

The Level of Friendship among Al-Israa University Students in the light of Some Variables

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Received: May 23, 2023 Accepted: June 12, 2023 Published: December 20, 2023

doi:10.5296/ije.v15i4.21361 URL: <https://doi.org/10.5296/ije.v15i4.21361>

Abstract

This study aimed to find out the level of friendship among the students of Al-Israa University in the Jordanian society, which is attributed to gender and academic qualification, and to achieve the objectives of the study, a questionnaire was prepared to measure the level of friendship among the students of Al-Israa University, and its validity and stability were confirmed, and it was applied to a sample of (361) male and female students, from the bachelor's and master's level at Israa University in Jordan. After using the arithmetic means, standard deviations and t-test, the results of the study revealed that the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students was high, and there are no statistical differences due to the variables of gender and academic qualification in the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students.

Keywords: friendship, university students, Al-Israa University

1. Introduction

The family is considered the first institution of socialization in which a person is born it transforms from a biological being into a social being, the most important thing that distinguishes man from other beings is his social nature and interaction with members of society, cases of group affiliation and clustering within a specific group framework all stem from the need for a sense of belonging, which friendship patterns are one of its forms.

The need for belonging is a human motive that has occupied human thinking throughout the ages, as he always seeks to search for communication with others to satisfy this need (Al-Zeyoudi, 2016), with the development and changes of life and the increase in its demands and difficulties, a person needs to build relationships and form friendships as a form of support in overcoming these difficulties, These relationships may be compulsory as the individual's relationship with his family members, or it is optional, such as the individual's relationship with friends (Pearce & Dunbar, 2020), since man is a social being by nature, he cannot live in isolation from others and their emotional participation (Al-Jundi, 2009).

Friendship is a psychological and social need that a person seeks to achieve in order to reach psychological and social compatibility and a sense of contentment, since a friend provides his friend with support, support, and compatibility (Al-Musawi, 2001), it also confirmed many studies, such as the study of Al-Morshidi and Al-Sayed (2018), Jarjis (2011), Bakalim and Karkai (2016), and Sarmini (2013). the importance of friendship in providing support, psychological compatibility, social support and a sense of happiness.

Friendship is defined in the language: *Mukhtar Al-Sihah*: “(Friendship). The man is (a friend), and the female is (a friend). and the plural is friends, and it may be said to the plural and the feminine (friend) (Al-Razi, 1985, P.234). *Lisan al-Arab*: Friendship in Hadith and Friendship, the Source of Friendship and its Derivation of Truthfulness, Affection and Advice (Ibn Manzoor, 1996, P.307).

Friendship is defined as a social relationship based on feelings of love and mutual attraction between two or more people (Al-Majzoub, 2001), and defines it (Al-Shammas, 2012) as an intimate relationship that binds two people with a strong bond without any greed or interests. (Makram Allah, 2017) defines it as a voluntary relationship based on sympathy, warmth of feelings, and the ability of the parties to exchange opinions and disclose the most private issues, in addition to mutual participation in interests, desires, tendencies, and trends, and (Dirk at al) defines it as a type of interpersonal-optional relationship through a continuous relationship between two people for a relatively long period of time that works to advance social and psychological goals for the individual that include patterns of help, love and affection.

We might conclude of definitions friendship is characterized by the following (Al-Ballah, 2017):

- An optional relationship that takes place in a socio-cultural environment.
- Continuity in the relationship for a certain period.
- Exchange of expression of feelings.

- Support and cooperation between its parties.

Friendship is also a source of social support for the development of the individual's personality, because friendship provides an individual's self-understanding and provides him with many social skills, where the university student spends time with his friends more than the time he spends with his family, as he acquires many experiences and information that it is difficult for him to gain from his family (Akin et al., 2016).

Thus, it becomes clear to us the important role of friendship in the life of the individual in general and in the life of the university student in particular, given that friendship is a psychological-social requirement through which he starts into the broad social world in which he integrates and interacts with it, and through it he acquires many experiences (Mansour, 2021).

