





Hijacking Democracy in Asia Challenges for Socialpreneurship and Institutional Resilience

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ABSTRACT

The democratization process in Asia faces significant challenges, particularly in leadership transitions often exploited by political elites to maintain power. This phenomenon, known as hijacking democracy, occurs when transitions meant to strengthen democracy are instead manipulated to consolidate authoritarianism and suppress political opposition. **This study** identifies key factors contributing to democracy hijacking, including political elites, military influence, weak institutions, local political culture, media control, and international pressure. Using a comparative approach across Asia, the research highlights how these elements interact, leading to democratic backsliding and eroding public trust in governance. **This issue** directly aligns with SDGs 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, which emphasizes transparent governance, political participation, and institutional integrity. **Ensuring fair** and accountable leadership transitions is crucial for sustainable development, social stability, and the protection of democratic values in the region. **Without institutional** reforms and active civic engagement, democracy in Asia remains vulnerable to manipulation by undemocratic actors.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Democratization in Asia, as one of the most politically diverse regions in the world, has experienced a variety of complex and multidimensional dynamics over the past decades. In some countries, democracy has gradually grown, expanded, and become more institutionalized, while in others, the process has encountered serious and persistent challenges that hinder consolidation [1]. One recurring and increasingly visible phenomenon in this context is the hijacking of democracy, which we define as a deliberate effort by political elites or power holders to exploit leadership transitions in order to retain or expand their control. This process involves manipulating democratic institutions, election mechanisms, and governance norms, as seen in cases such as Thailand and Myanmar, where transitions intended to support democratization instead reinforced elite dominance. Ideally, these transitions should serve as a fundamental pillar in strengthening the democratic process and ensuring the continuity of inclusive governance. However, in practice, leadership transitions are often exploited by political elites and powerful groups as strategic opportunities to consolidate control, weaken existing democratic institutions, and limit balanced political participation in order to maintain or expand their influence. Such cases reveal that democratization in Asia is not a straightforward or linear process that in-

evitably leads to the strengthening of democratic systems [2]. Instead, it is a fragile process, vulnerable to distortion and manipulation by actors who prioritize personal or group interests over the collective goal of democratic consolidation [3]. Against this backdrop, The present study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how leadership transition can be transformed into a tool for democracy hijacking, as well as to identify the key variables that play a critical role in shaping this process. This research contributes to democratization theory by conceptualizing ‘hijacking democracy’ as a strategic intervention by political elites and power holders during leadership transitions, which differs from general authoritarian resurgence. While previous studies have focused on political regression in broad terms, this study specifically highlights the mechanisms and stages through which democratic transitions are deliberately manipulated to maintain elite dominance, particularly in the Asian context. In line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 16 on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, this research underscores the importance of safeguarding democratic principles and institutional integrity as an integral part of the broader global agenda for sustainable governance and long-term stability.

In this context, several key factors repeatedly appear in the scholarly literature and empirical studies. Among the most prominent are the dominant role of political elites in shaping political outcomes, direct and indirect forms of military intervention that undermine civilian authority [4], the persistence of weak democratic institutions that enable electoral fraud and erode judicial independence, and the influence of local political culture, which often normalizes or even legitimizes authoritarian practices in exchange for stability [5]. In addition to these domestic dynamics, external factors such as international pressure and media influence also play a decisive role in directing public opinion and shaping the eventual outcomes of leadership transitions [6]. The combination of these variables illustrates the multi-layered nature of democracy hijacking, where both internal weaknesses and external pressures interact to undermine democratic resilience. This situation also affects the development of social entrepreneurship, as weakened democratic institutions reduce civic trust and limit the active participation needed for community-based entrepreneurial initiatives. Therefore, strengthening democratic governance indirectly supports the sustainability of socialpreneurship movements that rely on inclusive participation and institutional accountability. This research, therefore, focuses specifically on countries in Asia, which display diverse but interrelated patterns of democracy hijacking during leadership transitions [7], and analyzes how these dynamics may ultimately affect the trajectory and future of democracy across the region. By explicitly linking these findings to the framework of SDGs 16, this study not only emphasizes the regional urgency of strengthening democratic resilience but also situates the problem within the global commitment to building inclusive, just, and accountable governance systems [8]. Through an in-depth analysis of several case studies in Asia, this research aims to identify the causal factors and consequences of democracy hijacking in a comparative perspective, while at the same time offering policy-oriented recommendations to prevent democratic backsliding and to strengthen institutional safeguards in the future.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative case study approach to examine “hijacking democracy” during leadership transitions in selected Asian countries. This method enables an in-depth understanding of political, social, and cultural dynamics in democratization. Countries such as Myanmar, Thailand, the Philippines, Timor Leste, and Indonesia were chosen based on their differing leadership transition models and varying levels of democratic resilience. The interview participants consisted of university lecturers, former election observers, and civil society activists with direct involvement in democratic monitoring, selected due to their expertise and informed perspectives on governance transitions [9]. Data were gathered from academic literature, reports, and news sources, supplemented by expert interviews for firsthand insights. The research employed thematic analysis through a systematic process of open coding, categorization, and theme formulation to identify patterns related to political elites, military intervention, media control, and institutional weakness [10]. To ensure validity, data triangulation was conducted by comparing interview transcripts, government documents, and secondary research sources, allowing cross-verification and reinforcing the credibility of the research findings. This methodological approach strengthens the accuracy and depth of interpretation in analyzing democracy hijacking and provide recommendations to strengthen democratic integrity in the region.

