



Negotiating Islamic Business Ethics in TikTok Live Streaming: Evidence from Aglaonema Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises

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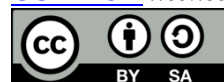
Live Streaming;

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to analyze how Islamic business ethics negotiations occur in the practice of TikTok live streaming in MSMEs selling aglaonema, as well as how business actors balance ethical principles and the demands of digital platform performance. Previous studies on live streaming commerce have primarily focused on consumer behavior and marketing effectiveness, while limited attention has been given to how Islamic business ethics are negotiated by MSME actors in real-time digital interactions. **Methodology:** The research uses a qualitative approach with an interpretive paradigm and case study design. The research subjects consisted of six informants, namely five owners and one live streaming host, who were selected purposively. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, live streaming observations, and documentation, then analyzed using thematic analysis techniques assisted by NVivo 12 Plus software. **Findings:** The results show that ethical negotiations occur dynamically in real-time interactions, influenced by sales pressure, platform algorithms, and audience responses. Business actors use various strategies such as persuasive communication, interaction adjustment, and product transparency to maintain ethical values such as honesty, trust, and responsibility. In addition, a balance between ethics and performivity is achieved through the integration of business practices that maintain moral principles while meeting the demands of the digital market. The conclusion of this study emphasizes that Islamic business ethics in live streaming commerce are adaptive and contextual, and can go hand in hand with digital marketing strategies without having to contradict each other.

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A. Introduction

The development of digital technology has fundamentally transformed contemporary business practices, particularly through the emergence of live streaming commerce within the platform economy ecosystem. This business model integrates real-time interaction, persuasive communication, and direct transactions into a single digital environment that enables intense engagement between sellers and consumers. In this context, digitalization not only changes transactional mechanisms but also reshapes how ethical values are practiced and negotiated in business activities. Previous studies on digital business indicate that market competition, sales targets, and platform-based systems increasingly influence how business actors negotiate principles such as honesty, transparency, and responsibility in everyday commercial practices (Bondarenko & Bondarenko, 2025; Zhang et al., 2022). Within TikTok live streaming environments, these pressures become more complex because interactions occur rapidly, publicly, and competitively, requiring business actors to make immediate decisions during real-time transactions. Moreover, platform architectures driven by algorithmic visibility and engagement metrics influence product exposure and sales opportunities, thereby affecting how sellers manage communication and promotional strategies (Daradkeh, 2023; McDonald et al., 2023; Oechslen, 2025). Consequently, live streaming commerce provides an important context for examining how ethical values are practiced and negotiated within contemporary digital economic activities.

In digital business contexts, ethical negotiation refers to the process through which business actors maintain, adapt, or prioritize moral principles when facing structural and situational pressures within platform ecosystems (Bondarenko & Bondarenko, 2025; Daradkeh, 2023; Nelson & Stout, 2022; Strudler, 2023). In highly competitive sectors such as live streaming commerce, sales pressure and audience expectations often create ethical dilemmas related to persuasion strategies, product presentation, and communication practices (Hapis, 2025; Jati Imantoro, 2025). Existing studies on MSMEs show that sellers frequently face tension between maintaining honesty and achieving sales performance targets in digital marketplaces (Nofiyanti & Fajrin, 2025). In addition, algorithmic recommendation systems shape seller behavior because visibility and transaction opportunities are strongly influenced by engagement indicators generated during live interactions (McDonald et al., 2023). As a result, ethical practices in digital commerce become dynamic and continuously negotiated through interactions among sellers, consumers, and platform systems. This condition becomes increasingly relevant in TikTok live streaming commerce, where audience interaction, persuasive communication, and conversion-oriented strategies occur simultaneously in real time.

The urgency of this research is strengthened by the growing ethical controversies surrounding live streaming commerce practices. Previous studies have highlighted debates regarding ethical boundaries in digital marketing and negotiation strategies, particularly concerning persuasive communication, strategic information framing, and transparency in online transactions (Nelson & Stout, 2022; Strudler, 2023). In digital commerce environments, sellers are often encouraged to intensify engagement and conversion through scarcity claims, limited promotions, and emotionally persuasive interactions, which may potentially influence consumer decision-making autonomy (Daradkeh, 2023). Furthermore, the increasing use of consumer data and digital technologies raises ethical concerns related to privacy, accountability, and transparency in platform-based business activities (Irianto et al., 2025; Kim et al., 2023). Although these studies successfully explain ethical challenges in digital business, they predominantly focus on consumer behavior, marketing effectiveness, and platform mechanisms rather than on how business actors themselves interpret and negotiate ethical values during real-time commercial interactions. Therefore, understanding ethical negotiation from the

perspective of MSME actors remains an important issue in contemporary digital business studies.

