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The Role of Communication as Agrarian Conflicts Resolution (Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Conflict is a natural reality, an unavoidable fact of life that often gives birth to creativity and fosters the emergence of innovative ideas. Its presence is frequently a catalyst for change. The conflict in this research is communication over the resolution of the Indramayu Farmers Union - Perum Perhutani agrarian land conflict in Indonesia. Conflict always involves differences in values, power, or perception. Communication is essential in developing relationships between two or more entities in conflict. This research method systematically observes scientific journal articles appropriate to the study topic, namely communication on agrarian conflict resolution. This research aims to describe the role of communication in resolving agrarian conflicts, especially agrarian land conflicts. The results of the study show that five (5) essential themes have become new thinking in resolving agrarian conflicts: (1) consistency of legal supremacy; (2) cooperation through mutual agreement; (3) mediation involving actors who can influence government policy and involvement; (4) negotiation by bringing together conflicting parties so that it is easier to convey disclosures; and (5) participatory communication, which places the parties in an equal communication atmosphere.

Keywords: communication conflict, agrarian conflict, conflict resolution

1. Introduction

Generally, conflict occurs due to differences in values, power, differences in perception, and miscommunication, all of which play an essential role in the evolution of conflict relationships. Even though conflicts may arise from issues related to identity, economics, or other material problems, it is essential to address them constructively and open-mindedly. In conflict situations, there are generally two or more social entities connected to at least one form of antagonistic interaction and interference with each other (Jeong, 2008).

Conflict is a normal and unavoidable fact of life. However, conflict often gives birth to creativity, generating creative ideas, correcting each other, competing, increasing cohesion, and so on (Fisher et al., 2001). Humans live with different needs, feelings, meanings, and perspectives, all of which underlie communication and trigger tension in interaction (Muldi, 2019). Even though conflict sometimes has a negative impact because its presence is often a catalyst for change (Gustin & Slavic, 2020), conflict can also make a situation ineffective, so it must be managed well (Chin, 2020).

Conflicts over land ownership claims, such as the social problems in this research, can only be expanded from just agrarian conflicts to more significant social conflicts if managed well. Conflict does not only harm farmers who use land as their primary source of life. Conflict will also hinder stakeholders from maximizing productivity in managing land, which is increasingly scarce due to community demand exceeding the availability of land objects due to population growth. Putnam (2013) quotes research by Mortensen (1974) and Hocker & Wilmot (1978), explaining that the distribution and availability of agricultural land resources as an essential means of development and human life has become unbalanced.

The imbalance in social life, as explained by Putnam (2013) citing Mortensen (1974) and Hocker & Wilmot (1978), can trigger social tension and conflict. Such situations need to be managed well. Engel & Korf (2005) explain that the ideal form of conflict management should be carried out while it is still in the latent stage or before the conflict escalates to the manifest stage, which Fisher *et al.*, (2001 b)   call it as a pre-conflict stage. Kriesberg & Dayton (2011) call pre-conflict the emergence stage.
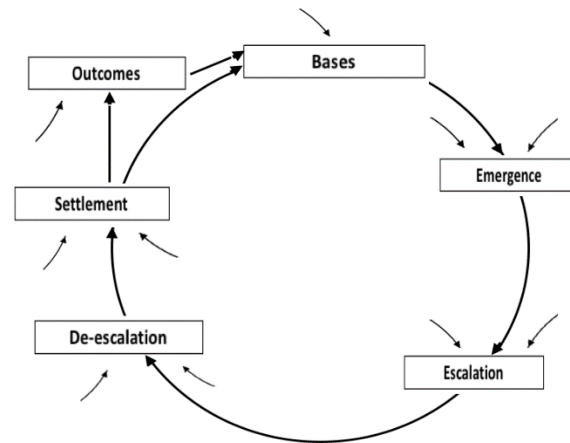
Figure 1. Conflict Cycle Syclus (Kriesberg & Dayton., 2011)

Source: Kriesberg & Dayton., (2011)

According to Fisher *et al.*, (2001) conflict management is related to eliminating the causes of conflict and efforts to build new, long-lasting relationships between the parties involved in the conflict. The perspective of Fisher *et.al.* (2001) shows that communication is an ineradicable part of conflict management. Muldi *et.al.* (2019) citing Kapelus et al. (2011), explain this, placing communication as essential in resolving conflict. Kincaid and Figueroa (2009) stated that conflict can be managed using various decision-making processes, such as discussion or dialogue, until all parties with different views converge. Engel and Korf (2005) reminded us of the importance of adequate communication channels in resolving conflict. Communication channels are used by parties to convey ideas or thoughts so that they do not develop into more significant conflicts, such as social conflicts.

