



The Effect of Work Environment and Work-life Balance on Job Satisfaction: Work Stress as a Mediator

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Aims: Employees are one of the crucial factors in a company. Company must be able to pay attention to the physical and mental needs of the employee to obtain good performance. Work environment and work-life balance are the factors that affect the employees' performance and job satisfaction. This research aims to identify the effect of the work environment and work-life balance on the job satisfaction of the employee's millennial generation which is mediated by stress.

Study Design: Explanatory Research.

Place and Duration of Study: millennials and have worked in Indonesia, between October 2022 and November 2022.

Methodology: The method of collecting the data is by using a questionnaire through a purposive sampling technique. The use of Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with the tool of AMOS 26. Sample: We included 206 respondents (80 men, 126 women; age range 20-35 years).

Results: The result of this research indicates that the work environment and work-life balance have

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a negative and significant effect on work stress but a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. Meanwhile, work stress has a negative and significant positive relation to job satisfaction when mediated by work stress.

Conclusion: This research reveals that work stress has a direct or indirect relationship to one's job satisfaction. Based on the research that has been done, it is known that the work environment and work-life balance are several factors that make workers feel satisfied with their jobs. They will experience work stress, where job stress is a mediator that will indirectly affect one's job satisfaction.

Keywords: Work environment; work-life balance; work stress; job satisfaction; SMEs.

1. INTRODUCTION

In this competitive millennial era, every company tries to always develop products and offer services. The success of a company cannot be separated from the participation of every employee. They are one of the important factors in a company, so every company should consider their needs. To get good performance from good employees, one thing that must be paid attention to by the company is employees' job satisfaction.

Each individual has different satisfaction standards. According to studies in the field of organizational behavior and organizational development, it has been reported that the concept of job satisfaction is complex because the satisfaction standards of people are different and it is impossible to satisfy everyone [1-3].

According to BPS data for 2020 [4], the current employees are the millennial generation with a total of 48 million people or 38% of the 127 million Indonesian employees. The millennial generation or commonly referred to as the Y generation is the generation born between 1980 and 1999. According to Schroth [5], the Y generation is a generation that is very dependent on technology. Y Generation grew up in technology so their life is more affluent, more technologically savvy, and lives more ethnically diverse. The millennial generation is always involved in programs that aim to find satisfaction and opportunities to be superior [6]. In addition, they also have high expectations for how someone or a company appreciates their value, and when they are not paid or appreciated according to their expectations, negative thoughts and feelings will arise and cause stress. Stress itself can also result from a mismatch between expectations and reality [7].

This research will identify the effect of the work environment and work-life balance on the job satisfaction of millennial generation employees

which is mediated by stress [8]. This research is based on previous research conducted by Kurniawaty et al. [9] which stated that the work environment has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction, but stress has a negative and significant effect on job satisfaction. Then, Hasan's study [10] finds that the work environment has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. A study on life balance conducted by Dousin et al. [11] shows that work life-work-life has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. Furthermore, Irawanto et al. [12] also indicate that work-life balance and stress have a direct or indirect effect on job satisfaction.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Work environment

The work environment is related to the physical and emotional aspects of the workplace which will determine employees' commitment, productivity, and job satisfaction [13]. The work environment includes the working atmosphere and working social life conditions [14]. It consists of a physical work environment and a non-physical work environment. The physical work environment includes temperature, office layout, air circulation, lighting, and noise levels. While the non-physical work environment involves a conducive and supportive relationship between employees and superiors [15].

2.1.2 Work-life balance

According to Jyothi and Jyothi [16], work-life balance is an achievement of employees who successfully balance their personal life with their work life. It refers to a person's efforts to manage the balance in the 3 domains of his life, namely his company or employees, social and personal life [5]. C.K Hebbar et al. [17] said that work life balance supports the efforts of employee to

manage their time and energy between work and other important aspects of their lives. Gryzwacz & Carlson [18] identify the work-life balance as a way to divide roles as expected between personal and family and employee roles. McDonald, P., & Bradley, L. M. [19] states that work-life balance consists of aspects of time, involvement, and satisfaction balance. Work-life balance can affect a person's mind.

