

## *Information behavior and psychological well-being: A review of the literature on social media use*

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**Paper Type:**

*Literature Review*

### **Abstract**

**Background of the study:** The impact of social media on individuals' information behavior and psychological well-being is significant. Understanding how social media use influences psychological well-being is crucial in our digitally connected environment.

**Purpose:** This study explores the relationship between information behavior on social media and psychological well-being. It investigates how individuals' information-seeking, processing, and usage on social media affect their psychological well-being.

**Method:** A qualitative analysis of relevant literature was conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of the impact of social media on psychological well-being. Scientific journals, research articles, and textbooks in psychology and communication were reviewed.

**Findings:** The analysis revealed a complex relationship between information behavior and psychological well-being on social media. Active social media use can enhance psychological well-being through increased social connections and support. However, negative impacts such as social media addiction, low self-esteem, and unhealthy social comparisons can also affect psychological well-being.

**Conclusion:** Understanding the relationship between information behavior and psychological well-being on social media is crucial for promoting healthy and responsible usage. Identifying influencing factors and developing effective interventions can enhance individuals' psychological well-being. Additionally, studying information behavior and psychological well-being on social media can help identify emerging patterns in the digital era.

**Keywords:** *Information behavior, psychological well-being, social media use, social connections, social comparisons, media literacy.*

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## Introduction

The development of information technology, especially social media, has had a significant impact on information behavior and individual psychological well-being. The use of social media has become an inseparable part of everyday life, allowing easy access to a variety of information, social interaction and self-expression. However, in this increasingly digitally connected environment, it is important to understand how behavioral information related to social media use can influence an individual's psychological well-being. Understanding the relationship between behavioral information and psychological well-being in social media use is important for developing strategies that promote healthy and responsible social media use.

Information Behavior is the way individuals search for, process and use information in everyday life. In the context of social media use, information behavior includes searching for information, evaluating sources, consuming content, and sharing information with others ([Andini & Kurniawan, 2020](#); [Faturahmi, 2020](#)). In the context of psychological well-being, information behavior related to social media use can have a significant impact on an individual's psychological well-being, both positive and negative ([Liu et al., 2019](#); [Luo & Hancock, 2020](#); [Reer et al., 2019](#)). Information Positive behavior in using social media includes responsible use, placement in selecting relevant and valuable content, and interacting positively with other people. On the other hand, negative behavioral information such as excessive use of social media, consumption of unhealthy or harmful content, and involvement in unhealthy social communication can cause stress, anxiety, and feelings of low self-esteem. It is important for individuals to understand and manage their behavioral information in social media use to maintain their psychological well-being.

Psychological well-being includes the emotional, cognitive, and social aspects of an individual. Social media use has been linked to a variety of psychological effects, including increased social connections, increased self-esteem, and the development of an online identity. Psychological well-being is a state where individuals feel satisfaction, emotional balance, and good ability to face the challenges of daily life ([Cook, 2020](#); [Graciyal & Viswam, 2021](#); [Nguyen & Le, 2021](#)). Understanding risks include social media addiction, feelings of low self-esteem, and social communication which can affect an individual's psychological well-being. In addition, social media use can also influence cognitive and social aspects of an individual's psychological well-being ([Choi & Noh, 2020](#); [Fabris et al., 2020](#); [Schivinski et al., 2020](#)). The cognitive aspect is related to the ability to convey information, focus and creativity. Excessive use of social media can interfere with an individual's ability to focus and shift attention, as well as reduce time spent on more useful activities. In the social aspect, although social media can facilitate interaction and connectivity with others, it can sometimes lead to adverse social comparisons, feelings of jealousy, and pressure to meet social expectations ([Cheng et al., 2021](#); [Sisler et al., 2021](#)). Therefore, it is important for individuals to use social media wisely and in a balanced manner to maintain their psychological well-being in emotional, cognitive and social aspects.

A review of the literature on behavioral information and psychological well-being on social media use is essential to understand the psychological effectiveness associated with this phenomenon. Through analysis of previous research, we can identify patterns, findings, and deviations in existing research. In this literature review, we will explore relevant theories and research, such as information handling theory, social processing theory, and subjective well-being theory. The literature review will also strengthen understanding of the factors that influence information behavior and individual psychological well-being in social media use. Some factors that can be considered include user motivation in seeking information, social effects of online interactions, level of media literacy skills, and regulations on social media use.