However, several previous studies on conflict resolution from various scientific disciplinary perspectives still leave empty spaces, namely communication issues that have yet to be focused on as an essential part of conflict resolution. Communication is not included as an essential element of conflict resolution, instead emphasizing sociological, legal and political approaches. Effective communication must be built from the start of a potential conflict or when a conflict occurs to prevent escalation or broader conflict. Putnam (2013) emphasized that communication is the basis for forming issues, framing perceptions, translating feelings, and harmonization, which indicates intentions and exchange of information. Oetzel dan Ting-Toomey (2013) emphasized that constructive conflict management will produce something better. On the other hand, if it is managed poorly, it will almost certainly have dire consequences.

Communication plays an essential role as the focus of this study, namely as part of conflict resolution, preventing conflict escalation, and through communication that can build long-lasting good relationships. The critical role of communication is illustrated in the study of Siregar *et al.*, (2023)which explains that effective communication allows parties to understand problems mutually. Accurate information will reduce misunderstandings. As explained by Kincaid and Figueroa (2009) the concept of convergent communication is that communication will bring the parties involved in the conflict to understand each other, reach a mutual agreement and active collection.

According to Eisenkopf (2018), peace will only be realized with communication in building understanding. Anying dan Gausset (2017) show that communication is essential in solving problems. Vulnerability to conflict usually occurs due to ignoring or ignoring communication patterns so that each party has a different perception. Therefore, conflict is essential to study from the perspective of communication science as a resolution because communication will equalize different perceptions.

2. Method

This research uses a systematic literature review as a method of review, analysis, structured evaluation, classification, and evidence-based categorization of previously produced literature. The systematic review steps are carried out in a planned and structured manner, which is prepared based on journals and previous research which is accessed using the Publish or Perish application, which aims to track, sort, select, retrieve and analyze citations from digital data sources, namely; ScienceDirect, Crossref and Google Scholar, with a period of 5 years from 2016 to 2020, as well as a reputable national journal of at least Sinta-2. The keywords used are Land Use Conflict Resolution, Land Cover Change, and Communication Land Conflict Resolution. The journal results could have been more relevant to the research theme. The journal search was expanded using keywords slightly different from the original by adding the two words Land and Policy. The aim is to see how land policy works, so the following keywords chosen are land use conflict and land policy.

The search for articles relevant to this research theme is not only taken from the perspective of Communication Science but also from various other scientific disciplines at the root of Communication Science, namely Sociology, as well as from Political Science, Law, Cultural Sciences and Economics. The results were relevant journals and then filtered again until more relevant journals were synthesized. ScienceDirect sources obtained 81,765 journals, then filtered again based on publication year 2016-2020, so they managed to obtain 26,569 journal articles. They then filtered again to get more relevant articles using publish or perish. The results obtained were 361 articles related to agrarian land conflicts. These journals were taken, sorted and selected for systematic review. The number of relevant articles was insufficient, so another search used Crossref with the keywords land use conflict resolution AND land cover change. The results obtained were 200 articles from 1975-2020, then filtered based on 2016-2020, resulting in 200 journals or the same as those obtained using the publish or perish application.

Another source, Google Scholar, obtained 3,670,000 journal articles. Article filtering was carried out based on the year of publication, namely 2016-2020, so that a total of 568,000 articles were obtained, then filtered using publish or perish by entering 200 articles. However, only 87 articles were obtained, filtered based on a reputable national journal of at least Sinta-2. The lack of articles relevant to this research theme shows that communication as part of agrarian land conflict resolution has yet to be widely studied by experts.

