



The effect of mimicry pet attachment behavior on college students' happiness

--Take short social media videos as an example

Yang Diwen

College of Literature and Journalism Inner Mongolia University Hohhot Inner, Mongolia,
010030, China

wuyuzhijun@qq.com

Abstract. With the growing number of social media users, people's lives are increasingly dominated by the Internet. Along with the public's love for pets, more and more pet content appears on social media platforms. Does mimicry pet attachment behavior have a positive effect on emotions and even solve corresponding psychological problems? Does pet attachment level have an impact on this? This paper uses experimental method to explore the impact of watching short videos of mimicry pets on the overall happiness of college students. It was determined that mimicry pet attachment behavior enhanced the overall well-being of college students, and the effects of the experimental results were compared with those of real pet interaction. The purpose of this paper is to open up new ways to use social media and short videos, and to find new ways to intervene in college students' negative emotions and psychological problems.

Keywords: Mimicry pet attachment, social media, college student psychology, happiness

1 Introduction

1.1 Topic Selection Background

According to the 51st Statistical Report on the Development of China's Internet, as of December 2022, the number of Internet users in China reached 1.067 billion, an increase of 35.49 million over December 2021, and the Internet penetration rate reached 75.6%. With the development of the Internet, people's lives are gradually occupied by the Internet, and the users of social media are also increasing. The influence of social media on people's lives and themselves cannot be ignored, and the uses of social media are gradually opened up more widely.

Among them, short video communication is an indispensable part of social media content. On March 29, 2023, the Research Report on the Development of Internet Audiovisual in China (2023) showed that the number of short video users in China reached 1.012 billion, and the content types were extremely wide, penetrating into various

Internet users. Short video "short, flat, fast" large traffic transmission content, can quickly complete and profound effective information to the user.

According to the "China Urban Pet Consumption Report 2022", 70.43 million urban pet owners (dogs and cats) in 2022, an increase of 2.9% over 2021. As the number of pet owners increases year by year and the pet consumption market continues to expand, more and more content about pets appears on social media and is widely spread.

The phenomenon of "cloud pet rearing" is becoming more and more common, and the phenomenon of mimicry pet attachment based on social media is gradually increasing. Whenever they brush the mimicry pet video, many netizens say that they have many different positive emotions accordingly. Therefore, it is worth exploring how short videos of mimicry pets in social media will affect users.

1.2 Significance and purpose of the topic

College students are in a sensitive, immature stage of mental development, self-mediation ability is weak, in the face of various aspects of pressure and impact, more likely to produce psychological problems. The traditional intervention of college students' mental health has discontinuity and hysteresis, and it is usually possible to take intervention measures after students have psychological problems for a period of time and have obvious abnormal performance. In the era of "Internet +", with the popularization of information technology, every student on campus receives a variety of information every day. If mimic pet attachment behavior can make college students feel happy, college students can adjust their emotions in this direction and take relevant measures in time. Exploring in this direction may open up a new use for social media and provide new ideas for solving the mental health problems of college students.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Related Concepts

"Mimicry pet attachment", proposed by Xiao Yuehua (2020), refers to a new pet attachment relationship formed between people and pets based on social media, which contains online intimacy fantasy and identification. In contrast to traditional pet attachment, mimicry pet attachment can occur both in people who have pets and in people who do not. Social media breaks the traditional model and distance between people and pets, creating a new type of attachment relationship between people and pets in the network air that is "not a breeding relationship like a breeding relationship" [1,2].

Mimicry pet attachment behavior is specifically manifested as an individual continuously and frequently browsing pet-related pictures, videos, and texts on social media, and communicating and interacting with other pet owners or pet lovers on social media, showing the group characteristics of online intimacy fantasy and intimate identification of pets.

2.2 Related Research

Since the theory of attachment was first proposed, it was first applied to the study of the relationship between parents and children, lovers and friends. In the relationship between people, attachment theory reveals the behavioral characteristics of individuals seeking intimate contact objects to obtain emotional support, comfort and trust protection, and summarizes the core characteristics of attachment behavior, attachment behavior system and attachment complex gradually developed by individuals from childhood, such as the attachment relationship formed between infants and their primary caregivers.

