

**JLPH:**
Journal of Law, Politic
and Humanities<https://dinastires.org/JLPH> dinasti.info@gmail.com +62 811 7404 455E-ISSN: 2962-2816
P-ISSN: 2747-1985DOI: <https://doi.org/10.38035/jlph.v6i6>
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The Influence of Fear of Missing Out and Culinary Experience on the Intention to Reduce Food Waste with the Mediation of Sustainable Consumption Behavior in Batam Culinary Tourism

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Abstract: Food waste in the culinary sector poses a challenge to sustainable tourism. The proliferation of social media has given rise to the phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), which encourages impulsive consumption, while the culinary experience, consisting of taste and food portion size, also shapes the intention to reduce food waste. This study aims to analyze the influence of FOMO, taste, and food portion size on the intention to reduce food waste, with sustainable consumption behavior as a mediating variable among culinary tourism consumers in Batam. Using an explanatory quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey, data were collected from 300 active social media users and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results show that FOMO has a significant positive effect on the intention to reduce food waste, food portion size has a significant positive effect and is the strongest predictor, while taste does not have a significant effect. Sustainable consumption behavior is shown to partially mediate the influence of FOMO and taste in a negative direction, but it is not significant for the portion size path. These findings provide an empirical model of sustainable consumer behavior as well as strategic recommendations for culinary business actors and policymakers in designing effective and contextual food waste reduction strategies.

Keywords: *Fear of Missing Out, Culinary Experience, Taste Food, Portion, Intention to Reduce Food Waste, Sustainable Consumption Behavior*

INTRODUCTION

Food waste is a global problem that has a significant impact on the environment, food security, and economic efficiency (FAO, 2024). Data from UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme, 2024) shows that in 2022 the world discarded 1.05 billion tons of food, with the food service sector accounting for 28% of total waste. In Indonesia, food waste is the largest component of domestic waste, and the tourism food and beverage sector has been identified as a major contributor. Various studies confirm that consumer behavior is a primary driver of food waste, so behavioral change interventions are key to reduction efforts (Printianto et al., 2019; Quested et al., 2013).

From a behavioral perspective, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) proposed by Ajzen (2020) is the main framework for explaining individuals' intentions to reduce food waste. TPB states that behavioral intention is formed by three main determinants: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In the context of food waste, sustainable consumption behavior represents the attitude component, while subjective norms and perceived control are reflected in social influence and individuals' beliefs about their ability to reduce food waste (Ajzen, 2020; Saputra & Alhamdi, 2025). Consumer behavior models strengthened by TPB show that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived control play important roles in determining waste reduction intentions (Ma et al., 2023). However, changes in consumption patterns in the digital era add complexity, because consumption decisions are no longer driven only by functional needs but also by social pressure and digital media trends (Saputra & Alhamdi, 2025).

To enrich the TPB framework, this study also adopts the Consumer Food Waste Behaviour Model, which emphasizes that food waste behavior is influenced by interacting personal, situational, and contextual factors, including consumption experience and food characteristics such as taste and portion size. This model explains that the intention to reduce food waste is shaped not only by attitudes but also by consumers' direct experience with the food consumed. In addition, Social Influence Theory strengthens understanding of how social pressure and social media influence shape consumption behavior. This theory explains that individuals tend to adjust their behavior to reference groups or ongoing trends, which in the digital context is manifested through the phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) (Alfina et al., 2023). Meanwhile, Expectancy-Value Theory provides a basis for explaining how consumers evaluate their culinary experiences based on expectations and perceived value, such as satisfaction with taste and portion appropriateness, which ultimately shape attitudes and behavioral intentions.

The phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) has emerged as an increasingly dominant psychological factor in shaping consumption behavior, especially among culinary tourism consumers who are active on social media (Alfina et al., 2023). From the perspective of Social Influence Theory (Wu & Long, 2024), FOMO is a manifestation of digital social pressure that drives individuals to try viral foods so as not to miss out on trends, even when they do not match their needs, thereby potentially increasing food waste (Chen et al., 2024; Masmoudi & Jmour, 2024; Pu et al., 2025). In the context of culinary tourism, consumption decisions are also strongly influenced by the dining experience, including the perception of taste, which shapes satisfaction and the desire to finish food (Wallnoefer et al., 2024). Based on Expectancy-Value Theory, consumers who have positive expectations regarding taste will tend to be more motivated to finish the food they order, while a mismatch between expectations and reality can encourage food leftovers. In addition, the appropriateness of portion size is an important factor influencing consumption levels and food leftovers. Previous research shows that overly large portions often encourage overconsumption and increase the potential for food waste, while appropriate portions can support more responsible consumption (van Rooijen et al., 2024).

Nevertheless, most previous studies still examine these factors separately and have not integrated the influence of FOMO, taste, and portion size into a single comprehensive behavioral model, especially by considering the mediating mechanism of sustainable consumption behavior on the intention to reduce food waste (Chun T'ing et al., 2021; Fazal-e-Hasan et al., 2023; Iriyadi et al., 2023; Lee et al., 2024; Melnyk et al., 2025). Research on sustainable food consumption shows that consumer behavior act as a mediator between personal factors and sustainable intentions (Thakur et al., 2025). This gap is clearly evident in the context of Indonesian culinary tourism, where studies on food waste behavior are still limited (Saputra & Alhamdi, 2025).

Based on these conditions, this study aims to empirically examine the influence of FOMO, taste, and portion size on the intention to reduce food waste among social media-based culinary tourism consumers, with sustainable consumption behavior as a mediating variable. By integrating the Theory of Planned Behavior, the Consumer Food Waste Behaviour Model, Social Influence Theory, and Expectancy-Value Theory, this study is expected to fill the research gap while providing a basis for formulating more effective, contextual, and sustainable food waste reduction strategies. Based on the theoretical foundation, the proposed hypotheses are:

H1: Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) has a negative effect on the intention to reduce food waste.

H2: taste food has a positive effect on the intention to reduce food waste.

H3: Portion has a positive effect on the intention to reduce food waste.

H4: Sustainable consumption behavior mediates the effect of FOMO on the intention to reduce food waste.

H5: Sustainable consumption behavior mediates the effect of taste on the intention to reduce food waste.

H6: Sustainable consumption behavior mediates the effect of portion size on the intention to reduce food waste.

METHODS

This study uses an explanatory quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey design to examine the causal relationships between FOMO, Taste, and portion size on the intention to reduce food waste, with sustainable consumption behavior as a mediating variable. The target population is culinary tourism consumers in Batam who actively consume culinary content on social media. The sampling technique uses purposive sampling with the following criteria: at least 18 years old, having visited culinary tourism destinations in Batam, and actively using social media for food content. The sample size was set at 300 respondents in accordance with the requirements of SEM analysis. The research instrument was a questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) developed from validated indicators in previous studies. Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS) through two evaluation stages: the measurement model (outer model) to test convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability, and the structural model (inner model) to test the coefficient of determination, direct effects, and mediation effects with a significance value of $p < 0.05$ (Hair Jr et al., 2021).

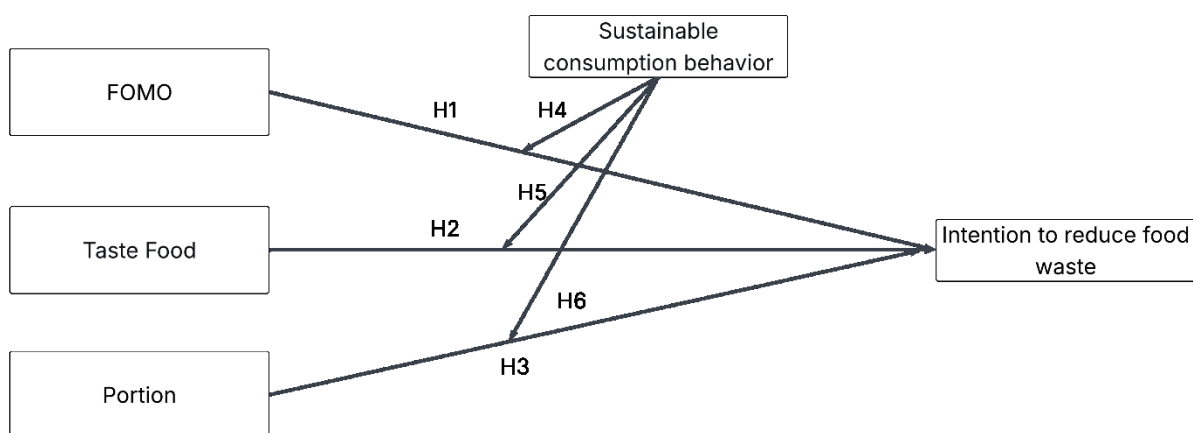


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Characteristics of the Respondents

