

Gender, Rural Governance, and Clan Networks: Rethinking a High-Profile Case in Contemporary China

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Abstract

This article has attempted to examine the incident of the chained woman that took place in Dongji Village, China, in 2022 through the lens of traditional culture. The chained woman's living place was not locked, and villagers were generally aware of her situation—but why was she not rescued? Why did the local Douyin blogger who found her use her story as social media fodder rather than recognise it as a crime of gender violence? From the perspective of traditional Confucianism and clan culture, this paper has revealed the connection between gender violence against women in contemporary rural China and the traditional culture of local clans. It argues that, in some grassroots villages in China today, the existence of clans is not only a collective identity system that maintains the patriarchal social order but also a social network that implicitly supports gender oppression. This network reinforces mutual support and patronage among men of the same surname, creates an exclusive structure in the distribution of power and benefits, and shapes local villagers' consciousness and conception of women, placing women in a position of instrumentality and dependence.

Keywords: chained woman, clan culture, Confucianism, rural area, gender-based violence

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Introduction

In December 2021, the Urban Management Bureau and the Veteran Affairs Bureau in Fengxian County, Xuzhou City, Jiangsu Province, China jointly organized a charity event to provide living assistance to low-income families. Dong Zhimin, a villager from Dongji Village in Fengxian County, was one of the beneficiaries. According to local media, Dong's family was financially tight, and he needed to support his aged mother and a disabled brother. In addition, he had eight children, of which seven were between 3 and 10 years old. After this event, some local Douyin (TikTok China) bloggers went to Dong's family to take videos that were about the shabby house and seven children playing happily, showing the contrast of “difficult but optimistic”. Furthermore, Dong Zhimin was portrayed as a great father who took on the responsibility of the family.

However, in the process of constructing the image of the “poor but tough household”, such narratives have overlooked one key point: the mother of the eight children had never appeared. It wasn't until 28 January 2022 that Douyin blogger @徐州一修哥 happened to film a simple shack next to the compound during a live broadcast of the Dong family, pushed the door open and found a woman chained at the neck inside. The video soon attracted around 2 billion views after the incident sparked public outrage. The underlying mechanism of violence behind the incident was further revealed when the woman muttered in front of the camera, “This house is full of rapists”, and “The world doesn't want me anymore” (Ai, 2022).

The rise of the Internet has provided new possibilities for the development of civil society in China (Hassid, 2012). The incident of the chained woman aroused great concern in cyberspace and became an important issue in the court of public opinion. Although the blogger who shot the video did not aim to rescue her, the proliferation of new media allowed the imprisonment to be immediately exposed through live broadcasting. After the video exploded on the Douyin platform, netizens continued to repost it on other social media platforms such as Weibo (Microblog) and Xiaohongshu (Red), quickly generating widespread public concern (Chau, 2024).

The public's intense concern and indignation over the truth of the incident centred on the following points: why was this woman chained around her neck and detained in winter in a dilapidated house wearing thin clothes with a draft on all sides? Secondly, if she was mentally ill, why wasn't she sent for treatment? According to the video, the chained woman had a young face but her teeth were badly missing; did that mean that she had been abused? In addition, the most crucial question is whether Dong Zhimin is suspected of trafficking women.

In order to calm public pressure and respond to questions, from the date of the incident to early February 2022, the Feng County and Xuzhou municipal governments issued a number of official announcements. However, these announcements did not provide sufficient explanations in the eyes of the public, but rather raised more questions (BBC, 11 February 2022). In particular, in the two announcements of 28 and 30 January 2022, the investigation team organised by the Feng County emphasised that the imprisoned woman “suffered from mental illness” as the main explanation for her detention in chains, and the issue of “whether Dong Zhimin was involved in illegal imprisonment” was not mentioned at all. Netizens have pointed out that this is an “easy-going” approach that lacks basic humane care and legal justice.

Immediately thereafter, netizens continued to ask questions, with the public further asking whether the local administrative system had intentionally shielded the suspect, Dong Zhimin,

and in particular, whether there was a structural protection mechanism in place for the local government where the incident took place. This compelled the Xuzhou municipal government to issue another notice on 10 February 2022, stating for the first time that Dong Zhimin was indeed “suspected of unlawful detention” (BBC News, 2022; Wang & Dong, 2022). Then, on 23 February 2022, the Jiangsu provincial government released the results of a further investigation. Notably, the investigation report still avoided the key question of whether the chained woman was illegally trafficked, and instead blamed local administrators for family planning mismanagement, loopholes in the marriage registration system, ineffective supervision of domestic violence and overbreeding, and the lack of a system for rescuing and treating people with mental disorders. This move has been interpreted by the public as an evasion of the core issues of the incident, further fuelling public criticism of the systemic failure to take responsibility.