In recent years, the attachment relationship between people and pets has also received attention from scholars. Some scholars claim that pets are a natural attachment object and are more appropriate than inanimate or abstract or symbolic objects. Pet attachment refers to a kind of long-lasting emotional connection between pet owners and pets. In this kind of interaction, pet owners can feel emotional comfort and trust protection from pets, and obtain psychological support and satisfaction. After many scholars have demonstrated that pets can provide good emotional value, and a good human-pet relationship can bring spiritual help to people [3].

Due to the limitation and influence of attachment relationship on psychotherapy, seeking a new perspective has become a necessary development and research direction.

With the development of social media and the Internet, the behavior of "cloud pet rearing" has gradually become a hot trend, and mimicry pet attachment has emerged, and research in this direction has gradually increased. Zhang Liancheng (2018) believes that the craze of "cloud raising cats" is a way for contemporary young people to express themselves and vent their emotions [4]. To a certain extent, "cloud pet rearing" on the Internet can affect individuals' positive emotions and life satisfaction, but has no significant regulating effect on negative emotions [5]. Through the gentle way of cloud suction cat, you can relieve your sense of depression, find like-minded users with you, redefine yourself, gain a sense of belonging in the community gathered by lovers, get rid of the anxiety and loneliness brought by modern society, and produce a sense of satisfaction together [6]. Foreign scholars have also studied the regulating effects of viewing animal videos on social media on human emotions and behaviors, such as the enjoyment of watching cat videos and self-monitoring [7].

3 Experimental Design

3.1 Sample Selection

This study used experimental methods to explore the effects of social media mimicry pet videos on viewers' overall well-being. In a comprehensive university in mainland China, 30 college students were recruited to participate in the experiment. The average age of the students was 21.3 years old, with 12 male students and 18 female students. The experimenter published recruitment information on campus, inviting college students to volunteer to participate in the experiment. The main content of the recruitment information was: "We are conducting a study on the general happiness of college

students, and we are now recruiting volunteers", and only a very general description of the experiment content was given, so as to avoid subjects from choosing whether to participate in the experiment according to their interests, which would affect the final result of the experiment.

3.2 Tool Selection

General Well-Being Schedule Scale (GWB Scale) and Lexington Attachment to Pets Scale (LAPS Scale) were used.

The General Well-Being Schedule Scale was proposed by Fazio (1977) as a standardized measurement tool developed for the National Center for Health Statistics of the United States to evaluate the participants' statements about happiness. Chinese scholar Duan Jianhua compiled the scale into the Chinese version in 1996. The feasibility test was carried out [8,9]. The measurement personnel are college students, and the credit is good, which is more suitable for the use of this experiment.

Lexington Attachment to Pets Scale, compiled by Lexington in 1992, is used to assess the degree of intimate relationship between people and pets [10]. The higher the LAPS score, the higher the pet attachment degree. This scale is the most widely used pet attachment scale at present. This experiment was used to determine the relationship between the experimental results and the degree of pet attachment.

3.3 Experimental process

Before the experiment, the total happiness scale and pet attachment scale were measured for each college student volunteer, and the data were recorded.

The experiment was set for 4 weeks. Thirty volunteers were divided into two experimental groups: the first group of 10 people had contact and interaction with real pets every day; The second group of 20 people watched 20 or more (recorded number) short videos of mimicry pets on social media every day, and the videos were randomly selected by the volunteers.

After the experiment, the scale was measured again, and the results were compared with the data before the experiment. After the experiment, we communicated with the volunteers to understand their subjective feelings during the experiment.

4 Conclusions

4.1 The impact of social media mimicry pet short videos on college students' overall well-being

After comparative analysis of the data before and after the experiment, the short video of mimicry pets on social media has a certain positive impact on the overall happiness of college students, and can play a role in increasing the main door mood.

Among them, 5% of the volunteers' happiness improved greatly, 60% of the volunteers' happiness improved to some extent, and the rest of the volunteers' happiness remained unchanged or slightly decreased.

4.2 Comparison of the impact of social media mimicry pet short video and real pet interaction on the overall well-being of college students

Real pet interaction also has a positive effect on the overall well-being of college students. Compared with watching videos, real interaction has a more prominent effect on the well-being of college students.

