

# Interpersonal Competences for Future Leaders of the Corporate World

Prof. Dr. Satya Subrahmanyam

Professor & Director, Department of Accounting, Catholic University in Erbil, Erbil, Kurdistan.

## ABSTRACT

This qualitative research aimed to investigate the importance and implementation of interpersonal competences in the academic and corporate environments. The core of the research was the analysis and elucidation of respondents' individual opinions, instances and perspectives on the effects of interpersonal competences in the relationship between employees, leaders and in improving the performance of the corporate and to transform into an efficient leader. The questions which led to a profound analysis of the core problem of research were – 1). How did graduates of business management incorporate communication competences in their interaction as employees? 2). How did graduates of business management apply their competences to interpersonal leadership? 3). How did interpersonal competences impact the success of the corporate? 4). What did graduates of business management perceive as an efficient leader of interpersonal competences? The findings of this research build on current research that has an impact on interpersonal competences. Substance guidelines emphasized that interpersonal competences should be taught by the academia and existing curricula and instructional manuals should be checked to strengthen the teaching and learning process. The incorporation of interpersonal competences instruction will help academia with new orientations for faculty, developmental workshops for faculty, or new orientations for students. This research builds on the advocacy of the knowledge of interpersonal competences and their effect on productivity and corporate leadership.

**Keywords:** Communication, Motivation, Corporate Leadership, Corporate Performance, Competences, Foundation Course.

## 1. Introduction

The situations graduates of business management entering into the corporate world without interpersonal competences, which are important to the business in the 21st century, remain the same [1]. Today, corporate

leaders realize that employees with high interpersonal competences have advantages that can help the corporate achieve performance goals [1]. Employees with interpersonal competences can raise earnings and improve business ties with existing clients [2]. Lack of interpersonal competences is not ideal for workplace engagement as well as for the corporate leading partnerships and employee interactions, organization operations and organizational development [3].

Most people find the incorporation of interpersonal competences into corporate leadership and managerial relationships to enhance business success as a distinguishing strategy, in which the leadership has gained interpersonal competences in all their operations [4]. This research aims to ensure consistent and reliable leadership of the corporate world [4]. Communication, motivation, influence, interaction, and the building of relationships of trust, openness, affirmative attitudes, convictions, and values constitute interpersonal competences [5]. Interpersonal competences are essential sociable skills in relationships which support aspiring corporate leaders and working conditions.

## Background of the Problem

The simple etiquette required to effectively achieve the modern corporate world for new graduates of business management is missing [1]. A few learning organisations provide courses on interpersonal communication strategies [1]. Information-exchange, persuasion, negotiation, dispute management, contentious management, coordination and influence [6], are some of the characteristics of interpersonal competences that apply to all corporate employees.

Other competences comprise planning, setting targets, change management, stress management, time management and delegations [7]. Self-disclosure and listening are both important to interpersonal competences in organisational hierarchical relationships. The corporate leaders should foster an atmosphere of engagement, trust, loyalty, openness, co-operation and decision-making, respected and welcoming [8]; [9].

Leaders in learning organizations who aim to create the brightest and finest professionals in all fields carry on responsibility for intellectually, emotionally and socially serving their graduates [10]. Learning is conducted by academic leaders to involve students in a learning experience and to create substantive connections with peers and faculty. When academic leaders follow this cycle of learning, students will learn how to create concrete connections in the corporate, in the academia, and personal life [10].

### Statement of the Problem

To order that graduates of business management meet professional success goals to their careers, the research aimed to explore and interpret the importance of interpersonal competences in the academia and the corporate world. For this purpose, the research questions used are:

- 1). How did graduates of business management incorporate communication competences in their interaction as employees?
- 2). How did graduates of business management apply their competences to interpersonal leadership?
- 3). How did interpersonal competences impact the success of the corporate?
- 4). What did graduates of business management perceive as an efficient leader of interpersonal competences?

### Assumptions

- ❖ The first supposition was that after completing a course in human communications, graduates of business management understood interpersonal competences better.
- ❖ The second supposition was that the graduates of business management used interpersonal competences with peers and superiors to reconcile conflicts.
- ❖ The third supposition was that graduates of business management may have studied in their preceding educational curriculum interpersonal competences or have been trained by employers.
- ❖ The fourth supposition was that graduates of business management were able to use interpersonal competences at work to meet business success goals.
- ❖ The fifth supposition was that graduates of business management could identify interpersonal competences.

