Effect of psychological empowerment on human resource management with the mediating role of emotional engagement in employees of selected sport federations

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to investigate the effect of psychological empowerment on human resource retention in selected sports federations, with the role of emotional commitment as a mediating factor. A cross-sectional study was carried out. The statistical population of the study (270 employees) was all official staff of five selected federations (wrestling, volleyball, taekwondo, soccer and swimming). Based on the Morgan table, 175 individuals were selected as the statistical sample. In order to assess the studied variables, Spritzer's psychological empowerment questionnaire (1995), Allen and Meyer Commitment Measurement Questionnaire (1991), and Kaident's staff retention questionnaire (2009) were used. The reliability of the questionnaires was 0.89, 0.87, and 0.84, respectively. In order to analyze the data, descriptive and inferential statistics (Kolmogorov Smirnov, Pearson Correlation Coefficient, Path Analysis Model) were used. The results showed that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between psychological empowerment and human resources maintenance (0.56). Emotional commitment with an impact factor of 0.35 plays a mediating role in relation to psychological empowerment in human resource retention. Therefore, the officials of sports federations can improve the maintenance of human resources by establishing a complete and desirable psychological empowerment and paying attention to the concept of emotional intelligence at the organization level.

KEYWORDS

1. INTRODUCTION

Workforce reduction in organizations has become one of the most important concerns of managers of organizations today. For this reason, organizations that can understand the causes and factors that affect employees' abandonment will be able to apply effective policies and practices to protect and retain human resources before employees leave the organization. Hence, one of the most important tasks of human resource management is the maintenance of human resources. In this context, crawl rate is used as one of the main indicators to evaluate the performance of human resource management, and as far as it is conventional, management performance in the field of personnel retention is considered desirable (Heilmann et al., 2008). With the increasing competition and expansion of human resource development, organizations are trying to maintain their talented employees and empower them so that they can perform well. Every organization pays a lot of expenses to educate, train, and prepare their employees to perform as desired, so losing their valuable skills and experience costs a lot.

Attracting and maintaining human resources is a set of management actions and measures that allow the organization and maintenance of human resources in the organization. Maintaining the safety, morale, interest, and specialization of employees is referred to as staff retention. Maintenance is a process where the management tries to increase the willingness of employees to continue to serve employees in the organization by using factors such as effective payment systems, training and development, promotion on the basis of merit, and the provision of amenities and services. Maintenance is the creation of a desirable employment situation for employees so that they are not willing to move to another organization (Inceoglu & War, 2012). The factors that affect the maintaining human resources can be classified into two categories: individual factors and organizational factors. From the point of view of sociologists and management scholars, each of these two groups engages in an environment that surrounds the environment with concepts such as values, beliefs, faiths, and other cultural elements. Therefore, when examining individual factors, factors such as values and beliefs, age and career history, education, and personality are discussed. When discussing the organization, attention is mainly focused on organizational and cultural factors in cultivating and maintaining human resources (Burke & El-Kot, 2010).

Psychological empowerment is one of the organizational factors that is considered as a positive psychological developmental status with the attributes of commitment and effort required to succeed in challenging tasks and assignments, sustainability in the goal and, if necessary, a pathway to achieve the goal, succeed and perseverance when faced with hardships and problems (Luthans,

Avolio, Avey & Norman, 2007). Yousef (2010) in his research showed that there is a negative correlation between job intention and psychological empowerment as well as anti-citizen behavior in the organization. Avey et al. (2010) also showed a significant negative relationship between the dimensions of psychological empowerment and absenteeism at work. Based on their research results, the presence of dimensions of psychological empowerment in the organization leads to the survival and longer retention of employees in the organization. Manyaka et al. (2017) also showed that credible leadership has a significant impact on psychological capital. This leads to a positive impact on organizational commitment, which leads to the inability of employees to leave the job.

Sanchez (2012) described psychological empowerment of employees as an important element in achieving excellent work outcomes. When individuals feel psychological empowerment, they will have multiple organizational and individual interests, such as creativity, flexibility, problem solving, good job performance, job satisfaction, mental health, and psychological health.

