

## Emotional Intelligence, Eudaimonic and Hedonic Well-Being among Students

Erum Rafique & Naeem Aslam

### Abstract

**Background:** The relationship between emotional intelligence and wellbeing has been an emerging area of research for the last few decades. The study was planned to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence, eudaimonic, and hedonic well-being among university students. .

**Methods:** The sample consists of 300 college and university students with the participation of both the gender were selected from Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Data collection was completed with self-report measures.

**Results:** For hypotheses testing Correlation, *t*-test, and ANOVA were computed. Results showed that there was a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence, eudaimonic well-being, positive affect, and life satisfaction. Emotional intelligence and eudaimonic well-being were negatively associated with negative affect. In addition, age was significantly positively related to emotional intelligence and Eudaimonic well-being. Post hoc analysis revealed that high levels of emotional intelligence, eudaimonic well-being, positive affect, and life satisfaction were higher in the highly educated group as compared to the middle and low education groups.

**Implications:** To enhance student's educational competencies, social relationship, improvement in mental well-being and their emotional difficulties the findings provides insight for health practitioners, and teachers. This study provides grounds for other researches on cognitive and affective components. .

**Conclusions:** Appropriate interventions and training are needed to enhance the wellbeing and emotional intelligence of the students'. Psychological wellbeing and high adaptive skills are helpful in boosting and accelerating their academic performance.

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Eudaimonic Well-Being and Hedonic Well-Being, students.

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## Background

For the past few decades, the construct of emotional intelligence (EI) has gained much importance in diverse fields of psychology. Its relationship with work adjustment, life satisfaction, health, and education, etc. has been well established (Austin & Saklofske, 2014; Di Fabio & Kenny 2016). BarOn (2006) defined EI is the ability that is vital to deal with daily hassles helps to differentiate between different emotions and label them appropriately, gives understanding for our and other people's emotions. Literature evidence states that people who are high on EI use an affective process and social support to enhance their well-being (Kong, Gong, Sajjad, Yang, & Zhao, 2019). The importance of EI can be understood through studies that showed that IQ represents only a 20% effect on a person's total achievement in life and emotional intelligence determined other things (Goleman, 1998). Development of EI is needed for better communication and handling various types of human behavior and challenging environments (Kargakou et al., 2015).

Eudaimonic well-being includes meaning in life and a sense of fulfillment (Rayan & Deci, 2001). Well-being with the consideration of a eudaimonic perspective described a sense of control over one's destiny, belongings tendency, fulfillment with one's presence, and oneself. Psychological well-being represents the absence of mental illness, pain, and discomfort (Keyes & Lopez, 2002). It means that the individual psychologically meets the criteria of personal growth, development, security needs, and behavior. Hedonic well-being consists of three components including life satisfaction which is the cognitive dimension, pleasant and unpleasant emotions represents emotional dimension both of these dimensions are associated with subjective well-being dimension (Diener, 1984). Well-being comprised a person's subjective happiness covers a full range of pleasant and unpleasant emotions, internal and long term states rather than external or floating moods. A person is considered high on subjective well-being to the degree that strongly embraces cognitive and emotional components (Deci & Rayan, 2008). Individuals who feel fulfilled having bonds with other people have higher personal satisfaction (Hemmati & Chung, 2016). Moreover, the literature suggests that happiness and life satisfaction increases with participation in social activity (Colombo, Rotondi & Stanca, 2018).

In Pakistan, the concept of emotional intelligence got constant attention from research experts who investigated it with well-being and various other variables in diverse situations. According to Nasir (2012), there is a significant association between academic achievement, cultural adjustment, and emotional intelligence. Adjustment in a particular culture consists of affective processing; emotional competencies help in regulation during a difficult point at that time the adjustment process of a student in the social environment contributes to their academic achievement. In a study, Suleman, Hussain, Shahzad, Syed, and Raja (2018) showed a negative association between perceived occupational stress and psychological well-being. Occupational stress has negative consequences on physical health for example diabetes,

depression, unsatisfactory work performance and at the same time have adverse effects on psychological well-being which affects an individual's normal functioning. Naheed, Rehman, and Shah (2000) have demonstrated that teachers professional attitude is associated with psychological well-being. In Pakistan teaching is considered a stressful career due to numerous reasons like working conditions, pay structure and workload, school environment opposite to such depressing aspects there are many factors which considered attractive like opportunities to self-expression, relationship with students and social relationship. A study on subjective well-being Arzeen (2013) indicates that wisdom, life satisfaction significantly associated with positive affect. People who experience more positive emotions remain less anxious have more wisdom to use optimistic social interactions which is constructive help for themselves and others.

