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Exploring the New Advancements in 3D Bioprinting.

Mohammed Saleh Mohammed Sayed
Ksa , Ministry Of Health

Saad Ali Alshahrani
Ksa , Ministry Of Health

Nasser Mohammed Alsharif
Ksa , Ministry Of Health

Khaled Jaber Alrowily
Ksa , Ministry Of Health

Norah Munie Mutlag Alotaibi
Ksa , Ministry Of Health

Esmaeel Hassan Matry
Ksa , Ministry Of Health

Saad Mohammed Sunaytan Albaqami
Ksa , Ministry Of Health

Nasser Mansour Aljohani
Ksa , Ministry Of Health

Mohammed Mohsen Khormi
Ksa , Ministry Of Health

Ahmed Hussain Fagihi
Jazan University

Abdulmajeed Yahya Alfaifi
Jazan University

Abdullah Shoei Sayd
Jazan University

Majed Ahmed Alayyafi
Ksa , Ministry Of Health

Moataz Saleh Alhaddad
Ksa , Ministry Of Health

Wael Nafea Zaid Alharbi
Ksa , Ministry Of Health

Bandar Mohammed Alhozim
Ksa , Ministry Of Health

Hassan Mohammed Al Shehri
Ksa , Ministry Of Health

Naif Lazzam Alshammari
Ksa , Ministry Of Health

Abstract:

3D bioprinting is a promising field that offers novel ways to produce intricate tissue constructions for tissue engineering and regenerative medicine. The main bioprinting technologies—such as inkjet, microextrusion, and laser-assisted bioprinting—are outlined in this article along with their benefits and drawbacks. The choice of material is crucial in the bioprinting process since natural and synthetic polymers have different qualities that affect printability, biocompatibility, and degradation kinetics. While scaffold-free methods and sacrificial materials increase build design diversity, biomimicry shows promise in controlling cell activity and tissue formation through surface alterations and nanoscale characteristics. Although there are still obstacles in the way of fully decellularization, tissue decellularization techniques offer insightful information about the composition and organization of the extracellular matrix (ECM). The discipline is moving forward despite present constraints in material characteristics, resolution, and throughput due to continuous technological breakthroughs and interdisciplinary collaboration. As bioprinting develops further, it opens up new possibilities for therapeutic interventions and personalized medicine, which will ultimately transform healthcare by offering specialized solutions for difficult tissue regeneration and repair.

Keywords: 3D bioprinting, tissue engineering, regenerative medicine, inkjet bioprinting, microextrusion bioprinting, laser-assisted bioprinting, biomimicry, extracellular matrix, tissue decellularization, personalized medicine.

Introduction:

The introduction of woodblock printing and the development of the industrial printing press in the fifteenth century allowed for the quick duplication of written and visual materials, which resulted in the mass distribution of knowledge. This revolutionary invention had a profound effect on education, politics, religion, linguistics, and other facets of civilization all around the world. With the advancement of printing technology in recent decades, two-dimensional (2D) printing has given way to additive manufacturing, which forms three-dimensional (3D) items by depositing successive layers of material. The ability to quickly prototype, manufacture, and customize consumer goods like jewelry, electronics, and bicycle parts has changed a number of sectors. Furthermore, 3D printing has completely changed scientific and educational methods by enabling researchers to model intricate chemical structures, make customized laboratory equipment, and replicate rare artifacts. Additionally, it gives students the ability to conceptualize, design, and test ideas in real space [1-9].

Charles W. Hull first put forth the idea of 3D printing in 1986. He introduced the technique known as "stereolithography," which prints thin layers of UV-curable material one at a time to create solid 3D things. Since then, this method has been modified for a number of uses, such as the production of sacrificial resin molds for the construction of biomedical scaffolds. Developments in aqueous-based, solvent-free technologies have made it possible to print biological materials directly for tissue engineering applications. A subset of 3D printing called "bioprinting" uses live cells, biochemicals, and biological components to precisely deposit them layer by layer to create three-dimensional tissue architectures. A number of bioprinting techniques, including autonomous self-assembly and biomimicry, seek to create functioning human tissues with characteristics appropriate for therapeutic use. Adapting current printing technologies for sensitive biological materials and simulating the intricate microarchitecture of extracellular matrix constituents and various cell types of present challenges [10].

