

## **ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF DICTIONARY AT SECONDARY LEVEL BY PAKISTANI LEARNERS**

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**Abstract:** The dictionary usage has the potential to make the reader to be able to self-teaching opportunities for enhancing different skills such as reading, spelling and general phonological skills. The objective of this research paper is to analyze the use of dictionary by the students at secondary level to enhance their skill. For this purpose, we develop a questionnaire and collected data from 200 respondents of different schools of District Khanewal. Our research findings show that there is limited use of dictionary by students and teachers particularly in those schools which are situated in rural areas because of unavailability of internet facilities and latest copies of dictionaries in hard form.

**Key words:** Use of bilingual and monolingual dictionaries, Pakistani ESL learners in classrooms, secondary level, Remedial Measures

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## **1. INTRODUCTION:**

Dictionary can be regarded as the common learning tool for commanding over a foreign language. There are many types of dictionaries in learning language. A dictionary comprises the inventory of the words and cemetery of words. The dictionary comprises two basic things the dictionary itself and its users. There are two main elements in its usage for example how to use the dictionaries and relevant skills to use for some specific purposes. Research works and publishing literature companies have been making efforts to compile decent easy access and better dictionaries. Dictionary can be called the building blocks without which no communication can be possible. When the second language learners and the same language learners are confronted with new words, they consider dictionaries as the possible way of resolving problems. Many researchers acknowledge that frequent use of dictionaries can affect short term memory and it can create problems in comprehending the text. In spite of criticism dictionaries consulting play an important role in enhancing storage of words and retention of words which are left being difficult. China is pioneer in compiling dictionary in reign of Han Dynasty. Erya and Shouwen is the main pillar of lexicography and linguistics. Compiling of Sanskrit dictionaries many million years ago were the origin of native lexicography in Indian language. There are three main Indian lexicographic traditions Nighantu, Kosha, and Nirukta. Nighantu is lexicon. It disclosed hidden words from sacred literature. A Kosha is a store of words. The earliest Kosha was in form in verse. It consisted of nouns not verbs. It was used by the poets especially. An epic poet Abu Mansur Ali ibn Ahmad Asadi Tusi compiled the Loghat-e-Force. In this dictionary words were arranged according to the last letter which was very useful for poets in finding suitable rhymes.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

The above discussion leads to the main hindrances in using dictionaries in ESL classroom at secondary level. The students and teachers both alike find difficulties while using the dictionaries during the lesson. They are accustomed to using teacher guides for searching the meanings of difficult words instead of using dictionaries. They did not use dictionary for improving pronunciation, spellings, grammar and vocabulary building. Many factors are responsible in removing the hurdles. Mother and national language has proved a nail in its coffin. The use of dictionaries is not a child play. To learn the use of dictionary without training is against the grain. The learners of English should be aware the rules of using dictionary through and through.

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study are given below:

1. To investigate the dictionary using of Secondary School Students,
2. To know the rate of using dictionary by students at secondary school level,
3. To investigate the problems faced by secondary school students while using dictionary.

## **1.4 Research questions:**

The research questions of this study are given below:

1. Do secondary school teachers & students consult dictionaries?
2. How often secondary school students consult dictionaries?
3. In which situation do the ESL students feel the need to consult dictionaries?
4. What are the problems of the students which they face while using dictionary?
5. What is the impact of dictionary using on vocabulary competence of ESL learners?

### **1.5 Significance of study:**

English has become powerful medium of instruction. It has been adopted as compulsory subject in Pakistani education. Many efforts have been made to compete the challenge in Pakistan. The native speakers are enjoying to rule over the whole world. The English people came to sub-continent for trading. They found the suitable condition of their authority and overcame India. Now it has become the matter of survival. There are many hurdles its implication in Pakistani society. Many challenges are traced in learning. The learners are trying their best but in vain. The devotion of the will probes into the target language translation of Pakistani students. It is not only the print dictionary but also the electronic dictionary. (1) The methods in which the learners use English Urdu dictionary. (2) The reference tools which are used in translation. (3) How will be more effective. It will be consisted of questionnaire, interview and think aloud protocol and the performance exercise.

