

Organizational Behavior Model as a Predictor of Job Performance in Educational Quality Management in University Collaborators in Peru

Modelo de comportamiento organizacional como predictor del desempeño laboral en gestión de la calidad educativa en colaboradores universitarios en Perú

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Abstract

Quality education has been outlined as a topic of global interest through the fourth sustainable development goal, which seeks to promote inclusive lifelong learning; its achievement requires integrated efforts of the educational institutions staff. This cross-sectional predictive research analyzes the predictors that improve the job performance of the university educational quality manager. We worked with a sample of 217 full-time teaching and administrative workers from a private Peruvian university. The instruments were the Positive Organizational Behavior Scale and the Quality Management Performance Scale. The results obtained with multinomial logistic regression analysis, showed a statistically significant effect on five of the eight predictors. Positive Beta coefficients were obtained for meaningful work ($\beta = 1.66$), horizontal collectivism ($\beta = 1.16$) and self-efficacy ($\beta = 1.10$) and negative ones for dispositional optimism ($\beta = -1.63$) and synergy ($\beta = -1.56$). It is concluded that job performance in quality management will improve if the first three predictors are strengthened and the last two are reduced in university professors and administrators in Peru.

Keywords: work performance, quality management, university education.

Resumen

La educación de calidad se ha trazado como un tema de interés global a través del cuarto objetivo de desarrollo sostenible, que busca promover el aprendizaje inclusivo durante toda la vida; su consecución requiere esfuerzos integrados del personal de las instituciones educativas. Esta investigación predictiva transversal analiza las variables que conforman un modelo de comportamiento organizacional como predictores que mejoran el desempeño laboral en gestión de la calidad educativa de colaboradores universitarios en Perú. Se trabajó con una muestra de 217 trabajadores docentes y administrativos a tiempo completo de una universidad privada peruana. Los instrumentos fueron la Escala de Comportamiento Positivo en la Organización y la Escala de Desempeño en Gestión de la Calidad. Los resultados del análisis de regresión logística multinomial mostraron un efecto estadísticamente significativo en cinco de los ocho predictores. Se obtuvo coeficientes Beta positivos para el trabajo significativo ($\beta = 1,66$), el colectivismo horizontal ($\beta = 1,16$) y la autoeficacia ($\beta = 1,10$) y negativos para el optimismo disposicional ($\beta = -1,63$) y la sinergia ($\beta = -1,56$). Se concluye que, el desempeño laboral en gestión de la calidad mejorará si se fortalecen los tres primeros predictores y se reducen los dos últimos en los docentes y administrativos universitarios en Perú.

Palabras clave: desempeño laboral, gestión de la calidad, educación universitaria.

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INTRODUCTION

The interest in quality education is expressed in the fourth sustainable development goal (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2015) which, in Latin America, remains an unfinished task (Regional Bureau of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean [OREALC/UNESCO], 2017). At the university level, managing educational quality is a challenge due to the inherent complexity of the process and its transcendence in the transformation and development of competencies that future professionals require to perform adequately in society (Fabela-Cárdenas, and García-Treviño, 2014; Schindler *et al.*, 2015).

Universities develop coordinated efforts to achieve their purposes, but they can be dissipated by the multiplicity of actions involved; prioritizing relevant aspects that impact on management is key to sustainable success. When reviewing educational quality models, staff is included in the resources or as support (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education [ENQA], European Students' Union [ESU], European University Association [EUA], & European Association of Institutions in Higher Education [EURASHE], 2015; Fabela-Cárdenas, & García-Treviño, 2014;) and, although the need to develop their competencies and qualifications is highlighted (OREALC/UNESCO, 2017), there is no major emphasis on concrete actions for the adequate management of workers as agents of university educational quality.

The involvement of human capital is decisive in competitiveness, productivity and achievement of institutional purposes (Lenihan *et al.*, 2019; Mariz-Perez *et al.*, 2012). Theoretical models on people factor management emphasize the nexus of quality practices (Hussain, and Younis, 2015; Rasit *et al.*, 2018) with organizational performance improvement (Abu-Jarour, 2013; Aman-Ullah *et al.*, 2022; Kiran *et al.*, 2022). This framework indicates the need to upgrade competencies in workers, invest in their training to prevent talent drain and strengthen the quality culture linked to the organizational culture.

