

Original Research Article

Analysis of Quality control of some fixed and portable X- ray units in Maharishi Markandeshwar Hospital India.

ABSTRACT

The quality assurance of all the radiographical instruments is very important for ensuring its proper and better functioning. Quality assurance (QA) is a program used by management to maintain optimal diagnostic image quality with minimum hazard and distress to patients. The program includes periodic quality control tests, preventive maintenance procedures, administrative methods and training. The present study is a prospective study which was carried out on seven X-ray units of Radiology department at Maharishi Markandeshwar Hospital, Mullan, Ambala, Haryana. In this study seven units of X-rays were analysed in which five were fixed and two were portable for their quality assurance through different test such as Congruence of radiation and optical fields, Focal spot size measurement etc. The results of the study revealed the the good quality and proper functioning of all the instruments used in the present study.

Keywords: Quality assurance; Radiology, X-ray machine; Focal spot, Optical fields.

INTRODUCTION

X-rays are an electromagnetic radiation with a very high frequency which are produced when a fast traveling cloud of electrons are suddenly stopped, X-rays are produced in such a way is called Bremsstrahlung radiation. It is also known as barking radiation [1,2].It was first discovered by a German physicist, Sir Wilhelm Conrad Roentgen on 8th November 1895[3]. Very quickly after their discovery, they were being utilized as facility in medical sector for

diagnostic imaging. The X-ray tube is constructed mainly of Inner components and the Outer components. The Inner components are two one is cathode which is a negative terminal and the another is anode which is a positive terminal. The outer components are Support system, Protective Housing, Glass or Metal Enclosure [1,4]. Other than these two components filters, collimators are also present. Through filters the process of filtration of x-rays occur. And collimator is the best beam restrictor device in x-ray tube.

The quality assurance of all the radiographical instruments is very important for ensuring its proper and better functioning [5,6]. In hospital most of the equipment's used for diagnosing disease or any abnormal condition are located in the radiology department and some of them are used since many year of time which may have improper functioning, misalignment of light and radiation beam, leakage radiation, alteration of filter and focal spot. Fault in any single factor may impact the final image quality and result in contribution to a large radiation dose to the patient and staff along with improper diagnostic information. Therefore quality control in diagnostic facilities is very much required for the safety and improved performance of the systems. The quality assurance (QA) in diagnostic radiology is the combined practice by the radiographer, radio technologist and departmental staff conducting different procedure or techniques to ensure that the radiographic images produced are of good quality so that it will provide enough diagnostic information with a low cost possible and less radiation dose to the patient to achieve the ALARA principle[7,8].

Therefore, in view of the above fact a study has been done to check the quality assurance of all the technical parameters of the stationary and portable X-ray equipment's available in the radiology department at MMIMSR, Mullana, Ambala, Haryana.

Methodology:

The study was a prospective study which was carried out on seven X-ray units of Radiology department at Maharishi Markandeshwar Hospital, Mullan, Ambala, Haryana. In this study seven units of X-rays were analysed in which five were fixed and two were portable for their quality assurance.

Materials used:

All in one test tool plate, Beam alignment test tool, Fluke survey meter (ionization chamber type), Resolution test tool, Focal spot test tool (Bar pattern type), Piranha all-in-one dosimeter, Measuring tape. All materials was provided by the department.

The test done for Quality assurance are as follows and the details of the instruments which were used in this study given in table 1.

