



Effect of Animal Assisted Interventions on Mental Health of Inmates: A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effects of animal-assisted interventions on prisoners. The literature review was conducted with PubMed, Science Direct, Web of Science, Wiley Online Library, APA PsycNET and Academic Search Ultimate, ULAKBİM Database. To search these databases, the words “animal assisted, pet assisted, dog assisted, horse assisted, interventions, therapy, inmate, prisoner” were used in combination. Seven studies were found that met the inclusion criteria. Two of the studies in this study was conducted according to quantitative research method, one to the mixed method, and four to the qualitative research method. As a result of, it was seen that the animal-assisted interventions used in penitentiary institutions positively had affected the psychosocial health of prisoners. It was found that these interventions helped prisoners gain new skills such that coping with negative thoughts and stress, management of anger and negative emotion, self-awareness and self-expression. It was also seen that these interventions reduce maladaptive behaviors such as self-harm and aggression. These results suggested that animal-assisted interventions may be beneficial in penitentiary institutions. Therefore, more studies should be done to see the potential of these interventions.

BIOGRAPHY

Zehra Su Topbaş has completed his master from Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Turkey. She is a research assistant in the Department of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing at Erciyes University. Her research interests are addictions and telehealth.



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