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A Developmental Study of A‘ḍā’ Mufrada (Simple Organs): Exploring Greek and Arab Scholarly Perspectives on its Evolution and Impact

Dr. Mohsina[1*], Dr. Abdul Malik[2], Dr. Mohd. Abu Bakar Quadri[3], Dr. Md Imran Khan[4], Dr. Ruqaiya[5], Dr. NafasatAli Ansari[6]

[1]PG Scholar, Department of Tashreeh ul Badan (Anatomy), State Takmeel-ut-Tib College & Hospital, Lucknow, U.P
[2]Associate Professor, Department of Tashreeh ul Badan (Anatomy), State Takmeel-ut-Tib College & Hospital, Lucknow, U.P
[3]Associate Professor & HoD, Department of Tashreeh ul Badan (Anatomy), State Takmeel-ut-Tib College & Hospital, Lucknow, U.P
[4]Assistant Professor, Department of Tashreeh ul Badan (Anatomy), State Takmeel-ut-Tib College & Hospital, Lucknow, U.P
[5]Department of Kulliyat, Allama Iqbal Unani Medical College & ACN Hospital, Muzaffarnagar, U.P
[6]Retd. Professor, Department of Tashreeh ul Badan (Anatomy), State Takmeel-ut-Tib College & Hospital, Lucknow, U.P

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***Corresponding author:** Dr. Mohsina
PG Scholar, Department of Tashreeh ul Badan (Anatomy), State Takmeel-ut-Tib College & Hospital, Lucknow, U.P

Abstract

Jalinoos, in his Unani literature, emphasized the importance of structural simplicity in categorizing organs, focusing on their lighter composition and maintaining the body's integrity, as a fundamental component of the human body. *Allama Qarshi* further refined the classification of *A‘ḍā’ Mufrada* (Simple organs) into ten distinct types, highlighting the complexity inherent in each type and its contribution to the overall structure and function of the body. Notable scholars such as *Abu Sehel Maseehi* and *Ali Ibne Abbas Majoosi* acknowledged the inclusion of *Mukh, Ẓufr, and Sha’r* within their classifications. In contrast, *Razi* excluded arteries, veins, tendons, and membranes from the *A‘ḍā’ Mufrada* (Simple organs) category, positing that these structures are derived from nerves and ligaments rather than being classified as independent organs. *Ibne Rushd* expanded the classification of *A‘ḍā’ Mufrada* (Simple organs) to encompass fourteen distinct types, which include *Jild* (skin), *Dam*(blood), *Balgham* (phlegm), *Marra Sawdā’* (black bile), *Marra Safra* (yellow bile), and *Rūḥ* (spirit). Basic elements in *Unani Medicine* are simple undivisable matter which provide the primary components for the human body. They cannot further resolve in to simple entities. A group of ancient physicians believe that organs formed by four elements combined in different amount and proportion. *Ibne Rushd* stated that *A‘ḍā’ Mufrada* (Simple organs) are developed either from primary combination or secondary. *Hippocrates* believed that if man's creation was made from one element, he would never fall ill and recover from one remedy and Fetuses' soft and hard parts are formed from soft and moist food, and their limbs develop like branches. *Ibne Hubl Baghdadi* stated that the human body is composed of primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary constituents of *Usṭuqussāt. Abu Sehel Maseehi* and *Allama Qarshi* differ on the formation of *A‘ḍā’ Mufrada* (Simple organs), with *Maseehi* claiming semen for bones and flesh, and *Qarshi* categorizing it into two types: *A‘ḍā’ Aṣliyya* and *A‘ḍā’ Manawiyya. Ali IbneAbbas Majoosi*, and *Allama Nafeesi* discuss semen's role in organ development, supplementedby *Fazil Khoon* and surplus blood, and its production of biological molecules.

Keywords: *A‘ḍā’ Mufrada, A‘ḍā’ Basīṭa, A‘ḍā’ Mutashābiha al-Ajzā’, A‘ḍā’ Aṣliyya,Mawālid Thalātha*.