Although research on digital ethics and live streaming commerce has expanded significantly, limited attention has been given to how Islamic business ethics are negotiated by MSME actors within real-time digital interactions. Most previous studies focus on technical dimensions, consumer psychology, or marketing performance, while the ethical experiences and subjective interpretations of sellers remain underexplored (Bondarenko & Bondarenko, 2025; Daradkeh, 2023). In addition, empirical studies examining the interaction between Islamic ethical values, platform algorithms, and market pressures in live streaming commerce are still limited (Irianto et al., 2025)(Irianto et al., 2025; Kim, 2024; Shah, 2024). This study therefore offers novelty by integrating three interconnected dimensions: Islamic business ethics, ethical negotiation in digital business, and live streaming commerce practices among MSMEs. Furthermore, the interpretive approach enables this study to explore the subjective meanings and lived experiences of MSME actors when dealing with ethical dilemmas in platform-based business environments, thereby extending previous literature that has been dominated by quantitative approaches (Curtis & Keeler, 2022; Hassan et al., 2023).

Based on these backgrounds and research gaps, this study aims to understand how aglaonema MSME actors negotiate and implement Islamic business ethics within TikTok live streaming practices. Specifically, this research seeks to identify how ethical value negotiation occurs during real-time live streaming interactions and how business actors balance commitment to Islamic ethical principles with the performative demands of digital platform ecosystems. In line with these objectives, this study addresses two main research questions: (1) How does the negotiation process of Islamic business ethical values occur in real-time live streaming interactions, particularly when business actors face sales pressure, platform algorithms, and audience dynamics? and (2) How do MSME actors balance commitment to Islamic ethical principles with the performative demands of digital platform ecosystems?.

B. Method

This study uses a qualitative design with an interpretive paradigm approach and a case study strategy that aims to understand in depth the construction of meaning, subjective experience, and the negotiation process of Islamic business ethics in the practice of TikTok live streaming in aglaonema MSMEs. This approach was chosen because it is able to capture social reality as a result of the construction of meaning formed through the interaction and experience of business actors in a complex digital context (Curtis & Keeler, 2022; Hassan et al., 2023). The subject of the study was determined through a purposive sampling technique with the criteria of aglaonema MSME actors who have been actively using the TikTok live streaming feature as a sales medium for at least 1 year, so that six main informants consisting of five business owners and one live streaming host who are directly involved in sales activities were obtained.

The research instrument is in the form of semi-structured interview guidelines designed to explore the experience of facing ethical dilemmas, as well as value negotiation strategies in real-time interactions, accompanied by observation sheets to record communication behavior, persuasion strategies, and interaction dynamics during live streaming (Karina, 2025; Sa'adah, 2025). The data collection procedure is carried out through triangulation methods, namely in-depth interviews, participatory observations in live streaming sessions, as well as documentation in the form of video recordings, screenshots, and archives of relevant digital content, thus allowing comprehensive data validation (Aziz, 2025; Nurhayati & Susanto, 2024). Data analysis is carried out thematically with an iterative interpretive description approach, starting from the process of verbatim transcription, open coding, categorization of themes, to interpretation of

meaning associated with the Islamic business ethics framework and the context of the digital platform ecosystem (Dolan et al., 2022). In this process, the researcher used NVivo 12 Plus software to help with data management, coding processes, visualization of relationships between themes, and improve transparency and audit trail analysis. The validity and credibility of the data are maintained through triangulation techniques of sources and methods, member checking to informants, and the preparation of thick descriptions to ensure the transferability of findings (Bayuo et al., 2024). With this methodological design, the research is expected to be replicated by other researchers in similar contexts and make a strong empirical contribution to the study of Islamic business ethics in the digital ecosystem.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Results