Empowerment has been introduced in the organization and management literature since 1980. A new approach is to increase productivity by increasing employee commitment to the organization and vice versa, used by managers, and it is a valuable way of balancing the full control of management and employee freedom at work. Its main philosophy is to change the management structure from a traditional and pyramidal form to a collaborative structure (Cheung et al., 2012). In fact, the psychological empowerment of employees is defined as the process of increasing internal motivation, which means the liberation of the forces and the internal power of individuals, as well as the provision of platforms and opportunities for the development of talents, abilities and merits (Hill & Huq, 2004).

Empowerment has four dimensions of the sense of competence: the degree to which one perform job tasks skillfully and successfully, the right to choose - freedom of action and independence of the individual in determining the necessary activities for his tasks, the sense of effectiveness; the degree to which a person can influence the strategic, operational and administrative results of a job, and the sense of meaningfulness, that is the value of the goals of the job and the individual's interest in the job (Carless, 2004). This characteristic of organizational culture increases the desire for survival and great efforts for the organization and acceptance of the organization's values and goals (Jung & Yoon, 2016).

On the other hand, organizational commitment is a strong desire for the survival of membership in a particular organization, a desire to make great efforts for the organization, and a firm belief in accepting the values and goals of the organization. Theorists have assumed a three-

pronged model of organizational commitment. In this model, organizational commitment consists of three aspects: emotional, continuous, and task-oriented or normative.

Affective commitment reflects the emotional affinity of employees to identify with the organization and participate in organizational activities. Continuous commitment also involves an obligation to continue working in the organization and not to quit because of the losses that the organization brings to the individual, but a normative commitment involves a moral obligation to stay in the organization (Saxena & Saxena, 2015). Emotional commitment that belongs to a person's sense of organization, is an important concept for understanding loyalty to the organization and the devotion of employees to the organization. Among the three components of organizational commitment, emotional commitment has the strongest and most positive correlation with desirable job outcomes, such as increased attention to performance and organizational citizenship behaviors. As a result, emotional commitment reflects an overall organizational commitment (Suma & Lesha, 2013).

Because of the importance and impact of emotional commitment on the success of organizations and the impact it can have on human resources in the organization, in this research, emotional commitment is considered as a bridge between the psychological empowerment and human resources maintenance.

Sports organizations should always be considered by researchers in different fields, as they play an important role in the development of sports and public health. One of the most important organizations in the field of sports of the country are sports federations, as federations promote and develop sports of the country and plan the development of championship and professional sports. The role of the staff of these federations in this regard is fundamental for the staff of sports federations and for conducting scientific research in this field. If the employees of these sports federations experience the opposite aspects of psychological empowerment such as disability, helplessness, and alienation, and lose their commitment to the organization, it will bring many disadvantages to this sports organization and will impact its performance. Therefore, considering the importance of psychological empowerment and emotional commitment as one of the main indicators of human resource development in the organization and the effect may can have on maintaining human resources in the organization, the aim of this study is to investigate the effect of psychological empowerment on human resource retention in selected sports federations, with the role of emotional commitment as a mediating factor.

There were three hypotheses (H) of research: H1: Psychological empowerment affects the maintenance of human resources of the staff of the selected sports federations. H2: Psychological

empowerment affects the emotional commitment of the employees of the selected sports federations. H3: The emotional commitment mediates the relationship between psychological empowerment and human resource retention.

2. METHODS

2.1. Design and participants

A cross-sectional study was carried out. The statistical population of the survey included all the official staff (270 people) of the five selected federations selected (wrestling, volleyball, taekwondo, football and swimming). Because of the large size of the studied population, simple random sampling method was used. Morgan table has been used to determine the statistical sample which consisted of 175 individuals.

