EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB INSECURITY AND JOB SATISFACTION: A STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING APPROACH ON WHITE-COLLAR EMPLOYEES[*]

İlhami Hakan DEMİR[2], Temmuz GÖNÇ ŞAVRAN[3]

Abstract

Drawing on the data of a quantitative study, this study aims to examine the impact of job insecurity levels on job satisfaction among white-collar employees and to interpret the findings in the context of risk society, flexible labor, and precariat. The data were collected through a survey conducted on a sample of 400 white-collar employees from the service, industry, and construction sectors, all of whom hold higher education degrees. The questionnaire included a personal information form to assess the socio-demographic characteristics of participants, the Job Insecurity Scale to quantify their levels of job insecurity, and the Job Satisfaction Scale to measure their levels of job satisfaction. To examine the effects of job insecurity on job satisfaction, two distinct Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) models were constructed, and the models' goodness of fit indices and estimation parameters were assessed. The results from the first model reveal a negative relationship between job insecurity and job satisfaction, while the findings from the second model indicate that quantitative job insecurity has a stronger predictive effect on job satisfaction factors than qualitative job insecurity.

Keywords: Sociology of Work, Job Insecurity, Job Satisfaction, White-Collar, Structural Equation Modeling

JEL Codes: J28, J63

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[2] Specialist in sociology, Independent researcher, dmr.hakan@outlook.com, https://orcid.org/0009-0004-0882-2866
[3] Prof., Anadolu University, Faculty of Humanities, tgonc@anadolu.edu.tr, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0561-4661

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to examine the impact of job insecurity on job satisfaction among white-collar workers among white-collar employees and to interpret the findings through essential debates in the sociology of work. As technological advancements and increasing labor market flexibility transform employment landscapes, understanding the relationship between job insecurity and job satisfaction becomes crucial. The research contributes to the existing literature by offering empirical insights derived from Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) applied to survey data collected from 400 white-collar employees in the service, industrial, and construction sectors. Methodologically, the study utilizes a structured survey incorporating the Job Insecurity Scale and Job Satisfaction Scale, ensuring strong reliability and validity in measurements. By differentiating between quantitative and qualitative job insecurity, the research provides a nuanced perspective on how workplace uncertainty influences employee well-being, offering valuable insights for organizational strategies and labor policies in an era marked by increasing job precarity. However, the study has limitations, such as its dependence on self-reported data, which may lead to response biases, and its narrow focus on a specific occupational group, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings.

Theoretical Background

Job insecurity has become more prevalent among white-collar workers in the first quarter of the 21. century due to rapid technological advancements, globalization, and increasing labor market flexibility. Workers who are essential to innovation and efficiency in organizations, however, suffer from disproportionate levels of uncertainty. (Standing, 2014, pp. 62–65; Bora et al., 2021, pp. 17–20). The global unemployment rate rose from 5,1% in 2023 to 5,2% in 2024 (ILO, 2024), and -excluding the pandemic period- 2025 was recorded as the year in which the most workers lost their jobs in the United States in the last 15 years (Whitfill Roeloffs, 2025). The roots of the increasing concern about job insecurity lies in historical changes in the labor market and wider economic policies. Job insecurity is defined as the anxiety individuals experience due to the threat of job loss or uncertainty in their work environment (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984, p. 439). During the 1980s and 1990s competition grew, governments implemented industry deregulation, and organizations increasingly adopted cost-reduction strategies within neoliberal and post-Fordist economic frameworks, and as a consequence, the job insecurity problem became more important (Reilly et al., 1993, pp. 167–169; Roskies et al., 1993, pp. 617–619).

As a result of these developments, modern society has stopped providing the traditional sense of security for people, instead, it has fostered a climate of uncertainty and ontological insecurity. Ontological

insecurity is defined as people's trust in the continuity of their own identities and the continuity of the social and material environments of action, which depend on routines, social interaction, and stability (Giddens, 1984, p.61). Giddens (2010, p.36) emphasizes that in late modernity, which is characterized by uncertainty and fluidity, individuals constantly strive to achieve a sense of stability and that ontological security is of vital importance for them. Giddens' point aligns with Elias (2001, p. 528), who emphasizes that in modern society individualism is core, but personal security is fragile and unstable. Beck (2000, p. 36-67) also emphasizes that in modern society, people are increasingly exposed to risks beyond their control, and job insecurity is one of the most prominent examples of this shift. In his Risk Society, Beck (1992) explains how the traditional sources of stability, such as stable and secure employment, have been eroded by risks generated by modern industrial and economic systems, and modern forms of work render individuals' sense of security increasingly uncertain. Beck's view that the rapidly changing nature of work intensifies feelings of insecurity is developed by Sennett (2019, p. 49), who identifies the ongoing changes in work conditions as a central aspect of career development in the modern era. Standing (2104) extends this notion by focusing on the rise of a new social class, the "precariat," defined by its reliance on unstable, insecure, and low-paying work. Standing (2014) shows how these conditions disproportionately impact workers, including white-collar employees who once had stable, long-term careers but now find themselves increasingly vulnerable to precarity. He argues that the precariat is not merely a product of economic shifts but also a result of wider sociopolitical transformations that have eroded labor protections and shredded traditional career trajectories. This precarious employment framework has cutting implications not only for job satisfaction but also for social cohesion and individual well-being. Unlike the traditional proletariat, which benefited from job security and social rights, the precariat is marked by temporary and insecure work, economic instability, and a lack of long-term career prospects. This pervasive insecurity fosters a constant sense of uncertainty, even among white-collar workers. Roskies et al. (1993, pp. 625–628) support this view, noting that economic recessions and corporate restructuring have heightened job insecurity among white-collar professionals. Furthermore, neoliberal policies and global competition have intensified these pressures, amplifying fears of job loss and concerns about the relevance of professional skills in a rapidly changing economy (Standing, 2014, pp. 8–11; Bora et al., 2021, pp. 303–306).

