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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Can Gratitude Become a Religiosity Mediator on Employee Job Satisfaction?

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Abstract:

Aims:

This study aimed to determine the role of gratitude as a mediator between the influence of religiosity on employee job satisfaction

Methods:

Quantitative research design with purposive sampling technique on 40 Primagroup Indonesia employees. Data were collected using the Religiosity Scale, Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, and Gratitude Scale, distributed directly to the respondents. Data analysis used Mediation Regression Analysis with the help of the SPSS version 26 program.

Results:

The test results of the direct influence of religiosity on job satisfaction were not significant ($\beta = 0.10$; p = 0.56 (p > 0.05)), meaning that hypothesis 1 was rejected. These results show that there is no direct influence of religiosity on job satisfaction when a gratitude mediator is presented. The results of the gratitude test as a mediator of the influence of religiosity on job satisfaction showed significant results ($\beta = 0.23$; p = 0.04 (p < 0.05)), which means that hypothesis 2 is accepted.

Conclusion:

The results showed that gratitude could mediate the effect of religiosity on employee job satisfaction. Gratitude can fully mediate the influence of religiosity on employee job satisfaction. So employees who have religiosity will feel more satisfied with their workers if through gratitude.

Keywords: Religiosity, Job satisfaction, Gratitude, Job, Employees, Satisfaction.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Employees are the most important asset for the company, without employees the company will never exist and develop, the existence of employees is very important for the company, so good employee management is needed to always feel satisfied with their work. Job satisfaction has an effect on organizational progress. Job satisfaction has a strong relationship with job involvement, characterized by a strong feeling of being involved in work, and is related to a sense of meaning or a sense of coherence in work [1, 2].

Employee satisfaction will increase innovative behavior for employees for organizational development [2, 3]. High job satisfaction is positively correlated with better performance, besides that, it will increase emotional bonds and pride in being a member of the organization that is owned so that employees will maintain organizational integrity and morale [4]. In addition, job satisfaction will reduce negative behavior at work [5, 6].

Employees who are satisfied with their work will reduce their intention to leave their jobs [7, 8] as well as their intention to retire early from their job [9]. However, it will increase employee commitment to work and organization [8]. Job satisfaction is not only beneficial for the organization but will also provide positive things to employees that make them feel satisfied with their careers and increase their life satisfaction [10]. Job satisfaction and job involvement were found to have a reciprocal relationship over time. Then it will affect selfconfidence [7]. Employees can survive and bounce back from work pressures because of satisfaction with their work [1].

Job satisfaction, especially funding and job support training, will improve subjective well-being and reduce posttraumatic stress to uphold work spirit and contribution [11]. Employees who feel dissatisfied with their work have mental

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health problems such as symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress [12]. Previous research has shown factors that influence job dissatisfaction. Work fatigue, especially the emotional exhaustion aspect, refers to the depletion of individual emotional resources affecting the decrease in job satisfaction. Likewise, aspects of personal achievement, namely low levels of self-efficacy and continuous negative feelings about oneself, have a negative impact on job satisfaction [13].

If someone assesses the external demands of the job as additional or exceeding his resources so that he experiences work stress, then it will lead to feelings of dissatisfaction [14]. Situations full of threats and pressure at work decrease job satisfaction, so they are less motivated to keep doing their jobs [15]. Job satisfaction relates to organization and working conditions, improvements in team supervision, as well as equal rights and obligations in service processes and job training [16]. Previous research has shown the role of interpersonal trust and mutual respect as a major influence on job satisfaction [17].

Likewise, religiosity in the workplace can significantly affect job satisfaction [18]. Improving job satisfaction starts with building a dimension of religiosity [19, 20]. Religiosity or spirituality increases employee commitment and performance [21]. In addition, positive psychology encourages and motivates employees to develop and increase their potential in the workplace [22]. Gratitude is part of the orientation of life to pay attention and appreciate the positive things in life [23].

