

The effect of trimetazidine on contrast-induced nephropathy in patients undergoing coronary angiography and/or percutaneous coronary intervention – A systematic review and meta-analysis

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Abstract. – **OBJECTIVE:** In this study, we aimed to evaluate whether the trimetazidine administration before CAG and/or PCI reduces the incidence of contrast-induced nephropathy (CIN). We also aimed to evaluate the factors affecting the effect and the certainty of the evidence.

MATERIALS AND METHODS: A systematic literature search was performed to obtain studies that assess trimetazidine's effect on the incidence of CIN in CAG/PCI patients up until 21 January 2021 through PubMed, Embase, and Scopus. The main outcome is CIN, defined as the increase in serum creatinine level ≥ 0.5 mg/dL (44.2 mmol/L) or $> 25\%$ of the baseline value 48-72 h after contrast media (CM) administration.

RESULTS: This systematic review and meta-analysis includes seven studies involving a total of 1590 patients. The prevalence of CIN was 11% [8%, 14%]. CIN's prevalence was 6% [4%, 8%] in the trimetazidine group and 16% [12%, 20%] in the control group. Trimetazidine use is associated with a lower incidence of CIN (RR 0.46 [0.34, 0.63], $p < 0.001$; I^2 : 0%) with a high certainty of evidence, with an absolute risk reduction of 78 fewer per 1000. Subgroup analysis in patients with renal insufficiency showed that trimetazidine lowers the risk of CIN (RR 0.40 [0.26, 0.61], $p < 0.001$; I^2 : 0%). The CIN reducing effect of trimetazidine was not significantly influenced by the age ($p = 0.960$), body mass index ($p = 0.816$), hypertension ($p = 0.595$), diabetes ($p = 0.362$), ejection fraction ($p = 0.261$), baseline serum creatinine (0.579), and contrast media volume ($p = 0.958$).

CONCLUSIONS: Trimetazidine administration decreases the risk of CIN in patients undergoing CAG/PCI.

Key Words:

Angiography, Cardiovascular, Contrast-induced acute kidney injury, Contrast media, Renal insufficiency.

Introduction

Contrast-induced nephropathy (CIN) is a condition in which there is a worsening of renal function after administering contrast media. It occurs in 3% to 14% after coronary angiography (CAG) or percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) procedure, and more frequently in patients with renal dysfunction¹⁻³. CIN is associated with mortality following CAG/PCI⁴. Adequate hydration remained pivotal in CIN prevention. Although there are several interventions proposed to reduce CIN, most results are inadequate or equivocal⁵.

Trimetazidine is an anti-ischemic drug that inhibits the long-chain mitochondrial 3-ketoacyl coenzyme A thiolase enzyme, improving the mitochondrial metabolism⁶. By inhibiting free fatty acids oxidation, metabolism in cardiac and muscle shifts to glucose utilization⁷. Pyruvate dehydrogenase activity is enhanced by trimetazidine; it restores homeostasis between glucose oxidation and glycolysis, which are disrupted due to ischemia^{8,9}. Thus, trimetazidine decrease oxygen consumption, intracellular calcium ion, and intracellular acidity^{9,10}. Attenuating the energy insufficiency results in decreased reactive oxygen species (ROS) formation¹¹. These mechanisms

promote membrane stabilization of the cells¹². Trimetazidine may protect against free radical damage due to its antioxidant activity, thus may attenuate renal ischemic-reperfusion injury^{13,14} we evaluated the effect of trimetazidine (TMZ). In this study, we aimed to evaluate whether the trimetazidine administration before CAG and/or PCI reduces the incidence of CIN. We also aimed to evaluate the factors affecting the effect and the certainty of the evidence.

Materials and Methods

This systematic review is reported according to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) reporting guideline (Figure 1).

Eligibility Criteria

The inclusion criteria include: (1) Randomized controlled trials assessing trimetazidine com-

pared to control in patients undergoing CAG and/or PCI, (2) Reporting the incidence of CIN.

The exclusion criteria were: (1) conference abstracts, (2) case reports, (3) review articles, (4) preprints, and (5) non-English language articles.

Intervention and Outcome

The intervention was trimetazidine administered before CAG and/or PCI. The control was standard of care.

