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Pet-friendly Workplaces | The Effect of Organizational Pet-friendly Policies on Employees' Attitudes and Behaviors of the Enterprise

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Department of Human Resources and Organizational
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Resumo

O presente estudo investigou de que forma as *pet-friendly* policies influenciam o desempenho dos trabalhadores e qual o papel que os diferentes tipos de compromisso (afetivo, normativo e contínuo), bem como o *work engagement* no trabalho têm na mediação desta relação. À medida que o papel dos animais de companhia na vida das pessoas se torna cada vez mais relevante, também o interesse em avaliar de que forma esta coabitação pode ter impacto nos resultados dos trabalhadores no seu trabalho aumenta. Nesta investigação foi utilizado um método quantitativo através de um questionário, que foi distribuído a um total de 270 participantes. Os resultados demonstraram que as *pet-friendly* policies estavam positivamente ligadas ao compromisso organizacional e ao *work engagement*. Além disso, os resultados evidenciaram uma mediação em série entre as *pet-friendly* policies e o desempenho através do compromisso organizacional e o *work engagement*. Estes resultados sugerem que as políticas *pet-friendly* contribuem para o desempenho profissional, não só através da promoção direta do compromisso e do *work engagement*, mas também através dos seus efeitos indiretos sobre estes mecanismos afetivos, aumentando, em última análise, a produtividade dos trabalhadores e o alinhamento com os objetivos organizacionais. O presente estudo demonstra a importância da integração de práticas *pet-friendly* nas estratégias organizacionais: ao reconhecer e responder às necessidades dos donos de animais de companhia, as organizações podem aumentar a motivação dos funcionários e impulsionar o desempenho geral, promovendo simultaneamente uma força de trabalho mais produtiva e satisfeita.

Keywords: Políticas *pet-friendly*; Animais de estimação no trabalho; Compromisso Organizacional; *Work engagement*; Desempenho profissional.

JEL classification: Y40 dissertations; O15 - Human Resources

Abstract

As pets hold an increasingly central role in people's lives, the importance of understanding how this bond may influence work-related outcomes has gained attention. As such, guided by the social exchange theory, this study examined how pet-friendly policies influenced employee performance, focusing on the mediating role of different types of organizational commitment (affective, normative, and continuance) and work engagement. Through a quantitative approach, an online questionnaire was distributed to 270 working adults. The findings indicated that pet-friendly policies were positively linked to organizational commitment (particularly affective and normative commitment) and work engagement. Importantly, a serial mediation effect was identified, whereby pet-friendly policies indirectly enhanced job performance through their influence on organizational commitment and work engagement. This suggests that pet-friendly policies support job performance not only by directly promoting commitment and engagement but also through their cascading effects on these psychological and affective mechanisms. These results underscore the potential of pet-friendly policies as a strategic tool for organizations: by acknowledging and addressing the unique needs of pet owners, organizations can cultivate a more motivated and engaged workforce. In turn, this fosters a positive organizational climate where employees feel aligned with company goals and perform at higher levels. This study therefore highlights the valuable role of pet-friendly policies in driving both employee well-being and productivity, offering actionable insights for organizations aiming to enhance their work environments and strengthen their appeal to modern, pet-owning talent.

Keywords: Pet-friendly policies; Pets at Work; Organizational Commitment; Work Engagement; Job Performance.

JEL classification: Y40 dissertations; O15 - Human Resources

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Glossary

PFW – Pet-Friendly Workplaces

Introduction

Over the years, the role of animals and companion animals in people's lives has become increasingly significant. The social representation of pets has evolved, with a significant portion of individuals—especially those from the Millennial and Generation Z cohorts—considering their pets as family members and best friends (Linne & Angilletta, 2024). Consequently, it is not surprising that pets are now more present in various contexts, leading to the emergence of the term "pet humanization".

Furthermore, findings confirm the trend among the youngest generations, showing that young people increasingly turn to companion animals to fulfill some of their emotional needs (Graham, et al., 2019). Studies have demonstrated that pets fulfill social and emotional needs similar to those met by human companions (Gardner, 2024; Wilkin et al., 2016), highlighting their importance in people's lives.

This trend has been transferred to work and organizational life (Kelemen et al., 2020). Changing workforce demographics and increasing benefit costs have led organizations to focus on their workforce' health and well-being (Wilkin et al., 2016). And as the number of employees with pets increases and as pets take a more central role in the lives of employees, there is an increased need to consider how having a stay-at-home pet might affect an employee's work-related outcomes (Kelemen et al., 2020). Moreover, within the office, millennials will overtake the baby boomers soon as the largest pet-owning generation, and this generation is also more likely to switch jobs, rather than work for a low-reputation employer (Cunha et al., 2018; Wagner, 2020). Therefore, considering the growing number of employees living with their companion animals at home, there is increasing interest in evaluating how this cohabitation may impact work-related outcomes for employees (Kelemen et al., 2020).

Pets have proven to be highly adaptable, meeting a range of human needs. Although their role in organizational settings has been subtle, their presence is becoming more common. Acknowledging such changes, some organizations are creating Pet-Friendly Workplaces (PFWs) and implementing Pet-Friendly Policies (PFPs), which formalize the inclusion of pets in the workplace (Cunha et al., 2018). Pet-Friendly Policies include practices aimed at enhancing employee motivation and strengthening the bond between employees and their pets. These practices can range from simple or low-commitment options, such as offering pet insurance and opportunities for telework, to more complex or high-commitment practices, like allowing employees to bring their pets to work (Junça-Silva & Galrito, 2024). These policies

regulate the presence of pets in organizations, redefining their role within the corporate environment.

The implementation of pet-friendly policies has been associated with several positive outcomes (Junça-Silva & Galrito, 2024). These include enhanced attraction and recruitment, improved employee retention, better employee health, increased productivity, and positive bottom-line results (Delanoieje & Verbruggen, 2024). Furthermore, pet-friendly policies that include taking the pet to work have been shown to be useful and positive due to the micro-breaks that employees take to interact with their and other colleagues' pets (Wagner & Pina-Cunha, 2021). Furthermore, it is not only pet-owners who benefit from micro-mental breaks with the company's pets, especially dogs; non-pet-owners' coworkers also play with the dogs, using this time as a mental break from work. They sometimes take care of a dog when the owner is busy, demonstrating that the positive influence of dogs on community is replicated in the work setting. This fosters social support and cohesion, creating a better-functioning community (Cunha et al., 2018).

This social cohesion can create a sense of belonging and commitment to the company and colleagues. Employees express high appreciation for their employers' pet-friendly policies, viewing them as a privilege and a mark of prestige, which leads to a favorable perception of the company (Wagner, 2020) and increases performance (Sousa et al., 2022), defined as the extent to which an employee meets job expectations and completes tasks effectively (Griffin et al., 2007).

Junça-Silva (2022) also showed the positive influence of pets on communities can be transferred to the office environment. A pet-day may be beneficial, not only for individuals' well-being, but also for the organization, as individuals more identified with their organization can work better and happier (Delanoieje, 2020). Thus, including Pet-friendly practices in organizational life is a strategy to improve the attitude of employees towards their work, and their subjective and psychological well-being. In other words, pet-friendly policies, such as, taking pets to work and involving them in "office" daily life is a strategy for those who aim to improve the sharing of values between employee and employer, and the cherry on top, is the happiness that it promotes (Gardner, 2024; Junça-Silva, 2022; Sousa et al., 2022).

If allowing pets in the workplace improves work-related quality of life and work relations, this may influence positively also other aspects, such as increased employee performance, and thus prove an attractive option for businesses that want to increase staff retention, employee commitment (refers to the psychological attachment and loyalty an employee has towards their

organization; Meyer & Allen, 1991) and work engagement (Hall & Mills, 2019; Hausknecht et al., 2009a).

This dynamic can be explained by Social Exchange Theory (SET), as articulated by Blau (1964). SET posits that individuals engage in voluntary actions motivated by the expected returns these actions will bring from others (Blau, 1964, p. 91). According to this theory, responsibilities are established through a series of social exchanges between individuals and the organization, within a reciprocal and interdependent relationship (Gouldner, 1960). From the SET perspective, the relationship between an organization and its employees is sustained by mutual interdependence, with an expectation of reciprocating support, work, and favors (Shore et al., 2006).

When employees feel supported and assisted, they are more likely to work harder to reciprocate the support provided by their leaders (Xiang et al., 2017). For example, when employees are allowed to telework or bring their pets to work, they are expected to reciprocate by being more committed and engaged in their work (Junça-Silva, 2022). Work engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

This dynamic is based on the reciprocity norm—the core principle of social exchange theory—which asserts an obligation to return favors and acts of kindness (Gouldner, 1960). In essence, it is generally expected that when one person does a favor for another, such as implementing pet-friendly policies, there will be a future return of favor, such as increased organizational commitment, work engagement, and overall job performance, although the exact nature of this return is not specified in advance (Blau, 1986). Therefore, it is expected that pet-friendly policies contribute to job performance due to increases in organizational commitment and work engagement, particularly for pet owners and those who embrace a love for pets.

Aligning with these principles, accommodating pets in the workplace can facilitate positive effects for both employees and customers, as many individuals consider their pets to be part of their family. Empirically, Hall and Mills (2019) found that employees who took their dogs to work reported increased work engagement, decreased turnover intention, and improved social connections compared to those who never brought their dogs. Other studies have found that having pets around increases the number of positive emotions a group feels and enhances prosocial behaviors exhibited by group members (Cunha et al., 2018; Kelemen, 2020). Similarly, Delanoëje and Verbruggen (2024) evidenced that teleworking with dogs around positively predicts job performance. Thus, pet-friendly policies likely have a positive effect on

job performance, as employees may feel grateful for the opportunity to work near their pets and, as a result, feel compelled to reciprocate by enhancing their commitment and performance.

