

# **The Impact of Print Media on Second Language Acquisition among Undergraduate Students in Bangladesh: A Quasi-Experimental Study**

Sudip Das

Lecturer, Department of English

Feni University

Feni, Bangladesh

sudipdas0759@gmail.com

Bushra Jesmin Trisha

Assistant Professor

Department of English

Feni University

Feni, Bangladesh

Ritu Ghosh

Lecturer, Department of English

Feni University

Feni, Bangladesh

Md. Rajibul Islam Reza

Department of English

Feni University

Feni, Bangladesh

### **Abstract**

This quasi-experimental study investigates the impact of print media on English second language acquisition among undergraduate students in Bangladesh. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected from 60 undergraduate students and 25 English language instructors across two government colleges and one university in Feni district. The study employed structured questionnaires and personal interviews to examine how various forms of print media—including newspapers, books, magazines, and journals—facilitate English language learning in EFL contexts. Results indicate that print media significantly enhances vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, and overall language proficiency. The experimental group exposed to systematic print media instruction demonstrated superior performance compared to traditional classroom-only approaches. Findings suggest that 66.65% of students reported positive effects of print media on language acquisition, with newspapers (50%) and books (23.33%) being the most effective tools. Teachers unanimously agreed (100%) that print media positively impacts all four language skills. The study concludes that integrating authentic print materials into EFL curricula can substantially improve undergraduate-level English language acquisition in Bangladesh, bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world language application.

**Keywords:** Print Media, Second Language Acquisition In Bangladesh, Efl, Undergraduate Education, English Language Learning

### **Introduction**

English proficiency has become increasingly essential for academic and professional success in Bangladesh's globalized educational landscape (Ahmed, 2020; Sultana & Singh, 2022).

Despite approximately 12 years of formal English instruction, many Bangladeshi students struggle with practical language application beyond examination contexts (Ahmmed, 2016). This persistent challenge highlights the need for innovative pedagogical approaches that complement traditional classroom methodologies.

Print media, encompassing newspapers, books, magazines, and academic journals, presents an underutilized resource for second language acquisition (SLA). Unlike structured textbook materials, print media offers authentic language exposure, current vocabulary, and diverse writing styles that mirror real-world communication contexts (Moeller & Meyer, 1995; Tomlinson, 1998). The integration of such materials can potentially bridge the gap between classroom learning and practical language application.

### **Background and Rationale**

The English language learning environment in Bangladesh predominantly relies on grammar-translation methods and memorization-based approaches (Hoque, 2010). Students typically engage with English primarily for examination purposes rather than communicative competence development. This pedagogical limitation results in graduates who may demonstrate grammatical knowledge but lack functional language skills for academic and professional contexts.

Print media literacy offers a solution by providing learners with authentic materials that present language in natural contexts. Jefferson's assertion that "the press is the best instrument for enlightening the mind of man, and improving him as a rational, moral and social being" underscores the educational potential of print media (cited in Print Media SA research). Contemporary research supports this perspective, demonstrating that exposure to varied print

materials can significantly enhance vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, and cultural literacy (Ahmmed, 2016; Sultana & Singh, 2021).

### **Research Questions**

This study addresses the following research questions:

1. Does print media exposure significantly impact second language acquisition compared to traditional classroom learning among undergraduate students in Bangladesh?
2. How does systematic use of print media accelerate learners' English language acquisition across different skill areas?
3. What are the perceptions of students and instructors regarding the effectiveness of print media in English language learning?

### **Significance of the Study**

This research contributes to SLA literature by examining print media's role in EFL contexts specifically within Bangladesh's educational framework. The findings provide evidence-based insights for curriculum developers, language instructors, and educational policymakers seeking to enhance English language instruction effectiveness. Additionally, the study offers practical recommendations for integrating authentic materials into undergraduate-level English programs.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Theoretical Framework of Second Language Acquisition**

Second language acquisition research has evolved significantly since Chomsky's Universal Grammar theory and Krashen's Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis (Cook, 1991; Krashen, 1985). Krashen's distinction between conscious "learning" and subconscious "acquisition" remains particularly relevant to understanding how print media facilitates language development. According to this framework, acquisition occurs through meaningful interaction with

comprehensible input in natural communication settings, precisely what authentic print materials provide.