Handy (1989, p. 212) introduced the concept of a "portfolio work life," suggesting that workers must continually adapt to new configurations of employment. This concept reflects the changing dynamics between individuals and their work, as non-traditional forms of employment—such as freelancing and temporary contracts—have grown in prominence. Although these new forms of employment may provide greater autonomy, they also expose workers to heightened risks, leaving them more vulnerable and detached from traditional employer ties. Friedman (2014, p. 185) emphasizes how such precarious job structures

intensify job insecurity and weaken long-term employer-employee bonds, contributing to broader systemic challenges in labor markets. Atkinson (2013, p. 659) claims that neo-liberal economic policies have worsened this insecurity by prioritizing labor market flexibility, resulting in more unstable and short-term employment conditions. Ross (2008, p. 44-45) critiques the post-industrial system for exploiting this instability, further deepening workers' vulnerability. Similarly, Bauman (2019, p. 9) describes these rising uncertainties as "liquid modernity," a condition where traditional sources of security—whether in work or social connections—are increasingly eroding. Munck (2012, p. 21) supports this view, asserting that globalization has significantly driven the flexibilization and precarization of labor. He argues that contemporary work arrangements dismantle traditional security frameworks, compelling individuals to navigate an increasingly volatile and unpredictable economic environment (Munck, 2012, p. 25).

Wright Mills (1951) provides a critical analysis of the changing dynamics within the American middle class, highlighting how their once-stable, hierarchical roles within bureaucratic organizations have increasingly become vulnerable to insecurity and devaluation. Aronowitz (2009) also focuses on the shift from industrial to post-industrial capitalism. He argues that this shift has not only disrupted economic structures but also eroded class consciousness and collective identity among workers. Aronowitz believes that this transformation has left both blue-collar and white-collar workers increasingly isolated and disempowered, as the decline of unions and the rise of precarious employment have fragmented solidarity.

In addition to this outline for understanding the existing sense of insecurity and alienation that characterizes modern workforces, Braverman (1974) shows how white-collar professions have experienced parallel trends of deprofessionalization and skill erosion, like the patterns he observed in blue-collar occupations. Braverman argues that the increase in automation and managerial control deskilled workers and forced them to work on more repetitive and routine tasks, instead of creative or strategic contributions. The post-Fordist labor relations are marked by flexible work arrangements, the decline of permanent, full-time employment, and the rise of precarious labor, and have fundamentally altered workers' job satisfaction. Gorz (1989, p.220) argues that the flexibilization of work intensifies insecurity and fragments the labor market, forcing employees to continually adapt to changing demands, which undermines job satisfaction. This study's identification of widespread quantitative and qualitative job insecurity among white-collar workers resonates with Gorz's concerns about the instability and precariousness of work in the post-Fordist era, as well as the erosion of long-term security. Harvey's (1989) analysis of the postmodern condition, where economic instability and globalization create a "liquid" and unpredictable world of work, further contextualizes this study's findings. Harvey emphasizes that the shift from stable industrial employment to

flexible, precarious work arrangements has heightened insecurity, with significant consequences for job satisfaction and worker well-being.

Literature Review

The relationship between job insecurity and job satisfaction has become a key topic in the sociology of work and organizational behavior. These two factors interact in complex ways, shaping individuals' workplace experiences and influencing how organizations function. While job insecurity arises from uncertainties in the work environment and concerns about the future, job satisfaction reflects an individual's sense of fulfillment or dissatisfaction with their job (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984, pp. 438–442; Vroom, 1964, p. 99). Job satisfaction, on the other hand, reflects an employee's emotional response to their job. Hoppock (1935, p. 3) defined it as employees' perceptions and feelings about their work environment, while Locke (1976, pp. 1297–1301) described it as the overall sum of an individual's positive and negative emotions toward their job. Research consistently indicates a negative relationship between job insecurity and job satisfaction (De Witte, 2005, p. 5; Smit et al., 2016, pp. 8–10).

Recent studies have explored the relationship between job security and job satisfaction across various professional settings. Lestari et al. (2023) examined hotel employees in Indonesia and found a significant positive correlation (r=0.370) between job security and job satisfaction, with a shared variance of 13.6%. Similarly, Masykuroh and Muafi (2021) reported that job security accounted for 65.5% of the variance in job satisfaction among supermarket employees, indicating a strong positive effect (β=0.709). In contrast, studies investigating job insecurity suggest a negative impact on job satisfaction. Narotama and Sintaasih (2022) identified a negative effect (β=-0.202) among contract workers in an Indian airport terminal, while Wang et al. (2022) observed a significant negative correlation (r=-0.181) with a 36.2% shared variance among public sector employees in China. Further evidence supports the detrimental effects of job insecurity. Stefano et al. (2020) analyzed call center employees in Italy and found a strong negative correlation (r=-0.500) with a shared variance of 25%. Yeves et al. (2019) demonstrated that job insecurity negatively impacted both intrinsic (r=-0.300) and extrinsic (r=-0.400) job satisfaction in Chilean workforce. Emanuel et al. (2018) also noted a stronger negative impact on female employees (β=-0.590, 35% variance explained) compared to males (β=-0.400, 16% variance explained). However, some studies found no statistically significant relationship between job insecurity and overall job satisfaction (Nemtenau et al., 2021; Mahmoud et al., 2021), although specific job satisfaction dimensions, such as supervision satisfaction and promotion opportunities, were negatively affected. Overall, the literature consistently indicates that job security enhances job satisfaction, while job insecurity undermines it. The degree of impact varies across studies, influenced by factors such as employment sector, contract type, and demographic differences.

