Journal of Business Insight and Innovation
Volume 5 Issue 11, 2026
ISSN-p: 3006-2284, ISSN-e: 3006-0982
https://insightfuljournals.com/

GREEN HRM PRACTICES AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE-RELATED OUTCOMES IN PAKISTAN'S HOSPITALITY SECTOR: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND THE MODERATING ROLE OF SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP IN EMPLOYEE RETENTION

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.63544/jbii.v5i11.282

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Article History:
Received: 05.10.2026
Accepted: 27.10.2026
Published: 05.11.2026

Abstract

This study examines the relationship between green human resource management (GHRM), perceived organizational support (POS), spiritual leadership (SL) and employee retention in the hospitality and tourism sectors of Pakistan. Employee retention is treated as a workforce-related outcome relating to organizational performance, rather than as a direct measure of organizational performance. A cross-sectional survey was conducted with 300 employees in Islamabad and Rawalpindi in 2023, using simple sampling, five-point questionnaires, and SPSS-based descriptive, reliability, correlation, regression, mediation, and moderation analyses. GHRM was positively associated with POS ($b = .7567$, $p < .001$) and employee retention ($b = .4421$, $p < .001$), while POS was positively associated with retention ($b = .5139$, $p < .001$). Spiritual leadership was neither a significant direct predictor of retention ($b = -.0045$, $p = .8396$) nor a significant POS × SL interaction ($b = -.0394$, $p = .2218$). The positive indirect effect is consistent with partial mediation by POS. These findings identify organizational support as a potential explanatory mechanism linking environmentally centred HR practices to employee retention, with appropriate limitations on leadership and general organizational performance claims.

Keywords: Green Human Resource Management, Perceived Organizational Support, Spiritual Leadership, Employee Retention, Hospitality, Pakistan

1. Introduction

The hotel and tourism sector relies on employees who offer high-quality service, communicate with guests, coordinate their work, and maintain a consistent customer experience. The loss of trained staff can therefore interrupt service provision, increase replacement and leadership costs, and weaken the organization's ability to implement its strategy. These workforce questions are especially important in operationally intensive organizations where the employees themselves deliver the service, and where organizational policy is visibly reflected in the customer experience. The sector also has an environmental footprint: pressure has been exerted on hotels and affiliated tourism organizations to reduce resource use and waste, and to demonstrate environmental responsibility. Human resource systems are therefore crucial in transforming environmental commitments into practice. Green human resource management (GHRM) offers a mechanism to achieve this by mainstreaming sustainability expectations into recruitment, training, participation, performance assessment, and rewards (Renwick et al., 2013; Ahmad, 2015; Suleman et al., 2025; Obeng et al., 2026).

The central question is whether employees interpret environmental initiatives as merely supplementary obligations or as evidence that the employer is endowed with strong and responsible values. Advertising green jobs may help candidates identify with the organization's environmental agenda. Training may build practical skills for resource-efficient operations, and staff involvement can signal the availability of voice.

Journal of Business Insight and Innovation
Volume 5 Issue 11, 2026
ISSN-p: 3006-2284, ISSN-e: 3006-0982
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Environmentally oriented management can improve the transparency of organizational acceptance. However, such initiatives will not automatically result in staff retention. Their consequences can be determined by how employees interpret whether the organization invests in them. POS captures the belief of a worker that the organization values their contribution and cares about their wellbeing (Eisenberger et al., 1986). A workplace that undertakes extensive sustainability activities while also providing employee resources and recognition may create more supportive perceptions and strengthen intentions to stay.

Leadership is another element in this context. Spiritual leadership aims at common goals, ethics, hope, responsibility, and work of interest (Fry et al., 2017; Samul, 2019; Shin & Shin, 2026). If leaders succeed in relating to the collective goals of workers, this may add value to organizational support. The conceptual arguments regarding this enhancement, however, are not reflected in the evidence provided. The study examined whether spiritual leadership improved the POS–retention relationship but did not reveal a statistically significant interaction. Reporting this insignificant finding is essential to prevent the empirical support for the proposed model from being overestimated.

