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Sustainable Cultural Tourism Development in Tamkesi Traditional Village: Findings from the 6A Framework Analysis

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Abstract

Cultural tourism in traditional Indonesian villages holds significant potential for preserving cultural heritage while driving local economic growth. Tamkesi Traditional Village in North Central Timor, East Nusa Tenggara, is one of the most iconic heritage sites with unique architecture and cultural traditions. This study aims to analyze the development of cultural tourism in Tamkesi using the 6A tourism framework, namely Attractions, Amenities, Supporting Services, Activities, Accessibility, and Available Packages, and collaborative governance principles. A qualitative descriptive approach was used, involving in-depth interviews with local stakeholders, direct observation, and document analysis. The findings indicate that despite Tamkesi's strong appeal and cultural authenticity, its tourism development faces limitations in amenities, accessibility, supporting services, and structured tour packages. Collaborative governance among local communities, government agencies, and tourism actors is identified as a crucial strategy to address these gaps and promote sustainable cultural tourism development. The study concludes that integrated planning and community-based collaboration are essential for strengthening all components of the 6A framework. This research contributes to the achievement of SDG 11 by supporting cultural heritage preservation and sustainable settlements, and to SDG 17 by reinforcing multi stakeholder partnerships to ensure effective and sustainable cultural tourism governance.

Keywords: Cultural Tourism, Development, Traditional Village

SDGs: Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities & Communities), Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)

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INTRODUCTION

Tamkesi is a megalithic and sacred village located in North Central Timor, Indonesia, recognized for its traditional architecture, spiritual rituals, and historical significance as the former royal center of the Biboki Kingdom since 1865. As a living heritage site, Tamkesi is protected by royal descendants and traditional elders who preserve the indigenous belief systems, clan houses, and sacred sites embedded in local cosmology (Lalian, 2026). Despite being acknowledged through Regent's Decree No. 502 of 2005 (Bupati Timor Tengah Utara, 2005) as a preparatory traditional village (*desa persiapan adat*), it has yet to receive full recognition as a formal traditional village, limiting its administrative authority and access to developmental funding or legal empowerment mechanisms (Kristoforus et al., 2018).

Tamkesi is a well-known cultural tourism site due to its unique sacred landscape, megalithic architecture, and preserved rituals. However, the data shows a decline in the number of visitors each year. This trend highlights latent potential hampered by poor infrastructure, weak promotional strategies, and low community participation (Taolin & Nugroho, 2016). Structural constraints such as unpaved road access, lack of clean

water, unreliable electricity, and inadequate accommodation pose major challenges to Tamkesi's tourism readiness (Jehamur et al., 2025).

Recent studies on sustainable and community-based tourism emphasize that empowering local communities, improving infrastructure, and fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration are crucial to ensuring long term tourism benefits (Muda, 2025; Tresiana & Duadji, 2023). Evidence from traditional villages in Bali, East Sumba, and Tana Toraja reveals that effective development arises from integrating local value systems with modern tourism governance and participatory planning (Tresiana & Duadji, 2023). However, studies on remote and borderland traditional villages in East Nusa Tenggara, like Tamkesi, are still rare and often lack policy-oriented perspectives on sustainable development (Kusmayadi & Anunut, 2017).

While Tamkesi possesses distinct cultural assets such as sacred cosmology, uninterrupted royal lineage, and intact ritual cycles it lacks a comprehensive, inclusive, and collaborative development framework that brings together local authorities, tourism agencies, community members, and the media. Existing research has focused solely on heritage conservation or architectural uniqueness, thus not proposing an integrative model that combines cultural sustainability with the economic potential of tourism (Tanggela & Bawole, 2024; Manek et al., 2025). Furthermore, issues such as infrastructure gaps, poor institutional support, minimal digital tourism promotion, and limited community capacity have not been thoroughly explored in academic and policy discourse, even though studies on rural and community-based tourism consistently identify weak physical and digital infrastructure, limited managerial skills, and underdeveloped online marketing as major constraints on destination competitiveness (Nursetiawan et al., 2026).

