



# Effective Leadership Styles in Thai Educational Administration: Balancing Tradition with Innovation

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**Abstract:** Effective educational leadership in Thailand requires balancing traditional cultural values with modern leadership practices to address the challenges of a rapidly changing global educational landscape. Thai cultural norms, such as respect for hierarchy and Buddhist principles, have traditionally shaped leadership in schools. However, the integration of transformational, distributed, and instructional leadership approaches has become increasingly important for driving innovation, improving school performance, and enhancing teacher engagement. This paper explores how Thai educational leaders can successfully blend traditional values with modern practices to create a harmonious and effective school environment. It examines the impact of different leadership styles on educational outcomes, the challenges of balancing tradition with innovation, and the policy implications for leadership development in Thailand. Recommendations for supporting future educational leaders include expanding training programs, increasing school autonomy, and promoting collaborative leadership. With the right support, Thai educational leaders have the potential to transform schools, ensuring that they are both culturally responsive and future-ready.

**Keywords:** Thai educational leadership, traditional values, transformational leadership, distributed leadership, policy implications

## 1. Introduction

Educational leadership in Thailand plays a critical role in shaping the effectiveness of schools and ensuring quality education for students. Leadership in Thai educational institutions is deeply influenced by the country's unique cultural context, which emphasizes respect for hierarchy, collective harmony, and the integration of Buddhist principles into daily life. These cultural elements significantly shape the expectations and behaviors of leaders in Thai schools. Thai leaders are traditionally seen as authority figures who are expected to



maintain order, provide moral guidance, and make decisions that benefit the collective community.

In the rapidly changing global education landscape, Thai educational leaders face the challenge of adapting to modern educational practices and innovations while preserving the cultural traditions that define their leadership roles. The globalization of education and the rise of digital learning have introduced new demands on school administrators, requiring them to adopt more dynamic and responsive leadership styles.

Balancing traditional Thai values with modern educational innovations is essential for improving school performance and fostering a more dynamic learning environment. Traditional Thai educational leadership often emphasizes hierarchical decision-making, where the principal or school director is the central authority. This can sometimes stifle creativity and limit the autonomy of teachers. On the other hand, modern leadership practices, such as distributed or transformational leadership, encourage collaboration, innovation, and shared decision-making, which can lead to more engaged teachers and improved student outcomes.

However, implementing modern leadership styles in Thai schools must be done with sensitivity to cultural norms. Leaders must navigate the tension between maintaining respect for authority and embracing collaborative practices that empower teachers and students. Achieving this balance is crucial for educational leaders who aim to drive school improvement while respecting the cultural values that are important to Thai society.

The purpose of this paper is to explore different leadership styles in Thai educational administration and analyze how these styles impact the balance between tradition and innovation. By examining the effectiveness of both traditional and modern leadership approaches, this paper will highlight the challenges and opportunities that Thai educational leaders face in transforming their schools to meet the demands of a globalized education system while honoring their cultural heritage. The paper will also provide recommendations for how Thai educational leaders can effectively integrate innovative practices while maintaining the cultural values that are central to their roles.

## 2. Traditional Leadership Styles in Thai Educational Administration

**Cultural Influences on Leadership:** Thai educational leadership is deeply rooted in cultural values such as respect for hierarchy, known as *Kreng Jai*, and collectivism. *Kreng Jai* is a cultural concept that emphasizes respect for authority and the feelings of others, often leading to deference to those in higher positions. In the context of educational administration, this cultural norm encourages a top-down approach to leadership, where decisions are made by school leaders without much consultation from teachers or staff. This hierarchical structure is seen as a way to maintain harmony and order within the school environment, as challenging authority is often discouraged (Holmes & Tangtongtavy, 1995). Collectivism is another significant cultural influence, where the success and well-being of the group are prioritized over individual interests. This collective mindset reinforces the role of school leaders as protectors and decision-makers who act on behalf of the entire school community. In this context, educational leaders are expected to maintain the cohesion of the group, often leading to a leadership style that avoids conflict and seeks consensus (Hofstede, 2011).