Despite this, in the Peruvian university context there are obstacles such as the insufficient promotion of university workers in a career line as

quality managers. The initiatives of the Peruvian State, such as the Supreme Decree approving the National Policy on Higher and Technical Productive Education, have yielded incipient results in contrast to other countries in South America (Sistema de Evaluación Acreditación y Certificación de la Calidad Educativa [SINEACE], 2022). Added to this is the partial internalization of quality assurance as a transversal factor in university activities, immersed in all institutional processes. Consequently, it is approached as an activity parallel to management, which weakens the notion of its true purpose, generates duplication of tasks that turn it into a burden rather than an opportunity (Seyfried, & Pohlenz, 2018) and the results are relegated to corporate reputation slogans.

In Peru, it is common for teachers and administrative personnel who work full time to perform tasks related to the management of university educational quality (such as being part of quality committees, reporting progress and results of self-evaluation, being responsible for the implementation of processes and procedures of the Quality Management System, among others), which entails additional efforts to those for which they were hired. In addition, the quality manager does not exist as a formal position within the Organization and Function Manuals or job profiles. After consulting these documents of the Peruvian universities (published in the Transparency section of their respective institutional web pages), we found details of the tasks corresponding to the Director, Head or staff of a Quality office as an advisory body, but not of the teaching and administrative staff who also perform quality tasks. These documents list generic features that apply to any job position, but do not contemplate specific competencies that the university educational quality manager must possess.

This complicates the characterization of this position, given the diversity of activities and the multilevel systemic interaction in which they must perform. Therefore, it leads to an inconclusive performance evaluation, focused only on the teaching and administrative positions as such, without exploring the profile as a quality manager. As a result, training or re-induction costs increase and, eventually, the quality of the educational service provided by the universities is limited.

In view of this panorama, a review of theoretical models was carried out to identify possible predictors that constitute a model of organizational behavior, or representation of the adequate procedure for the improvement of work performance when managing quality. Thus, eight independent variables grouped in three areas were established:

The first two areas are based on the theoretical model of positive organizational behavior (Luthans 2002). The first is called cognitive-personal with three variables drawn from the construct psychological capital that should be present in all areas of the worker's life and were: 1) *Self-efficacy* or confidence in one's own abilities for task achievement (Bandura, 1977) by previous successful experiences that influence effort, use of resources, persistence and dedication (Azanza *et al.*, 2014; Llorens *et al.*, 2007). It maintains a positive correlation with performance (Çetin, & Aşkun 2018). 2) *Dispositional optimism* is the widespread expectation of achieving positive outcomes in various life settings (Carver *et al.*, 2010) and is directly related to performance (Luthans *et al.*, 2005; Youssef, & Luthans, 2007). 3) *Dispositional hope* is a state of motivation and determination to plan, direct, and redirect one's capabilities in pursuit of a goal (Snyder, 1995; Youssef, & Luthans, 2007). It is also related to performance and job satisfaction (Luthans *et al.*, 2005).

The second area was named positive work, with two variables that should be manifested in the workplace and they are: 4) Flow or state of total involvement (full concentration on a task), enjoyment and control in an activity (Bakker, 2008; Csikszentmihalyi, 2015). 5) Meaningful work is the favorable perception of giving a greater purpose to the work performed (Steger *et al.*, 2012).

The third area was called social and was based on the social cognitive interpretive and social theoretical model (Pfeffer, 1997). It included the following three predictors: 6) *Horizontal collectivism* or the importance of group feelings, beliefs and goals over individual ones (Triandis, 1996; Triandis, & Suh, 2002). 7) *Politeness* is a discretionary or organizational citizenship behavior (Organ, 2018), characterized by consideration of coworkers' opinions in stages prior to decision making (Organ, 1997). 8) *Synergy* is the coordination between two or more parties

(Riley *et al.*, 2011), by synchronizing joint actions or skills of understanding and organizing work to achieve common goals and improve performance (Sebanz *et al.*, 2006). It allows sharing tasks, predicting actions and influencing performance (Sebanz *et al.*, 2006).