Literature Review

Academic research on the chained woman incident has been carried out from multiple dimensions such as new media, communication, civil society mobilisation, and improvement of the legal system, reflecting a comprehensive interdisciplinary and multi-perspective analysis path. In particular, the online communication and mobilisation of public opinion triggered by this incident have been at the centre of many research, with Yang and Wang (2025) examining how netizens became self-assigned detectives after the release of inaccurate information by the local government, and went to Feng County to conduct field investigations. Zhang and Zhang (2024) analysed how civil society, represented by feminist netizens, strategically appropriated and adapted officially sanctioned discursive resources to fight for public opinion space and the right to express themselves under state censorship and repression, using the chained woman incident as an entry point. Zhang (2022) further pointed out that social media has significantly expanded the public awareness of the chained woman incident in the process of dissemination, providing a new mechanism for event exposure and monitoring. In addition, Zhou et al. (2022) analysed the metaphorical strategies of reporting under different media regimes, pointing out that due to the complexity and sensitivity of the chained woman incident, all kinds of metaphors worked together to serve the established media power structure and ideological goals, while Lam et al. (2025), through comparison, found that mainland Chinese media tended to portray domestic violence as a “private issue” of internal family disputes, in contrast to the differences in media presentation in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Scholars in the field of law have also debated the chained woman incident. Hao and Yang (2022) argue that the statutory penalties for human trafficking under the current law were basically reasonable, and there was no need to raise them. Luo (2022), on the other hand, argued that the criminal justice system for human trafficking must be systematically consolidated, and the statutory penalties for buyers should be moderately increased. Wang (2023) further pointed out that simply increasing the penalties is not enough to effectively curb the relevant crimes; on the contrary, it is necessary to increase deterrence through the application of the existing legal provisions and by combining the rules of adjudication in typical cases to enhance the normativity of judicial application.

In addition, Xu (2022) suggested that there were also possible ways to address the issue of women trafficking from cultural and ethical perspectives. She suggested that Confucian values and the complementary theory of “Yin and Yang” in the I Ching can serve as ideological resources for the promotion of women's status in society, which can help to enhance the awareness of gender equality as a whole. At the same time, Xu also called for paying more

attention to the characteristics of values and ethical systems in rural areas. This view of hers is highly compatible with the view of this article.

The incident of the chained woman exposes not only the tragedy of individual women being trafficked, but also the result of the phenomenon of small-community crime in rural areas being nurtured in a specific cultural soil. Starting from Confucianism and the clan system in traditional Chinese culture, this article tries to explore the cultural roots of the indifference, connivance, and even rationalisation shown by the people in rural areas in the face of gender violence. Two main issues will be discussed: first, how are the Confucian ethical concepts of women, family harmony and maintenance of social order used to shield individual rights violations in rural societies? Secondly, while maintaining the internal stability of rural society, does the clan system form an implicit mechanism of exclusion and domination over outsiders (especially women)? Through this analysis, this article aims to reveal the more complex and deeper cultural and social structural factors behind the problem of gender violence in contemporary rural China.

Research Methods

Based on a traditional cultural perspective, this article takes Confucianism and the clan system as its analytical framework and adopts qualitative research and documentary analysis to systematically examine the cultural roots of indifference to gender violence and the tendency to rationalise it among people in rural areas. The study is mainly carried out through the following paths.

Firstly, through a combing of classical Confucian literature and local archives, this article traces the process of institutionalisation of traditional gender concepts and their modern changes, focusing on how the conceptual system of Confucian ethics on the positioning of women's roles and the construction of the social order has evolved into a discourse tool for suppressing the rights of the female individual in modern rural society. Secondly, this article analyses in depth how the clan system, while maintaining the stability of rural society, has formed a set of hidden mechanisms to exclude and dominate female members through its organisational structure and mindset. On this basis, the interaction between Confucian ethics and the clan system will be further explored, revealing how the two together shape the gender power pattern in rural society. Ultimately, the above analysis will shed light on how traditional cultural factors influence people's collective perceptions of and behavioural responses to gender-based violence, thereby revealing the complex mechanisms linking traditional culture and contemporary gender-based violence.

