



ASSESSMENT OF PRINCIPAL PLANNING FOR RESUMPTION OF A NEW ACADEMIC SESSION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract:

The study focused on the assessment of principal planning for the resumption of a new academic session in public secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria. The researcher employed a survey research method to obtain data from principals and teachers. The schools used for the study were randomly selected through a simple random sampling technique. All the principals in the sampled schools were included in the study, while the teachers were randomly selected by ballot. Self-constructed instruments - Planning for School Resumption in a New Academic Session (PSRNAS) and Teachers Assessment of Principals Planning for School Resumption in New Academic Session (TAPSRNAS) questionnaires were used to gather the data. The instruments were validated by an expert in test construction and one professor in the Department of Educational Management and Foundations at Delta State University, Abraka. Two research questions were raised, and a hypothesis was tested at a 0.05 level of significance. Data were analysed with percentages and a t-test. The findings showed that principals do not adequately prepare for school resumption; teachers' responses also indicated that principals do not make adequate plans before school resumption. The hypothesis was rejected, as there was no significant difference between teachers' and principals' responses regarding the level of planning for school resumption. The paper recommended that the government produce a handbook on school resumption preparations for each new academic session, and that principals make adequate plans to communicate with stakeholders before school resumption, amongst others.

Keywords: planning, resumption, new academic session, public secondary schools

1. Introduction

The success of any human endeavour is predicated upon adequate planning. Education delivery processes and activities cannot be carried out meaningfully without adequate

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planning to ensure a conducive environment for teachers to perform their jobs well and for pupils to learn effectively. Principals must therefore make adequate plans before the school resumption date. Resumption means returning to school after a holiday to continue teaching and studies for both teachers and students. School principals are administrators who are responsible for ensuring that schools are in good shape before students and teachers resume for a new academic session. A new academic session marks the start of new learning experiences as pupils are promoted to new levels, with a new curriculum or courses to learn in their educational pursuit. In other words, students would experience a new curriculum different from their earlier levels, and teachers would also teach subjects aligned with their new levels. The principal is the rallying point for all educational activities; hence, he/she must make adequate plans for resource inputs in the school, as pupils will be in high expectation for their new classes. The quality of principal planning capability would largely determine the success of an academic session. The preparation for a new academic session cannot be overlooked, as lots of things must be put in place, ranging from facilities to human resources.

Akporehe and Asiyai (2021) asserted that the central nerve of school activities is the principal. Thus, principalship is a responsibility and not just a position. The National Association of Secondary School Principals (2013) noted:

“Today’s climate of heightened expectations, principals are in the hot seat to improve teaching and learning. They need to be educational visionaries; instructional and curriculum leaders; assessment experts; disciplinarians; community builders; public relations experts; budget analysts; facility managers; special program administrators; and expert overseers of legal, contractual, and policy mandates and initiatives.”

The above statement shows that the quality of the school principal's planning as the school leader must be up to standard to ensure effective education delivery.

As the students resume, it is expected that learning will take off immediately, as the principal would be deemed to have made adequate plans to ensure that the teaching and learning process proceeds smoothly. The duty of the principal is to collaborate with the government, which manages school teachers, and other stakeholders, such as parents and Parents-Teachers Associations, to provide educational supplies, including consumables and utilities, to school teachers and students. The principal is expected to ensure that facilities are adequately provided in the schools. Principals must necessarily consult and collaborate with government parastatals, such as ministries of education, to obtain the latest school curriculum and policy documents to stay in tune with the recommended standards.

Oparinde (2024) highlighted that the educational system, like other organisations, conforms to the required standards through policies that guide its actions and decisions. Therefore, in the formal educational system, educational activities are not carried out haphazardly but under a planned curriculum that outlines the educational experiences learners/students should be competent in and the grades they should earn that cumulate

in the awarding of a certificate. This, therefore, means that the success of educational delivery in any school is predicated on the planning that principals put in. Thus, educational planning, whether at the micro or macro level, is necessary. The axiom that he who fails to plan, plans to fail is very applicable in an educational setting.

