



## Original Article



## Outcome of Modified Salter Osteotomy in Improving Acetabulum Index of Developmental Dysplasia of the Hip with Age Group of 2–10 Years

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## ABSTRACT

The modified Salter osteotomy is a widely utilized surgical intervention for treating developmental dysplasia of the hip (DDH). **Objectives:** To assess the outcome of modified Salter osteotomy in improving the acetabular index (AI) in children with DDH aged 2–10 years. **Methods:** This observational cohort study was conducted at the Department of Orthopedics, JPMC, Karachi, from December 2024 to September 2025. Sixty children aged 2–10 years with DDH undergoing modified Salter osteotomy were included. Baseline demographics, clinical examination, and preoperative radiographs for AI were recorded. Outcomes included change in AI, radiological grading by Severin classification, and clinical results by Modified MacKay criteria at 3 and 6 months. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 26.0 with non-parametric tests, Chi-square/Fisher's exact test, and Kappa statistic, taking  $p < 0.05$  as significant. **Results:** In a total of 60 children, 12 (20.0%) were boys, and 48 (80.0%) were girls, with a median age of 7 (5.5–9) years, and BMI 25 (23.0–27.0) kg/m<sup>2</sup>. The median AI decreased significantly from 39.00 (35.00–43.00) preoperatively to 21.00 (18.00–25.00) at 6 months ( $p < 0.001$ ). At 6 months, radiological outcomes were excellent in 24 (40.0%), good in 20 (33.3%), fair in 10 (16.7%), and poor in 6 (10.0%). Clinical outcomes were excellent in 22 (36.7%), good in 21 (35.0%), fair in 11 (18.3%), and poor in 6 (10.0%). Agreement between the two systems was substantial ( $\kappa = 0.71$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). **Conclusions:** Modified Salter osteotomy resulted in a significant improvement in AI among children with DDH, accompanied by favorable radiological and clinical outcomes at six months.

## INTRODUCTION

The modified Salter osteotomy is a widely utilized surgical intervention for treating developmental dysplasia of the hip (DDH). The modified Salter osteotomy is primarily aimed at correcting acetabular dysplasia and enhancing the biomechanical alignment of the hip joint in pediatric patients. If left untreated, DDH can lead to early degenerative changes, resulting in pain, restricted mobility, and the necessity for additional surgical interventions in adolescence or adulthood. In early childhood, the acetabulum is relatively malleable, and surgical correction can significantly reshape the hip socket [1]. No formal studies are available estimating the

prevalence of DDH in Pakistan. Whatever local data exist, the incidence of DDH is estimated to be around 5/1000 hips [2]. A key indicator of acetabular dysplasia and treatment efficacy in DDH management is the acetabular index (AI), which measures the slope of the acetabular roof [3]. A high AI indicates insufficient acetabular coverage of the femoral head, increasing the risk of hip instability and progressive joint degeneration. Surgical procedures like the Salter osteotomy enhance acetabular coverage [3]. The traditional Salter osteotomy redirects the acetabulum by cutting through the ilium and rotating the acetabular fragment, utilizing a bone graft to improve coverage over



the femoral head and reduce the acetabular index [4–6]. Modifications to the Salter technique have been developed to optimize surgical outcomes and minimize complications in pediatric orthopedic surgery [7, 8]. Baghdadi et al., in a clinical evaluation based on the Modified MacKay criteria, noticed that 30% of cases were rated as excellent, 52% as good, 14% as fair, and 4% as poor following the Salter technique in DDH [9]. The DDH can result in persistent acetabular dysplasia, hip instability, and early degenerative changes if not corrected during childhood. In children, pelvic osteotomies are often required to improve femoral head coverage and allow further acetabular remodeling. The modified Salter osteotomy is a commonly performed redirection procedure aimed at correcting acetabular dysplasia, and improvement in AI is a key objective, a radiographic marker of treatment success. Although literature reports favorable outcomes after modified Salter osteotomy, local evidence in children aged 2–10 years remains limited, and radiographic outcome data are scarce in comparable settings.