**Patriarchal Leadership:** The traditional leadership style in Thai educational institutions is often patriarchal, characterized by a strong top-down, authoritative approach. School leaders, typically male in this context, are viewed as paternal figures who are responsible for the welfare of the school community. This leadership style emphasizes control, discipline, and the expectation that teachers and staff will follow directives without questioning authority. The principal or school director holds significant power and is expected to lead with authority, making key decisions independently (Jantarach, 2013). While this leadership style can create a stable and organized environment, it can also limit innovation and creativity. The emphasis on hierarchy often restricts the autonomy of teachers, who may feel disempowered to make decisions or contribute to school improvement efforts. This can result in a lack of collaboration and a reluctance to embrace new ideas that could enhance teaching and learning (Kitamura & Yamamoto, 2017).

**Buddhist Leadership Principles:** Buddhist teachings play a significant role in shaping leadership practices in Thai schools. Principles such as Karuna (compassion) and mindfulness are often integrated into leadership approaches, emphasizing the importance of caring for others and being present in the moment. Karuna encourages leaders to show empathy and compassion toward teachers, students, and staff, fostering a supportive and nurturing school environment. Mindfulness helps leaders remain calm and focused, enabling them to make thoughtful decisions and manage conflicts effectively (Pongpaew, 2014). Buddhist leadership principles also encourage ethical behavior, humility, and a focus on collective well-being. Thai educational leaders who adopt these principles often prioritize the moral and spiritual development of their students, in addition to academic success. These leaders may also engage in practices such as meditation and reflective decision-making, which align with Buddhist teachings and contribute to a peaceful and harmonious school environment (Sinthuphan, 2011).

**Challenges of Traditional Leadership:** Despite the stability and order that traditional leadership styles can provide, they also come with significant challenges. One of the primary limitations is resistance to change. In a hierarchical system where decisions are made by a small group of leaders, there is often a reluctance to adopt new practices or ideas that could disrupt the established order. This resistance can hinder the implementation of innovative teaching methods, technology, and educational reforms that could benefit students (Hallinger & Lee, 2014). Another challenge is the lack of teacher autonomy. In a traditional leadership model, teachers may have little input in decision-making processes, which can lead to disengagement and a lack of motivation. When teachers feel that their voices are not heard, they may be less likely to take initiative or invest in the success of the school. This can ultimately impact the quality of education and limit the potential for school improvement (Walker & Hallinger, 2018). In conclusion, while traditional leadership styles in Thai educational administration are deeply rooted in cultural and religious values, they also present challenges in adapting to modern educational needs. Balancing these traditional practices with more collaborative and innovative approaches is essential for improving the quality of education in Thailand.

### 3. Modern Leadership Styles in Thai Educational Administration

**Transformational Leadership:** Transformational leadership in Thai educational administration focuses on inspiring change and innovation in schools by motivating staff and encouraging continuous professional development. Transformational leaders act as role models, fostering a shared vision for the school and empowering teachers to achieve higher levels of performance. In the Thai context, this leadership style is gaining traction as it aligns with the growing need for schools to adapt to global educational trends and improve overall student outcomes (Hallinger, 2003). In transformational leadership, school leaders work to create a supportive and collaborative environment where teachers feel valued and motivated to innovate. By providing professional development opportunities, leaders help teachers to continuously enhance their skills and knowledge, which is crucial in a rapidly changing educational landscape. Moreover, transformational leaders in Thailand emphasize the importance of fostering a positive school culture that encourages creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving among both teachers and students (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006).

**Distributed Leadership:** Distributed leadership is an emerging trend in Thai educational administration, where decision-making is shared among staff members rather than centralized in the hands of a single leader. This collaborative approach promotes a sense of ownership and empowerment among teachers, allowing them to take on leadership roles and contribute to school improvement efforts. Distributed leadership recognizes that leadership is not confined to formal administrative positions but can be exercised by anyone within the organization (Harris, 2008). In Thailand, distributed leadership is particularly relevant in fostering innovation and adapting to new educational challenges. By involving teachers in the decision-making process, schools can benefit from diverse perspectives and ideas, leading to more effective and sustainable improvements. This leadership style also helps to build a strong sense of community within the school, as teachers feel more connected to the school's mission and goals. Distributed leadership aligns with Thailand's cultural emphasis on collectivism, making it a natural fit for promoting collaboration in schools (Walker & Hallinger, 2018).

