

The Impact of Place and Price on Consumers' Repurchases Organic Food: The Moderating Role of Consumers' Gender

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Abstract

This study investigates the direct impact of perceived place and price on consumers' repurchase intentions toward organic food, focusing on the moderating role of consumers' gender. The study used (SEMPLS) and SPSS for data analysis and utilized an online snowball survey to collect data from 194 respondents in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This study demonstrates the significant direct impact of perceived price on repurchase intention and the significant effect of gender on this relationship. This study contributes to the understanding of the factors (place and price) that influence consumers' repurchase intentions for organic food, shedding light on the moderating role of gender in this process. By providing insights into the influence of place, price, and gender on consumer behavior, this study offers valuable implications for entrepreneurship and marketing in the organic food industry.

Keywords: consumer perceptions, consumer attributes, food industry, repurchase intention, organic food

1. Introduction

In recent years, organic food has become an increasingly important health awareness issue despite the lack of evidence from scientists. Wang et al. found that health consciousness was the primary driver, but herd mentality also played a role in motivating organic food consumption (Wang et al., 2023). There are various definitions of organic food; however, there is only one thing that people agree about—this kind of food is healthy.

In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the organic food industry has received significant attention since it became part of the 2030 VISION (mewa.gov.sa, 2019). Organic farms play an important role in food security in Saudi Arabia. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has turned towards organic agriculture to provide local organic products such as wheat, dates, vegetables, and others as alternatives to imported products for several reasons, including supporting national farms and meeting the needs of citizens and residents, as well as food security. The emphasis on renewable resources and the conservation of soil and water is a key aspect of organic food production (Jukes, 1977; Kreisberg, 2008). The Ministry of Environment, Water & Agriculture established an organic agriculture development project by contracting with the German company GIZ to provide an expert house to develop appropriate plans for developing organic agriculture activities in the Kingdom (mewa.gov.sa, 2017). This project extended to five phases from 2005 to 2017, during which several plans were developed that contributed to the development of organic agriculture from a productive, regulatory, and legislative standpoint, as well as at the level of marketing solutions (mewa.gov.sa, 2017).

The organic food market in Saudi Arabia, as in many other countries, faces a challenge to market its products and maintain its businesses. This study aims to analyze the impact of price and place on the repurchase intention of organic food. Moreover, it focuses on marketing solutions for this sector to increase the organic food market in Saudi Arabia by understanding consumer behavior toward organic food.

Additionally, Musungwini et al. (2014) and Malau (2020) found that the 4 Ps of marketing strategy (product, promotion, price, and place) play essential roles in market analysis and business performance, respectively. All elements of the marketing mix are linked to and affected by each other (Singh, 2012). When the price of a product increases, demand for it decreases; thus, it will need fewer distribution locations (Singh, 2012). A location is generally referred to as a distribution channel (Rasmussen et al., 2007). Therefore, understanding

consumer behavior is important to keep the number of customers increasing. In addition, demographic information such as gender plays an essential role. Ranawana and Henry (2010) claimed that men and women have distinctive choices for liking and disliking products. Consumers should purchase products immediately and plan to repurchase them within a short time in case of advantages over the competition (Sarker et al., 2012; Lascu et al., 2020; Clemes et al., 2020).

The most widely used theory to explain the useful behavior of demographic information, such as age and gender, is the theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Abrahamse & Steg, 2011), which many researchers have mentioned is the best theory for predicting consumer behavior (Taylor & Todd, 1995). Moreover, one researcher asserted that TPB is better than the theory of reasoned action in terms of predicting individual intentions (Chang, 1998). The interaction of the components of TPB with demographic variables has not received much attention in previous studies (Botetzagias et al., 2015). This study addresses this gap by applying TPB to explain the relationship between price, place, gender, and repurchase intention toward organic food.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Organic Food

There are many definitions of organic food, but it generally refers to a method of growing. Clayton and Bush (2019) explained that organic food is grown and processed without the use of synthetic pesticides and conventional fertilizers, genetically modified organisms, or irradiation. Additionally, antibiotics and growth hormones are absent in organic dairy products, eggs, poultry, and meat (Clayton & Bush, 2019).