Perceived job insecurity consists of both quantitative and qualitative dimensions, each associated with distinct emotional and behavioral reactions among employees. Quantitative job insecurity arises from the fear of job loss and perceived economic instability, whereas qualitative job insecurity pertains to anxieties about changes in working conditions (Hellgren et al., 1999, p. 182). These dimensions are interconnected, with quantitative insecurity directly diminishing job satisfaction by amplifying concerns about employees' financial futures. Employees who fear losing their jobs often express lower satisfaction with critical aspects such as pay and career advancement opportunities (De Witte, 2005, p. 5), and those experiencing high levels of quantitative insecurity tend to perceive their work conditions as more unstable and temporary (Hellgren et al., 1999, p. 190). On the other hand, qualitative job insecurity stems from worries about shifts in job content, responsibilities, and workplace dynamics, creating uncertainty about employees' roles and reducing their overall job satisfaction. Vander Elst et al. (2014, pp. 375–377) highlight that this form of insecurity particularly impacts satisfaction with management and communication, fostering an unstable work environment. Thus, both quantitative and qualitative job insecurities significantly influence job satisfaction, albeit through different pathways. These findings indicate that perceived job insecurity affects job satisfaction in multifaceted ways, with implications at the individual, organizational, and societal levels. This study seeks to expand the existing literature by exploring the relationship between job insecurity and job satisfaction, providing fresh insights into the experiences of white-collar employees, who are especially susceptible to both economic and qualitative uncertainties in today's rapidly evolving labor market.

METHOD

Research Model

This study was conducted within a quantitative research framework, utilizing a predictive-relational survey model (Karasar, 2023, p. 114; Johnson & Christensen, 2019, p. 65). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was applied as the primary analytical technique, providing a comprehensive perspective on the complex relationship between job insecurity and job satisfaction. Unlike traditional regression analyses, SEM accounts for both direct and indirect influences while mitigating measurement errors, thereby improving result reliability and precision. Additionally, SEM is particularly advantageous for studies on psychological constructs, as it incorporates multiple observed indicators for each latent variable, enhancing the model's explanatory power.

The first research model focuses on examining the connection between job insecurity and job satisfaction, particularly delving into how job insecurity influences employees' perceptions of their satisfaction at work. By assessing the predictive impact of job insecurity on job satisfaction, the study seeks

to reveal the underlying factors that drive these dynamics. Based on this relationship, the following hypothesis was developed: "H_1: *Job insecurity has a statistically significant effect on job satisfaction."* This hypothesis serves as the foundation for the first research model. The second research model builds on this foundation and is structured as follows.

Figure 1: Second research model
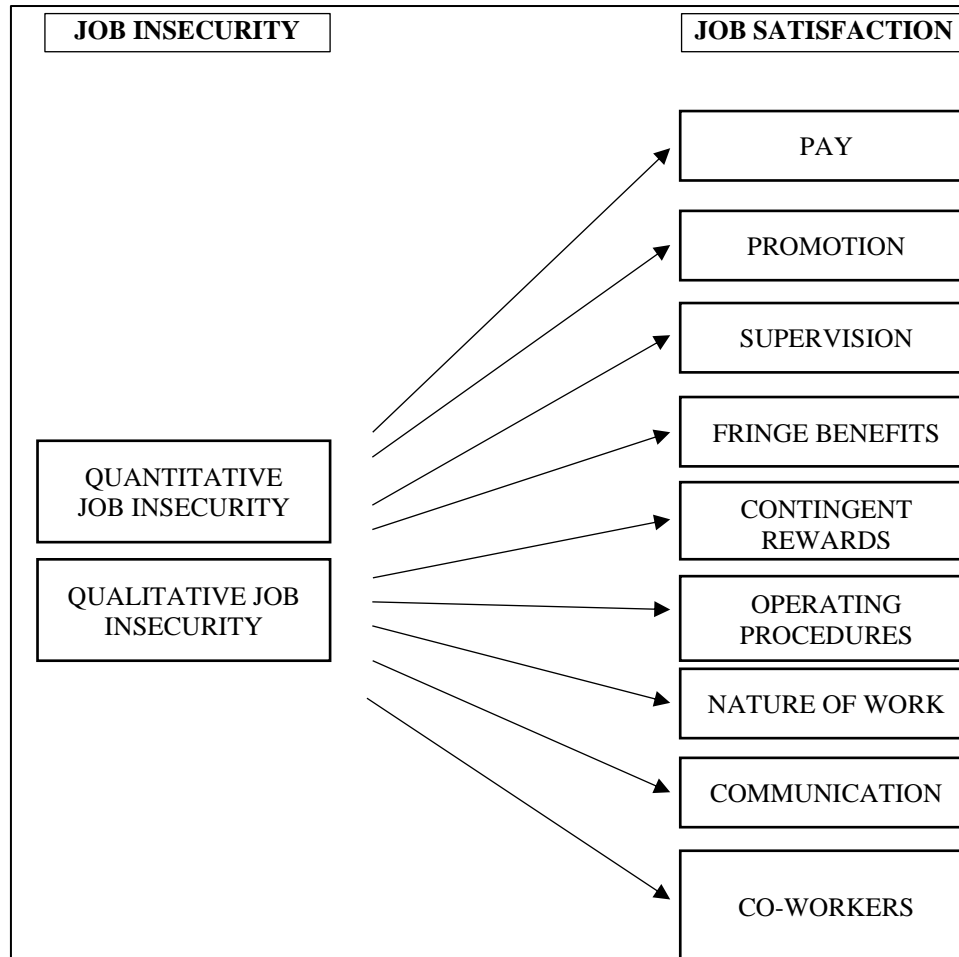
Researchers designed the second research model (see Fig.2) to examine and reveal how the two factors that determine perceived job insecurity (Hellgren et al., 1999) influence the nine factors that shape job satisfaction (Spector, 1985; Yelboğa, 2009). They developed these models based on the literature, not only to explore the overall effects of job insecurity on job satisfaction but also to assess how quantitative and qualitative job insecurity impact satisfaction with pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedures, nature of work, communication, and co-workers. Accordingly, this study defines job insecurity as the independent variable and job satisfaction as the dependent variable.

The hypotheses formulated for the second research model are as follows:

H₂: Quantitative job insecurity has a statistically significant effect on the subdimensions of job satisfaction, including contingent rewards, operating procedures, co-workers, nature of work, fringe benefits, supervision, promotion, pay, and communication.

H₃: Qualitative job insecurity has a statistically significant effect on the subdimensions of job satisfaction, including contingent rewards, operating procedures, co-workers, nature of work, fringe benefits, supervision, promotion, pay, and communication.