Planning in education is a rational and systematic process of identifying educational needs, determining the direction education should take, and implementing the plans. Oparinde (2024) described planning as a process of determining individual responsibilities, delegating tasks, and distributing authority within a framework provided by the organisation. Planning can also be described as a management tool for achieving goals. As plans tend to change, the organisational structure should be responsive to change. The principal is duty-bound to identify the school's needs to plan for them and implement the plans. Adequate plans would provide a conducive environment for teachers to teach and students to learn. Oparinde (2024) and Shani (2015) maintained that management can use planning as a tool for achieving goals by providing direction. The study by Ali and Jumare (2024) found several inefficiencies in planning practices that have a significant negative impact on secondary school administration in Kaduna State. The school principal, as the school administrator, must demonstrate leadership by planning curricular and extracurricular activities, as well as facilities and supplies. His planning roles entail an interplay among various aspects of the school, thereby ensuring a successful resumption in a new academic session.

Suffices to say that in every new academic session, there is an academic calendar that gives direction on how educational operations and activities are to be undertaken in order to cover the curriculum. In the secondary school educational system, there are three terms that make up an academic session in Nigeria, namely the first term, the second term, and the third term. The principal plan for school resumption is to consult with the Ministry of Education, especially in a new academic session, as the government usually determines the resumption date. The government education parastatal closest to secondary schools is the Local Government Areas Ministries of Education, with which the school principal must liaise in preparation for resumption. The Chief Inspectors of Education (CIEs) disseminate circulars and provide necessary information to school principals on whatever the State Ministry of Education, through the Commissioner of Education, has directed. The academic calendar is issued by the Ministry of Education, and every school is expected to abide by the time frame and resume the same.

When adequate plans are made, a conducive learning environment will be created, and pupils will look forward to resumption and come to school immediately an academic session starts. This would imply that both material and human resources are put in place for learning to take off as soon as school resumes. The expected joy of school resumption seems to be waning among students in many schools. In 2023, the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria, announced a 85% school resumption, which they deemed impressive, as reported by the News Agency of Nigeria. In Owerri town, Imo State, Nigeria, Imo (2024) observed a low turnout of teachers and students at school, attributed to students attending one occasion or another in the villages after the Christmas holiday.

The Nation Online Newspaper of 7th January, 2025, reported that schools in Lagos and Osun states recorded poor turnout on the first day of resumption. The poor resumption was blamed on parents who could not get their wards to resume after the holiday. Some teachers said it was neither strange nor unusual, particularly at the beginning of the term, to have low turnout. One wonders why these views are coming from teachers who should know that an academic calendar has to be complied with to cover the scheme of work.

Parents are also implicated in this ugly trend, as they are responsible for preparing their children for school resumption. Nwokolo and Sam-Kalagbor's (2019) study on how the principal manages staff and effective administration in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State revealed that effective administration improves productivity skills and knowledge, which are the benefits of principal-staff management strategies. Osiobe (2025) reported that the first day of resumption for schools across Delta State recorded a mixed turnout, with some classrooms filled with eager learners while others remained half-empty. The report has it that many parents wait until the second week before sending their children

There is no gainsaying that the way a school principal lays his plans would determine the take-off of the academic session. The plans the school principal puts in place before resumption would awaken a sense of responsibility among education stakeholders, such as teachers and parents, to play their roles in preparing for school resumption. Bryk et al. (2018) highlighted that principal planning and implementation strategies will influence students' academic performance, and the overall school environment motivates students. They also noted that students' performance is the cumulative effort of teachers' performance. Akporehe (2023) maintained that a high internal efficiency would be ensured if a principal is performing functions and activities. Adequate planning is therefore expected of any school principal. To plan is to diligently outline what is to be done, how it is to be done, when it is to be done, and the means to do it. Before school resumption, the school principal must determine what needs to be done to attain academic excellence in both material and human resources. Material resources include furniture for teachers and students, chalkboards, classrooms, writing materials, cleaning materials, electrical appliances, technological facilities, and others.