INTRODUCTION

Unani literature theorizes that the human body comprises seven fundamental components, which are deemed essential for sustaining life. Among these components, the *Aza* are recognized as the fourth element in the hierarchy established by ancient Unani scholars. *Aza* are characterized as solid and rigid structures that arise from the *Akhlat*, or humors, and they are distinct in that they do not exhibit the fluidity of liquids or the dispersive nature of air. Their primary function is to preserve the body's integrity and maintains the body in its original form [1-3].

Unani scholars refer to tissues as *A‘ḍā’ Basīṭa* [4]. These *Aza* or tissues consist of combination of smallest unit, which are known as *Khaliyya* (cell), these compartments, or cells, are considered the fundamental unit of organs [5, 6].

In classical Unani texts, *Aza* are categorized into two distinct types: *A‘ḍā’ Mufrada* [4]. (Simple organs) which refers to simple or homogeneous organs,

and *A'ḍā' Murakkaba,* which denotes compound or complex organs. The former, also known as *A'ḍā' Mutashābiha al-Ajzā'* or *A'ḍā' Basīṭa* [4], consists of individual components that maintain specific functions, while the latter, referred to as *A'ḍā' Aliya* [4], encompasses more intricate structures formed by the combination of simpler elements [1-7]. This classification underscores the complexity and interdependence of bodily components as understood in Unani medicine.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This research focuses on the analysis and synthesis of information derived from historical Unani literature, including texts such as *Ifada-e-Kabeer, Kitab-al-Kulliyat, Firdos-al-hikmat, Kitab-al-umda-fi-Jarahat, Al-Qanoon fi'tib, Al Moalijat Buqratia, Kitab-al Mukhtarat fi'tib, and Kamil-al-sana etc.* In addition to these ancient works, the study also incorporates insights from contemporary academic resources, including scholarly journals, research articles, and modern publications.

Objectives

The objective of this research paper is to connect the insights derived from classical Unani literature with contemporary scientific discussions, thereby enhancing the comprehension of Unani medicine. Through the amalgamation of these varied sources, the study seeks to offer a holistic view regarding the evolution of *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs), emphasizing the significance of historical knowledge within the framework of modern medical inquiry and application.

1. To integrate perspectives from classical Unani texts with modern scientific discourse, thereby deepening the understanding of Unani medicine.
2. To provide a comprehensive perspective on the development of *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs), highlighting the importance of historical insights in the context of contemporary medical research and practice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A'ḍā' Mufrada (Simple organs) refers to organs that possess a uniform nomenclature for both their smaller and larger components, or exhibit homogeneity in their structural composition. For instance, a sizable chunk of meat is classified as meat, just as a smaller fragment of muscle retains the same designation, irrespective of its dimensions. These homogeneous organs can amalgamate to create more intricate structures, such as the head, hands, and feet, which are composed of elements like flesh, heat, and moisture [7, 8].

According to *Jalinoos*, organs characterized by a lighter composition are categorized as simple organs, and their classification does not pose any issues [8]. This perspective underscores the significance of structural simplicity in the understanding of organs classification, suggesting that the nature of an organ's composition plays a crucial role in its categorization within biological systems.

Classification of A'ḍā' Mufrada

Allama Qarshi, a distinguished scholar, has categorized the *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs) into ten distinct types i.e; *'Aẓm* (Bone), *Gudhruf* (Cartilage), *Watr* (Tendon), *Ribāṭ* (Ligament), *'Aṣab* (Nerve), *Ghisha* (Membrane), *Lehm* (Muscle), *Shahm* (Fat), *Shiryān* (Artery), *Warīd* (Vein) [3-9]. The classification provided by *Allama Qarshi* highlights the intricate nature of *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs), emphasizing the significance of each type in the overall structure and function of the body. By delineating these categories, *Qarshi* contributes to a deeper appreciation of anatomical components, facilitating further exploration and study within the field of anatomy and physiology.

