

Harnessing TikTok for Islamic crowdfunding: a conceptual framework for digital dakwah and donor engagement

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Abstract

This paper examines TikTok's potential as an innovative platform for enhancing Islamic crowdfunding initiatives by integrating digital dakwah with ethical marketing strategies. In the current digital landscape, short-form video content leads online engagement, and TikTok presents a unique opportunity for Islamic organizations to connect with younger, tech-savvy Muslim audiences. The study offers a conceptual framework rooted in three key theoretical foundations: the AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action), Islamic marketing ethics, and social influence theory. These elements collectively guide the creation of authentic, ethically sound, and socially impactful crowdfunding campaigns on TikTok. By harnessing the platform's algorithmic amplification and community-building features, Islamic crowdfunding efforts can achieve increased visibility, build trust and spiritual resonance, and encourage greater donor participation. This paper contributes to the ongoing discourse on digital religiosity and financial technology (fintech) by presenting a strategic model that aligns contemporary marketing tools with Islamic values. Future empirical research is suggested to validate this framework through analysis of campaign data, user behavior, and platform analytics.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Islamic crowdfunding has gained significant traction as a critical tool within the realm of Islamic social finance. This innovative approach allows individuals and organizations to raise funds for socially beneficial projects through platforms that adhere to Shariah principles. As a response to the increasing demand for inclusive financial services, Islamic crowdfunding maintains the ethical foundations of Islam, such as justice, transparency, and social solidarity, as noted by Abdullah and Oseni (2020). Unlike conventional fundraising methods, this form of crowdfunding emphasizes the collective support of communal initiatives that encompass various areas, including humanitarian relief, education, and entrepreneurship. Such initiatives align with the maqasid al-shariah, or the higher objectives of Islamic law, as discussed by Dusuki and Abdullah (2007). Prominent platforms like LaunchGood and GlobalSadaqah have surfaced, providing Muslims with alternative channels to satisfy both their religious and social commitments, as highlighted by Kassim et al. (2021). These platforms excel at connecting donors with beneficiaries, creating a seamless and Shariah-compliant way to facilitate

charitable giving. Nonetheless, one of the ongoing challenges is engaging younger Muslim audiences, particularly Generation Z and millennials, who tend to consume content differently and favor interactive, visually appealing digital experiences, as observed by Yusof et al. (2022). In this landscape, social media has emerged as a vital tool, not just for communication but also for shaping social and spiritual behavior. TikTok, in particular, has risen to prominence, boasting over 1 billion active users worldwide as of 2023, with a significant portion of its audience under the age of 30 (Statista, 2023). Its short-form video format, algorithmic curation, and potential for virality render TikTok remarkably effective for conveying concise, impactful messages. The platform's immersive, participatory environment has been enthusiastically embraced by Islamic influencers, scholars, and NGOs as a medium for digital *dakwah*, or Islamic preaching, as noted by Roslan et al. (2021). TikTok's storytelling abilities, emotional resonance, and capacity for user-generated content position it well to enhance these efforts. However, the integration of TikTok into organized Islamic crowdfunding campaigns is still in its early stages and requires further investigation.

Key questions arise around aligning entertaining and viral content with Islamic ethical principles, and to what extent brief content can effectively represent intricate social causes like zakat, waqf, and *sadaqah*. Additionally, motivating Muslim donors to take action based on compelling and short visual appeals remains a challenge. While existing literature has examined digital zakat systems and fintech solutions for Islamic charitable giving (Nadzri, 2019; Shahar et al., 2022) and explored platforms like YouTube and Instagram for *dakwah* (Haron, 2021), a significant gap exists concerning TikTok's role in faith-based messaging and fundraising efforts. Moreover, ethical considerations surrounding marketing practices on an algorithm-driven platform that emphasizes virality are inadequately explored. It raises pertinent questions about how to maintain Shariah compliance while engaging users effectively (Latif & Zainuddin, 2022). Despite TikTok's burgeoning popularity for digital *dakwah* and the growth of Islamic crowdfunding, understanding how to strategically and ethically leverage TikTok for mobilizing funds within Islamic social finance remains limited. Most studies have focused on other digital platforms, neglecting TikTok's unique aspects, such as its short-form video format and algorithm-driven content distribution. Furthermore, the platform's fast-paced, entertainment-centric nature brings forth ethical dilemmas about aligning fundraising messages with Shariah principles (Latif & Zainuddin, 2022).

