**Research Report**

Kathleen L. Munsell, Merle Canfield, Donald I. Templer,1 Kimberly Tangan, and Hiroko Arikawa

**Modification of the Pet Attitude Scale**

**ABSTRACT**

This study recruited 203 college students to help determine clarity and precision in the wording of four items in the Templer, Salter, Baldwin, Dickey, and Veleber (1981) Pet Attitude Scale (PAS). Half the college students received the original format, and half received the modified wording format. The correlation with total score did not differ for three of the pairs of items. For one of the items, the correlation was higher with the original wording. The 18-item Pet Attitude Scale—Modified retains the original wording for that item and uses the modified wording for the other three items.

The purpose of the present study was to make a minor modification of the Templer, Salter, Baldwin, Dickey, and Veleber (1981) Pet Attitude Scale (PAS). In the construction of this 18-item Likert format self-report instrument, a Chronbach’s Alpha of .93 and a test-retest reliability of .92 were reported. A meaningful factor structure was obtained resulting in three factors: (a) Love and Interaction accounting for 84.6% of the variance; (b) Pets in the Home accounting for 8.6% of the variance; and (c) Joy of Pet Ownership.
Meaningful correlations were obtained with the Eysenck Personality Inventory, the Allport-Vernon Lindsey Study of Values, the Personality Research Form, and an abbreviated form of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI). Finally, kennel workers were found to have significantly higher scores than social work students.

Subsequent research has extended the construct validity of the PAS and expanded our knowledge about pet attitudes. Schenck, Templar, Peters, and Schmidt (1994) found that the PAS scores of American adolescents correlated with those of their parents, with the mother-adolescent correlations being higher than the father-adolescent correlations. Al-Fayez, Awadalla, Templar, and Arikawa (2003) reported that the PAS score of both male and female Kuwaiti adolescents correlated more highly with those of their fathers than with scores of their mothers. Planchon and Templar (1996) and Planchon, Templar, Stokes and Keller (2002) found that persons who grieved more after the deaths of a pet had higher scores on the PAS. Moroi (1984) reported that loneliness correlated positively with the Joy of Pet Ownership factor of the PAS and negatively with the Love and Interaction and Pets in the Home factors. Jenkins (1986) used the PAS to determine positive regard toward dogs that participants petted to lower their blood pressure. Hama, Yogo, and Matsuyama (1996) found that persons with higher scores on the PAS had greater reduction in the mean arterial pressure and systolic pressure when petting horses. The research of Crowley-Robinson and Blackshaw (1998) reported that Animal-Assisted-Therapy staff with higher PAS scores were more upset when the therapy dog disappeared. The PAS were found to correlate positively with childhood animal bonding (Brown, 2000). The PAS was displayed as an example of a good psychometric instrument in a research methods laboratory manual for psychology (Langston, 2001).

It was brought to one of the author’s attention that there was an inconsistency with the format of the questions. Some of the questions were directed toward individuals who already had pets; whereas one of the questions had qualifiers for individuals who did not already own a pet. It was decided to correct this situation. A qualifier, “or would if I had one” was added to three existing items:
1. My pet means more to me than any of my friends (Item 2);
2. I have occasionally communicated with my pet and understood what it was trying to express (Item 8); and
3. I frequently talk to my pet (Item 16). Item 3 was modified from “I would like to have a pet in my home” to “I would like to have a pet, or to continue to have a pet, in my home.” Table 1 contains the original and modified items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Original Statement</th>
<th>Original Correlation</th>
<th>Modified Statement</th>
<th>Modified Correlation</th>
<th>Z-Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>My pet means more to me than any of my friends.</td>
<td>.555**</td>
<td>My pet means more to me than any of my friends (or would if I had one).</td>
<td>.692**</td>
<td>1.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I would like to have a pet in my home.</td>
<td>.634**</td>
<td>I would like a pet, or to continue to have a pet, in my home.</td>
<td>.390**</td>
<td>2.97*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I have occasionally communicated with my pet and understood what it was trying to express.</td>
<td>.682**</td>
<td>I have occasionally communicated with my pet and understood what it was trying to express (or would if I had one).</td>
<td>.681**</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I frequently talk to my pet.</td>
<td>.666**</td>
<td>I frequently talk to my pet (or would if I had one).</td>
<td>.652**</td>
<td>.173</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05 (2-tailed)
** p < .01 (2-tailed)
Method

Participants

Respondents were recruited from four general education undergraduate classrooms. A total of 295 questionnaires were handed out with 205 completed returns being collected. Two participants were excluded from the database because of obvious erroneous information, resulting in a total sample size of 203 participants (49 males, 151 females, and 3 unspecified) ranging in age from 17 to 55 years of age, with a mean age of 23.55 (SD = 7.42).

Procedure

Participants were administered either the original or modified PAS. Students were approached in their classes by one of the authors. Each participant was assured that participation was voluntary and was given information on how to contact the researcher. A consent form was attached to each of the scales. All participants who agreed to participate completed the task. Every other participant was given the original version of the PAS, while the remaining students were administered the modified version of the PAS. Demographic data pertaining to age and sex were collected.

Results

Chronbach alpha was .92 both with the original wording and the modified wording formats. It should be noted that the Chronbach alpha reported by Templer et al. (1981) was .92. Table 1 contains the item-total score correlation coefficients for the original and modified items 2, 3, 8, and 16. For item 3 the original correlation of .634 was significantly higher than the modified correlation of .390, Zr = 2.97, df = 98, p < .05.

Discussion

The findings provide reassurance about the original wording of the four questions under consideration. Even though the original wording is not scientifically precise, the participants apparently intuited the intended meaning of the item. For three of the items, the correlations of original and modified wording with total score did not differ. With one item, the correlation was actually significantly
higher with the original wording. A reasonable inference is that the original wording did not cause major problems. The basic integrity of the previous research with that format may be assumed.

On the other hand, the modified wording would appear to provide greater credibility to at least some participants, patients, researchers, and clinicians. The recommendation of the present authors is that the modified wording be used for items 2, 8, and 16, and that the original wording be returned for item 3. We call this format of the 18-item instrument the Pet Attitude Scale—Modified.

* Kathleen L. Munsell, Merle Canfield, Donald I. Templer, and Kimberly Tangan, California School of Professional Psychology-Fresno, Alliant International University, and Hiroko Arikawa, Forest Institute of Professional Psychology

**Note**

1 Correspondence should be sent to Donald Templer, Alliant International University, 5130 East Clinton, Fresno CA 93727. E-mail: dtempler@alliant.edu

**References**


