



Harmonizing Local Wisdom with Islamic Values: A Guide to Character Education Development

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ABSTRACT

The globalization wave has caused Indonesians to gradually lose and forget the values of local wisdom as the nation's assets and charm. The global community recognizes Indonesia as a society characterized by positive traits such as friendliness, courtesy, perseverance, altruism, openness, courage, and others. Initial observations at the State Islamic Institute of Palopo indicate that lecturers perceive that most students have lost the original character of the Indonesian nation. Implementing character education aligned with local wisdom values can address this issue. The research employed in this study is developmental research with the four D (4 D) model. Data collection techniques used include direct observation, interviews, and questionnaires. We can overcome negative student character issues using local wisdom and religious values. Every higher education institution requires character education guidelines that lecturers can use as a reference to cultivate positive student character. Higher education institutions can conduct character education through lectures, academic guidance, and real-life community service activities.

INTRODUCTION

Building the quality and morality of human resources should ideally be based on Islamic values and local wisdom, thereby influencing activities in education to achieve educational goals by making humans fully human. Education should be able to make individuals moral so that they possess characters that can compete and distinguish themselves from others (Park, 1915; Ugolini, 2020). Cultural values become the highest element by referring to Islamic values in implementing character education. Indonesia's diversity and plurality must be preserved and nurtured to the fullest. Diversity and plurality strengthen the unity and integrity of the nation within the framework of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia, ensuring that national life can proceed peacefully. The formation of noble values that shape the behaviour of the Indonesian people is due to the strong influence of customs and traditions, which have become embedded in society's culture. Although customs and cultures vary from region to region, they generally embody the same essential values (Hasanah et al., 2016; Singh, 2019).

The character greatly determines the existence of a nation. A nation with a strong character can uphold its dignity. Character is the essence of life that distinguishes humans from animals. Individuals and society with strong and good character possess good morals and ethics (Haris, 2017; Yunita & Mujib, 2021). The fundamental goal of character education is to cultivate good individuals with attractive, ethical, humble, honest, intelligent, caring, and resilient personalities (Dianing Kartika et al., 2021). The

growth and development of good character will motivate students to grow with the capacity and commitment to do their best and to do everything correctly with a sense of purpose in life.

Indonesian archipelago's customs and culture typically foster positive moral attitudes and behaviours. Thus, there are rules of conduct for interactions with parents, children, siblings, neighbours, guests, strangers, and society, and even guidelines for interacting with nature, plants, and animals. Each has its customs, cultural forms, and prohibitions, making these phenomena deeply ingrained in Indonesian life. Whether realized or not, local values, culture, and traditions strongly influence the formation of Indonesia's character in each region. Trust in the customs and beliefs of ancestors deeply rooted in community life can serve as a means of instilling values in individuals within society ([Affandy, 2017](#); [Barth, 2002](#); [Rustan Effendi, 2020](#)). Therefore, these elements shape the personality, traits, behaviours, habits, and attitudes quite characteristic of their social lives and rooted in the local wisdom that grows around them.

Students, as agents of change, social control, and the iron stock, need to be strengthened with character education, which will make them agents of change, social control within society, and the successors of the nation's future, becoming the nation's hope for the future. Higher education institutions, where students acquire knowledge and technology, are not exempt from local wisdom values, as each already has different cultures and traditions; they need to be strengthened with Islamic values to reinforce their character as students of state Islamic higher education institutions. Local wisdom is the wisdom or original knowledge of a society stemming from the noble values of cultural traditions to regulate community life. Local wisdom is a local cultural value that wisely manages the community's way of life. Local wisdom is a local cultural value that wisely regulates community life. The local wisdom is that the community applies local culture's values to manage its social order and social life wisely ([Hasanah et al., 2016](#); [Astuti et al., 2019](#)).

Based on observations made by researchers at the PTKIN IAIN Palopo campus, students have not fully implemented character education characterized by local wisdom and integrated with Islamic values. Therefore, at that time, the researcher considered conducting a study that would produce a guidebook product on character education characterized by local wisdom and integrated with Islamic values and culture. Despite numerous studies in this field, we must address a knowledge gap. This research aims to contribute significantly by deeply exploring how character education based on Islamic values and local wisdom can be effectively integrated and implemented in Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia.

