



Original Research Paper

**PET-FRIENDLY HOSPITALITY IN TOURISM:
AN INTEGRATIVE REVIEW AND AN ILLUSTRATIVE ANALYSIS OF
HOTEL POLICIES IN TURKEY**

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Abstract

The role of companion animals within the family unit has changed profoundly over the past two decades, accelerating the spread of pet-friendly service models in tourism and hospitality. This study synthesises the conceptual foundations of pet-friendly accommodation, the service-design and consumer-behaviour dimensions of pet hotel operations, and the ethical questions surrounding animal welfare within an integrative framework, applied to the Turkish market. A structured literature review was conducted on peer-reviewed studies published between 2016 and 2026, retrieved from Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, Emerald, SAGE, Taylor & Francis Online, and DergiPark, complemented by a small-scale content analysis of eighteen publicly listed pet-friendly hotels in Turkey, coded along species/weight restrictions, fee structure, and common-area access. The preference for pet-friendly accommodation reflects the emotional and anthropomorphic dimensions of the owner-pet bond as much as functional necessity; hygiene, safety, staff competence, and the physical servicescape consistently emerge as shared determinants of consumer satisfaction. The Five Freedoms framework and its Five Domains successor are applied to pet hotel and boarding services, and anthropomorphic tendencies are shown to carry a dual effect on animal welfare. The content analysis finds wide variation in weight limits and pet fees alongside a consistent restriction on indoor common-area access, indicating that service standardisation in the Turkish market remains at an early stage. The study integrates the service-design, consumer-behaviour, and animal-welfare strands of this literature, proposes an owner-satisfaction/animal-welfare paradox as a conceptual contribution rather than a tested empirical claim, and concludes with an interdisciplinary research agenda for future research.

Keywords: pet-friendly tourism, pet hotel, pet-friendly accommodation, animal welfare, service design

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1. Introduction

The place of companion animals within the family unit has undergone a remarkable transformation over the past two decades. According to data from the American Pet Products Association (APPA), approximately 95% of pet owners now consider their pets to be family members (Bryant University News, 2025); this shift in perception has reshaped consumer behaviour across a broad range of domains, including pet care, nutrition, and travel preferences. This shift can be read through the lens of anthropomorphism; pet hotels, grooming salons, specialised food brands, and pet-oriented social events are among the concrete manifestations of this transformation in tourism and consumption.

The most visible outcome of this transformation within the tourism sector is the rapid spread of pet-friendly accommodation services. A survey by the American Hotel and Lodging Association found that roughly three-quarters of hotels now accept pets (Kim et al., 2025); in Turkey, too, the number of pet-accepting establishments is growing year on year in coastal destinations such as Ayvacık, Ayvalık, Çeşme, Didim, Bodrum, Dikili, Edremit, and Marmaris. The global pet travel services market is estimated to have reached approximately USD 2.6 billion in 2025, with projections suggesting it will grow at an average annual rate of over 8% to reach USD 5.3 billion by 2034 (Global Market Insights, 2025). The primary driver of this growth is pet humanisation combining with rising disposable income to elevate pet-related spending.

Within this context, the pet hotel concept refers not merely to hotels that host travelling owners together with their animals, but to a broader service ecosystem that also encompasses boarding/kennel-type establishments providing temporary care for animals independently of their owners. Bernardi, Edelman, and Crossley (2022) demonstrated that such boarding services effectively enable owners' freedom to travel and alleviate the guilt felt during travel. Buhalis and Chan (2023), meanwhile, approached pet-friendly hospitality as a service-design problem; drawing on interviews with pet-friendly hotel managers in Hong Kong, they developed a service blueprint encompassing cross-departmental collaboration and partnerships with external specialist organisations.

Despite this rapidly expanding body of literature, academic visibility of the topic within the Turkish context remains limited. Demircioğlu and Şen Demir (2021) qualitatively examined accommodation establishments' perspectives on pets in the case of Fethiye, finding that facilities were generally attentive to pet acceptance and care; however, the volume of such studies remains modest compared with the international literature. The purpose of this study is to synthesise the international and national literature on pet-friendly tourism and the pet hotel concept along the axes of

service design, consumer behaviour, and animal welfare, to present the field's current body of knowledge within a systematic framework, and to propose an agenda for future research. The problem motivating this synthesis can be stated directly: existing pet-friendly hospitality research is predominantly owner-centred, measuring guest satisfaction, willingness to pay, and behavioural intention, while animal welfare considerations rarely enter service-design or consumer-behaviour models on their own terms. This review addresses four research questions: (RQ1) How has the literature conceptualised pet-friendly accommodation and the pet hotel service ecosystem? (RQ2) Which consumer-behaviour and service-design factors shape the pet-friendly accommodation experience? (RQ3) To what extent, and how, has animal welfare been incorporated into pet-friendly hospitality research to date? (RQ4) What does an illustrative examination of the Turkish market reveal about pet-friendly service standardisation in an under-researched national context?

1.1. The Concept of Pet-Friendly Tourism

Pet-friendly tourism can be defined as the set of products and services developed to satisfy pet owners' desire to share their travel experiences with their animals. The concept extends beyond accommodation to encompass transport, food and beverage, and recreation, spanning different links of the tourism value chain. Airlines such as Turkish Airlines and Pegasus permit pets with valid passports and vaccination records to travel in cabin carriers, a practice that gives concrete form to the transport dimension of pet-friendly tourism. Quan, Kim, Baah, Kim, and Han (2024) compared the perceptions of pet-owning and non-pet-owning tourists toward pet-accompanying tourism, finding significant differences between the two groups in both expectation and concern levels.