The use of 3D bioprinting in tissue and organ engineering is reviewed in this paper, covering tissue construct printing techniques, bioprinter types, and the sequential tissue printing process. It also talks about the limitations of present technology and upcoming research issues in this area. 3D bioprinting encompasses three primary methodologies: biomimicry, autonomous self-assembly, and mini-tissue building blocks, each offering distinct approaches to tissue and organ engineering [1].Biomimicry involves the emulation of biological structures and processes to replicate cellular and extracellular components of tissues or organs. This method aims to reproduce intricate features such as vascular branching patterns or physiological biomaterial gradients, thereby striving for faithful reproduction at the microscale. Success in biomimicry requires a comprehensive understanding of the microenvironment, including cellular arrangements, soluble factor gradients, extracellular matrix composition, and biological forces. This interdisciplinary approach draws from fields such as engineering, imaging, biomaterials, cell biology, biophysics, and medicine [2].Autonomous self-assembly capitalizes on insights from embryonic organ development, where early cellular components autonomously generate

extracellular matrix and organize themselves to form desired tissue architectures and functions. This method, whether scaffold-free or guided, relies on cellular behavior to drive tissue formation. It necessitates a profound understanding of embryonic tissue genesis and organogenesis mechanisms, alongside the capability to manipulate environments to induce embryonic-like processes in bioprinted tissues [3].

Mini-tissues, fundamental to both biomimicry and autonomous self-assembly, denote functional building blocks or the smallest units of tissue structure and function, such as kidney nephrons. These mini-tissues can be assembled into larger constructs through rational design, self-assembly, or a combination of both strategies. Examples include assembling self-organizing cell spheres into macro-tissues and reproducing tissue units through high-resolution printing for subsequent self-assembly. Applications span from forming branched vascular networks to creating 'organs-on-a-chip' for drug screening and disease modeling [4].Integrating these strategies is crucial for printing complex 3D biological structures with diverse functional, structural, and mechanical properties. The bioprinting process entails imaging and design, material and cell selection, and the actual printing of tissue constructs. Following printing, constructs may undergo in vitro maturation before transplantation or be reserved for in vitro analyses [5].

Understanding the structure and chemistry of the components that make up functional tissues and organs is a basic requirement for accurately modeling their complex and diverse design. Medical imaging technology plays a vital role in providing tissue engineers with information about the shape and function of tissues at different scales, from the cellular to the organism. These technologies include many noninvasive imaging modalities, the most common of which are magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and computed tomography (CT). In addition, mathematical modeling and computer-aided design and manufacturing (CAD-CAM) techniques are used to scan and record the complex tomographic and architectural features of tissues [11]. CT imaging makes use of the varying ways that different tissues absorb X-rays to provide images for both diagnostic and interventional reasons. The X-ray source revolves around the patient, and sensors measure the transmitted beam's angle and intensity as it passes through the body. This data is then assembled into pixels that represent discrete tissue volumes, or voxels. With surface rendering and stereolithographic editing, the tightly spaced axial slices of tissue architecture obtained from this imaging modality allow for a thorough delineation of tissue volumes [2].

Another modality, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), is useful for imaging soft tissues in close proximity to one another without ionizing radiation exposure because it provides great spatial resolution in soft tissue along with higher contrast resolution. Nuclear magnetic resonance, the basis for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), works by aligning a portion of the tissue's nuclei with a high magnetic field. Changes in the states of nuclear energy produce radiofrequency signals that can be picked up by receiver coils. Contrast compounds enhance the contrast of biological structures, making it easier to distinguish features like blood arteries from

their surroundings. Examples of such agents are barium or iodine for CT scans and iron oxide, gadolinium, or metalloproteins for MRI scans [3]. Following acquisition, unprocessed imaging data are tomographically reconstructed to provide 2D cross-sectional pictures. This process enables the creation of 3D anatomical representations, which may then be examined or altered. The transition from "analytical anatomy" to "synthetic anatomy" frequently makes use of mathematical modeling and CAD-CAM methods. As a result, several visualization approaches such as volume rendering and 3D representation are made possible, and the resulting 3D anatomical models offer insights into organ anatomy while maintaining image-voxel information [14].