**Instructional Leadership:** Instructional leadership in Thai educational administration focuses on improving teaching and learning outcomes by actively involving school leaders in curriculum development, teacher support, and the implementation of instructional strategies. Instructional leaders prioritize academic excellence by working closely with teachers to ensure that classroom practices are aligned with the school's educational goals and standards (Hallinger, 2010). In Thailand, instructional leadership is becoming increasingly important as schools face the challenge of raising student achievement in a competitive global environment. Instructional leaders monitor and evaluate teaching practices, provide feedback to teachers, and facilitate professional development that enhances instructional quality. By focusing on the core business of teaching and learning, instructional leaders help to create an environment where students can succeed academically (Robinson et al., 2008).

**Adaptation to Global Trends:** Modern leadership styles in Thai educational administration are heavily influenced by global educational trends. With the increasing interconnectedness of the world, Thai schools are under pressure to remain competitive internationally. This requires educational leaders to adopt practices that align with global

standards, such as the integration of technology in education, the promotion of 21st-century skills, and the emphasis on student-centered learning (OECD, 2016). Thai educational leaders are also influenced by international frameworks, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which emphasize the importance of inclusive and equitable quality education. As a result, modern leadership in Thailand must balance local cultural values with the demands of a globalized education system. This includes adopting leadership styles that encourage innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement, while ensuring that Thai students are prepared to compete and succeed on the global stage (Moolenaar et al., 2010).

#### 4. Balancing Tradition with Innovation

**Integrating Traditional Values with Modern Leadership:** Thai educational leaders are tasked with the challenge of incorporating traditional cultural values into modern leadership practices to create a harmonious and effective school environment. Thailand's deep-rooted respect for hierarchy and collectivism requires that even innovative leadership styles are implemented with consideration for cultural norms. For example, leaders can blend *Kreng Jai* (respect and deference) with modern leadership practices by ensuring that decision-making processes remain consultative and respectful while promoting collaboration and shared leadership responsibilities (Hofstede, 2011). In this context, leaders can uphold traditional values such as Buddhist principles of compassion and mindfulness, while also encouraging teachers and staff to take on more active roles in decision-making and school improvement initiatives. By maintaining respect for authority and collective harmony, educational leaders can foster an environment where innovation is embraced without causing disruption to the cultural fabric of the school (Walker & Hallinger, 2018). This approach helps create a school culture that values both tradition and modernity, ensuring that both students and teachers feel respected and empowered.

**Case Studies of Successful Integration:** Several Thai schools have successfully blended traditional and modern leadership styles to improve educational outcomes. For instance, in a prominent school in Bangkok, the principal integrated distributed leadership practices while maintaining respect for traditional values by establishing clear communication channels and a strong sense of hierarchy. The principal regularly consulted senior staff and respected the school's long-standing traditions, while also encouraging younger teachers to lead initiatives and innovate within their classrooms. This approach resulted in increased teacher engagement and improved student outcomes without disrupting the traditional school structure (Hallinger & Lee, 2014). Another example is found in a rural school in northern Thailand, where the school leader applied transformational leadership principles, inspiring teachers to embrace change while respecting the local community's values. By incorporating Buddhist teachings into the school's leadership philosophy, the principal was able to introduce new instructional methods and technologies while maintaining the school's cultural identity. This resulted in higher teacher morale, more student-centered teaching practices, and improved academic performance (Pongpaew, 2014).

**Challenges in Achieving Balance:** Despite these successes, balancing tradition with innovation in Thai educational administration is not without its challenges. One of the primary difficulties is resistance from older staff who may be more accustomed to traditional

leadership styles and may view modern approaches as disruptive or disrespectful. In many cases, older staff members may resist changes that challenge the established hierarchy or require them to adapt to new technologies and teaching methods (Kitamura & Yamamoto, 2017). Another challenge is the lack of resources in many Thai schools, particularly in rural areas. Implementing modern leadership practices often requires access to technology, professional development, and additional funding, which may not be available in all schools. This resource gap can make it difficult for educational leaders to introduce innovative practices, even if they are eager to do so. Additionally, the pressure to conform to national educational standards and policies can limit the flexibility of school leaders to experiment with new approaches (OECD, 2016). In conclusion, while balancing tradition with innovation in Thai educational leadership is challenging, it is also essential for improving educational outcomes. By integrating cultural values into modern leadership practices, educational leaders can create a harmonious environment that respects tradition while embracing change. However, overcoming resistance from staff and addressing resource limitations will be critical to the success of these efforts.