Both *Abu Sehel Maseehi* and *Ali Ibne Abbas Majoosi* recognized the inclusion of *Mukh* (bone marrow), *Zufr* (nail), and *Sha'r* (hair) in their classifications [2, 3]. In contrast, *Razi* and *Allama Nafeesi* opted to exclude arteries, veins, tendons, and membranes from the category of *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs), arguing that these structures are derived from nerves and ligaments [10, 11]. His terminology reflects a broader understanding, as he refers to these structures collectively as vessels, rather than specifically identifying them as arteries and veins. *Razi's* approach encompasses not only the traditional arteries but also extends to other types of vessels, including *Uroq-e-lymphawia* (lymphatic vessels) and *Uroq-e-sha'riya* (capillaries) [2]. This distinction highlights the complexity of the vascular system and suggests a more integrated perspective on the anatomical components involved. By broadening the definition of vessels, *Razi* contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the interrelationships among various biological structures.

Ibne Rushd identifies a total of fourteen *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs), which encompasses various components of the human body, including *Jild* (skin), *Dam* (blood), *Balgham* (phlegm), *Marra Sawdā'* (black bile), *Marra Safra* (yellow bile), and *Ruh* (spirit). His definition of an organ extends beyond the conventional understanding, as he considers any bodily part—whether solid, firm, or fluid—to be an organ [4-12]. This perspective allows him to categorize humors and spirits as organs, contrasting with the typical view that limits the term to solid and firm structures.

In contrast, *Ibne Hubl Baghdadi* presents a different classification, identifying eleven *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs), which notably includes *Al-Ṣifāq* (peritoneum) [13, 14]. This variation in the number

and types of recognized organs highlights the diversity of thought within the medical discourse of the time. Each scholar's classification reflects their unique understanding of human anatomy and physiology, contributing to a broader comprehension of bodily functions.

Ali Ibne Abbas Majoosi further refines the categorization of *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs) into seven distinct types. His classification encompasses *Ghadarif* (cartilages) and *Iẓām* (bones), *Awtar* (tendons) and *Ribāṭāt* (ligaments), *Sharāyīn* (arteries), *Awrida* (pulsating and non-pulsating veins), *Lehm wa Shahm* (muscle and fat), *Jild wa Aghshiya* (skin and membranes), as well as *Zufr wa Sha'r* (nail and hair) [15]. This systematic approach underscores the complexity of human anatomy and illustrates the evolving nature of medical knowledge in historical contexts, as scholars sought to delineate the various components that constitute the human body.

Development of A'ḍā' Mufrada

Basic elements in *Unani Medicine* are simple undivisable matter which provide the primary component for the human body. They cannot further resolve in to simple entities [1]. A group of ancient physicians believe that organs formed by four elements combined in different amount and proportion [16].

The explanation provided by *Ibne Rushd* is that all organs are composed of four elements: fire, air, water, and earth. It also states that organs are formed through the combination of these elements, which occurs through a process called *"tabakh"* facilitated by heat. Furthermore, we note that various types of *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs) contain varying amounts of heat, coldness, moisture, and dryness. In summary, natural philosophy explains that the new forms that are created by the combination of elements are *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs), and each organ has its own specific balance of these qualities [12-15].

A range of combinations can be utilized to blend four distinct qualities, resulting in the formation of a new quality. When the amounts of all components are equal, this mixture is referred to as *"Moatadil bil izafat ilal itraf"* (moderate with respect to the extremes), as it signifies a balanced state characterized by equal proportions of each quality. Variations in the qualities of these elements lead to diverse types of temperaments, each differing based on the specific combinations employed. For instance, the temperament of a horse contrasts with that of a human due to the differing elemental qualities. Furthermore, variations can manifest within the same category, although they will remain within established limits. This suggests that an individual's temperament may fluctuate over time, displaying both balanced and imbalanced states [12].

An imbalance can manifest in any of the four qualities previously identified, or in two qualities that are active and passive yet not mutually exclusive, such as *Hararat* (heat) combined with *Ratubat* (moisture) or *Harart* (heat) paired with *Yabusat* (dryness). This suggests that these qualities can coexist without negating one another, leading to a complex interplay within the system. In addition, the concept of *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs) encompasses nine distinct temperaments, which include *Moatadil, Haar, Barid, Ratab, Yaabis, Haar Ratab, Haar Yaabis, Baarid Ratab, and Baarid Yaabis*. Each of these temperaments represents a unique combination of the aforementioned qualities, further illustrating the nuanced nature of balance and imbalance within this framework [12].

