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The Role of Job Satisfaction Mediation in the Work Environment and Employee Performance

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Abstract

This research seeks to examine how the work environment affects employee performance, using job satisfaction as a mediating factor. The research issue arises from the observed gap between the working environment conditions that fulfill the standards and the decrease in employee performance at the manufacturing firm PT. Assemble a group of individuals. Employing an explanatory quantitative method, this research examined the connection among variables utilizing data from 158 participants through the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique founded on Partial Least Square (PLS). The analysis results indicate that the work environment positively and significantly influences employee performance and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction has been demonstrated to significantly impact performance and serves as a mediator that enhances the connection between the work environment and performance. Therefore, job satisfaction serves as a crucial avenue for enhancing the effects of the work environment on employee productivity. These results validate that managing the work environment and enhancing job satisfaction are essential approaches to boost human resource performance

Keywords

Employee Performance, Employee Satisfaction, Job Satisfaction, Mediation, Work Environment.

1. Introduction

Globalization and technological advancements have brought major changes in the human resource management landscape, creating new challenges for organizations in maintaining operational effectiveness amid increasingly intense global competition (Anasi, 2020; Burbar, 2021). In this situation, employee performance is one of the crucial elements that determine the success of achieving organizational goals (Saputra, 2021; Darmawan, 2024). Optimal performance not only reflects personal and organizational effectiveness but also strengthens competitiveness and operational sustainability.

A significant factor influencing performance is the workplace environment. Research conducted by Heimerl et al. (2020) and Januarty et al. (2020) and Murti and Yulaeli (2024) indicates that the workplace environment encompassing physical, psychological, and social aspects deeply influences employee motivation and productivity. Nonetheless, to gain a deeper insight into the impact of the work environment, it is essential to consider the factors that connect the relationship. Here, job satisfaction acts as a possible mediator that transmits the effects of the work environment on performance, as noted by Idris et al. (2020), Usman et al. (2022), and Alkandi et al. (2023). Nevertheless, Kalkavan and Katrinili (2014) discovered contrasting results, indicating that there was no notable correlation between job satisfaction and employee performance. The variations in results indicate contradictions in the literature, thus additional investigation into the function of job satisfaction as a mediating factor is necessary.

Additionally, the variation in the findings of earlier studies serves as the foundation for the research gap recognized in this investigation. Several earlier investigations demonstrate that the workplace environment considerably influences employee performance (Idris et al., 2020; Rahmawati & Damayanti, 2023; Setyaningrum & Muafi, 2023). Conversely, studies conducted by Warongan et al. (2020) and Mendonca et al. (2021) determined that the work environment did not have a meaningful effect on performance. This inconsistency is caused by variations in theoretical models, differences in variable indicators, methodologies, and the context of the research location. Therefore, a review with a more comprehensive approach is needed to produce a more holistic and valid understanding of the relationship between these variables.

The gap phenomenon in this study is shown by a real case that occurred at PT. Cipta Panel Buana, a furniture manufacturing company serving the domestic and export markets. Based on the company's internal data, there have been delays in delivery in the last three months, with the most extreme cases reaching 46 hours and 35 minutes of delay in November 2024. This problem was strengthened by the results of a preliminary study of 30 employees which showed low task performance, especially in terms of work completion efficiency. These findings are an indication that work environment conditions and suboptimal levels of job satisfaction also contribute to the decline in employee performance.

The purpose of this research is to examine the influence of the work environment on employee performance with job satisfaction as a mediating variable, using PT Cipta Panel Buana as the case context. This study's scientific novelty stems from re-evaluating the connection between the work environment and employee performance, incorporating job satisfaction as a mediating variable, particularly within the manufacturing sector, recognized for its high work pressure and stringent productivity requirements. The research also fills in the gaps in the previous literature by presenting empirical data from the field and proposing managerial solutions that are relevant to the company's real operational conditions. Thus, this study is crucial as it offers a comprehensive insight into how an effectively managed workplace and elevated job satisfaction can greatly enhance employee performance.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. Work Environment and Employee Performance