Although it is a hot topic in human resources management literature, scarce studies have explored the role that pet-friendly policies might have for both employees and organizations (see Junça-Silva & Galrito, 2024 for a review.) Plus, considering the growing recognition that healthy workplaces are linked to individual and organizational performance (Wilkin et al., 2016) and that pets are being increasingly valued by their owners (Linne & Angilletta, 2024), it becomes increasingly relevant to expand what is known about pet-friendly policies and their potential effects on affective, attitudinal and behavioral outcomes (Gardner, 2024; Sousa et al., 2022; Wells & Perrine, 2001; Wilkin et al., 2016).

With this context in mind, the primary research question was: “How do pet-friendly workplace practices influence employee performance, and what role do different types of employee commitment (affective, normative, and continuance) and work engagement play in mediating this relationship?” Drawing on Social Exchange Theory, we posited that pet-friendly policies are likely to enhance job performance by fostering increases in organizational commitment, particularly affective commitment, and work engagement.

The study offers several significant theoretical and practical contributions. First, from a theoretical perspective, it extends the application of Social Exchange Theory by exploring the impact of pet-friendly policies on employee performance. This also answers the recent call form more studies on the intersect of pets and organizational daily life (Delanoieje & Verbruggen, 2024; Kelemen et al., 2020). As such, this research highlights how such practices can enhance affective commitment and work engagement, providing empirical support for the theory within the context of contemporary workplace dynamics and considering the youngest generations (Dale, 2022). Furthermore, the study deepens the understanding of employee commitment by examining the different types—*affective, normative, and continuance* - in the framework of pet-friendly policies. This nuanced approach enriches the literature on organizational behavior. By integrating the concepts of work engagement and organizational commitment, the study presents a comprehensive framework for understanding the factors driving employee performance, elucidating the mediating roles of both constructs and thereby offering a holistic view of employee motivation and engagement, considering the implementation of pet-friendly policies.

On the practical side, the findings provide valuable insights for organizations seeking to improve employee performance through the implementation of pet-friendly policies. By demonstrating the positive effects of these practices on organizational commitment and work

engagement, the study presents a compelling rationale for their adoption in the workplace (Wagner & Pina-Cunha, 2021). Additionally, it underscores the importance of creating a supportive work environment that acknowledges the emotional significance of pets in employees' lives, thereby enhancing employee well-being (Pali-Schöll et al., 2023). Organizations can leverage this knowledge to increase job satisfaction and reduce turnover rates (Sousa et al., 2022). Moreover, the study highlights the potential for pet-friendly policies to be integrated into human resource practices as a strategic approach to fostering a positive organizational culture. By aligning human resource strategies with employee preferences and needs, organizations can enhance overall employee engagement and performance. All in all, the study contributes to both theoretical frameworks and practical applications, providing a robust foundation for future research and organizational strategies aimed at enhancing employee performance through pet-friendly policies.

To develop and explore the previously stated research problem, and the possible implications, in this dissertation I will start by present a literature review focused on the presence and impacts of Pet-friendly policies in the workplace, the types of commitment, work engagement, as well as explore theories related to employee's performance and productivity. In the end of this section, I will also present my hypothesis. Following by presenting the methodology used to explore my proposal theme, that will allow me to then present and discuss the research finding. Finally, resume everything with the conclusions and recommendations section.

1. Literature Review

1.1. The rising importance of pets

The number of families with pets has increased significantly in recent years (Dale, 2022). This trend reflects a shift in societal attitudes toward pets, with many people now viewing them not merely as animals but as integral members of the family (Linne & Angilletta, 2024). Indeed, pets fulfill important emotional and social roles, often being considered friends and companions. This change in perception is evident in the ways pets are integrated into daily life and various social settings (Victor & Mayer, 2023).

Historically, pets were primarily confined to the home, serving specific functions such as companionship or security (Linacre, 2016). However, the modern perspective on pets has expanded, recognizing their value in enhancing human well-being and social interaction (Phillipou et al., 2021). As a result, pets are increasingly present in a variety of social spaces beyond the household (Hui Gan et al., 2020). For example, many public places, such as parks, cafes, and even some workplaces, are becoming more pet-friendly, allowing pets to accompany their owners in daily activities.

Furthermore, the increasing acceptance of pets in various social settings underscores the evolving relationship between humans and animals. Pets are now seen as active participants in family and social life, contributing to their owners' emotional and psychological health. This shift has significant implications for how society structures and accommodates the presence of pets, highlighting the need for more inclusive and supportive environments for both pets and their owners.

As the presence of pets has been more permanent in society, there has been two different positions in terms of impact and role of pets (Hall & Mills, 2019). While ones argue for the positive effects of pets (Sousa et al., 2022), other have posited the negative effects (Cunha et al., 2018). Indeed, pet ownership can have negative effects (e.g., increased risk of falls, allergies, psychological dependency, costs) (Cunha et al., 2018), but also positive ones. For instance, Reniers et al. (2022) have shown the association of pets with reduced depression and loneliness, and with the improved quality of life and social connections. Although this complexity in the effects that pets can have, the fact is that they are a presence increasingly common in daily social and organizational life (Delanoieje, 2020).

It is proven that animals provide important well-being outcomes for a variety of individuals, including children, the elderly, and even prisoners (Kelemen, 2020; Wells & Perrine, 2001). The various benefits of owning a pet include individual and social benefits: physical, psychological, social, and community benefits (Wilkin et al., 2016; McNicholas & Collis, 2000). Plus, growing comfort with self and learning to build satisfying relationships with a canine companion may even help individuals develop skills to navigate future human relationships – social benefits (Cavanaugh et al., 2008). Indeed, McNicholas and Collis (2000) showed that a dog's presence, even if for small periods of time and independent of the appearance, enhances the number of interactions in a social setting, results also presented in Barker et al. (2012), and that effect is larger with strangers, that supports the idea of social catalysis effect of dogs, which can possibly translate that all companion animals help with socialization.

The benefits obtained from the pet-owner relationship are also dependable of the degree of attachment of the relationship in question, and this is influenced by aspects such as owner gender and length of ownership (Smolkovic et al., 2012). This means that pets in stronger owner-pet relationships provide a more significant buffer against stress for their owners than human partners or friends (Scholtz, 2022).

Research also sustained that companion animals are even more important for employees who live alone (Kelemen et al., 2020). In parallel even busy professionals gain from pet ownership and are a group among whom pet ownership is reportedly prevalent (Gardner, 2024). Organizations such as Amazon and Google also have dog water fountains and other accommodations for the pets that employees bring into the workplace, as a form of bringing positivity (Cunha et al., 2018; Kelemen, 2020, Wilkin et al., 2016).

The integration of pets into broader social contexts is reflected in the rise of pet-friendly policies in organizations. Businesses are acknowledging the benefits of accommodating pets, both for the well-being of employees and the overall work environment (Sousa et al., 2022; Wagner & Pina-Cunha, 2021). Pet-friendly workplaces, which allow employees to bring their pets to work, are becoming more common (e.g., Amazon). These practices not only improve job satisfaction and employee morale but also foster a sense of community and social support within the workplace (Hoffman, 2021). Indeed, the presence of pets in organizations might facilitate the self-expressiveness of their owners, where the companion animal is one way to express their personalities. A common way to serve this self-expressive function is through personalization of the workplace, which can help people regulate social interactions as well as help employees deal with stress. Consequently, they generate higher levels of employee morale as well as lower turnover rates that are beneficial to the organizations (Wells & Perrine, 2001). The opportunity for self-expression is also important from the commitment perspective, since research shows it is one of the variables correlated with affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

In pet-friendly companies, problems tend to be addressed openly, employees have more autonomy, with flexibility for breaks, and greater tolerance for failure and errors. It was reported that workers who often took their pets to work reported higher work engagement and work-based friendship, and less turnover intentions, compared to those who never took their pet to work (Junça-Silva, 2022).

All in all, the growing number of families with pets and the evolving view of pets as family members and friends illustrate a broader societal trend. Pets are no longer confined to the home but are active participants in various social spaces, reflecting their integral role in contemporary life. This change calls for continued adaptation in public and organizational policies to support the well-being of both pets and their human companions.

1.2. Pet-friendly policies

Organizations have considered the importance of pet role in their employees' life, with pet-friendly policies becoming more common (Scholtz, 2022; Wilkin et al., 2016). Pet-Friendly Policies include practices aimed at enhancing employee motivation and strengthening the bond between employees and their pets. These practices can range from simple or low-commitment options, such as offering pet insurance and opportunities for telework, to more complex or high-commitment practices, like allowing employees to bring their pets to work (Junça-Silva & Galrito, 2024). Pet-friendly practices encompass a wide range of initiatives (although they are often misunderstood). Organizations can adopt pet-friendly measures by allowing employees to bring their pets to work, offering a few days of bereavement leave for the loss of a pet, providing pet-based performance rewards such as vouchers for pet hotels, permitting time off to take pets to the vet, and offering pet daycare assistance.

Pet-friendly policies disadvantages

Pet-friendly policies can present challenges and associated disadvantages. These may include health risks such as allergies, safety concerns, cultural sensitivities, fears and phobias, and potential disruptions to the work environment (Cunha et al., 2018; Hall & Mills, 2019; Wells & Perrine, 2001). Allergies to pet dander can cause significant discomfort or health issues for some employees, potentially leading to absenteeism, demotivation or decreased productivity (Linacre, 2016). Safety concerns may arise from the behavior of pets, including the risk of bites or other injuries, which can create liability issues for the organization and others involved (Wells & Perrine, 2001).

In addition, one must also consider cultural sensitivities, and personal preferences also play a crucial role; not all employees may be comfortable with pets in the workplace due to cultural beliefs or personal experiences (Weber & Stewart, 2020). Fears and phobias related to animals can significantly impact some individuals, leading to stress or anxiety that negatively affects their work performance (Hall et al., 2017). Moreover, the presence of pets can sometimes lead to disruptions, such as noise or distractions, which may interfere with the concentration and workflow of other employees (Junça-Silva & Galrito, 2024).

