

Problems connected with hyperactivity and bad behavior of dogs of different breeds

**Angelika Dąbrowska, Jacek Zawisłak,
Natasza Świącicka, Dominika Gulda**

University of Technology and Life Sciences in Bydgoszcz,
Department of Horse Breeding and Fur Animals;
Mazowiecka 28, 85-084 Bydgoszcz

The aim of the performed investigation was to determine the level of hyperactivity and bad behavior of selected dog breeds. The numbers of the analyzed animals were as follows: in total 471 individuals (items), including 400 pedigree dogs qualified to a particular group according to FCI and 71 crossbreed dogs. The observations were carried out in a dog owner's house or neutral places (parks, forest glades, veterinary clinics). According to "bad behavior" (category A), the greatest aggression towards humans was observed within the dogs from groups I and II (37.4% and 40.9%, respectively). The dominating breeds were: German Shepherd, Rottweiler, Staffordshire Bull Terrier (medium and large breeds). In category B – the highest hyperactivity was observed in the dogs from group I, group II and group VIII. In category C – the greatest problems according to hyperactivity were spotted for small breeds, for example: Dachshund, which was characterized by intense barking and howling, and defecation in the house. Further breeds to be mentioned for hyperactivity are: Cavalier King Charles spaniel and Yorkshire Terrier. The smallest number of problems was caused by big breeds (within the range of 1.8-2.6% of the investigated population). It was confirmed that the most common disorders in the population of medium and large dogs were in the following order: aggression towards humans, aggression towards other dogs and pulling the leash; however, small dogs showed the greatest hyperactivity.

KEY WORDS: breed of a dog / behavior / hyperactivity / dog age

The estimated population of breeding dogs in Poland is close to 400 000 individuals and mongrels about 7 millions [7, 8]. Along with such a big population of animals both in the countryside and the cities, the problem of hyperactivity and bad or aggressive behavior may appear not only among the mongrels but also breeding dogs.

There are many kinds of aggressions [1] and they have different basis not only a genetic one. Defensive dogs and sheep dogs are generally speaking more aggressive, the aggression of terriers is found on the mean level and the accompanying dogs show lower excitability and malice [4]. A tremendous impact on the positive or negative behavior of a dog is exerted by the owner of an animal [2, 12].

The basis of solving the problem connected with bad behavior might include the modification of reaction by supplanting one reflex by another and inculcating of a new behavior. And what is more, a patience and calm must always be preserved. A problem noticed in time enables to lend the dog a helping hand by the owner, by going to the vet or a dog trainer [9].

The aim of this paper was to analyze certain forms of bad behavior of dogs.

Material and methods

The research material comprised dogs in the number of 471 individuals (including 400 breeding dogs classified in the suitable group of FCI and 71 mongrels). The research was carried out in the years 2006-2008 and all of the analysed dogs (304 ♂ and 167 ♀) came from Kujawy-Pomerania province. The data for the investigations were collected from the formal "animal register cards". The information contained in these cards was obtained on the ground of the interviews with the dog owners. The main sections of the card were as follows: address data, reported problem, history of the problem, therapy plan and course, control visits as well as observed effects.

The observations were performed at the owner's house – 216 or on a neutral ground (in a park – 62, a glade – 80 or a veterinary clinic – 113). On this basis, a division into three categories was carried out: A) problems originated from bad behavior (aggressiveness towards people, towards dogs or a nervous behavior), B) lack of control over a dog (jumping on people, disobedience, pulling the leash), C) problems originated from the nervousness of a dog (destroying objects, dirtying in the house, barking and howling). The above categories of disorders were set according to breeds (FCI) and their percentage share in particular categories was determined. The analysis concerned also the impact of an age (three groups: junior, adult, senior) and the body weight (in kg) on the unacceptable behavior.

