



## Perspectives and challenges for implementing a core of canine-assisted therapeutic activities in the Amazonas military police

*Perspectives and challenges for the implementation of the center for dog-assisted therapeutic activities in the military police of Amazonas*

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**ABSTRACT:** The main objective of this research is to assess the perceptions of key managers of the Amazonas Military Police regarding the challenges of implementing a Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities. To this end, quantitative research was used as methodological tools, through the application of questionnaires and interviews with thirty key operational and strategic managers of the Amazonas Military Police, related to the thematic area addressed. The aim was to identify the degree of adherence to the implementation of this Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities. The bibliographic results reveal a growing trend in the use of animals to assist in medical treatments, especially dogs, being accepted and even recommended by the medical community today, due to the benefits that are observed. However, the degree of adherence of the managers of the Military Police of Amazonas exceeds a little more than half of those interviewed, revealing that much still needs to be done to actually operationalize the activity with therapy dogs in the Military Police of Amazonas, since the challenges are many, such as a lack of doctrinal bases, a lack of specialized personnel in the area, as well as a specific dog for this purpose.

However, it is important to highlight the institutional support so that in the near future, as a social institution and owner of the canine squad, the Military Police of Amazonas can inaugurate this therapeutic project with dogs in the state, in favor of society and the people who would benefit, whether from the military or civilian public.

**Keywords:** Perception; Challenges; Therapies; Dogs; Police.

**ABSTRACT:** The central objective of this research is to increase the perception of the main managers of the Amazon Military Police in relation to the challenges for the implementation of a Center for Therapeutic Activities Assisted by Dogs. For this, quantitative research was used as methodological instruments, through the application of questionnaires and interviews to the thirty main operational managers and strategic managers of the Amazon Military Police, related to the thematic area addressed. To this end, identify the degree of adherence to the implementation of this Center for Therapeutic Activities Assisted by Dogs. The bibliographic results reveal a growing trend in the use of animals in the aid of medical treatments, especially the dog, being accepted and even recommended by the medical community today, due to the benefits that are observed, however the degree of adherence of the managers of the Amazon Military Police surpasses a few more than half of the interviewees, revealing that much still remains to actually operationalize the activity with therapy dogs in the Amazon Military Police, since, the challenges are many, as lack of doctrinal bases, lack of specialized staff in the area, as well as a specific dog for such a purpose. However, it is necessary to highlight the Institutional support so that soon, as a social institution and holder of the canine squad, the Amazon Military Police can inaugurate this therapeutic project with Dogs in the State, in favor of society and the people who would benefit, whether from the military or civilian public.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

1

The dog, in history, according to Beck and Katcher (2003), was domesticated by humans thousands of years ago, with the first interaction being aimed at obtaining food, which later led to joining forces with humans in hunting, including helping in locating and capturing prey, making the human-dog bond increasingly stronger.

Still for Beck and Katcher (2003) over the years, already domesticated, they were trained to perform numerous activities, both for military and civilian purposes, such as: guides for people with special needs; guarding facilities; protection; search and rescue of people; expertise; location





explosives, narcotics detection, and the domestic dog, which in many homes ends up becoming a member of the family, among other activities. In this sense, the use of dogs by humans, besides being an excellent work tool, also serves as a faithful companion.

Animals are found in doctors' offices, hospitals, schools, and institutions, performing countless functions in our society. Kassis and Berzins (2002) state that psychologically, dogs, through their purity and instinctive spontaneity, reawaken a person's inner child and increase their capacity for love. Furthermore, the presence of an animal helps reduce problems such as anxiety, stress, and heart problems.

In police activity in the State of Amazonas, through the Independent Canine Policing Company, specifically, dogs are used in the search for lost people, capture of individuals, action in riot control, prisons, sports arenas, drug sniffing, firearm sniffing, searching for corpses, and socio-educational activities.

Considering that the constitutional role of the Military Police is to provide a sense of public security, through overt policing, a function in which social and/or therapeutic actions are not legally described. From this perspective, the scientific question that arises is: what are the prospects and challenges for the implementation of a Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities, through the Independent Company of Policing with Dogs from the Amazonas Military Police?

To address this issue, two hypotheses were proposed. The Guiding Hypothesis is that the implementation of a Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities, based on the care model, constitutes an organizational and social ideal, involving common objectives of the various PMAM departments and managers, with the aim of providing health promotion to all those in need, resulting in improved quality of treatment through canine assistance. The second hypothesis is that the implementation of a Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities would expand the social assistance practice offered by PMAM, elevating the institution's reputation in society and bringing specialized troops closer to people, aiming not only to provide health and social assistance, but also to promote community policing.

In this context, the overall objective is to assess the perceptions of the PMAM's top managers regarding the aspects and challenges of implementing a Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities through the Independent Canine Policing Company of the Amazonas Military Police. To this end, the following specific objectives were pursued: 1. To highlight deficiencies in the use of dogs in hospitals, rehabilitation clinics, and boarding homes in the state of Amazonas, to facilitate patient treatment; 2. To understand the perspectives of the top managers of the PMAM's Specialized Canine Unit regarding the aspects and factors that facilitate and hinder the implementation of a Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities; 3. To identify the degree of adherence of the top managers of the PMAM's health and social services to the implementation of a Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities through the Independent Canine Policing Company of the Amazonas Military Police.

2

For Cusack (2008), the health benefits of the relationship between humans and animals are nothing new to science. Treatments that use animals in patient recovery have already been implemented in several countries, achieving successful results. In England, where the treatment is already being implemented, it has been proven that the stimulation of therapy dogs in hospital settings, for example, helps not only the patient but also the entire staff who work with the animals. The presence of animals helps break down the stress barrier present in these settings.

According to Becker (2003), treatment with dogs does not only improve people's psychological state,





Doctors have proven that there is a reduction in medication use and an increase in patient well-being and the immune system. Therefore, with the periodic presence of dogs in the treatment environment, we aim to alleviate the patient's psychological distress, reduce medication use in the medium and long term, and thus increase patient well-being.

According to Dontti (2005), during therapy, the body releases endorphins, the hormone responsible for well-being and relaxation, resulting in a decrease in blood pressure and cortisol levels. Thus, contact with dogs can provide relaxation, happiness, peace, and well-being for people, in addition to combating feelings of loneliness and abandonment in the case of hospitalized patients.

