

1 **Early results of Oxford mobile bearing Medial Unicompartmental Knee Replacement**
2 **(UKR) with the Microplasty instrumentation: An Indian experience.**

3

4 **ABSTRACT**

5 Object: Oxford medial unicompartmental knee replacement (UKR) is indicated in patients
6 with anteromedial osteoarthritis (AMOA) of the knee. Microplasty (MP) instrumentation was
7 introduced in 2012 as an improvement over phase 3 instrumentation. Advantages of this
8 instrumentation include conservative tibial cut, decreased tibial re-cut rate and improved
9 component alignment. We report the results of UKR with the new instrumentation in a
10 consecutive series with a minimum follow-up of 2 years.

11 Materials and Methods: A prospective study of 115 cemented medial Oxford UKRs
12 implanted in 89 patients was done. Post-operative alignment of the tibial and femoral
13 components was analysed. Patient reported outcome measures were recorded using Oxford
14 Knee Score (OKS) and the American Knee Society Score (KSS). Tegner Activity Scale
15 (TAS) was used to record the activity level.

16 Results: 115 consecutive medial Oxford UKRs were studied. All patients were followed up
17 annually in this prospective ethically approved study. The mean follow-up was 36 months
18 and the minimum follow-up was 25 months. No patient died and none were lost to follow-up.
19 At the final follow-up, the average OKS of the cohort was 39.5 (SD: 5.7). 91.2 % of the
20 patients had good or excellent OKS with only 3.5 % reporting poor OKS. The overall limb
21 alignment was 4.8° varus ($0 - 14^{\circ}$ varus). Tibia was recut in 5.2 % of cases. Median bearing
22 size was 3 (range: 3 to 6). There was one case of bearing dislocation and one case of aseptic
23 tibial loosening.

24 Conclusion: This is the first study to report results of MP instrumentation at a minimum
25 follow-up of 2 years. Our study indicates that the new instrumentation results in reliable and
26 accurate implantation of femoral and tibial components in majority of the cases, with a
27 decrease in number of alignment outliers, and also a reduced rate of bearing dislocation.

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29 **KEYWORDS:** Anteromedial osteoarthritis (AMOA), unicompartmental knee replacement
30 (UKR), Microplasty instrumentation, mobile bearing.

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45 INTRODUCTION

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47 Anteromedial osteoarthritis (AMOA) of the knee as a distinct clinical, pathological, and
48 radiological entity was first described by White et al in 1991 (1). The characteristic features of
49 this entity include a correctable varus deformity, and varus which disappears on flexion.
50 AMOA manifests as erosion of anterior tibial cartilage with intact anterior and posterior
51 cruciate ligaments. Although initially developed as a bicompartamental implant for knee
52 osteoarthritis (2,3), the Oxford Unicompartmental Knee Replacement (UKR), (Zimmer
53 Biomet, Warsaw, Indiana, USA) has been used to treat AMOA over the past 35 years with
54 recognition of AMOA as a distinct entity. The instrumentation and surgical technique have
55 also evolved (2-5). The net result has been excellent clinical outcomes and long term
56 survivorship similar to total knee replacement (TRK) (6–8). Multiple studies have shown lower
57 rate of complications, lower mortality rates, higher percentage of highly satisfied patients,
58 faster and less painful rehabilitation, and a reduced hospital stay in UKR compared to TKR (6–
59 9).

60 The implant has the certain unique features – a single radius (spherical) twin peg femoral
61 component and a mobile meniscal bearing which articulates with a flat tibial surface and a fully
62 congruent femoral surface (2). These help reduce wear, restores normal kinematics and
63 minimise bone resection. It is implanted through a minimally invasive approach which
64 maintains integrity of the extensor mechanism, limits soft tissue damage and helps in rapid
65 recovery.

66 Microplasty (MP) instrumentation (Zimmer Biomet, Warsaw, Indiana, USA) was introduced
67 in 2012 with the aim of improving alignment and preserving bone. The key advantages of the
68 new instrumentation include minimizing tibial bone resection, reducing tibial recut rate, and a

69 more reliable positioning of the femoral component. Few studies have compared the
70 Microplasty instrumentation with Phase 3 (P3) instrumentation (10–15). Although three studies
71 have shown superior results with Microplasty instrumentation in terms of alignment and
72 bearing dislocation rate, one study did not show any benefit of the new instrumentation (10–
73 13,15). Whether the Microplasty instrumentation improves short term survival rates is not yet
74 clear. This study aims at describing the surgical technique and elucidate the clinical and
75 radiological results at a minimum follow-up of 2 years.

