

**The Analysis of Human-Animal Bond as a Catalyst for Personal  
Transformation in a Street Cat Named Bob Novel**

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**ABSTRACT**

The research analyzes the effect of the human-animal transformation bond in the novel, *A Street Cat Named Bob*, written by James Bowen. This observes the effect of the human-animal bond to help psychological stabilization, reconstruction, and social reintegration. The Bowen's story is placed in the form of contemporary recovery narratives. Research was conducted with qualitative thematic analysis approach based on attachment theory and recent human-animal bond research. The research comes from repeated close reading of the novel. The data were organized using a theory based on the concepts of caregiving system and moral awareness, emotional co-regulation, social interdependence and animals as social catalysts, and personal transformation and relational identity. There are results finding that are got from this research: (1) The cat is a bond figure that gives safety and emotional continuity; (2) caregiving and responsibility activate moral awareness encourages a behavior change; (3) the relationship between Bowen and the cat reduce anxiety and relapsing; (4) The bond changed the protagonist's internal working model, making him see himself positively; (5) the cat is a changeable social agent facilitate interaction and work opportunity (6) depending on each aspects grow an ethical relational identity and transforms the individual. This finding shows that a relational framework is crucial to seeing the social dimensions of an individual's psychological transformation.

**Keywords:** Human-Animal Bond; Personal Transformation; Novel

**INTRODUCTION**

In recent years, the bond between humans and animals has expanded from a secondary topic into an important field. This research combines several fields. They are psychology, sociology, and literary criticism. A pet is not just something passive. A pet can actively help shape identity, build emotional strength, and create a sense of belonging. The change of these ideas becomes the foundation to analyze James Bowen's novel titled *A Street Cat Named Bob*. This novel tells us the relationship between a homeless musician and a stray cat. The relationship between

them helps the musician recover from drug addiction. This novel explores the relationship between a homeless musician and a cat. It shows how strong their attachment becomes. It also shows how this bond can change his life. At the same time, people are paying more attention to isolation and mental health. Because of this, understanding relationships in popular literature is more important. It helps us better understand people and their experiences. This research explains how the novel shows the relationship between humans and animals. It reflects how people can change and improve themselves. It also helps us understand how someone can return to society.

Some research today show that pets are not just animals. They can help people feel happier and improve how they connect with others. Experts now believe animals are more than just useful friends. They also help shape who we are. For example, Bussolari explains having a close bond with a pet can help people cope with trauma and feel less excluded. Pets can give a sense of safety and comfort that people sometimes do not get from other humans (Bussolari, 2020). In the same way, Haber says that the relationship between humans and animals goes both ways, understanding and responding to each other (Haber, 2022). This connection is important for emotional healing. These ideas help us to understand Bowen's novel better. Bob, the cat is not only just a pet but an important part of the main character's personal growth and recovery as well. This research also shows that pets can change people's lives. They can help create daily routines. They also teach responsibility. These things are often missing for people facing homelessness or addiction

In Indonesia, researchers have also started studying these ideas. The ideas are especially focused on literature and how animals are shown in stories. Pratiwi and Suyoto explain that animals in stories are not just background characters. They often reflect human behavior and values, like a mirror (Pratiwi, D., & Suyoto, 2021). Their research shows that stories in this novel are starting to challenge the idea that humans are always more important than animals. This idea fits well with Bowen's story, where Bob the cat is treated as an equal, not just a pet. Another study was done by Rahmawati, Santoso, and Wibowo. They found that in many modern novels, pets help main characters stay strong during difficult times. Rahmawati, Santoso and Wibowo say, "animals often give emotional support and help characters to stay grounded when they are facing serious problems (Rahmawati et al., 2023)."

