

Relation Between Mindfulness and Post-Earthquake Trauma Levels of Students Who Take and Don't Take Folk Dance Lesson

Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between mindfulness and post-earthquake trauma levels of sports sciences faculty students who take and don't take folk dance lesson. Mixed models was used both qualitative and quantitative approaches. A total of 94 students, 35 women and 59 men, studying at the faculty of sports sciences, participated in this study. Data were collected using the Mindfulness Scale and the Post-Earthquake Trauma Level Determination Scale. Descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test and Pearson correlation analysis were applied to analyze the data. According to the research results, it was seen that the students were traumatized at a "high" level according to the scores they received from the PETLDS. A significant difference was observed in favor of the students who took folk dance lessons in the affective dimension, one of the sub-dimensions of the post-earthquake trauma scale, in terms of whether the students took folk dance lessons or not and gender variables. It was determined that there was a significant negative relationship between mindfulness scores and post-earthquake trauma scores. Accordingly, it can be said that if university students' mindfulness scores increase, their post-earthquake trauma scores will decrease.

Keywords: Folk dances, Conscious awareness, Mindfulness, Earthquake, Trauma

Introduction

Dance, which consists of exercises performed rhythmically with multiple movement figures accompanied by music, is expressed as identical to sports. Under the general form of dance, folk dances are also included in local folklore. In addition to many common features of folk dance genres, different rhythms, music, movement figures and backgrounds are seen. For this reason, folk dances have very different effects on the human organism in parallel with the duration of their implementation (Ünveren, 2006). In addition to allowing the individual to exercise regularly through physical activity, folk dances also increase social interaction with other people, improving both interpersonal communication skills and coping skills with problem situations. As a result, individuals who engage in folk dances become both physically active and improve themselves socially (Şimşek, 2020). These types of sports activities include all of the movements that people do purposefully and consciously within certain conditions in order to have a healthy time and achieve a healthy life. Sports and artistic activities serve as activities that relax people spiritually and provide psychological well-being (Ramazanoğlu et al., 2005). It is stated that sports and artistic activities are effective in preventing behaviors such as stress, anger, aggression

and violence by causing the negative energy accumulated in people's bodies to emerge. Some studies have found that participation in such activities protects and improves mental health (Peluso and Andrade, 2005).

"Awareness", which means "mindfulness", has emerged as a form of meditation (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). It is known to be used as a therapy method, especially in the treatment of psychological disorders such as depression and anxiety (Harrington and Dunne, 2015). While Brown and Ryan (2003) define mindfulness as focusing one's attention in a non-judgmental and accepting manner on what is happening at the moment, Nyanaponika (1972) defines mindfulness as the state of being clearly aware of our perceptions, focusing only on what is actually happening in us and our inner world in successive moments." Germer et al. (2005), mindfulness is a skill that allows us to be less passive towards what is happening in the present and is associated with all our positive, negative and neutral experiences, reducing all levels of suffering and increasing our state of well-being. It is directing attention entirely to present experiences, and this requires intending to live the moment fully. Numerous philosophical, spiritual and psychological traditions have emphasized the importance of mindfulness for ensuring and increasing well-being (Mayer, 2000; Kabat-Zinn, 2000; Baer et al., 2004; Lykins and Baer, 2009). Acceptance, one of the mindfulness skills, is being able to see unpleasant events, people and emotions as reasonable and to be able to come to terms with them by developing tolerance towards them. In other words, it requires the person to be present-focused, open, willing and kind, without being judgmental towards himself and his life. According to Kabat-Zinn (2000), acceptance does not mean having a passive approach towards unpleasant things or liking them. Awareness means being able to approach and accept situations that involve anxiety, fear and worry (Demir, 2014).

Generally, a traumatic event poses a threat to the lives of individuals or those they know closely. The closer and bigger this threat is, the greater the size of the trauma (Erhan, 2013). It is possible to experience a stress disorder after traumatic events. In the DSM-IV (1995) diagnostic criteria, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms are grouped into three main groups; These are nightmares, thoughts reminiscent of the traumatic event, and symptoms of increased arousal such as difficulty falling asleep, intolerance, and startle. Earthquakes have different characteristics than other traumatic events. Earthquakes occur suddenly and cause many problems due to destruction, death and injuries; It has an important place among natural disasters in that it can also create chronic effects due to aftershocks (Sabuncuoğlu et al., 2003). We are likely to encounter many traumatic events throughout our lives, and natural disasters have an

important place among traumatic events. Earthquakes can be said to be a very traumatizing natural disaster in today's conditions, considering their effects on individuals such as their unpredictability, wide impact area, and magnitude of destructive power (Tanhan and Kayri, 2013).

