

# Unpacking the Social and Health Effects of Covid-19 Pandemic on Healthcare Workers' Performance in Selected Public Hospitals in Lagos, Nigeria

Lateef Okikiola Olanipekun<sup>1</sup>  | Michael Adekunle Oderinde<sup>2</sup>  | Oluwaseun Deborah Akingbala<sup>3</sup>   
| Deborah Oluwayimika Olanipekun<sup>4</sup>  | Abdullateef Adeniyi Onabanjo<sup>5</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>Accra Institute of Technology Business School, Accra, Ghana

<sup>2</sup>Lagos State University, Ojo, Nigeria

<sup>3</sup>Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospital Complex, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

<sup>4</sup>ISCG University, Republic of Benin

<sup>5</sup>Hallmark University, Ijebu-Itele, Ogun State, Nigeria

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## Correspondence:

Lateef Okikiola Olanipekun

Email: [iolanipeku@ait.edu.gh](mailto:iolanipeku@ait.edu.gh)

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## Abstract

**Background:** The rapid spread of Covid-19 necessitated all businesses to abruptly shut down overnight except for health workers who battled the situation and salvaged its increase. How this era shaped the performance and mental well-being of healthcare workers requires an examination, hence this study. Thus, this study examined the social and health effects of Covid-19 pandemic on the performance of healthcare workers in selected public hospitals in Lagos, Nigeria.

**Methods:** The study was hinged on the dethnomethodical theory and health behaviour theory. The study was cross-sectional with a sample size of 155 respondents obtained via quantitative data gathering process.

**Results:** Findings revealed that Covid-19 significantly affected the social and health status of healthcare workers with 0.767,  $p=.000$ . Evidence further revealed that Covid-19 equivalently contributed to the social well-being of health workers with 0.879,  $p=.000$ . In addition, finding indicated that a positive effect of Covid-19 was found on the work pattern of health workers with 0.748,  $p=.000$ .

**Conclusion:** The study concluded that COVID-19 affected the social health and well-being of healthcare workers as well as their work pattern; and for a developing country like Nigeria, lack of awareness played a principal role which further induced mental stress. Therefore, managements of public hospitals should provide health workers with continuous trainings to combat unforeseen circumstances like the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Keywords:** Covid-19 Pandemic, Health Care Workers, Pattern Of Work, Performance, Social And Health Status, Well-Being.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid nature of the COVID-19 outbreak caught the global space unaware and as such presented an alarming crisis on human health across the globe whose aftermath effects till this era is still being scuffled with universally. Additionally, asides its huge influence on the human, it also significantly hampered the business and commercial economic landscape of several nations, thus, forcing a shutdown (WHO, 2021; Allen, Gabriel-Kona, Gontor, Okafor & Olanipekun, 2022). Just as the adage posited that viruses know no bounds; the impacts of this virus still continue to linger. In fact, more than ninety-four percent (94%) of the businesses in Nigeria and across the globe were negatively impacted due to COVID-19 disruptions (WHO, 2021). It was presumed that its threat will fade eventually, just like the as other previous viruses like Ebola, Zika, and severe acute respiratory syndrome also known as “SARS”.

Nonetheless, the social-economic impact of the virus is still being felt despite that it no longer exists. In a swift response aimed at cushioning the spiral upshots of this virus, efforts were dissipated by governments and measures such as lockdowns, closing of both institutions and businesses, creation of social distancing and so forth were implemented towards flatten the epidemic curve until pending the arrival of drugs and vaccines (Anderson, Heesterbeek, Klinkenberg, & Hollingsworth, 2020). Workplaces were radically affected which caused a standstill in the economy as well as individuals’ daily work lives. Organisational closures of forced many of those who still retained their jobs to work from home, but during this event, the healthcare professionals were at the front row of trying to salvage the situation and restoring sanity. Therefore, healthcare workers were confronted by the scourge of the COVID-19 pandemic with severe work-related and private demands. However, as time passes by, increased demands and low resources sets in which depleted individuals’ energy reserves, reduction in psychological well-being and resulting in dwindling performance (Hobfoll, 2010).

Based on the preceding argument, new challenges were posed by the COVID-19 pandemic on the psychological health of these workers which goes beyond previous submissions in the aspects of demands and resources (Bakker and Demerouti; Sonnentag, 2015). For instance, while many other corporate workers are allowed to work from home to reduce social contacts and reduce the amount of availability of social supports, which serve as a core protective factor against psychological wellbeing and other and health issues, the healthcare workers never had such opportunities due to the nature of their jobs (Allen, Gabriel-Kona, Gontor, Okafor & Olanipekun, 2022). In addition to these work-related changes, the lives and psychological well-being of healthcare workers was threatened by the pandemic thereby instilling fears about their own health as well as the well-being of their loved ones. Tus further exacerbated into growing frustration, loneliness and reduction in performance and effective job delivery (Brooks, Webster, Woodland, Wessely, Greenberg, 2020). From the foregoing, the overall objective of this study was premised on the investigation of the social and health effects of covid-19 pandemic on the performance of healthcare workers in selected public hospitals in Lagos, Nigeria.