Performance is a fundamental element in management, referring to the results or level of success of an individual in executing tasks over a specific period, based on agreed-upon work standards, targets, or criteria (Mendoca et al., 2021). It reflects employees' behavior in fulfilling their responsibilities within the work environment by Raziq and Maulabakhsh (2015) and is directly linked to organizational achievement through effective planning and evaluation of results (Anitha, 2014). Generally, performance is viewed as the ability or positive contribution of employees in meeting expectations, achieving targets, and adhering to organizational standards (Mensah, 2015). Arijanto (2018) describes performance as the success level of employees in completing their work, work behavior that supports organizational outcomes in terms of quality, quantity, and timeliness. Yimam (2022) emphasizes that performance involves completing tasks set and measured against planned goals. Khan et al. (2019) note that good performance is evident when employees meet tasks with accuracy, speed, and cost-effectiveness while fulfilling organizational expectations. Additionally, Purwoharsojo and Syaharuddin (2020) define performance as the outcome of an individual's work aligned with set responsibilities and goals, highlighting both quality and quantity in employee performance.

Based on various sources cited regarding the definition of employee performance, it can be concluded that employee performance is the result of employee work on the achievement of tasks in achieving organizational goals measured based on certain standards that have been set. Performance reflects the dedication and effort of employees in fulfilling the responsibilities given, where good performance is achieved when employees are able to meet the organization's expectations both in quality and quantity.

H1: Work environment has a significant effect on employee performance.

2.2. Work Environment and Job Satisfaction

Anorogo and Widiyanti (2018) define the work environment as all factors surrounding employees that can influence their performance in completing assigned tasks. This environment plays a crucial role in determining how effectively tasks are executed. The physical work environment encompasses all actual conditions present in the workplace, such as lighting, noise levels, and office layout, which can affect employees both directly and indirectly (Sedarmayanti, 2015). For example, a well-lit and well-organized workspace can increase productivity and reduce stress, while a cluttered or noisy environment can hinder focus and efficiency. In addition to physical aspects, the non-physical work environment is equally important. This refers to the emotional and social climate in the workplace, characterized by a balanced atmosphere that fosters healthy communication and relationships. Vertical relationships, involving interactions between subordinates and superiors, are crucial for effective management and guidance. Meanwhile, horizontal relationships between coworkers encourage collaboration and teamwork. A positive non-physical work environment can improve employee job satisfaction, motivation, and overall well-being. Kahn (1990) emphasized the importance of the physical and psychological aspects of the work environment in influencing employee engagement and performance. Therefore, elements of the work environment, both physical and non-physical, are crucial in shaping employee performance and organizational success.

H2: Work environment has a significant effect on job satisfaction

2.3. Job Satisfaction and Employee Performance

Job satisfaction represents the employee's emotions related to accomplishments and success in their role (Sheraz et al., 2021). This idea can also be viewed as an emotional reaction stemming from a person's view of their job, with those who are satisfied with their work typically evaluating it more favorably (Chen et al., 2023). Nuranda & Kasmari (2023) stated that job satisfaction is an emotional response to the workplace, making it intangible yet observable through behaviors like company loyalty, peak performance, and adherence to organizational rules

On the other hand, Heriyadi et al. (2020) describe that job satisfaction as an individual's general view of his or her job, which includes satisfaction or dissatisfaction with various aspects of work. Hanaysha & Tahir (2016) added that job satisfaction is closely related to employees' attitudes towards their duties, working conditions, and relationships with superiors and colleagues. Robbins & Judge (2019) stated that job satisfaction is an employee's psychological assessment of their work, which is influenced by both internal work factors and the external environment. Meanwhile, Memon et al. (2023) stated that job satisfaction is a comprehensive attitude formed from various factors, including individual characteristics, social relationships outside of work, and other specific aspects.

H3: Job satisfaction has a significant effect on employee performance.

H4: Job satisfaction mediates the influence of the work environment on employee performance.

