

Wright State University

CORE Scholar

Student Papers in Local and Global Regional
Economies

Economics Student Papers

Spring 2023

Building a Better Community: Public Service Jobs for Stray Dog Shelters

Divya Sharma

Wright State University - Main Campus

Follow this and additional works at: https://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/econ_student_papers_economies

Repository Citation

Sharma, D. (2023). Building a Better Community: Public Service Jobs for Stray Dog Shelters. . https://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/econ_student_papers_economies/27

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Economics Student Papers at CORE Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Papers in Local and Global Regional Economies by an authorized administrator of CORE Scholar. For more information, please contact library-corescholar@wright.edu.

Divya Sharma

EC 7250 Economic, Social and Ecological Systems

Professor: Zdravka Todorova

Wright State University

Fall 2023

Building a Better Community: Public Service Jobs for Stray Dog Shelters

Introduction

Stray dogs are a common sight in India, and their population is increasing at an alarming rate. India has an estimated 30 million stray dogs, which is one of the highest numbers in the world. These stray dogs pose a significant threat to public health and safety, with an estimated 20,000 people dying every year from rabies transmitted by stray dogs. In addition, stray dogs are often malnourished, injured, and exposed to harsh weather conditions. Building sheds for stray dogs can help address this problem, as it provides a safe and comfortable place for the dogs to sleep and helps prevent the spread of disease. However, the construction of such sheds requires funding, and the social costs associated with the problem need to be addressed.

Identifying the Problem and its Social Costs

The problem of stray dogs in India is multifaceted and has several social costs associated with it. One of the primary social costs is the loss of life for stray dogs due to starvation and mistreatment. Stray dogs often have to compete with each other and other animals for food, which can lead to malnutrition and starvation. The number of dogs on India's streets declined from 17 million in 2012 to 15 million in 2019, according to figures tabled in Lok Sabha by the Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying Minister (Parshottam Rupala)[1]. They are also susceptible to diseases, which can be fatal without proper medical care. Additionally, many people in India are not fond of stray dogs and may threaten or kill them, making their lives even more challenging.

The causes of mortality in free-ranging dogs and how they are influenced by humans (Scientific Reports)[2]. Of the total mortality, 32% was due to natural causes, while 63% of the mortality was directly or indirectly influenced by humans. The data further shows that human-influenced deaths or disappearances became the prevalent cause of mortality (50%) and remained unchanged until the 5th month of age. This indicates that free-ranging dogs face a higher risk of mortality due to human influence as they grow older. Another social cost of stray dogs in India is the potential threat they pose to public health. Stray dogs can carry diseases that can be transmitted to humans through bites or contact with their feces. This can lead to the spreading of

illnesses such as rabies and hepatitis, which can be deadly if not treated promptly. Additionally, stray dogs can cause accidents by running into the streets, posing a risk to pedestrians and drivers.

There are reports that around 200 stray dogs have died in Mumbai, Thane, and Navi Mumbai due to dehydration, insufficient food, and nutrition since the beginning of the lockdown. The lockdown has prevented people from going out to restaurants and grocery shops, which are the primary sources of food waste for these animals. The founder of Save The Paws, (Poonam Gidwani)[4], said that the lockdown's worst effect has been on the animals, as they are not getting enough food. The article also mentions that feeders of stray animals are finding it hard to spend on these animals, as the lockdown has stopped their incomes. The NGO Save The Paws visits locations to verify animal deaths and facilitates the disposal of their remains. The Reliance Foundation is helping Save The Paws by providing food for stray cats and dogs, fodder for stray cattle, and grain for birds.

Job Guarantee

A job Guarantee is a policy proposal that aims to provide employment opportunities to all individuals who are willing and able to work. It is a form of social safety net that ensures a minimum level of employment and income for everyone in society. In India, the government launched the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in 2005, which provides 100 days of employment in rural areas to each household that requests it. The policy has been successful in providing temporary employment to millions of people in rural areas, but it has also faced criticisms for being ineffective, corrupt, and creating dependency on government handouts.

