

Internship Proposal

Proposal By: Catarina Castro | ana.castro@ibmc.up.pt

Proposal At: 2024-02-28

Contact: ana.castro@ibmc.up.pt

Project Title:

Training my dog! Dog owners' knowledge, perceptions, and practices of dog training

Level:

Master Student

Project Summary:

Techniques used to train dogs can be grouped into two major training methods, referred to as aversive- or reward-based, according to whether or not aversive stimuli are used [1,2].

Currently, little is known regarding dog trainers' and dog owners' knowledge on dog behavior and learning theory and what governs the choice of training method [3-6].

This project aims to assess dog owners' knowledge, perceptions, and practices of dog training and training methods in Portugal. This study is a part of broader project exploring the knowledge level and the factors that affect the choice of dog training methods among dog trainers, veterinarians, and dog owners in the US, UK, Portugal, Sweden, and Brazil. The supervisors Ana Catarina Vieira de Castro and Anna Olsson lead the larger project.

A pen and paper questionnaire will be distributed via veterinary premises (hospitals and clinics) to owners bringing their dogs for routine exams or vaccinations, aiming at a total sample of 400 respondents.

Work to be developed by the student:

Survey translation from English to Portuguese (The English language questionnaire is currently being piloted in an online version (edinburgh.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/dog-training-survey-jb)).

Recruitment of premises and distribution of surveys

Checking visits/phone calls to the premises during data collection to ensure compliance.

Data analysis

References:

1. Guilherme-Fernandes, J, Olsson, IAS, Vieira de Castro, AC (2017) Do aversive-based training methods actually compromise dog welfare?: A literature review Applied Animal Behavior Science, 196: 1–12



- 2.Vieira de Castro, AC, et al (2020) Does training method matter? Evidence for the negative impact of aversive-based methods on companion dog welfare PLoS ONE; 15(12): e0225023
- 3.Warren-Smith, AK, McGreevy, PD (2008) Equestrian Coaches' Understanding and Application of Learning Theory in Horse Training Anthrozoös, 21(2): 153-162
- 4.Greenebaum, JB (2010) Training Dogs and Training Humans: Symbolic Interaction and Dog Training Anthrozoös, 23 (2), 129-141
- 5.Feng, LC, Howell, TJ, Bennett, PC (2018) Practices and perceptions of clicker use in dog training: A survey-based investigation of dog owners and industry professionals Journal of Veterinary Behavior, 23: 1-9
- 6.Herwijnen, IRv, et al (2018) The existence of parenting styles in the owner-dog relationship PLoS ONE; 13(2): e0193471