To bridge the existing gap, this study attempts to design a strategic framework for the sustainable development of Tamkesi as a cultural tourism village, by utilizing the 6A tourism framework: Attraction, Accessibility, Amenities, Ancillary Services, Activities, and Available Packages. The 6A model, as articulated by Buhalis (2000), remains widely applied in tourism development literature and continues to inform modern destination management strategies (Klepers & Ābols, 2022; Tresiana & Duadji, 2023; Agustan et al., 2024). Through this analytical lens, the aim of this research is to provide a systematic understanding of Tamkesi's current conditions and potential, while proposing development strategies that are culturally respectful, economically viable, and socially inclusive.

METHOD

This research adopts a qualitative case study strategy, enabling an in-depth exploration of a bounded case within its real-life context (Mtisi, 2022), namely the current conditions and challenges of cultural tourism development. This research was conducted in the Tamkesi Traditional Village, North Central Timor Regency, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. Participants consisted of 12 key informants selected through purposive sampling, including traditional leaders, village government officials, tourism operators, and visitors. The selection criteria were based on their direct involvement and knowledge of tourism development in Tamkesi. This research is guided by the 6A tourism framework (Attractions, Amenities, Supporting Services, Activities, Accessibility, and Available Packages) and the concept of collaborative governance (Buhalis, 2000; Ansell & Gash, 2008). Data were collected using a semi-structured interview guide that covered all elements of the 6A framework and governance aspects. An observation checklist was used to assess physical facilities, cultural attractions, and accessibility. Relevant documents, such as regional tourism plans, visitor statistics, and cultural preservation regulations, were also reviewed. Data collection was conducted over three months (March, April and May) in 2024. Interviews were conducted face-to-face in local languages and Indonesian, recorded with consent, and transcribed verbatim. Observations were conducted during cultural events and field visits. Document analysis was conducted in parallel to verify and complement the interview and observation findings.

Data analysis employed the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes three steps: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing/verifying conclusions (Mattimoe et al., 2021). Data reduction in this study focused on grouping collected data related to the sustainable development of the Tamkesi tourism destination and discarding data that did not align with the research objectives to ensure a truly focused data collection. This process continued throughout the study. Data presentation was guided by the problem formulation as a research question, so that the narrative presented provides a detailed description of the conditions to narrate and answer the problem formulation. Conclusions were drawn by grouping the data found based on specific patterns. This data grouping is expected to explain the reality of the problem being studied, namely the sustainable development of the Tamkesi tourism destination, so that it can then become research data from which conclusions can be drawn. The conclusions drawn will be verified with the aim of testing their validity (Sutopo, 2002).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Tamkesi is located on the back of two stone mountain peaks, namely Tapenpah and Oepuah. The two stones symbolize the cosmic dualism that nature always has two sides: feto-mone (female and male), olif tataf (younger sibling), East-West and North-South. This dualism is the foundation that manifests in every form on earth. The western part is called Oepuah, meaning betel nut water, and is identified as mone, which means male, masculine. While the eastern part is called Tapenpah, meaning guardian of nature, because it symbolizes the male side.