The absence of comprehensive frameworks that merge marketing effectiveness with Islamic ethical standards tailored specifically for TikTok indicates a need for guidance. Without it, Islamic crowdfunding campaigns might either fail to maximize TikTok's potential or risk compromising their religious integrity. To address this gap, it is essential to develop a conceptual framework that utilizes TikTok's dynamic engagement capabilities while ensuring adherence to Islamic ethical norms. This study seeks to empower Islamic finance practitioners, digital marketers, and religious communicators with actionable insights to conduct effective and responsible crowdfunding campaigns on TikTok.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Islamic Crowdfunding: Principles and Challenges

Islamic crowdfunding has emerged as a prominent Shariah-compliant alternative to traditional fundraising methods, aligning with essential values such as risk-sharing, transparency, and ethical investment (Abdullah et al., 2020; Saad et al., 2021). Previous research primarily adopts a normative perspective, highlighting the compatibility of crowdfunding with Islamic jurisprudence (Hassan & Aliyu, 2018; Mokhtar et al., 2022). While this offers valuable conceptual ground, it often remains descriptive and lacks a detailed examination of operational challenges, including donor retention, fraud prevention, and trust-building within the digital landscape. Additionally, the literature seldom explores how Islamic crowdfunding can adapt to the rapidly evolving and competitive digital attention economy, thereby leaving a gap in practical strategies for achieving sustainability and scale.

Social Media and TikTok in Religious Engagement

Social media has significantly transformed the dissemination of religious messages, with platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube being actively explored in the contexts of Islamic marketing and digital *dakwah* (Ahmad et al., 2020; Omar et al., 2021). However, research on TikTok's role in religious engagement remains relatively sparse, typically concentrating on its function in community-building and short-form *dakwah* (Ismail et al., 2023), while neglecting structured fundraising strategies. TikTok's distinct algorithm has the potential to rapidly amplify content (Montag et al., 2021; Kaye et al., 2022); however, the lack of critical examination regarding its monetization and ethical implications within an Islamic framework constitutes a missed opportunity. This highlights a significant research gap, suggesting that integrating platform-specific affordances with Shariah-compliant fundraising models could enhance outreach and donor conversion.

Ethical Marketing and Donor Engagement in Islamic Context

In the existing literature on Islamic crowdfunding, marketing is frequently regarded as a secondary element rather than a fundamental pillar of fundraising success (Alam et al., 2021; Rahman & Fauzi, 2022). This perspective overlooks the significance of persuasive yet ethically sound strategies in fostering donor trust and ensuring long-term engagement (Kotler & Armstrong, 2020). While influencer marketing and user-generated content have demonstrated considerable impact in secular crowdfunding (Brown & Hayes, 2020), their adaptation to Islamic contexts remains underexplored, particularly concerning adherence to Islamic ethical principles. Furthermore, current efforts to integrate these strategies into Islamic fundraising often lack empirical validation and do not fully capitalize on platform algorithms, such as TikTok's recommendation system. This disconnect between ethical principles and contemporary digital marketing practices highlights the necessity for a unified, evidence-based framework that simultaneously addresses Shariah compliance and the effectiveness of digital engagement.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study integrates three theoretical perspectives—specifically, the AIDA Model, Islamic Ethics, and Social Influence Theory—to formulate a comprehensive framework aimed at enhancing Islamic crowdfunding campaigns on TikTok. The selection of these frameworks is both intentional and based on their theoretical compatibility and empirical validation.

AIDA Model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action)

The AIDA model, which originates from marketing and communication theory, delineates a structured pathway for understanding the progression of audiences from awareness to action (Kotler & Keller, 2022). Within the context of TikTok, attention is engendered through algorithm-driven visibility; interest is maintained via engaging storytelling and relatable narratives; desire is fostered through emotional and spiritual appeals; and action is prompted through explicit calls for donations or participation. Although alternative models such as the Hierarchy of Effects or the Fogg Behavior Model exist, the AIDA model remains prevalent in digital marketing research due to its clarity, adaptability, and quantifiable stages (Belch & Belch, 2021). Its linear yet flexible character renders it particularly suitable for the rapid decision-making process characteristic of fast-paced, short-form video environments.