Job satisfaction is a very important aspect of the working world. Job satisfaction is a condition in which an employee feels content with their job, both financially and psychologically. Employees who are satisfied with their job tend to be more productive, contribute more, and have a desire to continue working for the same company. However, many employees do not feel satisfied with their job, which can lead to feelings of stress, lack of motivation, and decreased productivity. To improve job satisfaction, a more holistic approach is needed. One approach that can be taken is through practicing gratitude in the workplace. Employees who are grateful at work believe that they will be more satisfied with their jobs within six months and are therefore less likely to seek and think about opportunities in other companies.

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Employees with more positive moods tend to participate and engage in activities to strengthen relationships with coworkers. Gratitude, as a positive trait, can help individuals to build friendships and other social bonds and lead to better social support [27, 28]. This indicates that a grateful attitude can help increase social support in the workplace and contribute to enhancing job satisfaction and employee productivity. In this context, gratitude practice in the workplace can be considered as an effort to improve employee well-being and assist in creating a more positive work environment.

However, previous research shows high gratitude because of the encouragement of religiosity, employees who believe in religion will be grateful for their work [29]. Religiosity and gratitude facilitate individuals to develop positive perceptions about life [30]. Religiosity provides an opportunity to give thanks or use religious aspects as a form of gratitude development, such as forms of teaching and traditional ritual activities. Religious experiences increase gratitude, such as thanking God for what he has in daily life (*e.g.*, the ability to walk) or positive events that are not sad [31].

Trust and relationship with God [32] and attending worship tend to feel more grateful from time to time than parents who do not go to worship places, like mosques, church, et cetera [33]. A person who believes in a Supreme Being, spends time reading scriptures and other religious literature, engages in religious activities, prays, and develops a relationship with God tends to be more grateful. Having a stronger belief in God's help tends to feel more grateful [33].

The results of the research above allow gratitude as a mediator. Previous research has found that gratitude acts as an indirect pathway to increased life satisfaction [34]. Gratitude also shows an indirect path of people's tendency to get support and provide social support [35]. Even in an organizational context, the indirect path of gratitude, it will increase organizational citizenship behavior and creativity among employees [36].

Most of the previous research only explained gratitude according to Western theory. While in this study will examine gratitude based on Islamic views. Because for Muslims, giving thanks to God is a very principled thing, both in the heart, verbally, and in behavior. God's promise to increase sustenance if someone is grateful and vice versa will be cursed if he denies it. It is emphasized that the awareness that human sustenance comes from God [37].

The description above can be concluded that gratitude is an indirect way to increase employee job satisfaction. However, no previous research has been found that shows the mediating role of gratitude between the influence of religiosity on job satisfaction. This study aims to determine the role of gratitude as a mediator of the influence of religiosity on job satisfaction.

2. THEORETICAL ANALYSIS AND MODEL HYPOTHESIS

Job satisfaction is an employee's overall evaluation of his work as a pleasant or unpleasant job [38 - 41]. Job satisfaction is an employee's attitude toward his job [42]. So, job satisfaction consists of feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that employees have that are relevant to their work.

There is a general approach used to explain the development of job satisfaction. First, the job characteristics

approach is that job satisfaction is determined by the nature of the job or the characteristics of the organization where you work. Employees evaluate their jobs and organizations and make some determinations of their relative satisfaction levels. Job satisfaction is determined by the comparison of scores for each aspect, such as salary, working conditions, and supervisory-employees, by making some judgments about what they currently receive. This assessment is only meaningful when compared to what the employee thinks should be received and what the employee gives [4, 43].

According to a study, self-perception theory which is a more general social psychological theory of attitude formation [41]. Inner self-concepts are formed from the opinions of others, social comparisons, and self-attributions influence the way we see ourselves. This view challenges whether long-time employees hold stable attitudes toward their jobs. Because employee job satisfaction can fluctuate and be determined based on the features of the situation [4].

Another explanation that is most closely related to social information processing theory is that employees develop attitudes such as job satisfaction through processing information from the social environment. According to a study [44], social comparison theory states that people often look to others to interpret and understand the environment. The practical implication of this theory is that organizations must be careful not to allow new employees to be spotted by disgruntled employees during the socialization process.

