas with little access to professional care services.
- **Guilt and Anxiety:** Pet owners often experience guilt and anxiety when they leave their pets alone or in the care of strangers for long periods, affecting their overall well-being and peace of mind.
- **Special Care Needs:** Like people, pets have unique needs and preferences that require special care, such as medications, dietary restrictions, and behavioural training, that may not be adequately met by standard pet care services.
- **Safety Considerations:** Entrusting pets to unqualified or inexperienced handlers creates safety risks such as accidents, injuries, and exposure to harmful environments or substances, causing stress to both pets and their owners.
- **Minimal attention to detail:** Some pet care services may focus on quantity rather than quality, resulting in overcrowded facilities and limited personal contact with pets, which affects the experience and relationships between caregivers and pets.

Recommendations and Future Research:

This research paves the way for further exploration of the pet care industry in Bengaluru. Here are some potential areas for future research: The research on the pet care industry in Bengaluru paints a clear picture of a rapidly evolving market driven by rising pet ownership and the challenges faced by busy pet owners. This section delves into actionable recommendations for pet care service providers and explores potential areas for future research to further solidify the understanding of this dynamic landscape.

Recommendations for Pet Care Service Providers:

The research highlights the concerns regarding quality and trust in pet care services. Service providers can address this by emphasizing transparency in their operations. This could involve showcasing staff qualifications, experience, and pet care philosophies on their websites and marketing materials. Additionally, exploring accreditation or certification programs for pet care professionals can bolster trust and confidence among pet owners.

The growing need for services catering to pets with special needs presents a significant opportunity. Service providers can develop specialized care packages for pets with dietary restrictions, medication requirements, or behavioural issues. This could involve partnering with veterinarians and animal behaviourists to offer comprehensive solutions. Additionally, customization options allowing pet owners to tailor services to their specific needs and preferences can further enhance customer satisfaction.

The research underscores the increasing influence of technology in pet care. Service providers can embrace pet care apps for features like online booking, scheduling appointments, real-time pet monitoring (through wearable tech), and facilitating communication between owners and caregivers. Integrating these technological advancements can offer convenient and efficient services, enhancing pet well-being and providing peace of mind to pet owners.

Pet owners often require guidance on responsible pet care practices. Service providers can play a valuable role by offering educational resources such as workshops, webinars, or informative content on their websites and social media platforms. This can cover topics like pet nutrition, training tips, common pet health issues, and responsible pet ownership. By educating pet owners, service providers can build stronger

relationships, foster trust, and establish themselves as valuable partners in pet care.

There are some scopes on the future research opportunities, it includes In-depth analysis of specific pet care service segments: A deeper dive into high-demand areas like dog walking or pet sitting could

provide insights into pricing models, service preferences, and competitor analysis.

Impact of pet care services on pet well-being: Studies could explore how utilizing pet care services translates to measurable improvements in pet health and happiness.

The role of pet care service providers in owner education: Research could investigate how pet care providers can effectively educate pet owners on responsible pet care practices.

By continuing to explore the evolving pet care landscape in Bengaluru, researchers and service providers can work collaboratively to ensure the well-being of pets and provide peace of mind to their owners in this vibrant Indian metropolis.

By implementing these recommendations and actively pursuing further research, pet care service providers in Bengaluru can create a more robust and trustworthy industry. Additionally, continued research efforts will lead to a deeper understanding of pet owner needs and preferences, paving the way for developing innovative and effective pet care solutions in this ever-evolving market. This collaborative approach between service providers, researchers, and pet owners will ultimately contribute to the well-being of pets and provide peace of mind to their human companions in Bengaluru.

CONCLUSION:

Bengaluru's pet care industry is flourishing alongside its rising pet ownership rates. This research, employing a mixed-methods approach, identified key challenges faced by pet owners, primarily busy schedules demanding convenient services. Pet sitting, dog walking, and specialized care for pets with dietary restrictions or behavioural issues are in high demand. However, concerns regarding service quality and trust highlight the need for accreditation programs to build confidence.

The research also revealed the growing influence of technology, with pet care apps and wearable tech emerging as potential solutions for remote monitoring, scheduling, and communication. Embracing these advancements can significantly enhance pet well-being and address owner concerns.

In conclusion, Bengaluru's pet care industry is primed for growth. To thrive, service providers must prioritize convenience, high-quality care, and personalization. Building trust through qualified professionals and potentially exploring accreditation programs are crucial steps. Catering to pets with special needs and embracing technological innovations are also key aspects for success.

Looking forward, further research can delve deeper into specific pet care segments, explore the impact on pet well-being, and investigate the role of service providers in owner education. By fostering collaboration between service providers, researchers, and pet owners, Bengaluru can create a robust pet care ecosystem that ensures the well-being of pets and peace of mind for their loving companions. To cater this demand, service providers should prioritize building trust through highly qualified professionals, convenient, high-quality and personalized pet care services. Potentially exploring accreditation programmes. Additionally, catering to pets with special needs and embracing technologies advancement to enhance the treatment of pets, enhance the pet owner satisfaction.

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