Population and Sample

The study population consists of white-collar professional and semi-professional employees working in Turkey. According to the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) 2023 Q3 data and reports from the Ministry of National Education, approximately 9,500,000 individuals are actively employed in white-collar positions in Turkey.

Various methods have been proposed for determining the sample size. Sekaran (2003, p. 253) suggests that a sample of 384 individuals can represent a population of 10,000,000. Another approach recommends calculating the estimated sample size based on its proportion within the population. Equation 1 illustrates this calculation method (Karagöz, 2019, p. 305).

$$n = \frac{N.Z^2.p.q}{d^2(N-1) + Z^2.p.q} \quad^4 \tag{1}$$

The calculation for a population size of 9,500,000 with an estimated proportion of 30% in the above equation is as follows:

$$n = \frac{(9500000).(3,84).(0,21)}{(23749) + (0,80)} = 322 \tag{2}$$

According to the sample size calculation shown in Equation 2, the minimum sample size for the study should consist of 322 participants.

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[4] N: Population (9.500.000).
Z: The value corresponding to the critical value in the Z-table at a given significance level α (e.g., 1.96 for α = .05).
p: The observation rate of the examined phenomenon in the population (30%).
q: The non-observation rate of the examined phenomenon in the population (70%).
d: Deviation (,05)

Bartlett et al. (2001, p. 47) suggest that in cases where the exact number of individuals in the population is unknown, the minimum sample size recommended for a 95% confidence interval and a 5% margin of error is 384. Different sample size calculation approaches in the literature (Sekeran, 2003, p. 253-298; Stevens, 1996, p. 117-120; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013, p. 7; Karagöz, 2019, p. 279-314) were also considered, and in order to compensate for any missing or invalid data and ensure sample diversity, the minimum sample size was determined to be 400 participants.

Since creating a sample frame was not feasible, the study employed quota sampling to ensure that neither gender accounted for less than 48% of the sample. Researchers reached participants via LinkedIn and distributed the survey through Google Forms. Among the 411 white-collar workers who participated in the study, 11 were excluded from the sample due to having a high school education or lower, and the total sample consists of 400 participants. Of the participants, 48.3% are male (n = 193), and 51.8% are female (n = 207). The mean age is 34.01 (SD = 8.68), with an age range of 20 to 71. In terms of marital status, 43.8% are married (n = 175), 48.3% are single (n = 193), and 8% are divorced (n = 32). Regarding educational background, 8.3% have an associate's degree (n = 33), 60.5% have a bachelor's degree (n = 242), and 31.3% have a graduate degree (n = 125). The sectoral distribution is as follows: 61.5% in services (n = 246), 30.8% in industry (n = 123), and 7.8% in construction (n = 31). Regarding work duration, the average total work duration in paid employment is 10.21 years (SD = 8.35), and the average work duration in the current job is 4.20 years (SD = 4.93). Only 3.3% (n = 13) of the participants are union members. The most common departments are sales/marketing (20.8%), human resources (15%), management/administrative affairs (11.5%), R&D and design (11%), and IT/software (10.8%).

Data Collection Technique and Measurement

The data for the research were collected using a survey method, which included three different data collection tools. The Personal Information Form was used to determine the socio-demographic profiles of the participants. This form contains information on gender, age, marital status, education level, industry, total work experience, current job tenure, and union membership. For this study, ethics committee approval was obtained with the decision no. 649936 of the meeting held on 04/12/2023 by the Ethics Committee of Anadolu University.

The first measurement tool used in the study is the Job Insecurity Scale, developed by Hellgren et al. (1999, p. 195). The scale consists of seven items and includes two dimensions: Quantitative Job Insecurity and Qualitative Job Insecurity. The Quantitative Job Insecurity dimension, consisting of three items, measures concern about job continuity, while the Qualitative Job Insecurity dimension, consisting of four

items, measures the threat of losing job-specific attributes. The scale is evaluated using a five-point Likert-type scale. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha (α) for the Job Insecurity Scale was found to be 0.830 (quantitative $\alpha = 0.778$, qualitative $\alpha = 0.861$), and the Omega (Ω) value was 0.836 (quantitative $\Omega = 0.799$, qualitative $\Omega = 0.867$). During the structural validity testing of the scale, the results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) showed that the model fit indices were as follows: $\chi^2/df = 3.665$, NFI = 0.967, TLI (NNFI) = 0.958, IFI = 0.976, CFI = 0.976, GFI = 0.970, AGFI = 0.930, SRMR = 0.056, and RMSEA = 0.082. All paths were found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). Based on these model fit indices and path analysis results, it can be said that the theoretical structure of the scale is compatible with the research data set (Karagöz, 2019, p. 1037-1044; Meydan & Şeşen, 2015, p. 31-38; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, p. 448; Kline, 2019, p. 297; Sürücü et al., 2021, p. 62-83). The skewness and kurtosis values of the data set were also examined, and the results showed that the skewness and kurtosis values of the scale and all its subdimensions fell within the range of +2 and -2, indicating that the distribution is normal (George & Mallery, 2010, p. 113). Furthermore, the results of the multicollinearity analysis on the independent variables (quantitative and qualitative job insecurity) showed VIF = 1.197, TV = 0.835, and CI = 5.404–5.998, suggesting that there is no multicollinearity problem among the independent variables (Çokluk et al., 2021, p. 35-38).

