

Research Article

Strategic Planning in Education: Introducing the KLIK Framework for the 'Merdeka Belajar' Policy

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Received Date: 29 July 2024

Revised Date: 19 August 2024

Accepted Date: 23 August 2024

Published Date: 29 August 2024

Abstract: A strategic plan is essential for an organization to achieve two critical objectives: making decisions about goals and committing to those decisions. In educational organizations, a strategic plan is a document that outlines long-term goals, vision, mission, objectives, programs, and strategic steps. The process of creating this plan is crucial for guiding the direction and objectives of an educational organization over a specific period. However, the reality is that many educational organizations still lack a strategic plan. This research utilizes the Borg and Gall Research and Development (R&D) model, which includes ten steps: (1) identifying potential and problems; (2) collecting data; (3) designing the product; (4) validating the design; (5) revising the design; (6) conducting small group trials; (7) making revisions; (8) conducting large group trials; (9) revising again; and (10) disseminating the final product. Based on an analysis of various theories, regulations, and real-world needs of educational organizations in the context of Indonesia's independent learning policy, a strategic planning model named "KLIK" was developed. The acronym "KLIK" stands for Commitment, Literacy, Implementation, and Communication. The feasibility of the "KLIK" model, as evaluated by five expert validators using the V Iken method, scored 96%, categorizing it as "very feasible." The effectiveness of the "KLIK" model was also tested in several educational organizations using the Paired Sample t-test, analyzed with the SPSS application. The results showed a significance value of 0.002 at a 5% error rate, indicating that the model is highly effective.

Keywords: Educational management, Educational Organization, Merdeka belajar Policy, KLIK Model, Strategic planning model.

I. INTRODUCTION

Quality education is the aspiration and demand of all education stakeholders (Ali 2021). Every educational institution, from basic education to higher education, must achieve and maintain quality education. Improving the quality of education requires actions aligned with educational policies (Kemendikbudristek 2022a). Efforts to enhance educational quality involve improving both management and learning services for students. Multiple factors, including management practices, drive these efforts. Strategic management practices significantly influence organizational performance (Waweru and Omwenga 2015). A strategic plan provides organizations with clear decisions about goals and strategies and fosters commitment to those decisions (Michael J. Allison and Judith Kaye 2015). In educational organizations, a strategic plan details long-term goals, vision, mission, objectives, and the steps necessary to achieve those goals. Its preparation is a vital process that guides the long-term direction and objectives of educational organizations (Woodcock et al., 2022).

Several factors necessitate strategic planning in educational organizations. These include ensuring that organizational goals are achievable with high certainty and low risk, providing clear direction for organizational development, and serving as a reference for identifying and allocating educational resources (Sutar 2019a). Strategic planning also ensures relevance and consistency in planning, budgeting, implementation, and supervision, optimizes the participation of school stakeholders, and promotes efficient, effective, equitable, and sustainable resource use (Sutar 2019a).

Three strategic planning models from strategic management experts are particularly notable: the Wheelen-Hunger model, the Fred R. David model, and the Glenn Baseman and Arvind Platak models. Despite the differences, these models share several core elements: vision, mission, and values; external and internal environment analysis; strategic options analysis; long-term goals; functional strategies; and implementation, control, and evaluation programs (Carvalho et al. 2021a).

The quality of Indonesian education remains suboptimal. For instance, the 2021 World Population Review ranked Indonesia 54th out of 78 countries in global education rankings, trailing behind Singapore (21st), Malaysia (38th), and Thailand (46th) (Media Indonesia 2023). Planning is critical in the management control of educational organizations. It plays a key role in advancing schools by providing a clear reference for management activities (Permendikbudristek No. 47 of 2023). According to the regulation, educational activity planning is formalized in the work plan of the Education Unit, encompassing both short-



term (one year) and medium-term (four years) plans (Kemdikbudristek, 2023).

Educational organizations are non-profit entities focused on the development and provision of unique services. Efficient resource management and high-quality output are paramount for these organizations (Stolz et al., 2022). However, educational organizations have been criticized for their ineffectiveness in meeting these priorities, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. This raises concerns about the quality of strategic plans, which often remain unrevised during or after extraordinary events like the pandemic (Mavi Ayyildiz and Özdemir, 2022).

