



Review

Understanding and addressing the global impact: A systematic review and cross-sectional bibliometric analysis of Langya henipavirus and pre-existing severe henipaviruses



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ABSTRACT

In 2022, Langya henipavirus was identified in patients with fever in eastern China. This study provides an overview of the scientific landscape, highlights research focus areas, and outlines potential future investigations. The relevant scientific literature was systematically searched and reviewed via advanced bibliometric techniques. Over the past two decades, henipavirus research has increased at an annual rate of 8.82%. The United States leads in research output, with the Australian Animal Health Laboratory as the top institution. Most articles are published in the *Journal of Virology*, identified as the most influential journal along with researcher Wang LF. Current research focuses on “zoonosis,” “vaccine,” and “pathogenesis,” whereas future areas may include “molecular docking,” “immunoinformatics,” “climate change,” “antibodies,” “vaccines,” “glycoprotein,” and “ephrin-b2.” This study details henipavirus research, highlighting key players, trends, and future directions. These insights will guide future efforts to address the risks posed by novel Henipaviruses, such as Langya.

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Contents

Introduction	2
Materials and methods	2
Literature search	2
Bibliometric analysis	2
Results	2
Scientific output and research performance	2
Scientific impact of journals and authors	3
Cooperation networks of institutions and scientists	6
Research hotspots and frontier directions in the field of henipaviruses	6
Discussion	6
Authors' contributions	11
Funding	11
Declaration of Competing Interest	11

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Appendix A Supporting information	11
References	11

Introduction

Langya henipavirus (also known as Langya virus or LayV), a novel member of the *Henipavirus* genus within the family *Paramyxoviridae* and the order *Mononegavirales*, has quickly become a focal point in the field of viral research [1,2]. Langya henipavirus exhibits a distinct profile, particularly in terms of host specificity and receptor binding characteristics [3,4], that differentiates it from other established henipaviruses like Hendra and Nipah. These latter viruses have been the cause of catastrophic outbreaks with significant fatality rates in Australia, Southeast Asia, and South Asia since the late 20th century [5–7]. The zoonotic potential of these viruses has been a significant concern, prompting a global vigilance for their emergence and spread [8]. Langya henipavirus's emergence is not just another addition to the *Henipavirus* family; it signifies a new dimension in the threat landscape of zoonotic diseases, demanding a reevaluation of our understanding and preparedness [9]. Langya henipavirus shares genetic similarities with other henipaviruses but presents distinct features that warrant further investigation [10]. Its discovery underscores the importance of surveillance efforts in identifying novel viral threats and highlights the need for proactive measures to mitigate potential spillover events [11]. As a single-stranded RNA virus, Langya henipavirus may exhibit a mutation rate comparable to that in severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) [12], which has profound implications for its potential to evolve and adapt in the human population. Therefore, further research is imperative to comprehensively understand the characteristics and risks associated with Langya henipavirus, paving the way for effective prevention and control strategies.

Bibliometric analysis serves as a valuable tool in assessing the scientific landscape surrounding emerging infectious diseases such as Langya henipavirus [13–15]. By analyzing publications related to Langya henipavirus, researchers can gain insights into the extent of research activity, key contributors, geographic distribution, and thematic trends [16]. This information not only aids in understanding the current state of knowledge but also guides future research directions and resource allocation to address gaps in understanding and preparedness.

In this study, we present a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of Langya henipavirus research, encompassing publications from various scientific disciplines and geographic regions. Through a systematic literature review and analysis, we aim to provide a comprehensive overview of the scientific landscape surrounding Langya henipavirus, identify areas of research focus, and delineate potential avenues for future investigations. Our findings contribute to the collective knowledge base on Langya henipavirus and inform strategies for enhanced surveillance, prevention, and control of emerging henipaviruses.

Materials and methods

Literature search

Historical documents of global significance were meticulously retrieved from the esteemed Web of Science Core Collection (WOSCC), employing a refined search strategy incorporating keywords such as “henipavirus,” “Hendra virus,” “Nipah virus,” “Langya henipavirus,” and “LayV.” Our inclusion criteria were stringent, requiring that documents be indexed in WOSCC and demonstrate relevance to Langya henipavirus, Hendra virus, or Nipah virus in their titles or abstracts. To maintain the integrity of the review process,

retracted and duplicated studies were systematically excluded by manual methods. Initial screening utilized sophisticated character-matching algorithms implemented in R software (version 4.2.1), followed by meticulous manual examination by two independent scientists employing a double-blind methodology. This meticulous approach ensured the comprehensive evaluation of each document, enhancing the reliability and credibility of our review findings. Additionally, the PubMed database was incorporated to mitigate potential biases.

Bibliometric analysis

Using the “bibliometrix” R package (version 4.1.3), we meticulously extracted metadata from a comprehensive selection of 1546 documents spanning the years 1998–2024. Most of the content (83.96%) consists of scholarly articles and reviews, reflecting the field's academic depth. We obtained a total of 2096 keywords, 5157 authors, 32256 references, and contributions from 412 distinct journals. Subsequently, employing advanced mathematical and statistical methodologies within the “bibliometrix” R package, we conducted a quantitative exploration of the research landscape surrounding Langya henipavirus and pre-existing severe henipaviruses. Leveraging the power of science mapping techniques, we delved into key dimensions, including scientific output, literature citation patterns, international collaboration dynamics, thematic evolution trajectories, and emergent frontier topics, to elucidate the evolving contours of scholarly discourse within the academic community.