2.2. Instruments

The instruments used in this study were three standard spatial empowerment questionnaires. To assess psychological empowerment, Spritzer's (1995) questionnaire was used. Allen and Meyer's (1991) questionnaire was used to assess emotional commitment and also Kaident's staffing retention (2009) questionnaire was used. Spritzer's psychological empowerment questionnaire (1995) contains 12 questions and measures four dimensions; sense of meaningfulness of a job, sense of competence, sense of being effective at work, sense of having the right to choose. The questionnaire was designed based on the Likert-type five-item scale (from completely disagree to completely agree). The Allen and Meyer Commitment Measurement Questionnaire (1991) has 8 questions and is based on the Likert-type five-item scale, and the Kaident staff retention questionnaire (2009) has 11 questions and it also was designed based on the Likert-type five-item scale. The content validity of the questionnaires was confirmed by 8 sports management professors and the reliability of the questionnaires was 89.8, 0.87, and 0.84, respectively.

2.3. Data analysis

For data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistics were used using the 22.0 version of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and LISREL 8.70 software. First, descriptive statistics were used to study the demographic data of the participants. As for inferential statistics,

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to determine the normal distribution of research data, and then, Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Path Analysis Model.

3. RESULTS

A total of 175 individuals of the five selected federations participated in the study. The descriptive results of the research showed that 19.0% (n=34) of the research sample were employees of the Wrestling Federation, 22.0% (n=38) of the sample were employees of the Volleyball Federation, 21.0% (n=36) were employees of the Taekwondo Federation, 19.0% (n=34) were employees of the Football Federation, and 19.0% (n=33) of the sample were employees of the Swimming Federation. Overall, 59.0% of the sample were male, while 41.0% were women. 57.0% of the sample had a bachelor's degree, while 43.0% had a master's degree. Almost half of the sample (46.0%) were between 36-40 years old. Overall, 59.0% of the sample have a history of exercise for less than 5 years, 39.0% for 6-10 years, and 9.0% for more than 10 years. Furthermore, 22.0% of the research sample have a history of service for less than 5 years, 50.0% between 10-6 years and 28.0% for more than 10 years. The results of the variables based on federation are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Means and standard deviations of the research variables based on federation.

M	SD	N	Variable	Federation
			Emotional commitment	
3.89	0.57		Psychological	
3.59	0.63	34	Empowerment	Wrestling
3.90	0.56		Staff retention	
			Emotional commitment	
3.75	0.51		Psychological	
3.72	0.49	38	Empowerment	Volleyball
4.09	0.72		Staff retention	
			Emotional commitment	
4.02	0.47		Psychological	
3.61	0.52	36	Empowerment	Taekwondo
4.15	0.63		Staff retention	
			Emotional commitment	
3.95	0.69		Psychological	
3.55	0.47	34	Empowerment	Soccer
4.12	0.74		Staff retention	
			Emotional commitment	
3.80	0.48		Psychological	
3.64	0.56	33	Empowerment	Swimming
4.02	0.61		Staff retention	

The results of Table 1 show that the average of the variables of the research by type of federations is higher than the average of standard 3 and has a favorable level. To examine the normal distribution of the research variables, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used Table 2. The results of Table 2 show that since the statistically significance level of the main variables of the research (psychological empowerment, emotional commitment, staff retention) is higher than 0.05, the distribution of data is normal and parametric statistics can be used for analysis.

Table 2. Determination of normal distribution of research variables.

Staff retention	Emotional commitment	Psychological empowerment	Variable
1/11	1/03	0/63	Z
0/19	0/26	0/82	sig
175	175	175	N

