An evaluation of an 8-week puppy test

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Puppy-tests

- Ideally should be done before choosing/buying a dog
- Should fit the dog to the buyer's expectations
- Should help the kennel owner to choose the correct buyer

- The test should predict the personality of the adult dog
Construction of the test

- 11 different situations
- 22 variables assessed
- 4 “global” assessments:
  - Activity during the test
  - Security/calmness during the test
  - Activity of puppy outside of the test
  - Activity of litter outside of the test
The components

1) Coming into the room, greeting a stranger
2) Human walks around the room, calls the puppy
3) Human sits on the floor, takes contact, pets
4) Lift up the puppy
5) Roll small ball
6) Large ball into room
7) Tug of war
8) Sound
9) Six different objects
10) Obstacle
11) Surface
The factors

4 factors:
1) Biting and play-cooperation with small ball
2) Reaction to novelty, big ball, sound, obstacles
3) Reaction to human
4) Following the human (only two measures)

740 puppies tested
Puppies and adult dogs

Australian shepherd
Groenendal/Malinois
Briard
Roughhaired collie
German shepherd
Boxer
Hovawart
Riesenschnauzer
Rottweiler
American staffordshire terrier
Borderterrier
Weimaraner
Poodle
French bulldog

Total of 197 dogs
42 litters
The comparison - the Swedish dog mentality assessment

- 10 different test situations
- 33 variables registered on a Lichert scale
- Approx 1.5 years old
- Previous work: 5 personality factors
  - Curiosity/fearlessness
  - Sociability (towards humans)
  - Playfulness (tug of war)
  - Aggression
  - Chase-proneness
The bad news

Only one significant association:

Chase-proneness in DMA and chasing/biting small ball in puppy test
The not so bad news...

Reaction to novelty in puppy => Playfulness (0.07)
Reaction to novelty in puppy => Chase (0.08)
Reaction to human => Curiosity/fearlessness (0.09)
Following human => Sociability (0.09)
The strange news

Security/calmness => aggression (0.001)
Activity outside of the test => aggression (0.01)
Work in progress...

Pinch of salt, or...
Work in progress...

Pinch of salt, or a mountain of it?

Thank you for your attention, questions?