3. Results and Discussion

The results of a systematic review of previous research literature regarding agricultural land conflict resolution research are divided into several categories: development communication, research using participatory communication theory, legal communication, mediation, convergent communication in the development context, and various perspectives. The widely used research methods are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Based on the 50 journals reviewed, 26 articles were found that were more relevant to agricultural conflict resolution research, where most of the research was case studies, ethnography, experimental studies, and literature studies.
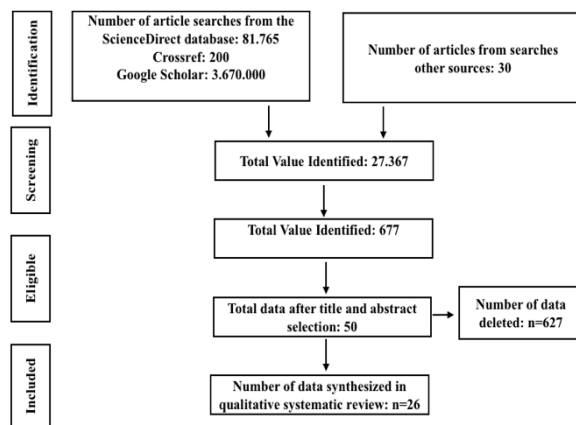

Figure 2. Flowchart Selection and Determination of Articles

4. Big Themes for Agrarian Conflict Resolution

Based on a synthesis of 26 previous research articles that are more relevant to this research study, five major themes were found in resolving agrarian conflicts, namely:

1. Law enforcement (the rule of law)

2. Collaboration

3. Mediation

4. Negotiation

5. Participatory communication.

The central theme of conflict resolution is carried out partially or by mixing or combining 2-3 themes. The most dominant solution to resolve conflicts is the application of rules as a basis for law enforcement (the rule of law). Other settlements are carried out through negotiation, collaboration and mediation separately or jointly to accommodate the interests of conflicting parties in agrarian utilization and management. However, these resolutions usually do not address the root causes of the conflict. Another solution is from the perspective of communication science, but only a few articles review conflict resolution from this scientific perspective. Even if there is a discussion, it does not touch on the aspect of communication as a resolution but rather an explanation that emphasizes the importance of communication as an instrument for resolving conflicts,

including agrarian land conflicts. The explanation of the five conflict resolution themes is as follows:

1. Law is a way of resolving conflict. Law also involves norms as a collective agreement in a customary society. Law is the commander in chief in administrating a democratic state system based on popular sovereignty. The law must be placed in the highest position (rule of law) so that all parties, including the authorities, must submit to it. . Bunga (2021) citing Bruno Leoni (1972: 62), explains that law has the highest position, even from the position of a king, where the king and his government must submit to the law placed in that highest position. Without law, there would never be a king and no legal reality in people's daily lives.

2. Obedience to the law is the act of following orders with awareness as an agreed rule. Bordens dan Horowitz (2008) explain that obedience to the law is a process of a person's attitude to change their behaviour in response to someone's orders. In the context of this research, obedience means obeying the law, which is the position of commander in chief. The word commander is taken from Article 10 of the 1945 Constitution, which explains that the President holds supreme authority over three forces that have great power: the Army, Navy and Air Force; who is the commander in chief of the three armed forces. Likewise, the law must be the commander in chief as a reference for conflict resolution that must be obeyed. Compliance with the law should include discussing conflict issues using dialogical communication. Burton (1990) citing Mitchell and Banks, defines *conflict resolution* as the result of discussing conflict issues handled satisfactorily and mutually acceptable, independently and over a long period, resulting in a positive relationship between the conflicting parties (Eyong *et.al,* 2020). Norms are also rules that bind members of a community group and serve as guidelines. Norms can be used as solutions by combining them with formal law, as found in research by Rahman *et.al.* (2018) .

3. Collaboration is the cooperation of two or more individuals or groups to achieve a common goal through a process ranging from planning to collective action. According to Lai (2011), collaboration is a form of coordinated cooperation between parties to find a standard solution. Collaboration emphasizes the importance of effective communication (listening to each other), considering each conflicting party's point of view, respecting each other, and combining various resources to reach a mutually beneficial agreement. Collaboration must avoid losses for each party in conflict. Individuals involved in a conflict are encouraged to contribute more to the resolution to strengthen their commitment to obtain a collective agreement as a resolution realized in joint action.