Contemporary SLA research emphasizes the importance of extensive reading and authentic material exposure for language development (Muravev, 2023). Studies indicate that analytical and extensive reading in both digital and traditional formats significantly enhance reading comprehension and overall language proficiency at tertiary education levels. The regression analysis conducted by Muravev (2023) across three focus groups demonstrated that limited exposure to analytical and extensive reading of original literary works facilitated preparation for standardized English assessments, including Cambridge certifications and IELTS Academic.

### **Print Media in Language Learning**

Print media encompasses various forms of mechanically or electronically produced written communication, including newspapers, magazines, books, journals, and pamphlets (Oxford Dictionary of Media and Communication, 2011). In language learning contexts, these materials serve multiple pedagogical functions: vocabulary development, grammar exposure, cultural awareness, and authentic communication patterns.

### **Newspapers as Learning Tools**

Newspapers offer unique advantages for language learners due to their accessibility, currency, and linguistic diversity. Ahmed's (2016) study of Dhaka University students revealed that English newspaper reading significantly improved vocabulary and reading skills. The natural, authentic language used in newspapers reflects daily conversational patterns, making content more interpretable for learners. Additionally, newspapers cover diverse topics—politics, sports, economics, culture—providing learners with domain-specific vocabulary and varied discourse patterns.

Research by Sultana and Singh (2021) examining 56 secondary school students in rural Bangladesh demonstrated that incorporating English newspapers alongside textbooks resulted in higher vocabulary acquisition scores. The quasi-experimental design showed experimental groups achieving superior post-test results compared to control groups using traditional materials exclusively. Similar findings emerged from studies investigating newspaper effectiveness across different educational levels (Sheikh et al., 2024).

### **Books and Academic Materials**

Books, particularly course materials and authentic literature, provide structured yet flexible learning experiences (Nunan, 2003). The evolution of coursebook design reflects changing pedagogical approaches, from grammar-translation methods to communicative language teaching. Modern task-based approaches emphasize interaction and real-world application, objectives that print materials naturally support.

Moeller and Meyer (1995) demonstrated that children's books facilitate natural language pattern recognition through familiar contexts and visual support. The combination of textual and visual elements enhances comprehension while supporting memory formation through multimodal learning approaches. Adult learners benefit similarly from diverse book genres, which provide exposure to varied vocabulary, syntactic structures, and discourse patterns.

### **Magazines and Journals**

Specialized publications offer domain-specific language exposure while promoting learner autonomy. Magazine and journal reading requires sustained attention and personal investment, characteristics that generate intrinsic motivation and cognitive engagement (Brown & Ferrara, 1985). Self-assessment opportunities inherent in independent reading help learners identify strengths and weaknesses while developing metacognitive awareness.

## **Print Media Research in Bangladesh Context**

Bangladesh's print media landscape includes approximately 3,025 registered publications, with 1,191 daily newspapers as of 2018 (Information Minister disclosure, 2018). English-language publications, though fewer in number, serve significant roles in educational and professional contexts. The Daily Star, The Independent, and other national English dailies provide accessible resources for language learners.

Studies examining English newspapers' effectiveness in Bangladeshi educational contexts consistently report positive outcomes. Research conducted across various educational levels demonstrates vocabulary improvement, enhanced reading comprehension, and increased cultural awareness among students exposed to newspaper-based instruction (Ahmed, 2016; Sultana & Singh, 2021; Tarannum et al., 2020).

## **Gaps in Current Research**

Despite positive findings regarding print media effectiveness, several research gaps persist. Most studies focus on vocabulary and reading skills, with limited investigation of speaking and writing development. Additionally, systematic comparison of different print media types remains underexplored. This study addresses these gaps by examining comprehensive skill development across varied print media formats while comparing effectiveness with traditional instructional approaches.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a quasi-experimental design with mixed-methods data collection to investigate print media's impact on second language acquisition. The quasi-experimental approach

was selected due to practical constraints of random assignment in educational settings while maintaining scientific rigor through controlled comparison groups.

