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## **Pet-friendly practices in companies' strategy: a look from the perspective of managers and employees**

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## **Abstract**

The representation of companion animals has been growing over the years. The impact of pets on the well-being of employees has also been the subject of debate in research. This research had two goals: (1) to analyze the managers' perceptions about pet-friendly practices and their main effects, and (2) to analyze the impact of pet-friendly practices on employees' well-being and work engagement. Relying on the social exchange perspective and the self-determination theory, it was hypothesized that pet-friendly practices would positively influence employees' well-being and work engagement via the satisfaction of their three basic needs (autonomy, competence and relatedness). To attain the goals, two studies with mixed methods were conducted. The first was a qualitative study that resorted to semi-structured interviews to 6 managers. The second study was quantitative and resorted to a large sample of workers ( $N = 378$ ). The first study demonstrated the main advantages and disadvantages of pet-friendly practices, as well as all the obstacles, limitations and how they could be overcome from managers' perspective. Further, managers showed interest and enthusiasm for the topic, but also emphasized some doubts in the implementation of a pet-friendly strategy, since there are few studies demonstrating their benefits. The second study showed that pet-friendly practices had a positive impact on employees work engagement and well-being through the satisfaction of competence, autonomy and relatedness needs. Portugal is considered a country with a conservative society, which hinders the dissemination and implementation of measures. Several recommendations are suggested to overcome the mentioned obstacles. Increasing awareness and discussion of the topic is a crucial point for future evolutions regarding pet-friendly practices.

**Keywords:** pet-friendly practices; animal companion; pets at work; well-being; work engagement; psychological needs.

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## **Introduction**

Animals play an important role in people's lives; further, they can be used in occupational therapy, speech therapy, or physical rehabilitation as they have several benefits for individual's well-being and mental health (Cryer et al., 2021). Animals are also considered companions and friends and certainly have a positive impact on the quality of individual's lives. Plus, the better the understanding about human-animal bond and the benefits, the more they can be used to improve people's happiness and life quality (Koukourikos et al., 2019).

In recent years, there has been growing interest in issues related to human-animal bonds. In light of the role of companion animals in modern society and the strong relationship between humans and their pets (Julius et al., 2012), public attitudes toward animals appear to be a central concern in the fields of human-animal relations and animal welfare (Serpell, 2004; Spooner et al., 2012). Today, animals fit into many niches of society. They are involved in everything, from entertainment and companionship to being service providers as well as therapy assistants – the therapeutic pet concept. Animals are not only companions, but they have evolved into family members. The growing practice of social celebrations such as pet's birthdays, gifts at Christmas and even graduation from obedience school is evidence that the human-animal bond is growing in strength. A few other examples are dressing pets in clothing, traveling with pets and allowing them to sleep in the bed. These are all examples of how strong is the bond that is being created between humans and their pets (Michigan State University, 2018).

Animals are known to provide many benefits to peoples' lives. For instance, they can have benefits for socialization as they facilitate people's interactions with others (Cherniack & Cherniack, 2014). People, especially children, can learn responsibility when caring for a pet. A very important aspect of dogs, in particular, is that they have the potential to motivate people to walk and do physical exercise. Companion animals can also serve to buffer difficult situations by being a source of emotional comfort, reducing anxiety, loneliness, and depression. Further, they provide a source of entertainment by making people laugh when they are comical. They serve as a source of tactile comfort by increasing sensory stimulation while decreasing blood pressure and heart rate (Tietjen, 2005).

Some organizations are beginning to discover the benefits of pets and how they intersect organizations in many ways (Kelemen et al., 2020). Indeed, some organizations have already implemented pet-friendly practices – organizational practices concerned with their employees' motivation that allow a set of measures that enhance the bond between them and their pets. According to a Nationwide/Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI) survey of 2,002, conducted in 2017, a pet-friendly workplace is defined as: one that allows pets in the workplace (regularly or occasionally) and/or offers a pet-friendly employee benefit, such as pet health insurance. This definition is inclusive of a wide range of pet-friendly practices.

Pet-friendly practices can range from simple or low-commitment practices (e.g., offering pet insurance; telework) to increasingly complex or high-commitment practices (e.g., allowing employees to bring their pets to work). A simple option is to partner with pet stores to offer employee discounts on food, merchandise, and services such as grooming, training, and pet-sitting. Another example is offering discounts on pet products and services as part of a comprehensive benefit package offered to employees. Another option is to offer veterinary healthcare coverage. Pet insurance provides pet owners with coverage for pet' accidents or illnesses, or may be used for preventative care (e.g., annual care and wellness exams). Among organizations that are pet-friendly – e.g., Chipotle, Deloitte LLP, Delta Airlines, Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft, UPS, and Xerox– it appears to be a popular option. Some companies such as Confirm BioSciences, Nestlé and Fidelidade give employees the flexibility (e.g., remote work) to attend to their pet's needs during the workday by granting flexible work arrangements to work nearby their pets (Junça-Silva, 2023). For example, flextime is helpful for parents with kids who may start earlier or end their workday later to be home with their kids before or after school. The same can be applied to employees with pets who may need a flexible working schedule to check on their pets or walk them during the day (Ezzedeen et al., 2015; Norling & Keeling, 2010; Sousa et al., 2022). Organizations can also extend bereavement leave to employees who need personal time during the death of a pet. Although pets are not considered to be family under current legislation such as the Family and Medical Leave Act or the Portugal Labor Code, the same entitlement to the loss of a human loved one may be applied to those who lost a pet (Bussolari et al., 2021). For some individuals, losing their pet, has a greater impact than losing a distant relative (Park et al., 2021). Pet

bereavement leave seems to be rarely offered, but it can be an option on the pet-friendly practices.

A more complex option of pet-friendly includes the opportunity to take employee's pet to work. This practice, although complex in terms of physical facilities, is particularly beneficial for employees who do not need to be concerned about their pets being home alone for long hours. This trend seems to be on the rise with a small but growing number of employers that allow pets in the workplace (Fronstin & Helman, 2013; Jammaers, 2023). Organizations such as Amazon, Autodesk, Ben & Jerry's, Build-a-bear, Cliff Bar, Electronic Arts, Google, Ibex Outdoor Clothing, Klutz, Lafarge Construction Materials, Nestlé Purina, P&G Pet Care, Replacement LTD, Softchoice, and Zynga, among others, regularly allow their employees to bring their pets to work. Other organizations participate annually in the initiative "Take Your Dog to Work Day". Some organizations offer more complex practices such as onsite walking services, pet daycare, outdoor pens, and grooming services. Although these measures do not seem to be commonly used, organizations that are just beginning to implement pet-friendly practices can start by incorporating simpler pet-friendly measures in the workplace, such as those mentioned above (Ezzedeen et al., 2015; Foreman et al., 2019; Lindsay & Thiagarajah, 2022).

A specific dimension of pet-friendly practices, even though less explored, includes pet-friendly social responsibility practices; these are organizational practices that are focused on supporting the well-being and health-related issues of abandoned animals and shelters and have, for instance, raffles, dog walking with abandoned dogs, authorize and empower employees' volunteer activities on animal shelters, or social events that collect financial assets to support abandoned pets in the shelters, among other practices.

Pet-friendly practices are being increasingly seen as a strategy to improve employees' productivity, well-being and retention (Pina-Cunha et al., 2019). Other benefits include lower absenteeism rates, higher morale, productivity, and organizational commitment, and improved perceived climate (e.g., Foreman et al, 2017; Junça-Silva et al., 2022; Kelemen et al., 2020; Wagner & Pina-Cunha, 2021).

The social exchange theory may support the beneficial effects of pet-friendly practices (Blau, 1964). Accordingly, employees make systematic comparisons between what they give to organizations, and what they receive in return (Blau, 1964). The more



they perceive that the organization supports their identify and values, the more they will give to organizations. Hence, if they have pets, or have pet-friendly values it is likely that their sense of connection with their organization increases if the organization has a pet-friendly policy or practices. For instance, if an employee has an old pet that needs to have medical support during the workday, if the organization understands and allows for teleworking (even in a hybrid mode), then it is likely that s/he feels supported by their organization and become more engaged with work. Work engagement is a positive affective-motivational state in which employees become energized to accomplish their tasks, dedicated to their work and absorbed when performing the tasks (Bakker et al., 2014). Further, this employee might also feel happier – the degree of satisfaction with life as a whole; Diener et al., 2002) - with that as s/he does not need to worry with his/her pet because s/he has the opportunity to work nearby them (Hoffman, 2021; Junça-Silva, 2023).

Further, relying on the self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000), we propose that the satisfaction of basic psychological needs - the psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness - will serve as underlying mechanisms that link pet-friendly practices and well-being and work engagement. The need for autonomy is related to the desire of psychological freedom in activities (Deci & Ryan, 2000); the need for competence is related to the desire of feeling competent in interacting with the environment (Deci & Ryan, 2000); and the need for relatedness is the desire to feel positively connected with others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). The central tenet of the SDT emphasizes that these basic psychological needs are innate and universal for human beings (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Moreover, the SDT suggests that the satisfaction of these basic psychological needs is an important ingredient for breeding and sustaining people's intrinsic motivation to work (Wang et al. 2018). That is, in organizations with practices that support these psychological needs, employees are more likely to demonstrate a high level of interest in the tasks at hand (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). As such, organizations with pet-friendly practices will likely facilitate the fulfilment of basic psychological needs, and thus will likely positively influence work engagement and well-being.

Despite the growing interest of scholars, research on the benefits of pet-friendly practices for employee's outcomes, such as work engagement are scarce (Kelemen et al.,

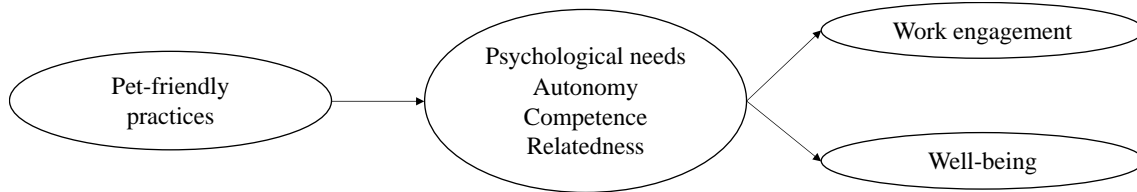
2020). Further, the perception of managers regarding pet-friendly practices are so far unknown. Thus, answering the specific call for studies of Kelemen et al. (2020) about the intersection of pets and organizational life, this research had two main goals: (1) to analyze the perception of pet-friendly practices from a managerial perspective and (2) to test the impact of pet-friendly practices on employees' well-being and work engagement via satiation of their psychological needs (see Figure 1). In order to achieve the first goal, the perspective of the managers regarding pet-friendly practices, a qualitative study was conducted with semi-structured interviews. To achieve the second goal, a quantitative study was conducted.

This study has contributions both for theory and for practice. Theoretically, it has contributed to the broadening of the social exchange and self-determination theories by including pets as relevant variables that can be analyzed under such frameworks. Further, by including pet-friendly practices as potential motivating factors to employees' work engagement and well-being under the self-determination theory, it can help to expand knowledge on the benefits of implementing such practices on relevant (personal and work-related) outcomes.

In addition, and practically speaking, by demonstrating the potential benefits of pet-friendly practices, this research also expands knowledge that can be useful for both researchers, managers and policy makers. For instance, findings obtained from these studies can help to delineate strategies for implementing pet-friendly practices, as well as to suggest fewer complex practices, which, despite being infrequent and little known, also may be triggers of employees' well-being and work engagement.

This dissertation is organized in three main parts. In the first part a thorough literature review was developed. In the second part, the two empirical studies are presented. In this part, the methodology is presented, characterization of the sample, description of the instruments applied, and the data collection procedure. Subsequently, the results of both studies are presented, and then the discussion of the results obtained, identification of limitations, and suggestions for future studies are described. Finally, in the third part, the conclusion of the study is presented.

**Figure 1 - The proposed mediation model**



## **Part I**

### **Literature Review**

#### **The Benefits of Pets**

The number of pets has significantly increased all over the world and many of them are considered family members (Junça-Silva, 2022). Portugal has a population of 10.5 million citizens (PORDATA, 2022), with 1.4 million cats and 2 million dogs; further, 54% of Portuguese homes having pets (FEDIAF European Facts & Figures, 2017). The official figures in Portugal leave no doubt: 4.8 million Portuguese are pet owners (The Portuguese Pet Industry: An Overview | GlobalPETS, 2022)). The number has grown from 2011, when the penetration of animals in homes stood at 45%. The year of 2013 had an increase of 5% compared to the two previous years. Portugal is the 12th in the ranking of countries with more pets. The USA is at the top of the pet-friendly countries and in Europe, Russia, France, Italy, Germany and England are ahead of Portugal in this trend (Pet Dogs per Capita in Europe: Romania, Portugal Top List, 2019). The reasons may be related to the change in the family unit and the understanding that pets contribute to physical and psychological well-being (Pego, 2019). However, the country is still improving animal welfare such as the elevation of pets to sentient beings under legal protection.