## 5. Impact on School Performance and Teacher Engagement

**Effects on School Performance:** The leadership style employed by school administrators in Thailand significantly affects overall school performance, including student outcomes, teacher effectiveness, and the institution's ability to meet educational standards. Research indicates that transformational leadership—which emphasizes motivation, vision-sharing, and professional development—has a positive impact on student achievement. In Thai schools, leaders who inspire teachers to innovate and take ownership of their teaching practices often see improved student performance, as motivated teachers are more likely to employ creative and effective instructional methods (Hallinger, 2003). Conversely, schools that adhere strictly to traditional, hierarchical leadership styles may struggle to achieve similar outcomes. The lack of teacher autonomy and innovation in such environments can stifle student engagement and limit academic progress. Studies have shown that schools where decision-making is centralized often experience lower levels of teacher effectiveness, as staff feel less empowered to take risks or experiment with new teaching methods (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). The introduction of distributed leadership in Thai schools, where leadership responsibilities are shared among staff, has also been linked to improved school performance. This approach fosters collaboration and allows for a more dynamic response to challenges, resulting in more effective problem-solving and implementation of educational initiatives (Spillane, 2006).

**Teacher Engagement and Professional Development:** Modern leadership styles, particularly transformational and distributed leadership, have a profound impact on teacher engagement and professional development in Thai schools. Transformational leaders encourage teachers to take ownership of their professional growth by offering opportunities for training, mentorship, and continuous learning. When teachers feel supported and motivated, their engagement levels increase, leading to a more vibrant and effective learning environment (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). Distributed leadership further enhances teacher engagement by fostering a culture of shared responsibility. In schools where teachers are

encouraged to contribute to decision-making processes, they feel a greater sense of purpose and are more likely to be invested in the success of the school. This collaborative environment also promotes professional growth, as teachers learn from one another and develop leadership skills alongside their instructional abilities (Harris, 2008). In Thailand, where traditional hierarchical structures have often limited teacher input, the adoption of distributed leadership represents a significant shift toward more inclusive and empowering educational practices.

**Sustainability of Leadership Practices:** The sustainability of leadership practices in Thai schools depends on the ability of leaders to continuously adapt to changing educational demands and societal expectations. While modern leadership styles like transformational and distributed leadership have shown positive impacts on school performance and teacher engagement, their long-term success requires ongoing support and adaptation. Thai educational leaders must remain flexible, regularly assessing the effectiveness of their leadership approaches and making adjustments as needed to address emerging challenges (Walker & Hallinger, 2018). Sustainability also involves creating systems that can endure beyond the tenure of individual leaders. Schools that invest in leadership development for both administrators and teachers are more likely to maintain high performance over time, as leadership responsibilities are shared and institutionalized. This ensures that leadership practices are not reliant on one charismatic individual but are embedded in the school's culture, making them more resilient to changes in personnel (Robinson et al., 2008). In conclusion, the impact of leadership styles on school performance and teacher engagement in Thailand is significant. Modern leadership approaches, which emphasize empowerment, collaboration, and continuous professional development, have the potential to drive lasting improvements in educational outcomes. However, the long-term sustainability of these practices requires ongoing adaptation and investment in leadership development at all levels of the educational system.

## 6. Policy Implications

**Government Support for Leadership Development:** The Thai government has recognized the importance of leadership development in improving the quality of education across the country. The Ministry of Education (MoE) has implemented various policies aimed at enhancing the capacity of school leaders through training and professional development programs. For instance, the Principal Leadership Development Program provides school principals with training on modern leadership styles, financial management, and the use of technology in education. This initiative is designed to equip school leaders with the skills needed to lead effectively in a rapidly changing educational environment (Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2018). Additionally, the Thai government has promoted the integration of innovative practices in educational administration through policies that encourage the adoption of technology, student-centered learning, and the decentralization of decision-making. The Education Reform Policy under the 20-Year National Strategy (2017-2036) emphasizes the need for leadership that can drive innovation and improve the quality of education in both urban and rural areas. This policy also highlights the importance of leadership in fostering collaboration between schools, communities, and other stakeholders to create a more inclusive and supportive educational environment (Ministry of Education,

Thailand, 2017). Despite these efforts, there remain challenges in fully realizing the potential of leadership development policies. One of the key issues is the uneven distribution of resources and opportunities, particularly in rural and underserved areas. Many school leaders in these regions lack access to the training and support necessary to implement innovative practices, which limits the overall impact of government initiatives (OECD, 2016).