By deepening our understanding of these factors, we can develop more effective strategies and interventions to improve individuals' psychological well-being in the context of social media. In addition, observing this literature can also provide insight into the latest trends and developments in behavioral information and psychological well-being on social media use, thereby allowing us to be at the forefront of research and development in this area.

Previous research has revealed a complex relationship between information behavior and psychological well-being on social media use. Several studies show that active use of social media can improve psychological well-being through social connections and social support obtained ([Lin et al., 2022](#); [Lin & Kishore, 2021](#); [Rehman et al., 2020](#)). However, there are also findings showing the negative impact of social media use on psychological well-being, such as addiction, feelings of loneliness, and unhealthy social comparisons ([Lee, 2020](#); [Mackson et al., 2019](#); [Marciano et al., 2022](#)). Several studies also indicate that how individuals manage and control social media use also plays an important role in their psychological well-being ([Kanekar & Sharma, 2020](#); [Ostic et al., 2021](#); [Schivinski et al., 2020](#)). For example, use that is too intensive or too frequent can cause digital fatigue and sleep disorders that can affect a person's emotional and cognitive balance. Therefore, it is important for individuals to develop self-awareness and self-management skills in the use of social media in order to minimize negative risks and maximize positive benefits from online interactions. With a deeper understanding of the relationship between information behavior and psychological well-being in social media use, we can develop guidelines and strategies that support healthy and responsible use, and promote optimal psychological well-being in this digital era.

By understanding the relationship between information behavior and psychological well-being on social media use, we can develop a better understanding of how social media can affect individuals psychologically. This can provide valuable insight for social media users, psychology practitioners, and policy makers in managing social media use in a healthy and sustainable manner. Through further research, it is hoped to identify the factors that influence this relationship and develop effective intervention strategies to improve individual psychological well-being in the era of social media.

A deeper understanding of information behavior and psychological well-being in social media use can also help identify new patterns and trends emerging in this digital era. The use of social media has created new platforms for individuals to obtain, disseminate, and participate in widespread information exchange ([Ahmad et al., 2019](#); [Katz & Nandi, 2021](#); [O'Brien et al., 2020](#)). By studying emerging information behavior in the context of social media, we can see how trends in information dissemination, opinion formation, and social influence develop in the digital environment. Through a deeper understanding of information behavior and psychological well-being on social media use, we can also identify shifts and developments in the dynamics of human communication and interaction. By studying how individuals share information, participate in discussions, and interact with content and other users on social media, we can observe changes in communication patterns, speaking styles, as well as the formation of groups and communities in the digital environment ([Martin & MacDonald, 2020](#); [Syahputra, 2019](#)). This information can be used to enrich existing communication and psychology theories, as well as to design interventions and policies that suit the new dynamics occurring in the social media era.

Through research on information behavior and psychological well-being on social media use, we can also identify strategies that can help individuals manage and optimize their use. Studying how healthy information behaviors can contribute to an individual's psychological well-being, such as selectivity in selecting valid information sources, managing time on social media use, and building supportive social relationships, can provide practical insights for those who wish to utilize social media in a beneficial way. positive and strengthen



their well-being ([Torous et al., 2021](#); [Yang et al., 2022](#)). In this regard, according to [Xiao et al. \(2021\)](#) A deeper understanding of information behavior and psychological well-being on social media use can also lead to the development of effective education and media literacy programs. By recognizing the psychological impact of social media use, we can design strategies that help individuals develop critical skills, such as information evaluation, emotional management, and healthy decision making in digital contexts. Through this approach, we can increase society's understanding of the risks and benefits of social media, as well as provide the tools and knowledge necessary to face the challenges that arise in everyday social media use.

The aim of this study is to explain the relationship between information behavior related to social media use and psychological well-being. Social media offers unlimited access to information, but how individuals seek, obtain, and use that information can impact their psychological well-being. By understanding this relationship, we can develop better strategies to promote healthy and responsible social media use.