2.1.3 Work stress

Stress is an unwanted reaction of people when faced with heavy burdens or heavy demands placed on them. It is a problem that is still increasing in number in an organization [20]. According to Ganster & Loghan [21], the main factors that usually trigger work stress are the work environment, management support, and workload. It will affect the physical and mental health of employees. Conditions of stress occur when a person feels the burden, they are facing is greater than their ability to handle it and continuously for a certain period so that mental and physical problems will occur [22-24].

2.1.4 Job satisfaction

According to Kreitner and Kinicki [25] job satisfaction is an effectiveness or emotional response to various aspects of employment. It is a psychological, physiological, and environmental combination that will make someone say honestly that he is satisfied with his employees [17].

2.2 Correlation between Variables

2.2.1 Work environment on work stress

According to Smucker et al. [26], the work environment refers to the feelings and responses of employees toward their work. When the work environment is good and conducive, it will make employees work well, thereby reducing the stress level of employees due to their work. However, when the work environment is not conducive, it will increase the stress level of employees due to work that is difficult to complete. This underlies the hypothesis:

H1: work environment has a negative and significant effect on work stress

2.2.2 Work-life balance on work stress

Disrupted employee work-life balance as a result of role conflicts between employees and their families can trigger stress for employees within the company [27]. When employees can balance their personal life and work life, it will have a good impact because it reduces their stress levels. According to research conducted by C.K Herbbar et al. [17], work stress caused by working hours that are too long will greatly affect the work life balance of workers. If an employee is unable to provide clear boundaries between his personal life and work life, an unprofessional attitude will be created. They will easily feel stressed because they feel a large workload and are also dissatisfied with their personal lives. This theory underlies the hypothesis:

H2 : Work-life balance has a negative and significant effect on work stress

2.2.3 Work environment on job satisfaction

The work environment is one of the crucial factors that influence job satisfaction [28]. In a dynamic work arrangement, everyone wants to work in a suitable work environment without environmental threats, guaranteed employees, and a well-paid salary structure which will ultimately increase job satisfaction [29]. When the employees are in a good work environment, they will feel satisfied with them because of a sense of security and comfort, and vice versa when a bad work environment makes them feel uncomfortable thereby reducing their level of job satisfaction. This underlies the hypothesis:

H3: work environment has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction

2.2.4 Work-life balance on job satisfaction

Implementing an effective work-life balance can increase job satisfaction [11]. WFC is negatively related to employee outcomes in the employability domain, including job satisfaction [30, 31, 32]. Support provided by managerial parties can provide satisfaction for employees [33]. According to Eisenberger et al. [34], managerial support refers to how managers understand and appreciate employees' contributions to their role in the family and care about the welfare and their needs. This theory underlies the hypothesis:

H4 : work-life balance has a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction

2.2.5 Work stress on job satisfaction

Work stress is widely considered to be one of the factors that affect one's job satisfaction. When someone feels stressed about their employees, it is difficult for them to feel satisfied with them. When work stress is not handled properly, it will decrease the level of job satisfaction of the employee. Meanwhile, if an employee can handle stress, he can complete and optimize his work and feel satisfied with the results obtained. This is in line with the research conducted by Lu Y, Hu XM, Huang XL, et al. [35], Wu S, Zhu W, Li H, et al. [36], Harzer C, Ruch W [37] that states the work stress has a negative correlation to job satisfaction. This research underlies the hypothesis:

H5 : work stress has a negative and significant effect on job satisfaction

2.2.6 Work environment on job satisfaction through work stress

According to Kakada & Deshpande [20], every company and at every level of management and employees has an average stress level which usually affects job satisfaction. It can create good and positive habits in the work environment [13]. An employee who gets a conducive and safe work environment will feel satisfied at work because his work can be completed properly and does not experience stressful conditions. Russo & Vitaliano [38] argue that the stress triggered by the workplace either directly or when employees are already experiencing stress in other aspects of life will have a real impact. When employees are unable to complete their work due to unfavorable working environment conditions, it tends to increase their stress conditions. So, it can make them feel dissatisfied with their work. This underlies the hypothesis:

H6 : work environment has a positive effect on job satisfaction with work stress as an intervening variable

2.2.7 Work-Life Balance on job satisfaction through work stress

Haar et al. [39] identified the factors that influence work-life balance such as job satisfaction, individualism and collectivism, work stress, career growth, employee absenteeism, turnover, and competitive environment. Low

employee work-life balance can be caused by work-family role conflict or what is called WFC. WFC itself will affect job satisfaction [36]. Conflict will affect the output provided by employees to the company when employees cannot properly manage their emotions. Then, the thoughts due to conflict will become stressful and it also affects job satisfaction. [40] indicated that WFC has a significant relationship with work stress and job satisfaction.

H7 : work-life balance has a positive effect on job satisfaction with stress as an intervening variable

2.3 Methodology

2.3.1 Measurements

The research questionnaire contains 33 items consisting of 4 variables, namely work environment and work-life balance as independent variables, job satisfaction as the dependent variable, and job stress as the intervening variable. The work environment variable is divided into 2 indicators, namely the physical work environment and the non-physical work environment. The measurement is an adaptation of the NIOSH Generic Job Stress Questionnaire [41] which consists of 4 items for the physical work environment and 2 items for the non-physical work environment. Then the measurement of work-life balance uses the theory of McDonald, P., & Bradley, L. M. [19] in which there are 3 indicators, namely time balance with 3 items, involvement balance with 2 items, and satisfaction balance with 3 items. The work stress variable uses an adaptation from Shukla & Srivastava [42] which contains 3 indicators namely the job stress scale, role expectation conflict, and co-worker support each contains 3 items. Then, the measurement of job satisfaction uses the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire [43] indicator by taking 3 indicators, namely working conditions, relations between colleagues, and achievement and compensation, each indicator contains 3 items.

2.3.2 Sampling and collecting data

This research analyses the effect of the work environment and work-life balance on job satisfaction with work stress as the intervening variable. This research is a quantitative research that distributes questionnaires to Indonesian employees with a total of 206 respondents. Respondents filled out the questionnaire with a

Likert scale measurement from point 1 which means strongly disagree to point 5 which means strongly agree. According to Crossman [44], sampling technique means a way to select the participants in a study with each purpose. In this study, purposive sampling was used because the samples are selected based on characteristics of the objective from the study also from the population, which is the sample taken was only the millennial generation born in 1980 to 1999 who had worked.

2.3.3 Data analysis

This research uses Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with the AMOS 26 statistical tool to analyze and evaluate the constructed research construct's measurement model and structural model. The fit test model is assessed based on goodness of fit index parameters such as chi-square (χ^2), CMIN/DF, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Incremental Fit Index (IFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Parsimonious Normed Fit Index (PNFI), Parsimonious Goodness-Of-Fit Index (PGFI), Parsimony Comparative Fit Index (PCFI). The validity evaluation will rely on the standardized loading factor (SLF) value, which must be ≥ 0.50

[45] and the reliability construct relies on the tabulated results of construct reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) values. Furthermore, the SEM analysis carried out is a structural model analysis to assess the research hypothesis that has been built and whether it is accepted or rejected. SEM analysis displays the t-value for each coefficient. The hypothesis can be said to have a causal relationship if the t-count value $\geq t$ table (1.96) with a significant level of α (usually $\alpha = 0.05$).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Respondent Characteristics

The summary of the respondents' profiles in this research is shown in the following Table 1.

Based on Table 1, respondents are dominated by women with a total of 126 people out of 206 total respondents with an average age range of 20-24 years of 137 people or 66.5%. The majority of respondents are single with the last education in high school/vocational high school graduates. In general, the respondents also have a work experience ranging from 1 to 4 years.

