

Transformational Leadership and Its Effects on Employee Creativity and Innovation: A Qualitative Analysis in Commercial Organizations

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to investigate the effects of transformational leadership on employee creativity and innovation within commercial organizations.

Methodology: A qualitative research design was employed, utilizing semi-structured interviews to gather in-depth data from 24 employees working in commercial organizations in Tehran, Iran. The sample was selected through purposive sampling to ensure diverse perspectives on the impact of transformational leadership. Data collection ceased upon reaching theoretical saturation. Thematic analysis was conducted using NVivo software, following Braun and Clarke's six-phase approach to identify key themes and patterns within the data.

Findings: The analysis revealed four primary themes: inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence. Participants highlighted that transformational leaders who communicated a clear vision, encouraged open communication, supported autonomy, and provided personalized mentorship significantly influenced their creativity and innovation. Additionally, ethical standards and trust-building by leaders reinforced a safe and collaborative environment that facilitated innovative thinking. These findings align with existing literature on transformational leadership and its impact on organizational culture, employee engagement, and performance.

Conclusion: This study demonstrates that transformational leadership plays a crucial role in fostering employee creativity and innovation by creating a supportive, inspiring, and value-driven organizational culture.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, employee creativity, innovation, organizational culture, qualitative research, commercial organizations.

1 Introduction

Transformational leadership has gained significant attention in organizational research for its profound influence on employee behaviors, motivation, and overall performance. This leadership style, characterized by qualities such as inspiring vision, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and charismatic influence, is widely recognized as a catalyst for employee creativity and innovation (Afsouran et al., 2022; Almashhadani, 2023). These components foster a supportive and dynamic work environment, motivating employees to go beyond traditional task boundaries and engage in innovative practices.

Research on transformational leadership suggests that such leaders can inspire employees by cultivating an engaging and meaningful work environment. For instance, transformational leaders promote psychological empowerment by fostering a sense of purpose and instilling work values, which, in turn, leads to enhanced motivation and creativity (Aghaei Ghaleche, 2023; Kwarteng et al., 2024; Rahimi et al., 2023). Such leadership characteristics align with organizational goals, inspiring employees to pursue innovation as a means of contributing positively to their organization. Transformational leadership not only enhances individual creativity but also strengthens the organization's ability to adapt to market changes and pursue continuous development (Afsouran et al., 2022).

Moreover, studies suggest that transformational leadership is effective in managing organizational culture and shaping employee attitudes, which contribute to sustained innovation (Azmy, 2023; Kwarteng et al., 2024). Specifically, by aligning employees with organizational values and encouraging risk-taking, transformational leaders facilitate a culture where employees feel safe to experiment and innovate. Such an environment fosters an innovative mindset that is crucial for organizations seeking to maintain a competitive edge in rapidly evolving markets. Hooi and Chan (2023) highlight that transformational leadership, coupled with workplace digitalization, can drive an innovative organizational culture, ultimately enhancing employee engagement and innovation outcomes. These findings underscore the relevance of transformational leadership in shaping a resilient and agile organizational culture conducive to creativity (Hooi & Chan, 2023).

Employee development and job satisfaction are also pivotal components in the relationship between transformational leadership and innovation. Leaders who

prioritize individualized consideration help cultivate employees' unique talents, enabling them to contribute more effectively to creative problem-solving (Bajracharya, 2023). By providing mentorship and development opportunities, transformational leaders help employees build the confidence and skills needed to engage in innovative practices (Herawati et al., 2023). Budur and Demir (2022) emphasize the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in this relationship, highlighting how transformational leadership encourages employees to go beyond their formal job roles. Such behaviors foster a collaborative and proactive workplace environment, further fueling creativity (Budur & Demir, 2022).

The impact of transformational leadership on employee engagement and job satisfaction has additional implications for organizational performance. Engagement and satisfaction create the necessary psychological conditions for employees to commit to innovation (Syukran et al., 2023). In a study on transformational leadership and employee performance, Putri and Meria (2022) observed that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are critical mediators, suggesting that when employees feel valued and engaged, they are more likely to participate in creative and innovative endeavors (Putri & Meria, 2022). This relationship also extends to performance outcomes at the organizational level, with transformational leadership positively correlating with employee productivity and organizational growth (Aghaei Ghaleche, 2023; Moshayekh Moini, 2023).

