Fostering Intercultural And Entrepreneurial Skills In Undergraduate Music Education: A New Pedagogical Framework

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The study focuses on developing a new methodology that would give students the tools they need to participate in the worldwide, digitalized music market as well as integrating intercultural competency and entrepreneurial abilities into undergraduate music education. It further asks whether a curriculum combining intercultural awareness and entrepreneurial competences truly adheres to its intent of equipping students to take responsibility for their learning by actively engaging in applied art studies. A mixed-method action research approach with 30 undergraduate music students, the framework achieved 75–78% improvement in intercultural competence, 70–74% improvement in entrepreneurial skills, and 15–20% improvement in project performance, demonstrating its effectiveness as an integrated competency-based music education model. It stresses the need for flexible learning environments centred on students to nurture autonomy and self-development, creativity, and flexibility. The model contends on different sources of motivation while focusing mostly on intrinsic motivation being able to nurture entrepreneurial behaviours-what is being assumed is that others will need some scaffolding to support students of different levels of self-regulation.

Keywords: Intercultural competence, Entrepreneurial skills, Music education, Pedagogical framework, Student autonomy.

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1. Introduction

In current settings where connectivity is paramount, the frontiers of existence in music instruction are expanding beyond those associated with conventional practices [1]. With a growing internationalization of the music industry, students must acquire a multi-holistic skill that transcends mere musical knowledge [2]. Intercultural competence-the capability to understand, respect, and operate amongst cultural differences-is now just as important to music students as knowing their notes [3]. At this hour, the rapid changes brought about by globalization and information technology warrant, that music students might attain entrepreneurial skills orienting them toward career creation, management, and sustainability in a competitive market [4, 5].

Intercultural competence is defined here as a measurable construct comprising cultural awareness and cross-cultural collaboration. Cultural awareness refers to the ability of students to recognize, interpret, and reflect on musical practices from diverse cultural contexts, while cross-cultural collaboration involves active participation, quality of interaction, and the integration of diverse musical perspectives in group-based learning. These indicators establish a clear basis for evaluating intercultural competence within the proposed pedagogical framework.

As music becomes more global and digitally consumed, emerging musicians need intercultural and entrepreneurial skills to create and market music effectively [6]. This framework combines academic learning with practical experience, enabling students to explore diverse musical cultures,

engage in cross-cultural collaboration, and develop business models suited to a global digital environment [7].

The evolving music industry requires musicians to possess technical skills and also be able to adapt to cultural contexts and business situations that, alas, are in constant flux [8].

According to Pan et al [9], social entrepreneurship education gradually shapes students' career perspectives and skill development through innovative learning activities. Adaptive hybrid learning systems personalize content based on student progress, while encouraging solutions to social issues such as poverty, unemployment, inequality, healthcare, and governance challenges. Empirical analysis using data envelope analysis evaluates the impact of cultural factors on early-stage social entrepreneurship education. Their study found that students valued cooperative learning through platforms like Skype and gained a stronger appreciation for diversity in music education. One of the most important lifelong competencies, according to Perić et al [10], entrepreneurship is a key lifelong competency involving creativity, initiative, planning, and risk management.

The growing importance of entrepreneurial competency development in higher education. Wei et al [11] emphasized that AI-enabled entrepreneurship education strengthens opportunity recognition, innovation capability, and entrepreneurial decision-making among students. Similarly, Ahmad et al. [12] reported that entrepreneurial self-efficacy and innovation-oriented learning significantly contribute to entrepreneurial competency formation in university environments. Furthermore, Nweke et al. [13] demonstrated that experiential learning supported by emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and digital innovation enhances entrepreneurial thinking, problem-solving ability, and opportunity identification skills. These contemporary findings reinforce the relevance of the Entrepreneurial Competency Mapping framework by highlighting the continuing importance of systematically developing entrepreneurial competencies within modern educational settings.

Numerous new pedagogical initiatives for music instruction fit under the category of digital technology, according to Calderón-Garrido et al [14], digital technology plays an important role in modern music education, but its practical use in Spanish universities remains limited. Their study found that many music instructors are self-taught in digital tools and face challenges such as inadequate classroom resources and low integration of technology in teaching.

