

ANIMAL CARE: AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO UNWANTED PETS – STRAY DOGS AND CATS

Myat Min @ Mohd Omar (Dr.)
International Islamic University Malaysia
omarminmin@gmail.com

Cho Cho Zaw @ Raheema
International Islamic University Malaysia
raheema@iium.edu.com.my

ABSTRACT

The topic of animal care especially the area of “unwanted pets in Islam” is rarely distributed among Muslim scholars, scientists and sociologists even though animal rights movement and animal activists are obviously increased among modern society. Small animals - dogs, and cats have been staying together with people since the beginning of human history. Humans have been receiving numerous benefits from them, such as keeping them as companions, using them for hunting, house keeping, and conducting research studies. The number of stray dogs and cats population on the streets has increased unexpectedly nowadays, and the risk of getting injury or disease from them becomes a huge concern for the community. Some people treated animals with cruelty, and there has been widespread abuse of them in the society. Animals are part of Allah (SWT) creations, and the Qur’an and the Al-Hadith prohibit cruelty to them and guides us to have mercy on them. As Muslims, Islamic teachings and concepts should be contemplated and incorporated in our daily activities. This study was conducted with the purpose of collecting authentic guidelines in Islam and exploring the view of Muslim scholars regarding animal care. The qualitative, library based approach was used as a research methodology and the data were exclusively sought from Holy Qur’an, Sunnah, books, journals, and Islamic manuscripts. The rights of animals, and human responsibility towards them were clearly presented from the perspectives of Islam. This study pointed out the need for maintaining balance between animal rights, and human benefits, focusing on treating animals with mercy, and reducing their sufferings even in times of killing them as a necessity. The study suggested that a need for developing a strategy by the relevant authorities regarding guidelines on some controversial issues such as animal neutering, spaying, and euthanasia to reduce the problems of pet owners, as well as to prevent the dangers of zoonotic diseases in the community. This study also serves as a comprehensive overview for the readers that assist them in obtaining knowledge, and increase their understanding of animal care in Islam. And it was expected to make a contribution to pet lovers in order to facilitate necessary prevention before their pets become unwanted and a burden to them.

Key words: Animal care, unwanted pets, stray dogs and cats, Islamic perspectives

Introduction

Several Islamic manuscripts mention that animals have their own rights and humans are responsible for their welfare. This study discusses the authentic guidelines of Islam regarding animal care, the balance among animal rights, human benefits and responsibility, solutions to controversial animal issues, and managing issues of unwanted pets from the Islamic perspectives. In Islam, animals are Allah’s (SWT) creations like humansⁱ. Being a representative (*khalifa*) on earth, humans have power over animals (Qur’an; 2:29; 36:71), and are able to use them for their benefits wisely, and also have responsibilities towards them (Qur’an; 54:27–32, 7:73, 11:64, 26:155–156). The importance of animal care is discussed based on the main Islamic teachings of the Holy Qur’an, Sunnah (prophet’s traditional ways), *Al-Hadith* (sayings of the Prophet), as well as classical and contemporary Muslim scholars’ views respectively. Islam teaches us to treat animals with kindness, and mercy, and not to abuse them. Since Islam guides us to the best way of life, its teachings and concepts should be contemplated and applied in our daily choices and activities. We need to find ways to tackle the issues concerning animals since we are given chances to explore the knowledge, and use them with wisdom. Therefore, solutions to the problems of unwanted animals from the Islamic perspective are very much needed to be shared and practiced accordingly, and to address those problems effectively.

Domesticated animals are not like wild animals that live in natural environment. They do not possess the capacity to survive by themselves in a man-made world. Out of all the domesticated animals, the researcher focus only on dogs, and cats because these pets runs on top of the most popular domestic pet lists in almost all the countries in the world. In America, out of about 7.6 million companion animals enter animal shelters nationwide every year, approximately 3.9 million are dogs and 3.4 million are cats. Out of them, approximately 2.7 million animals (1.2 million dogs and 1.4 million cats) are euthanized each year.ⁱⁱ The stray cats and dogs under the negligence owner or ill-treated people become problems to animals and human society. The pets become unwanted after they are burdens to a family if they grow old, get sick or their owners are no longer able to provide food and necessary shelter to them. Healthy animals may also be classified as unwanted due to their uncontrolled number, and the failure in getting sufficient food, treatment and/or shelter for them. There are widespread cases of animal abuses in the society, and one of the possible causes of it, is related with animal overpopulation.

A female dog and her puppies are theoretically capable of multiplying to over 67,000 in just six years, and a female cat and her kittens can result in over 400,000 offspring in only seven years. Purebred puppies and kittens come from large-scale commercial breeders commonly referred to as “mills” which produce mass animals for profit, typically keeping hundreds of female pets in crude, cramped cages, or tied, for their entire lives. The animals are bred incessantly, and then killed after four or five years when their bodies become worn out, and they are no longer “productive”.ⁱⁱⁱ Moreover, many pet owners do not realize how to prevent over-breeding of their pets, and/or not able to spend spay or neuter method in them. Because of their increased number, the owners are not able to provide adequate food, shelter, and the care needed for them, and causing them to suffer. These could also lead them to wander around on the streets as stray animals, causing road accidents, harass citizens, damage property, pollute the environment, and spread disease such as rabies to human or other animals. There are also often serious welfare issues for the strays involved; hunger, cold, disease and fear aggressive interactions with both humans and other animals.^{iv} Thus, the problem of unwanted pets, and measures needed to prevent it from happening have become a major issue in our society.

On the other hand, the therapeutic use of pets as companions has gained increasing attention in recent years by a wide variety of AIDS and cancer patients, the elderly, and the mentally ill. There are more than ten thousands references to the use of a variety of animals in psychotherapy, and the terms used include Pet Therapy, Pet Assistant Therapy, and Pet Facilitated Therapy. Pets such as dogs and cats provide unconditional, nonjudgmental love and affection. Pets can shift our narrow focus beyond ourselves, helping us to feel connected to a larger world. As it has been mentioned before, there are many cases of abuse to stray dogs and cats. We come across animal cruelty cases on a regular basis, about how they have been beaten, tortured, and killed in inhumane ways. At the same time, increasing numbers of people are experiencing loneliness and depression in our modern society. Some of these problems might be settled by promoting public awareness and encouraging those people in need to become pet owners by adopting pets from the animal shelter, or from the owners who are not capable of keeping them.

The Muslim’s primary duty is to practice what is right and to avoid what is wrong according to Islam.^v While using animals for their services and benefits, man should not unnecessarily hurt or harm them. This can broadly be applied to animal care. Animals should be made use of, but not mistreat them. Nowadays, people become selfish and inconsiderate towards others in favour of their personal greed and envy, the love of wealth and power. Needless to say, animals have suffered as a result of ignorance and lack of sympathy of human beings. However, there are still many people who show their love and mercy in treating animals, even if they has little knowledge about how to take care of them. Some people do spend a huge amount of money due to the higher costs of veterinary services, pet foods and accessories.