The modified Salter osteotomy has been mostly applied in developmental dysplasia of the hip, but a local assessment of its radiographic outcome, especially the increase in the acetabular index, in children as young as 210 years is scarce. The absence of outcome data tailored to the population poses a gap in the objective evaluation of the surgical success in similar contexts. This research aimed to determine the result of modified Salter osteotomy through the evaluation of the change in the acetabular index of children with DDH.

## METHODS

This observational cohort study was conducted at the Department of Orthopedics, Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC), Karachi, Pakistan, between December 2024 and September 2025. Ethical approval was granted by the Institutional Review Board of JPMC (letter number F.2-81/2024-GENL/166/JPMC). Informed written consents were sought from all study participants. The inclusion criteria were children of either gender, aged 2–10 years, diagnosed with DDH, and who underwent surgical intervention via modified Salter osteotomy. Children with neuromuscular disorders, syndromic etiologies of hip dysplasia, prior hip surgery, or incomplete medical records were excluded. DDH was defined as a developmental disorder of acetabular formation leading to hip instability and abnormal gait. Non-probability, consecutive sampling technique was adopted. A sample size of 60 was based on the WHO sample size calculator using an expected 4.0% frequency of poor outcomes in DDH [9], a 5% margin of error, and a 95% confidence level. At baseline, demographic data, including age, gender, and body mass index (BMI), were recorded. A detailed clinical examination

was performed to assess hip stability, range of motion, and gait. Preoperative anteroposterior pelvic radiographs were obtained, and AI were independently measured by two radiologists to ensure interobserver consistency. Intraoperative details, including osteotomy technique, fixation type, and perioperative complications, were documented. All patients underwent Modified Salter Osteotomy performed by an experienced pediatric orthopedic surgeon following standard operative protocols. The primary outcome was improvement in AI, while secondary outcomes included radiological classification of hip morphology by the Severin grading system and clinical outcomes using the Modified MacKay criteria, both categorized as excellent, good, fair, or poor. The AI, defined as the angle between Hilgenreiner's line and a line drawn from the triradiate cartilage to the lateral edge of the acetabulum, was used as a quantitative radiographic measure of acetabular coverage. Severin's classification system grades hip morphology on postoperative radiographs according to acetabular development, congruency of the femoral head, and the presence of degenerative changes. Severin grades I and II, representing a normal or nearly normal hip joint with adequate acetabular coverage, were categorized as excellent or good outcomes. Grades III and IV, which indicate dysplastic hips with insufficient coverage but without frank dislocation, were considered fair outcomes, while grades V and VI, denoting subluxated or redislocated hips and advanced degenerative changes, respectively, were classified as poor outcomes. The Modified MacKay criteria provide a standardized framework for assessing postoperative hip function. The criteria take into account hip stability, range of motion, presence or absence of pain, gait quality, and limb length equality. Patients with full stability, a normal pain-free gait, and a full range of motion were classified as having excellent clinical outcomes. Those with minor limitations in movement or gait disturbances without significant pain were graded as good outcomes. Patients with moderate restriction of movement, limping, or discomfort were placed in the fair outcome category, while those with persistent instability, severe stiffness, painful gait, or marked functional limitation were graded as poor outcomes. Participants were followed at 3 months and 6 months postoperatively. At each follow-up, clinical outcomes were assessed using the Modified MacKay criteria, while serial radiographs were obtained for acetabular index measurement and graded according to the Severin classification. Outcome assessment was performed by clinicians blinded to the initial preoperative measurements to reduce assessment bias. The completeness of follow-up was ensured through scheduled hospital visits and reminder calls to caregivers, with any loss to follow-up recorded.

All data were entered and analyzed using IBM-SPSS Statistics version 26.0. Categorical variables such as age group, gender, surgical side, BMI categories, and outcome grades were expressed as frequencies and percentages. Continuous variables, including the age, BMI, and AI, were assessed for normality using the Shapiro-Wilk test and were reported as median with interquartile range because the data were not normally distributed. The preoperative and postoperative AI were compared using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test for paired data. Radiological outcomes according to the Severin classification and clinical outcomes according to the Modified MacKay criteria were presented as categorical distributions, and agreement between the two outcome scoring systems was assessed using the Kappa statistic. Associations between outcome categories (excellent, good, fair, poor) and demographic or clinical variables were evaluated using the Chi-square test or Fisher's exact test where appropriate. Statistical significance was defined as a p-value of less than 0.05.