### **1.6 Delimitations**

The researcher will delimit his research in some secondary and higher secondary schools of Tehsil Mian Channu. Some schools are located in city area while some schools are situated in away from city. All these schools are government schools of both types male and female.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW:**

For this purpose, Knight (1994) found out the usability about the usage of dictionaries. In addition to Hayati and Pour Mohammdi (2005) interrogated the main impact of using the dictionary not in speaking but in reading comprehension can be improved. This experiment is held in Shahid Chamran University of Ahwaz in Iran. Another study by Laufer & Levitzcky-Avaid (2006) showed the supremacy of bilingual dictionary, monolingual and bilingual zed. About the importance of

dictionary McCarthy (1990) said that there is no meaningful way to express a wider range of meanings without words. Cohen (1988) claimed in his research that there is no harm in consulting dictionary in learning the second language. Hulstijn, Hollander & Greidanus, (1996) unanimously pointed out that it was not only facilitation in vocabulary learning but for understanding the text. Krashen (1993) had sharpened the usability of the dictionary that the students preferred carrying dictionary not a grammar book during the visit. Breen and Mann (1997) declared that autonomous learners who availed the chances outside the class acting upon the suggestions of teachers. Landau (1984) said about dictionary certified definition that dictionaries were such books as contained lists of organized and alphabetical arrangements. Fraser (1999) a pioneer lexicographer pointed out those learners found out unknown word in dictionary while reading text. Lndau (1984) expressed that dictionaries were framed in a specific way for. ESL students. For example, they were consist of providing detailed information on pronunciation, verb patterns, collocations, definitions in simple way or in a controlled vocabulary. Miller (2006) pointed out that the use of dictionary improved the stock of words while writing. Bejoint, (2000) declared dictionary as the thesaurus of all the collective knowledge of the community. Cowie, (1999) said that the early 1980s, there had been rapid development of a new field of dictionary users and uses. Tono (2001) who is the central figure said that there were three elements the language, lexicographer and the dictionary which were interacted one another. Tomaszczyk (1979) researched on dictionaries and users and uses. It is considered the first survey of the dictionary needs for the learners of the new language. In this competition 449 learners participated but mostly of them were EFL students. They were interested in finding meaning of difficult words, knowing the correct spellings, the articulation of the words, general information of the

grammar; they also showed interest in the use of bilingual dictionary instead of monolingual dictionary. Baxter,J (1980) The dictionary and vocabulary behavior :a single word or a handful? The survey was in japan in which it was experimented that the learners had used lot of bilingual dictionary instead of monolingual dictionary. The reason of that was the too difficult way of comprehending the meaning of a word. Despite the results Baxter was in favor of monolingual dictionary because the monolingual dictionary can be helpful in oral fluency and he considered monolingual dictionary as the effective tool of learning language. It was much speculated but more appreciated. Bejoint (1980) made the base of two popular researchers Baxter (1980) and Tomaszczyk (1979) but his much more attention was given to bilingual dictionary. They claimed that they used bilingual dictionary for encoding and decoding and in writing not in speaking medium. They mostly searched out verbs not adverbs and prepositions. Tono (1987) Atkins &Varantola (1998) and Lew (2012) continued this practice. Jain, M (1981) experimented on meanings in the foreign language dictionary. Ard,J (1982) observed the effects of bilingual dictionary usage on EFL students during the writing a passage. Bensoussan (1984) ,R.Weiss made experiments on the effect of dictionary usage on EFL test performance and a comparison between learners and students attitude and expectations. . These finding proved prompting for further studies to Tono (1989) and Nesi and Meara (1991). Tono, Y (2011) developed a study on application of eye –tracking in EFL learner’s dictionary look up process research. Dziemianko, A (2012) studied the usefulness of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries in papers and electronic form .He compared on line version that would enhance production, retention and collocations. Taylor (1988) experimented a small scale dictionary usage on the group of 122 students at the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong. It was supposed that bilingual dictionary had