By combining Islamic perspectives and local wisdom, this study will provide new insights into strategies for shaping strong and morally upright characters among students. Through a holistic approach, we will explore the traditional values inherent in Indonesian local culture and how to integrate these values with Islamic principles in character education. The researcher hopes that this research's findings will not only fill existing knowledge gaps but also provide practical guidance for Islamic higher education institutions in designing and implementing sustainable character education programs based on Islamic values and local wisdom. Thus, the researcher expects this research to make a meaningful contribution to building a young generation with solid character, high ethics, and rooted in local knowledge and Islamic values, capable of addressing the challenges faced in the current context of globalization.

METHODS

This research utilizes the 4D model development design. The 4D model consists of four stages of development: define, design, develop, and disseminate ([Thiagarajan et al., 1974](#)). This research chose the 4D model because its developmental stages unfold more sequentially than other models, allowing for a clearer understanding of the progression of events or phenomena. The validation and testing stages also refine the resulting draft book. The following figure depicts the research flowchart.

Research Stages	Define	Analyzing Student Character		
		Analyzing Guidebook Needs		
	Design	Information gathering according to product development needs		
		Design the initial product		
	Develop	Book Draft 1	content eligibility validation	Revision 1
		Book Draft 2	presentation validation	Revision 2
		Book Draft 3	linguistic validation	Revision 3
		Book Draft 4	graphic validation	Revision 4
		Final Product Book		
	Dissemination	End Product Dissemination	Leaders as policy makers	
			Lecturer as product user	

Figure 1. Research Stages

There are two types of data in this study: quantitative data and qualitative data. Book assessments derive these data conducted during the book development process. The qualitative data in this study are obtained from assessments by subject matter experts, media experts, and lecturers. This data consists of input, feedback, criticism, and suggestions from open-ended questionnaire questions. The quantitative data in this study are obtained from assessments by subject matter experts, media experts, and lecturers regarding the feasibility of the developed book. This data comes from closed-ended questionnaires with predefined answer alternatives. The questionnaire assesses the book regarding content suitability, language, presentation, graphics, functionality, and integration.

This developmental research uses a questionnaire as the data collection instrument. The questionnaire aims to gather data on the accuracy of the book's material, language, presentation, functionality, integration, and graphics. This questionnaire will be analyzed to determine its feasibility and as a basis for revising the book to ensure its suitability for use. This study uses a combination of closed-ended and open-ended questionnaires. Closed-ended questionnaires provide assessment criteria for respondents to fill in answers with predefined answer alternatives. Meanwhile, open-ended questionnaires allow respondents to give criticism and suggestions for improving the developed product.

The aspects evaluated in validating the guideline book include (a) content feasibility in terms of material relevance, material accuracy, material currency, and curiosity enhancement; (b) presentation feasibility in terms of presentation techniques, supporting presentations, learning presentation, coherence, and flow of thought sequence; (c) language feasibility including fluency, communicativeness, dialogic and interactive nature, suitability with development, and conformity with language norms; (d) graphics assessment including book size, book cover design, and book content design ([Anori et al., 2021](#); [Baderiah et al., 2022](#); [Fahlevi et al., 2021](#); [Hidayat et al., 2020](#); [Nur & Hidayah, 2018](#); [Zulfah et al., 2018](#)). The data analysis technique in this study uses descriptive analysis. The data are analyzed to determine the feasibility of the developed guideline book. The analyzed data are derived from assessments by subject matter experts, media experts, and lecturers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Define

The first step taken in this research by the research team was to distribute questionnaires to lecturers to assess their responses to the implementation of character education conducted thus far. Additionally, the reactions from lecturers will serve as a foundation for compiling the guideline book. A total of 23 lecturers responded to the distributed questionnaire. The lecturers' responses regarding student character indicated that 77% of students exhibit negative character traits, while only 22% display positive ones. It underscores the need for further efforts by lecturers as educators to address the decline in student character.

All lecturers who completed the questionnaire agreed on the necessity of a character education guideline book. 39.1% of lecturers stated that the guideline book supports their educator activities, while 52% said it is essential. Regarding the necessity of a guideline book in higher education processes, data revealed that 85.7% of lecturers believe such a book is required. Regarding implementing character education, findings showed that 52.4% of lecturers have never seen or used a character education guideline book. In comparison, 47.6% stated that they have seen and used guideline books derived from textbooks that do not integrate Islamic education and local culture.

