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First records of the Tosa Dwarf Monocle Bream, *Parascolopsis tosensis* (Kamohara, 1938) (Teleostei, Nemipteridae), from the Dongsha Atoll, South China Sea

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Abstract. Two specimens of *Parascolopsis tosensis* (Kamohara, 1938) were collected from Dongsha Atoll. Because records of the species are sparse and it has only been recorded from Taiwan, the Philippines, and the Nansha Islands in the South China Sea, the newly found specimens represent the first records of this species from Donsha Atoll.

Keywords. Actinopterygii, biodiversity, ichthyofauna, taxonomy

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Introduction

The Tosa Dwarf Monocle Bream, *Parascolopsis tosensis* (Kamohara, 1938), is a nemipterid (Teleostei, Nemipteridae) reaching approximately 10 cm in maximum standard length. Because of its small body size and deeper water distribution, there are no major fishery, and the species is rarely found in markets (Russell 1990, 2001; Yamada et al. 2007). Despite being recorded across a wide area of the western Pacific, the exact geographical range of *P. tosensis* remains unknown. Existing records from Taiwan and the Philippines are limited to a few localities (Kaohsiung and southwest of Manila) (Fourmanoir 1981; Shao and Chen 1988; Russell 1990, 2001, 2019; Aizawa and Doiuchi 2013). Two specimens identified as *P. tosensis* were recently collected from Dongsha Atoll in the northern South China Sea. These specimens, which have been deposited in the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology in Japan, represent the first records of this species from Dongsha Atoll and are described in detail.

Methods

Counts and measurements, expressed as percentages of standard length (SL), follow Miyamoto et al. (2020) and are shown in Table 1. All measurements were made with digital callipers (CD-8 ASX 200 mm, Mitsutoyo Corp., Kawasaki) to the nearest 0.01 mm. The map (Figure 1) was constructed with QGIS (2025). Institutional codes follow Fricke and Eschmeyer (2026). The collected specimens are deposited at OISTICH (Ichthyological collection in Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology, Onna, Japan). Abbreviations are FL (fork length), SL (standard length), TL (total length).

Results

Family Nemipteridae
Genus *Parascolopsis* Boulenger, 1901

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Table 1. Meristic data of specimens of *Parascolopsis tosensis* collected off Dongsha Atoll.

	OISTICH 822	OISTICH 824
Standard length (mm; SL)	64.2	58.1
Counts:		
Dorsal-fin rays	X, 9	X, 9
Anal-fin rays	III, 7	III, 7
Pectoral-fin rays	15	14
Pelvic-fin rays	I, 5	I, 5
Pored lateral-line scales	36	36
Scales between lateral-line and 5th dorsal-fin spine	4	4
Scales below lateral line	13	13
Scale rows on preopercle	4	4
Scale rows on opercle	4	4
Gill rakers	4 + 5	4 + 5
Measurements (% of SL)		
Body depth	42.8	39.6
Head length	38.2	37.8
Snout length	8.6	8.9
Eye diameter	15.6	15.0
Interorbital width	12.8	12.2
Suborbital depth	2.1	2.2
Upper-jaw length	12.0	11.1
Depth of caudal peduncle	10.3	10.5
Length of caudal peduncle	21.1	22.2
Predorsal-fin length	42.9	42.9
Dorsal-fin base length	52.7	50.1
Longest dorsal-fin spine length	17.3 (5th)	17.4 (5th)
Pectoral-fin length	28.4	26.2
Pelvic-fin spine length	18.1	18.5
1st soft pelvic-fin ray length	22.6	23.9
Preanal-fin length	68.0	66.9
Anal-fin base length	19.1	18.1
1st anal-fin spine length	9.3	7.8
2nd anal-fin spine length	13.7	14.6
3rd anal-fin spine length	13.1	13.8
Upper lobe of caudal-fin length	25.7	25.4
Fork part of caudal-fin length	17.9	18.4
Lower lobe of caudal-fin length	25.4	25.9
1st dorsal-fin spine length	7.3	8.1
2nd dorsal-fin spine length	11.4	12.3
3rd dorsal-fin spine length	13.2	16.1
4th dorsal-fin spine length	16.8	16.8
5th dorsal-fin spine length	17.3	17.4
6th dorsal-fin spine length	15.6	17.3
7th dorsal-fin spine length	14.8	16.0
8th dorsal-fin spine length	13.9	15.7
9th dorsal-fin spine length	damaged	14.4
10th dorsal-fin spine length	13.3	14.7