The development of successful friendship is one of the main pillars of healthy adaptation, and it contributes significantly to improving the quality of life (Ghosh, Ray, & Das, 2015), it also appears more urgent for the university student due to his need for psychological and social support from friends (Abu Bakr, 2016) where members of a friendship group can help each other achieve goals, teach each other goal-achieving skills, and create an atmosphere of goal-seeking (Parker, et al 2015).

1.1 Components of Friendship

The components of friendship can be summarized in three:

- 1- A motive-emotional component: such as the motive of belonging, the need for social competence, pleasure, ...
- 2- Communicative component: which is the behavioral processes (communicative, interactive, cognitive).
- 3- A mental component (Al-Qadri, 2012).

1.2 Characteristics of Friendship

Friendship is one of the important signs of group cohesion, as it provides the members of the group with intellectual, mental, and emotional support that is not available in other social relationships, the characteristics of friendship can be summarized as follows (Qassam, 2012):

- 1- Enjoying the company of the other party.
- 2- Accept the other party as it is.
- 3- Each party's concern for the interests of the other.
- 4- Respect and belief in the good behavior of each party.
- 5- Mutual assistance when needed.
- 6- Spontaneity and the behavior of each party as it is.
- 7- Disclosure of personal experiences and feelings.

1.3 Friendship Functions

Most recent psychological studies agree on the existence of a close link between interaction with friends and psychological and social compatibility in all stages of life in general, and in adolescence in particular, where the relationship between friends helps to provide cultural, political and economic support for friends, in addition to supporting moral growth by strengthening many social values and participating in solving many life problems (Muhammad, 2020), the functions of psychological and social friendship can be summarized as follows (Al-Shammas, 2012).

First: The psychological function of friendship: Most of the research related to the functions of friendship agrees that friends play a major role in reducing feelings of anxiety and tension in a friend by supporting them with positive and pleasant feelings and keeping them away from loneliness, thus, friends achieve a great deal of psychological comfort for the friend, and perhaps one of the most important psychological functions of friendship is self-disclosure, people naturally tend to talk to others whether on public or private issues in order to relieve stress.

Second: The social function of friendship: Friendship provides friends with a set of socially desirable skills and abilities, and his knowledge of social roles and moral values associated with them through which they can share their problems and ideas with him and their joys and sorrows friends learn through it how to share with others their interests, express feelings and ideas, and build relationships of mutual trust this helps in realizing appropriate social behavior standards in different social situations.

By integrating the two previous functions, the nature of friendship is manifested in its two dimensions, personal and social, considering a person as a social being who cannot live alone in isolation from others, it can only prove itself in the framework of interaction with others.

Finally, despite the importance of friendship in the life of the individual and the bright image of it, it must be noted that there are sometimes negative effects represented in the exploitation of friendship by some to achieve personal goals, in addition, some friends may be descended from low and deviant moral standards, which has a negative impact on the other friend, undoubtedly, this requires the individual to know how to choose his friends and deal with them, and we must not overlook the role of the family, particularly parents, in guiding children, and know their friends and monitor them continuously.

2. Study Problem

University students constitute an important dimension in the life of a university student, as they contribute significantly to achieving growth, psychological adjustment, and building and refining his personality, the group of comrades constitutes one of the main social circles that influence the life of the individual in the various aspects of his development, whether in the personal, mental, social or academic aspects, and others, and that ignoring the role of friends in the life of the individual means ignoring an important aspect of the most important social

aspects that provide the individual with experiences, skills and ideas and contribute to his feeling of contentment, security and happiness, and because a friend sees the person who befriends him, whether in the positive or negative aspects, so friendship plays an important role in the life of the individual, especially young people who are in dire need of friends, and because there are those who believe that friendship no longer exists between people or may have become rare as a result of the imbalance of the value and social system and the spread of various means of technology, this is what aroused the researchers' interest in conducting this research in order to identify the level of friendship among the students of Al-Israa University, while studying the differences in the response of the research sample according to the variable of gender and academic qualification.

3. Objectives of the Study

- Identifying the level of friendship among the students of Al-Israa University in the city of Amman.
- Detecting differences in the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students due to gender and academic qualification.