Hidalgo-Fernández, Moral-Cuadra, Menor-Campos, and Lopez-Guzman (2023), surveying 1,696 dog owners in Spain and applying partial least squares structural equation modelling, found that dog attachment exerts a significant effect on both dog-related travel motivations ($\beta = 0.278$) and human-related travel motivations ($\beta = 0.338$), and that it is specifically the dog-related motivations, rather than the human-related ones, that significantly predict how favourably the family evaluates the destination from the pet's own perspective. This asymmetry suggests that pet owners evaluate a destination's suitability along two at least partially separate tracks, one oriented toward their own holiday experience and one oriented toward the animal's, with only the latter shaping the destination assessment made on the pet's behalf.

Hung, Chen, and Peng (2016) examined dog owners' decisions to include their animals in

tourism activities through a constraint-negotiation model, finding that attachment strength strengthens the motivation to overcome perceived constraints. Peng, Chen, and Hung (2014) had earlier extended this reasoning by incorporating pet attachment into the theory of planned behaviour, showing that attachment operates as an antecedent of attitude rather than a separate, parallel driver. This finding indicates that pet-friendly tourism is not solely a matter of service supply, but is also shaped decisively by the owner-pet bond in travel decision-making. Hsu, Liu, Yu, and Fang (2026) moved the discussion beyond a purely functional perspective, applying a dual-gaze framework and finding that pet owners experience both an outward-facing (social) and an inward-facing (subjective) process of meaning-making during travel, both of which enhance value co-creation and subjective well-being.

Earlier market-oriented studies had already identified pet owners as a distinct, commercially significant travel segment. Dotson, Hyatt, and Clark (2010) characterised the family-dog traveller as an emerging market segment with identifiable planning behaviours, while Kirillova, Lee, and Lehto (2015) found that willingness to travel with a pet in the United States varies systematically with species, trip purpose, and perceived social acceptability. Wei, Leung, and Xu (2023) subsequently extended this line of inquiry by modelling human-pet interaction itself as a driver of tourists' emotional and social value, finding that this interaction contributes most strongly to travel experience and quality of life among owners with comparatively lower baseline attachment to their pet, a moderation pattern that complicates any assumption that attachment strength alone predicts outcomes uniformly.

1.2. Pet Humanisation and Anthropomorphism

Pet humanisation refers to the process by which companion animals are elevated to a near-human status within the family structure, with consumption decisions accordingly coming to reflect values similar to those governing human-directed products and services. Epley, Waytz, Akalis, and Cacioppo (2008) defined anthropomorphism as the tendency to attribute human emotional and behavioural characteristics to non-human entities, showing that this tendency is associated with sociality and effectance motives. Kylkilahti, Syrjälä, Autio, Kuusmin, and Autio (2016) examined the phenomenon of co-consumption between consumers and their pets, finding that the animal is positioned as an active stakeholder in household consumption decisions. This positioning builds on Belk's (1988) foundational account of possessions as constitutive of the extended self, which Belk (1996) later applied directly to companion animals, identifying family membership as one of the dominant metaphors through which owners narrate

their relationship with a pet; travel decisions that place the animal's comfort on a par with the owner's own can be read as a direct behavioural expression of this incorporation of the pet into the self.

Huang, Krier, Josiam, and Kim (2021) explained the consumer-pet relationship during travel through an empathetic self-regulation model, finding that anticipated positive and negative emotions shape the level of desire, which in turn drives approach and avoidance behaviours. This finding demonstrates that the preference for pet-friendly accommodation rests on emotional anticipation as much as on rational cost-benefit calculation. While the anthropomorphic tendency operates as a positive driver of service design, the risks it poses for animal welfare are discussed separately in Section 4.1.

1.3. The Pet Hotel Concept: An Accommodation Type or a Service Ecosystem?

The term pet hotel is used in the literature in two distinct but related senses. In the first usage, a pet hotel refers to a tourist accommodation establishment offering pet-friendly policies and amenities where human guests stay together with their animals. In the second usage, it refers to a boarding/kennel-type establishment that provides temporary care for the animal independently of its owner. Mlakar and Zupan Korže (2022) compared these two models, finding that a substantial share of pet owners remain cautious about professional pet boarding services and that the proportion of owners who prefer to take their animal along on travel remains high.

In this study, the pet hotel concept is treated as a broad service ecosystem in which the two models are positioned as complementary rather than mutually exclusive elements. This ecosystem encompasses pet-friendly hotels that enable joint human-animal accommodation, boarding establishments providing temporary care for animals, and the medical, grooming, and recreational services that support both models.

2. Materials and Methods

This study combines two complementary components: a structured narrative/integrative literature review and a small-scale supplementary content analysis. The literature review aimed to synthesise the existing body of knowledge on pet-friendly tourism and the pet hotel concept. The search was conducted across the Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, Emerald Insight, SAGE Journals, Taylor & Francis Online, and DergiPark databases using English and Turkish keyword combinations ("pet-friendly tourism", "pet-friendly hotel", "pet hotel", "pet boarding", "companion animal travel", "evcil hayvan turizmi", "pet-dostu otel", "evcil hayvan dostu konaklama"). The search was restricted primarily to peer-reviewed tourism, hospitality, and consumer-behaviour journal articles published between 2016 and 2026, in English or

Turkish, addressing companion animals within a tourism, hospitality, or consumer-behaviour context; sources returned by the search but addressing animal-tourism topics unconnected to companion animals or pet-friendly services (for example, wildlife tourism ethics or unrelated hospitality operations management) were screened out during title/abstract review. This screening step excluded several sources that surfaced during the search process, including studies on host-community volunteering and on informal-economy entrepreneurship, on the grounds that their substantive focus lay outside the scope defined above rather than for reasons of quality. A small number of seminal theoretical sources predating 2016 (for example, Ajzen, 1991; Belk, 1988, 1996; Bitner, 1992; Epley et al., 2008; Schwartz, 1977) were retained outside this window where needed to establish the conceptual and theoretical foundations underpinning the reviewed empirical literature. The resulting corpus comprised 35 peer-reviewed or scholarly sources; industry and market reports were treated as a separate category throughout, used solely to provide contextual indicators of market size, and are not presented with the same evidentiary status as the peer-reviewed academic sources.