***Parascolopsis tosensis* (Kamohara, 1938)**

Common name in English: Tosa Dwarf Monocle Bream

Common name in Chinese: 土佐副眶棘鱸

Figure 2; Table 1

Scolopsis tosensis Kamohara 1938: 32, fig. 14 [type locality: Mimase, Tosa (currently Kochi), Japan]—Kamohara 1952: 46, fig. 44 [Mimase, Tosa (Kochi), Japan]; Matsubara 1955: 675 (Kochi, Japan); Kamohara 1958: 37 (Mimase, Kochi, Japan); Kamohara 1964: 48 (Kochi Prefecture, Japan); Dotsu and Tomiyama 1967: 22 (Miiraku, Fukue Island, Goto Islands, Nagasaki, Japan); Fourmanoir 1981: 86 (approx. 95 km southwest of Manila, Luzon, Philippines); Akazaki 1984: 169, pl. 164-E (Kochi Pref., Japan and Eat China Sea); Yamakawa 1985: 509, unnumbered fig. (Okinawa Trough); Yamada 1986: 229, unnumbered fig. (East China Sea); Yamada et al. 2007: 735, unnumbered illustration on p. 735, pl. 34 fig. 8 (reporting SNFR 375, 380; East China Sea from west of Goto Islands to Okinawa Trough north of Ishigaki Island, Japan).

Parascolopsis tosensis—Russell and Gloerfelt-Tarp 1984: 113 (classification); Shao and Chen 1988: 120, fig. 8 [reporting ASIZP 056229; Ta-shi (currently Daxi), Yilan, northern Taiwan]; Russell 1990: 75, figs. 108, 131, pl. 4 fig. h (southern Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, and eastern Indonesia); Aizawa