4. Study Questions

1. What is the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students?
2. Are there statistically significant differences at the level of (0.05) or less in the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students due to gender?
3. Are there statistically significant differences at the level of (0.05) or less in the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students due to the academic qualification?

5. Importance Study

- Importance of the topic: This study derives its importance in dealing with the concept of friendship, which is considered one of the important concepts in the individual's social life in that it defines a relationship with others on sound foundations.
- The importance of the target group: targeting the group of university students who seem to have friendship more urgently because of their need for psychological and social support.
- This study can benefit Arab libraries and researchers with positive topics that limit the spread of negative phenomena in Arab society.

6. Terminology of Study and Procedural Definitions

- Friendship: a voluntary relationship based on sympathy, warmth of feelings, and the ability of the parties to exchange opinions and disclose the most private topics, in addition to mutual participation in interests, desires, inclinations, and trends (Makram Allah, 2017). Friendship is defined procedurally by the degree that the subject gets on the tool prepared for that purpose.
- University students: They are students enrolled in university studies after high school.
- Al-Israa University: It is one of the private Jordanian universities, established in 1991 and located in Al-Tneeb area, Queen Alia International Airport Road, south of the capital, Amman.

7. Study Limitations

- Human limit: The current study was limited to bachelor's and master's students at Al-Israa University in Amman.
- Spatial limit: The current study was limited to Al-Israa University, Amman.
- Temporal limit: The study was applied during the first semester of the academic year 2022/2023.
- As for the determinants of the study, they are limited to the sample, its specifications, and the study tool, whose validity and reliability have been confirmed.

8. Previous Studies

Mansour (2021) conducted a study aimed at identifying the level of friendship among a sample of female students at Taif University and knowing the differences in the responses of the study sample about friendship according to the variable (academic specialization, academic level, number of family members, and family income level), the study sample consisted of (105) female students. The results of the study concluded that the level of friendship among female students at Taif University was high, there are statistically significant differences in the level of friendship according to the variable of the number of family members and the level of family income, and there are no statistically significant differences in the level of friendship according to the variable of academic specialization and academic level, Al-Shamiri's study (2019) aimed to identify the level of friendship among Taiz University students in the light of some variables, the study sample consisted of (520) male and female students from different faculties and levels at Taiz University, the results of the study revealed that the level of friendship among Taiz University students was high, and there were no statistically significant differences in the level of friendship according to the variables: gender, type of college, and place of residence, the study of Al-Murshidi and Al-Sayed (2018) aimed to reveal the quality of friendship and spiritual intelligence in predicting love of life among a sample of Hail University students in the light of some

variables, the study sample consisted of (402) male and female students. The results of the study revealed that there is a significant predictive ability for the quality of friendship with love of life, and there is a predictive ability for spiritual intelligence with love of life, and there were no statistically significant differences in the level of friendship according to the variables of gender and scientific specialization, while significant differences appeared in spiritual intelligence according to the gender variable in favor of females, the results revealed that literary majors are higher in spiritual intelligence, males are higher than females in love of life, and scientific majors are higher in love of life, the study (2017) Sima & Singh aimed to identify the level of friendship among college students at the university, the study sample consisted of (401) male and female university students in Ethiopia. The results of the study revealed that the level of friendship between students was weak, the results also showed that the level of support and assistance among the students was academic, Sarmini (2013) conducted a study aimed at identifying the possibility of the level of friendship in predicting happiness and the effect of some variables on friendship, the study sample consisted of (194) male and female students from the Faculty of Education, Arts and Sciences at Ain Shams University, the results of the study revealed that there were no statistically significant differences in the level of friendship due to the gender variable, there are statistically significant differences in the level of friendship according to the variable of specialization in favor of literary majors, and the friendship scale revealed its ability to predict happiness, Alshamas (2012) conducted a study aimed at revealing friendship and its role in the life of a university student, the study sample consisted of (120) male and female students from the Faculties of Science and Education at Damascus University, the results of the study revealed that there were no statistically significant differences in the level of friendship between students of the Faculty of Science and students of the Faculty of Education, there were no statistically significant differences in the level of friendship between males and females, the study of Hall (2010) aimed to identify the differences between the sexes in the level of friendship. The study sample consisted of (8825) individuals, its results revealed that there were statistically significant differences in the level of friendship due to the gender variable and in favor of females.