### Purpose of the Study

The aim is to explore and interpret, to meet organizational success outcomes in their careers, the importance of interpersonal competences for graduates of business management. This research is critical since business graduates usually do not qualify in managing their employees and customers without necessary interpersonal competences [11]. Aldag and Kuzuhara [6] and Thilmany [12] have indicated that people who exercise interpersonal competences develop cooperation, promote communication, and inspire others, help overcome conflicts and problems.

### Aims of the Study

It was necessary to identify the problem and to analyze the narratives of the individual participants carefully and to draw collective conclusions about what corporate leaders should do in one specific situation. Additional ideas arose from a systematic review of qualitative research [13]. The first goal of this research is to assess whether graduates of business management have incorporated employee-related communications competences. The second objective of this research is to identify the use of interpersonal leadership competences. The third objective of this research is to examine the impact of interpersonal competences on the success of the corporate. The fourth goal of this research is to analyze the views of the graduates of business management as efficient leaders.

### Significance of the Study

The foundation, for growing profession, business and the profit and non-profit sectors, is interpersonal competences [6] ; [14]. The results of this qualitative research show how graduates of business management have demonstrated interpersonal competences in interactions with staff, leadership relationships, organizational success and efficient leadership. The outcome from this research will help to establish and expertise the subject and help the graduates of business management to transform into change leaders of the corporate world.

This research found the need for interpersonal competences to excel workforce in the corporate world to better explain the results [8]. The results of this research contribute to corporate leadership and interpersonal competences and productivity impacts in the workplace. Ineffectiveness in a nonproductive work environment may be part of interpersonal competences [15]. Corporate leaders require candidates to have interpersonal competences before interviewing for a position as this expertise is also more sorts after as it is

included in the job descriptions. To achieve success on the job, corporate leaders and employees have to show trust, integrity and teamwork [16].

Successful corporate leaders search for people who work best together as teams [8]. Teams don't work well when people are taking credit for suggestions created by another team member. People who choose to work alone and not were with the team can also harm trust. Furthermore, leaders can not enjoy gossip and corporate politics to ensure successful corporate leaders are efficient and productive. Corporate leaders must ensure effective executives in the organization are committed to the growth of future leaders with commitment and expertise. Persons who hold managerial roles require the know-how and experience to improve the efficiency of workforce, besides trust and behavioural values [8].

## 2. Review of Literature

Interpersonal competences of corporate leaders are important soft skills in the fabrication and managing of employees, clients and other groups concerned [9]. The key characteristics of effective leaders are interpersonal competences [12]. Unfortunately, many graduates of business management have been entering into the corporate world without possessing minimal understanding and experience of interpersonal competences [1].

### Interpersonal Competences

Communication, motivation, impact, interaction and establishment of relationships of trust, transparency and attitude are interpersonal competences [5]. 96 per cent of the leaders of academia observed that organizational leaders to be successful based on experience, expertise and abilities, for leaders to lead together [11]. By strong interpersonal competences, leaders can develop professional communications that can interpret and explain messages and address problems collaboratively and display shared appreciation and sincere awareness of their positions as leaders [8].

In a corporate environment, senior leaders must be ambidextrous - not only learn the technical competences of a task, but also the diverse soft skills [17]. For instance, senior leaders use their interpersonal competences to create a culture of confidence in corporate and communities [18]. Soft skilled persons are a combination of social and interpersonal competences, while hard skills include technically or administratively quantifiable and measurable results [19].

For example, a researcher may define soft skills as interpersonal competences that include a person who discerns other people's moods, motives, expectations and feelings [20]. Callahan [21] Said 80% to 90% of leadership competences are not academic, suggesting that most leaders can have technical expertise, but are missing emotional intelligence, which includes interpersonal competences. That insight is particularly crucial that a person should control feelings to be successful in an ever-changing business environment, [22].

### Johari Window in Business Management

The Johari Window is an important way of recognizing the need for aspiring business leaders to highlight interpersonal competences in business management programs [23]. Not engaging the workforce through interpersonal competences, in the accomplishment of organizational success targets [24] is an obstacle. The Johari window model, designed in 1955 by psychologists Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham, illustrated and improved self-awareness in the individuals and groups [25].