Though, there are different types of animals, being the most common domesticated pets among the human society, dogs and cats becomes the centre of attention to this study. As a veterinarian, the author has had experiences in treating animals in both government animal hospital, and private veterinarian clinics. These experiences included giving treatment, assisting or performing surgery, and looking after the animals ranging from the small tigers to exotic and domesticated pets. Witnessing the success of the treatment to save animals’ lives and/or reduce their sufferings was an uplifting experience for the veterinarians. There are also times to take note cases of animals’ abuses, and abandoned pets in the community. In addition to these, as part of the treatment, certain types of surgery such as neutering, spaying, or if needed killing the animals by using euthanasia methods are unavoidable for the veterinarians. Thus, all these facts mentioned before lead the researcher not only this study to focus on dogs and cats as unwanted pets, but also guide to explore more about it from the perspectives of Islam. This study aims to find out what are the Islamic teachings regarding animals, and is there any guidelines about these practices in Islam. This study is collectively taken from the dissertation done as part of fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts (Islamic Sciences) by Myat Min^{vi} @ Mohd Omar, the main author of this article.

This is a qualitative library based research, and the data are collected from the primary and secondary sources such as books, articles, journals, encyclopedias, dictionaries and online networks. Some descriptions and discussions are based on the researcher’s own experiences and some media materials. Some analysis and suggestions are taken from the views of scholars, and people who are involved in animal care series. Even though, this study does not have immediate commercial potential, the main motivation of it, is for knowledge enhancement purpose. This research is hoped to lay down the foundation for applied research which will focus on analysis and solution to social and real life problems which regards to issues of unwanted animals.

Literature Review

This study is an attempt to explore details information on Islamic animal care with special explanations on contemporary problems of unwanted pets from the Qur’anic, prophetic, and scholastic views. The following literature shed light on contemporary issues of animal care and unwanted pet problems. *The Holy Qur’an, Original Arabic Text with English Translation & Selected Commentaries* by ‘Abdullah Yusuf ‘Ali. (2004) is taken as the first and most important literature source for this study. The Qur’an is primarily a scripture of guidance, and not a book of any physical or social sciences. It provides broad guidelines concerning the spiritual and material aspects of life. Qur’an 6:38 guides us to have a greater compassion for every living thing, by saying that animals are part of our community. The second main important sources of this research are the Hadith books as the books of the virtues of the companions of the Prophet. Volume One^{vii} and Volume Two^{viii} of *The Translation of the Meaning of Al-Lu’lu’ wal-Marjan, Arabic-English: A Collection of Agreed upon Ahadith from Al-Bukhari and Muslim*, compiled by Fuwad Abdul Baqi and translated by Muhammad Mushsin Khan, and *Mishkat Al-Masabih* by Robson, James, D. Litt., D.D and others are selected in this study. Another excellent book of a contemporary Muslim scholar, *Animals in Islam*, was written by the late Al-Hafiz B.A. Masri, the first Sunni Imam of the Shah Jehan mosque, when he was working in the Islamic center of Europe. He was widely respected for the depth of his scholarship in this field.^{ix}

The book, “*The Animals Lawsuit against Humanity: A Modern Adaptation of an Ancient Animal Right Tale*”, with the interesting contents were also discussed in this study. Like conventional Arabic Islamic works, the Epistles have no lack of quotations from the Qur'an, but the *Encyclopaedia* is usually ascribed to the mysterious "Brethren of Purity" (Persian: *akhavan al-Safa*). It is about the group of Persian scholars placed in Basra, Iraq sometimes around 10th century CE. In this story, the King (or Shah) of Djinn arranged a series of debates between the humans and various representatives of the animals, such as the nightingale, the bee, and the jackal. The King discovered the oppression of people from the complaints of animals who unused to such harsh treatment. At the final hearing, the spirit of sages from Balakiss pointed out that all families of humans and animals are all God's creations; we are all equally part of the Great Oneness. All that is asked of us is to treat one another with respect and loving-kindness. Finally, the King was convinced by the argument that humans were superior to animals, and so worthy of making animals their servants because they were the only ones Allah (SWT) had offered the chance of knowing good from evil, and granted his judgment to them, but strongly cautioned them that the Qur'an promises them hellfire if they mistreat their animals.^x

An important modern scholar book “*Environmental Philosophy from Animal rights to radical Ecology*”, published in Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1993 at New Jersey, was written by Michael E. Zimmerman. Some philosophical thinking towards animal treatments is mentioned in this book. It is a common place to say that morality places some limits on how animals should be treated. In this book, a second view about constraints on how animals may be treated involves the idea of cruelty. The reason why we are not to kick dogs is that we should not be cruel to animals, and kicking dogs is cruel. The prohibition against cruelty can be given a distinctively Kantian twist. This happens when the grounds given are that cruelty to animals leads people to be cruel to other people.^{xi} In the book of “*Ethics and Animals*”, the author Lori Gruen provides a survey of the issues central to human-animal relations, urging readers to engage critically and to reflect empathetically on treatment of animals.^{xii}

“*The Animal Ethics Reader*” is another work that was reviewed in this literature. In this book, eighty seven specific articles are organized into ten parts and the theories and a sketch of the development of animal ethics are described. The coauthors – Martin Forward and Mohamed Alam, explained the Muslim view of the animal-human relationship that animals are not to be treated as valueless by human beings, but by Allah's (SWT) permission, human beings have superiority over the animals and are entitled to use animals for good purposes.^{xiii} To sum up, the literature discussed animals and their treatment in Islam, animal right charter, animal law suit against humanity, usages of animals for food and experimentation, ethical and religious perspectives, including animal treatment and other general views. Additional discussion was on contemporary issues, and finding solutions for unwanted pets were rarely seen in those literatures. However, they all provided valuable guidelines and foundation of knowledge to the researcher. Some other literature reviews are also mentioned and discussed accordingly.

Guidelines On Animal Treatment From The Sources Of The Qur'an And Sunnah

Numerous Qur'anic verses and Hadiths regarding rewards and punishments towards animal treatment, and examples of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) relationships with animals are discussed in this study. Being kind to animals and treating all the living creatures on earth with mercy and compassion is a human responsibility, and it can be seen from the sources of the Qur'an and Sunnah. On the way to a battle, as the Prophet's army marched towards Makkah to conquer it, they passed a female dog with puppies. The Prophet not only gave orders that the mother dog and puppies should not be hurt or disturbed, but posted a man to insure that this was done without failure.^{xiv} A believer is required to have *Taqwa* in *Ihsan* (kindness) in the best way in every aspect of his life, whether in his heart, environment, business, or at home. The word *Ihsan* occurs in various forms over hundred and ninety times in the Qur'an.

