

Research Horizon

ISSN: 2808-0696 (p), 2807-9531 (e)

Research Horizon

Volume: 06

Issue: 04

Year: 2026

Page: 1999-2010

Citation:

Erisadana, R. N., & Jamaludin, A. (2026). Mapping knowledge, raising awareness: how do health law research trends in Indonesia progress?. *Research Horizon*, 6(4), 1999-2010.

Article History:

Received: July 18, 2026

Revised: August 14, 2026

Accepted: August 23, 2026

Online since: August 25, 2026

Mapping Knowledge, Raising Awareness: How Do Health Law Research Trends in Indonesia Progress?

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Abstract

Health law in Indonesia has expanded alongside regulatory reform, digital healthcare, public health challenges, and emerging legal issues, yet its overall research development remains insufficiently mapped. This study maps the development, productivity, citation impact, institutional distribution, and thematic evolution of health law research related to Indonesia. A quantitative bibliometric analysis was conducted using 82 documents. Publication and affiliation trends were analyzed through Scopus, citation impact was examined using Publish or Perish, and keyword co-occurrence and overlay visualizations were generated using VOSviewer. The findings indicate substantial growth in publications since 2019, with the highest output recorded in 2025. Research productivity was concentrated in major Indonesian universities, particularly Universitas Indonesia, Universitas Gadjah Mada, and Universitas Airlangga. Highly cited publications primarily addressed telemedicine, public health, medical dispute resolution, and pandemic governance. Keyword analysis revealed interconnected themes involving health law, healthcare, public health, human rights, mental health, and health policy, with an apparent shift toward contemporary and applied issues. Health law research in Indonesia is developing into a multidisciplinary and increasingly policy-oriented field.

Keywords

Health Law, Healthcare Regulation, Human Rights, Legal Reform, Public Health Law, Health Policy.

1. Introduction

Health law is a subdiscipline that plays an important role in ensuring the fair, safe, and effective governance of healthcare systems, including through the protection of patients' rights, regulation of healthcare professionals' responsibilities, resolution of medical disputes, and governance of technological developments and innovations in healthcare delivery (Nurnaeni & Bachri, 2024; Rahman et al., 2025). These developments have become increasingly complex alongside healthcare system transformation, the digitalization of medical services, the expansion of telemedicine, the strengthening of public health policies, and the emergence of various legal issues during and after the COVID-19 pandemic (Lukito & Gani, 2024). In Indonesia, this complexity is also reflected in the development of the national health regulatory framework, including the enactment of Law Number 17 of 2023 concerning Health, which demonstrates the growing need for legal scholarship capable of responding to changes in healthcare services and health policy (Hariani et al., 2025). Consequently, health law research is no longer limited to the legal relationship between patients and healthcare professionals. However, it has expanded to encompass human rights, health policy, governance, public health, mental health, health technology, and medical dispute resolution (Siregar, 2023).

The expansion of this field has contributed to the development of health law research in the academic literature. However, the development of an academic field cannot be understood solely through the number of publications; it should also be examined through publication growth, institutional contributions, citation impact, and the development and interrelationships of research themes. Bibliometric analysis is particularly relevant in this context because it enables the systematic mapping of knowledge development through the analysis of publication productivity, affiliations, citations, keywords, and thematic relationships (Pajung et al., 2026). Previous bibliometric studies have mapped the development of literature in health law and related subfields. For example, a bibliometric study of health law research in China identified patterns of publication development and research themes related to food safety, health administration, and legal principles (Liu, 2025). Meanwhile, international bibliometric research on legal medicine and medical malpractice has identified patterns of productivity among countries, authors, and journals, as well as collaboration networks and shifts in research focus (Shi et al., 2019; Çevik et al., 2026). These findings demonstrate the usefulness of bibliometric approaches for systematically and measurably examining the structure and evolution of an academic field.

Nevertheless, bibliometric research specifically mapping the development of health law research related to Indonesia remains relatively limited (Pisani et al., 2017). Previous studies have predominantly adopted international scopes, focused on particular countries, or examined specific subfields of health law, and therefore have not provided a comprehensive account of how health law research related to Indonesia has developed as a body of knowledge. This gap includes the lack of systematic mapping of publication dynamics over time, the most productive affiliations, highly cited literature, and the structure and development of research themes. Such mapping is important for identifying research concentration, recognizing themes that have received substantial academic attention, understanding relationships among research topics, and identifying shifts in research focus over time. Without such mapping, the development of health law research in Indonesia may be understood primarily through fragmented individual studies rather than as a broader and interconnected knowledge structure.