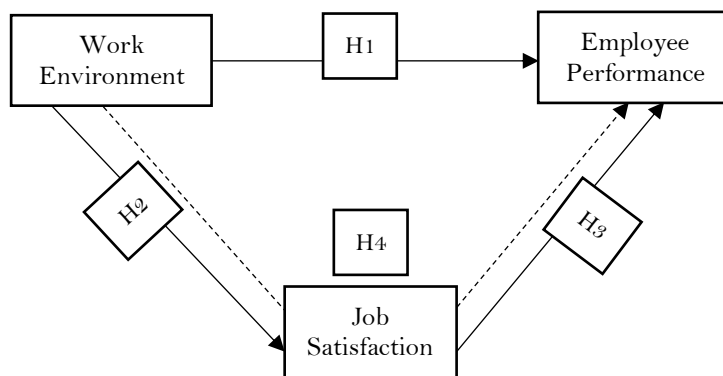


Figure 1. Research Framework

Figure 1 shows the framework of this research is described in a conceptual model that connects risk aversion and customer attitudes as independent variables, brand trust as a mediating variable, and brand loyalty as dependent variables.

3. Methods

This study employed a quantitative research design aimed at testing hypotheses and measuring relationships between variables through numerical data. The focus was explanatory research, investigating the causal relationships between the variables involved. The primary variables examined in this study included risk aversion and customer attitudes, specifically as they relate to customer loyalty through the perspective of brand trust. The research sample was determined with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, resulting in a total of 158 respondents. Probability sampling was used, specifically through simple random sampling, to ensure that every individual in the population had an equal chance of

being selected. Participants in this study were staff at PT. Cipta Panel Buana, a company engaged in furniture manufacturing for local and international markets.

Data collection was conducted using a direct questionnaire survey distributed in person. The questionnaire used a Likert scale to measure responses, allowing for a deeper understanding of participants' attitudes and perceptions. This method facilitated the collection of primary data directly from respondents, ensuring the relevance and accuracy of the information collected. For data analysis, descriptive statistics were used to describe the characteristics of the respondents, providing a clear picture of the sample's demographics. Inferential statistics were then used to test the hypotheses, using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach. This analysis involved evaluating the measurement model to assess construct validity and reliability, as well as the structural model to examine the relationships between variables. Hypothesis testing was conducted to determine the significance of the relationships identified in the study. Thus, this comprehensive approach to data collection and analysis allows for a robust examination of the interactions between risk aversion, customer attitudes, and customer loyalty in the context of brand trust.

4. Results

Table 1 displays the demographic traits of the 158 participants in this research. Regarding gender, most respondents were female (54.40%), whereas males comprised 45.60%. Based on the age distribution, the majority belonged to the 28–37-year category (34.20%) and the 18–27-year category (30.40%), suggesting that the respondents were within the working age demographic. Regarding education, most respondents had a bachelor's degree (S1) at 44.30%, followed by high school/vocational school at 31.60% and D3 at 24.10%. According to work duration, most respondents possessed 3–5 years and over 5 years of experience (27.80 years each), highlighting the participation of individuals with substantial work backgrounds.

Table 1 Respondent Demographics

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Man	72	45.60
	Woman	86	54.40
Age	18–27 years old	48	30.40
	28–37 years old	54	34.20
	38–47 years old	36	22.80
	>48 years old	20	12.70
	High School/Vocational School	50	31.60
Final Education	D3	38	24.10
	S1	70	44.30
	<1 Year	28	17.70
Long Time Working	1–3 Years	42	26.60
	3–5 Years	44	27.80
	>5 Years	44	27.80

