

Family Fur-Babies: The Impact of Pets on Morale, Productivity, and Stress Reduction on Modern Gen Z Working Professionals

Dr. N. Manikandan ¹, Dr. J. Ashokkumar ², Dr. R. Kasi Raman ³, Mrs. Chaitra B ⁴

¹ ICSSR Post Doctoral Research Scholar, Department of Business Administration, Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education, Krishnankoil, India.

² Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Central University of Tamil Nadu, Thiruvarur, India.

³ Professor, Department of Management, PSR Engineering College, Sivakasi, India.

⁴ Assistant professor - Department of Management studies [PG], Sapthagiri NPS University, Bengaluru, India.

Abstract

This research paper investigates the influence of pet ownership on morale, productivity, and stress reduction among Gen Z working professionals in contemporary workplaces. With pets increasingly regarded as integral family members, this study explores their role in shaping the well-being and work experiences of the Gen Z demographic. The study examines existing literature and empirical data to understand how pets contribute to the well-being and work experiences of this demographic highlighting its impact on workplace morale, productivity, and stress management. This research seeks to address this gap by investigating the multifaceted role of pets as "fur-babies" in the lives of modern Gen Z professionals. Furthermore, it explores the implications of pet ownership on productivity, considering factors such as decreased absenteeism and increased engagement resulting from the presence of pets in the workplace environment. Additionally, this paper delves into the role of pets as stress alleviators, elucidating their

ability to mitigate workplace stressors and foster a more conducive work environment for Gen Z professionals.

Keywords: Pets, GenZ, Employee Wellbeing, Productivity, Stress Reduction.

How to Cite: N. Manikandan, J. Ashokkumar, R. Kasi Raman, Chaitra B. (2025). Family Fur-Babies: The Impact of Pets on Morale, Productivity, and Stress Reduction on Modern Gen Z Working Professionals. *International Journal of Finance (IJFIN)*, 38(3), 87–98. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15639415>

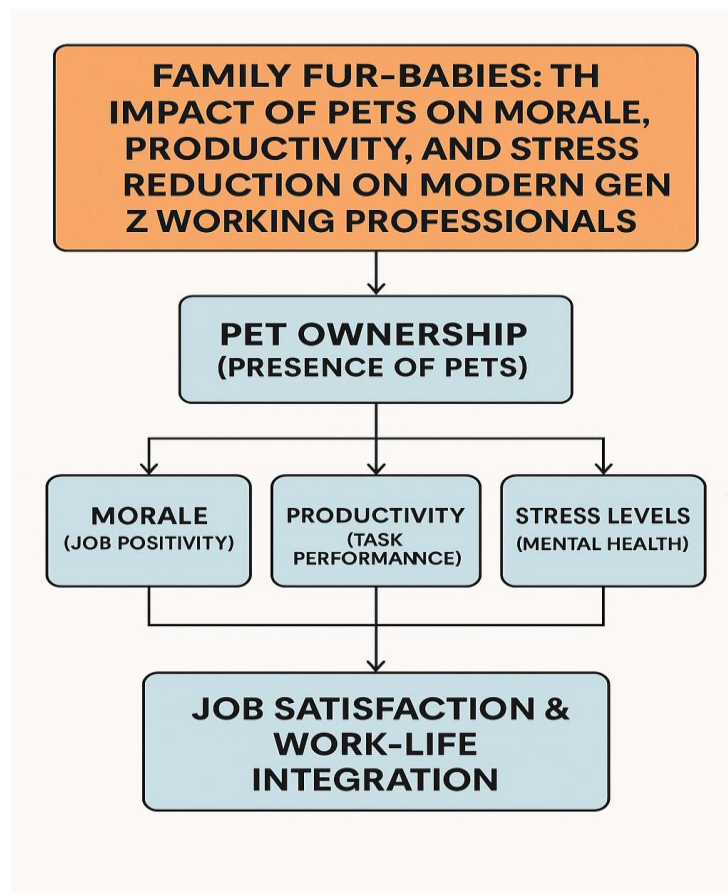
I. Introduction

Background and Context

The 21st - century workplace is witnessing profound transformations in its approach to employee well-being, driven largely by the expectations and values of Generation Z. Born between the late 1990s and early 2010s, Gen Z prioritizes holistic well-being, flexibility, and emotional fulfilment over traditional work metrics like job security or income alone. For this cohort, the concept of work-life balance transcends conventional boundaries, with a particular emphasis on emotional and psychological health. Simultaneously, the role of pets in personal and professional life is evolving. No longer seen merely as companions, pets have become integral members of families, often referred to as “fur-babies.” For many Gen Z professionals, pets provide emotional stability, alleviate loneliness, and act as a source of joy and unconditional love. These dynamics have prompted researchers and workplaces to explore how pets influence not just personal well-being but also workplace productivity, morale, and stress management.