The analysis of school accreditation in Indonesia in 2021, conducted by BANS/M using the LISREL 8.8 application, concluded that graduate quality, learning processes, teacher quality, and school management significantly impact accreditation outcomes (Badan Akreditasi Nasional Sekolah/ Madrasah 2022). These findings underscore the need for schools and madrasahs to reform their management processes. One essential reform is the development and preparation of a school strategic plan, as indicated in accreditation instrument option number 23 (Kemendikbudristek 2022a).

In addition, the Ministry of Education, Research, and Technology has implemented the Merdeka Belajar policy. This program encourages educational units and the Education Office to prepare activities aimed at improving learning outcomes based on factual data (Rivki et al., n.d.). The Merdeka Belajar episode 19, titled "Indonesian Education Report and Data-Based Planning," provides insights into the quality of education in Indonesia. According to this report, the preparation of school vision/mission and instructional leadership is often rated as "LIMITED." The education report card shows that the national average score is 45.7, with West Java province averaging 46.05 and Bogor City at 48.92. These scores indicate that the composite value for the delivery and implementation of the school's vision and mission, especially regarding the focus on improving learning, remains low (Kemendikbudristek 2022b). Schools often fail to use their vision and mission as a reference in planning and implementing work programs, and there is insufficient communication of progress toward these goals.

Collaboration between the principal's managerial and social competencies and a participatory leadership approach has proven effective in realizing the school's annual work plan. Principals have succeeded in improving educator competencies and performance through collaboration with various stakeholders (Dera Nugraha & Dian Reftyawati, 2022). Organizational planning in educational institutions provides clarity in the direction of educational processes, enabling more effective and efficient management. To improve the quality of education in line with customer needs and expectations, educational services must be attentive to the demands of students and other stakeholders (Hourani & Hamdan 2021).

An initial survey conducted between May 14 and June 16, 2023, involved interviews with 30 respondents, including school principals, teachers, and committee members from six sub-districts in Bogor City. The survey explored various aspects of the School Work Plan (RKS), focusing on strategic plan ownership, development, dissemination, improvement, evaluation, and the effectiveness of the strategic planning process. The results indicated that 30% of respondents acknowledged the existence of a strategic plan, 40% stated that the plan was always developed, 30% reported that the plan was socialized, 10% said the plan was regularly improved, and 20% found the strategic plan easy and effective to implement. However, the formulation of school strategic plans is still perceived as challenging and confusing. The development team struggles with clearly determining the school's vision and mission, setting activity priorities, compiling performance indicators, and evaluating progress. The strategic plan often becomes a mere administrative exercise, with little practical application or evaluation of success (RKS Monitoring and Evaluation by the Supervisor).

Based on interviews with the school development team, it was concluded that the commonly used strategic planning models in educational organizations are considered difficult, especially within the context of the Merdeka Belajar policy. Principals and development teams are often confused during the preparation of strategic plans, leading to documents that are merely administrative and lack substantive evaluation. There is a tendency to copy and paste previous years' plans without conducting any meaningful evaluation or measuring the success of the strategic plan (Summary of the initial survey interview).

Given these challenges, there is a clear need for a new model to assist in the preparation of strategic plans for educational organizations. This model should align with the characteristics and needs of educational organizations, providing a practical approach to strategic planning within the framework of independent learning policies. The proposed strategic planning model, named "KLIK," is designed to facilitate the creation of effective and efficient work plans for educational organizations. The model is based on the Research and Development (RnD) methodology.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A) *Strategic Plan of an Educational Organization*

A plan is generally understood as a list of provisions concerning future actions, including the activities to be performed, the individuals responsible, the location, timing, and resources required, as well as benchmarks for achieving desired outcomes (Shah & Abualrob 2012). Planning is a critical management step, described by ISO 21001 (2018) as a systematic approach to

decision-making. According to Garth N. Jones, planning involves rational thinking based on facts and estimates, serving as a preparatory step for implementing actions (Sutar 2019b). Similarly, Terry defines planning as the process of selecting and connecting facts, making assumptions about the future, and formulating activities deemed necessary to achieve specific results (Abdelfattah 2019).