The Johari Window model is a methodology that researchers and other persons of corporate world use to analyze and develop the mechanism between management and workers interpersonal communications [26]. The paradigm also addresses the way that the graduates of business management respect and use interpersonal competences in the relationships of the corporate world [27]. Self-awareness is an exercise for employees to identify strengths and development needs to improve their competences, most practitioners, consultants and corporate trainers use the Johari Window model in corporate training programs.

Figure 1: Johari Window Model

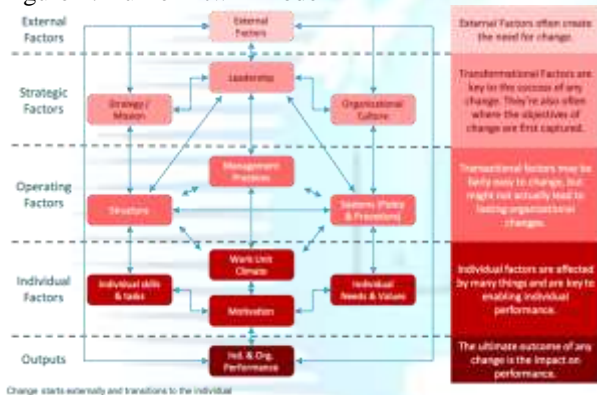


### Geminal Theory for Interpersonal Competences

### Burke-Litwin Model

In understanding the role of individual interpersonal competences in employees and leadership, the Burke-Litwin model is helpful to individuals becoming effective leaders and helps individuals to achieve business goals for business efficiency [4]; [28]. The Burke-Litwin model demonstrates organizational know-how, as the model is a method for evaluating the medium of communication networking through coordination of the relationship of trust between the leader and supporters [5]. The paradigm also shows openness, displays principles and ideals and works together to accomplish corporate goals effectively [5].

Figure 2: Burke-Litwin Model



### Interpersonal Competences in Corporate Leadership

In employee and leader relationships, which have an impact on corporate performance, the value of corporate leaders places on interpersonal competences. Bolt and Hagemann identified four signs when potential corporate leaders are facing trouble situations. Such signs included a lack of communication, motivation, personal concerns, social stressors and concerns of development and lack of follow-up [4]. Certain signs of distress include impaired self-control, intuition, and weak or under-developed emotional intelligence [29].

Laurer suggested five features which could adversely affect employee and leader connections and corporate performance for business leaders to avoid. The first feature is that a leader should not humiliate employees before others. Second, while decisive action is the usual behaviour today, leaders do not take quick decisions. Thirdly, to maintain quality, morality and stress, the leader needs to set realistic deadlines. The fourth feature is to prevent a leader from interfering with the personal time of subordinates outside the office. Finally, perception in the workplace becomes a reality. This means that if leaders always prefer one employee over

another, other employees may feel that the leader does not value everyone fairly [16].

### Implementing Verbal and Nonverbal Communication Behaviour as a Leader

Individuals who are proficient in interpersonal competences show the ability to understand behavioural actions in both verbally and nonverbally and the application of emotions of other individuals [30]. Leaders who have not demonstrated professional competences and analytical understanding will rather be able to perceive the emotional and visual signals of certain persons [11] ; [31]. Graduates of business management with knowledge on interpersonal competences, emotional intelligence (EI), can better understand the thoughts and feelings of others [3].

Emotional intelligence comprises interpersonal competences and is useful to an emotional leader [5] ; [31]. Conrad [27] addressed four acts in a corporate, consisting to improve emotional intelligence (EI). 1. Include emotional intelligence in recruiting methods, 2. Evaluate the emotional intelligence of prospective corporate leaders, 3. Ensure the efficiency evaluations take into account the way work is performed, 4. Render emotional intelligence a central factor in the successions planning.

### Importance of Interpersonal Competences

Prospective candidates for managerial positions through recruiters, staffing agencies, and job listings websites will find that every job listing requires interpersonal competences [32]. Candidates must be familiar with competences as well as means of communicating with colleagues [33] ; [34]. There should be soft skills training sessions in the curriculum as recruiters owe the workforce a more important exposure to certain qualities [34]. Besides, lessons on teamwork, team leadership and interpersonal competences gaining impetus. TopMBA.com has said in the latest survey:

- The soft skills of prospective employees are becoming one of the most relevant. In their report, which analyzed responses from 5,000 business management hires in 36 countries, the highest importance were leadership competences, critical thinking, communication networking and interpersonal competences.