1. **Congruence of radiation and optical fields:** Pro-RF basic tool phantom (All –in-one test tool plate) was placed over the loaded cassette on the table at 100 cm FFD. Collimation light was aligned (collimated) to the outline marked on the Pro-RF basic tool phantom (beam alignment test tool). The X-ray machine was set to 45 kVp and 10 mAs and exposure was made to check the congruence of radiation and optical field[9].
2. **Central beam alignment:** Pro-RF basic tool phantom (All –in-one test tool plate) was placed over the cassette on the X-ray table at the 100 cm FFD. The central beam alignment test tool (cone type) was placed on the center of the all-in-one plate. Collimation and central ray was correctly aligned with the test tool. The machine was set to 45 kVp and 10 mAs and exposure was made to check the central beam alignment. In the image the both circles should not overlap. (if overlap i.e., there is shift of $< 1.5^\circ$ of the central beam [10]).
3. **Effective Focal spot size measurement:** Pro-RF basic tool phantom (All –in-one test tool plate) was placed over the cassette on the table at the 60cm FFD. The resolution bar pattern test tool was kept in its specific area mentioned on the all-in-one test tool plate and was fixed correctly. The X-ray machine was set to 55 kVp and 20 mAs and exposure was made to see the measurement of effective focal spot size[11].
4. **Accuracy of Accelerating Tube Potential:** Piranha all-in-one multifunction meter was placed on the table. The X-ray tube collimation was set to the specific area of the all-in-one multifunction meter. The kV station of the X-ray machine was set constant and mA was kept variable to the different 3 exposures. The exposure was made 3 times at different kV stations such as at 60 kV, at 8 kV and at 100 kV [12].
5. **Linearity of radiation output:** Piranha all-in-one multifunction meter was placed on the table. The X-ray machine was set to the 100 Cm FFD. The kVp and exposure time was made constant, 60 kVp and time 0.10 second and the exposure was made at different mA stations. The average readings were taken[10].

$$\text{Coefficient of linearity} = \frac{X_{\max} + X_{\min}}{X_{\max} - X_{\min}}$$

6. Reproducibility of radiation output: Piranha all-in-one multifunction meter was placed on the table. The FFD was set to 100 cm. Collimation was made to the specific area of the all-in-one multifunction meter. The kVp and mA station was made constant and exposures are made at different time to measure the coefficient of timer linearity[10].

7. Radiation leakage through tube housing: The collimator of the X-ray tube was made totally closed. The X-ray machine was set to the 100 cm, kVp was set to 100, mA was set to 100 and time was set to 0.5 second. The Fluke Survey Meter was placed at one meter distance from the tube to the left, to the right, to the back, to the front and at the top to measure the leakage radiation from the X-ray tube. The Leakage radiation was measured on the basis of work load of the unit. Work load of the unit = 180 mA - min. in one hour[13].

Maximum leakage from the tube is calculated by:

$$\frac{\text{mA-min. in one hour} \times \text{max. Leakage level mR / hr}}{60 \text{ min.} \times \text{mA used for measurement.}}$$

Results:

The results of different quality control tests conducted on different X-ray unit given separately and are as follows:

ROOM 1:

Type of Equipment: - Fixed X-ray Machine

Model Name: - DigiX FDX

Sr. No: - 2K 18080001DX / DR-FDX

Sr. No.	Parameters Tested	Specified Values	Measured Values	Tolerance	Remark
1	Congruence of radiation and	Measurement at 45 kV	0.8 % (X+X')	Tolerance : I X I + I X' I ≤ 2% of	Pass

	optical field		0.9 % (Y+Y')	FFD $I_Y I + I_{Y'} I \leq 2\%$ of FFD	
2	Central Beam Alignment	Measurement at 45 kV	< 1.5°	Central Beam Alignment < 1.5°	Pass
3	Effective Focal Spot Measurement FFD= 60 cm	1.2 mm X 1.2 mm 0.6 mm X 0.6 mm	1.2 mm X 1.2 mm 0.6 mm X 0.6 mm	Tolerance : + 0.5 f for f < 0.8 mm + 0.4 f for 0.8 ≤ f ≤ 1.5 mm + 0.3 f for f > 1.5 mm	Pass
4	Accuracy of Operating Potential (kV)	At 150 kV	152.7 kV	± 5 kV	Pass
5	Accuracy of Irradiation Time	N/A	-	% Error < 10 %	-
6	Total Filtration	Measurement at 150 kV	14.2 mm of Al	Tolerance : 1.5 mm Al for kV ≤ 70 2.0 mm Al for 70 < kV ≤ 100 2.5 mm Al for kV > 100	Pass
7	Linearity of mAs Loading Stations		0.0	CoL < 0.1	Pass
8	Consistency of radiation output	At 60 kV	0.027	CoV ≤ 0.05	Pass
9	Radiation leakage level at 1m from Tube Housing and Collimator	Measurement at 100 kVp and 150 mA	0.115 mGy 0.124 mGy	Tube Leakage < 1 mGy in one hour	Pass