There are many studies about the relationship between humans and animals that have been done. The studies still have a gap in research about how personal change happens. Most of the studies focus either on psychology or on literature, but they rarely connect both. For example, Giraud and Hollin studied how people's dependence on animals can change their independence, especially in a disability context (Giraud, E., & Hollin, 2022). Septiana and Hidayat studied how "home" is shown in stories about people who move a lot, but they focused on place, not on relationships with animals (Septiana, R., & Hidayat, 2023). Liu studied animals in city stories and how they help social interaction, but only in fictional urban settings (Liu, 2024). None of these studies use this novel, *A Street Cat Named Bob*. This research fully shows how an animal can change a person's life in situations like

homelessness and addiction. Bowen's story is unique. It combines life on the streets, personal struggle, and recovery. They are all connected through his relationship with Bob, the cat. This connection makes it important to study more deeply. So, the purpose of this research is to understand how the bond between a human and an animal in the novel, *A Street Cat Named Bob* helps create personal change.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **The Human Animal Bond**

The human–animal bond goes to a meaningful and dynamic relationship between humans and animals. The relationship between them can give positive effects for both. For example, having a pet can provide companionship, a sense of purpose, and social support. In the context of *A Street Cat Named Bob* novel, the human-animal bond is not merely a source of emotional support but also a mechanism. It encourages the protagonist to reconstruct his identity and adopt more responsible behaviors. Prato et al say the relationship between human and animal get stronger, it is because of affection, trust, and care (Prato et al.,2022).

The second edition of *Attachment and loss* In Bowlby Basic book defines the presence of an attachment figure is comforting and provides security that allows an individual to more confidently navigate their world, creating motivation for the relationship to continue, a response observed in both humans and other animals (Bowlby, 1982).According to Liu, to reduce stress, improve emotional control, and promote positive feelings can be done by spending time with our pets (Liu, 2024).

One of the biggest reason why the human- animal bond connected strongly, it is because of emotional and social support. The forms of social support include emotional support, instrumental support, informative support, and friendship support. Sarafino & Smith mention emotional support itself includes empathy, concern, and attention toward the person, which can be obtained from family, friends, and the surrounding environment (Sarafino, & Smith, 2011). In addition to receiving emotional support from humans, pets can also provide emotional support to their owners (Carter, 2016).

### **Attachment Theory**

Attachment theory focused on intraspecies bonds between human infants and their mothers (Bowlby, 1982). It explored the exchange of comfort, care, and pleasure associated with the interaction There is compelling evidence that humans may also form interspecies attachment relationships with their pets. For example, Meehan et al. found that people perceived their relationship with their pets as fulfilling the same core attachment needs as their relationships with other humans (Meehan et al., 2017) . Kalenkoski and Korankye (2022) observed that walking, exercising, and playing with pets were associated with greater happiness and less stress (Kalenkoski, C.M. and Korankye, 2022). The concept of attachment to pets is widely accepted as the best explanation of the relation with our companion animals; attachments to pets are often viewed as being even more secure than those with

people. These studies above say that emotional bonds are not limited to human relationships. When people go through difficult experiences, animals can become a source of comfort and support. Their companionship can help people feel more secure and emotionally stable.

### **The Analytical Dimensions of Personal Transformation**

In this research, the human–animal bond is examined through four transformative dimensions: caregiving and moral awareness, emotional co-regulation, social interdependence and animals as social catalysts, and personal transformation and relational identity. These dimensions are closely connected to Bowlby's attachment theory, which proposes that attachment relationships influence not only emotional security but also social behavior, self-perception, and personal development (Bowlby, 1982).

Attachment security has also been associated with emotional regulation and effective social support processes, which help individuals manage stress and maintain psychological well-being (Mikulincer, and Shaver, 2019). Moreover, positive attachment experiences contribute to the development of internal working models that shape self-identity, interpersonal relationships, and personal growth throughout life (Bowlby, 1982). Together, these concepts provide a theoretical framework for understanding how the relationship between James Bowen and Bob contributes to the protagonist's psychological, social, moral, and identity-related transformation.

### **Caregiving System and Moral Awareness**

The caregiving system is an important concept within attachment theory that explains how individuals respond to the needs of others through care, protection, and support (Bowlby, 1982). While attachment theory focuses on receiving comfort and security from attachment figures, the caregiving system emphasizes providing care to others. The caregiving relationship between humans and animals is also closely connected to empathy. Empathy is described as the ability to understand and respond to the feelings and needs of another living being. Prato et al argue that human–animal relationships involve emotional attachment, empathy, and caring behaviors that strengthen the bond between humans and animals (Prato et al.,2022). In this context, caregiving can promote positive behavioral change. Liu suggests that caring for animals often motivates individuals to adopt healthier routines and make more responsible decisions (Liu, 2024). The presence of an animal that depends on human care may encourage people to avoid harmful behaviors and maintain greater self-control.

