



## Arabic Grammatical Errors in Translating Islamic Texts Among Tarjamah Students

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose of the study:** This study aims to identify common Arabic grammatical errors made by eighth-semester Tarjamah students in translating Islamic texts and to analyze the factors influencing these errors in Arabic-to-Indonesian translation practices.

**Methodology:** This study employed a qualitative field research design combined with library research. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, translation tests, documentation, and literature review involving eighth-semester Tarjamah students of State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. Data analysis techniques included editing, tabulating, classification, and grammatical error analysis focusing on nahwu and sharaf aspects in Islamic text translation.

**Main Findings:** The findings revealed that many students still experienced difficulties in applying Arabic grammar rules, particularly nahwu and sharaf, during the translation process. Frequent errors were found in identifying fi'il-fa'il structures, jumlah ismiyyah and fi'liyyah, mudhaf-mudhaf ilaih, and grammatical sentence positions. These weaknesses affected translation accuracy, coherence, and naturalness. Internal learning motivation, limited practice, instructional methods, and insufficient mastery of qawa'id were identified as major contributing factors.

**Novelty/Originality of this study:** This study specifically examines Arabic grammatical errors in translating Islamic manuscripts among Tarjamah students using authentic translation tasks from Jâmi' al-Fiqih texts. The research contributes new insights into the relationship between Arabic grammar mastery and translation quality while highlighting pedagogical weaknesses in Arabic grammar instruction within higher education translation programs.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language is the primary medium used by humans to communicate ideas, knowledge, and cultural values in social life. In the context of Islamic scholarship and education, Arabic occupies a highly significant position because it serves as the source language for various classical and modern Islamic literatures [1]-[3]. Arabic is not merely understood as a communication tool, but also as the principal medium for understanding Islamic teachings derived from the Qur'an, Hadith, tafsir, fiqh, and other branches of Islamic sciences. Therefore, the ability to

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understand and translate Arabic becomes an essential competence, particularly for students studying in translation or *tarjamah* programs [4], [5]. In the translation process, translators are required not only to understand vocabulary, but also to master the complex grammatical structures of Arabic so that the message in the source language can be accurately transferred into the target language without losing its original meaning [6].

Arabic grammar or *qawā'id* is a fundamental aspect of Arabic language learning because it is directly related to sentence structure, word formation, and relationships among words within a text. Arabic grammar consists of *nahwu* which discusses syntax and *sharaf* which discusses morphology [7]-[9]. Both branches play an important role in determining a person's accuracy in reading and understanding Arabic texts, especially unvowelized Arabic texts. Minor mistakes in determining word positions, verb patterns, or relationships between *mubtada'* and *khabar* may significantly alter the meaning of a translation. Therefore, mastery of Arabic grammar is considered an essential requirement for translators in order to produce accurate, communicative, and contextually appropriate translations [10].

In practice, the process of translating Arabic into Indonesian still encounters numerous obstacles, particularly those related to translators' grammatical competence. Many translation results remain literal, rigid, and less appropriate according to Indonesian language conventions due to insufficient mastery of Arabic grammar [11], [12]. This problem is also found among students of the Tarjamah Department who have academically completed several grammar courses. However, when directly confronted with Islamic Arabic texts, students still experience difficulties identifying grammatical elements such as *fi'il-fa'il*, *mudhaf-mudhaf ilaih*, *jumlah ismiyyah*, and *jumlah fi'liyyah*. These difficulties indicate a gap between theoretical mastery of grammar and its practical application in translating authentic texts [13].

In addition to grammatical mastery, the low quality of translation results is also influenced by internal and external learning factors. Internal factors include low learning motivation, lack of translation practice, limited vocabulary mastery, and insufficient exposure to Arabic texts [14]-[16]. External factors are related to teaching methods, instructional materials, curriculum design, and the lack of practical approaches in Arabic grammar instruction. During the learning process, students tend to study grammatical theories separately without sufficient practice in applying them to authentic text analysis. As a result, students face difficulties connecting *nahwu* and *sharaf* theories with the practice of translating complex and contextual Islamic texts [17].