Adding a pet to one's life is a big commitment and responsibility. By adopting a pet, one has the responsibility to care for another living being for the rest of his/her life.

Further, by doing so, one has to consider the time and money needed to invest in pet care. Despite all the benefits that exist in adopting a pet, it also implies having added care and concern when individuals have to move away from them for a few hours, creating anxiety and stress (Cryer et al., 2021; Jensen et al., 2021). The best example of this occurs when one has to commute daily to work, staying away from home for many hours (Pina-Cunha et al., 2019; Sousa et al., 2022). Also, due to the attachment to pets (Cryer et al., 2021), being away from them can affect the individuals' focus and performance in the tasks they have to carry out (Junça-Silva et al., 2022).

Pets, especially dogs and cats, can reduce stress, anxiety, and depression, relieve loneliness, encourage exercise and playfulness, and improve cardiovascular health (Koukourikos et al., 2019; Lindsay & Thiyagarajah, 2022). The company of a dog or cat helps to reduce stress and anxiety, since it causes a greater production of dopamine and serotonin - neurotransmitters that trigger pleasure and have calming properties (Friedman & Krause-Parello, 2018). Pets also provide valuable companionship for older adults (Jensen et al., 2021). For example, a study conducted by the Australian Baker Medical Research Institute revealed that there was a direct link between having a pet and decreased risk of developing heart disease (Marques, 2022).

On the other side, having a pet has diverse benefits, including mental health or well-being (Jammaers, 2023) since pets provide love and companionship to their owners in good and bad times (Lebid & Simonova, 2021). Plus, pet ownership has been associated with other positive health outcomes, such as increased survival one-year after heart attacks, reduced loneliness and improved social support and emotional support (Barker et al., 2012). Moreover, pets buffer the impact of stress or difficult situations (Jensen et al., 2021). Barker et al. (2012) in a study measuring cardiovascular stress reactivity following a stress task completed in the presence of a dog or a close friend, researchers reported lower physiological indicators of stress in dog owners when the pet was present (Barker et al., 2012). Pet care responsibilities are a routine that conveys a comforting sensation that supports individual's focus and organization of the days and tasks. In other study, researchers showed that couples with pets had lower blood pressure and heart rate at rest and lower systolic blood pressure and heart rate during a mental stress task (Allen, 2002). Similar benefits were reported in a randomized controlled trial in which hypertensive stockbrokers starting medication to treat hypertension were randomly assigned to acquire

a dog or cat or to a wait list control. After six months, those owning pets performed better on mental stress tasks and demonstrated lower physiological response to stress compared with the control group (Allen et al., 2001).

According to Biswas (2019), interacting with a friendly pet can help many physical and mental issues. It can help reduce blood pressure and improve overall cardiovascular health. As it was mentioned before, it can also release endorphins that produce a calming effect (Barker & Wolen, 2008) which, consequently, can help alleviate pain, reduce stress, and improve overall psychological state (Wells, 2019).

Animals serve as a powerful force in life (Mellor et al., 2020), improve psychological safety perceptions (Friedman & Krause-Parello, 2018), are natural therapists (Strauss et al., 2021) and mood boosters (Koukourikos et al., 2019). For instance, petting a cat or dog's head can lower blood pressure and make people relax as it can balance physical and emotional stress (Gartland et al., 2022). Even watching fish swimming in an aquarium relieves tense muscles and helps reduce stress (Jensen et al., 2023). Stroking a dog or cat can lower blood pressure and heart rate and boost levels of serotonin and dopamine (Biswas, 2019); it can also help to relax and practice mindfulness (Junça-Silva, 2022). Spending time playing and petting a pet increases serotonin and dopamine levels in brain – hormones responsible for positive emotions and well-being (Goh et al., 2023).

A study done by the National Institutes of Health (NIH, 2017) found that people who experienced a stressful situation recovered more quickly when they were with their pets than with their partners or friends exercise and are less depressed. Pets may also have a significant impact on allergies, asthma, social support, and social interactions with other people (Pali-Schöll et al., 2023). Biswas (2019) emphasized that high levels of cholesterol and triglycerides can increase the risk of heart disease, but owning a cat or dog can lower both, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Pets can be affectionate, accepting, loyal, honest and consistent (Hradecká et al., 2015). If someone feels isolated with low support, a pet can help to reduce loneliness and provide a sense of purpose, which improves mental health (Hoy-Gerlach et al., 2022). Also, pets do not have opinions, critiques, and judgements; unlike people, pets will not judge their owners or their weaknesses and thus do not condition their habits or behaviors

(Ferrell & Crowley, 2023). Thus, one can conclude that pets have diverse benefits for those who own them.

### **Pet-friendly practices**

Pets' representation is changing, and their owners are valuing them in such a way that their emotional attachment to them is becoming stronger (Wagner & Pina-Cunha, 2021). The pet industry has exploded over the past few years, as the demographics of pet ownership shifted to millennials surpassing baby boomers as the largest group of pet owners (Dale, 2022). The increased importance of pet ownership in younger generations' is reflected in the creation of new, booming pet products/industry sectors, including pet insurance, calming products, tracking devices, vitamins/supplements, special foods, and the surge of pet parties (Springer, 2017, cited in Rice & Mullins, 2019). Based on the same 2017-2018 industry benchmarking report by the APPA, about 11% of workplaces allowed employees to bring their pets to work, which increased by 8% in 2014 (Springer, 2017, cited in Rice & Mullins, 2019). It is estimated that this number is likely to continue to increase as pets become more central to people's lives.

Adding to this, pets may be a positive presence and a personal resource for their owners while working (Hoffman, 2021) which may justify why pets are being valued for organizational purposes, and the increased number of organizations adopting pet-friendly practices (Junça-Silva, 2022). Pet-friendly practices are quite vast (even though often misunderstood); these are practices aimed to motivate employees by strengthening the bond with their pets and enhancing both human and animal welfare as the motivational factor. Organizations can become pet-friendly by implementing measures such as allowing the employee to bring their pet to work, allowing a few days of mourning for the loss of a pet, pet-based performance rewards such as canine hotel vouchers, allowing the employee to take their pet to the vet or pet daycare assistance (Junça-Silva, 2023).

These practices are strategies with benefits for employees who become more satisfied and motivated (Pina-Cunha et al., 2019; Wilkin et al., 2016). Pet-friendly practices also have benefits for the organization because their implementation improves employer branding (Anwar et al., 2020), enhances its integration within the community, attracts new talents and loyal stakeholders, increases talent retention (Sousa et al., 2022);

and at the same time provides workers with healthier working environments (Cardy & Lengnick-Hall, 2011).

### **Benefits of pet-friendly practices**

Pet-friendly practices have been a topic of discussion, with the belief that they can spare organizational costs especially when compared to the advantages they promote. Large organizations such as Google, Amazon, and Proctor & Gamble all have dog-friendly policies in some divisions. Whether it is a desire for innovation and fun at a large company or a relaxed, family-oriented atmosphere in small or medium companies, business owners have implemented pet-friendly policies because they believe that pets have a positive influence on their companies (Barker, 2005; Pali-Schöll et al., 2023).

For instance, by accommodating pets, organizations promote positive effects for workers, since many of them consider their pets to be family members (Cohen, 2002; Wagner & Pina-Cunha, 2021). Some benefits of taking the pet to work or working from home are related to the balance between work and nonwork life as working nearby pets, means that employees do not need to worry about leaving them home alone for the entire day, especially if is a senior pet with special needs or a disease that regularly requires medication (e.g., diabetes or a heart injury) (Foreman et al., 2019; Wells, 2019). These benefits are also relevant for the organization. For instance, it is likely that employees who take their pets to work or who work from home may work late to finish tasks because they do not have the worry of going home to take care of their pets (Hoffman, 2021).

Some benefits are lower absenteeism rates, higher productivity, and better employee relations (Foreman et al., 2017; Wilkin et al., 2016). Pet-friendly practices seem to satisfy the needs of employees and their customers, and at the same time deliver benefits to organizations (Lindsay & Thiyagarajah, 2022). A study by Pet Products Association (PPA, 2011), found that having an animal on the job increased labor productivity by 73 percent, decreased blood pressure, and employees' stress levels, and helped to restore their physical and mental health. The presence of pets also helps to increase productivity (Kelemen et al., 2020), help to socialize, be more creative, and be less sedentary (Costa et al., 2022). For pets, it is also an end to long hours alone which, in turn, decreases their

owners' concerns during the day (at work) and helps them to be more engaged with their work (Bolstad et al., 2021; Pinto, 2016).

### **The relationship between pet-friendly practices and well-being indicators**

Employees are more likely to identify themselves with an organization whose attributes, values, and practices are attractive and share similarities with their personal ones (Brown, 2017). The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals estimates that 25% of Australian offices are pet friendly. Indeed, dogs are a big part of Australian culture, they are invited to birthday parties, celebrations, and meetings. Hence, it is likely that organizations with pet-friendly practices make employees who have pets happier and engaged with their work (Junça-Silva, 2022, 2023; Kelemen et al., 2020).

Well-being may be studied from two perspectives, hedonic and eudemonic (Diener et al., 2022). While the hedonic perspective emphasizes the search for pleasure and the avoidance of pain as the main assumption, the eudemonic highlights the self-actualization and self-development (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The hedonic perspective has been the one that is mostly applied to understand well-being in the working settings (and, as such is the one adopted in this research). This approach adopted the concept of subjective well-being as the main construct. It includes two components, an affective and a cognitive (Diener et al., 2002). The affective component is related to the frequency of positive and negative affect that individuals experience, and the cognitive component is the evaluation that one makes about life – life satisfaction. Accordingly, happier individuals are those who experience more positive affect (than negative affect) and have a positive judgment about their life as a whole (Diener, 2009).

Work engagement is a well-being indicator (Bakker et al., 2014). It is an affective motivational attitude composed of vigor (physical energy to perform the work), dedication (a positive affective state experienced while working) and absorption (focus on the tasks) (Bakker et al., 2014).

It has been shown that when employees share values and identify themselves with the organization, they are happier, and engaged with their work because it helps to satisfy basic human needs, such as the needs for safety, belonging, self-improvement, and



reduction of uncertainty and, in turn, it leads to more cooperation, better relationships, and higher levels of satisfaction (Junça-Silva, 2022). As a result, employees who identify with their organizations should report higher levels of well-being than employees who are less identified. In a study by Barker (2008), it was shown that the presence of dogs in the workplace reduced their owners' stress during the day and made it more satisfying for those who interacted with them (the dogs). Similarly, Barker et al. (2012) showed that employees who were forced to leave their pets at home had 70% higher stress levels than a worker who did not own animals. The animals were brought into the office on specific days and stress was measured in two ways: measurement of cortisol levels, the stress hormone, and self-reports. The team observed that workers sought out the animals during breaks and found that this interaction promoted informal communication between employees. It was therefore concluded that having pets in the workplace was very good for morale, reduced stress levels and promoted communication between colleagues.

### **The Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT)**

The positive effects of pet-friendly practices on well-being indicators may be supported by two theories: the social exchange theory and the self-determination theory.

First, the self-determination theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2000; 2001) is a broad theory of human motivation concerned with how individuals interact with and depend on the social environment. The theory has been successfully applied across domains including parenting, education, healthcare, sports and physical activity, psychotherapy, and virtual worlds, as well as the fields of work motivation and management. The SDT defines intrinsic and several types of extrinsic motivation and outlines how these motivations influence behavioral responses in different domains, as well as social and cognitive development and personality. SDT specifically suggests that employees' performance and well-being are affected by the type of motivation they have for their job activities. The fundamental idea is that environmental factors such as job design, human resources practices, and forms of management have an impact on workers' motivations and experiences as they predict a set of basic psychological needs.

SDT therefore differentiates the types of motivation and emphasizes that different motives have different catalyzers, concomitants, and consequences in which intrinsic

motivation is the most relevant one, as it is the one that determines human behavior through the attainment of three basic needs (Deci et al., 2017). The theory describes three innate psychological needs—competence, autonomy, and relatedness—which when satisfied yield enhanced self-motivation and mental health and when thwarted lead to diminished motivation and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Accordingly, individuals develop efforts to fulfil these needs and when they attain it, they achieve psychological growth (e.g., intrinsic motivation), integrity (e.g., internalization and assimilation of cultural practices), and well-being (e.g., life satisfaction and psychological health), as well as the experiences of vitality (Ryan & Frederick, 1997) and self-congruence (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999).