It is worth noting that there were also some volunteers whose overall happiness did not change much. After communication, some volunteers said that "they have been accustomed to facing their pets, and it is really fresh", thinking that they did not have many emotional fluctuations during the experiment.

4.3 Relationship between pet attachment degree and its impact on overall well-being

Through the analysis of the experimental data, there is a certain two-way positive correlation between the degree of pet attachment and the impact on the overall happiness.

Although the data variables were small, the experimental results showed that the volunteers with higher pet attachment degree had a stronger impact on their overall well-being than those with real pets who interacted with short pet videos on social media. At the same time, most of the volunteers whose interaction with real pets on social media had a positive impact on their overall well-being also had a slight increase in pet attachment.

5 Problems and Prospects

5.1 Other Video Content

The experiment only stipulates that the subjects need to watch a certain number of mimicry pet videos in the corresponding period, but there is no restriction on other types of videos. In other video types, such as game videos, funny videos and other types of videos can also stimulate happy emotions, satisfy emotions and other positive emotions that can be transformed into happiness; Some horror videos and anti-counterfeiting videos may also cause negative emotions that reduce happiness. Due to the limited experimental conditions, the influence of watching other types of videos on subjects' happiness was not excluded in this experiment.

5.2 Social and life factors

In this experiment, it is worth noting that one of the subjects broke up with his lover during the experiment observation period, which caused his happiness to decline after

the experiment and did not obey the predicted results. At the same time, after detailed communication and understanding, it was learned that after experiencing a breakup, watching mimicry pet videos and interacting with real pets did not have a great tendency to relieve or eliminate negative emotions. In addition to the effects of watching videos on subjects' emotions and happiness, the social and life events that subjects face will also have an impact on them. Due to the limitations of experimental conditions, this experiment could not take into account the influence of social and life factors on the final results of the experiment, and we will find ways to improve it later.

5.3 Measurement Scale

General Well-Being Schedule Scale is based on a one-month period and can only measure changes in mood and happiness over a longer period of time. Although the subjects continued to watch short videos of mimicry pets on social media and interact with real pets, their immediate or short-term emotional changes could not be measured, which would affect the final measurement effect to some extent. If conditions permit, we can try to use relevant measuring devices to measure immediate changes in mood or happiness in the future, and perhaps the experimental results will be more intuitive and accurate.

References (APA format)

1. Xiao Yuehua. (2020). Mimicry Pet Attachment based on Social media: Intimacy substitution and Fantasy on the Cloud. *Southeast communication* (11), 28-32. Doi: 10.13556 / j.carol carroll nki DNCB. Cn35-1274 / j. 2020.11.009.
2. Xiao Yuehua. (2021). Motivational Impact of Social media-based mimicry Pet Attachment Behavior: The mediating role of online Social Support (Master's Thesis, Jinan University).
3. Shi Y Y. (2022). The effect of keeping pets on human mental state. *Statistics and Applications*, 11(5), 1084-1094.
4. Zhang Liancheng. (2018). Analysis on the craze of "cloud raising cats" on social media network. *New media studies* (02), 55 and 56. Doi: 10.16604 / j.carol carroll nki issn2096-0360.2018.02.023.
5. Ren, W. & Zhao, W. (2020). The relationship between online "cloud pet rearing" and emotion and life satisfaction. *Think Tank Times* (04), 236-237.
6. Sun R. (2019). A study on the culture of "cloud sucking cats" from the perspective of Hierarchy of Needs Theory: A case study of college students in Beijing. *New media studies* (15), 76-77. The doi: 10.16604 / j.carol carroll nki issn2096-0360.2019.15.027.
7. Radha O'Meara. (2014). Do Cats Know They Rule YouTube? Surveillance and the Pleasures of the Cat Videos. 10.5204 / MCJ. 794. March 2014 m/C Journal, 17 (2)
8. Fazio, A. F. (1977). A concurrent validation study of the NCHS General Well -Being Schedule. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.
9. Duan Jianhua. (1996). Trial results and analysis of global happiness Scale in Chinese college students. *Chinese Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 4(1), 56-57.
10. JOHNSON, TP, GARRITY, TF, STALLONES, &L. (1992). PSYCHOMETRIC EVALUATION OF THE LEXINGTON ATTACHMENT TO PETS SCALE (LAPS). *ANTHROZOOS*, 5(3), 160-175.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