Argyriou [15] views musical literacy as a multicultural and digital learning practice that supports inclusion, identity development, and intercultural education. Westerlund et al. [16] describe intercultural music teacher education as a reflective learning process that redefines intercultural competence through collaboration, uncertainty, and self-reflection. Existing intercultural music education models primarily emphasize cultural awareness, diversity appreciation, and cross-cultural communication through collaborative musical activities and multicultural learning experiences. For example, Joseph et al. [17] focused on intercultural exchange through collaborative song-based learning, while Westerlund et al. [16] highlighted reflective intercultural competence development in music teacher education. Although these approaches effectively strengthen cultural understanding and inclusivity, they provide limited attention to entrepreneurial competency development and career preparation within the contemporary music industry. collaboration, and self-regulated learning. By combining cultural engagement with professional and entrepreneurial competencies, the framework addresses the growing demand for graduates who can successfully navigate both intercultural and business-oriented dimensions of the global music environment.

2. materials and methods

Data collection followed a mixed-method approach using questionnaires, interviews, observations, project evaluations, and student work to assess intercultural and entrepreneurial skills in music education. The questionnaire and interview protocols were based on prior research in intercultural competence and entrepreneurship in music education, with content validity ensured through expert review. Reliability was strengthened through consistent administration, data triangulation, and comparison of qualitative and quantitative findings throughout the study. The action research cycle was used in sort of a sequential yet reiterative way across the whole intervention period. When it came to planning, the baseline survey results plus curriculum objectives were brought in to sort out competency development aims, especially those touching intercultural awareness and entrepreneurship. Then, in implementation, students took part in weekly competency-led learning sessions, group projects, thoughtful reflection tasks and, also music related entrepreneurial activities, which sounds a bit broader but it was still aligned. Finally, in the reflection stage, both qualitative and quantitative findings were examined to judge the learning results, pinpoint what needed betterment, and adjust the next round of instructional activities. Overall, this cyclical process made sure there was steady alignment between teaching approaches, student experiences, and the competency development objectives.

Mixed-method data synthesis combined qualitative and quantitative findings to identify competency development patterns and improve study reliability. The action research followed four stages-planning, implementation, observation, and reflection-to refine teaching strategies through continuous evaluation.

In the mixed method data synthesis, the quantitative survey outcomes were looked at first, to spot certain trends around intercultural competence and the way entrepreneurial skill development was actually taking shape. After that, these findings were set side by side with qualitative evidence, meaning the student reflective journals and instructor observations, so the research could confirm, unpack, and give context to what the patterns were showing. When the numbers matched what the learners described, those areas of agreement were used as extra support, to make the interpretation of competency growth feel stronger.

This study explores how intercultural awareness and entrepreneurial education influenced student learning and skill development in music education. Mixed-method integration, qualitative data obtained from student reflective journals and instructor observations, were analyzed alongside quantitative survey findings at each stage of the action research cycle. During the planning stage, survey results were used to identify baseline competency levels and guide instructional design. During implementation and observation, instructor observations and student reflections were compared with emerging survey trends to examine consistency in intercultural and entrepreneurial skill development. In the reflection stage, qualitative insights were used to explain and interpret quantitative outcomes, allowing a comprehensive understanding of student learning experiences and competency growth. This triangulated integration strategy strengthened the validity of the findings by linking numerical improvements with observed behavioral and reflective evidence.

The reliability of the research is affected by the teacher also acting as the researcher, influencing both implementation and analysis of the pedagogical framework. Data was collected through teacher documentation, student journals, and observations, and interpreted in line with the study's aims. To improve reliability, data triangulation and detailed context description were used, though the need for an independent observer was later recognized for more objective evaluation.

The reflective journals were analyzed in a systematic manner at regular intervals in order to track any progress in students' intercultural awareness and entrepreneurship skills. Thematic analyses of journal contents included predefined categories such as intercultural awareness, willingness to embrace musical styles from other cultures, intercultural communication, creativity, initiative, adaptability, problem solving, and self-regulation. Students' perceptions of their learning process, cross-cultural encounters, decision-making, and reflections on project work were used to detect indicators of competency. New insights gained from the analysis of reflective journals were compared with teacher's observations and surveys in order to improve competency evaluation.

Independent validation methods, including peer evaluation and external academic feedback, were used to reduce teacher-researcher bias and improve the reliability of intercultural competence assessment. External academic feedback was obtained at key stages of the intervention, including mid-term and final project evaluations, to review assessment consistency and provide independent perspectives on student competency development. collaboration, adaptability, initiative, innovation, and strategic thinking.