Each species of animal is a “community” like the human community (Qur'an 6:38), thus every creature on earth has the right to share in all the natural resources on this world with human beings. The Holy Qur'an lays down the condition that human beings, like all other creatures, shall have to work for their food and that their share would be proportionate to their labor (Qur'an 53:38-39). The Holy Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes that food and other resources of nature are there to be shared equitably with other creatures.^{xv} Mankind should remember that the earth belongs to all living creatures: *He laid out the earth for His creatures* (Qur'an; 55:10) and men are sent to earth to serve as representatives (*Khalifa*). The wrongful dominion of, and exploitation of animals by man creates a stain to our morality. Human responsibility toward animal includes treating them with kindness, feeding or allowing them to get food and water in ways suitable to them.

As in “The Cave” chapter, the Qur'an reveals the story of righteous youths who had a dog with them, and the fact that Allah (SWT) mentions and counts it among them, indicates that dogs are permitted to live among people (Qur'an 18:13-18). One can imagine that if dogs are prohibited among human society, and assumed as dirty creatures, Allah (SWT) would not have mentioned that those dwellers of the Cave who had a dog with them as good believers.

According to Islam, dogs may be used for guards as well as for hunting, as per the-Qur'an 5:4, in which Allah (SWT) tells us that it is allowed to eat what the trained dogs' catch in hunting. If the dog is an animal which causes contamination by mere touch, it would not have mentioned in the Qur'an like this way. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) told that all creatures are like dependents of Allah (SWT), and HE loves the most those who are the most beneficent to His creatures and therefore he said, “He, who is not merciful to others, will not be treated mercifully.”^{xvi}

The Prophet (PBUH) was sent as a Mercy to the world and it was mentioned in the Holy Qur'an (Qur'an 21:107). Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) showed compassion to all those around him, including his family, relatives, friends, orphans, strangers and even enemies. He treated the animals with respect and mercy and taught his followers that because animals were part of God's creation, they should be treated with dignity and due care. The best examples of the rewards and punishments towards animal treatment could be seen in the following Hadiths. Allah's (SWT) Final Messenger (PBUH) said concerning with the punishments, “A woman was tortured and was put in Hell because of a cat which she had kept locked till it died of hunger.”

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) further said, (to the woman), 'You neither fed it nor watered when you locked it up, nor did you set it free to eat the insects of the earth^{xviii}', and regarding the rewards of treating animals kindly, "A prostitute was forgiven by Allah (SWT), because, passing by a painting dog near a well, and seeing that the dog was about to die of thirst, she took off her shoe, and tying it with her head-cover she drew out some water for it. So, Allah (SWT) forgave her because of that." (Sahih al-Bukhari, 54/538)^{xviii} And another Hadith reminds us about the resurrection day regarding animal treatment is that "whoever kills a sparrow or anything bigger than that without a just cause, Allah (SWT) will hold him accountable on the Day of judgment."^{xix} It can be clearly seen from the above examples of the Qur'an and Sunnah that human beings should treat animals with kindness and compassion, and the rewards and punishments in the hereafter will be based on their intentions and actions.

In Islam, animals have their own rights; the rights to have their own foods, the rights to be loved and protected. Human responsibilities to animals are to feed them, maintain them, treat them with kindness, and use them in suitable ways. All creations, living and non-living, participate in the divine eternal plan, and therefore, merit appropriate care and attention from the humans. The ancient nation of Thamud in the story of Prophet Salih was warned that even a thirsty camel has rights for drinking; (Qur'an; 54:27-32, 7:73, 11:64, 26:155-156).^{xx} Allah (SWT) loves those who are most beneficent to them, and rewards and punishments will be given regarding animal treatment (Qur'an 26:155-156). Islam never regards dogs as forbidden creatures in human society. Some unlearned Muslims tend to treat dogs as evils or harmful animals, and there have been some instances that reached to the extent of trying to exterminate them or treat them with cruelty. Even though there are a lot of Muslim animal lovers and activists, the ignorance of such people creates unfavorable image of Islam among non-Muslims. On the other hand, some people are over reacting, and spending a lot of money for their pets, while many people are starving in some parts of the world. Islam teaches us to use our wisdom, and to be in moderation in everything we do, and this concept should be applied concerning with the animals and pets as well.

Moreover, the animals have been among society since the time of different Prophets throughout the history, and it can be noted from the holy Quran. The detailed findings of the author including names of animals, the relationships between Prophets and animals in the Quran are described in the following subtitles.

Names of Animals and Insects in Qur'an

Reflecting the prominence of animals in the divine scheme of things, six chapters are named after animals in the Qur'an. Thus, it is seen that Islam sanctifies life in all its aspects, omitting nothing from its embrace. These surahs/chapters are: 1. The Cow (surah 2); 2. The Cattle (surah 6); 3. The Bee (surah 16); 4. The Ant (surah 27); 5. The Spider (surah 29); and 6. The Elephant (surah 105). Furthermore, the researcher's finding shows thirty five names of animals and insects in the Qur'an as follows.

1. A fly (22:73-74); 2. A worm/ termite (34:14); 3. Ants (27:18); 4. Apes (2:65-66); 5. Ass (74:50); 6. Birds (2:260); 7. Bee (16:68-69); 8. Calf (2:51); 9. Camel (88:17); 10. Cow/Heifer (2:67); 11. Dog (18:18); 12. Donkey (31:19); 13. Elephant (105:1); 15. Ewe (38:24); 16. Fish (7:163); 17. Fowls (56:21); 18. Frog (7:131-134); 19. Goats (6:143); 20. Horse/Steed (3:14); 21. Hoopoe (27:20); 22. Lice (7:131-134); 23. Lion (74:51); 24. Locust (7:131-134); 25. Quail (2:57); 26. Mosquito (2:26); 27. Mule (16:8); 28. Ox (6:144-146); 29. Raven/ crow (5:31); 30. Sheep (6:143); 31. Serpent/ snake (28:31); 32. Spider (29:41-43); 33. Swine (16:11); 34. Whale (37:142-144); 35. Wolf (12:30-31).