The Delta Society (1996) ensures that after intense research and experiments around the world, it was concluded that therapy with dogs is highly beneficial in educational and therapeutic activities, patients are more willing, interested and more comfortable in activities in which the dog is present.

In this aspect, this research is justified by the evident need to have a social institutional policy also aimed at society, aiming at frequent monitoring, focused on health promotion and acceptance of treatment, which can directly and indirectly reflect on the quality of life of this person.

From this perspective, we believe in the importance of this scientific research for society, since the role of the military police officer for the community is quite broad, ranging from the conception centered on the "preservation of public order", which is a fragment of Art. 144 of the Federal Constitution of 1988, which clarifies that public security is the duty of the State, the right and responsibility of all, and is exercised to preserve public order and the safety of people and property (BRASIL, 1988) and combat crime, to the understanding of a police officer as a public service provider, whether in security, educational services or social services.

This work also entails actions in the academic world in the areas of research and outreach, combined with a social commitment to the scientific and humanitarian advancement of the PMAM. In other words, intellectual production in the academic sphere is of utmost importance, as scientific production, in its various manifestations and embodiments, serves as a mechanism for disseminating research results that transcend the academic sphere and take shape within the police institution and society. It is through intellectual production that institutional demarcations are broken down and activities initially carried out within the police force are externalized, thus fostering integrated social development.

This study will also contribute to the professional development of the author, who, in addition to being a military police officer active in the officer development program, also works in the Canine Patrol Unit and is a healthcare professional. By completing this study, he will be able to connect the two areas, gaining insight into the perspectives of key PMAM managers regarding the study's purpose.

In this sense, the managers involved in this work will also be favored, since, during the execution of this study, there will be a sharing of knowledge and a correspondence of information about the topic that will allow an alignment between the theory, concepts, challenges and trends studied and the practice experienced in the Military Police of Amazonas.

3

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public, whether in security, educational services or protecting lives.

In addition to this, there are other scopes, namely describing the use of dogs in hospitals, rehabilitation clinics, boarding homes, with the purpose of facilitating the treatment applied to the patient, especially the benefits of this method, as well as the ideal dogs, and what would be necessary to implement this service in the State of Amazonas.

And, to know the perspectives of the main managers of the Specialized Unit with Dogs of the PMAM regarding the aspects and facilitating and challenging factors for the implementation of a Center for Therapeutic Activities Assisted by Dogs; in the meantime, to identify the degree of adherence of the main managers of the operational service and the strategic service in health, social promotion and logistical-financial of the PMAM regarding the implementation of a Center for Therapeutic Activities Assisted by Dogs, through the Independent Company of Policing with Dogs of the Military Police of Amazonas.

With this basis, the methodological aspects were established within the Institution itself, through interviews and questionnaires with the managers of the Independent Canine Policing Company, the Specialized Policing Command, the Health Directorate, the Social Promotion Directorate, the Logistics and Financial Directorates, and PM6/Projects Section.

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This article is subdivided into theoretical basis, which addresses the main authors who deal with therapy facilitated by dogs; methodological section, which details the methodological procedures used during the research; results and discussion, where the results of the research are presented; and the conclusion, with the final considerations of the author of the research, based on the results. obtained.



In this section, we sought authors who address the topic, so for a better understanding we will address the legal issues of the military police function, as well as the historical contextualization of animal-facilitated therapy, particularizing dog-facilitated therapy, its concepts, and the benefits of the dog as a therapeutic link.

### 2.1 MILITARY POLICE FUNCTION: FROM LEGAL TO SOCIAL

In a very simplistic and legal sense, it is understood that the Military Police is responsible for promoting security for society. Police officers hold police power so they can carry out their duties while ensuring public order. Therefore, all military police officers have a constitutional duty to maintain public order (BRASIL, 1988).

But does social security only cover situations involving crime or conflict? Or could it be based on a more approachable, welcoming police force that promotes social projects with a clear objective? to serve society well?

Legally, the police in Brazil are state agencies whose constitutional purpose is to preserve public order, protect people and property, investigate and suppress crimes, and control violence. The 1988 Federal Constitution (BRASIL, 1988), in its article 144, establishes that public security, a duty of the State, a right and responsibility of all, is exercised through the following agencies: 1) Federal Police; 2) Federal Highway Police; 3) Federal Railway Police; 4) Civil Police; 5) Military Police and Military Fire Departments (BRASIL, 1988).

The Military Police's primary function is to provide overt policing to maintain public order in Brazilian states and the Federal District. The fact is that the Military Police in Brazil act far beyond their constitutional mandate, taking on various other responsibilities, such as promoting social projects, with the clear aim of preventing crime and/or improving society's quality of life (BRASIL, 1988). Based on this precept—that the Military Police can fulfill social responsibilities, since it is deeply embedded in the very way society views its security agents—we set out to study our specific subject: therapy facilitated by dogs.

### 2.2 CONTEXTUALIZATION

For Sheldrake (2000), animals, especially dogs, have always been part of our collective unconscious, conveying to humans the idea of companionship and fidelity. These traits follow traditions from both Western and Eastern cultures. The importance of these beings to humans is clear, as they hold a certain power and, in some way, clearly indicate transmutation, protection, basic human feelings, and even spiritual evolution.

For Dontti (2005), the Greeks believed that dogs were capable of curing diseases and raised them as auxiliary therapists in their healing temples. Asclepios, the main healing deity, extended his powers to sacred dogs.

Dontti (2005) states that canines are motivating stimuli for diverse emotions and feelings, and that through their behavior, they are capable of teaching people how to live better and with a better quality of life. They are of paramount importance in socialization and in changing human behavior. In 1699, there were already reports of dogs, especially with children, having a socializing function.



children could learn to reflect on their sense of responsibilities to others.

Still for Dontti (2005), in the 70s and 80s, research related to animals, particularly canines, was deepened, creating the name Pet Therapy, which was used until the 90s. However, at times it was confused as therapy for animals and not for people.

As a result of this fact, the need arose for an appropriate terminology used throughout the world, “Animal Assisted Activity and Therapy”, or specifically “Canine Assisted Therapy”.