To plan for facilities, an inventory of material resources is necessary. This will help to determine the available resources for staff and students. The school principal can then embark on maintenance and make requisitions to the government for educational facilities. Human resources refer to the teachers and non-academic staff in the school. The teachers perform teaching roles that enable students to pass from grade to grade, having acquired the requisite skills and knowledge through the learning process. Class teachers' duties, such as counselling, games masters/mistresses, sanitation master, and others, are assigned to them by the school principals. The non-teaching staff include bursars, security personnel, messengers, office clerks, and others. All these personnel and facilities must be adequately planned for before school resumption. Ali and Jumare (2024) conducted a study in Kaduna State involving 21 principals, 253 teachers, 63 nonteaching staff, and 10 supervisors to evaluate principals' planning practices for active school

administration in secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The findings showed that principals ensure the smooth functioning of their schools by engaging in activities such as curriculum planning, budgeting, staff recruitment, facility management, and academic scheduling. They also found that ineffective planning practices have a significant negative impact on secondary school administration, including resource misallocation, poor academic outcomes, inefficient use of facilities, and strained relationships with stakeholders.

Another important plan to be made is for the new entrants to the school. The principal is expected to obtain information on the number of pupils to be distributed to their schools. This is because the Ministry of Education at the local government area level has data on all pupils who are to transition from primary to secondary school, and the secondary schools closest to them are where they are given admission. The data obtained would enable the principal to determine the school's carrying capacity and plan for learning resources before resumption. The practice in the National Policy on Education is 30 students per class (NPE 2004), and it is necessary to ensure this to provide an enabling environment for students to learn.

Budgeting is also an important provision to be made for a new academic session. Planning for material resources requires finance. Buying of consumables like stationery and office supplies such as pens, pencils, markers for staff, notebooks for lesson notes, folders, files, printer ink and toners, office pins, glue, scissors and others are of serious concern for effective teaching and learning.

The principal must also make provision for cleaning and maintenance, including supplies of cleaning products such as detergents, disinfectants (e.g., Dettol), sanitisers, and others. Paper towels, toilet paper, soap, and other supplies are needed for students and teachers to ensure good hygiene. To ease the evacuation of waste, trash bags, and recycling bins need to be planned for. Students' health concerns are not to be taken for granted, given the impact of disease outbreaks like Ebola and COVID-19 on the school. School principals must plan for handwashing and sanitising equipment, as well as water. In this respect, health facilities, such as well-equipped first-aid boxes, have to be provided. Provision must be made for health personnel and a sick bay in the school. Every subject has to be planned for. For example, science subjects like chemistry and biology would need reagents for practicals. Other subjects would also require consumables during the teaching process.

As noted by Classroom Notes (2025), all educational stakeholders must prepare for school resumption. She maintained that principals should plan ahead by reviewing and drafting school policies and procedures, planning for events that will arise during the year, providing support such as teacher development programmes, and encouraging communication regarding policies for teachers, amongst others. She advised that teachers should prepare their lesson notes and communicate with their students to ensure an effective school year.

Making a good plan for resumption should not be devoid of data and a proper inventory of school facilities. Robbison, Lloyd, and Rowe (2022) found that if principals

utilise data-driven approaches in planning, they would align resources with school strategic goals. An effective data-driven approach will start with an assessment of school-level needs. Thus, collaboration with stakeholders, especially teachers, would foster the identification of actual needs and the planning of means to meet the school's needs. The study of Habtamu (2019) on the role of school principals in improving students' academic performance in secondary schools of Sidama Zone, SNNPR, found that principals, who are school leaders, do consider ideas and suggestions of teachers to improve the academic achievement of students in the school, with a low level of 1.96 as against a 2.59 rating. The leadership role a school principal plays in planning will no doubt encourage teachers to synergise, thereby increasing teacher productivity. Guanah, Eleke, and Okoro (2022) found that teacher productivity can be influenced by principal leadership style. This may be attributed to the teacher taking ownership of principal plans, which is participatory, as it is the norm of every planning process. Oparinde (2024) study, which was carried out on effective planning and staff job performance in public secondary schools in Osun State, Nigeria, established a significant relationship between effective administrative planning and staff job performance with a calculated r -value of .60, which is greater than the critical r -value of .062 at the .05 level of significance and for 363 degrees of freedom. A teacher who performs his/her job well is productive. Elizabeth, Aderanti, and Oluwaraju's (2023) study, conducted in Lagos, Nigeria, found that the principal's administrative skills are positively associated with teacher productivity in secondary schools. Teacher productivity is, therefore, the capability of a teacher to carry out the functions assigned to them effectively, thereby impacting students and attaining the goals of education at any level. This view aligns with Anisah and Rusdinal (2020), who suggested that the success or failure of the educational system or a country is determined by teachers.