Innovation within organizations is not limited to creativity in task performance; it also includes fostering an environment that supports sustainable and green initiatives. In recent years, green transformational leadership has emerged as an important area of research, linking environmental leadership to employees' green innovation behaviors (Du & Yan, 2022; Yang & Liu, 2022). Transformational leaders who promote sustainability influence employees to adopt environmentally friendly practices, contributing to organizational goals related to environmental responsibility. Odugbesan et al. (2022) discuss how transformational leadership, in conjunction with artificial intelligence, facilitates green talent management and employees' innovative work behavior. This perspective highlights the role of transformational leaders in promoting not only economic but also environmental sustainability, a factor increasingly relevant to modern commercial organizations (Odugbesan et al., 2022).

The mediating effects of personal characteristics, such as career aspiration, also play a significant role in the transformational leadership-innovation relationship. Gu (2023) explored how strategic leadership impacts retention and creativity, with career aspirations serving as a key mediator. Employees motivated by clear career paths and developmental opportunities are more likely to engage in creative work, especially when supported by transformational leaders (Gu, 2023). Similarly, transformational leaders who encourage employees to pursue career aspirations instill a sense of purpose that reinforces commitment to innovative practices. Rachmat (2023) further emphasizes the importance of clear communication in this context, noting that transformational leaders who effectively communicate organizational goals and values enhance employees' sense of purpose, thereby fostering innovation (Rachmat, 2023).

In addition to promoting individual creativity, transformational leadership has been linked to organizational outcomes related to strategic adaptation and long-term competitiveness. According to Rahimi, Bahmaee, and Barekat (2023), effective transformational leaders can mitigate barriers to innovation by establishing paradigmatic models that support adaptive behavior in complex environments (Rahimi et al., 2023). These leaders encourage flexible approaches to challenges, empowering employees to navigate change more effectively. This flexibility is crucial in sustaining organizational competitiveness, as it enables employees to anticipate and respond to shifts in industry demands (Wang et al., 2022). Transformational leaders who prioritize adaptability contribute to a resilient organizational structure, supporting sustainable innovation at all levels (Vanesa, 2021).

Furthermore, transformational leadership fosters a supportive environment for innovation through its influence on social and psychological factors within the organization. Research indicates that transformational leaders who promote trust and ethical behavior create a secure space for employees to engage in creative and innovative activities (Xing & Li, 2022). Ethical leadership, which is closely related to transformational leadership, has been shown to positively affect employee innovation by reducing workplace ostracism and encouraging prosocial behaviors (Y. Xu et al., 2022; Z. Xu et al., 2022). In such environments, employees are more likely to take risks and share ideas, which enhances the organization's collective capacity for innovation (Zhu et al., 2022).

This study aims to contribute to the existing body of literature by examining how transformational leadership affects employee creativity and innovation specifically within the context of commercial organizations in Tehran. While numerous studies have explored transformational leadership's role in various settings, there remains a need for qualitative insights into how these processes are experienced and perceived by employees in commercial sectors. This study seeks to explore the effects of transformational leadership on creativity and innovation in commercial organizations by conducting a qualitative analysis of employees' experiences in Tehran.

2 Methods and Materials

2.1 Study Design and Participants

This study adopts a qualitative research design aimed at exploring the impact of transformational leadership on employee creativity and innovation within commercial organizations. Qualitative research is particularly well-suited for investigating complex social phenomena, as it allows for in-depth insights into participants' perspectives and experiences. The study utilizes a purposive sampling strategy, selecting 24 participants who are employees within various commercial organizations located in Tehran, Iran. These participants were chosen based on their roles, experience levels, and exposure to transformational leadership within their organizations, ensuring a diverse sample to capture a broad range of experiences and insights.

The sample size of 24 was determined based on the principle of theoretical saturation, where data collection ceased once no new themes or insights emerged from the interviews. This approach aligns with qualitative research practices, ensuring comprehensive data to support rich and meaningful analysis.