3. Results

The proposed pedagogical framework operates through an input-process-output model in which intercultural learning and entrepreneurial training function as key inputs implemented through collaborative learning, reflective practice, and autonomous decision-making.

Fig. 1 illustrates the sequential workflow of the proposed framework, beginning with instructional inputs that support intercultural and entrepreneurial learning. These inputs are implemented through various learning activities and monitored using multiple assessment methods. Assessment outcomes are used to evaluate competency development in cultural awareness, collaboration, creativity, adaptability, self-regulation, and entrepreneurial skills. The developed competencies contribute to professional readiness and global music industry preparedness. A continuous reflection and improvement loop supports ongoing enhancement of teaching and learning practices.

The pedagogical workflow shadowed a four-stage action research cycle consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. During the planning stage, competency objectives and learning activities were designed based on curriculum requirements and baseline assessments. The implementation stage involved the delivery of intercultural and entrepreneurial learning activities through collaborative and reflective practices. Observation was conducted using instructor records, reflective journals, peer assessments, and project evaluations to monitor student progress. Finally, the reflection stage analyzed assessment outcomes to identify competency development and

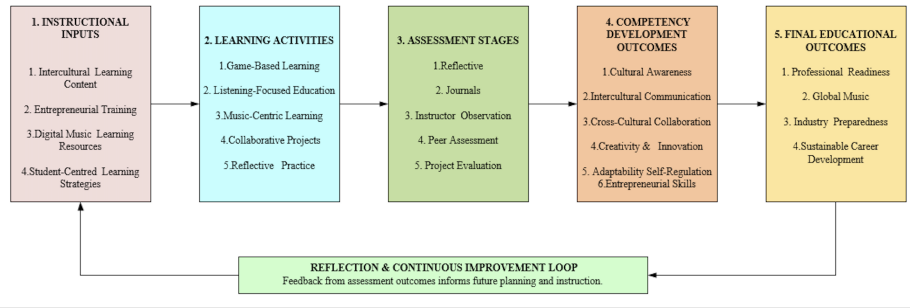

Fig. 1. The Input Process Output Educational Workflow of Intercultural–Entrepreneurial Pedagogical Framework

inform continuous improvement of instructional strategies.

The standardized criteria were sort of divided into two separate dimensions, like, not exactly the same thing. For the intercultural competence side, the dimensions included cultural awareness, intercultural communication, openness to diverse musical traditions, and crosscultural collaboration, and all of that together helped students engage well in multicultural music settings. Meanwhile, the entrepreneurial competency dimensions covered creativity, initiative, opportunity recognition, adaptability, problemsolving, project management, and self-directed decisionmaking, and this basically supported professional readiness plus entrepreneurial behaviour in music-related situations.

The entrepreneurial competencies were linked to practical music career activities, with students demonstrating improvements in creativity, adaptability, initiative, and collaborative problemsolving through intercultural music learning experiences. The pedagogical framework was implemented through three interconnected instructional components that collectively supported intercultural and entrepreneurial competency development. Game-based learning served as the initial stage by encouraging active participation, learner autonomy, and selfregulated learning. Building upon this foundation, listening-focused educational activities enhanced cultural awareness and critical reflection through exposure to diverse musical traditions. Subsequently, music-centric learning provided opportunities for students to apply acquired knowledge and skills through singing, performance, and collaborative musical activities.

A. design of game-based learning

Game-based learning promoted self-regulated learning and student autonomy by enabling learners to set goals, select instruments, and manage their progress through structured activities.

B. development of listening-focused education

Listening-focused activities enhanced analytical listening skills and cultural awareness through critical discussions, reflective exercises, and exposure to diverse musical traditions.

C. development of music-centric learning

Music-centric learning encouraged active participation through singing and performance activities, while continuous assessment and individual practice supported musical growth and student engagement.

Table 1. Assessment Methods and Evaluated Skills

Assessment Method	Evaluated Skill
Reflective Journals	Self-regulation, cultural awareness
Instructor Observation	Participation, collaboration
Project Evaluation	Creativity, innovation
Peer Assessment	Communication, teamwork

Student skills were consistently evaluated through instructor observations, reflective journals, peer assessment, and project evaluations, as presented in Table 1.

