

Differences in the ownership of brachycephalic dog breeds and non-brachycephalic dog breeds. Preliminary results

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Abstract: Popularity of brachycephalic dog breeds is increasing internationally despite well-documented intrinsic health and welfare problems associated with their conformation [1,2]. A questionnaire was created to explore characteristics, expectations, motivations and perceived reality of dog-owners who purchase brachycephalic dog breeds (NBDOs) (i.e. English and French bulldog, and Pug) (BDOs) compared to dog-owners of non-brachycephalic dog breeds (NBDOs) [1,3]. Mann-Whitney U tests were performed. The sample totalled 728 respondents (320 BDOs; 408 NBDOs). Age range of BDOs resulted higher than NBDOs (45-54 years) ($P < 0.05$). In the brachycephalic group non-sterilized animals were the majority. 69% of dogs purchased from non-certified breeder and 88% purchased from web or shop belonged to brachycephalic breeds ($P < 0.05$). The most satisfied owners about commitment request had a non-brachycephalic breed (66%) whereas 52% of BDOs were more than satisfied with the general behaviour ($P < 0.05$). Regarding phalic dogs were attacked more frequently than non-brachycephalic ones by other dogs (73%) ($P < 0.05$). Regarding clinical disorders in brachycephalic group, the most frequent symptoms were snoring (39%) followed by breathing distress during hot climatic conditions. The most frequent diagnoses were gastroenteric disorders (22%) followed by neurologic disorders (21%) and BOAS (20%). 31% of brachycephalic dogs had undergone conformation-related surgeries. 44% of BDOs considered the health status of their dog as good. The main motivation for acquiring these breeds was the character (94%). These preliminary results are in line with other studies [4-6]. Further analysis will be performed to explore the dog-human relationship and behavioural aspects to expand the knowledge on the complex phenomenon of brachycephalic ownership.

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