In this context, Fine (2003) believes that CFT emerges as an alternative therapy to assist people who require biopsychosocial support to improve their quality of life. The idea is to divert the attention of the patient, whether child, adult, or elderly, from the treatment and provide them with moments of relaxation, even within the hospital, clinic, or special school, which the dog can provide.

### 2.3 CONCEPTUALIZATION

Alonso (2006) defines Animal-Assisted Therapy as a therapeutic method that uses a specific animal as a mediator of the process (which can be a dog, turtle, bird, or rabbit). The professional and the animal act directly on the affectivity, conflictual, and social relationships of each person.

Cusack (2008) considers that Canine Assisted Therapy can be understood as a set of techniques that use the canine as a mediating and facilitating instrument in the interventions developed by the therapist, with the goal of ensuring the development of the patient. It takes advantage of the person-animal bond and the benefits that arise from this interaction to enrich and complete the essential link in the patient-therapist relationship, fundamental in any type of therapy, including psychopedagogical therapy.

Becker (2003) states that this activity can be performed by a multidisciplinary team, addressing the motor, psychological, and social difficulties of each patient, regardless of whether they have special needs. Sessions can be in groups, but planning and monitoring must be individualized. AAT care is the stage that includes establishing the objectives to be achieved and the consequent emphasis on the relevant area of application.

Becker (2003) also adds that this therapy focuses on the dog and its particularities. Since its primary function in assisted therapy is to assist in carrying out dynamic activities, with rules, autonomy and self-confidence.

Kassis and Berzins (2002) state that there are records that the use of animals as assistants in health centers began in England in 1792, when patients with mental illnesses were allowed to care for animals from an institution. Alonso (2006) describes this technique as Dog-Facilitated Therapy (CFT), and it falls within the framework of AAT (Animal-Assisted Therapy). Some theories mistakenly use the concept of Canine Therapy to conceptualize the practice in which the dog acts as a reinforcing, stimulating, and globally rehabilitative instrument for the individual being treated. However, for didactic purposes in this context, we do not use the term because we understand that when dealing with Canine Therapy, the dog would be the promoting element of the therapy. However, the view addressed here is that the dog would be a facilitator of conventional therapies, not depriving the patient of their medical, physical therapy, occupational therapy, pedagogical, and psychological and social.

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According to the recommendations of the Delta Society (1996) incorporated by Y Granger Y Kogan, Canine Assisted Therapy involves a health professional or specialist in human care using the animal as part of their work. It is an intervention with defined objectives where the animal fulfills a role



specific and is an integral part of the entire treatment process.

For Beck and Katcher (2003), Canine Assisted Therapy is one that requires the use of animals as therapeutic agents, that is, it means utilizing the therapeutic capacity of contact with dogs. Thus, the basic character of canine therapy encompasses two perspectives: the therapist-patient relationship combined with the properly integrated person-animal relationship.

According to Fine (2003), therapeutic activity with dogs constitutes firstly a set of studies that, due to its peculiarities, implies being considered as an ecotherapy, represented by nature – animals, but, at the same time, linked to the world of psychotherapy due to the existence of the therapist-patient relationship; secondly, therapy with dogs is combined or connected with other types of therapy due to the same requirements; thirdly, the use of dogs is based in itself on their plurality that, with one or another preparation, are capable of establishing a relationship with the subject, provoking in him a positive factor that contributes to its establishment.

Along the same lines, Fine (2003) asserts that dog-facilitated therapy is a differentiated form of therapeutic assistance that positively impacts the final outcome of treatment, since the presence of a dog in any environment promotes joy, relaxation, and comfort. Professionals from various fields use dogs as a means of reinforcing, stimulating, and facilitating patient rehabilitation. This approach is divided into three specialties: Assistance, Therapy, and Assisted Therapy.

Assistance is where the dog exclusively serves a specific person, helping with their daily activities. The trainer, based on the special needs of the person being assisted, prepares the dog to meet a need. For example, a child with autism often runs out into the street without warning, putting their physical integrity at risk. The dog is tied to the child using an elastic cord. When the dog recognizes the child's running behavior, he lies down, thus avoiding an accident (FINE, 2003).

In therapy, the team that assists the person with a disability guides the trainer to prepare the dog by providing exclusive care, for example, a child does not allow himself to be touched by another human being, so the dog can be the link between the work team and the child (FINE, 2003).

In assisted therapy, the Binomial (human-dog) visits the institution that provides assistance services and the professional who experiences the daily lives of people with special needs, guides the trainer with the demands of each patient, serving a group of people, for example, people with difficulty moving their upper limbs, when the assisted person throws a ball to the dog, who fetches and returns with the ball, systematically moving the upper limbs, facilitating rehabilitation (FINE, 2003).

However, according to Alonso (2006), there is still much confusion regarding the roles of assistance dogs and therapy dogs, even though they have very different functions. An assistance dog is trained to assist a person with a specific task, such as guiding a visually impaired person or assisting with household tasks. A therapy assistance dog, on the other hand, is an integral part of the treatment session, mediating and motivating the completion of an activity proposed by a healthcare or education professional, with a purpose and objective tailored to the needs of each patient.

For Cusack (2008), the health benefits of the relationship between humans and animals are nothing new to science. Treatments that use animals in patient recovery have already been applied in several countries, with successful results. In England, where the treatment is already being applied



It's been proven that the stimulation of therapy dogs in hospital settings, for example, helps not only the patient but also the entire staff who work with the animals. The presence of the animals helps break down the stress barrier present in these settings.

According to Becker (2003), treatment with dogs not only improves people's psychological state, but doctors have proven that it reduces medication use and increases patient well-being and the immune system. Therefore, with the periodic presence of dogs in the treatment environment, we aim to alleviate patients' psychological suffering, reduce medication use in the medium and long term, and thus increase patient well-being.

According to Dontti (2005), during therapy, the body releases endorphins, the hormone responsible for well-being and relaxation, resulting in a decrease in blood pressure and cortisol levels. Thus, contact with dogs can provide relaxation, happiness, peace, and well-being for people, in addition to combating feelings of loneliness and abandonment in the case of hospitalized patients.

The Delta Society (1996) ensures that after intense research and experiments around the world, it was concluded that therapy with dogs is highly beneficial in educational and therapeutic activities, patients are more willing, interested and more comfortable in activities in which the dog is present.