**Recommendations for Policy Improvements:** To further support educational leaders in balancing tradition with innovation, the Ministry of Education in Thailand could consider the following recommendations: (1) **Expand Leadership Training Programs:** While the government has made strides in providing leadership training, these programs should be expanded to reach a larger number of school leaders, particularly in rural and under-resourced areas. Training programs should include modules on integrating traditional Thai values with modern leadership practices, ensuring that leaders are equipped to navigate the cultural context of their schools while embracing innovation. This could be achieved through partnerships with universities and international organizations that specialize in leadership development. (2) **Increase Autonomy for Schools:** Greater autonomy for schools, particularly in decision-making and resource allocation, can empower educational leaders to implement innovative practices that are tailored to the specific needs of their students and communities. Decentralization policies that give schools more control over their budgets, staffing, and curricula can enable leaders to be more responsive and creative in addressing challenges. However, this increased autonomy must be accompanied by accountability measures to ensure that educational standards are maintained (Bureau of Education, Thailand, 2018). (3) **Support for Rural Schools:** Special attention should be given to supporting leadership development in rural schools, where resources and opportunities are often limited. The government could introduce targeted initiatives that provide rural school leaders with access to professional development, technology, and collaborative networks that connect them with peers in more urbanized areas. These initiatives could include mentorship programs that pair experienced leaders with those in rural settings to foster knowledge sharing and support. (4) **Promote Collaborative Leadership:** Policies that encourage collaborative leadership practices, such as distributed and transformational leadership, should be promoted across the education system. This includes providing training on how to build effective teams, delegate responsibilities, and create a culture of collaboration within schools. Collaborative leadership can help bridge the gap between traditional and modern practices by involving teachers and staff in decision-making processes, thus ensuring that innovation is driven by a collective effort rather than a top-down mandate (Harris, 2008). (5) **Incorporate Technology in Leadership Development:** The government should also focus on incorporating technology into leadership development programs, equipping school leaders with the digital tools and skills needed to manage modern educational environments. This includes training on data-driven decision-making, the use of digital platforms for communication and collaboration, and the integration of educational technology into teaching and learning (UNESCO, 2019). By implementing these recommendations, the Ministry of Education in Thailand can further support educational leaders in balancing tradition with innovation, ultimately improving the quality of education across the country.



## 7. Future Directions in Thai Educational Leadership

**Emerging Leadership Trends:** Thai educational leadership is increasingly influenced by global trends, particularly in the areas of technology and inclusive education. The integration of technology in school management is rapidly becoming a priority as schools strive to enhance administrative efficiency and improve educational outcomes. School leaders are beginning to leverage data analytics, digital platforms, and online communication tools to streamline processes such as attendance tracking, student assessments, and teacher professional development. The use of Learning Management Systems (LMS) and other digital tools in classrooms has also become more prevalent, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated the shift towards online and blended learning models (UNESCO, 2021). Another emerging trend is the focus on inclusive education. There is a growing recognition of the need to create learning environments that are accessible and equitable for all students, including those with disabilities, those from ethnic minority backgrounds, and those facing socio-economic challenges. Educational leaders in Thailand are increasingly prioritizing policies and practices that promote inclusivity, such as differentiated instruction, personalized learning plans, and community engagement initiatives that involve parents and local stakeholders in the education process (UNICEF, 2019). This shift reflects a broader global trend towards inclusive education and aligns with Thailand's commitments under international frameworks like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**Preparing Future Leaders:** As Thai schools continue to navigate the complexities of balancing tradition with innovation, there is a pressing need to prepare future educational leaders who are capable of addressing these challenges. The role of a school leader in Thailand is no longer limited to administrative tasks; it now requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses strategic planning, instructional leadership, and community engagement. To prepare future leaders, there must be a strong focus on leadership development programs that equip aspiring school administrators with the skills they need to lead effectively in a changing educational landscape. These programs should emphasize the importance of adaptability, cultural competence, and the ability to integrate both traditional values and modern educational practices. Universities, government agencies, and private organizations can collaborate to design and implement leadership development programs that combine theoretical knowledge with practical experience (Walker & Hallinger, 2018). Another crucial area for preparing future leaders is the promotion of mentorship and peer learning networks. By connecting aspiring leaders with experienced school administrators, mentorship programs can provide valuable insights into the day-to-day realities of educational leadership in Thailand. Peer learning networks, where leaders share experiences and strategies, can also foster collaboration and innovation, helping to spread best practices across the education system (Harris, 2008). Furthermore, policy frameworks must support the continuous professional development of educational leaders. This includes providing access to resources, training opportunities, and support systems that allow school leaders to stay up-to-date with the latest developments in education and leadership. The Ministry of Education in Thailand can play a pivotal role in facilitating this ongoing professional development by creating structures that encourage lifelong learning for school leaders (OECD, 2019). In conclusion,

