

Are people aware of the impact of adverse temperatures in animals and how to mitigate them?

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INTRODUCTION

Due to climate change, extreme weather has worsen, endagering the health of companion animals. This issue brings out the need of pet owners being aware of behavioral changes in their animals and being informed about how to proceed. This study aims to determine whether people are aware of the effects of climatic changes on animals and how to mitigate them.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

An online survey was conducted to the general public.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections:

- Demographic characterization
- 13 questions on hypothetical situations of how the individuals would proceed in the face of adverse climatic changes (Likert scale)

The data was analyzed using IBM® SPSS® software (sig. $p < 0.05$). We made an index, based on 10 questions, on knowledge of how to react to animal behavior changes caused by adverse temperatures. After calculating descriptive statistics for the index and a specific question¹, both were analyzed considering the demographic groups using the Kruskal-Wallis test.

1. "I believe I can identify when the animal exhibits symptoms consistent with adverse temperatures"

RESULTS

432 individuals answered the survey.

The majority of the individuals achieved the highest possible score of the index (mode = 50) meaning they have high knowledge on how to proceed. The same results were observed for the specific question.

The categories - individuals' sex, household type, and geographic locations - do not influence the index. Meanwhile the 3 groups categories significantly correlated ($p < 0.01$) to the index (fig 1. to 3.)

Concerning the 2^o question and its correlation with the demographic groups, the results were similar to those above.