Sales and Platform Pressure

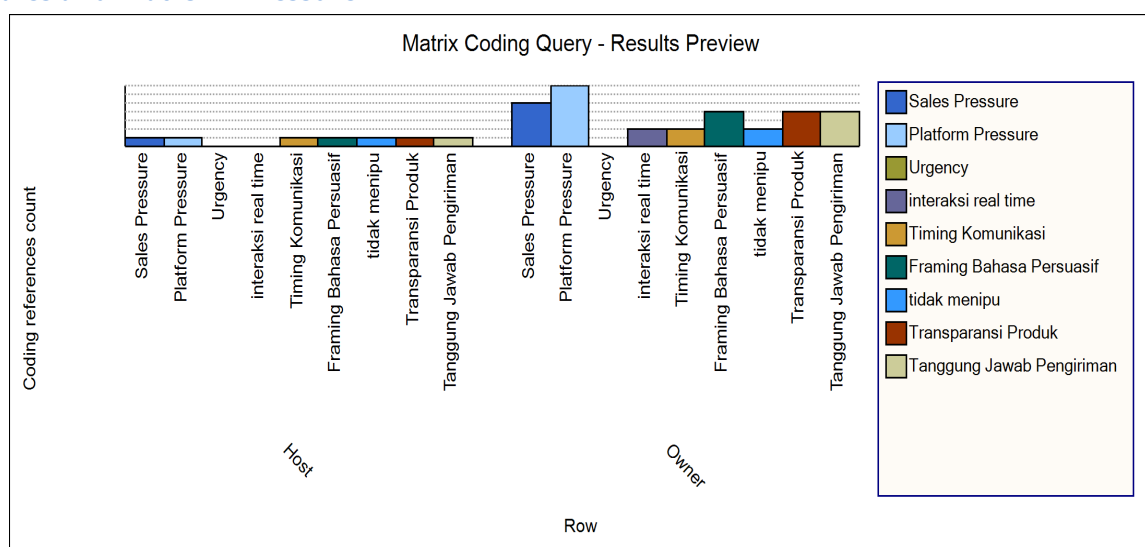


Figure 1. Results of Matrix Coding Query Research using NVivo 12 Plus

The data in the coding query matrix in Figure 1 shows that the categories of sales pressure and platform pressure appear dominant in the owner group compared to the host, shown by the higher coding frequency in the owner column in the NVivo 12 Plus visualization used in the analysis of this research data. This is in line with the owner's informant's statement that there is pressure from the platform system and transaction targets, such as "the more transactions we have, the more deductions too". In addition, pressure also arises from the demands of fluctuating live sales performance, as the host conveyed that "the sales are more than live because we directly interact with buyers". In the visualization of the NVivo concept map as seen in figure 2, this pressure is directly connected to the ethical dilemma node, showing a direct relationship between performance pressure and the emergence of ethical dilemmas. Live observation data also shows a closing push through the statement "only 1 package left... Please type in the deal".

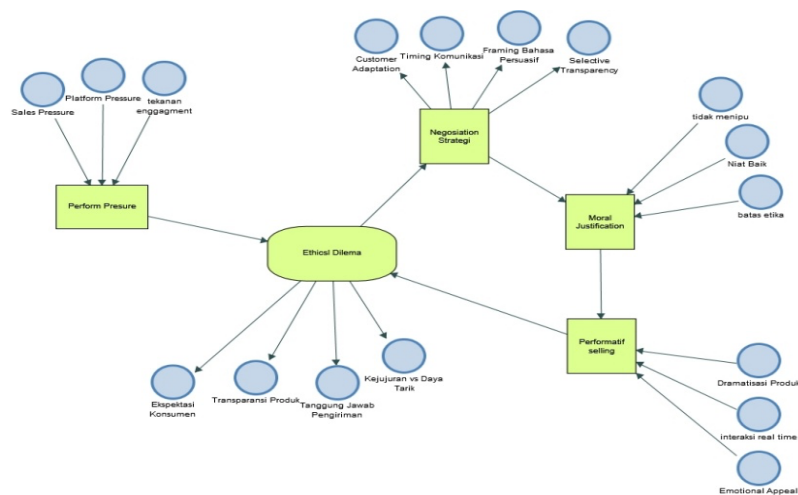


Figure 2. Visualization of Nvivo 12 Plus Concept Map: The Process of Negotiating Islamic Business Ethics in the Live Streaming Practice of Aglaonema MSMEs