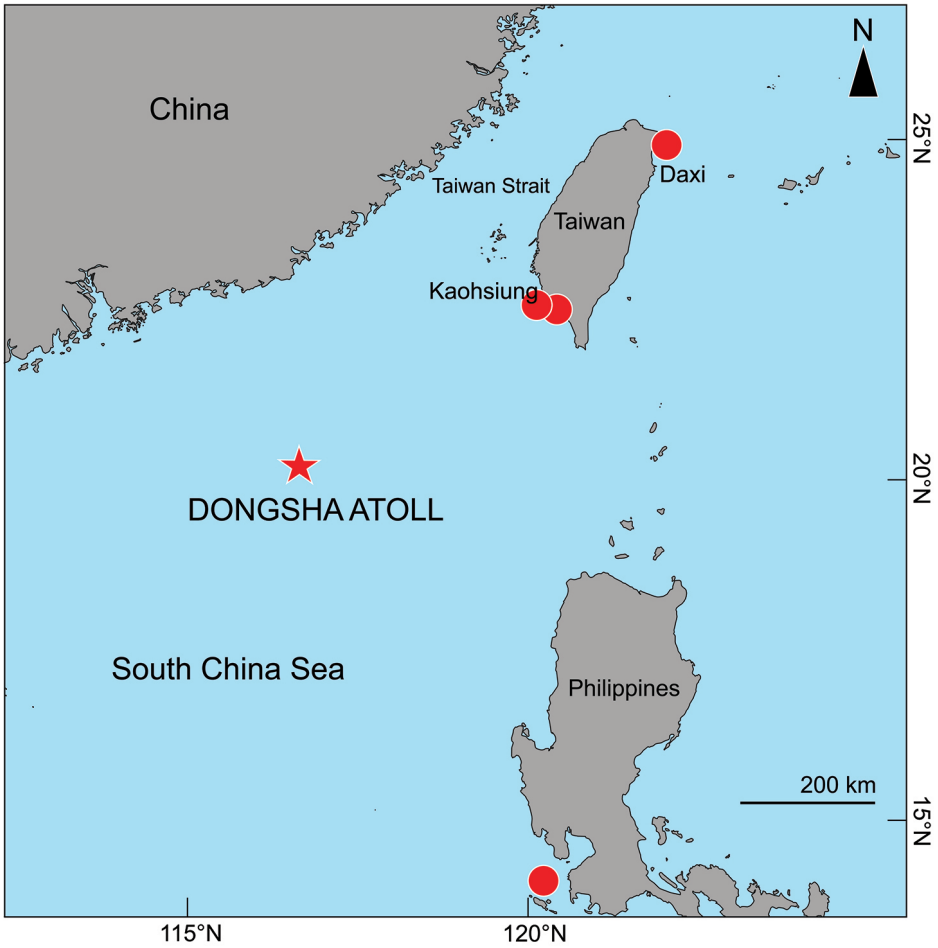

Figure 1. Records of *Parascolopsis tosensis* in the northern part of South China Sea. Star and circles represent the localities of the specimens examined in this study, and previously published records, respectively.

1993: 743, unnumbered fig. [Kochi Pref., south of Hamada (Shimane Pref.), East China Sea; Taiwan; and eastern Indonesia]; Mohsin and Ambak 1996: 319 (Indonesia); Russell and Chin 1996: 418 (southern Japan, Philippines, and Indonesia); Kanashiro 1997: 369, fig. 1 (Mimase, Kochi Pref., Japan); Aizawa 2000: 851, unnumbered fig. [Kochi Pref., south of Hamada (Shimane Pref.), East China Sea; Taiwan; and eastern Indonesia]; Randall and Lim 2000: 620 (South China Sea); Russell 2001: 3083, unnumbered fig. (southern Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, and eastern Indonesia); Shinohara et al. 2001: 327 (Tosa Bay, Kochi, Japan); Aizawa 2002: 851, unnumbered fig. [Kochi Pref., south of Hamada (Shimane Pref.), East China Sea; Taiwan; and eastern Indonesia]; Matsumoto 2005: 82, table 1 (off Uyagawa, Shimane, Japan); Shinohara et al. 2005: 435 (East China Sea); Moriwaki et al. 2007: 7, table 1 (off Uyagawa, Shimane, Japan); Shao et al. 2008: 253 (southwest of Kaohsiung, Taiwan); Kawano et al. 2011: 84, table 1 (Shimane Prefecture, Japan); Igushi and Inamura 2012: 2, unnumbered fig. (off Kyoden, Uozu, Toyama, Japan); Aizawa and Doiuchi 2013: 950, unnumbered fig. (Hamada and Uyagawa in Shimane Pref., Tosa Bay, west and southern coasts of Kyushu, Japan; East China Sea; Taiwan; Philippines; and eastern Indonesia); Kawano et al. 2014: 21, table (Toyama and Shimane, Japan); Fujiwara et al. 2014: 65 (Hamada and Uyagawa in Shimane Pref., Tosa Bay, and west and southern coasts of Kyushu, Japan); Li et al. 2016: 170, table 3 (Nansha Islands); Nair et al. 2016: 1 (western Pacific); Hou et al. 2017: table S1 (Nansha Islands); Hung et al. 2017: 546, fig. S3 (Taiwan); Russell 2019: 852, unnumbered fig. (reporting NMMB-P24552; Ke-tzu-liao, Kaohsiung, Taiwan); Russell 2020: 852, unnumbered fig. (reporting NMMB-P24552; Ke-tzu-liao, Kaohsiung, Taiwan); Ogwang et al. 2020: 210, fig. 2 (Taiwan); Miyamoto et al. 2020: 91 (western Pacific); Russell 2022a: 1 (IUCN Red List assessment: East China Sea from southern Japan, Ryukyu Islands and Taiwan; south through the Philippines and eastern Indonesia); Gloerfelt-Tarp and Kailola 2022: 199, unnumbered fig. on p. 198 (south of Lombok, Indonesia); Koreeda and Motomura 2025: 64 (Koshiki Islands, Japan); Matiku et al. 2026: 107, table 1 (Nansha Islands).

Material examined. SOUTH CHINA SEA — Dongsha Atoll • OISTICH 822; 1 spec. (64.2 mm SL, 81.6 mm TL, 77.3 mm FL) • same locality; leg. H.-C. Ho; OISTICH 824; 1 spec. (58.1 mm SL, 73.7 mm TL, 68.5 mm FL) • same locality; leg. H.-C. Ho.