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77 MATERIALS AND METHODS

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79 Prospectively collected clinical data and radiographs of 115 consecutive cemented medial
80 Oxford UKRs implanted in 89 patients from August, 2013 to July, 2015 were analysed in this
81 study. Ethical clearance was obtained from institutional ethics committee. Informed consent
82 was obtained from all participants. The surgeries were performed by a single senior surgeon
83 using the new Microplasty (MP) instrumentation for recommended indications which was
84 followed by the standard physiotherapy and rehabilitation protocol. The inclusion criteria for
85 Oxford UKR was the presence of Anteromedial osteoarthritis (AMOA). Patients with lateral
86 compartment osteoarthritis, inflammatory arthritis and flexion deformity more than 15⁰ were
87 excluded. The patellofemoral (PF) compartment osteoarthritis was not considered as an
88 exclusion criterion unless there was severe lateral facet OA with subluxation, grooving and/or
89 bone loss.

90 All the patients were clinically followed up at 0, 3, 6 and 12 months post-surgery and then
91 annually and patient reported outcome measures were recorded using Oxford Knee Score
92 (OKS) and the American Knee Society Score (KSS). Tegner Activity Scale (TAS) was used to

93 record the activity level. Short leg antero-posterior and lateral radiographs of the knee were
94 taken under fluoroscopic guidance using the recommended method (16) at 6 months, 1 year
95 and then at the latest follow-up. Long leg standing antero-posterior view of both lower limbs
96 was taken preoperatively and at 6 months post-surgery.

97 *Radiographic assessment of implant positioning*

98 Orientation of femoral and tibial implants in the sagittal and coronal planes was measured on
99 short leg radiographs and for the values lying outside the recommended guidelines, the knee
100 was considered an outlier for that measurement (14).

101 *Femur flexion/extension:* The acute angle subtended between femoral diaphyseal axis and a
102 line parallel to the femoral peg was measured on lateral radiographs. Implants lying outside 0°
103 to 15° of flexion were considered outliers. A value of 5° was added to the measured flexion/
104 extension angle to compensate for the 5° distal femoral anterior bowing.

105 *Femoral component varus/valgus:* The acute angle subtended between the femoral component
106 and diaphyseal axis in the coronal plane was measured on AP view. A 7° subtraction was made
107 to compensate for the normal physiological valgus of femur. Implants with more than 10° of
108 varus or valgus were considered outliers.

109 *Posterior tibial slope:* The angle subtended between a line parallel to tibial tray and
110 perpendicular to the tibial diaphyseal axis was measured on lateral radiographs. Implants lying
111 outside $7^{\circ} \pm 5^{\circ}$ were considered as outliers.

112 *Tibial component varus/valgus:* The angle subtended between a line parallel to tibial tray and
113 the tibial diaphyseal axis was measured on AP radiographs. Implants more than 5° of varus or
114 5° of valgus were considered as outliers

115 *Lower limb alignment:* Alignment was measured on standing long leg AP radiographs of
116 patients as the acute angle subtended between the mechanical axis of femur and tibia.

117 *Radiolucent lines:* The observed radiolucent lines (RLLs) were recorded and classified into
118 physiological and pathological (17) and their relation to clinical outcome was analysed

119 *Surgical Technique (Oxford Medial cemented UKR with MP instrumentation) (Figures 1 – 7):*

120 The patient was placed supine on the operating table with the leg to be operated placed on a
121 padded leg holder and ipsilateral hip abducted to allow the leg to hang free. The knee should
122 be free to flex to at least 120°. Skin incision extends from superomedial pole of patella to the
123 medial border of tibia tuberosity. Medial parapatellar arthrotomy is performed, and the
124 proximal part of arthrotomy is angled superomedially into the fibres of Vastus medialis. The
125 lateral compartment is carefully inspected for cartilage loss and the integrity of anterior cruciate
126 ligament (ACL) is verified by giving a tug with hook. Anvil osteophyte just anterior to the
127 tibial insertion of ACL is removed if present. Osteophytes on the margin of medial femoral
128 condyle and the intercondylar notch are removed. No medial release is done. Femoral sizing
129 stylus (available in 1 mm, 2 mm, 3 mm options for each femoral size) is used to determine the
130 size of femoral component as well as tense the medial collateral ligament (MCL). On pulling
131 the stylus anterior, so that the stylus hugs the posterior condyle, there should a 3-5 mm gap
132 present anteriorly between anterior lip of stylus and eburnated femur. Usually 1 mm stylus does
133 the job. Occasionally in the presence of a very deep tibial defect or medial laxity, a 2 or 3 mm
134 stylus may be required. When a 3 mm stylus is used, less bone is removed from tibia. In our
135 series, the most commonly used stylus in males was small, and for females extra small. Other
136 methods of determining size include pre-operative templating (less accurate), and height and
137 gender based guidelines.