The instructor also served as the researcher, multiple data sources such as journals, project evaluations, student feedback, and observations were comparatively analyzed to reduce bias and improve consistency in qualitative evaluation.

In Table 2, a structured scoring rubric with weighted evaluation criteria was used to standardize competency assessment across learning activities. Each criterion was evaluated using a fivepoint performance scale, and weighted scores were aggregated to improve the objectivity, consistency, and comparability of competency measurement.

The standardized rubric criteria sort of were applied across all the learning activities, and the whole thing was evaluated in a pretty consistent way. For creativity, it was more about how original the musical ideas sounded, how

Table 2. Weighted Competency Assessment Rubric

Criterion	Evaluation Focus	Weight (%)
Creativity	Originality, innovation, cultural integration	30
Collaboration	Teamwork, communication, participation	25
Adaptability	Flexibility, response to challenges	20
Initiative	Leadership, self-directed learning, opportunity recognition	25

innovative the project design felt, and whether the students could actually blend different cultural influences into what they produced. Collaboration was looked at through active participation, communication effectiveness, teamwork overall, plus what each person contributed during the group based musical activities. Entrepreneurial competencies got assessed too, like initiative, recognizing opportunities, problem-solving ability , project management, adaptability, and that self-directed decision making.

4. Discussion

The findings indicate that the proposed pedagogical framework effectively enhanced intercultural competence, entrepreneurial skills, creativity, collaboration, and self-regulation among undergraduate music students through competency-based intercultural, reflective, and entrepreneurial learning activities.

Teacher observations, reflective journals, and project outcomes suggest that student autonomy and intercultural collaboration contributed substantially to competency development. Opportunities for independent decision-making, collaborative musical activities, and reflective practice encouraged creativity, adaptability, cultural awareness, and entrepreneurial thinking. These findings indicate that the combination of learner autonomy and intercultural engagement provides an effective foundation for developing both professional and entrepreneurial competencies in undergraduate music education.

Contemporary digital technologies such as online collaborative platforms, digital audio workstations, virtual music production environments, and social media-based music dissemination also supported intercultural interaction and entrepreneurial learning throughout the educational process. The use of these digital platforms subsidized to measurable entrepreneurial development by enhancing students' skills in digital content creation, audience engagement, self-promotion, project management, and collaborative music production, all of which are essential competencies in contemporary music entrepreneurship.

Digital learning technologies underwired intercultural engagement among students. Collaborative online platforms enabled learners to exchange musical ideas, discuss cultural perspectives, and participate in group-based activities involving diverse musical traditions. These interactions promoted cultural awareness, intercultural communication, openness to unfamiliar musical practices, and cross-cultural collaboration. The observed increase in student participation and engagement with diverse musical perspectives suggests that digital learning environments played an important role in supporting the intercultural competence objectives of the proposed pedagogical framework.

Digital music learning platform use sort of, contributed in a direct way to outcomes that are measurable for student entrepreneurship development. The online collaborative platforms helped with project coordination, teamwork and even that whole group rhythm of working together, while digital audio workstations (you know) improved creative production, and content development abilities. At the same time, social media-based music sharing activities seemed to boost audience engagement, self-promotion, and digital marketing know-how. Students who really leaned into these tools tended to show more initiative when handling project management tasks, they also had better communication skills, and they became more capable of crafting and presenting music-related entrepreneurial projects.

In the proposed model, entrepreneurship competence was measured based on four major aspects, namely, creativity, innovation, self-regulation, and strategic thinking. Creativity and innovation were manifested by the ability of the participants to come up with creative ideas related to music and solve their tasks in entrepreneurial projects, whereas self-regulation referred to the skills of setting goals, being able to learn independently, and making decisions. Finally, strategic thinking entailed the skills of identifying business opportunities, creating plans for entrepreneurial projects, solving problems, and managing business activities.

The integration of intercultural music activities, collaborative projects, and reflective practices contributed to improvements in creativity, adaptability, cultural understanding, and entrepreneurial thinking among students.