ROOM 2

Type of Equipment:- Fixed X-ray Machine

Model Name:- MARS 50+

Sr. No:- 2K11150797-XHF

Sr. No.	Parameters Tested	Specified Values	Measured Values	Tolerance	Remark
1	Congruence of Radiation and Optical Field	Measurement at 45 kV	1.0 % (X+X') 0.4 % (Y+Y')	Tolerance : I X I + I X' I ≤ 2% of FFD I Y I + I Y' I ≤ 2% of FFD	Pass
2	Central Beam Alignment	Measurement at 45 kV	< 1.5⁰	Central Beam Alignment < 1.5 ⁰	Pass
3	Effective Focal Spot Measurement FFD = 60 cm	1.2 mm X 1.2 mm 0.6 mm X 0.6 mm	1.2 mm X 1.2 mm 0.6 mm X 0.6 mm	Tolerance : + 0.5 f for f < 0.8 mm + 0.4 f for 0.8 ≤ f ≤ 1.5 mm + 0.3 f for f > 1.5 mm	Pass
4	Accuracy of Operating Potential (kV)	At 120 kV	124.5 kV	± 5 kV	Pass
5	Accuracy of Irradiation Time			% Error < 10 %	N/A
6	Total Filtration	Measurement at 100 kV	3.56mm of Al	Tolerance : 1.5 mm Al for kV ≤ 70 2.0 mm Al for 70 < kV ≤ 100 2.5 mm Al for kV > 100	Pass
7	Linearity of mAs Loading Stations		0.024	CoL < 0.1	Pass
8	Consistency of Radiation Output	At 60 kV	0.013	CoV ≤ 0.05	Pass

9	Low Contrast Resolution		2.0 mm is Visible	3.0 mm Hole Pattern must be Resolved	Pass
10	High Contrast Resolution		1.70 lp/mm is Visible	1.5 lp/mm Pattern must be Resolved	Pass
11	Exposure Rate at Tabletop	100 KV	3.654R/min	Tolerance : 1. Exposure Rate without AEC mode ≤ 5 cGy/Min 2. Exposure Rate with AEC mode ≤ 10 cGy/Min	Pass
12	Radiation Leakage Level at 1m from Tube Housing and Collimator	Measurement at Maximum 100 and 100 mA	0.131 mGy 0.142 mGy	Tube Leakage < 1 mGy in one hour	Pass

ROOM 3

Type of Equipment:- Mobile X-ray machine

Model Name: - Skanmobile

Sr. No: - MY 1119R0038

Sr. No.	Parameters Tested	Specified Values	Measured Values	Tolerance	Remark
1	Congruence of Radiation and Optical Field	Measurement at 45 kV	1.1 % (X+X') 0.8 % (Y+Y')	Tolerance : $I_X I + I_{X'} I \leq 2\%$ of FFD $I_Y I + I_{Y'} I \leq 2\%$ of FFD	Pass
2	Central Beam Alignment	Measurement at 45 kV	< 1.5⁰	Central Beam Alignment < 1.5⁰	Pass

3	Effective Focal Spot Measurement FFD = 60 cm	1.8 mm X 1.8 mm	1.7 mm X 1.8 mm	Tolerance : + 0.5 f for f < 0.8 mm + 0.4 f for 0.8 ≤ f ≤ 1.5 mm + 0.3 f for f > 1.5 mm	Pass
4	Accuracy of Operating Potential (kV)	At 100 kV	101.7 kV	± 5 kV	Pass
5	Accuracy of Irradiation Time		NA	% Error < 10 %	Pass
6	Total Filtration	Measurement at 100 kV	3.10mm of Al	Tolerance : 1.5 mm Al for kV ≤ 70 2.0 mm Al for 70 < kV ≤ 100 2.5 mm Al for kV > 100	Pass
7	Linearity of mAs Loading Stations		0.017	CoL < 0.1	Pass
8	Consistency of Radiation Output	At 60 kV	0.008	CoV ≤ 0.05	Pass
9	Low Contrast Resolution		2.0 mm is Visible	3.0 mm Hole Pattern must be Resolved	Pass
10	High Contrast Resolution		1.70 lp/mm is Visible	1.5 lp/mm Pattern must be Resolved	Pass
11	Exposure Rate at Tabletop	100 KV	3.654R/min	Tolerance : 1. Exposure Rate without AEC mode ≤ 5 cGy/Min 2. Exposure Rate with AEC mode ≤ 10 cGy/Min	Pass
12	Radiation Leakage Level at	Measurement at Maximum	0.137 mGy	Tube Leakage < 1 mGy in one hour	Pass

