

Generalization of a Theory of Suicidal Behavior for Pet Owners

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INTRO:

- Interpersonal Psychological Theory of Suicidal Behavior (IPTS; Joiner, 2005) states 3 conditions to dying to suicide:
 - Thwarted Belongingness (feelings of isolation)
 - Perceived Burdensomeness (thought lives will not be missed)
 - Acquired Capability (ability to self-harm)
- Typically studied in health-care professionals (a high risk population for all 3 conditions)
- Current study: Do these factors similarly affect pet-owners? Does frequency, intensity, and amount of time since pet’s health concerns predict the 3 conditions?
- Are there mediating factors between pet health concerns and the 3 conditions? For example:
 - Anthropomorphism (seeing human qualities in non-human objects)
 - Person Orientation/Thing Orientation (PO/TO; being interested in people or in things)

METHODS

- 488 participants from Mechanical Turk
- Participants completed 14 different questionnaires via SurveyMonkey measuring:
 - Asked to describe their pet ownership
 - Includes frequency, recency, and severity of pet health issues
 - Suicide ideation and capability
 - What interpersonal needs are met
 - PO/TO measure
 - Depression, Stress, Anxiety
 - Attachment Style
 - Anthropomorphism scale
 - Self-concept scale (closeness of self to pet)



The more you take care of your pet’s health may mean you are generally less interested in people. However, explains why pet owners may be at risk for suicide.



Take a picture to have access to full correlation results

Results

(reflect the most interesting and consistent findings)

Correlation Coefficients		
	IPTS Outcome Variables	
Pet Ownership Predictors	Interpersonal Needs Questionnaire: Perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness	Acquired Capability for Suicide Scale: Physical capacity for self-harm
Routinely take pet to veterinarian? (1 = Yes, 2 = No)	.229***	.005
Note. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001		

The less often one routinely takes their pet to the veterinarian, the more perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness they perceive.

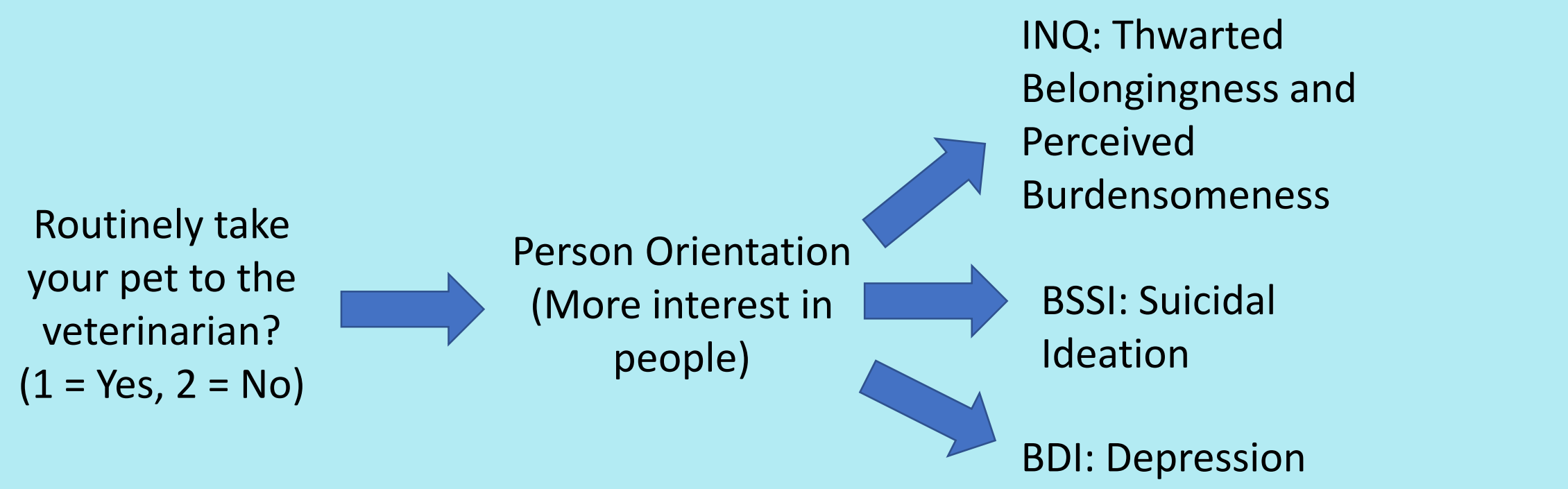
Correlation Coefficients									
	Other Outcome Variables								
Pet Ownership Predictors	BSSI: Suicidal Ideation	BAI: Anxiety	PSS: Stress	BDI: Depression	PO: Person Oriented	TO: Thing Oriented	ADOSC: Pet as part of self-concept	IDAQ: Anthropomorphism	
Routinely take pet to veterinarian? (1 = Yes, 2 = No)	.118**	.087	.125*	.148***	-.128**	-.038	-.245***	-.071	
Pet ever sick enough to require emergency care? (1 = Yes, 2 = No)	-.030	-.106*	-.071	-.080	-.139**	.000	-.165***	-.066	
Symptoms mild, moderate, or severe? (1 = Mild, 2 = Mod, 3 = Severe)	.006	.104*	.116	.058	.092	.006	.138**	-.002	
Note. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001									

The less often one routinely takes their pet to the veterinarian, the more suicidal ideation, stress, and depression. The less often one routinely takes their pet to the veterinarian, the more likely they are interested in people and the more the pet is a part of their self-concept.

Correlation Coefficients		
	IPTS Outcome Variables	
Other Variable Predictors	Interpersonal Needs Questionnaire	Acquired Capability for Suicide Scale
BSSI	.643***	.219***
BAI	.568***	.476***
PSS	.576***	.383***
BDI	.782***	.531***
PO	-.232***	.106*
Note. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001		

Correlation Coefficients	
Other Variable Predictors	PO: Person Oriented
BSSI	-.114*
BAI	.026
PSS	-.027
BDI	-.119*
Note. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001	

The more person oriented you are, the less burdensome and thwarted belongingness one perceives (but more suicide capability). The more person oriented you are, the less suicide ideation and the less depressed.



Person Orientation partially mediates the relationships between routinely taking your pet to the veterinarian and perceived depression, suicidal ideation, and perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness. The more often you take your pet to the vet, the less likely you will be person oriented. Subsequently, the less person oriented you are, the more thwarted belongingness and burdensomeness you will perceive to be, the more suicidal ideation you will perform, and the more depressed you will be.