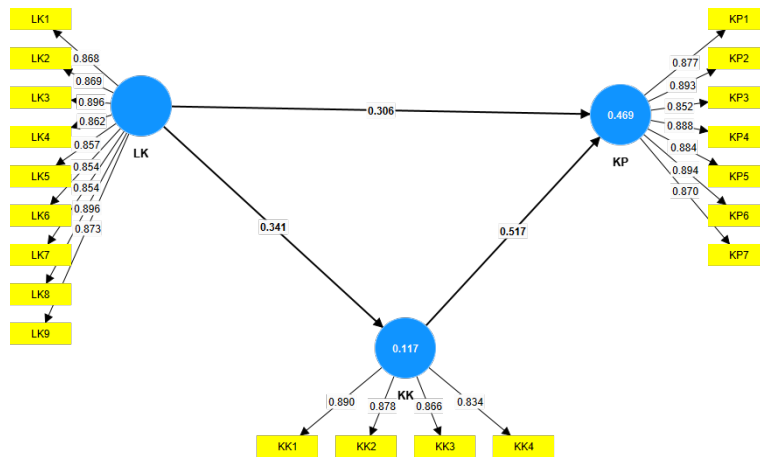


Figure 2. Path Diagram

Figure 2 shows a latent variable-based structural model—with two groups of latent variables: on the left are “LK” (LK1–LK9) representing indicators of the first latent construct, and on the right are “KP” (KP1–KP7) representing the second latent construct. Each indicator has a factor loading coefficient between ± 0.84 – 0.90 (e.g., LK2 = 0.868, KP3 = 0.893), indicating a fairly strong relationship with its latent construct. In the middle, there is a mediating or intervening latent variable (blue circle with a value of 0.117) that connects the two constructs. The path coefficients between the constructs indicate the strength of the direct relationship: the effect of the LK construct on mediation is 0.341, then mediation on KP is 0.517, and the direct relationship between LK and KP is 0.306. All these values indicate that some of the influence of LK on KP is mediated by the middle variable, but there is also a direct effect that is not mediated.

Table 2. Outer Test

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	AVE	Descriptions
Job Satisfaction	KK1	0.890	0.752	Valid
	KK2	0.878		
	KK3	0.866		
	KK4	0.834		
Employee Performance	KP1	0.877	0.774	Valid
	KP2	0.893		
	KP3	0.852		
	KP4	0.888		
	KP5	0.884		
	KP6	0.894		
	KP7	0.870		
Work environment	LK1	0.868	0.757	Valid
	LK2	0.869		
	LK3	0.896		
	LK4	0.862		
	LK5	0.857		
	LK6	0.854		
	LK7	0.854		
	LK8	0.896		
	LK9	0.873		

External loading testing is conducted to evaluate the convergent validity of the indicators utilized in the model. According to Table 2, every indicator has an outer

loading value exceeding 0.70, indicating their validity. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct has surpassed the threshold value of 0.50, validating that these indicators effectively account for the variance of the construct. Therefore, it can be inferred that all metrics within the Employee Performance, Job Satisfaction, and Work Environment construct possess sufficient convergent validity

Table 3. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability
Employee Performance	0.890	0.892
Job Satisfaction	0.951	0.953
Work Environment	0.960	0.963

Table 3 show the reliability assessment is conducted to determine how consistently the indicators within a construct measure the variables in question. The primary metrics utilized in this assessment are Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR). Hair et al. (2021) indicates that Cronbach's Alpha and CR values must be ≥ 0.70 , reflecting an adequate level of internal consistency.

The findings from the reliability test displayed in Table 3 indicate that every construction utilized in this research meets the established reliability standards. The Employee Performance Construct shows a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.890 and a CR of 0.892, indicating that the metrics utilized to assess employee performance are notably reliable and consistent. Likewise, the Job Satisfaction construct demonstrated extremely high values, specifically 0.951 for Cronbach's Alpha and 0.953 for CR, signifying that the measure in this construction is highly dependable in reflecting differences in respondents' views on their job satisfaction

The Work Environment Construct demonstrated the highest reliability of the three, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.960 and a Composite Reliability of 0.963. This indicates that all metrics within the Work Environment variable exhibit strong stability and reliability, rendering them useful for evaluating respondents' perceptions of various elements of the work environment in their organization. This reliability test confirms that the entire construct in the research model has been eligible for use in the advanced analysis stage. There is no construct that has a value below the threshold, so there is no need to delete or modify the indicators used. These results also strengthen the validity of the measurement model as a whole, as well as add to the confidence that the data obtained from the respondents is stable and trustworthy for subsequent structural model testing.

Table 4. Coefficient Determination

Variable	R-square	R-square adjusted
Employee Performance	0.117	0.111
Job Satisfaction	0.469	0.463

Table 4 shows the coefficient of determination or R-square (R^2) is used to measure how much the independent variables in the model can explain the dependent variables. In the context of structural modeling based on Partial Least Squares (PLS), a high R^2 value indicates that the free variable makes a significant contribution to the formation of bound variables. Hair et al. (2021) stated that the R^2 value of 0.75 is classified as high, 0.50 is classified as moderate, and 0.25 is classified as low in the context of social science.