### **Emotional Co-Regulation**

Emotional co-regulation is defined as the process through which individuals manage and stabilize their emotions with the support of a trusted relationship.. Animals often provide a stable and non-judgmental source of comfort that helps individuals deal with emotional challenges. According to Prato et al, attachment processes within

human–animal relationships can create feelings of security, trust, and emotional closeness (Prato et al., 2022). One of the most widely recognized benefits of the human–animal bond is stress reduction. Research has shown that spending time with companion animals can help people feel calmer and more relaxed. Interactions with animals may reduce psychological distress and create positive emotional experiences. Liu explains that companion animals influence cognitive and neurological processes associated with emotional well-being (Liu, 2024). Their presence can help individuals feel safer and more emotionally balanced, which contributes to lower levels of stress and emotional tension.

### **Social Interdependence and Animals as Social Catalysts**

The human–animal bond is not limited to emotional and psychological benefits but also influences social relationships and community participation. In this perspective, relationships are important sources of support, opportunities, and social belonging. Recent human–animal bond research suggests that companion animals can strengthen these social connections by acting as social catalysts. A social catalyst is an agent that encourages interaction and communication between people. Groenewoud et al. found that strong bonds with companion animals are positively associated with psychosocial health and social well-being (Groenewoud et al., 2023). This finding suggests that relationships with animals can contribute to an individual's emotional and social functioning by providing support, reducing feelings of isolation, and strengthening a sense of belonging.

### **Personal Transformation and Relational Identity**

The human-animal bond is also associated with psychological growth. In the process of caring for and spending time with animals, individuals may become more confident, compassionate, and emotionally resilient. Groenewoud et al found that strong bonds with companion animals are positively related to psychosocial health and emotional support (Groenewoud, et al, 2023). Recent studies show that relationships with companion animals can help people change and grow. These relationships can influence how people think, feel, and behave.

These changes often involve identity reconstruction, which is the process of developing a new understanding of oneself. As stated by attachment theory, supportive relationships can influence an individual's internal working model, shaping how they view themselves and others (Bowlby, 1982). Another important outcome of the human-animal bond is the development of an ethical relational identity. This concept refers to a sense of self that is shaped through responsibility, care, and concern for others. Prato-Previde et al argue that human–animal relationships involve empathy, attachment, and caregiving behaviors (Prato et al., 2022). In this context, the human–animal bond can become an important source of personal transformation, psychological growth, and identity reconstruction.

### **Character**

Character is one of the most important elements in a novel because it drives the story

and helps readers understand the events and themes presented in the narrative. According to Abrams and Harpham, characters are the persons represented in a literary work whose actions, thoughts, and feelings are revealed through narration and dialogue (Abrams, M. H., & Harpham, 2015). Characters can develop throughout the story as they respond to different experiences and relationships. Meyer explains that characters are used by authors to express ideas, values, and conflicts within a narrative (Meyer, 2011). So, analyzing a character's thoughts, behaviors, and relationships can help researchers understand the meaning of a literary work and the process of personal transformation experienced by the character. Characters drive the progression of a novel's story. Their appearance, behavior, and style are crafted to align with the novel's themes, making them integral to the storytelling process.

## **Novel**

A novel is a literary work that presents human experiences through a structured narrative consisting of characters, events, settings, and conflicts. As a form of prose fiction, a novel reflects various aspects of life, including social relationships, emotions, values, and personal struggles. Through its narrative structure, a novel allows readers to understand human behavior and interpret the meanings behind the experiences of the characters. In literary studies, novels are frequently analyzed because they contain important messages, values, and perspectives about human life. Herlina states that a novel can be examined in relation to realities outside the text, allowing readers to understand broader social and cultural meanings (Herlina, 2018). Similarly, Rokhyanto argues that relationships between characters in a novel often reflect human relationships in society and contain ethical and moral dimensions (Rokhyanto, 2022). So, a novel is not only a source of entertainment but also a medium for exploring identity, personal development, social interaction, and human transformation.