### Interpersonal Competences in the Curriculum

Many political, financial, cultural and environmental challenges are faced by the leaders of academic and corporate world, and they are not able to address these problems with technological expertise alone [35]. The leaders of the organisations struggling to recognize operating processes and to conform with specific laws. Managers and executives will learn better about what today's leaders are aware of to satisfy these current demands. The leaders need to look at the world differently, especially in terms of how people respond globally [10].

The most common deficiencies in the interview process are miscommunication, lack of interpersonal competences and questionable inspiration, according to Knight et al., [36]. Management faculty must teach students what they need to be good leaders to become productive corporate leaders [37] ; [38]. The quest for a person to become an efficient leader starts with self-inspection such as the identification of their strengths and weaknesses and appraising those [37].

Change in every organization is unavoidable; leaders face intensified pressure, sustainability challenges and reduced efficiency risks [10]. Leaders should encourage workforce by offering incentives to increase their expertise to improve productivity in the corporate. Corporate growth is a transition mechanism for businesses as well as workforce [10]. Managers in the corporate sector who can tap workforce' potential will use a massive output energy supply [26].

### **Integrating Interpersonal Competences into the Workplace**

The mediation strategy appears to be a successful starting point for leaders to help corporate members become effective communicators. Corporate leaders can benefit from the interpersonal competences needed to support the corporate culture [14]. Interpersonal competences for team leaders are beneficial for building relationships, promote engagement and develop partnership between team members [39].

Corporate leader who wants to make workforce ease and grow to their full capacity may undergo a paradigm shift [40]. When people alter paradigms, the world itself shifts and scholars are using modern methods to grasp these different paradigms through the exploration of a new paradigm [41]. Wheeling around and using common tools in areas that were not traditionally seen, scholars will see new and unexpected things through revolutions. After a revolution, researchers responded to another reality as shifts in the context allow them to see

differently the nature of their work dedication [41] ; [42].

Adopting a concept, theory or paradigm helps a person make decisions in society and at home, performing tasks [41]. Changes can also arise while engaging with relatives, friends, employers, organizations, associations and partners [43] ; [44] . By thoughts and concepts, the world is understood by people [44]. Changing the perspective or thought of a person can be difficult as what the person learns gets entrenched and new knowledge becomes less available [3].

### **Preparing Future Leaders for the Corporate World Early**

The corporate world, in which graduates of business management work will benefit one day from them if they are trained to become successful leaders [45]. Graduates of business management are eligible to enrol in numerous personal and professional institutions to improve their teamwork, communications and professional expertise for working in industry, government, technology and health care sectors.

Various technical associations are responsible for training employees for the development of leadership competences as well as scholarly and technological capabilities. The BPO (Business Professionals Organisation) team conducts a variety of strategic leadership events and several graduates take part in the national and international workplace competences review programs [46].

Graduates participate at BPO conferences with activities ranging from teamwork, entrepreneurship, small businesses, human resources, marketing, among others [46]. The graduates also develop their leadership skills by mutual teachings of teamwork, management skills, and team bonding tasks as each other operates at the WSAP. Such graduates learn about the roles of corporate administration, as they partake in ventures for research and facilities [46].

### **3. Methodology**

The purpose of the research is to explore and interpret, to achieve corporate success goals, the importance of interpersonal competences for business management graduates. This research was conducted by interviewing of 25 corporate executives graduated from Tishk International University and Catholic University in Erbil and currently working in leadership positions.

Using qualitative methods, researchers try to address questions such as how, when and why [47]. Large volumes of data consist of participants' words or code, and the anomalies are identified by the details. Qualitative research findings are non-numerical information, for example, new scientific concepts or ideas. A qualitative methodology is an effective tool for this research because it is a form of educational research with the opinions of participants who have addressed general and specific questions. Researchers for qualitative methods explain and research possibilities or inconsistencies [47]. A detailed review was carried out on the themes of the participants' large quantities of word or text data [48]. The best research design for this study was the focused group interviews.