To assess the productivity and impact of journals and authors, we employed robust metrics such as the H-index and G-index. The H-index, denoting the number H such that an author has H papers each cited at least H times, and the G-index, representing the highest number of top G publications with at least G² citations, provide nuanced insights into the scholarly influence wielded by key stakeholders in the field. To further enrich our analysis, we constructed a dynamic cooccurrence map of keywords across temporal dimensions via the VOSviewer software (version 1.6.18), facilitating a granular exploration of thematic trends and shifts over time [17,18]. Moreover, leveraging the capabilities of CiteSpace (version 6.3.R1), we conducted rigorous keyword clustering and citation burst detection analyses, leveraging thresholds such as a Q-score > 0.3 and an S-score > 0.7 to ensure the structural integrity and credibility of our findings [19–21].

Results

Scientific output and research performance

With stringent inclusion and exclusion criteria, the current study undertook a cross-sectional exploration within the research domain of Langya henipavirus and pre-existing severe henipaviruses via WOSCC and PubMed (Fig. 1 and Supplemental Figure 1). Over the past two decades, scientific output within the field of henipaviruses has exhibited a consistent upward trajectory, with an annual growth rate of 8.82% (Fig. 2A). The cumulative publication count was accurately modeled via the following formula:

$$y = 6.26 \times 10^6 - 6.29 \times 10^3x + 1.58x^2 \quad (R^2 = 0.999)$$

The United States emerged as the foremost contributor to henipavirus research, followed by Australia and India (Fig. 2B). Notably, the Australian Animal Health Laboratory, the University of Texas

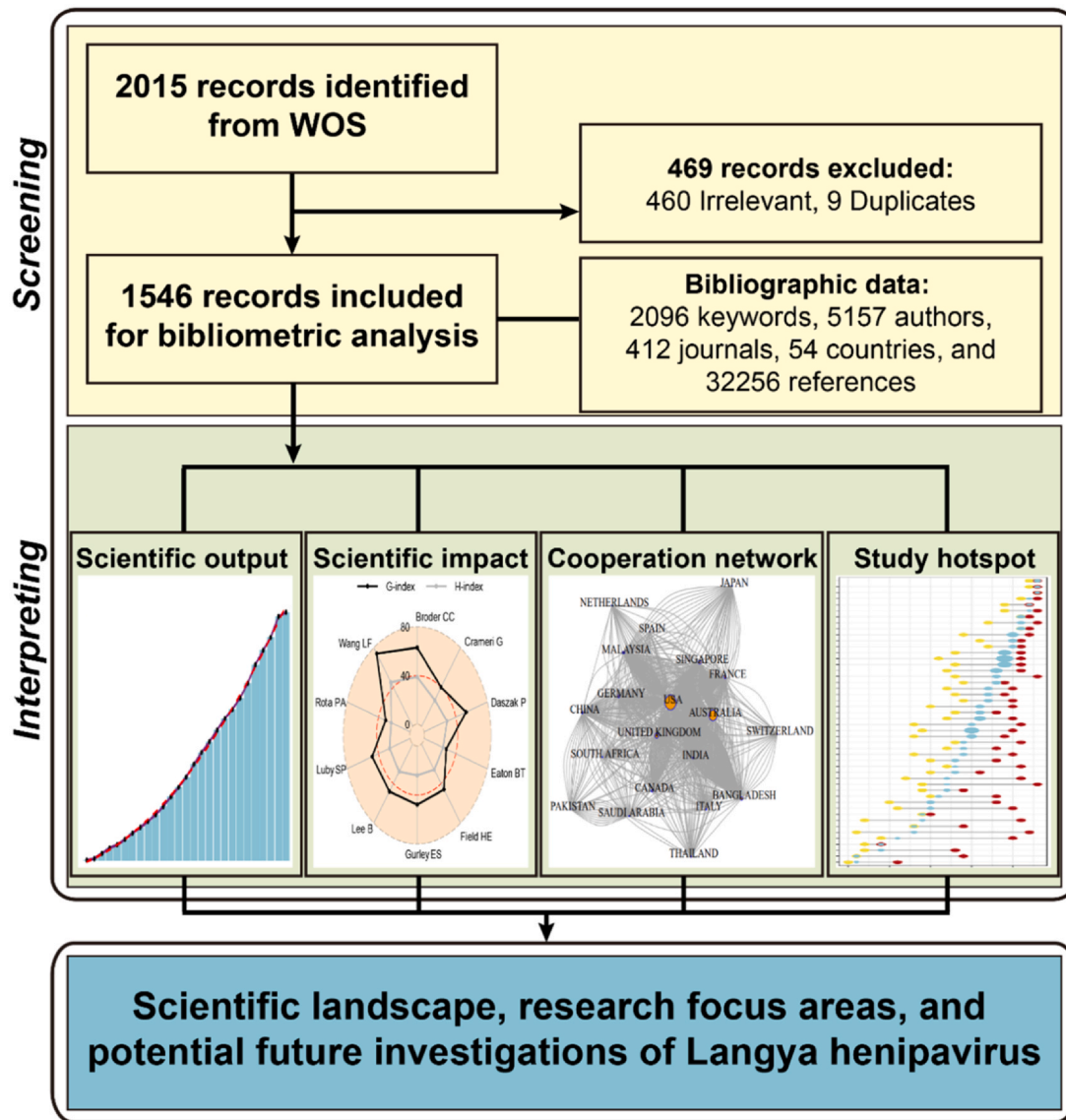


Fig. 1. Flow diagram for the comprehensive bibliometric analysis of Langya henipavirus and pre-existing severe henipaviruses.