been using since the two monolingual dictionaries. Borthwick Gilchrist lived in Scotland and worked in Edinburgh as a doctor. He joined East India Company as assistant surgeon. He was living north of India when he took interest in Hindustani language. He mostly confronted with people of different fields of life. He learnt better language from indigenous people especially soldiers. His dictionary came to the hands of people in Calcutta and London in 1796. The founder of Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu Adab India created the Standard English Urdu Dictionary in 1937. He was considered Samuel Johnson of Urdu literature. Kitabistan's English- English –Urdu dictionary was produced by professor Basher Ahmad in 1957. In 1960 English into English and Urdu dictionary was published by Ferozsons which was a famous publishing company. Professor Kalimuddin compiled a dictionary consists of six volumes. The name of that dictionary was Jami English dictionary. Mr. Shanul Haq Haqqee compiled an English Urdu dictionary. It was very latest. It was published in 2003. Its base was on concise oxford dictionary. Bejoint, (2000); Hartmann, (2001); Kirkness (2004) discussed the main difference in different types of dictionary. In the same way Bejoint (2000) made a list of different types of dictionaries e.g. general and specialized dictionaries, monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, encyclopedic and language dictionaries, foreign learners' and native speaker dictionaries, the dictionaries for adult and dictionaries for children. Prichard (2008) was of the view that the learners were given the proper training how to use the dictionaries.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research will contribute to the process of dictionary usage in learning the second language for English translation. There are four steps in this regard. Firstly, how the learners think about the dictionary use. Secondly, what is the actual use of

it? Thirdly, the effective result of its usage and fourthly, the discussion of results will be implicated.

### **3.1 Subject and Setting:**

The research methodology related with the learners of ESL and use of dictionary to know and enhance the vocabulary of second language learning process. The present study consists of seven secondary schools located in Khanewal District in Punjab Pakistan. The age ratio in secondary school students is seventeen to eighteen years and combination of male and female having with arts and science subjects. English subject is compulsory in Pakistan being an international language. The students have been studying English as second language since the nursery class along with the Urdu language. Their English language proficiency is not very appreciable. In 5<sup>th</sup> class PEC Exam and 8<sup>th</sup> PEC Exam their scoring is pass marks in English language papers in spite of the hard work of teachers. Most of them are interested in improving their writing and speaking skill in English. They know the importance of English. They know that they can be promoted in advance classes without passing English. They want to learn English adopting some activities. But they need short cut method to improve English.

### **3.2 Participants:**

The participants in this study were 200 English learners of secondary schools of district Khanewal tehsil Mian channu. They were the students of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> classes and the relevant teachers who were mostly master degree holders but not masters in English subject. The students were arts and science groups. The English language was compulsory for the both groups for passing matric exams. Most of the participants were between 15 to 16 years old. There were similar numbers of male and female. All the students had been studying English since nursery class. They were

considered that they were not aware of new words of English before the study. They were given list of unknown words in the vocabulary pretest.

### **3.4 Research procedure**

For the implementation of these research tools (questionnaire and interview) they were applied on seven secondary level students which located in Tehsil Miachannu district Khanewl. The questionnaire took place in the students' class room. They were filled by the students individually. The interviews were held with teachers and the purpose was to know about teachers' habits of training the students for dictionary use. The finding and results were then compiled in the form tables.

### **4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:**

The results are shown in table 1:

**Table 1. Words for 9<sup>th</sup> Class**

<b>Nouns</b>	<b>Verbs</b>	<b>Adverbs</b>	<b>Adjectives</b>	<b>Abstract Nouns</b>
Participant	Takes	Violently	Green	Pain
Akram	Create	Loudly	Smell	Cruel
Worker	Elaborate	Slowly	Large	Beauty
City	Broadcast	Carefully	Tall	Headache
Road	View	Gradually	Thick	Intelligent
Town	Digests	Tomorrow	Thin	Ugly

### **Discussion:**

In the case of 10<sup>th</sup> class students, I selected 18 words randomly from the English text book. They were provided these words on a paper and they were asked

to identify these words with simple and easy meanings falling in different categories for example nouns and verbs, adjective, adverb and pronouns.