In order to get away from situations that negatively affect the health of individuals, such as intense work tempo, monotonous life, anger, stress, psychological problems and future anxiety in daily life, individuals should spare some time during the day or participate in many types of dances such as folk dances in their free time. and is thought to be very important in maintaining mental health. It should not be forgotten that the way to raise healthy and successful young people in the future is through regular physical activity and exercises, that is, sports, art and dance (Yılmaz, 2022). Based on this, the aim of this study is to examine the relationship between mindfulness and post-earthquake trauma levels of sports sciences faculty students who do or do not take folk dance lesson.

Methodology

Model of the Research

Mixed models was used both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The model of the research is the relational scanning model. In this model, it is tried to learn whether the variables change together and, if there is a change, how it happens (Karasar, 2014). Qualitative data were collected deep interview. The students were asked "Their mood after the earthquake" as an interview question. Thus, as a result of the experimental study, it was observed whether there was any change in the participants' mood after the earthquake.

Working Group

A total of 94 students, 35 women and 59 men, aged between 18 and 39, studying at the sports sciences faculty, participated in this study. Demographic information of the students is given in table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Students

	Variables	N	%
Gender	Female	35	37,2
	Male	59	62,8
Class	1	29	30,9
	2	12	12,8

	3	18	19,1
	4	35	37,2
Folk Dance Lesson	Take Folk Dance Lesson	48	51,1
	Don't Take Folk Dance Lesson	46	48,9
City of Residence	Adana	6	6,4
	Adıyaman	2	2,1
	Ankara	3	3,2
	Antalya	1	1,1
	Balıkesir	1	1,1
	Diyarbakır	1	1,1
	Elazığ	2	2,1
	Gaziantep	8	8,5
	Hatay	46	48,9
	İstanbul	1	1,1
	Kahramanmaraş	9	9,6
	Mersin	5	5,3
	Osmaniye	3	3,2
	Sivas	3	3,2
	Şanlıurfa	3	3,2
Province Affected by the Earthquake	Adana	2	2,1
	Adıyaman	1	1,1
	Diyarbakır	1	1,1
	Gaziantep	6	6,4
	Hatay	72	76,6
	Kahramanmaraş	6	6,4
	Malatya	1	1,1
	Osmaniye	2	2,1
	Şanlıurfa	3	3,2
Did your level of conscious awareness increase after the earthquake?	Yes	89	94,7
	No	5	5,3
Living Place	Family house	5	5,3
	Boutique hotel	3	3,2
	In the Tent	2	2,1
	House	65	69,1
	Container	14	14,9
	Dormitory	5	5,3
	Total	94	100,0

As seen in table 1, 37.2% of the students are female and 62.8% are male. 30.9% of the students are in the 1st grade, 12.8% are in the 2nd grade, 19.1% are in the 3rd grade and 37.2% are in the 4th grade. While 51.1% of the students took a folk dance course, 48.9% did not take this lesson. Students were caught in the earthquake in Adana, Adıyaman, Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Malatya, Osmaniye and Şanlıurfa, and after the earthquake, some of them started to live in cities other than these places. After the earthquake, the level of conscious awareness of students increased by 94.7%. While the majority of students begin to live in houses, some students still continue to stay in hotels, tents, containers and dormitories.

Data Collection Tools

Data were collected using the Mindfulness Scale (MS) and the Post-Earthquake Trauma Level Determination Scale (PETLDS). The Mindfulness Scale was adapted into Turkish by Özyeşil et al (2011). The validity and reliability of the Post-Earthquake Trauma Level Determination Scale was made by Tanhan and Kayri (2013). The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the mindfulness scale is .80. High total scores mean that mindfulness is high. The internal consistency coefficient of the post-earthquake trauma level determination scale is 0.87. The score range of 52.385±5.051 to be obtained from the scale indicates a threshold value at which individuals are traumatized. Above and below this threshold value indicate low and high levels of traumatization. The scale consists of 5 factors. Accordingly, the first factor is "Behavior Problems"; the second factor is "Excitatory Limitation"; The third factor is named "Affective", the fourth factor is "Cognitive Configuration" and the fourth factor is named "Sleep Problems". There are no reverse items in the scale and the score to be taken from the scale varies between 20 and 100.

