

The Public's Perception on Banning Dog Breeds: Investigating the reasons the public agree and/ or disagree with the banning of dog breeds



TIN21086851@my.askham-bryan.ac.uk

Joel Tinkler

Introduction

Dog (*Canis Lupus Familiaris*) breeds have been banned in the UK since 1991 through the implementation of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, which aimed to ban dogs bred for fighting and including only breed types known as the pit-bull terrier and Japanese Tosa at the time (Legislation.gov.uk, 2014).

Researching the UK public's opinion on banning dog breeds will show how the public perceive the process of banning dog breeds and possibly result in better and more effective ways of preventing dog bites on humans and increase overall welfare of breeds within the UK.

Methods

- Created a questionnaire comprised of a mix of likert scales, open-ended and multiple-choice questions
- Approved by an ethics panel
- Distributed the questionnaire
- Collected the responses (n=127) and analyse the data using Minitab
- The data was analysed using Chi-squared tests.

Results

The data was run through a Chi-squared for association test, which showed that there is a significant association between perceptions of banning dog breeds and behaviours shown in a public and private setting (χ^2 , $\chi^2_1 = 9.220$, $p < 0.05$). (See Figure 1).

However, a Chi-squared for association test showed that there is not a significant association between perceptions of banning dog breeds and high mortality rates of different health conditions (χ^2 , $\chi^2_1 = 10.374$, $p > 0.05$). (See Figure 2).

Other results show that each age group are more likely to agree with banning a dog breed due to individual cases of health conditions that cause suffering other than the 18-24 demographic who are equally unsure as agreeable, and it was also found that the

majority of each age group are against banning dog breeds due to individual cases of aggression.

Discussion

These findings agree with other findings as Orritt et al., (2015) has found similar results suggesting that the public perceive behaviours shown in a public setting are more of a concern than behaviours seen in private and that members of the public are actually more likely to allow these behaviours to be shown in a private setting.

The results also suggest that the only health condition that most of the public agree with to be a good enough reason to ban a breed is breathing issues which was also found to be the case in a study by Packer and O'Neill (2021) which discusses the ban of breeding brachycephalic dogs in The Netherlands (See Figure 3).



Conclusion

The findings show that most people are not in favour of banning dog breeds, however, there seems to be more support for banning breeds based on health over behaviour; which is a significant finding as this is the complete opposite to what is currently done in most countries, including the UK, and could be due to health being massively linked to behaviour and welfare. It is also highlighted that most respondents agree to ban breeds due to breathing issues which aligns with findings from other studies. This study was justified by its own findings as well as other literature within the field, providing valuable results and potential for further research.

References

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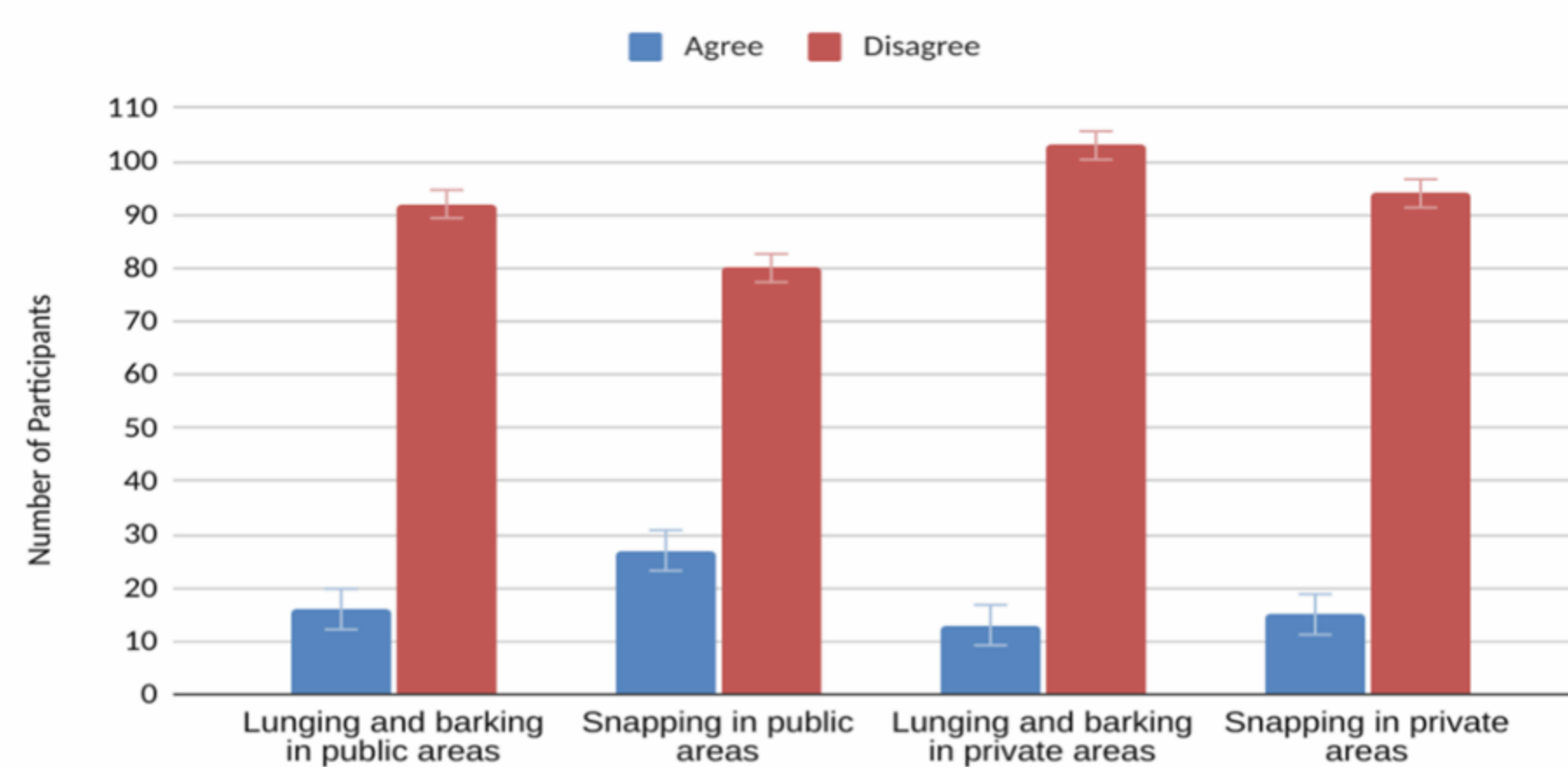