4. Mediation is a strategy that can be chosen to resolve conflicts through negotiations mediated by a mediator. Rosy *et.al,. (* 2021) explain that mediation is a negotiation process to resolve the problems of conflicting parties by involving neutral external parties to find a mutual agreement. External parties or mediators only help resolve problems for which they are given authority but require authority to decide the conflict. The mediator acts as a facilitator during the dialogue or deliberation process so that each party can properly formulate and propose a good and beneficial conflict resolution for both parties. Conflict resolution through mediation can help or increase communication confidence, such as the ability to convey thoughts or ideas and help improve the relationship between the parties in conflict in a better direction.

5. Negotiation. Based on the Principles of Negotiation Theory, conflict occurs because of an imbalance of positions and differences in perspective on the conflict. This theory helps parties in conflict to negotiate based on interests and speeds up the negotiation process to reach a mutually beneficial agreement (Fisher *et al.* 2001) . The conflict resolution procedure through negotiation is based on an agreement built on communication between the parties in conflict without involving third parties (Syafrida & Hartati,. 2021) .

6. Participatory Communication. In a seminar in Latin America in 1978, educational theorist Paulo Freire expressed the concept of participatory communication, where every individual or group has the same right to voice their opinion. This concept, developed in Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1994, can facilitate grassroots communities to actively participate in empowering communities to meet their needs. Muchtar (2016) quotes Mefalopulos (2003), explaining that the essence of participatory communication is building trust and exchanging knowledge and perceptions about problems and opportunities to reach a common consensus with stakeholders. Rogers & Kincaid, (1981) explain that participatory (convergent) communication will unite different perceptions. Eisenkopf (2018) emphasizes the central role of communication in conflict resolution. Without communication, peace will never be achieved. Putnam (2013) sees communication as the basis for issue formation, which, according to Hoffmann (2014)   is the transformation of conflict.

Conflict Resolution Communication

A systematic review of the literature using 50 articles indexed by Scopus and the reputable journal Sinta (a ranking of Indonesian national journals) for analysis was then narrowed down to 26 articles more relevant to agrarian conflict resolution studies. Analysis of the article includes communication elements as an essential part of conflict resolution. Whatever form of strategy is chosen for conflict resolution as discussed in the 26 articles, whether law enforcement (the rule of law), collaboration, mediation, or negotiation, all emphasize the importance of the fifth resolution, namely

participatory communication that can bridge the parties to equalize perceptions in agrarian conflict.

As a basis or foundation for conflict resolution, the rule of law will be more effective if regulations and laws are enforced against parties who violate mutual agreements in conflict. According to Burton (1991), law enforcement must include dialogue to discuss conflict issues to produce acceptable decisions for all parties (Eyong *et al.* 2020). The studies conducted by Diawuo & Issifu (2016), Abdul & Pendaliday (2018); Eyong *et al.* (2020), Rahman and Hossain (2020) explain that fair formal law enforcement is very important in resolving various conflicts.

The lack of optimal law enforcement as a basis for conflict resolution efforts, according to Riyadi (2017) study, can be seen from government services that have yet to use the law as a basis for complete resolution. However, we must realize that applying conflicting legal options, especially customary and state law, will give rise to agrarian conflict. In their study, Fahrimal dan Safpuriyadi (2018) also highlighted the role of regional governments, which were deemed to have failed to mediate conflicts based on formal law because their position was often in a dilemma due to the impact of regional tax revenues. Institutions that should be able to help resolve conflicts tend to be weak, or their existence needs to be felt by people who need justice.

According to Bordens dan Horowitz (2008)   obedience to the law is very important because a group or society will only survive for a short time if its members obey the laws, rules and customs. Based on the legal themes used in conflict resolution described above, conflict resolution communication must make (1) the law the basis for decision-making and (2) the law is fair. According to Burton (1991), as quoted by Eyong et al. (2020) law enforcement requires effective communication through dialogue to resolve agrarian conflicts.