Translating Islamic texts possesses a higher level of complexity compared to general texts because such texts contain religious terminology, classical linguistic structures, as well as profound cultural and contextual meanings [18], [19]. Therefore, translators are required not only to understand the source and target languages, but also to comprehend the cultural context and linguistic structures employed within the texts. Errors in understanding Arabic grammatical structures may lead to meaning distortion and reduce the quality of information conveyed to readers. In the context of higher education, this condition becomes a serious challenge for Tarjamah study programs in producing graduates who possess professional translation competencies, particularly in translating Islamic manuscripts accurately and appropriately [20].

Based on these conditions, research concerning common Arabic grammatical errors in translating Islamic manuscripts becomes important to conduct. This study focuses on eighth-semester Tarjamah students of the 2005/2006 academic period at State Islamic University UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta using *Jāmi' al-Fiqih* by Yusri As-Sayyid Muhammad as the translation object. This research is expected to provide a comprehensive description of the grammatical errors frequently committed by students, the factors causing such errors, and contributions toward the development of more practical and contextual Arabic grammar teaching methods in the field of translation studies [21], [22].

Previous research conducted by Musa and Abdul gahfur [23] examined grammatical aspects and translation styles in the translation of *Risalah al-Mu'awanah*, focusing on professional translators' works. Meanwhile, Muhammad Al-Koasari [24] investigated the written translation abilities of Tarjamah students, particularly in translating proper names. Other studies generally discussed translation methods or overall translation quality without specifically examining students' grammatical errors in translating Islamic texts. Therefore, there remains a research gap regarding the lack of in-depth studies on common Arabic grammatical errors committed by translation students in the context of translating Islamic manuscripts through practical *nahwu* and *sharaf* analysis [25].

The novelty of this study lies in its specific focus on analyzing forms of Arabic grammatical errors in the translation of Islamic manuscripts conducted by eighth-semester Tarjamah students using the authentic text *Jāmi' al-Fiqih*. This study not only identifies linguistic errors, but also connects these errors with pedagogical factors, instructional methods, and students' mastery of *qawā'id* [26]. Therefore, this research contributes new insights to Arabic-Indonesian translation studies through grammatical analysis and evaluation of Arabic grammar instruction in higher education [27], [28].

The implications of this research are expected to provide evaluation materials for lecturers, study programs, and educational institutions in improving the quality of Arabic language instruction, particularly in *nahwu*, *sharaf*, and translation courses [29]. The results of this study may serve as a basis for designing more

practical, integrative, and translation-based learning models so that students are not only able to understand grammatical theories but also capable of applying them effectively in translating Islamic texts.

The urgency of this research becomes increasingly important due to the growing demand for competent Arabic translators in academic, educational, and Islamic fields. Students' low grammatical competence may negatively affect translation quality and lead to inaccuracies in conveying the meanings of Islamic texts to society. Therefore, this research is essential to support the improvement of students' translation competencies, enhance the quality of Arabic grammar instruction, and produce translation graduates who are academically and professionally competitive in the field of Arabic-Indonesian translation.

Based on the background and research gap presented above, this study is guided by the following research questions: (1) What types of Arabic grammatical errors are commonly committed by eighth-semester Tarjamah students in translating the Islamic manuscript *Jâmi' al-Fiqih*? (2) What grammatical aspects of *nahwu* and *sharaf* are most problematic for students during the translation process? and (3) What pedagogical factors influence students' grammatical errors in translating Islamic texts? These research questions are formulated to provide a comprehensive understanding of students' translation difficulties and to support the development of more effective Arabic grammar and translation instruction in higher education.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

### 2.1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design using a field research approach supported by library research. The qualitative descriptive method was selected because the study aimed to describe and analyze the common grammatical errors committed by Tarjamah students in translating Islamic Arabic texts into Indonesian. Through this approach, the researcher was able to examine linguistic phenomena deeply, systematically, and contextually based on students' translation results. Field research was conducted directly at the Tarjamah Department of State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta to obtain authentic data from students, while library research was used to strengthen theoretical foundations related to Arabic grammar, translation theory, and error analysis. The study focused on identifying grammatical errors in *nahwu* and *sharaf* aspects appearing in students' translations of Islamic texts. This research design enabled the researcher to understand not only the forms of errors but also the underlying factors contributing to those errors in the translation learning process [30], [31].