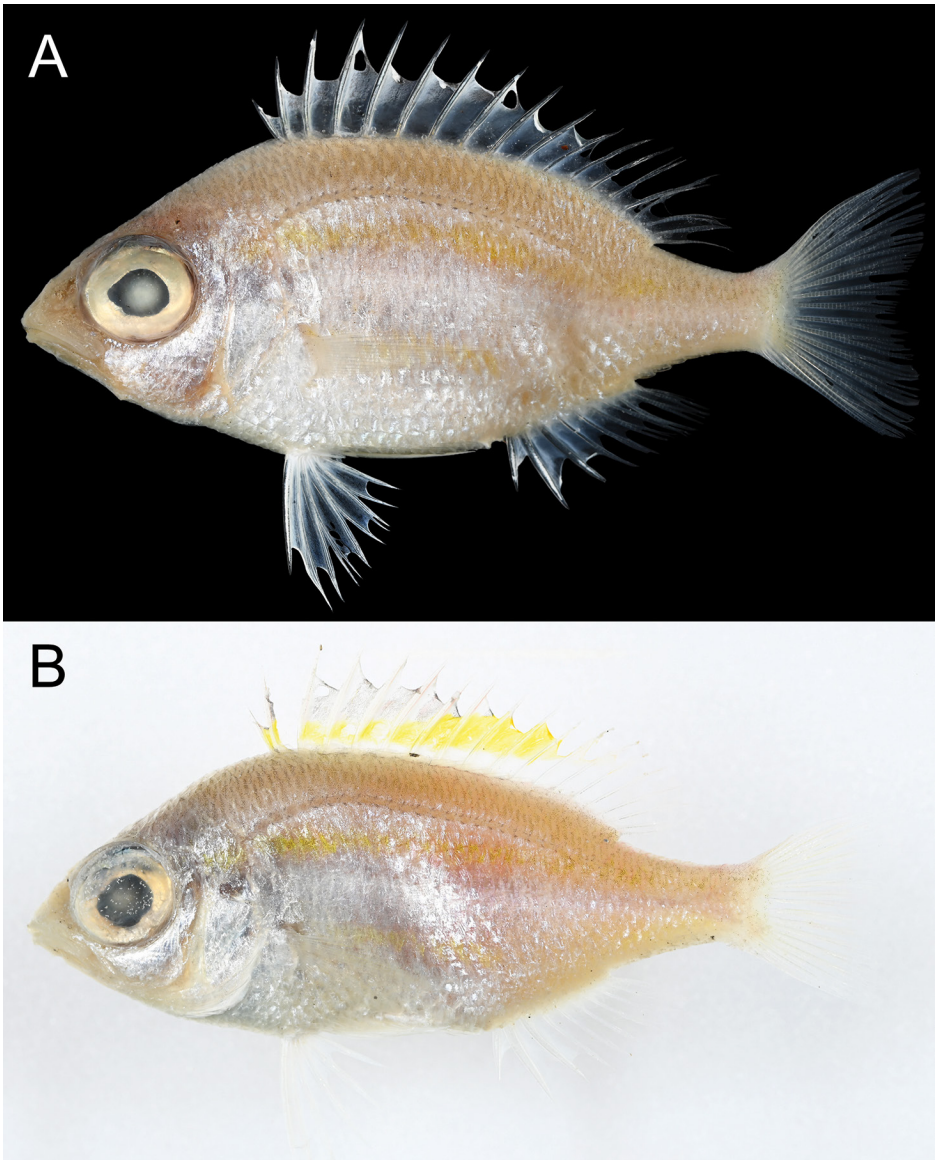

Figure 2. Fresh specimens of *Parascolopsis tosensis* collected from Dongsha Atoll. **A.** OISTICH 822, 64.2 mm SL; **B.** OISTICH 824, 58.1 mm SL.

