

Destination Brand Identity and Community Dynamics as Enhancers of Competitive Advantage of Tourism Industry in Davao Oriental

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Abstract. Competitive advantage in tourist destinations refers to the unique attributes and resources that enable a destination to stand out in a competitive market. As competition in the tourism sector intensifies, destinations must proactively enhance their competitiveness by capitalizing on their unique assets, investing in quality services, and responding effectively to changing market trends. Due to the limited studies focusing on competitiveness, this study employed a descriptive-correlation design to examine the relationship between destination brand identity, community dynamics, and competitive advantage in the tourism industry of Davao Oriental. The study employed purposive sampling to select 300 respondents, chosen based on specific criteria. The data collected were analyzed using statistical tools such as Mean, Standard Deviation, Pearson r , and Multiple Regression Analysis. The study's results found that the status of competitive advantage in the destinations has a high level, with an overall mean of 4.04. Furthermore, the status of the destination brand identity is at a high level, given its general mean score of 4.17. Also, community dynamics has an overall mean of 3.83, indicating a high level. Finally, destination brand identity and community dynamics were found to be correlated with competitive advantage. Furthermore, the regression model suggests 43% of the combined influence of brand identity and community dynamics can enhance competitive advantage.

Keywords: Brand identity; Community dynamics; Competitive advantage; Davao Oriental; Tourism industry.

1.0 Introduction

Competitive advantage in tourist destinations represents unique attributes and resources that allow a destination to stand out in a competitive market, attracting more visitors than its rivals (Rahman, 2023). Over the past decade, the tourism sector has had tremendous growth, accompanied by shifting traveler preferences. Many tourists are seeking places that offer authentic and sustainable holiday experiences for rest (Buffa, 2015). This shift in demand has intensified the competition among destinations, as confirmed by Ramseook-Munhurrin et al. (2016), who emphasized the increasing challenge for destinations to capture and retain visitor interest. Pike (2015) further noted that in this saturated marketplace, destinations are struggling to stand out as travelers are presented with more choices than ever before. Moreover, Ram et al. (2015) cautioned that tourists are increasingly seeking authentic experiences, and the overdevelopment and commercialization of tourism areas may compromise the authenticity that travelers seek. Such a disconnect between tourist expectations and actual experiences can

diminish a destination's appeal, ultimately weakening its competitive advantage.

Competitive advantage plays a pivotal role in driving economic growth and fostering innovation, as emphasized by Buhalis et al. (2019). In the context of tourism, enhancing a destination's competitiveness is essential not only for attracting visitors but also for stimulating local economies and promoting income growth (Wu et al., 2016). Building on this, Harahap et al. (2024) asserted that a competitive advantage is particularly vital in the tourism industry, as it enables businesses and destinations to differentiate themselves within a highly dynamic and competitive environment. This differentiation contributes to increased market share, higher profitability, and stronger customer loyalty—factors that are instrumental for sustaining long-term success. These perspectives highlight that competitive advantage is not merely a marketing tool, but a strategic necessity for economic resilience and growth in the tourism sector.

Moreover, the study by Wei (2018) found a significant relationship between destination brand identity and the competitive advantage of tourist destinations through the integration of cultural, historical, and symbolic aspects to strengthen tourist loyalty. Similarly, Han et al. (2021) suggest that destination brands encourage repeat visits and establish a competitive edge. Additionally, Ruiz (2022) revealed the crucial role of community dynamics in enhancing competitive advantage through collaborative efforts and sustainable practices. In line with this, Mukti et al. (2024) further stated that community dynamics foster strong destination branding that drives competitiveness in the tourism market.

Studies are examining the relationships among the variables under investigation. A strong brand identity and community dynamics in the tourist destination not only attract tourists but also foster loyalty, economic growth, and long-term sustainability. This study prompted the researcher to focus on these variables as enhancers of competitive advantage to create a synergistic effect that strengthens a destination's overall competitiveness in an evolving tourism landscape.