The equilibrium of qualities within the *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs) is inherently unattainable, as these organs are predominantly constituted of water and earth elements, overshadowing the contributions of air and fire to their structural integrity or *qiwam*. However, it is possible to achieve a balance in the temperament of analogous organs based on their inherent qualities (kaifiyat). For instance, *Jalinoos* noted that the tip of the finger exhibits the most balanced temperament among the hand's components. Based on the aforementioned considerations, it can be concluded that the temperament of *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs) will align with one of the nine established temperaments, irrespective of whether the corresponding organs are derived from an animal. This temperament is characterized by a harmonious interplay of the organ's functions and responses, and it is also regarded as balanced in relation to the organism's lineage [12].

Ibne Rushd emphasized the importance of distinguishing between the origins of *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs), noting that some arises from an initial combination of elements, while others result from a secondary combination that is regarded as primary in this context. The components of human *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs) share similarities, with these secondary combinations playing a crucial role in their development. This relationship can be elucidated by recognizing that these organs are fundamentally derived from blood, which is in turn generated from the consumption of food and beverages. Natural science supports the assertion that sperm alone is insufficient for the creation of *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs), nor can these organs be formed from substances such as bile, black bile, or phlegm. Consequently, blood serves as the essential material from which these analogous organs are constructed, exemplified by the process through which a composite entity, like *shikanjabeen*, is formed from vinegar, honey, and water [12].

While *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs) are indeed formed within the maternal womb, it is critical to note that neither bile nor black bile is present in this environment, nor is there any incorporation of yellow

bile into the blood that contributes to the formation of simple organs. Regarding phlegm, it is classified as a *Maddae Baeeda*, or remote substance, since the organs derived from it are ultimately created through blood. In contrast, black bile and yellow bile do not fall into the categories of either *Maddae Baeeda* or *Maddae Qareeba*, as their conversion into blood is not feasible. These two substances exist in a potentially latent state within the blood, and any alterations in the blood typically lead to a transformation towards these substances, which can result in disease. This complexity often leads to confusion among physicians, particularly due to the concept of *Muqamul Haq*, which refers to that which is attached to the blood, potentially causing misunderstandings [12].

The presence of substances in a compound does not imply that all elements that exist potentially within it constitute its fundamental substance. Thus, blood itself is recognized as the source or *heola* for the three humors [12]. This understanding is vital for comprehending the intricate relationships between the various bodily substances and their roles in health and disease. By clarifying these distinctions, one can better appreciate the physiological processes that govern the formation of *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs) and the implications of their interactions within the human body.

According to *Rabban Tabri* human derives nourishment from the four elements. Respiration is done through air, drinks water, and eats food that takes on solid forms on Earth, such as meat, grains, and fruits, which also contain fire components. Phelgm is formed from watery components of food. Blood is formed from the airy components. Bile is created from fiery components, and black bile from the earthy components. Food is produced from the four elements, and the four temperaments arise from food. Homogeneous organs are produced from these temperaments. During pregnancy, the consumption of dense and solid foods helps in the formation of the bones. Foods that are less hard and dense contribute to the development of nerves and muscles. Softer materials and foods lead to formation of flesh. Hair and nails are formed from the waste products that the body naturally expels by *tabiyat* [7-17].

Aristotle said that there are two types of *tabiyat*. One *tabiyat* is the cause of creation and destruction in the whole and its parts, such as the sky with celestial bodies, the moon, the sun, and the stars. The second *tabiyat* is that whose components come into being due to creation and destruction, but its entirety is not subject to creation and destruction. These are the four elements. From the component of these elements the four temperament arises, and from these four temperaments, organs are produced [7].