The View of Women in Clan Society in the Context of Confucian Culture

Xuzhou City is located in the northwestern part of Jiangsu Province, bordering Shandong Province, and has long been within the radiation range of the Central Plains culture. Shandong has been an important birthplace of Confucian culture and is the hometown of Confucius, the founder of Confucianism. Influenced by its geography, Xuzhou has been deeply imbued with Confucianism since ancient times. Since the Han Dynasty, Liu Che (156–87 BCE), the Western Han Emperor who originated from Xuzhou, implemented the policy of “Dismissing the Hundred Schools of Thought and Exalting Only Confucianism” during his reign, establishing Confucianism as the core of the state’s ideology and vigorously pursuing a system of “ritual” and “filial piety”. This policy established the central position of Confucianism in state ideology and vigorously promoted Confucian ethical culture based on the two systems of “rites” and

“filial piety”. The system of “rites” maintained the hierarchical order of the ruler, his subjects, and the people by regulating the code of conduct in society. “Filial piety” is a family ethic focused on respecting and obeying one's parents; it is based on the ethics of blood ties, stressing the obligation of children to honour, support, and obey their parents, and it expands to become the core ethical norm that maintains family order and social stability. “Rites” and “filial piety” are mutually reinforcing, with “rites” providing social norms for “filial piety”, and “filial piety” laying the family foundation for “rites”. The purpose of the feudal ruling class in putting forward the concepts of rites and filial piety was to control the minds of the people in order to maintain the Confucian social order of “the unity of family and state”, with the fundamental aim of consolidating their rule.

The implementation of Confucianism not only strengthened the legitimacy of imperial rule but also played a profound role in educating the people. As a military and economic centre, Xuzhou absorbed the Confucian ethical concepts of loyalty, filial piety, benevolence, and righteousness. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, the local government cultivated local scholars through the establishment of Confucian institutions such as the Yunlong Academy. During this period, the imperial examination system—a system of selecting officials centred on the Confucian classics—further promoted the socialisation of Confucianism: the examinations were based on the *Four Books* and the *Five Classics*, and the *Ba Gu Wen* (eight-legged essay) was strictly adopted (Gao, 2006). After receiving Confucian training through the academies, Xuzhou literati advanced to the civil service through the imperial examinations, thus reinforcing the dominance of Confucianism at the local level.

The clan system is a form of social organisation that was formed and strengthened under the influence of Confucianism. The Confucian core idea of filial piety, which emphasises respect for ancestors and parents, provides the theoretical basis for the clan system. Confucianism advocates “benevolence and love”, but “love has its differences”. In contrast to Christian brotherly love in the Western world, which emphasises the equality of love, Confucianism advocates “love with difference”, which asserts that one's love for others should be differentiated according to the closeness of kinship: the love of blood relatives is love based on natural blood relations, and within that love, the differentiation of love is a basic feature, constituting the foundation and root of benevolence (Chen, 2011). Based on blood affinity and ethical relations, love for people follows the principle of differential order from near to far, and from close to distant. For example, a Confucian scholar would prioritise caring for his own family, followed by helping more distant relatives, and finally benefiting neighbours and outsiders as the most distant. This hierarchy of care from relatives to the most distant is a typical manifestation of the “differential order of love”. As Fei (1997) once commented, “In this Confucian society, all universal standards do not come into play, and one must ask who the target person is, and what relationship he or she has with that person before deciding what standards to apply.”

The clan, as a characteristic product of traditional Chinese culture, is composed of members who are brought together on the basis of patrilineal blood relations. In traditional China, clans are centred on males of the same surname and lineage, with an emphasis on continuity of lineage and common ancestry. A clan usually includes both direct and collateral male members, such as grandfathers, fathers, sons, grandsons, uncles, and male cousins. These male members constitute the main force of the clan, holding decision-making and executive power in clan affairs, ancestral rituals, and land distribution. The Confucian notion that “there is a difference in love” fits perfectly with the clan's practice of “internal and external differentiation”—a distinction that often renders women and outsiders as perpetual “outsiders” even within the

household. The clan tends to differentiate between inside and outside, to order kinship, to put the interests of the family first, and to advocate “familyism”, which requires all members of the clan to evaluate all matters on the basis of the interests of the family. When a conflict arises between the interests of the family and the interests of others, members of the clan are obliged to defend the interests of the family (Ye, 1996).