Official documents, such as constitutions, election reports, and government statements, were analyzed to understand the legal framework and institutions in place, and how these played a role in the democratization process. The data collected was analyzed using a thematic analysis approach [11]. The researcher identified key

themes that emerged from the interviews and literature and matched this information with pre-defined variables, such as the role of political elites, military power and media control. This approach allowed the researcher to systematically organize and interpret the data, and discover significant patterns in democracy hijacking [12]. And to validate the findings to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the findings, this research involved data triangulation by comparing results from various sources. In addition, feedback from informants through follow-up interviews was also used to deepen understanding and strengthen the validity of the results [13]. Through this methodology, the research is expected to provide deeper insights into the process of democracy hijacking in Asia during leadership transitions, as well as generate useful recommendations to improve the quality of democracy in the region [14].

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As expected, the public wants a country to uphold the principles of fairness and accountability in implementing democracy to ensure public participation in determining its leaders for a certain period of time and carried out periodically in accordance with applicable laws and regulations [15]. However, in practice there are several countries in the world and especially in Asia that have not fully implemented the democratic process in accordance with existing principles. So that there is a tendency for political elites to strategically use party structures and institutional influence to preserve or expand their authority. This reflects how democratic mechanisms can be manipulated to reinforce existing power hierarchies, rather than support political plurality. For this reason, the following is Table 1 are the democracy index values of several countries in Asia and the following categories:

Table 1. Democracy Index Values

No	Country	Democracy Index	Full Democracy Category
1	Japan	8.00	Full Democracy
2	India	6.75	Disconnected democracy
3	Indonesia	6.20	Disconnected democracy
4	Philippines	6.20	Disconnected democracy
5	Thailand	5.30	Autocracy
6	Myanmar	3.00	Autocracy
7	China	2.30	Authoritarian

Data source: EIU 2023

Based on the Democracy Index data as listed above, it becomes evident that lower index scores correlate with greater vulnerability to democracy hijacking. Countries with weak judicial independence and strong elite intervention, such as Myanmar and Thailand, display lower democratic stability, whereas countries with more balanced civilian institutions, such as Indonesia, show relatively stronger resistance to elite manipulation [16]. Table 2 the following are some of the key findings generated from this research:

Table 2. Factors Contributing to Democracy Hijacking in Asia

No.	Factor	Impact on Democracy
1	Role of Political Elites	Controls public policy and leadership transitions
2	Military Intervention	Coups and restrictions on civilian government
3	Weak Democratic Institutions	Electoral fraud and weak judicial system
4	Local Political Culture	Tolerance of authoritarianism for the sake of stability
5	International Pressure	Varies depending on global community support
6	Media Control	Restrictions on press freedom and information manipulation

Source: Research Findings

Table 2 outlines the major factors contributing to democracy hijacking in Asia, especially in times of leadership transition. The role of political elites is shown as a dominant force, as they control public policy

and influence leadership succession [17]. Military intervention also emerges as a critical threat, often leading to coups and restrictions on civilian authority. Weak democratic institutions further exacerbate the problem through electoral fraud and fragile judicial systems, which undermine both legitimacy and accountability [18]. Moreover, local political culture may tolerate authoritarian practices in the name of stability, creating an environment where democratic values are compromised for short-term order.