## Method

### *Literature review*

In this research method, a qualitative analysis of relevant literature is carried out to understand the impact of social media use on individual psychological well-being. Literature selection was carried out by identifying sources that focus on the experiences of social media users, their impact on psychological aspects, and the factors that influence them. The sources used include scientific journals, research articles, and related textbooks in the fields of Library and Information Science, Psychology, and Communication Science.

### *Data collection*

Qualitative analysis methods are used to gain an in-depth understanding of the data found in the literature ([Ibrahim et al., 2023](#)). First, the main themes emerging from the relevant literature were identified. These themes can relate to changes in behavior, changes in emotions, and social interactions that are influenced by social media use. Next, a detailed analysis of each theme was carried out, exploring the context, mechanisms and related variables. The qualitative information gathered from this literature was then organized and synthesized to holistically understand the impact of social media use on individuals' psychological well-being ([Duradoni et al., 2020](#)).

## Result and Discussion

### *Information Processing*

Information Processing is a framework used to understand how individuals receive, process, store, and use information from their environment. This theory presents a mental model that explains how information is processed by individuals, starting from sensory input to output that produces actions or responses.

First of all, in this theory there is an input stage, where individuals receive information through their five senses, such as sight or hearing. The information received is then processed in the next stage, namely the processing stage, where the individual gives meaning to the information. At this stage, information is compared with knowledge that already exists in the individual's memory, so that a more complete understanding is formed ([Khotimah et al., 2019](#); [Townsend, 2021](#)). Next, there is the storage stage, where the processed information is stored in short-term or long-term memory. Short-term memory allows individuals to store information for a short time, while long-term memory is a more permanent place for storing information ([Cai et al., 2022](#); [Septriwinti & Nasution, 2023](#); [Sweller, 2020](#)). Information in long-term memory can be accessed and recovered for future use.



In addition, information processing theory also recognizes the existence of influencing factors that can influence information processing, such as attention, motivation, and individual goals. Attention is the ability to focus on relevant information and ignore irrelevant information ([Nasution et al., 2023](#)). Individual motivation and goals can influence how individuals search, select, and process information ([Sharot & Sunstein, 2020](#)). For example, individuals who have certain goals will be more likely to seek information that supports those goals. Information processing theory also highlights the importance of using effective processing strategies, such as grouping information, setting priorities, and logical reasoning. These strategies help individuals better obtain and retain information, as well as improve understanding and rational decision making.

In all, information processing theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how individuals process information from their environment. By understanding these information processing processes, we can better understand how individuals convey messages, make decisions, and interact with the world around them.

### *Information Gratification*

Information gratification, in the context of communication and psychology, refers to an individual's need to seek, obtain, and satisfy their desires for information. This concept is based on the assumption that humans naturally have an intrinsic drive to seek knowledge and expand their understanding of the world around them. There is a complex process involving motivation, search behavior, evaluation of information, and finally achieving an adequate level of satisfaction. Individuals seek information in response to their needs, interests, questions, or curiosities ([Kim, 2020](#); [Sharot & Sunstein, 2020](#)). For example, someone who wants to learn a new topic or solve a particular problem will feel compelled to search for relevant information.

Information seeking behavior involves various strategies, such as accessing information resources, interacting with other people, or using media and communication technology ([Dadaczynski et al., 2021](#); [Liu, 2020](#); [Soroya et al., 2021](#)). Individuals will select methods and sources that they believe will provide the necessary information. Information evaluation is the next stage, where individuals filter, process, and evaluate the information found. They will assess the reliability, credibility, and relevance of the information in the desired context. The ultimate goal of information satisfaction is to achieve an adequate level of satisfaction. Individuals will feel satisfied when they succeed in meeting their information needs or getting the answers they are looking for. However, satisfaction levels may vary depending on factors such as quality of information, suitability for objectives, and personal satisfaction.

Additionally, it is important to note that information gratification can also contribute to an individual's personal growth and self-development. By seeking and acquiring new information, individuals can expand their knowledge, increase their understanding of the world, and develop necessary skills ([Laato et al., 2020](#); [Szymkowiak et al., 2021](#)). Information gratification also has implications in the communication and media domains. The use of digital technology and social media has significantly increased the accessibility of information, but has also given rise to new challenges, such as information overload and difficulties in evaluating the reliability of information. Therefore, it is important for individuals to develop good critical skills and information literacy to maximize their information satisfaction.