As a historical legacy, the clan network still exerts a far-reaching influence in contemporary Chinese rural society, particularly in regions like Xuzhou where Confucian traditions remain deeply embedded. For a long time, the family system in Xuzhou has generally emphasised traditional etiquette and patriarchal order, stressing “the proper order between the elder and the young” and “the virtues of filial piety, fraternal duty, loyalty, and trustworthiness”. In social practices such as weddings, funerals, and ancestor worship, and through the implementation of systems such as ancestral halls, genealogical records, and clan rules, clans have effectively assumed the functions of local governance, education, and relief. Xuzhou clans practised the “clan chief system”, in which elders of high moral standing who were well-versed in Confucianism acted as clan chiefs, managing their clans according to the Confucian concepts of “moral governance” and “governance by virtue”. Some large clans also established charitable estates and schools—such as the charitable land system of the Cui clan in Tongshan during the Qing Dynasty—which provided support for the poor and weak within the clan, embodying the Confucian ideal of “respecting the elderly of one's own family as well as those of others”. This interaction demonstrates that Confucianism provided moral legitimacy to the Xuzhou clan system, while the clan system served as the concrete practice of Confucian ethics in grassroots society.

The combination of Confucianism and the clan system has produced specific social norms, and the gender concepts embedded in the clan system are likewise derived from Confucianism. Although the representative figures of Confucianism, Confucius and Mencius, both lost their fathers at an early age and were brought up by their mothers, the overall gender concepts established in the Confucian system of thought reinforced the subordinate status of women. The traditional patriarchal society was founded on the hierarchical principles of “respect for elders and the subordination of women”. Confucian classics such as *Li Ji Nei Ze* (The Book of Rites: Domestic Rules) and *Yi Li* (The Ceremonials and Rites) explicitly prescribed the subordinate role of women as “obeying their fathers before marriage, their husbands after marriage, and their sons in widowhood”.

The gender inequality that prevailed in ancient Chinese society was concretely and profoundly reflected in the clan system of the Xuzhou region. The clan, as a social organisation linked by blood ties, operates on a distinctly patriarchal membership basis. In this system, women associated with the male members of the clan—such as wives, mothers, and unmarried daughters—although living within the clan, occupy a marginal position. Wives, though married into their husbands' clans, are often regarded as “outsiders”, while daughters, once married, are regarded as “spilled water” and formally separated from their natal clans to join their husbands' clans. This arrangement of gender marginalisation not only shapes the power structure within the family but also has a profound impact on the social relations and ethical order of rural society.

By controlling marriage arrangements and property inheritance, the clan system effectively preserves and transmits Confucian gender ethics and perpetuates patriarchal power structures from generation to generation. Although the women's liberation movement after the founding of New China abolished many customs that discriminated against women, concepts such as the

preference for men over women still exist to varying degrees in areas where clan culture is deeply rooted, such as Xuzhou. Men still hold decision-making power and the right to speak within the clan, while women remain primarily responsible for the reproductive labour of the family. This phenomenon demonstrates that the cultural traditions formed through the long-term interaction between Confucianism and the clan system have had a profound and complex impact on the shaping of gender concepts, and that their legacy has not yet completely dissipated in contemporary society.

Discussion

Clan descent is a key element in understanding the structure of traditional Chinese society. As the core of descent theory, the patriarchal system not only establishes the organisational principles of the clan but also bears the primary responsibility for presiding over religious and ethical affairs such as ancestor worship (Hu, 2015). In ancient times, due to the low productivity of agricultural societies, the bureaucratic system originating from the will of the emperor could hardly penetrate grassroots areas below the county level. At the same time, the land-centred production model of agriculture made people tend to live together in family units, forming a village structure centred on the family and constructing a typical vernacular society. Particularly during the Ming and Qing dynasties, when the state delegated grassroots governance to local gentry groups, Confucianism established a patriarchal network of grassroots society through the intermediary power of clans, thus becoming an important tool for the state to govern grassroots society. Although clan leaders nowadays are usually no longer in control of political or economic power, they are still able to effectively organise and discipline their clan members with the help of traditional Confucian ideology. As a result of the clan chiefs' promotion of Confucian values, Confucianism not only functioned as the ideology of the ruling class at the level of the ancient Chinese feudal state but also exerts a profound influence on grassroots societies today. It can be said that Confucianism not only carries the concept of governance “above the temple” but also plays a role in organising rural society.