The second measurement tool used in the research is the Job Satisfaction Scale, developed by Spector (1985) and adapted into Turkish by Yelboğa (2009). The scale consists of 36 items and measures nine factors: salary, promotion, management, fringe benefits, reward, job procedures, coworkers, nature of the job, and communication. The scale is evaluated using a five-point Likert-type scale. The overall reliability coefficient of the scale is $\alpha = 0.78$, and the reliability coefficients of the factors are $\alpha > 0.70$. In this study, the Job Satisfaction Scale had $\alpha = 0.950$ and $\Omega = 0.951$. The Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's Omega values for the subdimensions ranged from 0.700 to 0.900. The CFA results showed that the model fit indices were as follows: $\chi^2/df = 2.847$, NFI = 0.831, TLI (NNFI) = 0.866, IFI = 0.883, CFI = 0.882, GFI = 0.797, AGFI = 0.757, SRMR = 0.078, and RMSEA = 0.068. All paths were statistically significant at $p < 0.001$. Based on the model fit indices and path analysis results, it can be said that the theoretical structure of the scale is compatible with the research data set (Karagöz, 2019, p. 1037-1044; Meydan & Şeşen, 2015, p. 31-38; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, p. 448; Kline, 2019, p. 297; Sürücü et al., 2021, p. 62-83). Skewness and kurtosis values were examined, and it was determined that the values for the scale and all its subdimensions were within the range of +2 and -2, indicating that the distribution is normal (George & Mallery, 2010, p. 113).

Data Analysis

The data analysis for the research sample consisting of 400 participants was conducted using IBM SPSS 26.0 and IBM AMOS 22.0 software. To identify the demographic findings related to the sample, frequency (n) and percentage values, along with a graphical abstract summarizing the demographic findings, were presented.

To test the assumptions of the hypothesis tests applied to the Job Insecurity and Job Satisfaction scales, the normality of the data set was checked using skewness and kurtosis values. The multicollinearity of the Structural Equation Models (SEM) applied in the study was tested by examining the VIF (Variance Inflation Factor), TV (Tolerance Value), and CI (Condition Index) metrics. For the structural validity analysis of the Job Insecurity and Job Satisfaction scales, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was applied, and reliability analyses were conducted using Cronbach's Alpha (α) and McDonald's Omega (Ω) coefficients. Descriptive statistics, including the arithmetic mean ($\bar{X}$), standard deviation (s.), minimum (min.), and maximum (max.) values, were used for central tendency measures. To evaluate the levels of the scales, cut-off points based on a 5-point scale were used: very low (1.00–1.80), low (1.81–2.60), moderate (2.61–3.40), high (3.41–4.20), and very high (4.21–5.00). To test the research hypotheses, two different structural equation models were created, and the model fit indices and estimation parameters were examined. The data were tested with a 95% confidence interval and a 5% margin of error.

FINDINGS

In this section, the descriptive statistics will be presented first, followed by the analyses of the first and second models.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics for the variables used in the study are presented in the table below.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

Variable / Item	$\overline{X}$	s.	Min.	Max.
Job Insecurity (Overall)	2,62	,96	1,00	5,00
Quantitative Job Insecurity	2,59	1,17	1,00	5,00
Qualitative Job Insecurity	2,64	1,13	1,00	5,00
Job Satisfaction (Overall)	3,12	,80	1,28	5,00
Pay	2,66	1,10	1,00	5,00
Promotion	2,98	1,08	1,00	5,00
Supervision	3,41	1,14	1,00	5,00
Fringe Benefits	2,91	1,05	1,00	5,00
Contingent Rewards	2,90	1,13	1,00	5,00
Operating Procedures	2,96	1,07	1,00	5,00
Co-Workers	3,49	,94	1,00	5,00
Nature of Work	3,65	,99	1,00	5,00
Communication	3,09	1,09	1,00	5,00

When examining the descriptive statistics for the Job Insecurity Scale, it was found that the overall score for the scale ranged from 1.00 to 5.00, with an average score of $\overline{X}$ = 2.62 (s. = 0.96), indicating a moderate level. The score for the quantitative job insecurity factor ranged from 1.00 to 5.00, with an average score of $\overline{X}$ = 2.59 (s. = 1.17), indicating a low level. The score for the qualitative job insecurity factor ranged from 1.00 to 5.00, with an average score of $\overline{X}$ = 2.64 (s. = 1.13), indicating a moderate level.

When examining the descriptive statistics for the Job Satisfaction Scale, it was found that the overall score for the scale ranged from 1.28 to 5.00, with an average score of $\overline{X}$ = 3.12 (s. = 0.80), indicating a moderate level. The score for the pay factor ranged from 1.00 to 5.00, with an average score of $\overline{X}$ = 2.66 (s. = 1.10), indicating a moderate level. The score for the promotion factor ranged from 1.00 to 5.00, with an average score of $\overline{X}$ = 2.98 (s. = 1.08), indicating a moderate level. The score for the supervision factor ranged from 1.00 to 5.00, with an average score of $\overline{X}$ = 3.41 (s. = 1.14), indicating a high level. The score for the fringe benefits factor ranged from 1.00 to 5.00, with an average score of $\overline{X}$ = 2.91 (s. = 1.05), indicating a moderate level. The score for the contingent rewards factor ranged from 1.00 to 5.00, with an average score of $\overline{X}$ = 2.90 (s. = 1.13), indicating a moderate level. The score for the operating procedures factor ranged from 1.00 to 5.00, with an average score of $\overline{X}$ = 2.96 (s. = 1.07), indicating a moderate level. The score for the co-workers factor ranged from 1.00 to 5.00, with an average score of $\overline{X}$ = 3.49 (s. = 0.94), indicating a high level. The score for the nature of work factor ranged from 1.00 to 5.00, with an average score of $\overline{X}$ =