The dependent variable is *job performance in university educational quality management* and is defined as the fulfillment of formally mandated activities (Koopmans *et al.*, 2011). For the purposes of the present research, it refers to university quality management. It is composed of three dimensions: 1) *Expertise*, consisting of knowledge and skills to manage the organization (Aman-Ullah *et al.*, 2022) and solve problems. 2) *Execution* is the fulfillment of responsibilities and obligations (Robbins, and Judge, 2017). It encompasses the planning, prioritizing, organizing, and carrying out of formal mandated activities that directly further organizational goals (Koopmans *et al.*, 2011; Koopmans *et al.*, 2013). 3) *Results* are the goals to be achieved in quantity and quality. It includes one's own perception of the fulfillment of assigned tasks (Koopmans *et al.*, 2013), in contrast to institutional objectives.

The aforementioned represents a knowledge gap regarding the key behaviors that affect the work performance of the quality manager. It is not unusual to assume that the assigned tasks will be accomplished within the required deadlines, without considering or conducting an in-depth analysis of the competencies, characteristics, skills and behaviors of the personnel involved in quality management. This limited assumption could lead to deficiencies in the processes of the continuous improvement cycle for the assurance of university educational quality.

Thus, there is a need to study these variables in the university community, especially in university teachers and administrators, as they are a strategic stakeholder in the consolidation and sustainability of quality in the institution. In view of the above, the following problem was formulated: To what extent do the variables of the organizational behavior model predict work performance in educational quality management in university collaborators in Peru?

The purpose of this research is to analyze the variables of the organizational behavior model (self-efficacy, dispositional optimism,

dispositional hope, flow, meaningful work, horizontal collectivism, Politeness and synergy) as predictors in the improvement of work performance in the management of educational quality in Peruvian university collaborators. It is hypothesized that the variables of the organizational behavior model predict work performance in the management of educational quality in Peruvian university collaborators.

At the same time, it is expected that the results will guide proposals for the development of human capital in universities as managers of quality, since this is the way to achieve institutional goals and the training of future competent professionals.

METHOD

Design:

A non-experimental quantitative methodological approach was followed, with a cross-sectional predictive research design (Ato et al., 2013) of eight independent variables (self-efficacy, dispositional optimism, dispositional hope, flow, meaningful work, horizontal collectivism, politeness and synergy) that make up the proposed model of organizational behavior and its effect on the dependent variable called job performance in quality management.

Participants:

The study included 217 university employees (61.5% women and 38.5% men) working full-time at a private Peruvian multi-campus university, aged between 34 and 73 years ($M = 39.64$; $SD = 9.94$). A total of 49.9% were teachers and 50.1% administrative staff. For the selection of participants, their role as teachers or administrators was considered indistinctly. The inclusion criteria were that they were involved in quality management tasks (participation in a quality committee for licensing or accreditation, being in charge of Quality Management System

procedures, belonging to the quality area of the institution or study programs), with at least one year of seniority in the position and the institution, and full-time work. Those who refused to be part of the research were excluded.

The participants were chosen by simple random probability sampling, which was carried out after accessing the list of collaborators working in quality management in the institution and making a random selection. To determine the sample, a confidence level of 95% and a sampling error of .05 were considered.

Instruments:

The first instrument was the Positive Organizational Behavior Scale, developed for the present study, because there are only psychometric instruments that measure the predictor variables separately. The theoretical models of positive organizational behavior (Luthans, 2002) and the interpretative and social cognitive theoretical model (Pfeffer, 1997) were used. It is a Likert-type scale of 31 direct items with five response options (never = 0 to always = 4). It comprises the variables self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), dispositional optimism (Carver et al., 2010), dispositional hope (Snyder, 1995; Youssef, & Luthans, 2007), flow (Bakker, 2008; Csikszentmihalyi, 2015), meaningful work (Steger et al., 2012), horizontal collectivism (Triandis, 1996; Triandis, & Suh, 2002), politeness (Organ, 2018), and synergy (Sebanz et al., 2006).

The evidence of validity based on internal structure was carried out with the exploratory factor analysis (EFA, minimum residuals method and oblimin rotation). It complied with the assumptions and was obtained with percentages of accumulated variance higher than 40% for each variable and factor loadings higher than .55. In turn, adequate adjustment indexes were obtained with the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA, maximum verisimilitude method). The internal consistency reliability indicated scores between .74 and .87 obtained with the Omega index (see details in Table 1).