Addressing these potential disadvantages requires careful consideration and the implementation of comprehensive guidelines. Employers need to ensure that pet-friendly policies are inclusive and considerate of all employees' needs, providing alternatives or accommodations for those who may be adversely affected (Gardner, 2024). Clear rules and protocols should be established to manage pet behavior, maintain hygiene, and ensure the safety and comfort of all staff members. Through thoughtful planning and effective communication, organizations can mitigate the challenges associated with pet-friendly policies while maximizing their benefits (Sousa et al., 2022).

Pet-friendly policies advantages

Despite the potential drawbacks of pet-friendly policies, there are several advantages. Firstly, the presence of pet-friendly policies can help create a positive and supportive climate and culture within the organization (Gardner, 2024). Such an environment allows employees to feel more comfortable and at ease in their workplace, which can subsequently lead to increased motivation and higher levels of performance (Sousa et al., 2022). For instance, employees who are allowed to bring their pets to work or take advantage of pet-related benefits often experience reduced stress levels, which contributes to a more relaxed and pleasant work atmosphere (Wagner & Pina-Cunha, 2021).

Moreover, pet-friendly policies can enhance employees' passion for the business and deepen their engagement with both their work and their customers (Junça-Silva, 2022). When employees feel that their personal lives and well-being are valued by their employer, they are more likely to develop a stronger connection to the company and its goals (Linacre, 2016). This increased work engagement can translate into better customer service and a more committed workforce, ultimately benefiting the organization's bottom line and productivity (Hoffman, 2021).

In addition to improving employee well-being and motivation (Delanoeije, 2020), pet-friendly policies can also play a crucial role in attracting and retaining talent (Wilkin et al., 2016). In today's competitive job market, benefits that promote work-life balance and employee satisfaction are highly sought after (Lopes et al., 2024). In this sense, organizations that offer pet-friendly policies can differentiate themselves as forward-thinking and empathetic employers, making them more attractive to potential hires who value a supportive and flexible work environment (Cardy et al., 2011).

However, to ensure that the implementation of pet-friendly policies is successful, it is crucial for the organization's overall strategy and culture to be aligned with its human capital strategy and organizational requirements (Cardy et al., 2011). This alignment ensures that the policies are not only well-received but also effectively integrated into the organization's operations (Gardner, 2024; Wagner & Pina-Cunha, 2021). For instance, clear guidelines and provisions must be established to address potential issues such as allergies, safety concerns, and disruptions. Training and communication are also essential to help employees understand the benefits and responsibilities associated with bringing pets to work (Warrilow, 2024). Furthermore, organizations must be willing to adapt and evolve their pet-friendly policies based on feedback and changing needs. Regular assessments and adjustments can help maintain a balance between accommodating pet owners and ensuring a productive and harmonious work environment for all employees (Charles & Wolkowitz, 2024).

Empirical studies have demonstrated that while there was no significant difference in the perception of organizational support or physiological stress between pet owners and non-pet owners, pet owners experienced decreasing levels of stress throughout the workday on days when their pets were present at work. In contrast, non-pet owners exhibited increasing stress levels on those same days (Barker et al., 2012; Hall & Mills, 2019; Scholtz, 2022). Furthermore, dog owners who did not bring their dogs to work showed consistently rising stress levels throughout the day, possibly due to increasing concern for their pets at home as time passed (Barker et al., 2012). Similarly, Wagner and Pina-Cunha (2021) demonstrated that allowing dogs and other pets inside the organization is not merely a benefit provided to employees, but also a reflection of the company's values regarding openness and flexibility. It signifies the employers' willingness to address employees' needs and support work-life balance. This approach is particularly relevant for organizations aiming to reduce employee stress and enhance the work atmosphere and social capital.

Other studies have shown that the presence of pets in the workplace can positively influence and improve various aspects of employees' job satisfaction (Delanoëje, 2020; Grajfoner et al., 2021). Furthermore, empirical evidence indicated that petting animals increased satisfaction and reduced stress (Weber & Stewart, 2020). Additionally, informal and relaxed pet-friendly policies (e.g., an open pet-friendly culture, flexible working hours or opportunities for teleworking) contributed to employee retention (Cunha et al., 2018; Wilkin et al., 2016). These findings suggest that implementing pet-friendly policies can be beneficial for organizations. By fostering a more relaxed and supportive work environment, organizations can enhance employee well-being and indirectly benefit from increased job satisfaction and reduced stress levels (Scholtz, 2022; Hall & Mills, 2019). Consequently, this can serve as a strong incentive for organizations to adopt and maintain effective pet-friendly policies.

Additionally, Hall and Mills (2019) demonstrated that employees who bring their pets to work reported higher levels of absorption, vigor, and overall work engagement. This finding aligns with child development literature, which suggests that the presence of a friendly dog can enhance motivation and attention (Hall & Mills, 2019). Furthermore, employees who frequently bring their dogs to the workplace reported significantly lower intentions to leave their current job, indicating that regular pet presence in the office can increase long-term job commitment and short-term work engagement (Hall & Mills, 2019).

Hence, while pet-friendly policies may present some challenges, their advantages can be substantial (for a review, see Gardner (2024)). They can contribute to a positive organizational culture, enhance employee organizational commitment (Halls & Mills, 2019), improve talent attraction and retention (Wilkin et al., 2016), and foster deeper engagement with the organization and work itself (Charles & Wolkowitz, 2024) that is crucial to cultivate employee' performance (Delanoëje & Verbruggen, 2024).

1.3. The relationship between pet-friendly policies and job performance

With the reduction of stress and increasing job satisfaction, associated with the implementation of pet-friendly policies, it is expected a positive effect on performance (Warrilow, 2024).

According to Griffin et al. (2007), job performance was defined as the set of behaviors that are relevant to the goals of the organization and that can be measured in terms of the individual's level of contribution to those goals. Griffin's conceptualization emphasizes that job performance encompasses not only the tasks and responsibilities specified in the job description but also broader behaviors that contribute to organizational effectiveness. This includes both task performance (the execution of duties directly related to one's job) and contextual performance (behaviors that contribute to the organizational environment, such as teamwork, effort, and adherence to company norms and values) (Motowidlo & Kell, 2003).

Some studies have shown the benefits of pet-friendly policies on employees' diverse positive behaviors, such as job performance (Araújo et al., 2022; Sousa et al., 2022). Perhaps for this reason, in recent years, researchers and managers have been concerned with including companion animals as organizational stakeholders (for a review see Connolly & Cullen, 2018). Connolly and Cullen (2018) and Tallberg et al. (2022) argued that non-human animals (that is, pets) are important actors in organizational practice because they affect organizational operations through the interactional relationships between humans and animals. Smart (2022) also proposed that pets should be treated as stakeholders, as they affect and are affected by the achievement of the business goals they are involved in. A theoretical framework used to define what stakeholders are is the extension made by Driscoll and Starik (2004) of Mitchell et al.'s (1997) stakeholder salience model. According to the stakeholder salience model, stakeholder participation is determined through the salience of power, legitimacy, urgency, and proximity (see Driscoll & Starik, 2004 for an overview of these attributes). While Driscoll and Starik (2004) referred to proximity in terms of spatial closeness, Lähdesmäki et al. (2019) expanded the concept of proximity to include close emotional ties and affective social relationships through the framework of care ethics. From there, it seems relevant that stakeholder theory includes non-human animals, that is, pets (Connolly & Cullen, 2018; Smart, 2022).

Following this trend, several organizations have reinvented themselves to stimulate worker motivation by implementing in their strategy the so-called pet-friendly policies, such as allowing the presence of pets at work (Kelemen et al., 2020). Thus, many organizations have adopted pet-friendly policies, as the relationship with pets makes individuals more motivated and willing to interact, communicate, express emotions, and share information at work, all behaviors that are positively related to performance (Hoffman, 2021). Other benefits include increased work engagement (Junça-Silva, 2023). Similarly, other studies have shown that employees who work in pet-friendly organizations, tend to solve problems more creatively, have greater flexibility, and exhibit greater tolerance for mistakes and errors (Junça-Silva, 2022), thus contributing to job performance (Wagner & Pina-Cunha, 2021). Plus, pet-friendly policies, such as allowing pets at the office, also increases positive affective states (e.g., enthusiasm) and improves job performance (Gardner, 2024; Junça-Silva, 2023), as there seems to be emotional contagion that pets transmit, such as trust, affection, and companionship (Sousa et al., 2022; Warrilow, 2024). Thus, it seems evident the relationship that pet-friendly policies have with affective and behavioral outcomes.

1.4. The mediating role of organizational commitment

Organizational commitment can be defined as a psychological state that characterizes the employee's relationship with their workplace, encompassing their willingness to contribute to the organization and their desire to remain with it (Almutairi, 2020; Meyer & Allen, 1991). More specifically, it refers to the psychological attachment and loyalty an employee feels toward their organization. This commitment includes the employee's inclination to stay with the organization and their dedication to its goals and values (Meyer & Allen, 1991). While the literature lacks consensus on the conceptualization and definition of commitment (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001), this thesis will adopt the definition previously mentioned as the foundation for our analysis.

According to Meyer and Allen (1991), organizational commitment comprises three distinct components, each associated with different psychological states: affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Affective commitment reflects an employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Employees exhibiting strong affective commitment choose to remain with the organization because they genuinely want to be part of it. Normative commitment, on the other hand, embodies a sense of obligation to stay employed. Individuals with high normative commitment feel they must remain with the organization because it is the "right" thing to do, reflecting a moral duty towards their employer. In contrast, continuance commitment refers to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the job. Employees in this category stay with the organization out of necessity, often because they perceive limited alternatives available to them.

The behavioral consequences of normative and continuance commitment predominantly manifest as a desire for continued employment; employees who experience either of these commitments intend to stay with the organization. In contrast, the behavioral outcomes associated with affective commitment are more varied and can lead to a broader range of positive organizational behaviors (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001).