Results and discussion

The research comprised 47 dog breeds (400 individuals) and a group of mongrels (71 individuals) – Table 1. Group II (12 breeds) was the most numerous in terms of the represented breeds according to FCI, however in terms of the number of the investigated individuals, the most numerous were breeding dogs in the first group – 99 individuals, the second group – 88 individuals and the third group – 85 individuals. On the basis of the conducted research, we can see that in terms of bad behavior (category A) the biggest aggression towards people was recorded in the dogs from the first, second, third and fourth groups (respectively: 37.4%; 40.9%; 38.1% and 83.3%) – Table 2. Alsatians, Rottweilers, Staffordshire Bull Terriers and Dachshunds were mainly dominating. Particular aggression towards other breeds was revealed by Alsatians, Rottweilers and Dobermans. In case of mongrels, the aggression towards people and dogs occurred on the level of 31.0% and 50.7%. Karpiński et al. [5] showed the aggression of mongrels towards other dogs in 47% of the investigated individuals. Cichoń [1] proved that the majority of cases of aggression towards people can be cured by the behavioral therapy but we shouldn't forget about the genetic background of the majority of unacceptable behavior.

Table 1
The number of dogs medically treated in years 2006-2008 with taking into account belonging to particular groups of FCI* (individuals)

The deviation according to FCI	Breed	No. acc. to FCI	A problems resulting from bad behavior					B lack of control over the dog – hyperactivity				C problems originated from the nervousness of a dog		
			the aggressiveness towards people	the aggressiveness towards dogs	the nervous behavior	jumping on people	disobedience	pulling the leash	destroying objects	dirtying in the house	barking and howling			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
I	Berger de Brie	113b	2	1	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-		
	<i>Briard</i>													
	Bearded Collie	271	3	-	-	-	1	2	1	-	-	-		
	Border Collie	297	12	6	6	1	6	6	12	4	5	1		
	Rough Collie	156	5	1	1	1	5	-	-	-	-	-		
	Cardigan Welsh Corgi	38	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	3		
	Belgia Shephend Dog	15	3	2	1	-	1	-	2	-	-	-		
	Deutscher Schäferhund	166	63	26	17	5	12	18	16	4	-	4		
	<i>German Shepherd Dog</i>													
	Old English Sheepdog	16	5	1	-	-	2	1	2	-	-	-		
	total	99	99	37	25	7	28	28	34	12	5	8		
II	Bernhardshund	61	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
	<i>Saint Bernard Dog</i>													
	Berner Sennenhund	45	4	1	-	3	2	2	2	-	-	-		
	<i>Bernese Mountain Dog</i>													
	Deutscher Boxer	144	18	4	6	1	4	1	5	3	-	-		
	<i>Boxer</i>													
	Bulldog	149	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
	Bullmastif	154	2	-	-	-	2	2	2	-	-	-		
	Doberman	143	17	7	12	-	3	3	2	2	4	-		