Table 1

Psychometric evidence of the Positive Behavior Scale.in the organization

Variable	EFA		CFA		Omega
	% of Variance	X ² /gl	CFI	SRMR	
Self-efficacy	54,9	0,24	,99	,005	,83
Dispositional optimism	51,9	1,23	,99	,013	,81
Dispositional Hope	49,3	3,39	,98	0,21	,80
Flow	41,2	3,11	,98	,024	,74
Meaningful work	68,7	1,41	,99	,012	,87
Horizontal collectivism	45,4	3,99	,97	,024	,77
Politeness	47,1	2,22	,99	,017	,78
Synergy	56,1	1,66	,99	,013	,84

The second instrument was the Quality Management Work Performance Scale, developed for this research under the theoretical premises of Koopmans et al., 2011, since there are only psychometric scales that measure general performance. It consists of 10 direct items grouped into three dimensions: Expertise (Aman-Ullah et al., 2022), Execution (Robbins, and Judge, 2017) and Results (Koopmans et al., 2013). It has five response options (definitely no = 0; definitely yes = 4). The scores obtained place the evaluated subjects in the poor, fair and good

levels of performance and their dimensions. After corroboration of the KMO assumptions and Bartlett's test of sphericity, validity based on the internal structure was demonstrated with the EFA using the method of minimum residuals and oblimin rotation, with an accumulated variance of 61.4%, factor loadings between .45 and .89 and an adequate adjustment obtained with the maximum likelihood method (RMSEA<.05; TLI>.99; χ^2 /gl < 2). Its internal consistency reliability, by means of the Omega index, showed values between .71 and .87 (see Table 2).

Table 2

Psychometric evidence of the Quality Management Job Performance Scale.

Dimensión	EFA		CFA		Omega
	% de Variance	X ² /gl	CFI	SRMR	
Expertise	17,4	-	-	-	,71
Execution	17,7	-	-	-	,74
Results	26,3	-	-	-	,87
Quality management job performance	61,4	1,17	,99	,024	-

Procedure:

The data collection technique was the remote and asynchronous self-evaluation survey. A private university with presence in several Peruvian

cities was chosen and permission was requested from the Vice-President's Office for Research, in compliance with the provisions of the institution. An online form was prepared and distributed by

e-mail to university teaching and administrative staff. Compliance with the selection criteria in the database was verified.

Data analysis:

The statistical package used was SPSS v24. Before processing the results, a preliminary analysis of normality was performed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and, with Spearman's correlation, the absence of multicollinearity between predictors and the dependent variable was verified to construct the prediction model.

The multinomial logistic regression analysis (MLRA) was used with the backward stepwise technique. First, the covariate labor condition (teachers or administrative staff) was established for its effect on the prediction of job performance in quality management and to determine whether the model works differently for teachers and administrative staff. Next, the overall significance of the model and the effect of each predictor were obtained by contrasting the p-values of the likelihood ratio tests. The Wald test ($p < .05$) allowed eliminating those with less impact on quality management performance. Subsequently, the model parameters were estimated to establish the cause-effect relationship among the variables. The effect of each predictor was quantified using the beta coefficients (β) and the exponential form of the pointwise intervallic Exp (β).

The model fit was evaluated with the deviation test to identify statistically significant differences between the predicted and observed values ($p \geq .05$), and the proportion of variability of the dependent variable that the final model explains was identified using the pseudo R^2 corrected for Nagelkerke. Finally, the estimated model was classified in the most probable category with the observed and predicted categories of the dependent variable, whose percentage of coincidences serves as an indicator of the predictive quality of the model.

Ethical aspects:

The international ethical standards (American Psychological Association, 2017) were followed, such as the criteria of confidentiality and anonymity of those evaluated and the institution

investigated, as well as the informed consent of all participants (Ministerial Resolution approving the Technical Document: Ethical Considerations for Health Research involving Human Subjects, 2020). As indicated above, written authorization for the study was requested from the Vice-President's Office for Research of the university and permission was obtained by means of an official letter issued by the Vice-President without requiring the approval of the Ethics Committee due to the nature of the study.