Chi-Square=655.73, df=347, P-value=0.00146, RMSEA=0.015
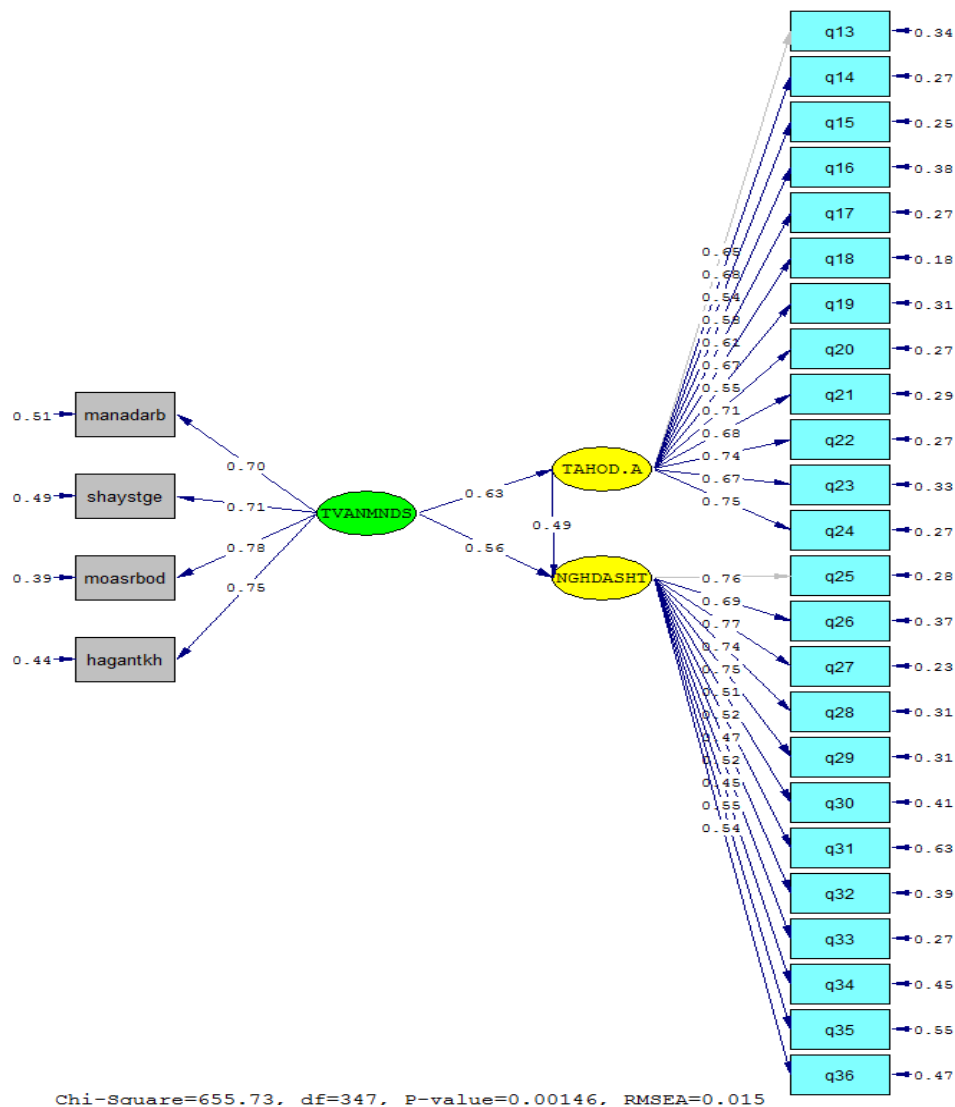
Figure 1. Structural research model