2.1. Job Satisfaction

Job characteristics that build job satisfaction are the job itself, satisfaction with supervisors, satisfaction with coworkers, promotions, and salaries [45]. Each employee will have a different level of satisfaction according to the prevailing perception within him. The more aspects of work that are in accordance with individual desires, the higher the level of perceived satisfaction or vice versa [46]. The facet satisfaction model [47] explains that employees will be satisfied with their work if the perception they receive from the aspect of their job is in accordance with the reality they get from the perceived aspect.

The measurement of the level of job satisfaction is divided into two, namely intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic is employees' feelings about the nature of work, such as activity, independence, social status, variety, utilization of abilities, authority, moral values, security, social service, achievement, creativity, and responsibility. While extrinsic is employees' feelings about aspects of work that are outside of work, such as progress, company policies and practices, compensation, coworkers, recognition, leadership-employee relations, leadership-technical practices, and working conditions [48, 49].

2.2. Religiosity and Job Satisfaction

Religiosity is human appreciation in dealing with God [50]. A person who is religious will believe in the existence of God and the Almighty regulates the rules of human life in behaving [51]. Religiosity emphasizes physical worship or human activity, belief or understanding of God and the spirit or

actualization of virtue and goodness. Based on this framework, the contract of religiosity is measured by aspects of one's Islam, faith, and ihsan [52].

Islam, Iman and Ihsan become a unity that cannot be separated. Islam is a religion that is blessed by God, while faith is the basic belief of the Islamic creed. Then, this belief is realized by working on the five pillars of Islam. The pillars of Islam are carried out by means of Ihsan to get closer to God and as a benchmark for the level of faith and piety of a servant [53].

Religiosity is manifested through behavior that displays one's religious values or beliefs [54]. Internalizing the values of religiosity in the workplace so that employees feel material and spiritual satisfaction together [55]. Religious teachings increase a person's understanding of the importance of his work so that it positively affects their satisfaction and performance [56, 57]. Religious employees view work as an obligation to try to make ends meet. Work, in general, is a source of independence, personal growth, self-esteem, and a place of charity for others [58]. On the other hand, if you don't work hard, you will be considered a failure [59].

Employees with high religiosity are more appreciative of the ability of co-workers in dealing with problems and are able to refresh the atmosphere in order to restore mutual enthusiasm, thereby increasing satisfaction with co-workers and superiors [60]. Religiosity fosters social bonds that will motivate people to work in teams [61].

Employees who feel that their work has a calling from the Most High or is related to the Divine, affects job satisfaction [62]. Fulfillment of the divine need for employees can result in a more collaborative and responsible workforce to form a highly satisfied workforce base [38].

2.3. Religiosity, Gratitude, and Job Satisfaction

All religions have the concept of gratitude as a moral influence and noble human nature [63]. Belief in and relying on a guardian angel belief is an expression of religious experience associated with divine messengers that gives rise to feelings of gratitude and amazement, as well as the ability to feel and appreciate the beauty of what one has.

The correlation between gratitude and religiosity is very close. People involved in activities [64] and who believe in religion will consider gratitude very prioritized and the highest form of gratitude [38]. Grateful not only to the Creator but also to each other. A religious person strongly believes that by being grateful to God then, others will get a reward [65].

Grateful for being pleased with God's favor and then expressing it with kindness. Ridho takes the form of understanding knowledge and then accepting the heart for God's favor. But it is not enough to be grateful without a response in the form of external actions, both verbally and in action [66]. There are two dimensions of gratitude, namely the internal dimension, which is a process of pleasure and acceptance of favors with knowledge and heart. While the external dimension is a form of expression and behavioral response to God's favor which is carried out verbally and by deed [66].



Fig. (1). Theoretical model.

Employee gratitude relates to feelings of building, appreciating, and helping to create a positive and happy work environment, influencing and strengthening relationships between management and co-workers is a form of job satisfaction related to employee gratitude. Gratitude keeps employees motivated, interested, and loyal to the organization despite the ever-changing dynamics of conflict. Gratitude increases motivation for employee performance, and increases individual and organizational success [67].

Satisfied with the job because of a fairly stable evaluation of how the job meets the needs, wants, or expectations of employees [68]. Job satisfaction is not only due to the fulfillment of employee needs and expectations. However, it is also an expression of gratitude among employees with gratitude for their performance [69]. So the motivation of employees to be grateful increases job satisfaction [40].