	1m from Tube Housing and Collimator	100 kVp and 20 mA	0.163 mGy		
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ROOM 4

Type of Equipment:- Fixed X-ray Machine

Model Name: - DX 525

Sr. No: - 933-52443

Sr. No.	Parameters Tested	Specified Values	Measured Values	Tolerance	Remark
1	Congruence of Radiation and Optical Field	Measurement at 45 kV	1.8 % (X+X') 1.7 % (Y+Y')	Tolerance : $ X + X' \leq 2\%$ of FFD $ Y + Y' \leq 2\%$ of FFD	Pass
2	Central Beam Alignment	Measurement at 45 kV	< 1.5°	Central Beam Alignment < 1.5°	Pass
3	Effective Focal Spot Measurement FFD = 60 cm	1.8 mm X 1.8 mm	1.7 mm X 1.8 mm	Tolerance : + 0.5 f for f < 0.8 mm + 0.4 f for 0.8 ≤ f ≤ 1.5 mm + 0.3 f for f > 1.5 mm	Pass
4	Accuracy of Operating Potential (kV)	At 100 kV	96.55 kV	± 5 kV	Pass
5	Accuracy of Irradiation Time		NA	% Error < 10 %	Pass
6	Total Filtration	Measurement at 100 kV	2.58 mm of Al	Tolerance : 1.5 mm Al for kV ≤ 70	Pass

				2.0 mm Al for 70 < kV ≤ 100 2.5 mm Al for kV > 100	
7	Linearity of mAs Loading Stations		0.071	CoL<0.1	Pass
8	Consistency of Radiation Output	At 100 kV	0.013	CoV ≤ 0.05	Pass
9	Low Contrast Resolution		2.0 mm is Visible	3.0 mm Hole Pattern must be Resolved	Pass
10	High Contrast Resolution		1.70 lp/mm is Visible	1.5 lp/mm Pattern must be Resolved	Pass
11	Exposure Rate at Tabletop	100 KV	3.654R/min	Tolerance : 1. Exposure Rate without AEC mode ≤ 5 cGy/Min 2. Exposure Rate with AEC mode ≤ 10 cGy/Min	Pass
12	Radiation Leakage Level at 1m from Tube Housing and Collimator	Measurement at Maximum 100 kVp and 20 mA	0.166 mGy 0.185 mGy	Tube Leakage < 1 mGy in one hour	Pass

ROOM 5

Type of Equipment:- **Fixed X-ray Machine**

Model Name: - **ALLENGERS 525**

Sr. No: - **2K40550210**

Sr. No.	Parameters Tested	Specified Values	Measured Values	Tolerance
1	Congruence of Measurement		1.3 % (Tolerance :

	radiation and optical field	at 45 kV	X+X') 1.5 % (Y+Y')	$I X I + I X' I \leq 2\%$ of FFD $I Y I + I Y' I \leq 2\%$ of FFD
2	Central Beam Alignment	Measurement at 45 kV	< 1.5°	Central Beam Alignment < 1.5°
3	Effective Focal Spot Measurement FFD= 60 cm	2.0 mm X 2.0 mm 1.2 mm X 1.2 mm	2.0 mm X 2.0 mm 1.2 mm X 1.2 mm	Tolerance : + 0.5 f for f < 0.8 mm + 0.4 f for 0.8 ≤ f ≤ 1.5 mm + 0.3 f for f > 1.5 mm
4	Accuracy of Operating Potential (kV)	At 90 kV	85.64 kV	± 5 kV
5	Accuracy of Irradiation Time	At 0.10 Sec	0.101 Sec	% Error < 10 %
6	Total Filtration	Measurement at 100 kV	2.03 mm of Al	Tolerance : 1.5 mm Al for kV ≤ 70 2.0 mm Al for 70 < kV ≤ 100 2.5 mm Al for kV > 100
7	Linearity of mA/mAs loading Stations		0.045	CoL < 0.1
8	Consistency of radiation output	At 60 kV	0.031	CoV ≤ 0.05
9	Radiation leakage level at 1m from tube housing and Collimator	Measurement at 100 kVp and 100 mA	0.121 mGy 0.127 mGy	Tube Leakage < 1 mGy in one hour