Medical Branch, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) emerged as the three most prolific scientific institutions (Fig. 2C). The Australian Animal Health Laboratory exhibited a particularly noteworthy annual article output, whereas the CDC displayed promising growth trends, poised to potentially surpass the former shortly (Fig. 2D). The leading publishing outlets in this domain included the *Journal of Virology*, *PLoS One*, and *Emerging Infectious Diseases* (Fig. 2E). Among these, the *Journal of Virology* stood out for its notably higher annual publication count, a trend anticipated to persist for the foreseeable future (Fig. 2F). The noteworthy authors within the field included Wang LF, Broder CC, and Daszak P, who emerged as the top three most prolific contributors (Fig. 2G).

Scientific impact of journals and authors

Applying Bradford's Law, we delineated the core publishing zones within the research domain of Langya henipavirus and pre-existing severe henipaviruses (Fig. 3A, Table 1). Notably, the *Journal of Virology* had the highest total number of citations among these core zones (Fig. 3B). Wang LF emerged as the most locally cited scientist within this field (Fig. 3C). In terms of individual publications, the average number of citations per document was 36.86%, with Chua KB's study in *Science* being the most locally cited reference (Fig. 3D) [22]. Evaluating the H-index and G-index metrics, both the *Journal of Virology* and Wang LF were identified as the most

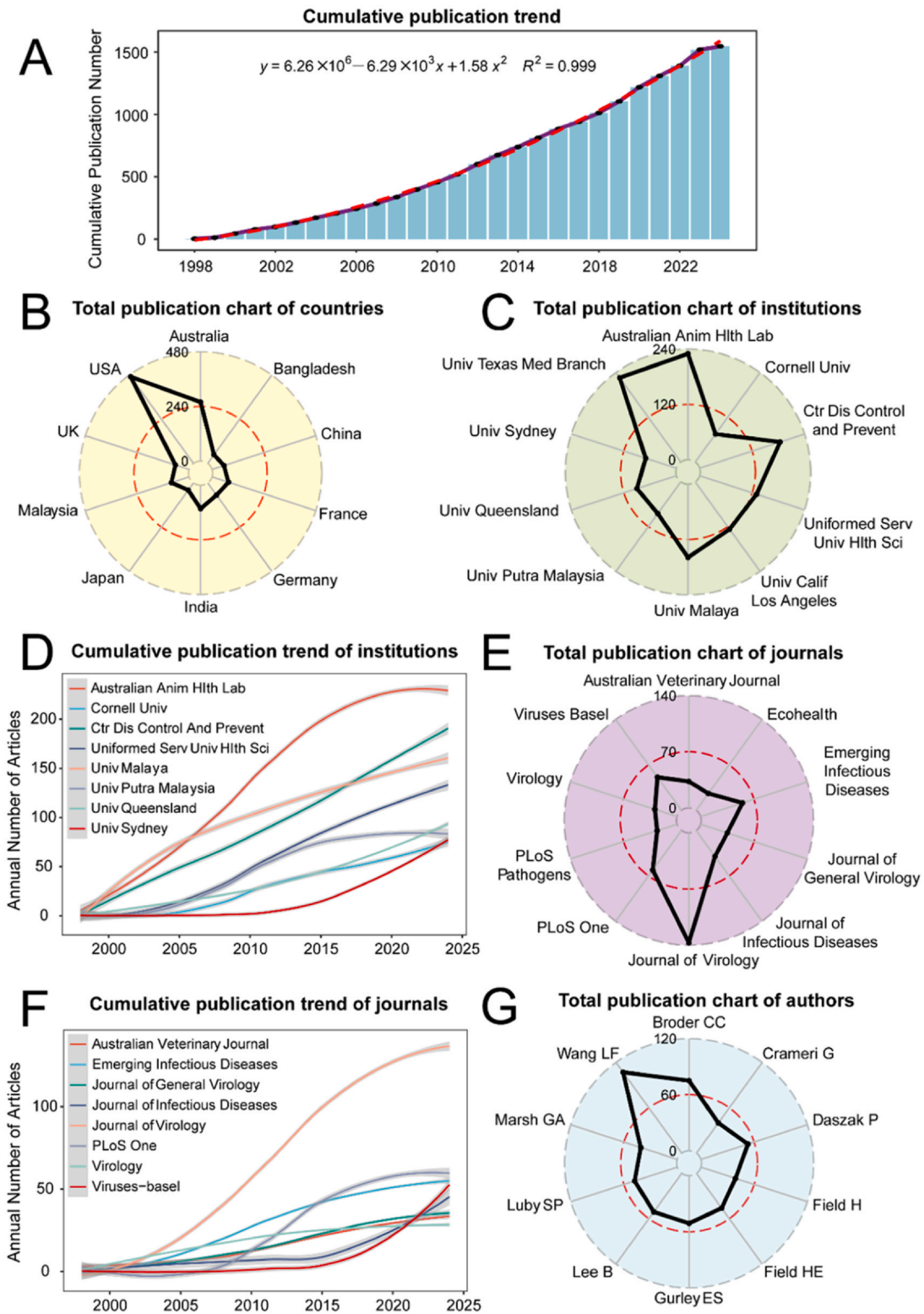


Fig. 2. Overview of research output in the field of Langya henipavirus and pre-existing severe henipaviruses, including Nipah virus and Hendra virus (A) Cumulative publication trends of Langya henipavirus and pre-existing severe henipaviruses, including Nipah virus and Hendra virus (B) Scientific output by country (C, D) Institutional contributions to scientific output (E, F) Scientific output across journals (G) Contribution of individual authors to scientific literature.