Overall, information gratification is an important process in human life that involves seeking, evaluating, and achieving satisfaction through information. A better understanding of this concept can provide valuable insights into understanding human motivation, decision making, and their interactions with the ever-evolving information environment.

### *Psychological Impact of Social Media Use*





use of social media has had a significant impact on the psychological well-being of individuals. Although social media offers advantages in terms of connectivity and access to information, research has shown negative impacts that need to be considered. One of the common psychological impacts associated with social media use is feelings of lack of self-satisfaction and low self-esteem ([Barthorpe et al., 2020](#); [Purnama et al., 2021](#)). Individuals often compare themselves to unrealistic standards presented on social media, which can lead to feelings of low self-esteem and self-dissatisfaction.

Social media use can also increase the risk of depression and anxiety. Information overload, especially negative news or detrimental content, can affect an individual's emotional well-being ([de Bruin et al., 2021](#); [Liu et al., 2021](#); [Pang, 2021](#)). In addition, social interactions that occur on social media can also be a source of stress, such as online conflict, intimidation, or negative comments, which can have a negative impact on an individual's mental health ([O'Reilly et al., 2018](#)). Social media can also affect an individual's sleep quality. Using social media at night often disrupts healthy sleep patterns, because exposure to blue light from gadget screens can disrupt the production of sleep hormones. Ongoing sleep disturbances can lead to mental health problems such as fatigue, irritability, and decreased cognitive function ([Vanek et al., 2020](#)).

In addition, social media can also strengthen compulsive behavior and addiction. Features such as notifications, endless scrolling, and “likes” or “followers” can trigger unhealthy behavior and make it difficult for individuals to stop using social media. When social media use becomes an activity that dominates and disrupts an individual's daily life, it can have a negative impact on psychological well-being. Social media also has the potential to influence social interactions and an individual's ability to build meaningful interpersonal relationships. Excessive use of social media can lead to social isolation and lack of direct interaction with other people ([Agustina & Aswin, 2021](#); [Indra et al., 2019](#)). Lack of engagement in real social interactions can lead to feelings of loneliness and a decline in the quality of personal relationships. The positive impact of social media is that it has a strong influence on individuals to do things that will bring good, such as social interactions that occur can cover a wider area and even between countries, and information can be received more quickly ([Cahyono, 2016](#)).

### *Social Influence*

Social influence is one of the important aspects related to the use of social media. In the connected digital era, social media provides opportunities for individuals to engage in a variety of social interactions with people from various backgrounds. However, social influences arising from social media use can have a complex impact on an individual's psychological well-being. One of the significant social influences of social media is the feeling of social connectedness ([Maimunah & Satwika, 2021](#)). Social media allows individuals to maintain relationships with their family, friends, and colleagues without the limitations of time and space. They can communicate, share experiences, and engage in activities together virtually. This positive influence can help improve psychological well-being by providing social support, reducing isolation, and increasing a sense of connectedness with others ([Choi & Noh, 2020](#); [Luo & Hancock, 2020](#)).

However, there are also negative social influences that arise from social media. One of them is social pressure and social comparison which can influence individuals' perceptions of themselves. Through social media, individuals are often exposed to the achievements, appearances, and lifestyles posted by others. This can lead to feelings of dissatisfaction with oneself, envy, or feeling inadequate. Constant social comparison can trigger social anxiety and disrupt an individual's psychological well-being ([Risdyanti et al., 2019](#)). Social media can also influence social norms and individual behavior. Individuals tend to imitate and adopt the



behavior and views they see on social media. This can impact an individual's identity and influence their decisions and behavior in real life. Social influence on social media can also reinforce stereotypes and misperceptions about certain groups, which in turn can affect the psychological well-being of individuals and society as a whole ([Chavez et al., 2019](#); [Demirtaş-Madran, 2020](#); [Pang, 2018](#)).

Social influence from social media can also involve influence from certain groups or communities. Through online groups and communities formed on social media, individuals can engage in discussions, get support, and feel included in an environment that matches their interests and identity ([Daniel et al., 2018](#); [DeVito et al., 2018](#)). However, this group influence can also be a form of social pressure or conformity that can influence individual behavior, attitudes and views (Berndt, 2018; Mallinson & Hatemi, 2018). Apart from that, social media also facilitates the dissemination of information quickly and widely. This can influence individuals' perceptions of social and political issues, and influence their attitudes and behavior regarding these issues. This social influence can trigger debate, conflict, or polarization among social media users. Information inequality and the risk of spreading misinformation or hoaxes can also have a negative impact on individuals' psychological well-being ([Ali et al., 2021](#); [Linde-Arias et al., 2020](#)).