Analysis of Data

In the analysis of the data, percentage and frequency, descriptive statistics were used for demographic characteristics, independent samples t-test was used for whether the students took folk dance lessons and gender variables, Pearson correlation analysis and direct transfer method were used for qualitative data.

Findings

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics Regarding Students' Mindfulness And Post-Earthquake Trauma Levels

Scales	N	Min.	Max.	X	Ss	
Mindfulness Total (MS)	94	22,00	87,00	57,71	14,81	
Post-Earthquake Trauma Total (PETS)	94	30,00	97,00	64,21	17,10	
Post-Earthquake Trauma Scale Sub-Dimensions	BehaviorProb.	94	4,00	20,00	11,44	4,17
	Excitatory Lim.	94	5,00	25,00	14,86	5,34
	Affective	94	4,00	20,00	12,74	3,06
	Cognitive Configuration	94	7,00	20,00	15,30	3,78
	Sleep Prob.	94	3,00	15,00	9,85	4,01

According to Table 2, the lowest score obtained from MS is 22 and the highest score is 87 (X =57,71). Accordingly, the students' level of conscious awareness is at a medium level. The lowest score obtained from PETS is 30 and the highest score is 97 (X=64,21). The score range of

52.385±5.051 on PETS indicates a threshold value at which individuals are traumatized. Above and below this threshold value indicate low and high levels of traumatization. In this regard, it is seen in the table that the students were traumatized at a "high" level by scoring between 64.21±17.10 on PETS.

Table 3: Independent Samples t-Test Results Regarding The Variables of Whether Students Take Folk Dance Lessons or Not

Scales	Variables	N	X	Ss	t	p
MS	Take Folk Dance Lesson	48	56,37	12,81	,893	,374
	Don't Take Folk Dance Lesson	46	59,10	16,68		
PETS	Take Folk Dance Lesson	48	67,83	16,73	-2,136	,035
	Don't Take Folk Dance Lesson	46	60,43	16,84		

In Table 3, there is no significant difference in students' conscious awareness scores according to the variables of whether they take folk dance lessons or not. Although there was a numerical difference in post-earthquake trauma levels, no statistical difference was found.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-Test Results Regarding The Variables of Whether Students Take Folk Dance Lessons or Not and The Sub-Dimensions of The Post-Earthquake Trauma Scale

Variables		N	X	Ss	t	p
Behavior Prob.	Take Folk Dance Lesson	48	12,04	3,77	-1,420	,159
	Don't Take Folk Dance Lesson	46	10,82	4,50		
Excitatory Lim.	Take Folk Dance Lesson	48	15,64	5,57	-1,462	,147
	Don't Take Folk Dance Lesson	46	14,04	5,01		
Affective	Take Folk Dance Lesson	48	13,56	3,03	-2,729	,008
	Don't Take Folk Dance Lesson	46	11,89	2,89		
Cognitive Configuration	Take Folk Dance Lesson	48	16,00	3,60	-1,834	,070
	Don't Take Folk Dance Lesson	46	14,58	3,86		
Sleep Prob.	Take Folk Dance Lesson	48	10,58	3,84	-1,828	,071
	Don't Take Folk Dance Lesson	46	9,08	4,09		

According to the analysis results regarding the variables of whether the students took folk dance lessons or not and the sub-dimensions of the post-earthquake trauma scale in Table 4, there is a significant difference in favor of the students who took folk dance lessons in the affective dimension, while there is no significance in the behavioral problem and emotional limitation sub-dimensions. Although there was a numerical significance in the cognitive structure and sleep problem sub-dimensions, no statistically significant difference was found.