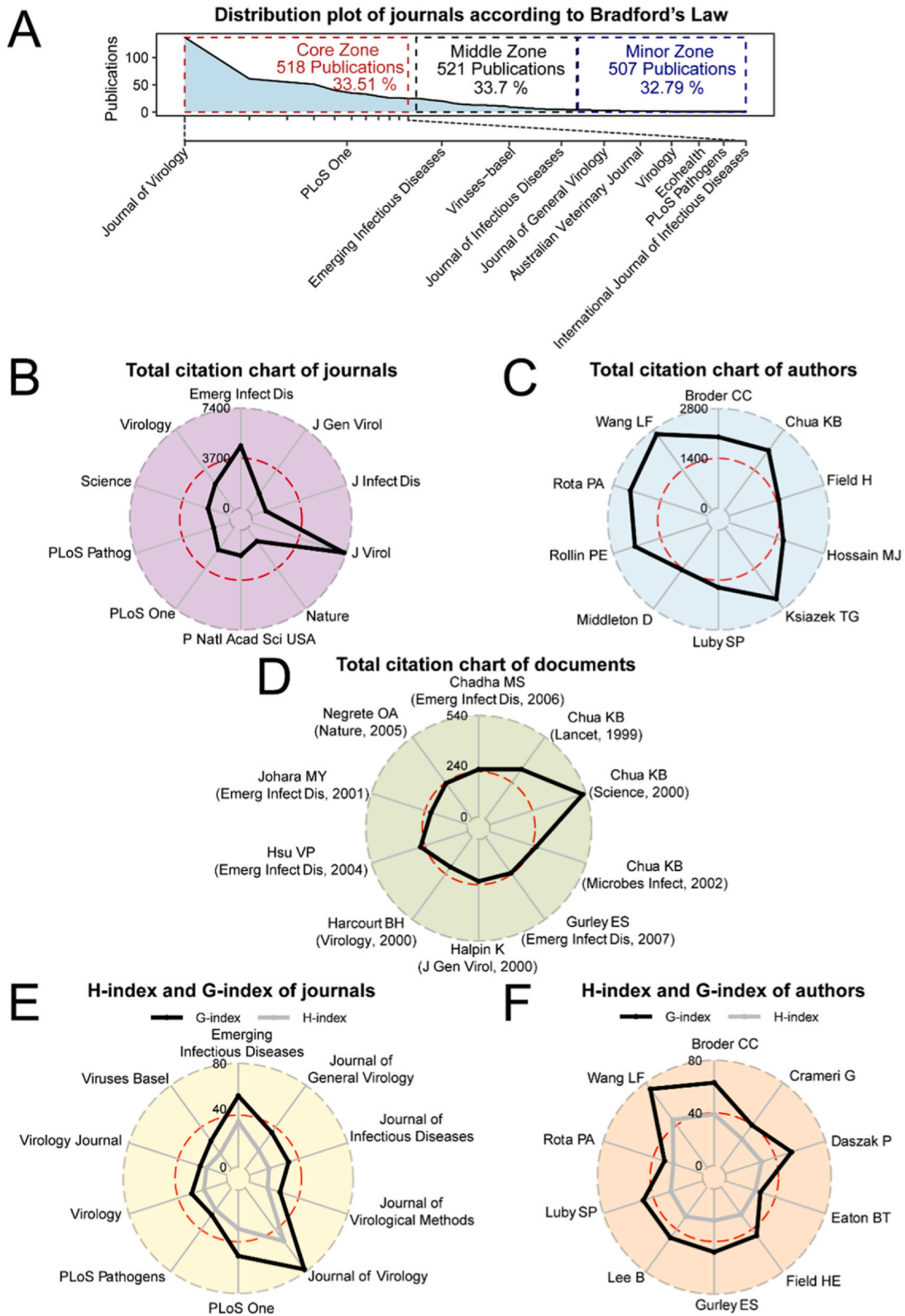


Fig. 3. Analysis of citations in the field of Langya henipavirus and pre-existing severe henipaviruses (A) Applying Bradford's Law, the core publishing zones were identified within the research domain of Langya henipavirus and pre-existing severe henipaviruses. (B) Total citations received by journals. (C) Total citations received by authors. (D) Total citations received by documents. (E, F) H-index and G-index were utilized to evaluate the productivity and impact of journals and authors. An author has an H-index if H of their papers has at least H citations each. The G-index is the highest number of top G publications that together have at least G² citations.

Table 1
Core publishing sources in the research field of Langya henipavirus and pre-existing severe henipaviruses.