The Xuzhou region has long been known for its advanced agriculture and is an important base for the production of agricultural and sideline products in China. The predominantly agricultural way of life in the region has led to a pattern of settlement centred on single-surname families, with many villages forming a “one village, one surname” structure. These families often multiplied over generations and were large in scale, forming powerful clan organisations. Dongji Village, for example, falls under the jurisdiction of Huankou Town, which has 36 administrative villages, including Dongji, Dongzhuang, and Dongtang—three villages with the surname “Dong” in their names (Xuzhou Bureau of Statistics, 2021). This clearly indicates that the Dong family name holds significant influence in the local community. The Dong family in Huankou Town has a history of nearly 600 years and has established a typical large-scale clan system, complete with a clan temple, an ancestral tomb, as well as a matriarch and a family council. Historically, the Dong family has held a prominent position in Feng County, and there is even a saying: “Although you may possess a thousand hectares of good land, it is even better to have the surname Dong,” reflecting the family's prestige and influence in the local community. This is precisely the underlying reason why the chained woman was imprisoned for such a long time. The intertwining interests of blood, kinship, and geography have turned all the Dongji villagers who knew about the existence of the chained woman into a criminal community. Rural villages in China are fundamentally natural villages, and in single-surname villages such as Dongji Village in particular, the villagers have long since formed a community of shared interests in which concealing a crime becomes an act of collective self-preservation.

In the 1980s, as the urban-rural household registration system was loosened following the reforms and opening up, and as farmers began to have money in their hands to participate in the market economy, the crime of human trafficking, particularly of women from impoverished inland regions, grew significantly in China. Xuzhou, as an area that was relatively lagging behind in economic development, also retained a deep-rooted traditional clan culture. This dual context made the pursuit of gender equality there a particular challenge. Deeply entrenched patriarchal attitudes were not only reflected in social perceptions but also had a profound impact on practical areas such as resource allocation and family decision-making, leading to a more prominent imbalance in gender development in the region. Many poor men were unable to find a wife locally; thus, in order to carry on the family line, they would purchase a wife from the even poorer mountainous regions of Yunnan, Guizhou, and Sichuan (Xie & Jia, 1989).

Victims and buyers of trafficking offences are usually concentrated in rural areas. The crime of trafficking in women encompasses the sale of human beings, prolonged rape, unlawful detention, and abuse. It is often committed by more than one perpetrator and is the result of a combination of group complicity and collective harbouring. Even well-educated women from upper-middle-class backgrounds who are targeted by traffickers may be trafficked to impoverished areas, where they may face unlawful confinement, violent beatings, humiliation, rape, and forced childbirth. Although the chained woman wore chains around her neck, the house she lived in was not locked, and villagers could see her—yet no one cared. The villagers remained indifferent and did not see the imprisonment as a criminal offence—or perhaps, as the passage suggests, did not see it as a matter worth intervening in. Furthermore, the blogger who found the “chained woman” admitted that he chose to expose the incident rather than report it to the police because he hoped to use the pressure of public opinion to make Dong Zhimin treat the chained woman more kindly. He also worried that if Dong Zhimin were arrested, the children would be left unattended (Zeng, 2022).

As a result, in this environment, trafficked women are not only objectified as “commodities” but also alienated as a form of “special private property”. To protect this “property”, villagers belonging to the same clan form a set of unwritten “township rules and regulations” as well as an unspoken ‘system of complicity’” (Zhao & Fu 2023). For example, if a trafficked woman is found to be trying to escape, the buyer and nearby villagers will unite to keep a close watch on her; when the police come to rescue her, the villagers will notify each other and refuse to cooperate, making it impossible for the police to locate her. Should a bought wife be discovered, the villagers will gather to obstruct the police from taking her away. This phenomenon is not unique to Dongji Village. In fact, when it comes to the abduction and trafficking of women and children, the villages involved effectively become a criminal community, bound not by formal conspiracy but by shared economic interests and kinship obligations. (He, 2022).