Negotiation Strategies in Live Interaction

The coding results in the coding matrix as shown in Figure 1 show that the categories of coding nodes: communication timing, persuasive language framing, and real-time interaction have high intensity in both groups, especially owners. In the visualization of the concept map as shown in Figure 12, this node is directly connected to the negotiation strategy. The transcript data shows real-time communication practices such as "please in the CO in the yellow basket" and "type deal if you want" that are repeated during the live session. In addition, the communication adjustment strategy can be seen from the statement "we follow the customer, if it is not suitable, it can be requested or replaced". The owner also conveyed the use of additional strategies such as bonuses and packages to attract purchase decisions, namely "we give fertilizer bonuses... to attract buyers". The customization and selective transparency nodes in the concept map of NVivo analysis results in Figure 1 confirm the existence of this variation in the data.

Ethical Dimension: Transparency and Responsibility

The results of the visualization of the Nvivo Query coding matrix as shown in figure 1 show the category of product transparency, non-cheating, and the responsibility of delivery has a relatively even distribution between the host and the owner. Also included from the interview data shows consistent statements such as "what is sendowed is sent" and "the goods displayed during the live are the ones we send, we do not cheat". In addition, the transparency aspect of product condition also appears in the quote "if there are plants whose leaves are torn, we still say". In the aspect of responsibility, data such as "if there is damage, we will still replace it" and "we will replace 100% on the next delivery". In the NVivo concept map in figure 2, all these categories of child nodes are directly connected to the nodes of ethical dilemma and moral justification, showing the interconnectedness between categories (child ode) in the resulting data structure (Node: ethical dilemma).

2. Discussion

The Process of Negotiating Ethical Values in Real-Time Live Streaming Interactions

The findings of the study show that the negotiation of Islamic business ethical values in live streaming takes place as an adaptive process that is simultaneously influenced by market pressures, platform algorithms, and audience interaction dynamics.

Empirical data show that sales pressure and platform visibility are the dominant factors that trigger the emergence of ethical dilemmas, as illustrated in the relationship between performance pressure and ethical dilemmas in NVivo's visualization. This is in line with the literature that states that digitalization is changing the conditions of business negotiations by presenting new pressures that force business actors to renegotiate moral principles in daily practice (Bondarenko & Bondarenko, 2025; Daradkeh, 2023; Nelson & Stout, 2022). However, the findings of this study enrich the literature by showing that in the context of live streaming, negotiations do not only occur at a strategic level but also take place in micro and real-time through direct interaction between sellers and consumers.

When compared to previous research that emphasized that market pressures often encourage the practice of information manipulation or over-promotion (Hapis, 2025; Jati Imantoro, 2025), the results of this study show more complex nuances. MSME actors in this study did not directly lead to manipulative practices, but negotiated through certain ethical boundaries, such as maintaining product honesty even though they used persuasion strategies. This can be seen from communication practices such as the use of urgency phrases ("only 1 package", "type deal") which empirically increases conversions but is still accompanied by transparency of product condition. These findings suggest a shift from the "ethical vs. unethical" dichotomy towards a spectrum of contextually negotiated ethical practices.

Further, the literature on platform architecture states that algorithms not only facilitate the market, but also form incentives and limit the agency of business actors (Daradkeh, 2023; McDonald et al., 2023; Oechslen, 2025). The findings of this study confirm this but also show that MSME actors are not completely passive to these pressures. They develop negotiation strategies such as communication timing, persuasive language framing, and customization to maintain ethical values while following the logic of the algorithm. Thus, the results of this study strengthen the argument that the actions of business actors in digital platforms are often an adaptive response to existing incentive structures, rather than merely value-free individual choices.

In the context of normative debates about strategic lies in negotiation (Nelson & Stout, 2022; Strudler, 2023), the findings of this study tend to support a perspective that emphasizes the importance of honesty as a foundation of long-term trust. Although there is room for the use of persuasion strategies, business actors still affirm ethical boundaries such as not deceiving and conveying the condition of the product as it is. This is in line with MSME studies which show that honesty remains a core value in digital business practices (Jati Imantoro, 2025), as well as showing that in the context of live streaming, honesty is negotiated through the means of delivery, not eliminated.