Efforts made by lecturers in character education include (a) imparting moral messages to students during lectures, (b) advising by providing examples from the lives of prophets and companions that are worth emulating, (c) assigning students to learn from figures with good character and success (success story method); (d) providing advice and examples from life; (e) encouraging students to recite prayers before lectures and not tolerating late submission of assignments to instil a sense of time appreciation in students.

Suggestions for integrating Islamic education and local wisdom into the character education guideline book include (a) explaining how to incorporate character education values into the lecture process; (b) including materials/discussions on characteristic cultural values of Luwu Land relevant to Islamic values; (c) tailoring the guideline book to the local wisdom of Luwu Land and supporting the vision and mission of IAIN Palopo; (d) ensuring that the guideline book contains not only expert opinions but also stories of prophets, companions, and scholars who continually promote character education while adhering to the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah; (e) incorporating local wisdom values that are easily understood and accepted by students; (f) tailoring the guideline book to the needs of lecturers and students; (g) ensuring that the guideline book is easy to understand, includes examples, and has an attractive appearance.

Design

Character education provides perspectives on various life values that will demonstrate one's identity as a self-aware human being, citizen, and man or woman (Colby et al., 2003; Turner, 2015). Individuals' character is a measure of their dignity, enabling them to think objectively, openly, and critically and have self-esteem that is not easily compromised. In the Character Education Implementation Guidelines, character education functions to (1) develop the potential to strengthen and build the behaviour of a multicultural nation and (3) enhance the competitiveness of the country in global interaction (Mansyur Ramly, 2011).

The Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendiknas) believes that one of the best solutions to lift Indonesia from decline is to reorient the values of the nation's character and culture, with education being the best aspect to build the pillars of the intended national culture and character. Here are the fundamental values outlined in Indonesian cultural and character education (Direktorat Ketenagaan, 2010).

Table 1. Values and Description of Character Education Values

Value	Value Description
Religious	The attitude and behaviour of being obedient in practising one's religious teachings, tolerant towards the practice of other religions, and living harmoniously with followers of other faiths promote mutual respect, understanding, and peaceful coexistence in diverse communities.
Nationalist	Efforts to make oneself someone who is always trustworthy in speech, actions, and work reflect a commitment to integrity and reliability, fostering trust and respect in both personal and professional relationships.
Integrity	The attitude of responsibility as a citizen, actively engaging in social life through consistent actions and words based on truth.

Value	Value Description
Independence	The attitude and behaviour of not quickly relying on others to complete tasks demonstrates independence and self-reliance, fostering a sense of personal accountability and initiative.
Communal Cooperation	A character that reflects actions of valuing teamwork spirit and working together to solve problems collectively, fostering communication and friendship, and providing assistance/help to those in need is an invaluable asset to any team or community.

IAIN Palopo, as a State Islamic Religious College, has specific characteristics in the development of knowledge, with its primary basis being religious sciences. Palopo hosts IAIN Palopo, an essential part of the Luwu Kingdom that has embraced Islam since the sixteenth century (16th century AD). The Luwu Kingdom has a symbol of "pajung" (umbrella), which signifies sheltering its people with advice, "*pasandre' ri adee' pattuppu ri sarae*" (Luwu society bases its behaviour pattern on the customary constitution (*ade*) rooted in the teachings of Islam (*sharia*)).

It is what is meant by local wisdom, which has superior and primary values, including (1) lempu (honesty/integrity), (2) ade'le' (justice), (3) getteng (steadfastness in principle), (4) acca (scholarship), and (5) innawa (compassion) (Yunus & Fadli, 2022). To achieve its vision and mission, IAIN Palopo bases the organization and management of the institution on the superior and central values of the local wisdom of the Luwu (Palopo) community. They believe it propels IAIN Palopo as a Higher Education Institution with effective and efficient governance, accountability, credibility, transparency, responsibility, and fairness. The description of the central values of local wisdom they internalize as the basis for managerial activities is as follows:

Table 2. Values and Description of Local Wisdom Values

Value	Value Description
<i>Lempu</i> (Honesty/Integrity)	The organization and management of IAIN Palopo begin with transparent planning involving all units at IAIN Palopo to present activity plans and discuss them in the annual meeting of IAIN Palopo. They then document these in the Institutional Work Plan and Budget (RKAK/L). This working mechanism will foster credible and accountable leadership in all units at IAIN Palopo.
<i>Ade'le'</i> (Fairness)	The governance and leadership of IAIN Palopo are open, competency-based, and professional. All academic community members have equal opportunities to engage in healthy competition.
<i>Getteng</i> (Steadfastness)	The academic community adheres steadfastly to the principles of academic integrity and the teachings of Islam.
<i>Ininnawa</i> (Compassion)	IAIN Palopo gears its policies toward enhancing academic and non-academic quality to accelerate institutional progress. An example program is providing scholarships for academically outstanding students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
<i>Acca</i> (Scholarship)	We are encouraging the enhancement of faculty, educational staff, and employees to become Muslim scholars capable of producing quality alums with noble character and spiritual depth.

The implementation of character education draws upon a rich tapestry of local wisdom values that serve as guiding principles. Among these values are *Patoh ri Dewatae* (Obedience to God), *Lempu* (Honesty), *Patoh* (Discipline), *Reso' Tenabgingi* (Hard Work), *Soppo* (Responsibility), *Mapoji Ri Wanua* (Love for the homeland), and *Siamaseang* (Love for peace). These values encapsulate the essence of

ethical conduct and societal harmony deeply rooted in the local culture. Embracing local wisdom as a foundational framework for character education has proven remarkably effective in preserving cultural heritage while fostering positive societal norms and values (Ruyadi, 2010; Setiawan et al., 2022).

Furthermore, integrating additional advice and proverbs into character education further enriches the pedagogical approach. For instance, the proverb "*Sipakatau, Sipakalebbi, Sipakainge*" emphasizes the importance of mutual respect and support among individuals. Similarly, "*Reso Temangingi Namalomo Nalettei Pammase Dewata*" underscores the significance of perseverance and diligence in seeking divine blessings. Additionally, "*Riolo Mappatiroang, Ritengnga Mapparaga-raga, Rimunri Mangampiri*" highlights the collaborative nature of learning and mentorship, fostering a culture of knowledge exchange. These proverbs, along with others like "*Rebba Sipatokkong, Mali Siparappe, Siruik Menre Tassiruik Nok*," "*Lele Bulu Te Lele Abiasang*," and "*Taro Ada Taro Gau*," serve as guiding principles that promote integrity, resilience, and harmony within the community.

Table 3. Mandatory Traits of the Muslim Community

Value	Value Description
<i>Sidiq</i>	Always Speaking the Truth
<i>Amanah</i>	Trustworthy and never betraying trust or responsibility given
<i>Tabligh</i>	Disseminating knowledge and religious teachings
<i>Fathonah</i>	Intelligent, skilful, and wise

Table 4. Conversion of Character Values in Local Wisdom and Religion

Character Value	Local Wisdom Value	Religious Value
Religious	<i>Getteng; Acca</i>	<i>Sidiq; Tabligh; Amanah; Fathonah</i>
Nationalist	<i>Ade'le'</i>	<i>Amanah</i>
Integrity	<i>Ininnawa</i>	<i>Sidiq</i>
Independence	<i>Getteng</i>	<i>Fathonah</i>
Communal Cooperation	<i>Ininnawa</i>	<i>Tabligh</i>

Religious values in character education are related to local wisdom of *getteng* and *acca* and values in Islam, namely *fathonah*. Citizens interpret religious values as obedient behaviour in carrying out their religion's teachings. These values are related to the values of local wisdom developed at IAIN Palopo, namely *getteng* (adhering firmly to religious teachings) and *acca* (realizing the figure of a scholar in religion who has noble character and spiritual depth). These character values are indeed related to the attitudes of *sidiq*, *amanah*, *tabligh*, and *fathonah* in the teachings of Islam.

Nationalist values are related to the local wisdom values of *ade'le'*, which also intersect with the value of *Amanah* in Islamic teachings. Nationalism is a behaviour that shows a trusted figure in all activities carried out. This value is related to the local wisdom value of *lempu* at IAIN Palopo by forming credible and accountable leaders who carry out their duties. In Islamic teachings, someone who can be trusted and responsible for the tasks given is called a trustworthy figure.