When the lighter element fire and air and the heavier elements water and earth combined, their varying proportions led to the creation of different things such as bodies of animals are composed of earthly matter, and they possess an excess of the lighter forces, fire and air. This is why animals can move from one place to another. In trees and plants, the forces of water and earth dominate, that is why they remain fixed in one place and cannot change their location [7].

Rabban Tabri uses word *Ummahat* because *Um* is forerunner of child birth and child come into being through the mother [18].

Hippocrates said, if man's creation was made from one single element, he would never fall ill because there would be no opposing force to make him sick. If he ever fell ill, he would recover from just one remedy and would not need various medicines. When seasons change, the four elements also change—cold in winters, heat in summers. In summer, when the sun comes closer to us, the two elements of fire and air become stronger. In winter, when the sun moves farther away, coldness prevails over fire and air, making these two elements weaker. Hippocrates said that the soft part of the fetus body is formed from soft and moist food, while the hard part is formed from solid food. Just as a branch arises from a tree, similarly, the limbs of the fetus (such as hands and feet) develop, and vessels wrap around them [7].

According to *Abu Sehel Maseehi A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs) are formed from *Qareebi Usṭuqussāt* (nearby elements), whereas air, fire, water, and earth are *Baeedi Usṭuqussāt* (remote elements), and nutrients are *Darmyani Usṭuqussāt* (intermediate elements). He said not only are the organs of the body composed of elements, but even the fluids and spirits (vital forces) found in the body's cavities are also composed of elements. He said there is no part of the body whether it is an organ or parts of an organ which is not composed of *Usṭuqussāt* (elements). The body cannot exist without the *Usṭuqussāt* (elements). Ultimately, the body is created from the elements because there is no difference whether the body is made directly from the elements or indirectly (through something else) [19, 20].

Thus, the body is first formed from semen and menstrual blood, and semen is made from blood, and blood is produced from food, which essentially comes from plants. This is because the animals that human consumes are also made from plants, and plants are produced from the elements. Therefore, the body continues to live and be sustained by the food, which in essence, is blood, because blood is produced from food, and that food is ultimately derived from the elements [19].

Ibne Hubl Baghdadi stated that the human body is composed of primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary constituents of *Usṭuqussāt.* The first composition of the human body is manifested through

the *A'ḍā'Aliya,* such as hands and feet. Each of these organs is composed of *A'ḍā' Mutashābiha al-Ajzā',* like bones, vessels, and nerves. Each of these is made up of the four humors: blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile. These humors are produced from plant and animal foods, which are regarded similarly to the composition of the human body's organs. The two elements with cold and wet temperaments, namely water and earth, assist in the formation and stability of the organs. The other two elements with dry temperaments, namely fire and earth, contribute to the firmness and hardness of the organs [13].

According to *Abu Sehel Maseehi*, bones and flesh are also formed from semen itself, not from blood or the fluidity of blood. Another group, however, believes that all *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs) are formed from semen, except for fat, muscle, and cartilage, which are formed from blood. In fact, muscle and fat are not made directly from semen but from the thicker blood, and due to heat, it undergoes coagulation, resulting in its formation. According to *Allama Qarshi*, the formation of fat and cartilage is influenced by the fluidity of blood, which contains a significant amount of fat. The process of coagulation occurs due to cold temperatures, leading to the solidification of these substances. This phenomenon can be reversed by the application of heat, which effectively melts or dissolves the coagulated materials [3-8]. *Qarshi* illustrates this concept using the example of a hen's egg, where moderate heat causes the egg to coagulate, resulting in a texture that resembles flesh, a substance that is ultimately derived from blood. Based on these observations, *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs) is categorized into two distinct types: *A'ḍā' Aṣliyya,* which are derived from the seminal fluid (Mani), and *A'ḍā' Damvia,* which originate from blood [3-8]. This classification underscores the different biological processes involved in the formation of various bodily tissues, highlighting the intricate relationship between temperature, fluidity, and the composition of blood in the development of fat and cartilage.