Parents and students are also expected to prepare for the resumption of school in the new academic session. Parents should ensure they provide all their wards' educational materials and books as prescribed by the school. They are expected to communicate with the school for the latest information regarding the resumption. Students should also be in constant communication with their schools. As regards communication, Class Room Notes (2025) advised that students should motivate themselves to learn, get organised, and be prepared to resume school. From the foregoing, we can see that the school principal plays a significant role in school resumption at the start of a new academic session and, in fact, throughout the term.

The study is hinged on the effective school model advanced by Lezotte (2010). Lezotte (2010) theorised that students' achievement is a measure of an effective school, indicating the joint presence of quality and equity. He stated that strong instructional leadership, a clear and focused mission, safe and orderly schools, a climate of high expectations for success, monitoring of student progress frequently, positive home-school relations, and an opportunity to learn/time on task are requirements for effectiveness in schools. The model of Lozette (2010) is relevant to this study, as it provides requirements that can be implemented to achieve a successful school

resumption. When a conducive climate is provided in school, resumption will be smooth, and students and teachers will be eager to resume in the new academic session.

2. Research Questions

- 1) What is the level of planning by principals for school resumption in a new academic session in public secondary schools in Delta State public secondary schools?
- 2) What are the responses of teachers in their views of principal planning for a new academic session, and school resumption in secondary schools?

2.1 Hypothesis

- There is no significant difference between principals and teachers in the views of the level of planning for school resumption in a new academic session in secondary schools in Delta State.

3. Materials and Methods

The study employed a survey research method to collect data from public secondary schools in the Delta Central senatorial district of Delta State. The population of the study are school principals and teachers in the Delta Central senatorial district in Delta State, specifically Ethiope West, Sapele and Udu Local Government Areas. All 54 schools in the area were used for the study. The 54 principals and 301 teachers were purposely selected. The schools from which the teachers were selected were randomly selected using a simple random sampling technique, with 30 per cent of the schools in the senatorial district utilised. All 54 principals in the sampled schools were included in the study, as they were the objects of the study, and their numbers were manageable. The 357 teachers were purposively selected from the sample. A total of 401 respondents were selected for the study. Two Self-constructed instruments, Planning for School Resumption in a New Academic Session (PSRNAS) and (TAPSRNAS) questionnaires, were used to gather the data. The instruments were validated by an expert in test construction and a professor in the Department of Educational Management and Foundations at Delta State University, Abraka. The reliability of the instruments was assessed using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. The reliability of the instruments was assessed with 50 teachers from schools that were not sampled for the study. The test-retest method was employed, and coefficients of .710 and .725 were obtained, thus making the instruments reliable. The instruments were rated on a 4-point scale: 4- very true, 3- True, 2- Not very true, and 1- Not true at all. The responses were aggregated into two categories: strongly agree and agree, to be generally regarded as agree, while disagree and strongly disagree were grouped as disagree. The decision means are: 2.5 and less than 2.5. The instruments were administered by the researcher and two research assistants. The data on the research

questions were presented as percentages. The Hypothesis was tested with a t-test at a 0.05 significance level.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Research Questions One: What is the level of planning by principals for school resumption in a new academic session in public secondary schools in Delta State?