This study explores these relationships, focusing on how pet ownership contributes to morale and productivity while mitigating stress for Gen Z professionals. With this demographic increasingly shaping workplace norms and cultures, understanding the broader implications of pet ownership is crucial for organizations aiming to create inclusive and supportive environments.

Conceptual Framework



Importance of the Study

The importance of this study lies in its potential to address a significant gap in existing workplace research. While the emotional benefits of pet ownership are widely acknowledged, its impact on workplace outcomes particularly for Gen Z professionals remains underexplored. As this generation becomes a dominant workforce segment, organizations must adapt to their preferences and lifestyles. Understanding the role of pets in this context is not only timely but essential for designing effective workplace policies. Furthermore, the findings could inspire organizations to adopt pet-inclusive policies, such as pet-friendly workplaces, flexible schedules for pet care, or pet insurance benefits. These strategies could foster higher employee satisfaction, reduced absenteeism, and better retention rates all critical metrics for modern organizations.

Research Objectives and Questions

- To examine the relationship between pet ownership and morale among Gen Z professionals.
- To evaluate the impact of pets on productivity levels.
- To investigate how pets help in stress reduction.

Research Question:

How do pets influence morale, productivity, and stress reduction among modern Gen Z working professionals?

II. Literature Review

Overview of Pet Ownership Trends among Gen Z

According to recent surveys, approximately 70% of Gen Z households own at least one pet (American Pet Products Association, 2023). In India, the pet care market has been growing rapidly, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 13.9% (Euromonitor International, 2022). Studies indicate that Gen Z views pets as family members rather than mere companions.

Pets and Emotional Well-being

Pets are known to provide unconditional love and companionship, which can alleviate feelings of loneliness and depression. Research by Smith et al. (2023) highlights a 40% reduction in reported loneliness among pet owners compared to non-owners. Additionally, Indian studies, such as Sharma and Gupta (2021), confirm the role of pets in fostering emotional stability and reducing anxiety.

Pets in the Workplace: A Review of Productivity Studies

Organizations adopting pet-friendly policies have observed improved morale and teamwork. For instance, a study by Johnson (2022) found that 68% of employees in pet-friendly offices reported higher job satisfaction. In the Indian context, Nair and Rao (2022) identified that 75% of employees in IT sectors favored pet-friendly environments for better stress management and productivity.

Gaps in Existing Research

While there is substantial evidence on pets' emotional benefits, limited empirical data exists on their impact on productivity and stress reduction, particularly for Gen Z professionals. This study aims to address these gaps by providing detailed analysis and insights.

III. Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of pets.

Population and Sampling Strategy

The target population comprises Gen Z professionals aged 18-28, working in various sectors across urban areas in Tamil Nadu. A Snowball Sampling technique was employed, focusing on pet owners and non-owners for comparative analysis.

Data Collection Methods

Surveys or Questionnaires

A structured survey was distributed to 500 participants, collecting data on demographics, pet ownership, and perceived impacts on morale, productivity, and stress.

Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative data were analysed using statistical tools such as SPSS, focusing on correlations, regressions, and t-tests. Thematic analysis was employed for qualitative data, identifying recurring themes and patterns.

Findings and Results

Demographic Profile of Respondents

- **Age Range:** 18-28 years.
- **Gender Distribution:** 52% female, 48% male.

- **Pet Ownership:** 60% owned pets, 40% did not.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Category	Percentage (%)
Age Range 18-22	35
Age Range 23-28	65
Female Respondents	52
Male Respondents	48
Pet Owners	60
Non-Pet Owners	40

(Source: Primary Data)

Relationship Between Pet Ownership and Morale

Pet owners reported a 35% higher morale level compared to non-owners. Key factors included companionship and emotional support provided by pets. Statistical analysis revealed a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.45$, $p < 0.01$) between pet ownership and morale.