According to Dontti (2005), these activities can aim to improve affection, socialization, interaction, self-esteem, communication, physical exercise, attention, concentration, responsibility, the importance of a routine, among many others. Social activities that help boost self-esteem, such as taking a dog for a walk on the street or in a park, encourage the patient to leave their controlled environment for a healthier external environment.

According to Sheldrake (2000), these activities help develop intellectual capacity through teaching and feeling productive. To achieve this result, it is necessary to train the animal in tricks and games, such as giving a paw, telling it to sit, among others.

Another benefit of Canine Assisted Therapy, according to Dontti (2005), is the fact that the animals act as co-helpers, to build an environment in which those being assisted feel more welcomed and safe, which is fundamental for the evolution of the entire treatment, since, within a clinical situation, it is common for an individual, when faced with stimuli or situations that generate anxiety, to show avoidant behavior towards the therapist and treatment.

According to Beck and Katcher (2003), dogs induce patients into an immediate state of relaxation, psychologically calming simply by attracting and maintaining our attention. Thus, the presence of the animal makes the therapeutic environment seem less threatening and consequently encourages the patient to be more willing and cooperative, especially at the beginning of the process when the therapist-patient bond is still developing and the treatment space seems daunting.

In this context, according to Beck and Katcher (2003), the animal generates a calming effect, reducing the level of anxiety. At the same time, the animal acts as a bridge of communication that will favor the relationship with the therapist and, at each meeting, the bond and trust necessary for the patient to be able to expose are getting stronger.

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Another advantage, for Kassis and Berzins (2002), of integrating animals into psycho-pedagogical care is related to the fact that the animal becomes an extension of the professional, that is, the patient can understand that the therapist's affectionate relationship with their animals will also extend to them.

Thus, according to Kassis and Berzins (2002), the patient begins to see the specialist as someone caring and caring who truly wants to help them. By having the animal as a co-therapist, the psychopedagogue can use countless situations to work on social, cognitive, and affective issues. Observation, knowledge,





cement about the animal, as well as its characteristics and way of understanding its behaviors and, even, the work of educating the animal, can constitute opportune moments to work on what is intended with each patient.

For Fine (2003), the benefits attributed to companion dog therapy are due to three integrated factors. First, there is the instrumental category, which includes ecotherapy, assistance dogs such as guide dogs, and therapy dogs for those with physical or mental disabilities or those who need to improve their self-esteem and self-confidence. Interaction with animals without these disabilities, through physical contact and handling, becomes an extension of the individual, increasing coordination, mobility, and skill, and consequently fostering confidence and self-esteem. Second, there is passive interaction, through observation, which induces a relaxing state and can lead to reflection.

Furthermore, for Fine (2003), in this category, the effects are short-term and persist as long as the animal is observed. This observation holds true because animals are effective at capturing attention due to their random, unpredictable behavior and constant activity. The third category, anthropomorphic, is where companion animals are seen as having the capacity to form emotional bonds. In this category, the therapeutic result is the individual's ability to perceive the animal as another person. When this occurs, the animal's behavioral signals are perceived as an expression of affection, devotion, and love for the person, who needs to be respected and loved, and is necessary to maintain a state of psychological and physical well-being. In many of these cases, animals are able to make humans feel this way when other humans cannot.

According to Ruckert (2007), much more than just providing favorable conditions for the development of the therapeutic process, animals can help the therapist understand more about their patients, through the way they relate and interact with the animal, which can thus provide the therapist with an additional source of information that will facilitate not only the diagnosis but also the treatment.

For Alonso (2006), other characterizations and reasons for the validity of dog-assisted therapy that explain the benefits that can be derived from this type of intervention are based on some theories: Social mediation. Canines have the ability to mediate interactions and promote social behaviors of positive affect, assuming the role of "social lubricants."

Alonso (2006) also introduced the so-called "Attachment Theory" to the scientific world, which consists of the innate need for social interaction associated with primary attachment figures or their substitutes or complements. The insecurity of this attachment negatively impacts mental health and increases vulnerability to stress. The justification for using animals is their ability to offer empathy equivalent to that of humans.

Later, Cusack (2008) brought to the forefront the "Learning Theory," in which individuals respond to situations around them through rewarding activities of positive reinforcement. Dogs can then serve as means of these rewarding activities.

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Cusack (2008) further reinforces the idea based on "Cognitive Theory," in which the system of beliefs, thoughts, and judgments are facilitated by animals, leading to changes in these systems themselves, causing significant changes, as they are capable of eliciting positive emotion or behavior. Changing from dysfunctional beliefs to functional beliefs.

Ruckert (2007) describes "Attribution Theory," which deals with the acquisition of new roles and responsibilities. Behavior modification to adapt to the expectations of the new role. Dogs allow the individual to assume these attributions, as well as other roles, such as being cared for in order to care for others. In short, there are countless benefits of dog-assisted therapy, ranging from physical benefits to



mental, social and especially emotional benefits.

Becker (2003) summarizes the benefits as physical, mental, social, and emotional. Physical benefits include exercises and various stimuli related to mobility; stabilization of blood pressure and positive chemical reactions; well-being; avoidance of pain; and encouragement of speech and physical functions. Mental benefits include stimulating the individual's memory, taking into account various observations related to their own life and the animals with which they have contact; and cognitive exercises using familiar animal materials, food, and hygiene.

Social benefits are related to recreational activities, fun and relief from everyday boredom, removing isolation; opportunity for communication and a sense of coexistence; possibility of exchanging information and being heard; and a feeling of security, socialization and motivation; and emotional benefits are related to unconditional love and attention; spontaneity of emotions; reduction of loneliness; reduction of anxiety; relaxation; joy; recognition of value and exchange of affection (BECKER, 2003).

### 3. MATERIAL AND METHOD

According to Piana (2009), research is important and necessary because it investigates the world in which human beings live and the human beings themselves. However, for him, research only exists with the support of appropriate methodological procedures that allow for an approach to the object of study.

In this sense, knowing that the Military Police function, beyond its inherent responsibilities in fighting crime, also has an important social role, namely, being a public servant. In this sense, the purpose of this research will be to generate knowledge for practical use, aimed at improving the treatment of the population, through the use of police dogs suitable for this demand, thus configuring an applied sphere, since it is directed at solving specific issues involving the Corporation's issues and interests (AMAZONAS, 1975).