So why did the Dong clan, an important part of the local power structure, fail to stand up and stop this tragedy? There are two reasons. First, clan culture itself is strongly patriarchal, and women are often seen as subordinates or outsiders. This is a feudal legacy of traditional Chinese culture that persists today (Gu, 2006). In the traditional clan order, the status of male members is naturally higher than that of females, especially those who are not from the clan—such as women who have been trafficked or married out of the clan. As a “foreigner” with the surname Yang, the chained woman was seen by the Dong clan as a mere “tool to carry on the family line” rather than as a member of the clan worthy of protection. Even if she was illegally detained, abused, or subjected to sexual violence, members of the clan may have regarded it as “Dong Zhimin's family business” and thus lacked the moral motivation to intervene. This

indifference is not accidental but stems from the deeper logic of Confucian patriarchal culture, which enshrines the principles of “distinction between inner and outer spheres” and “male superiority over female inferiority”. Within this framework, women are tacitly assigned to their husband's family, their fates dictated by male authority, while outsiders—including other male clan members—are accorded no right to intervene, as the Confucian ethical order systematically delegitimises external interference in what is constructed as a “domestic affair”.

Second, clan society attaches great importance to “honour” and “decency”, and tends to digest conflicts internally rather than expose problems publicly. After public opinion surrounding the chained woman incident intensified, some Dongji villagers still tried to defend Dong Zhimin, claiming that “the chained woman has mental problems, and it is for her own good that she is locked up” (Jimu News, 2022). Behind this kind of rhetoric lies the clan culture's obsession with the notion that “family scandal cannot be publicised”. In their view, rather than allowing what happened to the chained woman to become the focus of society and tarnish the clan's image, it is better to maintain superficial harmony and condone the continuation of atrocities in the shadows—a logic that prioritises collective reputation over individual suffering and effectively sanctions impunity.

Conclusion

The chain that had been locked around the woman's neck for years was not only a constraint on her body but also an extreme trampling of her humanity and dignity. The villagers' blindness and the passive inaction of local law enforcement agencies reflected a serious lack of state public power at the grassroots level. This kind of power indulgence and governance failure has exacerbated the deterioration of the social ecology, turning the countryside into a marginal zone on the verge of a breakdown of civilised order. There is no constant boundary between the “normal” and the “pathological”; they are in a state of historical flux and evolution (Canguilhem, 1991). What becomes “normal” in a given social context is thus the product of contingent historical forces, not of moral or medical necessity. Trafficking in women is not only tolerated but is even condoned and internalised as a normal norm—a socially generated pathology. Communities of interest, bound by blood, kinship, and geography, have created a “norm” in rural societies of “joint criminality” that harbours the abuse of women. This “norm” is neither natural nor historically inevitable but is the result of the co-construction of local social structures and cultural mechanisms.

The structural characteristics of clan culture not only promote the objectification and control of women's bodies but also perpetuate and reproduce gender violence in local societies through implicit power mechanisms. The failure of the Dong clan to explicitly stop Dong Zhimin's abusive behaviour towards women reflects a deep-seated problem: the dysfunctionality and ethical failure of traditional clan culture in rural societies that have not yet been adequately penetrated by the modern legal order. When clan culture, local protectionism, and gender violence form a conspiracy, the law often fails to be fully effective. In this case, despite strong public condemnation, only a handful of grassroots officials were held accountable, while the clan forces that had long condoned or even participated in the cover-up were not fundamentally challenged. It was not the self-purification of the clan that made the incident publicised and widely disseminated, but rather the involvement of external media, the sustained voice of public opinion, and the active intervention of the state's judicial power. In short, the chained woman incident demonstrates that to break this cycle, it is not only necessary to improve law enforcement but even more crucial to deconstruct the patriarchal network of clan control over

rural society; otherwise, more chained women will exist in even more insidious ways in the future.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

The author declares that Grammarly, an AI-assisted writing software, was used in proofreading and refining the language used in the manuscript. The usage was limited to correcting grammatical and spelling errors and rephrasing statements for accuracy and clarity. The author further declares that, apart from Grammarly, no other AI or AI-assisted technologies have been used to generate content in writing the manuscript. The ideas, design, procedures, findings, analyses, and discussion are originally written and derived from careful and systematic conduct of the research.

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