## RESULTS

In a total of 60 children, 12 (20.0%) were boys, and 48 (80.0%) were girls. The median age and BMI were 7 (5.5–9) years, and 25 (23.0–27.0) kg/m<sup>2</sup>, respectively. Surgical intervention was performed on the right side in 17 (28.3%), on the left side in 30 (50.0%), and bilaterally in 13 (21.7%) (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Characteristics of Children (n=60)

Characteristics		Frequency (%)
Age (Years)	2-5	21 (35.0%)
	>5 to 10	39 (65.0%)
Gender	Boy	12 (20.0%)
	Girl	18 (80.0%)
Surgical Site	Right	17 (28.3%)
	Left	30 (50.0%)
	Bilateral	13 (21.7%)
Body Mass Index (kg/m <sup>2</sup> )	≤24	19 (31.7%)
	>24	41 (68.3%)

The AI showed a statistically significant improvement 6 months after modified Salter osteotomy, and the median preoperative AI was 39.0° (IQR 35.0–43.0), which decreased to 21.0° (IQR 18.0–25.0) at follow-up (p<0.001). Radiological outcomes at 6 months based on the Severin classification demonstrated that 24 (40.0%) hips were graded excellent, 20 (33.3%) good, 10 (16.7%) fair, and 6 (10.0%) were poor. Clinical outcomes at 6 months assessed using the Modified MacKay criteria showed that 22 (36.7%) hips were graded excellent, 21 (35.0%) good, 11 (18.3%) fair, and 6 (10.0%) were poor. Comparison of outcome systems demonstrated substantial agreement with a Kappa statistic of 0.71 (p<0.001) (Table 2).

**Table 2:** Cross-Comparison of Radiological (Severin) and Clinical (Modified MacKay) Outcomes After 6-Months (n=60)

Severin Classification	Modified MacKay Criteria			
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Excellent	18	4	2	–
Good	3	13	3	1
Fair	1	2	6	1
Poor	0	2	0	4

Radiological outcomes by the Severin classification showed that in children aged 2 to 5 years, 11 (45.8%) were excellent, 6 (30.0%) good, 3 (30.0%) fair, and 1 (16.7%) poor, while in those aged 6 to 10 years, 13 (54.2%) were excellent, 14 (70.0%) good, 7 (70.0%) fair, and 5 (83.3%) poor (p=0.484). Among boys, 7 (29.2%) were excellent, 4 (20.0%) good, and 1 (10.0%) fair, with no poor outcomes, whereas in girls, 17 (70.8%) were excellent, 16 (80.0%) good, 9 (90.0%) fair, and 6 (100%) poor (p=0.336). With respect to the surgical side, excellent outcomes were observed in 5 (20.8%) right-sided, 15 (62.5%) left-sided, and 4 (16.7%) bilateral hips, while poor outcomes were seen in 1 (16.7%) right-sided, 3 (50.0%) left-sided, and 2 (33.3%) bilateral hips (p=0.791). In the BMI ≤24 kg/m<sup>2</sup> group, 9 (37.5%) were excellent and 2 (33.3%) poor, compared with 15 (62.5%) excellent and 4 (66.7%) poor in the BMI >24 kg/m<sup>2</sup> group (p=0.733) (Table 3).

**Table 3:** Association of Radiological Outcomes (After 6 Months) Based on Severin Classification with Demographic and Clinical Variables (n=60)