According to Selltitz (1974), there are two general types of reasons for proposing research questions: intellectual, based on the desire to know or understand, for the satisfaction of knowing or understanding; practical, based on the desire to know in order to become capable of doing something better or in a more efficient way. efficient.

And, as this was field research, which for Vergara (1998) is characterized by the fact that observation and data collection were carried out directly on site, the research environments were the Institution itself, through the Independent Canine Policing Company, the Specialized Policing Command, the Health Directorate, the Social Promotion Directorate and the Logistics and Financial Directorates, and PM6/Projects Section, to which semi-structured interviews and a directional questionnaire were carried out with managers of each sector mentioned, totaling thirty managers.

Regarding the objective, the current research had an exploratory nature, which according to Vergara (1998) is characteristic because it did not find scientifically produced information that met the needs of the proposed research, which, within the scope of PMAM, aims to achieve greater familiarity with the problem, with a view to making it explicit, since there is nothing written institutionally on the subject, and little related research at the national level, thus configuring an Action Research, as it will seek relevant data to resolve the lack of social care actions through canines in the State. of the Amazon.

According to Malhotra (2001), the procedure adopted was documentary and theoretical research, since even though there are no laws, norms, guidelines, or any other legal framework in Brazil or in the State of Amazonas,



other documents that establish conditions for the participation of dogs as therapeutic assistants; nor data and research that have received analytical treatment, intra-institutional documents were researched regarding the breed and number of dogs existing in the Independent Company of Policing with Dogs, to incorporate important information cited in this research.

However, in addition to documentary research, related bibliographic surveys were carried out, which converges with Piana (2009) who states that by understanding bibliographic research as the survey of all bibliography already published in the form of books, periodicals (magazines), theses, conference proceedings, where its purpose is to provide the researcher with access to the literature produced on a given subject.

Regarding the approach, Gil (2009) supports the research as qualitative and quantitative, translating the opinions and information gathered during data collection into numbers, then classifying and organizing them. The data collection method was a semi-structured interview (Appendix A) with ten questions to the main managers of the PMAM (National Police Department). These questions were asked about the aspects and challenges of implementing a Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities. This aimed to elicit the interviewees' particular perspectives and thus provide greater insight into the singularities of the activities, processes, and outcomes. Thirty managers from the focal areas of canine training, officers from the Independent Canine Policing Company, the Health Directorate, and the Directorate of Social Promotion, Finance/Logistics, and Projects Section were interviewed.

Gil (1999) defines this technique as where the researcher presents themselves to the person being investigated and asks them questions to obtain the data relevant to the investigation. The interview was, therefore, a form of social interaction. More specifically, in this research, it was a form of asymmetrical dialogue, in which the author sought to collect data and the interviewed manager presented themselves as a source of information.

In addition to this, the questionnaire (Appendix B) was also adopted, which Gil (1999) defines as a structured technique for data collection that consists of a series of questions, written or oral, that an interviewee must answer, and which was also applied to the aforementioned managers.

According to Marconi and Lakatos (1996), the population to be questioned is defined as the set of individuals who share at least one characteristic in common, which in this universe is being a strategic manager or an operational manager. In this sense, the questionnaire facilitated data processing and tabulation of results, providing relevant information about this sample.

The diagnosis of the tabulated results was based on the Cluster Analysis model (conglomerates), explained by Malhotra (2001), which suggests that cluster analysis is a technique used to classify objects or cases into relatively homogeneous groups called clusters. The objects in each cluster tend to be similar to each other but different from objects in other clusters.

According to Everitt (1993), cluster analysis is a technique that aims to group individuals with similar characteristics, such as strategic managers in the research, and operational managers in the canine unit. Thus, cluster analysis classifies individuals into homogeneous groups called clusters or conglomerates. Therefore, it is understood that the groups created by cluster analysis are similar to each other. Cluster analysis is described by data from a set of  $n$  individuals for whom information is available in the form of  $p$  variables. In this sense, the method analyzes individuals based on existing information.

In this regard, Everitt (1993) states that with cluster analysis it is possible to segment services according to the user profile, creating and identifying ideal types, allowing the development of strategies aimed at the perspectives of managers and the needs of dog operators with the assisted population.

The ideal type referred to a mental construction of reality, where the researcher selected a certain number



characteristics of the object under study, in order to construct a tangible top, that is, a type. This type was very useful for classifying the objects of study. Thus, by understanding the challenges and prospects, cluster analysis allowed us to identify opportunities for implementing the Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities, better adapting them to the needs.

Data analysis was performed using Fourth Generation Evaluation. According to Meirelles, Hypolito, and Kantorski (2012), this model consists of identifying the demands, concerns, questions, and perspectives of stakeholders. These questions serve as the basis for determining what information is needed and can truly expose their lived concepts and ideas on a given topic, enabling the responsive construction of reality and enabling these stakeholders to expand their capacity to intervene in the service's reality. Therefore, the idea of evaluation is suggested not only as a model, strategy, tool, or discussion, but as a stance; that is, as a concrete attitude of respect for those involved in the process.

Meirelles, Hypolito and Kantorski (2012) add that fourth-generation evaluation is essentially characterized by negotiation, judgments, challenges, criteria and integrated actions, involving all managers in the decision-making process, in which the evaluation itself can be treated and considered as a process of permanent learning.

Thus, the authors Meirelles, Hypolito and Kantorski (2012) see this evaluation as relevant because it indicates the possibility of socializing the results and discussions that can help managers in their choices and development of actions to meet goals.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

For the main managers of PMAM, several conditions can be highlighted as factors for adherence or not to the process of implementing a Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities, through the Independent Canine Policing Company of the Amazonas Military Police.

Facing the challenges of implementing any new system within a centuries-old institution to meet the needs of a population is difficult, as anything new is frightening and creates insecurity. However, when designed and implemented with appropriate planning, it can bring great success to the entire population (MENDES, 2007).