Characteristics of the Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
< 20 Years	52	17.3%
21-30 Years	168	56.0%
31-40 Year	62	20.7%
> 40 Tahun	18	6.0%
Gender		
Male	126	42.0%
Female	174	58.0%

Based on the table of respondent characteristics involving a total of 300 participants, the majority of respondents were in the age range of 21–30 years, totaling 168 people (56.0%), indicating that the study population was dominated by young adults or the millennial and early Gen Z generations. The 31–40 age group accounted for 62 respondents (20.7%), followed by the under-20 age group with 52 respondents (17.3%), while the over-40 age group was the smallest with only 18 respondents (6.0%). In terms of gender, the composition of respondents showed a fairly noticeable imbalance, with female respondents far outnumbering male respondents, totaling 174 people (58.0%) and 126 people (42.0%), respectively. Overall, this respondent profile illustrates that the research subjects were predominantly young productive individuals aged 21–30 years and female, which needs to be considered as a demographic context in generalizing the research results.

Frequency of Culinary Tourism Visits

Table 2. Frequency of Culinary Tourism Visits

Times	Frequency	Percentage
1-2 times/month	98	32.7%
3-5 times/ month	134	44.7%
> 5 times/ month	68	22.6%

Based on the frequency distribution table regarding the intensity of culinary tourism visits, out of a total of 300 respondents, the majority of respondents were in the frequency group of 3–5 times per month, totaling 134 people (44.7%), almost half of all participants. The group with a frequency of 1–2 times per month ranked second with 98 respondents (32.7%), while the group with a frequency of more than 5 times per month was the smallest group, comprising only 68 respondents (22.6%). Viewed cumulatively, 77.4% of respondents (232 people) made culinary tourism visits 1 to 5 times per month, indicating that the majority of respondents had a regular visiting habit but still in the moderate category, not daily. Meanwhile, the group with a very high frequency (>5 times/month), amounting to 22.6%, actually represents a segment of highly loyal visitors or heavy users, who may have a higher interest in or dependence on culinary tourism activities compared to the average respondent.

Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

1. Convergent Validity and Reliability

Table 3. Convergent Validity and Reliability

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)	FOMO1	0.757	0.613	0.790	0.864
	FOMO2	0.785			
	FOMO3	0.786			
	FOMO4	0.803			

Taste Food	TF1	0.787	0.641	0.814	0.877
	TF2	0.875			
	TF3	0.833			
	TF4	0.696			
Portion	P1	0.812	0.633	0.806	0.873
	P2	0.762			
	P3	0.779			
	P4	0.826			
Sustainable consumption behavior (SCB)	SCB1	0.869	0.788	0.911	0.893
	SCB2	0.916			
	SCB3	0.899			
	SCB4	0.865			
Intention to Reduce Food Waste (IRFW)	IRFW1	0.806	0.661	0.829	0.934
	IRFW2	0.825			
	IRFW3	0.836			
	IRFW4	0.785			

Source: SmartPLS Output 3 (2026)