Tabel 1. Characteristics of respondents

Category	Item	F	%
Gender	Male	80	38.8
	Female	126	61.2
	Total	206	100
Age	20 years old to 24 years old	137	66.5
	25 years old to 29 years old	34	16.5
	30 years old to 34 years old	11	5.3
	> 35 years old	24	11.7
	Total	206	100
Marital Status	Married	42	20.4
	Single	164	79.6
	Total	206	100
Education	Primary School	0	0
	Junior High School	0	0
	Senior/Vocational High School	106	51.5
	Diploma	17	8.2
	1 st Degree	67	32.5
	2 nd Degree	16	7.8
	Total	206	100
Experience	< 1 year	47	22.8
	1 year to 4 years	116	56.3
	5 years to 9 years	22	10.7
	>10 years	21	10.2
	Total	206	100

Table 2. Measurement model results

Variables	Indicators	Items	SLF	AVE	CR
Work Environment	Physical work environment	WE1	0.688	0.544552	0.958751
		WE2	0.67		
		WE3	0.78		
		WE4	0.695		
	Non-physical work environment	WE5	0.826		
		WE6	0.656		
		WE7	0.828		
work life balance	time balance	WLB1	0.697	0.559254	0.955575
		WLB2	0.638		
		WLB3	0.736		
	Involvement balance	WLB4	0.783		
		WLB5	0.819		
	satisfaction balance	WLB6	0.721		
		WLB7	0.796		
		WLB8	0.776		
Work Stress	Job Stress Scale	WS1	0.733	0.572697	0.936413
		WS2	0.83		
		WS3	0.767		
	Role Expectation Conflict	WS4	0.795		
		WS5	0.745		
		WS6	0.748		
	Coworker Support	WS7	0.807		
		WS8	0.666		
		WS9	0.706		
Job Satisfaction	working condition	JS1	0.88	0.743653	0.981666
		JS2	0.889		
		JS3	0.933		
	Human Relation	JS4	0.973		
		JS5	0.789		
		JS6	0.789		
	Achievement and compensation	JS7	0.782		
		JS8	0.858		
		JS9	0.839		

3.2 Measurement and Structural Models

The results of the validity and reliability tests as well as the goodness of fit can be presented as follows (Table 2):

Table 2 shows the result of testing the validity and reliability of the overall model. The standardized loading factor (SLF) value of all indicator variables in the full model has a value above 0.50. This means that all indicators are declared valid and believed to be able to measure the construct of the full model being built. The results of the reliability test present appropriate results. All instruments are stated as reliable and can consistently measure the constructs of the full model built. This is shown from the avariance extracted (AVE) value of all instrument indicators which obtain a value of

≥0.50 and the value of construct reliability (CR) which obtains a value of ≥0.70.

Table 3 is the result of the fit test model. Based on the results of the model fit test, shows that the suitability requirements of the model can be accepted and stated fit. Four measurements show the degree of good fit. Hair et al. (2014: 583) state that a research model construct can be stated fit and accepted if there are three to four measurements that obtain a degree of good fit or above the cut-off value.

3.3 Hypothesis Testing

The results of testing the causal relation between variables in the structure of this research are as follows;

Table 3. Goodness of fit index

Goodness of fit index	Cut off value	Results
CMIN/DF	≤ 3.00	2.022
RMSEA	≤0,08	0.071
IFI	≥0,90	0.9006
CFI	≥0,90	0.906

Table 4. Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Path	Estimates	S.E.	C.R.	P. label	Conclusion
H1	WS <--- WE	-0.357	0.123	-2.893	0.004	Accepted
H2	WS <--- WLB	-0.245	0.088	-2.780	0.005	Accepted
H3	JS <--- WE	0.419	0.125	3.351	***	Accepted
H4	JS <--- WLB	0.303	0.088	3.423	***	Accepted
H5	JS <--- WS	-0.234	0.079	-2.971	0.003	Accepted