The need for relatedness is a basic human need crucial for well-being (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) and is related to the desire to have stable, satisfying, and positive relationships (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Diverse studies have demonstrated the impact of relatedness on happiness and well-being (DeNeve, 1999; Wang et al., 2018). From this standpoint, it is likely that pet owners see their need for relatedness if organizations have pet-friendly practices that support the bond with their pets. For instance, considering that pet owners can take their pet to work, or work from home, it is likely that they have their need of relatedness satisfied – by being nearby their pet – which will, thereby, lead to increased levels of both well-being and work engagement.

The need for competence is the individual's desire to feel effective and competent in areas considered relevant (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Further, studies have consistently shown that feeling competent not only triggers self-confidence but also enhances well-being (Martela et al., 2023). Other studies have demonstrated that attaining relevant goals predicts well-being and work engagement (Mazzetti et al., 2023). Hence, pet-friendly practices may support individuals' focus and concentration on the tasks which facilitates goal attainment and, in turn, leads to enhanced well-being and work engagement.

The need for autonomy is the desire of having flexibility and freedom on the tasks to be performed (Ryan & Deci, 2001). When employees have more autonomy, freedom, and flexibility on the job they are also happier and satisfied with it (Sarmah et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2018). Further, by having autonomy on the job employees tend to be more motivated to pursue organizational goals, which will likely influence work engagement

(Jin et al., 2022). Thus, pet-friendly practices, such as, telework or flextime, promote autonomy which will likely support employees' need for autonomy and, in turn, will likely predict work engagement and well-being.

To facilitate effective functioning in social contexts, improve psychological health and well-being the needs for competence, relatedness or belonging, and autonomy or self-determination are essential. Ryan and Deci (2001) have found that social contexts such as workplaces that support the satisfaction of basic psychological needs contribute to autonomous motivation, psychological and physical well-being, and improved performance. The concept of basic needs has emerged as a concept to describe the conditions and mechanisms that influence motivation, well-being, and performance (Deci et al., 2017). Thus, pet-friendly practices will likely satisfy their employees' needs, motivating them to do their tasks and thus increasing their work engagement and well-being.

Second, the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) suggests that individuals behave by weighing the costs and benefits they expect to receive, either through concrete rewards (pay, goods) or socio-emotional ones (e.g., flexibility, autonomy).

Accordingly, these benefits improve the quality of interactions between employees and employers and are reinforced when: (a) costs are less than valued rewards; (b) there is trust between each party regarding their obligations over time; (c) the exchange is considered fair (which implies mutual adherence to the norm of reciprocity); and (d) there is a psychological commitment between each party. Therefore, pet owners who are in organizations with pet-friendly practices may feel a greater sense of obligation and commitment to their organization, which may result in higher levels of job satisfaction and work engagement. "Organizations with pet-friendly practices that support their employees with pets may spark perceptions of shared values, leading them to feel more identified with the organization and increase levels of well-being" (Junça-Silva, 2022, p. 4)

Therefore, based on the SDT and the social exchange theory, it is expected that pet-friendly practices, by promoting organizational support and meeting psychological needs (autonomy, competence and relatedness), increase well-being and work engagement.

Pet-friendly practices in companies' strategy: a look from the perspective of managers and employees

Relying on the SDT and the social exchange theory, the following hypotheses were defined.

H1. Pet-friendly practices positively influence work engagement through the satisfaction of psychological needs:

H1a. Pet-friendly practices positively influence work engagement through the satisfaction of autonomy needs.

H1b. Pet-friendly practices positively influence work engagement through the satisfaction of competence needs.

H1c. Pet-friendly practices positively influence work engagement through the satisfaction of relatedness needs.

H2. Pet-friendly practices positively influence well-being through the satisfaction of psychological needs:

H2a. Pet-friendly practices positively influence well-being through the satisfaction of autonomy needs.

H2b. Pet-friendly practices positively influence well-being through the satisfaction of competence needs.

H2c. Pet-friendly practices positively influence well-being through the satisfaction of relatedness needs.

## **Overview of studies**

The present research was supported by a mixed methodology (qualitative/quantitative; Pope & Mays, 1995). The first study was an exploratory study and embraced a qualitative approach to explore managers' perceptions about pet-friendly practices, their implementation, and the perceived consequences.

The second study, a correlational one with a quantitative approach, aimed to test the effect of pet-friendly practices on well-being indicators (i.e., well-being and work engagement) by adopting the perspective of SDT and the social exchange framework.

## **Part II – Empirical studies**

### **Study 1 – exploring managers perceptions about pet-friendly practices.**

The qualitative research aimed to obtain a better understanding of the contextual surroundings and the particularities of the object of study (i.e., pet-friendly practices, its feasibility and potential consequences). This exploratory study was based on a semi-structured interview script, produced from the literature review, so that the interviewees could express their opinions with freedom of time and words. The interviewee's thoughts and discourse could, however, be guided by the pre-defined questions in order to obtain the information necessary to the first study's goals. To this end, the interview is a privileged instrument for collecting information because it allows us to collect a great amount and varied information that would otherwise be impossible to access – for instance, through a survey. The interview is characterized by a direct contact between the interviewer and the interviewee where a true exchange is established, and the interviewee expresses his/her perceptions, interpretations and experiences and the researcher facilitates this expression, prevents it from straying from the goal and allows the interviewee to access a high degree of authenticity and depth (Quivy & Campenhoudt, 1998).

This approach is quite complete in that it provides comparable and deeply understandable answers allowing for a more systematic treatment of the data (Reis, 2010). The analysis of a qualitative analysis, based on inductive reasoning and on the rigorous description of phenomena, has at its foundation exploratory research (Leininger, 1984; Silverman, 2006).

The qualitative approach allowed to understand the perception of employees about the potential consequences of pet-friendly practices on employees (Fraser & Gondim,

2004). That is, the central interest was in how (or based on what?) managers attribute meanings to pet-friendly practices (Fortin, 2000). This research methodology implies specific methods of analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994): (a) transformation of the collected data into text; (b) coding and annotation of reflections in the transcribed data; (c) classifying the data into categories patterns, relationships, and similarities or disparities; (d) progressive elaboration of a set of generalizations that involve the consistencies found throughout the analysis of the interviews; and (e) the identified patterns considered in light of these generalizations and the literature review.

### **Participants and procedure**

Given the nature and objectives of the research, semi-structured interviews were chosen, since it is "certain to obtain comparable data among the various subjects" (Bogdan and Biklen, 1994, p. 135) and, to this end, the interview scripts were built to interview managers and understand their perceptions about pet-friendly practices. This script had pre-defined topics of interest to the research and were developed in order to get a better understanding of their perceptions, with the purpose of deepening aspects related to the study's goal. Since the interview was semi-structured, the interviewer was aware of all the topics on which s/he aimed to obtain reactions from the interviewee. A guideline was fixed for the beginning of the interview. The script had underlying objectives but allowed some flexibility to conduct the interview.

In this study, the interviewees were previously contacted via email to ensure their availability to participate in the study, and to explain the reasons for having been chosen to be interviewed. The general objectives of the study were also mentioned, as well as the importance of their participation in it. After agreeing to participate in the interview, anonymity was guaranteed. At the beginning of the interview, they were briefly informed of the purpose and assured that what will be said in the interview will be treated confidentially. Further, permission to record the interview was asked prior to its conduction. Bogdan and Biklen (1994) referred that there are great advantages in recording interviews, especially when they are very long. In this study, we chose to record the interviews in order to avoid taking notes during the interview, which could create distraction in the interviewers. The interviews were conducted between July and

September 2022, via Zoom, in order to facilitate the availability of the interviewees. The interviews lasted an average of about 45 minutes and were recorded and, later, their content was transcribed.

Managers who participated were selected by convenience according to their experience in a managerial position and the sample included six managers ( $N = 6$ ) in Human Resources Management positions (three female) in Portuguese organizations with high responsibilities managerial areas; they were aged between 30 and 55 years and their selection did not consider the sector of activity. The experience of the managers in the Human Resources area varied between three and 20 years.

### **Data analysis**

Content analysis was conducted using MAXQDA, through the creation of categories. Content analysis is a method of qualitative analysis that is important, as it offers the possibility of methodically treating information and testimonies that present a certain degree of depth and complexity. For Quivy and Campenhoudt (1998), only the use of organized and stable methods allows the researcher to elaborate an interpretation that does not take as reference his/her own values and representations that may create bias in the data.

Following the procedures of qualitative research methodology and content analysis, we proceeded to transcribe the interviews in their entirety and coding it by the creation of categories (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The creation of categories was based on the literature review of pet-friendly practices. With these procedures we intended to recognize meanings at the level of similarities and differences and identify a coherence that would allow to organize the information provided by the participants. The grouping of the main ideas referred to in the answers originated a categorical tree about the benefits, disadvantages, and limitations of pet-friendly practices.

The results extracted from the qualitative analysis using Software MAXQDA were explored in two distinct moments: (a) presentation of the content analysis of the interviews with managers and (b) presentation of the general dimensions defined for the feasibility of pet-friendly practices that emerged from this analysis.

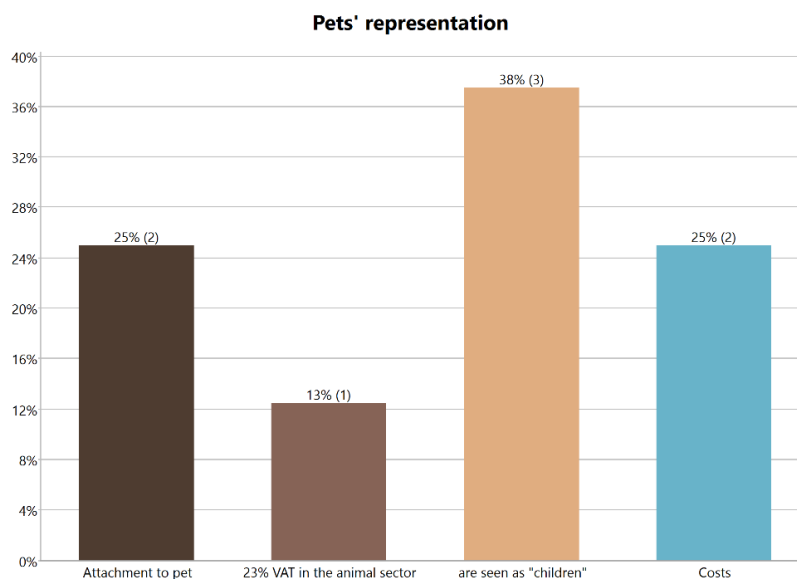
The interview aimed to clarify how managers perceived pet-friendly practices at work. The analysis done through MAXQDA allowed to obtain five categories: 1) representations of pets; 2) pet-friendly practices; 3) benefits; 4) disadvantages and limitations of implementing the practices; 5) solutions to the limitations.

### Pets' representation

On the first point, three managers mentioned that pets were seen as children and that they required a lot of costs (N = 3) and consequently concern, responsibility and caretaking. For instance, they stated: *“many people already see their pets as their children”* (Manager 4) and *“pets are almost like children and being able to take our pet to work makes us feel good and we are not with the worry of how he will be at home and if he is okay”* (Manager 3). Still on this point, the relevance of this for the state/government was highlighted, being that all products at this level had a high cost, such as having a vat rate of 23% (N = 1).

It was also mentioned that they have a strong relationship with their animals and cannot be away from them for many hours, meaning an attachment between the animals and the owners (N=2). It was also mentioned that having animals means spending part of the monthly income, treating them as if they were children and thus there are associated costs (N=2): *“We often don't want to go to the office because we are attached to our animals”* (Manager 2).

Figure 2 - Pets' representation





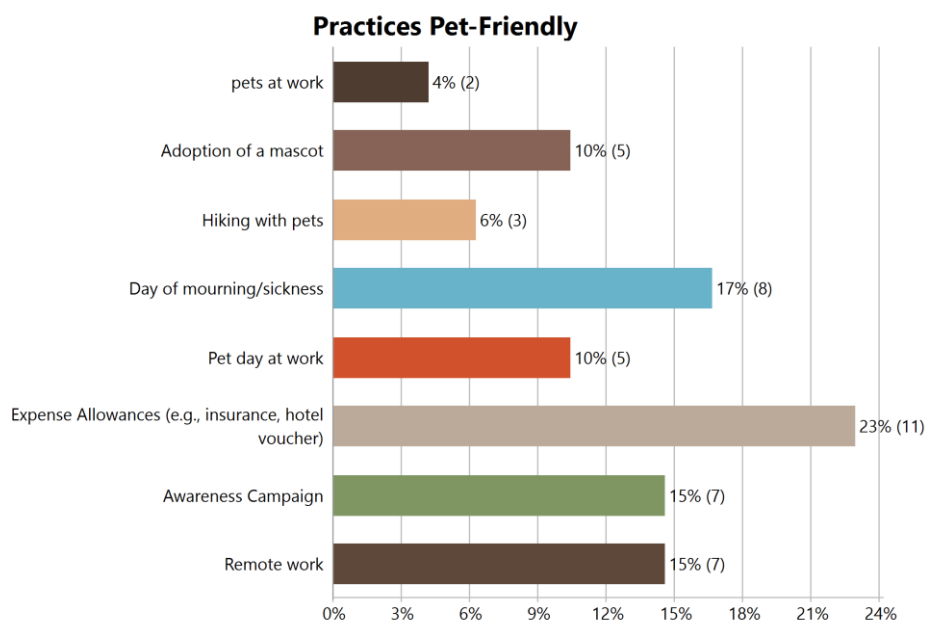
### Pet-Friendly Practices

Regarding the second point, nine practices were mentioned. The most mentioned practice was expense allowances such as pet insurance, voucher for veterinarian and hotel (N = 11) (figure 3). When questioned about the topic and the practices they were aware of and which were implemented at their organization, they pointed out examples such as remote work (N = 7), awareness campaigns (N = 6), day of mourning in case of death of the pet (N= 6), pet day at work (N = 5), and the adoption of a mascot (N = 5) and pet-walks (in which employees take their pets) (N = 4). Managers emphasized six times the practice of the day of mourning in case of loss of a pet as an example:

*"One thing my company does is remote work, and that allows us to be closer to our animals (...) And about the day of mourning, I think it makes perfect sense because I consider that animals are almost like children. I know they're not but I'm really sure that if one day I lose him, I'll be very grateful to have that day off from work"* (Manager 1).