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in unprecedented losses and thus creating new work patterns which affected both the health and social well-being of healthcare workers, thus climaxing into poor performance

in a manner that was never expected. In Nigeria alone, statistics recorded that about “twenty-eight thousand one hundred and sixty-seven (28,167)” individuals and recording more than six hundred and thirty-four (634) deaths (Allen, Gabriel-Kona, Gontor, Okafor & Olanipekun, 2022). This created a huge strain on the both the physical and mental capacity of the healthcare workers. This could account for the reason as to why the outbreak became highly uncontrollable in Nigeria; which resulted into poor citizens’ sufferings due to ineffective responses coupled with lack of adequate facilities for healthcare. The aforesaid spurred the curiosity of the researchers’ towards interrogating the social and health influence of covid-19 pandemic on healthcare workers’ performance in selected public hospitals in Lagos, Nigeria.

The broad objective of the study was aimed at examining the social and health effects of covid19 pandemic on the performance of health workers in selected public hospitals in Lagos, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to:

1. investigate the significant effect of Covid-19 Pandemic on the social and health status of health care workers in selected public hospitals in Lagos, Nigeria;
2. evaluate the effects of Covid-19 pandemic on the social well-being of health care workers in selected public hospitals in Lagos, Nigeria; and
3. interrogate the effects of Covid-19 on the work pattern and performance of health care workers in selected public hospitals in Lagos, Nigeria.

H01: Covid-19 Pandemic has no significant effect on social and health status of healthcare workers in selected public hospitals in Lagos, Nigeria.

H02: Covid-19 pandemic has no significant effect on the social well-being of healthcare workers in selected public hospitals in Lagos, Nigeria.

H03: Covid-19 has no significant effect on work pattern and performance of healthcare workers in selected public hospitals in Lagos, Nigeria.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Social and Health effects of Covid-19 Pandemic on Healthcare Worker’s Performance

As reported from the administered surveys by the symptoms (WHO, 2020) during the period of the “Covid-19” pandemic which puts both children and young adults are a very high risk of developing anxious. Further data obtained on a sample of healthcare workers as the epidemic progresses showed how anxiety levels and apprehension in healthcare workers are mediated by being at the frontline of combatting further spread of the virus for the purpose of also ensuring quick economic recovery and family stability (Dasaolu, 2020). On the contrary, the fear of trying not to infected relatives or acquaintances as witnessed in the case of Dr. Adedavoh and a young assistant pregnant nurse during the Ebola era led to an exacerbated symptom of anxiety amongst many healthcare workers.

Furthermore, the economic challenges and the complete shutdown of many institutions and those operating a skeletal style of activities explains in deep what aggravate these anxious symptoms (Akindele, 2020). In addition,

an online survey conducted on the general population healthcare workers in Nigeria found that healthcare workers are more likely to experiencing stress, anxiety, and depression than others during the pandemic (Akindele, 2020). These results suggested a continuous monitoring and promotion of mental health of healthcare workers as a mechanism for reducing the negative consequences of the pandemic on both their current and future performances (Akindele, 2020; Dasaolu, 2020).

## 2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study was hinged on the Dethnomethodical Theory and health behaviour theory whose proponents and ideologies are presented below.

### 2.2.1 Dethnomethodical Theory

This theory was propounded by Harold Garfinkel and it describes how the social order of a society may be altered by an unplanned event. The period of the Covid-19 pandemic constituted crisis that is “bio-social” because it does not only affect health of individuals’ and their respective families but also significantly influence the fundamentals of our sociality as Nigerians. It impacted our “physiological bodies” because epidemiological issues were raised by this virus. This opinion of this theory promotes the notion that the Covid-19 pandemic established a unique perspective of our current study by addressing changes occurring in the Nigerian healthcare system during the ongoing pandemic, with specific attention and focus on the social and health status of healthcare workers especially in government hospitals in Nigeria and how this influenced their performance under the harsh condition of the pandemic.