The supplementary component, reported in Section 3.3.3, is a documentary content analysis of publicly available pet-friendly hotel policy information published on a Turkish online aggregator, with a secondary, small-scale cross-verification step (four of the eighteen coded properties checked against independent listings) undertaken to gauge the reliability of the primary source; both the method and its limitations are reported in full in Section 3.3.3. This component draws on secondary, publicly published business information rather than data obtained from human participants or animals, and its scope and limitations are stated explicitly where it is reported. Neither component of the study involves primary data collection from human or animal subjects (no survey, interview, or experiment was conducted); given that the study relies solely on publicly available secondary information and did not involve human participants, animals, or primary data collection, formal ethics committee approval was not applicable under the relevant institutional requirements. Source selection for the literature review prioritised verifiability: bibliographic details were cross-checked against publisher records, DOI registries, or indexing databases where available, and findings were, wherever full text access permitted, checked directly against the original article rather than against secondary summaries. This review does not follow a formal systematic protocol (e.g., PRISMA), and no inter-rater reliability check was performed, since a single author conducted the search and screening; this is stated here as an

explicit methodological limitation rather than left implicit. The review is thematically organised around the headings of conceptual framework, consumer behaviour, service design, market trends, and animal welfare.

3. Results

3.1. Consumer Behaviour in Pet-Friendly Accommodation Services

3.1.1. Travel Motivations and Perceived Constraints

Studies examining pet owners' travel decisions centre on the tension between motivation and constraint. Veas-González and colleagues' (2025) study conducted in Chile found that the key determinants of travel intention and willingness to pay a premium lie beyond emotional attachment alone, in perceived benefit, prestige, and novelty-seeking. This finding indicates that pet-friendly tourism marketing should address concrete experiential benefits alongside emotional appeals.

Hoy, Stangl, and Morgan (2025b) modelled the tendency to travel with dogs across four social representations, showing that owners' motivational orientations and behavioural tendencies vary according to these representations. Meng, Chi, Kim, Kim, Quan, and Han (2024), applying behavioural reasoning theory (BRT), the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), and the norm activation model (NAM) in combination, found that the preference for pet-friendly hotels rests on both cognitive justification and moral norms. This multi-theoretical approach supports the view that the preference for pet-friendly accommodation is too multidimensional to be captured by any single behavioural model. Both underlying theories have well-established roots outside tourism: the theory of planned behaviour holds that attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control jointly determine intention (Ajzen, 1991), while the norm activation model explains altruistically motivated behaviour through the activation of personal moral norms (Schwartz, 1977); applying both frameworks together to pet-friendly hotel choice reflects the field's growing recognition that the decision combines self-interested and welfare-oriented reasoning about the animal.

The economic dimension of this decision has been examined directly through willingness-to-pay research. Taillon, MacLaurin, and Yun (2015) found that hotel pet policies measurably affect guests' willingness to pay a premium for pet-friendly accommodation, while Ramos-Ruiz, Aguilar-Rivero, Aja-Valle, and Castaño-Prieto (2024), surveying 1,391 dog owners in Spain, confirmed through structural equation modelling that travel motivation, perceived constraints, and family attachment jointly and significantly shape accommodation demand. Taken together with the constraint-negotiation and attachment-based models discussed above, this body of work indicates that

price sensitivity in pet-friendly accommodation choice cannot be separated from the emotional weight owners place on the animal.

3.1.2. Online Reviews and Decision-Making Processes

Online review platforms play an increasingly decisive role in pet-friendly hotel selection. Li and Baek (2026) analysed 13,604 TripAdvisor reviews posted between 2020 and 2024 using a mixed-methods approach, finding that cleanliness outweighs value for money, functioning as a threshold condition; reviews emphasising cleanliness were found to reduce health and safety concerns. Koufodontis and Melissourgou (2024) analysed 1,723 customer reviews posted during 2023-2024 using a netnographic approach, revealing a complex interaction pattern within the hotel-pet-owning-guest-non-pet-owning-guest triangle; this pattern indicates that pet-friendly policies affect not only pet owners but also other guests staying at the same property.

The netnographic studies conducted by Kim, Baah, Kim, Han, Meng, and Chi (2025) and by Koufodontis and Melissourgou (2024), despite drawing on different data sets, converged on similar findings: service quality, facility amenities, the clarity of pet acceptance policy, hygiene, safety/accessibility, and price-value perception consistently emerge as the shared axes determining consumer experience. This convergence suggests that these dimensions are generalisable beyond any single sample.

3.1.3. Emotional Attachment and Concern for Animal Welfare

Bernardi, Edelheim, and Crossley (2022) analysed pet boarding users' online posts through content analysis, identifying three main themes: boarding services effectively enable owners' travel, these services alleviate the guilt and anxiety felt during travel, and animals are imagined to be enjoying their own holidays. This third theme indicates that anthropomorphic projection functions as a psychological mechanism that legitimises the preference for boarding services.

Mlakar and Zupan Korže (2022), by contrast, found that a substantial share of owners indicated they would not choose professional pet boarding services again in future; underlying this cautious attitude is concern over the stress the animal may experience in an unfamiliar environment. Ultimately, the central tension shaping owners' decisions in pet-friendly accommodation choice is drawn between freedom to travel and a sense of responsibility for the animal's well-being.

This tension is not confined to the accommodation decision itself but extends into everyday leisure practice. Hoy, Stangl, and Morgan (2024), interviewing 34 dog guardians in the United Kingdom, found that shared outdoor leisure spaces gained particular importance during the COVID-19

pandemic, functioning simultaneously as an outlet for owners' intrinsic motivation and as a setting perceived to benefit the dog's own well-being. The same research team's subsequent study of specialty online travel agencies for dog-friendly accommodation (Hoy, Stangl, & Morgan, 2025a) similarly found that owners' well-being beliefs about their dog, rather than purely logistical considerations, shape attitudes toward and intentions to use such platforms. Read together, these two studies reinforce the view that concern for the animal's experience, not merely its physical accommodation, increasingly organises pet owners' travel-related choices.

