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Study: Cats meow more frequently to male owners

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Department of Psychology and conducted in collaboration with Ankara University, the research examined the greeting behavior of 31 cats in their home environments after designing a method that allowed them to analyze natural interactions inside participants' homes.

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A new study by Bilkent and Ankara universities reveals that cats meow at men twice as often as they do at women — a striking difference in feline greetings recorded by home cameras

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Because laboratory observation of cats is often difficult, the team designed a method that allowed them to analyze natural interactions inside participants' homes.

Owners were asked to attach a body-mounted camera before entering their homes and to behave normally for the first five minutes after stepping inside, a moment when cats typically display greeting behaviors.

To standardize the evaluation, researchers coded the first 100 seconds of each video. They identified and recorded 22 distinct behavior types associated with feline greeting patterns. The researchers also examined demographic variables that might shape feline behavior.

These included the gender of both cats and owners, the number of cats in the household, whether each cat was adopted from the street or purchased and breed information.

According to the project leader, Assistant Professor Kaan Kerman, the data revealed a notable gender-based difference: Cats meowed more often at male owners — an average of 4.3 times per 100 seconds — compared with 1.8 times for female owners.

The study found that this difference reflected the frequency of meowing rather than the volume or intensity of the



Cats scattered along the Bosphorus embankment wait as they anticipate tossed scraps of the day's catch.

sounds.

Kerman said one possible explanation is that male owners may have more difficulty noticing their cats' needs, prompting cats to vocalize more to get their attention.

However, he also specified that this vocalization be-

havior was for the purpose of greeting their owners, noting that there was no link between the cat's frequency of calling and its action of moving toward the food bowl.

The study also determined that feline greetings are complex, involving a combination

of friendly, social behaviors and actions related to stress management, suggesting the cats feel both a desire for connection and relief upon their caregiver's return.

Overall, the study does not offer conclusions about men globally or across cultures.