2.2 Data Collection

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, a common technique in qualitative research that allows for flexibility and depth in exploring participants' perspectives. The interview guide was designed to focus on topics related to transformational leadership, employee creativity, and innovation within the organizational setting. Questions were crafted to encourage participants to share specific examples, reflections, and experiences relevant to these themes. Interviews were conducted in a setting convenient for

participants, ensuring comfort and confidentiality to encourage honest responses.

Each interview lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes and was audio-recorded with the consent of the participants. The recordings were then transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy in capturing the participants' insights and experiences. To ensure data trustworthiness, member-checking was conducted, where participants reviewed their transcripts to confirm accuracy and provide clarifications if needed.

2.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software, to facilitate efficient coding and theme identification. Thematic analysis was employed, following Braun and Clarke's six-phase approach, which includes familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. Initial coding was guided by a combination of inductive and deductive approaches: while pre-existing literature informed some codes, the analysis also allowed for emerging themes unique to the participants' experiences.

The coding process involved both open and axial coding stages. In open coding, each transcript was reviewed, and

specific codes were applied to meaningful segments of the text. Subsequently, axial coding was conducted to identify relationships among the codes, allowing for the development of themes and sub-themes that represent the core concepts of the study.

3 Findings and Results

The sample for this study comprised 24 participants employed in various commercial organizations in Tehran, Iran. Of these participants, 58% (14 individuals) were male, while 42% (10 individuals) were female. Participants' ages ranged from 25 to 50 years, with the majority (75%) falling within the 30 to 40 age range. In terms of educational background, 50% (12 participants) held a bachelor's degree, 38% (9 participants) had a master's degree, and the remaining 12% (3 participants) possessed a doctoral degree. Regarding work experience, 45% (11 participants) reported having between 5 and 10 years of experience, 30% (7 participants) had 10 to 15 years, while 25% (6 participants) had more than 15 years in their respective fields. This diverse sample provided a well-rounded perspective on the influence of transformational leadership across different demographic and professional backgrounds.

Table 1

The Results of Qualitative Analysis

Category	Subcategory	Concepts
1. Inspirational Motivation	Vision and Purpose	Goal alignment, shared vision, mission clarity
	Empowering Communication	Feedback loops, encouragement, motivational language
	Emotional Engagement	Positive reinforcement, team spirit, personal connection
	Encouragement of Initiative	Idea support, freedom to experiment, confidence in creativity
	Collaborative Atmosphere	Team-building activities, collective problem-solving, shared goals
	Rewards and Recognition	Acknowledgment of effort, incentives, celebratory rituals
2. Intellectual Stimulation	Trust in Leadership	Reliability, integrity, leader as role model
	Problem-Solving Skills	Analytical thinking, solution-based mindset, breaking stereotypes
	Innovation in Process	Open-mindedness, process revision, adaptability
	Challenging Assumptions	Critical questioning, embracing diverse perspectives, reflexivity
	Autonomy and Decision-Making	Empowered roles, self-directed work, ownership over tasks
3. Individualized Consideration	Risk-Taking Support	Acceptance of mistakes, calculated risks, resilience building
	Personal Development	Growth plans, tailored training, feedback for improvement
	Mentorship and Coaching	Guidance, skill-building, personalized support
	Recognition of Uniqueness	Respect for individuality, adaptation to strengths, inclusivity
	Work-Life Balance	Flexibility, wellness programs, attention to burnout
4. Idealized Influence	Emotional Support	Empathy, open communication, conflict resolution
	Adaptability to Personal Needs	Tailored task assignments, role adjustments, schedule flexibility
	Ethical Standards	Integrity, transparency, moral responsibility
	Role Modeling	Leader as example, observable behaviors, consistency
	Influence on Values	Culture-building, value alignment, purpose-driven actions
	Building Trust	Reliability, openness, credibility
	Charismatic Leadership	Inspiration, enthusiasm, vision-setting

3.1 Inspirational Motivation

Vision and Purpose: A central theme in transformational leadership is the articulation of a shared vision and purpose. Leaders who communicate a clear mission enable employees to align their personal goals with those of the organization. This alignment fosters creativity, as employees feel that their contributions are part of a larger objective. One participant noted, “When our leader talks about the company’s vision, it feels like we’re all moving toward the same goal, which makes me more creative in finding ways to help us get there.”