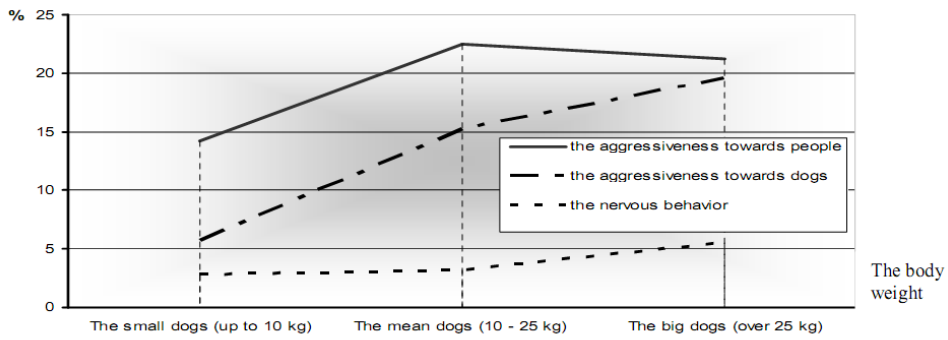
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	2	235	9	2	3	-	2	2	2	-	1	1
	Doutsche Dogge											
	<i>Great Dane</i>	328	3	3	3	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
	Кавказская овчарка											
	<i>Caucasian Shepherd Dog</i>											
	Rottweiler	147	25	14	17	5	6	6	12	-	1	-
	Sharp pei	309	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Zwergschнауzer	183	4	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	1	1
	<i>Standard Schnauze</i>											
	Riesenschнауzer	181	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	<i>Giant Schnauzer</i>											
	total	88	88	36	42	9	21	18	28	5	7	2
III	Airedale Terrier	7	5	-	1	-	1	1	2	1	-	-
group	Border Terrier	10	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Bull Terrier	11	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Fox Terrier	12	3	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Jack Russel Terrier	345	7	2	2	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
	Lakeland Terrier	70	3	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	2
	Staffordshire Bull Terrier	76	30	19	15	-	-	-	6	5	-	-
	West Highland White Terrier	85	4	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
	Yorkshire Terrier	86	8	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	4	6
	total	63	63	24	21	-	2	4	14	10	8	14
IV	Dachshunde	148	12	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	11
group	<i>Dachshund</i>											
V	Chow chow	205	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
group												
VI	Basset Hound	163	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
group	Beagle	161	2	-	-	-	1	2	1	-	-	-
	Bloodhound	84	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	-
	Dalmatnac	153	4	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	2	-
	<i>Dalmatian</i>											
	total	9	9	1	-	1	1	3	3	1	3	-

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
VII													
group													
		Irish Red Setter	120	3	-	-	-	2	1	3	-	-	-
		Weimaraner	99	7	3	3	-	1	1	1	-	-	-
		Deutsch Kurzhaar	119	3	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
		German shorthaired pointer	13	3	3	5	-	3	2	5	-	-	-
		total	5	26	10	4	2	5	5	2	2	2	2
VIII		English Cocker Spaniel	111	27	9	5	-	6	6	6	2	1	-
group		Golden Retriever	122	17	1	4	1	9	5	7	-	-	2
		Labrador Retriever	125	15	2	1	1	6	10	6	-	-	-
		English Springer Spaniel	85	85	22	14	4	26	26	24	4	3	4
		total	136	19	1	1	3	3	-	-	3	6	4
IX		Cavalier King Charles Spaniel	227	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
group		Lhasa apso	172	4	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	2	2
		Caniche Moyen	208	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3
		Poodle Medium	27	27	3	2	4	4	-	-	4	11	9
		Shih Tzu	160	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		total	400	400	139	110	25	85	81	108	36	42	48
X		Irish Wolfhound	71	71	22	36	1	15	14	18	-	5	1
group		<i>Irish wolfhound</i>	471	471	161	146	26	100	95	126	36	74	49
Total		all breeds											
		Without a group											
		mongrels											
		Generally											

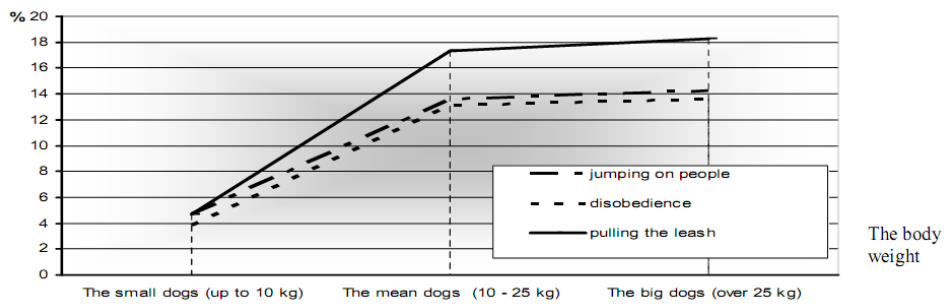
*FCI – Federation Cynologique Internationale

Table 2
The participation (percentage) of occurrence of particular disorders of the researched individuals with taking into account the suitable group of FCI