**Table 2 Correct use of Verbs, Adverbs and Adjectives by 10<sup>th</sup> class**

<b>Noun</b>	<b>Verbs</b>	<b>Adverbs</b>	<b>Adjectives</b>	<b>Pronouns</b>	<b>Proper Nouns</b>
Pen	Revolve	Neatly	White	Him	Quaid-e-Azam
Papers	Respect	Cleanly	Circle	They	Multan
Network	Mean	Today	Hard	Your	Lahore

#### **4.1 Vocabulary Tasks:**

This assignment was designed to check the learning ability of the learners in vocabulary learning of foreign language and the use of dictionary might influence the way in which new words for vocabulary were required. For this purpose different passages of English text were assigned to the students to check the learning process from the previous words before dictionary and after dictionary and guessing meanings.

**Table 3: Correct guessed words meaning 9<sup>th</sup> class**

Sturdy	Reeled	Chivalr y	Executio n	Surety	Aquifer s	Depleted
Enhance	Escalate	Fossils	Integrity	Vulnerabl e	Intensiv e	Significantl y
Cultivatio n	Populou s	Supplie s	Labour	Fertilizer	Escape	Orphan

Recapture	Trial	Convict	Attempt	Aspiratio n		
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**Table 4 Gussed words of 10<sup>th</sup> class**

Association	Celebratio n	Customar y	Lunar	Partake	Recipient
Reinvigorat e	Symbolize	Broadcast	Coverag e	Distinct	Leisure
Luxury	Omit	Proficient	Skip	Aptitude	Consideratio n
Dynamic	Innovative	Decade	Demise	Loathe	Negate
Prevail	Revelation	Shelter	Merely	Resultantl y	Rewarding
Significance	Trends	Beaming	Blog		

A passage from the 9<sup>th</sup> class was assigned to the students of Government High School 124/15-L for translation and they were not provided any kind of dictionary and other helping guides. The result of 36 students of both arts and science was as under.

**Table 5 Translation Tasks for the 9<sup>th</sup> class**

Students ratio	Correct translation percentage	guessing meaning percentage
4	60%	40%
10	35%	15%
12	20%	5%
10	2%	0%

**Discussion:**

Mostly teachers used mobile phone dictionary consuming much time in translating the article. They were unable to prove exact translation which was required. This part of research will display the profound results which were collected by the students by interview and questionnaires. It is shown in percentage of students' responses for the items. In the delimited schools of Tehsil Mian Chanu, the usage of dictionary is little the students' attitude is not satisfactory.

**Table 6: Instruction about dictionary usage**

Statement of the Questions	Agree		Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%
Have you learnt in class use of dictionary?	50	40.3	74	59.7
Have you got competency in dictionary use?	12	9.7	112	90.3
I know how to consult dictionary.	80	65	44	35
I started dictionary at sixth class.	13	10.5	111	89.5
I started dictionary at seventh class.	20	16	104	83.87

I started to consult dictionary at secondary level.	48	38.7	76	61.3
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**Discussion:**

This table simply shows about the question in yes/no. The first question shows that at secondary level the students are provided only superficially instruction about the dictionary usage. They reported that very low number of students is trained at secondary level on the dictionary use. This presentation shows that instructors are unable to become aware the significance of the dictionary. The second part shows the recommendation of the first dictionary. It shows their independence interest dependent interest in purchasing dictionary. Table 2 shows the involvement of others in the recommendation of the dictionary in learning a new language and enhancing previous knowledge.

**Table 7: Why is dictionary purchased?**

Statement of the Questions	Agree		Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%
My teacher recommended dictionary.	78	62.9	46	37.1
Bookshop recommendation	36	29	88	7
My parents recommended it	46	37	78	63
My friend recommended it	12	9.7	112	90.3
I decided to use internet for it	5	4	119	96
I received dictionary as gift	0	0	124	100

**Discussion:**

This table shows the main role of teachers in recommending dictionary. The second role of dictionary about buying it is booksellers. They have to sale it and there is no their idea about the dictionary purchasing. Parents and friends can be interrupted in purchasing a dictionary. Some students claim that in the beginning they were hesitant to have a dictionary but with the passage of time they became familiar with the effects of the dictionary usage. One respondent became delighted when I presented him with a mini pocket dictionary.