### 2.2.2 Health Behaviour Theory

This theory is also known as the Social Cognitive Theory. The tenet of the theory capture individuals who are rational in their actions. In addition, the continuous emphasis is premised on expectancy-value which represents a principal advancement of the “SCT” is its focus on personal agency as well as the significance of its content and context as a cardinal determinant of health behaviour. More so, while the SCT has been very helpful and useful in providing adequate insights as to why people exhibit some specific health behavioural pattern, it has also had a considerable amount of effect on interventions in behavioural changes. Therefore, an individual’s self-efficacy and perceived ability in bringing about a specific action course within a particular context, remains a fundamental construct under the SCT.

### 2.2.3 Empirical Review

Medically speaking, the concepts of burnout and exhaustion are typical example of psychological health issues which are connected to severe consequences like depression which could lead to suicide (Meyer & Schermuly, 2016). Therefore, in predicting exhaustion and burnout from the angle of healthcare workers’ perspectives during the pandemic, two dominant theories are predominantly relevant, this is as a result of the fact that these speak extensively on the interlinks as well as the association between demands and resources and to the connected ephemeral dynamics. According to Bakker et al., (2014), the job-demands-resources model and the proponent of

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the conservation of resources (COR) theory by (Hobfoll, 2001) are interrelated. Thus, job demands such as “workload”, job resources like “social support” and personal resources like “self-efficacy” are similar to motivation in the area of “employees work engagement” and strain which include “exhaustion” and hence, the performance of people who are working (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

A study by Bakker and Demerouti, (2017) and Hatch et al., (2019) which investigated JD-R indicated that employees’ exhaustion can be accurately predicted by demands and resources such that resource losses can be substituted by job resources. Another meta-analytic investigation by Lesener et al., (2019), which was longitudinal in nature also illuminated that there exists a converse effect of burnout on job characteristics, which indicates that when employees are exhausted due to higher demands as witnessed during the pandemic in Nigeria, it is like to affect their performance thus resulting to low and ineffective delivery. This was further supported by Bakker and Demerouti, (2017) whose study concluded that exhausted employees perceive higher job demands with less resources to be stressful.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey design was used in this study. The descriptive survey was based on a cross-sectional research design. This study was purely quantitative. The population for the study comprised of the entire employees of the selected employee of Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH) who served as respondents for the study.

**Table 1: Population of Departments in the selected organization**

Source: Field Work, (2025)

S/N	Departments	Staff
1.	Anaestacia	23
2.	Community and Primary Health Care	53
3.	Dentistry	19
4.	Dietetics	25
5.	Ear, Nose and Throat	29
6.	Family Medicine	24
7.	Hematology and B.T.	23
8.	Health Information Management	55
9.	Intensive Care Unit	35
10.	Laboratory Services	32
11.	Medical social Welfare	39
12.	Medicine	33
13.	OBS & Gynea	30
14.	Ophthalmology	26
15.	Pediatrics	19
16.	Pharmacy	25
17.	Physiotherapy	20

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18.	Psychiatry	27
19.	Radiology	15
20.	Surgery	12
<b>Total</b>		<b>564</b>

### 3.1 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

A total number of Two hundred and twenty-nine (229) Staff were selected from Lagos State University Teaching Hospital, (LASUTH), Ikeja who served as respondents for the study. The method of selecting the sample from the population was based on the non-probabilistic sampling technique, therefore, from the above total population, a sample size of 229 respondents were selected using the convenience method of sampling. This was chosen for the sake of ensuring that all elements in the population are well represented.

**Table 2. Sample size determination for the study Source: Researchers Framework, (2025)**

S/N	Department	Staff	Sample Size determination	Sample Size
1	Anaestacia	23	$\frac{23(229)}{564}$	9
2	Community and Primary Health Care	53	$\frac{53(229)}{564}$	22
3	Dentistry	19	$\frac{19(229)}{564}$	8
4	Dietetics	25	$\frac{25(229)}{564}$	10
5	Ear, Nose and Throat	29	$\frac{29(229)}{564}$	12
6	Family Medicine	24	$\frac{24(226)}{564}$	10
7	Hematology and BT	23	$\frac{23(226)}{564}$	9
8	Health Information Management	55	$\frac{55(229)}{564}$	22
9	Intensive Care Unit	35	$\frac{35(229)}{564}$	14
10	Laboratory Services	32	$\frac{32(229)}{564}$	13
11	Medical social Welfare	39	$\frac{39(229)}{564}$	16
12	Medicine	33	$\frac{33(229)}{564}$	13

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13	OBS & Gynea	30	$\frac{30(229)}{564}$	12
14	Ophthalmology	26	$\frac{26(229)}{564}$	11
15	Pediatrics	19	$\frac{19(229)}{564}$	8
16	Pharmacy	25	$\frac{25(229)}{564}$	10
17	Physiotherapy	20	$\frac{20(229)}{564}$	8
18	Psychiatry	27	$\frac{27(229)}{564}$	11
19	Radiology	15	$\frac{15(229)}{564}$	6
20	Surgery	12	$\frac{12(229)}{564}$	5
Total		564		229

### 3.2 Method of Data Collection

This study relied on the quantitative (questionnaire) method of data gathering. In order to get the necessary information for the study, data were collected from healthcare workers of two (2) selected public hospitals in Lagos, Nigeria.

