

Editor's Comment:

The subject of the study is of true practical concern.

Yet, while the experimental part of the manuscript can, a priori, be considered OK, the analytical part of the study, namely Discussion and Conclusion, is completely flawed.

This results from experimental data not being subsequently submitted to elementary statistical test of significance, as rightly emphasised by one Reviewer. Unfortunately, the Authors have not accounted for this deficiency in their study.

And – still more unfortunately – it turns out that the main diagnostic point of the study, according to which 'German shepherd' would be more susceptible to Canine Ehrlichiosis than other dog breeds reveals, indeed, completely inexact, as soon as one relevantly looks at the displayed experimental data from a statistical point of view (see Chi-2 test 17x4 in Table below). One can thus observe that the only statistically significant difference which is actually highlighted is the marked positive sensitivity of the male of the "Cross" breed.

While the intuitive, but false, appreciation of the Authors likely results from their (methodologically wrongly) comparing the differences in terms of absolute numbers, which of course tend to magnify differences for the 'German shepherd' sample (386 individuals) as the latter is far larger than any of the others.

Pedagogically, this is a truly demonstrative example of the risks of biased – here false – diagnostic resulting from neglecting statistical tests to be applied to experimental data.

Nevertheless, the experimental results, as such, are, by themselves, of true interest, as soon as the (mostly wrong) aspects of the Discussion and Conclusion sections are delated.

So, I finally suggest that the manuscript be accepted for publication in ARJAVS, but under the more relevant format of "Technical Notes" and after being purged of the flawed analytical conclusions.

Table: Chi-2 test performed on experimental data provided in the manuscript.

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