Journal	Category	JCR IF (2022)	JCR quartile	ISSN	EISSN	Region
<i>Journal of Virology</i>	Virology	5.4	Q2	0022-538X	1098-5514	USA
<i>PLoS One</i>	Multidisciplinary sciences	3.7	Q2	1932-6203	1932-6203	USA
<i>Emerging Infectious Diseases</i>	Infectious diseases; immunology	11.8	Q1	1080-6040	1080-6059	USA
<i>Viruses-Basel</i>	Virology	4.7	Q2	/	1999-4915	Switzerland
<i>Journal of Infectious Diseases</i>	Microbiology; infectious diseases; immunology	6.4	Q2	0022-1899	1537-6613	USA
<i>Journal of General Virology</i>	Virology; biotechnology and applied microbiology	3.8	Q2	0022-1317	1465-2099	England
<i>Australian Veterinary Journal</i>	Veterinary sciences	1.1	Q3	0005-0423	1751-0813	Australia
<i>Virology</i>	Virology	3.7	Q3	0042-6822	1089-862X	USA
<i>Ecohealth</i>	Environmental Sciences	2.5	Q3	1612-9202	1612-9210	USA
<i>PLoS Pathogens</i>	Microbiology; virology; parasitology	6.7	Q1	1553-7366	1553-7374	USA
<i>International Journal of Infectious Diseases</i>	Infectious diseases	8.4	Q1	1201-9712	1878-3511	England

JCR., Journal Citation Reports; IF., Impact Factor; ISSN., International Standard Serial Number; EISSN., Electronic International Standard Serial Number

influential journal and researchers, respectively, within the research community (Fig. 3E and Fig. 3F).

Cooperation networks of institutions and scientists

The intricate tapestry of global scientific collaboration has fostered a paradigm shift in research dynamics, exemplified by the burgeoning rate of international coauthorships, which has soared to a remarkable 40.43%. This study delved into the forefront of collaborative endeavors, spotlighting key players such as the United States, and spearheading pioneering research on Langya henipavirus and its relationship with pre-existing severe henipaviruses (Fig. 4A). Notably, the Australian Animal Health Laboratory emerged as a nexus of collaborative synergy, intricately interwoven with diverse scientific institutions (Fig. 4B). Furthermore, a compelling narrative unfolds through the intimate collaborative ties between Wang LF and their esteemed counterparts (Fig. 4C).

Research hotspots and frontier directions in the field of henipaviruses

In the historical documents of Langya henipavirus and pre-existing severe henipaviruses retrieved from WOSCC, the most frequently occurring keywords were identified as “zoonosis,” “bat,” “vaccine,” “encephalitis,” and “pathogenesis” (Fig. 5A). These terms demonstrated a significant degree of overlap with those identified in PubMed (Supplemental Figure 2A), highlighting a high level of similarity between the two databases. Notably, thematic clustering analysis revealed that “zoonosis,” “one health,” “epidemiology,” “flying fox,” and “horse” formed a cohesive motor theme, representing well-developed and highly relevant topics within the field (Fig. 5B). Conversely, keywords such as “encephalitis,” “innate immunity,” “pathology,” “molecular docking,” and “virology” were categorized into a niche theme, highlighting more isolated research areas. Noteworthy emerging themes included “bat virus,” “COVID-19,” “diagnosis,” and “Ebola virus,” whereas fundamental concepts such as “Nipah virus,” “Hendra virus,” “henipavirus,” “paramyxovirus,” and “vaccine” were grouped in the basic theme, indicative of future developmental trajectories.

A time-sliced cooccurrence map of keywords was subsequently constructed (Fig. 6). This map revealed that “Langya henipavirus” was associated with keywords such as “vaccine,” “immunoinformatics,” and “molecular docking.” The log-likelihood ratio clustering analysis yielded 12 distinct clusters, included topics such as “fusion protein,” “emerging infectious disease,” “West Nile virus,” “molecular docking,” “monoclonal antibody,” and “Langya henipavirus” (Fig. 7A). The Q-score of 0.5608, which exceeds the threshold of 0.3, and the S-score of 0.9193, surpassing 0.7, indicate that the clustering structure is both significant and reliable. Within the “Langya

henipavirus” cluster, specific keywords such as “vaccine construction,” “immunoinformatics,” “China,” and “protein-protein docking” were prominently featured. Additionally, a timeline of keyword bursts spanning 1998–2024 revealed significant research hotspots, including “molecular docking,” “Ebola virus,” “molecular dynamics,” “public health,” and “reverse genetics,” with “molecular docking” exhibiting the highest citation burst strength (citation burst strength = 4.2677) (Fig. 7B). This timeline map also visually depicts the temporal evolution of keywords across various clusters (Fig. 7C). On the basis of quantile years of publication in WOSCC, trend topics predicted for the henipavirus research field included “molecular docking,” “molecular,” “dynamics,” “immunoinformatics,” “climate change,” “antibodies,” “SARS-CoV-2,” “Ebola virus,” “vaccine,” “glycoprotein,” and “ephrin-b2” (Fig. 7D). This aligned with the trends identified in PubMed, where “neutralizing antibodies,” “molecular docking,” and “glycoprotein” were also highlighted as emerging topics. Additionally, PubMed shed light on new topics such as “Ghana virus,” “public health,” “antiviral,” and “biosecurity” (Supplemental Figure 2B).

Discussion

To the best of our knowledge, we performed the first comprehensive systematic review and bibliometric analysis of Langya henipavirus and its pre-existing counterparts, Hendra and Nipah viruses. We present a nuanced and multifaceted portrait of the scholarly landscape surrounding Langya henipavirus and pre-existing severe henipaviruses, shedding light on key patterns, trends, and emerging frontiers that shape the trajectory of scientific inquiry in this critical domain.