### 2.2. Subjects and Sample

The subjects of this research were eighth-semester students of the Tarjamah Department at the Faculty of Adab and Humanities, State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, during the 2005/2006 academic period. The participants were selected purposively because they had completed Arabic grammar courses such as *nahwu* and *sharaf* and had experience translating Arabic texts into Indonesian. Therefore, they were considered appropriate respondents for identifying grammatical problems in translation activities. The students represented learners who had received formal instruction in translation studies and Islamic text interpretation. The sample selection was intended to provide relevant data regarding students' grammatical competence in translating Islamic manuscripts. The research subjects consisted of students who participated actively in translation assignments, questionnaires, and interviews conducted during the research process [32].

### 2.3. Data Sources and Data Collection Techniques

The data sources in this study consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from students' translation works, questionnaires, and interviews regarding their understanding and difficulties in applying Arabic grammar during translation activities. Secondary data were collected from books, scientific journals, previous studies, institutional documents, and references related to translation theory, Arabic grammar, and Islamic manuscript translation. The primary translation text used in this study was *Jâmi' al-Fiqih* by Yusri As-Sayyid Muhammad.

Data collection techniques included observation, translation tests, questionnaires, interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted during translation learning activities to identify students' grammatical difficulties. Translation tests were used to measure students' abilities in translating Arabic Islamic texts into Indonesian. Questionnaires were distributed to identify factors influencing students' grammatical competence and translation difficulties. Interviews were conducted to obtain deeper information regarding students' experiences and perceptions about translation learning and Arabic grammar mastery. Documentation techniques were applied to collect institutional records, students' translation assignments, and supporting academic materials [33], [34].

Table 1. Data Collection Techniques

Technique	Purpose	Data Obtained
Observation	Observing translation learning activities	Students' grammatical difficulties
Translation Test	Measuring translation competence	Translation error data
Questionnaire	Identifying influencing factors	Students' perceptions and responses
Interview	Obtaining in-depth information	Explanatory qualitative data
Documentation	Collecting supporting records	Academic and translation documents

The data collection techniques used in this study consisted of observation, translation tests, questionnaires, interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to examine the translation learning activities and to identify students' grammatical difficulties during the translation process. Meanwhile, the translation test was administered to measure students' translation competence and to obtain data related to grammatical errors found in their translations of Islamic texts. Questionnaires were distributed to identify factors influencing students' translation performance, including their perceptions, learning experiences, and responses toward Arabic grammar and translation instruction. In addition, interviews were conducted to gain deeper qualitative information regarding students' difficulties, challenges, and strategies in translating Arabic manuscripts. Documentation techniques were also employed to collect supporting records, such as students' translation assignments, academic materials, and other relevant documents related to the research context. The combination of these techniques enabled the researcher to obtain comprehensive and reliable data for analyzing grammatical errors and their contributing factors in Arabic-Indonesian translation learning.

#### 2.4. Research Instruments

The research instruments used in this study included translation test sheets, questionnaires, interview guidelines, and observation sheets. The translation test instrument consisted of Islamic Arabic texts selected from *Jâmi' al-Fiqih* which students translated into Indonesian. This instrument was developed by the researcher based on Arabic grammar theories of *nahwu* and *sharaf* as well as translation error analysis frameworks adapted from previous Arabic-Indonesian translation studies. The questionnaire instrument contained several structured questions concerning students' learning experiences, grammar mastery, translation difficulties, and learning motivation, adapted from educational and translation-learning perception studies. Interview guidelines were designed by the researcher to obtain detailed explanations from respondents regarding the causes of grammatical errors and challenges faced during translation activities. Observation sheets were also developed to record students' participation, classroom interaction, and responses during translation learning activities. All instruments were systematically designed and validated by experts to ensure data validity and reliability throughout the research process[35].