The data analysis revealed that the Job Satisfaction construct presented an R^2 value of 0.469, indicating that 46.9% of the variability in Job Satisfaction is accounted for by two primary constructs, namely Employee Performance and Work Environment. This value is classified as moderate, so it can be concluded that the model has a moderate ability to explain variations in respondents' perceptions of job

satisfaction. Although not yet high, the contribution of these two variables is quite significant and can be considered theoretically and practically in the context of human resource management.

Meanwhile, the Employee Performance construct has an R^2 value of 0.117, which means that only about 11.7% of the variation in employee performance can be explained by the Work Environment as the only exogenous variable. This value is relatively low, which indicates that while the Work Environment contributes to improved performance, there are many other factors outside of the model that can affect employee performance. These factors can be individual motivation, leadership style, workload, reward system, or even external factors such as economic conditions and organizational policies.

The adjusted R-square value, which is also shown in Table 4, does not differ much from the main R^2 value, 0.463 for Job Satisfaction and 0.111 for Employee Performance, respectively. This indicates that the model is stable despite adjustments to the number of predictors in the model. These results indicate that the constructed structural model has moderate explanatory strength for the Job Satisfaction variable and relatively weak for the Employee Performance variable. Therefore, future model development can consider the addition of other relevant constructs so that variations in employee performance can be explained more comprehensively.

Table 5. F2 Test

Variable	Employee Performance	Job Satisfaction
Employee Performance		0.445
Work Environment	0.132	0.156

Table 5 shows the data processing results reveal several key findings regarding the constructs of employee performance, job satisfaction, and work environment. The employee performance construct has an F^2 value of 0.445 in relation to Job Satisfaction, indicating a strong effect. This suggests that higher employee performance significantly enhances job satisfaction, driven by factors such as a sense of accomplishment, recognition, and clarity in job roles. In contrast, the work environment construct shows an F^2 value of 0.132 on employee performance, indicating a small effect. While a supportive work environment contributes to employee performance, it is not the primary driver, as other factors like intrinsic motivation and training likely play crucial roles. However, the work environment does exhibit a medium effect on Job Satisfaction, with an F^2 value of 0.156. This indicates that aspects such as physical comfort, colleague relationships, and overall organizational atmosphere significantly impact individual job satisfaction. Findings suggest that while the work environment is important for enhancing job satisfaction, its influence on employee performance is less pronounced. Companies should consider investing in a positive workplace environment to boost job satisfaction, which can lead to improved employee retention and productivity in the long run.

Table 6. Hypothesis Test

Variable	Sample	Mean	Std. Dev	t- statistics	p- values
Employee Performance -> Job Satisfaction	0.517	0.517	0.067	7.719	0.000
Work Environment - > Employee Performance	0.341	0.348	0.071	4.824	0.000
Work Environment - > Job Satisfaction	0.306	0.309	0.065	4.690	0.000
Work Environment -> Employee Performance -> Job Satisfaction	0.177	0.179	0.039	4.511	0.000

Table 6 shows the findings highlight the significant relationship between the work environment, employee performance, and job satisfaction within the organization. A strong connection is observed between job satisfaction and employee performance, with a coefficient of 0.517 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating that higher job satisfaction levels lead to improved employee performance. As employees enhance their performance in fulfilling duties, their overall job satisfaction increases. Additionally, the work environment plays a crucial role in influencing both employee performance and job satisfaction. The analysis shows a coefficient of 0.341 and a p-value of 0.000 for performance, suggesting that a positive work atmosphere encompassing physical, social, and organizational culture enhances employee performance. Similarly, the work environment positively impacts job satisfaction with a coefficient of 0.306 and high significance, indicating that a supportive workplace fosters job satisfaction. Moreover, the work environment has a significant indirect effect on job satisfaction, mediated by employee performance, with a mediating coefficient of 0.177 and a p-value of 0.000. This suggests that a supportive workplace boosts productivity, which in turn enhances job satisfaction. The results demonstrate that the work environment underpins both employee performance and satisfaction, with performance serving as a key link between environmental conditions and job satisfaction perceptions.