2.2 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

TPB examines the psychological aspects of individuals in relation to social exchanges and serves as a catalyst for social behavior (Mathew et al., 2020). The basic concept of TPB highlights the exchange of costs and rewards that illuminate human interactions based on psychological motives (Lascu et al., 2020; Sridhar & Mishra, 2011). Scholars argued that human psychology and cost-oriented incentives compel individuals to engage in social transactions because involvement in such exchanges enhances their ability to satisfy their needs (Mathew et al., 2020). Consequently, individuals recognize the importance of acquiring social necessities and strive to fulfil them because engaging in transactions prompts them to make definitive decisions aimed at meeting the demand for social needs (Cook et al., 2013). Moreover, TPB asserts that individuals make decisions based on their specific preferences. In doing so, they anticipate receiving favorable incentives and enduring benefits by varying their selections between products (Clemes et al., 2020). Consequently, they opt for choices that result in the least expensive products (Yang et al., 2019). TPB also posits that an uncertain decision may lead an individual to select expenses and rewards of different natures (Mathew et al., 2020).

2.3 Price and Repurchase Intention

Numerous studies have consistently indicated that the pricing factor significantly impacts the re-purchasing behavior of organic food (Marian et al., 2014; Aschemann-Witzel, 2014; Watanabe, 2023). Elevated prices may discourage customers from making repeat purchases, leading them to potentially transition towards alternative pricing brackets (Marian et al., 2014). Nevertheless, the existence of organic certifications and income levels can potentially sway consumers' inclination to pay premiums for organic products (Watanabe, 2023). Additional elements such as environmental consciousness, perceived product quality, and health-oriented consumption patterns also shape the perceived value of organic food, consequently influencing the intention to repurchase (Toni, 2018). Factors that influence purchasing decisions include nutritive primacy, health perception, and sensory attributes (Khatab et al., 2020). However, the scarcity of access to organic food and its high prices are significant barriers (Khatab et al., 2020). Researchers advocated that repurchasing intention may be negatively or positively influenced by consumer perception or recognition (Aldousari et al., 2017). Price is a distinguishing characteristic of a product related to its quality. Moreover, Wang et al. (2016) supported the positive and significant influence of PPR on RI among consumers. Based on this evidence, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1. Perceived price significantly and positively influences organic food repurchase intention.

2.4 Perceived Place and Repurchase Intention

Place, one of the four components of the marketing mix, is an important factor in a customer's ability to obtain a product. Within this framework, scholars in the field of marketing defined locations as environments that support practical transactions between purchasers and vendors, during which both sides trade currency, products, or services (Bagozzi, 1975). The right places aim to make the right products available for the right customers for that product (Widyastuti et al., 2020).

Other marketers view the place concept as comprising actions or “activities that make the product available to target consumers” (Armstrong & Kotler, 2015, p. 53), including channel selection and logistics. Although such conceptualizations of place are valid, some scholars argued that this notion does not capture all definitions of place (Grönroos, 1994; Sherry, 2000). Kerr and Oliver (2015) asserted the importance of placing identity in marketing and branding, suggesting that it can impact repurchase behavior. Based on this evidence, this study proposes the following research hypothesis:

H2. Perceived place significantly and positively influences organic food repurchase intention.

2.5 Moderating Role of Gender

Gender impacts consumer buying decisions. Amin (2015) demonstrated the effects of perceived ease of use, trust tendency, and perceived usefulness on repurchase intention, with gender differences in trust tendencies. Additionally, Ranawana and Henry (2010) clarified that females and males in every family perform idiosyncratic actions when repurchasing products. Moreover, both females and males look for products because they need to think of every one of their substitutes (Salinero et al., 2014). Based on previous research, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H3: Gender significantly and positively moderates the link between consumer perceptions (perceived price = H3a; perceived place = H3b) and repurchase intentions.