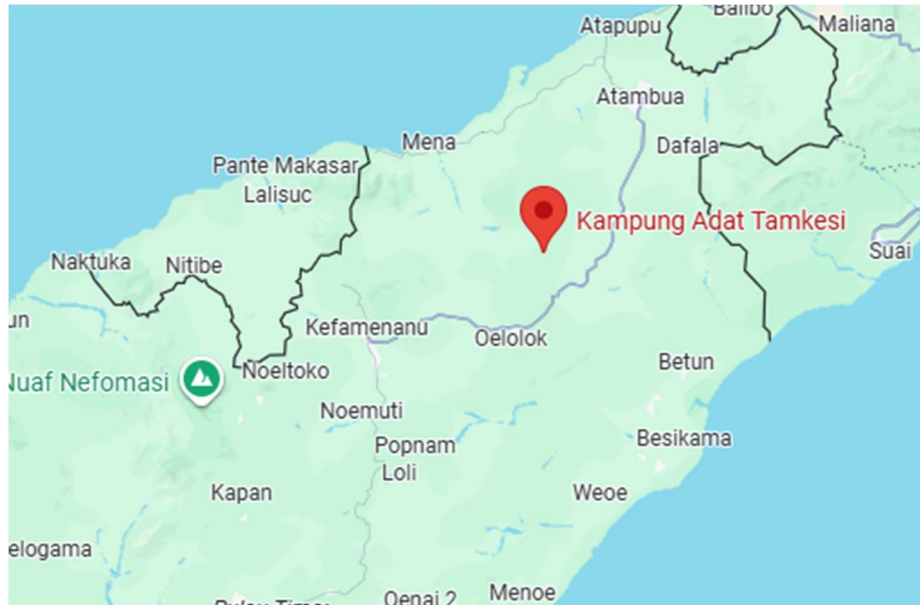


Figure 1. Map of Tamkesi Traditional Village

Figure 1 shows the geographical location of the traditional village of Tamkesi which is located in Tautpah Village, Hamlet III Usboko, South Boboki District, North Central Timor Regency. The administrative boundaries of Tamkesi are as follows: Northern Part: borders Tautpah and Sapaen Villages. Eastern Part: borders Oekopa and Oerinbesi. Southern Part: borders Teba. Western Part: borders Tokbesi. Tautpah Village consists of three hamlets and in the Tamkesi traditional village area, especially the sonaf area, now there are only 3 families who inherit and maintain the sonaf, they live in adar houses with roofs made of thatch (alang-alang) and hanging down to the ground. Meanwhile, below the foot of the mountain, there is a settlement which also includes the Tamkesi traditional village, which chose to move from the Sonaf area because the buildings could use modern materials. The livelihoods of the Tamkesi traditional village community are farmers, livestock breeders, traders, and builders. Table 1 present the population of the Tamkesi traditional village community based on livelihood.

Tamkesi is a former palace or center of the Biboki kingdom in the past until now. This kingdom is led by a king who the local people usually call usif koko. The king or usif koko and the successor tribe of the king are the Usboko Clan. The king is seen as a source of blessings. In running the government, the USIF Koko is assisted by the amaf as commanders and as mouthpieces for the community. There is also a king's spokesperson or Aat (Uskenat), whose job is to convey the king's messages to the community. In the cultural order of the community that inhabits the Tamkesi traditional village, there are several ume (traditional houses and residences) which are places for carrying out traditional activities and resting. Functionally, ume or other types of houses (lopo, sonaf, ume kbubu, and ume kbat) in the lives of the Tamkesi indigenous people have socio-economic, socio-cultural, and religious functions, namely: Sonaf mnasi is the residence of the Usboko Emperor/king, which is considered holy and sacred. This building is the center of the South Biboki kingdom (Tamkesi palace). Ume means house and kbubu means round, long owned by ancestors. So, Ume kbubu is a round house (because of its round shape) belonging to ancestors, or often called the mother's house. This ume kbubu was founded by all members of the tribe, because it has the status of a tribal house/house. Lopo is a residence also for men, namely a masculine symbol, round in shape, with four pillars (columns), and contains other functions as a meeting place, a place for tribal ceremonies, and a place to store agricultural products, which are the result of men's work. Ume Kbat/kanaf means clan name, so Umekbat/kanaf means a tribal or

clan house built as a sign of the bond and unity of all members of the tribe or clan. Table 1 shows a presentation of the number of architectural buildings in the Tamkesi traditional village.

Table 1. Number of Tamkesi Architectural Buildings in 2023

Building	Total
Sonaf mnasi	1
ume kbubu	8
Lopo	10
Ume Kbat/kanaf	10
Total	29

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the architecture of buildings in Tamkesi is dominated by structures closely linked to the local culture. Furthermore, these buildings also demonstrate the strong cultural heritage of the community, which must be maintained for its sustainability. Efforts to maintain this cultural sustainability can be achieved through collaboration between the government and the community, and, where possible, the involvement of the private sector. In addition, structured planning and heritage based tourism management are necessary to ensure that development initiatives do not compromise the authenticity and cultural values embedded in the village architecture. Such integrated efforts will strengthen both cultural preservation and the long term resilience of the local tourism sector.

The results of the study indicate that the development of cultural tourism, which leads to the traditional village of Tamkesi, starts from the development of human resources to tourism facilities. Tamkesi is a traditional village in Tautpah Village, Biboki Selatan District, North Central Timor Regency, which has been designated as a preparatory village for traditional villages since 2005 through Regent Decree Number 502 of 2005 (Bupati Timor Tengah Utara, 2005) concerning "Appointment of the Head of Traditional Village and Apparatus of the Tamkesi Preparatory Traditional Village, Biboki Selatan District" but until now has not been definitively designated as a traditional village. In addition, the development of cultural tourism that must be carried out is the development of tourist attractions, access, facilities, and supporting services, as well as tour packages to attract tourists. In addition, there is a shift in the paradigm of public administration, efforts to develop cultural tourism carried out by the Regional Government of North Central Timor Regency through the Tourism and Creative Economy Office of North Central Timor Regency, of course, collaborate with related parties to support and assist the government so that it is not alone in development efforts (Collaborative Governance). The development indicators that must be pursued are Attraction, Amenities, Support Services, Activities, Accessibility, and Available Packages.