Table 5: Independent Samples t-Test Results Regarding The Gender Variable of Students

Scales	Gender	N	X	Ss	t	p
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MS	Female	35	57,14	12,89	-,286	,073
	Male	59	58,05	15,94		
PETS	Female	35	67,08	17,51	1,258	,592
	Male	59	62,50	16,77		

According to the analysis results regarding the gender variable of the students in Table 5, although there was a numerical difference in the mindfulness scores, no statistical difference was found. No difference was found in PETS scores.

Table 6: Independent Samples t-Test Results Regarding The Gender Variable of The Students and The Sub-Dimensions of The Post-Earthquake Trauma Scale

Gender		N	X	Ss	t	p	
Post-Earthquake Trauma Scale Sub-Dimensions	Behavior Prob.	Female	35	12,02	4,28	1,042	,300
		Male	59	11,10	4,09		
	Excitatory Lim.	Female	35	15,31	5,13	,630	,530
		Male	59	14,59	5,49		
	Affective	Female	35	13,74	2,87	2,496	,014
		Male	59	12,15	3,05		
	Cognitive Configuration	Female	35	16,05	3,67	1,488	,140
		Male	59	14,86	3,80		
	Sleep Prob.	Female	35	9,94	4,17	,170	,866
		Male	59	9,79	3,95		

According to the analysis results regarding the gender variable of the students and the DSTDBS sub-dimensions in Table 6, there is a significant difference in favor of women in the affective sub-dimension, while there is no difference in the other sub-dimensions.

Table 7: Pearson Correlation Analysis Results

	MS	PETS
MS	1	
PETS	-,432**	1

0.01

In Table 7, it was determined that there was a negative significant relationship between mindfulness scores and post-earthquake trauma scores ($r=-.432$; $p<.01$). Accordingly, it can be said that if the conscious awareness scores of university students increase, their post-earthquake trauma scores will decrease.

Table 8: Students' Answers to Their Mood After The Earthquake

Code: "Ö"	Answers	N
Ö1/Ö37/Ö38/Ö88/Ö89/ Ö90/Ö91/Ö92/Ö93/Ö94	<i>Living with the awareness that anything can happen at any moment.</i>	10
Ö2	<i>The soil smells so good because it takes in our loved ones. When you see it in your bones, you understand it.</i>	1
Ö3/Ö24	<i>My anxiety started to increase, living in Hatay still makes me anxious.</i>	2
Ö5/Ö14	<i>I have mixed feelings and I don't know exactly either. It's constantly changing.</i>	2
Ö6/Ö8/13/Ö59/Ö60/Ö61/ Ö66/Ö71/Ö72/Ö80/Ö81/ Ö82	<i>I'm in a pretty bad and terrible situation. I have zero motivation, stress and deep sadness.</i>	12