*"We here in the company are managing to implement the walk with pets, which consists in promoting a team building in which we take a weekend. Because here it happens a lot that they socialize in teams, but only about work and they miss the interpersonal relationships"* (Manager 2).

Figure 3 - Practices Pet-Friendly



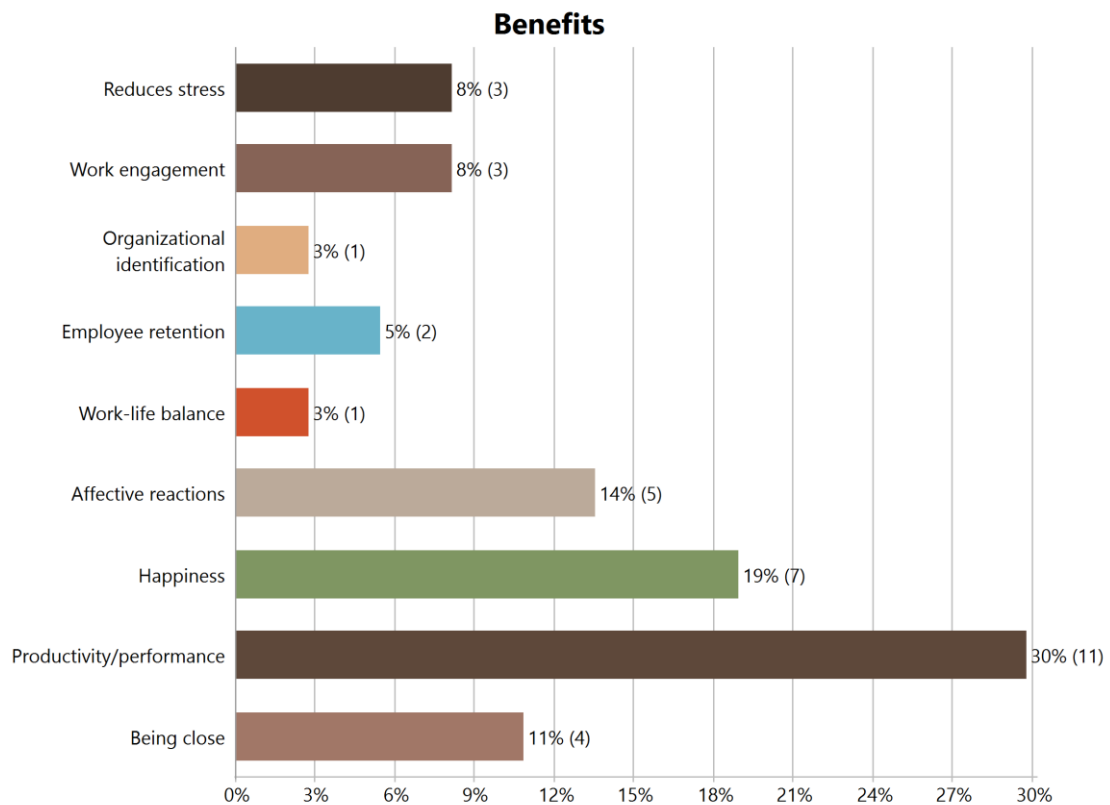
## Benefits

When analyzing the benefits of pet-friendly practices, managers identified two major dimensions, one related to work and organizational-related benefits and another related to personal-related benefits. In the dimension of work and organizational benefits, it included four sub-dimensions, namely productivity (N = 11), work engagement (N = 3), retention (N = 2) and organizational identification (N = 1). Moreover, the dimension of personal-related benefits included five sub-dimensions, namely: increased happiness and well-being (N = 7), more positive affective reactions during the day (N = 5), working nearby their pets (N = 4), stress reduction (N = 3) and work-life balance (N = 1).

For instance, managers reported that the implementation of these practices could improve the sense of identification with the company's values and ideas, employees' involvement, and engagement. Further, managers emphasized that pet-friendly practices could promote employee retention, because when employees feel happy at work, retention increases. It was also cited that pet-friendly practices contributed to work-life balance. Finally, managers considered, in general, that pet-friendly practices allowed to be closer to our pets by taking more breaks in the case of remote work, which helped to relieve occupational stress. Below I present some excerpts from what was referred to above:

*“I had a friend who was going through a tough time and her pets were her comfort to get through this time and so she couldn't stay away from them for long (...) our CEO ended up implementing some pet-friendly practices because he saw many benefits for employee productivity”* (Manager 4). *“These practices bring a feeling of satisfaction to the employees, because everything that is the company's involvement for the good of the community brings a positive return for the employee because he feels that his responsibility as a company employee goes beyond his mandatory duties (...) we know that these practices all together contribute to a very positive outcome”* (Manager 5). *“Companies with pet-friendly practices retain 90% of their employees”* (Manager 3).

**Figure 4 - Benefits**



### Limitations

In the fourth point, 11 disadvantages of pet-friendly practices were described. All managers mentioned disadvantages, agreeing that these measures were still little known in Portugal and that their implementation presented several limitations, mainly due to the closed mind of the Portuguese population (N = 5) and due to people who do not like animals or do not have them and as such do not fully understand (N = 2):

*"I think that one of the biggest problems is skepticism. In Portugal, I think that the big fight we are going to have will be skepticism and resistance. We see these practices implemented in the US and in Brazil, but here it seems that the ideas arrive later. It is something that is fought to become intrinsic in society and I believe that these are the main obstacles" (Manager 5). Manager 2 also confirmed that "we are facing a very backward and conservative population".*

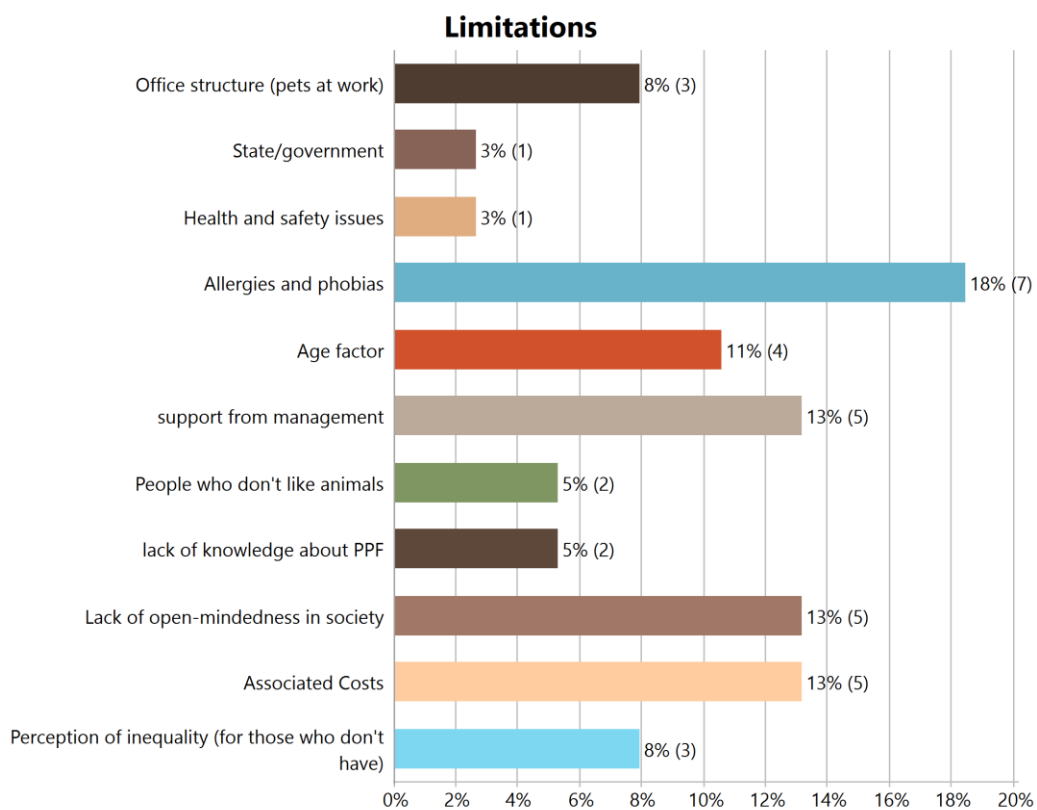
Following the most mentioned practice ("pets in the workplace"), the most mentioned limitation was allergies and phobias, pointing out as the main obstacle to the implementation of this practice (N = 7). All managers mentioned that besides the difficulty that may exist to implement these practices, these also had an associated cost that would impact the organizational budget, and not all were financially prepared for this cost (N = 5), as mentioned by manager 5 and 6, respectively: "*The only less positive point is the higher cost that we now have*" and "*When we talk about well-being, we must also think about the financial aspect*". That said, this implementation would be easier if the organizational budget were higher, and managers open to take risks and test these measures: "*The main factor that weighed on this was the financial resources that were still not positive, because fortunately we have some financial health that allowed us to work on these practices and execute what are our dreams and these issues that are not the obligation of any company, but that should be a concern within what is possible to act*" (Manager 5).

An important question was also presented regarding the perception of inequality towards people who cannot take advantage of pet-friendly practices because they do not have pets (N=3): "*Normally, when we implement a practice, we want everybody to be able to benefit from it, and this is also a problem. We would have to identify the people who have animals*" (Manager 1).

Another limitation pointed out was the age factor (N=4), as older people are not as empathetic to these practices and end up not being as receptive to their implementation in companies, which may be related to their mindset: "*I think the mentality is also associated with the age factor. The younger generation are more sympathetic than the older ones. As we in the company are a very young generation, the obstacles would not be on the side of the employees. There are some who will not care and understand, maybe the older ones in the organization, but the younger ones, probably most of them will value and understand. The mentality is associated with the age group factor*" (Manager 2).

Finally, support from managers was also highlighted as an important factor (N=5). Managers who hold much of the decision making in their hands, if they are not aware of employees' problems, cannot find solutions. In this sense, managers who are more attentive and closer to employees have a better perception of their well-being and thus can act or implement measures to combat the issues.

**Figure 5 - Limitations**

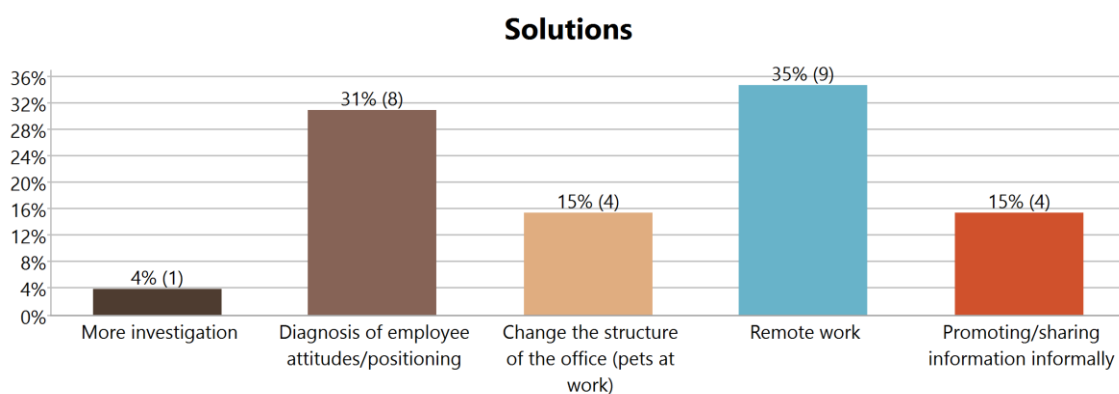


**Solutions**

It was also asked which solutions they considered to exist to overcome the obstacles and problems mentioned before. Remote work was highlighted as a way to allow people to be closer to their pets, and consequently to decrease the concern of leaving them alone for many hours (N = 9). Besides this, it was stated that to fight the population's conservative mindset, one should invest in the information dissemination and awareness campaigns (N = 4): *"I think it is important that the subject is talked about among employees in an informal context"* (manager 2) and *"besides this, we could implement an awareness campaign on the subject. We should always take advantage of these situations and raise or invent something voluntary to raise awareness"* (Manager 1).