Beyond domestic factors, external dynamics also play a role. International pressure has varying impacts depending on the stance and support of the global community toward specific regimes [19]. At the same time, media control remains a powerful instrument for restricting press freedom and manipulating information, which suppresses critical voices and prevents fair public discourse. Together, these factors demonstrate that democracy hijacking in Asia is driven by a combination of internal weaknesses and external pressures, reflecting the fragile nature of democratic governance during political transitions [20].

3.1. The Role of Political Elites

Political elites play a pivotal and often decisive role in the democratic process, whether in building, sustaining, or undermining it [21]. The term political elites generally refers to individuals or groups who occupy positions of significant authority and influence within a political system, including government leaders, members of parliament, party officials, as well as influential military and civilian figures [22]. These actors frequently determine not only the direction of national politics but also the quality, resilience, and legitimacy of democracy in a given country. Their ability to influence both formal institutions and informal networks means that they hold the capacity to either foster democratic consolidation or, conversely, erode it through practices that prioritize personal or group interests over the broader public good.

One of the most important roles of political elites lies in their capacity to determine public policy, since they are directly responsible for designing and implementing policies that have an immediate and long-term impact on people's lives [23]. In a well-functioning democratic system, these elites are expected to formulate policies that genuinely reflect the will and needs of the population, while also ensuring transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness in the policymaking process. This includes creating and enforcing laws that guarantee fair and competitive elections, promoting economic policies that distribute resources more equitably [24], and protecting fundamental civil rights that allow citizens to freely express their views and participate in governance. Such responsibilities highlight the centrality of political elites in shaping whether democracy evolves into a participatory and just system or becomes distorted into a mechanism serving only a narrow segment of society [22, 25]. In many Asian contexts, the actions of political elites during leadership transitions serve as a critical test for the stability of democracy, as their decisions often determine whether transitions lead to greater democratic deepening or, instead, to democracy hijacking.

3.2. Guarding the Transition of Democracy

In many countries, political elites play a key role during the transition from authoritarian to democratic systems. They can act as reform leaders who encourage democratization by developing more inclusive political institutions and promoting political and civil rights [26]. Historical experience shows that transitions are often successful when elites willingly restructure political arrangements to expand representation and protect civil liberties. For example, in South Africa, political elites such as Nelson Mandela were instrumental in the transition from apartheid to democracy, demonstrating how elite commitment to democratic values can open the door to institutional reform, reconciliation, and long-term stability. However, the same transitional period also represents a vulnerable phase in which democratic institutions are still fragile and can be easily steered in undemocratic directions. During these critical moments, political elites hold disproportionate influence over legal design, constitutional drafting, and power redistribution, making their intentions and behaviors decisive for the direction of the transition.

The hijacking of democratic transitions refers to attempts by certain groups or elites to take over or control the transition to democracy for their own interests. Instead of strengthening democratic institutions, they take advantage of weaknesses in the transition phase to maintain power or enrich themselves [27]. This phenomenon poses a serious threat to the sustainability of democracy, especially in countries like Myanmar and Cambodia, where elites have systematically manipulated leadership transition rules to consolidate power. The rulers want to control the electoral process to produce only leaders loyal to them, strengthen the interests of the oligarchy [28], and design laws and policies that favor certain groups at the expense of broader democratic participation. Their influence extends to the manipulation of democratic institutions such as parliament and the

judiciary to extend the power of families or political dynasties at both central and regional levels, while simultaneously hindering legal and governance reforms that have the potential to reduce their dominance of power [29]. Such practices illustrate how elite behavior can transform transitional opportunities into mechanisms of authoritarian entrenchment, thereby weakening public trust and undermining democratic consolidation over time.

