

Industry funding effect on positive results of probiotic use in the management of acute diarrhea: A systematized review

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Several investigations have found that industry-funded studies tend to inform results favoring the sponsored products. The pressure to demonstrate that a drug or a product causes a favorable outcome may result in investigation biases from industry-funded research. One example of this could be found in the probiotic research funded by the industry. The aim of this study was to assess the effect of industry funding on positive outcomes of the use of probiotics in the management of acute diarrhea. A systematized review of clinical trials on the use of probiotics in the management of acute diarrhea was performed. The associations between the source of funding, clinical outcomes, probiotic genus, and quality of the study were assessed using the χ^2 -test and Fisher's exact test. Sixty-six clinical trials were included; 27 were industry funded, 18 were nonindustry funded, and 21 did not disclose their funding source. There were 48 positive and 30 negative clinical outcomes. There was no significant association between the source of funding and clinical outcomes ($P=0.491$). No association between the rest of the studied variables and outcomes was observed either ($P>0.05$). In clinical trials on the use of probiotics in the management of acute diarrhea, the source of funding has no influence on positive clinical outcomes.