Identification. These two specimens were identified as a species of the genus *Parascolopsis*, following Russell (1990, 2001, 2022b), in having the following characters: scales on suborbital area; suborbital bone posteriorly serrated and without distinct spine; four transverse scale rows on preopercle; posterior margin of preopercle finely serrated; no canine-like teeth on maxilla; anterior margin of region covered with predorsal scales just reaching to horizontal level anterior margin of eye; temporal region entirely covered with scales; second anal-fin spine longer and more robust than third. Furthermore, the two specimens closely matched the diagnostic morphological characters on *P. tosensis sensu* Russell and Gloerfelt-Tarp (1984), Russell (1986, 1990, 2001), Russell and Golani (1993), Russell and Chin (1996), Aizawa and Doiuchi (2013), and Miyamoto et al. (2020): total gill rakers on first gill arch 9; no scales on suborbital region and maxilla; preopercle with small scaleless region; predorsal scale region anteriorly almost reaching to line connecting anterior margins of both eyes. *Paracsolopsis tosensis* resembles *P. flavimarginatus* Matiku & Bogorodsky, 2026, a species recently described from the western Indian Ocean; however, the former species has a deeper body (>35.7% SL in *P. tosensis* vs. 27.5% SL in *P. flavimarginatus*), fewer total gill rakers on first gill arch (8–10 vs. 17), and presence of two broad, longitudinal, yellow stripes (vs. only one mid-lateral reddish-yellow stripe) (Russell 1990; Matiku et al. 2026). Of the Dongsha specimens, OISTICH 824 shows a yellow band on the spinous portion of dorsal fin, while OISTICH 822 lacks this colouration, and its dorsal fin is uniformly white. This yellow line can also be seen in the individuals shown by Kanashiro (1997), Russell (2019, 2020), and Gloerfelt-Tarp and Kailola (2022). The present specimens had been frozen for approximately four years after collection, and some of their body colouration is thought to have faded during that time.

Since the yellow longitudinal bands on the lateral surface of body in both specimens is less distinct than that of individuals shown in previous studies, the yellow line on the dorsal fin of OISTICH 822 is also expected to be faded during the frozen storage period.

Description. Counts and measurements, expressed as percentages of SL, are given in Table 1. Body oval, compressed, deepest at origin of 5th dorsal-fin spine. Dorsal profile of body rising from snout tip to fourth dorsal-fin spine, subsequently descending until the uppermost point of caudal-fin base. Ventral profile of body descending from lower-jaw tip to insertion of pelvic fin, thereafter almost parallel to body axis and subsequently rising from anal-fin origin to lowermost point of caudal-fin base.

Snout tip pointed. Mouth terminal, not large, posterior tip of maxilla not reaching vertical through anterior margin of pupil; maxilla anteriorly projecting beyond lower-jaw tip; posterior tip. Teeth on anterior part of maxilla larger than other teeth; three or four rows of fine teeth on lateral part. No teeth on vomer and palatines. Three or four rows of small teeth on mandible, conical teeth on anterior part slightly enlarged. No teeth on tongue. Eye round, not covered with adipose eyelid, lower margin of pupil just above level of snout tip. Nostrils double-paired, anterior nostril located just anterior to posterior one. Posterior nostril just anterior to orbit. Posterior margin of suborbital bone serrated but without spine; antrorse suborbital spine absent. Posterior margin of preopercle serrated. Posterior margin of opercle smooth; single small posterior-projecting bony spine located on posterior part of opercle.

Pelvic-fin triangular, outer contour of fin descending from fin insertion to tip of first soft fin ray, thereafter raised to fifth soft ray; fin insertion slightly anterior to posterior margin of opercle; all soft fin rays branched; posterior tip of depressed fin almost reaching to anus; single posteriorly pointed elongated axis scale located just above pelvic-fin insertion. Dorsal-fin origin just above origin of first pelvic-fin soft ray; end of fin base posterior to posterior-most point of anal-fin base; all soft fin rays branched. Pectoral fin triangular, dorsal and posterior margins nearly straight; fin insertion slightly posterior to dorsal-fin origin and just below origin of second dorsal-fin spine; fin insertion slightly above lower margin of eye; posterior tip of fin pointed, almost reaching to vertical through anus; two each dorsomost rays and ventralmost rays unbranched, all other rays branched. Anal-fin origin just below origin of ninth dorsal-fin spine; second spine longest and robust; all fin rays branched; end of fin base just below origin of sixth dorsal-fin soft ray. Caudal fin almost truncate, central part of posterior margin slightly indented. Anus round, just anterior to anal-fin origin.