Meyer et al. (2002) highlighted that affective commitment has the strongest positive correlation with desired work behaviors, such as job performance, attendance, and low turnover intentions. Employees exhibiting high affective commitment are more likely to excel in their roles because they genuinely care about the organization. Consequently, they demonstrate better attendance records and have lower intentions of leaving the organization. Following this, normative commitment also plays a role, as employees who feel a moral obligation to stay tend to contribute positively to the business. In contrast, continuance commitment shows little to no correlation with these desirable behaviors. This is largely because employees with high continuance commitment remain with the organization out of necessity rather than a genuine identification with the organization or a desire to see it succeed (Meyer et al., 2002).

Permarupan et al. (2013) further elaborated on the concept that organizational commitment significantly influences employees' dedication, responsibility, and loyalty to their organizations. This commitment serves as a crucial predictor of various workplace outcomes, including job performance, turnover rates, and absenteeism (Meyer et al., 2002; Permarupan et al., 2013). Additionally, all three forms of organizational commitment— affective, normative, and continuance—have been shown to correlate negatively with turnover intentions (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001).

This dynamic can be elucidated through Social Exchange Theory (SET), as articulated by Blau (1964). He refers to exchanges motivated by rewards and the potential to influence others for personal gain. SET posits that individuals engage in voluntary actions driven by the anticipated returns these actions are expected to yield from others (Blau, 1964, p. 91). According to this theory, responsibilities are established through a series of social exchanges between individuals and the organization, fostering a reciprocal and interdependent relationship (Gouldner, 1960). From the perspective of SET, the relationship between an organization and its employees is sustained by mutual interdependence, characterized by an expectation of reciprocal support, work, and favors (Shore et al., 2006).

In the workplace context, this can be understood as the organization implementing pet-friendly policies with the expectation that employees will recognize the value of these practices and, in return, perform their jobs well. Employees, on the other hand, assess their efforts against the rewards provided by the organization. When employees see the implementation of such policies, they may perceive the organization as supportive of their personal values. As a result, they are more inclined to exert greater effort to reciprocate this support, which can lead to increased work commitment and work engagement. For instance, when employees are permitted to telework or bring their pets to the office, they are expected to reciprocate by demonstrating higher levels of commitment and engagement in their work (Junça-Silva, 2022).

This idea of exchange contributes to the development of a relationship between the employee and the organization, as noted by Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005). In this relationship, employees experience a sense of connection and engagement. The mutual recognition and appreciation of each other's contributions and needs foster a positive and supportive work environment. This dynamic not only enhances job performance but also strengthens organizational commitment and employee work engagement.

This dynamic is grounded in the norm of reciprocity, which is a fundamental principle of social exchange theory, asserting an obligation to return favors and acts of kindness (Gouldner, 1960). Essentially, it is generally anticipated that when one person performs a favor for another—such as the implementation of pet-friendly policies—a future return favor will occur, manifested as increased organizational commitment, work engagement, and overall job performance, although the specific nature of this return may not be predetermined (Blau, 1986). Consequently, it is expected that pet-friendly policies enhance job performance by fostering increases in organizational commitment and work engagement, particularly among pet owners and those who appreciate the companionship of pets.

Supporting this notion, Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) found that employees who perceive organizational support are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of commitment. This aligns with the perspective of social exchange theorists, who argue that employees reciprocate organizational support with increased commitment to their workplace (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Therefore, it is likely that, at least, for pet owners or pet lovers pet friendly policies act as a sign of perceived organizational support that, in turn, can leverage, employees' organizational commitment, in particular, affective commitment.

Affective commitment is characterized by a strong emotional connection to the organization, and it is likely to be significantly influenced by the implementation of pet-friendly policies. These policies can cultivate a nurturing and supportive working environment, allowing employees to feel more valued and connected to their workplace. By fostering this emotional bond, pet-friendly initiatives can enhance employees' affective commitment (Hall & Mills, 2019), leading to greater levels of work engagement (Junça-Silva, 2022). Specifically, heightened affective commitment may translate into increased vigor, dedication, and absorption at work, which are all key components of work engagement as described by Schaufeli et al. (2017).

Moreover, pet-friendly policies can also enhance normative commitment, which reflects an employee's sense of obligation to remain with the organization. When employees perceive that their organization is making an effort to support their well-being, they may feel a stronger moral obligation to reciprocate that support through their continued dedication and engagement in their work (Ahuja & Gupta, 2019).

In addition to affective and normative commitment, pet-friendly policies contribute to a more positive and supportive workplace atmosphere. This improved environment can positively impact continuance commitment by influencing employees' perceptions of being supported within the organization (Knotts & Houghton, 2021). When employees feel that their organization is accommodating their needs and fostering their well-being, they are less likely to desire to leave. Instead, they may perceive a higher cost associated with leaving the organization, either in terms of emotional attachment or practical considerations related to their work environment (Hall & Mills, 2019).

This has been empirically demonstrated before. Specifically, for dog owners, the opportunity to bring their dogs to work has been associated with improved commitment outcomes, particularly for those who do so frequently (Hall & Mills, 2019). Additionally, Hall and Mills (2019) demonstrated that employees who bring their pets to work reported higher levels of absorption, vigor, and overall work engagement. This finding aligns with child development literature, which suggests that the presence of a friendly dog can enhance motivation and attention (Hall & Mills, 2019). Furthermore, employees who frequently bring their dogs to the workplace reported significantly lower intentions to leave their current job, indicating that regular pet presence in the office can increase long-term job commitment and short-term work engagement (Hall et al., 2017). Furthermore, Junça-Silva (2022) also demonstrated that organizations with pet-friendly policies improved their performance due to increases in their employees' organizational commitment and identification. More recently, Junça-Silva and Galrito (2024) demonstrated that pet-friendly policies increased work engagement levels through increases in employees' motivation. This suggests that the implementation of pet-friendly policies positively influences an individual's commitment to their organization, enhancing work engagement.

Overall, by enhancing affective, normative, and continuance commitment, pet-friendly policies have the potential to create a virtuous cycle of engagement and loyalty. Employees who feel emotionally connected, obligated to stay, and supported in their roles are likely to demonstrate higher levels of engagement and performance, which ultimately benefits both the employees and the organization. This synergy underscores the value of adopting pet-friendly practices as a strategic approach to fostering a committed and engaged workforce.

Drawing on social exchange theory, we propose that the implementation of pet-friendly policies serves as a means for organizations to demonstrate support for their employees. Consequently, we anticipate that such policies may positively influence organizational commitment (Hall & Mills, 2019), and as a result employees' work engagement (Junça-Silva, 2022). Therefore, the following hypothesis was defined:

Hypothesis 1: Pet-friendly policies is positively related with work engagement through (a) affective, (b) normative, and (c) continuance commitment.

1.5. The mediating role of work engagement

Work engagement might be a “tool” for organization, to help employees becoming more immersed in their work (Kim et al., 2012). Work engagement was defined by Schaufeli et al. (2002) as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind”, that is “persistent and pervasive” (p. 74), with three dimensions: vigor, dedication, and absorption. *Vigor* comprehends high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, *dedication* is translated by sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge, lastly, *absorption* is defined by complete focus/concentration and engrossed by their work. Bakker and Demerouti (2008) argued that engaged employees possess high levels of energy, are passionate about their work on a level they do not feel the time passing and see work as a challenge, in a positive way.

In terms of what promotes work engagements, we can refer to two levels individual antecedents (e.g., optimism, perceived organizational support) and organizational antecedents (e.g., authentic corporate culture, supportive organizational culture) (Wollard & Shuck, 2011). In alternative we can mention the JD-R Model (Job Demands-Resource Model), with job resources (e.g., autonomy) and personal resources (e.g., optimism) as antecedents (Bakker and Demerouti (2008), this model has constructed that “job resources in general will satisfy basic psychological needs and are instrumental for achieving work-related goals” Saks and Gruman (2014). Also engaged employees will be able to generate their respective job resources as time goes, and they are able to influence the team members by exuding optimism and creating a positive team climate, that is independent of the demands and resources present (Bakker et al., 2008).

Higher levels of organizational commitment are positively correlated with increased work engagement, as evidenced by research conducted by Halbesleben (2010), Kim et al. (2012), Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005), and Saks and Gruman (2014). Indeed, employees who are committed to their organization are more likely become engaged in their work due to the positive and emotional bond that connects employees and their organization. Given this relationship, it is plausible to suggest that a positive work environment fostered by the implementation of pet-friendly policies can serve as an antecedent to both organizational commitment (Halls & Mills, 2019) and work engagement (Junça-Silva, 2022).

The introduction of pet-friendly practices may enhance the overall workplace atmosphere by promoting a culture of support and inclusivity, which, in turn, can elevate employees' emotional attachment to their organization (Warrilow, 2024). When employees feel that their organization values their well-being—evidenced through initiatives such as allowing pets at work or allowing employees to take part of the day to go to the veterinary—they are more likely to develop a stronger sense of commitment to the organization (Junça-Silva, 2022; Sousa et al., 2022). This emotional bond not only reinforces their dedication but also cultivates a sense of belonging, which is crucial for fostering positive affective attitudes, such as, work engagement (Charles & Wolkowitz, 2024).

Furthermore, a positive work environment, characterized by supportive policies that align with employees' personal values—such as pet-friendly initiatives—can significantly reduce stress and enhance employee well-being (Kelemen et al., 2020; Wagner & Pina-Cunha, 2021). When employees experience lower stress levels and greater satisfaction with their workplace conditions, they are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of vigor, dedication, and absorption in their work, which are essential components of work engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2017).

This dynamic can create a synergistic effect: as organizational commitment and a positive work environment reinforce each other, employees become more engaged in their tasks. This increased engagement can lead to improved performance, as committed employees are more likely to go above and beyond in their roles (Delanoeije & Verbruggen, 2024; Victor & Mayer, 2023).

In summary, the interplay between organizational commitment, a positive work environment fostered by pet-friendly policies, and work engagement underscores the importance of supportive workplace practices. By enhancing both commitment and engagement, organizations can create a more motivated and productive workforce, ultimately benefiting both employees and the organization as a whole. Further research could explore specific mechanisms through which pet-friendly policies influence these dynamics, including the potential mediating effects of employee well-being and job satisfaction.