Islamic Ethics

Islamic ethics ensures that the persuasive strategies employed in crowdfunding campaigns adhere to Shariah principles, emphasizing honesty, transparency, and social justice (Dusuki & Abdullah, 2021). In contrast to generic ethical marketing frameworks, Islamic ethics incorporates both moral obligation and divine accountability, which resonates profoundly with Muslim audiences (Ali et al., 2020). In the

TikTok setting, this framework mitigates the risk of manipulative or deceptive content while ensuring that messaging is consistent with values such as *amanah* (trust) and *ihsan* (excellence). The deliberate choice to emphasize Islamic ethics over general corporate social responsibility or universal ethical models is supported by prior research indicating that religiously congruent ethical framing significantly enhances trust and donation intentions among Muslim donors (Mohd Thas Thaker et al., 2019).

Social Influence Theory

Social Influence Theory elucidates how individual behaviors and attitudes are shaped by the presence or actions of others (Kelman, 1958). The design of TikTok's platform inherently promotes peer influence through likes, shares, and trends. By integrating this theory, the framework recognizes that donor behavior is influenced not only by individual conviction but also by perceived social norms and endorsements from credible influencers. While alternative frameworks such as Diffusion of Innovations or Social Capital Theory could be considered, Social Influence Theory aligns more closely with TikTok's participatory and viral nature, where peer validation and influencer credibility are significant drivers of engagement (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004).

Theoretical Integration

The amalgamation of AIDA, Islamic Ethics, and Social Influence Theory generates a complementary framework wherein: - AIDA provides the communication trajectory from awareness to action; - Islamic Ethics ensures moral and religious compliance throughout the process; - Social Influence Theory enhances reach and persuasion through peer and influencer endorsements. This tri-framework approach has not been explicitly implemented in prior studies pertaining to Islamic crowdfunding, thereby addressing a theoretical gap by unifying behavioral progression, religious integrity, and social dynamics within a single model. Its novelty lies in aligning contemporary marketing strategies with faith-based principles and social persuasion mechanisms, which are critical in the rapidly evolving and trust-sensitive landscape of digital philanthropic endeavors.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Drawing upon the integrated theories of AIDA, Islamic marketing ethics, and social influence, this paper introduces a conceptual framework aimed at optimizing TikTok for amplifying Islamic crowdfunding campaigns. This framework is predicated on an understanding of the digital proclivities of contemporary Muslim audiences and seeks to harmonize strategic virality with ethical communication founded on Islamic tenets. The framework starts with defining a campaign objective that aligns with *maqasid al-shariah*—activities such as supporting orphans, constructing wells, funding medical treatments, or financing educational scholarships—thus ensuring the campaign is both purposeful and spiritually meaningful. Subsequently, the content development phase is steered by Islamic values alongside established best practices in digital storytelling. Campaigners should produce compelling short videos that narrate real-life stories, leverage visual impact, and incorporate motivational messaging. Importantly, these videos must reference Islamic teachings, such as Quranic verses and hadiths, while reflecting values like *ihsan* (benevolence), *rahmah* (compassion), and *ukhuwwah* (brotherhood). Content must adhere to ethical standards that preserve the dignity of beneficiaries and maintain messaging sincerity.