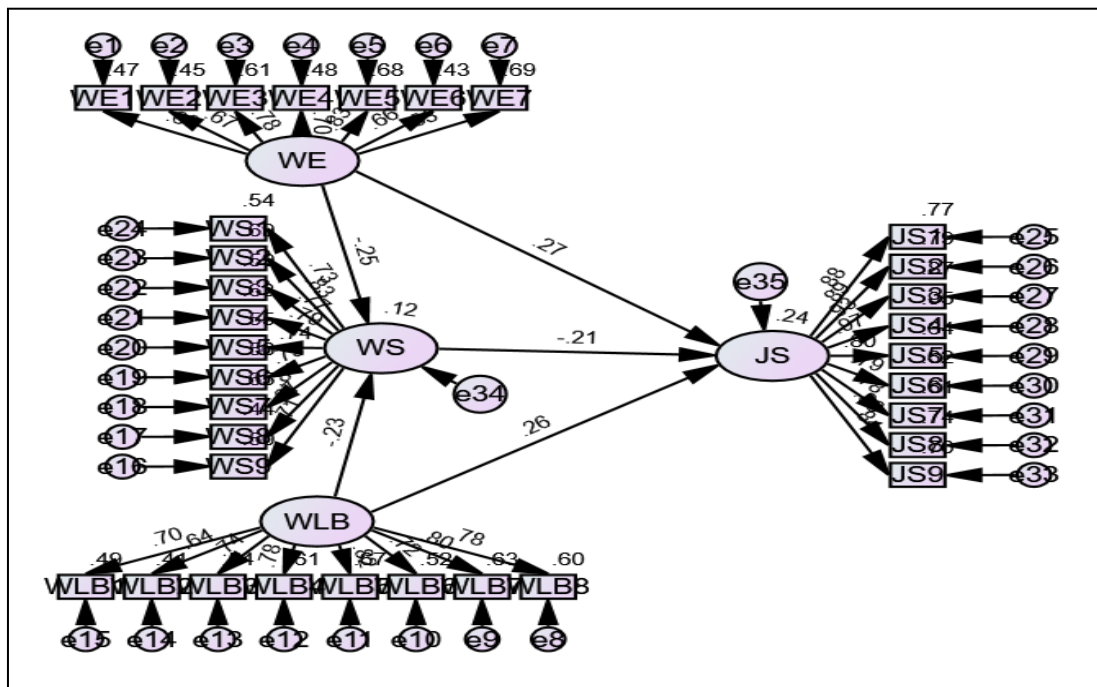


Fig. 1. Full model structural test

Table 5. Hypothesis testing mediation

Hypothesis	Path	Test Statistic	S.E.	P. label	Conclusion
H6	Work environment → Job Satisfaction through work stress	2.07308019	0.04029656	0.03816482	Significant
H7	Work Life Balance → Job Satisfaction through work stress	2.02863843	0.02826033	0.04249513	Significant

Based on the results of the AMOS processing shown in Table 4, the t-count value for the work environment variable to work stress is -2,893 and the p-value is 0.004, for the work-life balance

variable to work stress is -2,780 and the p-value is 0.005. Furthermore, the work environment variable on job satisfaction has a t-count value of 3,351 with a p-value of less than 0.001 which is

marked with three stars and the work-life balance variable on work satisfaction has a t-count value of 3,423 with a p-value less than 0.001 marked with a three-star symbol. As well as the variable work stress on job satisfaction which has a t-count value of -2.971 with a p-value of 0.003. These results indicate that the t-count value for each relationship between variables is greater than the t-table value of 1.96. Likewise, the p-value obtained shows a value smaller than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$). Based on these results it can be stated that the work environment and work-life balance have a direct or indirect influence on work stress and job satisfaction.

3.4 Hypothesis Testing Mediation

The Sobel Test is used for Mediation analysis to prove an indirect relationship, namely, mediation carried out by work stress. This mediating effect will affect the relationship between the work environment and work satisfaction through work stress and the relationship between work-life balance and work satisfaction through work stress, the result is shown in Table 5.

Based on the Sobel test results in Table 5, the statistical value of the Sobel work environment test for job satisfaction through workplaces is 2.07308019 and the p-value is 0.03816. These results indicate that the statistical value of the Sobel test is greater than the t-table (1.96). Likewise, the p-value obtained is smaller than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0.05$). This shows that there is a significant indirect effect of the work environment on job satisfaction through work stress. The corresponding results were also obtained on work-life balance on job satisfaction through work stress, where the Sobel test statistical value was 2.02863843, greater than 1.96, and the p-value was 0.04249513, less than 0.05 ($\alpha = 0, 05$). Thus, there is a significant indirect effect of work-life balance on job satisfaction through work stress.