This mapping is particularly relevant because health law in Indonesia is developing alongside regulatory changes, transformations in healthcare delivery, advances in medical technology, and the emergence of new issues requiring legal

responses (Stoumpos et al., 2023). An analytical approach is needed not only to identify the publications that have been produced but also to demonstrate how knowledge in this field has developed, been distributed, and shifted in thematic focus. Bibliometric analysis can provide an empirical basis for understanding these developments while strengthening academic awareness of the position and direction of health law research related to Indonesia.

Against this background and research gap, this study aims to map knowledge and build academic awareness of health law research trends in Indonesia, while providing a systematic overview of the development and concentration of research in this field through a bibliometric approach. The resulting mapping is expected to provide an empirical overview of the dynamics of health law research related to Indonesia and serve as a basis for understanding its development and potential directions for future research.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Knowledge Development and Academic Awareness

Health law research is an evolving body of knowledge shaped by changes in healthcare regulation, medical practice, public health governance, and technological development. According to Siregar (2023) and Nurnaeni and Bachri (2024), its scope encompasses patients' rights, healthcare professionals' responsibilities, medical disputes, health policy, human rights, and emerging healthcare technologies. Regulatory transformation can influence scholarly inquiry by generating new legal questions and requiring reinterpretation of existing frameworks. In Indonesia, the enactment of Law Number 17 of 2023 concerning Health provides an important context for examining changing approaches to healthcare governance and legal protection (Hariani et al., 2025). Therefore, health law knowledge should be understood as a dynamic process in which research priorities respond to regulatory, institutional, technological, and public health developments. Examining publication trends and institutional contributions is consequently important for identifying how this knowledge base has expanded and which academic institutions have substantially contributed to its development (Liu, 2025).

Academic awareness is important because the growing body of health law literature encompasses increasingly diverse and specialized concerns. Lukito and Gani (2024) identify emerging issues such as telemedicine, pandemic governance, public health regulation, mental health, and medical dispute resolution that demonstrate the field's responsiveness to contemporary healthcare challenges. However, this diversity can make the overall direction of research difficult to identify when studies are examined individually. Academic awareness therefore requires understanding not only publication volume but also the visibility and thematic concentration of research. Citation patterns can indicate studies that receive greater scholarly attention, while recurring themes can reveal central areas of research (Shi et al., 2019; Çevik et al., 2026). Mapping these dimensions can strengthen understanding of the development, concentration, and academic visibility of health law research and provide a clearer basis for identifying dominant and emerging areas within the field.

2.2. Bibliometric Analysis for Mapping Health Law Research

Bibliometric analysis provides a systematic means of examining the structure, development, and distribution of scholarly knowledge through quantitative analysis of published literature. Unlike conventional narrative reviews, bibliometric methods can examine publication productivity, institutional affiliations, citation impact, and thematic relationships simultaneously, allowing researchers to identify patterns that may not be apparent from individual studies (Hosseini-rad, 2025). In health law research, this approach is particularly relevant because the field encompasses

interdisciplinary issues that connect legal scholarship with medicine, public health, policy, ethics, and healthcare governance. Previous bibliometric studies by Liu (2025) and Sirago et al. (2025) showed that publication trends and institutional affiliations can identify the growth of research activity and the concentration of scholarly contributions within particular institutions or research communities. Citation analysis adds another dimension by identifying publications that have gained greater academic visibility and may represent influential contributions to the development of a research field (Sweileh, 2018).

Beyond publication and citation patterns, bibliometric analysis can reveal the conceptual structure and temporal evolution of research through keyword co-occurrence and overlay visualization. Co-occurrence analysis identifies frequently connected keywords and groups them into thematic clusters, while overlay analysis illustrates changes in thematic prominence across publication periods (Pajung et al., 2026). Previous studies by Shi et al. (2019) and Çevik et al. (2026) in health law and related fields have identified interconnected themes involving human rights, healthcare professionals, legislation, medical disputes, public health, and emerging healthcare challenges. These techniques are therefore useful for examining whether health law research related to Indonesia is concentrated on normative, policy, regional, or issue-specific themes and how these themes evolve. Integrating publication, affiliation, citation, and keyword analyses provides a comprehensive framework for mapping the development and thematic evolution of health law research.