Relationships between Prophets and Animals in the Qur'an

Different kinds of animals are mentioned in the Holy Book Qur'an in relation with the stories of the Prophets (peace be upon them). The very bird that praise Allah (SWT) [Qur'an 24:41]; Bees that are ordered by their Rabb [Qur'an 16:68,69]; The crow (raven) that Allah (SWT) sent to Adam's (PBUH) son [Qur'an 5:31]; The four birds that Ibrahim (PBUH) had trained to follow his direction [Qur'an 2:260]; A bird that was made by Isa (PBUH) [Qur'an 5:110]; The birds that are commanded by Dawood (PBUH) [Qur'an 34:10, 38:19]; Ewe flock that Dawood's (PBUH) solved the problem [Qur'an 38:23,24]. The cow of Banu Israel that Musa (PBUH) ordered to be slaughtered [Qur'an 2:71]; A calf which is made by Banu Israel in the absent of Musa (PBUH) [Qur'an 2:51,54,92,93 & 20:88]; Snake that transformed from the staff of Musa (PBUH) [Qur'an 20:20, 27:10, 28:31]; The fish that the young servant of Musa (PBUH) forgot to tell the disappearance of it [Qur'an 18:61,63]; The wolf that was falsely accused of eating Yusuf (PBUH) [Qur'an 12:13,14,17]; The termite that ate the staff of Sulayman (PBUH) [34:14]; The hoopoe of Sulayman (PBUH) [Qur'an 27:20,22]; The Ant and Sulayman (PBUH) [Qur'an 27:18]. 'Uzayr's (Ezra's) (PBUH) donkey [Qur'an 2:259]; The whale that swallowed Yunus (PBUH) [Qur'an 37:139-148]; The she-camel that is related to Saleh (PBUH) and the tribe of Thamud [Qur'an 91:12,14]; The dog of the people of the cave [Qur'an 18:18]; The hunting animals [Qur'an 5:4]; The dog that was described as similitude of nature of man [Qur'an 7:176]; The ass (donkey)'s braying (sounding of loud and rough) voice that Luqman (PBUH) do not like [Qur'an 31:19]; Abrahah's elephant [Qur'an 105:1]; Apes (monkey) and pigs in the matter of Sabbah [Qur'an 2:65, 5:60]. Other animals mentioned in the Qur'an are steeds (war horse) [Qur'an 38:31-32], salva (quail meat) [Qur'an 2:57, 7:160, 20:80], spider [Qur'an 29:41], fly [Qur'an 22:73], moths (flying insect like butterfly) [Qur'an 101:4], beast (wild animal) [Qur'an 81:5], asses (donkey) [Qur'an 74:50], lion [Qur'an 74:51], mules [Qur'an 16:8], gnat [Qur'an 2:26], camels [Qur'an 88:17,56:55,77:33], locusts [Qur'an 54:7], lice, frogs [Qur'an 7:133], flesh of swine [Qur'an 2:173, 5:3], flesh of fowls [Qur'an 56:21] and animal skin (also -wool, fur, hair) [Qur'an 16:80]. The thorough findings of the researcher about animals and its related matters are mentioned in details in the following table.

Animals and its Related Matter from the Holy Qur'an

	Name of Animal	Qur'anic verses	No. of Different Chapter	No. of Verses.
1	A bird	3:49; /5:110;/ 27:20;	3	3
2	A fly	22:73;	1	1
3	A worm/ Termite	34:14;	1	1
4	Animal/ animals	5:1-4, 95, 97, 103;/ 6:38;/ 10:24;/ 16:80;/ 22:18,34;/ 45:4;	6	13
5	Animal from water	24:45;	1	1
6	Ants	27:18;	1	1
7	Apes	2:65;/ 7:166;	2	2
8	Ass	31:19;/ 74:50,;	2	2
9	Beast/Beasts	2:164;/ 8:22,55;/ 27:82;/ 31:10;/ 81:,5;	5	6
10	Bee	16:68,69;	1	2
11	Birds	2:260;/ 12:36,41;/ 16:79;/ 21:79;/ 22:31;/ 24:41;/ 27:16,17;/ 38:19;/ 67:19;/ 105:3;	10	12
12	Blood	2:173;/ 7:133;	2	2
13	Bone	2:259;/ 6:146;	2	2
14	Calf	2:51, 54, 92, 93;/ 4:153;/ 7:148, 152;/ 11:69;/ 20:88;/ 51:26,27;	6	11
15	Camel/ Camels	6:144;/ 7:40;/ 12:65,72;/ 22:27, 36;	4	6
16	Camel (she- camel)	5:103;/ 7:73, 77;/ 11:64;/ 17:59;/ 26:155;/ 54:27;/ 81:4,;/ 91:13;	8	9
17	Camelry	59:6;	1	1
18	Cattle	3:14;/ 4:119;/ 6:136,8,9,42,43;/ 7:179;/ 16:5,6,7,66;/ 36:71,72,73;/ 39:6;/ 40:79,80;/ 42:11;	14	25
19	Cattle/ livestock	43:12,13;/47:12;/79:31,33;/ 80:32;	4	6
20	Cavalry	17:64;	1	1
21	Coral	55:22;	1	1
22	Creature	10:66;/ 11:6,56;/ 16:49,61;/ 21:19;/ 29:60;/ 35:28,45;/ 42:29;/ 45:13;	8	10
23	Created all things	6:59,101-102;/ 10:31, 34, 56;/ 36:36;/38:31,33;/ 41:47;/ 51:49;/ 53:45;/	7	12
24	Dog	7:176;/ 18:18,22;	2	3
25	Donkey	2:259;/ 16:8; 62:5;	3	3
26	Elephant	105:1;	1	1
27	Ewe	38:23,24;	1	2
28	Fish	7:163;/ 18:61;/ 37:144;/ 68:48;	4	4
29	Flea	7:133;	1	1
30	Flock	20:18;	1	1
31	Fowls	56:21;	1	1
32	Frog	7:133;	1	1
33	game (water +land)	5:94-96;	1	3
34	Goats	6:143;	1	1
35	Heifer	2:67-70;	1	4
36	Honey	47:15;	1	1
37	Hoof	6:146;	1	1
38	Horse	3:14;	1	1
39	Lawful and forbidden	5:87,88;/6:119, 146;/ 7:32, 157;/ 8:69;/ 10:59;/ 16:114;/	6	9
40	Lice	7:133;	1	1
41	Lion	74:,51;	1	1
42	Live and dead	2:259, 260;/ 3:27;/ 6:95;/	3	3
43	Locust	7:133;/ 54:7;	2	2

44	Manna and quails	2:57;/ 7:160;/ 20:80;	3	3
45	Meat/flesh	2:259;/ 6:118-9, 121;/ 16:115;/ 16:14;/ 10:37;/ 35:12;/ 52:22;	7	9
46	Meat (dead)	2:173;	1	1
47	Meals	6:143;	1	1
48	Milk	47:15;	1	1
49	Mule	16:8;	1	1
50	Ox/oxen	6:144,146;	1	2
51	Pearls	52:24;/ 55:22;/ 56:23;/ 76:19;	4	4
52	Raiment (clothing)	7:26;/	1	1
53	Raven / crow	5:31;	1	1
54	Sacrifice	2:196;/ 5:27, 103;	2	3
55	Serpent/snake	7:107;/ 20:20;/ 26:32;/ 27:10;/ 28:31;	5	5
56	Sheep	6:143,146;/ 21:78;	2	3
57	Silk	22:23;/ 35:33;/ 76:12;	3	3
58	Spider	29:41;	1	1
59	Steed/horse	8:60;	1	1
60	Swine	5:60;	1	1
61	Swine (flesh of)	2:173;/ 5:3;/ 6:145;/ 16:115;	4	4
62	Wolf	12:13,14,17	1	3
	Total			219