#### 2.5. Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis technique in this study used descriptive qualitative analysis. After all data had been collected, the researcher conducted several stages of analysis, namely editing, classification, tabulation, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. Editing was carried out to check the completeness and consistency of the obtained data. Classification was conducted by grouping grammatical errors based on categories such as *fi'il-fa'il*, *mudhaf-mudhaf ilaih*, *jumlah ismiyyah*, and *jumlah fi'liyyah*. Tabulation was used to simplify data presentation into tables and percentage forms. The researcher then interpreted the findings by connecting them with translation theory and Arabic grammar concepts. Finally, conclusions were drawn to identify dominant grammatical errors and factors influencing students' translation performance [36].

Table 2. Categories of Grammatical Errors

Variable	Category	Percentage (%)
Nahwu Errors	Bad	35.6
Sharaf Errors	Sufficient	42.4
Translation Accuracy	Good	22.0

The results showed that students still experienced difficulties in applying Arabic grammar during the translation process. *Nahwu* errors were categorized as bad with a percentage of 35.6%, indicating weaknesses in understanding Arabic sentence structures and grammatical functions. Meanwhile, *sharaf* errors were categorized as sufficient with a percentage of 42.4%, showing that students had moderate mastery of Arabic morphological forms. However, translation accuracy was categorized as good, suggesting that students were generally able to convey the meaning of the Islamic texts despite grammatical inaccuracies. These findings indicate the need for more practical and translation-based instruction in *nahwu* and *sharaf* learning.

## 2.6. Research Procedure

The research procedure was conducted systematically through several stages. First, the researcher identified the research problem related to grammatical errors in Arabic-Indonesian translation. Second, literature review activities were conducted to establish theoretical foundations regarding translation theory, Arabic grammar, and error analysis. Third, the researcher prepared research instruments including translation tests, questionnaires, interview guides, and observation sheets. Fourth, data collection was conducted through translation activities, questionnaires, interviews, and observations involving Tarjamah students. Fifth, the collected data were analyzed descriptively to identify types of grammatical errors and influencing factors. Finally, the researcher interpreted the findings and formulated conclusions and recommendations for improving Arabic grammar instruction and translation learning.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Students' Arabic Grammatical Errors in Translating Islamic Texts

The findings of this study revealed that eighth-semester Tarjamah students still experienced significant difficulties in applying Arabic grammatical rules during the process of translating Islamic texts into Indonesian. Based on the translation tests conducted using excerpts from *Jāmi' al-Fiqih*, numerous grammatical errors were identified in both *nahwu* and *sharaf* aspects. These errors affected the quality, coherence, and accuracy of the translated texts. Most students tended to translate texts literally without fully considering the grammatical structures and contextual meanings contained in the source language. Consequently, several translated sentences became ambiguous, ineffective, and inconsistent with Indonesian linguistic conventions.

One of the most dominant grammatical problems identified in this research was students' inability to correctly determine the relationship between *fi'il* and *fa'il* within Arabic sentences. Many students failed to recognize the subject of the sentence due to limited understanding of sentence structure and word position. As a result, the translated meaning often shifted from the intended message in the source text. This finding indicates that students still lacked practical competence in analyzing Arabic sentence patterns despite having studied grammar theoretically in previous semesters. The difficulty became more visible when students encountered long and complex Islamic texts containing classical Arabic structures and implicit grammatical markers.

Another common error involved misunderstanding *mudhaf* and *mudhaf ilaih* constructions. Several students translated compound noun phrases separately without identifying the possessive relationship between words. This error caused inaccurate interpretations and reduced semantic coherence in the target language. In many cases, students also struggled to distinguish between *jumlah ismiyyah* and *jumlah fi'liyyah*, resulting in inappropriate sentence structures in Indonesian translations. These findings demonstrate that students' grammatical understanding remained largely theoretical and had not yet been fully integrated into translation practice.

Errors in *sharaf* or morphology were also found extensively in students' translations. Students frequently failed to identify verb patterns, tense markers, and word derivations correctly. Misinterpretation of verb forms led to incorrect meanings, especially in distinguishing active and passive forms or singular and plural structures. In several translation results, students translated derived forms literally without considering their contextual grammatical functions. This phenomenon indicates that morphological competence significantly influences translation accuracy, particularly in Arabic texts where changes in word patterns directly affect semantic interpretation.