3.2. Service Design in Pet Hotels and Pet-Friendly Hotels

3.2.1. Service Blueprints and Policy Frameworks

Buhalis and Chan (2023), in a grounded theory study conducted with pet-friendly hotel managers in Hong Kong, showed that pet-friendly services require a cross-departmental structure that extends beyond the front office to encompass housekeeping, kitchen operations, security, and coordination with external stakeholders such as veterinarians and pet care specialists. The service blueprint they developed links anthropomorphism theory with service-design practice, offering managers a concrete framework for establishing core pet-friendly policies and structuring cross-departmental collaboration.

This framework connects directly with servicescape theory (Bitner, 1992), since pet-friendly service quality is linked not only to staff behaviour but also, just as directly, to the design of the physical environment (flooring, access to outdoor areas, noise insulation, odour-controlling ventilation) around the needs of both animal and owner. Kim, Baah, Kim, Han, Meng, and Chi (2025) combined qualitative interviews with six pet-travelling guests and a quantitative survey to distil an initial pool of 38 candidate attributes down to 23 validated items; exploratory factor analysis then reduced these to six underlying dimensions, pet-related activity support, pet-centric facilities and services, pet-centric room amenities, pet-friendly room features, pet-related house rules, and pet-friendly safety measures, jointly explaining 74.8% of total variance. Importance-performance analysis and regression showed that pet-related activity support was the strongest driver of visit and word-of-mouth intentions, that pet-centric facilities and services most strongly predicted willingness to pay a premium, and that pet-friendly safety measures, despite their importance to guests, showed a persistent importance-performance gap that hotels have yet to close. This finding indicates that meeting functional and safety-related requirements carries at least as much weight as decorative or experiential elements in shaping guest response.

The physical servicescape is not, however, always the dominant driver of guest satisfaction. Lin, Lai, and Morrison (2019), studying small bed-and-breakfast properties on Taiwan's Liuqiu Island through the lens of the social servicescape concept, found that guest experience resolved into two distinct dimensions, physical environment and personal interaction, and that satisfaction and revisit intention were driven almost entirely by the latter; the physical environment had little measurable effect on either outcome. Applied to pet-friendly accommodation, this finding cautions against treating physical servicescape investment as a sufficient condition for guest satisfaction: the quality of host-guest interaction around the pet, staff who remember the animal's name, check in on its comfort, or adapt routines to its needs, may carry at least as much weight as the physical facilities themselves, particularly in the smaller, host-intensive properties that make up much of the pet-friendly boarding segment.

3.2.2. Service Quality in Pet Boarding Services

Service quality in boarding-type pet hotels is evaluated using criteria that differ from those applied to accommodation hotels, since here the ultimate recipient of the service is the animal, while the party that purchases and evaluates the service is the owner. This divide gives rise to a distinctive consumer-experience model in which service quality perception is constructed indirectly, through the animal's behavioural responses and the cues the owner observes. Bernardi et al. (2022) found that owners regard the opportunity for the animal to socialise with others of its own species, the availability of individualised care programmes, and transparency practices such as regular photo and video updates as important criteria in boarding selection.

3.2.3. Sectoral Trend: Luxury and Personalised Services

A clear trend observed in the pet boarding market is the shift from standard care toward luxury and personalised service packages. Market research indicates that grooming, spa treatments, and individualised care packages are rapidly proliferating within the boarding segment, with the overnight/traditional boarding segment generating an estimated USD 5.4 billion in revenue in 2025 and dogs accounting for 71.7% of this market (Global Market Insights, 2025). This trend can be read as a concrete manifestation of pet humanisation within boarding/accommodation services; as owners come to demand for their animals the same service standard they choose for their own travel comfort, the market converges toward the service logic of the human-oriented hospitality sector.

3.3. Market Size and Sectoral Trends

3.3.1. The Global Market

Industry reports on the pet travel services market, despite differing methodologies, point to a consistent growth trend. According to Global Market Insights (2025), the market stood at approximately USD 2.6 billion in 2025 and is projected to reach USD 5.3 billion by 2034 at an average annual growth rate of 8.3%. By segment, dogs account for 60.2% of the market, while domestic travel accounts for 77.2% of total revenue; geographically, the United States holds a dominant position with over 82% of market share. These figures are drawn from industry reports rather than peer-reviewed sources and should therefore be treated as contextual estimates rather than academically verified data.

The literature consistently identifies pet humanisation, rising disposable income, and the release of pent-up post-pandemic travel demand as the underlying dynamics of this market growth. According to American Pet Products Association data, 55% of dog owners and 36% of cat owners now select their holiday destination directly on the basis of pet-friendly infrastructure; this figure indicates that pet-friendly services have moved beyond an ancillary consideration to become a primary criterion in destination choice.

3.3.2. Pet Tourism and the Pet Hotel Sector in Turkey

Pet ownership in Turkey has risen markedly in recent years; industry sources report that more than 8 million pets are kept in Turkish households, that the total pet market has reached approximately TRY 70 billion, and that the market is growing at an average annual rate of 15% (press coverage drawing on data from the Pet Industry and Businessmen's Association [Evcil-Der], 2025-2026). Nationwide, 5,500 pet stores and 2,000 veterinary clinics are reported to be operating alongside pet hotels and boarding establishments. These figures are drawn from non-academic industry/press sources and should be treated with appropriate caution.

Direct academic data on the subject remain limited. Erten, Öztürk, and Yılmaz (2019) examined the socio-demographic profile and attitudes of pet owners in the Alanya-Mardin case, finding that ownership motivations vary regionally. Demircioğlu and Şen Demir (2021), in a qualitative study of ten pet-friendly accommodation establishments in Fethiye, found that facilities were generally attentive to pet acceptance and care, though a standardised pet-friendly service protocol had not yet taken hold. This finding can be interpreted as indicating that the pet-friendly accommodation sector in Turkey parallels international trends in terms of scale, while service standardisation remains at an early stage of maturity.