3.3. Guardians of Democratic Institutions

The guardians of democratic institutions are key actors and institutions in ensuring the democratic functioning of the system. Political elites are also tasked with maintaining and strengthening democratic institutions, such as parliament, the judiciary and elections [30]. In a well-functioning democracy, political elites must work to ensure that these institutions remain independent and effective, and free from corruption and abuse of power. Strong institutions allow for checks and balances that are essential to avoid concentrations of power [31]. State institutions such as the Legislature or Parliament function as lawmakers and overseers of government policy. Good legislation can strengthen the rule of law and maintain accountability. The Executive implements public policy and provides services to the public based on a democratic mandate [32]. A transparent executive strengthens public trust. Based on the fact that Government institutions do not carry out their mandate properly, the tendency of the government to provide services to their constituents and more oriented to their party groups or groups [33]. This is done with the aim of maintaining the power of the government, by sharing the interests of many people, therefore the behavior of the State apparatus that carries out political pressure, corruption and polarization of society [34].

3.4. Democracy Hijacking

However, political elites can also play a role in undermining democracy, particularly when they prioritize their personal or group interests over the public interest. This phenomenon is referred to as "hijacking democracy", where political elites use democratic mechanisms, such as elections, to strengthen their own power and undermine democratic institutions [35]. This is evident in Myanmar, where military elites restrict civilian rule through constitutional provisions granting them reserved parliamentary seats; in Thailand, where military coups repeatedly destabilize elected governments; and in the Philippines, where political dynasties influence electoral commissions and local governance. These mechanisms reveal targeted institutional manipulation rather than general political decline. In many cases, political elites may manipulate democratic processes to entrench their power [36], often using the same democratic tools that were meant to ensure fair representation. By undermining key institutions like the judiciary, media, or electoral bodies, they can create an environment where their continued dominance is guaranteed [37].



Figure 1. The Factors of Democracy Hijacking

The Figure 1 is manipulation can take various forms, such as gerrymandering, voter suppression, or restricting the opposition ability to compete effectively. Even when elections are held, the results can be

skewed in favor of the elites, leaving the public feeling disillusioned and powerless [38]. This strategic erosion of democracy allows authoritarian leaders to consolidate control, silencing dissent and curbing freedoms in the name of preserving stability or national interest, despite the harm it causes to the democratic fabric of society.

3.5. Maintainer of Political Culture

Political elites also shape a country political culture. Through their behavior and decisions, political elites can encourage a political culture that supports tolerance, dialogue and participation, or conversely, encourage an exclusionary culture that widens social and political divides [39]. When political elites model good democratic practices, such as transparency and accountability, they foster a positive political culture and support democratic stability. Controlling democratic institutions such as elections, the judiciary and the media reinforces power and limits civil liberties and human rights in order to maintain political stability and maintain dominance [40]. The behavior of the political elite in hijacking democracy has resulted in a decline in the quality of democracy, a reduction in civil liberties and human rights violations, making democracy a formality. Public dissatisfaction and protests, injustice in the political process can cause public dissatisfaction which leads to protests and even violence. Such was the case in Bangladesh [41]. The hijacking of democracy often leads to the concentration of power and resources in the hands of a few, creating oligarchies or dynasties as well as social conflict and a crisis of confidence where segments of society feel marginalized by the political process, the potential for social conflict increases as well as the crisis of confidence of the people who see that the democratic process is hijacked will lose confidence in political institutions and the democratic process itself [42].

3.6. Mediators in Conflict

In democracies undergoing political tension or crisis, political elites often act as mediators or arbiters to prevent further conflict. They can facilitate dialogue between disputing parties and ensure that political competition stays within democratic channels without inciting violence [43]. In countries like Indonesia, political elites play an important role in maintaining stability during the transition to democracy. In each country analyzed, political elites played a central role in steering the leadership transition [44]. In Myanmar, for example, despite hopes for democratization after the 2015 elections, military and political elites managed to draft laws and policies that limited the powers of the civilian government. Established elites often use democratic rhetoric to maintain their power while weakening the opposition.

3.7. Military Intervention and Security Forces

Military intervention in leadership transitions has proven to be a significant factor in the hijacking of democracy. In Thailand, the military has carried out several coups to overthrow elected governments [45], under the pretext of maintaining stability. These actions reveal that military institutions often position themselves as guardians of national unity, yet their involvement tends to reflect deeper interests in preserving their political and economic influence. Rather than functioning as a neutral watchdog, military leaders frequently intervene at strategic political moments to redirect the trajectory of governance in ways that weaken civilian authority. This dynamic demonstrates that the presence of an overly powerful military apparatus becomes a structural obstacle to genuine democratization, especially when armed forces hold institutional privileges, constitutional protections, or economic stakes that motivate them to resist political reforms. Consequently, democratic transitions in such environments rarely unfold organically, as the military's persistent interference constrains elected leaders' ability to govern effectively and prevents the establishment of stable, people driven institutions.