3.65 (s. = 0.99), indicating a high level. Finally, the score for the communication factor ranged from 1.00 to 5.00, with an average score of $\overline{X}$ = 3.09 (s. = 1.09), indicating a moderate level.
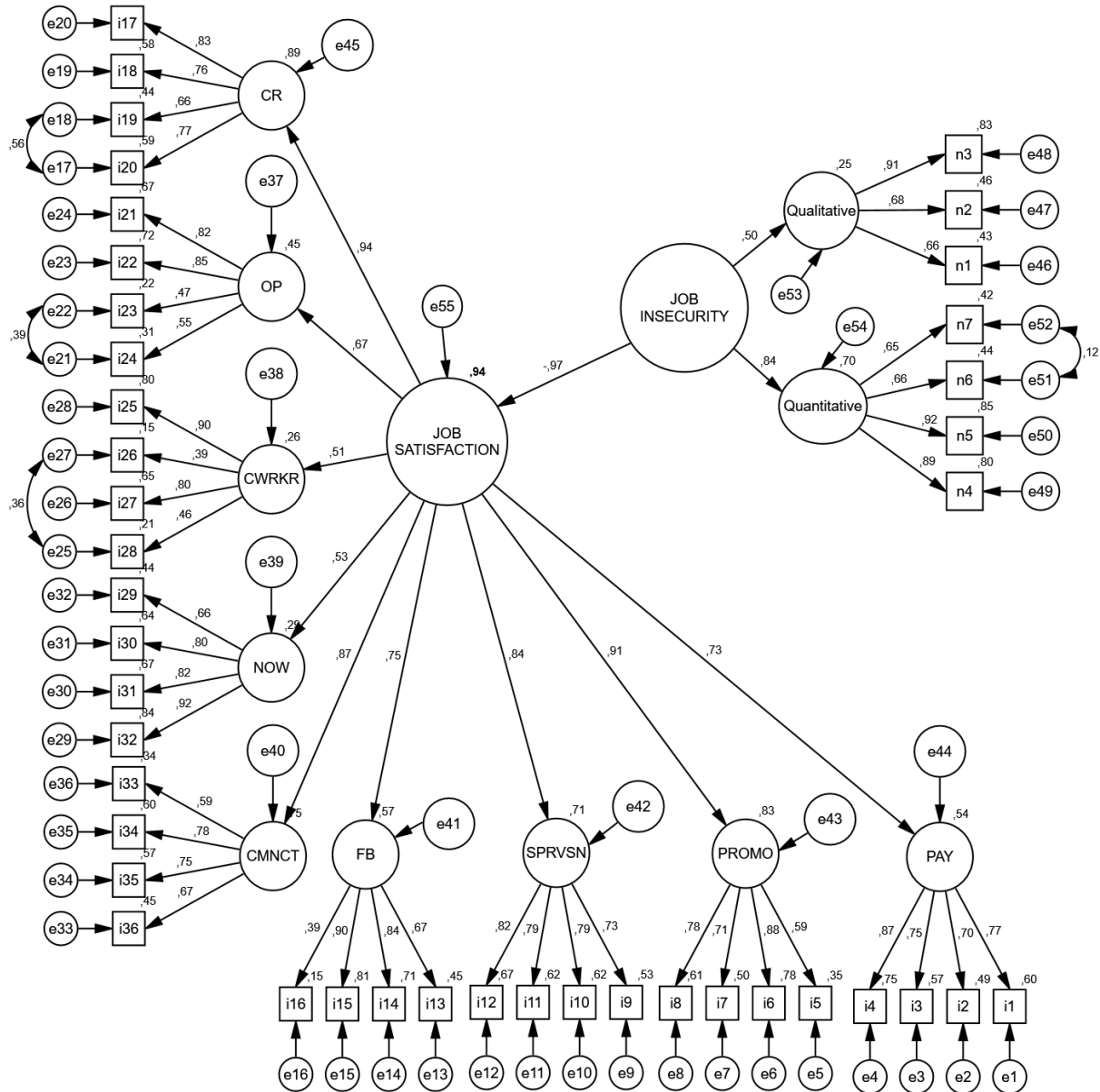
Testing of the First Structural Equation Model

The path diagram of the first structural equation model of the research is presented in Figure 2. According to the goodness-of-fit index values for the model, the χ^2/sd value is 2.856, the NFI value is .792, the TLI (NNFI) value is .843, the IFI value is .854, the CFI value is .853, the GFI value is .756, the AGFI value is .726, the SRMR value is .085, and the RMSEA value is .068. It has been determined that the RMSEA, χ^2/sd, SRMR, and CFI values, considered important criteria in the literature, fall within the acceptable and excellent fit boundaries for this model (Kline, 2019, p. 297-301). The estimation parameters and regression weights for the first structural equation model are also presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Estimation parameters of the first structural equation model

Dependent V.	Path	Independent V.	β	S. E.	C. R.	*p*	R²
Job Satisfaction	←	Job Insecurity	-,969	,287	-6,809	***	,939

*** *p* < ,001, β = Standardized Beta, S.E. = Standart Error, C.R. = Critical Ratio

When the estimation parameters of the first structural equation model are examined, it is observed that job insecurity has a statistically significant effect on job satisfaction (p = .001, p < .05). This effect is found to be negative with β = -.969. The variance explained (R²) of job satisfaction by job insecurity is calculated as 93.9%. According to the obtained result, a strong relationship exists between high perceived job insecurity and decreasing job satisfaction.

Figure 2: First structural equation model

Testing of the Second Structural Equation Model

The diagram of the second structural equation model created within the scope of the research, along with its estimation parameters and regression weights, is presented in Figure 3 and Table 3, respectively. According to the goodness-of-fit index values for the model, the χ²/df value is 2.060, the NFI value is 0.779, the TLI (NNFI) value is 0.826, the IFI value is 0.840, the CFI value is 0.839, the GFI value is 0.740, the AGFI value is 0.706, the SRMR value is 0.085, and the RMSEA value is 0.072. The RMSEA, χ²/df, SRMR,

and CFI values, considered important indicators in the literature, are found to be within the acceptable and excellent fit ranges for this model (Kline, 2019, p. 297-301).