### Data Collection

Participants, [47] may be interested in one of the different methods or formats for interviews. The format of this research was open-ended, semi-structured and unstructured questions. Interview notes and transcriptions used to gather narrative details. Additional methods for gathering data include gathering open-ended answers to an open-ended interview schedule. In qualitative research, it is the primary means by which investigators collect data [47] ; [49]. To facilitate transparent and honest dialogue in the process, the facilitator works to ask the participants questions.

Evidence from the focus group sessions consisted of participants' thoughts and attitudes [50]. The results are helpful for an understanding of the issue of business management graduates with no interpersonal competences that influence employee and leadership, corporate success and efficient leadership [11].

### Instrumentation

The researcher is the main tool for data collection in qualitative research [47] ; [49]. The researcher acts as a facilitator, by posing questions of participants in the interview process to facilitate transparent and honest dialogue. The open-ended interview schedule was used in this research.

### 4. Findings

This research was an instrumental since the findings of the research centred on a specific problem [51] which involved investigating the relationships between interpersonal competences and employee relationships, leadership relationships, corporate success and efficient leadership. A big issue in the field of interpersonal competences at the job for fellow workers and leaders

was a commonality in the research results, which became an obstacle to organizational objectives. The participants expressed the severity of the lack of interpersonal competences to significantly lower workplace productivity and to encourage staff to leave the organization with a revolving door due to corporate abuse. The research shows interest and significance in the development of interpersonal competences of business management graduates, who turns to be corporate executives and leaders.

### Theme 1: The Role of Interpersonal Competences in Employee Relationships

To distinguish the moods, desires, expectations and emotions of others, every respondent used interpersonal competences. The interviewees conveyed how everybody was receptive to emotional cues such as facial expressions, voice tones and body ergonomics. The participants controlled their feelings well, which was another interpersonal competence.

All interviewed shared thoughts about disagreements with colleagues and this contact contributed to transparent and frank work ties. People are responding with greater transparency and confidence because they are free, trusting and a risk-taker. People who took required was training along with essential interpersonal competences as the best competence had separated from others who did not in the workplace [34]. Interpersonal competences are the number one skill set to learn as the respondents in this research suggest. The interpersonal competences in the workplace were demonstrated by people who were effective in a person with strong interpersonal competences rather than people whose competences were weak.

### Theme 2: The Role Interpersonal Competences in Leader Relationships

All the interpersonal competences with their bosses were clarified. The behavioural talents used included verbal and nonverbal actions while they were communicating with the superiors. In the introductory human communication course, several respondents demonstrated how one viewed nonverbal behaviour more frequently.

Participants referred to the Burke-Litwin model role as an efficient leader and successful employee and leader in the accomplishment of organizational goals [4] ; [28]. Participants' student behaviours and explanations of the use of interpersonal competences in peer and leading relationships and collaborative interactions with peers were presented by the participants. They spoke about

the consequences of interpersonal competences and how they used organizational success goals and interpersonal competences as an efficient leader. Throughout the research, the large amount of personal views, incidents and instances expressed by respondents is additionally responsible for the theoretical context.

### **Theme 3: The Role of Interpersonal Competences to Achieve Corporate Performance**

Increased corporate performance can result in the value and significance of interpersonal competences. The managers' experience and success included the retention and loyalty of the employees, respect among the employee and the manager, improved work productivity, both in academia and corporate world. The interpersonal competences were strong, which helped maintain a business system and enabled management to take greater responsibility for the accomplishment of corporate goals.

The findings and analyzes reflect the theoretical context of the research, which centred on the model Burke-Litwin as a diagnostic method for actions, corporate implications as well as causes and effects used by the researchers [52]. In this research, Gitsham and Peters study was focusing on the implementation or non-implementation of interpersonal competences in the workplace for the achievement of corporate performance objectives [17] also highlighted.

### **Theme 4: The Role of Interpersonal Competences in Leadership**

The respondents suggested it is a struggle for executives not to connect with the workforce to meet their corporate success targets. Interpersonal competences, such as empathy, cooperation, commitment, trustworthiness, integrity, decision making and staff morale, were identified as successful leaders. The responses of the participants based on the outcomes of members with leadership competences. The interviewees shared additional interpersonal competences as leaders should demonstrate that they are motivating staff, constructive behaviours, effective listeners, and help people accomplish their assignments while they are incredibly busy.