## **METHOD**

### **Design and Sample**

This research uses qualitative thematic analysis approach as the research design. The subject of the analysis is *A Street Cat Named Bob* Novel

### **Instrument and Procedure**

In this research, the researcher is the main tool for analyzing the data. It is supported by several structured tools:

#### **1. Thematic coding Framework**

This tool uses ideas from human-animal bond theory and attachment theory to organize the analysis. It focuses on (a) caregiving system and moral awareness (b) emotional co-regulation, (c) social interdependence and animals as social catalysts, (d) personal transformation and relational identity. These themes help to analyze the story in a clear and organized way.

#### **2. Document analysis**

This is a guide used to collect and classify evidence from a novel, *A Street Cat Named*

Bob novel consistently. It helps the researcher identify important parts of the story related to the study.

### 3. Analytical matrix

This tool helps connect the collected data with the theories and research questions. It makes comparison and interpretation easier. Together, these tools make the research systematic, clear, and reliable. (Nowell et al., 2017).

## Data Analysis

The researchers organized the data relevant to the research topic. This process involved reading, identifying, and extracting key details that align with the study's focus on the attachment, emotions, social interactions, and behavior changes of the main character in the novel. The data were then analyzed using the selected theoretical framework to address the research questions. Finally, the collected data were compiled, refined, and presented as a comprehensive research report.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Six major results of how human–animal bond operates as a catalyst for personal transformation are found in *A Street Cat Named Bob*'s novel by James Bowen. They are (1) The cat is a bond figure that gives safety and emotional continuity; (2) caregiving and responsibility activate moral awareness encourages a behavior change; (3) the relationship between Bowen and the cat reduce anxiety and relapsing; (4) The bond changed the protagonist's internal working model, making him see himself positively; (5) the cat is a changeable social agent facilitate interaction and work opportunity; and (6) depending on each aspects grow an ethical relational identity and transforms the individual.

### The Cat is a Bond Figure that Gives Safety and Emotional Continuity

The table below shows the evidence from the novel that explains how staying with Bob helps the main character, Bowen control his emotions.

*Evidence Table 1*

| Textual Evidence                                                                                      | Chapter & Page | Interpretation                                                                       | Theoretical Link                                                                                                        | Supporting Research                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| "He followed me up the stairs and walked straight into my flat as if he belonged there."(Bowen, 2013) | Ch. 1, p. 9    | Bob quickly becomes part of Bowen's life, showing the start of a close relationship. | Bowlby's attachment theory proposes that attachment bonds begin through proximity-seeking behavior between individuals. | Research indicates that companion animals can quickly become attachment figures providing emotional security for humans (Amiot, C. E., & Bastian, 2022) |
| "Bob seemed to know when I was feeling down and would stay close to me."(Bowen, 2013)                 | Ch. 6, p. 74   | Bob gives comfort when Bowen feels sad.                                              | Attachment figures function as a safe haven, offering comfort during stress or vulnerability.                           | Studies show companion animals can reduce emotional distress and support emotional regulation (Brooks et al., 2018)                                     |
| "Whenever I                                                                                           | Ch. 7, p.      | Bob's                                                                                | Attachment                                                                                                              | Human–animal bonds                                                                                                                                      |

|                                                                      |              |                                            |                                         |                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| went out, Bob insisted on coming with me.”(Bowen, 2013)              | 90           | presence creates routine and stability.    | involves consistent presence.           | often provide routine and stability that support psychological well-being (Gee, N. R., & Mueller, 2019)                   |
| “When Bob was beside me, I felt calmer and less alone.”(Bowen, 2013) | Ch. 7, p. 92 | Bob helps Bowen feel calm and less lonely. | Attachment provides emotional security. | Companion animals are associated with increased emotional security and reduced loneliness (Amiot, C. E., & Bastian, 2022) |

In this novel, *A Street Cat Named Bob*, the story shows how Bowen and Bob build a strong emotional bond that makes Bowen feel safe and stable. At the beginning, Bob quickly follows Bowen into his apartment and stays close to him every day. This shows that Bob always wants to be near him. According to John Bowlby, this behavior is called “seeking closeness,” which is an important part of emotional attachment. People and animals stay close to someone because it makes them feel safe and comfortable during stressful times (Bowlby, 1988). As the story continues, Bob becomes a reliable companion. He stays beside Bowen when he feels sad or stressed. This shows that Bob acts like a “safe place,” giving comfort and reducing anxiety. Because of Bob, Bowen feels calmer, less lonely, and more like he belongs somewhere. More recent studies also show that pets can help people feel stable and manage their emotions. It is especially those who are dealing with mental health problems or isolation (Amiot, C. E., & Bastian, 2022). In Bowen’s life, Bob’s constant presence brings comfort and stability. Over time, Bowen builds a strong and secure emotional connection with him. This relationship not only reduces loneliness and stress but also becomes the foundation for his personal growth. In the end, the story shows that animals can act like strong emotional support figures. They can help people feel safe, stay stable, and build a better life.