The research is based on results received from a survey of 300 hotel and tourism staff in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, gathered between March and April 2023. The main empirical outcome is worker retention, assessed by a self-report questionnaire. Although retention is relevant to organizational effectiveness, the dataset does not contain a separate organizational performance scale, financial indicators, productivity measurements, or independently verified personnel turnover. This analysis therefore covers employee-level associations without unmeasured organizational outcomes being treated as a statistical result.

2. Theory and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Green HRM Practices and Perceived Organizational Support

GHRM is an environmentally based approach that focuses on environmental targets and systematically implements human resource functions. Green recruitment and selection seek applicants who understand sustainability expectations; green training builds knowledge of responsible operations; green employee engagement encourages participation; and green performance management and compensation reward contributions to environmental priorities. These dimensions correspond to research indicating that human resources can contribute to organizational sustainability (Amrutha & Geetha, 2020; Benevene & Buonomo, 2020; Bangwal et al., 2025). Hotels and restaurants can use environmental training to equip staff with service and waste-reduction guidance, and to provide transparent recognition of environmental behaviour. These practices form part of the management strategy that is translated into employee experience.

Social exchange considerations indicate that workers reciprocate resources and attention from their employers. Where green training is backed by appropriate time and resources, and where sustainability-related efforts are acknowledged rather than taken for granted, employees may conclude that the organization values their contributions (Elias et al., 2025). Although green policies can also be experienced as burdensome when they are symbolic or inadequately resourced, the theoretical expectation is consistent with POS. Karatepe et al. (2022) examine GHRM among hotel staff, and Bhatti et al. (2022) examine GHRM and POS (see also Khan et al., 2025; Hawela et al., 2025; Kim & Lee, 2026). A positive relationship between GHRM and POS was therefore expected:

H1. Green HRM practices are positively related to perceived organizational support.

2.2 Organizational Support, Green HRM, and Employee Retention

POS is not merely the existence of an HR policy. It is an employee's assessment of organizational treatment and of access to support, recognition, and care for personal wellbeing. Workers who consider themselves respected may feel greater attachment and have less reason to seek alternative jobs (Kwon et al., 2026). Arasanmi and Krishna (2019) link employer branding and POS to organizational commitment and retention, and Maan et al. (2020) indicate that support is associated with positive workplace attitudes. A positive relationship between POS and employee retention was therefore proposed:

H2. Perceived organizational support is positively related to employee retention.

GHRM may also be directly associated with retention (Le & Pham, 2026). Sustainable HR policies may enable an employer to differentiate work-related and organizational values and to provide opportunities

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Volume 5 Issue 11, 2026
ISSN-p: 3006-2284, ISSN-e: 3006-0982
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for skills development. These issues have been addressed in studies conducted in the host country and in other developing countries, including work on millennial retention and GHRM (Islam et al., 2022). A distinction should nevertheless be drawn between the direct and indirect routes. An association at the direct level implies that green HRM is associated with retention irrespective of support perceptions; an indirect association implies that part of the apparent GHRM benefit operates through the perception of the employer as supportive. The model therefore proposed:

H3. Green HRM practices are positively related to employee retention.

H5. Perceived organizational support mediates the relationship between GHRM practices and employee retention.

Because direct and indirect channels may coexist, partial mediation was anticipated.

2.3 Spiritual Leadership as a Direct and Conditional Influence

Spiritual leadership reinforces shared vision and experiences of meaningful membership in the working community. Workers may interpret leaders who communicate this purpose, show compassion, and act consistently with their values as more trustworthy. Earlier research, including Fry et al. (2017), KA and Aboobaker (2021), and Zhang and Yang (2021), connects spiritual leadership with performance-related outcomes including intention to stay and innovative behaviour. A positive direct relationship between SL and employee retention was therefore hypothesised:

H4. Spiritual leadership is positively related to employee retention.

Spiritual leadership was also expected to strengthen the relationship between POS and retention, on the assumption that value-based leaders amplify the effect of organizational support:

H6. Spiritual leadership moderates the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee retention.

