

Category 4 resource development

Group 4-401
Mixed & Match

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Abstract

Mixed and matched is an initiative that aims to promote adoption instead of the purchasing of pets, as well as the adoption of mixed breeds instead of pure breeds. We chose to do this as getting more to adopt will save many dogs' lives. What does this mean? Well, many animals in animal shelters are euthanized as in the animal shelters, there are issues of overcrowding and concerns over costs of food, and other essentials for the animals. By adopting, one can give animals in a shelter a happy life, instead of relegating it to a bleak future. Our second aim is to rectify the stereotype that mix breeds are somehow inferior to purebreds, and by doing so, we hope to be able to significantly boost the number of adopted mix breed from shelters as according to The Humane Society Of United States, out of the 6-8 million dogs brought in each year, about 75% of dogs are mix breeds, and these are the dogs that are less likely to be adopted due to stereotypes of how pure breeds are "healthier" and have "better temperament".

Introduction

Rationale:

While getting a dog, most will go to pet shops, and breeders first, as their dogs are often seen as "newer" and "better", while dog shelters are seen as "dirty" and "handicapped". This mindset results in a large demand for "pure breeds" from commercial breeders that often only focus on the amount of puppies "produced" and little care for their health, well being, and living conditions. This all happens even as the dogs are neglected and not given sufficient attention. We would like to change this lose-lose situation and get people to see adopting mix breeds as a more viable choice, or at least as being more appealing.

Objectives:

- To break the stereotype of pure bred superiority

- To promote adopting as an alternative to buying dogs from pet shops

Target audience:

Potential dog owners

Resources:

- Posters
- Instagram account
- A website

Review

There are some organizations that hold annual adoption drives that educate its members and some public members on this, but the outreach is not enough, with only a few hundred attending the events. The perception of pure bred superiority is one that is evident but not acknowledged or acted upon. Thus we feel that there could be more outreach about this issue, especially among the younger generation so that this situation can be improved.

Methodology

Firstly, we decided to detail a list of issues that we hope to make improvements on. We then narrowed it down to this current issue. Secondly, we then made a survey that ascertained and affirmed that there is really a need for our project needs of the project. Subsequently, we checked on the effectiveness of our resources. Lastly, we also gathered information on how to improve on our plans. After that, we then contacted several animal shelters and dog lovers societies, like Purely Adoption, ASD, Mutts and Mittens, and Exclusively Mongrels. In the end, we decided to partner with Exclusively Mongrels. We then carried out an interview with the founder of Exclusively Mongrels. In the interview, we asked him why he decided to start his association, if he thinks the current efforts to encourage the public to adopt mixed breeds are enough and, if the

present initiatives are insufficient, how we could make further improvements on the issue.

Survey and interview results

Interview

In the interview with Kevin Neo, the creator of Exclusively Mongrels, we asked several questions, as shown below.

--What made you want to start "Mongrels Exclusively"?

He felt that not enough was done for Mongrels especially because they have a bad reputation.

--Do you think the current effort is enough?

"It has come a long way since the start but it still isn't there yet, and definitely every little bit helps."

--how serious is this problem now and how much can it impact the dogs if it isn't addressed?

"It can affect the lives of hundreds of dogs and possibly other animals, and makes the difference between them left unloved and abandoned or finding a loving home and living a happy life."

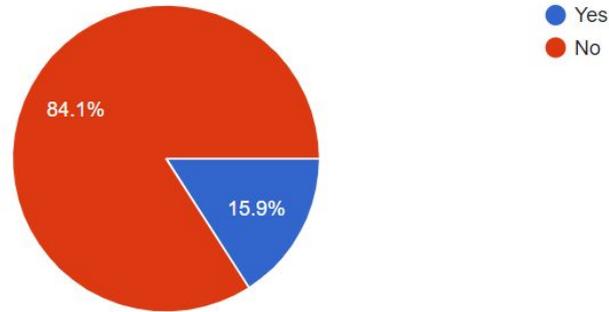
Survey

This survey was conducted to find out if there is a real need for our project. It was also to find out the effectiveness of our resource package, and lastly to receive some feedback.

In the graph below, we first asked participants if they own a dog, as we wanted to find out the amount of purebreds versus mix breeds that are adopted or sold already.

Do you currently own a dog?