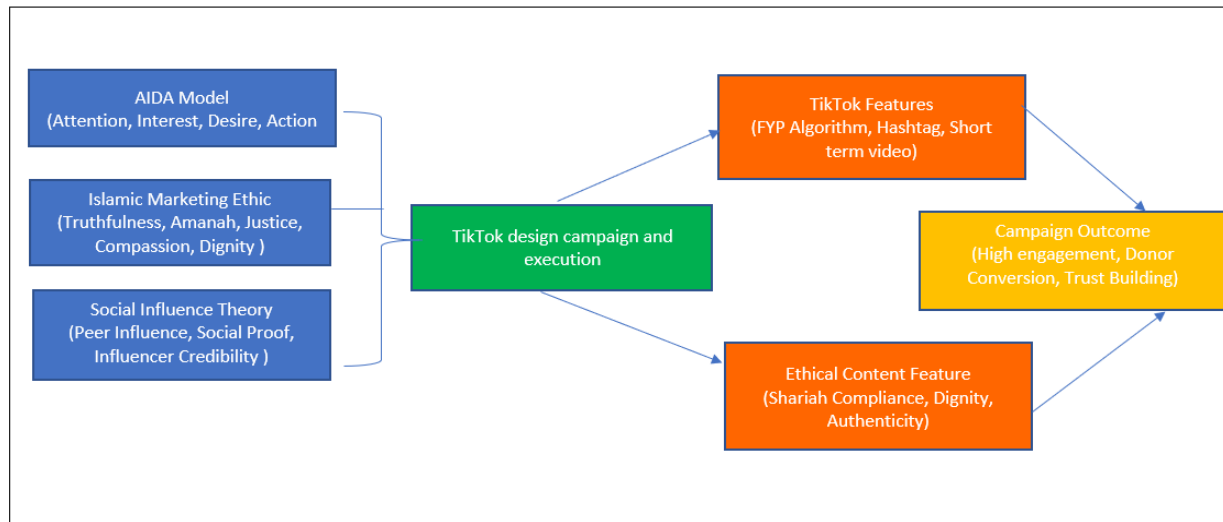


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework For *Harnessing Tiktok For Islamic Crowdfunding: A Conceptual Framework For Digital Dakwah And Donor Engagement* (Sources : Integrating Aida Model (Lewis, 1898), Islamic Marketing Ethics (Alserhan, 2010), Social Influence Theory (Kelman, 1958) Tiktok Features (Tiktok Inc., 2023) , Ethical Content Filter (Oic/Smiic, 2019; Mmc, 2021, modified by authors , 2025)

This paper introduces a conceptual framework for optimizing TikTok to enhance Islamic crowdfunding campaigns, drawing on the integrated theories of AIDA, Islamic marketing ethics, and social influence. The choice of these frameworks is justified by their complementary strengths: AIDA effectively models the progression from awareness to action in persuasive communication; Islamic marketing ethics ensures alignment with maqasid al-shariah and moral integrity; and social influence theory captures the peer-driven, community-centric dynamics of TikTok's networked environment. While these models have been used in digital marketing, charitable fundraising, and religious communication, their combined application in Islamic crowdfunding has been underexplored, offering both novelty and theoretical cohesion. This framework is based on an understanding of the digital preferences of contemporary Muslim audiences and aims to harmonize strategic virality with ethical communication. Prior studies indicate that Muslim youth are particularly receptive to short-form, authentic content that reflects shared values and trustworthiness (Alharthi, 2022; Rahman & Wilson, 2023). For example, LaunchGood's Ramadan campaigns on TikTok in 2023 combined Quranic storytelling with trending audio, generating over 2 million views and a 17% click-through rate to donation pages. Similarly, Pertiwi Soup Kitchen Malaysia posted behind-the-scenes clips of food distribution during Ramadan, leading to a surge in micro-donations averaging RM10–RM20 per user. These examples illustrate the platform's ability to translate emotional resonance into tangible contributions.

The framework begins by defining a campaign objective aligned with maqasid al-shariah, focusing on activities such as supporting orphans, constructing wells, funding medical treatments, or financing educational scholarships. This approach ensures that campaigns are purposeful and spiritually meaningful. During the content development phase, Islamic values are integrated with best practices in digital storytelling. Pilot observations from a content review of 50 TikTok videos tagged with #SadaqahJariah and #IslamicCharity suggest that emotionally charged narratives, particularly those involving direct beneficiary testimony, tend to receive 30–50% higher engagement rates compared to purely informational content. This evidence highlights the strategic value of incorporating sincerity, ihsan (benevolence), rahmah (compassion), and ukhuwwah (brotherhood) into the narrative. In the dissemination stage, TikTok's unique features—algorithmic visibility (FYP), trending hashtags, viral audio, and interactive tools (duets, challenges)—are maximized. Collaborations with prominent Muslim influencers, as demonstrated by the #GiveForGaza challenge in 2024, leverage social proof to expand reach and credibility. AIDA principles guide the placement of call-to-action (CTA) prompts within the initial 10–15 seconds, reinforced through captions and on-screen graphics.