Finally, regarding the implementation process, when they were asked how they would do or did it in the case of implementation of these practices, they answered that first of all it should be important to diagnose the employees' perception about the potential implementation of pet-friendly practices (N = 8). They emphasized that this initial diagnostic was important to avoid any kind of revolt and discontent and to involve them in the process; for instance, manager 5 stated: *"But I would start by making a diagnosis in which I would collect the perspective of employees to understand if they feel comfortable with these pet-friendly practices or with which pet-friendly practices they feel more comfortable"* and manager 4: *"but for that there has to be a diagnosis through a questionnaire that we give to the employees"*.

**Figure 6 - Solutions**



### **Brief summary of results**

Summarizing the qualitative analysis, a total of five categories were obtained: pet's representation, pet-friendly, benefits, limitations and solutions. From these categories, 30 subcategories were created, as it is possible to illustrate in the image.

In the first category "pets' representation", three subcategories are identified in which their image as "children" is the most identified category. In the second category "pet friendly practices ", nine subcategories are identified and the most mentioned one is having help with expenses (such as vouchers for veterinarians and hotels). The category "benefits" includes two main dimensions, one related to organizational benefits, and

another related to personal advantages. In the organizational benefits, the most identified one is increases in productivity, and in the personal advantages, managers highlight that pet-friendly practices lead undoubtedly to happier employees. Limitations includes a total of 11 subcategories, in which the most mentioned is the potential existing of employees with allergies and phobias (in the case of leaving pets to the workplace). The second most mentioned was the age factor and the support from managers. Finally, in the "solutions" category, five subcategories are identified, and the most mentioned solution is remote work.

In conclusion, it is possible to verify that limitations and pet-friendly practices are the most identified categories, followed by benefits, solutions and pets' representation. With this, it can be concluded that, when addressing the topic throughout the interview, managers mention the pet-friendly practices they are aware of and the reasons for the lack of implementation of them. However, they also emphasize some of the benefits that are inherent to them.

The following figures summarize the results of the qualitative analysis.

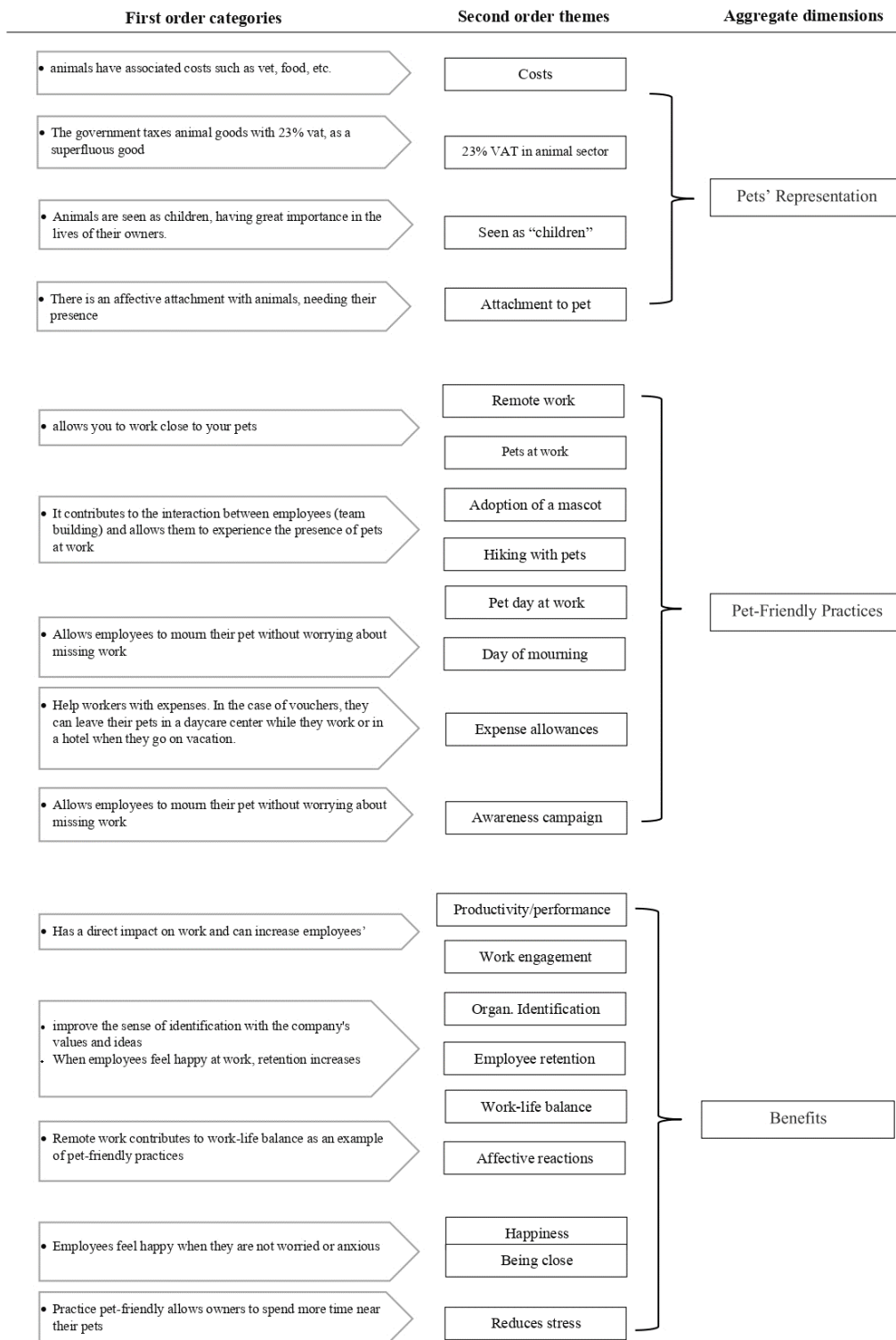
Figure 7 - List of categories

Lista de Códigos	Manager 6	Manager 5	Manager 4	Manager 3	Manager 2	Manager 1	SOMA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Solutions                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> More investigation</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diagnosis of employee attitudes/po</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Change the structure of the office (t</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remote work</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Promoting/sharing information info</li> </ul> </li> <li> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pets' representation                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attachment to pet</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 23% VAT in the animal sector</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> are seen as "children"</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Costs</li> </ul> </li> <li> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Limitations                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office structure (pets at work)</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State/government</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health and safety issues</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allergies and phobias</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age factor</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> support from management</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> People who don't like animals</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> lack of knowledge about PPF</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lack of open-mindedness in society</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Associated Costs</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Perception of inequality (for those v</li> </ul> </li> </ul>							0
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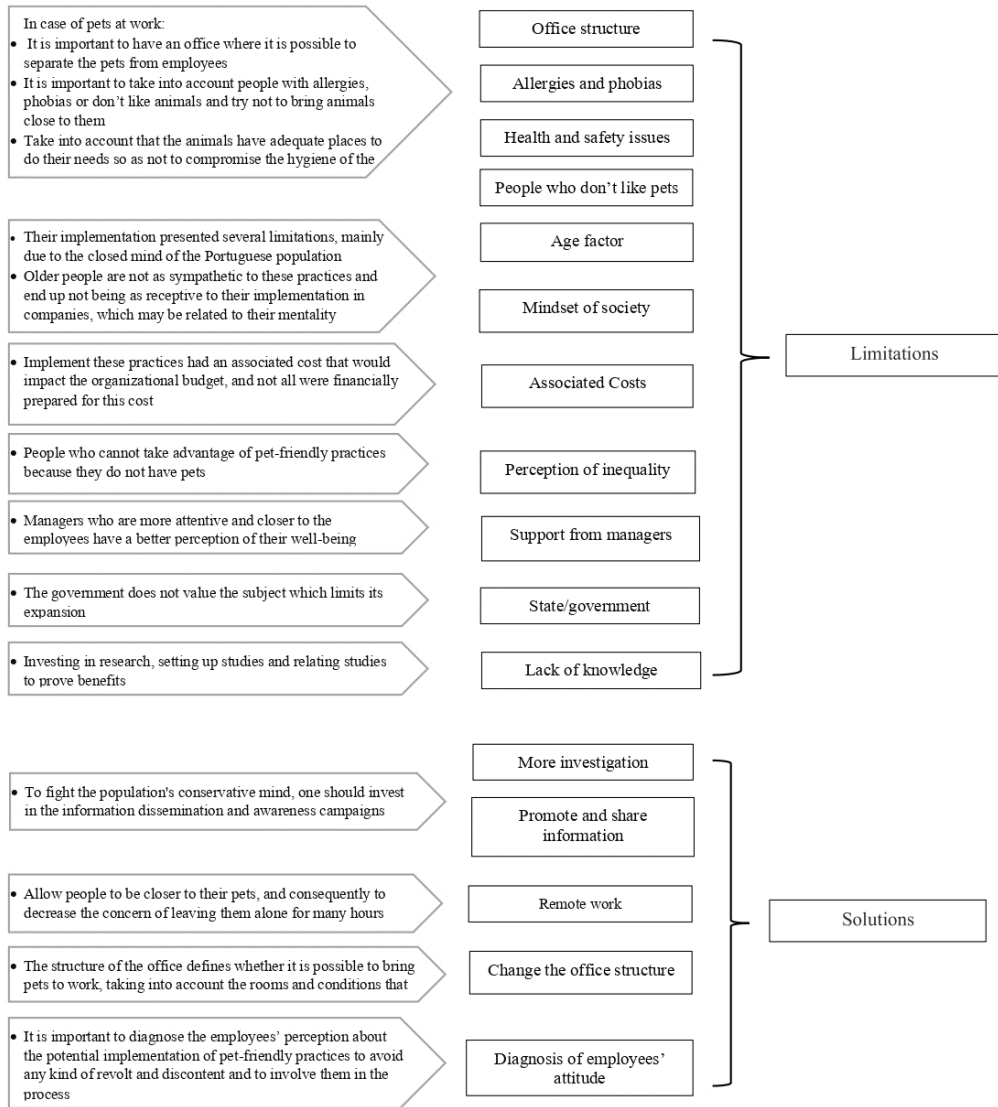
Lista de Códigos	Manager 6	Manager 5	Manager 4	Manager 3	Manager 2	Manager 1	SOMA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Benefits                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reduces stress</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Work engagement</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Organizational identification</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employee retention</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Work-life balance</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Affective reactions</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Happiness</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Productivity/performance</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being close</li> </ul> </li> <li> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Practices Pet-Friendly                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> pets at work</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adoption of a mascot</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hiking with pets</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Day of mourning/sickness</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pet day at work</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expense Allowances (e.g., insurance,</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Awareness Campaign</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remote work</li> </ul> </li> </ul>							0
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Σ SOMA	15	16	25	47	27	26	156



**Figure 8 - Graph of categories**



Pet-friendly practices in companies' strategy: a look from the perspective of managers and employees



### **Part III - Quantitative study**

Quantitative research is a systematic process of collecting observable and quantifiable observable, based on the observation of objective facts, phenomena, and events that exist independently of the researcher (Freixo, 2011). The aim of quantitative research is to quantify data and generalize the results of the sample to the target population (Malhotra, 2004). This method considers that data is quantifiable and can be translated into numbers to be classified and analyzed usually using statistical methods (Reis, 2010).

According to the proposed research hypotheses and field of application, it was imperative to use a quantitative research method in order to test them against observation data. The research method considered most appropriate for this study was the questionnaire survey as we had access to validated surveys to evaluate the variables under study. The questionnaire is an instrument that translates the study's goals with measurable variables and helps to organize, standardize, and control the data so that the information can be collected in a rigorous manner (Fortin, 2009). It also allows for eventual confirmation or disconfirmation of the proposed hypotheses (Freixo, 2011).

Questionnaires can measure both objective and subjective information. Objective measures are related to facts, individual's characteristics, their knowledge and behaviors. Subjective measures refer to attitudes, that is, to what people think, feel, the judgments they make and comprise measures of opinion, satisfaction, perception, values and behavioral intentions (Freixo, 2011).

As for the content of the questions, they could be divided between those that focused on facts (all the information held by the participants that was likely to be known through a form other than a survey) and opinion questions which, having a more subjective nature, addresses opinions, attitudes, beliefs, preferences, etc. Questions can be closed questions, in which participants have to choose their answers between two or more options, and open questions in which participants can answer using their own vocabulary providing details and making comments, thus allowing for more precise and in-depth investigations, although presenting greater difficulties in statistical treatment (Freixo, 2011).