Table 3: Estimation parameters of the second structural equation model

Dependent V.	Path	Independent V.	β	S. E.	C. R.	*p*	R^2
Contingent Rewards	←	Qualitative	-,003	,049	-,068	,946	,826
Contingent Rewards	←	Quantitative	-,907	,061	-13,912	***	
Operating Procedures	←	Qualitative	-,208	,050	-3,435	***	,433
Operating Procedures	←	Quantitative	-,534	,053	-7,383	***	
Co-Workers	←	Qualitative	-,028	,041	-,461	,645	,251
Co-Workers	←	Quantitative	-,488	,047	-6,093	***	
Nature of Work	←	Qualitative	-,051	,060	-,883	,377	,298
Nature of Work	←	Quantitative	-,520	,054	-8,763	***	
Fringe Benefits	←	Qualitative	,053	,053	,997	,319	,548
Fringe Benefits	←	Quantitative	-,764	,063	-10,685	***	
Supervision	←	Qualitative	-,092	,051	-1,879	,060	,677
Supervision	←	Quantitative	-,775	,059	-12,042	***	
Promotion	←	Qualitative	,007	,040	,157	,875	,872
Promotion	←	Quantitative	-,937	,066	-11,555	***	
Pay	←	Qualitative	,112	,058	2,064	,039	,537
Pay	←	Quantitative	-,779	,062	-11,815	***	
Communication	←	Qualitative	-,116	,051	-2,236	,025	,698
Communication	←	Quantitative	-,775	,062	-10,986	***	

*** p < ,001, β = Standardized Beta, S.E. = Standart Error, C.R. = Critical Ratio

Figure 3: Second structural equation model
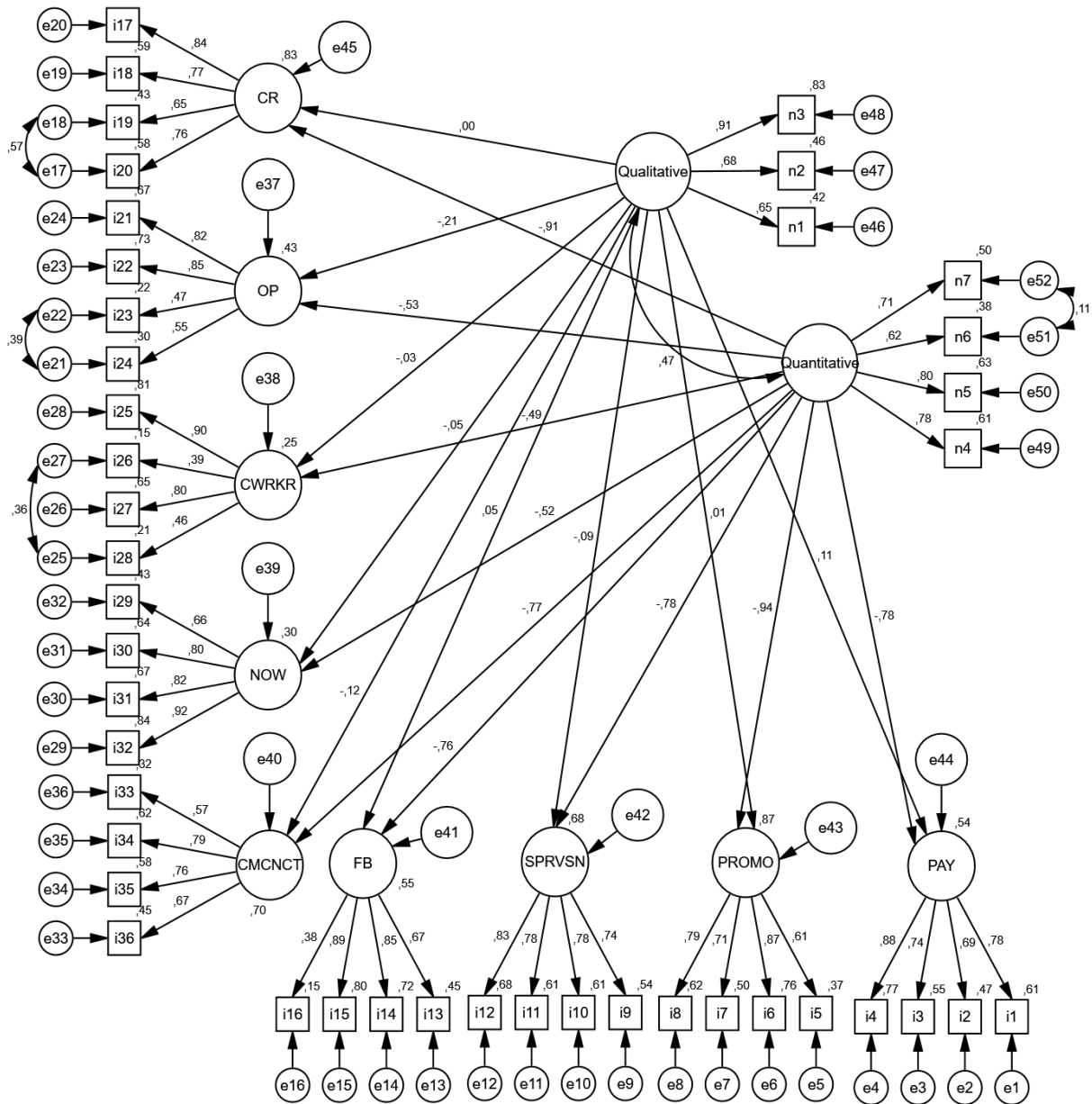
When examining the estimation parameters for the second structural equation model, it was found that, in the analysis of the second structural equation model, quantitative job insecurity generally has significant and negative effects on the dependent variables. Statistically significant effects were observed on the following factors: Contingent Rewards (β = -0.907, p < 0.001, R² = 0.826), Operating Procedures (β = -0.534, p < 0.001, R² = 0.433), Co-Workers (β = -0.488, p < 0.001, R² = 0.251), Nature of Work (β = -0.520, p < 0.001, R² = 0.298), Fringe Benefits (β = -0.764, p < 0.001, R² = 0.548), Supervision (β = -0.775,

$p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.677$), Promotion ($\beta = -0.937$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.872$), Pay ($\beta = -0.779$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.537$), and Communication ($\beta = -0.775$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.698$).

However, qualitative job insecurity had no significant effect on Contingent Rewards, Operating Procedures, Co-Workers, Nature of Work, Fringe Benefits, Supervision, or Promotion factors. It was found to have a low-level effect on Pay ($\beta = 0.112$, $p = 0.039$) and Communication ($\beta = -0.116$, $p = 0.025$).