138 Now, the anteroposterior axis (flexion-extension axis) of the vertical tibial cut is marked. This
139 axis should be pointing towards the anterior superior iliac spine (ASIS). An easy way of
140 marking is to insert a straight narrow osteotome or chisel into the intercondylar notch abutting
141 the lateral wall of medial femoral condyle. The knee is then flexed and extended to identify the
142 flexion-extension axis. A marking pen is used to mark the axis on the articular surface of tibia.
143 Femoral sizing stylus and extramedullary tibial cutting guide (with a size zero golden shim on
144 top) are linked together with a G-clamp (3G or 4G), depending on what thickness bearing insert
145 (size 3 or 4) the surgeon wants to use later on. Vertical tibial cut is taken along the marked axis
146 with a reciprocating saw. The vertical cut must pass just medial to ACL, and ideally include a
147 part of the medial tibial spine. A medial cut would undersize the tibia and increase chances of
148 overhang, while a lateral cut may damage the ACL.

149 The golden shim is replaced by a slotted size zero silver shim and the horizontal cut is taken.
150 MCL must be protected at all times by a Z shaped retractor. The tibial sizing is done by laying
151 the tibial cut flat on the tibial base plates of opposite side. The femoral canal is opened with a
152 drill bit and awl (1 cm superior to the anteromedial corner of notch), and femoral intramedullary
153 rod is inserted. Centre of the femoral condyle is marked with a pen. Femoral drill guide (set at
154 3 or 4 depending on what size G-clamp was used) is inserted and IM (intramedullary) link used
155 to connect it with the rod. The IM link helps set the femoral component flexion and rotation
156 (5). With the drill holes in line with the central mark, 4 mm and 6 mm holes are drilled. The
157 posterior femoral resection guide is inserted into the holes and posterior cut taken. The tibial
158 cut and the posterior femoral cut create the flexion gap. Next, extension gap is created by
159 milling the femoral condyle.

160 Zero spigot is inserted into 6 mm hole and gently hammered in, followed by milling. Then,
161 tibial base plate and femoral trial (single peg) are inserted to measure flexion (in 110⁰ flexion)
162 and extension (in 20⁰ flexion) gaps with gap gauges. If even the smallest gauge (size 1) is tight

163 in extension, extension gap is considered zero. The difference of the two gaps is calculated,
164 and milling repeated with the corresponding size spigot. Again trial is done to confirm that the
165 gaps are equal. Anti-impingement guide is inserted and milling done to remove part of anterior
166 condyle. Through the same guide, posterior osteophytes can be removed by using a bespoke
167 chisel. Next, tibial preparation is completed. Trial is repeated with twin peg femoral trial
168 component, keeled tibia, and meniscus. Knee is moved through flexion-extension to check
169 stability and ensure that the bearing does not impinge. Final implant is cemented and wound
170 closed in layers after inserting drain.

171

172 RESULTS

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174 A total of 115 medial Oxford UKRs were performed on 89 patients suffering from AMOA by
175 a single senior surgeon over the study period. The mean follow-up was 36 months and the
176 minimum follow-up was 25 months (range: 25 – 48 months). None of the patients were lost to
177 follow-up.

178 The mean age for the entire cohort was 58.2 years (SD: 7.99, range: 44 – 79 years) with an
179 average BMI of 28.34 (SD: 3.11, range: 22.5 – 36.6). Males constituted 21% of the total cohort
180 (Table 1).

181 *Clinical outcome (Table 2)*

182 At the latest follow-up, the average OKS of the cohort was 39.5 (SD: 5.7, range: 11 – 48). 46.9
183 % of the patients had excellent OKS (OKS > 41), 44.3 % had good OKS (OKS 34-41), while
184 only 3.5% had poor OKS (OKS<27). KSS satisfaction score was 33.1 (SD: 4.4, range: 12 –
185 40), KSS expectation was 11.6 (SD: 1.5, range: 5-15) and KSS function was 71.1 (SD: 8.9,

186 range: 13 – 84). Median Tegner activity level was 3 (range: 0 to 4). All scores improved
187 significantly when compared to the pre-operative scores (Table 2).