3.5 Discussion

The satisfaction that humans have will usually produce positive energy for themselves and what they are engaged in. Likewise in the working world, almost all workers seek job satisfaction with various points of view and factors that will support the thoughts and feelings of satisfaction they get. Dissatisfaction experienced by humans will affect feelings and thoughts which is called stress. The millennial generation has different ways to deal with the stress they face, but when

they fail to deal with stress it will reduce their level of job satisfaction. The work environment and work-life balance influence stress and job satisfaction. Employees spend most of their time in the work environment, so it is important to create a clean, healthy and safe work environment so that employees are comfortable. The comfort provided will lead to positive feelings and thoughts thereby increasing employee job satisfaction.

The work environment has a negative and significant influence on work stress for the Indonesian millennial generation. The results of this research are in line with previous research conducted by Praveen Kakada & Y. M. Deshpand [20] that an employee's satisfaction with his work environment will minimize stress levels. Company management also plays a very important role in reducing employee stress levels [46]. Likewise, research conducted by Andesna Nanda [47] shows that the non-physical work environment has a negative and significant effect on work stress. Stress in the work environment can reduce the employee's intention to work optimally so that the work performance of the employees themselves will also decrease [48].

On the other hand, the work environment has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction. Hasan H [10] and Kurniawaty et al. [9] also found that the work environment has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction. This proves that a good physical and non-physical work environment will give positive feelings to employees who work so a good and healthy work environment is one of the supporting factors for one's job satisfaction. From the relationship between work environment and work stress and job satisfaction, this research also proves that work stress significantly mediates the relationship between work environment and job satisfaction. This indicates that a good work environment will reduce employee stress levels and increase job satisfaction, whereas a bad work environment will increase stress levels and decrease job satisfaction.

The results of this research show that work-life balance has a significant negative effect on work stress. The results of this research are in line with the results of research conducted by Paramita L and Supartha. I. W [49] and Al Momani [50] indicate work-life balance has a significant negative relationship to work stress. Because this stress arises from the pressure that originates internally and externally from oneself

and affects the physical and mental, while the balance of one's life is an external factor that triggers stress. Furthermore, work-life balance has a positive effect on job satisfaction. If someone is not satisfied with his job then it is very difficult for him to achieve work life balance. These results are in line with the previous research conducted by Dousin et al. [11], Attar et al. [51] and Irawanto et al. [12]. Employees will be more satisfied when they have flexibility in working, especially since most of the work experience respondents in this research are employees who have worked for 1 to 4 years so employees are still adapting to large work pressures and tight deadlines. This research also states that work stress significantly mediates the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction. Indirectly, companies that pay attention to the work-life balance of employees will help them reduce stress levels so that work satisfaction increases, and vice versa.

4. CONCLUSION

The main objective of this research is to identify the effect of the work environment and work-life balance on the job satisfaction of millennial generation employees which is mediated by stress. The survey was conducted based on the answers given by 206 respondents who are millennials and have worked in Indonesia. This research reveals that work stress has a direct or indirect relationship to one's job satisfaction. Based on the research that has been done, it is known that the work environment and work-life balance are several factors that make workers feel satisfied with their jobs. They will experience work stress, where job stress is a mediator that will indirectly affect one's job satisfaction.

The researchers admit there are limitations in this research. These limitations include only researching the Indonesian millennial generation. It is recommended for further research to examine future generations who have entered the working world. The sample size in this research is not sufficient to represent all Indonesians, so it is hoped that future research can use a larger sample size.

For companies, the results of this research can be used as a reference to be applied to the companies to increase the job satisfaction of their employees and to develop new knowledge in the field of employment. For researchers, the results of this research are expected to be literacy materials and comparative references to

develop deeper and more comprehensive research studies to contribute to increasing job satisfaction.

CONSENT

All authors declare that 'written informed consent was obtained from the millennials workers in Indonesia for publication of this case report and accompanying images.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

All authors hereby declare that all experiments have been examined and approved by the appropriate ethics committee and have therefore been performed in accordance with the ethical standards laid down in the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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