Adjacent strands of the Turkish literature approach the human-animal relationship from complementary angles. Yenişehirlioğlu and Cihangir (2021) proposed a destructive/non-destructive contact-based typology for classifying animal use across the tourism industry more broadly, a framework that helps situate pet-friendly accommodation, a non-destructive, consensual form of animal-tourist contact, within the wider and more ethically varied landscape of animal-based tourism. Özden (2022), surveying 475 consumers, found that pet owners display significantly higher sustainable consumption tendencies than non-owners, a finding that resonates with the extended-self account of pet ownership (Belk, 1988, 1996) and suggests that the values pet owners bring to everyday consumption likely also inform their expectations of pet-friendly hospitality providers.

Table 1. Comparison of Key Empirical Studies on Pet-Friendly Accommodation

Author (s) and Year	Method / Data	Focus	Key Finding	Animal Welfare Independently Measured?
Buhalis & Chan (2023)	Grounded theory, 25 manager interviews (Hong Kong)	Service design	Developed a pet-friendly service blueprint based on cross-departmental collaboration.	No
Hung, Chen & Peng (2016)	Survey, constraint-negotiation model	Consumer behaviour	Attachment strength reinforces motivation to overcome perceived constraints.	No

Koufodontis & Melissourgou (2024)	Netnography, 1,723 TripAdvisor reviews	Customer experience	Identified a multi-directional interaction pattern among hotel, pet-owning, and other guests.	No
Kim, Baah, Kim, Han, Meng & Chi (2025)	Mixed methods, IPA + regression	Service attributes	Six attribute dimensions identified; safety measures show a persistent importance-performance gap.	No
Li & Baek (2026)	Mixed methods, 13,604 TripAdvisor reviews	Online reviews	Cleanliness functions as a threshold condition that outweighs value for money.	No
Bernardi, Edelheim & Crossley	Qualitative content analysis, 6 countries	Boarding services	Boarding services enable travel freedom	No

(2022)	s		while reducing owner guilt.	
Veas-González et al. (2025)	Survey, Chile	Travel motivation	Perceived benefit and novelty-seeking are stronger predictors than emotional attachment.	No
Demircioğlu & Şen Demir (2021)	Qualitative interviews, Fethiye (Turkey)	Business perspective	Facilities are attentive to pet acceptance; a standard protocol has not yet emerged.	No

Source: Compiled by the author from the cited studies. The final column records whether each study independently assessed the animal's own welfare state (e.g., behavioural or physiological indicators) as opposed to relying solely on owner-reported outcomes; across all eight studies reviewed here, it did not, which is the empirical basis for the owner-satisfaction/animal-welfare paradox proposed in Section 4.1.

3.3.3. An Illustrative Content Analysis of Pet-Friendly Hotel Policies in Turkey

To move the discussion of the Turkish market beyond the two qualitative studies reviewed above, this section reports a small-scale, illustrative content analysis of publicly listed pet-friendly hotel policies in Turkey. Eighteen properties were coded from a curated online listing of 37 pet-friendly hotels across Turkish destinations (Oggusto, 2026), accessed in September 2026. The listing organises properties by destination; the eighteen coded here are the properties listed under the first three destination headings encountered in the source

(Istanbul, $n = 9$; Ayvalık, $n = 2$; Bodrum, $n = 7$), coded in full before the exercise was stopped at a pragmatic sample size. This is a convenience sample based on the source's own presentation order rather than a purposive or random selection, and the remaining nineteen properties, across five further destinations (Antalya, Marmaris/Selimiye, Fethiye/Ölüdeniz/Göcek, Alaçatı, and additional listings), were not coded. For each property, the listing's own stated pet policy was coded along four dimensions: species/breed restrictions, maximum weight, the fee structure applied for pet accommodation, and the scope of common-area access granted to pets. The resulting sample is heterogeneous rather than uniformly upscale: it spans five-star urban and resort hotels, an adults-only property, a countryside boutique farm stay, and an independently owned boutique hotel, alongside more modestly positioned city-centre options; it nonetheless over-represents branded five-star properties in three destinations relative to the boutique hotels, guesthouses, and bungalow-style establishments that make up a substantial share of Turkey's pet-friendly accommodation sector more broadly. This exercise is explicitly not presented as a representative national survey; it relies on a single secondary aggregator rather than direct verification with each property (a partial exception being the four-property cross-check reported below), and was not cross-checked against the hotels' own websites in full. It is offered as a first, transparent step toward the kind of systematic policy documentation this field currently lacks in the Turkish context, and as a concrete illustration of the standardisation gap that Demircioğlu and Şen Demir (2021) identified qualitatively.

Table 2. Illustrative Coding of Pet-Friendly Hotel Policies in Turkey ($n = 18$)

Property	Region	Species / Limit	Weight Cap	Fee Structure	Common-Area Access
Çırağan Palace Kempinski	Istanbul	Cat, trained dog	≤ 10 kg	Free	Indoor restricted; leashed outdoor
Four Seasons Istanbul	Istanbul	Dog only	7-11 kg	Free	Indoor restricted; leashed outdoor
Conrad	Istanbul	Dog,	≤ 34	~€56 /	Indoor