### Caregiving Responsibility Activates Moral Awareness and Promotes Behavioral Change

The second finding shows that caring for Bob helps Bowen become more aware of right and wrong, which changes his behavior. The table below shows the evidence from the novel that explains this change clearly.

*Evidence Table 2*

| Textual Evidence                                                                                                | Chapter & Page | Interpretation                                                      | Theoretic al Link                                     | Supporting Research                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| “I couldn’t let my new friend down.”(Bowen 2013)                                                                | Ch. 2, p. 22   | James feels responsible for Bob and doesn’t want to disappoint him. | People feel responsible when someone depends on them. | Companion animals often trigger responsibility and moral engagement in vulnerable individuals (Amiot, C. E., & Bastian, 2022)               |
| “I felt like I had an extra purpose in my life, something positive to do for someone other than myself.”(Bowen, | Ch. 3, p. 32   | James starts caring about others, not just himself.                 | Caring for others gives life meaning.                 | Human–animal interaction research shows pets can foster life purpose and emotional stability (Broadhurst, S., Broom, D. M., & Adams, 2023). |



|                                                                                                                            |                |                                                                         |                                                    |                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2013)                                                                                                                      |                |                                                                         |                                                    |                                                                                                                                                |
| “I had a new responsibility in my life and an extra mouth to feed.”(Bowen, 2013)                                           | Ch. 6, p. 75   | James realizes he must take care of Bob and plan his actions.           | Caring means protecting and providing.             | Studies demonstrate that caring for animals creates daily structure and accountability (Brooks et al., 2018)                                   |
| “Being with Bob had already taught me a lot about responsibility.”(Bowen, 2013)                                            | Ch. 12, p. 169 | James learns discipline and becomes more responsible.                   | Relationships can change how people think and act. | Human–animal bonds contribute to identity reconstruction and ethical responsibility (Amiot, C. E., & Bastian, 2022)                            |
| “If I wasn’t responsible and organized I didn’t earn money. And if I didn’t earn money Bob and I didn’t eat.”(Bowen, 2013) | Ch. 12, p. 169 | James connects responsibility with survival and becomes more organized. | Caring for others builds self-control.             | Companion animals promote routine, stability, and recovery behaviors in marginalized populations (Broadhurst, S., Broom, D. M., & Adams, 2023) |
| “I want to do it for myself and for Bob.”(Bowen, 2013)                                                                     | Ch. 12, p. 170 | Bob motivates James to stay clean and improve his life.                 | Emotional bonds can drive positive change.         | Animal companionship reduces relapse risk by providing emotional accountability (Brooks et al., 2018)                                          |

In *A Street Cat Named Bob*, the novel shows how Bowen’s relationship with Bob slowly changes step by step. At first, it is just a simple meeting. Then, Bowen begins to feel empathy and regularly starts taking care of Bob. It finally changes his behavior in a positive way. Using John Bowlby’s attachment theory, this change happens because Bowen starts to feel responsible for Bob. When someone takes care of someone else, they are motivated to protect and support them (Bowlby, 1988). This responsibility helps Bowen think differently and make better choices, such as staying sober, working, and reconnecting with society. Research also supports this idea. Some studies show that pets can help people become more responsible, build daily routines, and develop a stronger sense of right and wrong (Brooks et al., 2018). It is especially for people who have emotional or social difficulties. In the end, the story shows clearly that caring for Bob helps Bowen grow as a person. This relationship increases his moral awareness and changes his behavior. It proves that the bond between humans and animals can support recovery and help rebuild a person’s identity.

### **The Relationship Between Bowen and the Cat Reduce Anxiety and Relapsing**

The table below shows how staying with Bob helps Bowen control his emotions. Bob acts like a strong support system, helping him stay calm, reduce anxiety, and avoid going back to drug addiction.