If it is not possible to survey all members of the universe, one resorts to techniques that allow the construction of a sample of that same universe. This small

representation of the research universe, if well-constructed, can replace the universe under analysis and is, in many cases, the only way to know it, if not in a fully secure manner, at least with reasonable security (Costa et al., 2011).

To select the sample the non-probabilistic method using a convenience sample was used. The sample was by convenience because it was taken as sample the elements of the population with internet access, available to receive the questionnaire link (through social networks) and access the site to respond via internet. For Malhotra (2004), the use of social networks also allowed the use of the snowball method, in that the respondents were asked to share the questionnaire with other potential respondents. Since a non-probability type of sample was used, it was intended to obtain as many responses as possible in order to increase the representativeness of the sample and the safety of the statistical constructs.

Within the scope of this study, the hypotheses were tested with 378 employees from diverse occupational sectors in Portugal. The questionnaire was applied online. Social networks were used to maximize the response rate. This quantitative research of the study took place in five stages: (1) construction and design of the questionnaire; (2) pre-testing of the questionnaire (in order to identify inconsistency or complexity in the questions, ambiguity in the language used, superfluous questions, and to adjust the size of the questionnaire); (3) procedures for mailing and follow-up of the questionnaire; (4) data collection and processing; (5) and analysis of the results.

### **Sample and procedure**

The sample was composed of a total of 378 participants, of which 95% were female, aged between 18 and 74 years ( $M = 42.22$ ;  $SD = 12.04$ ). Regarding marital status, 30.1% were single, 53.8% were married or living a nonmarital partnership, 14% were divorced and 2.1% were widowed. Most participants (36.4%) had a bachelor's degree, followed by a master's degree (29.3%) and participants with a secondary education (25.1%). Overall, 27.4% were in a hybrid regime, 52.2% in a full face-to-face regime and 8.4% were completely in remote work.

Regarding their pets, 7.4% mentioned not having pets, 84.4% had pets and 8.2% answered that they did not have pets but have had them in the past. About 84.5% answered

having an average of 2.4 pets ( $SD = 2.35$ ). Overall, 92.7% had dogs, followed by cats (30.9%).

Respondents were thoroughly informed about the nature and study's goal; they were also informed about the procedures and confidentiality and anonymity of the data was warranted. Adequate information was provided about the demands that the project would place on them in terms of time and activities required from the respondents, as well as disclosure of confidential information. Respondents were also informed that they were free to participate or to decline to participate or to withdraw from the research at any time. Since the questionnaires were shared online (via email and the researcher's social networks), the above-mentioned information was provided in the covering letter of the questionnaire. Therefore, if the respondent completed and forwarded the questionnaire to the researcher, it was assumed that informed consent was given.

## **Measures**

### **Pet-friendly practices**

We used nine examples of pet-friendly practices (identified in the previous study) to measure it (e.g., "remote work", "mourning days in case of death of the animal"). Participants responded on a binary answer ("yes" and "no"). The Cronbach's alpha was 0.89.

### **Subjective well-being**

Subjective well-being was measured with the short form of the satisfaction with life scale (Kjell, & Diener, 2021). It included three items, such as "Today, I felt that my life is getting closer to my ideals". Participants rated it on a five-point Likert scale ranging from '*strongly disagree*' (1) to '*strongly agree*' (5). The Cronbach's alpha was 0.92.

### **Work engagement**

Work engagement was assessed with the three item Ultra-Short Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli et al., 2017) (e.g., "I have been feeling full of energy"). It was rated on a 5-

point Likert scale that ranged from 1 – *never* to 5 – *always*. The Cronbach's alpha was 0.88.

### **Basic psychological needs**

We measured the three dimensions of psychological needs: autonomy, relatedness and competence, based on work-related basic need satisfaction (Ilardi et al., 1993; Broeck et al., 2010). It included two items per dimension: autonomy (e.g., “Today, I felt I could pretty much be myself at work”), relatedness (e.g., “Today, I felt people at work care about me”) and competence (e.g., “Today, I felt competent and capable”). Participants rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “*not at all*” (1) to “*extremely*” (5). The Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0.84 to 0.87.

### **Control variables**

We used participants' sex and age as controls. We used sex as a control because some studies have shown that women tend to be more sensitive and empathetic to animals than men (Graça & Milfont, 2018). Hence, sex differences could influence both mediators and the criterion variables. Furthermore, age could also account for influences on well-being and work engagement, as there have been identified differences in the way older and younger experience affect and their subsequent levels of well-being (Livingstone & Isaacowitz, 2018).

### **Data analysis**

In our mediating model (see Figure 1), there were three types of variables: (1) predictor (pet-friendly practices); (2) two criterion variables (i.e., work engagement and well-being); and (3) three mediators (psychological need: competence, autonomy and relatedness). SPSS 28.0 and the software JASP (version 0.14.1) were used to test the proposed research models. First, the multivariable normality test was done. Second, descriptive analysis was conducted to calculate the mean and standard deviation for each variable. Third, correlational analyses were performed to examine whether pet-friendly practices were associated with the mediators and the criterion variables. Fourth, the measurement model's goodness of fit was evaluated. In this regard, we found that the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) < 0.08, Standardized Root Mean

Squared Residual (SRMR) < 0.08, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) > 0.90, and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) > 0.90 evidenced a good fit (Kline, 2015).

## **Results**

### **Common method bias and multicollinearity issues**

Although we have followed some recommended procedures to reduce the potential common method bias - i.e., using closed-ended questions mixed in the survey (e.g., "I like ice-creams") and resorting to previously validated surveys to assess the variables under study - it cannot be completely avoided (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Hence, to understand its presence in the study we followed some recommendations (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

First, we performed Harman's single factor test to check for common method bias. The findings showed that the first factor only accounted for 35.91% of the total explained variance; hence, the common method bias was not a serious issue.

Second, as Kock (2015) suggested, we also performed a full collinearity evaluation test to check for the potential common method bias. The results demonstrated that all the variance inflation factor values ranged from 1.04 to 2.63; because the values were less than the cut-off point of 3.33, multicollinearity concern was not a severe issue in this study.

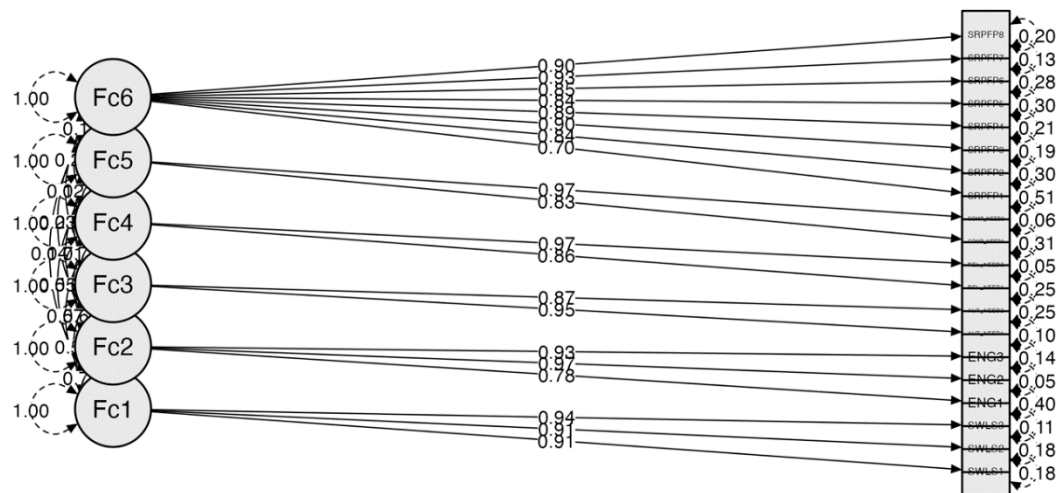
At last, we performed four confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) to confirm the independence of the variables under study. To assess the adequacy of the model and compare it with other reasonable alternative models, we analyzed diverse fit indices (Hair et al., 2010), namely CFI, TLI, SRMR, and RMSEA. Model 1 was the hypothesized six-factor model comprising separate scales for pet-friendly practices, competence, autonomy, relatedness needs, work engagement, and well-being. Model 2 was a three-factor model where work engagement and well-being were combined into a unique factor, plus the three psychological needs were loaded onto one factor and another one for pet-friendly practices. Model 3 was a two-factor model where work engagement, well-being, and the three psychological needs were combined into a single factor. Model 4 was a one-

factor solution in which all items were loaded onto a single factor. Table 1 shows that the six-factor model (Model 1) provided the best fit for the data ( $\chi^2/df = 1.51, p < 0.001, CFI = 0.99, TLI = 0.9, SRMR = 0.06, \text{ and } RMSEA = 0.04 \text{ CI } 95\% [0.03, 0.05]$ ) (see Figure 2), and all other alternative models evidenced a poorer fit. These results together with the Cronbach alpha reliability scores across all the measurement scales evidenced the discriminant and convergent validity of the study; hence, we proceeded with the hypotheses testing.

**Table 1- Confirmatory factor analysis results**

Models	$\chi^2$	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Model 1	235.500	155	0.99	0.99	0.04	0.06
Model 2	749.717	167	0.98	0.98	0.11	0.08
Model 3	1,520.475	169	0.97	0.97	0.16	0.11
Model 4	5,224.882	170	0.88	0.87	0.31	0.31

**Figure 9 - Confirmatory factor analysis model plot**





## Descriptive statistics

Table 2 shows the correlations between the variables as well as their mean and standard deviation values. The results indicated that all the variables were significantly and positively correlated with each other, except for the relationship between pet-friendly practices and the need for autonomy.

**Table 2 - Descriptive statistics, correlations and reliabilities**

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. PFP	1.51 <sup>1</sup>	0.78	(0.89)						
2. Autonomy needs	3.82 <sup>1</sup>	1.10	0.09	(0.86)					
3. Relatedness needs	3.95 <sup>1</sup>	1.10	0.17**	0.62**	(0.87)				
4. Competence needs	3.78 <sup>1</sup>	1.03	0.13*	0.71**	0.60**	(0.84)			
5. Work engagement	3.18 <sup>1</sup>	1.04	0.19**	0.50**	0.57**	0.60**	(0.88)		
6. Well-being	3.26 <sup>1</sup>	1.04	0.12*	0.40**	0.47**	0.44**	0.69**	(0.92)	
7. Age	42.11	12.04	0.07	0.01	-0.03	0.07	0.03	-0.04	
8. Sex	-	-	-0.03	0.105	0.08	0.08	0.13*	0.12*	

Note. *N* = 379; \**p* < 0.05 \*\**p* < 0.001.

<sup>1</sup>Scale ranging from 1 to 5. <sup>2</sup>Sex codes: 1 – female; 2 – male. *Cronbach* alphas are in brackets. PFP = Pet-friendly practices.

## Hypotheses testing

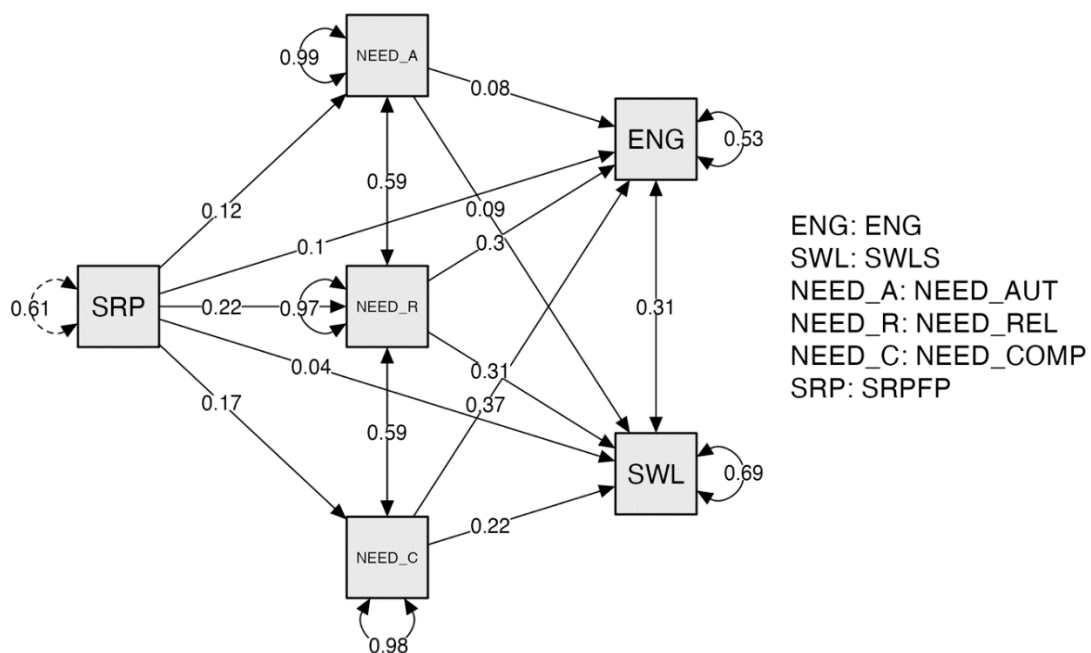
The structural equation model fitted the data well:  $\chi^2_{(313)} = 1.39$ , *df* = 35, *p* < 0.001, *CFI* = 0.99, *TLI* = 0.99, *RMSEA* = 0.04, 90% *CI* [0.09;0.16]), *SRMR* = 0.03. The standardized path coefficients among the variables are presented in Figure 3.