Istanbul Bosphorus	bul	cat	kg	stay	restricted; leashed garden
The Ritz-Carlton Istanbul	Istanbul	Dog, cat	~10 kg	Seasonal fee	Indoor restricted; leashed terrace
Swissôtel The Bosphorus	Istanbul	Dog only, 1/room	≤10 kg	₺4,180 + ₺580/night	Indoor restricted; leashed garden
Crown Plaza Florya	Istanbul	Not specified	≤5 kg	₺2,500/night	Indoor restricted; leash/carrier
Bude Ortaköy	Istanbul	Dog, cat, 1/room	Small-medium	Free	Designated rooms only
The Marmara Pera	Istanbul	Not specified	Small breeds	€12/night	Restricted at rooftop restaurant
Grandma's Wonderland	Istanbul (Silyri)	Not specified	No limit	Free	Not specified
D-Resort Ayvalık	Ayvalık	Not specified	≤35 kg	€30/night	Designated zones; pet menu offered
Simlar da Aquapark	Ayvalık	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
WAM by Karma	Bodrum	Not specified	No limit	Free	Confirm with property

Flamm Bodrum	Bodrum	Dog, all sizes	No limit	Free	Full property access, leashed
The Bodrum EDITION	Bodrum	Dog, cat	≤6 kg	€84/night	Indoor/pool restricted; leashed beach
The Marmara Bodrum*	Bodrum	Dog, cat, 2/room	No limit	€27/day	Restaurant leashed; pool excluded
Susona Bodrum, LXR*	Bodrum	Dog, cat	No limit	€250 / stay	Restaurant, carrier only
Lujo Hotel Bodrum	Bodrum	Dog, cat, 1/room	≤6 kg	~₺26,000 / stay	Forest rooms/villas only; guide dogs exempt
Caress Bodrum	Bodrum	Dog, cat, 1/room	≤8 kg	€120-125 + €25/day	Indoor/pool restricted; leashed paths

Source: Coded by the author from Oggusto (2026), accessed September 2026. Fee amounts are quoted as listed by the source, in the original currency (EUR or TRY) and billing unit (per night, per stay, or per pet) stated there; they are not directly comparable across properties without conversion, and this heterogeneity is itself discussed as a finding below. Full dataset available as Supplementary File 1. * Cross-source verification (see text below) found conflicting figures for this property across independent listings.

Three patterns stand out. First, weight-based species restriction is widespread but inconsistent: nearly half of the coded properties (8 of 18, 44%) state a specific numeric weight cap at or below 11 kg, which would exclude many medium and large dog breeds from these properties, and a further two

properties (Bude Ortaköy, The Marmara Pera) restrict access to small or small-to-medium breeds without stating a specific figure, while five properties (Grandma's Wonderland, WAM by Karma, Flamm Bodrum, The Marmara Bodrum, and Susona Bodrum) apply no weight limit at all; no consistent rationale for this divide is stated in the listings themselves. Second, fee structures show no evidence of standardisation, neither in amount nor in charging mechanism: five properties charge nothing, while the remainder apply a mix of flat one-time fees, nightly charges, per-pet charges, and combined entry-plus-daily-cleaning fees, quoted variously in euros and Turkish lira, such that the amounts are not directly comparable across properties without currency and billing-period conversion; this heterogeneity of billing structure is, in itself, a further indicator of the absence of a shared pricing convention. Third, common-area access follows a near-universal pattern in which pets are excluded from indoor restaurants, pools, and spas regardless of fee level, with only the independently owned boutique property in the sample (Flamm Bodrum) granting unrestricted property-wide access. Only one property (D-Resort Ayvalık) reported a dedicated pet menu, and only two (The Marmara Bodrum and Lujo Hotel Bodrum) required a signed pet policy agreement. This pattern of wide variation in fees and weight thresholds, combined with a converging restriction on indoor common areas, offers concrete, quantifiable support for Demircioğlu and Şen Demir's (2021) qualitative conclusion that pet-friendly service delivery in Turkey has not yet converged on a shared protocol, even within this mixed sample of upscale and boutique properties. A further, unplanned finding emerged from a partial verification exercise. To gauge the reliability of the primary source, four properties were cross-checked against independent listings (BringFido, Etstur, and Jolly, alongside the properties' own websites where available). D-Resort Ayvalık's pet menu was independently confirmed on the property's own website, and Lujo Hotel Bodrum's reported fee and weight cap matched exactly across sources, but two of the four checked properties returned conflicting figures: Susona Bodrum's pet fee is listed as €250 per stay by one source and as £3,500-£4,500 per pet per stay by two others, a divergence of roughly threefold depending on which listing is consulted; The Marmara Bodrum's daily fee is reported as either €27 or €50, and its weight cap as either unrestricted or capped at 15 kg, depending on the source. Beyond the within-market variation documented in Table 2, this spot-check suggests that pet policy information for at least some Turkish properties may not be consistently reported across the secondary sources that publish it, a pattern that would be consistent with the absence of an authoritative, standardised policy record that the

primary analysis identifies, though a sample of two conflicting cases cannot establish this as a general property of the market. This finding was incidental to the main coding exercise and rests on a small, non-random check of four properties; it is reported here as a signal warranting systematic verification in future research, not as a general characterisation of the market.

3.4. Animal Welfare and the Ethical Dimension

Figure 1 summarises, as a single integrated conceptual framework, how the concepts introduced in Section 1 relate to the consumer-behaviour, service-design, and market findings reported above and to the animal-welfare dimension discussed in the remainder of this section.

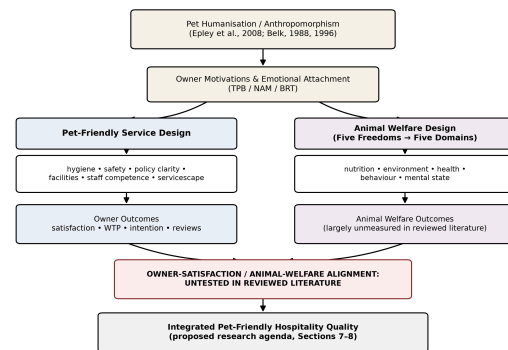


Figure 1. An integrated conceptual framework linking pet humanisation, service design, consumer behaviour, and animal welfare in pet-friendly hospitality.