SN	As a school principal, I plan the following before school resumption	SA F (%)	A F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)	Mean	Decision
1	Staff meetings are called before the date of resumption		4 (7.4)	24 (44.4)	26 (48.1)	3.00	disagree
2	The school is made clean		6 (11.1)	20 (37.0)	28 (51.9)	3.00	disagree
3	All furniture is put in good condition and shape			5 (9.3)	49 (90.7)	2.00	disagree
4	Call teachers to know where they are		1 (1.9)	36 (66.7)	17 (31.5)	3.00	disagree
5	Provides curriculum for teachers for a week upon resumption		1 (1.9)	37 (68.5)	16 (29.6)	3.00	disagree
6	Provides diaries a week to resumption		6 (11.1)	17 (31.5)	31 (57.4)	3.00	disagree
7	Make sure that notes are provided for lesson note writing		5 (9.3)	15 (27.8)	34 (63.0)	3.00	disagree
8	Make sure that every teacher submits one week lesson note		5 (9.3)	31 (57.4)	18 (33.3)	3.00	disagree
9	Make sure teachers have seats and tables.			22 (40.7)	32 (59.3)	2.00	disagree
10	Makes sure subject allocation is ready		18 (33.3)	8 (14.8)	28 (51.9)	3.00	disagree
11	Make sure that the school premises are disinfected			25 (46.3)	29 (53.7)	2.00	disagree
12	Make sure that the toilets are in good conditions	8 (14.8)	12 (22.2)	11 (20.4)	23 (42.6)	4.00	disagree
13	Make sure that security is in place	14 (25.9)		27 (50.0)	13 (24.1)	4.00	disagree
14	Liaises with the Ministry of Education for the update of the latest information			33 (61.1)	21 (38.9)	2.00	disagree
15	Communicates the necessary information about the school to parents	14 (25.9)	3 (5.6)	18 (33.3)	19 (35.2)	4.00	disagree
16	Calls for PTA for their input in school administration		15 (27.8)	26 (48.1)	13 (24.1)	3.00	disagree
17	Communicates with teachers to keep them informed about school policies.	14 (25.9)	5 (9.3)	21 (38.9)	14 (25.9)	4.00	disagree
18	Makes a budget for the term		14 (25.9)	23 (42.6)	17 (31.5)	1.00	disagree
19	Distributes the timetable for the new session	9 (16.7)	6 (11.1)	22 (40.7)	17 (31.5)	1.00	disagree

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20	Seeks input of need assessment data of school from teachers	6 (11.1)	6 (11.1)	25 (46.3)	17 (31.5)	1.00	disagree
21	I set up committees to monitor every aspect of the school activities			34 (63.0)	20 (37.0)	2.00	
	Grand mean					37.44	

The findings showed that the principals disagreed on all the items on 92.6%, 88.9%, 100%, 98.1%, 98.1%, 90.7%, 90.7%, 90.7%, 100%, 66.7%, 100%, 63%, 74.1%, 68.5%, 72.2%, 64.8%, 72.2%, 77.8% and 100. The negative finding of planning for school resumption may have contributed to poor resumption noted in Imo Trumpeta (2024) observation, as well as The Nation Online News Paper of 7th January, 2025 reported in Lagos, Osun of low observed that there was a low turnout of many teachers and students in school on resumption day. This also agrees with the study of Ali and Jumare (2024), who found several ineffectiveness in planning practices in secondary school administration in Kaduna state, which they said have a significant negative impact on schools, of which poor school resumption could be one.

Research Question 2: What are the responses of teachers in their views of principal planning for a new academic session, following school resumption in secondary schools?

SN	My principal plan the following before school resumption	SA F (%)	A F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)	Mean	Decision
1	Staff meetings are called before the date of resumption		1 (0.3)	59 (16.5)	297 (83.2)	1.17	Disagreed
2	The school is made clean		1 (0.3)	2 (0.6)	354 (99.1)	1.01	Disagreed
3	All furniture is put in good condition and shape		1 (0.3)	97 (27.2)	259 (72.5)	1.28	Disagreed
4	Call teachers to know where they are		16 (4.5)	93 (26.1)	248 (69.4)	1.35	Disagreed
5	Provides curriculum for teachers for a week upon resumption		33 (9.2)	119 (33.3)	205 (57.5)	1.52	Disagreed
6	Provides diaries a week to resumption		11 (3.1)	105 (29.4)	241 (67.5)	1.36	Disagreed
7	Make sure that Notes are provided for lesson note writing		21 (5.9)	140 (39.2)	196 (54.9)	1.51	Disagreed
8	Make sure that every teacher submits one week's lesson notes		77 (21.5)	112 (31.4)	168 (47.1)	1.75	Disagreed
9	Make sure teachers have seats and tables.		18 (5.0)	133 (37.3)	206 (57.7)	1.47	Disagreed
10	Makes sure subject allocation is ready		1 (0.3)	131 (36.7)	225 (63.0)	1.37	Disagreed
11	Make sure that the school premises are disinfected		65 (18.2)	114 (31.9)	178 (49.9)	1.68	Disagreed
12	Make sure that the toilets are in good conditions		1 (0.3)	133 (37.3)	223 (62.4)	1.38	Disagreed
13	Make sure that security is in place		132	94	131	2.00	Agree