Bryson views strategy as a pattern of goals, policies, programs, actions, decisions, or resource allocations that define what an organization is, what it aims to do, and why it does it (Akyel, Korkusuzpolat, & Arslankaya 2012). Planning, as one of the core functions in the management process, is essential for guiding future actions (Mavi Ayyildiz & Özdemir, 2022). Strategic planning, the first and most critical function of management, involves organizing activities to achieve desired results and coordinating these activities across the organization (Ali 2021).

Educational organizations, which play a key role in shaping the future through planning, utilize various types of plans based on their purpose, content, and duration. One crucial plan in educational institutions is the strategic plan, known as the School Work Plan (RKS) in the schooling context (Kemendikbudristek 2022a). Fred R. David describes strategic planning as part of strategic management, encompassing three stages: strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategy evaluation (Bhatti, Ramirez, & Athanasopoulou, 2023). Strategic management involves formulating, implementing, and evaluating cross-functional decisions to help organizations achieve their goals (David & David, 2015).

According to Wheelen and Hunger, strategic management includes a set of managerial decisions and actions that determine an organization's long-term performance. This process involves environmental scanning (both external and internal), strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation and control. Strategic planning, once known as business policy, has evolved significantly due to concentrated efforts from researchers and practitioners (Wheelen & Hunger 2012).

Strategic planning is a continuous and deliberate process that involves evaluating different strategies and setting goals, with key components such as managerial factors, environmental factors, and organizational factors contributing to the intensity of strategic planning (Hourani & Hamdan 2021). It is a disciplined approach to decision-making and action, guiding organizations in understanding what they need to do and why (Doraisamy 2021).

Strategic planning is oriented towards achieving results within a specific time frame, considering potential opportunities and constraints (de Moura Pereira et al., 2023). It involves determining what the organization wants in the future and how to achieve these goals, thus serving as a fundamental decision-making framework that aligns the organization with its long-term vision (Lumapow & Lengkong 2019).

Kerzner views strategic planning as a management tool that manages current conditions while making future projections, serving as an organizational guide for the next 5 to 10 years (Abdelfattah 2019). Strategic planning includes assessing organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges, formulating missions and policies, setting strategic goals, and implementing control mechanisms. It is a logical framework that outlines the organization's current status, future direction, and the path to get there (Doraisamy 2021). Strategic planning involves making decisions with future implications, impacting overall organizational goals and objectives. It is a philosophy, a mindset, a process of thinking, and an intellectual activity (Carvalho et al., 2021b).

Robbins defines an organization as a consciously coordinated social entity with identifiable boundaries, which operates on a relatively continuous basis to achieve a common goal or set of goals (David & David 2015). In the context of education, an educational organization is a structured environment where educational activities are conducted to achieve desired educational goals (Suhartono 2021). Organizing education involves establishing a system or place for educational activities to achieve these goals (Nasiri Khiavi, Vafakhah, & Sadeghi, 2024).

Hence, the strategic plan of an educational organization serves as a roadmap or blueprint, directing the organization from its current state to its desired future state within a defined time frame. The strategic planning process in educational organizations is a systematically prepared policy that guides the organization in achieving its goals. Key indicators of strategic planning in educational organizations include strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation.

B) Merdeka Belajar Policy

The term "Merdeka Belajar" was first introduced by the Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makarim, during the National Teachers' Day celebration in 2019. "Merdeka Belajar," or "Independent Learning," refers to the freedom of thought and learning, where students are encouraged to think independently, accept others' opinions, and develop their thoughts in acquiring knowledge (Pangestu & Rochmat 2021). This concept is inspired by the educational philosophy of Ki Hajar Dewantara, which advocates for freedom in obtaining education as protected by law. The concept also emphasizes the freedom of students to express and receive opinions (Suhartono 2021).

While "Merdeka Belajar" promotes a learning environment that is enjoyable and non-restrictive, students must still adhere to school regulations to ensure smooth learning processes. The key characteristic of this learning approach is the creation of a fun, liberating educational environment where students can freely explore and develop their potential (Kemdikbudristek 2022).

"Merdeka Belajar" represents a breakthrough policy aimed at decentralizing educational management and returning authority to schools and local governments. This authority is exercised through flexibility in planning, implementing, and evaluating education programs, with the ultimate goal of achieving national educational objectives set by the central government (Rivki et al., n.d.). The policy encourages schools to build a learning environment that is conducive to both teachers' and students' needs, thereby aligning assessments and curriculum implementation with local conditions and national standards.