Conceptual Model:

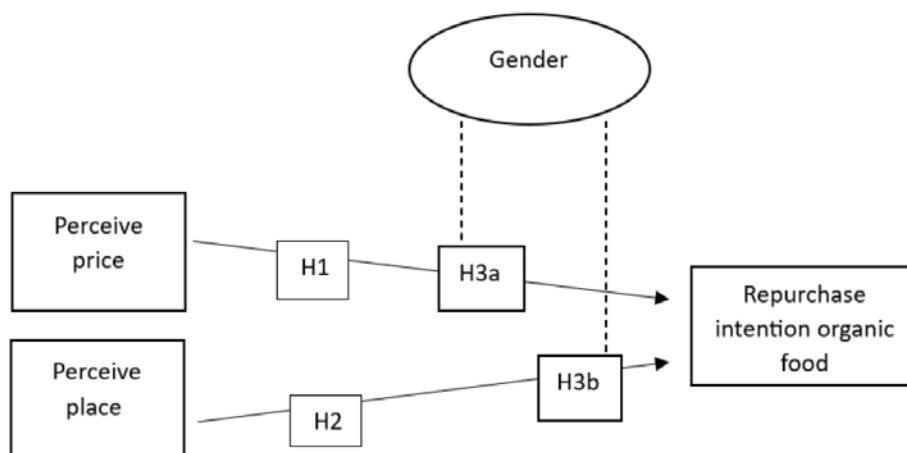


Figure 1. Hypothesis model

3. Research and Methodology

3.1 Data Collection and Analysis

This study used an online snowball sampling survey. Between March and May 2024, we received a snowball sample of 194 respondents. Data were collected from customers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Several statistical tests were used for data analysis, such as internal validity, including variable and construct validity tests, path analysis, and factor loadings. To evaluate the model with multiple variables, we used SEMPLS and SPSS software. All responses on variables related to this study were obtained on a 5-point Likert scale from 5 points (strongly agree) to 1 point (strongly disagree). This investigation utilized established measurement scales derived from previous literature such as price fairness from Bei and Chiao (2001) and the repurchase intention scale from Singh and Alok (2021). The place scale was adapted from Asdi and Putra (2020). Moreover, scholars have verified that the survey was composed of straightforward language and devoid of errors (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Additionally, constructs that use Likert scales with 5 points highly provide a high level of validity and reliability (Saleh & Ryan, 1991).

3.2 The Reliability of the Questionnaire Instruments

Cronbach’s alpha, which determines instrument reliability based on the amount of variance shared or covariance among the different items in an instrument, as opposed to the total amount of variance, was improved upon by

Lee Cronbach in 1951 (Cronbach, 1951). It is expressed as a number between 0 and 1, and test items are correlated when the value of alpha is greater (Cronbach, 1951; Streiner, 2003).

Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008) suggested using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient to measure the reliability of multiple-item constructs. Agarwal and Karahanna (2000) recommended that a score of 0.6 is accepted for newly developed measures, while 0.70 is the minimum accepted level otherwise. According to the results in Table 1, Cronbach's alpha (0.962) was adequate. Based on the Cronbach's alpha coefficients, these items are free of random errors and generate similar results if repeated, implying that these measurements are reliable.

Table 1. Reliability and stability of variables

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
Repurchase	0.954	5
Place	0.927	7
Price	0.948	6
Total	0.869	18

Table 2 summarizes the demographic statistics, including the sample characteristics of age, sex, and income.

Table 2. Sample characteristics

Characteristics	Total	Percentage	
Income	10000 or less	97	50.0
	10000–19000	88	45.4
	20000–29000	9	4.6
Gender	Female	138	71.1
	Male	56	28.9
Place of preference	Market	93	47.9
	Hyper	82	42.3
	Organic food store	19	9.8
Knowledge of organic food after COVID-19	Yes	56	28.9
	No	138	71.1
	Total	194	100

Table 2 shows that most of the sample (50.0%) have an income of 10000 or less. The sample is largely female (71.1%) compared to males (28.9%). Respondents were asked about their preferences for shopping for organic food, and the majority preferred to buy from the market (47.9%). Nearly a third of the sample (28.9%) were aware of organic food after COVID-19, which meant that the pandemic did not play an essential role in increasing the relevance of organic food.

3.3 Assessment of the Relationships Between the Study Variables

To study the relationships between the study variables, we built a structural model using SEM-PLS 3 software, as shown in Figure 1. SEM-PLS was used to acknowledge the structural relevance between price scales, place and repurchasing according to the collected data from the sample. A reliability test showed the extent to which the indicator variance can be explained by the latent variable. If a reflective indicator had a loading value of less than 0.6, the indicator was eliminated from the model. Figure 2 presents the final indicators retained in the model for further analysis. This signifies that several latent variables explain the typical indicators.