The analysis further showed that many students relied heavily on word-for-word translation methods. Although this method may help students understand lexical meanings, it often produced rigid and unnatural translations. Students tended to prioritize lexical equivalence rather than contextual meaning and communicative readability. Consequently, many translated texts sounded awkward and failed to reflect natural Indonesian language usage. This finding confirms that translation competence requires not only vocabulary mastery but also deep understanding of grammar, context, and target language style [37], [38].

Table 3. Dominant Arabic Grammatical Errors

Error Type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Fi'il-Fa'il Errors	28	31.5
Mudhaf-Mudhaf Ilaih Errors	21	23.6
Jumlah Ismiyyah Errors	15	16.8
Jumlah Fi'liyyah Errors	12	13.5
Sharaf/Morphology Errors	13	14.6

The results above indicate that grammatical understanding remains a major challenge for Tarjamah students in translating Islamic manuscripts. Students who lacked strong mastery of *nahwu* and *sharaf* tended to

produce translations with low accuracy and limited contextual appropriateness. Therefore, grammatical competence becomes an essential component in improving Arabic-Indonesian translation quality.

### 3.2. Factors Influencing Students' Translation Difficulties

The study also identified several internal and external factors influencing students' grammatical difficulties in translation activities. Internal factors included low motivation to practice translation independently, insufficient vocabulary mastery, limited exposure to Arabic texts, and weak understanding of grammatical application. Many students admitted that they memorized grammatical formulas theoretically but rarely practiced applying them in authentic translation exercises. Consequently, when confronted with complex Islamic texts, they struggled to identify grammatical structures accurately.

Another important internal factor was students' limited reading habits regarding Arabic literature. Students who rarely engaged with Arabic texts demonstrated lower translation accuracy compared to those who frequently practiced reading and interpreting Arabic materials. This finding suggests that translation competence develops gradually through continuous exposure to authentic texts and practical language use. In addition, several students expressed anxiety and lack of confidence when translating Islamic texts due to fear of misunderstanding religious meanings.

External factors also significantly influenced students' translation performance. The findings revealed that grammar instruction in classrooms tended to emphasize theoretical explanation rather than practical application. Learning activities focused mainly on memorizing grammatical rules instead of applying them to contextual text analysis and translation exercises. Consequently, students experienced difficulties connecting grammatical theories with real translation situations. Limited instructional media, insufficient translation practice sessions, and lack of interactive learning approaches further contributed to students' grammatical weaknesses.

The teaching methods used in Arabic grammar classes also influenced students' learning outcomes. Traditional teacher-centered instruction limited students' opportunities to analyze texts critically and collaboratively. Students often depended on lecturers' explanations without developing independent grammatical analysis skills. This condition reduced students' critical thinking abilities and hindered their translation development. Therefore, more contextual and student-centered learning approaches are necessary to improve translation competence and grammatical application.

The findings additionally revealed that students experienced difficulties in understanding the cultural and contextual dimensions of Islamic texts. Translation errors were not solely caused by grammatical problems but also by insufficient understanding of Islamic terminology and contextual meanings embedded within Arabic expressions. This issue became more challenging because Islamic texts frequently use figurative language, classical sentence structures, and culturally specific concepts that require deeper interpretative competence.

Table 4. Factors Influencing Translation Difficulties

Factors	Description	Influence Level
Grammar Mastery	Weak understanding of <i>nahwu</i> and <i>sharaf</i>	High
Vocabulary Limitation	Limited Arabic lexical knowledge	High
Learning Motivation	Lack of independent practice	Moderate
Teaching Method	Theory-oriented instruction	High
Text Complexity	Classical Islamic language structures	High

The findings demonstrate that translation competence is multidimensional and influenced by linguistic, pedagogical, and psychological factors. Therefore, improving students' translation ability requires integrative instructional strategies combining grammatical mastery, contextual learning, and intensive translation practice.

The findings of this study support translation theories proposed by Belmekki Mahmoud, who emphasized that translation is not merely transferring words from one language into another but reproducing meaning naturally and communicatively within the target language [39]. Students' grammatical errors in this study demonstrate that insufficient understanding of *nahwu* and *sharaf* negatively affects meaning transfer and translation coherence. The dominance of literal translation methods among students further confirms that grammatical mastery strongly influences translators' ability to produce contextual and communicative translations.