in standard mode.
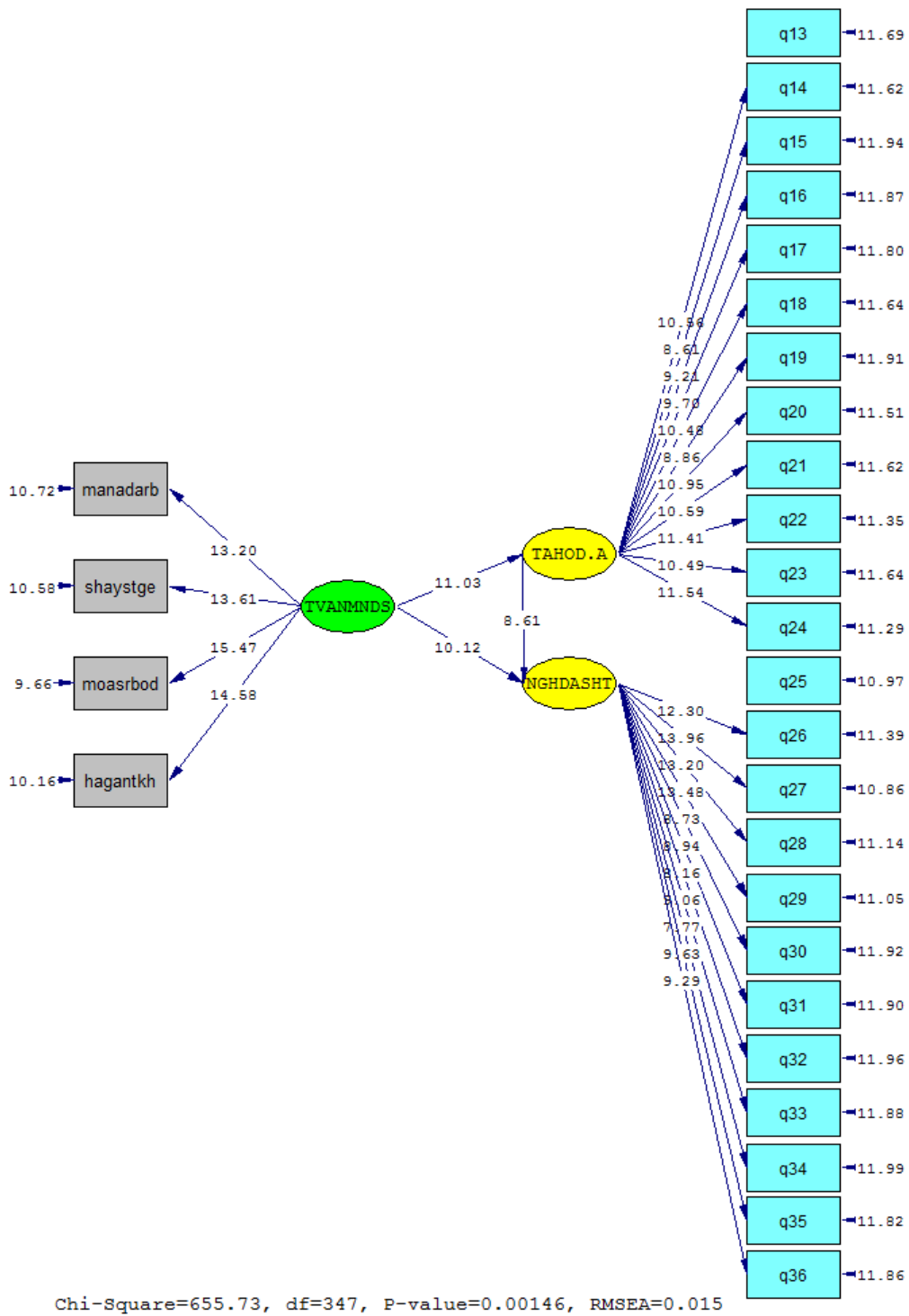
Figure 2. Structural structure of the research in a meaningful state