Using 2D cross-sections or 3D representations directly can yield accurate copies of scanned organs or tissues in bioprinting applications. Alternatively, computer-based models are essential for anatomical structural design, analysis, and simulation in situations where it may not be possible to replicate a patient's own organ because of illness or financial limitations. Moreover, CT and MRI data are widely used in regenerative medicine to offer accurate tissue dimension measurements for bioprinted construct design [5]. This helps anticipate the mechanical and biochemical properties of artificial tissue constructs.For the purposes of manufacturing and prototyping, the completed tissue or organ model interfaces with bioprinting devices that are numerically controlled. In order to accomplish this integration, the 2D to 3D reconstruction process is reversed. The 3D-rendered model is divided into thin, orientable, and 2D horizontal slices, which are subsequently imported into the bioprinter system. These two-dimensional horizontal slices contain anatomical and architectural information that provide instructions for layer-by-layer deposition to the bioprinting equipment. Furthermore, different approaches to the design of tissues and organs are introduced by the variety of bioprinting methods accessible. Some bioprinting techniques use a single material being deposited continuously to create three-dimensional structures, while others use different materials being deposited in different places or according to predetermined patterns. As such, tissue design techniques require considering the features and capacities inherent in the particular bioprinting technologies that are being used; they will be covered in the discussion that follows.

Bioprinting Strategies:

Inkjet, microextrusion, and laser-assisted printing are the main methods used for the deposition and patterning of biological materials. Some of these technologies' unique features should be considered when discussing the three most important aspects of 3D bioprinting: surface resolution, cell viability, and the type of biological material used in the printing process. Inkjet Bioprinting: Often called drop-on-demand printers, inkjet printers are the most common kind of printer used in biological and nonbiological applications. These printers provide precise liquid delivery volumes to preset places. The first inkjet printers used for bioprinting were modified versions of 2D inkjet printers that were sold commercially. To enable control of the z-axis (the third dimension in addition to the x and y axes), biological materials were used in place of standard ink cartridges, and an electronically controlled elevator stage was used in place of

paper. Currently, bioprinters that use inkjet technology are specially designed to accept and print biological materials with ever-increasing speeds, accuracy, and resolution. In order to create pressure pulses that force droplets out of the nozzle, thermal inkjet printers heat the print head electrically. Although there are worries about the localized heating effect, research has shown that it has little influence on biological molecule stability or cell viability. However, limitations including poor droplet directionality, nozzle blockage, and possible mechanical and thermal stress on cells prevent thermal inkjet printers from being widely used in 3D bioprinting. On the other hand, inkjet printers that integrate piezoelectric crystals or acoustic waves provide benefits like regulated droplet size and directionality, minimized cell exposure to stressors, and prevented nozzle clogging. However, issues with obtaining biologically meaningful cell densities, material viscosity restrictions, and the need for post-printing crosslinking of printed materials to provide structural order and activity still exist [15].

The aforementioned developments and obstacles highlight the continuous innovation and improvement in the field of inkjet bioprinting, as efforts are directed towards surmounting technical constraints to augment the repeatability, efficacy, and biological significance of printed structures.Notwithstanding these drawbacks, inkjet-based bioprinters have a number of benefits, such as being reasonably priced, having a high print quality, printing quickly, and working with a variety of biological materials. Furthermore, by varying drop densities or sizes, inkjet printing makes it possible to incorporate concentration gradients of materials, cells, or growth factors throughout the three-dimensional structure. Researchers in many facilities may readily acquire, alter, and experiment with 3D inkjet-based bioprinting technology because regular 2D inkjet printers are so widely available. Furthermore, because their design and control software are easily accessible and their parts are straightforward, commercially available inkjet bioprinters are reasonably priced. Significant advances have been made possible by the widespread use of inkjet bioprinting technology by numerous research groups. This has allowed for the precise and high-resolution deposition of adjustable droplet sizes. With rates of 1–10,000 droplets per second, droplet size and deposition rate can be electronically adjusted, spanning from <1 picoliter to >300 picoliters in volume. Notably, inkjet bioprinting has been effectively used to a number of applications, such as the in vitro creation of layered cartilage constructions and bone constructs, as well as the in situ regeneration of functional skin and cartilage. These uses highlight the ability of inkjet-based bioprinting to create functional structures that can be renewed [17].