The effectiveness of the intercultural music learning environment was evaluated through student participation, collaborative activities, reflective journals, and project out-

Table 3. Indicators of Intercultural Competence Development

IC Indicator	Key Evidence
Cultural Awareness	Exposure to diverse music styles
Intercultural Communication	Effective teamwork in diverse groups
Cross-cultural Collaboration	Joint musical production
Openness/Curiosity	Engagement with unfamiliar traditions

comes. Indicators such as cultural awareness, intercultural communication, collaboration, and openness to diverse musical traditions were used to measure cultural interaction outcomes. IC refers to Intercultural Competence in the competency assessment framework, as presented in Table 3. Differences in intrinsic motivation and self-regulation affected students' engagement with entrepreneurial activities, although reflective practices, peer feedback, and structured guidance supported creative and professional readiness in the global music industry. Student autonomy and intercultural learning enhanced creativity, collaboration, entrepreneurial skills, and professional development, while structured guidance supported learners with different self-regulation levels.

Cultural awareness and cross-cultural collaboration played separate roles in contributing to entrepreneurial behavior formation. Through cultural awareness, students developed a better understanding of various musical viewpoints, became aware of opportunities in varying cultures, and learned to be creative in producing and distributing music. Cross-cultural collaboration, on the other hand, improved communication skills, teamwork, and decision making as well as problem-solving capabilities when interacting with students from other cultural backgrounds. The collaborative process helped students become better negotiators, team managers, and decision makers, which are essential traits of an entrepreneur. It was observed that cultural awareness promotes entrepreneurship by helping entrepreneurs see opportunities and think creatively, while cross-cultural collaboration enhances entrepreneurial capabilities such as adaptability and collaboration.

Quantitative findings from student surveys, reflective journals, and project evaluations indicate that 75-78% of students improved in intercultural competence, while 70-74% demonstrated enhanced entrepreneurial skills. Nearly 68% actively participated in intercultural collaborative projects, and approximately 80% reported increased confidence in exploring unfamiliar musical styles. Project performance scores also improved by an average of 15-20%, supporting the effectiveness of the proposed pedagogical framework.

Qualitative evidence obtained from student reflective journals, instructor observations, and classroom interactions provided additional insight into the mechanisms underlying these
improvements. Students frequently reported increased cultural awareness, greater confidence in intercultural communication, enhanced creativity, and stronger self-regulation during collaborative musical activities. Instructor observations further indicated that students became more willing to explore unfamiliar musical traditions, participate in group decision-making, and demonstrate initiative in project-based tasks. These qualitative findings help explain the quantitative improvements by illustrating how intercultural experiences and entrepreneurial learning activities influenced student behaviour and competency development throughout the intervention.

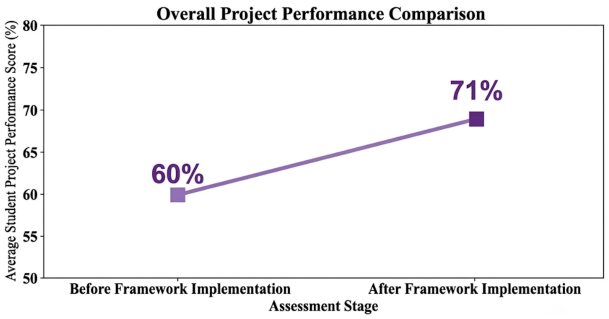

Fig. 2. Comparative Analysis of Student Project Performance Before and After Framework Implementation

Fig. 2 illustrates the comparison of average student project performance before and after the implementation of intercultural-entrepreneurial pedagogical framework. The horizontal axis represents the assessment stages, while the vertical axis indicates the average student project performance score expressed as a percentage. Numerical indicators show an increase from 60% before implementation to 71% after implementation, demonstrating an overall improvement in project performance following the intervention.

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistical summary of student competency improvements observed after implementation of the proposed pedagogical framework. In addition to the reported improvement percentages, mean values, standard deviations (SD), variances, and 95% confidence intervals (CI) are included to provide a more comprehensive assessment of the distribution and consistency of

Table 4. Descriptive Statistical Summary of Competency Improvement Outcomes

Competency Area	Improvement (%)	Mean (%)	SD	Variance	95% CI
Intercultural Competence	75-78	76.5	1.50	2.25	75.4-77.6
Entrepreneurial Skills	70-74	72.0	2.00	4.00	70.6-73.4
Cross-cultural Collaboration	68	68.0	1.20	1.44	67.1-68.9
Confidence in New Musical Styles	80	80.0	1.00	1.00	79.3-80.7
Project Performance	15-20	17.5	2.50	6.25	15.7-19.3

improvements in intercultural competence, entrepreneurial skills, cross-cultural collaboration, confidence in new musical styles, and project performance. The percentage ranges reported were derived by comparing student performance across the initial and final stages of the intervention using data collected from surveys, project evaluations, reflective journals, and instructor observations. Improvement percentages represent the proportion of students demonstrating measurable progress in each competency area based on the predefined assessment criteria and scoring rubric. The reported ranges reflect variations observed across different evaluation sources and stages of the action research cycle. Comparative interpretation of these values was used to identify overall trends in competency development and to assess the relative effectiveness of the pedagogical framework in supporting intercultural and entrepreneurial learning outcomes.