The Johari Window stressed how important interpersonal competences are to being an effective leader, such as teamwork, sensitivity and transparency [53] ; [30]. The interpersonal competences which sustain an entrepreneurial culture have all been successful, as well as leaders that encourage employees

to be responsible for their corporate goals [54]. The respondents indicated the possibilities of ridicule, division and cultural barriers in the workplace due to lack of effective interpersonal competences [55] ; [24].

### **Emergent Themes Discovered**

The interviewees offered extra details to emphasize certain areas during the focus group meetings. The emergent themes are a result of previous research and answers beyond the initial questions of the interview.

#### **Emergent Theme 1: Interpersonal Competences Training Opportunities**

Interpersonal competences training in the workforce has been clarified by the respondents to foster compassion and improve working performance. Before and after the training exercise, the respondents have conveyed their experiences in the working climate.

#### **Emergent Theme 2: Interpersonal Competences Training Needed, but Not Offered**

Two respondents suggested that their employers do not provide training on interpersonal competences and that they require much exercise. One respondent said that her employer addresses competences in diversity training briefly, but the organization would benefit from interpersonal competences training. Another respondent said his boss would provide interpersonal competences training on an annual basis.

#### **Emergent Theme 3: New Employees Joining Existing Cohorts from Other Universities**

Some of the new employees, completed graduation in business management from other universities who have joined current cohorts did not work in well with the cohort and were suggested to undergo an interpersonal competences training. They harmed team success due to their lack of interpersonal competences. The new co-workers have not committed to project schedules and could not be traced by telephone or e-mail.

#### **Emergent Theme 4: Interpersonal Competences Learned during Foundation Course**

In scenarios with supervisors, co-workers and cohorts mentor, three participants were used to boost performance goals. Different cognitive competences have been used by the respondents such as constructive listening and questioning. Until acquiring these new

skills, the respondents indicated that deadlines were missed in academic and business projects.

#### **Emergent theme 5: Introduction of the Foundation Curriculum**

The Foundation Curriculum and its effect on their learning were addressed by three participants. How a faculty taught a course had changed the understanding of the subject content by them. One respondent said that there was a major improvement in how people interacted with what they had learned from the course.

#### **Emergent Theme 6: Introduction of Interpersonal Competences at Higher Secondary Level**

Three participants shared the need for introducing courses on interpersonal competences at higher secondary level itself. They clarified that they did not do well with peers, seniors and teaching staff at the secondary level. Many of the co-workers were working without interpersonal competences, so they addressed this crucial question.

### **5. Conclusions and Recommendations**

Several conclusions were drawn based on the scientific findings of this research. The recommendations were presented based on the problem and the results of the research.

#### **Theme 1: Interpersonal Competences in Employee Relationships**

The interpersonal competences such as managing relationships with workforce were illustrated in this research. For a corporate that profits from this research, the idea of organizational competence is evaluated for multinational, national and regional executives as the results become discoveries that leaders require more interpersonal competences than technical competences to meet corporate success goals.

Leaders require interpersonal competences to communicate with staff, peers and teams effectively. Corporate leaders who show respect, encouragement and listening to employees are likely to save the corporate from employing and training new employees.

#### **Theme 2: Interpersonal Competences in Leadership Relationships**

The interpersonal competences in conflict resolution, employee motivation, teamwork and information inquiry were shown to be important in the research findings. The basis of interpersonal competences is

global, making it pervasive, accessible and feasible to be evaluated in any region.

#### **Theme 3: Interpersonal Competences to Achieve Corporate Performance**

In this research, the interviewees in governmental, banking, retail and health care addressed how the non-use or use of interpersonal competences by employees and leaders contributed to reducing or increasing the productivity of the workforce. The impact of the reciprocal relationship of interpersonal competence training and morale and work efficiency was highlighted.

#### **Theme 4: Interpersonal Competences in Leadership**

The interpersonal competences in leadership and the value of these skills benefitted the organization were illustrated by respondents in this research. The relevance of interpersonal competences should be tested by regional, national and global leaders to better lead and handle their business [12]. In specific, leaders need to provide the application of interpersonal competences in personal and professional development to create and facilitate progress for leaders, enable team building, hold team meetings, inspire teams, define priorities, articulate objectives, empowering employees, engage in feedback [7].

### **6. Conflict of Interest**

The author confirms that there is no conflict of interest to declare for this publication.

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