
















Political and Ideological Vulnerabilities in Indonesia's Border with Timor-Leste to Support State Resilience and Security: A Study on Belu and Malaka Regencies

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<https://doi.org/10.18280/ijstdp.190630>

ABSTRACT

Received: 8 April 2024

Revised: 15 May 2024

Accepted: 3 June 2024

Available online: 24 June 2024

Keywords:

Belu and Malaka Regencies border areas, the eastern sector of the Indonesia-Timor Leste land border, the sovereignty of the country, focus group discussions, academic literature, ArcGIS spatial analysis, strengthen the country's resilience and border security, peaceful and long-term bilateral relations

Border areas are important to discuss, considering their location affects state sovereignty. This research aims to analyze political and ideological vulnerabilities in Belu and Malaka Regencies, which are important areas along the eastern sector of the Indonesia-Timor Leste land border. An analysis of political and ideological vulnerabilities in the region is used in formulating strategies to strengthen the country's resilience and security. This research is survey research with data collection using questionnaires, in-depth interviews and observations with 204 respondents, and integrating academic literature and ArcGIS spatial analysis. Existing findings indicate that Belu and Malaka districts have low political and ideological vulnerability, as evidenced by increased political awareness and strong resistance to ideological attacks, highlighting the importance of government involvement in ensuring territorial integrity through increased bilateral communications and cooperation with Timor-Leste. The research results recommend increasing political awareness through education, encouraging bilateral dialogue, involving local communities in governance processes, fostering intercultural tolerance, improving infrastructure and economic frameworks, and establishing rapid threat response mechanisms. These suggestions aim to strengthen the country's resilience and border security, while facilitating peaceful and long-term bilateral relations.

1. INTRODUCTION

Border areas are sensitive areas between countries that can give rise to various kinds of vulnerabilities, such as political, ideological, economic, social, cultural, defense, and security vulnerabilities. Understanding these vulnerabilities is the key to preventing conflict between countries that could disrupt a country's resilience and security. Political vulnerabilities such as instability and polarization, as well as ideological ones such as differences in values, can threaten social stability and cohesion [1]. In border regions, where dynamics between countries are complex, inclusive strategies that include education, dialogue, and socio-economic development are crucial to preventing conflict and strengthening bilateral

relations. These efforts promote peace and cooperation, making understanding these vulnerabilities key to sustainable security and more harmonious international relations in sensitive regions.

Political vulnerability refers to the potential for disruption to the stability and effectiveness of a country's government due to factors such as government instability [2], political polarization, corruption, and external influences. This includes the challenges of maintaining security and order, managing public resources and policies fairly, and responding to citizens' needs. Factors such as political division and corruption can erode public trust in institutions and hinder government functioning. On the other hand, tense international relations and pressure from external actors can influence domestic

policies and increase the complexity of state management. Addressing these vulnerabilities is critical to building country resilience and ensuring social, economic, and security stability. Identification and strengthening of these vulnerable areas allows the government to be more resilient in facing internal and external challenges, maintain sovereignty, and protect the welfare of its citizens.

The ideological aspect of vulnerability is related to the risks faced by the values, beliefs, and basic principles of a society or country due to ideological polarization, propaganda, external influences, and social and cultural changes. Increased ideological polarity and disinformation can erode social cohesion and fuel conflict [3]. Rapid changes in social and cultural norms, as well as interference from outside actors, challenge traditional values, creating uncertainty and the potential for resistance. Radicalization and the spread of extreme ideologies add complexity to this challenge, threatening national security and social stability [4]. Addressing these vulnerabilities requires a comprehensive strategy involving education, intergroup dialogue, and policies that promote pluralism and tolerance. Such an approach aims to strengthen society's ideological foundations, reduce the possibility of social disintegration, and ensure integrity and harmony in diversity [5]. Understanding and managing these ideological vulnerabilities is crucial to maintaining state stability, preventing conflict, and enabling the development of an inclusive and harmonious society.

Conflicts and instability on Indonesia's border with Timor-Leste continue to occur. Thus, political and ideological aspects must be studied to determine border area susceptibility. Border communities will become dependent on neighboring countries due to the development gap, which could threaten the nation's political consciousness and orientation. This could divide the nation [6].

The regions of Indonesia that directly border Timor-Leste are the Belu and Malaka districts. As a regional border, the people in Belu and Malaka districts have political and ideological vulnerabilities that could give rise to potential conflict with Timor-Leste. Understanding the political and ideological conditions in this region is necessary so that society can avoid potential border conflicts. For this reason, this research aims to analyze political and ideological vulnerabilities on Indonesia's border with Timor-Leste to support state resilience and security, as well as identify strategies to overcome challenges in strengthening bilateral and regional resilience.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Timor-Leste, formerly known as East Timor, was once the 27th province of Indonesia through the "Balibo" declaration, then confirmed by Act No. 7 of 1976 and MPR Decree No. 6 of 1978. The problem in East Timor has something to do with its long political history. For 23 years, the territory of Timor-Leste integrated with Indonesia, but the anti-integration parties (Portugal, the United Nations, and others) did not accept integration claims from Indonesia, which meant that they did not recognize the sovereignty of the Indonesian government in East Timor [7]. Finally, with a long effort, political policies in the government of B.J. Habibie resulted in the separation of Timor-Leste from Indonesia, so there was a referendum in 1999 and Merdeka on May 20, 2002 [8, 9]. This separation caused many people living in the Indonesia and Timor-Leste

border region to have close affinities [10]. Following the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste referendum, more and more problems arose with the NKRI in the border area [11].

After 2002, the Indonesia and Timor-Leste dispute became a community struggle involving residents from both nations. Border towns face distinct challenges due to their distance from government and multinational pressure [12]. Thus, cross-border collaboration is used to resolve issues when official negotiations fail [8]. The Convention for the Demarcation of Portuguese and Dutch Dominions on the Island of Timor 1904 (1904 Treaty), the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) 1914 [13], and the 2005 Provisional Agreement [14] govern the land border between Indonesia and Timor-Leste. Seven Belu Regency sub-districts and one Malaka Regency sub-district contain the Indonesia and Timor-Leste major border [15]. The Land Border Agreement (temporary agreement) signed by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia and Timor-Leste on June 8, 2005, established 907 coordinate points for the Indonesia and Timor-Leste border [10].