Character education integrity is closely related to the value of *inninawa* in local wisdom and *sidiq* in Islamic values. Integrity shows the attitude of responsibility as a citizen in social life. Character education integrity is related to the local wisdom value of *inninawa*, which desires policies aimed at collective progress, such as providing scholarships for outstanding and poor students. Individuals with integrity or in the local wisdom value are called *inninawa*, related to the value of Islamic teachings of *sidiq* (always doing everything honestly/somewhat in carrying out their responsibilities).

One can integrate the value of independent character education with the local wisdom value of *getteng*, which in Islam is related to the value of *fathonah*. Independent individuals have an attitude to always complete tasks or responsibilities without relying on others. It is associated with the local wisdom value of *getteng*, which means always adhering to the independent attitude in realizing academic truth. In Islamic teachings, the value of *fathonah* signifies that individuals who take on responsibility must be able to complete tasks with intelligence, cleverness, and wisdom.

Cooperation is related to the value of *inninawa* in local wisdom and *tabligh* in Islamic teachings. Cooperation in the academic world is working together to solve institutional problems, establish communication and friendship, and assist colleagues in need. The value of collaboration in local wisdom is called a caring attitude for collective progress (*inninawa*). In Islamic teachings, the caring attitude can be associated with *tabligh*, considering individuals in an institution must share knowledge to advance the institution. After analyzing the needs of lecturers for character education guidebooks by looking at the responses given through questionnaires, the research team compiled the guidebook. The compilation of the book was carried out for two months, resulting in the specifications of the textbook, as seen in the following table.

Table 5. Specifications of Manual Design

Name	Caption
Book Title	<i>Panduan Pendidikan Karakter berciri Kearifan Lokal terintegrasi Nilai-nilai Keislaman</i>
Size	15,5 X 23
Number of Pages	125
Number of Chapters	5
Number of Sub-Chapter	15

You can see the design for the manual cover in the image below.



Figure 2. Book Cover

The authors designed the book on Islamic Education and Local Culture with discussions outlined in the following structure.

Table 6. Structure of the Main Discussion Design

Number of Chapters	Chapter Title	Discussion Materials
I	Character Education Paradigm	Definition of Character Education Concept of Character Education in Higher Education
II	Character Education Based on Coursework	Background Character Values That Can Develop Implementation of Character Education Based on Courses
III	Character Education Based on Academic Guidance	Background Character Values That Can Be Developed Implementation of Character Education based on Academic Guidance
IV	Character Education Based on Thematic Real-World Learning Courses	Background Character Values That Can Develop Theoretical Foundation Description of Thematic Real-World Learning Course Model Implementation of Character Education based on Thematic Real-World Learning Course
V	Implementation of Local Wisdom and Islamic Values in Character Education	Background Implementation of Character Education based on Local Wisdom and Islamic Values

The prepared manual is then presented to users and policymakers to gather feedback and input regarding the compiled textbook. Additionally, content experts validate the manual and media experts assess the suitability of the developed manual before users can utilize it. Observers can see the experts selected as validators in this study in the following table.

Table 7. List of Validator Names

Name	Validator	Expertise
Dr. Nurdin K, M.Pd.	Content Validity	Character Education
Dr. Sukirman, M.Pd.	Linguistic Accuracy	Language and Culture
Dr. Kaharuddin, M.Ag.	Presentation	Islamic Education
Dr. Firman, S.Pd., M.Pd.	Graphic Design	Language and Graphics

Validators provided validation for content validity validators on June 14, 2022. Observers can see the assessment results from validators in the following table.

Table 8. Summary of Content Validity Validation Results

Expert	Aspect			Overall Value	
	Content Coverage	Accuracy of Material	Insight	Score	Category
Score	82	91,6	92,8	90	Highly Valid
Category	Highly Valid	Highly Valid	Highly Valid		

The results of the content validity validation indicate that the character education manual is suitable for use as a guide for lecturers in implementing character education based on local wisdom and integrated with Islamic values. Validators provided validation for the linguistic aspect to validators on June 15, 2022. Observers can see the assessment results from validators in the following table.