### *Self-control*

Self-control is an important aspect related to social media use. In a digital world full of distractions and stimuli, an individual's ability to control themselves in their use of social media is key to maintaining psychological well-being. Self-control involves an individual's ability to regulate the frequency, duration, and purpose of social media use ([Du et al., 2018](#); [Zahrai et al., 2022](#)). This involves awareness of the influence that social media has on an individual's psychological well-being and the ability to make wise decisions about its balanced and beneficial use.

The importance of self-control in using social media lies in the individual's ability to avoid negative impacts such as addiction, feelings of lack of worth, and detrimental social influences. Individuals who are able to control themselves will be better able to limit the time spent on social media, avoid content that is detrimental or damaging to psychological well-being, and remain focused on more positive and productive goals in using social media. Apart from that, self-control in using social media is also involves the ability to regulate and manage emotions that arise in response to content or interactions on social media. Individuals need to be able to recognize and manage negative emotions such as anxiety, envy, or dissatisfaction that may arise due to social comparison or exposure to content that triggers negative emotions. The ability to control oneself in managing emotions can help maintain psychological well-being and avoid negative impacts that may arise from social media use ([Kross et al., 2021](#); [Rasmussen et al., 2020](#)).

Self-control in social media use also involves the ability to maintain privacy and maintain boundaries between online and offline life. Individuals need to be able to understand and manage their privacy on social media, including limiting personal information uploaded, controlling who can access their information, and avoiding the tendency to share too much about their personal lives ([Ketelaar & Van Balen, 2018](#); [Nabity-Grover et al. al., 2020](#)). This is important to maintain psychological well-being and avoid risks such as data hacking or unethical use of personal information. Self-control is also related to the ability to choose useful and positive content on social media. Individuals need to be able to choose and manage their social media environment wisely, including following accounts that inspire, support, and provide valuable information ([Aïmeur et al., 2019](#); [Xiao et al., 2021](#)). By controlling the type of content consumed, individuals can avoid negative impacts and promote better psychological



well-being.

### *Personal identity*

Self-identity is a very relevant concept in the context of social media use. Social media provides a platform where individuals can display, convey, and shape their identities online. Self-identity involves individuals' understanding of who they are, the values, interests, and life experiences that they identify as part of themselves ([Ekström & Sveningsson, 2019](#); [Sergeeva & Kortantamer, 2021](#)). Social media use can have a significant impact on the development and maintenance of an individual's self-identity. Through social media, individuals can share information about themselves, such as photos, status updates, and interests they have. This allows them to form and express their identity to others.

The influence of social media on self-identity is not always positive. Social media can amplify social pressure to display a perfect life and extraordinary achievements, which can influence individuals' self-perception and provide pressure to create an ideal identity ([Flett et al., 2022](#); [Hardie et al., 2022](#)). This can lead to feelings of inauthenticity or dissatisfaction with oneself. Social media also presents challenges in maintaining a consistent and integrated self-identity. Content shared on social media is often selective and tends to highlight positive aspects of an individual's life. However, real life is often complex and has many dimensions. Excessive use of social media can cause individuals to display only selected aspects of their identity, while neglecting other aspects that are also important to them ([Abbas et al., 2019](#); [Weinstein, 2018](#)).

Social media can also influence the development of self-identity in teenagers. Teenagers often seek social validation and recognition, and social media can be a platform where they seek that recognition. However, social influence on social media can also amplify pressure to conform to certain trends or norms, ignoring or downplaying unique aspects of their identity ([Constantino et al., 2022](#); [Rashidi et al., 2020](#)). This can influence the development of a healthy and authentic self-identity in adolescents.