Attraction

Based on the results of research in the field, there needs to be an effort to develop attractions such as renovating traditional houses by adjusting the needs and customs in Tamkesi, training for the surrounding community by collaborating with parties that provide training or course services in welcoming tourists, cooperation with dance studios and other arts fields to increase the attraction of cultural tourism objects and utilizing the role of mass media as a means of promotion such as collaborating with television stations, YouTubers and other social media activists. Related to Attraction, factors that influence the development of attractions cultural tourism is development must be development that adapts to circumstances and conditions without eliminating historical elements, this is a challenge in itself in development efforts, there needs to be involvement of other parties such as traditional leaders, cultural observers, academics and others so that development adapts to the order that has been maintained for a long time.



Figure 2. Traditional House and Lopo

Figure 2 shows the architectural form of cultural buildings found in the Tamkesi traditional village, known as *ume kubub* (round traditional houses). Tamkesi also boasts other distinctive cultural heritage assets, including megalithic structures and ritual events such as *fua malus* and *kobe oe*. These attractions form the core identity of the village and are perceived as authentic and unique by visitors. This authenticity has been identified as a key determinant of visitor satisfaction and loyalty in heritage tourism (Park et al., 2019); Su et al., 2016). However, unlike destinations like Ubud, Bali, where cultural heritage is integrated with modern tourism services without compromising its authenticity (Bharuna & Aritama, 2025), Tamkesi faces a dilemma between preserving tradition and developing tourism. This aligns with Timothy and Nyaupane's (2009) assertion that unmanaged tourism growth in rural heritage sites can threaten cultural integrity if not accompanied by effective conservation policies. In Tamkesi, prioritizing conservation limits commercialization, which maintains authenticity but also limits potential economic benefits.

Amenities (Supporting Facilities)

Based on field research, supporting facilities at the Tamkesi traditional village cultural tourism site are still inadequate, necessitating improvements to facilities and infrastructure, such as the construction of public toilets, electricity, and clean water. Regarding amenities (supporting facilities), a key factor is that facility construction must utilize natural materials and tools, and avoid cement, zinc, brick, or other artificial materials; all must be natural. In the case of Nhon Ly coastal community in Vietnam, insufficient support for infrastructure and poorly equipped homestays meant that tourists were hosted in substandard conditions, which undermined the competitiveness of the CBT destination and its capacity to generate sustained economic gains for residents (Quang et al., 2023). Crouch and Ritchie (1999) argue that a destination's competitiveness is a function of its core resources and supporting factors (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). Tamkesi's strong appeal is eroded by the absence of these supporting facilities, which directly impacts tourist satisfaction and interest in returning.

Ancillary Services (Supporting Services)

Based on the results of observations in the field, supporting services at the Tamkesi cultural tourism object are still inadequate, such as the absence of information boards or written regulations for visitors or tourists while they are there, then it is necessary to form a tourism management organization by involving the Tamkesi traditional village community directly so that visitors who come can be easily directed under the party that handles the tourist attraction. Regarding Ancillary Services (Supporting Services), the factors that influence the development of supporting services are the absence of a tourist attraction management organization and the absence of empowerment for the surrounding community.



Figure 3. Entrance (Eno Paisanaunu)

Figure 3 shows one of the information resources available at Tamkesi, namely the inauguration monument, which provides information regarding when and who inaugurated the Tamkesi tourist village. However, there is a lack of other information resources that visitors can utilize to gain a more detailed understanding of Tamkesi village, such as professional guide services, interpretive signage, and a visitor information center. Consequently, tourists rely heavily on informal explanations from local residents, which may lack consistency and depth, a pattern that contrasts with findings from heritage and conservation sites where well-designed interpretive services significantly improve visitors' understanding and overall experience (Arowosafe et al., 2023). This reflects challenges in villages where limited interpretive capacity undermines the visitor experience (Zhang & Guo, 2022). In contrast, Shirakawa-go in Japan demonstrates how well-designed visitor management and information services can enhance visitors' understanding of the World Heritage village and improve their overall experience, creating opportunities to increase tourism-related revenue and satisfaction (Okagawa et al., 2025). The lack of such services at Tamkesi highlights untapped potential for enhancing the quality of the tourism experience.