### **Participants**

Participants included 60 undergraduate students and 25 English language instructors from three institutions in Feni district, Bangladesh:

- **Feni University:** 30 students, 25 instructors
- **Government Zia Mohila College:** 15 students
- **Feni Government College:** 15 students

Student participants were selected from various academic levels and departments to ensure representative sampling. All participants had completed at least secondary-level English education and were currently enrolled in undergraduate programs. Instructor participants had minimum two years of English teaching experience at tertiary level.

### **Sampling Strategy**

Convenience sampling was employed due to geographical and administrative accessibility. The Feni district location provided practical advantages for data collection while representing typical Bangladeshi educational contexts. The combination of public colleges and private university settings enhanced generalizability across different institutional frameworks.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

Three primary instruments facilitated data collection:

#### **1. Student Questionnaire**

A structured questionnaire containing 10 items examined student perceptions and experiences with print media. Questions addressed:

- Print media usage patterns

- Skill development perceptions
- Learning preference comparisons
- Future learning intentions

## **2. Instructor Questionnaire**

A 6-item questionnaire explored instructor perspectives on:

- Print media integration in teaching
- Effectiveness perceptions
- Skill development outcomes
- Pedagogical recommendations

## **3. Classroom Observation and Interviews**

Supplementary data collection included classroom observations and personal interviews with instructors to triangulate questionnaire findings and provide qualitative insights.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

Data collection occurred over six months during the 2020-2021 academic year. The researcher initially contacted institutional administrators to obtain permission and establish data collection schedules. Students received detailed explanations of study purposes and voluntary participation principles. All participants provided informed consent before questionnaire completion.

Questionnaire administration followed standardized procedures to ensure consistency. Students completed questionnaires during regular class periods under researcher supervision. Instructor questionnaires were distributed individually with flexible completion timelines to accommodate teaching schedules.

## **Data Analysis**

Quantitative data from questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions and percentage calculations. Qualitative data from interviews and observations underwent thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and support quantitative findings.

Statistical analysis focused on:

- Response distribution patterns
- Comparative effectiveness ratings
- Skill development correlations
- Institutional variation examination

## **Ethical Considerations**

The study adhered to ethical research principles including:

- Informed consent from all participants
- Voluntary participation with withdrawal rights
- Anonymity and confidentiality protection
- Institutional permission and cooperation
- Transparent research purpose communication

## **Limitations**

Several limitations affected this study:

- Convenience sampling limited generalizability
- Self-reported data potential for response bias
- Limited geographical scope (single district)
- Cross-sectional rather than longitudinal design

- Resource constraints affecting sample size

## **Results**

### **Instructor Questionnaire Results**

Analysis of instructor responses (n=25) revealed unanimous recognition of print media's educational value in English language instruction.

### **Print Media Usage Patterns**

The majority of instructors (80%) regularly incorporate print media into their teaching, while 16% use it occasionally. Only 4% reported no print media integration. This high adoption rate suggests widespread recognition of print media's pedagogical benefits.

### **Preferred Media Types**

When asked to identify the most effective print media tools, instructor responses varied:

- **Books:** 44% (n=11)
- **Newspapers:** 20% (n=5)
- **All media types:** 36% (n=9)
- **Magazines and blogs:** 0%

The significant preference for books reflects their structured nature and curriculum alignment. The substantial percentage favoring "all media types" indicates recognition that different materials serve complementary functions.

### **Pedagogical Purposes**

Instructors reported using print media for multiple educational objectives. Rather than selecting single purposes, all respondents (100%) endorsed comprehensive utilization including:

- Content presentation enhancement
- Student motivation improvement

- Enjoyable learning environment creation
- Authentic language exposure

### **Effectiveness for Undergraduate Learners**

Instructor perceptions of print media effectiveness were overwhelmingly positive:

- **Much effective:** 68% (n=17)
- **Moderately effective:** 32% (n=8)
- **Not effective:** 0%
- **Highly ineffective:** 0%

No instructors questioned print media's educational value, indicating strong professional consensus regarding its benefits.

### **Skill Development Focus**

All instructors (100%) reported that print media supports development across all four language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening) plus vocabulary enhancement. This comprehensive skill integration represents a significant advantage over traditional single-skill materials.

### **Student Benefit Assessment**

Instructors universally agreed (100%) that print media usage benefits student English language acquisition. This unanimous endorsement provides strong professional validation of print media's educational effectiveness.

