

Tawhidic Moral Ecology: A Framework for Character Education in Islamic Homeschooling

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Abstract

This study explores the process of internalizing the value of *tawhid* (the oneness of God) within Islamic homeschooling education in Bandar Lampung, Indonesia, through the theoretical framework of Thomas Lickona's moral development model, which encompasses three dimensions: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Employing a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. The findings reveal that *tawhidic* values are systematically implemented across all moral dimensions. In the *moral knowing* phase, children are guided to understand the concept of divine unity through *muzakarah* (dialogic learning), storytelling, nature contemplation (*tadabbur al-nature*), and problem-based learning. In the *moral feeling* phase, these values are internalized through modeling, habituation, and reflective dialogue, cultivating both emotional and spiritual awareness. In the *moral action* phase, *tawhid* is manifested in practical behavior through exemplary conduct, worship habituation, value dialogue (*hiwar al-qiyam*), assigned responsibilities, and community-based social projects. This study affirms that *tawhid* serves as the core of moral character formation within Islamic homeschooling—an integrative and contextually grounded framework for nurturing faith-based moral development in children.

1. Introduction

Character education constitutes one of the principal goals of the national education system. Within the framework of Islamic education, character formation cannot be separated from the foundation of *tawhid*, which places God at the center of moral and spiritual orientation. *Tawhid* is not merely a theological acknowledgment of divine oneness; it represents a value system that shapes the consciousness, emotions, and behavior of a Muslim in everyday life.

Islamic homeschooling serves as an alternative educational model that offers Muslim families the flexibility to integrate Islamic values into their children's learning experiences. This model facilitates personalized, reflective, and contextually grounded learning that aligns with the spiritual rhythm of the family. Within this context, the internalization of *tawhidic* values becomes the cornerstone for the development of holistic Islamic morality—encompassing cognitive (knowing), affective (feeling), and behavioral (action) dimensions.

This study aims to elucidate the process of internalizing *tawhid* values within Islamic homeschooling in Bandar Lampung through the lens of Thomas Lickona's theory, and to analyze how pedagogical methods, media, and

strategies contribute to children's moral development. The research extends Lickona's framework by introducing a transcendental dimension—the *tawhidic moral agent*—as its normative foundation.

Comparatively, the findings are situated within a cross-cultural perspective. Studies conducted in Turkey highlight Islamic family-centered character education rooted in religious practice and habituation. In Malaysia, research by Kaya and Aydin (2019) emphasizes spiritual reflection and faith-based social engagement. Global literature on character education indicates that effective moral education must integrate cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. Megawati and Dwi Sulisworo further assert that religious moral education should connect spirituality with moral rationality to achieve the wholeness of human personality.

Tawhidic morality thus functions as an integrative framework uniting the processes of knowing, feeling, and action while providing a transcendental dimension absent in Western humanistic models. The value of *tawhid* harmonizes rationality and spirituality within a unified epistemological framework, enabling individuals to perceive moral truth not merely through empirical experience but through the awareness of the ontological relationship between human beings and the Creator.

2. Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design, focusing on an in-depth understanding of the process of *tauhid* (Islamic monotheism) internalization within the specific context of Islamic homeschooling in Bandar Lampung. This approach allows for a rich, phenomenological, and contextual exploration of religious behaviors, values, and practices embedded within Muslim family life. According to Creswell (2013) and Yin (2017), qualitative case studies are particularly effective for uncovering complex social and moral processes through participants' meaning-making rather than through quantitative measurement of variables.

The research is grounded in an interpretivist and constructivist paradigm, in which the researcher serves as the primary instrument for data collection and interpretation. Reality is viewed as a social construct formed through interactions among participants within a value-laden homeschooling environment. Consequently, the study aims not at generalization, but at deep understanding and the transferability of meaning to other non-formal Islamic education contexts.

