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Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Ms Narvekar Hemangi Narayan (Registration Number: 2071013), PhD scholar at the School of Psychological Sciences, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bangalore will defend her PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Thursday, 3 October 2024 at 11.00 am in Room No. 044, Ground Floor, R & D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru - 560029.

- Title of the Thesis** : **Efficacy of Canine-Assisted Therapy on Social Competence among Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder**
- Discipline** : **Psychology**
- External Examiner (Outside Karnataka)** : **Dr Krishan K Sony**
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- External Examiner (Within Karnataka)** : **Dr Rushi**
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- Supervisor** : **Dr Uma Krishnan**
Assistant Professor
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The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva-voce examination.

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 25 September 2024


Registrar

ABSTRACT

Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) because of their deficits in social competence often suffer a great deal in the community. Canine-assisted therapy (CAT) seems to be a useful approach to improve social functioning. This study aimed to investigate whether CAT can assist in improving the social competence of adults with ASD. The study employed an ABAB single-case experimental design with four participants. The social performance and social interactions with the therapy dog and therapist were the target measures of the study that were assessed using the Vellore Assessment of Social Performance and Animal-assisted Therapy Flowsheet. The baseline measures for the study were taken four times for 4 weeks for two baseline/reversal phases of the study. CAT was delivered by a trained dog along with a certified animal-assisted practitioner twice a week for 4 weeks for 45-60 minutes during two intervention phases.

The results were interpreted using descriptive, graphical and numerical analysis. The mean scores indicated improvement in social performance and social interaction scores in the intervention phases. The visual inspection showed similar results as indicated by the increasing trend line in intervention phases. The Non-overlap of All Pairs results showed a medium to strong effect of CAT in improving social performance. The results validated the use of CAT in the enhancement of social competence among adults with ASD. The study significantly contributed to the field of CAT as well as has implications for aiding the integration of adults with ASD into mainstream society by enhancing their social functioning.

Keywords: human-animal bond, animal-assisted intervention, dog-assisted therapy, neurodevelopmental disorder, developmental disabilities, social maturity

Publications:

1. Narvekar, H. N. (2023). A Reflection on the Current Status of Animal-Assisted Therapy in India. *Human Arenas*, 6(4), 760-775. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42087-021-00250-x>
2. Narvekar, H. N. & Ghani, S. (2022). Animal-Assisted Therapy for the Promotion of Social Competence: a Conceptual Framework. *Human Arenas*, 1 -10. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42087-022-00313-7>
3. Narvekar, H. N. & Narvekar, H. N. (2022). Canine-assisted Therapy in Neurodevelopmental Disorders: A Scoping Review. *European Journal of Integrative Medicine*, 102-112. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eujim.2022.102112>
4. Narvekar, H. N. & Ghani, S. (2022). Ethical Issues in Animal-Assisted Therapy. *Global Bioethics Enquiry*. <https://globalbioethicsenquiry.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/VP1-ANIMAL-ASSISTED-THERAPY.pdf>

Book Chapters:

1. Narvekar, H. N., & Krishnan, U. (2023). Animal-assisted Therapy for Children and Adolescents with Neurodevelopmental Disorders: A Review. In S. Gupta (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Child and Adolescent Psychology Practices and Interventions*. IGI Global Publishing.
2. Narvekar, H. N., & Ghani, S. (2023). Animal-Assisted Therapy in the Multidisciplinary Management of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. In P. Varma, P. Rai & A. Ranjan (Eds.), *Alternative Therapies Across Ages: A Psychological Perspective* (pp. 35-52). Reliance Publishing House.