9. Commenting on Previous Studies

By reviewing previous studies, the following can be noted:

- Friendship represents an important dimension on the social side among students.
- The diversity of the size and type of the sample used, some of which were conducted on university students, some on adolescents, and some on individuals in general.
- The studies varied in terms of objectives, including the aim of knowing the predictive ability of friendship with other variables such as love of life and happiness, including knowledge of the level of friendship among students in the light of some variables such as specialization, place of residence, family income level, and type of college. 2021.

- The places in which the studies were conducted varied, some of which were conducted in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Egypt, Syria, and Ethiopia. As for locally in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the researchers did not find - according to their knowledge - any local study.
- This study benefited from previous studies in knowing the theoretical frameworks for the topic of friendship and in designing the study scale.
- What distinguishes the current study from previous studies is that it dealt with the issue of friendship among university students in the capital, Amman, and the variable of academic qualification. Use a scale designed by the researcher.

10. Methodology and Procedures

This part includes the steps followed in the implementation of the current study in terms of: the methodology, the sample, the instrument, the procedures for applying the study and its variables.

10.1 Study Approach

The study used the descriptive survey method, as it aimed to identify the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students in light of the variables: gender and educational qualification.

10.2 Study Community

The study population consisted of all the students of Al-Israa University enrolled in the first semester 2022/2023 AD from the bachelor's and master's levels, which numbered (5400) male and female students, of them, (5042) students are at the bachelor's level and (358) are at the master's level. Table (1) shows this.

Table 1. Al-Israa University Students Enrolled in the First Semester 2022/2023 AD, Distributed According to Gender and Educational Qualification

Qualification	Gender		Total
	male	female	
Bachelor	1887	3155	5042
Master	90	268	358
Total	1977	3423	5400

10.3 The Study Sample

The study sample consisted of (361) male and female students from Al-Israa University in the academic year 2022/2023 AD, who were chosen on a random basis, at a rate of (7%), table (2) shows the distribution of the study sample according to the variables of gender and

educational qualification.

Table 2. Distribution of the Study Sample from Al-Israa University Students in the Academic Year 2022/2023 Distributed by Gender and Educational Qualification

Qualification	Gender		Total
	male	female	
Bachelor	141	162	303
Master	34	24	58
Total	175	186	361

10.4 Study Tool

To achieve the objectives of the study, the study tool was prepared after reviewing the theoretical literature and available standards in this field, such as: Mansour (2021), Khaled (2018), Qassam (2013), and Al-Shamas (2012). The tool consisted of (21) paragraphs, the responses to the items of the tool were made by bachelor's and master's students at Al-Israa University according to a five-dimensional scale: (always, dearly, sometimes, rarely, never), the degree (5) expresses the highest levels of friendship, while the degree (1) expresses the lowest levels. The levels of averages were divided into three levels: the low level of friendship and its averages range between (1-2.33), the average level of friendship, its averages range between (2.34 - 3.67), and the high level of friendship and its levels range between (3.68 - 5).

To achieve the validity of the study tool a prospective study was conducted on (30) male and female bachelor's and master's students at Al-Israa University from outside the study sample to ensure the indicators of building validity for the scale, where the correlation coefficients were calculated between the items and the total score of the scale, it was found that all the paragraphs have statistically significant correlation coefficients at the level of significance (0.05) and (0.01), which are as follows:

Table 3. Correlation Coefficients of the Friendship Scale Items with the Total Score of the Scale (n = 30)

Paragraph	Paragraph link	Paragraph	Paragraph link	Paragraph	Paragraph link
1	.696**	8	.749**	15	.661**
2	.795**	9	.615**	16	.801**
3	.635**	10	.564**	17	.801**
4	.775**	11	.503**	18	.862**
5	.751**	12	.704**	19	.458*
6	.669**	13	.538**	20	.384*
7	.773**	14	.640**	21	.704**

To achieve the stability of the study tool Cronbach's alpha stability was calculated on the results of the application on the survey sample, and the internal consistency stability coefficient was calculated by Cronbach's alpha (0.93), in addition, the repetition stability was calculated by re-application on the same survey sample after two weeks, the recurrence stability coefficient was reached by Pearson correlation coefficient (0.90), these coefficients give high reliability for applying the study tool to the sample.