We note an annual growth rate of 8.82% in scholarly output related to henipavirus research over the past two decades, highlighting sustained interest in this field. This trend likely stems from significant public health concerns, as evidenced by the prominence of terms such as “zoonosis,” “bat,” and “vaccine” within the literature. A positive correlation between time and research output is suggested by our modeling, which may be a reflection of heightened global awareness of henipaviruses and their potential impact on human health. Notably, *Henipavirus* is one of the most perilous zoonotic virus groups in the Asia-Pacific region since the dawn of the 21st century [23]. Hendra virus and Nipah virus, among the identified species, are particularly virulent pathogens responsible for human outbreaks associated with high fatality rates [4,24,25]. Hendra virus was first recognized amidst an outbreak of respiratory and neurological ailments affecting horses and humans in Hendra, a suburb situated near Brisbane, Australia [26]. Nipah virus was first identified in Malaysia and Singapore, subsequently leading to encephalitis outbreaks among pig farmers, with recurring occurrences

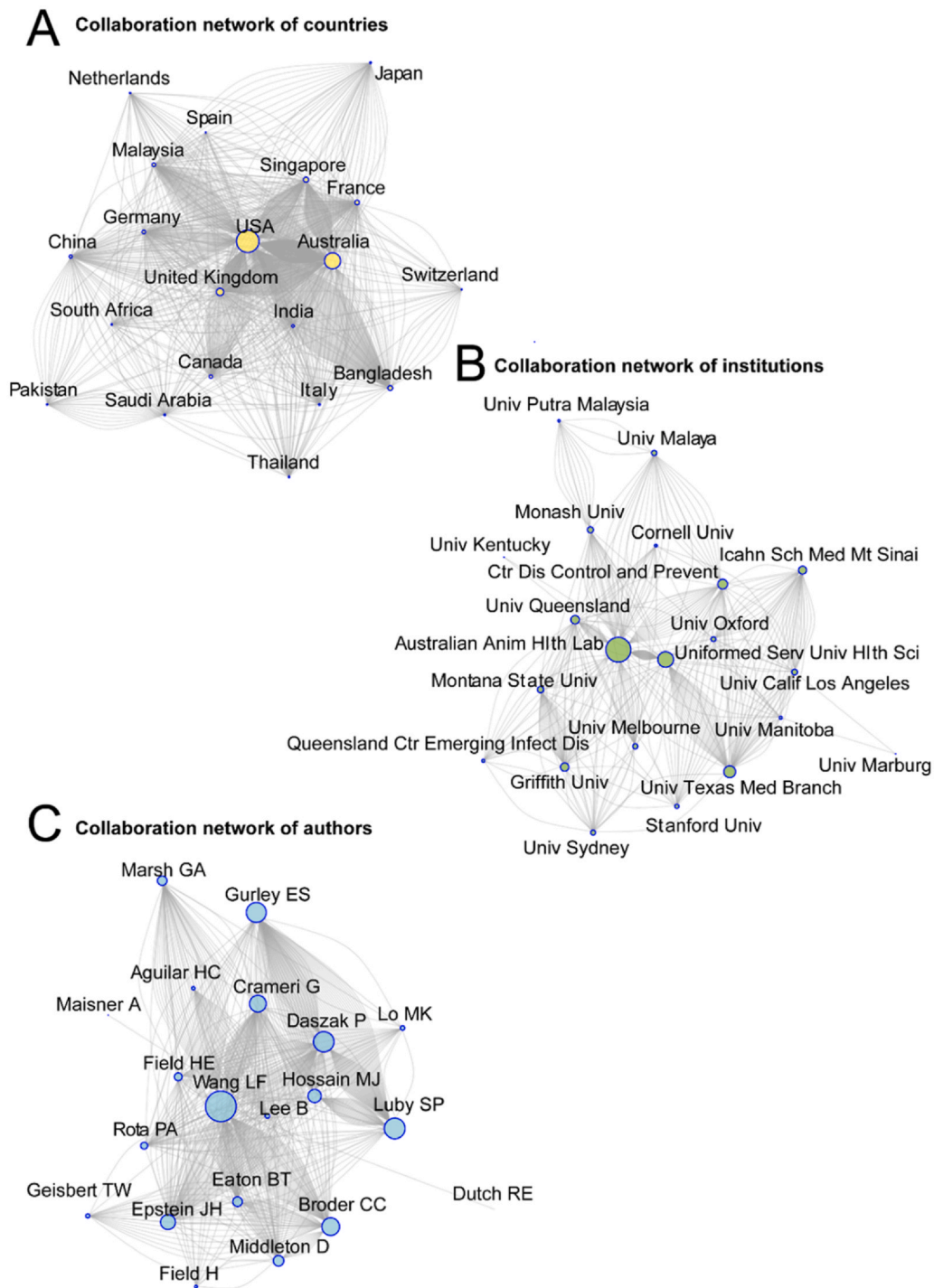


Fig. 4. Examination of international collaboration dynamics in the field of Langya henipavirus and pre-existing severe henipaviruses (A) Network analysis illustrating international collaborations between countries. (B) Network analysis highlighting collaborative relationships between institutions. (C) Network analysis depicting collaborative ties between authors.

reported nearly every year in Bangladesh and India [27,28]. These viruses have been classified as biosafety level 4 (BSL-4) pathogens, denoting the highest level of laboratory safety isolation and often representing the most dangerous and refractory viruses [29]. In 2022, a previously unknown zoonotic henipavirus, designated

Langya henipavirus, was first identified in patients exhibiting fever in eastern China [1,30]. Although no severe symptoms or documented cases of human-to-human transmission have been reported thus far [30], recognizing the possibility of future mutations that could lead to changes in its epidemiological characteristics is crucial.