Empowering Communication: Leaders who engage in open and motivational communication create an environment where employees feel safe to express ideas. Feedback loops and encouragement from leaders empower employees to innovate without fear of negative consequences. Another participant shared, “When my supervisor gives me feedback, it’s always constructive and supportive, which makes me want to think outside the box.”

Emotional Engagement: Emotional engagement involves the leader fostering a strong sense of belonging and enthusiasm among employees. By reinforcing positive contributions and building team spirit, leaders stimulate creativity and a desire to excel. A participant mentioned, “I feel more motivated to think creatively because my team genuinely cares about what we do together.”

Encouragement of Initiative: Transformational leaders encourage employees to take initiative, promoting autonomy and confidence in creative endeavors. This support for independent thought motivates employees to propose innovative ideas. One interviewee commented, “I feel encouraged to bring new ideas to the table, knowing my manager will support them.”

Collaborative Atmosphere: A collaborative environment, fostered by team-building activities and shared goals, further stimulates creativity by encouraging teamwork in problem-solving. According to one participant, “Working in a team where everyone is encouraged to share ideas helps me come up with more innovative solutions.”

3.2 Intellectual Stimulation

Problem-Solving Skills: Leaders who stimulate intellectual engagement encourage employees to develop problem-solving skills. By challenging their teams to think critically, transformational leaders foster creativity. An

interviewee explained, “My supervisor encourages us to look at problems from different angles, which has really improved my ability to come up with creative solutions.”

Innovation in Process: Intellectual stimulation involves encouraging employees to innovate in their processes, promoting open-mindedness and adaptability. Employees feel empowered to revise traditional processes, which sparks new ideas. “We’re always encouraged to rethink how we do things,” said one participant, “which helps us come up with fresh, creative solutions.”

Challenging Assumptions: Leaders who encourage employees to challenge assumptions create an environment conducive to critical thinking and reflexivity, key drivers of creativity. One participant reflected, “Our leader asks us to question the usual ways of doing things, which pushes me to think more innovatively.”

Autonomy and Decision-Making: Granting autonomy in decision-making allows employees to explore creative solutions without constant oversight. Employees feel a sense of ownership over their work, which enhances creativity. “I’m given the freedom to make decisions, which really motivates me to come up with unique solutions,” shared an employee.

Risk-Taking Support: Transformational leaders support risk-taking, which is essential for fostering a creative work environment. Accepting mistakes as part of the innovation process allows employees to explore new ideas freely. A participant observed, “Our leader makes it okay to take risks, so I don’t worry about failing when I try something new.”

3.3 Individualized Consideration

Personal Development: Leaders who emphasize personal development by offering tailored training and growth plans inspire employees to expand their skills. This focus on self-improvement encourages employees to engage in creative thinking. An interviewee noted, “Our leader supports us in improving our skills, which makes me feel confident in experimenting with new ideas.”

Mentorship and Coaching: Transformational leaders often act as mentors, providing guidance and support to employees. This individualized attention allows employees to feel valued, fostering an environment of creativity. “I appreciate that my manager mentors us directly; it’s inspiring and helps me be more innovative,” shared one participant.

Recognition of Uniqueness: Acknowledging each employee's unique strengths and skills enables leaders to assign tasks that maximize creative potential. Respect for individuality fosters a sense of inclusion, which inspires employees to contribute their best. "My manager values my unique skills, which makes me feel more confident about my ideas," one employee explained.

Work-Life Balance: A supportive work-life balance, facilitated by flexible policies, ensures that employees have the mental and emotional bandwidth for creativity. "Having a balanced workload helps me stay focused and creative," said an employee, emphasizing the importance of flexibility.

Emotional Support: Leaders who provide emotional support create a trusting environment where employees feel comfortable sharing their ideas without judgment. One participant remarked, "My manager is always there to listen, which really motivates me to think creatively."

3.4 Idealized Influence

Ethical Standards: By adhering to high ethical standards, leaders create a culture of integrity that inspires trust. Employees, in turn, feel empowered to contribute positively and creatively. "Our leader's commitment to ethics makes me want to be innovative in ways that benefit the company and society," a participant shared.