In addition, the findings of this study also expand the literature on real-time interactions in live streaming commerce that previously focused more on the conversion and consumer behavior aspects. Empirical studies show that real-time interactions in live streaming increase trust and reduce the risk of consumer perception (Miao et al., 2025; Pang et al., 2021), but this study adds a dimension of business ethics by showing that these interactions are also a space for value negotiation between sellers and buyers. Thus, the main contribution of this study is to show that ethical negotiations in live streaming are not only influenced by external pressures but also mediated by communication practices and social interactions that take place in person.

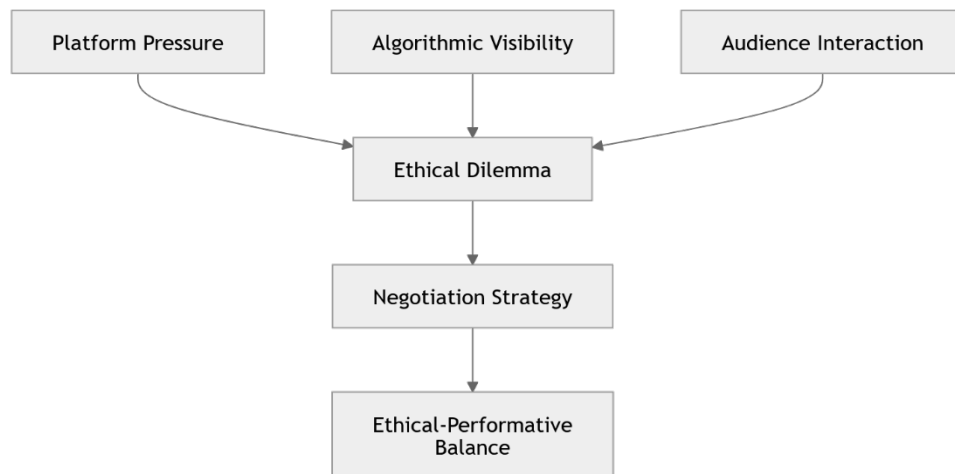


Figure 3: Ethical Negotiation Model in TikTok Live Streaming Commerce

Balance between Islamic Business Ethics and Platform Performativity

The results of the study show that the balance between Islamic business ethical principles and the demands of platform performativity is not achieved through unilateral compromise, but through dynamic and contextual integration. MSME actors do not abandon ethical principles to achieve sales targets but also do not ignore the performance demands set by the platform. These findings are in line with the literature that states that business actors rely on the internalization of values and ethical leadership as a mechanism to deal with market pressures (Hapis, 2025; Imantoro, 2025). In the context of this study, the internalization of these values can be seen from the commitment to honesty, trust, and responsibility that is maintained even in conditions of high pressure.

However, when compared to the literature that emphasizes the gap between values and practices due to limited resources and platform pressures (Daradkeh, 2023; Husriadi, 2025; Prianka, 2022), this research shows that MSME actors are able to develop practical strategies to bridge the gap. For example, the practice of product transparency and the provision of warranties not only serves as a form of ethical responsibility, but also as a strategy to build customer trust and loyalty. This shows that ethics is not only positioned as a moral obligation, but also as a strategic asset in digital business.

In the literature on performativity in live streaming, it is stated that sales success is heavily influenced by the host's ability to build interaction, appeal, and parasocial trust (Chen et al., 2022; Jiang et al., 2024; Zhu et al., 2021). The study's findings confirm the importance of this performative aspect but add that performative is not always at odds with ethics. Business actors use performativity to convey ethical values, for example through friendly, transparent, and educational communication about products. Thus, performativity in this study not only functions as a marketing tool, but also as a medium for internalizing ethical values.

Further, the literature also highlights that the platform's algorithm encourages the use of strategies such as scarcity cues and limited promotions that can increase impulse purchases (Miranda et al., 2024). The findings of this study show that the strategy is indeed used, but to a certain extent that is still ethically acceptable. This shows that there is a value filtration process, where business actors choose strategies that are in accordance with Islamic ethical principles and avoid practices that are considered violative. Thus, the balance between ethics and performativity is not the result of total compromise, but the result of the process of selection and adaptation of strategies.

In the context of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, these findings suggest that digital business practices can remain aligned with the goals of property protection/ *ḥifẓ al-māl*, justice/ *ʿadl*, and benefit/ *maṣlaḥah*, despite being in a highly competitive and technology-based

environment. This reinforces the argument that Islamic values are flexible and adaptable in a variety of contexts, including the digital economy. Thus, this study makes an important contribution in showing that Islamic business ethics are not only relevant, but also operational in the practice of live streaming commerce.