Variables	Excellent, n (%)	Good, n (%)	Fair, n (%)	Poor, n (%)	p-value	
Age (Years)	2 to 5	11 (45.8%)	6 (30.0%)	3 (30.0%)	1 (16.7%)	0.484
	>5 to 10	13 (54.2%)	14 (70.0%)	7 (70.0%)	5 (83.3%)	
Gender	Boy	7 (29.2%)	4 (20.0%)	1 (10.0%)	–	0.336
	Girl	17 (70.8%)	16 (80.0%)	9 (90.0%)	6 (100%)	
Surgery Side	Right	5 (20.8%)	7 (35.0%)	2 (20.0%)	1 (16.7%)	0.791
	Left	15 (62.5%)	8 (40.0%)	6 (60.0%)	3 (50.0%)	
	Bilateral	4 (16.7%)	5 (25.0%)	2 (20.0%)	2 (33.3%)	
Body Mass Index (kg/m <sup>2</sup> )	≤24	9 (37.5%)	8 (40.0%)	2 (20.0%)	2 (33.3%)	0.733
	>24	15 (62.5%)	12 (60.0%)	8 (80.0%)	4 (66.7%)	

Chi-Square test applied

Clinical outcomes according to the modified MacKay criteria indicated that in children aged 2 to 5 years, 10 (45.5%) were excellent, 7 (33.3%) good, 3 (27.3%) fair, and 2 (33.3%) poor, whereas in those aged 6 to 10 years, 12 (54.5%), 14 (66.7%), 8 (72.7%), and 4 (66.7%) respectively were observed (p=0.734). In boys, 6 (27.3%) were excellent, 5 (23.8%) good, and 1 (9.1%) fair, with no poor outcomes, while in girls, 16 (72.7%) were excellent, 16 (76.2%) good, 10 (90.9%) fair, and 6 (100%) poor (p=0.357). Considering the surgical side, excellent outcomes were seen in 4 (18.2%) right-sided, 14 (63.6%) left-sided, and 4 (18.2%) bilateral hips, with poor outcomes in 1 (16.7%) right-sided, 3 (50.0%) left-sided, and 2 (33.3%) bilateral hips (p=0.380). In the BMI

≤24 kg/m<sup>2</sup> group, 8 (36.4%) were excellent and 2 (33.3%) poor, compared with 14 (63.6%) excellent and 4 (66.7%) poor in those with BMI >24 kg/m<sup>2</sup> (p=0.940)(Table 4).

**Table 4:** Association of Clinical Outcomes (After 6 Months) Based on Modified Mackay Criteria with Demographic and Clinical Variables(n=60)

Variables	Excellent, n (%)	Good, n (%)	Fair, n (%)	Poor, n (%)	p-value	
Age (Years)	2 to 5	10 (45.5%)	7 (33.3%)	3 (27.3%)	2 (33.3%)	0.734
	>5 to 10	12 (54.5%)	14 (66.7%)	8 (72.7%)	4 (66.7%)	
Gender	Boy	6 (27.3%)	5 (23.8%)	1 (9.1%)	–	0.357
	Girl	16 (72.7%)	16 (76.2%)	10 (90.9%)	6 (100%)	
Surgery Side	Right	4 (18.2%)	8 (38.1%)	2 (18.2%)	1 (16.7%)	0.380
	Left	14 (63.6%)	9 (42.9%)	7 (63.6%)	3 (50.0%)	
	Bilateral	4 (18.2%)	4 (19.0%)	2 (18.2%)	2 (33.3%)	
Body Mass Index (kg/m <sup>2</sup> )	≤24	8 (36.4%)	8 (38.1%)	3 (27.3%)	2 (33.3%)	0.940
	>24	14 (63.6%)	13 (61.9%)	8 (72.7%)	4 (66.7%)	

Chi-Square test applied

## DISCUSSION

The present study demonstrated a significant reduction in AI at six months after modified Salter osteotomy in DDH among children aged 2–10 years. Rehman and colleagues reported a reduction in mean AI from 32.25 ± 3.77° to 19.16 ± 5.25° at eight weeks following Salter osteotomy in children aged 18 months to 4 years, which was statistically significant (p<0.001) [10]. The larger reduction in AI observed in the present study may reflect the inclusion of older children up to 10 years, who presented with higher baseline AI values, thereby providing a greater potential for correction. Esmailnejad-Ganji *et al.* reported long-term outcomes of a modified Salter osteotomy in 90 hips with DDH, demonstrating a reduction in mean AI from 47.85° to 17.16° immediately postoperatively, with further remodeling leading to a mean AI of 11.24° at final follow-up [11]. The current study observed a similar significant reduction at six months, although the degree of correction was not as profound as reported in that study. The discrepancy likely reflects the relatively short follow-up duration in the present cohort, as long-term remodeling of the acetabulum is expected to enhance radiological improvement over time. Vasyly and Viktor, evaluating modified single pelvic osteotomy (SPO), also reported a reduction in AI from 39.5 ± 7° to 20.4 ± 5° at six months, with continued improvement to 14.5 ± 4° at longer follow-up [12]. Based on the Severin classification, the present study observed excellent or good radiological outcomes at six months. These results are in agreement with Baghdadi *et al.* who found radiological satisfaction rates of 86% and 85% in patients younger and older than three years, respectively, using the modified Severin score [9]. A study from Iraq reported good to excellent radiological outcomes in the majority of patients under six years of age