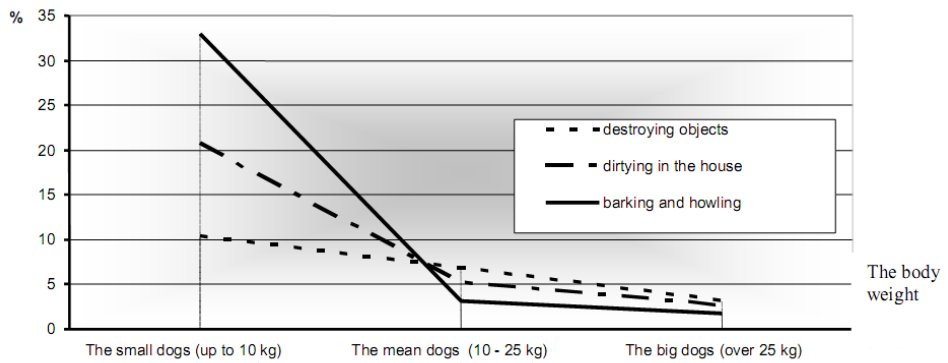
A group according FCI	n	A problems resulting from bad behavior (%)		B lack of control over the dog – hyperactivity (%)			C problems originated from the nervousness of a dog (%)			
		the aggressiveness towards people	the aggressiveness towards dogs	the nervous behavior	jumping on people	disobedience	pulling the leash	destroying objects	dirtying the house	barking and howling
I	99	37.4	25.3	7.1	28.3	28.3	34.3	12.1	5.1	8.1
II	88	40.9	47.7	10.2	23.9	20.5	31.8	5.7	8.0	2.3
III	63	38.1	33.3	–	3.2	6.3	22.2	15.9	12.7	22.2
IV	12	83.3	–	–	–	–	–	–	41.7	91.7
V	2	100.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
VI	9	11.1	–	11.1	11.1	33.3	33.3	11.1	33.3	–
VII	13	23.1	38.5	–	23.1	15.4	38.5	–	–	–
VIII	85	25.9	16.5	4.7	30.6	30.6	28.2	4.7	3.5	4.7
IX	27	11.1	7.4	14.8	14.8	–	–	14.8	40.7	33.3
X	2	50.0	50	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	400	35.0	27.5	6.3	21.3	20.3	27.0	9.0	10.5	12.0
Mongrels	71	31.0	50.7	1.4	21.1	19.7	25.4	–	7.0	1.4
Generally	471	34.2	31.0	5.5	21.2	30.2	26.7	7.6	10.0	10.0



Category A - problems resulting from bad behavior



Category B - lack of control over the dog - hyperactivity



Category C - problems originated from the nervousness of a dog

Fig. The behavior of dogs in relation to the body weight

Table 3
The number of the researched dogs in years 2006-2008 with taking into account the size of the breed and the age of an animal