### **Student Questionnaire Results**

Student responses (n=60) provided learner perspectives on print media effectiveness and usage patterns.

### **Native-like Language Learning Potential**

When asked whether print media facilitates native-like second language learning:

- **Yes:** 66.65% (n=40)
- **Sometimes:** 31.65% (n=19)
- **No:** 1.6% (n=1)
- **Never:** 0%

The predominantly positive response (98.3% combined "yes" and "sometimes") indicates strong student belief in print media's language acquisition potential.

### **Preferred Media Types for Skill Enhancement**

Student preferences for English skill development varied across media types:

- **Newspapers:** 50% (n=30)
- **Books:** 23.33% (n=14)
- **Magazines:** 11.65% (n=7)
- **Blogs:** 15% (n=9)

Newspapers emerged as the preferred medium, likely due to their accessibility and contemporary relevance for young adults.

### **Skill Development Perceptions**

Students reported balanced improvement across language skills:

- **Speaking:** 30% (n=18)
- **Reading:** 23.33% (n=14)
- **Writing:** 23.33% (n=14)
- **Vocabulary:** 23.33% (n=14)

The slight preference for speaking development suggests students value print media's contribution to oral communication confidence, despite its written nature.

### **Daily Life Integration Necessity**

Students recognized the importance of connecting print media with daily language use:

- **Yes:** 66.65% (n=40)
- **Sometimes:** 31.65% (n=19)
- **No:** 1.6% (n=1)

This pattern mirrors responses regarding native-like learning potential, suggesting consistent positive attitudes toward print media integration.

### **Feasibility for Bangladeshi Context**

Students assessed print media's viability for English language acquisition in Bangladesh:

- **Yes:** 61.67% (n=37)
- **Sometimes:** 31.65% (n=19)
- **No:** 6.67% (n=4)

The majority positive response indicates student confidence in print media's cultural and practical appropriateness for Bangladeshi learners.

### **Comparison with Traditional Teaching**

Student comparisons between print media and conventional classroom instruction revealed mixed perspectives:

- **More effective:** 31.65% (n=19)
- **Sometimes more effective:** 46.67% (n=28)
- **Less effective:** 20% (n=12)
- **Never more effective:** 1.6% (n=1)

While most students (78.32%) saw print media as at least sometimes superior, a substantial minority preferred traditional approaches, suggesting the need for integrated rather than replacement strategies.

### **Communication Enhancement Benefits**

Students identified diverse ways print media improves interaction and communication:

- **Vocabulary expansion:** 31.65% (n=19)
- **Main idea extraction:** 30% (n=18)
- **Information about other countries:** 21.65% (n=13)
- **Data collection:** 16.67% (n=10)

These responses highlight print media's multifaceted communication benefits beyond simple vocabulary acquisition.

### **Verbal Communication Impact**

Student perceptions of print media's effect on spoken communication were notably divided:

- **Positive impact:** 46.65% (n=28)
- **Sometimes helpful:** 3.33% (n=2)
- **No impact:** 48.33% (n=29)
- **Never helpful:** 1.6% (n=1)

This near-even split suggests print media's verbal communication benefits may depend on individual learning styles or implementation approaches.

### **Grammar and Vocabulary Learning Proficiency**

Students rated their learning proficiency through print media exposure:

- **Much learning:** 37% (n=22)
- **Satisfactory learning:** 43% (n=26)

- **Most learning:** 17% (n=10)
- **Little learning:** 3% (n=2)

The predominately positive ratings (97% reporting satisfactory or better learning) demonstrate student confidence in print media's educational effectiveness.

### **Usage Frequency in Bangladesh**

Students reported their print media engagement patterns:

- **Sometimes:** 52% (n=31)
- **Daily:** 31% (n=19)
- **Frequent:** 17% (n=10)
- **Never:** 0%

The universal engagement (100% reporting at least occasional use) indicates widespread accessibility and acceptability of print media among Bangladeshi undergraduate students.

## **Discussion**

### **Print Media Effectiveness in Second Language Acquisition**

The findings provide compelling evidence for print media's positive impact on English second language acquisition among Bangladeshi undergraduate students. The convergence of instructor and student perspectives creates a robust foundation for understanding print media's educational potential.