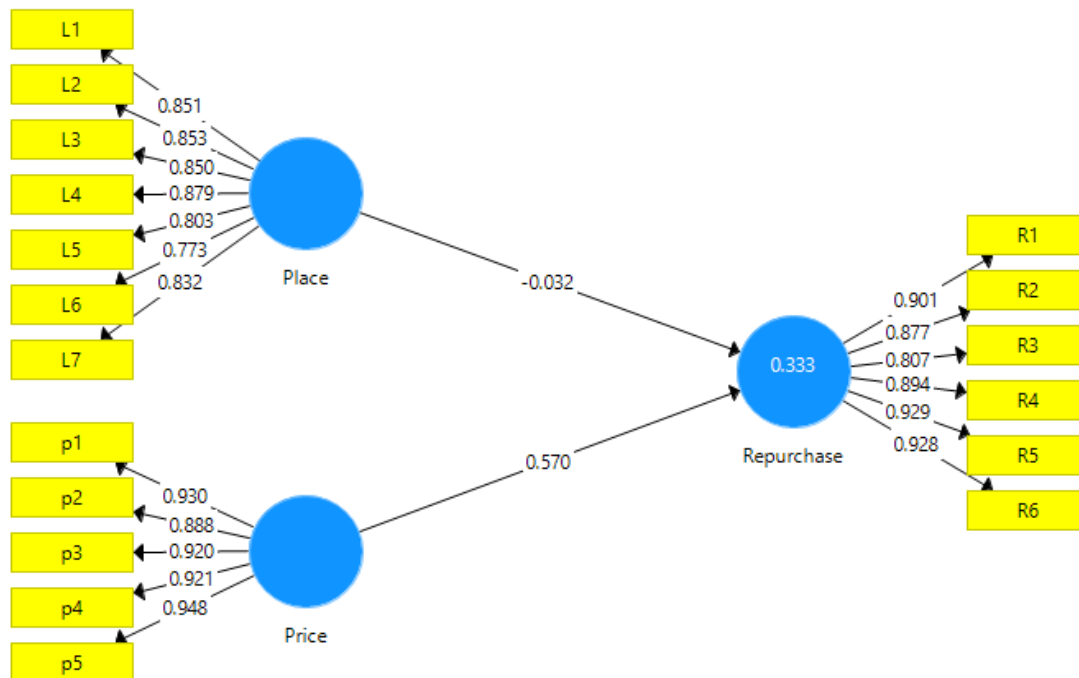


Figure 2. Model 1: Path diagram with loading factors

Figure 2 shows the value of the obtained R-square points. Customer satisfaction for repurchases was 33%, which clarifies why more than 33% of the variability of the endogenous variables was explained by the variability of the exogenous variables.

Table 3 presents the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test results, which is a measure of sampling adequacy. We obtained a KMO value of 0.871, which indicates that the degree of information among the variables overlaps with strong partial correlations. The second is Bartlett’s test of sphericity, where it is ideal to conduct a factor analysis. Bartlett’s test of sphericity (p-value < 0.05) emphasizes a statistically significant rejection of the null hypothesis, which states that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix. This implies that non-zero correlations exist between the variables, as detailed in the table below.

Table 3. KMO and Bartlett’s tests

KMO measure of sampling adequacy		0.871
Bartlett’s test of sphericity	Approx. chi-square	3823.189
	df	153
	Sig.	0.000

3.4 Assessment of Measurement Model (Validity and Reliability)

Table 4 shows the construct reliability and validity analysis. In this table, four latent variables have composite reliability values greater than 0.6. Hence, the set indicators were accurately measured for each construct and met the reliability standards. The average variance extracted (AVE) should be 0.5 or greater (Richter et al., 2020). In the AVE column, all latent variables were above 0.5, indicating attainment of the validity standard. Diagonal elements (shown in bold) represent the square root of the AVE, which indicates the amount of variance in a construct explained by its measures. In simpler terms, higher diagonal values indicate that the measures capture most of the intended construct's variance.