### 3.3 Method of Data Analysis

Data obtained from respondents were analysed using SPSS 27.0. Results of the stated hypotheses were tested using regression analysis.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Testing of Hypotheses with Regression Analysis

HO1: Covid-19 Pandemic has no significant effect on social and health status of health care workers.

Table 3. Model Summary

	Model	R Square	Adj.R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.767 <sup>a</sup>	.589	.586	.394
A. Predictors: (Constant), Covid 19				



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Table 4. ANOVAa

	Model	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	34.104	1	34.104	219.312	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	23.792	152	156		
	Total	57.897	153			

4.1 Dependent Variable: Heath Status of care givers

4.2 Predictors: (Constant), Covid 19

Table 5. Coefficients

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.000	.073		13.691	.000
	Covid 19	.616	.042	.767	14.809	.000

A. Dependent Variable: Heath Status

Tables 3, 4 and 5 presented the results of the linear regression that were calculated to predict covid 19 on health status of health care givers. A significant regression coefficient was found ( $F(219.312) = 14.809, p = .000$ ), with  $R^2$  of .589. This presupposes that 58.9% variation in health status of care givers was as a result of Covid-19. Evidence in table 5 also is the beta value under the standardized coefficients which shows that Covid-19 equivalently contributes to the change in the dependent variable (health and mental status of health care givers) ( $\beta = .767, p = .000$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected because results showed that, Covid-19 significantly affected the health and mental status of healthcare givers during the pandemic period.

H02: Covid-19 pandemic has no significant effect on the social well-being of health workers.

Table 6. Model Summary

	Model	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.879 <sup>a</sup>	.772	.771	.375

a. Predictors: (Constant), Covid 19

Table 7. ANOVAa

	Model	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	66.209	1	66.209	518.599	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	19.533	153	.128		



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Total 85.742 154

a. Dependent Variable: Social Well-being of health workers

b. Predictors: (Constant), Covid

Table 8. Coefficients

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.188	0.68		2.785	.003
	Covid 19	.972	0.43	.879	22.773	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Social Well-being of health workers

Tables 6, 7 and 8 presented the results of the linear regression that were calculated to predict covid 19 on the social well-being of health workers. A significant regression coefficient was found ( $F(518.599) = 22.773, p=.000$ ), with  $R^2$  of .772. This presupposes that 77.2% variation in the social wellbeing of health workers was as a result of Covid-19. Evidence in table 8 also is the beta value under the standardized coefficients which shows that Covid-19 equivalently contributes to the change in the dependent variable (the social well-being of health workers) ( $\beta=.879, p=.000$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected because results showed that, Covid-19 significantly affected the social wellbeing of health workers during the pandemic period.

HO3: Covid-19 has no significant effect on work pattern and performance of health care workers.

Table 9. Model Summary

	Model	R Square	Adj. R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.748 <sup>a</sup>	.559	.556	.403

a. Predictors: (Constant), Covid 19

Table 10. ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

	Model	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	31.568	1	31.568	193.901	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	24.909	153	.163		
	Total	56.477	154			

a. Dependent Variable: Work Pattern

b. Predictors: (Constant), Covid 19

Table 11. Coefficients

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	(Constant)	1.004	.043		13.443	.000

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1	Covid 19	.593	.075	.748	13.925	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Work Pattern						

Tables 9, 10 and 11 presented the results of the linear regression that were calculated to predict Covid 19 on the work pattern of healthcare workers. A significant regression coefficient was found ( $F(193.901) = 13.925$ ,  $p=.000$ ), with  $R^2$  of .559. This presupposes that 55.9% variation in the work pattern of health workers was as a result of Covid-19. Evidence in table 11 also is the beta value under the standardized coefficients which shows that Covid-19 equivalently contributes to the change in the dependent variable (the work pattern of health workers) ( $\beta=.748$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected because results showed that, Covid-19 significantly affected the work pattern of health workers during the pandemic period.