EI has potential effects on enhancing student's psychological well-being so that they can attain personal meaning (Ruiz-Aranda, Extremera, & Pineda-Galan, 2014). Emotion regulation leads to Eudaimonic well-being more experiences of positive affect in diverse situations while infrequently practiced negative effect (Kahneman et. al., 2004). In essence, the literature suggests that education and training increase the well-being of a person (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005). Numerous studies suggested that emotional intelligence will have an optimistic impact on well-being, experiences conscious feelings, handling relationships, and inversely related to pessimistic feelings (Bastian, Burns & Nettelbeck, 2005; Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler, & Mayer, 1999). Zeidner and Olinick –Shemesh (2010) found a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence, positive affect, better satisfaction with life; emotional intelligence predicts an individual's sense of self-worth, and positive mental health. Literature has documented well about the significant association between emotional intelligence, positive outcomes across social, academic, career setting, and psychological domains among adolescents, to reduce daily life stress high emotional intelligence helps decrease conflicts, social understanding, and improving relationship (Perera & DiGiacomo, 2015).

Mehmood and Gulzar (2014) reported that people with high levels of self-esteem effectively and intelligently handle difficult times and are more assertive, they perform excellently in tasks and spend a happy life. For managing, processing, and understanding emotions the ability emotional intelligence is central competency (Petrides et al., 2007). Ayyash-Abdo and Alamuddin (2007) concluded women experience more negative affect, and inclined their thinking toward happiness (Koo, Rie, & Park, 2004), whereas men tend to distract their thoughts. Magai (2001) examined in a study that as age increases people will develop a better ability to aware, regulate their emotions and a wide range of life experiences enhance interpersonal communication. Easterline (2006) found that self-acceptance and autonomy both of these aspects of psychological well-being are easily attainable with increasing age while young and middle age groups experience less satisfaction as compared to the older group. Similarly, Hooley and Lavery (1995) found that positive affect has a positive association

with life satisfaction as age increases. Cazan and Nastasa (2015) suggest that EI promotes higher success as well as adjustment in the educational environment. Judges, Iles, and Dimotakis (2010) examined the relationship between education and well-being and find a positive correlation between education and well-being. Agrawal et al. (2011) reported that higher education was positively associated with life satisfaction and positive affect, whereas higher education negatively associated with negative affect. EI plays a significant part in a student's achievement improves personal meaning and psychological well-being (Ruiz-Aranda et al., 2014).

The current study examines the relationship between emotional intelligence, eudaimonic, and hedonic well-being among students. These concepts gain consideration in positive psychology and health because they have a significant link with different measures, for instance, happiness and quality of life. Well-being enhances happiness in an individual's life. Existing literature yielded positive relations among emotional intelligence, life satisfaction, and eudaimonic well-being (Bastian, Burns, & Nettelbeck, 2005). Current research has a modest attempt to determine the association between emotional intelligence, eudaimonic, and hedonic well-being. Emotionally intelligent individuals experience less stress and negative feelings it is an important factor to understand their own and other people's emotions (Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler, & Mayer, 1999). Therefore, the study aims to investigate that those individuals who have high emotional intelligence consist of positive emotions able to maintain well-being while experiencing low levels of negative emotions (Mikolajzak, Nelis, Hansenne, & Quoidbach, 2008). Scheibes, Freund, and Baltes (2007) found that age plays an important role in emotional intelligence which in turn increases well-being changes can acquire through learning, training, and life experiences because these components are developmental. High EI helps to control emotions and promote well-being, reduce stress by decreasing conflicts, and improving social relationships.