The border area is a geopolitical study because it relates to the concept of a state as a unity that has sovereignty, population, territory, and perception of the threat faced [16]. Governments need to pay attention to border control because they are vulnerable to external threats. Political, defense, security, economic, and socio-cultural problems [14] such as foreign ideological and cultural invasions, transnational crime, exploitation of natural and human resources, the expansion of drug networks, etc. are frequently emerging in border areas [17].

Border area problems are complex [18] and growing because they are the responsibility of multiple agencies, including border forces, immigration, customs, and quarantine [17], central and regional governments, communities, and stakeholders. This multi-agency system lacks coordination; therefore, governments cannot promote border management through strong governance [11, 19]. In addition, border areas were once considered Indonesia's "backyard," causing development gaps. To overcome this, President Jokowi initiated the "Nawacita Program," which aims to transform border development and make it a "gateway" to Indonesia [12, 13].

Political vulnerabilities in the Indonesia and Timor-Leste border region need attention. Aspects of this vulnerability include political participation, political awareness, and political education. Political participation is a fundamental component within the framework of a democratic society. The phenomenon of political participation serves as an indicator of the political modernization process. Political participation refers to the participation and effort of citizens in order to monitor and comprehend matters of political significance. A weakened degree of participation in politics is frequently regarded as an unwanted indicator, given that it may be construed as an indication that citizens have no concern about matters pertaining to the state [20].

Political participation refers to the active participation of citizens in a multitude of political processes. Citizen participation in politics extends beyond mere endorsement of decisions; in fact, the more accurate term would be political mobilization [21]. In Indonesia, instances of citizen participation in the political system can be observed within schools, families, and communities. Indonesia, being a democratic nation, encourages all of its citizens to express their viewpoints. One method entails engaging in political activities across diverse contexts. Political participation

signifies the societal disposition and responsibility to engage in political procedure. This type of participation can be organized and carried out in various ways. Political participation can change people from apathetic to active.

Political awareness is very important to instill in the younger generation from an early age. This development can be achieved through citizenship education lessons, which meet the criteria for forming students' political awareness. Learning involves students in a real environment to increase tolerance, participation, and political awareness, as well as involving other relevant stakeholders in organizing elections [22].

Higher political awareness may positively affect border region defense. This is due to the fact that heightened political awareness can inspire more community participation in the protection and security of border regions. The public will be more inclined to report suspicious activities and provide assistance to security forces in border regions if they possess a heightened level of political awareness. Apart from that, political awareness can also increase feelings of nationalism and love for the country, so that people will be more concerned and enthusiastic about protecting the territorial integrity of the country, especially in border areas that are vulnerable to external threats.

Aspects of ideological vulnerability in the Indonesia and Timor-Leste border region include the values contained in Pancasila. Maintaining the Pancasila ideology can be achieved through the application of strategic management theory to the following: formulation of strategies, evaluation and implementation, and internal and external analysis. Deputy VI for National Unity-Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs; Director for Character and National Insight Ideology Development-Ministry of Home Affairs; and BPIP (Pancasila Ideology Development Agency) have thus far formulated strategies to strengthen the Pancasila ideology. BPIP has incorporated initiatives that strengthen the Pancasila ideology into its strategic plan, spanning the years 2020 to 2024. An environmental analysis, the formulation of a vision and mission, and the establishment of strategies, objectives, and metrics are all components of the strategic plan. Thus far, BPIP has participated in outreach initiatives targeting the younger population as part of its efforts to reinforce the Pancasila ideology. BPIP Deputy V consistently conducts evaluations with the aim of enhancing strategies that support the Pancasila ideology in Indonesia [23].

As stated by the Information Media Department of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Indonesia in 2018 [24], significant transformations in the way technological advancements impact the susceptibility of the state's ideology are inevitable. Youth in Indonesia must be cognizant of the need to defend the nation against a variety of extant threats. State defense education serves as an effective mechanism that encourages an increased level of patriotism while also facilitating the comprehension and application of Pancasila values in daily existence.

Several other things that can be done to strengthen ideology include instilling ideological values in the student environment through personality development courses. Nevertheless, in order to enhance efficacy, the educational process should more logically analyze the practical applications of the Pancasila ideology as it pertains to contemporary affairs and daily existence [25]. Aside from that, the approach taken by the government in utilizing cyber security will serve as a formidable deterrent against ideological threats that may emerge via social media. This is

due to the fact that the advancement of globalization undoubtedly has both positive and negative effects in the realm of technology. By incorporating social media literacy into educational strategies, a society can become more cognizant of the numerous threats that already exist [26].

3. METHODOLOGY

This research is survey research using a combination approach, namely quantitative, qualitative, and spatial. A quantitative approach was used to obtain, process, and analyze ideological and political vulnerability questionnaire data in Belu and Malaka Regencies. A qualitative approach was used to collect in-depth data through in-depth interviews with key informants (stakeholders) who understand ideological and political vulnerabilities in Belu and Malaka Regencies and then to formulate strategies to overcome challenges in strengthening bilateral and regional resilience. A spatial approach is used to analyze the spatial pattern (distribution) of levels of ideological and political vulnerability in Belu and Malaka Regencies.

3.1 Location and time of research

The research was conducted in Belu and Malaka Regencies, which are the border areas of Indonesia and Timor-Leste. The boundary between Malaka Regency and Belu Regency covers a distance of 149.1 kilometers, from Motaa'in in the northern region of Belu Regency to Motamasin in the southern region of Malaka Regency [27]. This research was carried out from September 2023 to November 2023.

3.2 Tools and data collection methods

Data collection tools are needed to obtain primary data in the field. The tools used include stationery, smartphones for recording and taking pictures (documentation), questionnaires, and interview guides.

Data collection methods in this research can be divided into two namely primary and secondary data collection. Primary data collection methods are questionnaires, in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The questionnaire is a list of statements prepared in writing containing indicators of ideological and political variables. The answer to each statement in the questionnaire has four scales, with the aim that respondents do not have the opportunity to choose a neutral answer. The scale used refers to the Likert scale. In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants (stakeholders) through focus group discussions. Observations were carried out by observing the attitudes and behaviors of respondents. Documentation in the form of taking pictures as evidence of research implementation. The results obtained from collecting primary data, in this research, namely ideological and political vulnerability data.