undergoing Salter osteotomy, with minimal complications [13]. Mahmud and colleagues, who evaluated a triple procedure including open reduction, varus derotation femoral osteotomy, and acetabular osteotomy, demonstrated a reduction in mean AI from 48.55 ± 7.63 to 23.68 ± 2.93, with Severin excellent or good outcomes in 16 (72.7%) hips [14]. The comparable rates of radiological success between the two studies suggest that modified Salter osteotomy alone, when properly indicated, may provide outcomes equivalent to more extensive combined procedures. In contrast, the long-term study by van Stralen *et al.* highlighted that 8% of hips required total hip arthroplasty at a median of 22 years following Salter osteotomy, and that the occurrence of avascular necrosis (AVN) significantly influenced radiological outcomes [15]. Clinically, the modified MacKay criteria revealed excellent or good results in the vast majority at six months. This proportion is consistent with the 82–83% satisfactory clinical outcomes reported by Baghdadi *et al.* in both age groups [9]. Jasim similarly documented favorable functional recovery, particularly in younger children [13]. Esmailnejad-Ganji *et al.* found excellent or good clinical outcomes in 94.5% of hips at final follow-up after a newly modified Salter osteotomy [11]. The slightly lower proportion in the present study is likely due to the shorter follow-up period, as functional recovery in DDH patients continues to progress with rehabilitation and growth [16, 17]. In the present study, radiological and clinical outcomes did not differ significantly between age groups. Baghdadi *et al.* also found no significant differences between children under and over three years in terms of clinical and radiological satisfaction [9]. In contrast, Koroglu *et al.* demonstrated that children operated before the age of four years achieved superior clinical outcomes and lower rates of AVN compared with those operated later [18]. The findings of this study support the role of modified Salter osteotomy as a reliable intervention for DDH in children between 2 and 10 years, producing both significant radiographic correction and functional improvement [19–21]. The substantial agreement between radiological and clinical outcome measures underlines the importance of combined assessment in postoperative evaluation [22–24]. The evidence from this and related studies suggests that surgical correction yields high proportions of satisfactory outcomes across a broad age range, provided that careful patient selection and surgical expertise are ensured [25].

Several limitations should be acknowledged. The short follow-up duration of six months restricts the ability to assess long-term acetabular remodeling, functional recovery, and the risk of late complications such as AVN, redislocation, or early degenerative changes. The single-

center design limits generalizability, and a multicenter collaborative approach would provide larger sample sizes and broader external validity. Moreover, the single-center study limits external validity; hence, multicenter research with a larger sample size and extended follow-up would be advised in the future to obtain stronger evidence and confirm the radiographic and clinical outcomes of modified Salter osteotomy.

## CONCLUSIONS

The use of modified Salter osteotomy increased the acetabular index (AI) of children with developmental dysplasia of the hip (DDH) significantly. This was accompanied by positive radiological and clinical outcomes at six months after surgery. Also, it was observed that Co concordance between various assessment systems was high, which proves the validity of the surgical outcomes.

## Authors' Contribution

Conceptualization: MA, PA

Methodology: MA, AGJ, FA, HA

Formal analysis: SS, AGJ, FA, HA

Writing and Drafting: MA

Review and Editing: MA, PA, SS, AGJ, FA, HA

All authors approved the final manuscript and take responsibility for the integrity of the work.

## Conflicts of Interest

All the authors declare no conflict of interest.

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