*Evidence Table 3*

| Textual Evidence | Chapter & Page | Interpretation | Theoretical Link | Supporting Research            |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Bob seemed to    | Ch. 6, p.      | Bob stays      | Close            | Studies show companion animals |

|                                                                                                |                |                                                                     |                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| sense when I was feeling low and would curl up beside me. (Bowen, 2013)                        | 74             | close when Bowen feels sad and helps him feel better.               | relationships help people feel calm during stress. | can reduce stress responses and promote emotional regulation through consistent presence and tactile interaction (Amiot, C. E., & Bastian, 2022)                                                                                   |
| When Bob was there beside me I felt calmer, like things might be all right. (Bowen, 2013)      | Ch. 7, p. 92   | Bob makes Bowen feel calmer and less anxious.                       | Support figures help people recover emotionally.   | Human–animal interaction research demonstrates that pets can reduce anxiety and increase perceived emotional security (Brooks et al., 2018)                                                                                        |
| Looking after Bob gave me something to focus on instead of the chaos in my head. (Bowen, 2013) | Ch. 8, p. 108  | Caring for Bob helps Bowen stop negative thoughts and focus better. | Caring for others helps control emotions.          | Pets create routine and improve mental focus (Gee & Mueller, 2019). Companion animals can promote routine and mental focus that support emotional stabilization (Gee, N. R., & Mueller, 2019)                                      |
| I knew that if I went back to drugs, I would lose Bob. (Bowen, 2013)                           | Ch. 12, p. 170 | Bob motivates Bowen to stay away from drugs.                        | Emotional bonds help people make better choices.   | Pets can reduce relapse by giving emotional support (Amiot & Bastian, 2022). Research indicates companion animals may reduce relapse risk by providing emotional accountability and social support (Amiot, C. E., & Bastian, 2022) |

When Bob comes into his life, things start to change. Bob often stays close to him. It is especially when he feels sad or stressed. For evidence, Bob curls up next to him during difficult moments. This simple action gives comfort and helps Bowen feel calm again. This is called emotional coregulation, when someone feels better because of the presence of another. According to John Bowlby, people feel safer when they are close to someone they trust. During stressful times, being near a trusted companion can reduce anxiety and help restore emotional balance (Bowlby, 1988). In the novel, Bob plays this role. When Bob is near him, Bowen feels calmer and more hopeful. It shows that Bob helps him feel emotionally supported. Studies show that pets can reduce stress and lower anxiety. It also helps people manage their emotions through daily interaction (Gee et al., 2019). Other research shows that for people with mental health challenges, pets can give emotional support and motivation to recover (Brooks et al., 2018). This is clear in Bowen's life, where taking care of Bob helps him stay sober. In the end, Bob's constant presence helps Bowen stay emotionally stable and motivates him to build a healthier and more stable life. The bond changed the protagonist's internal working model, making him see himself positively. The table below shows how the relationship with Bob changes the way Bowen sees himself.

*Evidence Table 4*

| Textual Evidence     | Chapter & Page | Interpretation  | Theoretical Link | Supporting Research |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|
| I felt like I had an | Ch. 3, p.      | Bowen starts to | Relationships    | Pets can help       |

|                                                                                                                            |                |                                                                        |                                                           |                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| extra purpose in my life, something positive to do for someone other than myself. (Bowen, 2013)                            | 32             | see himself as someone who has a purpose and can care for others.      | ps can change how people see themselves                   | people find meaning and build a positive identity (Amiot, C. E., & Bastian, 2022).    |
| Being with Bob had already taught me a lot about responsibility.(Bowen, 2013)                                              | Ch.12,p. 169   | Bowen becomes more responsible and disciplined because of Bob.         | Caring for others builds responsibility and self-control. | Looking after animals can improve responsibility and stability (Brooks et al., 2018). |
| If I wasn't responsible and organized, I didn't earn money. And if I didn't earn money Bob and I didn't eat. (Bowen, 2013) | Ch. 12, p. 169 | Bowen understands that his actions affect both his and Bob's survival. | Experience teaches responsibility and accountability.     | Pets help create routine and responsible behavior (Gee, N. R., & Mueller, 2019).      |
| I want to do it for myself and for Bob.(Bowen, 2013)                                                                       | Ch. 12, p. 170 | Bowen is motivated to improve his life for himself and Bob.            | Emotional bonds encourage positive change.                | Pets can motivate recovery and reduce relapse(Amiot, C. E., & Bastian, 2022).         |