Secondary data collection was obtained from the results of previous research (journals), statistical data provider agencies (BPS), and books related to this research. This process begins with a literature search through leading academic databases, such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science. Secondary data obtained by identifying relevant academic publications is a crucial first step. Keywords such as "state resilience," "border security," "Indonesian political

dynamics,” “Timor-Leste,” and “ideological influence” were used to filter and find relevant journal articles, books, and other academic sources. We then evaluate each found publication based on its thematic relevance, novelty, and contribution to understanding the issue. Selected publications include relevant theories, case studies, historical analysis, and previous empirical research that provide in-depth insights into political and ideological vulnerabilities in border regions. The research framework synthesizes and integrates this information, bolstering the analysis with a theoretical foundation and solid empirical evidence. This process of identification and selection of academic publications ensures that research is built on a broad and in-depth understanding of political and ideological dynamics and their influence on resilience and security in the Indonesia and Timor-Leste border region, resulting in comprehensive and evidence-based analysis.

3.3 Sampling

The respondent sampling technique in this research used purposive random sampling with the aim of obtaining a sample that could represent the research objectives by paying attention to the respondents' criteria. The selection of these criteria takes into account that the respondent can provide appropriate information to answer the statements in the questionnaire. The sample respondents were people living in Belu and Malaka Regencies. Respondent sampling technique the distribution of respondents was carried out evenly throughout each district, resulting in 101 respondents in Belu Regency and 103 respondents in Malaka Regency.

Sampling of key informants is based on selecting experts, community figures, or stakeholders with a vested interest in the research domain. Selected specialists are regarded as possessing expertise in border regions, authority in policy decision-making, and Ipoleksosbud development.

3.4 Data analysis

The data analysis technique uses Likert scale analysis to determine the level of ideological and political vulnerability in Belu and Malaka Regencies. The data from the questionnaire is tabulated in Microsoft Excel. This data is in the form of scoring the results of respondents' choices regarding the statements in the questionnaire. Then, from the data tabulation, the total score for each statement is calculated.

Tables 1 and 2 list the variables and indicators utilized in the evaluation of the intersection of ideology and politics. Each indicator is assessed on a 1-4 point scale. The scale ranges from "strongly agree" with point 4, "agree" with point 3, "disagree" with point 2, and "strongly disagree" with point 1.

After the data was analyzed using a Likert scale, the data was then analyzed using a spatial approach using ArcGIS software to produce a regional vulnerability map based on the Likert scale scoring results. Making this map requires spatial data such as DEM (Digital Elevation Model) and regional boundary data. ArcGIS software was utilized to generate a map depicting regional vulnerability with respect to specified variables, as indicated by the district area map. Mapping is an analytical process used to ascertain the degree of susceptibility between geographical areas based on acquired data. The procedural sequence for generating a vulnerability map is illustrated in Figure 1.

Table 1. Measurement variables and indicators

No.	Variables	Indicators
1	Ideology	Knowledge
		Attitude
		Behavior
2	Political	Political Participation
		Political Literacy
		Political Culture

Table 2. Vulnerability level score

No.	Variables	Indicators	Score Value
1	Ideology	Strongly agree	4
		Agree	3
		Disagree	2
		Don't agree	1
2	Political	Strongly agree	4
		Agree	3
		Disagree	2
		Don't agree	1

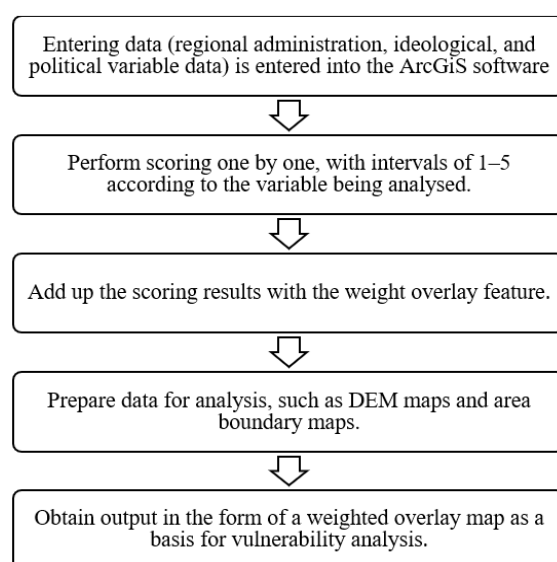


Figure 1. Data processing steps

Methods of factor analysis, synthesis, and abstraction. This method is used to summarize the conceptual direction that defines the political and ideological aspects of vulnerability to support state resilience and security in the border region between Indonesia and Timor-Leste. We analyze various scientific sources, studies, and expert opinions to identify the main concepts and factors that influence them (paradigms).

Comprehensive analysis method: this method is used for in-depth analysis of aspects of political and ideological vulnerability to support state resilience and security in the current border region between Indonesia and Timor-Leste. We thoroughly examine various aspects of this field, including conflicts, political campaigns, initiatives, peace, programs, and strategies. Based on this analysis, we developed practical recommendations for further improvements in these areas.

Method of generalization and logical modeling: this method is used to create a model that reflects the main aspects of political and ideological vulnerability to support state resilience and security in border regions. We have developed a conceptual model that helps understand the interrelationships between the various components of this paradigm.

Method of logical generalization of research results and expert assessments: this method is used to summarize the results of our research and expert assessments. We systematize the information received, theoretically summarize the provisions, and formulate conclusions and proposals for improving political and ideological vulnerabilities to support the country's resilience and security at the regional border.

The combinatorial use of this research method allows researchers to build a comprehensive and multidimensional understanding of political and ideological vulnerabilities in the border region between Indonesia and Timor-Leste, as well as their relationship to the dynamics of the 2024 presidential election.