Table 4. Construct reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity (baseline model)

Variable	Composite reliability	(AVE)	Place	Price	Repurchase
Place	0.942	0.697	0.835		
Price	0.966	0.849	-0.199	0.922	
Repurchase	0.958	0.792	-0.145	0.576	0.890
R ² =0.33					

Almost all GoF measures meet the threshold level set by previous literature works (See Table 5). Both d_ULS (the squared Euclidean distance) and d_G (the geodesic distance) offer values that are not significant, indicating a good model fit (for both PLS and PLSc) (Hair, Jr. et al., 2017a, 2017b; Dijkstra & Henseler, 2015a, 2015b).

Table 5. Measurement model fit indices

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.078	0.078
d_ULS	1.034	1.034
d_G	0.777	0.777
Chi-square	813.389	813.389
NFI	0.795	0.795

Moreover, Table 6 displays information from the bootstrapping results, which show a direct relationship between the latent variables. P values were determined to explain the relationship between these latent variables.

Table 6. Model 1: Bootstrapping analysis (direct effect)

	The relationship	Original sample (O)	T	P	Support
H1	Price --> Repurchase	0.570	12.502	0.000	Yes
H2	Place --> Repurchase	-0.032	0.427	0.669	No

The P-value and original sample columns in each section show that the conclusion that H1 is supported while H2 is not.

3.5 The Moderating Role of Gender

To investigate the moderating effect of gender on the relationship between consumer perceptions (perceived price and perceived place) and repurchase intentions, we designed the structural model shown in Figure 3.

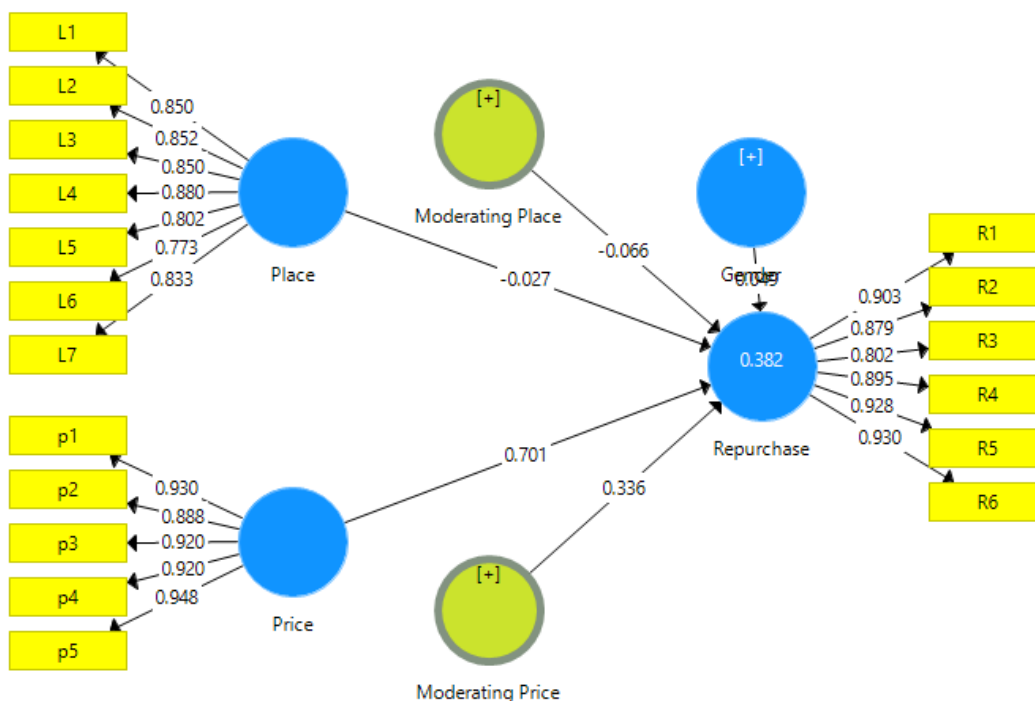


Figure 3. Model 2: Path diagram with loading factors

Figure 3 also shows the value of the obtained R-square points. Customer satisfaction for repurchases was 38.2%, which explains why the variability of the endogenous variables is explained by the variability of the exogenous variables at more than 38.2%.