**Table 8: Attitude towards dictionary**

Statement of the Questions	Agree		Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%
Dictionary is not my favorite book	44	35	80	65
I consult dictionary during lesson	62	50	62	50
Dictionary is a valueless tool for me.	74	59.7	50	40.3
It is helping book in exams.	55	44.4	69	55.6
Satisfaction of dictionary using in class	81	65	43	35

**Discussion:**

The question no 12 shows that majority of the students do not like the use of dictionary in the classroom. In the response of 13 questions the respondents consider it as an interruption its usage during the lesson. This activity demands much time. Question 14 shows that some respondents did not consider dictionary as a value able learning tool while mostly respondents believe that dictionary is a value able learning tool. In response of question no 15 the majority of the students acknowledge that they never use dictionary in exams. They considered it as the wastage of time.

**Table 9: Dictionary types according to different languages**

Statement of the Questions	Agree		Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%
Bilingual dictionary is my favorite one	114	91.9	10	8.1
E-bilingual dictionary is my favorite dictionary	90	72.5	34	27.5
I like print bilingual dictionary	82	66.1	42	33.9
I like monolingual dictionary	50	40.3	74	59.7

**Discussion:**

ESL learners prefer bilingual dictionary. The use of bilingual dictionary is greater than the monolingual dictionaries. The bilingual dictionary is preferable to monolingual dictionary. The bilingual dictionary is favorite not only proficient but also advanced learners. The ESL learner feels secure while translating and explaining. There is a major obstacle in using monolingual dictionary as the learners cannot easily understand the definition.

**4.6.The attitude towards bilingual dictionary**

ESL learners use bilingual dictionary instead of monolingual dictionary. But there is a problem which is pointed out by one interviewee that sometime it provides uncommon words. Then they compare the word with monolingual to check either it is common or uncommon. The bilingualized is in fact the hybrid of monolingual dictionary created for native speakers and foreign language learners. According to Laufer (1997) the bilingualized dictionary contains monolingual word then converts into the learner's mother tongue.

**Table 10: Dictionary use according to Format:**

Statement of the Questions	Agree		Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%
I like paper dictionary	56	42.2	68	54.8
I like electronic dictionary	100	80.6	24	19.4
I like on line dictionary	21	16.9	103	83.1

Majority of students take interest in print and electronic dictionaries and bilingual dictionaries rather than voiced dictionary.

#### **4.8 Dictionary usage and class activity**

The purposes of this section are the dictionary use. It points out how the ESL learners consult dictionaries on four basic skills

**Table 11: Consulting of dictionary on four basic skills.**

Statement of the Questions	Agree		Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%
Dictionary is used during/after the lesson	14	11.3	110	88.7
Dictionary is used reading an English text	85	68.5	39	31.5
Dictionary is used while writing	66	53.2	58	46.8
Dictionary is used while speaking	24	19.3	100	80.7
Dictionary is used for translation	115	92.7	9	7.3

#### **Discussion:**

This survey shows that during the reading text book the use of dictionary is very necessary. It is evident that students use dictionaries for translation activities and some written assignment.

**Table 12: Dictionary usage for different information**

Statement of the Questions	Agree		Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%
Dictionary is used to lookup meanings	108	87	16	12.9
Dictionary is used for synonyms	19	15.3	105	84.7
Dictionary is used for antonyms	19	15.3	105	84.7
Dictionary is used to check spellings	89	72	35	28
Dictionary is used for pronunciation	65	52.4	59	47.6
Dictionary is used for certain words	24	19.4	100	80.6
Dictionary is used for parts of speech	6	4.6	118	95.2
Dictionary is used for etymology	5	4	119	96
Dictionary is used to know the word common	23	18.5	101	81.5
Dictionary is used to check words phrases	5	4	119	96
Dictionary is used to check the grammatical functions	21	16.9	103	83.1

The table shows that dictionary is used to look up meanings, spellings, pronunciation, examples, synonyms, antonym, derivation and etymology. It is confirmed that dictionary is used to earn words.