11. Study Procedures

- Determining the study population and sample of bachelor's and master's students at Al-Israa University in the capital, Amman.
- Examine the theoretical literature and previous studies related to the topic of friendship.
- Preparing the study tool and ensuring its validity and reliability.
- Application of the tool to the study sample.
- Data dumping and extracting results.
- Answering the study questions, analyzing and discussing the results, and making recommendations.

12. Study Variables

- Gender: It has two levels (male and female).
- Academic qualification: It has two levels (Bachelor's and Master's degrees).
- Friendship: It has three levels (low, medium, high).

13. Statistical Processors

- Arithmetic averages and standard deviations to detect the level of friendship.
- T-test to discover the differences attributed to social gender and academic qualification.

14. Results the Study

14.1 Results of the first question and its discussion: What is the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students?

To answer this question, arithmetic averages were calculated and the standard deviations for the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students, and Table (4) shows this.

Table 4. Arithmetic Averages the Standard Deviations of the Items of the Friendship Scale for Al-Israa University Students Are Arranged in Descending Order According to the Arithmetic Means

Rank	number	Paragraphs	Arithmetic averages	Standard deviation	Level
1.	12	I stand by my friends in difficult times	4.58	.853	High
2.	1	I feel happy with my friends	4.22	1.034	High
3.	7	I hope my friendships will last a lifelong	4.20	1.241	High
4.	20	I don't care about the nationality or religion of my friends	4.17	1.238	High
5.	10	I welcome any friend who wants to get to know me	4.15	1.160	High
6.	21	I join my friends in their events	4.14	1.127	High
7.	19	I don't care about the age difference when choosing my friends.	4.12	1.159	High
8.	8	I have a number of friends	4.06	1.223	High
9.	16	I feel psychologically comfortable with my friends	4.04	1.120	High
10.	18	I feel comfortable and intellectually connected with my friends	3.91	1.182	High
11.	5	My friends stand by me in difficult times.	3.83	1.246	High
12.	13	It's easy for me to build friendships	3.80	1.267	High
13.	17	I feel an urgent desire to meet my friends	3.80	1.290	High
14.	14	I am very interested to find friends of mine	3.76	1.367	High
15.	4	I join my friends in filling my free time	3.70	1.211	High
16.	15	I don't find it embarrassing to discuss my feelings with my friends	3.46	1.392	medium
17.	6	My friends give me financial and moral support	3.44	1.401	medium
18.	2	I turn to my friends in difficult circumstances	3.42	1.338	medium
19.	9	Meet my friends outside of university	3.33	1.500	medium
20.	3	I share my personal situation with my friends	2.77	1.357	medium
21.	11	I have friends of the opposite sex	2.64	1.543	medium
Total degree of friendship			3.79	.840	High

Categories: (low) 1 - 2.32 / (medium) 2.33 - 3.67 / (high) 3.68 - 5

Table (4) shows that the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students was high, as the arithmetic averages of the total score was (3.79) with a standard deviation of (0.840), the arithmetic averages of the paragraphs ranged between (2.64-4.58), and the levels of the paragraphs were between high and average, and with a high level of appreciation, while paragraph (11) which reads: “I have friends of the opposite sex” ranked last, with an arithmetic averages of (2.64), with a standard deviation of (1.543), and a medium level of appreciation.

The researchers believe that this result is due to the presence of cultural and social factors that bring together the members of the study sample, this allows for an increase in social communication among students, and the spread of friendship between them at high levels, the university also carries out many social, cultural, scientific and recreational activities that allow communication between students, and the participation of some of them in their free time, which helps students to form strong friendships among students, and the continuation of these friendships for long periods.