Data sources were categorized into three main types: in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. These were selected to obtain a comprehensive picture of the internalization of *tauhid* values in Islamic homeschooling. First, in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 parents (HS), 2 external tutors (TE), 2 administrators of the Muslim Homeschooler Community (PH), 3 local residents familiar with homeschooling activities (WS), and 5 students directly involved in the homeschooling programs (PD). These interviews aimed to elicit participants' perceptions, experiences, and reflections on *tauhid*-based learning practices. Each informant was selected purposively based on active involvement in family-based education. The interviews were semi-structured to enable flexible yet profound exploration. Second, observations were carried out in various learning activities, including *tadabbur alam* (nature reflection), Islamic storytelling, reflective dialogue, and *tauhid*-themed social projects. This method allowed the researcher to capture the dynamics of interaction among children, parents, and tutors directly. Third, documentation served as a supporting data source to reinforce findings from interviews and observations. The collected documents included the *Kisah Tauhid* syllabus, *ruhiyah* (spiritual) activity agendas, learning transcripts, and student worksheets.

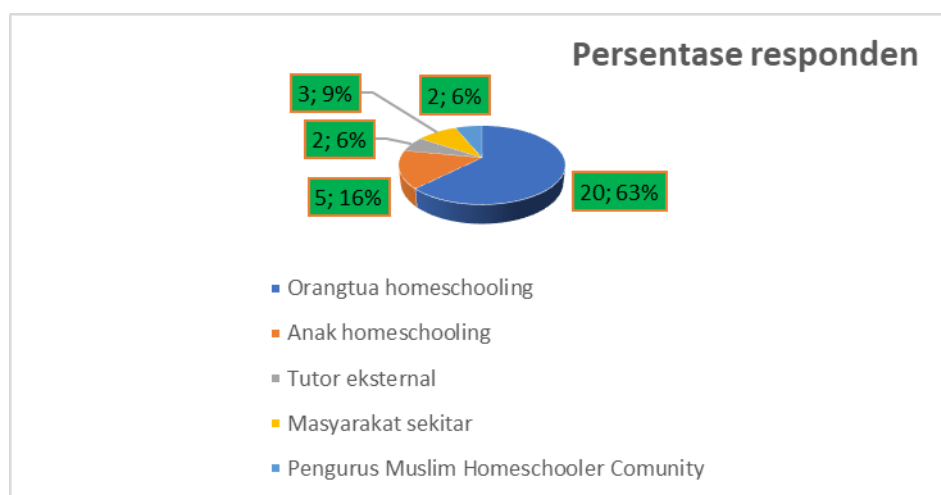


Figure 1. Percentage of Respondents

Beyond these three data sources, a triangulation strategy was employed to ensure credibility and consistency. Triangulation involved comparing findings across multiple data sources and timeframes. This approach follows the validation framework of Lincoln and Guba (1985), emphasizing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as key criteria for qualitative trustworthiness.

Data analysis followed a manual coding procedure consisting of three stages: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. 1) During *open coding*, the researcher identified units of meaning emerging from interview and observation narratives. 2) In *axial coding*, categories were grouped based on thematic relationships among key concepts such as *tauhid*, *role modeling*, and *habitual worship practices*. 3) Finally, *selective coding* was used to construct a theoretical narrative explaining how *tauhid* values are internalized within the three moral dimensions of knowing, feeling, and action. To ensure the validity of the findings, the study applied triangulation, member checking, and audit trails, following the trustworthiness criteria established by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Moral Knowing: Tauhid Knowledge as the Basis of Moral Rationality

The findings indicate that at the stage of *moral knowing*, parents and tutors construct an understanding of *tauhid* (the oneness of God) through both conceptual and narrative approaches. Children are guided to engage in dialogues about divine unity through prophetic stories that emphasize the principle of *tauhid*—the acknowledgment of Allah’s absolute oneness.

Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) rejected idol worship and affirmed that only Allah possesses ultimate power (Qur’an, Al-Anbiyā’ [21]: 51–70). Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) liberated the Children of Israel from Pharaoh through miracles granted by Allah, demonstrating absolute obedience to Him (Qur’an, Al-Qashash [28]: 38–42). Prophet Nuh (peace be upon him) urged his people to abandon polytheism (Qur’an, Hud [11]: 25–48), while Prophet Yunus (peace be upon him) surrendered himself to Allah from within the belly of the fish (Qur’an, Al-Anbiyā’ [21]: 87–88). Similarly, Prophets Hud and Salih (peace be upon them) admonished their people to worship none but Allah (Qur’an, Al-A’rāf [7]: 65–79). Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) proclaimed monotheism as the essence of Islamic teaching (Qur’an, Al-Ikhlāṣ [112]: 1–4).