In essence, "Merdeka Belajar" is an educational innovation designed to provide greater autonomy to schools and local governments, fostering a more tailored and effective educational experience. This policy aims to develop the potential of students and teachers according to their individual interests, talents, and needs, thus enhancing the quality and competitiveness of Indonesian human resources on the global stage (Kemdikbudristek 2022). The policy reaffirms the legal mandate for schools to have the freedom to assess and implement the curriculum in ways that reflect the local context and conditions.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study primarily aims to develop a strategic planning model for educational organizations within the context of the "Merdeka Belajar" policy. The findings of this research are intended to serve as a reference and guideline for educational organizations in drafting strategic plans that align with the principles of independent learning. The research follows the Research and Development (R&D) model, as outlined by Borg and Gall, which focuses on producing practical products such as instructional models, service models, or systems and assessing their feasibility (Bhatti, Ramirez, & Athanasopoulou 2023). To develop a relevant product, it is crucial to conduct a needs analysis and a feasibility test to ensure that the final product meets the needs of the broader community.

The strategic planning model developed in this study is named the "KLIK" model, an acronym for Commitment, Literacy, Implementation, and Communication. This model is designed to address the challenges identified in the needs analysis, such as the lack of stakeholder involvement in the development of vision, mission, and objectives and the tendency to copy-paste previous strategic plans without proper reflection or self-evaluation.

The model developed through this research is named the "KLIK" model, an acronym that stands for Commitment, Literacy, Implementation, and Communication. Each component of the KLIK model addresses a critical aspect of strategic planning that was identified as a gap in current practices.

1. **Commitment:** This component emphasizes the importance of securing a strong commitment from all stakeholders involved in the educational organization, including leadership, educators, and community members. It ensures that the strategic plan is not just a document but a lived and shared goal across the organization.
2. **Literacy:** This involves increasing the organization's literacy regarding strategic planning processes, tools, and expectations. It addresses the need for stakeholders to fully understand and be capable of contributing to the development and implementation of the strategic plan.
3. **Implementation:** This focuses on the actual execution of the strategic plan. It involves detailed planning for how strategies will be operationalized, resources allocated, and actions monitored to ensure the strategic goals are met.
4. **Communication:** Effective communication is vital to ensure that the strategic plan is understood, embraced, and enacted by all members of the organization. This component ensures that the progress and outcomes of the strategic plan are regularly communicated to all stakeholders, fostering transparency and accountability.

Figure 1 illustrates the operational structure of the KLIK model, which provides a practical framework for educational organizations to develop strategic plans that are not only administratively sound but also functionally effective.



Fig. 1 Model of Strategic Plan Development

The development of the KLIK model followed a structured Research and Development (R&D) approach as outlined by Borg and Gall. This process involved ten stages:

1. Potential and Problems Identification: Initial research identified key challenges in current strategic planning practices within educational organizations, particularly those related to the "Merdeka Belajar" policy.
2. Data Collection: Extensive data was collected from various sources, including literature reviews, surveys, and interviews with educational stakeholders.
3. Product Design: Based on the data collected, the KLIK model was designed to address the identified challenges.
4. Design Validation: The initial design was validated through expert reviews, ensuring that it met the theoretical and practical needs of educational organizations.
5. Design Revision: Feedback from experts was incorporated to refine the model, ensuring it was both practical and effective.
6. Small Group Trials: The revised model was tested in a small group of educational organizations to assess its feasibility and identify any further areas for improvement.
7. Revisions: Based on the small group trials, additional revisions were made to the model.
8. Large Group Trials: The model was then tested in a larger group of educational organizations to assess its effectiveness across different contexts.
9. Final Revisions: The final set of revisions was made based on feedback from the large group trials.
10. Dissemination: The final KLIK model was disseminated to educational organizations as a comprehensive framework for strategic planning.

The feasibility of the KLIK model was rigorously tested using the Delphi technique, which involved a panel of five experts from various fields of education and strategic management. Each expert evaluated the model based on several criteria, including its relevance, practicality, and alignment with the "Merdeka Belajar" policy.

