



Dog exposure in Swedish babies

Factors associated with dog ownership in Swedish families with children

Aim

The project was aimed to identify regional and socio-economic factors associated with dog ownership in Swedish families with children.

Material and Methods

- The study population consisted of all babies born in Sweden during 2010
- Data was achieved through record linkage between the Total Population Registry, the LISA databases at Statistics Sweden (area of residence, income and education), and dog ownership data from the Swedish Kennel Club Register and the Swedish Board of Agriculture Register
- A logistic model was used to assess the associations of regional and socio-economic predictor variables with dog ownership
- Categorical predictor variables tested were area of residence, family disposable income the year before birth (quintiles 1-5, where 1 was low and 5 was high) and the education level of the mother. The age of the mother at birth was included in the model as a continuous variable.



Results

In 2010, 14.3% (15,826 out of 110,623) of the Swedish families with newborns were dog owners. Living in Stockholm, higher maternal age and higher maternal education were independently associated with lower odds of dog exposure.

Multivariable logistic regression model for dog ownership in 110,623 Swedish families with new-born children in 2010.

Effect	Level	Estimate	S.E.	P*	OR	95%CI
Geographic region	North	0.62	0.02	<.0001	3.68	3.45, 3.93
	Middle	0.11	0.02		2.21	2.09, 2.34
	South	-0.04	0.01		1.91	1.82, 2.01
	Stockholm				ref	
Family income	quintile 1	-0.40	0.02	<.0001	0.67	0.63, 0.72
	quintile 2	0.14	0.02		1.15	1.09, 1.22
	quintile 3	0.15	0.02		1.17	1.10, 1.24
	quintile 4	0.12	0.02		1.13	1.07, 1.20
	quintile 5				ref	
Mother's education	compulsory	0.16	0.02	<.0001	1.75	1.64, 1.86
	secondary	0.24	0.01		1.9	1.83, 1.97
	higher				ref	
Mother's age		-0.02	0.002	<.0001	0.98	0.97, 0.98

* Significance of main effect

Comments

Dogs serve as important sources of social support, providing many positive psychological and physical benefits for their owners. Hence, it is important to gain better knowledge on factors associated with dog ownership in order to properly assess associations between dog ownership and human health. This study displays several regional and socio-economic parameters associated with dog ownership.