The specific indirect effects in Table 7 were used to discover the effects of gender on the endogenous variables. Accordingly, H3a is supported but H3b is not.

Table 7. Model 2: Effects of gender on endogenous variable (moderating effect)

Path	Original sample	T Statistics	P	Support
Gender -> Repurchase	0.049	0.71	0.478	No
Gender as moderating place -> Repurchase	-0.066	0.776	0.438	No
Gender as moderating price -> Repurchase	0.336	3.152	0.002	Yes
Place -> Repurchase	-0.027	0.338	0.736	No
Price -> Repurchase	0.701	9.064	0.000	Yes

To determine the differences in favor of either gender, we conducted a Mann-Whitney U test. The results, which are summarized in Table 8, indicate that differences in price and purchase intention affect women more than men. This means that women are more price-conscious than men and prefer to buy from places with lower prices, whereas men do not pay much attention to these factors.

Table 8. Mann-Whitney test, grouping variable: Gender

		Price	Place	Repurchase
Test statistics	Mann-Whitney U	2778	3637	2792.5
	Wilcoxon W	4374	13228	4388.5
	Z	-3.342	-0.666	-3.061
	Asymp. sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.506	0.002
Mean	Female	2.084	4.255	3.190
	Male	1.371	4.296	2.435
Std. deviation	Female	1.254	0.835	1.271
	Male	0.597	0.858	1.513

4. Findings and Discussion

This study aims to verify whether there is a direct relationship between price and repurchase of organic products. We also investigated the presence of a direct effect on repurchases through place, and whether gender plays an important role in these relationships or not.

The results are as follows. First, there is a direct effect of price on the repurchase of organic products. This means that the customer is highly sensitive to the pricing process of organic products, which plays an important role in the process of making repurchase decisions.

The second hypothesis was that place directly affects repurchase decisions. Place is considered to be one of the four elements of the marketing mix. However, based on these results, we found no direct impact or interference in the decision-making process of repurchasing organic products. This means that a consumer's presence in the mini-market does not currently play a major role. The reason may be that the culture of buying organic products from anywhere does not occupy a place in the consumer's mind because they believe that the important factor is price, not place. When the price of a product increases, demand for it decreases; thus, fewer distribution locations are needed (Singh, 2012). In reality, there are no organic products in the mini-market. This may explain their lack of influence on their decisions to repurchase.

The third hypothesis was that gender acts as a mediator with pricing only; that is, women and men differ in their price awareness and involvement in repurchase decisions. Women have a greater awareness of this factor, while men buy organic products without paying much attention to price. This may be because according to the accepted culture, women care most about everything related to the home, including purchasing food products. Therefore, they look at prices and compare products more because of wider experience.

5. Managerial Implications

This study will help investors in this sector and entrepreneurs understand their behavior towards organic products. What distinguishes this study is its contribution toward maintaining the sustainability of organic product projects. From a marketing perspective, price plays an important role in sustaining the success of organic projects. Customers are highly sensitive to the pricing process and there is a large difference between the pricing of organic and non-organic products. This difference reduces the idea of repurchasing organic products and, thus, their lack of sustainability. Moreover, realizing the importance of organic food, in addition to the importance of the characteristics of places where organic food is sold, is related to the repetition of the process of purchasing organic food (Brčić-Stipčević & Petljak, 2011).

In addition, this study points to an important point: the gender factor and its indirect effect on prices and repurchases. Women have great influence; therefore, it is important to include women's preferences in prices and the process of developing a pricing strategy. Even in campaigns promoting organic products, it is preferable to focus more on women in terms of price to attract them and encourage them to repurchase, for example, offers for products or discounts and using social influencers in marketing campaigns to attract women's attention toward the importance of organic food.

6. Limitations

This study measured only two dependent variables: price and location. Studying other variables such as promotions leads to better results. Using elements other than gender as mediators; for example, the influence of social media or celebrities. Data were collected using questionnaires. If personal interviews were conducted with consumers, more accurate results could have been obtained. Such research could also be conducted in other countries to obtain broader results.

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The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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