Based on the measurement model evaluation table, all latent constructs Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), Taste Food, Portion, Sustainable Consumption Behavior (SCB), and Intention to Reduce Food Waste (IRFW) demonstrate good psychometric quality and meet the validity and reliability criteria. The outer loading values for all indicators range from 0.696 to 0.916, where only one indicator (TF4 at 0.696) falls slightly below the 0.70 threshold but is still tolerable in social research, while all other indicators exceed 0.70, thus satisfying convergent validity. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values range from 0.613 to 0.788, all above the minimum threshold of 0.50, indicating that each construct is able to explain more than 60% of the variance of its indicators. In terms of internal reliability, Cronbach's Alpha values range from 0.790 to 0.911, and Composite Reliability ranges from 0.864 to 0.934, all of which exceed the minimum standard of 0.70 and are even classified as high to very high. The Sustainable Consumption Behavior (SCB) construct performs the strongest with an AVE of 0.788, Cronbach's Alpha of 0.911, and CR of 0.893, confirming that its indicators are the most consistent in reflecting sustainable consumption behavior. Conversely, the FOMO construct has the lowest values (AVE 0.613; CA 0.790) but still meets the requirements, so the entire instrument is declared valid and reliable for use in the subsequent structural model analysis.

Table 4. fornell larcker

Variabel	FOMO	Intention to reduce food waste	Portion	Taste food	Sustainable consumption behavior
FOMO					
Intention to reduce food waste	0.227				
Portion	0.401	0.876			
Taste food	0.679	0.689	0.730		
Sustainable consumption behavior	0.506	0.629	0.630	0.714	

Source: SmartPLS Output 3 (2026)

The Fornell-Larcker table shows that discriminant validity is generally met because the square root of AVE values on the diagonal are greater than the correlations between variables in the same row and column. food waste. Overall, discriminant validity is met.

Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

1. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Table 5. coefficient of determination

Endogenous Variable	R^2	Adjusted R^2
Intention to reduce food waste (IRFW)	0.574	0.568
Sustainable Consumption behavior (SCB)	0.381	0.375

Source: SmartPLS Output 3 (2026)

The R^2 value for Intention to Reduce Food Waste (IRFW) of 0.574 indicates that all predictor variables in the model are able to explain 57.4% of the variance in the intention to reduce food waste, classified as moderate-strong, while the remaining 42.6% is influenced by other factors outside the model. Meanwhile, the R^2 for Sustainable Consumption Behavior (SCB) of 0.381 means that the exogenous variables are only able to explain 38.1% of the variance in sustainable consumption behavior, classified as moderate-low. The Adjusted R^2 values close to the R^2 values for both constructs indicate that the model does not suffer from overfitting. Thus, the model has stronger predictive power for IRFW than for SCB.

2. Hypothesis Testing (Direct Effects)

Table 6. Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Path	Koefisien (β)	Standard Error	t-Statistik	p-Value	Conclusions
H1	FOMO $\rightarrow$ IRFW	0.327	0.073	4.488	0.000	Supported
H2	Taste Food $\rightarrow$ IRFW	-0.001	0.071	0.018	0.986	Rejected
H3	Portion $\rightarrow$ IRFW	0.602	0.052	11.624	0.000	Supported
<i>control</i>	FOMO $\rightarrow$ SCB	0.458	0.059	8.246	0.000	-
<i>control</i>	Taste Food $\rightarrow$ SCB	0.303	0.067	4.517	0.000	-
<i>control</i>	Portion $\rightarrow$ SCB	-0.128	0.071	1.815	0.070	-
<i>control</i>	SCB $\rightarrow$ IRFW	-0.206	0.052	3.984	0.000	-

Source: SmartPLS Output 3 (2026)

The results of hypothesis testing show that of the three main hypotheses, two are supported and one is rejected. H1 (FOMO $\rightarrow$ IRFW) is supported with a positive coefficient of 0.327 ($t = 4.488$; $p < 0.001$), meaning that the higher the FOMO, the higher the intention to reduce food waste, although this direction is contrary to the initial assumption that hypothesized a negative influence. H2 (Taste Food $\rightarrow$ IRFW) is rejected because its coefficient is nearly zero ($\beta = -0.001$) and not significant ($p = 0.986$), indicating that taste does not play a direct role in shaping the intention to reduce food waste. H3 (Portion $\rightarrow$ IRFW) is strongly supported as the dominant predictor with a coefficient of 0.602 ($t = 11.624$; $p < 0.001$), confirming that portion appropriateness is the most influential factor. On the control paths, FOMO ($\beta = 0.458$; $p < 0.001$) and Taste Food ($\beta = 0.303$; $p < 0.001$) have a significant positive effect on SCB, while Portion is not significant ($p = 0.070$). Interestingly, SCB actually has a significant negative effect on IRFW ($\beta = -0.206$; $p < 0.001$), indicating the existence of complex dynamics in which sustainable consumption behavior do not always encourage the intention to reduce food waste.

