

Effect of Participatory Decision Making on Employee Satisfaction in Parastatals in Mombasa County

Kale Ali Omar¹, Dr. Jean Uzel², Dr. Mary Peninah Ibuta³

Masters Candidate¹, Lecturer^{2,3}, Technical University of Mombasa, Mombasa, Kenya

Abstract: This research was set to establish the effect of Participatory Decision Making on Employee Satisfaction in Parastatals Mombasa County. The purpose of this study was to help organizations identify participatory decision-making methods they can use that will have a positive impact on the feelings that their employees have about their organizations. The general objectives of this research were to determine the effect of job autonomy, employee empowerment and transformational leadership on employee satisfaction among Parastatals in Mombasa County. A total of 74 employees were sampled from a total of 37 Parastatals. To assess the effect of PDM on employee satisfaction, questionnaires were used to collect primary data. A pilot test was conducted to test the validity and reliability of the instrument. Data was then be analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test the hypothesis and the relationship between PDM and employee satisfaction was determined using regression analysis. The findings showed that job autonomy had an average positive relationship with employee satisfaction while transformational leadership and employee empowerment had a strong positive relationship with employee satisfaction.

Keywords: Participatory Decision Making, job autonomy, employee empowerment, transformational leadership, employee satisfaction.

1. INTRODUCTION

Implementation of organizational decisions by superiors has hindered employee's commitment which has led a potential threat on the success of the organization (Shafiwu, 2014). For this purpose, it is very important to identify what make employees to be more satisfied and devoted (Kaye & Jordan-Evans, 2001).

Noah (2008), argued that through participatory decision-making subordinates gain more control and freedom in sharing information that will create mutual understanding between the management and workers through special form of delegation. Previous study on Participatory Workplace Activities, Employee Level Outcomes and the Mediating Role of Work Intensification (Chidiebere & Danat, 2014) investigated the impacts of participative decision-making and information-sharing activities on employee attitudes and well-being, and examined whether work intensification plays a mediating role in these relationships. It was evidenced from that participative decision-making habitually favors employees. Additionally, for employees who are allowed to freely contribute their opinions in organizational decision making, there are high chances to develop a logical work empowerment, cope with high work demands through capacity building and experience greater levels of employees' satisfaction at work. On the flipside, through employee involvement the activities of sharing information to employee was discovered to be less favorable. (Chidiebere & Danat, 2014).

Further, Wadesango (2012) on the study of the Influence of Staff Participation in Decision making on their Occupational Morale in Universities established that when critical issues emerged most staffs were not consulted. However, in the same study staffs wanted their views to be heard and recognized by the university systems. It occurred that some of the decisions made by the seniors in the University system had no impact on the success of the institutions since staffs were not motivated to implement them. It was further established that in under certain conditions staffs have found it difficult to implement on decisions made without being consulted. He further stated that staffs tend to receive the decisions with suspicion if they were not involved in the process of making decisions. Helms (2006) revealed that employees feels they are part of the team with mutual goals when they participate in the decisions of an organization, heightens their self-esteem and creative ability. When employees are allowed to participate in decisions of the organizations it helps to widen their ideas and views.

Abdulai & Shafiwi (2014) carried out a research on PDM and employee productivity among banks in Ghana, they found weighty association between various forms of employee participation. They also found that employees feel part and parcel of the organization when they are involved in the decision-making process since implementation becomes easy, creates harmonious working environment, boosting employee's morale through recognition which results to increase in employee commitment and satisfaction as well as improved productivity.