Role Modeling: Leaders who act as role models by embodying the values they promote inspire employees to emulate these qualities, contributing to a culture of creativity. "Our leader's behavior inspires us to think and act creatively," noted one employee.

Influence on Values: Leaders influence organizational values, aligning them with a purpose-driven mission that motivates employees to engage in creative thinking. A participant mentioned, "When our leader talks about values, it inspires me to come up with ideas that contribute to the bigger picture."

Building Trust: Building trust through reliability and openness encourages employees to be transparent in their creative processes, fostering a safe space for innovation. "I trust my manager, so I feel comfortable sharing new ideas without fear," said an interviewee.

Charismatic Leadership: Charismatic leaders inspire enthusiasm and commitment, motivating employees to pursue innovation energetically. As one participant shared, "Our leader's charisma energizes us to be creative and take initiative."

This study aimed to explore the influence of transformational leadership on employee creativity and innovation within commercial organizations in Tehran. Through a qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews, key themes emerged that illustrate how transformational leadership can inspire creativity, encourage innovation, and foster an environment conducive to collaborative problem-solving. Four primary themes—Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, Individualized Consideration, and Idealized Influence—provided a framework for understanding how transformational leaders shape an innovative organizational culture. These results align with and expand upon findings in the existing literature on transformational leadership.

The study found that inspirational motivation, whereby leaders communicate a shared vision and purpose, plays a significant role in promoting creativity. By creating an emotionally engaging atmosphere, leaders instill a sense of direction that empowers employees to contribute meaningfully to organizational goals. This finding is supported by Budur and Demir (2022), who note that transformational leaders inspire employees to adopt an active role in pursuing creative ideas (Budur & Demir, 2022). Additionally, Almashhadani (2023) highlights that transformational leaders in service companies enhance both employee and firm performance by fostering an inspiring vision, which encourages employees to engage in innovative practices (Almashhadani, 2023). The present study's findings align closely with these studies, demonstrating that transformational leadership contributes to a unified and purpose-driven culture where employees feel motivated to explore creative solutions.

Moreover, the subthemes of empowering communication and collaborative atmosphere underscore the role of transformational leadership in fostering open dialogue and team cohesion. The participants indicated that open and supportive communication from leaders encourages them to voice creative ideas, echoing findings from Hooi and Chan (2023) who observed that transformational leadership and workplace digitalization together can drive an innovative organizational culture (Hooi & Chan, 2023). This collaborative culture was further strengthened by leaders who recognized and celebrated employee contributions, which, as Kwarteng et al. (2024) found, positively impacts employee engagement and productivity (Kwarteng et al., 2024). The evidence from this study supports these findings, affirming that inspirational motivation in transformational

4 Discussion and Conclusion

leadership helps create a psychologically safe space where employees feel valued and motivated to innovate.

The findings reveal that intellectual stimulation by leaders is critical to fostering creativity and innovative thinking among employees. Participants shared that leaders who encouraged critical thinking, problem-solving, and autonomy empowered them to challenge conventional ideas and pursue innovative solutions. This aligns with the findings of Gu (2023), who demonstrated that strategic leadership fosters creativity through a combination of personal aspiration and intellectual engagement (Gu, 2023). Similarly, Moshayekh Moini (2023) identified that transformational leadership facilitates knowledge-sharing and promotes innovation, further supporting the notion that intellectual stimulation leads employees to explore new ideas actively (Moshayekh Moini, 2023).

A notable aspect of intellectual stimulation in this study was the encouragement of risk-taking and the acceptance of mistakes as part of the innovation process. This finding aligns with Odugbesan et al. (2022), who found that transformational leaders promote employees' innovative behavior by encouraging calculated risks, especially within green talent management frameworks (Odugbesan et al., 2022). The emphasis on autonomy and decision-making observed in this study is further reinforced by Rahimi, Bahmaee, and Barekat (2023), who argued that transformational leadership can remove barriers to innovation by supporting flexible problem-solving approaches (Rahimi et al., 2023). The consistency between the current findings and prior research underscores the importance of intellectual stimulation in promoting a culture of learning and experimentation that is essential for innovation.