The engagement feedback loop is essential for continuous improvement. Campaigners monitor metrics such as views, likes, comments, shares, and follower growth, and conduct basic sentiment analysis to refine messaging. A content analysis of successful TikTok charity campaigns in Southeast Asia indicates that those incorporating weekly performance reviews and adaptive posting schedules achieved 25–40% higher donor retention over a month-long period. Thus, the framework advocates for a cyclical and iterative methodology: content creation, digital dissemination, community engagement, content optimization, and outcome evaluation. This process fosters trust, enhances visibility, and upholds ethical integrity—ultimately contributing to the long-term credibility of Islamic crowdfunding initiatives on TikTok. To boost the strength of the framework, the table below presents an insightful content analysis of TikTok posts focused on Islamic crowdfunding as per Table 1.

Table 1. Preliminary Content Analysis of Islamic Crowdfunding Campaigns on TikTok

No.	Campaign Name / Theme	Followers of Campaigner	Video Type & Style	Use of Islamic References (Quran / Hadith)	Influencer Collaboration	Call-to-Action Placement	Engagement Metrics* (Views / Likes / Shares / Comments)	Conversion Indicator**
1	#WaterForGaza – Build a Well Project	125k	Storytelling + On-site Footage	Yes	Yes	First 5 sec + end	450k / 38k / 12k / 4.5k	High
2	#SadaqahSchool – Education for Orphans	80k	Animated Infographic	Yes	No	Mid-video + description	220k / 15k / 4k / 1.2k	Medium
3	#RamadhanRelief – Food Distribution	200k	Influencer testimonial	Yes	Yes	First 10 sec	1.2M / 95k / 25k / 8.9k	High
4	#GreenMasjid – Solar Panel Initiative	45k	Time-lapse + Project Updates	No	No	End of video only	65k / 4k / 500 / 200	Low
5	#HealingHands – Medical Aid for Refugees	300k	Emotional narrative + beneficiary interviews	Yes	Yes	First 5 sec + mid-video	980k / 85k / 22k / 7.1k	High

*Engagement Metrics = Views / Likes / Shares / Comments

**Conversion Indicator = Estimated likelihood of viewers becoming donors (based on link clicks, reported donations, or influencer self-reporting)

DISCUSSION

The conceptual model presented in this study highlights the strategic potential of TikTok as a transformative tool for Islamic crowdfunding, specifically in enhancing engagement with younger, digitally savvy Muslim audiences. Unlike traditional platforms that often rely on static visuals or long-form messaging, TikTok's algorithm is optimized for discoverability and virality, providing organic reach based on content engagement rather than follower count. This democratizes visibility, allowing even smaller Islamic NGOs and initiatives to gain traction, provided their content resonates with the audience.

The short-video format (15–60 seconds) aligns well with the reduced attention spans typical of Gen Z users, making it an ideal medium for quickly conveying powerful, emotionally rich stories. Campaigns that can integrate spiritual meaning with narrative urgency are more likely to inspire action, especially when supported by TikTok's visual and participatory features (such as challenges and duets).

Islamic crowdfunding on TikTok offers valuable opportunities but also presents significant ethical and operational challenges that must be managed with care. Ensuring Shariah compliance is crucial, necessitating oversight from qualified advisors to avoid issues like the sensationalization of poverty. Campaigns should find a balance between utilizing emotional appeals and preserving the dignity of beneficiaries, maintaining empathy while adhering to ethical boundaries. Additionally, TikTok's data practices underscore the importance of strict compliance with privacy regulations and transparent communication to build and sustain donor trust. Institutional readiness is another limitation, as many

organizations lack the expertise to effectively leverage digital marketing strategies and the platform's ever-evolving features, highlighting the need for training and collaboration with professionals. Furthermore, the platform's moderation policies and entertainment-oriented culture may not always align with the goals of Islamic crowdfunding, indicating that a multichannel strategy could be a more sustainable approach than relying solely on TikTok for faith-based fundraising initiatives.

Ethical Consideration

The integration of TikTok into Islamic crowdfunding presents new opportunities while also introducing specific ethical challenges. Rooted in Islamic principles such as amanah (trust), hurmah (dignity), and sidq (truthfulness), these campaigns must address risks associated with the platform's unique dynamics. TikTok's algorithm tends to prioritize sensational content, which may undermine the sincerity (ikhlas) and authenticity of fundraising efforts. Additionally, content moderation policies are often unclear and inconsistent, posing a risk of unfairly censoring religious fundraising initiatives.