This research has limitations, namely that the research area (Belu and Malaka districts) is a very large area, so respondent sampling was carried out in each sub-district with the aim of the information obtained being more widespread and representative. Apart from that, events in the past related to the separation of East Timor from Indonesia, which is now Timor-Leste, had a deep impact on the people there, allowing them to provide comprehensive information.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Belu regency

Belu Regency, East Nusa Tenggara, is one of the districts that borders Timor-Leste to the east and is a development priority [28]. Belu Regency is the Eastern Sector (main sector) of the land border, which borders directly with Covalima District and Bobonaro District in Timor-Leste for 126 kilometers [4, 19]. Belu Regency has the geopolitical title of being the front porch of the country in the eyes of the international community [29]. The area is 2,445.57 km², divided into 12 sub-districts consisting of 69 villages and 12 sub-districts. A total of 76 villages and sub-districts are in non-coastal areas, and the rest are in coastal areas. The population of Belu Regency at the end of 2022 was recorded at 224,306 people, so the population density in Belu Regency in 2022 was

calculated at 175/km². There are 2 official gates as cross-border gateways for population and trade mobility located in 2 locations, namely Motaain and Turiskai [30].

4.1.1 Political vulnerability

Based on the questionnaire given to 101 respondents regarding politics in Belu Regency, the results were obtained as presented in Table 3. There were 16 statements related to politics, where the answers could be "strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree."

Political aspects include political participation, political literacy, political education, and political culture. These aspects are influenced by the values, norms, and beliefs that influence how societies and individuals perceive politics. A study finds that the three research sites have distinct political cultures, but the participants exhibit a consistent political cultural inclination [31].

The political vulnerability of the inhabitants of Belu Regency falls into the low to very low category, as illustrated in Figure 2(a). Six subdistricts (Raihata, Lamaknen, South Lamaknen, Kakuluk Mesak, West Tasifeto, and Nanaet Duabesi) are classified as having a very low political vulnerability, while six subdistricts (Lasiolat, East Tasifeto, Atambua City, West Atambua, South Atambua, and Raimanuk) fall into the low category. Low to very low vulnerability values indicate that the populace of Belu Regency holds an in-depth awareness of politics, which serves as a fundamental defense against political-related threats, challenges, obstacles, and disturbances.

In the realm of politics, the presence of low to very low vulnerability values within Belu Regency may be construed as an indication of the region's populace's robust political fortitude. A heightened level of political awareness among the populace enables them to recognize and confront a multitude of political concerns that emerge, including those associated with misinformation, propaganda, or divisive efforts. Active political participation, in which citizens not only participate in general elections but also in community discussions, activism, and other political decision-making processes, is frequently associated with this high level of awareness [32].

Table 3. Questionnaire results related to Belu Regency politics

No.	Questionnaire Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Don't Agree
1	Community participation in general elections.	40	57	4	0
2	Political participation can be used as a parameter in assessing the level of democracy in a country.	24	68	9	0
3	The public can participate in the membership of a political party.	24	62	13	2
4	The selection of leaders or representatives of the people should pay.	45	51	4	1
5	Money politics is a form of bribery.	35	39	13	14
6	Political literacy can be built through political education.	25	54	15	7
7	Political education is needed to increase community political participation.	28	63	8	2
8	New voters are the main target for getting political education.	25	61	11	4
9	Instagram social media can be one way to increase political literacy for novice voters.	25	54	15	7
10	Political parties have the responsibility to provide political education to the public to reduce the abstention rate.	24	51	22	4
11	Political literacy is very important to realize quality elections.	26	60	8	7
12	Political culture in Indonesia is very closely related to the customs and traditions of society.	30	58	4	9
13	Political culture is reflected in people's behavior patterns in state life, state administration, and government politics.	22	65	4	10
14	Participant political culture is the best political culture because society plays an active role in determining the direction of government policy.	28	63	3	7
15	Decision-making should be done by deliberation or voting, not by bribery, collusion, or intimidation.	35	59	6	1
16	Demonstrations or actions are carried out peacefully, not violently.	46	53	2	0

Political vulnerability, as seen in aspects of political participation, political literacy, and political culture, is still very high. Meanwhile, the Belu people's awareness of political culture, namely general elections, both presidential and regional head elections, is still going well. The 2009 elections were attended by 38 election-participating organizations, with a total of 164,250 voters out of 223,309 registered voters (73.55%) [33]. The implementation of elections in 2019-at that time, the presidential elections of Joko Widodo-Makruf Amin and Prabowo Subianto-Sandiaga Salahudin Uno-were more difficult in border areas. Apart from limited information, political unrest in border areas has also seen a decrease in the number of political participants. Political socialization is considered to have a significant influence on political participation because it can encourage citizens to prioritize voting rights, foster concern for the region, and create good nationalism [34]. The decline in the number of people participating in elections illustrates that there is a decline in people's trust in politics, so in this case, political communication is needed. General elections must be carried out in accordance with the principles of the 1945 Constitution. The election organizer (KPU) must guarantee that the election process is administratively correct and free from the impression of one-sidedness, as well as protecting the rights of citizens [33].

Apart from that, high political awareness also reflects a good level of political education in society. This means that residents in Belu Regency have a better understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens. They are more likely to engage in constructive dialogue and have the ability to critically analyze government policies and programs. This is very important in building a society that is resilient to various forms of political manipulation and fostering a healthy democratic environment where every voice can be heard and valued.

In addition, election organizers (KPU) must understand that political education has the potential to support the millennial generation's understanding of the urgency of political participation in the context of everyday life while

strengthening their level of political awareness. With the resources and enthusiasm possessed by the millennial group, optimal utilization is expected from parties involved in efforts to increase literacy, especially in aspects of democracy and politics, including state institutions that focus on the political and government sectors. This is even more important considering that 2024 is scheduled to be the peak period for political activity.

4.1.2 Ideological vulnerability

The results regarding ideology in Belu Regency are displayed in Table 4. The responses to the eighteen ideology-related statements are as follows: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree."

The ideological aspect includes people's understanding of the values contained in Pancasila, moral values, religious values, as well as attitudes and behavior towards others. The ideological vulnerability of the residents of Belu Regency is categorized as very low, as shown in Figure 2(b), due to the fact that their knowledge, attitudes, and behavior are in complete accordance with Pancasila and the Constitution of 1945. The very low ideological vulnerability indicates that the residents of Belu Regency have been reinforced with an ideology capable of withstanding ideological-related threats, challenges, obstacles, and disturbances. Despite the very low standards, the implementation and reinforcement of Pancasila values must remain a priority. Student nationalism within borders is extremely susceptible to stimulation and influence from neighboring nations, despite its relatively high level. It is imperative to instill Pancasila as a form of national identity in the younger generation from a young age. The introduction of content pertaining to the development of national identity into citizenship education lessons is essential for enhancing students' national identity formation [32]. Aside from that, the cultivation of ethical values can be achieved through the formation of character and behavior, which is essentially the promotion of Pancasila ideology. It is imperative to impart Pancasila values to the millennial generation in a succinct, visual, and comprehensible fashion [22].