Overall, the job guarantee policy in India has both positive and negative aspects. While it has provided temporary employment to millions of people and helped to reduce poverty in rural areas, it has also faced challenges such as corruption, inefficiency, and low wages. To address these issues, there is a need for greater investment in infrastructure, training, and skilling, as well as reforms in governance and administrative processes.

Types of Jobs that Can be Created at the Local Level

To address the problem of stray dogs in India, public service jobs can be created at the local level. These jobs can aim to feed and shelter stray dogs and provide medical care to those that are sick or injured. Some of the specific jobs that can be created include:

1. Building and maintaining shelters for stray dogs: This job would involve constructing and maintaining shelters for stray dogs. The shelters would provide a safe and secure place for stray dogs to sleep, eat, and get medical attention.

2. Feeder: A feeder can be employed to provide food and water to stray dogs in specific areas. The feeder can also monitor the health of the dogs and report any sick or injured animals to the relevant authorities.
3. Training: Training can be given to newcomers on how to handle stray dogs, how to feed them, how to clean their shelters, and how to provide them with medical attention. This training will help newcomers to be more effective in their work and to ensure the safety of the dogs.
4. Shelter keeper: A shelter keeper can be employed to maintain and manage shelters for stray dogs. The shelter keeper can provide medical care to sick or injured animals and ensure that the shelters are clean and safe.
5. Veterinarian: A veterinarian can be employed to provide medical care to sick or injured stray dogs. The veterinarian can also provide vaccinations and sterilization services to help control the population of stray dogs.
6. Educator: An educator can be employed to educate the public about the importance of caring for stray dogs. The educator can also provide information on how to report sick or injured animals and how to avoid contact with potentially dangerous dogs.
7. Adoption Center: This job would involve operating an adoption center for stray dogs. The adoption center would provide a safe and comfortable environment for stray dogs to live while they are waiting to be adopted. The dogs would be vaccinated, neutered, and spayed, and they would be evaluated to ensure that they are healthy and adoptable. The adoption center would also provide information to potential adopters about the responsibilities of pet ownership. An adoption center would be a valuable addition to any community that is trying to address the problem of stray dogs. It would provide a safe and loving home for stray dogs, and it would help to find them permanent homes.

Economic, Ecological, and Social Aspects

The problem of stray dogs in India has interrelated economic, ecological, and social aspects, which create social costs that affect various aspects of society.

Economic aspects: Stray dogs are a potential threat to public health, causing significant economic losses. These losses come from medical expenses, such as rabies treatments, and loss of work hours due to dog bites. Additionally, stray dogs can cause economic losses to businesses and farmers by attacking livestock and ruining crops.

Ecological aspects: Stray dogs may carry and spread diseases such as rabies to other animals in the environment. This can have a negative impact on the ecosystem and wildlife population. Rabies is a serious disease that can infect humans, livestock, and other animals, which can lead to economic costs related to medical treatments and loss of work hours. Moreover, stray dogs may also compete with native wildlife for food and resources, which can have an impact on the natural balance of the ecosystem. For instance, if stray dogs consume all the food sources, it can lead to the depletion of resources for other animals. This can cause an imbalance in the ecosystem and have long-term negative impacts on the environment.

Social aspects: The presence of stray dogs in public spaces can create fear and anxiety among people, especially children and the elderly, who may be more vulnerable to dog attacks or feel uncomfortable around them. One local newspaper (Hindustan Times)[3] states that a retired doctor named Safdar Ali was bitten to death by a pack of stray dogs while out on a walk in Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh. The incident occurred at around 6 am inside the Aligarh Muslim University campus of the Thana Civil Line area. The attack was caught on camera and showed more than half a dozen dogs attacking the victim. The station house officer (SHO) of Civil Lines, Pravesh Rana, confirmed the incident. The incident highlights the issue of stray dogs in India and the need for effective measures to address this problem. This fear and anxiety can lead to a decreased quality of life for individuals and even affect their behavior, leading to reduced public use of spaces where stray dogs are present. For example, people may avoid walking or exercising in parks or other public areas where stray dogs are known to roam. This can have social costs, as people may miss out on opportunities to engage in healthy activities or connect with their community.

The proposed job of building sheds for stray dogs has interrelated economic, ecological, and social benefits.