Mediation Analysis (Indirect Effects)

Table 7. Indirect Effects

Hypothesis	Path	Indirect Effect	Standar Error	t-Statistik	p-Value	Conclusions
H4	FOMO → SCB → IRFW	-0.110	0.028	3.967	0.000	Mediasi Parsial
H5	Taste Food → SCB → IRFW	-0.062	0.024	2.632	0.009	Mediasi Parsial
H6	Portion → SCB → IRFW	0.026	0.017	1.577	0.155	Mediasi Parsial

Source: SmartPLS Output 3 (2026).

The results of the mediation analysis show that sustainable consumption behavior (SCB) acts as a significant partial mediator on two paths, namely H4 (FOMO → SCB → IRFW) with an indirect effect of -0.110 ($t = 3.967$; $p < 0.001$) and H5 (Taste Food → SCB → IRFW) with an indirect effect of -0.062 ($t = 2.632$; $p = 0.009$). Both paths have a negative direction, meaning that part of the positive influence of FOMO and Taste Food on the intention to reduce food waste actually weakens when mediated through SCB, because SCB itself has a negative effect on IRFW. Meanwhile, H6 (Portion → SCB → IRFW) is not significant because the indirect effect value is only 0.026 with a t-statistic of 1.577 and a p-value of 0.155 (> 0.05), so even though the table lists "Partial Mediation," this mediation path should actually be declared statistically unsupported. Thus, only H4 and H5 are proven as significant partial mediations, while H6 is rejected, indicating that the influence of Portion on the intention to reduce food waste is direct without going through sustainable consumption behavior.

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Fear of Missing Out on Intention to Reduce Food Waste (H1)

The results show that FOMO has a positive and significant effect on the intention to reduce food waste. This finding contradicts the initial hypothesis, which assumed that FOMO would decrease the intention to reduce food waste. These results indicate that consumers with high levels of FOMO actually have greater awareness of reducing food waste. In addition, consumers with high FOMO are highly active social media users, so their exposure to anti-food waste campaigns and educational content about sustainability is also greater. This finding is consistent with the research of Chen et al. (2024) and Pu et al. (2025), which shows that exposure to food waste content on social media can increase environmental awareness among digital consumers, although it contradicts the study by Alfina et al. (2023), which positions FOMO as a trigger for irresponsible consumption.

The Influence of Taste Food on Intention to Reduce Food Waste (H2)

Contrary to the initial assumption, culinary experience as measured through food taste does not have a significant effect on the intention to reduce food waste. This finding indicates that satisfaction with taste alone is not sufficient to encourage the intention to reduce food waste. This result is consistent with the research of Saputra and Alhamdi (2025), which also found that taste is not significant in shaping food waste reduction intentions in Batam, but it contradicts the findings of Wallnoefer et al. (2024), which showed a positive relationship between sensory satisfaction and food-finishing behavior in the context of European restaurants.

The Influence of Portion on Intention to Reduce Food Waste (H3)

Food portion size proved to be the strongest predictor in influencing the intention to reduce food waste ($\beta = 0.602$; $t = 11.624$; $p < 0.001$). This finding confirms that the appropriateness of portion size to consumption needs is a crucial factor in encouraging responsible consumption behavior. Consumers who pay attention to portion adequacy before

ordering tend to be more aware of their consumption capacity and more committed to finishing their food. This result supports the research of van Rooijen et al. (2024), which identified excessive portions as the main cause of plate waste in the food service sector, and strengthens the argument that portion-based interventions, such as offering small, regular, and large sizes, are the most effective strategy for reducing food waste in restaurants.

The Mediating Role of Sustainable Consumption Behavior (H4, H5, H6)

The mediation analysis reveals complex findings that do not fully align with the hypothesized theoretical framework. Sustainable Consumption Behavior (SCB) is shown to partially mediate the influence of FOMO on the intention to reduce food waste (H4) in a negative direction. This means that part of the positive influence of FOMO on the intention to reduce food waste actually weakens when mediated through SCB. This indicates that although FOMO can directly increase the intention to reduce food waste, FOMO also tends to lower sustainable consumption beh, which in turn reduces that intention. There is an internal conflict within consumers between the drive to follow trends and the commitment to sustainability (Martin-Rios et al., 2025).