ROOM 6

Type of Equipment: - Fixed X-ray Machine

Model Name: - ALLENGERS 525

Sr. No: - 060350034

Sr. No.	Parameters Tested	Specified Values	Measured Values	Tolerance	Remark
1	Congruence of Radiation and Optical Field	Measurement at 45 kV	1.4 % (X+X') 1.3 % (Y+Y')	Tolerance : $ X + X' \leq 2\%$ of FFD $ Y + Y' \leq 2\%$ of FFD	Pass
2	Central Beam Alignment	Measurement at 45 kV	< 1.5°	Central Beam Alignment < 1.5°	Pass
3	Effective Focal Spot Measurement FFD= 60 cm	2.0 mm X 2.0 mm 1.0 mm X 1.0 mm	2.0 mm X 2.0 mm 1.0 mm X 1.0 mm	Tolerance : + 0.5 f for f < 0.8 mm + 0.4 f for 0.8 ≤ f ≤ 1.5 mm + 0.3 f for f > 1.5 mm	Pass
4	Accuracy of Irradiation Time	At 0.20 Sec	0.209 Sec	% Error < 10 %	Pass
5	Accuracy of Operating Potential (kV)	At 80 kV	82.98 kV	± 5 kV	Pass
6	Total Filtration	Measurement at 100 kV	2.59 mm Al	Tolerance : 1.5 mm Al for kV ≤ 70 2.0 mm Al for 70 < kV ≤ 100 2.5 mm Al for kV > 100	Pass
7	Linearity of mAs Loading Stations		0.029	CoL < 0.1	Pass
8	Consistency of Radiation Output	At 60 kV	0.012	CoV ≤ 0.05	Pass

9	Radiation Leakage Level at 1m from Tube Housing and Collimator	Measurement at 100 kVp and 50 mA	0.162 mGy 0.172 mGy	Tube Leakage < 1 mGy in one hour	Pass
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ROOM 7

Type of Equipment: - Mobile X Ray Machine

Model Name: - MARS -2.5

Sr. No: - 2K10120282

Sr. No.	Parameters Tested	Specified Values	Measured Values	Tolerance	Remark
1	Congruence of Radiation and Optical Field	Measurement at 45 kV	0.9 % (X+X') 1.1 % (Y+Y')	Tolerance : $ X + X' \leq 2\%$ of FFD $ Y + Y' \leq 2\%$ of FFD	Pass
2	Central Beam Alignment	Measurement at 45 kV	< 1.5°	Central Beam Alignment < 1.5°	Pass
3	Effective Focal Spot Measurement FFD= 60 cm	2.8 mm X 2.8 mm	2.8 mm X 2.8 mm	Tolerance : + 0.5 f for f < 0.8 mm + 0.4 f for 0.8 ≤ f ≤ 1.5 mm + 0.3 f for f > 1.5 mm	Pass
4	Accuracy of Operating Potential (kV)	At 100 kV	102.3 kV	± 5 kV	Pass
5	Accuracy of Irradiation Time		NA	% Error < 10 %	Pass

6	Total Filtration	Measurement at 100 kV	2.14 mm Al	Tolerance : 1.5 mm Al for kV ≤ 70 2.0 mm Al for 70 < kV ≤ 100 2.5 mm Al for kV > 100	Pass
7	Linearity of mAs Loading Stations		0.007	CoL < 0.1	Pass
8	Consistency of Radiation Output	At 60 kV	0.017	CoV ≤ 0.05	Pass
9	Radiation Leakage Level at 1m from Tube Housing and Collimator	Measurement at 100 kVp and 20 mA	0.159 mGy 0.187 mGy	Tube Leakage < 1 mGy in one hour	Pass

Discussion:

There are a number of reasons for developing quality assurance programs in dental radiography. Prior to 1974, there were no requirements for machine performance[14] and the operating stability of many x-ray generators in use today is uncertain. Studies have shown that there are a variety of types of machine malfunction which may occur as a result of use and aging [15.16] . There is evidence to suggest that sight development is a common practice used to compensate for inadequate machine performance, inadequate operator training, or defective processing chemistry