In *A Street Cat Named Bob*, the novel shows how Bob helps Bowen change the way he sees himself. Before meeting Bob, Bowen feels stuck in addiction, homelessness, and being ignored by society. Because of this, he sees himself as a failure. But when Bob comes into his life, this starts to change. Bowen says that caring for Bob gives him “an extra purpose in life.” This means he is no longer just trying to survive. He is now taking responsibility for someone else. This is the beginning of a more positive identity. According to John Bowlby, people build their self-image based on their relationships. Positive experiences like caring for someone can help a person believe they are capable, responsible, and able to have meaningful relationships (Bowlby, 1988). In Bowen's case, simple daily actions like feeding Bob, protecting him, and taking care of him help him slowly see himself as a responsible and dependable person. Studies show that having a pet can improve mental health, build confidence, and give people a sense of purpose (Amiot et al., 2022). Other studies also show that animals can help people feel more stable emotionally and more responsible, which supports recovery and personal growth (Brooks et al., 2018). This is clear when Bowen says he wants to recover “for myself and for Bob.” This shows that Bob is not just a companion, but also a strong reason for Bowen to change his life. In the end, their relationship helps Bowen become more responsible, confident, and hopeful.

### **The Cat is a Changeable Social Agent Facilitate Interaction and Work Opportunity**

The table below shows how Bob helps Bowen connect with other people and earn money. Bob makes it easier for Bowen to talk to others and get attention in public.

*Evidence Table 5*

| Textual Evidence                                                                                  | Chapter & Page | Interpretation                                            | Theoretical Link                                         | Supporting Research                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| People who normally walked straight past me suddenly stopped to talk because of Bob.(Bowen, 2013) | Ch. 8, p. 104  | Bob helps Bowen talk to people who usually ignore him.    | Feeling supported helps people interact with others.     | Pets can help people start conversations and connect (Wood, et al., 2015).          |
| Bob drew people to me. They wanted photos, they wanted to talk about him. (Bowen, 2013)           | Ch. 9, p. 118  | Bob attracts people and makes them interested in talking. | Supportive relationships increase social confidence.     | Animals make people more approachable and social (Wood, et al., 2015).              |
| More people were stopping and listening to my music because of Bob.(Bowen, 2013)                  | Ch. 9, p. 121  | Bob helps Bowen get more attention and earn money.        | Feeling stable helps people work and engage with others. | Animals can increase attention and job opportunities (Gee, N. R., & Mueller, 2019). |
| People seemed happy to give a little more when they saw Bob sitting there with me.(Bowen, 2013)   | Ch. 10, p. 133 | Bob makes people feel kind and more willing to help.      | Others may feel caring when they see a close bond.       | Animals can make people more generous and helpful (Amiot, C. E., & Bastian, 2022).  |

In *A Street Cat Named Bob*, the novel shows how Bob helps Bowen connect with other people and earn money. Bowen lived as a homeless street musician before meeting Bob. Most people ignored him. He felt invisible and had very little interaction with others. Everything is changing. Bob starts going with him while he plays music on the street. People who used to walk past him now stop to talk, take photos, and show interest. That is because of Bob. The cat makes Bowen more approachable and gives people a reason to interact with him. This can be explained using John Bowlby's attachment theory. When someone has a trusted friend, they feel more confident and secure (Bowlby, 1988). Bob's presence makes Bowen feel calmer and more confident, so he can talk to strangers more easily. Because of this, Bob is not just emotional support, but he also helps Bowen become more active socially. Research also supports this idea. Studies show that pets can help people connect with others because they make someone seem more friendly and trustworthy (Wood et al., 2015). Other studies also show that animals can help people earn money or find opportunities, because they attract attention and create positive feelings in others (Gee, N. R., & Mueller, 2019) In the story, this is clearly seen. Bowen says more people stop to listen to his music, and they often give more money when they see Bob with him. This shows that Bob is not only a companion but also helps Bowen survive by improving his social connections and income.

### Depending on Each Aspects Grow an Ethical Relational Identity and Transforms the Individual

The table below shows how Bowen and Bob depend on each other. This relationship helps Bowen become responsible and caring instead of struggling alone with addiction.