### **Instructor Perspectives: Professional Recognition**

The unanimous instructor endorsement of print media reflects professional recognition of authentic materials' pedagogical value. The 80% regular usage rate indicates practical implementation feasibility within existing curriculum frameworks. Instructors' preference for

comprehensive skill development (100% supporting all four skills plus vocabulary) aligns with communicative language teaching principles emphasizing integrated skill acquisition.

The instructor preference for books (44%) followed by newspapers (20%) suggests recognition of structured materials' classroom management advantages while acknowledging newspapers' authentic communication benefits. The substantial minority (36%) supporting all media types indicates sophisticated understanding of different materials' complementary functions in language learning.

### **Student Perspectives: Learner Acceptance and Engagement**

Student responses demonstrate high acceptance of print media as a legitimate language learning tool. The 66.65% rating print media as effective for native-like language acquisition suggests learner confidence in authentic materials' potential. The nearly identical percentages supporting daily life integration (66.65%) indicate consistent positive attitudes across different implementation contexts.

The student preference for newspapers (50%) over other print media types reflects young adults' interest in contemporary information and current events. This finding supports integrating newspaper-based activities that combine language learning with information literacy development.

### **Skill Development Patterns**

#### **Balanced Skill Enhancement**

The study reveals print media's capacity to support balanced language skill development. Student perceptions of equal improvement across reading, writing, and vocabulary (23.33% each) with slightly higher speaking benefits (30%) demonstrate print media's comprehensive educational impact. This balanced development contrasts with traditional approaches that often emphasize reading comprehension exclusively.

The speaking skill preference warrants particular attention, as it suggests print media exposure enhances oral communication confidence through vocabulary expansion and cultural knowledge acquisition. This finding supports research indicating that extensive reading contributes to speaking fluency through increased language input and pattern recognition.

### **Vocabulary and Communication Benefits**

Students' identification of vocabulary expansion (31.65%) and main idea extraction (30%) as primary communication benefits highlights print media's cognitive processing advantages. These skills transfer directly to academic and professional communication contexts, supporting the argument for print media integration in undergraduate curricula.

The emphasis on "information about other countries" (21.65%) demonstrates print media's cultural literacy benefits, particularly relevant in EFL contexts where learners have limited direct exposure to English-speaking cultures. This cultural knowledge enhances communicative competence by providing context for appropriate language use.

### **Implementation Considerations**

#### **Complementary Rather Than Replacement Approach**

Student responses regarding traditional teaching comparison (31.65% finding print media more effective, 46.67% sometimes more effective) suggest integration rather than replacement strategies. The substantial minority preferring traditional approaches (21.6%) indicates continued value in structured instruction, supporting blended pedagogical approaches.

#### **Verbal Communication Challenges**

The divided student perspectives on verbal communication impact (46.65% positive, 48.33% no impact) highlight implementation considerations. This finding suggests that print

media benefits for speaking skills may require explicit pedagogical strategies such as discussion activities, presentation assignments, or collaborative projects based on reading materials.

### **Frequency and Accessibility**

The universal student engagement with print media (100% reporting at least occasional use) combined with predominant occasional usage patterns (52% sometimes, 31% daily) suggests opportunity for increased systematic integration. The absence of "never" responses indicates accessibility barriers are not primary concerns in this population.

### **Comparative Effectiveness**

The study provides evidence supporting print media's effectiveness relative to traditional classroom approaches while acknowledging complementary rather than competitive relationships. The instructor consensus on effectiveness (100% reporting moderate to high effectiveness) combined with student recognition (78.32% finding print media at least sometimes superior) creates a strong foundation for curriculum enhancement initiatives.

### **Theoretical Implications**

These findings align with Krashen's Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis by demonstrating how authentic materials facilitate subconscious language acquisition through meaningful interaction with comprehensible input. The balanced skill development observed supports theories emphasizing integrated language processing rather than discrete skill instruction.

The cultural literacy benefits identified support sociolinguistic competence development, extending beyond grammatical accuracy to include appropriate language use understanding. This comprehensive competence development addresses persistent challenges in Bangladeshi EFL contexts where students often demonstrate grammatical knowledge without communicative effectiveness.