the future of educational leadership in Thailand will be shaped by the ability of school leaders to embrace emerging trends, such as technology integration and inclusive education, while maintaining respect for traditional values. Preparing future leaders to navigate these complexities requires a concerted effort from educational institutions, government agencies, and the broader community to ensure that leaders are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to lead effectively in the 21st century.

## 8. Conclusion

In Thai educational administration, effective leadership is pivotal in driving school performance and fostering teacher engagement. This paper has explored the importance of balancing traditional values—such as respect for hierarchy and Buddhist principles of compassion—with modern leadership practices, such as transformational and distributed leadership. By integrating these approaches, Thai educational leaders can create a school environment that both honors cultural heritage and embraces innovation, which is essential for improving student outcomes and adapting to global educational trends. The paper has also examined the impact of different leadership styles on school performance, highlighting how modern practices like transformational leadership can inspire change and innovation, while distributed leadership fosters collaboration and shared responsibility among staff. Furthermore, it has addressed the challenges of achieving this balance, including resistance to change and the limitations imposed by resource constraints. Recommendations for government policies to further support leadership development, such as expanding training programs and increasing school autonomy, were discussed as crucial steps for the future of Thai education. Effective leadership has the potential to transform Thai schools by bridging the gap between tradition and modernity. As educational leaders in Thailand continue to navigate the complexities of this balance, ongoing support through professional development, policy reforms, and resource allocation will be vital. Leadership that respects cultural values while fostering innovation is key to preparing Thai students for success in a rapidly changing world. With the right support, Thai educational leaders can drive meaningful change, ensuring that schools are both culturally responsive and future-ready.

### Originality & Body of Knowledge

*Originality:* This paper offers a distinctive analysis of educational leadership in Thailand by examining how traditional cultural values can be harmonized with modern leadership approaches to create effective school environments. Unlike previous studies, this work focuses on integrating respect for hierarchy and Buddhist principles with transformational, distributed, and instructional leadership practices. The paper's originality lies in its exploration of how Thai cultural norms - such as *Kreng Jai* and collectivism - can be incorporated into leadership models to address the demands of globalization and digital transformation. Furthermore, it contributes unique insights into overcoming challenges in implementing innovative practices within a traditionally hierarchical educational system.

*Body of Knowledge:* This study enhances the body of knowledge on Thai educational leadership by providing a comprehensive framework for balancing tradition with innovation. It highlights the impact of leadership styles - both traditional and modern - on

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school performance, teacher engagement, and student outcomes. By analyzing the implications of global educational trends on Thai leadership practices, the paper provides actionable recommendations for policymakers and school administrators. It also underscores the importance of policy reforms, professional development programs, and collaborative leadership in fostering culturally responsive and future-ready schools. Through its case studies and integration of Buddhist principles, the paper contributes valuable strategies for navigating the complexities of leadership in a rapidly evolving educational landscape.

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## Declarations

**Conflict of interest:** The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

**Ethical treatment of experimental subjects (animals & human):** The research was conducted in compliance with the principles of the Helsinki Declaration regarding human subjects, so formal ethical approval was not required.

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