Therefore, the following hypothesis was defined:

Hypothesis 2: Work engagement mediates the positive relationship between (a) affective, (b) normative, and (c) continuance commitment and job performance.

1.6. The serial mediating model

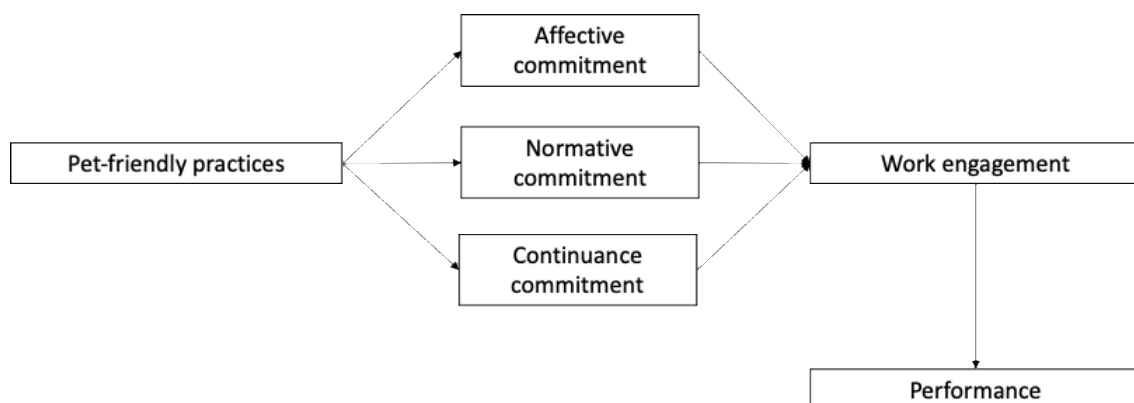
It is further proposed that organizational commitment will be positively related to job performance, with work engagement serving as a mediator in this relationship. Previous studies have demonstrated that work engagement is a key predictor of job performance and mediates the connection between various organizational policies, attitudes, and performance outcomes (Schaufeli et al., 2017). Within the social exchange theoretical framework, pet-friendly policies promote positive exchanges and cultivate human, social, and cultural capital (Junça-Silva & Galrito, 2024). By linking pet-friendly policies with job performance, we posit that organizational commitment will function as an affective mechanism mediating the effects of pet-friendly policies on work engagement and, ultimately, job performance.

Building on the social exchange theory, we propose that pet-friendly policies foster stronger connections between employees and the organization, ultimately enhancing organizational commitment, which in turn positively influences work engagement and, consequently, employee job performance (Figure 1). The serial mediation model posits that pet-friendly policies trigger affective mechanisms such as organizational commitment, which subsequently lead to affective outcomes like increased work engagement and behavioral outcomes like job performance. This model highlights the interconnected pathways through which pet-friendly policies influence affective and behavioral outcomes, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding the impact of pet-friendly policies on employees' work engagement and job performance.

Therefore, relying on the social exchange theory, the following hypothesis was proposed:

Hypothesis 3: Pet-friendly policies are positively related to job performance through the mediating effect of (a) affective, (b) normative, and (c) continuance commitment, and, as a result, work engagement (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. the proposed serial mediating model.



2. Methodology

2.1. Participants and procedure

To investigate the influence of pet-friendly policies on the organizational environment, a quantitative research design was employed using an online questionnaire (Annex 1) created in Google Forms. The questionnaire was made available in both Portuguese and English to increase accessibility and ensure a broader participant base. In the introduction, participants were given a brief overview of the research topic, with assurances of anonymity and confidentiality. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary.

The questionnaire was distributed across LinkedIn, Facebook, and WhatsApp via a shared link, utilizing a non-probabilistic convenience sampling. The sample included employees from organizations with and without pet-friendly policies, ensuring diversity in policy exposure. The first section gathered demographic information, including participants' pet ownership status and details on any pet-friendly policies within their organizations (if applicable). Subsequent sections contained items directly related to the study's model, designed to measure key constructs, such as organizational commitment, work engagement, and job performance, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the proposed relationships.

A total of 270 working adults participated in this study, with 52.2% identifying as male. Participants ranged in age from 20 to 59, with an average age of 33 years ($SD = 9.35$). In terms of educational attainment, 30% of participants held a Bachelor's degree, while 39.3% had obtained a Master's degree. Overall, 65% of participants were pet owners, while 35% were not. Among those with pets, the majority (96%) kept them at home. The most common pets were dogs (68%), followed by cats (21%), reptiles (6%), and hamsters (2%).

2.2. Instruments

The questionnaire was developed in accordance with the study's theoretical framework and hypotheses. Its structure integrated scales that had already been validated.

Pet-friendly policies

To assess the presence of pet-friendly policies within organizations, participants were presented with a list of 20 specific pet-friendly policies (see Junça-Silva & Galrito, 2024; e.g., “remote work” and “bereavement leave in case of a pet’s death”). Participants indicated the extent to which each policy was implemented in their organization using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always) ($\alpha = 0.89$).

Organizational commitment

Organizational commitment was measured with the three-component organizational commitment scale (OCS; Allen & Meyer, 1990). This scale contains 24 items measuring the three components of organizational commitment: affective (e.g., “My organization has great personal significance for me”; $\alpha = 0.89$), continuance (e.g., “A lot of my life would be affected if I decided I wanted to leave this organization”; $\alpha = 0.90$), and normative (e.g., “Even if it would be an advantage for me, I feel it would not be right to leave my organization at the present time”; $\alpha = 0.91$). Participants answered on a 5-point Likert scale (1-*totally disagree*; 5-*totally agree*). Cronbach's alpha for the overall scale was 0.90.

Work engagement

We used the short version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli et al., 2006). The scale consists of three items for each of the following three subscales: vigor ($\alpha = 0.90$; e.g., “At my job, I feel full of energy”); dedication ($\alpha = 0.93$; e.g., “My job inspires me”); and absorption ($\alpha = 0.82$; e.g., “I am immersed in my work”). Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each statement on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*always*). In the present study, Cronbach's alpha for the overall scale was 0.94.

Performance

Performance was measured with the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (Koopmans et al., 2012). We used three items that measure task performance (e.g., “I manage to plan my work so that it is done on time”; $\alpha = 0.87$) and other three items to assess contextual performance (e.g., “I take on challenging tasks when I am available”; $\alpha = 0.92$). Participants answered on a 5-point Likert scale (1-*totally disagree*; 5-*totally agree*). Cronbach's alpha for the overall scale was 0.93.

Control variables

We controlled for gender and age because research suggests that men and women perceive and evaluate their pets differently, potentially influencing how they respond to pet-friendly policies (Herzog, 2007). Age was also controlled, as age groups may vary in their attachment to pets and their views on workplace policies that support pet ownership (Kogan et al., 2012). Controlling for these factors allows us to more accurately assess the effects of pet-friendly policies on organizational outcomes by reducing potential confounding influences.

Data analysis

In the proposed serial mediation model (see Figure 1), three categories of variables were included: (1) predictor variables, represented by pet-friendly policies; (2) the criterion variable, operationalized as job performance; and (3) two mediators – organizational commitment, and work engagement. The analysis was conducted using SPSS version 29.0 and JASP (version 0.14.1) to test the research model.

The data analysis process began with descriptive statistics to compute the mean and standard deviation for each variable. Following this, correlational analyses were performed to assess the associations between pet-friendly policies, mediating variables, and the criterion variable. The measurement model's fit was then evaluated based on established criteria, including 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 , in line with best practices for model validation (Kline, 2015).

To test Hypotheses 1 and 2, we employed model 4 of the PROCESS macro in SPSS (Hayes, 2018), which is particularly suitable for estimating indirect effects as it applies a bootstrapping technique (5,000 samples) to generate confidence intervals (CIs) for the estimates. Hypothesis 3 was tested using model 6 of the PROCESS macro, specifically designed for assessing serial mediation effects. This method provided a robust examination of the indirect paths specified in the proposed model.

3. Results

3.1. Common method bias and multicollinearity issues

To minimize the potential influence of common method bias we followed some recommendations of Podsakoff et al. (2003). First, we randomized the items throughout the survey and included closed-ended questions mixed with the items from the scales (e.g., “I do not like pets.”).

First, Harman’s single-factor test was conducted to examine the potential for common method bias. The results indicated that the first factor accounted for only 33.08% of the total explained variance, which is below the 40% threshold suggested by Podsakoff and colleagues (2003), indicating that common method bias was not a significant issue in this study.

Second, as recommended by Kock (2015), a collinearity assessment test was also performed to evaluate potential common method bias. The results showed that all variance inflation factor (VIF) values ranged between 1.12 and 2.97; as these values were below the cut-off of 3.33, multicollinearity was also not a significant issue in this study.

Third, four confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were conducted to confirm the independence of the study variables. To evaluate model fit and compare it with other reasonable alternative models, various fit indices were analyzed (Hair et al., 2010), including CFI, TLI, SRMR, and RMSEA. Model 1 was the hypothesized six-factor model, consisting of separate scales for pet-friendly policies, organizational commitment, work engagement, and job performance. Model 2 was a three-factor model, where work engagement and organizational commitment were combined into a single factor. Model 3 was a two-factor model, where work engagement, job performance and organizational commitment were combined into one factor and pet-friendly policies into another. Model 4 was a single-factor solution, with all items loading onto a single factor. Table 1 shows that the six-factor model (Model 1) demonstrated the best fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 2.04$, $p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.94, SRMR = 0.05, and RMSEA = 0.06, 95% CI [0.05, 0.07]), while all other alternative models showed poorer fit.

