

Pet Adoption and Consumer Variety Seeking: Spillover Effects and Dog–Cat Differences

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Abstract

This project conceptualises pet adoption as a distinct life transition and examines how it reshapes consumers' variety seeking in both non-pet fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and pet-related purchases. Using NielsenIQ Consumer Panel data from 2004–2020 and a difference-in-differences framework, the analysis shows that first-time pet owners increase their variety seeking in non-pet FMCG categories, indicating behavioural spillover into everyday household shopping. Within pet-related categories, the results reveal systematic heterogeneity by pet type: first-time dog owners exhibit higher variety seeking after adoption, whereas first-time cat owners display reduced variety seeking and a stronger preference for familiar options. Overall, the findings demonstrate that pet adoption tends to elevate variety seeking in routine FMCG purchases, while the size and direction of changes in pet-related categories depend on both product category and pet type.

Track: Consumer Behaviour