However, in order to understand the perspectives of the Corporation's managers, a semi-structured interview was conducted to understand their considerations regarding the possibility of creating a Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities, as well as to understand, from their perspective, the facilitating and hindering aspects of this implementation. Thus, the interview was applied to thirty (30) managers/directors who would be directly involved in the implementation of the Nucleus, namely the person responsible for the Specialized Policing Command, the Director of the Health Directorate, the Social Promotion Directorate, the Finance Directorate, the Logistics Directorate, and the PM6/Projects Section.

The interview contained ten (10) open questions, but which left room for the interviewees to detach themselves from the specificity of the questions, leaving gaps to express their considerations, so that they could describe their desires and plans regarding the topic, which would bring us to the considerations of their perspectives.

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Compressing the resulting more described in three aspects and facilitating factors and three aspects and factors-challenging res. The following result was reached:



TABLE 1. Perception of the main PMAM managers regarding the aspects and facilitating factors and challenges for the implementation of a Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities, through the Independent Police Company with Dogs from the Military Police of Amazonas

ASPECTS AND FACTORS	
Cluster Analysis	
FACILITATORS	CHALLENGERS
- Existing internal structure to carry out the activity (CIPCães/HPM);	- Costs/Acquisition of the dog focused on TAC/Raising funds;
- Organizational support;	- Doctrinal bases/documents that support police action/cases of possible accidents;
- Broader integration and social responsibility.	- Internal resistances.

Source: Prepared by the research author/Research data

When observing the focal points expressed by the main managers of the Military Police of Amazonas, we notice that they place as facilitating points the existing internal structure to carry out the activity, which they cite the CIPCães itself and the HPM (Military Police Hospital/Polyclinic), perhaps because they judge that this therapy dog would stay in a common box, just like the other dogs in the unit, which maintain their comfort in an individual box, however, the therapy dog, unlike the others, would not remain in the Unit's facilities, and should be taken to its owner's residence, even due to the profile of this therapy dog.

In the meantime, we see the first challenge for managers being the acquisition of this dog. However, according to Soares (2018), virtually any dog, regardless of breed, can be eligible to be a therapy dog, as long as it can pass the required training and temperament tests. This view ensures that it doesn't necessarily need to be a highly valued dog, or of a specific breed, just a dog with therapeutic aptitude, with temperament and docility, and a willingness to perform the activities.

proposals.

The Independent Canine Policing Company's canine squad is reduced, with dogs already trained for their specific police duties continuing to perform their assigned duties. There are no dogs ready to work in therapeutic areas. The squad's descriptive chart is shown below:

TABLE 2. Current squad of police dogs ready for the Independent Canine Policing Company of the PMAM and area of operation

CANINES			
ORDER	RACE	AMOUNT	AREA OF ACTIVITY
1	Belgian Shepherd Malinois	10	Narcotics Sight
2	Belgian Shepherd Malinois	2	Guard and Protection
3	Belgian Shepherd Malinois	1	Search and Capture
4	Belgian Shepherd Malinois	1	Corpse Lighthouse
5	Labrador	1	Search and Rescue
6	Beagle	1	Narcotics Sight
7	Rottweiler	1	Guard and Protection
8	Doberman	1	Social Presentations
13	TOTAL	18	-

Source: Prepared by the research author/Data from CIPCães/PMAM

According to Dontti (2005), therapy dogs must have at least basic training, as they will need to remain calm and relaxed during sessions. Commands such as "sit" and "stay" must be thoroughly trained and performed at different times, for example, in different environments.



with children, with toys, with other dogs, different people, with noises and for this these dogs also need to have a great deal of focused training, both dog and handler have to be focused on each other at all times during visits.

In their responses, managers ensure that organizational support and broader integration and social responsibility are facilitating perspectives, as they believe that proximity to the population through therapy dogs is a good way to carry out community policing, or proximity policing, giving the population a different view of the police.

This philosophy is based on the idea of a police force providing services, acting for the common good to, together with the community, create a peaceful and orderly society. It is a philosophy and organizational strategy that fosters a new partnership between the public and the police (BRASIL, 1988).

As a challenging factor, internal resistance within the institution itself suggests, which sees the Canine Unit as a mere repressive unit in the fight against crime, especially when it comes to detecting narcotics. This may be seen as a diversion from its core function, which is to use the dog to fulfill its role as a police dog, leaving the therapy dog in the hands of agencies other than the police.

Another point considered a challenge for managers was the lack of written doctrinal bases or documents supporting police action within hospitals, clinics, and schools, especially in cases of accidents, such as a dog accidentally knocking over an elderly person during work, causing injury. In this case, what legal basis would the institution and the police officer have to justify their presence at the establishment, and even carrying out such activity?

Although Alonso (2006) states that these dogs need to be trained and desensitized to touch, people, and children who speak in higher tones and make more abrupt movements. The fact is that there is no written evidence supporting the role of police officers in canine-assisted therapeutic activities, in any setting. There are few written documents on the subject in Brazil, and legal bases and doctrines are not even mentioned. What exists are people who willingly perform the practice without considering the possible implications.

Soares (2018) says, regarding therapy dogs, that this means they must have a positive response when someone grabs their head, and they cannot react negatively when a metal tray is placed behind them, or when a tray accidentally falls near them. Essentially, a good therapy dog cannot be bothered by a child hugging it. It should not be reactive when an Alzheimer's patient tries to grab its ears or when it hears the screams of special needs children. A therapy dog must be able to walk alongside its handler without showing anxiety when on a leash. When visiting children, extra care must be taken, as children have a tendency to pull their fur, hug, hold their tails, and stare into the eyes of dogs, which they often interpret as a threat.

Ultimately, the concern of the main managers of the Military Police of Amazonas has ethical, moral, social and mainly legal foundations, because while the activity is initially seen as something very beautiful, and advantageous for the Corporation, as it is carrying out a pioneering social activity in the State, at the same time it can bring damage to its image if it is developed without the appropriate technique and knowledge.

The semi-structured interview was applied to the managers of the Independent Canine Policing Company, an institutional unit that would be the driving force for the implementation of the Center, with results compiled separately. Thus, the interview was applied to fifteen (15) officers and/or trainers of the Canine Unit who would be directly involved in the operationalization of the project, to observe the results described in three facilitating aspects and factors and three challenging aspects and factors. Which are



arrived at the following result:

TABLE 3. Perspectives of the main managers of the PMAM Specialized Canine Unit regarding the facilitating and challenging aspects and factors for the implementation of a Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities (TAC)

ASPECTS AND FACTORS	
Cluster Analysis	
FACILITATORS	CHALLENGERS
- Recognition of the activity; - Good relationship with Entities and Institutions that support the implementation;	- Reduced number of professionals at CIPCães;
- Existence of professionals with the ability to develop the activity.	- Acceptance of TAC by the medical community;
	- Professionals who are not specialists in the area/there are no specific courses in this area.