Ö4/Ö7/Ö35/Ö50	<i>He/She is aware and pessimistic that you will never be the same again</i>	4
Ö9/Ö46/Ö16/Ö18	<i>Immediately after the earthquake, I was very sad, depressed and embittered because of what I experienced and the people I lost. I experienced problems such as sleeping problems, nightmares, and the feeling of a constant earthquake. But as the days went by, both me and my family slowly recovered. After all, life goes on.</i>	4
Ö10/Ö20/Ö39/Ö65/Ö74 Ö76/Ö77	<i>There's a little bit of uneasiness about everything.</i>	7
Ö11/Ö32	<i>I am stronger and more determined.</i>	2
Ö12	<i>There is a lot of absent-mindedness and forgetfulness. Also, I get very sleepy, I go to bed, I can't lie down, those moments keep coming back to me and I start to cry.</i>	1
Ö15	<i>After the earthquake, I couldn't focus on my life much, I didn't care what I was doing because I lost my home, many of my friends, and my job.</i>	1
Ö17/Ö36	<i>After the earthquake, my trust in people has decreased a lot, I feel like everything could suddenly slip away from me. It turns out how easy it is to lose...</i>	2
Ö19	<i>After the earthquake, I couldn't react to anything, I cried all the time afterwards. My mood has become very unstable. My muscles started to tense when I heard bad things. My mood changed when I moved away from Hatay. After staying in another city for a month, we returned to Hatay. Now I work in a boutique cafe concept place. Time passes and thoughts wander most of the time. Sometimes, no matter how tired I am, the inside of my head won't shut up.</i>	1
Ö21/Ö25/Ö29/Ö34/Ö40/ Ö43/Ö67/Ö78	<i>I'm depressed.</i>	8
Ö22/Ö64/Ö68/Ö69	<i>I had moved away from life socially, I became introverted and more emotional, but now I am slowly overcoming these situations.</i>	4
Ö23/Ö26/Ö27/Ö28/Ö31/Ö41/ Ö52/Ö53/Ö54/Ö55/Ö56/ Ö57/Ö58/Ö62/Ö63/Ö70/ Ö73/Ö79	<i>I feel anxiety, fear, sadness more intensely, I am unhappy. I became afraid of natural events and started to feel worse.</i>	18
Ö30	<i>I still live in fear of an earthquake. I don't have any plans for the future, I just try to live in the moment. Most of the time, I can't even do that.</i>	1
Ö42	<i>While at first I was struggling with unresponsive thoughts, anxieties and fears within myself, now there is a decrease in those feelings and thoughts. Sometimes I interpret our current situation and the things we are going through as a joke. There is a thought about what we have experienced and what we have become. Apart from that, having practice in our classes or working somewhere makes me a little better and dispels my negative thoughts, even though we have difficulties in socializing.</i>	1
Ö44/Ö45	<i>I stopped putting my future concerns and dreams at the center of my life, I just try to be happy in my current circumstances and hope for the best in everything..</i>	2
Ö47/Ö48/Ö49	<i>I'm in a better situation.</i>	3
Ö51	<i>I would like to die.</i>	1
Ö83	<i>The difficult conditions I experienced after the earthquake, leaving home, family concerns, inability to focus and constantly thinking about what would happen caused me to fail at university and in my duties, but I will overcome this.</i>	1
Ö84/Ö85/Ö86/Ö87/Ö88	<i>I turned into someone who was tired, cowardly, full of longing, fed up and did not enjoy the life I was living. He doesn't feel 22 and I don't think I can live up to him. I can't do the things I could do before. For example, I cannot sit down and read a book properly. I can not understand. I can't stand people. Someone constantly reminds me of my acquaintances whom I lost in the earthquake.</i>	5

Participants are coded and numbered with the letter "Ö".

In Table 8, it can be seen that the majority of students still have negative emotions, based on their answers to their moods after the earthquake. It is seen that the awareness of 10 of the participants increased.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the relationship between mindfulness and post-earthquake trauma levels of sports sciences faculty students who took or did not take folk dance lessons was examined; The conscious awareness level of the students was at a medium level (Alper et al., 2021) and their post-earthquake trauma levels were at a "high" level. These results indicate that there is a significant relationship between conscious awareness and post-earthquake trauma levels. Although the students' conscious awareness levels are at a medium level, the level of trauma they experienced after the earthquake is high, so it can be said that conscious awareness has the potential to reduce the level of trauma.

There is no significant difference in students' mindfulness scores depending on whether they take folk dance lessons or not. According to the study of Tingaz (2020), the scores obtained from the mindfulness scale do not differ according to the status of having done yoga before in the current study group. According to the study of Bayram (2019), it was determined that there was a significant difference between conscious awareness levels and the variables of weekly sports activity duration and purpose of doing sports activities. Although there was a numerical difference in post-earthquake trauma levels, no statistical difference was found. Alpulu and Yılmaz (2024) stated that the negativities experienced in the earthquake left deeper traces due to the low life experience of individuals who do not do active sports. Other factors (e.g., level of social support, earthquake experience, personal adversity) may have an impact on levels of mindfulness and trauma. These factors may suppress or modify the effect of taking or not taking folk dance lessons. Karacan-Doğan et al. (2023) did not detect any statistically significant difference between the dancers' dance type, gender, place where they spent most of their lives, mother and father education level, self-defined income level and intercultural sensitivity levels.