Reflective observation (*tadabbur al-nature*) and dialogic learning were also employed to strengthen moral cognition. As one parent explained:

“We invite our children to observe nature as a sign of Allah’s greatness. They learn that every creation carries divine meaning.” (Interview, HS3, 2024)



Figure 2. Homeschooling children engaging in nature reflection (*tadabbur al-nature*) to contemplate the greatness of Allah.

The *storytelling* and *problem-based learning (PBL)* methods are applied in Islamic homeschooling to stimulate children’s critical thinking in understanding the relationship between faith and moral action. Through storytelling, children are introduced to prophetic narratives or exemplary figures as behavioral models. For instance, the story of Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) rejecting idol worship (Qur’an, *Al-Anbiyā’* [21]: 51–70) is narrated to children, who are then guided to analyze the rationale behind the Prophet’s actions and their implications for everyday moral conduct, such as courage and steadfastness in faith.

Meanwhile, PBL is implemented through moral scenarios drawn from family life, such as: “If a child sees their sibling taking money from their parents without permission, how should they respond?” Children are asked to identify the moral problem, evaluate possible responses, and select the solution that integrates faith and ethical behavior. This approach simultaneously cultivates critical reasoning and the internalization of *tauhid* values and good character within the lived experiences of the family context.

In this setting, children’s cognitive processes are not limited to rote memorization of dogma but oriented toward *meaning construction*—the reinterpretation of the concept of divine oneness (*tauhid*) in relation to real-life experiences. Observations reveal that when children are provided reflective space, they are able to link theological concepts with empirical phenomena, interpreting rain, plant growth, or the alternation of day and night as manifestations of Allah’s oneness. This cognitive mechanism represents a form of moral scaffolding, in which dialogic interaction functions as a bridge between *tauhidic* concepts and children’s moral reasoning. Moreover, the moral knowing dynamic in Islamic homeschooling exemplifies the principle of active moral cognition (Narvaez, 2019)—the capacity for moral reasoning shaped through emotional and reflective engagement. These findings reinforce De Muynck’s (2018) view that religious moral education does not end with value transmission but requires epistemic internalization, wherein children comprehend moral truth through their spiritual relationship with God.

This demonstrates that *tauhid*-based learning, through dialog and nature observation, operates as an epistemic encounter between rational and spiritual knowledge. In a global perspective, this model aligns with the *religious reasoning* approach in the Netherlands (De Muynck, 2018) and *faith-based reflective inquiry* in the United Kingdom (Halstead, 2020), both of which position transcendental values as the foundation of moral thought. However, the uniqueness of Islamic homeschooling in Bandar Lampung lies in its revelatory epistemology, in which moral rationality is not autonomous but bound to divine consciousness. Thus, *moral knowing* serves as the cognitive foundation for the formation of a reflective, value-oriented spiritual awareness that unites the spiritual and social dimensions of moral life.

Table 1. Summary of Empirical Findings on the Dimension of Moral Knowing (Tauhid Knowledge)

No	Internalization Method	Form of Implementation	Key Empirical Findings	Impact on Moral Knowing
1	Interactive Dialogue (<i>Muzakarah</i>)	Reflective discussions between children and parents on the meaning of worship and the oneness of Allah	Children demonstrate enhanced conceptual understanding and begin to articulate theological reasoning behind acts of worship	Strengthens rational thinking grounded in <i>tauhidic</i> values
2	Islamic Storytelling (<i>Qışşah Islāmiyyah</i>)	The story of Prophet Ibrahim’s search for God is delivered narratively and interactively	Children connect the narrative to social reality and exhibit heightened spiritual curiosity	Fosters knowledge construction rooted in faith-based exemplarity
3	Nature Reflection (<i>Tadabbur al-Nature</i>)	Direct observation of Allah’s creations in nature (gardens, beaches, orchards)	Children experience “natural spiritual encounters,” developing awe and gratitude	Enhances epistemic awareness of divine signs in the natural world
4	Islamic Problem-Based Learning (PBL)	Moral scenarios embedded with <i>tauhid</i> -based reflection during decision-making	Children link honesty, discipline, and responsibility with their faith in Allah	Develops moral reasoning grounded in faith and religious logic

Source: Researcher’s Field Interviews and Observations (2024)

These four methods constitute a cognitive moral scaffolding, through which theological understanding develops via reflective and dialogical experiences. This strategy aligns with the faith-based reasoning framework (De Muynck, 2018), which positions faith as a fundamental source of moral rationality.