Activities

Based on the results of research in the field, activities and daily life in the Tamkesi Traditional Village are one of the attractions, tourists who visit usually follow the daily life of the community who live traditionally, traditional ceremonies and the daily life of the Tamkesi traditional village community such as farming and raising livestock, but there needs to be development with training in processing souvenirs and traditional food so that tourists who come can be presented and become souvenirs and other crafts. Related to Activities, the factors that influence development efforts are the lack of training and socialization for the Tamkesi traditional village community to communicate with local and foreign tourists. Training is needed by collaborating with parties that have a concentration in tourism development.



Figure 4. Traditional Ceremony

Figure 4 shows the traditional ritual activities performed by the Tamkesi community, which constitute an attraction that needs to be preserved and perhaps even developed so that the values contained within can be passed down to future generations. The existence of cultural attractions through these traditional ritual activities needs to be understood as a significant potential that must be supported through various concrete steps, including tourism promotion and other aspects such as transportation that can connect tourists to the tourist attractions offered. A detailed understanding of this potential and its utilization will enable collaboration between actors, including through a policy network involving the government, the private sector, and the community, in efforts to develop tourism in Tamkesi Village. Through a policy network that fosters

relationships between institutions in tourism management, synergy and optimal collaboration in tourism management can be enhanced (Mariane et al., 2022).

Research results indicate that tourists visiting Tamkesi Village can witness traditional ceremonies and daily village life, but interactive experiences such as weaving workshops, traditional cooking classes, or guided historical tours remain rare. Richards (2020) emphasized that experiential activities are increasingly valued in cultural tourism, as they encourage deeper engagement and learning. This limitation aligns with the findings of (Çakmak et al., 2018) in Turkey, where diversifying activities beyond passive observation actually increased tourist satisfaction and repeat visits. Without such diversification, Tamkesi risks being perceived as a "one-off" destination, which reduces the long-term sustainability of tourism.

Accessibility (Access)

Based on the results of research in the field, access to the Tamkesi traditional village is inadequate, the roads are narrow in certain locations, full of holes and steep so that it is difficult for tourists to visit there, there needs to be development by repairing and improving the road to the Tamkesi cultural tourism object. Then it is hoped that there will be collaboration between the government and parties that provide public transportation services, such as Damri, the Department of Transportation, and the private sector that provides transportation services, to make it easier for tourists who do not yet know the location of the Tamkesi traditional village. Regarding Accessibility, the factor that influences the development of cultural tourism in the Tamkesi traditional village is the limited budget for development, so further coordination is needed with the related parties.



Figure 5. Road to Tamkesi Traditional Village

Figure 5 shows the road access available to tourists to Tamkesi Village. Research has found poor road conditions and limited transportation options. These barriers reduce visitor numbers and limit market reach. Similar issues have been reported in rural tourism destinations (Omirezakova & Wendt, 2025), where limited transport infrastructure hinders tourism growth despite its high potential. That improving accessibility not only increases tourist visits but also encourages broader regional development (Zairil, 2024). Therefore, addressing accessibility is a priority for tourism and rural development in Tamkesi. This can be achieved through collaboration between all stakeholders government, private sector, and community directed toward achieving predetermined objectives, as well as providing knowledge and learning related to the implementation of policy networks (Novando et al., 2023) for sustainable tourism development.

Available Packages (Tour Packages)

Based on the results of research in the field, the intended tour package does not yet exist, so it needs to be included in development efforts so that it will later increase the appeal of cultural tourism in the Tamkesi traditional village, considering that competition in tourism marketing is getting tighter. Related to Available packages (Tourism Packages), the factors that influence the development of the Tamkesi traditional village tourism object are that the Human Resources of the Tamkesi traditional village community need to be improved by improving the quality of education, so that later the community will be directly involved in providing tour packages.