2.4. Theoretical Model dan Hypothesis

The theoretical model of the relationship between variables from the analysis of the literature review can be seen in Fig. (1).

Religiosity affects employee job satisfaction (H1) and gratitude mediates the effect of religiosity on employee job satisfaction (H2).

3. METHODS

The Ethical Commission Research of the Faculty of Psychology, University of Muhammadiyah Malang, approved the study (approval number research ethics: E.6.m/391/FPsi-UMM/XI/2021). The authors assured the participants that the study data would be presented anonymously, and they agreed in writing to participate.

3.1. Research Design

This study uses quantitative methods by limiting the phenomenon to several variables studied. Mediation regression research is designed to test the mediator variable as an indirect path of the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable [70, 71]. If the condition of the independent variable is correlated with the mediator variable, and the mediator variable is correlated with the dependent variable, then the mediator variable functions as an indirect path of the independent variable with the dependent variable [72].

3.2. Research Subject

The research subjects were taken using a purposive

sampling technique, the sample size had no statistically definite provisions, and the acceptable sample size for correlational research was at least 30 subjects, but larger would be better [73], depending on the ability of the researcher, the size of the population, or the magnitude of the risk [74]. So the research subjects specifically for Primagroup employees who are Muslim are 40 (47%). The employees collected are male and female (26:14) aged 18 - 49 years (M = 29,05; SD = 7,63).

3.3. Research Instruments

The research instrument in data collection used a Likert scale model. Job satisfaction variable was measured using the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire [48] based on intrinsic and extrinsic aspects, with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.854. The religiosity variable was measured using the IIUM Religiosity Scale [52], compiled to measure religiosity in Muslims centered on three aspects, namely Islam, faith, and ihsan, consisting of 10 items with a reliability value of (Cronbach's alpha) 0.780 [75]. Gratitude variable is measured using a gratitude scale [66] to measure the gratitude level of Muslims with the internal aspect of *al-shukr al-dākhiliyah* and external *al-shukr al-khārijiyah*, 13 items are divided into favorable and unfavorable statements with a reliability value of (Cronbach's negligent) 0.855 [66].

3.4. Research Procedure

The research procedure begins with compiling the research background and literature review as well as compiling research assumptions or theoretical models, continuing to develop relevant research methods, and modifying the scale that will be used in data collection. The data collection process begins with asking permission from the Primaland and Primajoss managers in Indonesia. After obtaining research permission from each manager, the research scale was distributed directly at the research location with each department's manager's help. Filling in the scale begins with the approval section to participate in this study, then the subject fills in his identity and the research scale. The process of distributing and filling out the scale takes one month; after all the scales are filled in, the researcher returns to the research site to take back the filled scale. The data collected were analyzed for normality, reliability, and variable correlation. After that, the analysis of hypothesis testing using the SPSS version 26.

3.5. Data Analysis

Before performing the analysis of hypothesis testing, the data must meet the requirements of normality and correlation

test. The data of this study show the Kolmogorov-Smirnov significance value of each variable meeting the normality of the data (Sig. > 0.05). The correlation test of this study must show a significant correlation as the basis for assumptions for the regression test. However, the correlation value between variables is not more than 0.8 because it will show multi correlation. The data analysis technique used in this research is Mediation Regression Analysis (MRA) [71] using Process 3.5 Hayes analysis in SPSS 26. This analysis technique is used to measure the role of gratitude (variable M) as a mediator of the influence of religiosity (variable X) on job satisfaction (variable Y). The mediation test has the following requirements: variable X has a significant effect on variable M; and the M variable has a significant effect on the Y variable.

4. RESULTS

The results of the statistical descriptive test obtained the average value (mean), standard deviation (SD), and correlation value of each variable in the following (Table 1).