3.2 Moral Feeling: Emotional Awareness and the Spirituality of *Tawhīd*

The moral feeling dimension within Islamic homeschooling is cultivated through habitual worship, parental exemplarity, and reflective activities. Children not only comprehend the concept of *tawhīd* cognitively but also internalize it emotionally through daily interactions and devotional practices. For instance, they are guided to

perform the five daily prayers, recite the Qur'an while reflecting on its meaning, and pray before and after meals (Interview, HS10, 2024). Such practices serve as an active acknowledgment of God's oneness, in which children realize that every act of goodness and conduct arises from devotion to Him. This spiritual sentiment shapes moral empathy—the capacity to experience goodness as an inner necessity. Psychopedagogically, this stage marks a transition from external consciousness (obedience driven by rules) to internal consciousness (obedience motivated by love and the recognition of divine unity).

This phenomenon aligns with the moral emotion development model, which emphasizes the role of positive emotions—such as gratitude, reverence, and love—in reinforcing moral commitment (Narvaez, 2019). Islamic homeschooling demonstrates that children's religious experiences are constructed through warm affective bonds with parents as moral exemplars. Consequently, *tawhīd* functions as an affective anchor—an emotional stabilizer that grounds children's moral behavior amid social dynamics.

The moral feeling dimension in the context of *tawhīd* reflects a synergy between spiritual affection and moral awareness. Conceptually, this process can be understood through the theory of spiritual affect regulation, wherein the value of *tawhīd* directs emotions to remain balanced and imbued with devotional meaning. This finding resonates with Gondal's (2023) research on Islamic affective education, which cultivates emotional *tawakkul*—the ability to attain serenity through awareness of God's presence. In this context, emotions such as fear, love, and hope are not passive states but moral mechanisms that guide prosocial behavior. Hence, Islamic homeschooling contributes to the formation of moral-emotional coherence deeply rooted in spiritual values.

Table 2. Methods for Developing Moral Feeling (Spiritual Affection of *Tawhīd*)

No	Method	Practical Implementation	Children's Emotional Responses	Impact on the Formation of Moral Feeling
1	Role Modeling	Parents demonstrate patience, sincerity, and discipline in worship practices.	Children spontaneously imitate religious behaviors; spiritual empathy begins to emerge	Strengthens emotional identification and religious affection.
2	Habituation (Routine Practice)	Regular activities such as congregational prayer, daily supplications, and charity	Children feel calm and grateful; exhibit spiritual discipline.	Develops emotional stability and a sense of gratitude in religious activities.
3	Reflective Dialogue	Conversations about experiences of loss or life trials are connected to the power and will of God.	Children express feelings of reverence and love toward God.	Cultivates inner awareness and deep spiritual consciousness.

Source: Homeschooling Activity Documentation (2024)

This affective dimension affirms that *moral feeling* is not merely emotional but constitutes **spiritual affectivity**—a synthesis of sentiment, faith, and moral meaning. It aligns with the *moral empathy development* model (Narvaez, 2019), which emphasizes the intrinsic relationship between emotion and moral consciousness.

3.3 Moral Action: The Actualization of *Tawhīd* in Social Behavior

At the *moral action* stage, children are encouraged to translate the values of *tawhīd* into tangible social actions. This manifests concretely in acts of charity, household responsibilities, and collaborative activities among homeschooling families. As one parent described, "After learning the story of Prophet Ibrahim, they took the initiative to help neighbors in need without being told" (Interview, HS6, 2024). Similarly, HS3 reported that their child now goes to the mosque whenever the call to prayer is heard, without any prompting. HS7 further noted that their child performs voluntary *duha* prayers with their younger siblings and now behaves courteously toward guests at home—an outcome shaped by the consistent example set by both parents in speech and conduct (Interview, HS7, 2024).