The fitting measurements, as well as the calculated values for the proposed model have been reported in Table 3, which indicates the suitability of the model.

Table 3. Evaluation of fitting indicators

Fit indices	Properties	Great values	Research values	Fit result
x^2/df	≤3	≤2	1/88	Fit
RMSEA	≤0/1	≤0/08	0/015	Fit
NFI	≥0/9	≥0/95	0/94	Fit
NNFI	≥0/9	≥0/95	0/91	Fit
CFI	≥0/9	≥0/95	0/92	Fit
IFI	≥0/9	≥0/95	0/90	Fit
GFI	≥0/9	≥0/95	0/95	Fit
AGFI	≥0/8	≥0/9	0/85	Fit

The hypothesis results are presented in the following table (Table 4).

Table 4. Results of hypothesis

Result	Indirect path coefficient	Direct route coefficient	The path of hypotheses
Confirmation	-	56.0** (03.11)	Psychological empowerment affects the maintenance of human resources of the staff of the selected sports federations
Confirmation	-	0.63** (12.10)	Psychological empowerment affects the emotional commitment of the employees of the selected sports federations.
Confirmation	0.35** (61.8)	-	The emotional commitment mediates the relationship between psychological empowerment and human resource retention

*Note: ns = nonsignificant: *p <.05; **p <.01;***p <.001.*

The mediator effect is obtained from the product of the influence coefficient of the independent-mediating variable with the influence coefficient of the mediating-dependent variable. The results of Table 4 show that the effect of psychological empowerment on the maintenance of human resources of employees of selected sports federations with the mediating role of emotional commitment is 35%, thus confirming the assumptions of the research.

4. DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the research, the correlation between psychological empowerment and human resource retention is significant. There is a significant positive correlation between psychological empowerment and human resources maintenance (0.56), which increases with increasing psychological empowerment in the organization the amount of human resources in the selected sports federations. Also, there is a statistically significant positive correlation between psychological empowerment and emotional commitment of employees (0.63).

By increasing the psychological empowerment in the organization, the amount of emotional commitment of employees in the selected sports federations increases. The results of this part of the research, are in agreement with the results of a study by Li et al. (2014), which showed that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between psychological empowerment and emotional commitment. Furthermore, Hamid et al. (2013), concluded that empowerment of individuals led to an increase in job satisfaction levels. Organizational commitment and job performance are both directional and consistent.

According to other research results, the effect that psychological empowerment indirectly and through the variable of emotional commitment on the maintenance of human resources is 0.35%. Therefore, it can be concluded that affective commitment, mediating the relationship between psychological empowerment and maintaining human resources is positive and relative. As a result, psychological empowerment is influenced by the emotional commitment to retaining human resources in the selected sports federations. Pradhan, Jenna & Pradhan (2017), who concluded that psychological capital substantially mediates the relationships between organizational commitment and employee retention, confirms the results of this part of the research.

In general, the main contributing factor for the continuation of work in the organization consist in the emotional commitment of the employees, and the weakness of the psychological capital is evident in this research. Many organizations include employees with a high level of knowledge and skills, but they do not benefit from their abilities. Therefore, it is necessary to be aware of and provide suitable platforms for enhancing the capabilities of employees, including psychological empowerment and organizational commitment, because psychological empowerment and commitment are an important strategic organization for the development of different organizations to adapt to external changes. Driven by a motivated and capable staff, it will enable managers to compete quickly and successful. It is obvious that the Ministry of Culture has a generally human-cultural nature and takes place with human interactions in the context of culture or the corporate

environment. Certainly, human resource management in general is a process of recruiting, hiring, educating and maintaining human resources in the organization. Therefore, the superior art of sports federation leaders and officials is to maintain effective manpower in these sports organizations in order to increase productivity. The result of paying attention to human resources and maintaining this important source is job satisfaction, which leads to self-efficacy, and the maintenance of the workforce is expressed as satisfactory in work at sports federations. Therefore, the managers of selected sports federations can understand the importance of each of the above variables and their application at the level of their organization and policies, as well as taking into account the important role of psychological empowerment and emotional commitment, in order to take more effective steps to improve the employee's career eagerness in order to increase their retention in the organization.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

In this context, the following applied suggestions are presented based on the findings of the research:

- It is suggested to the elected sports federation officials to design the organization's plans in such a way that employees find their work activities meaningful and that they create the necessary assurance to do the work.
- It is suggested to the elected sports federation officials to use employee participation plans in the organization's activities so that employees can assure their capabilities for successful work, as well as the continuous use of employees' opinions and suggestions by managements to increase their work capacity.
- It is suggested to the elected sports federation officials to set up training programs for their staff so that they acquire the required skills.
- It is suggested to the elected sports federation officials to give them the necessary authority to decide how to do the work, and to give them considerable opportunities for freedom and reasoning about how they work.
- It is recommended that the officials of the elected sports federation emotionally deal with the staff in a way that the organization has a lot of personal meaning for them, and have a sense of belonging and interest in their work organization.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors listed have made a substantial, direct and intellectual contribution to the work, and approved it for publication.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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