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			(37.0)	(26.3)	(36.7)		
14	Liaises with the Ministry of Education for the update of the latest information			152 (42.6)	205 (57.4)	1.43	Disagreed
15	Communicates the necessary information about the school to parents	32 (9.0)	23 (6.4)	93 (26.1)	209 (58.5)	1.66	Disagreed
16	Calls for PTA for their input in school administration	54 (15.1)	78 (21.8)	75 (21.0)	150 (42.1)	2.10	Disagree
17	Communicates with teachers to keep them informed about school policies.		66 (18.5)	111 (31.1)	180 (50.4)	1.68	Disagreed
18	Makes a budget for the term	54 (15.1)		132 (37.0)	171 (47.9)	1.82	Disagreed
19	Distributes the timetable for the new session		46 (12.9)	166 (46.5)	145 (40.6)	1.72	Disagreed
20	Seeks input on the need assessment data of the school from teachers	54 (15.1)	22 (6.2)	123 (34.5)	158 (44.2)	1.92	Disagreed
21	I set up committees to monitor every aspect of the school activities		75 (21.0)	114 (31.9)	168 (47.1)	1.74	Disagreed
	Grand Mean					32.92	

The result showed that teachers assessed principals as low in their planning for school resumption, disagreeing with all items. The percentage responses were 99.7%, 99.7%, 99.7%, 95.5%, 90.8%, 96.9%, 94.1%, 78.5%, 95%, 99.7.7%, 81.8%, 99.8%, 63, 100%, 84.6%, 63.1%, 81.5%, 84.9%, 87.1%, 78.7%, and 79% respectively. This will no doubt affect school resumption. Hence, Nwokolo and Sam-Kalagbor (2019) asserted that effective principal staff management strategies enhance effective administration and improve productivity, skills, and knowledge. Oparinde (2024) established a significant relationship between effective administrative planning and staff job performance. This may also be the reason for the mixed turnout at resumption noted by Osiobe (2024) in Delta State schools.

Hypothesis one: There is no significant difference between principals and teachers in their responses to the level of planning for school resumption in a new academic session.

Table 1: Independent Sample t-statistics comparing the ratings of teachers and Principal school resumption preparedness

Group Statistics					
	Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Ratings	Teachers	357	32.9216	5.60142	.29646
	Principals	54	37.4444	2.50031	.34025

Variable	N	Mean	Mean Diff.	SD	df	tcal	Sig (2-tailed)
Teachers	357	32.92	5.60	4.52	409	5.84	0.00
Principal	54	37.44	2.50				

The tested hypothesis found no significant difference between teachers' and principals' responses regarding the level of planning for school resumption. This result is because

both principals' and teachers' responses were identical on their questionnaires. Their responses were all negative (disagree). This shows that school principals' preparation plans for school resumption are inadequate. Ali and Jumare (2024) had found several ineffectiveness in planning practices in secondary school administration in Kaduna state, which they said have a significant negative impact on schools, of which poor school resumption could be one. Osiobe (2024) also reported mixed attendance on the school resumption day, which could also be attributed to a lack of principal planning for the resumption.

5. Recommendations

- 1) The Education Ministry should come up with a handbook on what principals should prepare for when schools are to resume in a new academic session
- 2) Principals should adopt strategies that will encourage a high level of school resumption, like good communication with education stakeholders.

6. Conclusion

It was concluded that principals did not plan for resumption. This shows that school principals' preparation plans for school resumption are inadequate. And that teachers assessed principals as low in their planning for school resumption

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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