First, the tests of indirect effects indicated that the need for competence and relatedness significantly mediated the relationship between pet-friendly practices and work engagement ( $\beta = 0.06$ ; *p* < 0.01; 95%*CI* [0.02;0.13];  $\beta = 0.03$ ; *p* < 0.01; 95%*CI*

[0.03;0.13], respectively). The findings showed that the need for autonomy did not mediate the relationship between pet-friendly practices and work engagement ( $\beta= 0.01$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ;  $95\%CI [-0.00; 0.05]$ ). The overall model explained 44% of the variance in work engagement ( $R^2= 0.44$ ). Hence, hypothesis 1a did not receive support; however, hypotheses 1b and 1c were supported by the data.

Second, the results evidenced similar patterns for well-being. The need for autonomy did not mediate the relationship between pet-friendly practices and well-being ( $\beta= 0.01$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ;  $95\% CI [-0.00; 0.05]$ ). On the opposite, the results showed that both psychological needs (competence and relatedness) mediated the relationship between pet-friendly practices and well-being ( $\beta= 0.04$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ;  $95\%CI [0.01; 0.10]$ ;  $\beta= 0.07$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ;  $95\%CI [0.03; 0.14]$ , respectively). The overall model explained 27% of the variance in work engagement ( $R^2= 0.27$ ). Hence, while hypothesis 2a did not receive support, hypotheses 2b and 2c received support from the data.

Figure 10 - The path estimates of the proposed mediation model



**Table 3 - The mediation model total, direct and indirect effects**

<b>Indirect effects</b>			<b>Estimate</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>CI 95% LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
PFP	→ NEED_AUT	→ Work engagement	0.003	0.57	-0.00	0.03
PFP	→ NEED_REL	→ Work engagement	0.051**	0.001	0.02	0.10
PFP	→ NEED_COMP	→ Work engagement	0.048*	0.02	0.01	0.11
PFP	→ NEED_AUT	→ Well-being	0.004	0.48	-0.00	0.03
PFP	→ NEED_REL	→ Well-being	0.050**	0.001	0.02	0.10
PFP	→ NEED_COMP	→ Well-being	0.027*	0.04	0.01	0.08
<b>Total indirect effects</b>						
PFP	→	Work engagement	0.102**	0.001	0.03	0.18
PFP	→	Well-being	0.082**	0.001	0.03	0.14
<b>Direct effects</b>						
PFP	→	Work engagement	0.086*	0.05	0.00	0.178
PFP	→	Well-being	0.042	0.40	-0.061	0.147
<b>Total effects</b>						
PFP	→	Work engagement	0.188**	< .001	0.09	0.31
PFP	→	Well-being	0.124*	0.02	0.02	0.25

Note.  $N = 379$ ; \*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.001$ . PFP = pet-friendly practices.

## Discussion

The topic of this study was chosen, taking into account some stories heard among friends and family members, as well as some news and issues addressed in scientific papers (although scarce). In fact, it is possible to realize that there are still not many pet-friendly organizations, nor many ones that address or are interested in the topic. Considering the importance that pets have in Portugal; it is relevant to explore and understand the reasons for the lack of studies about pet-friendly organizations.

This research answers the call for more studies on the impact of pet-friendly practices on employees' outcomes (i.e., well-being and work engagement) (Kelemen et al., 2020). Two studies, an exploratory and a correlational one, evidence specific categories of pet-friendly practices that appear to be relevant to employees' well-being. Further, the second study adopts a social exchange and self-determination perspective to test whether pet-friendly practices may help employees satisfy their basic psychological

needs (namely, autonomy, relatedness, and competence) and, as a result, enhance their levels of both work engagement and well-being.

Overall, the findings from the first study evidence that pet-friendly practices appear to be an unknown topic among managers as these appear to assume that pet-friendly practices are only resorted to taking the pet to the organizational facilities. However, managers also consider that even though Portugal has a conservative culture with close-minded employees, pet-friendly practices may have benefits among those who own and have strong bonds with their pets. The findings from the second study evidence the positive effect of pet-friendly practices on both work engagement and well-being through the satisfaction of the needs for relatedness and competence.

### **Theoretical implications**

First, from the managers' perspective, the findings show that although they are all familiar with the topic, there are still many doubts and uncertainties about pet-friendly practices and their potential benefits. First, their main assumption is that pet-friendly practices are associated with taking the pet to the workplace; they also emphasize that this particular practice is complex due to the structure and organization of the office and also consider all employees who may have phobias or allergies or even who may not agree or dislike.

It is also possible to verify that managers believe that pet-friendly practices can contribute positively to several factors, namely productivity, reduced stress and anxiety, improved work engagement, and identification with the organization's values. They state that in Portugal, these measures must be implemented gradually since the country has a conservative culture with a closed mind towards new issues and practices. However, they recognize that pets increasingly play an important role in people's lives, and it is necessary to create measures that include them, even at work. Indeed, a pet, which is considered a child to many people and a family member, who stays home alone during the workday can be a reason for deconcentrating and creating anxiety at work (Junça-Silva, 2023). This is consistent with empirical findings. A study conducted by Rossbach and Wilson (1992) showed that pets directly contribute to decrease absenteeism and turnover,

increase productivity, and lower medical, legal, and insurance costs, which are all outcomes of interest to organizations. People are happier and more relaxed in the presence of a pet (Kelemen et al., 2020). In another study, pet owners reported lower stress during the day when they were close to their pets, and throughout the day an increase in stress and anxiety was not felt as it was normally felt on a regular working day because the owners did not feel the need to rush at home to take care of them (Foreman et al., 2019). The study concluded that, at the end of the day, pet owners who went to work and left their pets at home experienced significantly more stress than their coworkers (Barker et al., 2012).

Although there are benefits, there are also some limitations and disadvantages related to pet-friendly practices. Firstly, the financial budget of each organization has to be considered, as these measures require an initial investment that will impact financial management. Although there is a possible long-term return (in terms of productivity and reduced absenteeism and turnover), it is necessary that the organization is financially stable to implement all the measures strategically and progressively.

Moreover, it is essential to consider the perspective of all employees when thinking about implementing new measures in order to avoid the opposite effect. Consistently, Geil (2017) also highlights that despite the benefits associated with pet-friendly practices, not all employees are "pet persons". Therefore, company decision-makers should be aware of the potential impact of pet-friendly measures on company efficiency. Plus, all employees should be aware of new initiatives and feel involved in the process. The measures can have an unequal effect on people who do not have pets, and this is a factor that should be considered in the early stages of the process. Allergies and phobias are also important limitations in the case of the practice of taking pets to the workplace. However, this was not highlighted in the interviews.

Second, the findings show that the need for autonomy does not mediate the relationship between pet-friendly practices and both work engagement and well-being. That is, pet-friendly practices although positively influence work engagement and well-being, it does not influence both indicators through the need for autonomy. This may be related to the fact that the instrument measured different kinds of pet-friendly practices that ranged from pet insurance to telework or taking the pet to work. The inclusion of the

different pet-friendly practices may have biased the mediating model. Furthermore, a simple mediation model considering, for instance, telework as a predictor of work engagement via satisfaction of autonomy needs is significant (indirect effect: 0.18, SE = 0.06, IC 95% [0.06, 0.31]) or predicting well-being (indirect effect: 0.14, SE = 0.05, IC 95% [0.05, 0.25]). The same patterns occur for the practice of taking the pet to work (work engagement: indirect effect: 0.15, SE = 0.07, IC 95% [0.01, 0.29]; well-being: indirect effect: 0.12, SE = 0.06, IC 95% [0.01, 0.24]). Thus, pet-friendly practices that are related to being nearby the pet while working (either by teleworking or taking the pet to work) also appear to satisfy the need for autonomy among employees which, in turn, is associated with increased levels of feeling vigorous, being dedicated and immersed on the work tasks, and at the same time increased well-being levels. Some studies have already reported consistent findings (e.g., Junça-Silva, 2022). For instance, in a diary study, Junça-Silva (2022) evidenced that pet owners who were working from home and had the opportunity to interact with their pets during the working day had increased levels of both work engagement and performance when compared to the days in which they were working far from their pets. Furthermore, Sousa et al. (2022) in an experimental study showed that the presence of animals increased the perception of social responsibility and employee organizational commitment.

Notwithstanding, pet-friendly practices positively influence work engagement and well-being through the satisfaction of both competence and relatedness needs. For instance, when working remotely or when employees who own pets take these to work, they may benefit from working nearby them; further, they do not have to be worried about their pets being home alone for long hours which makes them more focused on the work, and feeling more competent and confident, and in turn leads to increased levels of both work engagement and well-being. Other studies have shown that employees that are not worried about pets being at home all day unsupervised experience less stress (e.g., Pina-Cunha et al., 2019). Studies have shown that stress is higher in those who do not own a pet (Wells, 2019; Wells & Perrine, 2001). With respect to productivity, allowing pets to be at work (such as in the case of remote work or workplace facilities) can also increase productivity, as employees may miss fewer sick days, adding the fact that they are accompanied by their furry friend (Cryer et al., 2021), performing better without the stress of worrying about pets at home (Foreman et al. 2017; 2019).

From a social exchange perspective, it is likely that by being allowed to work from home, pet owners feel a sense of duty and gratitude to their organization, which consequently can lead to positive outcomes, such as feeling vigorous, dedicated, and absorbed in work (Junça-Silva et al., 2022; Wagner & Pina-Cunha, 2021). Further, working in an organization with pet-friendly practices – and not only including telework or taking the pet to work but also other pet-friendly practices, such as a pet-friendly culture or having the day to take the pet to the veterinary, among others – that share similar values with employees will likely to make these (particularly pet owners) more connected to the organization and satisfying their need for relatedness which, in turn, may create happy and engaged employees. For instance, Grandin and Johnson (2005) stated that the “strong psychological and emotional attachment to, together with the positive interactions with animals, forms a special bond that improves human quality of life - emotionally, psychologically, physically, and spiritually” (p. 22).

In this line, studies show that pet ownership, human-animal interactions, and the human-animal bond per se have social and individual benefits (e.g., Kelemen et al., 2020; Sousa et al., 2022). In terms of physical and psychological health, studies demonstrate that pet owners have a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and fewer sick days (Wagner & Pina-cunha, 2021). Pets' behaviors dispel laughter, promote humor and entertainment, reduce depression and contribute to long-term well-being (Serpell, 2011). Pet ownership also provides social support since they are conceptualized as emotional therapists (Friedman & Krause-Parello, 2018). The support received from pets can encourage humans to have more social interactions with other humans (Friedmann et al., 2011). Beyond this, Barker (2005) supported that pet-friendly workplaces are indicators that organizations value and worry about their employees' well-being. Furthermore, when an employee needs to choose between a pet-friendly organization and a traditional one, candidates (with pet-friendly values or with pets) tend to choose the first (Barker, 2005; Barker et al., 2012; Linacre, 2016; Wilkin et al., 2016).

To sum up, there is a need to clarify what are pet-friendly practices as managers appear to limit it to take the pet to work, even though recognize their potential benefits (for instance, well-being). Plus, pet-friendly practices indeed affect both well-being and work engagement as they satisfy employees' need for relatedness and competence.

## **Contributions and recommendations**

As time goes by, the interest of organizations in being pet-friendly workplaces tends to increase and it is, therefore, important to provide recommendations to managers and HR professionals. This study contributes to this direction. First, it is necessary to understand that there are different forms of pet-friendliness, and organizations can implement from simpler to more complex practices. Organizations that are hesitant to become pet-friendly should start with simple measures and gradually adopt more complex ones. The main concern is to consider the needs of the workplace and employees. Not all pet-friendly practices are aimed at bringing the pet to the workplace. For instance, organizations can implement different pet-friendly measures, from simple options to more complex actions. Simple measures include offering employees' discounts for pet services, veterinary health care coverage, such as pet insurance, or work flexibility (such as remote work). Another option is pet bereavement days in case employees need to bereave a pet's death. More challenging options to implement include allowing the opportunity for employees to bring their pets to work and offering on-site perks such as walking services, pet daycare, outdoor enclosures, and grooming services (Wilkin et al., 2016). The implementation of these measures is expected to be gradual.