The main outcome is CIN, defined as the increase in serum creatinine level ≥ 0.5 mg/dL (44.2 mmol/L) or $> 25\%$ of the baseline value 48-72 h after contrast media (CM) administration¹⁵. The effect estimate was reported as risk ratio (RR) along with its 95% confidence interval (95% CI).

Search Strategy

A systematic literature search was performed to obtain studies that assess the effect of trimetazidine on the incidence of CIN in

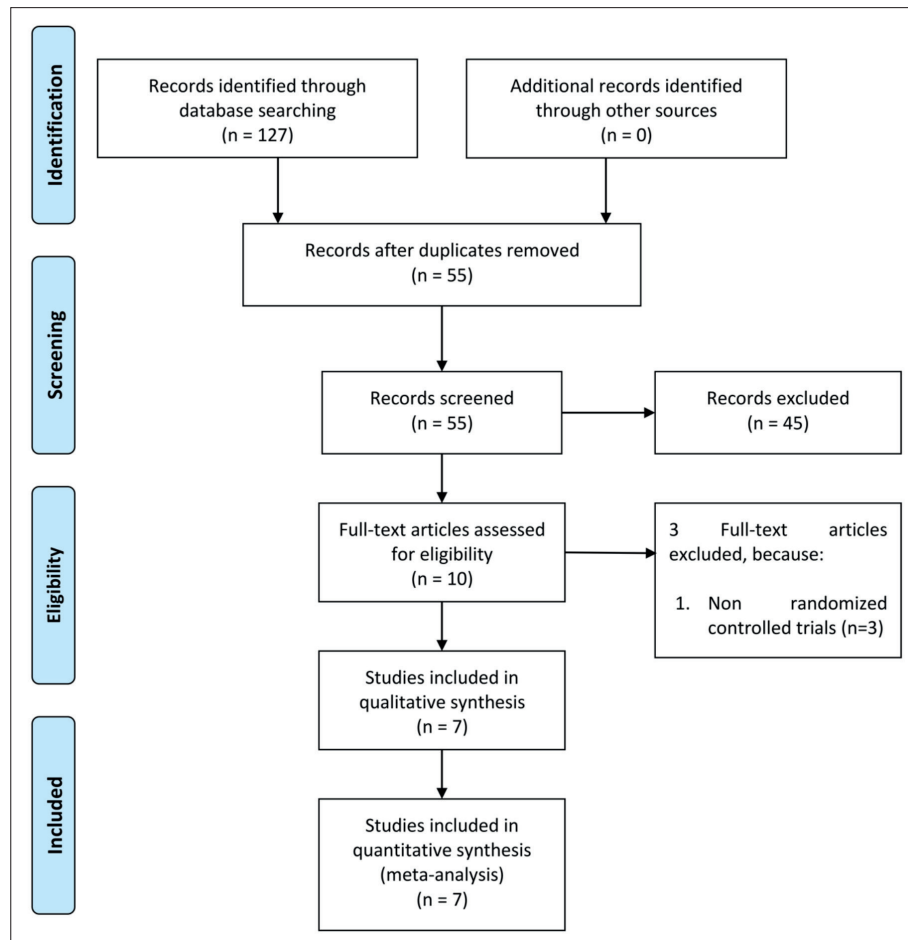


Figure 1. PRISMA flowchart.

CAG/PCI patients with keywords [“trimetazidine” and “contrast-induced nephropathy” OR “contrast-induced acute kidney injury” OR “contrast-induced acute renal injury”] and its synonym from inception up until 21 January 2021 through PubMed, Embase, and Scopus. According to the inclusion and exclusion criteria, two independent authors performed a literature search and articles’ eligibility assessment. Discrepancies were resolved by discussion.

Data Extraction

Two authors independently performed data extraction for several variables, including first author, year of publication, study design, sample size, baseline characteristics of the patients, trimetazidine protocol details, definition of CIN, and CIN incidence.

Assessment of Methodology Criteria and Risk of Bias

Cochrane Risk of Bias Assessment Tool was used to facilitate the assessment of the included studies. This was performed by two authors independently, and discrepancies were resolved by discussion. Guideline Development Tool by GRADEpro GDT was used to evaluate the certainty of evidence.