The internalization of values at this stage illustrates that the child's moral development has reached the level of faith-driven behavior—that is, moral actions grounded in the consciousness of faith rather than the anticipation of reward or fear of punishment. Homeschooling thus serves as a formative environment for cultivating spiritually grounded moral autonomy, where a child's ethical decisions arise from *tawhīdic* awareness rather than external compulsion.



Figure 3. Children performing the *Duha* prayer together with their siblings out of their own volition.

Furthermore, **moral action** was also reflected in the children's voluntary engagement in maintaining household cleanliness. They regularly collected litter around the house and tidied up toys or belongings without being told. *"The children automatically clean the house whenever they see trash or messy toys. They call it part of worship and a trust to preserve cleanliness, because Allah is beautiful and loves beauty"* (Interview, HS3, 2024). Research documentation shows a daily schedule listing "house cleaning" as part of their routine (Research Documentation, 2024).

Another example of moral action was the children's participation in religious social activities, such as collaborating with other homeschooling families to donate part of their allowance to orphanages. *"They were the ones who suggested setting aside some of their pocket money to donate to orphans or orphanages. We only facilitated it—the initiative came from them,"* (Interview, HS2, 2024). This finding was reinforced by photo documentation of visits to orphanages (Research Documentation, 2024).

Additionally, some children showed a strong desire to share their knowledge with others, for instance, teaching *Qur'an* memorization techniques to peers. *"My child was invited to give a short talk on how to memorize and retain Qur'anic verses during a Ramadan camp,"* (Interview, HS4, 2024). This moment was captured in the researcher's documentation of homeschooling children actively participating in a *pesantren kilat* program (Research Documentation, 2024).



Figure. 5 A homeschooling child sharing knowledge during a *Pesantren Kilat* (Islamic short-course) activity.

These findings indicate that the internalization of *tawhid* fosters faith-driven prosocial behavior, rather than actions motivated by external pressure. This conclusion aligns with Tsang's (2021) research, which emphasizes that instilling religious values through social habituation and community projects effectively cultivates children's moral responsibility. Similarly, Hardya's (2022) study on the influence of religious education on adolescent behavior confirms that faith-based education nurtures self-control and intrinsic motivation to do

good. Thus, the actualization of *tawhidic* values at the moral action stage signifies the formation of spiritually grounded moral autonomy—that is, moral decision-making derived from faith-consciousness rather than from external rewards or punishments.

Conceptually, these results reinforce the notion that *tawhid* functions as an integrative moral schema, uniting the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of morality. Within the framework of moral integration theory, *tawhidic* values act as the moral center of gravity that orients thinking, feeling, and acting toward spiritual unity. The *moral action* phase thus represents the transformation of spiritual values into tangible social ethics, embodying the concept of tawhidic praxis—social actions that manifest awareness of divine oneness in human relations. Pedagogically, this approach resonates with Narvaez's (2019) *faith-in-action* model and Halstead's (2021) concept of *religious moral agency*, both emphasizing that genuine moral values must be realized through concrete action. Homeschooling children engaged in social and charitable activities exemplify moral coherence between belief and behavior, making *tawhid* not merely a normative ideal, but a profound source of ethical orientation.

Table 3. Forms of Moral Action Actualization (Tawhidic Behavior among Children)

No	Method	Practical Activities	Indicators of Moral Action	Field Observation Notes
1	Role Modeling (<i>Uswah Ḥasanah</i>)	The child imitates polite behavior, keeps promises, and maintains regular prayer.	The child demonstrates consistent moral conduct in social interactions.	Parents serve as a <i>living moral model</i> in daily life.
2	Worship Habituation	The child performs prayer without being instructed and reads the Qur'an regularly.	A sense of spiritual responsibility and disciplined worship emerges.	Consistency is more evident in families with structured religious routines.
3	Value-Based Dialogue (<i>Hiwar Tawhid</i>)	Reflective discussions following social or natural events.	The child interprets events through a theological lens and responds with empathy.	Spiritual awareness becomes integrated into moral decision-making.
4	Assignment of Responsibility	The child leads prayers, becomes an imam, or organizes worship schedules.	The child demonstrates <i>moral agency</i> and leadership.	Reflective behavior increases; responsibility is consciously accepted as a trust (<i>amanah</i>)
5	Social Project Activities	Charity efforts, knowledge-sharing, or environmental cleanliness initiatives.	The child acts altruistically without external prompting.	Social behavior is rooted in tawhid consciousness (<i>faith-driven action</i>).