The distinction between main effects and moderation is essential. A leader coefficient describes a relationship with retention; moderation requires evidence that the POS–retention relationship changes as leadership changes. Even if spiritual leadership were intrinsically valuable, the absence of interaction would not justify describing it as reinforcing. Employee preferences, remuneration, and local institutional environments may affect the apparent interaction. Six hypotheses were evaluated on the basis of the empirical findings, without their being re-specified after data collection.

3. Method

3.1 Design, Setting, and Sample

The research used a quantitative, deductive, cross-sectional field survey design with minimal researcher interference. The individual worker was the unit of analysis. Participants worked in tourism- and hospitality-related organizations in the Pakistani twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The recruitment context comprises organizations or outlets associated with PTDC, Marriott, Serena Business Complex, and Hashoo Foundation; these descriptions are not independent of the employer of each respondent. Data were gathered over approximately six weeks, from March 8 to April 18, 2023. Questionnaires were completed by respondents at their workplace or via Google Forms.

Owing to time constraints and data availability, convenience sampling was used. A final analytical sample of 300 respondents was analysed. This is an adequate description of the group concerned, not evidence of a random selection of national hospitality employees. The final sample was selected pragmatically rather than through probability-based selection, which reduces the representativeness of the findings. Statistical relations should therefore be interpreted as patterns among the workers interviewed, with cautious generalization to the national population. Cross-sectional measurement also does not establish a reliable temporal ordering of variables; apparent regression effects should be read as statistical associations rather than as evidence of cause and effect.

3.2 Measures and Analytical Approach

The questionnaire used a five-point response format ranging from strong disagreement (1) to full agreement (5). As identified in the study materials, the GHRM measure was based on Freitas et al. (2020), the POS measure on Eisenberger et al. (1986), the spiritual leadership measure on Fry et al. (2017), and the

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ISSN-p: 3006-2284, ISSN-e: 3006-0982
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employee retention measure on Yang et al. (2021). Items focused on eco-recruitment, sustainability training, organizational support and resources, inspiring leadership, and working conditions relevant to an employee's decision to remain with the employer. The survey instrument comprised 11 GHRM items, 12 POS items, 7 SL items, and 9 employee retention items. Analyses were conducted on construct scores derived from the questionnaire items.

The analytical approach covered descriptive statistics, internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha), Pearson correlations, regression-based path analysis, and mediation and moderation tests performed in SPSS. The figures presented below are taken from the documented results of the study; respondent-level data and executable SPSS syntax were not produced for independent re-examination during manuscript preparation. For clarity, the descriptive p value identified in the source as .0000 is reported as $p < .001$, and the statistical estimates in the tables are retained in their current form. The primary model estimates the relationship between GHRM and employee retention via POS and assesses SL as a direct predictor and as a moderator of the POS–retention relationship. Separate specifications for exploratory mediation were identified from the primary model rather than being combined into a single estimate.

Participation was described as voluntary, with informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and the ability to skip questions or withdraw. The available study documentation does not mention an institutional ethics approval number, and no such claim is made here. The manuscript analyses the findings of the 2023 survey and does not claim any further dataset or new data collection. Independent verification remained limited by the non-receipt of respondent-level records and executable statistical syntax.

4. Results

4.1 Respondent Profile and Scale Properties

Of the 300 employees, 147 were male (49.0%) and 153 were female (51.0%). The age distribution was relatively broad: 49 employees (16.3%) were 25 years or younger; 67 (22.3%) were 26–35; 63 (21.0%) were 36–45; 62 (20.7%) were 46–55; and 59 (19.7%) were 56 years or older. The study comprised 101 participants at entry level (33.7%), 88 at mid level (29.3%), and 111 (37.0%) at management level. In total, 52.3% of respondents were based in Islamabad and 47.7% in Rawalpindi. This allocation ensures variation in respondent characteristics but does not remove the sampling limitations.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Internal Consistency of Study Variables

Construct	*N*	*M*	*SD*	Cronbach's α
Green HRM practices	300	3.515152	2.849696	.94
Perceived organizational support	300	3.517778	.7128047	.91
Spiritual leadership	300	3.752857	.7054460	.94
Employee retention	300	3.506667	.7718872	.91

Note. Values reproduced as supplied. The standard deviation reported for GHRM (2.849696) is implausibly large for a five-point scale with a mean of 3.52 and should be verified against the original output.