Animals Rights And Human Responsibility Towards Animals

Animals in the service of man should be used only when necessary and their comfort should not be neglected. The Prophet (PBUH) once passed by a lean camel whose belly had shrunk to its back. "Fear God" he said to the owner of the camel, "In these dumb animals, and ride them only when they are fit to be ridden, and let them go free when it is time that they should rest."^{xxi} About taking care of animals while travelling, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) gave the following advice: When you journey through a verdant land, (go slow to) let your camels graze. When you pass through an arid area, quicken your pace (lest hunger should enfeeble the animals). Do not pitch your tents for the night on the beaten tracks, for they are the pathways of nocturnal creatures.^{xxii} Moreover, the following verse in the Qur'an mentions the ownership status of human beings. Do they not see that We have created for them from what Our hands have created, the cattle, so that they are their owners? (Qur'an 36:71) Animals have been created for the benefit of mankind. However, as being the owners, men have responsibilities towards them. It is better to use them wisely, and not to abuse them against Allah's (SWT) will.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) forbade the practice of cutting tails and manes of horses and of keeping horses saddled unnecessarily. It is forbidden to stay long on the back of an animal (Horse, Donkey, and Camel) when it is not in motion. The Prophet made a remark on this cruelty as "Do not turn your animals into chair".^{xxiii} The Prophet mentioned that beast of burden like camels, ox, donkeys, horses, elephants etc. are not allowed to carry load that is too heavy, and should be well fed and watered. Whenever the Prophet saw any animal over-loaded or ill-fed, he would approach the owner and said, "Fear Allah (SWT) in your ill treatment of animals." Once the Prophet (PBUH) entered a garden and saw a camel, and when the camel saw him, it started crying with tears coming out of its eyes. The Prophet (PBUH) approached the camel and rubbed off the tears asking, "Who is the owner of this camel?" The owner replied "It is mine, Oh Prophet of Allah (SWT)". The Prophet (PBUH) then said "Indeed your animal complained to me that you starve and overwork it" (Abu Dawud). The Prophet also prohibited branding animals with hot iron bars and storing milk in the udders of animals which is another malpractice in Arabia in those days, caused pain and discomfort to the animals.

The Prophet (PBUH) and his fellow travelers used to delay even their prayers until they had first taken down their loading from the backs of the animals and attended to their needs.^{xxiv} Hazrat Ali's (RA) general advice about pack animals is: "Be kind to pack animals; do not hurt them; and do not load them more than their ability to bear" When the Prophet (PBUH) migrated to Madinah from Makkah, people there used to cut off camels' humps and the fat tails of sheep. The Prophet (PBUH) ordered this barbaric practice to be stopped. He declared: "Whatever is cut off an animal while it is still alive, is carrion and is unlawful (Haram) to eat."^{xxv} Animals, their works and usages are mentioned in several verses of the Qur'an. Animals are part of our creations, and they have been created for the benefits of mankind. Animal tortures and abuses are prohibited in Islam. People should take the examples of Prophet's Muhammad's (PBUH) ways of dealing with animals. From all the above teachings of the Quran, Sunnah, and Hadiths, it is clear that the basic responsibility of human beings includes treating all the living creatures on earth with kindness and mercy. Animals ought to be treated in such a way as to minimize their discomfort and pain since they have their consciousness and sufferings. "A good deed done to a beast is as good as doing good to a human being; while an act of cruelty to a beast is as bad as act of cruelty to a human being" and that 'kindness to animals was promised by rewards in life of Hereafter'.^{xxvi} Allah (SWT) loves those who are kind and enjoin kindness (Qur'an; 16:90; 31:17). People should not kill a living

creature, except for a justifiable reason (Qur'an; 6:152; Q; 17:33). Widespread beating, kicking, overriding, torturing, cruel slaughtering methods and vivisection, causing animal pain and suffering that lead to a reconsideration of humane ethics.

Controversial issues on unwanted pets – dogs and cats

There are some controversial issues concerning the treatment of unwanted pet animals. Like others, some Muslims also do not simply approve the processes of sterilization, euthanasia, and animal assistant therapy. These issues are needed to be discussed to raise public awareness and obtain proper management. The animal over-breeding, its associated problems, and issues on methods of treatment are tried to address here from the Islamic and modern medical perspectives. Even though there are numerous issues regarding animal care, the scarcity of data regarding unwanted pets in Muslim societies remains one of the challenges in this study. The method to control animal over-breeding is still a controversial issue among Muslim scholars.

In recent times, several issues have been raised concerning animals related factors. Out of the six hundred million dogs in the world, around 80% are estimated to be stray and a similar percentage for cats.^{xxvii} The problems arising from strays are significant, with human health issues such as rabies and injuries from bites being two of the more serious issues. There are also serious welfare issues for the strays involved such as; hunger, cold, disease and fear from aggressive interactions with both humans and other animals. It is an undeniable fact that a worldwide pet overpopulation problem is mostly due to the negligence of their owners. For these reasons, and because strays are very visible to the human populace, the stray animal population is often a prominent concern for both governments and animal welfare groups.

Numerous issues concerning unwanted pets have been raised. The areas such as animal assistant therapy, shelter policy, and government rules and regulation in handling stray animals are still progressing gradually and need to be further developed. At the same time, it has been known that human beings receive numerous beneficial effects by keeping pets as companions. Pet species perform vital services. Parents often use pets as a tool in rearing their children. Pets can be used as a mechanism for teaching children about basic biology as well as the larger lessons about life and death. Children learn responsibility by taking care of the animal.^{xxviii} Dogs still pull sleds and carts in Alaska, Greenland, and Siberia. Guided dogs are the useful tool for people with physical disabilities. Medical studies have verified the benefits of pet ownership and the reasons appear to be physical, emotional and social. A research study was done that has explored the relationship between the domestic dog and human well-being, and the studies reviewed suggest that dogs can have prophylactic and therapeutic value for people.^{xxix} This article initially concentrates on the value of dogs for physical health in humans, exploring the evidence that this species can prevent us from becoming ill, facilitate our recovery from ill-health, and even serve as an early warning system for certain types of underlying ailment including cancer, oncoming seizures and hypoglycaemia. The paper then examines the relationship between dogs and psychological health in humans, exploring the ability of this species to aid the disabled and serve as a therapist to those in institutional settings such as hospitals, residential homes and prisons. Weaknesses in the existing research in this area are highlighted throughout the article.^{xxx} In addition to it, pets help their owners to be more active because they need daily care. Seeing-eye dogs and hearing-dogs are useful for people who are blind and deaf.

Moreover, one of the studies based on animal assistant therapy, found out that the pet-owning group showed significantly fewer physical symptoms associated with the bereavement than did their non-owning counterparts. Moreover, another study has also shown that people undergo the lowest cardiovascular reactivity to stress in the presence of their dog or cat.^{xxxi} Another study pointed out that lonely old people who have pets can care for live longer and have better health and stroking pets can lower blood pressure.^{xxxii} Animals are being increasingly used in mental and emotional therapy. The prison Pet Partnership Program, located at the Washington State helps inmates learn how to train, groom, and board dogs within the prison walls. Rehabilitation centers use pets to help patients improve their strength, coordination, and mobility.^{xxxiii} Even though animals are not capable of the highest forms of intellectual interaction with humans, they can be wonderful companions. In addition to it, dogs have been proven to be useful in rescue teams, illegal goods investigations, special guards and security reasons and others. From the numerous benefits mentioned above, Animal Assistant therapy should be made to be in line with the Islamic teachings. The foundational knowledge to build this program will be achieved after absorbing basic principles of animal care from the Islamic perspectives.