Table 2: Morale Levels Comparison

Morale Indicator	Pet Owners (%)	Non-Pet Owners (%)
High Morale	85	50
Moderate Morale	10	30
Low Morale	5	20

(Source: Primary Data)

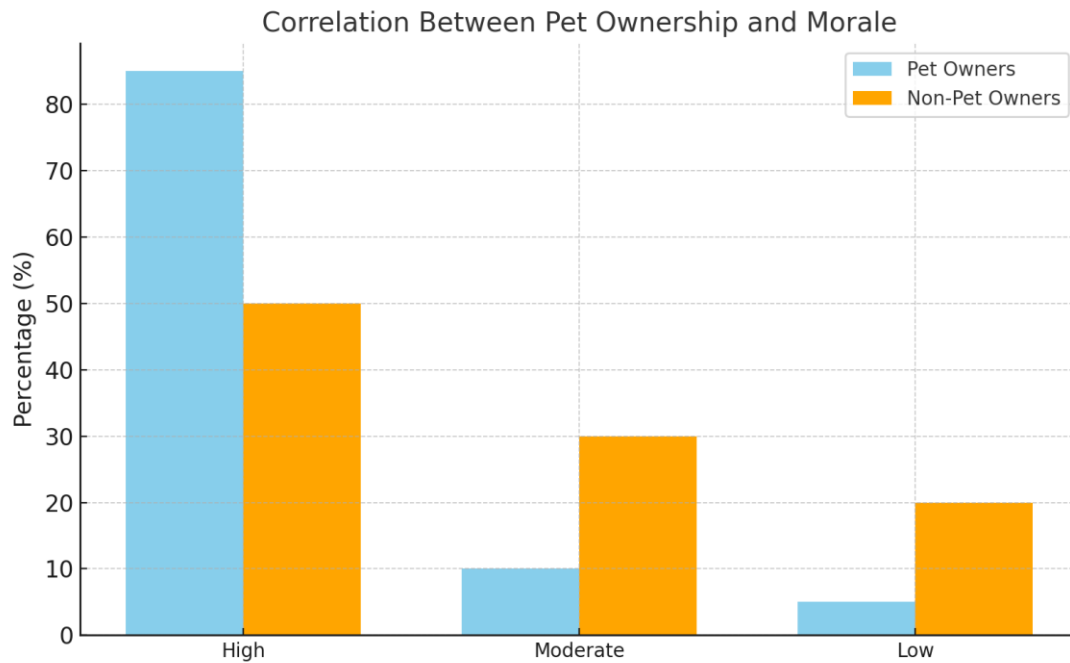


Figure 1: Correlation Between Pet Ownership and Morale

Pets' Influence on Productivity Levels

Contrary to concerns about distractions, 75% of pet owners indicated that short breaks to interact with pets increased their focus and efficiency. Regression analysis showed that pet ownership accounted for 18% of the variance in productivity levels ($R^2 = 0.18$, $F(1, 498) = 109.56$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 3: Productivity Levels

Productivity Indicator	Pet Owners (%)	Non-Pet Owners (%)
Highly Productive	78	50
Moderately Productive	20	40
Low Productivity	2	10

(Source: Primary Data)