Lastly, the reliability of the study variables exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, in line with Fornell and Larcker (1981). The results for convergent validity, measuring the correlation among the indicators of latent constructs, showed that the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all latent constructs in the study were above 0.5 (see Table 2). Additionally, each construct’s AVE was assessed against its correlation with other constructs, with AVE values exceeding the inter-construct correlations, thereby confirming convergent validity. For discriminant validity, which demonstrates the uniqueness of each latent variable’s

indicators, validity was confirmed as the square roots of the AVE (indicated by the diagonal values for each latent variable) were greater than the correlations between variables (Hair et al., 2010). We also examined the Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), finding that MSV was lower than AVE for all constructs, thereby supporting discriminant validity. Thus, the study's reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were confirmed.

All in all, these results, along with Cronbach's alpha reliability values for the measurement scales, provided evidence of the study's discriminant and convergent validity; therefore, we proceeded with hypothesis testing.

Table 1 - Confirmatory factor analysis results

Modelos	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Model 1	2.04	0.96	0.94	0.06	0.05
Model 2	6.93	0.73	0.68	0.15	0.09
Model 3	7.42	0.70	0.66	0.16	0.12
Model 4	9.91	0.58	0.52	0.18	0.13

3.2. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics, alongside correlations and internal consistency indices of the study variables. According to Field (2009), the relatively small standard deviations compared to the variable means suggest that the means represent the observed data effectively. As expected, all variables showed significant correlations with each other, in the anticipated directions. Further, the square roots of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each variable were higher than their correlations with other variables, supporting the discriminant validity of the constructs.

Table 2 - Means, standard deviations, correlations, and internal consistency indices (Cronbach's alpha) of the study variables.

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>DP</i>	CR	AVE	MSV	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.PFP	2.08 ¹	0.85	0.87	0.58	0.09	[0.76]	(0.93)					
2.AC	3.21 ¹	1.12	0.93	0.81	0.51	0.30**	[0.90]	(0.88)				
3.NC	2.64 ¹	1.26	0.95	0.85	0.51	0.27**	0.72**	[0.92]	(0.92)			
4. CC	2.74 ¹	1.12	0.89	0.73	0.36	0.14	0.48**	0.60**	[0.85]	(0.81)		
5. WE	3.38 ¹	1.01	0.93	0.81	0.32	0.27**	0.57**	0.47**	0.22**	[0.90]	(0.88)	
6.Performance	4.21 ¹	0.70	0.91	0.78	0.09	0.14*	0.27**	0.16*	0.08	0.30**	[0.88]	(0.86)
7. Age	33.44	9.35	-	-	-	-0.12	0.07	0.00	0.14*	-0.08	-0.01	-
8. Gender ²	1.52	0.50	-	-	-	-0.07	-0.01	0.03	0.08	-0.07	0.04	-

Note. $N = 270$; * $p < 0.001$.

¹Escala de 1 a 5

²Gender: 1 - male; 2 – female.

The square roots of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) are within the range []. M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; AVE = Average Variance Extracted; MSV = Maximum Shared Variance; CR = Composite Reliability. Cronbach's alphas are in parentheses. PFP = Pet-friendly policies. WE = Work engagement. AF = affective commitment; NC = Normative commitment; CC = Continuance Commitment.

3.3. Hypotheses testing

Hypotheses 1

To test hypotheses 1, three mediation analyses (model 4) were conducted using the PROCESS macro in SPSS version 29 (Hayes, 2018). Hypothesis 1 proposed that the relationship between pet-friendly policies and work engagement would be mediated by (a) affective, (b) normative, and (c) continuance commitment.

Results showed a significant indirect effect of pet-friendly policies on work engagement through affective commitment (Indirect Effect = 0.21, $SE = 0.06$, 95% CI [0.10, 0.33]), with the model explaining 36% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.36$, $F_{(2, 257)} = 50.35$, $p < 0.0001$), supporting hypothesis 1a.

The indirect effect of pet-friendly policies on work engagement through normative commitment was also significant (Indirect Effect = 0.16, $SE = 0.05$, 95% CI [0.07, 0.27]), with

the model explaining 30% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.30$, $F_{(2, 256)} = 36.85$, $p < 0.0001$), supporting hypothesis 1b.

The indirect effect of pet-friendly policies on work engagement through continuance commitment was non-significant (Indirect Effect = 0.04, SE = 0.03, 95% CI [-0.00, 0.10]). Hence, hypothesis 1c did not receive support.

Hypotheses 2

To test hypotheses 2, more three mediation analyses (model 4) were conducted using the PROCESS macro in SPSS version 29 (Hayes, 2018). Hypothesis 2 predicted that work engagement would mediate the relationship between (a) affective, (b) normative, and (c) continuance commitment and job performance.

First, results indicated a significant indirect effect from affective commitment on job performance through work engagement (Indirect Effect = 0.10, SE = 0.03, 95% CI [0.04, 0.17]), explaining 12% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.12$, $F_{(2, 266)} = 18.15$, $p < 0.0001$), thus supporting hypothesis 2a.

Similarly, results also indicated a significant indirect effect from normative commitment on job performance through work engagement (Indirect Effect = 0.10, SE = 0.03, 95% CI [0.05, 0.16]), explaining 11% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.11$, $F_{(2, 266)} = 16.60$, $p < 0.0001$), thus supporting hypothesis 2b.

Lastly, the mediation results evidenced a significant indirect effect from continuance commitment on job performance through work engagement (Indirect Effect = 0.05, SE = 0.02, 95% CI [0.02, 0.09]), explaining 11% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.11$, $F_{(2, 266)} = 16.57$, $p < 0.0001$), thus lending support to hypothesis 2c.

Hypotheses 3

To test hypotheses 3, three serial mediation analyses (model 6) were conducted using the PROCESS macro in SPSS version 29 (Hayes, 2018). Hypothesis 3 anticipated that pet-friendly policies would be positively related to job performance through the serial mediating effect of (a) affective, (b) normative, and (c) continuance commitment and work engagement.

First, the indirect effect of pet-friendly policies on job performance through affective commitment and work engagement was significant (Indirect Effect = 0.06, SE = 0.03, 95% CI [0.02, 0.12]), with the model explaining 17% of the variance in job performance ($R^2 = 0.17$, $F_{(3, 255)} = 11.63$, $p < 0.0001$), supporting hypothesis 3a.

Second, hypothesis 3b was also supported. The findings showed a significant indirect effect of pet-friendly policies on job performance through normative commitment and work engagement (Indirect Effect = 0.06, SE = 0.02, 95% CI [0.02, 0.11]), with the model explaining 17% of the variance in job performance ($R^2 = 0.17$, $F_{(3, 255)} = 12.07$, $p < 0.0001$).

Lastly, the indirect effect of pet-friendly policies on job performance through continuance commitment and work engagement was not statistically significant (Indirect Effect = 0.01, SE = 0.01, 95% CI [-0.00, 0.04]). Therefore, hypothesis 3c was not supported by the data.

4. Discussion

As highlighted in the literature review, companion animals have long been shown to have a positive impact on humans, fulfilling a range of individual, social, and emotional needs, with documented benefits spanning physical, psychological, social, and community well-being (Cavanaugh et al., 2008; Kelemen et al., 2020; McNicholas & Collis, 2000; Reniers et al., 2022; Wells & Perrine, 2001; Wilkin et al., 2016). Pets have not only maintained a strong presence in diverse aspects of their owners' lives but have increasingly assumed a central role, thereby expanding their relevance beyond personal spaces into professional and organizational contexts (Cunha et al., 2018; Kelemen, 2020).

Consequently, organizations have recognized this shift and begun implementing pet-friendly policies to support and integrate this growing human-animal bond within the workplace (Cunha et al., 2018; Junça-Silva, 2022; Scholtz, 2022; Wilkin et al., 2016). Studies on implementing pet-friendly policies revealed a broad spectrum of associated benefits, including strengthened work relationships, reduced turnover intentions, alignment with shared values, increased well-being, enhanced commitment, and elevated engagement and performance (Hall & Mills, 2019; Hausknecht et al., 2009a; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Wagner, 2020; Wells & Perrine, 2001).

Despite growing interest, research on the role of pet-friendly workplace policies remains scarce (Delanoeije & Verbruggen, 2024; Gardner, 2024; Kelemen et al., 2020). Addressing this research gap, the present study responds to calls for further investigation into the impact of these policies on both affective and behavioral outcomes (Gardner, 2024). In particular, the study examines how pet-friendly policies potentially foster positive workplace behaviors—specifically, job performance—by delving into the mediating roles of affective mechanisms such as organizational commitment and employee work engagement.

Therefore, this study answers the principal research question about “How do pet-friendly workplace practices influence employee job performance, and what role do different types of employee commitment (affective, normative, and continuance) and work engagement play in mediating this relationship?”. Through this study, we investigate whether pet-friendly policies serve not only as a driver of commitment but also as a sequential pathway leading to job performance. The research seeks to clarify the indirect relationship between pet-friendly policies and performance outcomes, focusing on how affective factors such as organizational commitment and work engagement mediate this relationship.

Overall, the findings indicate that pet-friendly policies are positively associated with both organizational commitment—particularly affective and normative commitment—and work engagement. This is in line with other empirical evidence (e.g., Gardner, 2024; Halls & Mills, 2019) and theoretical arguments (Junça-Silva & Galrito, 2024). Indeed, the integration of pets in the workplace offers employees emotional and social support, potentially enhancing affective bonds with their organization (Wilkin et al., 2016). This emotional connection, known as affective commitment, may increase employees' loyalty and intention to stay within an organization that demonstrates support for their well-being and openness to pet-friendly beliefs (Warrilow, 2024). Furthermore, pet-friendly policies that fulfill employees' personal values and social needs could bolster normative commitment, where employees feel an obligation to reciprocate the organization's support.