Body covered with non-deciduous ctenoid scales. Suborbital and maxilla without scales Temporal regions and opercle entirely covered with scales. Preopercle entirely covered with scales, but ventero-posteriorly naked. Snout not scaled. Anterior margin of region covered with predorsal scales almost reaching to horizontal level anterior margin of eye. No scales on fins. Gill rakers present on inner side of gill arch; gill rakers rod-like.

Colouration. Body dorsally pinkish beige, lateral surface of body below lateral line whitish silver. Two orange-yellow lines on lateral surface of body; lines narrower than pupil diameter; first line runs from dorsal most point of opercle to upper part of caudal-fin base; second line runs from pectoral-fin insertion to lower part of caudal peduncle. Lateral surface of head, including suborbital region and opercle, uniformly whitish silver. Snout and dorsum of head pale yellow. Scales on dorsal half of body with black margins posteriorly. Spinous portion of dorsal fin white, upper part blackish. OISTICH 824 (58.1 mm SL) with yellow narrow longitudinal band mid spinous dorsal fin while OISTICH 822 (64.2 mm SL) without yellow band on its dorsal fin. Fin membrane of soft portion of dorsal fin semi-transparent, whitish; melanophores scattered along soft fin rays. Pectoral, pelvic, anal and caudal fins semi-transparent, without melanophores.

Distribution. *Parascolopsis tosensis* is distributed in the western Pacific, including western Japan, Taiwan, Nansha Islands, the Philippines, and eastern Indonesia. These specimens represent new recorded from the Dongsha Atoll, thus extending the distribution westwardly in the South China Sea (Russell 1990, 2001; Aizawa and Doiuchi 2013; Li et al. 2016; this study; Figure 1). Rivaton et al. (1990) reported *P. tosensis* from New Caledonia and Fricke et al. (2011), listing the species in the fishes of New Caledonia cited the record. However, Rivaton et al. (1990) showed no voucher specimens and detailed description, the record from New Caledonia may be based on misidentification as pointed out by Russell (2022a). Russell (2022a) also suggested that the record of *P. tosensis* from the northern Australia by Zhou et al. (2009) might be a misidentification of a species of another nemipterid genus, *Pentapodus*. Therefore, New Caledonia and Australia are not included in the distributional range of *P. tosensis* in this study.

Discussion

Parascolopsis tosensis was described by Kamohara (1938) as *Scolopsis tosensis* based on a specimen collected from Mimase, Kochi Prefecture, Japan. Although the species was included in the genus *Scolopsis* in the mid-20th century, most recent studies regard the species as a member of the genus *Parascolopsis* after the publications of Russell and Gloerfelt-Tarp (1984) and Russell (1990), which were comprehensive revisions of the family Nemipteridae (see the synonymy list). *Parascolopsis tosensis* was recorded from various regions in the west Pacific such as southern Japan (Dotsu and Tomiyama 1967), East China Sea (Yamakawa 1985; Yamada 1986), Philippines (off Luzon; Fourmanoir 1981), Nansha Islands (Li et al. 2016), and Indonesia [Lombok (Russell 1990; Gloerfelt-Tarp and Kailola 2022)]. In Taiwan, the species was first recorded from Daxi, Yilan by Shao and Chen (1988); it has only been recorded subsequently from the Taiwan mainland (Shao et al. 2008; Russell 2019, 2020). Furthermore, *P. tosensis* is not included in the ichthyofaunal studies of the Dongsha Atoll (Chang et al. 2012; Ng et al. 2024), so the present specimens represent the first records of the species there.

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Additional information

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that no competing interests exist.

Ethical statement

No ethical statement is reported.

Use of artificial intelligence (AI)

The authors accept full responsibility for the content of the manuscript, including the disclosure of any use of AI. No AI tools were used in the preparation of this manuscript.

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Author contributions

Conceptualization: HH. Data curation: HH, HCH. Investigation: HH, HCH. Methodology: HH, HCH. Resources: HCH, LS. Supervision: HCH, LS. Writing – original draft: HH, HCH. Writing – review and editing: HH, HCH, LS.

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Data availability

All data that support the findings of this study are available in the main text.

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