From the above studies Chiedere & Danat (2014) concluded that through employee involvement information sharing activities was found to have less favorable implications for employees, Wadesango (2012), stated that staffs create suspicion to accept decisions in the process of decision making if they were not involved in the organization. Helms (2006) revealed when employees are allowed to participate in decisions in the organizations it helps to widen their views, Tarara (2005) recommended that upcoming research could emphasize on participatory decision making on employee satisfaction and commitment to come to more specific conclusions on its impacts. Abdulai & Shafiwi (2014) found that employees feel part and parcel of the organization when they are involved in the decision-making process since implementation becomes easy, creates harmonious working environment, boosting employee's morale through recognition which results to increase in employee commitment and satisfaction as well as improved productivity. Despite these studies having highlighted PDM in various forms and how they increase employee morale and satisfaction, it leaves a gap since it did not directly determine the relationship between PDM and the determinants of satisfaction and employee morale. Due to conflicting findings and recommendations of previous research on PDM in parastatals, this study was aimed at determining the effect of participatory decision making on employees' satisfaction in Parastatals in Mombasa County. Results from this study will have strong implications for managers and provide seeds for future research.

2. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

i. General Objectives:

The purpose of this study was to assess the effect of Participatory Decision Making on employee satisfaction in Parastatals in Mombasa County.

ii. Specific Objectives:

- i. To determine the effect of job autonomy on employee satisfaction in Parastatals Mombasa County.
- ii. To establish the effect of employee empowerment on employee satisfaction in Parastatals Mombasa County.
- iii. To determine the effect of transformational leadership on employee satisfaction in Parastatals Mombasa County.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

i. Critical Theory:

The concept of Critical theory determines decision practices adopted from the past or the current that has directly or indirectly affected the people/persons concerned when injustices and empowerment is addressed to the society (Capper, 1993). According to Denzin & Lincoln (2005) the conceptual structure of critical theory is designed by political, economic, socio-cultural, ethical and gender variations. (Capper, 1993) went further to describe the aim of critical theory

as to employ critical methodologies such as interviews and group discussions with an intension of investigating social injustices with the goal of freeing the oppressed. In Critical Theory, alternative views (theories) of society are critique with an aim to change society. In critical design practices, factual items as critiques (critical items) which express series of alternative opportunities (socio-cultural practices, political practices, application of technologies etc.) with a goal to change the character of design and its products. The most vital aspect of critical theory is its liberatory attention, such that it contributes the wheel to change people's understanding and providing best practices among themselves (Waghid, 2000). Besides, the aim of the critical theory is to free members of the organization from sources of domination, disaffection, mistreatment and subjugation (Gioia & Pitre 1990 quoted in Capper, 1993).

ii. Macgregor's Theory X, Y and Z:

MacGregor's theory X, Y and Z is one among the many of the management theorists that have frequently proved to support the merits of participative management. Other theories are employee empowerment; Total Quality Management (TQM); and Management by Walking Around; and Management by Objectives (Helms, 2006). For this study, MacGregor's Theory X and Y will enable to explain in details on participation in decision making since the best explanation that will be captured in this theory will enable to distinguish different types of people an organization possesses such as employees and management vis-à-vis their participation in decision making. According to Douglas McGregor's Theory X assumes people cannot be able to work and deliver because of laziness and it is the responsibility of the manager to impose force or coerce them to work in order to meet the target goals. Furthermore, McGregor's Theory X styles three categories of assumptions it is the nature of human beings to dislike work and will find some means to avoid it; in order to get people, work towards organizational objectives management must impose strict measures such as being coerced, controlled, directed, and threatened; and human beings likes to avoid responsibility and focuses on his/her individual ambition such as job security setting aside organization ambitions.

According to this theory, it is an employee fault if he/she fails to perform at the workplace and it is the responsibility of an employee for demonstrate initiative and motivation. Tangible reward should act as a motivating factor towards the performance of an employees (Helms, 2006). Theory X has two implications to managers such as structure of the work and motivate employees for organizational goals to be met. This therefore a manager can impose other decision-making style like authoritarian which provides freedom to decide what is beneficial for the organization (Papa et. al., 2008). Theory Y suggests employee's behavior varies with the way mangers treats them. Theory Y assumes that the regular people are not lazy and like to perform their work unlike Theory X; people will work with little or no supervision through the exercise providing direction and control by themselves in order to achieve the set objectives; through the peoples effort to achieve organizational booties of satisfaction and self-actualization are attained; the average human being accepts, invites and also seeks responsibility; human beings have the ability to solve organizational problems through innovation, ideas and views; and the intellectual potential of the regular person is only partially realized. Managers part is only considered as failure if the organization productivity is minimized due to demotivated staffs (Helms, 2006). McGregor (1960) contends that an organization with Theory Y managers is more preferable than those with theory X managers due to the fact that it brings positive working environment which creates mutual trust between the juniors and seniors in an organization.