Microextrusion Bioprinting: One of the most popular and reasonably priced methods used in nonbiological 3D printing, microextrusion is becoming more and more popular in tissue and organ engineering studies. A temperature-controlled material handling and dispensing system, a stage with x, y, and z axis of motion, and a fiberoptic light source for illumination or photoinitiator activation are the standard components of microextrusion printers. Instead of producing liquid droplets, these printers produce continuous beads of material through robotically controlled extrusion. It is possible to fabricate intricate structures because the material that has been deposited acts as a foundation for further layers. Microextrusion printing

can be used with a variety of materials, such as cell spheroids, hydrogels, and biocompatible copolymers. Pneumatic or mechanical dispensing systems are used by microextrusion printers to extrude biological materials; each method has advantages and disadvantages. While mechanical systems give more spatial control, pneumatic systems offer simpler drive-mechanism components. Materials with varying viscosities have been shown to be compatible with microextrusion processes, which allow for a broad range of fluid characteristics. Shear-thinning materials are widely used because they enable accurate construction of intricate structures and the patterning of various cell types. The promise of microextrusion bioprinting in tissue engineering has been demonstrated by its use in the creation of multilayer cartilage and bone constructions, among other applications [1].

These developments in inkjet and microextrusion bioprinting demonstrate how bioprinting technologies are always evolving and adapting to new problems and needs in tissue and organ engineering [18-25].The capacity of microextrusion bioprinting technique to deposit extremely high cell densities—a crucial objective in tissue engineering—is one of its main advantages. Using solutions made entirely of cells, several researchers have used microextrusion printing to generate 3D tissue constructions with physiological cell densities. Spheroids of multicellular cells are deposited and given time to self-assemble into the required three-dimensional structure. The material qualities of these tissue spheroids can imitate the functional and mechanical features of the extracellular matrix (ECM) in tissue. A cohesive macroscopic construct is formed when nearby cell aggregates fuse together, based on the viscoelastic characteristics of the building blocks. Benefits of the self-assembling spheroid approach include the possibility for faster tissue organization and the capacity to control the development of intricate structures. This method appears promising for organizing self-assembling vascular tissue spheroids in 3D bioprinted organs, hence permitting the creation of an intraorgan branched vascular tree in 3D thick tissue or organ structures. The most popular technique for scaffold-less tissue spheroid bioprinting is mechanical microextrusion.

However, compared to inkjet-based bioprinting, cell viability following microextrusion bioprinting is often lower, with cell survival rates ranging from 40% to 86%. The shear forces that are applied to cells in viscous fluids during the extrusion process are the cause of this diminished viability. The nozzle diameter may not have as much of an impact on cell viability as dispensing pressure does. Even if a lot of studies show that cell viability is maintained after printing, it is crucial for researchers to show that these cells not only survive but also carry out their vital tasks in the tissue build. A major difficulty facing many users of microextrusion bioprinting technology is increasing print resolution and speed. High resolutions and speeds can be attained by nonbiological microextrusion printers, however it is unclear if these characteristics can be satisfied with physiologically relevant materials while preserving high cell viability and function. It may be possible to preserve cell viability and function after printing by using enhanced biocompatible materials, such as dynamically crosslinked hydrogels, which are mechanically resilient during printing and acquire secondary mechanical qualities afterwards.

Furthermore, improvements in nozzles, syringes, or motor-control systems may shorten print times and enable the simultaneous deposition of several different materials [25-33].