Moreover, the findings of this study aim to make a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge on tourism competitiveness by providing empirical insights into the roles of destination brand identity and community dynamics in enhancing tourist appeal. These findings will provide a valuable framework for academics, policymakers, and tourism stakeholders in understanding how localized strategies can foster sustainable and competitive tourism development. To ensure its practical relevance, the results will be presented to the Local Government Unit of Baganga, Davao Oriental, to guide the formulation of strategic programs and initiatives. Additionally, this research will be disseminated through business and academic conferences, both locally and internationally, and submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. A copy of the study will also be archived in the University of the Immaculate Conception library to serve as a reference for future research and policymaking.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study on the Destination's Brand Identity and Community Dynamics as Enhancers of the tourism industry's competitive advantage in Davao Oriental employed a descriptive-correlational research design. Quantitative research is descriptive and objective, deriving its findings from empirical data (Saner et al., 2012). Additionally, Fleetwood (2024) noted that correlational research is a non-experimental research method in which a researcher measures two variables, understands, and assesses the statistical relationship between them, with no influence from any extraneous variable. In this study, a descriptive research design was used to assess the status of competitive advantage, destination brand identity, and community dynamics. Moreover, the correlational research design was intended to assess the significant relationships between the variables, namely destination brand identity and community dynamics, and the dependent variable, which is the competitive advantage of the tourism industry in Baganga, Davao Oriental.

2.2 Research Locale

This study was conducted in Davao Oriental, a province known for its rich natural resources, diverse tourist attractions, and strategic regional importance. Its tourism development is actively supported by the regional government through sustainable practices, making it an ideal setting for exploring strategies to enhance destination competitiveness. The research focused specifically on Baganga, a municipality with several notable tourist spots. Coordination with the Municipal Tourism and Cultural Affairs Office (MTCOA) was made to obtain

an official list of these destinations.

2.3 Research Respondents

This study utilized a purposive sampling method. As Andrade (2020) noted, purposive sampling can enhance the study's validity by ensuring that the sample reflects the characteristics necessary to address the research question. This sampling method aligns with the characteristics of the population and the study's objectives, as highlighted in the works of Creswell (2015) and Patton (2002). In this study, purposive sampling was employed to choose respondents who are directly involved and knowledgeable about tourism in Baganga, Davao Oriental, to assess the competitiveness of its tourist destinations. This study included 300 respondents, who were residents of the tourist destinations in Baganga, Davao Oriental. They were chosen based on the following criteria: they must reside near the tourist destination and be 18 years old or above to ensure that the respondents are of the maturity and legal capacity to provide informed responses.

Moreover, the researcher coordinated with the Municipal Tourism and Cultural Affairs Office (MTCOA) to obtain the list of tourist destinations in the municipality. Additionally, the researcher sought permission from the Mayor's office to conduct the study, as the residents were the respondents. After obtaining the necessary approvals, the researcher coordinated with the residents to begin data collection.

2.4 Research Instrument

This study utilized the adapted questionnaires, which were adapted from previous studies. The competitive advantage was adapted from the study of Khorsheed et al. (2020) entitled *The Role of Services Marketing Mix 7P's on Achieving Competitive Advantages (The Case of Paitaxt Technical Institute in Kurdistan Region of Iraq)*, Destination Brand Identity was adapted from the study of Tsaur et al. (2016) about *Destination Brand Identity: Scale Development and Validation*, and Community Dynamics was adapted from a study of Chin et al. (2017) entitled *Community's Experiential Knowledge on the Development of Rural Tourism Competitive Advantage*.

Prior to data collection, the research instruments were validated by experts to ensure their reliability and accuracy. A pilot test was also conducted to assess their effectiveness further. The results showed high levels of internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values of .939 for destination brand identity, .935 for community dynamics, and .939 for competitive advantage. These results indicate that all instruments are highly reliable for measuring the intended variables. Moreover, to assess the level of responses, a 5-point Likert scale will be used, where 5 indicates strong agreement and 1 indicates strong disagreement.

2.5 Data Collection

The researcher collected data using survey questionnaires, with the data collection process commencing after receiving approval from the Dean of the Graduate School of the University of the Immaculate Conception and securing a Clearance Certificate from the UIC-Research and Ethics Committee (UIC-REC). Upon obtaining these approvals, the tourist destinations in Baganga, Davao Oriental, were identified through coordination with the Municipal Tourism and Cultural Affairs Office (MTCOA). The researcher also sought formal permission from the Mayor's Office, as residents served as the study's respondents.