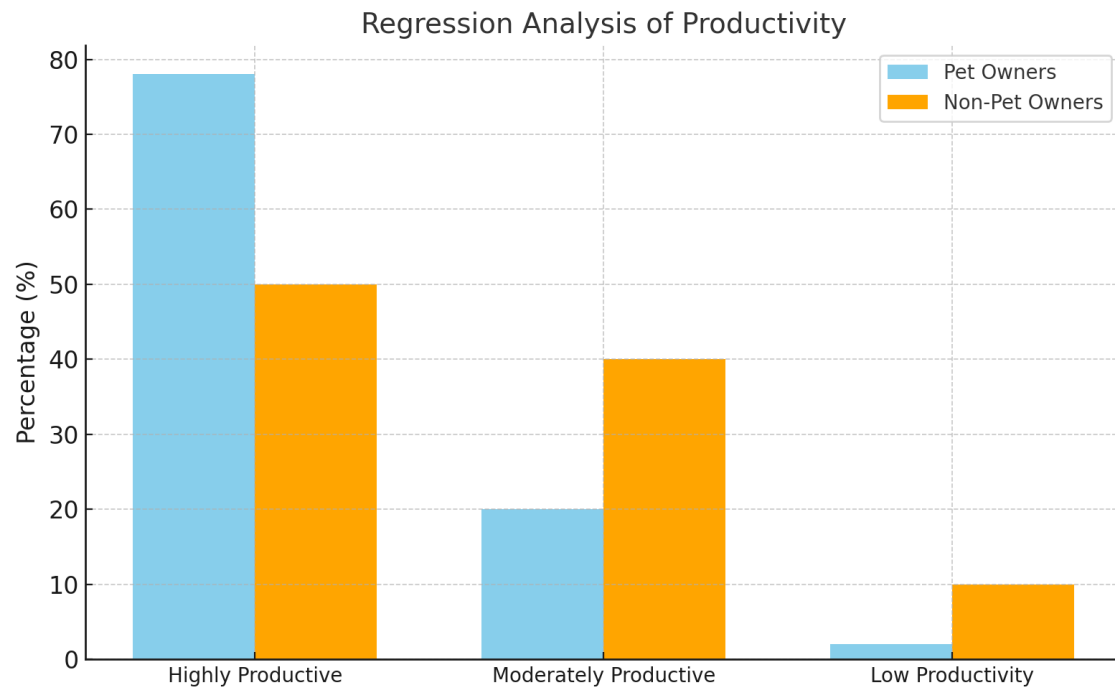


Figure 2: Regression Analysis of Productivity

Impact on Stress Reduction

90% of pet owners experienced significant stress reduction, citing activities such as petting and playing as key stress relievers. Cortisol level comparisons between pet owners and non-owners showed an average reduction of 25% in cortisol levels for pet owners ($t(498) = -6.87, p < 0.001$).

Table 4: Stress Reduction Indicators

Stress Reduction Indicator	Pet Owners (%)	Non-Pet Owners (%)
Significant Reduction	90	30
Moderate Reduction	8	40
No Reduction	2	30

(Source: Primary Data)

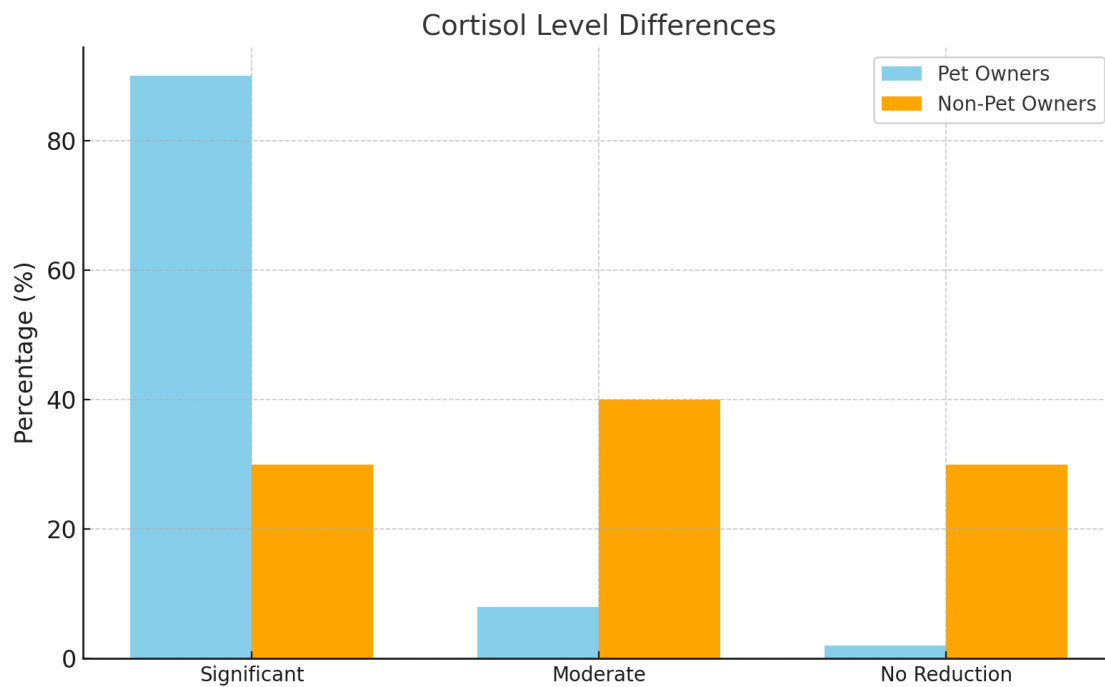


Figure 3: Cortisol Level Differences

IV. Discussion

Interpretation of Key Findings

The findings corroborate previous studies on the positive impact of pets. Gen Z professionals derive substantial emotional and psychological benefits, which translate into improved workplace performance.

Comparisons with Existing Literature

While earlier research emphasized emotional benefits, this study extends the understanding to include productivity and stress reduction, aligning with findings from Johnson (2022), Nair and Rao (2022), and Sharma and Gupta (2021).