## Method

### Objectives

The objectives of the present study are:

1. To investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence, eudaimonic, and hedonic well-being among students.
2. To investigate the role of demographic variables (age and education) on emotional intelligence, eudaimonic, and hedonic well-being.

### Hypotheses

The hypotheses of the present study are:

1. Emotional intelligence is positively related to eudaimonic well-being, positive emotions, and life satisfaction while negatively associated with negative emotions.
2. Emotional intelligence, eudaimonic, and hedonic well-being increases with age.
3. Higher would be the education higher would be emotional intelligence, eudaimonic, and hedonic well-being.

### Design

This was the quantitative study. Purposive sampling technique was used based on cross-sectional design.

### Participants

The present study consisted of 300 participants, through almost equal participation of both gender, with age ranged from 16-25 years ( $M = 21.76$ ;  $SD = 2.55$ ). The data was taken from various institutes of Rawalpindi and Islamabad through a convenient sampling technique. Respondents were male and female students.

### Measures

**Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS).** To assess the EI, Emotional Intelligence Scale (Wong & Law, 2002) was used in this study. This scale measures an individual's capability to understand, identify, and direct emotions in their own self and surrounding people. EI has four subscales which consist of self emotional appraisal, emotional use, and regulations, whereas other people's emotions appraisal is also included. Responses were acquired on a six-point Likert scale varying from strongly disagree = 1 to strongly agree = 6. The inner consistency reliability ( $\alpha = 0.94$ ) for this scale represents almost good and high reliability as reported by Wong and Law (2002).

**Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWB).** The scale of Psychological Well-Being was used to assess eudaimonic well-being. It has 42 items and six subscales developed by Ryff et al. (2007). The inventory intends to assess environmental mastery, self-acceptance, autonomy, personal growth, positive relations with others, and purpose in life. Responses were rated on six-point Likert scales ranging from strongly disagree = 1 to strongly agree = 6. Each dimension has seven items. The Cronbach's alpha ranged from ( $\alpha = .70-.84$ ) for scale represents good reliability.

**Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS).** Positive and Negative affect was measured by using five points Likert scale prepared by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988). Both are Subjective well-being components comprised of words list which illustrate two different states of emotions (positive and negative emotions). Responses were rated on five-point Likert scales ranging from very slightly or not at all = 1 to extremely = 6. The Cronbach's alpha reliability for PA ( $\alpha = .89$ ) and NA ( $\alpha = .85$ ) shows good and high reliability.

**Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS).** Life satisfaction was judged by five-items used in this study developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985). This scale measures an individual's global assessment with life and gives a general evaluation of a person. Respondents were judged at a seven-point Likert scale ranges from strongly disagree = 1 to strongly agree = 7. To get a score for hedonic well-being PANAS and SWLS scores were used together. Internal consistency and Cronbach's ( $\alpha = .80-.87$ ) in the original version represent good reliability.

### Procedure

For data collection, a convenient sampling technique was used. The sample of the study consists of students who were taken from various institutes of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Respondents were informed about study objectives and informed consent was taken. The

## Results

Table 1

*Descriptive statistics and Psychometric Properties of Scales (N = 300)*

Scales	Items	M	SD	A	Ranges		
					Potential	Actual	Skew
EI	16	70.03	12.29	.85	16-96	30-94	-.715
PWB	42	164.32	20.76	.79	42-262	117-231	.779
Posit. A	10	35.11	6.49	.67	10-50	17-50	-.213
Nega. A	10	27.17	7.87	.78	10-50	11-48	.187
Life Sat	5	23.06	4.50	.57	5-35	5-33	-.539

*Note.* EI= Emotional intelligence; PWB= Psychological well-being; Posit. A= Positive affect; Negat. A= Negative affect; Life Sat = Satisfaction with life