The result of this question agreed with the result of Mansour’s study (2021), and the results of Al-Shamiri’s study (2019), as their results revealed that the level of friendship among female university students was high, the result of the question differed with the result of the study (Sima & Singh, 2017), whose results revealed that the level of friendship among students was weak.

14.2 Results of the second question and its discussion: Are there statistically significant differences at the level of (0.05) or less in the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students due to gender?

Arithmetic averages, standard deviations, and a t-test were extracted to reveal statistical differences in the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students that are attributed to gender. Table (5) shows this.

Table 5. Means, Standard Deviations, and T-test to Discover the Statistical Differences in the Level of Friendship among Al-Israa University Students due to Gender

Scale	Gender	Number	Arithmetic averages	Standard deviation	value "T"	Degrees of freedom	Statistical significance
Friendship	male	175	3.87	.847	1.827	359	.069
	female	186	3.71	.829			

Table (5) shows that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students due to gender, where the value of the statistical significance was (0.069), and this significance is higher than the value of (0.05), which indicates that there are no statistical differences between male and female Israa University students in the level of friendship, the researchers

explain that friendship is a social requirement that is stable at the university level, unlike the previous stages, where these relationships are characterized by emotional and social maturity, it also meets many of the needs of the male or female student alike. The result of this question agreed with the results of Al-Shamiri study (2019), and the results of the study of Al-Murshidi and Al-Sayed (2018), the results of the study of Sarmini (2013), and the results of the study of Al-Shamas (2012), which revealed that there were no statistically significant differences in the level of friendship according to the gender variable, the results of the question differed with the results of the (Hall, 2010) study, the results of which revealed that there were statistically significant differences in the level of friendship due to the gender variable and in favor of females.

14.3 The results of the third question and its discussion: Are there statistically significant differences at the level of (0.05) or less in the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students due to the academic qualification?

Arithmetic averages, standard deviations, and a "T" test were extracted to reveal statistical differences in the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students that are attributed to the academic qualification, and Table (6) illustrates this.

Table 6. Arithmetic Averages, Standard Deviations, and the "T" Test to Detect Statistical Differences in the Level of Friendship among Al-Israa University Students Attributed to Academic Qualification

Scale	Qualification	Number	Arithmetic averages	Standard deviation	value "T"	Degrees of freedom	Statistical significance
Friendship	Bachelor	303	3.78	.849	.470-	359	.639
	Master	58	3.84	.796			

It is clear from table (6) that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the level of friendship among Al-Israa University students due to the academic qualification, where the value of the statistical significance was (0.639), this indication is higher than the value of (0.05), which indicates that there are no statistical differences between Al-Israa University students in the bachelor's and master's levels in the level of friendship, the researchers explain this result in the fact that friendship is a social and human demand that provides support and assistance to the friend and fulfills his needs, whether at the bachelor's or master's level, the result of this question agreed with the results of Mansour's study (2021), the results of which revealed that there were no statistically significant differences in the level of friendship according to the variable of the academic level, and the researcher did not find anything different with the result of this question.

15. Recommendations

In light of the results of the study, the researcher recommends a number of recommendations, the most important of which are:

- 1- Recommend the preparation of educational programs aimed at educating students about the importance of friendship in their lives.
- 2- Recommend giving the opportunity for university students to hold periodic meetings to discuss some issues related to their psychological and social needs.
- 3- Recommend the encouragement of teamwork, and group activities in universities, to allow positive interaction between students and the formation of healthy friendships among them.
- 4- Recommend holding periodic meetings between university students to discuss some social issues that concern young people, thus providing opportunities for constructive acquaintance between them and providing an atmosphere to form friendships among some of them.
- 5- Recommend inclusion special chapters on the concept of friendship, its components and characteristics, in academic curricula, particularly in university courses.
- 6- Recommend action More future studies, focusing on the qualitative dimensions of friendship, as it is possible and on other samples in different educational stages, conducting comparative studies of the level of friendship between secondary and university levels.

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Acknowledgments

Not applicable.

Authors contributions

Not applicable.

Funding

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Informed consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Macrothink Institute.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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