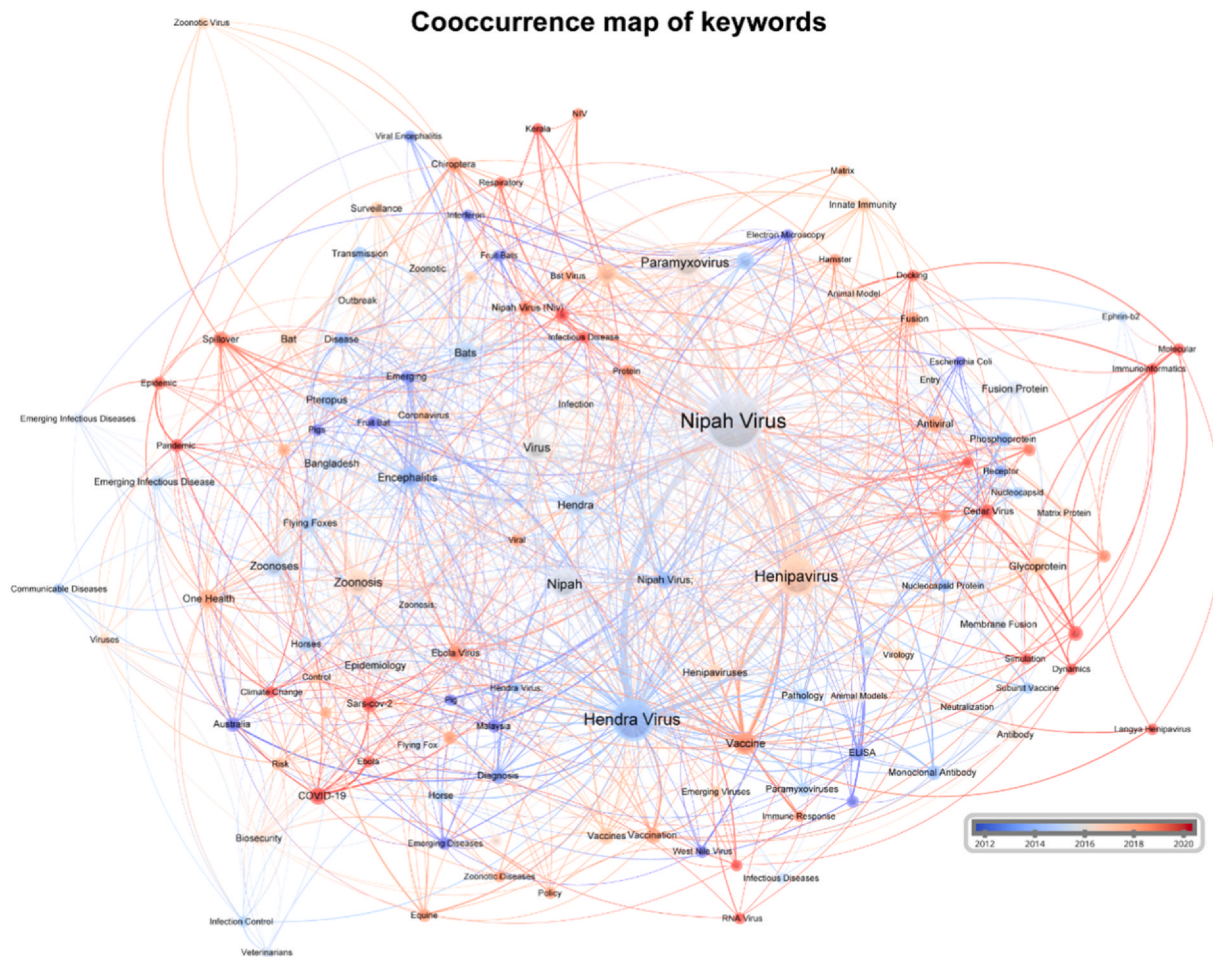


Fig. 6. Cooccurrence mapping of keywords in the research field of Langya henipavirus and pre-existing severe henipaviruses. This map revealed that “Langya henipavirus” was associated with keywords such as “vaccine,” “immunoinformatics,” and “molecular docking.”.

Our study also highlights the need for pathological research to better understand the biology of emerging henipaviruses, improve diagnostic capabilities, and develop effective interventions to prevent and control infections. Keywords such as “encephalitis,” “pathology,” and “virology” were clustered in the niche theme, reflecting a relatively isolated research area. Pathology detection is key to characterizing emerging infectious disease pathogens [22,59,60]. In 2002, on the basis of a series of 32 fatal human cases of infection, the pathology and pathogenesis of Nipah virus were comprehensively described [61]. According to their findings, endothelial cell and neuron infection, vasculitis, and thrombosis are critical to the lethal nature of Nipah virus. In 2009, scientists from the Australian Animal Health Laboratory replicated the pathological morphology of Nipah virus infection via a ferret model, characterized by multisystemic vasculitis [46]. Systemic infection and acute encephalitis have been identified as major pathogeneses of Hendra virus [62], which shares similarities with Nipah virus. The pathological characteristics and pathogenesis of Langya henipavirus remain unclear.

Although this study provides an extensive overview of the scientific discourse on Langya henipavirus, we are aware of the constraints inherent in our bibliometric analysis, especially our initial reliance on databases like Web of Science, which could potentially exclude regional literature. To mitigate this, we have broadened our scope to incorporate PubMed, thereby enriching the comprehensiveness of our research. We understand that each database possesses distinct advantages and limitations. Nevertheless, through rigorous search methodologies and stringent selection criteria, we are confident in presenting a reliable portrayal of the research domain.