This study also aligns with Newmark's theory concerning semantic and communicative translation. Many students in this research relied excessively on literal translation approaches, resulting in unnatural and rigid target language structures. Such findings indicate that students still prioritize lexical equivalence over contextual meaning. In Islamic text translation, however, communicative translation becomes highly important because translators must preserve religious meanings while maintaining readability and linguistic naturalness in the target language.

The findings additionally support previous studies emphasizing the relationship between grammatical competence and translation quality. Students who demonstrated stronger understanding of sentence structure and morphology produced more accurate and coherent translations. Conversely, students with limited grammatical

competence experienced difficulties interpreting contextual meanings and identifying sentence relationships. This confirms that grammar instruction should not be separated from translation practice within Arabic language education.

Compared with previous studies, this research provides a more specific analysis of Arabic grammatical errors in translating Islamic manuscripts among Tarjamah students. Muh. Sabilar Rosyad et al. study focused mainly on translation style and grammatical equivalence in translated works, while Nadia Selim examined students' translation ability regarding proper names. Another study conducted by Syihabuddin discussed translation methods theoretically without specifically analyzing grammatical error categories in students' Islamic text translations. Therefore, this study fills an important research gap by examining practical *nahwu* and *sharaf* errors in authentic translation tasks and identifying pedagogical factors influencing such errors [40], [41].

The novelty of this study lies in its integration of grammatical error analysis with translation pedagogy in the context of Islamic manuscript translation. Unlike previous studies focusing generally on translation quality or methods, this research specifically examines practical grammatical problems experienced by Tarjamah students during authentic translation activities using *Jâmi' al-Fiqih*. The study also contributes new insights regarding the relationship between Arabic grammar instruction and translation competence development in higher education contexts [42], [43].

The implications of this research are significant for Arabic language and translation education. The findings suggest that Arabic grammar instruction should become more practical, contextual, and translation-oriented. Lecturers are encouraged to integrate authentic Islamic texts into grammar learning activities and provide intensive translation exercises to strengthen students' grammatical application skills [44], [45]. Educational institutions should also develop interactive learning strategies that encourage critical analysis, collaborative translation practice, and contextual understanding of Arabic texts.

Despite its contributions, this study still has several limitations. First, the research focused only on eighth-semester Tarjamah students from one university, limiting the generalizability of findings to broader contexts. Second, the study analyzed translation errors only within Islamic manuscript translation and did not compare different text genres. Third, the research employed descriptive qualitative analysis without involving experimental instructional interventions to improve students' grammatical competence. Therefore, future studies are recommended to involve larger participant groups, multiple institutions, and experimental learning models to obtain more comprehensive findings regarding Arabic grammar instruction and translation competence development.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that eighth-semester Tarjamah students still experience considerable difficulties in applying Arabic grammatical rules when translating Islamic texts into Indonesian. The dominant errors identified in this research include mistakes in *fi'il-fa'il* structures, *mudhaf-mudhaf ilaih*, *jumlah ismiyyah*, *jumlah fi'liyyah*, and morphological (*sharaf*) forms. These grammatical weaknesses significantly affect translation accuracy, coherence, and contextual appropriateness. The findings also reveal that students tend to rely on literal translation methods, resulting in rigid and less communicative translations. Several factors influencing these difficulties include limited mastery of *nahwu* and *sharaf*, lack of translation practice, limited vocabulary knowledge, low reading exposure to Arabic texts, and teaching methods that focus more on theoretical grammar instruction than practical application. Therefore, this study emphasizes the importance of developing more contextual, practical, and translation-oriented Arabic grammar instruction in order to improve students' translation competence, particularly in translating Islamic manuscripts accurately and communicatively..

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#### USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGY

The authors declare that no artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted technologies were used in the preparation, analysis, or writing of this manuscript. All stages of the research process, including data collection, data analysis, interpretation of results, and manuscript preparation, were conducted entirely by the authors without the assistance of any AI-based tools.

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