Table 1: Final Feasibility Test Results of the KLIK Renstra Model

No.	Assessment Aspects and Indicators	Average	Percentage	Interpretation
01.	Background of Model Development	19,75	99%	Very feasible
02.	Purpose of Model Development	19,33	97%	Very feasible
03.	Model Rationality	18,17	91%	Very feasible
04.	Model Visualization	19,50	98%	Very feasible
Average value		19,19	96%	Very feasible

Based on the results above, the KLIK model was found to be highly feasible, with an average feasibility score of 96%.

To determine the effectiveness of the KLIK model, a comparative analysis was conducted using the Paired Sample t-test. This analysis compared the strategic planning documents of educational organizations before and after the implementation of the KLIK model. The components evaluated included the clarity and relevance of the vision and mission statements, the comprehensiveness of the context analysis, the detail of the work plans, and the overall coherence of the strategic planning document.

Table 2: Comparison of scores before and after using the KLIK model

No.	Component	Score	
		X ₁	X ₂
1.	Determination Process Documents	3	4
2.	Initial Part	3,86	4
3.	Chapter I Introduction	2	3,33
4.	Chapter Ii School Profile	2	3
5.	Chapter Iii Context Analysis	1,25	3,25
6.	Chapter Iv Work Plan	2	4
7.	Chapter V Closing	2	4
Amount		18,11	25,58

The significant improvement in scores, as shown in Table 2, indicates that the KLIK model effectively enhances the strategic planning process within educational organizations. This is further supported by the Paired Sample t-test results, which revealed a significance value of 0.002. This value, well below the 5% error threshold, confirms the high effectiveness of the KLIK model in improving strategic planning outcomes.

Paired Samples Correlations				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	SEBELUM PERLAKUAN & SETELAH PERLAKUAN	7	.569	.182

Paired Samples Test				
Paired Differences				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	95% Confidence ...
				Lower
Pair 1	SEBELUM PERLAKUAN - SETELAH PERLAKUAN	-1.35286	.70438	.26623
				-2.00430

Paired Samples Test				
		Paired ...		
		95% Confidence Interval of the ...		
		Upper	t	df
Pair 1	SEBELUM PERLAKUAN - SETELAH PERLAKUAN	-.70141	-5.081	6
				Sig. (2-tailed)
				.002

Fig. 2 Correlation Test

The statistical analysis confirms that the implementation of the KLIK model leads to substantial improvements in the quality of strategic planning documents (figure 2). The increase in total scores from 18,11 to 25,58 demonstrates the model's ability to address previously identified gaps and enhance the overall strategic planning process.

The results of this study have significant implications for educational organizations, particularly those operating under the "Merdeka Belajar" policy. The KLIK model provides a structured yet flexible framework that educational organizations can adopt to enhance their strategic planning efforts. By focusing on key elements such as Commitment, Literacy, Implementation, and Communication, the model ensures that strategic plans are not only well-formulated but also effectively implemented and regularly reviewed.

Furthermore, the KLIK model's emphasis on stakeholder involvement and clear communication ensures that all members of the educational community are aligned with the organization's strategic goals. This alignment is crucial for achieving the desired educational outcomes, particularly in a policy environment that emphasizes autonomy and localized decision-making.

The application of the KLIK model in real-world educational settings has demonstrated its practicality and adaptability. Educational organizations that have adopted the KLIK model report greater clarity in their strategic goals, improved stakeholder engagement, and more effective use of resources. Additionally, the model's structured approach to strategic planning has been particularly beneficial in aligning organizational practices with the "Merdeka Belajar" policy, ensuring that educational institutions can meet both national standards and local needs.

While the KLIK model has shown considerable promise, its implementation is not without challenges. Some educational organizations may require additional training and support to fully adopt the model, particularly in the areas of stakeholder engagement and data-driven decision-making. Future research could explore these challenges in more depth, providing additional resources and tools to support the widespread adoption of the KLIK model. Moreover, ongoing evaluation of the model's impact on educational outcomes will be essential to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. Further studies could investigate the long-term effects of the KLIK model on organizational performance, student achievement, and overall educational quality.

IV. CONCLUSION

The development of the KLIK strategic planning model represents a significant advancement in the strategic management practices of educational organizations, particularly within the context of Indonesia's "Merdeka Belajar" policy. This model was meticulously designed to address the specific challenges that educational institutions face, including the need for greater stakeholder involvement, enhanced understanding of strategic planning processes, and more effective implementation and communication of strategic goals.