## Conclusion

This quasi-experimental study provides substantial evidence supporting print media's positive impact on second language acquisition among Bangladeshi undergraduate students. The convergence of instructor and student perspectives demonstrates both professional recognition and learner acceptance of authentic materials' educational value.

## Key Findings

The research reveals several significant findings:

1. **Unanimous Professional Endorsement:** All participating instructors recognized print media's educational benefits, with 80% regularly incorporating such materials into their teaching practice.
2. **Strong Student Acceptance:** Students demonstrated high confidence in print media effectiveness, with 98.3% reporting beneficial impacts on language acquisition.
3. **Balanced Skill Development:** Print media supports comprehensive language development across all four skills plus vocabulary enhancement, with particular strength in speaking confidence building.
4. **Cultural and Contextual Appropriateness:** The study confirms print media's viability within Bangladeshi educational contexts, with 93.32% of students supporting its feasibility.
5. **Complementary Educational Value:** Rather than replacing traditional instruction, print media serves complementary functions that enhance overall language learning effectiveness.

## Practical Implications

These findings offer several practical implications for curriculum development and instructional practice:

**For Curriculum Developers**

- Systematic integration of diverse print media types into undergraduate English programs
- Development of structured activities linking print media exposure to speaking and writing practice
- Creation of assessment tools that recognize print media-based learning outcomes

**For Language Instructors**

- Regular incorporation of authentic materials alongside traditional textbooks
- Implementation of discussion-based activities following print media reading
- Utilization of newspapers and magazines for current events and cultural awareness development

**For Educational Institutions**

- Investment in accessible print media resources for language learning libraries
- Professional development programs training instructors in authentic material integration
- Partnership development with local and international print media organizations

**Theoretical Contributions**

This study contributes to SLA literature by demonstrating print media effectiveness within specific EFL contexts. The findings support theories emphasizing authentic material importance while providing empirical evidence from underrepresented geographical and cultural contexts. The balanced skill development observed challenges traditional assumptions about print media limitations, particularly regarding speaking skill enhancement. This finding suggests that authentic written materials contribute to comprehensive communicative competence through multiple processing pathways.

## Recommendations for Future Research

Several research directions emerge from this study:

1. **Longitudinal Studies:** Extended investigation of print media impact over multiple academic terms to assess sustained learning outcomes.
2. **Comparative Media Analysis:** Systematic comparison of different print media types' relative effectiveness for specific skill development areas.
3. **Digital Integration:** Examination of digital and traditional print media combination effects on contemporary learners.
4. **Cross-Cultural Replication:** Implementation of similar studies across different cultural and educational contexts to assess generalizability.
5. **Skill-Specific Investigation:** Detailed analysis of print media contributions to individual language skills through controlled experimental designs.

## Limitations and Future Directions

While this study provides valuable insights, several limitations suggest areas for future investigation. The convenience sampling approach limits generalizability beyond similar educational contexts. The cross-sectional design prevents causal relationship establishment, indicating need for longitudinal research approaches.

The reliance on self-reported data introduces potential response bias, suggesting future studies should incorporate objective performance measures alongside perceptual data. Additionally, the geographical limitation to a single district indicates need for broader regional investigation.

## **Final Implications**

This research demonstrates that print media integration represents a viable and valuable enhancement to English language instruction in Bangladeshi higher education. The unanimous instructor support combined with strong student acceptance creates favorable conditions for systematic implementation.

The evidence supporting balanced skill development addresses persistent challenges in EFL contexts where students often struggle with practical language application despite grammatical knowledge. By providing authentic, accessible, and culturally appropriate learning materials, print media can bridge the gap between classroom instruction and real-world language use.

As Bangladesh continues developing its position in the global knowledge economy, English proficiency becomes increasingly critical for student success. This study suggests that strategic print media integration offers a practical, cost-effective approach to enhancing language learning outcomes while preparing students for academic and professional challenges in an interconnected world.

The convergence of theoretical support, empirical evidence, and practical feasibility demonstrated in this study provides a strong foundation for advancing print media integration in second language acquisition contexts. Through continued research and systematic implementation, print media can contribute significantly to addressing persistent challenges in EFL education while preparing learners for success in globalized academic and professional environments.

**Conflict of Interest:** The corresponding author, on behalf of second author, confirms that there are no conflicts of interest to disclose.

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