The common problems associated with unwanted animals are animal over-breeding, zoonosis diseases, infections, rabies, animal bites and others. These problems occur mostly due to lack of knowledge and inadequate resources of the owners to provide enough food and shelter and to get treatment and vaccination for their animals. Another problem is that people attitude towards animals, cruel or inhumane killings of them. Animal euthanasia and neutering are still debatable or controversial issues even among some scholars in using the methods of desexing/sterilization/neutering, and euthanasia of animals, and it would be worthy to find out these issues from both veterinary science and the Islamic perspectives. However, modern Muslim Scholars have different views on the use of neutering and euthanizing methods in animals. Most of the scholars and pet owners generally agree to use these methods while there are a few scholars who are against it. Some of the issues regarding unwanted pets are further explored in the following subtitle.

Managing Issues Of Unwanted Pets

Euthanasia is the ancient people's choice of veterinary medicine, and they used this method to manage animals which are no longer able to provide services to people. According to the classical heritage in Islam, euthanasia is not allowed in human cases. Though, there are some countries which allow euthanasia as accepted medical practice, many countries didn't allow them to practice, as per their medical ethics "During the entire treatment, I will strive, as far as it is possible for me, to benefit patients. Things that may harm them and do them wrong, I will avoid to the best of my judgment. I will not give a lethal medicine if asked

for it nor give such counsel. Similarly, I do not believe that I may give women an injection to induce abortion. In my treatment and my science I will keep myself pure and clean. ...^{xxxiv}

Moreover, the prohibition and permission of 'euthanasia' might not be the same for human and animal. Some scholars argue that "If an animal whose meat is not permissible to eat gets sick, and there is no hope that it will recover, then there is no sin on you if you kill it, because if it is kept alive it will become a burden on you which may be a waste of your money, as you will have to spend on it and this spending will be a waste of your money. However, Islamic fatawa do not bother to elaborate on the means through which mercy killing can be executed. These are naturally numerous. Muslim jurists rather view all forms of euthanasia as murder."^{xxxv} Nonetheless, according to one Hadith, "order of killing dog was concerned with the rabid dogs".^{xxxvi} From this we learnt that if the dogs have infections and afraid of spreading to human beings, they are allowed to be killed. Another Hadith mentions that killing of animals is better than torturing them, and it can be seen in the following. "Keeping it alive until it dies without giving it food and drink is Haraam, it is permissible to kill it, whether you slaughter it or kill it with bullets. Doing whatever is easiest on the animal, because the Prophet (PBUH) said: "If you kill, kill well, and if you slaughter, slaughter well. Let each one of you sharpen his blade and let him spare suffering to the animal he slaughters."^{xxxvii} From the above Hadith, it could be concluded that killing of animals is allowed, if the owners are not capable of keeping them, and they are having serious illness, pain or suffering. In Islam, certain things are forbidden while some other things might be allowed with exemptions based on the intentions and conditions of environment that someone is facing or experiencing.

Simply allowing a cat to be put down because it is sick is not allowed in Islam. If, however, the cat is too sick to recover and there is no hope of it ever being able to lead a normal life, or one does not have the means and resources to obtain adequate treatment for it, then he/she should hand it over to the humane society. It is up to them to decide what to do with the cat. If they decide to put it down because of not being able to find a home, or because of their decision that such an animal cannot be cared for or set free, it is permitted to do so according to the principles of the Shari'ah. It is generally agreed by scholars that if leaving certain animals free becomes a cause of genuine concern for the safety of society, it is permitted in Shari'ah to put them down as a lesser of the two evils.^{xxxviii}

The Qur'anic position is in the middle. It is not possible to argue that animals should not be used in research and experiments while these procedures save uncountable number of human lives and reduce their sufferings. But at the same time, they have to make sure that animal sufferings should be at a minimum. Muslim scientists have an ethical obligation to ensure that their research aims cannot be achieved in other ways. As moral beings, man should not even countenance suffering on the part of animals except when it serves a clearly defined issue, higher purpose such as the saving of uncountable number of precious life. The triad of reduction, refinement, and replacement in animal procedures should be an integral part of any scientific research project, to help to minimize animal use and suffering.^{xxxix} Most fundamentally, it is forbidden to be cruel to animals. Under Islamic law, animals kept by human beings must have their basic needs provided, even if they are old or ill. Animals must not be overworked or housed in a way that might cause them injury.

The Islamic Religious Council of Singapore or MUIS (Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura) is supportive of cats sterilization, stating that in the long run, it is more humane to control the stray population by sterilization, rather than putting them down to sleep or enabling them to breed in unconditional conditions where they are left in the streets, hungry and are more prone to diseases.^{xl} The MUIS Fatwa Committee states: "Fundamentally, all mazhabs (Schools of Islamic Jurisprudence) allow the sterilisation of animals. After analysing the arguments and position of the different mazhabs and medical opinion from the Society of Prevention of Cruelty Against Animals (SPCA), the Fatwa committee decides that (in the article 19) sterilising cats on the basis of 'maslahat' (general good) is harus (permissible)."^{xli} In Malaysia, Department of Islamic Advancement of Malaysia or Jabatan Kemaguan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM) also issued the "fatwa" since 2002 that "all pets like cats and dogs are allowed to be neutered or spayed in order to maintain the health and welfare of both the animals and the community."^{xlii} Human beings have been given *Hikmah* (wisdom) and intention and situation plays the major roles in deciding our actions, and it could be applied in deciding to perform methods of neutering and euthanasia in animals. In addition to these, it is the responsibilities of every Muslim to follow the guidelines from the Qur'an, Sunnah and the teaching of the Prophets. Kindness to animals, Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) and other Prophets' (PBUT) relationship with animals, rewards and punishments regarding their treatments have been discussed from the Islamic points of views, and for Muslims, all these are to be taken as examples to follow.