According to the analysis results regarding the variables of whether students take folk dance lessons or not and the sub-dimensions of the post-earthquake trauma scale, there is a significant difference in favor of students taking folk dance lessons in the affective dimension, while there is no significance in the behavioral problem and emotional limitation sub-dimensions. Although there was a numerical significance in the cognitive structure and sleep problem sub-dimensions, no statistically significant difference was found. Elçi et al. (2023) revealed that, according to parents' opinions about the activities their children participated in, their children made many physical improvements after regular physical activity (mobility, flexibility, etc.), and at the same time, they moved away from psychologically (fear, loneliness, darkness, etc.) negative emotional states and began to adapt to daily life more quickly. Students taking folk dance lessons can

establish social connections and find support within the group during this activity. This may alleviate post-earthquake trauma experiences and make a meaningful difference in affective symptoms. Physical activities, such as folk dances, can have stress-reducing effects. As stress decreases, post-traumatic affective symptoms may also decrease. Students taking folk dance courses can benefit from the spiritual well-being and vitality that dancing and moving brings. This may contribute to differences in post-traumatic affective symptoms. Folk dance lessons may include sensory stimuli, and sensory stimuli may be effective in emotional regulation. This may influence differences in affective symptoms.

According to the analysis results regarding the gender variable, although there was a numerical difference in mindfulness scores, no statistical difference was found (Alper et al., 2021; Tingaz, 2020; Acar and Eker, 2019; Cengiz et al., 2016; Baer et al., 2011). No difference was found in PETS scores. The sample used in the study may not have been large enough to statistically determine differences between genders. Small sample sizes can make it difficult to detect statistically significant differences. According to the analysis results regarding the gender variable of the students and the PETS sub-dimensions, there is a significant difference in favor of women in the affective sub-dimension (Kardaş and Tanhan, 2018), while there is no difference in the other sub-dimensions. There may be different trauma response patterns between men and women. Affective symptoms may be more pronounced among women, while differences in other subscales may be less pronounced. Gender roles and social expectations may make women more prone to emotional reactions. Therefore, post-earthquake affective symptoms may be more pronounced among women. On the other hand, differences in other sub-dimensions may depend more on external factors or the level of social support. Cengiz and Peker (2023) found that women had higher post-earthquake depression levels than men. In the study conducted by Alpullu and Yılgin (2024), it was determined that women's post-earthquake trauma levels were significantly higher than men.

It was determined that there was a significant negative relationship between conscious awareness scores and post-earthquake trauma scores ($r = -.432$; $p < .01$). Accordingly, it can be said that if the conscious awareness scores of university students increase, their post-earthquake trauma scores will decrease. Karabacak-Çelik (2023) stated that post-earthquake trauma symptoms have a negative significant relationship with hope and well-being. Akay et al. (2024) found that there was a negative and low level relationship between perceived stress score and subjective well-being score. Studies in the field of psychology have found that there is a significant negative

relationship between the level of conscious awareness and the level of stress (Söner and Kartol, 2022).

It can be seen that the majority of students still have negative emotions, based on their answers to their moods after the earthquake. It is seen that the awareness of 10 of the participants increased. When we look at the research in the literature on how dance affects the cognitive/spiritual health of the individual; Akandere and Demir (2011), in their study examining the effect of dance on people's depression levels; While statistically significant differences were observed in the pre-test and post-test measurements of the dancing group, there were no significant differences in the pre-test and post-test measurements of the control group. They stated that dance positively affects individuals' depression, which is one of their mental health problems, and removes individuals from depression. As a result of Mandıralı (2019) research; He stated that the Awareness-Based Creative Drama Program is a very effective program in increasing the "Psychological Endurance" and "Self-Confidence" levels of athletes and also in developing "Stress Coping Strategies".

As a result, mindfulness involves the individual developing a careful and accepting awareness of momentary experiences, emotions and thoughts in the present. This can be an effective tool for dealing with stressful situations. However, the fact that students in this study showed high trauma levels despite their moderate levels of conscious awareness may indicate that other factors (for example, the intensity of earthquake-related experiences, social support) also have an impact on trauma levels. The results highlight the importance of developing mindfulness skills and reducing post-earthquake trauma levels. In this context, it may be important to implement interventions such as psychological support, stress management techniques, and post-traumatic coping strategies. Additionally, awareness training and support programs may need to be expanded, especially for groups at risk (e.g. earthquake victims). Dance, as a sensory experience, can provide satisfaction and relief to students on an emotional and affective level, thus influencing differences in affective symptoms after an earthquake.

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Consent

As per international standards or university standards, Participants' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

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