Table 1 indicates that mean agreement for the constructs was above the scale midpoint, at 3.506667 for employee retention and 3.752857 for spiritual leadership. Reliability coefficients ranged from .91 to .94, reflecting high internal consistency of the items in this sample. Reliability alone does not establish that the four constructs are empirically distinct, that the measures are free of method effects, or that retention corresponds to observed staff departures. Because all major variables were self-reported by approximately the same individuals, this is a significant qualification.

Table 2

Pearson Correlations Among Study Variables

Variable	GHRM	POS	SL	ER
GHRM	1			
POS	.902**	1		
SL	−.063	−.033	1	
ER	.914**	.913**	−.053	1

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Volume 5 Issue 11, 2026
ISSN-p: 3006-2284, ISSN-e: 3006-0982
https://insightfuljournals.com/

Note. **p < .01. GHRM = green HRM practices; POS = perceived organizational support; SL = spiritual leadership; ER = employee retention. Values reproduced as supplied.

GHRM was strongly and positively correlated with POS (r = .902) and employee retention (r = .914), while POS was strongly correlated with retention (r = .913); all three correlations were reported as significant at the .01 level. Spiritual leadership showed small negative correlations with GHRM, POS, and retention, with no evidence of statistical significance. The unusually high correlations among GHRM, POS, and retention warrant caution, because they may reflect overlapping measures, common-source variance, or closely related constructs. The available reporting does not include an independent measurement-model assessment sufficient to distinguish among these explanations.

4.2 Main Regression and Moderation Model

The main regression model, reported as a moderated mediation model predicting POS from GHRM, recorded R = .9020 and R^2 = .8136, with $F(1, 298)$ = 1301.0583 and p reported as .0000. The GHRM coefficient was .7567 (*SE* = .0210, t = 36.0702, 95% CI [.7154, .7980]), a positive association that supports H1. The retention model included GHRM, POS, SL, and the POS × SL interaction, yielding R = .9371 and R^2 = .8782, $F(4, 295)$ = 531.5961, with p reported as .0000. The coefficients are presented in Table 3; all coefficients are unstandardized.

Table 3

Principal Regression Coefficients (Outcome: Employee Retention)

Term	b	*SE*	t	p	95% CI
GHRM	.4421	.0429	10.3063	.0000	[.3577, .5265]
POS	.5139	.0511	10.0614	.0000	[.4134, .6144]
SL	−.0045	.0224	−.2026	.8396	[−.0487, .0396]
POS × SL	−.0394	.0321	−1.2243	.2218	[−.1026, .0239]

Note. Values reproduced as supplied.

GHRM remained positively associated with employee retention after the inclusion of POS and the leadership terms (b = .4421, p < .001), supporting H3. POS also showed a substantial positive association (b = .5139, p < .001), supporting H2. The adjusted SL coefficient was negative but close to zero (b = −.0045) and statistically non-significant (p = .8396), so H4 is not supported. The POS × SL interaction was negative and statistically non-significant (b = −.0394, p = .2218), with a confidence interval containing zero. Consequently, the primary model offers insufficient evidence that spiritual leadership strengthens the POS–retention relationship, and H6 is not supported. The non-significant results are not evidence that leadership can never be meaningful, and they do not establish that the hypothesized effect is absent; rather, they indicate that the hypothesized effect was not detected in this sample.