In an ideal world, we would be able to live harmoniously. We do not live in an ideal world as we have to make choices about how to act ethically when interests conflict, having theoretical frameworks to guide our thinking and our actions will be most useful.^{xliii} Almost all religions allow the use of animals for the necessary human needs with the nature, there would be no conflicts, and everyone would have their interests satisfied. Man has always used them and their labour just as human beings take each other in service. However, animals are not capable of protecting their rights, and it is left mainly to human conscience, public opinion, social censure and government legislation.^{xliiv} In terms of legislation, as mentioned by WSPA, it should include both national or primary laws that set out the main principles of stray control and animal protection, and by-laws that provide detail and allow for local differences.^{xliv}

Every individual is accountable for their action and has to answer for it on the resurrection day. Since animals are members of our community, they should be treated with justice. Every person should also obey rules and regulations of their government concerning animal issues. Young children should be trained specific ways of helping and caring animals. In the first years of life, the children can be taught to understand animal feelings, to cooperate with others, and negotiate conflicts, show willingness to share with peers and adults, and manifest capabilities for giving help. As early as the second years of life, one can begin to teach children the rudiments of a sense of responsibility for other people and animals.^{xlvi} Moreover, the ethics on how to deal with

animals, their rights as creatures on earth and basic attitude of being kind to animals should be taught at school starting from the younger age. It is essential to promote public awareness among people for the better benefits of mankind and society. Individual and family belong to the community. Responsible families can help build better community and the prosperous nation as a whole.

Each and every country in the world should enforce rules, and regulations regarding animal handling. There should be veterinary clinics run by animal welfare groups which can offer free services to animals owned by people who cannot afford to pay private veterinary fees. When performing any animal research facility, the goal of it is to support research programs that promote the health and wellbeing of people and animals by facilitating high quality, scientifically sound research with animals.^{xlvii} Animal care is the broad area and is not limited to a few countries, and it can be applied globally. More research needs to be done especially in the area of food safety regulations and policies.

There are three main ways to prevent and control this problem: legislation, sterilization, and education. Legislation includes both national or primary laws that set out the main principles of stray control and animal protection, and by-laws that provide detail and allow for local differences. Of course, without enforcement, legislation is useless. Hence, all legislation should be followed up with both national and local enforcement. Registration can also be used to encourage neutering of owned animals by offering free or reduced registration of neutered animals. Legislation should require that all animals be vaccinated against zoonosis that can endanger humans. Abandonment and allowing dogs to roam unsupervised can be legislated against. Legal requirements can be set for breeding establishments and pet shops, to ensure that animals are kept according to good welfare standards and those puppies and kittens are raised in conditions that are good for their health, and ensure they will be well adjusted pets. Legislation should also protect animals against cruelty, neglect and inhumane killing. Enforcement will require collaboration between police, legal representatives, members of the veterinary community and the public. Animal welfare officers can be employed to enforce the legislation at 'ground level'.^{xlviii}

In addition to these, sterilization could be done by using the methods of spaying and neutering to control animal over-population. Spaying and neutering are the surgical procedures performed by veterinarians that render dogs/cats incapable of breeding by removing their reproductive organs. This method is also used to reduce aggressive behaviour and can reduce the chances of animal having certain types of cancers in their reproductive system.

Most humane societies, animal shelters and rescue groups urge pet owners to have their pets neutered to prevent the births of unwanted litters, contributing to the overpopulation of unwanted animals in the rescue system. Another way to prevent animals over breeding is public education, and it is a long-term solution to stray animal control and should be aimed at both adults and children. There are many different ways of educating people, including the use of printed materials, the internet, schools and public lectures. Animal welfare organizations can play a vital role in educating the public about responsible animal ownership and the problems and/or solutions to stray populations. Investing in the next generation by educating children can be both rewarding and extremely effective in the long term. Concerning animal over breeding, Catch Neuter and Release (CNR) Programs are also used by veterinarians. It essentially involves catching stray animals, sterilizing and vaccinating them, and then releasing them back to the place they were initially caught. A sterilized animal is usually marked with a permanent mark such as a small cut on ear flap or the use of coloured collar to show that they have been sterilized. Another method to prevent pet overpopulation is to promote pet adoptions instead of buying from trading pet animals.

Euthanasia method is defined as making someone painless, and rapid unconsciousness followed by cardiac and respiratory arrest, and ultimately death. It is used to stop the suffering of sick and old animals and is administered by responsible and properly trained individuals. The veterinarians may assist the pet owners in making decisions to perform euthanasia method in their pets if they no longer able to keep their animals. Nonetheless, euthanasia method is still controversial issue for some people, one research study was conducted to identify the pet owner's satisfaction on euthanasia. Discussing a related subject, Jolle Kirpenstein, from the University of Utrecht, Netherlands, presented results of an evaluation of owner experiences following euthanasia of their horses. The results show 84% of the owners satisfied with this method. The study involved telephone interviews with fifty eight owners who had their horses euthanized by lethal injection. The owners were present at the euthanasia in 83% of cases, and 84% of these owner-observed cases were described as peaceful. Veterinarians should note the owners describing the euthanasia as peaceful and those describing their veterinarians as friendly and compassionate were significantly happier with the procedure.^{xlix} One of the responsibilities of a Muslim is to explore knowledge and practice it accordingly. It is generally agreed that the Muslim vets should practice all the methods of veterinary sciences mentioned above in solving and handling the issues of unwanted pets. The problems of animal over population cannot be settled without taking adequate preventive measures against animal over breeding. However, Allah has given human beings *hikamah* (wisdom) to examine the knowledge we learned and not to follow blindly any information without analyzing it carefully.

Discussion And Conclusion

In this study, numerous Hadiths, and Quranic verses have pointed out to be compassionate and treat with kindness over animals. The Qur'an is full of verses exhorting man to study nature- the planetary system, the terrestrial elements, the fauna and flora on earth.ⁱ All creation, living and non-living, participate in the divine eternal plan and, therefore, merit appropriate care and attention from humans. It is necessary (Wajib) upon every individual owning animals to spend on them, providing food and everything else required for their good up keep. The position on animal welfare within Islamic law is an excellent example of compassion and concern for those who depend on others for their care. Islamic legal protection of animal welfare is truly a model for everyone, and if these protective rules were applied worldwide, the amount of animal suffering should be radically reduced and the situation for animals would be tremendously better.ⁱⁱ The Qur'an mentions the creation of animals in a diversity of

species. Allah (SWT) requires mankind to obtain knowledge, know his environment and benefit mankind. HE commands human beings to explore the creation of the universe by travelling on land, sea and observing the creatures like camel, bee, ant, bird, fish and others. Humans have been benefitting from goods obtained by hunting or domestication of animals such as eggs, milk, meat, fur, wool, honey, bone meal and skin, etc. There is a blessing in our creation and the creation of our environments. To be thankful for this blessing means animals should be treated with compassion and not to abuse them. Kindness is an important ingredient of the human conscience. Allah (SWT) Himself is compassionate and kind. HE wants man, His vicegerent on earth, to be kind-hearted towards all living creatures.