Primagroup employees have an average job satisfaction of 3.95 (SD = 0.35), indicating a high category (score 1 - 5), religiosity shows an average of 3.50 (SD = 0.38), which is in the high category (score 1 - 4), and employee gratitude has an average of 3.38 (SD = 0.34) indicating the high category (score 1 - 4). The results of the correlation analysis between the variables (Table 2) job satisfaction with religiosity (r = 0.30 (p < 0.05)), the correlation between job satisfaction and gratitude (r = 0.48 (p < 0.01)), and religiosity with gratitude (r = 0.60 (p < 0.01)). Shows the results that all variables have a positive or unidirectional correlation with significance.

Hypothesis testing as the basis for making decisions obtained the following results:

The test results of the direct influence of religiosity on job satisfaction were not significant ($\beta = 0.10$; p = 0.56 (p > 0.05)), meaning that hypothesis 1 was rejected. These results show that there is no direct influence of religiosity on job satisfaction when a gratitude mediator is presented.

The results of the gratitude test as a mediator of the influence of religiosity on job satisfaction showed significant results ($\beta = 0.23$; p = 0.04 (p < 0.05)), which means that hypothesis 2 is accepted. These results indicate an indirect effect of gratitude for the influence of religiosity on job satisfaction. So the influence of religiosity fully requires gratitude to be able to increase employee job satisfaction because there is no direct effect of religiosity on job satisfaction.

5. DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that there is no significant direct effect of religiosity on job satisfaction for employees. Previous research has also shown that there is little direct influence of religiosity on job satisfaction and coworker satisfaction [76, 77]. This means that it is not due to the direct effect of religious beliefs as indicated by obedience to religious orders and carrying out religious rules for Primagroup employees so that there is a sense of satisfaction with the nature of work and other forms of support outside of work.

If the religiosity of Primagroup employees is only manifested by religious obedience, belief, and appreciation in life, it has not affected job satisfaction. The results above indicate that religiosity cannot stand alone as a variable that will boost the satisfaction of Primagroup employees.

As previous research shows, a person with religiosity encourages to excel in doing good deeds to get the best reward and will work harder to work on the mandate received. The urge to compete and hasten in goodness will increase job satisfaction [78].

Religious employees view work as an obligation to try to make ends meet. Work in general, is a source of independence, a means for personal growth and self-esteem, and a place of charity for others [58]. On the other hand, if you don't work hard, you will be considered a failure [59]. Employees work not because they are satisfied with getting wages or relationships with colleagues but to seek blessings and rewards as capital in the afterlife.

Table 1. Variable description.

-	-	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1	Job satisfaction	3,95	0,35	1	-	-
2	Religiosity	3,50	0,38	0,30*	1	-
3	Gratitude	3,38	0,34	0,48**	0,60**	1

Note: *. p < 0.05

**. p < 0.01

Table 2. Mediation regression test results.

Relationship between Variables		р	\mathbf{R}^2
Religiosity with job satisfaction		0,02	0,13
Religiosity with gratitude		0,00	0,36
Gratitude with job satisfaction		0,02	0,24
Religiosity with job satisfaction with the presence of gratitude (H1)		0,56	0,24
Gratitude mediator religiosity with job satisfaction (H2)		0,00	-

Note: Significance value *p* < 0,05

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This study shows that high religiosity means that employees obey religious orders, have strong beliefs, and deeply appreciate their religious rules. One of the fruits of faith and obedience is being grateful for every aspect of life, whether favorable or unfavorable. Religious knowledge followed by practice to feel the sweetness of faith, patience, fortitude, gentleness, compassion, justice, gratitude, prioritizing virtue, and happiness to help others must be the character of every Muslim employee [55]. Employees who believe in the greatness of God will be happy to receive every gift from God so that they are satisfied with their work.

Although the direct effect of religiosity on job satisfaction shows a positive correlation, it becomes meaningless when the mediating variable is present. So the results of this study show that gratitude acts as an indirect path to the full influence of religiosity on job satisfaction. Employees who obey the rules and orders of religion, believe in the teachings of their religion and live it when they worship and carry out daily activities in accordance with the rules of their religion. Then it will increase understanding and grow acceptance in the heart for all that is given, whether it is beneficial or detrimental, because it is a gift from God.