Allama Nafeesi elaborates on the notion that while organs originate from semen, this does not imply that they are solely composed of it. Instead, the initial development begins with semen, which is subsequently supplemented by nourishment derived from the *fazil khoon*, or surplus blood, of the woman. This surplus blood is typically expelled during menstruation, playing a crucial role in the growth and maturation of the organs.[8] He provide evidence that if organ cease to exist, they donot regenerate because the material from which they are made doesnot formed in the body [11].

In the perspective of *Ali Ibne Abbas Majoosi*, the interplay of action and reaction among the *Ajzae Awwaliyya* [12], or fundamental components, of *Mawālid Thalātha* leads to the formation of biological molecules, referred to as *uzwi murakkabat.* The interaction of these biomolecules results in the creation of *A'ḍā' Daqeeqa,* which further combine to form *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs). This process continues with the association of *A'ḍā' Murakkaba,* ultimately culminating in the formation of the human body [9-13]. He gave evidence that when body buried in the soil, the solid componets of the body breakdown and mix with the soil. The body's water gets absorbed in to moisture, and gases are released from the body. Heat is produced at the spot where the body disintegrates, and steam rises from that place [15-21].

CONCLUSION

The concept of *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs), expressed by Ibne Rushd, asserts that the human body is constituted of four fundamental elements: fire, air, water, and earth. These elements are combined through a mechanism known as *"tabakh"*, which is facilitated by heat. Within the framework of *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs), there exist nine distinct temperaments, each signifying a specific combination of these elemental forces. However, achieving an ideal equilibrium among these temperaments is deemed unattainable, primarily due to the overwhelming influence of water and earth. Blood serves as the essential foundation for these bodily organs, being synthesized from the consumption of food and liquids. *Ibne Hubl Baghdadi* emphasized the human body's composition of primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary constituents of *Usṭuqussāt.* Organs are composed of *A'ḍā' Aṣliyya,* bones, vessels, and nerves, each with four humors. Cold and wet temperaments, water and earth, help in form and stabilize organs, while dry temperaments, fire and earth, contribute to firmness and hardness.

Abu Sehel Maseehi and *Allama Qarshi* differ on the formation of bones, flesh, fat, muscle, and cartilage. *Abu Sehel Maseehi* believes bones and flesh are formed from semen, while *Allama Qarshi* argues that fat and cartilage are formed from blood due to coagulation. The fluidity of blood, which contains fat, influences the formation of these substances. *Qarshi* categorizes *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs) into two types: *A'ḍā' Aṣliyya* [4], and *A'ḍā' Manawiyy* [4]. *Rabban Tabri* explains that humans rely on the four elements for nourishment, with respiration, water, and food forming temperaments. Food, containing fire, air, and earth, produces these temperaments. During pregnancy, dense and solid foods aid in bone formation, while less hard and dense foods contribute to nerve and muscle development.

Aristotle's contributions further delineate two categories of *tabiyat*, which govern the processes of creation and destruction, ultimately leading to the development of various organs. This intricate interplay of elements and temperaments underscores the complexity of human physiology as understood in this philosophical context. *Ali Ibne Abbas Majoosi* and *Allama Nafeesi* discuss the role of semen in organ development, supplemented by Fazil Khoon and surplus blood. *Mawālid Thalātha,* a substance containing semen,

is believed to produce biological molecules called *Uzwi Murakkabat,* influenced by the interplay of these components. The engagement of these biomolecules leads to the formation of *A'ḍā' Daqeeqa,* which subsequently amalgamate to produce *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs). This sequence persists with the integration of *A'ḍā' Murakkaba,* ultimately resulting in the comprehensive development of the human body.

In conclusion, the study of *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs) not only highlights the historical perspectives of Greek and Arab scholars but also underscores its relevance in the context of modern anatomical studies. By delving into the evolution and implications of *A'ḍā' Mufrada* (Simple organs), the study contributes meaningfully to our current knowledge of human anatomical development.

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Ethical Statement

The authors indicated that ethical approval was not necessary for this study, given its nature as a review. Nonetheless, we have taken care to ensure that all data sources employed are duly acknowledged and cited in compliance with established academic standards.

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