Table 4. Questionnaire results related to Belu Regency ideology

No.	Questionnaire Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Don't Agree
1	Pancasila serves as the state ideology.	75	26	0	0
2	Pancasila as the way of life of the Indonesian people.	71	29	0	1
3	Pancasila is the source of all sources of law.	66	32	2	1
4	Pancasila is the embodiment of the Indonesian nation's identity.	65	34	1	1
5	Pancasila as the basis of the state is stated in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution.	69	31	0	1
6	Recognising equality, equality of rights, and human obligations for every human being without distinction of ethnicity, religion, race, gender, skin colour, social status, and so on.	63	37	1	0
7	Develop an attitude of mutual tolerance.	46	46	7	2
8	Develop an attitude of mutual respect for the freedom to carry out worship in accordance with their respective religions and beliefs.	68	31	2	0
9	Develop an attitude of respect and cooperation with other nations.	61	37	2	1
10	Prioritise deliberation in making decisions for the common good.	56	43	1	1
11	Respect and uphold every decision reached as a result of discussion.	60	40	1	0
12	Feeling love for the homeland and nation by buying domestic products.	53	44	2	2
13	Likes to do humanitarian activities (likes to help others).	56	45	0	0
14	Carrying out flag ceremonies every Monday at the office, department, or school.	57	41	2	1
15	Having a religion or belief is important for many people.	61	40	0	0
16	Carrying out flags to commemorate historical moments.	53	46	1	1
17	Dare to defend truth and justice.	65	36	0	0
18	Don't impose your will on other people.	60	41	0	0

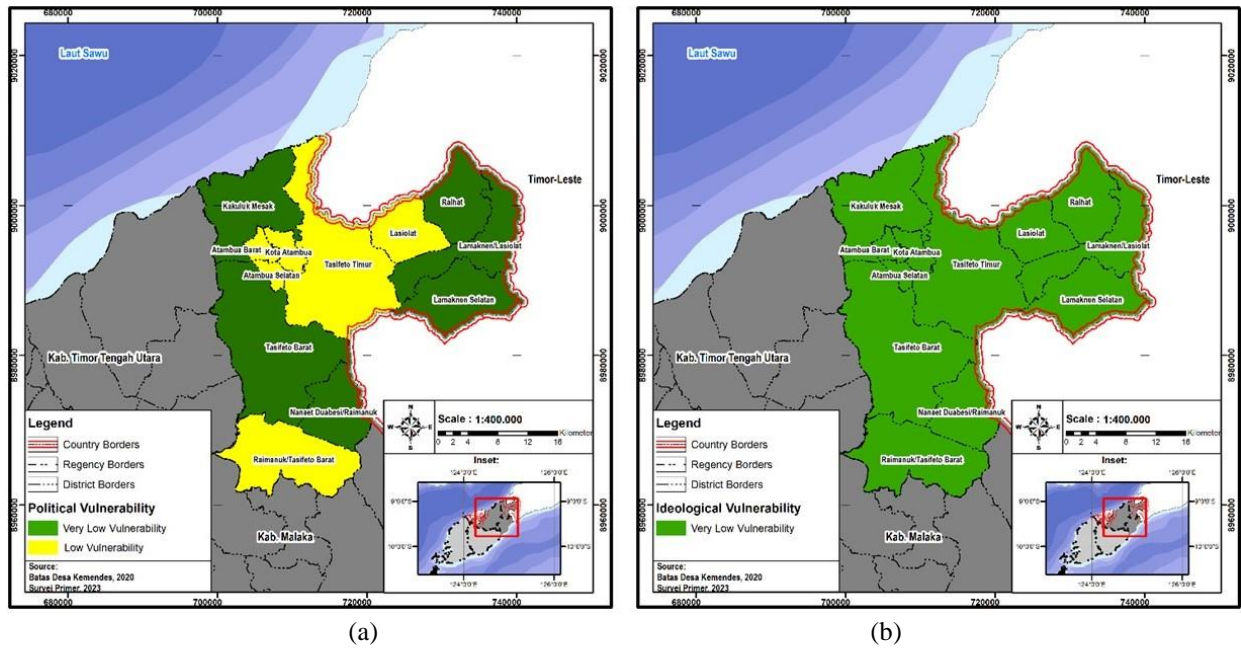


Figure 2. Belu Regency vulnerability map: (a) political vulnerability and (b) ideological vulnerability

4.2 Malaka regency

Malaka Regency, East Nusa Tenggara, is among the districts that share an eastern border with Timor-Leste. In accordance with Law No. 3 of 2013 of the Republic of Indonesia regarding the establishment of Malaka Regency in East Nusa Tenggara, Malaka Regency emerged as an autonomous region subsequent to the enlargement of Belu Regency. Its administrative center is situated in Betun, Central Malaka Regency [34]. The region comprises 127 sub-districts and a total area of 1,160.63 km², all of which are located on a single island in Timor. The recorded population of Malaka Regency is 188,191 individuals, resulting in a population density of 1,904 individuals per km². This border region has become a development implementation priority due to the fact that it necessitates the participation of numerous stakeholders

in order to improve the development of numerous sectors. The establishment of three Integrated National Border Posts in Motamasin (Malaka), Motaian (Belu), and Wini (North Central Timor) demonstrates this [35]. East Kopalima District is the sole sub-district within Malaka Regency that shares a direct border with Timor-Leste (Figure 3). East Kopalima shares a 32-kilometer-long border with the State of Timor-Leste, which is traversed by four villages [36].

4.2.1 Political vulnerability

The outcomes derived from the survey administered to 103 respondents with respect to politics in Malaka Regency are displayed in Table 5. The responses to the sixteen political statements were as follows: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree."