The study by Yang *et.al.* (2020), Almeida *et.al.* (2018), Yusran *et. al.* (2017), and Handoko *et.al.* (2019) regarding agrarian conflicts shows that collaboration will be more effective in resolving agrarian conflicts if agrarian land governance is carried out jointly through agreements. Management utilizes grant management land through a profit sharing or intercropping system, as long as it does not conflict with statutory regulations, supports each other's land use interests, and all parties are aware of maintaining land function zoning. Mukhtar et al.'s study. (2016) also shows that collaboration will more effectively resolve vertical conflicts between the community and the government by prioritizing local wisdom in land management and ownership (land tenure). This conflict resolution model has long been developed among the people of Muna and Southeast Sulawesi as local wisdom in resolving vertical conflicts between the government and the community. The Kawaagho system, for example, can be used as a conflict resolution based on local wisdom by providing forests to the community to be managed according to the principles of sustainable forest management but not in conflict with statutory regulations and criteria for recipients of land grants and use rights for ten years.

Another solution is to temporarily lend all or part of the land temporarily, and the third Kaendea management model is similar to the agroforestry system, namely an agricultural business combined with woody plants and food crops to increase profits and maintain environmental sustainability. According to Lai (2011), collaboration emphasizes the importance of effective communication (listening to each other), considering the point of view of each party involved in the conflict, respecting each other, and combining various resources to reach a standard agreement. Thus, collaboration as conflict resolution can take the form of joint land management or (1) intercropping (Kaendea) such as an agroforestry system, (2) giving forests to communities to be managed according to the principles of sustainable forest management (Kawaagho), or (3) by temporarily lending land to be managed with productive plants.

Mediation is an alternative conflict resolution that involves agreeing to bring in an independent third party. A third party acts as a mediator to help reach a mutual agreement in conflict resolution konflik (Rahmah (2019). Mediation, especially agrarian conflicts, will be more effective through various mediation and advocacy. However, advocacy tends to be carried out massively confrontationally (Alfitri et al., 2017) because the basis is law. Mediation is carried out by involving local actors to influence policy (Anying & Gausset, 2017), the role of traditional elders (John et al., 2018),and the involvement of the government and traditional institutions (Erwin et al., 2019) in deliberations (Kurniati *et al.,* 2019) to find the best solution that is acceptable to all parties and mutually beneficial. Based on these studies, a concrete form of mediation is to present a mediator.

1. Local actors (traditional leaders) to influence policy
2. Involve the government
3. Traditional institutions in deliberation so that all parties can accept the best solution and is mutually beneficial.

Negotiation can be chosen as conflict resolution. In this case, it must start from awareness to jointly interpret the function of the land (Vos, 2016), adhere to the consensus that has been made (Dufwenberg *et al.,* 2016), awareness of equitable distribution of land that is not monopolized by certain parties (Petrescu-Mag *et al.,* 2018), compromise (van Leeuwen *et al.,* 2020), comply with collective agreements ((Riyadi., 2017), and all parties are willing to accommodate their respective interests (Putri., 2017). Negotiations by bringing together conflicting parties will make it easier to convey views and interests. The dialogic communication process is much more effective when discussing issues related to the disputed matters. Apart from that, there must also be an awareness of listening to each other's views and interests to understand each party's position

in the conflict so that it will be easier to formulate and determine a mutually beneficial conflict resolution.

Referring to the explanation, it can be concluded that conflict solutions can be resolved by (1) understanding the function of the land, namely that the parties to the dispute have an awareness of interpreting the function of the land as a whole so that a common perception of the function of the land will be established; (2) comply with mutual deliberations or agreements; (3) awareness of equitable distribution of land that certain parties do not monopolize; (4) compromise; (5) accommodate interests; and (6) awareness of mutual listening. This aligns with the research results (Muldi, 2019), which studied agrarian conflicts on the north coast of Banten, Indonesia. According to him, the principle is that humans always live side by side with different needs, feelings, meanings and points of view, all of which underlie communication and trigger tension in interactions. Furthermore Muldi (2019) stated that communication plays an essential role in conflict over disparities in resource utilization.

Apart from that, according to Muldi (2019), government and company communication is considered ineffective in managing conflict because it does not involve conflicting parties in efforts to find and determine conflict resolution. As a result, the people of the northern coast of Banten have a negative view of sea sand mining activities there. The communication channels the public uses to express opinions through demonstrations, anarchism, social conflict between layers, and human rights violations are forms of conflict over interests. According to Siripongtugsin (2016), Ma *et al.,* (2020) participation is essential in making joint decisions to resolve conflicts with community involvement.