Figure 1: Public's Perception on Banning Dog Breeds Due to Behaviours (Source: Authors Own, 2024).

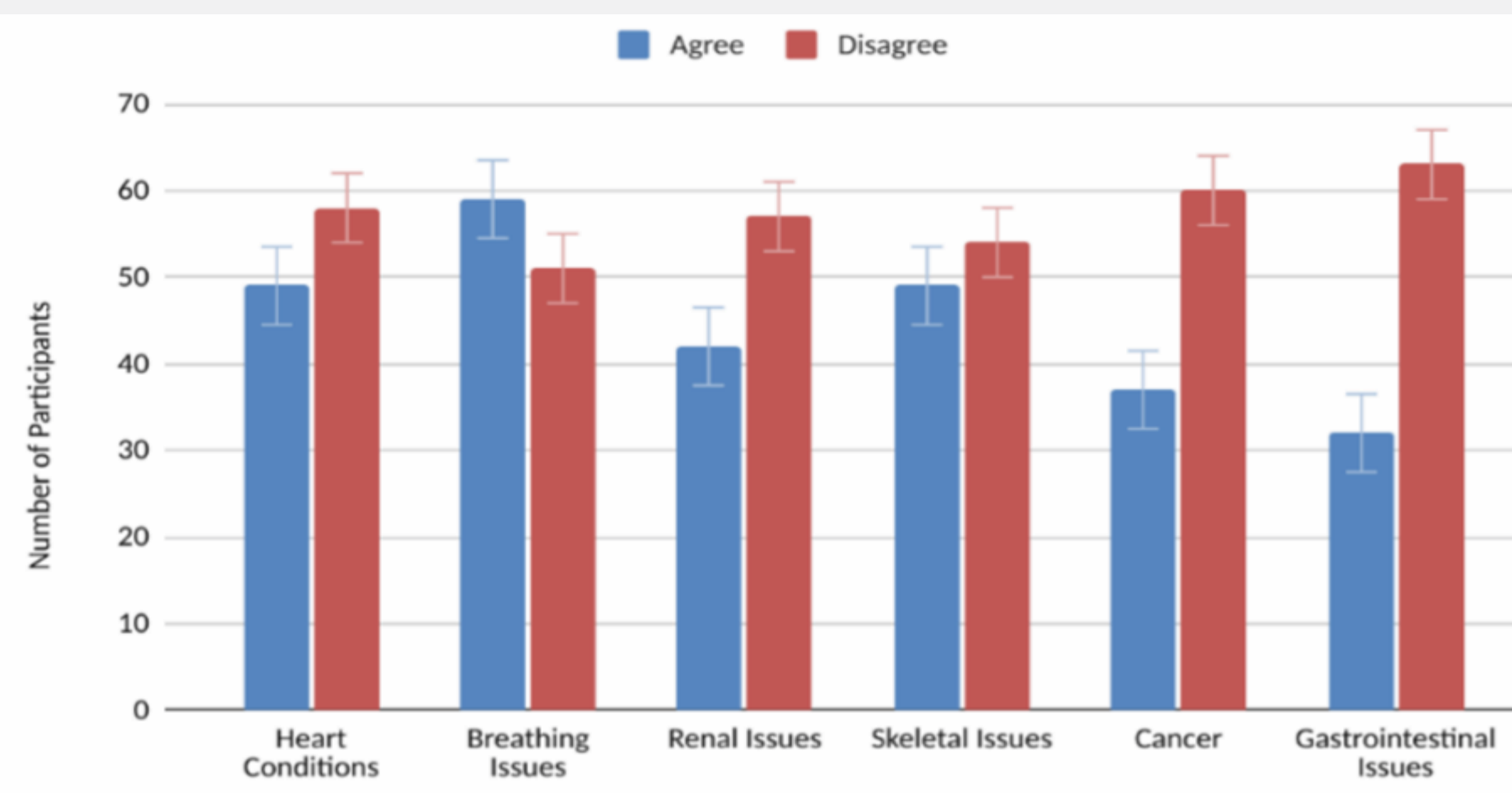


Figure 2: Public's Perception on Banning Dog Breeds Due to Health Conditions (Source: Authors Own, 2024).



Figure 3: English Bull Dog Skull Drawing (Source: Behance, 2021).