Table 2

*Relationship between the study variables with demographic variables (N=300)*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
EI	-	.36**	.36**	.33**	.11*	.23**	.25**	.28**	.40**	-.07**	.24**	.62**	-.02
PWB		-	.69**	.64**	.70**	.70**	.69**	.78**	.41**	-.39**	.25**	.15**	-.11**
Auto			-	.42**	.41**	.42**	.36**	.45**	.34**	-.21**	.22**	.12*	.04
Env. M				-	.27**	.35**	.23**	.46**	.30**	-.31**	.17**	.68	.05
Per. G					-	.37**	.45**	.47**	.22**	-.33**	.11	.13*	-.14*
P.Rel						-	.35**	.44**	.25**	-.27**	.26**	.09	.05
Pur. L							-	.44**	.28**	-.24**	.09	.11*	.09
Self. A								-	.33**	-.29**	.19**	.09	.09
Posit. A									-	.01	.09**	.05**	-.01
Nega. A										-	-.26**	-.01	.07
Life sat											-	-.05	.09
Age												-	.16*
Education													-
M	70.0	164.3	26.6	26.2	27.2	28.6	27.3	28.5	35.1	27.2	23.1	21.76	14.41
SD	12.3	20.77	3.93	4.72	4.79	5.35	5.33	5.28	6.50	7.87	4.51	2.55	1.57

*Note.* EI= Emotional intelligence; PWB= Psychological well-being; Auto =Autonomy; Env. M = Environmental mastery; Per G = Personal growth; P.Rel= Positive relation; Pur. L = Purpose in life; Self A = Self acceptance; Posit. A = Positive affect; Negat.A = Negative affect; Life Sat = Satisfaction with life.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

Table 3

*Comparison of Adolescents and Adults on Study Variables (N=300)*

Variables	Adolescents (n = 142 )		Adults (n = 158)		t	p	95 % CI		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
Emotional Intelligence	69.61	11.8	70.22	12.5	.39	.14	-3.62	2.40	-
Psychological wellbeing	160.0	17.4	165.3	22.0	1.30	.01	-8.45	-1.70	.25
Autonomy	26.01	4.7	26.22	4.7	.370	.53	-1.37	.94	-
Environmental mastery	26.36	4.0	27.57	5.0	2.04	.02	-2.37	-.04	.27
Personal Growth	26.36	4.0	27.57	5.0	2.04	.02	-2.37	-.04	.26
Positive relation	28.21	5.1	28.81	5.4	.89	.44	-1.90	-.71	-
Purpose in life	26.80	5.3	27.46	5.3	.99	.78	-1.96	.64	-
Self- Acceptance	28.07	4.6	28.64	5.5	.86	.08	-1.86	.72	-
Positive Affect	34.64	6.0	35.32	6.6	.83	.17	-2.26	.91	-
Negative Affect	27.71	7.4	26.92	8.0	.80	.24	-11	2.71	-
Life Satisfaction	21.72	4.6	23.78	4.4	1.89	.82	-.039	2.15	-

Note. LL= lower limit; UL= upper limit.

Table 4

*Comparison of Study variables on the level of Education (N=300)*

variables	<sup>a</sup> Low education (n = 55)		<sup>b</sup> Middle education (n = 70)		<sup>c</sup> High education (n = 175)		F	MD=i-j	i>j	95%CL	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD				LL	UL
EI	69.49	12.8	69.45	10.9	71.92	12.6	1.08				
PWB	160.4	15.4	163.6	22.8	165.82	21.2	1.48				
Auto	26.18	4.2	25.81	4.9	26.29	4.7	.25				
Env. M	26.18	3.6	26.62	4.3	26.74	3.8	.43				
Per. G	25.47	4.3	27.31	4.5	27.68	4.9	4.60**	HE >LE	2.21*	.45	3.97
P. Rel	28.49	5.1	28.32	5.8	28.78	5.2	.19				
Pur.L	26.32	5.4	27.44	5.3	27.48	5.3	1.03				
Self. A	27.74	4.5	28.11	5.6	28.83	5.3	1.09				
Post. A	35.29	6.6	35.32	6.0	35.97	6.8	.10				
Nega. A	28.92	7.2	26.87	7.4	26.73	8.2	1.69				
Life sat	22.16	3.2	23.74	4.5	24.44	4.7	4.13**	HE >LE	1.71*	.05	3.37

Note. EI= Emotional intelligence; PWB= Psychological well-being; Auto= Autonomy; Env.M= Environmental Mastery; Per. G=Personal Growth; P.Rel= Positive Relation; Pur. L= Purpose in life; Self. A = Self-acceptance; Post.A = Positive Affect; Nega. A = Negative Affect; Life sat = Satisfaction with life; a= Education less than Matric; b= Education Matric to Master; c= education above Masters

required information was gathered through a demographic sheet that included age and education. Participants were, then given the scales of the study along with written as well as oral instruction. Participants were guaranteed confidentiality and the researcher explained the purpose of study so that they could provide relevant information honestly without hesitation.