The body weight	The age	The participation (%)	Breed	A			B			C				
				problems resulting from bad behavior	the aggressiveness towards people	the aggressiveness towards dogs	lack of control over the dog (hyperactivity)	jumping on people	disobedience	pulling the leash	destroying objects	dirtying the house	problems originated from the nervousness of a dog	problems originated from the nervousness of a dog
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
The small dogs (up to 10 kg) n = 70	junior (1-12 months)	17.1	Border Terrier	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
			Cavalier King Charles Spaniel	1	1	3	3	-	-	-	3	6	4	4
	adult (1-8 years)	72.9	Cardigan Welsh Corgi	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	3	3
			Jack Russel Terrier	10	10	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	5	11
	senior (over 8 years)	10.0	<i>Dachshund</i>	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	2	2
			Lakeland Terrier	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	-
			Lhasa apso	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	3
			Shih Tzu	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	1	1
			Zwergschнауzer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			<i>Standard Schnauze</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
The mean dogs (10-25 kg) n = 104	junior (1-12 months)	100.0	West Highlander White Terrier	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	
			Yorkshire Terrier	15	6	3	5	4	5	5	11	22	35	35
	adult (1-6 years)	9.6	n	14.2%	(5.7%)	(2.8%)	(4.7%)	(3.8%)	(4.7%)	(4.7%)	(10.4%)	(20.7%)	(33.0%)	
			Airedale Terrier	1	1	-	1	1	2	1	1	-	-	-
			Basset Hound	1	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	-	-	-
			Beagle	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			Bulldog	10	4	2	5	5	5	5	2	2	2	2
			English Cocker Spaniel	6	6	1	6	6	6	12	4	5	1	1
			Border Collie	1	1	1	5	1	5	1	1	1	1	1
			Rough Collie	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
senior (7 years and more)	100.0	n	22.5%	(15.2%)	(3.2%)	(13.6%)	(13.1%)	(17.3%)	(6.8%)	(5.2%)	(3.1%)	(3.1%)		
		Fox Terrier	43	29	6	26	25	33	13	10	6	6	6	
		Caniche Moyen	1	1	1	6	10	6	6	5	-	-	-	
		<i>Poodle Medium</i>	2	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
		Shar pei	19	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
		English Springer Spaniel	43	29	6	26	25	33	13	10	6	6	6	
		Staffordshire Bull Terrier	1	1	1	6	10	6	6	5	-	-	-	
		total	100.0	22.5%	(15.2%)	(3.2%)	(13.6%)	(13.1%)	(17.3%)	(6.8%)	(5.2%)	(3.1%)	(3.1%)	

Pulling the leash is one of the most often occurring troubles that the owners of dogs often come across [3]. From the observations of the authors we can see that over 26% of dogs have these inclinations (Table 2), and the biggest coefficient of the lack of control over the dog (pulling the leash) characterized the dogs from the first group – shepherd dogs and driving dogs.

In the category C, the biggest problems connected with nervousness occurred in the group of Dachshunds (group IV) for the trait “barking and howling” (91.7% of the researched individuals) and in the group of accompanying dogs. The dogs belonging to these groups had also high rate concerning the trait “dirtying in house”. Each dog can be trained and should be trained because it is necessary to correct functioning in relation with people and it is also necessary for the correct psychological development, feeling of security and self-assurance [10].

When analyzing the size of dogs (the body weight) and the age range of dogs in years 2006-2008 (Table 3; Figure), it has been shown that dogs of small breeds (0-10 kg) caused problems with vocalization (barking and howling: 33.0% of the researched population), especially Dachshund was a noisy breed. Such behavior might be a symptom of boredom and chronic stress [11]. On the second place in this group of dogs, the problem with dirtying in house (20.7%) occurred. The defecation and urination during the absence of the owner might be the symptom of the separation fear or lack of cleanliness training. It is rather rare to be related with the medical problems connected with infection of the urinary tract, diabetes mellitus or renal failure [6].

The dogs of mean and big breeds cause many problems with aggression towards people (respectively: 22.5% and 21.2% – Table 3) and aggression towards dogs. In these breeds, there has been observed a relatively high percentage of the lack of control over the dog showing typical hyperactivity, especially pulling the leash and getting away of the leash (from 17.3% to 18.3% of the investigated individuals).

In the researched population the most numerous groups were at the age from one year old to several years old (adult group) independently on the body weight of animals. Their share ranged from 67.3% to 80.8%.

In the researched population of dogs the most aggressive, in relation to people and animals (dogs), there were found German Shepherd Dog (Alsatian), Rottweiler, Staffordshire Bull Terrier (dogs of mean and big breeds). The dogs belonging to small breeds were nervous and hyperactive what was manifested in barking and howling especially in the group of Dachshunds, they also dirtied in house. On the basis of the conducted research we can draw conclusions that the dogs of big breeds were characterized by a bad behavior and hyperactivity and it indicates that they should be directed to the basic training of this group of dogs.

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