Table 5. Questionnaire results related to Malaka Regency politics

No.	Questionnaire Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Don't Agree
1	Community participation in general elections.	29	67	6	1
2	Political participation can be used as a parameter in assessing the level of democracy in a country.	31	65	6	1
3	The public can participate in the membership of a political party.	24	67	10	2
4	The selection of leaders or representatives of the people should pay.	42	55	4	2
5	Money politics is a form of bribery.	35	36	12	20
6	Political literacy can be built through political education.	31	58	11	3
7	Political education is needed to increase community political participation.	22	66	11	4
8	New voters are the main target for getting political education.	27	60	9	7
9	Instagram social media can be one way to increase political literacy for novice voters.	24	59	14	6
10	Political parties have the responsibility to provide political education to the public to reduce the abstention rate.	18	70	13	2
11	Political literacy is very important to realize quality elections.	34	64	4	1
12	Political culture in Indonesia is very closely related to the customs and traditions of society.	38	53	11	1
13	Political culture is reflected in people's behavior patterns in state life, state administration, and government politics.	33	59	10	1
14	Participant political culture is the best political culture because society plays an active role in determining the direction of government policy.	29	58	14	2
15	Decision-making should be done by deliberation or voting, not by bribery, collusion, or intimidation.	38	57	4	4
16	Demonstrations or actions are carried out peacefully, not violently.	44	56	3	0

The political vulnerability of the residents of Malaka Regency falls within the categories of very low and low (Figure 3(a)). In four subdistricts-East Malaka, Sasitamean, Io Kufeu, and Rinhat-political vulnerability is very low, and in eight subdistricts-East Kopalima, Kopalima, Laenmanen, Botin Leobebe, Central Malaka, Weliman, West Malaka, and Wewiku-it is low. This shows that community politics remains exceptionally robust in terms of political participation, political literacy, and political culture. The fact that political vulnerability in Malaka Regency is rated as very low or low indicates that the populace shows a remarkable degree of political awareness, which serves as a fundamental defense against political-related threats, challenges, obstacles, and disturbances. One way in which community political participation can be utilized to assess political vulnerability is through its impact on the formulation of effective policies. Centralized policymaking would reduce the necessary dynamism of the fundamental demands of society within national borders [12].

4.2.2 Ideological vulnerability

Based on the questionnaire given to 103 respondents regarding ideology in Malaka Regency, the results were obtained as presented in Table 6. There were 18 statements related to ideology, where the answers could be "strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree."

The ideological vulnerability of the residents of Malaka Regency is categorized as very low, as shown in Figure 3(b), due to the fact that their knowledge, attitudes, and behavior are in complete accordance with Pancasila and the Constitution of 1945. A low level of ideological vulnerability indicates that the residents of Malaka Regency show a strong ideology that

enables them to confront ideological threats, challenges, obstacles, and disturbances. Despite the fact that ideological vulnerability is very low in Malaka Regency, this remains a cause for concern.

East Kopalima District is a priority location in Malaka Regency due to its status as a disadvantaged region with restricted government resource accessibility, which hinders its development in comparison to other areas. This condition leads to a wide range of issues, with particular concern for the deterioration of nationalism and national identity, particularly as it pertains to Pancasila [37]. The deterioration of societal sentiments associated with nationalism and national identity poses a significant peril to the Indonesian nation [36].

Nationalism incorporates national identity. Strengthening national identity in border regions requires local government initiatives and the promotion of the Indonesian language. Bahasa Indonesia is the way of life in East Kopalima, where residents communicate with their compatriots in Timor-Leste and Indonesia [38]. Border region residents are essentially subject to the ideological influence of neighboring countries, which manifests itself in education, way of life, and other aspects of daily community life. The cultivation and recognition of a strong ideology as a deterrent against the infiltration of foreign ideologies from neighboring countries. Strengthening Pancasila values in border areas can take the form of grounding Pancasila values, Pancasila education with an emphasis on theory and practice, maintaining national identity, increasing prosperity, and increasing a sense of justice, as well as practicing Pancasila in everyday life [38]. The people of East Kopalima also actively participate in flag ceremonies on both Independence Day of the Republic of Indonesia and National Education Day [36].