Table 9. Summary of Linguistic Aspect Validation Results

Expert	Aspect (%)				Overall Value	
	Appropriateness	Communicative	Interactive	Clarity	Score	Category
Score	62,5	75	75	58	63,8	Acceptably Valid
Category	Acceptably Valid	Acceptably Valid	Acceptably Valid	Acceptably Valid		

The validation results for the linguistic aspect indicate that the character education manual is sufficiently valid and suitable for use as a guide for lecturers in implementing character education based on local wisdom and integrated with Islamic values. Validators validated the presentation aspect to validators on June 16, 2022. The following table shows the assessment results from validators.

Table 10. Summary of Presentation Validation Results

Expert	Aspect			Overall Value	
	Technic	Supportive	Presentation	Score	Category
Score	75	100	100	90	Highly Valid
Category	Acceptably Valid	Highly Valid	Highly Valid		

The validation results for the presentation indicate that the character education manual is suitable for use as it falls under the category of highly valid as a guide for lecturers in implementing character education based on local wisdom and integrated with Islamic values. Validators provided validation for the graphic design aspect on June 17, 2022. Observers can see the assessment results from validators in the following table.

Table 11. Summary of Graphic Design Validation Results

Expert	Aspect			Overall Value	
	Size	Cover	Book Content	Score	Category
Score	75	78,5	78,8	65,2	Acceptably Valid
Category	Acceptably Valid	Highly Valid	Highly Valid		

The validation results for the graphic design aspect indicate that the character education manual is suitable for use as it falls under the category of acceptably valid, allowing the manual to implement character education based on local wisdom and integrated with Islamic values. Based on the validity testing results of the character education manual on content validity, language, presentation, and graphic design, one can conclude that users can utilize the textbook as all assessment categories are valid.

The research results indicate that implementing character education based on Islamic values and local wisdom can strengthen individual character and build social harmony. These findings are consistent with the view that quality character education should be based on religious values and local knowledge, providing a solid moral foundation for individuals to interact positively within society ([Hirsanuddin, 2021](#); [Hasudungan, 2020](#)). In the "Define" stage, findings revealed that most IAIN Palopo lecturers needed a character education guidebook integrated with Islamic values and local wisdom. It indicates a gap in pedagogical resources available to support character education efforts in the university. These findings align with literature emphasizing the importance of appropriate guidebooks or curricula to support character education implementation ([Muhammad et al., 2021](#); [Murwaningsih et al., 2020](#)).

Furthermore, it found that local wisdom values, as reflected in Luwu culture, provide a strong foundation for character development. Integrating these values into character education enriches students' learning experiences and strengthens local cultural identity. It aligns with the view that character education should reflect cultural context and local values to be practical and relevant for students ([Hidayati et al., 2020](#); [Hermino & Arifin, 2020](#); [Sadakah et al., 2020](#)). In the "Design" stage, findings revealed that the character education manual design had well-organized discussion structures and design specifications tailored to user needs. Validation of the manual by content, media, and language experts also indicated that the manual met the required validity standards. Thus, the conclusion drawn from this research is that the character education approach based on Islamic values and local wisdom has excellent potential to fill gaps in available character education resources and provide new insights into the development of inclusive and values-oriented pedagogy. The following steps are to ensure the effective implementation of this character education guidebook at IAIN Palopo and further test its impact on student character development.

CONCLUSION

The research into developing a character education manual at IAIN Palopo highlights the urgent need for educational resources that integrate Islamic values and local wisdom, addressing the predominant negative character traits observed among students. The process of defining, designing, and validating the manual, with inputs from lecturers, content, and design experts, underscores a comprehensive approach aimed at enriching the character education curriculum. This tailored guidebook not only aims to foster positive character development among students but also to preserve and promote cultural and religious values, reflecting a direct response to the educators' needs and the local educational context.

However, the true measure of the manual's effectiveness will be seen in its practical application and its impact on student character development over time. The initial positive validation results mark the beginning of a broader implementation phase that requires ongoing evaluation to assess and refine the guidebook's utility. Future studies should focus on the long-term outcomes of this character education approach, exploring its adaptability and potential application beyond IAIN Palopo to contribute to the broader field of character education and student development.

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The authors declare no funding and conflicts of interest for this research.

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