3. Methods

This study employed a quantitative bibliometric analysis to examine the development, productivity, citation impact, institutional distribution, and thematic structure of health law research related to Indonesia. The analysis was designed to identify publication trends, the most productive affiliations, highly cited publications, and the evolution of research themes over time. The bibliometric approach was selected because it enables systematic and quantitative mapping of the structure and development of a research field.

The literature search was conducted using the Scopus database on 2 February 2026. The search strategy used the terms “Health Law” AND “Indonesia” without restricting the publication period. All document types indexed by Scopus were considered, including research articles, review articles, letters, notes, editorials, short surveys, books, book chapters, comments, and conference papers. The search yielded 82 documents, which constituted the final dataset for analysis. The search was conducted on a single date to minimize potential variation resulting from subsequent database updates. The retrieved records were exported in CSV and RIS formats for subsequent analysis and processing.

The bibliometric analysis comprised three main components. First, the publication trend and affiliation analysis were conducted using the “Analyze Results” feature in Scopus. Publication records were examined by year to identify changes in research productivity, while affiliation data were analyzed to identify the institutions contributing most substantially to health law research related to Indonesia. Second, citation analysis was conducted using Publish or Perish based on the RIS dataset. The analysis included total citations and citations per year to identify publications with relatively high scholarly impact. The ten publications with the highest citations per year were then examined by topic, publication year, and journal.

Third, keyword co-occurrence analysis was conducted using VOSviewer version 1.6.20. The analysis included the complete set of keywords available in the Scopus records, comprising both author keywords and index keywords. A minimum occurrence threshold of four occurrences was applied to identify frequently recurring terms, resulting in 43 keywords included in the visualization. Network visualization

was used to examine the relationships and thematic clusters among keywords, with node size representing keyword occurrence and connecting lines indicating co-occurrence relationships. In addition, overlay visualization was employed to examine the temporal development of research themes, with differences in color representing the relative timing of keyword occurrence (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010). of integrating publication, affiliation, citation, and keyword analyses, this study provides a systematic overview of the quantitative development and thematic evolution of health law research related to Indonesia.

4. Results

4.1. Publication and Affiliate Trends

The development of health law research related to Indonesia can be examined through publication productivity and the distribution of contributions across author affiliations. An analysis of these two dimensions provides an overview of how research activity has developed over time and where scholarly contributions are concentrated. Figure 1 presents the annual publication trend and the distribution of publications across the most productive affiliations.

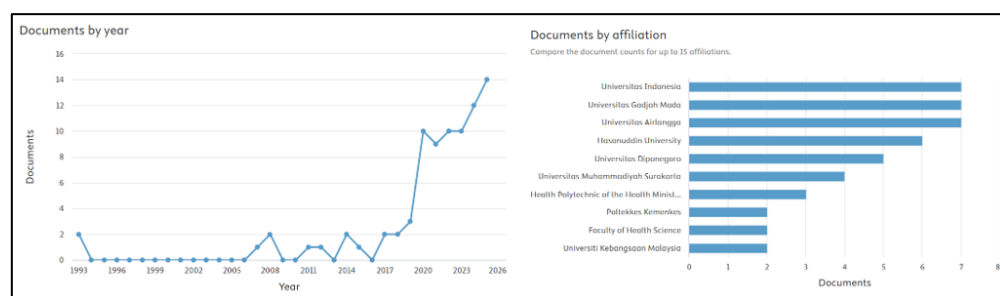


Figure 1. Trend in the Number of Annual Publications

Figure 1 illustrates the publication trends and institutional contributions in health law research in Indonesia based on the Scopus database. Using Scopus's Analyze Results feature, 82 documents related to health law research in Indonesia were identified. The annual publication trend shows that research output remained limited and sporadic from 1993 to 2018, with no more than one to three documents published per year. A substantial increase occurred in 2019 and 2020, with publications rising from three documents in 2019 to ten documents in 2020, followed by relatively high publication numbers in 2021 ($n = 9$), 2022 ($n = 10$), 2023 ($n = 10$), 2024 ($n = 12$), and 2025 ($n = 14$), which recorded the highest number of publications. In terms of institutional affiliation, Universitas Indonesia, Universitas Gadjah Mada, and Universitas Airlangga recorded the highest contributions, with seven documents each, followed by Universitas Hasanuddin ($n = 6$), Universitas Diponegoro ($n = 5$), Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta ($n = 4$), and the Health Polytechnic of the Health Ministry ($n = 3$). The figure also shows contributions from Poltekkes Kemenkes, the Faculty of Health Science, and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, with two documents each.