The platform's monetization model can encourage "clickbait charity," where dramatic appeals overshadow important values like transparency and dignity. Furthermore, donor engagement leads to the collection of sensitive data, raising privacy concerns and ethical considerations regarding the handling of personal information, especially among younger users. To protect the integrity of Shariah (Islamic law) in such a fast-paced, entertainment-driven environment, it is essential to balance engaging content with strict adherence to Islamic ethical norms. This can be accomplished by establishing Shariah-compliant content guidelines, implementing internal ethical review processes, and collaborating with scholars and finance experts to maintain trust and credibility in digital faith-based fundraising.

Limitations

As a conceptual paper, this study acknowledges several limitations that should be noted. First, the proposed framework is primarily theoretical and has yet to undergo empirical validation. The lack of campaign data, analysis of donor behavior, or metrics on user engagement limits the generalizability of the model across various contexts.

Second, the framework is significantly influenced by the platform-specific dynamics of TikTok, including algorithmic amplification, content moderation policies, and monetization structures, all of which can change rapidly. This dependence may restrict the long-term applicability of the model as social media platforms evolve in unpredictable ways.

Third, the study does not provide cross-platform comparisons; while TikTok is highlighted for its popularity among younger audiences, other platforms such as Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, or emerging applications might present comparable or complementary opportunities for Islamic crowdfunding.

Finally, the framework does not fully account for the complexity of sociocultural variations across Muslim communities, which may affect both the reception of digital dakwah and the effectiveness of crowdfunding appeals. Recognizing these limitations emphasizes the necessity for future research to empirically test, refine, and contextualize the model, thereby enhancing its robustness and practical utility in Islamic social finance.

CONCLUSION

This paper offers a conceptual investigation of TikTok as a dynamic and ethically-oriented tool to bolster Islamic crowdfunding initiatives. By incorporating frameworks from marketing communication (AIDA), Islamic ethics, and social influence theory, the study suggests a structured model that connects faith-based philanthropy with contemporary digital behavior. The framework aims not only to enhance donor motivation but also to integrate mechanisms for ethical reflection, content responsiveness, and ongoing engagement. In particular, the paper highlights the importance of TikTok's visual storytelling,

viral features, and youth-focused design in appealing to Gen Z Muslims — a group that is increasingly distanced from traditional giving methods but significantly active online. By focusing on maqasid al-shariah-aligned objectives, Islamic messaging, and dignified storytelling, the model is positioned as both spiritually significant and technologically viable.

Comparative studies across different platforms—such as Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, and Facebook Stories—may highlight platform-specific features and audience behavioral trends that could further refine the model. Additionally, longitudinal research can evaluate the long-term impacts on brand trust and retention resulting from ethical TikTok campaigns within Islamic crowdfunding. In conclusion, as Islamic social finance adapts within a digital environment, leveraging modern tools like TikTok—with deliberate intent, spiritual authenticity, and ethical clarity—presents promising new opportunities for outreach, empowerment, and communal benefit. If approached with hikmah (wisdom), ihsan (excellence), and amanah (trust), this integration could signify a significant progression in the field of digital Islamic philanthropy.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author affirms that there is no conflict of interest in this article.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Norhaidah Ahmad is responsible for conceptualising the research framework, conducting the literature review, and drafting the full manuscript. Joeaiza Juhari provided critical editorial input, improved the structure and clarity of arguments, and refined the theoretical framework to enhance scholarly coherence. The co-author also contributed to strengthening the integration of Islamic marketing ethics within the context of digital platforms, ensuring the manuscript meets academic standards and relevance.

AI GENERATIVE DECLARATION

The author declares that generative AI tools were not used in the creation of this article, except for text paraphrasing and cross-checking references. The author assumes full responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, and final content of this work.

RESEARCH ETHICS STATEMENT

The author(s) declare that this study did not involve any human biological samples or data, or animal subjects. Consequently, formal ethics committee approval and informed consent were not required for this research.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to institutional and ethical requirements.

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