Results in Table 1 depict the psychometric properties of instruments. Alpha values are in the satisfactory range except for the Satisfaction with Life Scale. The value of skewness is acceptable in normal range

showed a normal distribution of data.

Table 2 depicts the correlation matrix among the study variables. EI is positively associated with psychological wellbeing, autonomy, personal growth, and positive relation, purpose in life, self-acceptance, positive affect, life satisfaction, and a negative non-significant association with negative affect and education. EI is also positively associated with age and age is significantly positively associated with psychological wellbeing, and its three subscales i.e., feeling of autonomy, individual's personal growth, and purpose in life, while negatively

associated with education. In addition, PWB and positive affect are positively linked with study variables, whereas negatively associated with negative affect and education.

Table 3 demonstrates the comparison of adolescents and adults in study variables. Results show that psychological wellbeing is higher among adults as compared to adolescents. Moreover, adults scores were higher in personal growth and environmental mastery as compared to adolescents.

Results in Table 4 demonstrate ANOVA scores, Mean and standard deviations of variables. The variables were compared on the educational level. The results depict that personal growth and life satisfaction are significantly different across three educational groups. Post hoc analysis revealed that higher educational levels of students showed greater life satisfaction and personal growth when compared to the low educational group.

## Discussion

The current study intended to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence, eudaimonic, and hedonic well-being among students. Moreover, it investigated the role of (age and education) on emotional intelligence, eudaimonic, and hedonic well-being. Based on the previous literature we have hypothesized that EI has shown positive association and negative association with negative emotions.

Age and education showed significant impacts on the individual as emotional intelligence, eudaimonic, and hedonic well-being increases with age improved with higher education. For data collection, Emotional Intelligence Scale, Psychological Well-being Scale, Positive and Negative Affect Schedule, and Satisfaction with Life Scale were administered on 300 participants with 16 to 25 range of age. The reliability index of all the scales was satisfactory except for Life satisfaction (see Table 1). Studies have suggested that people in various cultures showed lower self-respect and subjective well-being especially those living in East Asians countries as compared to European Americans (Hamamura, Heine, & Paulhus, 2008; Heine & Lehman, 1997; Lee & Seligman, 1997), people who live in individualistic society rate themselves high on subjective wellbeing than collectivistic society (Ma & Schoeneman, 1997).

For the first hypothesis, EI is positively related to eudaimonic well-being, positive emotions, and life satisfaction and negatively associated with negative emotions. Our findings showed that EI is positively associated with psychological wellbeing, autonomy, positive relation, purpose in life, self-acceptance, positive affect, and life satisfaction. EI is also positively associated with age. In addition, PWB is positively associated with life satisfaction, positive affect, and age while negatively associated with NA. However, positive affect is negatively correlated with NA (see Table 2). Results are in line with previous literature claimed that emotional intelligence has a positive association with eudaimonic well-being (Bastian, Burns & Nettelbeck, 2005; Mayer, Caruso & Salovey,

1999), while significant improvement in emotional and well-being competencies showed as age increases (Bar-On, 2000). Similar findings are presented by Zeidner, Matthews, and Roberts (2009) they found that EI correlated with social-emotional achievement in student's increases life satisfaction that in turn overcome obstacles to achieve the quality of life.