Through this influence, employees will feel satisfied in every situation and condition of their work, receive gifts from Primagroup, and build more positive relationships with colleagues and superiors. Previous research has shown that a relationship with God strengthens their gratitude which ultimately leads to higher job satisfaction [41, 79]. The religious practice fosters positive emotions, such as joy, serenity, gratitude, and hope, which broaden the mindset, make a person more creative, integrative, build and replenish personal and social resources [80] and give thanks to God than others will get a reward [65].

Gratitude is one of the fundamentals of religion. The creator of the universe is the provider of everything one has in this life (*i.e.*, consciousness, health, family, sanity, and wealth), and the possessor is obliged to give thanks to Allah. Not only on auspicious things but also for every situation that shows acceptance of Allah's decision. So praising and thanking Allah for His blessings is highly appreciated in Islam [81].

The influence of gratitude on individual attitudes toward others will lead to increased satisfaction in interpersonal aspects, for example, satisfaction with superiors and coworkers [82], which can help in enhancing teamwork and collaboration [83]. Belief in and involvement in religious activities, such as reading the scriptures, praying, or attending religious services, as personal resources that positively influence attitudes or behavior at work. Low personal resources in responding to work situations lead to job dissatisfaction [84]. So it can increase job satisfaction by encouraging employees to be grateful [40] as one of the positive emotions of personal and social resources.

One of the interesting things, Primaland and Primajoss managers, added information that Primagroup is committed to housing management according to religious rules; Primagroup also requires its employees to follow religious law, which is also a mandatory activity in Primagroup, for example, praying on time, attending religious studies, tadabur verses is in the holy book, and cover the aurat. The statement above may have a role in developing and fostering religiosity, which will impact the gratitude and/or job satisfaction of Primagroup employees. Previous research stated that increasing religiosity could be achieved through organizing recitations, social services, and other activities so that knowledge about religion and sensitivity to practicing religious teachings in daily life [85].

If religion becomes a large part of their self-concept and feels free to engage in religious practices (*e.g.*, wearing religious attire and discussing religious affiliations and practices), they will perceive the organization's acceptance and appreciation of employees as making them aware of their peers and more willing to take action in the interest of others and their organization to enable one to more effectively deal with stressors and maintain employee job and life satisfaction [86].

However, the findings of this study only have a partial percentage of influence among the variables above, and there may still be an influence of other variables, such as work motivation, work environment, leadership, and others. The limitations of this study lie in the small number of research subjects, which were only Muslim employees from a single company. Therefore, further research is still needed for wider generalization.

CONCLUSION

The results showed that gratitude could mediate the effect of religiosity on employee job satisfaction. Gratitude can fully mediate the influence of religiosity on employee job satisfaction. So employees who have religiosity will feel more satisfied with their workers if through gratitude.

IMPLICATION

The theoretical implications of the research findings can serve as a reference in examining gratitude, job satisfaction, and religiosity from various perspectives, such as gratitude and job satisfaction in various religious, cultural, or belief contexts of employees. The practical implications can provide considerations for companies regarding the factors of gratitude that can affect employee job satisfaction, thus requiring efforts by companies to enhance gratitude. Suggestions for future research include involving more research subjects from various religions with a broader population.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

All authors contributed significantly to this study:

Tulus Winarsunu: Designing the research designs and writing the research backgrounds, conducting the data analysis, and discussing the research results

Riskun Karim Aminuddin: Referencing and analyzing the literature review

Djudiyah: Preparing research instruments and conducting research scale trials

Zainul Anwar: Referencing and conducting literature reviews and finishing the research article

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MRA = Mediation Regression Analys	sis
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SD = Standard Deviation

ETHICS APPROVAL AND CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

This study was conducted following the guidelines of the ethical commission research Faculty of Psychology University of Muhammadiyah Malang (approval number research ethics: E.6.m/391/FPsi-UMM/XI/2021).

HUMAN AND ANIMAL RIGHTS

No animals were used in this research. All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of institutional and/or research committees and with the 1975 Declaration of Helsinki, as revised in 2013.

CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

STANDARDS OF REPORTING

STROBE guidelines were followed.

AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIALS

The data supporting the findings of the article is available in the [Zenodo] at [https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8191330], reference number [10.5281/zenodo.8191330].

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None.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest, financial or otherwise.

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