RESULTS

Preliminary analysis:

The fit to the normal distribution of the variables was evaluated. The results showed p-values lower than .05, which evidenced a statistically significant difference between the distribution of the scores of the predictors, the dependent variable and its dimensions. The correlations among predictors registered values from .47 to .79, which indicated an absence of multicollinearity among them and allows their use for the prediction model.

Effect of predictors on quality manager job performance:

The results are presented without subdividing them into teachers or administrative staff, since the quality management tasks they perform are common, regardless of their status. To contrast this premise, the employment status covariate (teachers and administrative staff) was considered and it was observed that it does not have a significant effect that differentiates the two groups, so it was discarded from the final model.

The likelihood ratio test proved to be statistically significant for the final model in the dependent variable, which allowed us to identify the effect of each of these predictors. This analysis showed that only self-efficacy, dispositional optimism, meaningful work, horizontal collectivism and synergy are significantly associated with quality management performance. Therefore, these five were selected to estimate the prediction model (see Table 3).

Table 3*Likelihood ratio tests on quality manager predictors*

Model	All predictors			Selected predictors		
	X ²	Gl	p	X ²	gl	p
Null						
Final	240,57	10	<,001	266,66	6	<,001
Covariable						
Employment Status	,51	1	,477			
Predictive						
Self-efficacy	5,72	1	,017	4,8	1	,029
Dispositional optimism	5,27	1	,022	11,8	1	<,001
Dispositional Hope	2,36	1	,125			
Flow	1,19	1	,275			
Meaningful work	4,35	1	,037	5,0	1	,025
Horizontal collectivism	7,68	1	,006	9,0	1	,003
Politeness	0,51	1	,475			
Synergy	3,98	1	.046	9,1	1	,002

Note. X² = Chi-square; gl = degrees of freedom; p = significance

In turn, the Wald test shows a statistically significant effect of the five predictors previously selected in the final model, which ratifies their contribution. In turn, no significant differences are reported between the predicted values with those observed in the deviation, which denotes a good fit. Beta coefficients (β) indicate that the increase in meaningful work, horizontal

collectivism and self-efficacy, as well as the decrease in dispositional optimism and synergy, improve the quality management performance of teachers and administrators (see Table 4). When classifying observed-predicted subjects in the most probable category, a good quality of prediction was obtained in 97.7% of cases.

Table 4*Prediction model parameter estimates on quality management performance*

Level at DV	Predictor	Wald test		Beta coefficients		Influence		
		X ²	p	β	EE	Exp(β)	Li	Ls
Good	Self-efficacy	3,98	,046	1,10	0,55	2,99	1,02	8,77
	Dispositional optimism	8,24	,004	-1,63	0,57	0,20	0,07	0,60
	Meaningful work	4,12	,042	1,66	0,82	5,23	1,06	25,83
	Horizontal collectivism	7,42	,006	1,16	0,43	3,18	1,38	7,31
	Synergy	7,06	,008	-1,56	0,59	0,21	0,07	0,66

Note. Reference category: Regular; B = Coefficient of the model; EE = Standard error; Exp(β) = Exponent of the β coefficient; Li = Lower limit; Ls = Upper limit; VD= dependent variable. Deviation: X²=34.2(p=1.0); Pseudo R²: Cox and Snell=.71; Nagelkerke=.94; McFadde=.89.

DISCUSSION

The need to prepare high-level professionals who appropriately face the changing demands of the environment (Fabela-Cárdenas, & García-Treviño, 2014) requires the planning and execution of strategies that ensure quality education (Supreme Decree approving the National Policy on Higher and Technical-Productive Education, 2020; OREALC/UNESCO, 2017). Being a topic of common interest, quality in education should be addressed transversally and include human capital (ENQA, ESU, USA, & EURASHE, 2015; Fabela-Cárdenas, García-Treviño, 2014; Mariz-Pérez *et al.*, 2012). Such is the purpose of this research, to identify predictors that favor job performance (Abu-Jarour, 2013; Aman-Ullah *et al.*, 2022; Kiran *et al.*, 2022), but oriented to the university teaching and administrative staff as quality managers.