Statistical Analysis

STATA 16.0 (StataCorp LP) was used to perform a meta-analysis. Random-effects meta-analysis of proportion was performed to pool the incidence of CIN. We calculated the RRs and their 95% CI by pooling dichotomous data using the DerSimonian-Laird method random-effects model. A p -value <0.05 for the effect estimate was considered statistically significant. The inconsistency index (I^2) test and Cochran Q test were used to evaluate heterogeneity across the studies. An I^2 -test value above 50% and/or p -value <0.10 indicates substantial heterogeneity.

Assessment of Publication Bias

We performed funnel-plot analysis and Egger’s test to evaluate the possibility for small-study effects, qualitative and quantitatively. Trim-and-fill analysis (Linear 0 estimator) was performed due to asymmetrical funnel-plot.

Exploration of Heterogeneity

Meta-regression analysis was performed to evaluate the association between trimetazidine and CIN using several characteristics and

confounders as covariates. Subgroup analysis was performed for patients with renal insufficiency.

Results

Baseline Characteristics

This systematic review and meta-analysis includes seven studies involving a total of 1590 patients¹⁶⁻²². The baseline characteristic of these studies is displayed in Table I. The prevalence of CIN was 11% [8%, 14%].

Contrast-Induced Nephropathy

The incidence of CIN was 6% [4%, 8%] in trimetazidine group and 16% [12%, 20%] in the control group. Trimetazidine use is associated with lower incidence of CIN (RR 0.46 [0.34, 0.63], $p<0.001$; I^2 : 0%, ($p=0.888$)) (Figure 2). Subgroup analysis in patients with renal insufficiency showed that trimetazidine lowers the risk of CIN (RR 0.40 [0.26, 0.61], $p<0.001$; I^2 : 0%, ($p=0.930$)).

Meta-Regression

The CIN reducing effect of trimetazidine was not significantly influenced by the age ($p=0.960$), body mass index ($p=0.816$), hypertension ($p=0.595$), diabetes ($p=0.362$), ejection fraction ($p=0.261$), baseline serum creatinine (0.579), and contrast media volume ($p=0.958$).

Risk of Bias Assessment

The Cochrane Risk of Bias Assessment is displayed in (Figure 3). Funnel-plot was asymmetrical (Figure 4) and the Trim-and-fill analysis (Linear 0 estimator) showed that the imputation of 3 studies on the right side of the plot resulted in RR of 0.50 [0.38, 0.67] (Figure 5). Egger’s test showed no indication of small-study effects in this pooled analysis ($p=0.172$).

GRADE Assessment

GRADE assessment showed a high certainty of evidence for the effect of trimetazidine on CIN reduction with an absolute risk reduction of 78 fewer per 1000 (Table II).

Discussion

This meta-analysis indicates that trimetazidine administration decreases CIN’s risk in patients undergoing CAG/PCI, especially in patients with

Table I. Studies included in the systematic review.

Author	Study design	Subject characteristics	Procedure	CIN Definition	Sample size (n)	Male (%)	Age (mean age in years)	BMI (kg/m ²)	HT (%)	DM (%)	Dyslipidemia (%)	LVEF (%)	SCr (mg/dL)	CrCl (ml/min)	eGFR (mL/min 1.73 m ²)	Contrast amount (mL)	Funding
Fu 2020	RCT	CrCl < 60ml/min	PCI	SCr elevation > 25% from baseline or > 0.5 mg/dl absolute at 48 to 72 hours	310	49.4%	76.8 ± 4.4	22.6 ± 2.5	57	45.5	NA	(LVEF < 45%) 7.7%	1.14 ± 0.17	NA	73.9 ± 13.5	141.7 ± 16.7	None
Liu 2015	RCT	eGFR 30 to	CAG/PCI < 90 ml/min/1.73 m ² LVEF > 35	SCr elevation > 25% from baseline or > 0.5 mg/dl absolute at 48 to 72 hours	132	56.8	58.6 ± 10.9	26.3 ± 2.4	54.5	60.6	25.8	NA	1.19 ± 0.25	NA	NA	122.15 ± 33.05	NA
Mirhosseni 2019	RCT	eGFR 30-60 mL/	CAG min/1.73 m ² LVEF > 45% with no urgent indication for angiography	SCr elevation > 25% from baseline or > 0.5 mg/dl absolute at 48 to 72 hours	100	44	66 ± 4.33	66 ± 5.96	62	63	NA	51 ± 4.504	1.28 ± 0.14	NA	50 ± 7.47	119.3	NA
Onbasili 2007	Double-blinded,	SCr ≥ 1.2 mg/d CrCl < 50ml/min	CAG/PCI	SCr elevation > 25% from baseline or > 0.5 mg/dl absolute at 24 to 48 hours	82	69	60.5 ± 10.5	26.2 ± 3.5	NA	23.2	NA	47.48 ± 18.89	1.28 ± 0.209	53.37 ± 11.98	NA	233.5	NA
Shehata 2014	RCT	eGFR 30 to < 90 ml/min/1.73 m ²	PCI	SCr elevation > 25% from baseline or > 0.5 mg/dl absolute at 72 hours.	100	68	58.5 ± 5.5	27.5 ± 3.0	48	100	30	54.5 ± 7.49	2 ± 0.45	NA	48.5 ± 15.50	275 ± 13.64	NA
Ye 2017	RCT	Diabetes and renal insufficiency eGFR 30-89 mL/min/1.73 m ²	CAG/PCI	SCr elevation > 25% from baseline or > 0.5 mg/dl absolute at 48 to 72 hours	106	59	64.2 ± 8.5	NA	70	100	53.8	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	None
Zhang 2020	RCT, Multi-center trial	Patients ≥ 60 yrs. Patients with diabetes LVEF > 30%	PCI	SCr elevation > 25% from baseline or > 0.5 mg/dl absolute at 48 to 72 hours	760	69	67 ± 6.6	24.9 ± 2.3	41.0	NA	NA	59.42 ± 8.271	0.92 ± 0.28	72.10 ± 13.05	NA	170.3 ± 67.0	Tianjin Municipal Health and Family Planning Commission