iii. The Empowerment Theory:

In today's business environment having employees with enough knowledge, skills and attitude is an important element of any organization in order to attain competitive advantage (Darvish et al., 2013). According to studies by (Spreitzer et al., 1996; Matthews et al., 2003) found out that when employees empowerment contributes to the success of the organizations. Nahapiet and Ghoshal, (1998) argues that when employees are empowered it helps an organization achieve their objectives as well as gaining competitive advantage globally. Organizations that empower have an upper hand by gaining maximum contributions from employees and they perform higher than those that fail to do so. According to Barney (1991) organization is made up of people which plays vital role in the achievement of organizational goals. (Barney, 1991). Numerous scholars (Spreitzer 1995; Fox 1998; Menon, 2001) have come into agreement that there is close relationship between employee empowerment and performance and concur that employee empowerment plays a major role towards achieving organizational competitiveness.

b. Conceptual Review:

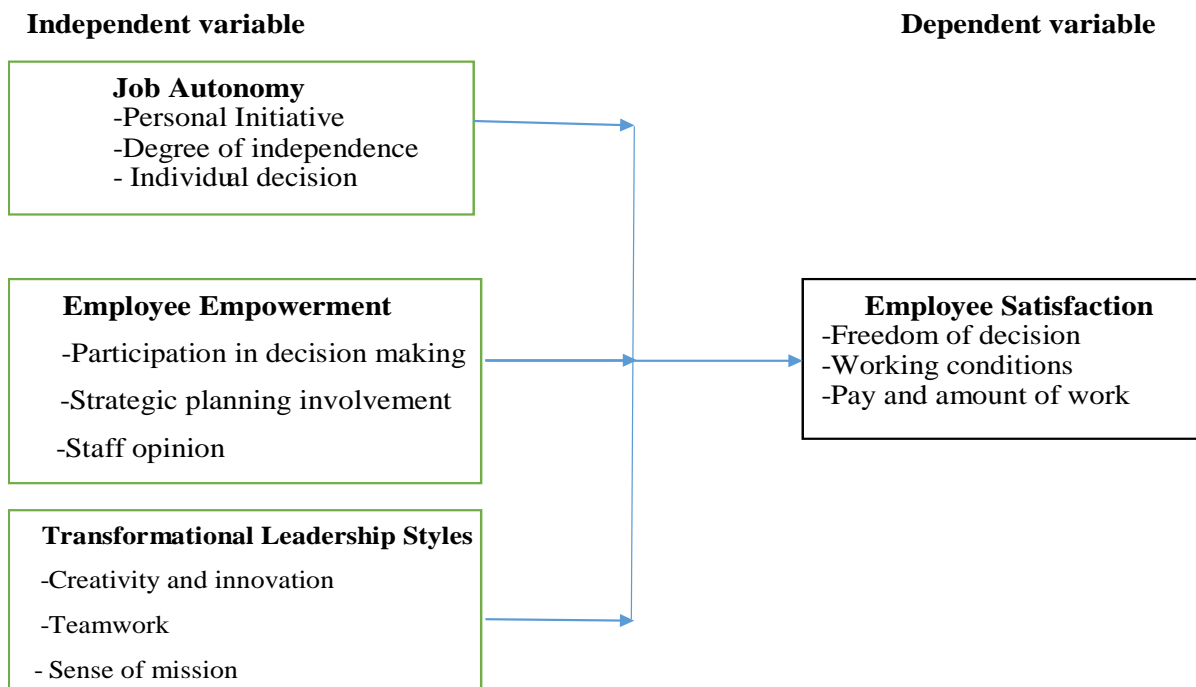


Figure 1

i. Effect of job autonomy on employee satisfaction:

Autonomy has been used by large number of researchers as one of the vital job design (Smith, Kot & Leat, 2003). An organization is inclined to be more productive if it possesses greater number of satisfied staffs (Robbins & Judge, 2007) and satisfied workers are prone to work effectively and efficient than the dissatisfied one. In Job autonomy freedom of power is provided to employees on how to conduct their duties at their workplace which results into reducing the emotional tense and stress hence satisfaction of an employee in an organization. According to Ford and his colleagues (2003) specified that employee satisfaction is closely linked with their responsibility in the organization. Job autonomy improves job performance of an individual since employees consider themselves skillful and knowledgeable in achieving their responsibilities (Saragih, 2011).

ii. Effect of employee empowerment on employee satisfaction:

Empowerment is the process whereby employees are encouraged to develop skills and self-reliance through opportunities at their workplace (Ibua, 2014). Armstrong (2010) proposes boosting knowledge and skills levels are two main mechanisms of getting staff ready for empowerment since improve their level of competence. Thus, empowering is considered a way to boost and increase decision making at middle and lower management levels of an organization, which consequently improve employees work experience (Laschinger, 2009). In public sector employees are frequently hindered by formal procedures at their workplace which in one way or another add little weight to their work practices; faced by contradictory goals to achieve; they have to compete for resource with other services; sometimes work depend on others to be done and; instructions from superiors or any other governing bodies have to be followed (Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2011).

iii. Effect of transformational leadership on employee satisfaction:

Leadership and satisfaction are vital elements towards the success of an organization. The relationship among leaders and followers influences the leadership styles, change and results that echo their shared purposes (Daft, 2008). Leadership is the ability to influence others so that they can act in a particular manner with intended purpose. A good leader encourages followers to accept any challenges provide by providing direction, encouragement, compassion, consideration, and support and achieve the intended objectives. Strong leaders provide visions and directions to his/her followers during challenging times with an aim of responding to social demands (Melum, 2002). Employee satisfaction should be considered when organizational leadership style is developed (Noe, 2008). Job satisfaction is perceived when people meet

their objectives (Wright, 2006). Job satisfaction discourages lower productivity, absenteeism and employee turnover rates which is very helpful to the organization especially HR managers (Hendon, 2013). In any organization/sectors satisfaction of employees and clients act as an important component (Laguador, De Castro & Portugal, 2014).

4. METHODOLOGY

a. Research Design:

The study used a cross-sectional research design to highlight the effect of participatory decision making on employee satisfaction in Parastatals in Mombasa County. This design allowed the researcher to gather information and data, present and summarize for clarification.

b. Sampling and Sample:

The sampling frame of the study included: one respondent from the management and one respondent from the permanent staff of all the 37 parastatals under study. Thus, the sampling frame for the study comprised of 74 study respondents. The senior management were sampled because they are involved in decision making while the junior staffs were sampled because they are the parties who are affected by the decisions made whether they were involved in the decision making process or not.

c. Data Collection, Presentation and Analysis:

A structured questionnaire was used as a tool of primary data collection. The questionnaire consisted of fixed-alternative questions. Therefore, a five point Likert scale was used in the questions. A Likert scale is an ordered, one-dimensional scale from which respondents choose one option that show best aligns with their view (Likert Scale, 2012). Respondents had to choose one of the range from strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree.

This study used descriptive and inferential statistics. Collected data was coded, entered and analyzed descriptively using IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20). Pearson Correlation analysis was used to test the relationship between variables in the study hypothesis while regression analysis was computed to determine the statistical relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variables.

5. RESULTS

a. Response Rate:

High response rate guarantees that the findings are representative of the target population. Emore (2007) notes that a response rate is the extent to which the collected data takes care of all the sample items, a ratio of actual respondents to anticipated number of persons who respond to the study. Questionnaires were self-administered and the study population comprised of 37 State Parastatals whereby a total of 74 questionnaires were given out by the researcher to respondents, that is, two questionnaires to each of 37 State Parastatals in Mombasa County. Fifty nine (53) questionnaires were completely filled, returned and used for analysis in this study.