Military interventions can severely disrupt the democratic process [46], as they often undermine the legitimacy of elected leaders and erode public trust in democratic institutions. In Thailand, military leaders have frequently justified their coups by claiming the need to preserve national security and restore order, framing their actions as necessary corrections to political crises. However, these interventions typically lead to recurring cycles of political instability, in which temporary military rule results in weakened political parties, fragmented civil society, and restricted political freedoms [47]. The military's prominent role in government often translates into policies that favor its own interests, limiting meaningful reform while suppressing dissent and reducing the policy-making autonomy of civilian institutions. As a result, democratic reforms are hindered, the space for political opposition becomes increasingly narrow, and public participation is constrained all of which weaken the foundational pillars of democratic society [48, 49]. Over time, this entrenches an authoritarian political culture that normalizes military involvement and makes long-term democratic consolidation even more challenging.

3.8. Weaknesses of Democratic Institutions

The weakness of democratic institutions, such as courts and electoral bodies, also contributes to the hijacking of democracy. In the Philippines, despite seemingly democratic elections [50], fraudulent practices and electoral manipulation show how vulnerable the political system is to outside influence. This leads to the legitimacy of the elected government being questioned, opening up space for the elite to maintain control.

The vulnerability of democratic institutions often undermines public trust in the system [51]. In the case of the Philippines, this erosion of trust is exacerbated by issues like corruption, weak enforcement of election laws, and lack of transparency. When electoral processes are manipulated, whether through vote buying, coercion, or other fraudulent activities, it becomes increasingly difficult for citizens to have confidence that their votes matter [52]. This creates an environment where the powerful elite can maintain influence, sidestepping true democratic representation. Furthermore, the lack of accountability in the judiciary and electoral bodies often results in the impunity of those responsible for undermining the integrity of elections [53], perpetuating a cycle of manipulation and inequality in the political system.

3.9. Local Political Culture

Local political culture plays a significant role in shaping people's perceptions of democracy and leadership. In Indonesia and Timor Leste, while people generally support democratic principles, trust in charismatic leaders often leads to tolerance of authoritarian practices. This tendency reflects a deeper sociopolitical pattern in which leadership is evaluated not solely based on democratic norms but also on personal qualities such as strength, decisiveness, and paternalistic authority. As a result, many citizens equate strong leadership with stability and national unity, even when such leadership styles reduce transparency, weaken institutional checks, or limit political pluralism. The research found that people tend to accept strong leadership for the sake of stability, which can lead to the hijacking of democracy, particularly when political elites capitalize on this cultural inclination to justify centralized authority and restrict opposition. Thus, political culture becomes both a foundation for democratic aspirations and a vulnerability that can be exploited during leadership transitions.

In both Indonesia and Timor Leste [54], the historical context of political instability and the desire for peace and order often contribute to this mindset. Years of authoritarian rule, conflict, and institutional fragility have shaped public expectations, creating a collective memory that associates strong leadership with security and social cohesion. This legacy influences contemporary political attitudes, leading citizens to prefer leaders who promise firmness and rapid decision-making, even at the expense of democratic accountability. The experience of conflict and the lingering fear of instability reinforce the perception that limits on civil liberties or political competition are acceptable trade-offs for national harmony [55]. Such conditions create an environment where authoritarian practices are normalized and embedded into political routines, as people prioritize immediate security and economic growth over long-term democratic development. Over time, this cultural acceptance of strongman politics can weaken democratic institutions, reduce civic participation, and make societies more vulnerable to elite manipulation during leadership transitions.

3.10. International Pressure and Media Control

International pressure has varied impacts in the context of leadership transitions [56]. Countries with strong international support, such as Indonesia, tend to be better able to sustain democratic processes despite challenges [57]. In contrast, in countries that receive less international attention, tight media control and restrictions on freedom of expression discourage public discussion of the democratization process, thereby strengthening the position of the ruling elite. From the above problems, efforts are needed to prevent the hijacking of democracy [58]. One effective approach is to promote transparency and strengthen civil society organizations that can hold leaders accountable. Additionally, fostering international collaboration in monitoring elections and governance can help deter authoritarian tendencies.

4. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION

The findings of this study offer important managerial implications for governments, policymakers, and civil society organizations seeking to safeguard democratic integrity during leadership transitions. Strengthening transparency, accountability, and institutional checks is essential to countering the risk of democracy hijacking by political elites or military actors. Decision makers should prioritize reforms that reinforce the independence of oversight bodies, ensure fair and competitive electoral processes, and prevent the concentration of political power within narrow networks. Enhancing the rule of law through stronger judicial autonomy,

improving public access to political information, and implementing robust mechanisms for monitoring government actions can significantly reduce corruption and rebuild public trust. These efforts create a more stable governance environment that encourages civic engagement and supports the development of resilient institutions aligned with the principles of SDGs 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.

Additionally, this study highlights the need for strategic collaboration among stakeholders including state institutions, international partners, academic institutions, and local communities to foster a political climate that resists authoritarian tendencies. Empowering the media and civil society to operate freely and independently is crucial for ensuring that citizens remain informed and able to hold leaders accountable. Beyond institutional reforms, leadership training programs, civic education initiatives, and digital transparency tools can help create a more participatory political culture that values dialogue over domination. Managers and practitioners in governance sectors should adopt adaptive strategies that consider local political norms, cultural expectations, and historical contexts, ensuring that democratic safeguards remain effective across different Asian countries. By integrating these approaches, governments can establish resilient systems that protect leadership transitions from manipulation, enhance social stability, and support sustainable democratic development across the region.

5. CONCLUSION


This study demonstrates that democracy hijacking during leadership transitions in Asia is not an isolated or spontaneous occurrence but the product of deeply embedded political dynamics involving elites, military actors, weak institutions, and sociocultural patterns that normalize authoritarian practices. Through a comparative analysis across several Asian countries, the research shows that democratic backsliding tends to emerge when power holders strategically manipulate transition periods to preserve their dominance, often under the guise of maintaining stability or protecting national interests. These findings contribute to the broader literature by conceptualizing democracy hijacking not merely as a symptom of authoritarian resurgence but as a deliberate, structured intervention by influential actors who exploit institutional vulnerabilities. Understanding these mechanisms is essential for developing more resilient democratic systems capable of withstanding both internal and external pressures.

The study further emphasizes that safeguarding democracy requires strengthening institutional integrity, enhancing transparency, and fostering active civic participation. Weak electoral bodies, compromised judicial systems, and restricted media environments create fertile ground for elite manipulation, allowing political transitions to become tools for entrenching power rather than renewing democratic legitimacy. Because leadership transitions represent critical junctures where democratic values are most susceptible to distortion, governments must prioritize reforms that ensure independence, professionalism, and accountability within key institutions. Moreover, the role of local political culture especially public tolerance for strong leaders underscores the importance of investing in civic education and public awareness initiatives that promote democratic norms, critical thinking, and participatory engagement.

Finally, this research highlights the broader implications of democracy hijacking for sustainable development, social cohesion, and regional stability, aligning strongly with the objectives of SDGs 16 on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions. To counteract democratic erosion, policymakers are encouraged to adopt proactive strategies such as early warning systems for political manipulation, collaborative monitoring frameworks involving civil society, and digital platforms that enhance government transparency. Future research may expand on these findings by examining long-term patterns of elite behavior, the evolving role of digital media in shaping political accountability, and the impact of international pressure on domestic political reforms. By reinforcing democratic safeguards and empowering citizens, Asian countries can build more resilient governance systems that protect leadership transitions from undemocratic interference and ensure that democratic processes contribute meaningfully to social prosperity and institutional integrity.

6. DECLARATIONS

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6.2. Author Contributions

Conceptualization: SQ and MM; Methodology: AC; Software: DL; Validation: MM; Formal Analysis: SQ, DL, and AC; Investigation: MM; Resources: SQ; Data Curation: DL; Writing Original Draft Preparation: MM and SQ; Writing Review and Editing: AC, DL, and MM; Visualization: AC; All authors, MM, AC, SQ and DL have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

6.3. Data Availability Statement

The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

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6.5. Declaration of Conflicting Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest, known competing financial interests, or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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