Aortic valves branched vascular trees, in vitro pharmacokinetic models, and tumor models have all been created using microextrusion bioprinters. Constructs ranging from clinically relevant tissue sizes down to micro-tissues in microfluidic chambers have been successfully created, despite the fact that fabrication times for high-resolution complex structures can be long.The basis of laser-induced forward transfer, which was first created for the transfer of metals but was successfully applied to biological materials including peptides, DNA, and cells, is how laser-assisted bioprinting (LAB) works. LAB is becoming more popular in tissue and organ engineering, although being less prevalent than inkjet or microextrusion bioprinting. A pulsed laser beam, a focusing device, a layer of biological material (cells or hydrogel) produced in a liquid solution, a receiving substrate, and a donor transport support (often glass) covered with a layer that absorbs laser energy are the components of a typical laboratory setup. Cell-containing materials are propelled toward the collection substrate by LAB's high-pressure bubble created when laser pulses are focused on the absorbing layer [34-37].

LAB has a number of benefits, such as the ability to print mammalian cells with no effect on viability and function, compatibility with a variety of viscosities, and nozzle-free operation. Droplets with a single cell per drop allow for high cell densities and microscale resolution. However, quick gelation kinetics are required for excellent form fidelity due to LAB's high resolution, which results in a relatively low total flow velocity. Furthermore, it can take time to prepare separate ribbons for every type of cell or hydrogel, and it can be difficult to precisely target and place cells. Notwithstanding these difficulties, strategies like cell-recognition scanning technologies might be able to solve part of the problems. Even if prices are coming down, issues with metallic residues in the finished bioprinted construct and the high expense of LAB equipment remain.Using a mouse calvaria 3D defect model, cellularized skin structures and nano-hydroxyapatite were deposited using LAB. Additionally, it has been employed in the production of bioresorbable, noncellular, personalized tracheal splints. Subsequent research endeavors might concentrate on employing substances that can seamlessly merge with a patient's tissue and utilizing the patient's own cells to augment the anatomical and functional elements of the tissue.

Materials and Scaffolds:

Initially, metals, ceramics, and thermoplastic polymers were the main materials used in 3D printing technologies, which were mostly created for nonbiological uses. However, these substances were incompatible with biological materials and live cells since they frequently contained chemical solvents, high temperatures, or crosslinking agents. Finding materials that are both compatible with biological entities and the printing process, as well as having the necessary mechanical and functional properties for tissue constructs, has thus proven to be a considerable difficulty in 3D bioprinting. The primary sources of materials used in regenerative medicine for

repair and regeneration are either synthetic molecules (polyethylene glycol; PEG) or naturally occurring polymers (such as alginate, gelatin, collagen, chitosan, fibrin, and hyaluronic acid, which are frequently derived from animal or human tissues). While synthetic polymers can be engineered to have particular physical qualities, natural polymers have inherent bioactivity and are analogous to human extracellular matrix (ECM). Nevertheless, poor biocompatibility, hazardous breakdown products, and mechanical property loss during deterioration are issues with synthetic polymers. However, because it is simple to manipulate the physical properties of synthetic hydrogels during synthesis and because they are absorbent and hydrophilic, they are a desirable option for 3D bioprinting.

The requirements for printable materials have grown increasingly intricate and precise as the variety of biological materials for medical applications increases. In order to prevent tissue structure collapse, materials must have the right swelling characteristics, short-term stability, long-term biocompatibility for transplantation, and optimal crosslinking processes for bioprinter deposition. They should also promote cellular adhesion, growth, and function. Important characteristics are covered in detail, including material biomimicry, printability, biocompatibility, degradation rates, byproducts, and structural and mechanical qualities. The capacity of a material to be precisely deposited with the appropriate spatial and temporal control is referred to as printability. Certain crosslinking mechanisms or restrictions on material viscosity are examples of needs that differ throughout bioprinting systems. The features of the material, such as its heat conductivity and cushioning capacities, must safeguard the vitality of the cells during printing. The standards for biocompatibility have changed to include materials that actively support the biological and functional features of constructions, such as their interactions with the immune system and host tissues.