Zikmund et.al., (2010) note that a response rate of over fifty percent (50%) is adequate for analysis, sixty percent (60%) good while seventy percent (70%) and over to be very good enough. High response rate enhances validity and importance of the findings. Hence, since the overall response rate in this study was 79.72%, it was regarded good and adequate for further analysis.

b. Reliability:

Reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient which was used to measure the internal consistency of the variable measures. The inter item reliability is shown on table 1 below.

Table 1: Reliability Results

Variable	No. of items	Inter-item consistency
Job Autonomy	16	.813
Employee Empowerment	6	.812
Transformational Leadership	11	.809
Employee Satisfaction	20	.810

The study measures were found to be highly reliable in that they all had alpha coefficient greater than the minimum accepted Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2010).

c. Pearson Correlation Coefficient:

The study was based on the premise that participatory decision-making had an effect on the employee satisfaction. Accordingly, three relevant hypotheses were set to guide the study in the conceptual framework. All the hypotheses were tested at 95 percent confidence level (level of significance, $\alpha = 0.05$). To test the stated hypotheses, Pearson correlation coefficient was computed.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Coefficient Matrix

		Employee Satisfaction
Job Autonomy	Pearson Correlation	.265*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.043
	N	59
Employee Empowerment	Pearson Correlation	.471**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	59
Transformational Leadership	Pearson Correlation	.623**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	59
	N	59

i. Hypothesis One:

H_{0a} Job autonomy does not affect employee satisfaction in parastatals in Mombasa County.

As shown on Table 4.10, the p-value was found to be 0.043 which is less than the significant level of 0.05, ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The result indicated that Pearson Correlation coefficient (r-value) is 0.265, which represented an average positive relationship between job autonomy and employee satisfaction. Therefore, the study concluded that job autonomy determined the level of satisfaction of employees among parastatals in Mombasa County.

ii. Hypothesis Two:

H_{0b} : Transformational leadership does not affect the employee satisfaction in Parastatals.

As shown on Table 4.10, the p-value was found to be 0.000 which is less than the significant level of 0.05, ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The result indicated that Pearson Correlation coefficient (r-value) is 0.623, which represented a strong positive relationship between employee empowerment and employee satisfaction. Therefore, the study concluded that transformational leadership determined the level of satisfaction of employees among parastatals in Mombasa County.

iii. Hypothesis Three:

H_{0c} : Employee empowerment has no significant effect on employee satisfaction in Parastatals in Mombasa County.

As shown on Table 4.10, the p-value was found to be 0.000 which is less than the significant level of 0.05, ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The result indicated that Pearson Correlation coefficient (r-value) is 0.471, which represented a strong positive relationship between employee empowerment and employee satisfaction. Therefore, the study concluded that employee empowerment determined the level of satisfaction of employees among parastatals in Mombasa County.

d. Regression Analysis:

Multiple linear regressions were computed at 95 percent confidence interval (0.05 margin error). Based on the model summary, the coefficient of determination (R squared) shows the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by in the independent variables. It is the overall measure of strength of association between independent and dependent variable. In line with this, 0.678 was found to be the coefficient of determination indicating a strong positive association between independent and dependent variable. R is the square root of R squared and it shows the relationship

between observed and predicted values of dependent variable; employee empowerment. R is 0.459 shows an average positive correlation between observed and predicted values of dependent variable; employee satisfaction. Table 3 shows the findings of the study.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.678 ^a	.459	.430	5.53544
a. Predictors: (Constant), Job Autonomy, Transformational Leadership, Employee Empowerment				

Table 4 below shows the analysis of variance (ANOVA) of the regression model. The *p-value* was found to be 0.000, which is less than 0.05 at 3 degrees of freedoms. This indicates that, the overall regression model statistically significantly predicts the outcome variable and all the model coefficients are significantly different from 0.0. Therefore, the study concluded that participatory decision making significantly affects employee satisfaction.