RCT, Randomized Controlled Trial; BMI, Body Mass Index; LVEF, Left Ventricular Ejection Fraction; SCr, Serum Creatinine; CrCl, Creatinine Clearance; CAG, Coronary Angiography; PCI, Percutaneous Coronary Intervention; CIN: Contrast-Induced Nephropathy.

Table II. Real time PCR primers.

Certainty assessment							N. of patients		Effect		
N. of studies	Study design	Risk of bias	Inconsistency	Indirectness	Imprecision	Other considerations	CIN	Placebo	Relative (95% CI)	Absolute (95% CI)	Certainty
7	Randomised trials	Serious ^a	Not serious	Not serious	Not serious	Publication bias strongly suspected strong association all plausible residual confounding would reduce the demonstrated effect ^b	52/798 (6.5%)	115/792 (14.5%)	RR 0.46 (0.34 to 0.63)	78 fewer per 1,000 (from 96 fewer to 54 fewer)	⊕⊕⊕⊕ HIGH

CI: Confidence interval; RR: Risk ratio. Explanations ^aInadequate blinding, many studies have unclear allocation concealment and randomization. ^bAsymmetrical Funnel Plot.

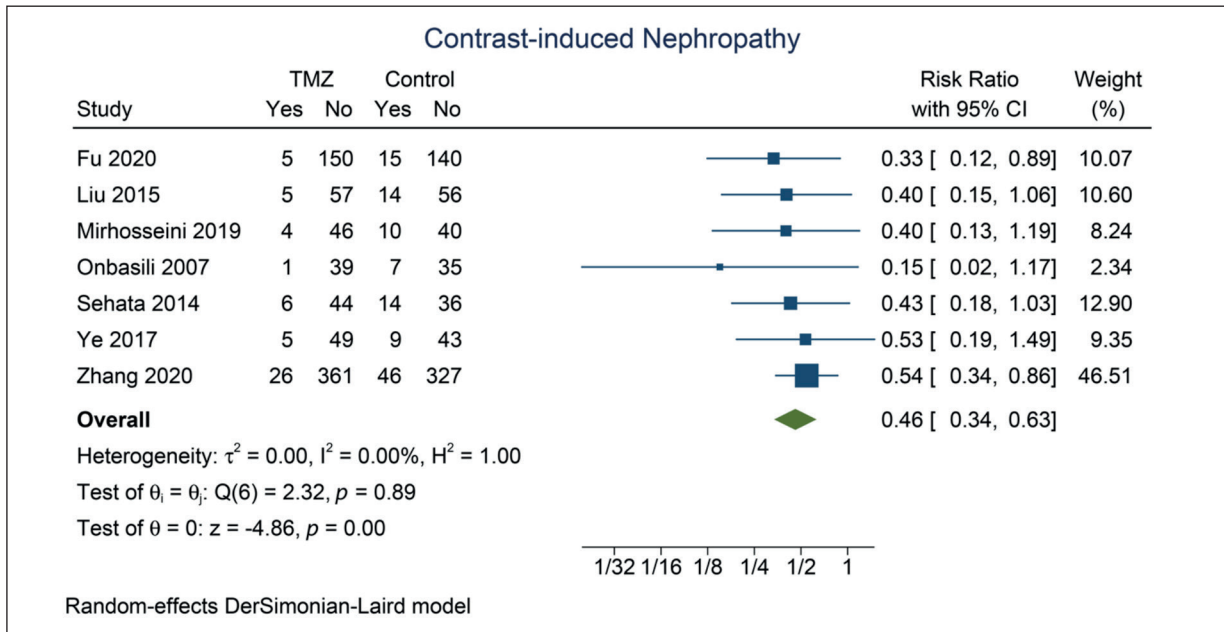


Figure 2. Trimetazidine and contrast-induced nephropathy.

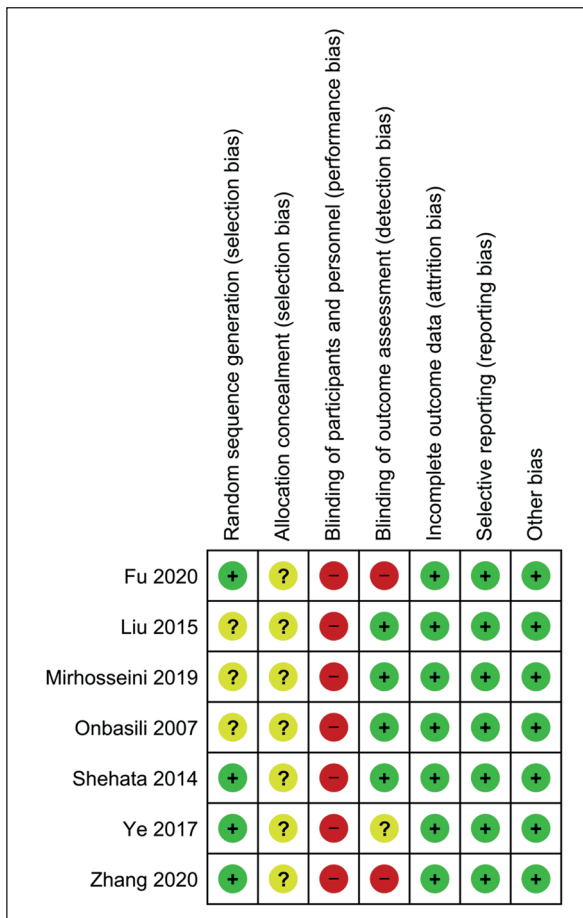


Figure 3. Cochrane risk of bias assessment.

renal insufficiency, with a high certainty of evidence.

Trimetazidine has been shown to attenuate the deleterious effects of ischemia-reperfusion injury at both cellular and mitochondrial levels due to its potent antioxidant activity²³⁻²⁷. Since the underlying pathophysiology of CIN involves reactive oxygen species and renal medullar ischemia^{28,29}, the use of antioxidants such as trimetazidine may counteract the process. Remote ischemia preconditioning and nicorandil, which have been shown to reduce the effect of CIN, works through a similar mechanism^{30,31}. Additionally, trimetazidine

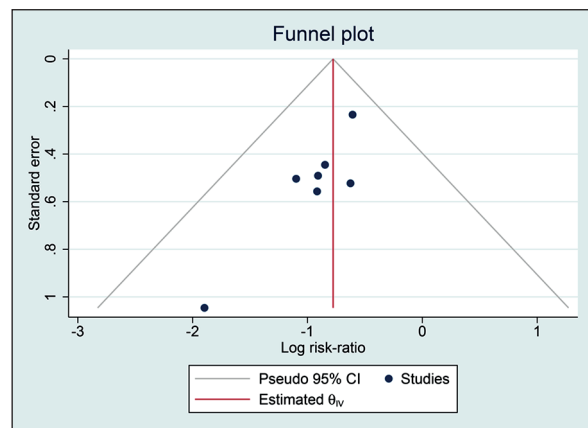


Figure 4. Funnel-plot analysis.