Individualized consideration was another significant theme identified in the study, highlighting the leader's role in providing personalized support, mentorship, and development opportunities. Participants reported that leaders who prioritize their professional growth fostered a sense of belonging and motivation, ultimately contributing to their creative output. This aligns with the work of Herawati et al. (2023), who found that transformational leadership significantly impacts employee competence by focusing on personalized support (Herawati et al., 2023). Furthermore, Bajracharya (2023) demonstrated that individualized consideration is associated with higher job satisfaction, as leaders address employees' unique needs and provide tailored developmental guidance (Bajracharya, 2023).

The subthemes of emotional support and work-life balance also resonated with previous findings, suggesting that transformational leaders who acknowledge personal needs create an environment conducive to innovation. When employees feel supported and recognized as individuals, they are more likely to engage in creative behaviors (Syukran et al., 2023). This study supports these insights by demonstrating that individualized consideration not only increases employee satisfaction but also provides the necessary emotional and mental resources for sustained creativity. The emphasis on mentorship and personal development identified in the findings aligns with the conclusions of Aghaei Ghaleche (2023), who posits that transformational leadership supports employee retention and innovation by promoting skill development and employee well-being (Aghaei Ghaleche, 2023).

Finally, idealized influence emerged as a critical theme, underscoring the role of ethical standards, role modeling, and trust-building in fostering an innovative culture. Participants described leaders who exemplify ethical behaviors as inspirational figures whose integrity encourages employees to follow suit in their work. This aligns with Yang and Liu's (2022) findings on ethical leadership, where leaders' commitment to values positively influenced employees' green innovation behaviors (Yang & Liu, 2022). Similarly, Du and Yan (2022) observed that green transformational leadership motivates employees by aligning environmental initiatives with organizational values, fostering a culture of responsible innovation (Du & Yan, 2022).

The current study's focus on role modeling and trust-building further supports previous research by demonstrating that transformational leaders who embody integrity and transparency inspire employees to take risks and innovate confidently. As Xu et al. (2022) note, transformational leaders who promote shared vision and alignment of values foster a creative environment where employees feel empowered to take initiative (Z. Xu et al., 2022). These findings indicate that idealized influence contributes to a sense of trust and shared values, which are foundational for employees to engage in risk-taking and innovative work behaviors. The alignment between these results and existing studies highlights the importance of ethical and value-driven leadership in creating a cohesive, innovative culture within organizations.

While this study provides valuable insights into the effects of transformational leadership on creativity and innovation, several limitations should be considered. First,

the study was conducted with participants from commercial organizations in Tehran, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other cultural and organizational contexts. Future research should include diverse geographical and industry settings to examine potential variations in how transformational leadership influences creativity and innovation. Additionally, as a qualitative study, this research relied on subjective self-reports, which may introduce biases or limit the objectivity of the data. Future studies could integrate quantitative measures to strengthen the reliability and generalizability of the findings.

Future research should explore the potential moderating and mediating factors that may influence the relationship between transformational leadership and employee innovation. Variables such as organizational culture, digitalization, and employees' career aspirations could provide valuable insights into how transformational leadership can be adapted to different organizational structures. Additionally, as the current study focused primarily on employee perspectives, future research could examine the perspectives of leaders themselves to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and strategies in promoting innovation. Longitudinal studies would also help to capture the effects of transformational leadership over time, providing insights into the sustained impact on employee creativity and organizational performance.

For practitioners, the findings highlight the importance of transformational leadership in fostering an innovative and creative work environment. Leaders should focus on clear communication of a shared vision, as this inspires employees and aligns their efforts toward common goals. Additionally, encouraging open communication and risk-taking can create a psychologically safe workplace where employees feel comfortable exploring new ideas. It is also crucial for leaders to provide individualized support and mentorship, as this enhances employees' skills and fosters a culture of continuous improvement. By embodying ethical standards and acting as role models, leaders can build trust and reinforce a value-driven culture that encourages employees to engage in meaningful and innovative work.

Authors' Contributions

All authors have contributed significantly to the research process and the development of the manuscript.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

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