Source: Prepared by the research author/Research data

When observing the perspectives of the main managers of the Specialized Canine Unit regarding the implementation of the Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities, we can see a concern about the reduced number of professionals for the various activities carried out by the military Unit, which would permeate beyond their usual duties in combating crime, and the various operations, in addition to the therapeutic activity itself; they also see as a challenge the breaking of the paradigm between the police function and the receptiveness of the medical community to this unconventional activity in a hospital environment.

Another challenge is how to train professionals in this area of activity, since one should not act empirically, and little has been written about this, either in an academic environment or in research on the subject, as well as there are no courses in Brazil aimed at working in this area, which would be an even greater challenge when thinking about a Center that acts with quality, and that is recognized for its effectiveness.

In contrast, it is observed that the perspectives of strategic managers refer to other concerns, which suggest challenges of a structural, financial nature, doctrinal bases and internal resistance.

The managers of the Specialized Unit with Dogs also note that they recognize the activity as valid for CIPCães, and that it could bring favorable recognition from society in general, as well as having a good relationship with Entities and Institutions that support the implementation; in addition to recognizing professionals, internally, with the capacity to initiate the first actions with therapy dogs.

Medeiros and Carvalho (2018) highlight several successful examples across Brazil, such as the Paraná Military Police, which implemented a Canine Assisted Therapy (CAT) unit with the initial goal of connecting the Paraná Military Police with communities of children with disabilities. Launched in 2008 at the 10th Battalion of the Paraná Military Police, the unit now serves an average of 800 children in 22 different cities through the creation of sectoral kennels operating in schools, hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, orphanages, and within the unit itself.

And, in the State of Amazonas it is no different, the Formando Cidadão Program is mentioned here, first implemented in Manaus in 1997, in 2023 it is already in other municipalities in Amazonas as a way of preventing or recovering young people between the ages of 12 and 17 at social and personal risk, reviving in the spirit of this clientele the desire to engage in society through studies and activities such as healthy sports, civic and professional actions (PMAM, 2023).

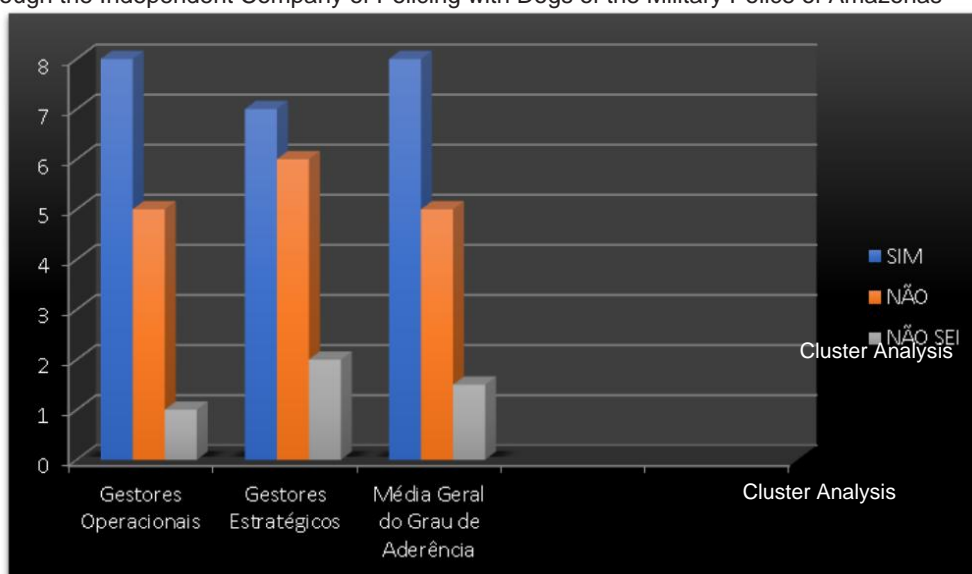
In 1992, free and supportive equine therapy services were implemented, as they continue to be until 2023. They are recognized by the Federal Council of Medicine for bringing excellent results in the rehabilitation of people with disabilities. The therapeutic project that gave rise to the PMAM Equotherapy Center is another example of success, and is now consolidated as an international reference as a therapeutic and educational method that uses the horse within an interdisciplinary approach, in the areas of Health, Education,

cation and Horse Riding, seeking the biopsychosocial development of people with special needs.

As well as the Military Police's own civic-social schools, which take on the management role in educating children and young people, preparing them for life. These are just a few examples, among many others.

To assess the level of compliance among the Corporation's managers, we divided them into two groups: operational managers, which include the commanders of the Specialized Policing Command and the commanders of the Independent Canine Patrol Company; and strategic managers, which include the directors of health, social promotion, finance, logistics, and the projects section. There were thirty managers in total, fifteen for each group captured by the questionnaire. The questionnaire contained ten questions, with the general objective of determining whether or not the manager agreed with the implementation of a Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities through the Independent Canine Patrol Company of the Amazonas Military Police, with a third option being neutral.

GRAPH 1. Degree of adherence of the main managers of the operational service and the strategic service in health, social promotion and logistical-financial of the PMAM regarding the implementation of a Center for Therapeutic Activities Assisted by Dogs, through the Independent Company of Policing with Dogs of the Military Police of Amazonas



Source: Prepared by the research author/Research data

Graph 1 records the degree of adherence of the main managers of PMAM, regarding the implementation of a Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities, in which the following result was obtained: 1. Among the operational managers, of the fifteen managers interviewed, eight were in favor of the idea of implementing the Center, to the point that five were against, and one manager did not express an opinion; 2. Meanwhile, among the strategic managers, of the fifteen interviewed, seven maintained a favorable position, six of them are against the implementation, and two did not know their opinion, and remained neutral to the questions.