Following approval, the researcher explained the criteria for respondent selection to ensure that participants met the qualifications set for the study. Only qualified individuals were invited to participate, and informed consent was obtained face-to-face. Respondents were asked to sign the consent form after being fully informed about the study's purpose, their rights as participants, and the voluntary nature of their involvement, with an emphasis on the study's ethical foundation and respect for participant autonomy.

Survey questionnaires were administered in person by the researcher, accompanied by a brief explanation of the research tool and its purpose. Each respondent took approximately 15–20 minutes to complete the instrument. In adherence to the Data Privacy Act of 2012, all personal information collected was kept confidential, securely stored, and used exclusively for research purposes. The data collection took place over a three-month period, from February to April 2025. Completed questionnaires were retrieved immediately, and all data gathered were tallied, analyzed, and interpreted using appropriate statistical tools.

2.6 Statistical Tools

The *Mean* was used in this study to determine the levels of destination brand identity, community dynamics, and

competitive advantage among tourist destinations in Baganga, Davao Oriental. To assess the consistency of the responses, the *Standard Deviation* was employed, indicating how closely the data clustered around the mean. Furthermore, *Pearson's r* was utilized to examine the relationships among the key variables—destination brand identity, community dynamics, and competitive advantage. In addition, *Multiple Regression Analysis* was conducted to determine the extent to which the independent variables—destination brand identity and community dynamics—enhance the competitive advantage of the tourist destinations.

2.7 Ethical Consideration

This study adhered to the University's research protocols and strongly upheld ethical standards and considerations. Accordingly, the researcher submitted the study to the UIC Research Ethics Committee for review and approval, as indicated by the assigned Protocol Code: GS-ER-01-25-0156. The Ethics Committee thoroughly reviewed this study in alignment with the ten ethical dimensions, namely: social value, informed consent, vulnerability issues, risk-benefit ratio, privacy and confidentiality of information, justice, transparency, researcher qualification, adequacy of facilities, and community involvement.

All procedures were conducted by established ethical standards and research protocols to ensure the academic rigor and integrity of the study. Moreover, the researcher possesses the necessary qualifications and competence to conduct this study, as she holds a Bachelor's degree and has engaged in various research activities, including conferences, workshops, seminars, and trainings conducted by different universities and organizations. These activities have incrementally reinforced her research capabilities and ability to conduct this study responsibly. The researcher is also involved in research organizations and extension activities within the institution with which she is currently affiliated. The guidance and supervision of the thesis adviser, along with the constructive criticism of the panel committee, which has extensive knowledge and background in both quantitative and qualitative studies, further strengthens the validity and reliability of this study. Additionally, access to the university's resources, such as the UIC library and other facilities, contributed to the completion of the study.

3.0 Results and Discussions

Table 1. Consolidated Results Status of the Competitive Advantage

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
Cost	3.95	0.86	High
Quality	4.05	0.88	High
Time	4.08	0.82	High
Flexibility	4.06	0.84	High
Overall Mean	4.04	0.85	High

Table 1 presents the status of competitive advantage, with an overall mean of 4.04, which indicates a high level. This was measured across four domains: cost, quality, time, and flexibility. The results suggest that tourist destinations in Davao Oriental are cost-effective, provide high-quality products and services, operate efficiently, and are adaptable to the evolving demands of tourists. These findings suggest that the destinations are effectively managing their resources to consistently deliver value competitively. This supports the assertion of Sadq et al. (2019), who emphasized that competitive advantage strengthens an organization's market position by excelling in areas such as product, pricing, timeliness, and adaptability to change. Similarly, Wali et al. (2016) highlighted that a true competitive advantage lies in an organization's ability to perform in ways that are difficult for competitors to replicate.

Time obtained a category mean of 4.08, indicating that the destinations in Davao Oriental are efficient in managing time-related factors, such as delivery and responding to customer demands. Their quick response to customers' queries, bookings, and fast service delivery indicates that time management is the destination's strength. This result aligns with the study by Asgarov (2024), which emphasizes that time management in the tourism sector involves strategically planning and allocating time to various activities to maximize efficiency and productivity. It includes organizing schedules, setting priorities, optimizing workflows, and ensuring the timely delivery of services. Furthermore, Kol (2019) pointed out that time plays a crucial role in competitive advantage by enabling efficient logistics, informed forecasting, and balanced tourist flows, ultimately enhancing service delivery and increasing tourist satisfaction within the tourism industry. On the other hand, the cost category had the lowest mean, but was still described as *high* and *evident*. This implies that residents find the destinations superior in service value, cost-efficient, and have a strategic use of information systems. The results support the notion of Vij

(2016) that cost optimization is essential for achieving a competitive advantage in the tourism industry, thereby ensuring effective operations.