In order to ensure that degradation rates correspond with cellular replacement of materials with ECM proteins, control over degradation kinetics is essential. Byproducts of degradation should be easily digested and harmless. Considerations regarding swelling and contractile properties are crucial because materials that exhibit excessive swelling or contracting can obstruct cell migration and the supply of nutrients. In order to prevent layer integrity loss or construct deformation, it becomes essential to comprehend these responses when combining numerous materials with distinct characteristics. The mechanical and structural characteristics play a crucial role in maintaining the functionality and structural integrity of three-dimensional (3D) tissue structures. The choice of material needs to match the unique mechanical requirements of the intended tissue, such as the liver, skin, or bone. Until intrinsic materials take over, sacrificial materials can be used to provide temporary structural support. They can also be included into the construct to aid in crosslinking during printing. Careful evaluation is necessary to ensure that the degradation of these replacement materials doesn't have negative effects.

In the field of bioprinting, biomimicry—which refers to the imitation of natural biological structures and functions—has gained traction. The incorporation of biomimetic components into structures can influence the behavior of cells, including adhesion, migration,

proliferation, and function. Changes to the surface that involve particular ligands or nanoscale characteristics may improve cell adhesion and impact cellular responses. A thorough understanding of target tissues' extracellular matrix (ECM) composition and organization is essential for creating biomimetic materials. Tissue decellularization methods face challenges in obtaining thorough decellularization without damaging tissue architecture, even though they provide insightful information about the compositions and functions of extracellular matrix materials [35-44]. An alternate biomimetic approach is embodied in scaffold-free bioprinting, where cells self-assemble to generate extracellular matrix. By using this method, cells can create an extracellular matrix (ECM) environment that suits their needs, giving them dynamic control over how they behave. However, the bioprinting process of incorporating these materials into constructs requires careful consideration of their degradation kinetics, byproducts, and implications for the integrity and functionality of the structures. Despite the obstacles that may arise, biomimetic techniques have great potential to drive progress in tissue engineering and regenerative medicine.

Conclusion:

To sum up, the discussion surrounding 3D bioprinting is broad and includes a variety of methods, materials, and issues that together influence how the field develops in order to transform tissue engineering and regenerative medicine. Prominent bioprinting techniques include inkjet, microextrusion, and laser assistance. Each has unique benefits and drawbacks concerning resolution, cell survival, and material compatibility. High-resolution printing and quick biological material deposition are made possible by inkjet bioprinting; yet, problems like clogged nozzles and stress from heat and mechanical forces on cells still exist. On the other hand, high cell densities and structurally sound structures can be successfully deposited using microextrusion bioprinting; nevertheless, preserving cell viability and attaining high resolution present challenges. Although laser-assisted bioprinting is notable for its high precision and cell-friendly deposition method, more research is necessary to address concerns about material residues and throughput. The choice of materials is crucial to 3D bioprinting; biocompatibility, printability, degradation kinetics, and biomimicry must all be balanced. While synthetic polymers like PEG offer customizable mechanical features, natural polymers like alginate and gelatin offer properties similar to those of an extracellular matrix. Although scaffold-free methods and sacrificial materials increase design adaptability, problems with degradation management and structural integrity still exist.

A potential approach that uses knowledge from natural biological systems to modify tissue growth and cell activity is called biomimicry. Although they necessitate a detailed comprehension of the composition and organization of extracellular matrix (ECM), surface alterations and nanoscale characteristics have the ability to improve cell adhesion and direct tissue creation. While attaining complete decellularization presents obstacles, tissue decellularization techniques provide insightful information on the functions of the extracellular matrix. Despite these obstacles, 3D bioprinting seems to have a bright future thanks to

continuous developments in biology, materials science, and technology. The full potential of bioprinting for tissue engineering and regenerative medicine will require addressing existing constraints in areas like throughput, resolution, and material characteristics. Transforming laboratory discoveries into clinical applications will require interdisciplinary collaborations from engineering, biology, and medicine. This will open up new possibilities for personalized medicine and therapeutic treatments. With customized treatments for intricate tissue repair and regeneration, the discipline has the potential to completely transform healthcare as it develops.

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