

Abstract

People have been living with dogs (*Canis familiaris*) in close symbiotic relationship for many thousands of years. Such a kind of coexistence cannot get along without certain risk factors. Although aggression is a natural and wide spread phenomenon in the animal kingdom, manifestation of canine aggression toward people is a public health problem which has to be resolved. Dog bites can cause traumatic injuries to victims and decrease the quality of life or even cause the loss of life to the animal. Therefore there is a serious need to determine the risk factors of dog attacks to people and provide effective preventive strategies to this problem. We consider two kinds of risk factors to be fundamental in this respect: factors depend on the dog (e.g. age, breed, sex and size) and factors depend on the owner (e.g. method of training, prior experience with care of dogs, knowledge of natural behavior of dog, time dedicated to dog etc.). Our study examined this risk factors using a questionnaire. Seventy two respondents (owners of both aggressive and non-aggressive dogs) participated on our study. Our results suggest that owner's knowledge of natural behavior of dog, time which the owner dedicates to his dog and sex of the dog correlate significantly with canine aggression toward people.

Key words: dog (*Canis familiaris*), aggression, risk factors, domestication, dominance order, dominance, submission, communication