Table 2. Consolidated Results Status of the Destination Brand Identity

Domains/Statements	Mean	SD	Description
Image	4.17	0.89	High
Quality	4.16	0.80	High
Personality	4.47	0.70	Very High
Awareness	4.07	0.85	High
Culture	4.00	0.92	High
Overall Mean	4.17	0.83	High

Table 2 reveals the status of destination brand identity as measured by five indicators: image, quality, personality, awareness, and culture. The overall mean of 4.17 is described as *high*, indicating its *evident* status. This implies that tourist destinations successfully cultivate a strong brand identity through a robust image, high perceived quality, increased awareness, a distinct and positive personality, and a well-defined and respected culture, which contribute to the competitive advantage of the tourism industry. Additionally, the standard deviation ranges from 0.70 to 0.92, indicating the consistency of the respondents' responses. Consequently, the results align with the study by Kladou et al. (2016), who highlighted that a strong, well-managed destination brand can lead to sustained tourism growth. Escobar et al. (2024) also illuminated the destination brand identity as a vital tool for positioning destinations in an increasingly competitive global tourism market.

Furthermore, personality acquired the *highest* category mean among indicators, described as *high*. This implies that the people in the destinations cultivated a welcoming and accommodating personality, creating a reliable and glamorous environment that was designed to meet the tourists' expectations and provide an enjoyable experience. The result of this indicator aligns with the study by Ervina et al. (2022), which found that destination personality has a significant impact on tourist loyalty. Strong, positive destination personality traits encourage repeat visits and recommendations to others, thereby enhancing a destination's competitive advantage. Supporting this, Dickinger et al. (2015) added that tourists perceive and emotionally connect with a destination's brand personality. Additionally, Kim (2016) expressed that emotional attachment formed through destination personality leads to increased tourist satisfaction and brand loyalty, which are essential for maintaining a competitive edge in tourism. Meanwhile, culture got the *lowest* mean but was still described as *high*, suggesting that the destinations showcase their vibrant local cultures, distinctive lifestyles, historical heritage, diverse subcultures, and indigenous arts, which gives them authenticity and uniqueness. The result aligns with the study by Zhou et al. (2024), which asserts that elements such as vibrant local cultures, distinctive lifestyles, historical heritage, diverse subcultures, and indigenous arts not only enhance the authenticity and uniqueness of a destination but also significantly contribute to its competitive advantage in the tourism industry.

Table 3. Consolidated Results: Status of the Community Dynamics

Domains/Statements	Mean	SD	Description
Community Knowledge	4.16	0.85	High
Community Support	3.49	1.38	High
Overall Mean	3.83	1.12	High

Shown in Table 3 is the status of community dynamics as evaluated through indicators of community knowledge and community support. The data illustrate that the status of community dynamics is *high* and *evident*, with a category mean of 3.83. This result suggests that the residents of Baganga, Davao Oriental, are aware of and actively involved in tourism-related activities, indicating a positive interaction and collaboration that supports the growth and success of the local tourism industry. The result supports the argument of Catalyestes (2022) that community engagement ensures the protection of natural resources and provides economic benefits, thereby contributing to the area's competitiveness. Building on this, Ginanjar et al. (2024) argue that local communities can enhance their competitive advantage in the tourism industry by actively participating in tourism development.

Community knowledge achieved a category mean of 4.16. This domain is described as *high*, interpreted as *evident*, noting that the destinations contribute to provincial economic growth, encourage visits, foster sustainable development, create employment, and enhance recognition and visitation through effective promotional investment. The result supports the study by Breugel (2013), which found that communities with higher levels of awareness and participation experienced more significant economic benefits, such as job creation and income

generation, contributing to the region's overall economic growth. Purnomo et al. (2025) further emphasize that developing rural tourism can improve community welfare by creating job opportunities and enhancing local income. On the other hand, community support got the lowest mean, described as *high*, and was interpreted as *evident*. This implies that the local communities are actively participating in tourism activities, planning, cultural exchanges, development initiatives, and environmental conservation, fostering the growth of tourist destinations. The results align with the study by Nunkoo et al. (2011), which suggests that the active participation of local communities enhances competitive advantage by contributing to decision-making, collaborating on projects, and promoting sustainability. Kayat (2014) supports this notion by arguing that empowering communities enables them to manage tourism activities more effectively, conserve valuable resources, and maximize both economic and social benefits. Chin et al. (2017) reinforce this by showing that the active support of communities for tourism initiatives has a significant influence on the development of rural tourism competitiveness.