The KLIK model—an acronym for Commitment, Literacy, Implementation, and Communication—was created to provide a practical, structured, and adaptable framework for strategic planning in educational organizations. Each component of the model serves a critical function: Commitment: Ensures that all stakeholders are fully engaged and dedicated to the strategic plan, turning it into a shared mission rather than just a formal document. Literacy: Focuses on increasing the strategic planning knowledge among stakeholders, ensuring that all participants are well-equipped to contribute effectively. Implementation: Provides a clear roadmap for executing the strategic plan, detailing how strategies will be put into action, monitored, and adjusted as necessary. Communication: Emphasizes the importance of ongoing dialogue about the strategic plan's progress and outcomes, fostering transparency and accountability within the organization.

The feasibility of the KLIK model was confirmed through expert validation, yielding an impressive average score of 96%, categorizing it as "very feasible." This strong endorsement from the expert panel suggests that the KLIK model is not only theoretically sound but also highly practical and relevant for the current educational landscape.

Effectiveness testing further demonstrated that the KLIK model significantly improves the quality of strategic planning within educational organizations. Comparative analyses of strategic planning documents before and after the implementation of the KLIK model revealed substantial improvements in key areas, such as clarity of vision and mission, comprehensiveness of context analysis, and coherence of work plans. The statistical analysis, with a significance value of 0.002, confirms the high effectiveness of the KLIK model, indicating that it is a powerful tool for enhancing strategic planning processes in educational organizations.

The successful development and testing of the KLIK model have important implications for educational organizations, particularly those striving to align their strategic planning efforts with the "Merdeka Belajar" policy. The model offers a structured approach that can be readily adopted by educational institutions to improve their strategic planning processes, ensuring that their goals are not only clearly defined but also effectively communicated and implemented.

The KLIK model also highlights the importance of stakeholder engagement in strategic planning. By fostering a culture of collaboration and shared responsibility, the model helps to ensure that all members of the educational community are aligned with the organization's strategic objectives, thereby increasing the likelihood of achieving desired educational outcomes. This alignment is particularly crucial in the context of the "Merdeka Belajar" policy, which emphasizes autonomy and localized decision-making.

While the KLIK model has proven to be both feasible and effective, its implementation may require additional support, particularly in educational organizations that lack experience with comprehensive strategic planning. It is recommended that these organizations invest in training and development programs to build the necessary skills and knowledge among their staff. Additionally, ongoing support from external experts or consultants could be beneficial in the early stages of model adoption, helping organizations to navigate potential challenges and maximize the benefits of the KLIK model.

Further research is needed to explore the long-term impact of the KLIK model on educational outcomes. Future studies could examine how the model influences key performance indicators such as student achievement, teacher performance, and overall organizational effectiveness over time. Additionally, research could investigate how the model can be adapted to suit different types of educational institutions, including those with varying resources, sizes, and strategic goals.

Another area of potential exploration is the scalability of the KLIK model. While the model has been tested in specific contexts, future research could focus on how it can be scaled up to apply across broader educational systems, including at regional

or national levels. This would involve examining how the model can be integrated into existing policy frameworks and how it can be customized to address the unique needs of different educational environments.

The KLIK strategic planning model represents a significant contribution to the field of educational management. By providing a clear, structured, and effective framework for strategic planning, the KLIK model empowers educational organizations to better align their goals with national policies, improve stakeholder engagement, and enhance the overall quality of education. The model's development, validation, and successful implementation suggest that it has the potential to become a key tool for educational leaders seeking to navigate the complexities of strategic planning in today's dynamic educational landscape. The adoption of the KLIK model offers a pathway for educational organizations not only to meet but also exceed their strategic goals, fostering an environment where continuous improvement is not just an aspiration but a reality.

Interest Conflicts

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Funding Statement

This research was entirely self-funded by the authors, with no external funding or financial support provided.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to acknowledge the contributions of all those who made this research possible. Author 1 served as the main researcher, leading the study's design, data collection, and analysis. Authors 2 and 3 provided invaluable guidance and oversight as supervisors, ensuring the research adhered to high academic standards. Additionally, Author 3 played a crucial role as the manuscript editor, refining the final draft for publication. The collaborative efforts of all authors were instrumental in the successful completion of this work.

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