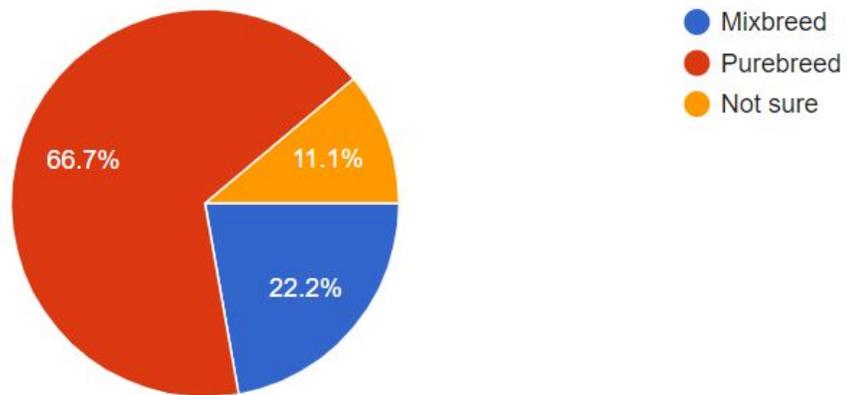
44 responses



We then asked the dog owners what type their dogs are, and the results are shown below.

If yes for the above question, is your pet a mixbreed or purebreed?

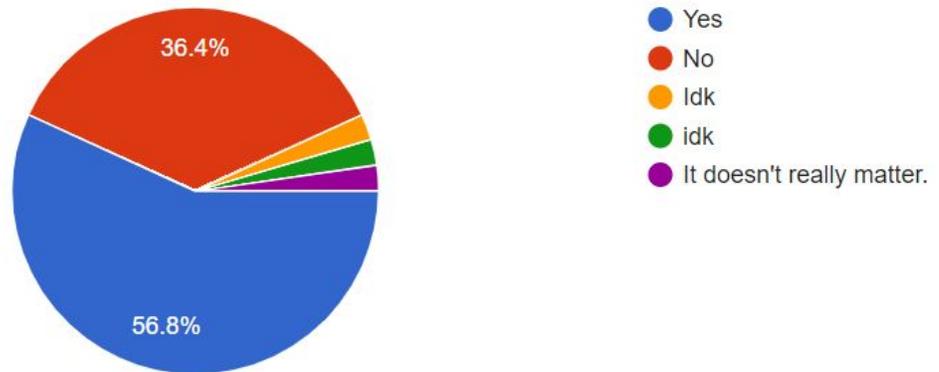
9 responses



We then asked all participants whether they favoured purebreds more, in terms of appearance, temperament, and overall appeal. The results showed that more than half of the respondents felt more inclined to purebreds, while 6.8 percent are not sure. Slightly more than a third of respondents did not favour purebreds more.

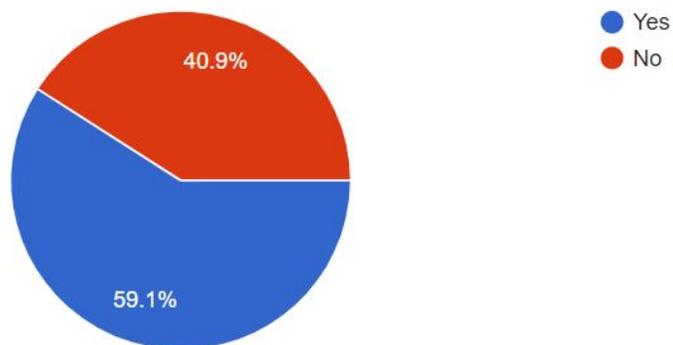
Do you favour purebreeds more? (eg. golden retrievers, german shepherds)

44 responses



After seeing these posters, has your perception about mixbreeds and purebreeds been changed?

44 responses



We then showed them 2 of our posters, to see if their perception has been changed, and a large number of respondents felt that their perspective has shifted. Do take note that the unchanged amount also includes the respondents who do not favour purebreeds more.

Development of resources

We have read through and gathered information from several reputable organisations websites and year end reports from SPCA, and we have gathered the data into a summarised and easy-to-understand form along with our purpose and other resources into a website. Our other resources are fun and informative posters and a website where we post regularly to educate our peers while they scroll through social media everyday.

Outcome and discussion

Although we have tried to raise awareness through the posters, it has not been very successful in conveying our message and convincing enough to change their mindsets, so we felt that we could have made it better. Secondly, we could have collaborated more consistently with our partners Exclusively mongrels, or collaborated on more projects together like a potential merchandise sale. Lastly, we could have made our website more interactive as it makes it more engaging and enables people to absorb the information in their own way which helps them to remember the message longer and at a faster rate.

Conclusion

Mixed and match has been a meaningful project to do because it concerns an issue that we are passionate about and it also promotes the welfare of dogs in Singapore, and as a dog lover myself, it has always been a less well known issue that I wanted to create awareness of. Although I have been passionate about it, it has not been an easy 9 months. We have had to make time for meetings with the members of the organisations, and our mentor too. To me, determination, creativity, and the never-give-up spirit was essential in this. Although the team has not always been the closest at all times, we have definitely become much more bonded as we face the challenges together. This was a great experience that we believe we have definitely benefited greatly from.

References

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