Participatory communication in agrarian conflicts in Indonesia means involving all parties involved to participate in the communication process towards coming together to obtain a resolution to the conflict. This resolution is the basis for participatory communication itself, namely to strengthen community participation in the joint decision-making process, namely participating in various aspects, such as building trust, open dialogue, information exchange, and information transparency, to achieve mutual understanding and agreement and collective action to obtain a resolution, which, in this research, is the resolution of agrarian conflicts.

The role of communication as part of conflict resolution is realized in the form of (1) involving community participation, including the government on equal terms, (2) freedom to express ideas without fear, (3) willingness to listen to each other, (4) building trust, (5) open dialogue, (6) information exchange, and (7) information transparency. Based on data from the five major conflict resolution themes above, they all emphasize that communication is essential in resolving conflict to simplify the concrete form of conflict resolution communication based on the five themes above, it is presented in table form as follows:

Table 1. Agrarian Conflict Resolution Serikat Tani Indramayu – Perum Perhutani

NO	RESOLUTION	RESOLUTION ACTION	WRITER
1	Rule of Law	Decision-based law	Diawuo & Issifu (2016);
		Justice Law	Abdul & Pendaliday (2018); Eyong et al. (2020); Rahman & Hossain (2020), Fahrimal & Safpuriyadi (2018)
2	Collaboration	Intercropping	Yang et al. (2020); Almeida et al. (2018); Yusran et al. (2017); Handoko et al. (2019); Mukhtar et al. (2016)
		Forest grant	
		Lending land	
3	Mediation	Involvement of local actors (traditional elders)	Rahmah (2019); Alfitri et al., (2017); Whatever and Gausset (2017); Erwin et al., (2019); Kurniati et al., (2019)
		Government involvement	
		Involvement of traditional institutions	
4	Negotiation	Interpreting land functions	Vos., (2016); Dufwenberg et al., (2016); Petrescu-Mag et al., (2018); van Leeuwen et al., (2020); Riyadi., (2017), Putri., (2017)
		Adhere to consensus	
		Awareness of land justice	
		Compromise	
		Accommodate interests	
		Awareness to listen to each other	
5	Participatory Communication	Community/government participation	Muldi et al., (2019); Siripongtugsin (2016); Ma et al. (2020)
		Freedom to express ideas	
		Listen to each other	
		Build trust	
		Exchange information	
		Information transparency	

Source: Prepared by the author (2023)

5. Conclusion

In light of the comprehensive discourse, it can be concluded that conflict is an unavoidable social dynamic that occurs in society. Five important resolution themes can be achieved individually and collectively: law enforcement (the rule of law), collaboration, mediation, negotiation, and participatory communication. Conflicts and social problems give rise to efforts to overcome them and use the concept of resolution. Law as conflict resolution must be implemented with the awareness that law must be the basis for resolving conflicts, the law of justice. The theme of the second resolution is collaborative land management or intercropping, giving forests to community members, or borrowing temporary land. The third solution, mediation, can be carried out by involving local actors such as traditional leaders to influence policy, involving the government, and involving traditional institutions as facilitators.

The fourth settlement, negotiation, can start from the awareness of each party to mutually interpret the function of land, comply with consensus, awareness of land justice, openness to compromise, accommodating interests, and awareness of listening to each other's views and interests. Parties to the conflict. The fifth resolution, which is the final theme of this research, is participatory communication carried out in the form of encouraging the community and government to participate in seeking a resolution, freedom to convey ideas without fear, listening to each other, building trust so that mutual openness, open dialogue, exchange of information, and transparency of information so that neither party feels there is a cover-up. All resolutions based on the five themes above are built through mutual listening through participatory communication or open dialogue.

Authors contributions

Author contributions to the research were made by BS, Prof S, Dr SS, and Dr NP. The research method was designed with BS, Prof S, Dr SS, Dr NP, and validation was done by BS and Dr SS. BS and Dr NP conducted data analysis. BS led the research. The research resources were managed with BS and Dr SS. Data collection was conducted jointly by BS and Dr SS. BS and SS were responsible for preliminary data preparation, writing, review. Editing was done by all authors BS, Prof S, Dr SS, and Dr NP, who together were responsible for overseeing the research process.

Competing interests

Not applicable.

Informed consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Redfame Publishing.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

Data availability statement

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

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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