Self-efficacy, dispositional optimism, meaningful work, horizontal collectivism and synergy were reported to have a statistically significant effect on quality management performance in 97.7% of cases. By analyzing more specifically, whether a person is confident in his or her own abilities to execute tasks (Bandura, 1977), gives meaning to work (Steger *et al.*, 2012) or prioritizes the achievement of group goals (Triandis, 1996; Triandis, & Suh, 2002), and will reflect a better fulfillment of requirements (Koopmans *et al.*, 2011) in university educational quality management. At the other extreme, the likelihood of performing well in quality management increases when teachers or administrators give up their beliefs in positive outcomes (Carver *et al.*, 2010) or stop working in a coordinated way (Riley *et al.*, 2011).

Then, if workers rely solely on the confidence of having positive endings without a clear strategy that leads to their achievement, they may be distracted from the effective tasks on which they should focus and, with this, delay the achievement of goals. In addition, the functions for managing educational quality, although they share the purpose of continuous improvement, can be varied and dispersed from the role as a teacher or administrator. Therefore, each person must focus individually on the tasks that correspond to him or her, since collective achievement will occur to the extent that each person fulfills the assigned part.

Therefore, when assigning a teacher or administrative employee to quality work, it is important to choose those who face challenges, who prioritize group objectives before personal ones. In addition, the individual should be encouraged to have had past successful experiences (not necessarily working in quality), which will increase their confidence in themselves and give them a purpose that will motivate them to perform their work.

Once the variables with significant effect are established, it is observed that five of the eight predictors would be incorporated into the profile of the manager of university educational quality; namely: strengthening the perception of meaningful work, horizontal collectivism and self-efficacy improves performance (Çetin, & Aşkun 2018). The promotion of synergy or dispositional optimism should be restricted if quality manager performance is expected to improve, which is discordant to previous reports (Luthans *et al.*, 2005; Youssef, & Luthans, 2007). Flow and dispositional hope have no statistically significant effect on the dependent variable, which differs from Luthans *et al.* (2005).

If the profile of the university educational quality manager is to be developed, the focus on previous successful experiences (Azanza *et al.*, 2014; Llorens *et al.*, 2007) that increase self-confidence should be encouraged (Bandura, 1977). In addition, it must be ensured that these workers have internalized the purpose of their work in the formation of professionals required by society (Steger *et al.*, 2012) and that they interact with their peers prioritizing collective goals (Triandis, 1996; Triandis, & Suh, 2002). However, the expectation of obtaining beneficial results should be discouraged (Carver *et al.*, 2010), since the focus on goals is lost due to the lack of clarity of actions. Likewise, coordination among collaborators should be limited, since their contributions may differ from what is required by the institution.

It is important to point out that the research had some limitations. The first limitation was the use of an accessible population from a private university with its own organizational culture and quality management purposes. Although the sample was taken from teachers and administrators in 10 different Peruvian cities in the coastal, highland and jungle regions, it is not

possible to generalize to the Peruvian university level. For this reason, future studies should be replicated in samples of public and private universities. A second limitation is the possible presence of mediating variables such as types of organizational culture that were not considered in the present study. Therefore, future research could incorporate these elements in a predictive model of greater complexity. Although self-assessment offers valuable information from the protagonists themselves, it requires other sources to be contrasted.

This research has contrasted the theoretical premises and previous studies with the empirical findings obtained, thus reinforcing the theories on organizational behavior. Additionally, it will be possible to generate, in future works, strategies to enhance self-efficacy, meaningful work, horizontal collectivism and flow, which have shown better results in the improvement of performance in quality management and its dimensions. This will make it possible to generate tools for the development of human capital to strengthen the soft skills required by teachers and administrators as managers of university educational quality.

CONCLUSIONS

A model of organizational behavior composed of 5 predictors that predict better performance in quality management in 97.7% of cases was established. The variables that contribute to improved performance are meaningful work, horizontal collectivism and self-efficacy. Its regular practice will contribute to meeting the challenges associated with continuous improvement in higher education.

This finding also points to the need to promote a work environment whose conditions enhance the development of behaviors that promote better performance. This generates the need to continue studies that analyze the contextual factors that intervene in the consolidation of an organizational culture that, in turn, is the appropriate scenario for all collaborators to be managers of the university's educational quality.

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KAA: Conceptualization, manuscript writing, methodology, formal analysis and interpretation of the results, and review.

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