3.4.1. Applying the Five Freedoms Framework to Pet Hotel Services

One of the core reference frameworks in the animal welfare field is the Five Freedoms, developed by the UK's Farm Animal Welfare Council. This framework comprises freedom from hunger and thirst, freedom from discomfort, freedom from pain, injury, and disease, freedom to express normal behaviour, and freedom from fear and distress. Although the principles were originally formulated for farm animals, they are now widely accepted as a framework applicable to the welfare of all animals. It should be noted that animal welfare science has since moved beyond a purely freedoms-based formulation: Mellor (2016) proposed the Five Domains model as an update that reframes the four physical/functional domains (nutrition, environment, health, behaviour) as inputs to a fifth, overarching mental domain, and explicitly incorporates positive welfare states rather than only the absence of negative ones. For pet hotel services, this distinction matters in practice: a Five-Freedoms-only audit may confirm that an animal's minimum needs are met while remaining silent on whether the animal has opportunities for positive affective experience, whereas a Five-Domains-informed audit would treat opportunities for play, choice, and social contact as welfare outcomes in their own right rather than as optional amenities.

This study nonetheless takes the Five Freedoms as its primary organising framework, for two reasons. First, the five-item structure maps directly onto

discrete, auditable service components (feeding programme, resting-area standards, veterinary access, exercise provision, and stress management), which makes it more immediately actionable for hotel operators than the Five Domains' more abstract mental-state orientation, and it is on this basis that Table 3 below translates each freedom into a concrete operational requirement. Second, using the Five Freedoms as the operational baseline while treating the Five Domains as the framework's contemporary refinement allows the discussion that follows to make a more precise point: even a pet hotel that satisfies every Five Freedoms criterion, and can document doing so, may still fail the Five Domains' higher bar of positive affective experience whenever service design optimises for the owner's satisfaction rather than the animal's. This is the central tension examined in Section 4.1. When applied to pet hotel and boarding services, the Five Freedoms framework indicates that service design must address behavioural needs (exercise space, intraspecific socialisation, a sense of security through familiar objects) alongside physical care needs (nutrition, hygiene, veterinary access). Studies examining the effect of the kennel environment on canine welfare indicate that prolonged boarding may be associated with stress indicators, underscoring that care practices should incorporate behavioural enrichment alongside physical care.

Table 3. Adapting the Five Freedoms Framework to Pet Hotel/Boarding Services

Freedom Principle	Application in the Pet Hotel/Boarding Context
Freedom from hunger and thirst	A species-appropriate feeding programme and continuous access to clean water
Freedom from discomfort	Appropriate temperature, flooring, and resting-area standards
Freedom from pain, injury, and disease	Availability of veterinary access and an emergency-response protocol
Freedom to express normal behaviour	Provision of exercise space, play time, and intraspecific socialisation
Freedom from fear and distress	A sense of security through familiar objects; noise and odour control

Source: Adapted by the author from the Farm Animal Welfare Council framework.

4. Discussion

4.1. The Owner-Satisfaction/Animal-Welfare Paradox and the Dual Effect of Anthropomorphism

The literature reviewed in Sections 3.1 and 3.2 converges on a single measurable construct: owner satisfaction, whether expressed as visit intention, willingness to pay a premium, or a favourable online review. The animal-welfare literature reviewed above converges on a different, largely unmeasured construct: the animal's own affective state. Nothing in the service-design or consumer-behaviour studies reviewed in this article establishes that the two move together, or fail to; no reviewed study measured both outcomes in the same animals, so their empirical relationship remains untested. This absence of evidence is itself the point, and it is framed here as a conceptual proposition rather than an empirical finding: the owner-satisfaction/animal-welfare paradox, which can be stated as follows. A pet hotel can score well, in principle, on every determinant of owner satisfaction identified in Sections 3.1 and 3.2, comfortable room amenities, a personalised menu, a signed care agreement, favourable reviews, while the animal itself experiences a service environment that does not meet the Five Domains' positive-experience standard, because none of the attributes owners are shown to value (Section 3.2.1) were derived from measures of animal affect in the first place. This is a logical implication of how the reviewed constructs are operationalised, not a pattern directly observed in this review's data, and it should be read as a testable proposition for future research rather than a demonstrated result. The anthropomorphic tendency is the mechanism proposed to produce this paradox. On one hand, owners' attribution of human emotions to their animals encourages businesses to adopt higher care standards, strengthening empathy and moral oversight. On the other hand, the literature discusses the possibility that excessive anthropomorphism may create a mismatch between the animal's true species-specific needs and the owner's human-centred expectations, a mismatch that may in turn heighten the animal's distress.

This dual effect poses a practical dilemma for pet hotel operators: the human-like comfort elements owners request (a special bed, a personalised menu, clothing) do not always align with the animal's species-specific behavioural needs (running space, intraspecific interaction, a predictable routine). The paradox is therefore not a hypothetical concern but a direct consequence of how the pet-friendly hospitality market currently measures its own success: every attribute framework reviewed in Section 3.2.1, Kim et al.'s (2025) six dimensions included, was derived from owner-reported importance and performance ratings, not from independent assessment of the animal's welfare

state. A hotel could, in principle, optimise perfectly against every one of these dimensions and still leave the animal's affective experience unmeasured and unmanaged. Managing this dilemma requires businesses, and future researchers, to adopt a service-design approach that meets owners' emotional expectations while independently verifying, rather than assuming, that the animal's genuine welfare needs are also met.