5. Discussion

Work is an important factor that can affect the performance of employee tasks. Physical work environments such as workspace comfort, lighting, and cleanliness, as well as nonphysical environments such as harmonious interpersonal relationships, have been shown to increase employee focus, motivation, and morale. When the work atmosphere is psychologically and physically supportive, employees feel more motivated to complete their tasks optimally. This supports the concept put forward by Raziq and Maulabakhsh (2015) that performance reflects how employees respond to their work environment. Sedarmayanti (2015) emphasized that the physical and non-physical work environment play a direct or indirect role in shaping work behavior. This research proves that a well-designed work environment is not only a workplace, but also a source of positive energy that strengthens the spirit of employee achievement.

Additionally, this research discovered that the workplace significantly influences job satisfaction. This discovery supports Sedarmayanti (2015) perspective that the work environment affects not just productivity, but also the psychological elements of employees. A pleasant, tidy, open, and low-stress workplace has been shown to enhance employee satisfaction with their jobs. A supportive work atmosphere fosters a feeling of safety and worth, which in turn boosts involvement and contentment in performing everyday responsibilities. According to Anorogo and Widiyanti (1993), the environment surrounding employees can influence their emotions and perceptions in the workplace. Consequently, businesses aiming to enhance employee satisfaction must focus on elements of the workplace, including both tangible and intangible factors.

The examination of the connection between employee performance and job satisfaction reveals a considerable and notable impact. Job satisfaction is a key factor in influencing productive work behavior. Content employees are generally more motivated, accountable, and play a significant role in reaching organizational objectives. Job satisfaction represents an employee's favourable view of their job, the workplace, and their work relationships. When workers believe they are appreciated and operate in a nurturing atmosphere, they demonstrate improved job performance, as confirmed by Mensah (2015) and Khan et al. (2019). This study supports this

perspective, highlighting that job satisfaction acts as a key influence in enhancing work quality and efficiency.

Ultimately, the study's findings indicated that job satisfaction acts as a mediator between the work environment and employee performance. This implies that a positive work environment not only directly influences performance but also enhances job satisfaction initially, which subsequently fosters better performance. In other terms, the workplace acts as a base, and job satisfaction functions as a link that guides employees to peak performance. These results emphasize that managing the work environment should be paired with a strategy to enhance job satisfaction for optimal employee performance. According to the perspectives of Arijanto (2018) and Yimam (2022), employee performance is shaped not just by technical skills, but also by positive perceptions and emotions regarding the workplace and their roles within it. Consequently, job satisfaction serves not just as a result but also as an essential factor in a comprehensive performance enhancement framework.

6. Conclusion

Based on the analysis, the work environment, both physical and psychosocial, has a significant impact on employee performance and satisfaction. The findings indicate that a supportive workplace not only increases productivity but also fosters a sense of satisfaction and fulfils emotional needs. The relationship between job satisfaction and performance is reciprocal, with satisfaction acting as a mediator that strengthens the effect of the work environment on productivity. The implications of this study emphasize the importance of a holistic approach to human resource management, balancing technical and psychosocial aspects to continuously improve performance. Organizations need to prioritize employee well-being through responsive policies, regular evaluations, and an inclusive work environment.

However, this study has limitations, such as the limited scope of respondents in a specific location or industry, so the findings may not be generalizable. The cross-sectional study design also hinders understanding the dynamics of long-term behavioural change. Furthermore, other variables such as leadership, motivation, or compensation systems were not included, despite their potential to modify the results. Recommendations for future research include: Expanding the geographic and sectoral scope for external validation, a longitudinal or experimental approach to examine the development of variables over time, and integrating qualitative methods (interviews/observations) for in-depth exploration of psychosocial factors. The addition of moderator variables (e.g., organizational culture) could also enrich the analysis. Further research suggestions could include testing similar models in different sectors, such as education or healthcare, as well as analysing the impact of intervention programs designed to improve employee well-being. Thus, these findings are not only relevant for HR practitioners but also open up opportunities for developing more dynamic, context-based management theories.

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Ethical approval was obtained for this study. The manuscript represents original work and has not been previously published, nor is it under consideration by another journal.

Data Disclosure Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.



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