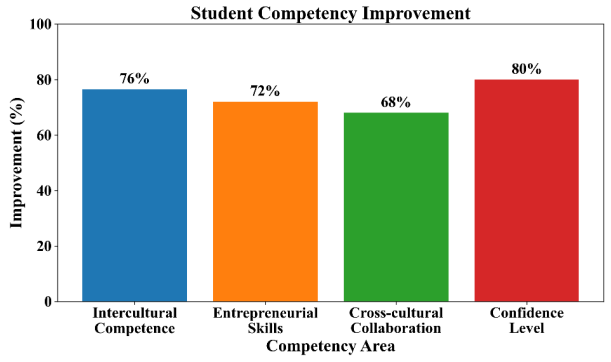

Fig. 3. Student Competency Improvement Outcomes

Fig. 3 visually summarizes the competency improvement outcomes observed throughout the intervention period. The graphical representation further confirms positive student development across all evaluated competency dimensions.

5. Conclusion

This study shows the major potential that lies in marrying intercultural competence and entrepreneurial skills to music education. Learners developed vital skills to survive in the intricate world of contemporary music industry through the elastic framework wherein they had much choice to pursue autonomy. The study revealed that students nurture entrepreneurial abilities, which are essential in succeeding in a globalized world, when empowered for learning, reflecting on experiences, and interacting with musical traditions and cultures in their learning experience.

Even if this curriculum promotes development of both intercultural and entrepreneurial competences, challenges arose in ensuring that every single student completely embraced the entrepreneurial side of their education. Lots of students with differing degrees of self-regulation had problems with the autonomy the curriculum offered. scaffolding and more support systems might have to be designed to help them to set attainable goals and to self- manage their own learning.

The study findings indicate that more than 70% of students demonstrated improvement in intercultural and entrepreneurial competencies, while nearly 80% reported increased confidence in engaging with diverse musical practices. The proposed pedagogical framework effectively integrates intercultural learning, entrepreneurship, reflective practice, and studentcentred learning to enhance creativity, collaboration, autonomy, and global cultural awareness in undergraduate music education. The proposed Intercultural-Entrepreneurial Pedagogical Framework has imperative long-term implications for curriculum transformation in undergraduate music education. By systematically integrating intercultural competence, entrepreneurial thinking, reflective practice, and student-centred learning, the framework supports the development of sustainable educational models that align with the evolving demands of the global music industry. Its adoption can encourage curriculum designers and educators to move beyond traditional performance-focused instruction toward competency-based learning environments that promote lifelong learning, professional adaptability, cultural engagement, and career resilience. Consequently, the framework provides a foundation for future curriculum innovation aimed at preparing graduates for sustainable participation in increasingly diverse and interconnected musical and professional contexts.

Structured feedback could be useful for future iterations

of the pedagogical framework, along with peer reviews that give students clearer guidelines in managing their own learning routes. Curriculum design should also strive to embed more tangible examples of industry-based experiences to reinforce preparation towards entrepreneurial activities in the area of the music industry. The insights from the present study thus offer important clues into the consideration of entrepreneurial and intercultural academia in music education and thus lay down a framework that can assume a natural role in informing future entrepreneurial inquiries and practices in that domain.

Declarations:

Data availability

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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Author contributions

- Qi He: Conceptualization, methodology, data collection, and original draft preparation.
- Wei Chen: Supervision, research design, manuscript review, and editing.
- Dan He: Data analysis, validation, and manuscript editing.

All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Ethical approval

Ethical approval for this study was obtained in accordance with the relevant institutional guidelines of the participating institutions.

Consent to participate

All participants voluntarily agreed to participate in this study and provided informed consent.

Consent to publication

All authors have reviewed and approved the manuscript and consent to its publication.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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