The findings indicate a significant serial mediation effect, whereby pet-friendly policies positively influence job performance through their impact on organizational commitment (specifically, affective and normative commitment, but not continuance commitment) and work engagement. By strengthening affective and normative commitment, pet-friendly policies can initiate a reinforcing cycle of work engagement (Halls et al., 2017). Employees who feel supported and valued by their organization are likely to experience a sense of gratitude and obligation to reciprocate, prompting greater investment of effort and enthusiasm in their roles, thus enhancing work engagement (Junça-Silva, 2022). Additionally, work engagement has been reliably associated with higher job performance, as engaged employees typically demonstrate increased productivity, proactive behavior, and resilience in pursuing organizational objectives (Bakker et al., 2023; Corbeanu & Iliescu, 2023; Hakanen et al., 2024; Naqshbandi et al., 2024). These results suggest that pet-friendly policies contribute to job performance not only by fostering commitment and engagement directly but also through their indirect effects on these affective mechanisms, ultimately enhancing employees' productivity and alignment with organizational goals.

4.1 Theoretical implications

The study offers notable theoretical contributions. First, these findings expand our understanding of the role of pet-friendly policies within organizational contexts. This also addresses the recent call for more research on the role of pets in organizational contexts (Delanoeije & Verbruggen, 2024; Kelemen et al., 2020), shedding light on how pet-friendly policies align with the expectations and values of newer generations in the workforce (Dale, 2022). By examining how these policies can influence job performance, this study helps to

clarify the affective mechanisms that connect pet-friendly practices to positive behavioral outcomes. Specifically, the results indicate that pet-friendly policies are positively associated with organizational commitment, particularly affective and normative commitment, though not continuance commitment. This aligns with our earlier arguments, suggesting that the social cohesion and opportunities for self-expression fostered by pet-friendly practices positively impact employee commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Wagner & Pina-Cunha, 2021).

By examining distinct dimensions of commitment—*affective, normative, and continuance*—this research provides a nuanced understanding of how pet-friendly practices specifically enhance affective and normative commitment, while continuance commitment remains unaffected. This differentiation enriches the organizational behavior literature, suggesting that pet-friendly policies do not only support workplace morale but strategically cultivate commitment types most strongly associated with positive organizational outcomes, such as job performance and work engagement.

In terms of commitment, prior research consistently showed a negative correlation between commitment and negative behaviors and attitudes (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Meyer et al., 2002; Permarupan et al., 2013). For instance, various studies have documented that pet-friendly policies can impact turnover intentions, as practices like allowing pets in the workplace or allowing telework, tend to lower turnover rates by creating a more welcoming and supportive work environment (Wells & Perrine, 2001; Junça-Silva, 2022; Halls & Mills, 2019). The presence of pet-friendly policies, therefore, not only supports a positive workplace atmosphere but also indirectly contributes to greater organizational stability by reducing employees' desire to leave (Hausknecht et al., 2009a; Junça-Silva, 2022; Permarupan et al., 2013).

Second, this study makes a theoretical contribution by extending Social Exchange Theory to the domain of pet-friendly policies, revealing how these practices can enhance employee performance by positively influencing affective and normative commitment, as well as work engagement. By reintroducing Social Exchange Theory, we frame higher employee commitment as an organizational reward, reciprocated through the implementation of pet-friendly practices (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Bakker et al., 2008). Specifically, pet-friendly practices create an exchange where employees, feeling valued and supported, respond with increased commitment and engagement. This reciprocal relationship reinforces the role of pet-friendly policies in strengthening employee loyalty and motivation, aligning with Social Exchange Theory's core idea that resources provided by organizations—such as pet-friendly practices—foster employee gratitude and commitment. Thus, our findings lend further support to the notion that employee commitment, particularly affective and normative dimensions,

benefits from the inclusion of pet-friendly policies, highlighting these practices as a meaningful investment in the social and emotional well-being of employees.

Third, the findings reveal a positive relationship between pet-friendly policies and employee work engagement. Comparing these findings with previous studies reinforces the notion that pet-friendly practices serve as antecedents to work engagement. Specifically, these policies align with the concept of "perceived organizational support," as they represent a tangible way for organizations to demonstrate their commitment to meeting employees' needs (Wollard & Shuck, 2011). Research by Halls and Mills (2019) and Junça-Silva (2022) indicated that allowing pets in the workplace enhanced levels of absorption, vigor, and overall engagement among employees. Consequently, the evidence suggests a strong positive connection between work engagement and pet-friendly practices.

Finally, the results provide robust evidence for a serial mediation effect, indicating that pet-friendly policies influence job performance through the affective pathways of organizational commitment and work engagement. This finding is consistent with prior literature, which suggests that employee commitment is a reliable predictor of job performance (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Permarupan et al., 2013; Sinha et al., 2002). Notably, affective commitment has been identified as the dimension most strongly correlated with enhanced performance outcomes (Meyer et al., 2002). Furthermore, work engagement has been consistently linked to higher performance levels, with studies demonstrating that engaged employees exhibit greater productivity and effectiveness (Christian et al., 2011; Halbesleben, 2010; Kim et al., 2012; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Bakker et al., 2008). Additionally, Rich et al. (2010) argue that engagement fully mediates the relationship between antecedents and performance. Thus, this study highlights the potential of pet-friendly policies to function as mediators in the relationship between organizational commitment and work engagement, ultimately contributing to enhanced job performance.

On a broader scale, the study integrates organizational commitment and work engagement to build a comprehensive model for understanding the mechanisms that drive employee performance. By illuminating the mediating roles of both engagement and commitment, this research presents a cohesive framework for understanding employee motivation in relation to pet-friendly policies. This holistic view not only advances theoretical insights into employee performance but also provides actionable insights for organizations aiming to boost productivity and engagement through pet-friendly practices.

4.2 Practical contributions

This study offers valuable insights into how organizations can strategically leverage pet-friendly policies to enhance both the affective well-being and productivity of their workforce, providing actionable recommendations for employers aiming to cultivate a supportive and high-performing work environment.

First, it can be argued that pet-friendly policies are positively associated with employee commitment, leading to desirable behaviors such as improved performance, higher attendance, and reduced turnover intentions (Meyer et al., 2002). Companies that implement pet-friendly practices—such as allowing pets in the workplace or offering flexible policies that permit employees to take breaks for dog walks—can foster a sense of connection and belonging to the organization. This connection is crucial for promoting employee longevity and satisfaction in the workplace. For example, the headquarters of a cosmetics company could adopt a “Pet-Friendly Week” initiative, allowing employees to bring their pets to work once a month. This policy would create additional opportunities for employees to interact and bond with colleagues, thereby enhancing workplace relationships (McNicholas & Collis, 2000; Barker et al., 2012). Such interactions not only facilitate social connections among employees but also strengthen their commitment to the organization, ultimately contributing to a more engaged and dedicated workforce. By prioritizing pet-friendly practices, organizations can foster a positive work culture that supports employee well-being while simultaneously driving organizational performance.

Furthermore, the study revealed a positive relationship between pet-friendly policies and work engagement. Organizations that implement these practices can observe a transformation in their employees, characterized by increased energy, enthusiasm, and concentration (Schaufeli et al., 2002). For instance, when a company offers a flexible work schedule that allows pet owners to manage their responsibilities—such as organizing walks, administering medication, and attending veterinary consultations—employees can better balance their professional and personal tasks. This balance helps reduce the stress associated with juggling work and personal commitments, creating an environment conducive to enhancing employee engagement.

For example, consider a marketing firm that has adopted a hybrid work model along with flexible working hours. In this scenario, employees can effectively manage their time in relation to their workload and meetings while simultaneously fulfilling their pet-related responsibilities. This flexibility allows them to maintain stable energy levels and engagement, as they are less likely to experience frustration from a rigid schedule.

Lastly, the results indicated a serial mediation effect from pet-friendly practices to job performance, mediated by organizational commitment and work engagement. By establishing pet-friendly policies, organizations create the conditions necessary to enhance work performance through increased commitment and engagement. As illustrated in the earlier examples, the cascading effect of these practices leads to improved performance outcomes, demonstrating the significance of integrating pet-friendly initiatives into organizational strategies. By recognizing and addressing the needs of pet owners, organizations can not only boost employee morale but also drive overall performance, fostering a more productive and satisfied workforce.

These findings provide both reassurance and excitement for HR departments, as they underscore the value of maintaining and enhancing pet-friendly practices within organizations. By continuously revising these initiatives based on employee feedback, HR professionals can ensure that pet-friendly policies not only meet the evolving needs of their workforce but also amplify work commitment and engagement. Moreover, the long-term recognition of these practices as performance boosters highlights their potential impact on organizational success.

Monitoring key metrics before and after the implementation of pet-friendly policies is essential for assessing their effectiveness and comparing results over time. This data-driven approach allows HR departments to make informed decisions and adjustments to maximize the benefits of such initiatives. Additionally, pet-friendly practices can serve as a compelling theme for internal activities, fostering a sense of community and camaraderie among employees. For instance, organizing pet-related events or workshops can enhance employee engagement and strengthen workplace relationships. From a corporate image perspective, pet-friendly policies can significantly enhance the attractiveness of the organization to prospective employees. By promoting contemporary and relevant practices that align with employees' priorities, companies can position themselves as forward-thinking and empathetic employers. This alignment not only helps attract top talent but also reinforces employee loyalty, ultimately contributing to a positive organizational culture and reputation.

These are reassuring and exciting findings for HR departments because they can continue to have pet-friendly practices and revising them according to employees' feedback, as well as start the implementation of pet-friendly since they are a way to potentialize work commitment and work engagement. In the long term they can also recognize it as a performance booster. Monitoring metrics before and after implementing them is extremely important, to compare results. They can also be relevant and serve as possible theme to explore for internal activities.

In terms of corporate image, they can help with the attractiveness of the company, advertising more current and relevant practices, to fit employees' priorities.

Conclusions & Recommendations

Limitations and future research

The generalizability of these study's results is subject to certain limitations. For instance, it is a cross-sectional study, and this type of study already has some limitations associated. This include the difficulty to refer causality: since the data is only collected in a single isolated moment in time it is not possible to confirm cause-effect relationships (Wang & Cheng, 2020). Further studies could replicate the current one but in a longitudinal approach. Additionally, another limitation of cross-section design is sampling bias, that can limit the representation of the desired population (Wang & Cheng, 2020). Future work could explore samples with more similar numbers between pet owners and non-pet owner, since in this study, as mentioned before, we had 65% of pet owners and 35% of non-pet owners.