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that job insecurity negatively impacts job satisfaction. Neoliberal work models, which emphasize flexibility and deregulation, heighten the risk of job loss, thereby reducing employees' satisfaction with their work (Crowley & Hodson, 2014). This negative correlation is corroborated by large-scale studies (Henscheid, 2004; Robbins & Judge, 2017) as well as more recent research by Narotama and Sintaasih (2022) and Brahmannanda and Dewi (2020). In the Turkish context, Sönmez (2022) and Özel (2014) similarly argue that job security is a fundamental prerequisite for job satisfaction. Furthermore, Reisel et al. (2010) highlight that job insecurity fosters anxiety, uncertainty, and stress, which erode both individual well-being and organizational cohesion.

Descriptive findings of this study indicate that white-collar employees experience moderate levels of both job insecurity and job satisfaction. While sectoral variations in job insecurity and satisfaction have been observed in Turkish studies, none have specifically targeted white-collar workers. International research, such as that by Cheng & Chan (2008) and Lestari et al. (2023), also suggest that job insecurity and satisfaction levels generally fall within the moderate range. In this study, quantitative job insecurity was found to be relatively low, whereas qualitative job insecurity was moderate, consistent with Dereli's (2012) findings. Research on economic downturns further supports that job insecurity tends to rise during such periods, leading to sharper declines in job satisfaction (Artz & Kaya, 2014). Sverke and Hellgren's (2002) model attributes this to heightened perceptions of labor market threats.

This study examines job insecurity through both quantitative and qualitative lenses. While the literature often treats job insecurity as an "objective" phenomenon tied to market dynamics rather than individual concerns (Heery & Salmon, 2000; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984), Hartley et al. (1991) frame it as a social identity issue, impacting individuals' roles within society. Neoliberalism, with its emphasis on flexibility and competition, exacerbates job insecurity, disrupting career planning and stability (McLaren, 2001). The findings underscore the importance of analyzing job insecurity in its sub-dimensions, as these can have distinct effects on job satisfaction.

The analysis reveals that quantitative job insecurity generally exerts a negative influence on various facets of job satisfaction, while qualitative job insecurity adversely affects operational procedures and communication but surprisingly enhances satisfaction with pay. These results align with existing literature on job insecurity (Sönmez et al., 2022; Ilkım & Derin, 2018; Özel, 2014). A particularly intriguing finding is the positive relationship between qualitative job insecurity and pay satisfaction, a phenomenon not widely documented in prior research. This can be explained through the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, which posits that individuals place greater value on tangible resources like pay when they feel insecure about other aspects of their work (Hobfoll, 1989; De Cuyper et al., 2012). Qualitative job insecurity may prompt employees to seek compensation for job-related stress and uncertainty through heightened pay satisfaction. The Social Comparison Theory (Clark, 2003) further supports this, suggesting that employees may derive greater satisfaction from their pay when they perceive it as favorable compared to others, especially in contexts of insecurity. In Turkey, where economic security is highly prized, increased pay satisfaction may serve as a buffer against job insecurity. However, the scarcity of empirical studies exploring this relationship limits the ability to fully bridge theory and practice.

The COR and Social Comparison theories emphasize individual-level assessments, reflecting the broader trend of individualization under neoliberalism. Harvey (2005) defines neoliberalism as an economic system driven by free markets and private property rights, prioritizing individual freedoms. This ideology has also facilitated the rise of precarious employment, a direct consequence of its emphasis on individualization (Lorey, 2006). This shift has given rise to new work values, such as entrepreneurialism and the maximization of personal skills, often at the expense of workers' rights (Demir et al., 2022).

The erosion of job security among white-collar workers mirrors broader transformations in labor relations. While early studies primarily focused on blue-collar workers, job insecurity has become a pressing issue for educated, skilled workers in the 21st century (Lopez & Phillips, 2019). In Turkey, the economic crises of 1994 and 2001 exposed white-collar unemployment, particularly among university graduates (Bora et al., 2021; Erdem & Tuğcu, 2012). The moderate correlation between job insecurity and job satisfaction observed in this study aligns with global trends, where labor market flexibility has intensified job insecurity (Sennett, 2015; Beck, 2000).

These findings further underscore the concept of precarity in contemporary labor markets. Precarity, defined by Johnson (2011) as a class of workers characterized by heightened insecurity, is driven by neoliberal policies that prioritize labor flexibility and economic instability (Standing, 2012, 2017). This trend is particularly evident in white-collar sectors, where traditional roles are increasingly replaced by

flexible work arrangements, exacerbating job insecurity (Vatansever, 2013). The implications of these findings highlight the urgent need to understand how neoliberalism and flexible labor markets have reshaped job security and satisfaction, particularly for white-collar workers navigating an increasingly uncertain economic landscape.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study offers theoretical and empirical contributions to understanding the relationship between job insecurity and job satisfaction among white-collar workers. It confirms that job insecurity, particularly in its quantitative dimension, significantly undermines job satisfaction, while also revealing the nuanced role of qualitative job insecurity in shaping employees' perceptions of pay and working conditions. These findings enrich the existing literature by providing empirical evidence from the Turkish context, where research on white-collar employees has been limited. The results highlight the critical importance of job security not only for individual well-being but also for organizational stability and broader societal cohesion, underscoring the need for policies that address the detrimental effects of job insecurity. The findings reinforce the argument that white-collar workers, much like their blue-collar counterparts, are increasingly vulnerable to insecurity in today's labor market. This trend is deeply intertwined with broader transformations in labor relations and societal structures, where risk, flexibility, and precarity have become defining characteristics of employment. To further advance this field, future research could investigate potential moderating factors, such as organizational support mechanisms or individual coping strategies, to better understand how these dynamics unfold. Additionally, longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into the long-term impacts of job insecurity on employee well-being, career development, and overall job satisfaction, offering a more comprehensive perspective on this critical issue.

AUTHORS' STATEMENT

Researchers have jointly contributed to the article. Researchers have not declared any conflict of interest.

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