Mikolijczak, Nelis, Hansenne, and Quidbach (2008) stressed the key element of emotional intelligence during the processes of optimism as well as positive outcomes in life, EI directly associated with positive feelings and protects from stressful negative feelings. The second part of the first hypothesis is also supported by our data that people who endorse greater EI and able to manage and understands their emotions experiences less stress, they are probably better in predicting emotional consequences have increased level of PWB (Bruckett & Mayer, 2003). Extremera, Ruiz-Aranda, Pineda-Galan, and Salguero (2011) found that emotional intelligence eudaimonic and hedonic well-being has significant association but emotional intelligence showed higher variance for eudaimonic well-being as compared to hedonic well-being. For a better outlook on life (hedonia) and positive mood maintenance, emotional intelligence is important in regulating developmental aspects of human functioning (eudaimonia). A study revealed that EI is significantly correlated with eudaimonic and hedonic well-being (Brackett, Rivers, Shiffman, Lerner, & Salovey 2006). Similarly, another study suggests that for hedonic and eudaimonic well-being the ability EI is significant and differential predictor (Mayer, Roberts, & Barsade, 2008). Empirical evidence suggests that high EI helps the individual to perceive and regulate emotions in this way they can experience positive emotions in greater frequency maintains positivity in life as compared to individuals who are low in emotional intelligence ability (Sanchezalvarez, Extremera, & Fernandezberrocal, 2016).

We also hypothesized that EI, eudaimonic, and hedonic well-being increases with age. Our findings supported the hypothesis. Past research suggests that from early adulthood to middle age emotional competencies and well-being are the developmental components that modify during later life experiences and adult development (Bar-On, 1997, 2000; Scheibes, Freund & Baltes, 2007). We were also interested to see how education creates an impact on study variables. The analyses revealed that higher education; life satisfaction and personal growth shows positive correlation (see Table 3). Results are consistent with studies that showed that high education provides opportunities and mold student's skills efficiently toward positive affect and satisfaction with life as they are developmental (Agrawal et al., 2011). ANOVA with the Post hoc test shows the considerable difference in personal growth and life satisfaction higher for the master group as compared to the lower education group. These findings are in accord with Ferrante's (2009) study found in the higher education setting life satisfaction and positive affect increases. Similarly, another plausible justification could be that high education help individuals earn high income which in turn associated with life satisfaction and happiness (Schimmel, 2009). In the same vein, Ma and Schoeneman

(1997) reported that cognitive and affective skills are key factors in students' attitudes, achievement and behavior higher level of education increases their intrapersonal skills and emotional expression.

## Limitations and Implications of the study

The present study has certain limitations. Self-reported measures were used for data collection; results may produce self-bias due to self-evaluation tools that may have validity problems. There are many factors that contribute to student's well-being and emotional intelligence such as personality, socio-economic status and physical health should be explored.

Data was collected from those institutions where students get a quality education while not representing the national sample it only includes two main cities of the country so generalization may cause problems.

To enhance student's educational competencies, social relationship, improvement in mental well-being and their emotional difficulties the findings provides insight for health practitioners, and teachers. This study provides grounds for other researches on cognitive and affective components.

## Conclusion

Developing high emotional intelligence is essential for students to excel in the future. It helps to become more productive and successful to reduce stress by decreasing conflicts and improving the relationship. The findings of the study revealed that emotional intelligence has a significant association with eudaimonic well-being, positive affect, and satisfaction with life, so this study will be helpful for practitioners and in education settings by raising the level of student's success.

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## Supplementary information

### Abbreviations

EI: Emotional intelligence

PWB: Psychological well-being

Auto= Autonomy

Env.M= Environmental Mastery

Per. G=Personal Growth

P.Rel= Positive Relation

Pur. L= Purpose in life

Self. A = Self-acceptance

Post.A = Positive Affect

Nega. A = Negative Affect

Life sat = Satisfaction with life

a= Education less than Matric

b= Education Matric to Master

c= education above Masters

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## Availability of data and materials

The datasets used and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding authors on reasonable request.

## Authors contributions

ErumRafique contributed to the study concepts and design and acquisition of data, analysis, and interpretation of data. Naeem Aslam participated in drafting the manuscript, critical revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content, and all authors have seen and approved the final version to be published.

## Ethics approval and consent to participate

The integrate study was approved by the National Institute of Psychology Review Board. Written consent was obtained from all participants.

## Competing interests

The authors declare to have no competing interests.

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