On the culinary experience path (H5), SCB also partially mediates with a negative direction. This result contradicts the theoretical assumption that sustainable attitudes always serve as a positive mediator toward environmentally friendly behavior, and it indicates the existence of an attitude-behavior gap that has been documented in the sustainable consumption literature. Meanwhile, on the portion path (H6), the mediation of SCB is not significant ($p = 0.155$), meaning that the influence of portion size on the intention to reduce food waste is direct without going through sustainable consumption behavior. This finding strengthens the conclusion that portion size is a practical factor that directly triggers intention without requiring an attitude internalization process first. Sustainable consumption behavior do not always serve as a positive bridge toward environmentally friendly behavior, and in the context of Batam culinary tourism, it was actually found that high sustainable behavior can decrease the intention to reduce food waste, possibly because consumers feel they have been sufficiently responsible in attitude and therefore neglect actual action a phenomenon known as moral licensing (Montesdeoca-Calderón et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

This study concludes that FOMO and portion size have a significant positive effect on the intention to reduce food waste, with portion size as the strongest predictor, while food taste does not have a meaningful direct influence. Sustainable consumption behavior is proven to partially mediate the influence of FOMO and food taste on the intention to reduce food waste, but in a negative direction that indicates a gap between attitude and behavior, whereas on the portion path the mediation is not significant because its influence is direct. These findings challenge the theoretical assumption that sustainable attitudes always serve as a positive mediator toward environmentally friendly behavior, and open up discussion about the phenomenon of moral licensing in the context of sustainable consumption. Practically, food waste reduction interventions in the culinary tourism sector should be prioritized on the portion aspect because it is proven to be the strongest and does not depend on attitude mechanisms, so business actors are advised to provide flexible portion options as the main strategy.

Limitations

This study concludes that FOMO and portion size have a significant positive effect on the intention to reduce food waste, with portion size as the strongest predictor, while taste food does not provide a meaningful direct influence. Sustainable consumption behavior is proven

to partially mediate the influence of FOMO and taste food on the intention to reduce food waste, but in a negative direction that indicates an attitude-behavior gap, whereas on the portion path the mediation is not significant because its influence is direct. These findings challenge the theoretical assumption that sustainable attitudes always serve as a positive mediator toward environmentally friendly behavior, and open up discussion about the phenomenon of moral licensing in the context of sustainable consumption. Practically, food waste reduction interventions in the culinary tourism sector should be prioritized on the portion aspect because it is proven to be the strongest and does not depend on attitude mechanisms, so business actors are advised to provide flexible portion options as the main strategy.

Recommendation

Based on the research findings, several recommendations can be proposed. For culinary business actors, providing flexible portion options is the main priority because portion size has been proven to be the strongest predictor of the intention to reduce food waste. For food content creators, the "finish your food" campaign can be integrated into viral culinary content to leverage high FOMO as a driver of responsible consumption behavior. For policymakers, food waste reduction education should target young consumers through digital platforms. For future researchers, it is recommended to use a longitudinal approach and add variables such as social norms or self-efficacy to deepen the understanding of food waste reduction mechanisms.

Recommendation

Rezki Alhamdi served as the lead author responsible for the research conceptualization, development of the theoretical framework, instrument development, data collection, data analysis using SEM, interpretation of results, as well as the writing and finalization of the manuscript. Abd Rahman Yusuf contributed to the preparation of the background, literature review, validation of the research instrument, and provided substantive input in the discussion and refinement of the final manuscript. Both authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript for publication.

Acknowledgment

This research was funded by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia through the Regular Fundamental Research Grant (No. 296/C3/DT.05.00/PL-Baru/2026) in the completion of the master's thesis. This support has been highly meaningful for the smooth running of the research process, data collection, and the preparation of this publication manuscript. The author also extends appreciation to all respondents who participated, as well as other parties who cannot be mentioned individually for their contributions to this research.

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