In conclusion, this study provides a detailed picture of henipavirus research, identifying key players, trends, and future directions. The findings underscore the importance of continued research, international collaboration, and a focus on molecular studies and public health strategies to combat henipaviruses effectively. In the ongoing struggle against emerging infectious diseases in the context of a shifting global landscape [63], the findings of this study are poised to significantly inform and direct subsequent research

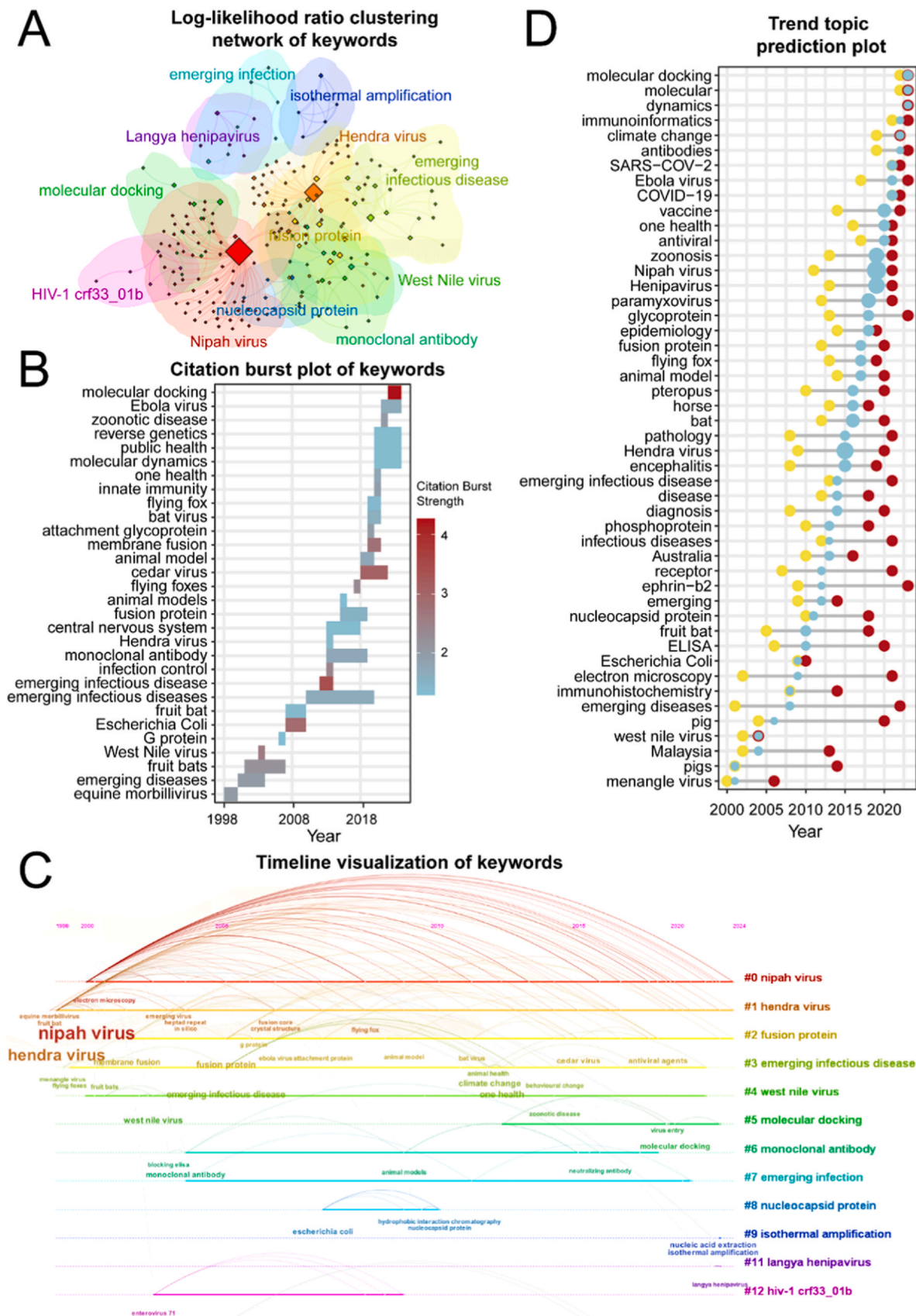


Fig. 7. Keyword clustering and frontier hotspot detection in the research field of Langya henipavirus and pre-existing severe henipaviruses (A) Log-likelihood ratio clustering analysis reveals 12 credible and well-structured clusters from henipavirus-related keywords. (B) Citation burst analysis reveals significant research hotspots. (C) Timeline map depicts the temporal evolution of keywords across various clusters. (D) Trend topics was predicted for the henipavirus research field based on the quantile years of publication. Yellow, blue, and red circles represent the first, second, and third quantile years of papers published, respectively. The size of the blue circle reflects occurrence frequency of keywords.

initiatives, bolstering our collective defense against the threats posed by novel henipaviruses, such as Langya henipavirus.

Authors' contributions

Li JD was responsible for data collection, data analysis, and visualization. Li JD and Liu YQ were responsible for reviewing the literature and writing the first draft. He RQ and Huang ZG were responsible for the design of the project. Huang WY, Huang H, and Liu ZH polished the article. Chen G was responsible for supervision and project management. All authors contributed to the final version of the manuscript and approved it for publication.

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Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

Appendix A. Supporting information

Supplementary data associated with this article can be found in the online version at [doi:10.1016/j.jiph.2024.102631](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jiph.2024.102631).

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