4.2. Highest Citations per Year in the Field of Health Law Related

To identify the most influential publications in the field, Table 1 presents the 10 references with the highest citations per year in Indonesia-related health law research. The table highlights the first author, citations per year, total citations, and the journal in which each study was published. These citation patterns provide an overview of the publications that have received relatively close scholarly attention

and indicate the studies that have contributed substantially to the development of health law-related research in the Indonesian context.

Table 1. The Highest Citations per Year in the Field of Health Law Related to Indonesia

Title	First Author	Citations per Year	Total Citations	Journal
Legal comparison of the use of telemedicine between Indonesia and the United States	Suwadi et al. (2024)	14.5	29	International Journal of Human Rights in Healthcare
Association between percentage of smokers and prevalence of smoking attributable morbidity in Indonesia: One decade after implementation of smoke-free area regulation	Martini et al. (2022)	4.5	18	BMC Public Health
The Urgency of Restorative Justice on Medical Dispute Resolution in Indonesia	Karjoko et al. (2021)	3.8	19	Al-Ihkam: Journal of Law and Social Institutions
Oral Health Status and Oral Healthcare System in Indonesia: A Narrative Review	Chairunisa et al. (2024)	3.5	7	Journal of International Society of Preventive and Community Dentistry
Indonesia's new health law: Lessons for democratic health governance and legislation	Gamalliel et al. (2024)	3.0	6	The Lancet Regional Health – Southeast Asia
Public Health-Based Policy on Stunting Prevention in Pati Regency, Central Java, Indonesia	Absori et al. (2022)	3.0	12	Open Access Macedonian Journal of Medical Sciences
Current situation and comparison of school mental health in ASEAN countries	Nishio et al. (2020)	2.5	15	Pediatrics International
Philosophy, law, and ethics of handling COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia	Wardiono et al. (2021)	2.4	12	Open Access Macedonian Journal of Medical Sciences
Mental health towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals: A review of policies in Indonesia	Megawati et al. (2025)	2.0	2	Asian Journal of Psychiatry
Determining the factors influencing residential property price: A comparative study between Indonesia and Malaysia	Rahadi et al. (2022)	1.5	6	Decision Science Letters

Table 1 presents the ten articles with the highest citations per year in the field of health law related to Indonesia. The article entitled “Legal Comparison of the Use of Telemedicine between Indonesia and the United States” by Suwadi et al. (2024) ranks first, with 14.5 citations per year and 29 total citations, making it the most

highly cited article in terms of annual citation impact. The second-ranked article, “Association between Percentage of Smokers and Prevalence of Smoking Attributable Morbidity in Indonesia: One Decade after Implementation of Smoke-Free Area Regulation” by Martini et al. (2022), received 4.5 citations per year and 18 total citations. This is followed by “The Urgency of Restorative Justice on Medical Dispute Resolution in Indonesia” by Karjoko et al. (2021), which ranks third with 3.8 citations per year and 19 total citations.

The remaining articles recorded between 1.5 and 3.5 citations per year, with total citations ranging from 2 to 15. Most of the articles in the top-cited group were published between 2020 and 2025, indicating that relatively recent publications have received substantial scholarly attention. The identified studies cover diverse health law-related topics, including telemedicine regulation, medical dispute resolution, public health policy, mental health governance, pandemic response, and comparative legal studies. In terms of journal contributions, the Open Access Macedonian Journal of Medical Sciences published two of the ten most-cited articles per year, while the remaining articles appeared in various international and regional journals.