188 *Tibial recut (Horizontal) and Bearing Size*

189 Tibia was recut in 6 cases (5.2 %). Median bearing size was 3 (range: 3 to 6). Bearing size 3 or
190 4 was used in 93% of the cases.

191 *Radiological outcome (Table 3)*

192 The mean overall limb alignment was 4.8° varus (SD: 3.1° , range: 0 to 14). None of the patients
193 had valgus alignment of the knee. Mean inclination of femoral component in the coronal plane
194 was 0.4° varus (SD: 3.93, range: 7° varus to 8° valgus). No implant was outside the
195 recommended range of 10° varus to 10° valgus.

196 In sagittal plane, average inclination was 6.8° flexion (SD: 4.49, range: 0° to 18° flexion) with
197 5 knees (4.3 %) lying outside the recommended range of 0° to 15° flexion.

198 Mean inclination of tibial component in the coronal plane was 1.2° varus (SD: 3.89, range: 10°
199 varus to 6° valgus) with 13 knees (11.3 %) lying outside the recommended range of 5° varus to
200 5° valgus

201 Mean posterior tibial slope was 6.4° (SD: 3.17, range: 0° to 14°) with none of the implant having
202 anteriorly sloping tibia and 5 knees (4.3 %) lying outside the recommended range of 2° to 12°
203 of posterior slope.

204 *Radiological lucencies*

205 57% of knees had physiological radiolucent line around tibial component and 1 knee (0.9 %)
206 had pathological radiolucency due to aseptic loosening of the implant.

207 *Complications*

208 There was one meniscal bearing dislocation (Figures 8 and 9) 6 months after surgery. The
209 patient complained of sudden pain and swelling over her left knee while walking. She was
210 diagnosed as having an anteriorly dislocated the meniscal bearing. The bearing was removed
211 and a thicker sized bearing (3 mm size replaced by 5 mm size) was inserted. The lateral
212 compartment and patellofemoral compartment did not show any signs of osteoarthritis. ACL
213 was intact, and the femoral and tibial components were not loose.

214 There was one aseptic loosening (Figure 10) which happened 2 years after surgery and the
215 patient is awaiting revision surgery. No case of infection was seen.

216

217 DISCUSSION

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219 This is the first prospective clinical and radiological study of Microplasty instrumentation
220 reporting short term results at a minimum follow-up of two years (range 25-48 months) in
221 Indian patients. Strengths of the study include a prospective study design, single centre
222 consecutive series of patients, no patient lost to follow-up and a minimum follow-up of 25
223 months. The study confirms the safety and efficacy of the system in Indian patients.

224 Although the first Oxford knee replacement (bicompartamental) was performed in 1976, the
225 Oxford medial UKR was first implanted in 1982 as a unicompartamental device (4). The phase
226 1 Oxford UKR had one femur size (corresponding to the present day medium size) and five
227 tibial sizes (non-anatomic, same for right and left side). The femoral preparation included three
228 bony cuts. The femoral component was single pegged. Phase 2 was introduced in 1987, which
229 included a modification in femoral design (flat posterior surface and a spherical inferior surface
230 on the non-articular side) and introduction of a spherical mill to match the extension gap to the
231 flexion gap. Milling could be done in 1 mm increments by varying the length of the spigot,

232 which allowed for accurate gap balancing. Both phase 1 and 2 Oxford UKR were implanted
233 via an open approach similar to TKR. Phase 3 prosthesis was introduced in 1998 with a focus
234 on minimally invasive approach. The implant inventory was expanded to include five femoral
235 component sizes (extra small, small, medium, large, extra-large), side specific anatomic tibial
236 base plate, and a modified polyethylene bearing to reduce the risk of impingement. The results
237 of phase 3 have been significantly better compared to phases 1 and 2 (18). To improve femoral
238 component stability, a twin-peg design was introduced in 2003 (19). Apart from improving
239 fixation of the component, the newer design had a 15⁰ extended arc (19), allowing for an
240 increased knee flexion, which is particularly beneficial in the Asian population. The twin-peg
241 design has been shown to improve survivorship (20). Microplasty instrumentation was then
242 introduced in 2012 with the addition of a femoral sizing spoon (stylus), a G-clamp, and an IM
243 linker.