### *Discussion*

To achieve self-control in using social media, there are several strategies that can be implemented. First, individuals can limit the time spent on social media by setting daily time limits or using time reminder features on their devices. By limiting the time spent on social media, individuals can avoid falling into patterns of excessive use. Second, individuals can choose wisely the content they consume on social media. Following positive and inspiring accounts, avoiding content that is harmful or triggers negative feelings, and choosing to follow sources that provide useful and trustworthy information can help maintain psychological well-being. Furthermore, individuals can increase self-awareness about the emotional effects caused by the use of social media. By recognizing the negative feelings or dissatisfaction that arise after using social media, individuals can take steps to reduce exposure to content that triggers those feelings.

Additionally, depending on an individual's goals for using social media, it is important to have a clear awareness of its beneficial and balanced use. Setting specific goals, such as using social media for educational purposes, personal development, or maintaining connections with loved ones, can help individuals focus their use and avoid getting caught up in unproductive or detrimental use ([Chau et al., 2018](#); [O'Rourke et al., 2018](#)).

It is important to develop alternative activities beyond the use of social media. Seeking activities that provide satisfaction and healthy engagement, such as exercise, art, reading, or socializing in person with others, can help reduce dependence on social media and improve overall psychological well-being. Self-control in using social media is a skill that needs to be trained and maintained. With good awareness, setting boundaries, and judicious use, individuals





can harness the benefits of social media without sacrificing their psychological well-being ([Hayat et al., 2020](#); [Przybylski & Weinstein, 2019](#); [Xiao et al., 2021](#)).

Self-control also involves using healthy strategies and habits in social media use. Self-control in social media use involves being aware of the fact that what is displayed on social media is often only an incomplete or unrealistic picture of one's life can help reduce feelings of low self-esteem or dissatisfaction. Choosing positive sources is important in controlling yourself. By following and interacting with positive accounts and communities and avoiding content that is detrimental or triggers negative feelings, individuals can maintain their emotional balance. Developing critical skills and media literacy is also an important part of self-control. By being able to identify false, hoax or inaccurate information, as well as being able to recognize attempts at manipulation and unhealthy influence on social media, individuals can make wiser decisions in their use ([Addawood et al., 2019](#); [Stahl, 2018](#)).

Setting notifications on social media apps can also help reduce distractions and distractions. By limiting unnecessary notifications, individuals can stay focused on the activity or task they are doing without being distracted by social media distractions ([Hayes et al., 2020](#); [Mark et al., 2018](#)). Engaging in alternative activities that are beneficial and satisfying is also an important part of self-control. Filling free time with physical activities, reading books, interacting with friends directly, or pursuing hobbies and personal interests can help reduce dependence on social media ([Alutaybi et al., 2020](#); [Biolcati et al., 2018](#)). That way individuals can better control their social media use.

Self-control in using social media is a continuous process and requires self-discipline. It's important to remember that healthy social media use is about striking the right balance between gaining benefits and avoiding negative impacts.

## Conclusion

Excessive social media use can disrupt social functioning and lead to social isolation, sleep deprivation, and eating disorders. Social media addiction can also affect productivity, concentration and overall quality of life. Apart from negative impacts, the use of social media can also have a positive impact on an individual's psychological well-being. Social media can be a platform that allows individuals to connect with their friends and family, especially in situations where physical meetings are difficult. Social interactions that occur through social media can provide emotional support, a sense of inclusion, and feelings of social connection. Another advantage of social media is that it provides an opportunity for individuals to build an online identity, express themselves, and develop their creativity through sharing the same content, hobbies, or interests.

Understanding the relationship between information behavior and psychological well-being on social media is critical to encouraging healthy and responsible social media use. Identifying influencing factors and developing effective interventions can improve individual psychological well-being. With a deeper understanding of information behavior and psychological well-being when using social media, it is hoped that it can help individuals manage their social media use in a healthy and sustainable manner.

This research still reviews the topic using literature, suggestions for further research. Research related to this topic can be made more specific, considering that there are many social media accounts such as Twitter (now X), Instagram, TikTok which of course have the possibility of differences in the behavior of their users. Furthermore, future research could also explore differences in the psychological impact of social media based on demographic factors such as age, gender, or cultural background.

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### Authors' Contributions

All authors have contributed to the final manuscript. The contribution of all authors: conceptualization, methodology, formal analysis, writing original draft preparation, writing review and editing. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

### Conflict of Interest

All authors have no conflict of interest related to this study.

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