4.3. Analysis of Co-occurrence Visualization of All Research Keywords

Following the identification of keyword interconnections and their evolution within the analyzed literature, this section discusses the two bibliometric visualizations presented in Figure 2. Figure 2 illustrates the evolution and distribution of keywords by time, as well as keyword groupings by thematic connections or clusters. This figure is then interpreted to provide an overview of the development and research focus regarding law and health in Indonesia.

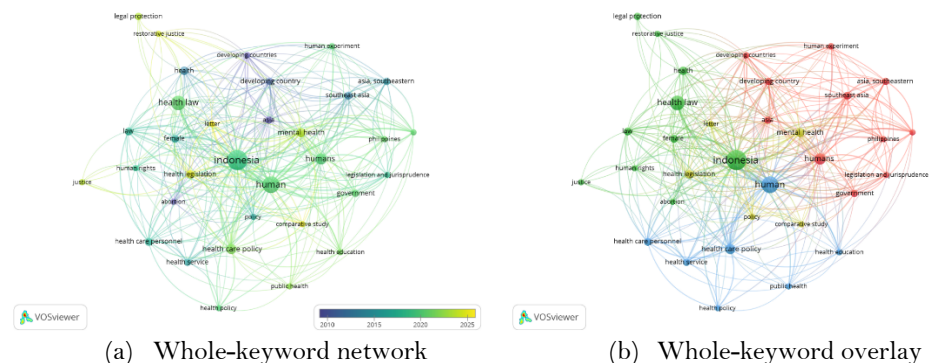


Figure 2. Keyword Co-Occurrence Network and Overlay Visualization

To provide a more comprehensive overview of research developments, the subsequent analysis presents two bibliometric visualizations generated using VOSviewer. These visualizations illustrate keyword relationships in the literature on law and health in Indonesia, in terms of temporal development and thematic clustering. The size of each node represents the frequency of keyword occurrence, while the connecting lines indicate the relationships or co-occurrence of keywords across publications. These visualizations provide an overview of the dominant research themes and the interconnections among topics within the field under investigation.

As shown in the visualizations, the keyword “Indonesia” appears as one of the largest nodes and is positioned relatively centrally within the network. This indicates its high frequency of occurrence and its role as a connecting point among various research topics. Keywords such as “human,” “health law,” “healthcare,” “health policy,” “public health,” “human rights,” “mental health,” and “legislation and jurisprudence” also demonstrate substantial interconnectedness. This pattern

suggests that research on law and health in Indonesia extends beyond regulatory aspects and encompasses broader issues related to healthcare delivery, public health policy, human rights, mental health, and the ethical and legal protection of individuals.

From a temporal perspective, the colors in the first visualization indicate changes in research focus over time. Blue generally represents keywords that emerged during earlier periods, green indicates topics that developed during intermediate periods, while yellow represents relatively more recent research themes. This pattern suggests that research has expanded from foundational themes such as “health law,” “healthcare,” “human rights,” and “public health” toward more specific and emerging issues, including “mental health,” “health education,” “comparative study,” and various aspects of health policy and regulation. The temporal variation in keyword colors indicates a dynamic research agenda in which emerging topics have developed in connection with themes that have historically received greater scholarly attention.

Meanwhile, the thematic clustering shown in the second visualization reveals several interconnected clusters. The green cluster is primarily associated with “health law,” “healthcare,” “health policy,” “human rights,” and “public health,” whereas the red cluster places greater emphasis on issues such as “mental health,” “human experiment,” “physicians,” and “legislation and jurisprudence.” The blue cluster is more closely associated with “health care policy,” “healthcare,” “public health,” and other health policy-related topics. Taken together, the two visualizations demonstrate that research on law and health in Indonesia is multidisciplinary and continuously evolving. The strong interconnections among law, healthcare, public policy, human rights, and society indicate that health is increasingly conceptualized not merely as a medical concern, but also as a legal, social, ethical, and public policy issue.

5. Discussion

The bibliometric analysis indicates that health law research related to Indonesia remained quantitatively limited during the early period (1993–2018), characterized by sporadic publications and a lack of continuity. This pattern reflects the relatively marginal position of health law within Indonesian legal scholarship, which has traditionally focused on public, criminal, and classical civil law. A substantial increase in publications from 2019, peaking in 2025, indicates a significant shift in the development of health law research. This growth may be associated with changes in national health policies, health-system reform, advances in medical technology, and the increasing complexity of legal issues arising from global health challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic further catalyzed this shift by highlighting the importance of health law in crisis governance, rights protection, and the legitimacy of public policy (Burci, 2024). According to Jitmau et al. (2025), this development is consistent with the law in action perspective, which emphasizes that legal scholarship evolves not only in response to normative changes but also to practical needs and social pressures. Thus, the increasing number of publications reflects not merely quantitative growth but also the consolidation of health law as an increasingly relevant and strategic field of study.