The questionnaire being a self-reported measure is limited by the possible presence of social desirability bias, this is, the wanting to align the responses to what they think is more socially acceptable; response bias, the presence of different factors that influence the way participants respond (e.g., fatigue); and resort to a pattern of responses. This can also translate to the possible presence of common method bias, generated by a single use method of data recollection. In this study, we conducted different techniques to mitigate the possible presence of this bias, as introduced on the results section (Podsakoff et al., 2003). A natural progression of this work could be, for example, monitor the before and after of incrementing pet-friendly policies, allowing the comparison and analyzing over time results.

Conclusion

This research demonstrated that pet-friendly policies have a significant positive impact on employees' organizational commitment, specifically enhancing affective and normative commitment, though no notable effect was observed on continuance commitment. These policies foster a more engaged and motivated workforce by facilitating greater emotional attachment to the organization (affective commitment) and a stronger sense of obligation or moral responsibility to stay (normative commitment). Additionally, pet-friendly practices were shown to improve overall work engagement by creating a supportive and inclusive work environment that values employees' well-being. Moreover, the study found that pet-friendly policies act as a mediating factor in predicting job performance, suggesting that employees who feel supported by such initiatives are more likely to perform better. This relationship highlights

the broader organizational benefits of pet-friendly policies, positioning them as a valuable component in fostering a positive workplace culture and driving job performance outcomes.

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Annex A

Introduction of the questionnaire

Hi, my name is Marta and I'm a 2nd year Master's student in Human Resources Management and Organizational Consultancy.

At the moment, I am developing a dissertation that will explore the impact of pet-friendly policies at work.

In this sense, I have developed the following questionnaire for which I would like to ask for your collaboration. Your participation is very important as without it I will not be able to finish the dissertation.

Participation is optional and voluntary, and all the information collected will be processed anonymously and confidentially. It will only be used within the scope of the study and for statistical processing.

Thank you very much! Let's start? 😊

1. Age

2. Sex

Female

Male

Prefer not to say

3. Level of Education

High School

Bachelor's Degree

Degree

Master's Degree

PhD

Postgraduate Studies

4. Marital Status

Single without relationship

Single in a relationship

Married

Widower

Divorced

5. Housing Situation

I live alone

I live with my parents/relatives

I live with my partner

I live with friends

6. Type of Residence

Flat

Townhouse

Villa

7. The environment in which you live.

Urban surroundings

Suburban environment

Rural area

8. Professional status

Unemployed Student

Employed

Self-Employed

Retired

Another

9. If you answered " Employed", please indicate how long you have been working in the current company.

If you answered "Self-employed" please indicate how long you have been in this situation.

10. In the company where I work/worked I carry out the function of ...

11. Have you ever had companion animals?

Yes

No

12. If yes, how many years have you had animals? (Enter "0" if it does not apply)

13. Do your friends/relatives have pets?

No, hardly anyone

Yes, some of them

Yes, nearly all of them

14. Do you work with animals?

Yes

No

Another

15. Do you have any animals at the moment?

Yes

No

16. How many animals do you have?

17. What species of animals do you currently have? (you can tick more than one option)

Bird

Dog

Cat

Small mammal (e.g., hamster)

Fish

Reptile

Another

18. Was the decision to have pets your own decision?

Yes

No

19. Did you purchased or adopt?

Purchased

Adopt

20. Are you the primary caregiver of this animal?

Yes, it's me alone

Yes, but I do have help

No

21. Are your pets at home or on the outside?

Inside

Outside

Another

22. Taking into account the scale presented (1=Strongly Disagree, 7=Strongly Agree), answer the following questions.

Pets bring joy to my life (or would if I had one).

I would like to have or continue to have a pet, in my household.

I treat companion animals with as much respect as I treat a human member of my family. The relationship with my pet makes me very happy.

My needs for intimacy, companionship, etc. could easily be fulfilled through a relationship with a companion animal other than my own.

I am committed to maintaining a relationship with my pet.

23. Do you work remotely?

Yes

No

24. If you answered yes to the previous question, is teleworking...

Integral

Hybrid

25. Based on your thoughts, tell to what extent teleworking has an effect, for better or worse, compared to face-to-face work, in the following scenarios. Consider the following scale (1=Much worse; 2=Worse; 3=Equal, 4=Better, 5=Much better.)

Being close to your pet.

The relationship with your pet.

Not being concerned about your pet during the day.

The well-being of your pet.

Your pet's health.

Interacting with your pet while working.

Your happiness, being able to be closer to your pet during the day.

Your health, by being able to be closer to your pet during the day.

26. Reflecting on your day today, consider the following scale (1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Frequently, 5=Almost Always). (Only answer if you have a pet animal)

Your pet was by your side while you were working.

You took work breaks to interact with your pet.

While you were working, you petted your pet.

27. Does your organization have pet-friendly practices?

Yes

No

I am not aware

28. Do you work at a co-working space?

Yes

No

29. Are there pet-friendly practices in this space? (Answer only if you marked "Yes" in the previous question)

Yes

No

I am not aware

30. Of the following pet-friendly practices, please indicate which ones your company/coworking space has implemented, considering the following scale (1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Multiple times, 5=Always). (Only answer if you previously stated "Yes")

Remote Working

Co-financing of animal insurance

Allows animals to enter the organization

There is a pet's day

Give the pet's birthday

Gives days of mourning in the event of the death of the animal

School fees for animals

Co-funding of hotel accommodation for pets on holiday

Allows you to take part of the day off to take your pet to the vet in case of illness

Allowance for vaccination

It has a pet-friendly culture (e.g. you can talk openly about animals without feeling shame/rejection)

Animal-friendly social responsibility practices

Organization of social responsibility solidarity events

Raffle tickets

Hiking

Solidarity piggy bank

Sharing of associations' animals on the company's social networks

Adoption of animals to be in the company (i.e. from the company)

Encourages the adoption of animals (with allowances, for example)

Encourages the purchase of solidarity gifts (from associations, for example)

31. Please rank the following pet-friendly practices according to the importance that you attach to them. Considering the following scale (1=not important, 2=not very important, 3=not at all important, 4=somewhat important, 5=very important)

Remote Working
 Co-financing of animal insurance
 Allows animals to enter the organization
 There is a pet's day
 Give the pet's birthday
 Gives days of mourning in the event of the death of the animal
 School fees for animals
 Co-funding of hotel accommodation for pets on holiday
 Allows you to take part of the day off to take your pet to the vet in case of illness
 Allowance for vaccination
 It has a pet-friendly culture (e.g. you can talk openly about animals without feeling shame/rejection)
 Animal-friendly social responsibility practices
 Organization of social responsibility solidarity events
 Raffle tickets
 Hiking
 Solidarity piggy bank
 Sharing of associations' animals on the company's social networks
 Adoption of animals to be in the company (i.e. from the company)
 Encourages the adoption of animals (with allowances, for example)
 Encourages the purchase of solidarity gifts (from associations, for example)

32. Please tick the option that best reflects your feeling of relationship with the statements presented, using the scale given (1=Strongly disagree, 2=Somewhat disagree, 3=Not disagree/not agree, 4=Somewhat agree, 5=Strongly agree)

My lifestyle, during today, allowed me to be in harmony.
 Considering most aspects of my life today, I consider them to be balanced.
 Today I was in harmony.
 Today, I felt that my life is moving closer to my own ideals.
 Today, I felt that the conditions of my life are excellent.
 Today, I am satisfied with my life.
 Today/Recently, I have been feeling full of energy.
 Today/Recently, I have felt enthusiastic about my work.
 Today/Recently, I have felt involved with the work I do.

33. Concerning the following statements, please use the following scale to choose the option that best applies to you. (1=Not applicable, 2=Applies a little, 3=Not applicable at all and not very applicable, 4=Applies somewhat, 5=Applies perfectly)

This morning, I felt I was able to be myself at work.

This morning, I felt I could decide how my work is done.

This morning, I felt that my colleagues (the people at my work) cared about me.

This morning, I felt close and connected to people.

This morning, I felt competent and capable.

This morning, I felt fulfilled by the job.

I believe in my abilities, even in the most challenging situations.

I can deal with unexpected situations, due to my knowledge.

If I have a problem, I can think of a solution to it.

I can deal with any problem I encounter.

34. Choose the option that best describes your actions, based on the scale (1=Rarely, 2=Sometimes, 3=Not often, not often, 4=Sometimes, 5=Always).

I manage to plan my work so that it is done on time.

I am able to do my job well with minimum time and effort.

I am able to separate the main problems from the secondary problems at work.

I take on challenging tasks when I am available.

I try to keep my job skills up to date.

I start new tasks with autonomy when the old ones are already finished.

35. Finally, considering the organization where you work and your relationship with it, use the following scale to answer the statements (1=Strongly disagree, 2=Somewhat disagree, 3=Neither agree or disagree, 4=Somewhat agree, 5=Strongly agree).

My organization has great personal significance for me.

I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization.

I feel part of my organization.

Even if it would be an advantage for me, I feel it would not be right to leave my organization at the present time.

I feel I have a great moral duty to remain in the organization I am currently in.

I feel I have a great duty to my organization.

I believe there are very few alternatives to be able to think about leaving this organization.

A lot of my life would be affected if I decided I wanted to leave this organization.

One of the negative consequences for me if I were to leave this organization is the scarcity of alternative employment available to me.

On a final note, a huge thank you for your participation!

I would like to thank you once again for your availability to answer the questionnaire and for completing it 😊

The dissertation is one more step to complete and will not be possible without the submitted answers!

If you wish to have more information about the study you can always contact me:

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"Who says a dream must be something grand?

Just become anybody

We deserve a life

*Whatever, big or small, **you are you after all.**"*

by BTS