4.3 Mediation and Conditional Indirect Effects

The study describes POS as a partial mediator, since the direct GHRM–retention coefficient remains positive and significant while the POS indirect association is also positive. One set of reported conditional indirect effect results covers three values of spiritual leadership. At SL = −.7054 the effect is .4099 (*SE* = .0411, 95% CI [.3295, .4923]); at SL = .0000 it is .3889 (*SE* = .0392, 95% CI [.3137, .4689]); and at SL = .7054 it is .3679 (*SE* = .0446, 95% CI [.2841, .4574]). All three intervals exclude zero. Positive conditional indirect effects, however, do not constitute evidence of significant moderation, and the interaction test was not significant (*p* = .2218). Hence, the stronger substantive finding is mediation via POS rather than an SL-dependent indirect route.

Table 4

Conditional Indirect Effects From the Moderated-Mediation Analysis

SL value	Indirect effect	*SE*	95% LL	95% UL
−.7054	.4099	.0411	.3295	.4923
.0000	.3889	.0392	.3137	.4689
.7054	.3679	.0446	.2841	.4574

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ISSN-p: 3006-2284, ISSN-e: 3006-0982
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Note. Conditional indirect effects are reported for three values of spiritual leadership. These confidence intervals support a positive indirect GHRM–POS–retention association but not a significant POS × SL interaction.

A separate mediation specification yielded the following regression coefficients: GHRM → POS, b = .7120 (p = .0000, R^2 = .6319); GHRM → retention in the model with POS, b = .1213 (p = .0003); POS → retention, b = .6669 (p = .0000, joint-model R^2 = .8013); and the GHRM total effect on retention, b = .5961 (p = .0000, R^2 = .5844). The indirect effect reported through POS was .4748 (*SE* = .0471, 95% CI [.3839, .5694]). A further assessment is reported as .6090 with an ambiguous label in the source. These model specifications should be presented separately, each with identifiable estimates, and the limits of comparability across specifications should be acknowledged.

4.4 Hypothesis Decisions

The study's findings are consolidated in Table 5, which supports four hypotheses and does not support two. The reported test statistics include GHRM → POS (t = 10.3603, p = .000), POS → retention (t = 10.0614, p = .000), GHRM → retention (t = 22.5745, p = .000), SL → retention (t = −.2026, p = .8396), the mediated relationship (t = 18.0016, p = .000), and the leadership-related moderation term (t = −1.2243, p = .2218). The *t* values in the coefficient tables are not equivalent to some of the aggregate statistics, and the final summary label differs from the explicitly tested POS × SL interaction. Hypothesis decisions are reported as recorded, and discrepancies between several aggregate test statistics have not been eliminated.

Table 5

Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Code	Tested hypothesis (abbreviated)	Decision
H1	GHRM positively relates to POS	Supported
H2	POS positively relates to retention	Supported
H3	GHRM positively relates to retention	Supported
H4	SL positively relates to retention	Not supported
H5	POS mediates GHRM–retention	Supported
H6	SL strengthens POS–retention	Not supported

Note. Hypothesis decisions reflect the reported regression, mediation, and moderation analyses. No decisions have been changed.

5. Discussion

The evidence suggests that employees reporting more effective green HR practices also report greater institutional support and stronger retention-related attitudes. This supports the argument that environmental policy can matter beyond environmental objectives (Guerra-Lombardi et al., 2026). If workers experience sustainability as an organized and supported part of their work, green policy may strengthen the conviction that their employer is directed, competent, and attentive to the workforce. Under this interpretation, the GHRM–POS and POS–retention coefficients were positive. The strength of these associations indicates that employee perceptions may be essential for understanding why a green HR strategy relates to labour stability, rather than merely indicating that environmental initiatives are a management success.

The retention relationship is of particular importance for service organizations (Li et al., 2025). Recruitment, induction, and socialization are recurring operational requirements, and continuity of experienced employees can preserve tacit knowledge, routine coordination, and customer-care relationships. GHRM may support such continuity when job information corresponds to workplace reality, when training equips employees credibly, and when contributions are recognized. Nevertheless, the study does not assess measurable organizational performance. Doing so would also require distinguishing changes attributable to green practices from other influences such as remuneration structures, job security, workload, and promotion opportunities. These factors are acknowledged as plausible determinants of retention, but they were not included as tested mediators or control variables in the reported primary model. Their effects could therefore not be assessed on the basis of the model presented. The value of this study is to identify what future evidence is required to establish the larger causes and financial implications. The relationship between green practices

Journal of Business Insight and Innovation
Volume 5 Issue 11, 2026
ISSN-p: 3006-2284, ISSN-e: 3006-0982
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and retention should therefore be seen as an observed association rather than as a guaranteed management intervention, especially where employee experience, contractual arrangements, and organizational structures vary widely across service institutions.