The dominance of Universitas Indonesia, Universitas Gadjah Mada, and Universitas Airlangga among the most productive affiliations indicates that health law knowledge production remains concentrated within major universities with established research traditions and institutional capacity. This concentration suggests that access to research infrastructure, academic networks, and institutional resources continues to shape the development of health law scholarship in Indonesia. Nevertheless, contributions from universities outside Java, such as Universitas Hasanuddin, indicate an emerging geographical expansion. The uneven distribution of productive affiliations highlights the need to strengthen inter-institutional and

cross-regional collaboration to promote a more balanced national research ecosystem.

The analysis of highly cited publications further demonstrates that research with greater scholarly impact tends to address contemporary, practical, and internationally relevant issues. Topics such as telemedicine, tobacco control, medical dispute resolution, and legal responses to the pandemic illustrate the intersection of law, technology, and public policy. The prominence of comparative research on telemedicine between Indonesia and the United States particularly reflects growing concerns regarding legal certainty, patient data protection, professional liability, and equitable access to digital healthcare. According to Suwadi et al. (2024), comparative approaches can help evaluate Indonesia's regulatory position within the broader development of global health law. Research on restorative justice in medical disputes indicates a movement beyond purely litigious approaches toward more equitable and protection-oriented mechanisms for resolving healthcare conflicts.

The integration of network and overlay visualizations demonstrates an evolutionary and interconnected thematic structure. The network visualization identifies four major clusters encompassing regional and developing-country contexts, normative and justice-oriented issues, health systems and policies, and more specific methodological or contemporary issues such as comparative studies and mental health. The overlay visualization further indicates a temporal shift from earlier normative and regional concerns toward health policy and system governance, followed by more recent and applied issues, including medical disputes, mental health, digital healthcare, and pandemic-related challenges. According to Agustina et al. (2019) and Silalahi et al. (2026), health law research in Indonesia appears to be moving from a predominantly normative-descriptive orientation toward a more analytical, comparative, and policy-oriented approach. This trajectory provides a foundation for developing health law that is adaptive, evidence-based, and responsive to emerging health challenges (Asriadi & Sari, 2025; Dharmawan et al., 2026).

6. Conclusion

This study shows that health law research in Indonesia has grown substantially, particularly since 2019, with publication output reaching its highest level in 2025. The findings show that research productivity is concentrated in major universities, particularly Universitas Indonesia, Universitas Gadjah Mada, and Universitas Airlangga, while highly cited publications primarily address contemporary and practical issues such as telemedicine, tobacco control, medical dispute resolution, public health policy, and pandemic governance. Keyword analysis further indicates that Indonesian health law research is multidisciplinary and increasingly interconnected with healthcare, human rights, public health, mental health, legislation, and health policy. The overlay visualization also suggests a shift from broader normative and public health concerns toward more specific and contemporary issues. These findings imply that health law has become an increasingly important and evolving area of scholarship, with opportunities for stronger institutional collaboration, interdisciplinary research, and evidence-based legal policy development.

This study is limited by its reliance on the Scopus database and a single search, which may exclude relevant publications indexed elsewhere and may be affected by subsequent database updates. In addition, bibliometric analysis cannot fully capture the depth of legal reasoning, normative interpretation, or practical implementation of legal provisions. Future research should therefore integrate multiple bibliographic databases and employ complementary systematic or doctrinal approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of health law scholarship. Further studies could also examine international collaboration, author-level networks, thematic

evolution within specific subfields, and the relationship between regulatory changes and research trends to identify emerging legal challenges and future research priorities in Indonesia.

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Acknowledgment

We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of individuals who supported the completion of this article.

Funding Information

This research did not receive any funding.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval and Originality Statement

Ethical approval was obtained for this study. The manuscript represents original work and has not been previously published, nor is it under consideration by another journal.

Data Disclosure Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.



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