Source: Results of Observation, Interviews, and Documentation (2024)

Tauhidic moral action is formed through *embodied faith*—a mode of spiritual internalization manifested in concrete social behavior. This concept extends Lickona's moral development theory by introducing a transcendental dimension that bridges faith and public ethics.

The findings of this study indicate that the process of internalizing the value of *tauḥid* within Islamic homeschooling operates integratively through the three moral dimensions formulated by Thomas Lickona—moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. These dimensions do not function independently but rather mutually reinforce one another in shaping *tauḥidic consciousness*—a divine-centered awareness that serves as the foundation of students' moral character.

Field evidence demonstrates that the cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of children's moral development converge toward a single spiritual orientation: the recognition of Allah's oneness as the ultimate source of value and morality.

A conceptual synthesis of these findings is presented in Table 4 below, illustrating the interrelation between developmental focus, psychopedagogical mechanisms, and moral outcomes within each dimension, as well as their alignment with contemporary global theories of moral education.

Table 4. Theoretical Synthesis: Integration of the Three Moral Dimensions in the Perspective of Tauhidic Character Education

No	Dimension	Focus of Development	Psychopedagogical Mechanism	Moral Outcome	Global Relevance
1	Moral Knowing	Theological rationality	Reflective dialogue and natural observation	Cognitive understanding based on faith	Supports faith-based reasoning (De Muynck, 2018)
2	Moral Feeling	Spiritual affection	Role modeling and emotional habituation	Empathy, love, and fear of Allah	In line with moral empathy theory (Narvaez, 2019)
3	Moral Action	Faith-based social behavior	Social projects and moral responsibility	Consistency of faith in real-life actions	Parallel with religious moral agency (Halstead, 2021)

Source: Research Results (2024).

These three dimensions constitute a tauhidic moral ecology—a character education system that unifies knowledge, emotion, and action under divine consciousness. This model is transferable and can be applied within minority Islamic education contexts (such as in Europe and Australia) through appropriate adaptation to local cultural frameworks.

4. Conclusion and Implications

The internalization of *tauhid* values within Islamic homeschooling in Bandar Lampung encompasses the three dimensions of moral development as articulated by Thomas Lickona: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. This process is realized through interactive dialogue, storytelling, *tadabbur al-nature* (spiritual reflection on nature), and problem-based learning, all of which strengthen the child's conceptual understanding. The values of *tauhid* are then internalized through parental modeling, habituation, and reflective dialogue, and are manifested in concrete actions such as habitual worship, social responsibility, and faith-driven community projects.

Tauhidic morality functions as both a cognitive-affective integrator and a transcendental dimension that provides spiritual direction for character formation. Accordingly, this study not only extends Lickona's moral development theory but also offers an Islamic character education model rooted in *tauhidic consciousness* as the foundation of authentic morality. The concept of *Tauhidic Character Education* holds significant relevance in the context of Muslim minority societies, such as those in Europe and Australia. *Tauhid*-based education can serve as a mechanism for strengthening a religious identity that is both inclusive and adaptive, balancing social openness with spiritual loyalty.

The findings of this study provide direct contributions to the development of non-formal Islamic education policy in Indonesia. The model of *tauhid* value internalization through homeschooling can be adapted to community-based educational institutions, Qur'anic learning centers (*Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an*), and Islamic family learning hubs. As a qualitative inquiry, the results of this research are transferable rather than generalizable. To enhance external validity and assess the long-term effects of *tauhid*-based character education, future studies are recommended to employ mixed-methods or longitudinal research designs.

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Conflict of Interest

Authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of the paper.

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