Currently, there are no integrated tourism packages that combine accommodation, guided tours, and cultural experiences. This absence makes it difficult for potential visitors to plan and book trips. Curated tourism packages can significantly increase length of stay and spending, thereby amplifying local economic impact (Pratiwi et al., 2025; Aguiló et al., 2017). Tamkesi's reliance on ad hoc visits results in underutilization of its cultural resources, as tourists do not fully engage with the range of possible experiences. Developing structured and community based tourism packages would enable visitors to experience cultural rituals,

traditional architecture, and local crafts in a more comprehensive manner. Such initiatives would not only enhance visitor satisfaction but also create more equitable economic opportunities for local residents.

The focus of this study is a single case of Tamkesi Traditional Village, which may restrict the generalizability of findings to other cultural tourism destinations with different socio-cultural and economic contexts. The qualitative design, while providing in-depth insights, relies on a relatively small number of purposively selected informants, which may introduce subjective bias. Seasonal factors, such as the occurrence of cultural events during the data collection period, may also have influenced the observed tourism dynamics. Furthermore, the analysis was conducted primarily from the perspective of local stakeholders, with limited direct input from a broad range of tourists. Future research could adopt a mixed-methods approach, incorporate longitudinal data to capture temporal changes, and compare multiple traditional villages to provide a more comprehensive understanding of cultural tourism development. Expanding the scope to include tourist satisfaction surveys, economic impact assessments, and environmental sustainability indicators would also enhance the robustness and applicability of the findings.

The findings of this study also have an impact on several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 8 (*Decent Work and Economic Growth*), SDG 11 (*Sustainable Cities and Communities*), and SDG 17 (*Partnerships for the Goals*). By enhancing the 6A components of tourism through collaborative governance, Tamkesi Traditional Village can promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, generate local employment opportunities, and preserve cultural heritage for future generations. Improved amenities, accessibility, and diversified tourism activities would not only strengthen the local economy but also foster resilient and sustainable rural communities. Furthermore, the collaborative governance approach aligns directly with SDG 17, as it encourages partnerships between local communities, government institutions, and private stakeholders. In this way, the strategic development of Tamkesi's cultural tourism can serve as a replicable model for rural heritage destinations seeking to align tourism growth with the broader agenda of sustainable development.

CONCLUSION

Sustainable tourism development is essential. This study demonstrates that cultural tourism development in Tamkesi Traditional Village needs to be based on its strong cultural authenticity. However, the results indicate identified limitations in tourism support components, including amenities, ancillary services, activities, accessibility, and the lack of integrated tourism packages. These findings highlight that although the village possesses substantial cultural assets, these strengths cannot be fully utilized without targeted improvements in infrastructure, service quality, and collaborative governance between local stakeholders, government agencies, and tourism operators. From a policy perspective, integrating the 6A tourism framework with collaborative governance offers a strategic pathway for sustainable cultural tourism development. These results also underscore the importance of balancing heritage preservation with the need for economic benefits for local communities, which requires careful planning and multi-stakeholder engagement. Based on these findings, further research could expand on this study by conducting comparative analyses with other traditional villages, applying a mixed-methods approach, and incorporating quantitative assessments such as tourist satisfaction, economic impact, and environmental sustainability. Such extensions would enrich theoretical understanding and provide a stronger empirical basis for developing a scalable cultural tourism model in the context of rural heritage.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Apriyanto Gebyanus Putra Haukilo: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, and Writing - Review and Editing; **Aplonia Pala:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, and Writing - Review and Editing; **Nikolaus Uskono:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, and Writing - Review and Editing; **Yohanes Fritantus:** Validation and Supervision; **Hendrikus Hironimus Botha:** Validation and Supervision; and **Theodecilda Bimolo:** Validation and Supervision. All authors have read and approved the final version of this manuscript.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare no known financial conflicts of interest or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this manuscript.

DECLARATION OF ETHICS

The authors declare that the research and writing of this manuscript adhere to ethical standards of research and publication, in accordance with scientific principles, and are free from plagiarism.

DECLARATION OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

The authors declare that generative artificial intelligence (Gen AI) and other AI-assisted tools were used prudently, not excessively, during the research and preparation of this manuscript. Specifically, ChatGPT was used for brainstorming, and Grammarly was used for grammar and style correction, paraphrasing, and improving clarity and coherence. All AI-generated content has been thoroughly reviewed and edited by the authors to ensure accuracy, completeness, and adherence to ethical and scientific standards. The authors accept full responsibility for the final content of the manuscript.

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