6. Implications, Limitations, and Conclusion

6.1 Implications for Hospitality Management

For the HR function in hospitality, the findings favour integrated rather than isolated sustainability activities. Recruitment materials should communicate realistic environmental expectations; training should provide usable skills and time; employee suggestions should receive responses; and performance reviews should recognize feasible contributions to environmental goals. Because the interpretation of support was as important as the presence of policies, such measures should be implemented equitably. Managers can monitor employees' perceptions of resources, recognition, wellbeing, and organizational support alongside retention indicators. The study does not identify which GHRM component has the greatest effect, so it would be premature to prescribe specific practices or to promise financial returns.

Leaders should sustain these systems in a manner consistent with their own behaviour, without assuming that spiritual leadership will necessarily enhance all forms of support. The absence of significant moderation indicates that a value-based message should complement concrete organizational practices rather than replace them. Hospitality organizations may use retention consultation, employee surveys, environmental improvement teams, and transparent accreditation procedures to determine whether sustainability expectations generate participation or additional pressure. These practical lessons suggest monitoring green HRM and staff support and testing outcomes with more extensive longitudinal data.

6.2 Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations constrain inference. Convenience recruitment in two adjoining Pakistani cities limits representativeness, and respondents may differ from hospitality workers across the country. The design is cross-sectional and based on self-reported questionnaires, so temporal ordering and causal effects cannot be determined. The retention measure consists of self-reported perceptions and working conditions, not administrative records of actual turnover. The dataset does not contain a separate financial or operational measure of organizational performance. For this reason, the results should not be re-labelled as direct tests of organizational performance. Regression outputs contain specification and reporting differences that must be verified before the manuscript is submitted to a journal.

Future studies could track employees over time, compare retention intentions with verified departure data, and add measures of employee service quality, guest assessments, operational productivity, and financial performance. Multisite samples would extend the context across provinces and hotel categories. Independent organizational-level indicators of resources, leadership ratings, and sustainability records could reduce shared-source concerns. Confirmatory measurement analysis and reproducible statistical scripts would establish whether GHRM, POS, SL, and retention are distinct constructs and whether POS mediation remains stable across model specifications. A carefully specified test of moderated mediation should require an explicit interaction before drawing moderation conclusions from positive conditional indirect effects at selected values.

6.3 Conclusion

Among hospitality and tourism staff studied in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, GHRM was positively associated with POS and employee retention. POS was positively associated with retention, consistent with partial mediation. Spiritual leadership did not demonstrate a statistically significant direct relationship with retention and did not have a significant moderating effect on the POS–retention relationship in the primary model. Four of the six hypotheses were supported and two were not. Although the study does not directly measure organizational performance, it identifies employee-level relationships relevant to staff stability and potential organizational effectiveness. Future research should conduct longitudinal tests of these associations using independent organizational performance indicators.

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ISSN-p: 3006-2284, ISSN-e: 3006-0982
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Ethics Statement

This study adhered to all ethical standards of research during the conducting of this study. We collected data from secondary sources, and no human participants were involved in the collection of data. Therefore, there is no conflict of interest of any human participant to this study.

Author's Contributions

All author/s participated in ideation, development, and writing the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author/s declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Funding Statement

The author/s did not receive financial support from any funding agency or external organization for the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

Data Availability

The datasets generated and analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. The authors are committed to transparency and will provide detailed methodological information and analysis protocols upon request.

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Volume 5 Issue 11, 2026
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Volume 5 Issue 11, 2026
ISSN-p: 3006-2284, ISSN-e: 3006-0982
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