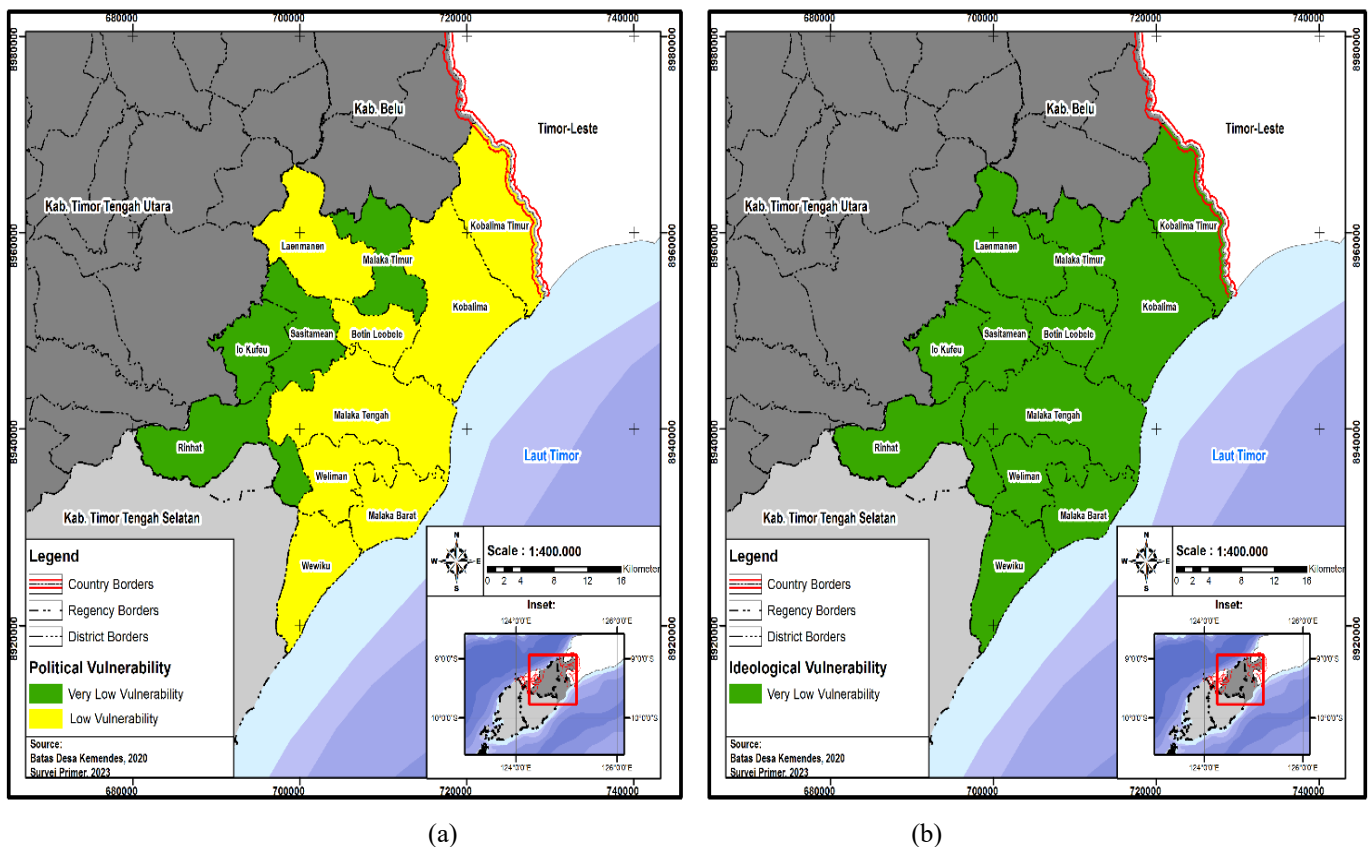


Figure 3. Malaka Regency vulnerability map: (a) political vulnerability and (b) ideological vulnerability

Table 6. Questionnaire results related to Malaka Regency ideology

No.	Questionnaire Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Don't Agree
1	Pancasila serves as the state ideology.	66	36	0	1
2	Pancasila as the way of life of the Indonesian people.	67	36	0	0
3	Pancasila is the source of all sources of law.	63	38	2	0
4	Pancasila is the embodiment of the Indonesian nation's identity.	51	51	0	1
5	Pancasila as the basis of the state is stated in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution.	63	37	2	1
6	Recognising equality, equality of rights, and human obligations for every human being without distinction of ethnicity, religion, race, gender, skin colour, social status, and so on.	61	42	0	0
7	Develop an attitude of mutual tolerance.	47	51	3	2
8	Develop an attitude of mutual respect for the freedom to carry out worship in accordance with their respective religions and beliefs.	69	32	2	0
9	Develop an attitude of respect and cooperation with other nations.	52	48	2	1
10	Prioritise deliberation in making decisions for the common good.	50	52	1	0
11	Respect and uphold every decision reached as a result of discussion.	50	52	1	0
12	Feeling love for the homeland and nation by buying domestic products.	51	51	1	0
13	Likes to do humanitarian activities (likes to help others).	59	44	0	0
14	Carrying out flag ceremonies every Monday at the office, department, or school.	48	54	1	0
15	Having a religion or belief is important for many people.	61	42	0	0
16	Carrying out flags to commemorate historical moments.	60	43	0	0
17	Dare to defend truth and justice.	67	36	0	0
18	Don't impose your will on other people.	45	54	3	1

4.3 Prabowo Subianto and his role in the border region between Indonesia and Timor-Leste

Prabowo Subianto, a retired three-star lieutenant general and former commander of the Army Special Force and Army Strategic Reserve Command, has been a prominent figure in Indonesian politics, particularly in the context of presidential elections [39]. His popularity in the 2014 and 2019 elections was linked to the perception that Indonesia required a strong leader like him to protect the nation [40]. Prabowo's influence extended to first-time voters, raising questions about his ability to garner positive attitudes among the Indonesian public.

In the context of the Indonesia and Timor-Leste border, Prabowo's political stance and ideology could have implications for the border communities. The border regions are crucial for upholding Indonesia's sovereignty and integrity [41]. Effective conflict resolution efforts and participation in defending the territory are essential, with the government playing a vital role in bilateral communication and cooperation. The preservation of Indonesian language and culture in border areas contributes to national identity and unity.

Moreover, Prabowo's communication style, characterized by the use of maxims of generosity and sympathy, aimed to project a sense of altruism and empathy towards others [42]. His political maneuvers and challenges to Indonesian democracy have been associated with oligarchic populism, posing a challenge to the democratic fabric of the country. Prabowo's engagement with authoritarian innovations and populist movements has been a subject of scholarly analysis, emphasizing the complexities of Indonesia's political landscape.

Prabowo Subianto's role in Indonesian politics, especially in presidential elections, reflects a blend of military background, political maneuvering, religious affiliations, and communication strategies. His influence on first-time voters, support from Islamic groups, and challenges to democratic norms underscore the multifaceted nature of his political persona and the broader implications for Indonesian democracy.

The election of Prabowo Subianto as president of the

Republic of Indonesia in the 2024 general election could potentially have various impacts on the Indonesia and Timor-Leste border region, depending on the policies and approaches taken by his government. Here are some possible impacts:

- 1) Border security and stability. Prabowo, with his military background, will probably pay special attention to border security. This can mean increased security and stability in border areas, which is important for preventing illegal activities such as smuggling and irregular migration. A firmer policy on the border could also affect bilateral relations with Timor-Leste.
- 2) Infrastructure and economic development. Prabowo has emphasized national development and domestic economic empowerment in his campaigns. His victory could encourage infrastructure development in border areas, such as roads, health, and education, which would improve the quality of life of local people and encourage economic growth. Stable political conditions are important for the economy and society's development and growth [43].
- 3) Relations with Timor-Leste. Given Prabowo's and Indonesia's history in East Timor, his victory could have a significant impact on relations with Timor-Leste. The approach taken by his government in dealing with old and new issues will be crucial in determining future bilateral relations. There is potential for increased cooperation or, conversely, increased tensions, depending on the policies implemented.
- 4) Human rights issues. Prabowo's victory is also likely to be closely watched by the international community and human rights organizations, given his past controversies. Its approach to human rights issues, both domestically and in the context of relations with Timor-Leste, will be important in determining Indonesia's international image.
- 5) Perceptions of Border Communities. The final and no less important impact is how people in border areas feel the direct impact of the new government's policies. Policies that support social, economic

development and improve public services will have a positive impact on the perception and welfare of border communities.