4.2. Toward an Integrated Research Agenda

The reviewed literature shows that research on pet-friendly tourism and pet hotels has largely progressed along three separate axes, service design, consumer behaviour, and animal welfare, with limited cross-fertilisation between them. The service-design literature (Buhalis & Chan, 2023; Kim et al., 2025) is largely oriented toward managerial implications from a business perspective, the consumer-behaviour literature (Hung et al., 2016; Meng et al., 2024; Veas-González et al., 2025) focuses on explaining owners' decision processes, while the animal-welfare literature is produced largely within veterinary and animal-behaviour disciplines, separately from tourism research. Few studies systematically integrate all three axes. The owner-satisfaction/animal-welfare paradox proposed in Section 4.1 is best understood, in this light, not as a novel empirical finding but as a structural property of the field as it currently stands: because service-design and consumer-behaviour research measure owner-reported outcomes almost exclusively, the literature as a whole currently has no mechanism for detecting whether a mismatch exists between what makes owners satisfied and what the animal actually experiences.

This fragmentation calls for a concrete future research agenda, organised around closing the owner-satisfaction/animal-welfare gap rather than around the three literatures separately. First, incorporating animal-welfare indicators (behavioural stress markers, physiological measures such as cortisol levels) as dependent variables in service-design studies could directly link managerial recommendations to welfare outcomes, rather than to owner-reported proxies alone. Second, consumer-behaviour models that explicitly test the mismatch between owner satisfaction and observed animal welfare, rather than assuming their alignment, could move the discussion of anthropomorphism's dual effect onto empirical ground. Third, expanding comparative research in emerging tourism markets, Turkey prominent among them, could broaden the field's empirical base, which currently rests largely on North American, East Asian, and Western European samples.

Methodologically, the literature relies predominantly on surveys and online-review analysis, with observational/ethological methods

and mixed-method designs employed in only a limited number of studies (Li & Baek, 2026, and Hsu et al., 2026, are among these limited examples). Expanding studies based on direct observation of animal behaviour could reduce the subjectivity limitations inherent in owner-reported data.

This synthesis can be condensed into four propositions intended to guide future empirical testing rather than to report findings already established by the reviewed literature. Proposition 1: owner-perceived service quality and animal welfare should be treated as analytically distinct outcomes that require independent measurement rather than being inferred from one another. Proposition 2: anthropomorphism may simultaneously strengthen owner demand for pet-oriented services and increase the risk of species-inappropriate service design, such that its net effect on animal welfare is likely context-dependent rather than uniformly positive or negative. Proposition 3: pet-friendly accommodation quality is a multi-stakeholder construct involving owners, animals, hotel employees, and non-pet-owning guests, whose interests do not necessarily converge on the same service attributes. Proposition 4: policy transparency, the clarity and public availability of a property's pet-acceptance terms, may function as a boundary condition that moderates the relationship between pet acceptance and perceived service quality, a possibility the cross-source inconsistencies documented in Section 3.3.3 make directly testable.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has synthesised the international and national literature on pet-friendly tourism and the pet hotel concept along the axes of service design, consumer behaviour, market trends, and animal welfare. The findings show that the preference for pet-friendly accommodation is a multidimensional phenomenon, shaped beyond functional necessity by the emotional and anthropomorphic dimensions of the owner-pet bond. Within the service-design literature, hygiene, safety, the clarity of pet acceptance policy, and the quality of the physical environment consistently emerge as the axes determining consumer satisfaction.

The animal-welfare dimension is assessed as the least developed yet most critical component of the field. Systematically adapting the Five Freedoms framework, with the Five Domains model as its contemporary complement, to pet hotel and boarding services could offer businesses a concrete quality standard while giving academic research a measurable welfare indicator. Underlying this dimension is the owner-satisfaction/animal-welfare paradox proposed in Section 4.1: because the pet-friendly hospitality literature measures success almost entirely through owner-reported outcomes, a hotel can satisfy every criterion the literature

currently tracks while leaving the animal's own affective welfare unverified. The dual nature of the anthropomorphic tendency that produces this paradox requires operators to strike a deliberate balance between owners' emotional expectations and animals' genuine needs, and requires researchers to build welfare measures that are independent of owner report.

In the Turkish context, the pet-friendly accommodation sector appears to be developing in line with broader international trends, though no national data source allows this scale comparison to be made precisely, while its academic research base and service standardisation remain at an early stage of development. The supplementary content analysis reported in Section 3.3.3, an illustrative rather than representative sample, lends this assessment some empirical texture: within a mixed sample of eighteen properties spanning luxury, upper-upscale, and boutique positioning, weight limits, fee structures, and common-area rules vary widely and without a stated rationale. Within the limits of this sample, this pattern is consistent with, though it does not by itself establish beyond the sample, Demircioğlu and Şen Demir's (2021) qualitative finding that a standardised pet-friendly protocol has not yet emerged in Turkey. Accordingly, conducting larger-scale, cross-verified comparative research in Turkey's pet-friendly destinations, particularly along the Aegean and Mediterranean coasts, and extending beyond the luxury-hotel segment this study was able to access, could both offer a distinctive contribution to the international literature and support the development of service-quality standards within the sector. The proposed agenda for future research prioritises interdisciplinary studies that integrate service-design, consumer-psychology, and animal-welfare perspectives within a single empirical framework.

Declarations

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

Ethics Statement

This study is a literature review supplemented by a documentary content analysis of publicly available, secondary business information (published pet-friendly hotel policies). It did not involve human participants, animals, or any primary data collection (survey, interview, or experiment). Given that the study relies solely on publicly available secondary information, formal ethics committee approval was not applicable under the relevant institutional requirements.

Data Availability Statement

The coded dataset underlying the content analysis reported in Section 3.3.3 (Table 2) is provided as Supplementary File 1 accompanying this article.

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Author Contribution

As the sole author, Umut Güleriyüz is responsible for the conceptualisation, literature review, data collection and analysis, writing, and final approval of this manuscript.

Declaration of Generative AI Use

During the preparation of this work, the author used an AI-based language model (Claude, Anthropic) to assist with literature search, drafting, and editing. After using this tool, the author reviewed and edited the content as needed and takes full responsibility for the content of this manuscript.

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Note: Industry/market reports (Global Market Insights, Evcil-Der, APPA) and peer-reviewed academic sources carry different levels of verification; this distinction is made explicit throughout the text.