In terms of percentage, Table 1 confirms the data collected, already presented graphically, to measure better statistical understanding, within the universe of samples collected among managers.





TABLE 1. Percentage of adherence of the main managers of the operational service and the strategic service in health, social promotion and logistical-financial of the PMAM regarding the implementation of a Center for Therapeutic Activities Assisted by Dogs, through the Independent Company of Policing with Dogs of the Military Police of Amazonas

Dimension	PMAM MANAGERS						Overall Perception Average					
	(Clusters)											
	OPERATIONAL MANAGERS			STRATEGIC MANAGERS			of Managers					
	YES	NO	NO	HE KNOWS	YES	NO	NO	HE KNOWS	YES	NO	NO	HE KNOWS
%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Degree of adherence	55.6	35.6	8.8	46.7	40	13.3	45.6	37.8	11.05			
Relative average	27.2	17.2	3.9	23.9	20.6	7.2	<b>51.1</b>	<b>37.8</b>	<b>11.1</b>			

Source: Prepared by the research author/Research data

The tabulation of the percentage data reveals some peculiarities, the first of which is that the managers of the Military Police are in agreement regarding the agreement to implement the Center for Assisted Therapeutic Activities with Dogs, since when observing only the universe of operational managers 55.6% agree, in the same way that in the universe of strategic managers 46.7% is in favor, in contrast, the percentage of disagreement among the operational managers permeates at 35.6%, similar to the 40% of the strategic managers.

When the two groups of managers are brought together, and the relative average is obtained, it is observed that 51.1% of the managers of the Military Police of Amazonas agree with the implementation of the Center, despite the challenges already mentioned above, while 37.8% are not in favor of the creation of the aforementioned therapeutic project, leaving 11.1% neutral in percentage terms.

The analysis of the results of the interviews and questionnaires was based on fourth-generation evaluation. This is a responsive evaluation that highlights the demands, concerns, and issues of stakeholders (strategic and operational managers). The goal is to capture the coherent views and the dichotomies between the two groups of managers. Emphasizing the interpretation of the context, it seeks to portray the reality comprehensively, even if some opinions conflict, thus enhancing potential improvements to the system.

The idea is not to pit managers against each other, but to understand where the differences and convergences lie. And, from there, to learn the opinions of everyone involved regarding the proposed topic, within of the current health context of the Military Police of Amazonas.

Thus, a framework was created to compose the fourth-generation evaluation, with items addressing managers' perceptions of the Center's implementation, criticisms, the management group's proposed improvements, and other aspects. It should be noted that the perception considered did not refer to all opinions, but rather to the highest percentage.

TABLE 4. Application of the Fourth Generation Assessment regarding the facilitating and challenging aspects and factors for the implementation of a Center for Canine-Assisted Therapeutic Activities (TAC)

ASPECT	OPERATIONAL MANAGERS	STRATEGIC MANAGERS
AS FOR THE COST/ FINANCIAL	- There would be no high costs, as any dog/ any breed could be suitable for the activity;	- High costs/Acquisition of a special dog focused on TAC/Capture of resources;
DOCTRINAL BASES - There is	no doctrinal basis for the activity in Brazil, however it is carried out through practical means;	- Lack of doctrinal bases/documents that support police action/ cases where accidents are possible;





Therefore, the focus was on the perspective of operational managers, namely the commanders of the Specialized Policing Command and the Commanders and trainers of the Independent Canine Policing Company; and of strategic managers, namely the health, logistics, projects, finance and logistics directorates, regarding this implementation.

The prospective results showed that for strategic managers, the facilitating factors for implementation would be: a) Existing internal structure to carry out the activity (CIPCães/HPM); b) Organizational support; c) Integration and broader social responsibility.

As a counterpoint, they point out the following aspects as obstacles to implementation: a) Costs/Acquisition of the dog focused on TAC/Resource raising; b) Lack of doctrinal bases/documents that support police action/cases of possibility of accidents; and, mainly; c) Internal resistance.

Overall, a significant number (40%) of strategic managers oppose the implementation of the Center for Therapeutic Activities with Canines. However, there is interest in improving the social vision of the Amazonas Military Police through its social projects, with a high level of support (46.7%) among strategic managers who propose supporting the creation of the Center.

The perspective results of the operational managers, especially in the focal area with dogs, point to the following motivating factors, which suggest a considerable degree of adherence (55.6%) regarding the need to implement the Center: a) Recognition of the activity; b) Good relationship with Entities and Institutions that support the implementation; c) Existence of professionals with the ability to develop the activity.

While they point to challenging perspectives: a) Reduced number of professionals in CIP-Cães; e) Fear of the lack of receptivity of TAC by the medical community; f) Professionals who are not specialists in the area/there are no specific courses in this area.

However, beyond the various points of disagreement among managers, their concern with improving the system based on a new vision of policing, focused on doctrinal, social, technical, and scientific parameters, is evident. It is noted that there are several challenges, ranging from the importance of qualifying and improving the operability of existing social projects, to those under study, such as the Therapeutic Activities with Dogs project, to the reduced number of professionals, financial costs, lack of logistical support, and to the values that must be internalized by managers, such as action, protagonism, and co-accountability.

However, these are challenges that must be overcome proactively, with a focus on promoting the police's social impact. At this point, we can see the importance of partnerships between strategic and operational managers, as there is a clear need for change in the way the Military Police is presented to society. In this sense, recognizing the importance of this partnership within the organization represents a strategic and entrepreneurial path forward, as society, when it sees the Military Police as a partner, will also respond favorably.

Clearly, the benefits of canine therapy are evident, such as bringing police closer to their target audience and maintaining the bond between police officers and society through the dog. However, these benefits would only be possible if requirements such as standardized protocols, ongoing financial and logistical support, and productivity and quality of service are met. This facilitates commitment to established standards, in addition to promoting the development of the institution, the training of its members, and the engagement of society as a whole.

Finally, it is suggested and hoped that the scope of this research may contribute to the development of the PMAM social system. May it satisfactorily address any questions that may arise regarding



the perspective of managers regarding the implementation of a Center for Canine-Assisted Activities. And, that managers in partnership can benefit from the study in proposing possible strategies regarding the need for social projects in the Military Police of the State of Amazonas, which enable the police officer to be a provider of quality public service, not only focused on the criminal issues of their role.

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