**Table 13: Problems in using dictionary**

Statement of the Questions	Agree		Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%
Word seeking is difficult for me	83	66.9	41	33.1
Comprehending definition is tough job	74	59.7	50	40.3

Identification of right meaning is tough task	97	78.2	27	21.8
Finding exact information is not easy	37	29.8	87	70.2
Unavailability of dictionary	40	32.2	84	67.8
Dictionary has insufficient information	32	25.8	92	74.2
Required much time in consulting dictionary	30	24.2	94	75.8
Shortage of example in dictionary	54	43.5	68	46.5
Unclear examples	14	11.3	110	88.7
Unclear pronunciation information	68	54.8	56	45.2

The table displays that the finding of right word meaning with in an entry is the most problematic issue for the second language learners especially in Pakistan. Some interviewees pointed out that they were unable to seek exact meanings of difficult words such as technical words and words in newspapers in their dictionary lake of training and practice. This shows that the dictionaries are not up dated with the time.

#### **4.11 Teacher's Questionnaire Results:**

##### **4.11.1 Competency and confidence can be restored through dictionary using.**

The teachers who are teaching English to 9<sup>th</sup> class have admitted that the use of dictionary is very effective in the class and their ratio is 75%.its usage provides the students competency and confidence. The 20% are uncertain in its effectiveness. And only 5% are disagreed.

##### **4.11.2 I am in favor of using monolingual dictionary:**

The use of monolingual dictionary in the class was supported by 85% teachers. Only 15% teachers were uncertain in the favor of the dictionary. The teachers' preference goes to monolingual dictionary.

##### **4.11.3 Can the use of dictionary invalidate the exams?**

In the response of 4<sup>th</sup> question, the only 20 % teacher thinks that the usage of dictionary cannot interrupt the exam values. The 25 % teachers are uncertain in favor of dictionary usage. 45% teachers are disagreed in the use of monolingual dictionary. 10 % teachers are sitting on the fence in this regard.

**4.11.4 The use of dictionary can be helpful in learning of students.** As long as the question is concerned the sayings of the teachers are at cross purposes. They have different opinions about this statement. 55 % teachers are agreed and 20% are not certain. Only 15% teachers are disagreed.

**4.11.5 The students are competent in using monolingual dictionary**

In response of the question, the teachers believe in the competency of their students while using the monolingual dictionary. 75 % teachers are agreed. 15 % teachers are not certain in this regard. 10% teachers are no agreed.

**4.11.6 The students need much training how to use the dictionary**

In the response of the question 75 % teachers are agreed in giving training. Only 5 % teachers are not certain to provide the training. 20 % teachers are disagreed. The researches show that the training of the students is very important. These findings show that the teachers force the students to use and encourage in using monolingual dictionary. But the teachers do not try to train the student to know how to use the dictionary.

**4.11.7 Encouraging the students using both the dictionary monolingual and bilingual dictionaries**

Coming to the conclusion on the use of the both dictionaries in the class room, 90 % teachers are agreed and 10 % teachers are disagreed. Majority of the teachers are in favor of the use of the monolingual dictionary. They encourage the students to use monolingual dictionary. 90% teachers are in favor of the use of monolingual

dictionary. On the contrary the teachers are agreed on using the both dictionaries in the classroom in learning process.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

Finally, it can be said that there is lack of training. In our concerning schools there are bilingual dictionaries such as kitabistan, Feroz Sons, and mini pocket dictionary. There is no use of advanced learners' dictionary. If there is present, it is in shelf. Online dictionary are not used in rural areas because there no availability of internet connection. There are old courses which are taught in schools. So the teachers are used to the old books teaching again and again. Our findings reveals that there is limited use of dictionaries at schools' level.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Qualified, passionate devoted and trained teachers should be appointed at very early level in schools.
- The habit of consulting dictionary should be promoted.
- Competition on pronunciation should be conducted and mistakes should be shown by consulting dictionary.
- Dictionary should be used in classroom daily.
- The availability of different kinds of dictionaries should be assured.
- Electronic and print dictionaries should be use at school level.

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#### **CONTRIBUTION OF AUTHORS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

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This research work was carried out in collaboration among three authors.

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All three authors read the manuscript carefully and declared no conflict of interest with any person or institution.

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