The Muslim's primary duty is to practice what is right and avoid what is wrong (Qur'an-7:157). The Islamic worldview and guidelines give sufficient basis for the humane treatment of animals. Islam has complete guidelines for human being concerning their behaviours and morality towards animals. There are numerous *Ayahs* (Sentences of the Qur'an) and *Hadiths* mentioning about animals and the human responsibilities towards them. Human beings are using animals as their food, dress, and transportation and also for other purposes. It is said in the Holy Qur'an that Allah (SWT) loves those who are kind and enjoin kindness (Qur'an; 16:90; 31:17). Some people do love the animals dearly and keep them as their pets. Pet do not possess the capacity to survive by themselves in our concrete world. They need our help.^{lii} It has also been discussed that Islam never forbids dogs as evil creatures. Based on the verses of the Qur'an (18:13-18; and 5:4), dogs can be used for guarding, and hunting in the human society, counted them as companions of people. One should be noted that as mentioned in the online article of "*Dog in Islam*", "we must not let our misunderstandings about dogs lead us to neglect, mistreat, or harm them. The one must only be careful not to come into contact with the dog's saliva, and to keep its living area clean and away from any areas used for prayer".^{liii}

Nonetheless, we need to practice everything in moderation. We should neither fall into the trap of treating animals as though they are essentially the same as human beings or into the trap of considering them as mere automata^{liv} nor overexploit them. The moral justification for animal experimentation requires a belief that there is a fundamental difference between animals and humans. However, the amount of animal sufferings in the research area should be reduced to a minimum since there are varying degrees of life, and of consciousness in them. Humans were given such a right under *khilafah* (vicegerency) (Qur'an; 16:4-8). As a vicegerent of God, man is in an exalted position and at the same time a humble servant, as the executor of the will of God on earth. Only moderate ways should be practiced in everywhere (Qur'an; 6:141-2; 7:3; 17:29), and this concept is also stated in the Qur'an as "eat and drink, but waste not by excess" (Qur'an 7:31).

Numerous issues concerning unwanted pets have been discussed in this research. Moreover, three main ways of preventing and controlling stray animals namely legislation, sterilization, and education have discussed in the subtitles "Managing issues of unwanted pets". The problems arising from stray cats and dogs such as animal over-breeding, zoonosis diseases, animal bites and others need to be managed effectively since these are the concern factors of the public health area. The rate of animals over breeding could be reduced if the owners have adequate knowledge. The public awareness should be raised to prevent zoonosis diseases. The use of euthanasia methods in animals is still debatable controversial issues among the scholars. Regarding sterilization, it is not a sin in Islam because it helps to reduce the over population of stray cats and reduce the wasteful destruction of lives as stated by MUIS Fatwa Committee in the article 19 that sterilizing cats on the basis of '*maslahat*' (general good) is *harus* (permissible).^{lv} It is also supported by the Department of Islamic Advancement of Malaysia or Jabatan Kemaguan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM) and it has decided that neutering of cats for reasons of '*maslahat*' (general good) is acceptable. It is in agreement with '*qaedah*' (way) *Fiqhiyyah* which states "To choose the lesser of two evils".^{lvi}

Education programs regarding animals should be aimed at all age groups of the society. Not only individual pet owner and veterinarians are responsible, but also government authority, community and the nation as a whole need to be involved to handle these issues. Some of the controlled methods of animal over-breeding have been discussed in this study. It is important to focus on these issues because all are required to calibrate with ethics of professional/ medical/ social and religious points of views. If de-sexing and euthanizing of animals are based on the aimless and unacceptable reasons, we are the ones who have to answer the questions on the Judgment Day. Hence, all these methods are to be used sensibly and need to be based on justifiable reasons.

In this research, the Qur'an is taken into consideration as the major source of ethics and morality to animal care. And, prophetic traditions are added as a benchmark to support the guidelines mentioned in the Qur'an. Muslim scholars' views are also used to shed light on detailed explanations of relevant Islamic teachings. It is hoped that the information obtained from the study is useful for vets or pet owners who are dealing with issues of unwanted pets. It is clear that handling issues of unwanted pet from the Islamic perspectives could bring harmony to the society in forming the best environment and building a healthy ecology. Muslim scholars as intellectuals should promote the knowledge of Islam in veterinary, medical and other professions, so that the information gathered could be contributed to the welfare of the society and supports us to be the noblest persons in this world and the hereafter.

However, this study is limited only to the description of animal care, and not on jurisprudence and policy making area so that it can focus on specific information in regards to unwanted pet issues. Although numerous research studies have been done on animal assistant therapy, and more research needs to be done from the perspectives of Islam. In addition to this, this study discusses primarily on the issues of unwanted pets, focusing on dogs and cats. Even so, there are various animal species and groups which are having the similar problems. It is suggested that further study should be conducted on other relevant issues of these different species of animals as the area and scope of animal care is very broad. Moreover, more research needs to be done especially in the area of food safety regulations and policies, and also on ethics of animal handling and slaughtering methods.

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ⁱ The Holy Qur'an says: "There is not an animal (that lives) on the Earth, nor a being that flies on its wings, but (forms part of) communities like you (Qur'an 6: 38, translated by 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali)"

ⁱⁱ <http://www.aspc.org/animal-homelessness/shelter-intake-and-surrender/pet-statistics>

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^v See Qur'an 7:157 "Now special mercy is assigned to those who follow the Rasool, the unlettered Prophet (Muhammad) (PBUH). Who enjoins them what is good and forbids what is evil; make pure things Halal (lawful) for them and impure things

Haram (unlawful)...” in *The Meaning of Al-Qur’an: The Guidance for Mankind*, translated by Malik, Muhammad Farooq-i-Azam (Kuala Lumpur:A.S.Noordeen, , July 1998) 240.

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^x Kaufmann, Mantthew, (ed), *The Animals’ Lawsuit Against Humanity: A Modern Adaptation of an Ancient Animal Right Tale*, translated by Babbi Anson Laytner and Rabbi Dan Bridge, illustrated by Kulsum Begum and introduced by Seyyed Hossein Nasr (Kentucky: Fons Vitae, 2005)

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^{xv} (Qur’an 80:24-25; 25:48-49; 32:27; 79:31-33). Being disobedient to Allah’s (SWT) instructions of having to be kind to animals can be seen in the example of the destructions of the ancient nation (the tribe of Thamud) and a she-camel as a symbol in the story of Prophet Saleh (PBUH) (Qur’an 7:73; 11:64; 26:155-6; 54:27-31).

^{xvi} Sahih Al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 42 of Vol. 8, Book 73 - Good Manners and Form (Al-Adab)

^{xvii} Al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Buhari, op. cit., 1981, Vol. 3. 77 and Muhammad Mushsin Khan (trans) Vol. 3, 323 <http://muttaqun.com/cats.html>

^{xviii} Ibid; see also: Al-Sajastani al-Azdi, Sunan Abi Dawud, op. cit., Vol 2, part 3, 24, Hadith no. 2550; 6 (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith No. 423, Vol. 7)

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^{xxii} (Narrated by Abu Huraira.Sahih Muslim - Kitab-ul-Imam [Ref. No. 53];

^{xxiii} Muslim and Bukhari. Also Holy Traditions. 1st edition. Vol. 1. Muhammad Manzurllahi, (Lahore, Pakistan: Ripon Press, 1932), 149.

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^{xxv} (Details see Narration by Abu Waqid al-Laithi, Tirmidhi; Hadith No. 1480, Chapt. On Al-At’imah)

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