The next recommendation is to include the workers in the implementation process. First of all, it is necessary to conduct employee surveys or even hold meetings with everyone to discuss the topic and analyze everyone's perspective. Organizations should frequently check employees' attitudes toward existing policies regarding pets to ensure fair treatment. Organizations may need to reassess their pet-friendly approach when hiring new employees to make sure that they fit with the culture and values.

Senior (2003) argued that stress levels among employees are increasingly higher and there is a growing recognition of the importance of managing psychosocial risks to limit healthcare costs and improve organizational productivity and that promoting mental health and enhancing employees' psychological well-being and resilience should become key features of the modern workplace. In order to improve employee performance and, consequently, organizational productivity, employers should promote both individual and



healthier work environments, and pet-friendly practices are one example of measures that can be implemented in this direction.

Pet-friendly practices should be formally and regularly evaluated to determine the success of the initiative, provide evidence of their impact, and improve the program so that future efforts are implemented more effectively. It can be helpful to compare the policies and procedures of similar organizations that have successfully instituted pet-friendly cultures.

### **Limitations and Future Research Directions**

First, regarding the second study, 387 participants were eventually reached due to the help of social media. Because the questionnaire was shared in some animal groups, the respondents turned out to be largely animal lovers. Although the distribution is homogeneous, it would be even better if the groups were closer in terms of numbers. Plus, the fact that it was available to anyone from anywhere is also a strength of the study. It is not specific in terms of location, gender, race, or culture, so it has a broader sample of individuals. Second, the use of self-reported measures together with a cross-sectional design may create the common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2012). However, some procedures (such as, the different confirmatory factor analysis, the reliability analysis and the Harman's single factor analysis) show that the common method bias is not a severe issue in the study. Yet, the study relies on a cross-sectional design which may create some bias in results' interpretation as, for instance, well-being and work engagement appear to fluctuate over time (Junça-Silva, 2022); thereby, future studies should consider alternative designs, such as, daily diary studies, to test the model.

Future studies should continue to investigate the impact that pet-friendly practices have on employee well-being and at organizational levels, observing their long-term effects and not just based on perceptions. Experimental studies are essential. For instance, implementing these practices in organizations to verify their effects on the organization, and evaluating the differences in terms of satisfaction, productivity, well-being, motivation, and stress reduction should be developed.

It is still important to explore the disadvantages of the practices and possible practical solutions to them. As it is still an embryonic issue, research should be further

explored to provide all the information for designing practical recommendations for organizations.

Finally, research has not directly measured the impact that pet-friendly practices have on productivity levels. In the study by Barker et al. (2012) when asked about perceptions of productivity levels, most people (60%) stated that the presence of pets had a neutral impact, about 20% reported that they were detrimental to productivity and 20% reported that they were helpful. Since perceptions are mixed, it is unclear whether pets actually help productivity at work.

## **Conclusions**

Increasingly, organizations are looking for new and innovative ways to attract and retain talent, being concerned with engaged employees and enhancing performance and job satisfaction. This study allows us to conclude that pets are important in people's lives, are considered family members, and increase well-being. Thus, pet-friendly practices present more advantages than disadvantages, and organizations should invest in practices that involve flexible working hours (remote work), subsidies (veterinarian, hotel, and pet insurance), and adoption of a pet mascot or pet day, thus contributing to an increase in well-being, and work engagement, and motivating their human resources. The fact that Portugal is still an unfamiliar country with this topic is related to the conservative mentality of society and the lack of approach and sensitivity because the topic is little discussed in the informal and business context. Besides this, the financial factor has a great weight in the implementation of this strategy. Adding this, the current study also shows that managers must have an impartial attitude because pet-friendly practices also cause more varied reactions in the organization, and in this sense, there must be a well-structured and thought-out implementation strategy, so as not to create a perception of inequality among employees. However, it is possible to conclude that managers and workers still do not know in depth about the topic and end up associating it only with the practice of taking pets to the workplace when it is addressed. The results suggest that is essential to create awareness campaigns and moments of discussion in order to make known all the different practices that can be implemented, without having to start with the most complex (animals in the workplace).

As the representation of animals is a topic of great discussion today, this research also analyzes the potential impact that pet-friendly practices have on well-being indicators via the satisfaction of psychological needs. The findings show that pet-friendly practices indeed affect employees' well-being and work engagement as they satisfy employees' needs for competence and relatedness.

Finally, pet-friendly practices are seen as an important factor in the lives of employees. As more studies and research on the subject are presented, demonstrating all the benefits of these practices, companies will gain more confidence in starting the implementation process.

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## Annexes

### Questionnaire

15/07/23, 16:17

Práticas pet-friendly na estratégia das empresas: um olhar sobre a perspetiva dos gestores e trabalhadores

## Práticas pet-friendly na estratégia das empresas: um olhar sobre a perspetiva dos gestores e trabalhadores

Sou estudante do curso de Mestrado em Gestão de Recursos Humanos e Consultoria Organizacional do ISCTE-IUL.

No âmbito da Dissertação de Mestrado encontro-me a realizar um trabalho de investigação intitulado "Práticas pet-friendly na estratégia das empresas portuguesas: um olhar sobre a perspetiva dos gestores e trabalhadores". Os dados recolhidos são anónimos e confidenciais, destinando-se apenas a fins académicos, pelo que o seu sigilo estará assegurado. Agradece-se que não seja fornecido mais nenhum dado para além dos solicitados de forma a manter o anonimato e a confidencialidade.

MUITO OBRIGADA PELA SUA COLABORAÇÃO.

\* Indica uma pergunta obrigatória

Práticas pet-friendly na estratégia das empresas: um olhar sobre a perspetiva dos gestores e trabalhadores

### Dados Pessoais

Responda a algumas perguntas sobre o seu perfil sociodemográfico. Relembro que esta informação é anónima. Serve apenas para tratamento estatístico.

1. 1. Sexo \*

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Feminino

Masculino

2. 2. Idade \*

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15/07/23, 16:17

Práticas pet-friendly na estratégia das empresas: um olhar sobre a perspetiva dos gestores e trabalhadores

3. 3. Estado Civil \*

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Solteiro(a)
- Casado(a)/União de facto
- Divorciado(a)
- Viúvo(a)

4. 4. Formação Académica \*

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Ensino Básico (1º ciclo)
- Até 9º ano de escolaridade (3º ciclo)
- Com 10º, 11º ou 12º ano de escolaridade (secundário)
- Frequenta a universidade
- Licenciatura ou Bacharelato
- Pós-graduação/Mestrado/Doutoramento

5. Qual a sua profissão/ocupação? \*

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Quadros Superiores de administração pública, dirigentes e quadros superiores de empresa
- Especialistas de profissões intelectuais e científicas
- Técnicos e profissionais de nível intermédio
- Pessoal administrativo e similares
- Pessoal dos serviços e vendedores
- Agricultores e trabalhadores qualificados de agricultura e pescas
- Operários, artífices e trabalhadores similares
- Operadores de instalações e máquinas e trabalhadores de montagem
- Trabalhadores não qualificados
- Membros das forças armadas
- Estudantes
- Trabalhadores domésticos
- Reformado/aposentado
- Desempregado
- Outro: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Qual o regime em que trabalha?

Caso seja estudante, reformado ou desempregado, não responda a esta questão

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Teletrabalho total
- Presencial total
- Híbrido (presencial e teletrabalho)

7. Se estiver reformado ou desempregado, indique por favor a última profissão exercida

\_\_\_\_\_



8. 8. Qual o rendimento médio líquido mensal do agregado familiar? \*

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Até 500 euros
- 501 a 1000 euros
- 1001 a 1500 euros
- 1501 a 2500 euros
- 2501 a 3500 euros
- Acima de 3501 euros
- Não sabe/ não responde

9. 9. Tem algum animal de estimação? \*

*Marcar apenas uma oval.*

- Sim
- Não
- Não, mas já tive

10. 10. Se sim, qual?

*Marque todas que se aplicam.*

- Cão
- Gato
- Outro: \_\_\_\_\_

11. 11. Quantos animais de estimação tem neste momento?

\_\_\_\_\_

12. 12. Há quantos anos tem animais de estimação?

\_\_\_\_\_

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13. 13. Responda às seguintes afirmações considerando a seguinte escala: 1- **\***  
Discordo totalmente; 2- Discordo parcialmente; 3- Não concordo, nem discordo; 4-  
Concordo parcialmente; 5- Concordo totalmente.

Pense no seu dia enquanto trabalhou. Caso não trabalhe, pense nas atividades que realizou.

Marcar apenas uma oval por linha.

	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Esta manhã, senti que podia ser eu próprio no trabalho</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Esta manhã, senti que podia praticamente decidir como o meu trabalho seria feito</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Esta manhã, senti que as pessoas no trabalho se preocupam comigo.</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Esta manhã, senti-me próximo e ligado às pessoas</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Esta manhã, senti-me competente e capaz</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Esta manhã, senti uma sensação de realização do trabalho.</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/19TiSaSae8q2ftwCIRa61xMJfZIREODMGov15BbhKTQ/edit>

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Práticas pet-friendly na estratégia das empresas: um olhar sobre a perspectiva dos gestores e trabalhadores

16. Responda às seguintes afirmações considerando a seguinte escala: 1- **\***  
Discordo totalmente; 2- Discordo parcialmente; 3- Não concordo, nem discordo; 4-  
Concordo parcialmente; 5- Concordo totalmente.

Marcar apenas uma oval por linha.

	1	2	3	4	5
Hoje, senti que a minha vida se aproxima dos meus ideais.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hoje, senti que as condições da minha vida são excelentes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hoje, estou satisfeito/a com a minha vida	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15/07/23, 16:17

Práticas pet-friendly na estratégia das empresas: um olhar sobre a perspectiva dos gestores e trabalhadores

17. 17. Responda às seguintes afirmações considerando a seguinte escala: 1- \*  
Discordo totalmente; 2- Discordo parcialmente; 3- Não concordo, nem discordo; 4-  
Concordo parcialmente; 5- Concordo totalmente.

Pense no seu dia enquanto trabalhou. Caso não trabalhe, pense nas atividades que realizou.

Marcar apenas uma oval por linha.

	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Tenho-me sentido cheio(a) de energia</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Tenho-me sentido entusiasmado(a) com o meu trabalho.</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Tenho-me sentido envolvido(a) com o trabalho que faço.</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. 18. A organização onde trabalha tem práticas pet-friendly?

Caso seja estudante, reformado ou desempregado, não responda a esta questão

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Sim  
 Não

19. 19. Das seguintes práticas pet-friendly, indique quais aquelas que a sua empresa tem implementadas

Caso seja estudante, reformado ou desempregado, não responda a esta questão

Marcar apenas uma oval por linha.

	Sim	Não
<b>Teletrabalho</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Comparticipação do seguro do(s) animal(is)</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Permite a entrada de animais na organização</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Tem o dia do animal de estimação</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Dá o dia de aniversário do animal</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Dá dias de luto em caso de morte do animal</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Comparticipação de hotel em caso de férias do animal</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Em caso de doença, permite tirar parte do dia para ir com o animal ao veterinário</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Tem uma cultura pet-friendly (exemplo: pode-se falar de animais à vontade sem</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

21. 21. Classifique as seguintes práticas pet-friendly de acordo com a importância que lhes atribui, considerando uma escala de 1 (Nada importante) a 5 (Muito importante). \*

Marcar apenas uma oval por linha.

	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Teletrabalho</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Comparticipação do seguro do(s) animal(is)</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Permite a entrada de animais na organização</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Tem o dia do animal de estimação</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Dá o dia de aniversário do animal</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Dá dias de luto em caso de morte do animal</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Comparticipação de hotel em caso de férias do animal</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Em caso de doença, permite tirar parte do dia para ir com o animal ao veterinário</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Tem uma cultura pet-friendly (exemplo: pode-se falar de animais à vontade sem sentir</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## **Interview Script**

Esta entrevista insere-se no âmbito de uma dissertação de mestrado em Gestão de Recursos Humanos e Consultadoria Organizacional tendo como tema “As práticas pet-friendly na estratégia das empresas: um olhar na perspectiva dos gestores e dos trabalhadores”. A sua contribuição é fundamental para se poder compreender e desenvolver o conhecimento científico sobre esta área. As suas respostas são anónimas e confidenciais.

Muito obrigada!

1. O que sabe sobre as práticas amigas dos animais em contexto de trabalho?
2. Consegue identificar algumas?
3. Qual a sua opinião sobre as mesmas?
4. Que benefícios poderão existir (considere trabalhador e organização).
5. Enquanto gestor, quais considera que seriam os obstáculos para a implementação destas práticas? De que forma poderiam ser ultrapassadas?
6. De que forma poderia intervir no processo de implementação destas práticas enquanto gestor? Se tivesse a responsabilidade de as implementar, como faria? Ou quais implementaria primeiro?