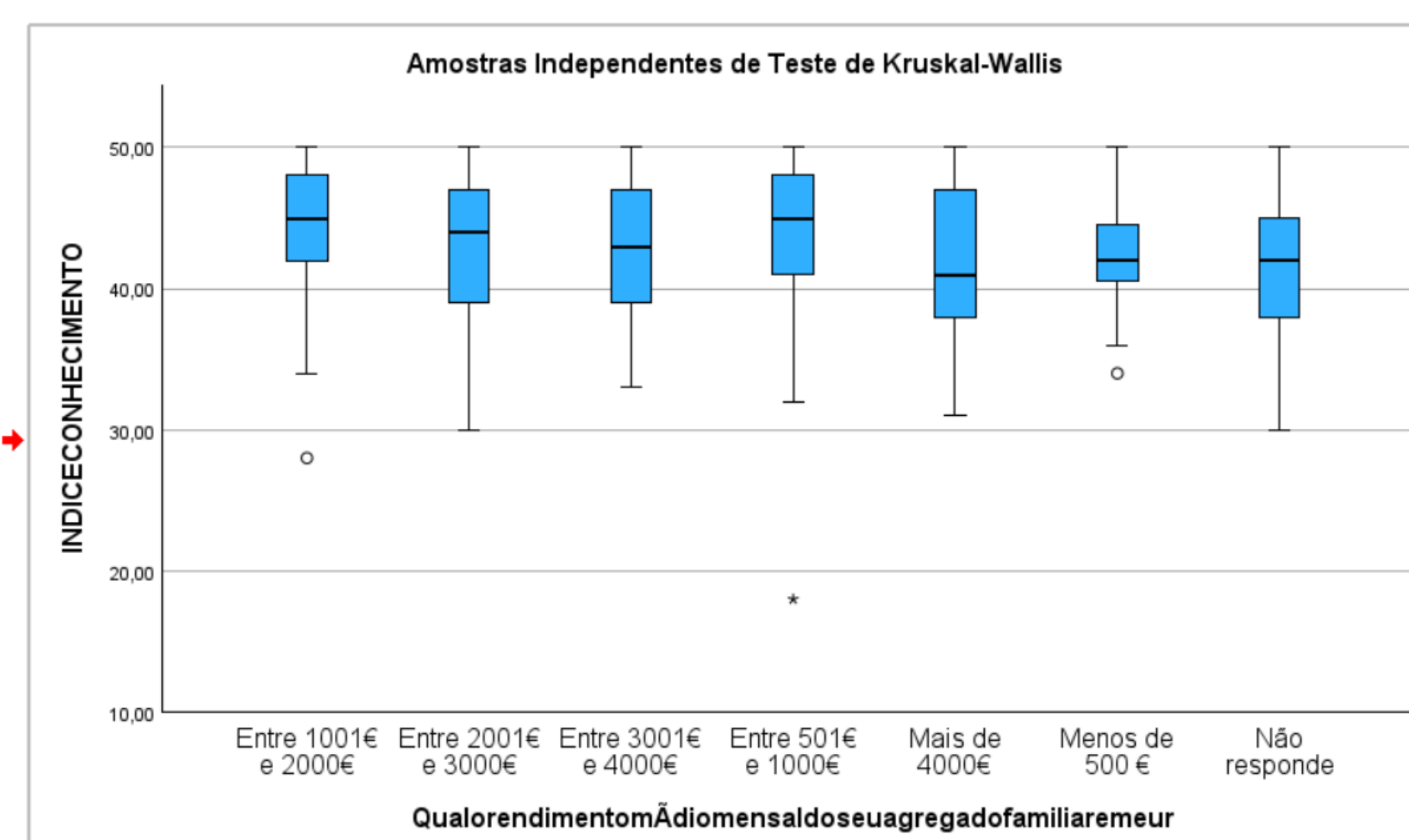


Fig 1. Box-plot for the INDICECONHECIMENTO variable for each income

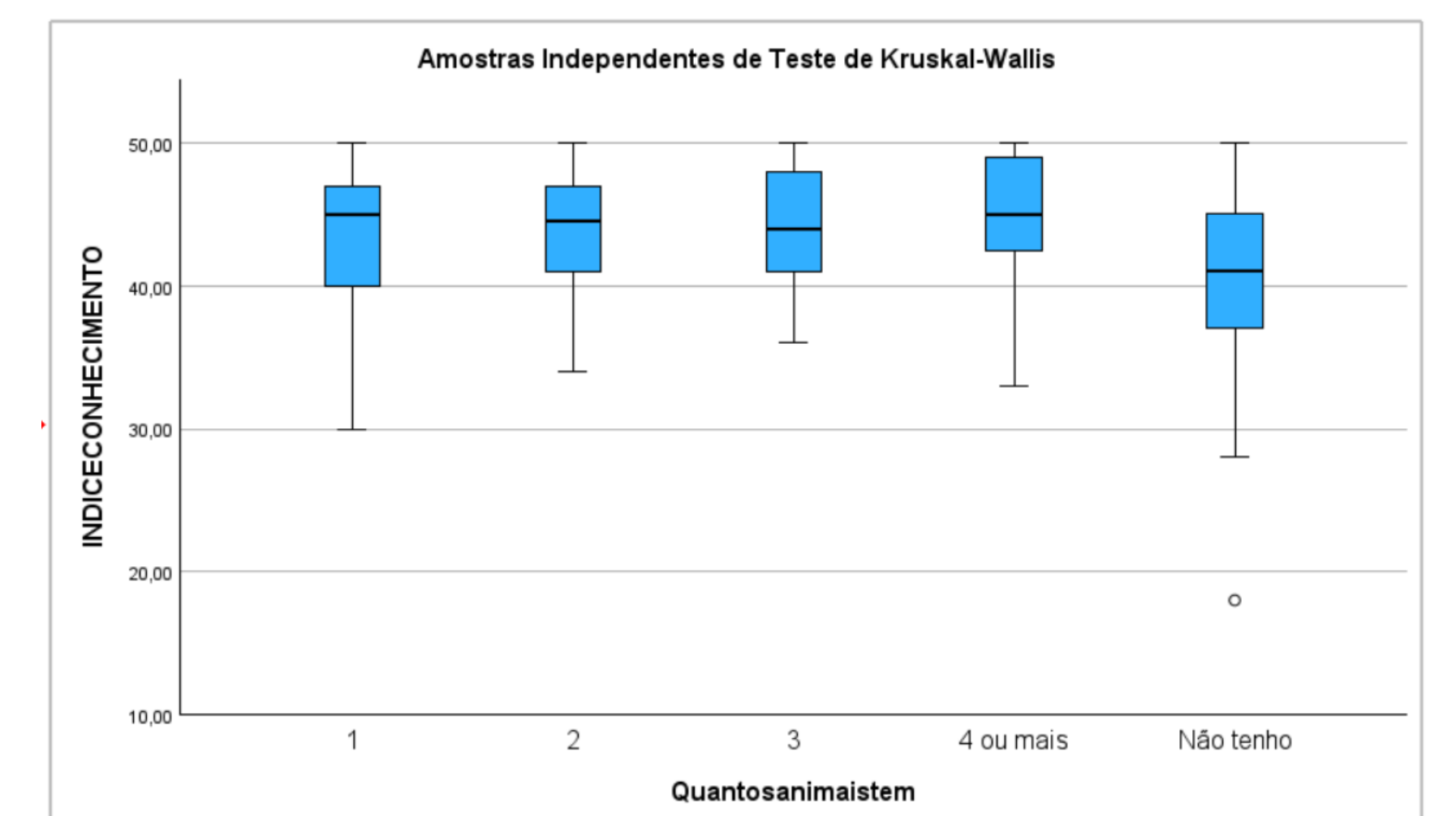


Fig 2. Box-plot for the INDICECONHECIMENTO variable for the number of animals

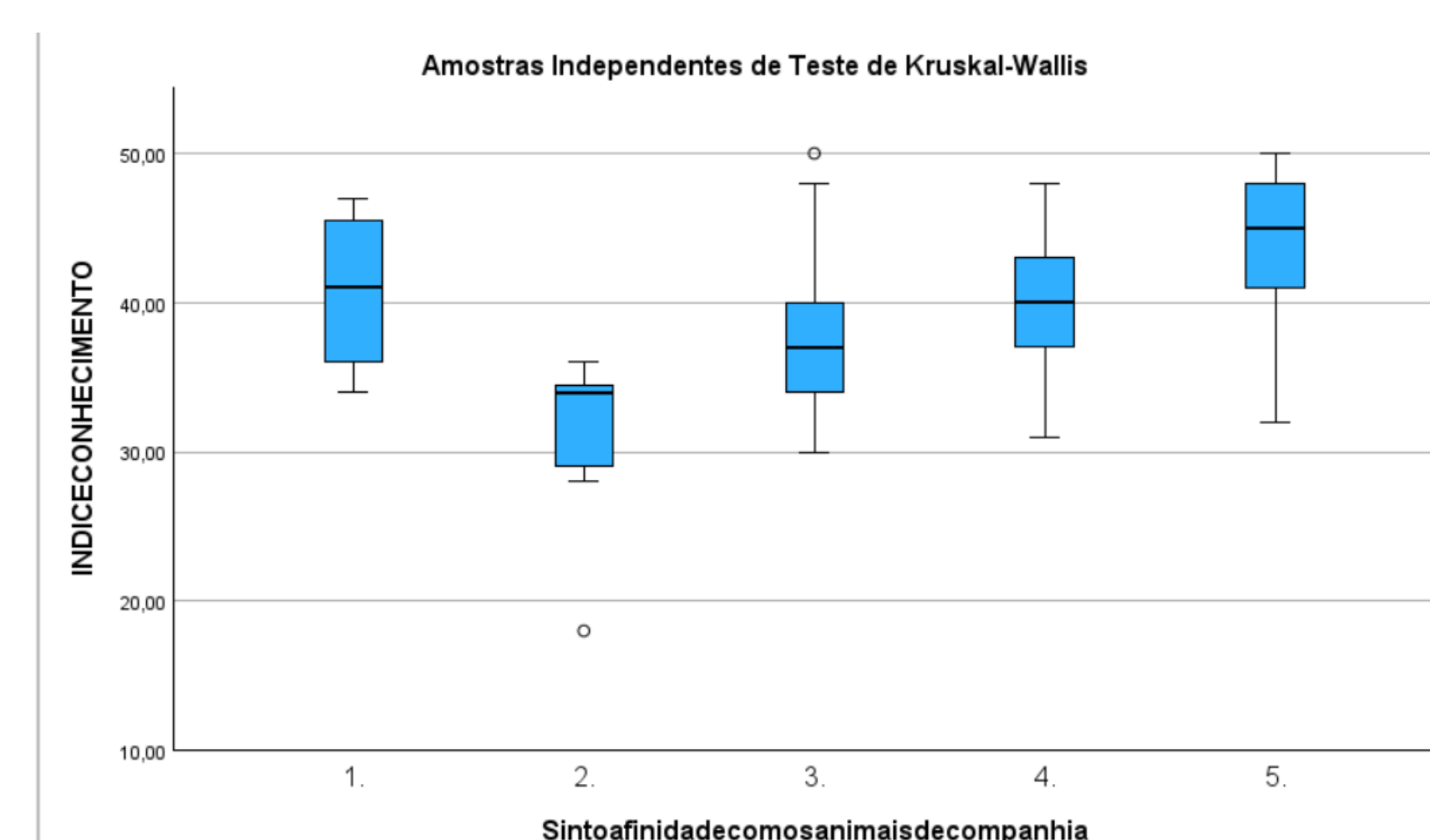


Fig 3. Box-plot for the INDICECONHECIMENTO variable for individuals affinity to companion animals

DISCUSSION

Based on the results, it was concluded that gender, type of house, or region do not influence the amount of knowledge analyzed. However, affinity with the animal, the number of animals per household and monthly income are related to this factor.

Owners are aware about the impact of extreme temperatures on the behavior of their animals, being able to recognize and act on the signals given by them, as previously demonstrated (Palestrini et al., 2022; Hall et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

After analyzing our results, we can conclude that most people know how adverse temperatures affect their companion animals and how to proceed in that case. Despite our very positive results, it is important to continuing educating and raising awareness on people with less income and low animal affinity.



For more informations