Economic benefits: Building sheds for stray dogs and hiring feeders to take care of them can have several economic benefits. For instance, providing shelters for stray dogs can help to reduce medical expenses and work-hour losses due to dog bites. When stray dogs have a designated area to stay, it can help reduce the risk of dog bites and subsequent medical expenses. Moreover, hiring feeders to take care of these dogs can create employment opportunities, which can stimulate the local economy. These jobs can also provide individuals with skills and experience that can be valuable in other areas of employment. Overall, addressing the issue of stray dogs can have positive economic impacts on the community.

Ecological benefits: Providing shelter and food for stray dogs can help to control their population and prevent them from disrupting ecosystems. Additionally, feeding stray dogs can reduce the amount of waste they produce, which can help to improve the cleanliness of the surrounding environment.

Social benefits: Building sheds for stray dogs and hiring feeders can reduce fear and anxiety among the public. It can also promote a sense of community responsibility towards stray dogs, and create a positive impact on animal welfare. The job of a feeder for stray dogs can provide an opportunity to educate the community about animal welfare issues. This job can serve as a tool for raising awareness about the impact of stray dogs on the community and the environment. It can also provide a platform for discussing the importance of responsible pet ownership and the benefits of spaying and neutering pets. Overall, building sheds for stray dogs and hiring feeders can have a positive impact on the social well-being of the community. The job can serve as a tool for education and awareness-raising about the importance of animal welfare.

References

1. Parshottam Rupala. "18 acks fewer stray dogs in 7 yrs, and the 1.53 crore still on streets." The Indian Express, 3 Aug. 2022, <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/18-lakh-fewer-stray-dogs-in-7-yrs-and-the-1-53-crore-still-on-streets-8066644/>.
2. Paul, M., Sen Majumder, S., Sau, S. et al. High early life mortality in free-ranging dogs is largely influenced by humans. *Scientific Report* 6, 19641 (2016). <https://doi.org/10.1038/srep19641>
3. Johny, Ritu Maria. "Man Mauled to Death by Stray Dogs in Aligarh; Watch." Hindustan Times, 16 Apr. 2023, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/man-mauled-to-death-by-stray-dogs-in-aligarh-watch-101681632765004.html>.
4. Vaktania, S., Poonam Gidwani (2020, May 4). At least 200 stray dogs have died during the lockdown. Mid-day. Retrieved from <https://www.mid-day.com/articles/at-least-200-stray-dogs-have-died-during-lockdown/22706223>
5. Mathew, Anju Ann. "Meet this Delhi-based NGO that fed over 900 dogs a day during COVID-19 lockdown." YourStory, 25 June 2021, <https://yourstory.com/socialstory/2021/06/perroyuda-welfare-foundation-ngo-animal-rescue-feeding-lockdown>.
6. BI India Partner. "Dog lover or not, this campaign by NGO Welfare of Stray Dogs will surely melt your heart." Business Insider, 10 Aug. 2020, <https://www.businessinsider.in/advertising/brands/article/dog-lover-or-not-this-campaign-by-ngo-welfare-of-stray-dogs-will-surely-melt-your-heart/articleshow/77462115.cms>.
7. Singh, Rajesh. "Street Dog Issue: Solutions & Stray Dog's Legal Rights in India." Pashudhan Praharee, 21 Sep. 2022, <https://www.pashudhanpraharee.com/street-dog-issue-solutions-stray-dogs-legal-rights-in-india/>.
8. Bholra, Sunanda. "Small Acts of Kindness Can Help Stray Dogs." Youth Ki Awaaz, 20 Jun. 2022, <https://www.youthkiawaaz.com/2022/06/small-acts-of-kindness-to-stray-dogs-can-help/>.
9. Majumder, Sreejani Sen, et al. "A Dog's Day with Humans – Time Activity Budget of Free-Ranging Dogs in India." *Current Science*, vol. 106, no. 6, 2014, pp. 874–78. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24102275>
10. Srivastava, Aparna. "Stray Dogs Are a Social Responsibility – A Perspective." Stray Relief and Animal Welfare (STRAW) India, 8 May 2020, <https://www.strawindia.org/blogs/12/stray-dogs-are-a-social-responsibility-a-perspective.aspx>.