Table 4. *Correlation of the Variables*

Variables Correlated with Competitive Advantage	r	p	Remarks
Destination Brand Identity	.559	.000	Significant
Community Dynamics	.597	.000	Significant

As shown in Table 4, the relationship between destination brand identity, community dynamics, and competitive advantage in the tourism industry is presented. The correlation result shows a positively significant relationship between Destination Brand Identity and Competitive Advantage, with an R-value of .559 (p-value <.05). This means that as destination brand identity increases, competitive advantage tends to grow, implying that a well-defined and authentic brand identity helps distinguish the municipality from other destinations by highlighting its image, quality, personality, awareness, and culture. The result is consistent with the study findings of Rop (2022), which revealed a significant relationship between destination branding and competitive advantage, emphasizing that effective branding strategies can lead to long-term sustainability and differentiation in the tourism market. Currie (2020) supports this, stating that reshaping the narrative and image of a destination serves as a mechanism to boost its competitiveness in the international tourism market through branding. A well-defined destination brand identity is crucial for distinguishing a destination from its competitors. This differentiation enhances the destination's attractiveness and competitive position in the global tourism market (Escobar-Farfán et al., 2024).

Moreover, a positive significant relationship between Community Dynamics and Competitive Advantage, with an *R-value* of .597 (p-value <.05). This indicates that competitive advantage improves when community dynamics increase. This implies that in Baganga, Davao Oriental, active community involvement plays a vital role in shaping authentic and memorable tourist experiences. When residents are engaged, supportive, and culturally involved, they help preserve local traditions, provide genuine hospitality, and ensure that tourism development aligns with community values. The result aligns with the study of Fong et al. (2015), which reveals that active participation in decision-making, empowerment, and community knowledge about tourism can significantly affect the sustainability of rural tourism development—further strengthened by the study of Escobar et al. (2024), who emphasize that fostering stakeholder collaboration enables destinations to establish a distinctive brand identity that resonates with both residents and visitors, thereby enhancing the overall visitor experience and competitive positioning.

Table 5. *Enhancers of Competitive Advantage*

Variables	Beta	p-value	t	Remarks
Destination Brand Identity	.327	.000	6.092	Significant
Community Dynamics	.312	.000	7.711	Significant

$r = .656$
 $r^2 = .430$
 $p = .000$
 $F = 108.706$

Table 5 presents the results of the multiple regression analysis, which demonstrate the impact of competitive advantage on destination brand identity and community dynamics. All the tested variables were found to significantly contribute in enhancing competitive advantage as indicated by (p-value <.05). Specifically, beta coefficient of destination brand identity ($\beta = 0.327$, $p = 0.000$) indicates as significant enhancer of competitive advantage, suggesting that a one unit increase in destination brand identity results in a 0.327 increase in

competitive advantage. The result supports the findings of Kladou et al. (2016), who asserted that a strong, well-managed destination brand can lead to sustained growth in tourism. Similarly, Pike et al. (2013) asserted that destination branding is critical in shaping a destination's competitiveness in the global tourism market.

In addition, community dynamics was found to be a significant enhancer, with a beta coefficient of 0.312 ($p < 0.000$), suggesting that a one-unit increase in community dynamics will lead to a 0.312-unit increase in competitive advantage. This further reinforces the importance of community dynamics in strengthening the competitive advantage of the tourism industry. This implies that the active participation, involvement, and engagement of residents in tourist destinations significantly enhance the competitiveness of the tourism industry. Furthermore, the r^2 value of 0.430 suggests that destination brand identity and community dynamics can explain 43% of the variance in competitive advantage, and the remaining 57% may be influenced by other factors not included in the study. Additionally, the regression model fit analysis denotes a strong relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable, reflecting an R-value of 0.656. Additionally, the exceptionally high value of the statistic confirms that the regression model is valid. At the same time, a t-value greater than two indicates that destination brand identity and community dynamics have a significant impact on enhancing competitive advantage.