The results of this study are important because they provide a deeper empirical understanding of how Islamic business ethics are practiced in the context of a complex digital economy, especially in live streaming commerce which has been studied more from the perspective of marketing and consumer behavior. These findings suggest that ethics is not just an ideal norm, but is a dynamically negotiated practice in real interactions, thus contributing to the development of a more contextual and applicable theory of business ethics. In addition, the study enriches the literature by showing that platform pressures do not necessarily result in unethical practices but can encourage innovation in communication strategies that still maintain moral values. In the scientific context, this research contributes to the integration between the study of Islamic business ethics, digital entrepreneurship, and platform studies, which have been fragmented. This research also provides practical implications for MSME actors that the application of ethics can be a differentiation strategy that increases customer trust and loyalty, not just a moral obligation.

On the other hand, this study has limitations on the relatively small number of informants and focuses on one type of business, so the generalization of the findings is still limited. In addition, the specific context of the research on the TikTok platform makes the results not necessarily directly applicable to other platforms with different characteristics. However, these limitations also open opportunities for further research to develop cross-sectoral and cross-platform comparative studies, as well as to expand analysis on a larger scale and diverse social contexts.

D. Conclusion

The conclusion of this study shows that the practice of Islamic business ethics in TikTok live streaming on aglaonema MSMEs is not something static but is the result of a dynamic negotiation process between moral values, platform pressure, and business strategy. Key findings show that businesses face strong pressure from sales targets, visibility algorithms, and real-time interaction dynamics, which directly raises ethical dilemmas in everyday practice. However, MSME actors do not necessarily ignore ethical values, but rather conduct a negotiation process through various strategies such as the use of controlled persuasive language, selective transparency, and adjustment of communication with the audience. In this context, Islamic business ethical values such as honesty/ *sidq*, trust, and responsibility are maintained as normative boundaries, even though they are conveyed in a form that is adaptive to the demands of the platform's performativity. In addition, the study also found that the balance between ethics and performance is not achieved through compromise, but through integration that allows the two to run simultaneously in digital business practices. Thus, this research makes an important contribution in the scientific field by expanding the understanding of Islamic business ethics as a contextual and operational practice in the digital ecosystem, as well as introducing the concept of ethical negotiation as an analytical framework in the study of platform-based digital entrepreneurship.

In addition to theoretical contributions, the findings of this study also provide significant practical implications for MSME actors and the development of ethical digital business ecosystems. This research shows that the application of ethics does not have to be contrary to the achievement of business targets but can instead be a source of competitive advantage through the development of customer trust and loyalty. Therefore, business actors are advised to continue to strengthen the internalization of ethical values

in digital practices, while developing effective communication strategies without violating moral principles. For future research, it is recommended to expand the scope of the study to involve more informants and variations of business sectors, to provide a more comprehensive picture of ethical practices in various digital business contexts. In addition, further research can develop a cross-platform comparative approach to see how differences in algorithm design and platform policies affect the ethical negotiations of business actors. The use of mixed methods can also be considered to combine the depth of qualitative analysis with the power of quantitative generalization. Thus, further research is expected to strengthen the validity of findings while enriching the development of business ethics theory and practice in the digital economy era.

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F. Author Contributions Statement

Jati Imantoro contributed to the conceptualization of the study, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and manuscript drafting. Kuncoro Budi Riyanto contributed to research supervision, theoretical framework development, methodological review, and critical revision of the manuscript. Andiana Rosid contributed to data validation, manuscript editing, literature review, and final manuscript refinement. All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

G. Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper. Furthermore, the authors confirm that there are no professional, institutional, commercial, or non-financial conflicts of interest that could have affected the design of the study, data collection, analysis, interpretation of the findings, or the decision to publish the results. The authors have conducted this research with full academic independence and are solely responsible for the content and conclusions presented in this manuscript.

H. AI Usage Statement

The authors used Artificial Intelligence (AI)-assisted tools for language refinement, grammar checking, and manuscript editing during the preparation of this article. The use of AI was conducted transparently and responsibly and did not replace the authors' roles in developing ideas, conducting scientific analysis, interpreting findings, or drawing research conclusions. All interpretations, analyses, and conclusions presented in this article remain the full academic responsibility of the authors.

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