Quality assurance (QA) is a program used by management to maintain optimal diagnostic image quality with minimum hazard and distress to patients. The program includes periodic quality control tests, preventive maintenance procedures, administrative methods and training. It also includes continuous assessment of the efficacy of the imaging service and the means to initiate corrective action. The primary goal of a radiology quality assurance

program is to ensure the consistent provision of prompt and accurate diagnosis of patients. This goal will be adequately met by a QA program having the following three secondary objectives these are as i) to maintain the quality of diagnostic images ii) to minimize the radiation exposure to patient and staff and iii) to be cost effective. Quality control (QC) consists of a series of standardized tests developed to detect changes in x-ray equipment function from its original level of performance. The objective of such tests, when carried out routinely, allows prompt corrective action to maintain x-ray image quality[17].

A number of studies have been performed on the quality control and assurance of X ray machines in different countries across the world. A study has been done in Iran by Zahra et al in 2016, the results of their study suggests that because of high work flow and continued use of the equipment's gets older and develops some defect which can cause improper functioning, so they want the AEOI should change their policies and recommend QC test to every single year[18]. Another study done in Bangladesh in 2011. In this study they calibrate the important technical factors of X-ray machines over there to compare the output radiation dose to the patient for effective and safe use of X-ray machine. Results of the study suggests that Quality control program should be conducted on regular basis on every single year for safe operation of X-ray unit and to reduce population dose while ensuring proper diagnostic information[19].

The results of the present study suggests that the Optical and radiation beam alignment of X-ray rooms 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 showed discrepancy of 0.8%, 1.0%, 1.1%, 1.8%, 1.3%, 1.4% and 0.9% respectively and the central beam alignment of X-ray rooms 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 had an error of less than 1.5° lies within acceptable limit. The effective focal spot of X-ray room number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are $1.2\text{mm} \times 1.2\text{mm}$, $1.2\text{mm} \times 1.2\text{mm}$, $1.7\text{mm} \times 1.8\text{mm}$, $1.7\text{mm} \times 1.8\text{mm}$, $2\text{mm} \times 1.2\text{mm}$, $2\text{mm} \times 2\text{mm}$ and $2.8\text{mm} \times 2.8\text{mm}$ respectively. Results indicate that the focal spots of all the xray machines lies within acceptable limit. The accuracy of operating potential have an error of all x-ray machines 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 is $\pm 5\text{kv}$ of all the machines which lies within acceptable limit. The linearity of mA loading stations of X-ray room number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are 0.004mGy, 0.024mGy, 0.017mGy, 0.071mGy, 0.045mGy, 0.029mGy and 0.007mGy respectively. The output consistency (COV) of X-ray room number 1,2,3,4,5,6 and 7 are less than 0.05%, 0.013%, 0.008%, 0.013%, 0.031%, 0.012% and 0.017% respectively. The maximum radiation leakage from tube housing of X-ray room number 1,2,3,4,5,6 and 7 are 0.115 mGy, 0.131 mGy, 0.137 mGy, 1.66 mGy, 0.121 mGy, 0.162 mGy and 0.159 mGy in one hour and the maximum radiation

leakage from tube collimator of the x ray machines number 1,2,3,4,5,6 and 7 are 0.124 mGy, 0.142 mGy, 0.163 mGy , 0.185 mGy , 0.127 mGy, 0.172 mGy, 0.187 mGy and 0.123mGy respectively. These findings comes within acceptable limits.

Conclusion: From the findings of the study concluded that all the X- ray machines placed in room 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 in the Radiology department at Maharishi Markandeshwar Hospital, Mullan, Ambala, Haryana are in good quality and ensure their proper functioning.

COMPETING INTERESTS DISCLAIMER:

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist. The products used for this research are commonly and predominantly use products in our area of research and country. There is absolutely no conflict of interest between the authors and producers of the products because we do not intend to use these products as an avenue for any litigation but for the advancement of knowledge. Also, the research was not funded by the producing company rather it was funded by personal efforts of the authors.

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UNDER PEER REVIEW