4.0 Conclusions

This study covered the competitiveness of the tourism industry as enhanced by its brand identity and community dynamics. The status of competitive advantage is high across all its indicators, interpreted as evident, implying that the destinations in Davao Oriental are cost-effective, offer high-quality products and services, are timely and efficient, and adapt to changing demands. It signifies the effective management of its resources to deliver products and services efficiently. The time obtained the highest mean score, indicating that destinations in Davao Oriental are efficient in managing time-related factors, such as delivery and responding to customer demands. Their quick response to customers' queries, bookings, and fast service delivery indicates that time management is the destination's strength. However, cost received the lowest mean score among the indicators, but was still interpreted as high. This entails that destinations that are less cost-efficient, but still find the cost acceptable in terms of the overall value and experience provided.

In addition, the status of destination brand identity in the tourism industry in Davao Oriental is generally high, indicating that the destination has a strong image, high perceived quality, increased awareness, a distinct and positive personality, and a well-defined and respected culture. The personality domain acquired the highest category mean scores, indicating that a welcoming and accommodating personality is prevalent in the destination. However, the culture domain received the lowest category mean, described as evident. This implies that destinations showcase their vibrant local cultures, distinctive lifestyles, historical heritage, diverse subcultures, and indigenous arts, which gives them authenticity and uniqueness.

Furthermore, the status of community dynamics is also high in all indicators. It implies that the community in tourist destinations is actively engaged in tourism-related activities, indicating a positive interaction and collaboration that fosters the growth and success of the local tourism industry. The community knowledge obtained the highest category mean, indicating that residents are well-informed about tourism-related activities, making them ready to engage. Meanwhile, the community support received the lowest mean scores but was described as high. It entails that the residents engage and participate in the various tourism-related activities and initiatives.

A significant relationship exists between destination brand identity and competitive advantage. This implies that the destinations establish a strong and well-defined brand identity, attracting more tourists and enhancing long-term success and sustainability. Similarly, a significant relationship was also found between community dynamics and competitive advantage, indicating that active local involvement, collaboration, participation, and shared decision-making contribute to the competitive advantage of a tourist destination. The study results reveal that destination brand identity and community dynamics are significant determinants of competitive advantage in the tourism industry. However, the data also show that destination brand identity has a greater influence in enhancing competitive advantage compared to community dynamics. Moreover, the results reveal that other factors not covered account for approximately 57% of the variance, suggesting the need for further investigation by future researchers.

The results of this study support the Resource-Based View Theory, which emphasizes that a firm's internal resources and capabilities are key to achieving sustainable competitive advantage. In the tourism industry, the destination brand identity and community dynamics serve as valuable internal resources. A strong brand identity – when supported by cost-efficiency, high-quality service, timely delivery, and adaptability to changing tourist demands – helps a destination stand out in a competitive market. At the same time, the active involvement of local communities in tourism activities enhances authenticity and sustainability, further strengthening a destination's appeal. These two factors – brand identity and community dynamics – are not only essential but also challenging for competitors to imitate, making them strategic assets for long-term competitiveness. Moreover, the study's results, which revealed a destination brand identity and community dynamics that can enhance competitive advantage, support the proposition of Morar et al. (2012), who emphasized that brand positioning serves as a key source of competitive advantage. Supported Escobar-Farfán et al. (2024) that a well-defined destination brand identity is crucial for distinguishing a destination from its competitors. Similarly, the proposition by Fong et al. (2015) states that active participation in decision-making, empowerment, and community knowledge about tourism can significantly enhance the sustainability of rural tourism development.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

Both authors made significant contributions to the success of this study. **Author 1** was responsible for conceptualizing the research, conducting data collection and analysis, and overseeing the overall development of the study through to its successful completion. **Author 2**, serving as the research adviser, provided critical guidance throughout the research process, offered in-depth reviews, and ensured the academic rigor and integrity of the study.

6.0 Funding

The research study was personally funded by the authors, with no external financial support.

7.0 Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest in this research study. All findings, analyses, and interpretations presented in this study are conducted with academic integrity and objectivity, free from any financial, personal, or professional influences that could affect the research outcomes. Additionally, the study's design, data collection, and conclusions have not been biased by external funding, sponsorship, or affiliations.

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