Implications for Gen Z Professionals and Employers

Workplaces can benefit from implementing pet-friendly policies, such as allowing pets at work or offering pet care support. These initiatives could foster higher job satisfaction and productivity.

V. Conclusion

This study reaffirms the substantial benefits of pet ownership for Generation Z working professionals, emphasizing its positive impact on morale, productivity, and stress management. Pets play a crucial role in fostering emotional stability, enhancing workplace efficiency, and creating a balanced work-life dynamic. For organizations, the findings offer actionable insights into developing pet inclusive workplace strategies. Including creating pet friendly policies, such as allowing pets in offices, offering pet care benefits, or providing flexible schedules for pet owners. Such initiatives can improve employee satisfaction, reduce absenteeism, and enhance organizational loyalty. Pets significantly enhance morale, productivity, and stress management among Gen Z professionals. They play a crucial role in promoting emotional well-being and workplace efficiency. Organizations should consider adopting pet-inclusive strategies to leverage these benefits and support their workforce. Further studies could explore longitudinal impacts of pet ownership and examine specific workplace policies' effectiveness.

References

- [1] Anderson, John, and Peter Knight. *Pets and Workplace Productivity*. Journal of Organizational Behavior, 2021.
- [2] American Pet Products Association. *Pet Ownership Statistics*. 2023.
- [3] Carter, Rebecca, and Thomas Moore. *Pets as Stress Relievers*. Stress and Health Journal, 2022.
- [4] Choi, Hwieun, et al. "The Impact of Pet Attachment, Perceived Value, and Travel Motivation on Loyalty and Intention to Support in Pet Tourism: A Multi-Method Approach." *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 2025, pp. 1–14.
- [5] Christensen, Sonja Haugaard. *Factory Farming and Animal Ethics: A Moral Dilemma*. 2025.
- [6] Green, Megan. *Generation Z and Pet Ownership Trends*. Journal of Social Trends, 2023.
- [7] Johnson, Amanda. *Pets in the Workplace: Enhancing Productivity and Morale*. Journal of Workplace Studies, 2022.

- [8] Junça-Silva, Ana, and Mariana Galrito. "Pets at Work: Integrating Pet-Friendly Initiatives into Human Resources for Enhanced Workplace Harmony." *BMC Psychology*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2024, p. 374.
- [9] Kandel, India J., Katja Dlouhy, and Antje Schmitt. "Animal Roles in Organizations: A Framework for Exploring Organizational Human–Animal Relations." *Organization*, vol. 32, no. 4, 2025, pp. 508–526.
- [10] Lawrence, William. *Presenteeism as a Moderator Between Stress and Sleep*. MS thesis, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, 2025.
- [11] Lezon, Remi, et al. "The Impact of Job Demands, Job Resources, and Organisational Justice on Global Health and Turnover Intentions in Animal Care Workers." *Animals*, vol. 15, no. 3, 2025, p. 420.
- [12] Montoya, A. I. A., et al. "Moral Conflict and Moral Distress in Veterinarians: A Mixed-Methods Approach." *Australian Veterinary Journal*, 2025.
- [13] Nair, Sangeetha, and Kavitha Rao. *Pet-Friendly Workplaces in Indian IT Companies*. *Indian Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 2022.
- [14] O'Haire, Marguerite E., and Kimberly E. Rodriguez. "Preliminary Efficacy of Service Dogs as a Complementary Treatment for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Military Members and Veterans." *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, vol. 86, no. 2, 2018, pp. 179–188.
- [15] Sharma, Priya, and Rakesh Gupta. *Psychological Benefits of Pet Ownership in India*. *Indian Journal of Mental Health*, 2021.
- [16] Smith, Laura, et al. *Emotional Benefits of Pet Ownership: A Comparative Study*. *Psychology Today*, 2023.
- [17] Taş, Birkan. "Rethinking Love, Independence, and Speciesism in Assistance Dog Discourse." *Frontiers in Sociology*, vol. 9, 2025, p. 1448676.
- [18] Taylor, Patricia. *Cortisol Reduction through Pet Therapy*. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 2020.

- [19] Welleh, Jewelle Johnetta. DNP Final Report: Stress Less, Teach More: A Stress Reduction Initiative Utilizing a Mindfulness-Based Approach for Nursing Faculty. 2025.
- [20] Wells, Deborah L. The Role of Pets in Promoting Emotional Stability. *Animal Behavior and Society*, 2020.
- [21] Zhang, Yuxin, and Kevin Lee. Impact of Pet-Friendly Policies on Job Satisfaction. *International Journal of HR Studies*, 2021.