## 5. DISCUSSION

Based on the analysed data it can be said that the performance of healthcare workers in selected Hospitals in Lagos State was significantly affected by the changes of COVID-19 pandemic. Objective one sought to examine how Covid-19 pandemic affect the health of employees and their performance on the job, findings unravelled that health of health care givers were badly affected as their work hours stretched beyond normal bringing about low commitment due to constant fatigue. Also, the following reasons were advanced as to how Covid 19 impeded on the health of the care givers; there was no increase in salary/Wages, Allowances, Bonuses for health workers during Covid-19 to boost their motivation during this pandemic period; in the same vein, there was absence of Medical/health benefits, Promotion opportunity and Compensation during accident, sickness or death of employee were provided by the organisation; hours of work/working hours was not regulated to avoid work overload during the Covid19 period; thus workers were stretched to perform beyond the expected time. This submission is in agreement with the position of Rudolph, Allan, Clark, Hertel, Hirschi, Kunze, Shockley, Shoss, Sonnentag, & Zacher, (2020).

Objective two which examined the impact of reaction to changes on employee's performance during the Covid-19 pandemic, findings revealed that reaction to changes impacted significantly on performance of health care workers during the Covid-19 and this was as a result of the followings, Fear on job loss during this period, Mental stress during the Covid-19, Fear of economic shutdown and Insecurity at work. Findings in this regard corroborates the findings of Van Bavel, Baicker, Boggio, Capraro, Cichocka, Cikara, and Willer, (2020) who posited that changes brought about by Covid-19 are new to health workers; thus, it became quite difficult to maintain a busy schedule but they have to accept these changes due to the pandemic but their reaction and their feelings about these changes really prevented them from fully concentrating on their works like before. This finding also validates the standpoint of the deontomethodical theory and justifies its usage as the theoretical bedrock of this study.

For objective three; findings revealed that continuous education and training is required for health workers to equip them in understanding and preventing future occurrence of Covid-19 and other pandemic, Social support to protect these workers will help improve their performance, Increased motivation in the area off salary, benefits

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and other incentives will help boost the performance of these care givers, Introduction of work-life balance programmes will help strengthen the mental capacity of these employees and Adequate equipment should be made available to guarantee improved service of the health workers. This submission supports the opinion of Odinioha, (2020). Finally, this finding aligns with the proponents of the health behaviour theory which explains the variation and degree of change in the well-being of the selected healthcare workers which arouse from mental stress and necessitating a shift in both their work pattern and behaviour.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This study sheds light on how COVID-19 impacted on the social and mental health of the healthcare workers in two selected public hospitals in Lagos State, Nigeria. It further empirically investigated the effect of fear of economic crisis and job performance on mental health through perceived job insecurity. Results show that perceived job insecurity was experienced in the course of the pandemic which slowed down performance of the staff; due to over-stretching of the mental state of the staff health. However, the moderating role of COVID-19 was confirmed in the direct relationship of staff performance crisis and mental health and also on impacted directly on perceived job insecurity. Findings from the study also revealed that fear on job loss during the pandemic period impeded on employees' performance, also, it was recorded that care givers experienced mental stress during the Covid-19 period affected employees' performance, again, fear of economic shutdown also was also a significant factor which limit performance of employees; this can as well be tagged as fear of the unknown and finally, insecurity at work due to the rapid spread of the virus also a factor Based on the outcome of this study, the followings were recommended.

1. Management should ensure that healthcare workers receive continuous trainings in order to combat pandemics of any kind.
2. Management's moral and social support are constantly required towards enhancing healthcare workers performance.
3. Management should ensure a flexible work and relaxation programmes that will help strengthen the mental capacity of these healthcare workers.
4. Introduction of work-life balance programmes will help strengthen the mental capacity of these employees.
5. Continuous education and training is required for health workers to equip them in understanding and preventing future occurrence of Covid-19 and other pandemic; thus, management should make regular training a habit.

## AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION AND DECLARATIONS

**Conception or Design:** Lateef Okikiola Olanipekun, Michael Adekunle Oderinde

**Data Collection and Processing:** Oluwaseun Deborah Akingbala, Deborah Oluwayimika Olanipekun

**Analysis or Interpretation of Data:** Abdullateef Adeniyi Onabanjo, Oluwaseun Deborah Akingbala

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**Manuscript Writing & Approval:** Lateef Okikiola Olanipekun, Michael Adekunle Oderinde, Abdullateef Adeniyi Onabanjo, All Authors

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Furthermore, this research did not involve the use of animals, plants, or any biological specimens requiring ethical approval. Therefore, ethical clearance from an institutional review board, prior informed consent (PIC) from respondents, or animal/plant welfare approvals are not applicable to this study.

The author(s) affirm full compliance with international ethical standards for research and publication.

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