Table 4: Anova

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1432.364	3	477.455	15.582	.000 ^b
	Residual	1685.263	55	30.641		
	Total	3117.627	58			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Job Autonomy, Transformational Leadership, Employee Empowerment

The findings of the study were regressed on a linear model to establish the relationship between the dependent and independent variable as shown on table 5. Based on the findings of the study, the regression equation model for the study is:

$$\text{Employee Satisfaction} = 29.749 + 0.406 \text{ Transformational Leadership} + 0.110 \text{ Employee Empowerment} + 1.217 \text{ Job Autonomy}.$$

In addition, coefficients for the following variables; Transformational Leadership and Job Autonomy were found to significant variables since their significant values 0.017 and 0.000 respectively were less than the *p-value* (0.05). However, coefficients for Employee Empowerment was found to be insignificant since its significant values was found to be 0.770.

Table 5: Coefficients

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	29.749	8.155		3.648	.001
	Transformational Leadership	.406	.164	.256	2.469	.017
	Employee Empowerment	.110	.372	.039	.294	.770
	Job Autonomy	1.217	.262	.599	4.642	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Satisfaction

6. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The first objective sought to examine whether job autonomy had an effect on employee satisfaction. To empirically test whether job autonomy had a significant effect or otherwise on employee satisfaction, the study applied Pearson correlation coefficient. From the findings, the *p-value* was found to be 0.043 which is less than the significant level of 0.05, ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The result indicated that Pearson Correlation coefficient (*r-value*) is 0.265, which represented an average positive relationship between job autonomy and employee satisfaction. Therefore, the study concluded that job autonomy determined the level of satisfaction of employees among parastatals in Mombasa County. These findings were similar with the findings of Castillo and Cano (2004) who established that job autonomy was the most motivating aspect for employees' job

satisfaction and also highlighted that 'work itself' was the characteristic most satisfying. When a job provides an opportunity for individuals with tasks that stimulate, growth opportunities for personal growth and learning, and the opportunity to be accountable for results, such provides a basis for enhanced employee satisfaction (Robbins et al. 2003). In addition, jobs that provide chances for using skills and abilities, diversity of tasks, independence and feedback of their performance tend to be preferred by the employees.

The second objective sought to examine whether employee empowerment had an effect on employee satisfaction. To empirically test whether employee empowerment had a significant effect or otherwise on employee satisfaction, the study applied Pearson correlation coefficient. From the findings of the study, the p-value was found to be 0.000 which is less than the significant level of 0.05, ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The result indicated that Pearson Correlation coefficient (r-value) is 0.471, which represented a strong positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. Therefore, the study concluded that employee empowerment determined the level of satisfaction of employees among parastatals in Mombasa County. By empowering employees, managers have the autonomy to contribute their time to more important matters (Spreitzer 1995). Employee empowerment therefore makes employees feel enhanced about their contributions to the organization, it enhances employees' minds to find improved ways to carry out their jobs and it gives workers the feeling of self-assurance in themselves and their organizations (Bourke 1998).

The third objective sought to examine whether transformational leadership had an effect on employee satisfaction. To empirically test whether employee empowerment had a significant effect or otherwise on employee satisfaction, the study applied Pearson correlation coefficient. From the findings of the study, the p-value was found to be 0.000 which is less than the significant level of 0.05, ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The result indicated that Pearson Correlation coefficient (r-value) is 0.623, which represented a strong positive relationship between employee empowerment and employee satisfaction. Therefore, the study concluded that transformational leadership determined the level of satisfaction of employees among parastatals in Mombasa County.

The study recommends that organizations should increase employees' awareness in participation programs, especially in the decision-making in order to increase work motivation. Similarly, they should encourage the introduction of the perfect participation program among their employees, to increase their awareness of participation and their work motivation and hence satisfaction. Secondly, the study identified a number of aspects relating to participation in decision making that influence employees level of satisfaction. However, some aspects require improvement going by the low mean rating obtained from their scores. Therefore, further studies should be carried out to test the variables in different contexts for comparability.

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