*Evidence Table 6*

| Textual Evidence                                                                                                    | Chapter & Page | Interpretation                                                                      | Theoretical Link                                                                    | Supporting Research                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I don't know why, but the responsibility of having him to look after galvanized me. (Bowen, 2013)                   | Ch. 2, p. 23   | Taking care of Bob motivates Bowen to become more disciplined and responsible.      | Caring for someone who depends on us encourages responsible and caring behavior.    | Studies show that caring for pets can increase empathy and responsibility, especially for people in difficult situations (Amiot, C. E., & Bastian, 2022). |
| I felt like I had an extra purpose in my life, something positive to do for someone other than myself.(Bowen, 2013) | Ch. 2, p. 24   | Bowen begins to find purpose in caring for Bob instead of focusing only on himself. | Strong emotional bonds can change how people see themselves and their role in life. | Research shows that pets can give emotional support, life purpose, and stability to vulnerable people (Amiot, C. E., & Bastian, 2022).                    |
| Bob's arrival in my life had dramatically changed all that.(Bowen, 2013)                                            | Ch. 7, p. 94   | Bowen realizes that Bob has greatly changed his life for the better.                | Strong attachment can help people change their identity and behavior over time.     | Studies show that human-animal relationships can support resilience and personal recovery (Brooks et al., 2018)                                           |
| Having Bob gave me a chance to interact with people... it was giving me back my identity. (Bowen, 2013)             | Ch. 12, p. 149 | Bob helps Bowen reconnect with other people and regain his sense of self.           | Supportive relationships can help people feel safe enough to connect socially.      | Research shows that pets often help people interact with others and rejoin social life (Wood et al., 2015).                                               |

In *A Street Cat Named Bob*, the novel shows how Bowen and Bob depend on each other. This relationship helps Bowen change his life permanently. At the beginning, Bowen says that taking care of Bob “pushed” him to become more responsible. This shows that when someone depends on him, he becomes more disciplined and caring. According to John Bowlby, relationships like this can make people feel responsible and encourage them to protect and care for others (Bowlby, 1988).

As their relationship grows, Bowen says that Bob gives him “an extra purpose in life.” That means he no longer sees himself only as someone struggling with addiction and rejection. Instead, he starts to see himself as a caregiver and protector. This shows a big change in how he thinks about himself. Later, Bowen clearly says that Bob “changed” his life. Studies show that pets can help people become stronger, recover emotionally, and build a more stable life. It is especially when they are going

through difficult situations (Brooks et al., 2018). Bowen also explains that Bob helps him connect with other people and feel like himself again. So, the relationship is not only about emotional support. It also helps him to be part of society again. Research shows that animals often help people start conversations and build trust with others (Wood et al., 2015). In the end, the relationship between Bowen and Bob is more than just companionship. It helps Bowen become a more responsible person and supports long-term positive change in his life.

## CONCLUSION

This research shows the relationship between humans and animals in the novel *A Street Cat Named Bob*. It plays an important role in changing a person's life. The research focuses on how the relationship between Bowen and Bob helps Bowen recover from addiction and rebuild his life. The findings show that Bob acts as a source of emotional support. He makes Bowen feel safe and helps him become mentally stable. Because Bob is always with him, Bowen feels calmer, controls his emotions better, and stays away from drugs. Taking care of Bob makes Bowen more responsible and helps him change his behavior. He stops focusing only on himself and starts caring for others. This helps him see himself as a better and more capable person. The finding also shows that Bob helps Bowen connect with other people. Because of Bob, Bowen can talk to people more easily and earn money. This helps him return to society. Their relationship is based on helping each other. This creates a strong sense of responsibility and identity for Bowen. It shows that recovery is not just about personal effort, but also about relationships and emotional support. This relationship helps reduce the negative view of homelessness and supports long-term recovery without relying only on medical treatment. This research is useful for education and literature studies. It shows that this novel can be used in English learning to help students understand real-life issues like struggle, recovery, and responsibility. This research proved that combining psychology and literature can give a deeper understanding of characters. Learning about human-animal relationships helps students become more empathetic and understand right and wrong. This research shows that the bond between humans and animals can strongly influence personal change. It highlights how such relationships can support recovery, build identity, and give meaning to life.

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