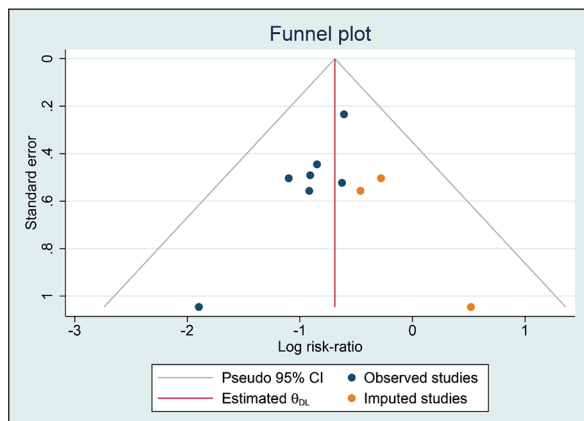


Figure 5. Trim-and-fill analysis.

has been shown to reduce inflammatory mediators in patients undergoing PCI³².

Meta-regression indicates that trimetazidine's benefit does not vary with age, body mass index, hypertension, diabetes, and ejection fraction. This analysis indicates trimetazidine benefit was observed across broad variety of patients and is not limited to specific patients. Patients without renal insufficiency are underrepresented in the current pooled analysis; this is because most of the studies enrolled patients with renal insufficiency.

Three studies were removed because of the non-randomized design; two of them indicate that trimetazidine does not reduce CIN incidence in unselected patients without targeting the higher-risk patients^{33,34}. One study indicates that trimetazidine reduces CIN occurrence in patients with mild-moderate basal renal insufficiency³⁵ coronary angiography and percutaneous coronary interventions are associated with the highest rates of CIN. Trimetazidine has been described as a cellular anti-ischemic agent. Previous studies demonstrated that Trimetazidine prevents the deleterious effects of ischemia–reperfusion at both the cellular and mitochondrial levels and exerts an anti-oxidant effect. It inhibits excess release of oxygen free radicals, limits cellular acidosis, protects Adenosine Triphosphate (ATP).

Although meta-regression analysis showed that the CIN reducing effect was not significantly influenced by the baseline creatinine level, this might be due to the underrepresentation of patients with high estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR). Zhang et al²² found that trimetazidine reduced CIN occurrence in patients with moderate and high-risk populations based on Mehran score, but not in low-risk patients. Fur-

ther RCTs are required to confirm whether the effect is demonstrable in patients with normal renal function.

Additionally, the CIN reducing effect of trimetazidine did not vary with contrast media volume. This might be valuable in patients with renal insufficiency receiving a complex coronary intervention, who will be exposed to a large amount of contrast.

One of the concerns of a meta-analysis is publication bias; the funnel-plot analysis indicates possible publication bias. Trim-and-fill analysis was used to impute three hypothetical studies to “balance” the funnel-plot, and the benefit was still significant, although slightly reduced.

Clinical Implications

Trimetazidine may be administered in patients undergoing CAG/PCI, especially in patients with renal insufficiency. It may be of value in patients with renal insufficiency undergoing complex coronary intervention in which a higher volume of contrast is required. However, due to the underrepresentation of patients without renal insufficiency, further RCTs are required in this subset of patients.

Limitations

The limitation of this systematic review includes the high risk of bias of the individual studies. The randomization process and allocation concealment are often unclear. The blinding is inadequate primarily due to the unavailability of a placebo. Patients without renal insufficiency are underrepresented.

Conclusions

In short, trimetazidine administration decreases the risk of CIN in patients undergoing CAG/PCI, especially in patients with renal insufficiency.

Conflict of Interest

The Authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

Ethical Approval

Not Applicable. Systematic review and meta-analysis contain data from published studies, not a primary data.

Informed Consent

Not Applicable. Systematic review and meta-analysis contain data from published studies, not a primary data.

Data Availability

The Authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

Contributorship Statement

Januar Wibawa Martha: conceptualization, investigation, writing—review and editing, supervision. Raymond Pranata: conceptualization, methodology, software, data curation, formal analysis meta-analysis, investigation, validation, writing—original draft, writing—review and editing. Arief Wibowo: data curation, investigation, writing—original draft. Irvan: data curation, investigation, writing—original draft. Rien Afrianti: investigation, writing—review and editing. Mohammad Rizki Akbar: investigation, writing—review and editing.

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