In all aspects, it is important for the new administration to consider the specific needs and unique challenges faced by border communities in designing and implementing policies to ensure that their impact supports resilience, security, and sustainable development in the region. Border areas that are safe and have an open-access policy tend to be potential areas for progress and development if appropriate policy interventions are carried out [44]. Infrastructure, natural resources, and human development are the border area's economic performance strategies [45]. This method should include collaboration principles between central and local governments [46].

Based on research findings, the following practical implications can be formulated:

First, the importance of maintaining and increasing the already high level of political awareness among local communities through civic education and comprehensive public policy. This program can help people understand their rights and obligations as citizens, as well as facilitate active participation in the democratic development process.

Second, considering that ideological vulnerability is still low, the government needs to strengthen efforts to encourage intercultural understanding and tolerance. This can be done through cultural exchange, joint education, and awareness campaigns aimed at eliminating prejudice and promoting social harmony. Bilateral cooperation between the governments of Indonesia and Timor-Leste is also crucial in managing border areas. This includes cooperation in the security, economic, and socio-cultural fields, which can not only prevent conflict but also improve shared prosperity.

Third, involve local communities in decision making regarding border area management. The establishment of dialogue forums between communities that facilitate the exchange of information and aspirations could be one way to make this happen.

Fourth, strengthening infrastructure and economic development in border areas can increase prosperity and reduce dissatisfaction, which can be exploited by parties who want to disrupt stability. This includes the development of basic infrastructure such as roads, health, education, and access to other public services.

Finally, the development of monitoring systems and rapid response to security threats is critical. Cooperation across institutions and between countries to identify and respond effectively to any indication of conflict can help in maintaining peace and security in border areas.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on this research, it can be concluded that the political vulnerability in Belu and Malaka Districts is in the low to very low category. This means that the political awareness that local communities have remains high and can be the basis for threats, challenges, barriers, and disruptions related to politics. Meanwhile, the ideological vulnerability in both districts is still so low that it can be concluded that communities are strong enough to face the threat, the challenge, the obstacle, and the disruption related to ideology.

The implications of this research include theoretical and practical implications. Theoretical implications: namely,

researchers can develop a theory of border region vulnerability. The practical implication is that the government is expected to play a role in supporting communities in border areas to preserve the territorial integrity of the country through bilateral communication, and cooperation is essential. The Indonesia and Timor-Leste government needs to listen and involve local communities in decision-making. His hope is that, if the aspirations of the local community are involved, the conflict can be resolved.

Based on all of the above, there are several important recommendations shown in Table 7:

Table 7. Recommendations for the political and ideological vulnerability of border areas

Recommendation	Content of the Recommendation
Strengthening political awareness	Given the high level of political awareness in local communities, there is a need for programs designed to maintain and increase this awareness. Education and training programs on citizenship, human rights, and public policy can help strengthen people's active participation in the political process.
Bilateral dialogue and cooperation	The governments of Indonesia and Timor-Leste must strengthen bilateral communication and cooperation, especially in managing border areas. This includes cooperation in the security, economic, and socio-cultural fields, which can help prevent conflict and improve shared prosperity.
Local community participation	It is important for the governments of both countries to listen to and involve local communities in decision-making related to border area management. This can be done through the establishment of dialogue forums between communities that facilitate the exchange of information and aspirations.
Overcoming ideological vulnerability	Even if ideological vulnerability is low, programs that promote intercultural understanding and tolerance remain important. This can include cultural exchanges, joint educational programs, and awareness campaigns that promote social harmony.
Strengthening infrastructure and economic development	Strengthening infrastructure and economic development in border areas can increase prosperity and reduce dissatisfaction, which can be exploited by parties who want to disrupt stability.
Monitoring and rapid response to threats	Develop a monitoring system and rapid response to security threats in border areas, including cross-agency and inter-state cooperation, to identify and respond effectively to any indication of conflict.

Through the implementation of these recommendations, it is hoped that we can strengthen resilience and security in the border areas between Indonesia and Timor-Leste, as well as promote peace and sustainable bilateral cooperation. Apart from that, it is expected that the two countries can strengthen the resilience and security of border areas while promoting peace and sustainable bilateral cooperation.

Limitations in this research are promising areas for further research. Research on the vulnerability of political and ideological aspects in the border region between Indonesia and

Timor-Leste has underscored the importance of a deep understanding of border dynamics in strengthening state resilience and security. From this research, a variety of promising research areas have emerged that, if explored further, could provide valuable insights for the development of more effective policies and practices. One critical area is comparative analysis of border policies, where comparing the approaches of Indonesia and Timor-Leste with those of other countries facing similar challenges can reveal best practices and innovative approaches to efficient and effective border management.

Furthermore, the importance of studying cross-border economic influences becomes very relevant, especially in the context of illegal trade, economic migration, and the potential for mutually beneficial economic cooperation. This research can help identify existing opportunities and risks, as well as strategies to optimize economic benefits while minimizing negative impacts on national security and resilience.

Evaluation of education and awareness programs is another promising area, especially in the context of strengthening intercultural understanding and tolerance. Research in this area can measure the effectiveness of various educational initiatives and awareness campaigns in increasing social cohesion and reducing the potential for conflict.

The influence of media and information technology on public perceptions and inter-community relations in border areas also offers extensive research space. In today's digital era, the media has significant power in shaping opinions and attitudes, so understanding its role can be key in communications strategies aimed at strengthening peace and stability.

Conflict management strategies in border areas, including traditional and modern approaches, require further exploration to find the most effective mechanisms for resolving disputes and facilitating dialogue. In this context, research can provide guidance for policymakers in designing and implementing initiatives that strengthen social and political resilience.

The impact of climate change on border security is an issue that is receiving increasing attention, with climate change and natural disasters potentially exacerbating tensions and triggering forced migration. Research in this area can help in formulating comprehensive adaptation and mitigation strategies.

Finally, strengthening regional and international security cooperation in dealing with non-traditional threats, such as terrorism and transnational crime, is very important. Research in this area can explore new ways to increase collaboration between countries when facing shared security challenges.

By exploring these research areas further, we can gain a more holistic and multidisciplinary understanding of effective ways of enhancing resilience and security in border regions while strengthening bilateral relations and contributing to sustainable regional peace.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author would like to thank Brawijaya University for supporting the implementation of this research project by providing financial grant support through the Brawijaya University Postgraduate School in the form of a Professorial Research Ecosystem Strengthening Grant (Grant No.: 1759.1.4/UN10.C20/2023).

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