244 The meniscus in a mobile bearing UKR follows the path of the femoral component. Hence, a
245 laterally placed femoral component may lead to impingement of the lateral wall of the bearing
246 with the lateral wall of the tibial tray. This point has been studied in detail by Inui et al (15).
247 They observed lateral tilting of meniscus in post-operative radiographs in 10 % of MP patients,
248 while none of the phase 3 cases depicted this. To avoid this, they stressed that the positioning
249 of the drill holes (4 mm and 6 mm) must be in the centre of the medial femoral condyle. We
250 ensured this in every case by marking the centre with a marking pen before positioning the
251 femoral drill guide. Also, we checked for impingement of meniscus on tibial tray in every case
252 during trial and before tibial keel preparation. Ideally, at least 1 mm distance must be
253 maintained (15). Hence, we did not encounter such a problem in any of our cases. Although
254 Inui et al (15) did not find this tilting to be consequential in terms of clinical scores in their
255 short follow-up of one year, it would not be wrong to conclude that this impingement might
256 contribute to polyethylene wear and hence a higher risk of revision later on. If impingement is

257 discovered during trial, one can extend the vertical tibial cut more laterally (21) and then
258 proceed with tibial preparation.

259 Hurst et al (14), Walker et al (12) and Jang et al (13) compared the component alignment of P3
260 with MP instrumentation. Two studies (12,14) showed significantly improved alignment with
261 MP, whilst one study did not show any difference between the two in terms of alignment (13).
262 Koh et al (10) and Tu et al (11) compared the component alignment as well as the clinical
263 outcome between MP and P3. They reported a significantly better positioning of femoral
264 component; while the clinical scores, overall limb alignment and tibial component alignment
265 were similar in the two groups.

266 Another advantage of MP has been a reduced risk of bearing dislocation (10,12,13). This also
267 reflects better positioning of components with respect to each other (10). A reduction in tibial
268 re-cut rate is also one of the advantages of MP instrumentation, although none of the previous
269 comparative studies (10–15) have compared the rate in MP and P3. The tibial re-cut rate in our
270 series was 5.2 %.

271 Due to the conservative tibial cut, the MP instrumentation typically leads to a higher percentage
272 of cases with a thinner bearing size. In our series, size 3 or 4 bearing were used in 93 % of the
273 knees; mean bearing size was 3.5 (median 3). In the study by Walker et al (12), mean size was
274 4.2 in MP group while it was 4.6 in P3 group, the difference being statistically significant.
275 However, in the study by Jang et al (13) size 3 or 4 bearing was used in 81.9 % in P3 and 80.6
276 % in MP group, and the difference was statistically insignificant.

277 A review of published comparative studies is given in table 4, and the outliers are compared in
278 table 5.

279 In our study, incidence of physiological radiolucent lines (RLL) beneath the tibial component
280 was 57.4% at the final follow-up. Pathological RLL was found in one patient, due to aseptic

281 loosening. As detection of these lines is highly dependent on positioning of the limb (17),
282 fluoroscopic imaging was used to specifically look for RLL in all cases at final follow-up. The
283 presence of these lines did not correlate with poor clinical score ($p = 0.59$ for OKS). A study
284 by Gulati et al also showed that 63 % knees with cemented Oxford medial UKR had RLL at
285 five-years follow-up (17). They reported that presence of RLL did not correlate with age, BMI
286 (body mass index), gender, post-operative limb alignment, state of the ACL, clinical score and
287 pain score. Our study also affirms this. Another series of 688 Oxford cemented medial phase 3
288 UKR's reported RLL in 70 % cases (22). Non-progressive, 1 mm-2 mm wide and separated
289 from underlying bone by a radiodense line are the three features necessary to label a RLL as
290 physiological (17). It is important to differentiate physiological from pathological lucencies as
291 misinterpretation may lead to unnecessary revision (23). Interestingly, Pandit et al have shown
292 the incidence of RLL to be much less (7 %) in uncemented medial oxford UKR, although this
293 did not translate into better clinical scores (24). The long term implication of this finding
294 remains to be understood.

295 The limitations of this study include a short follow-up and lack of a comparative P3 group. Our
296 group was one of the first to adopt MP instrumentation in India and this is first ever report of
297 the new system. It is versatile, easy to use and reproducible. It improves component alignment
298 and reduces the need for tibial recut, which in turn weakens the bone increasing the fracture
299 risk. Long-term follow up is needed to ensure that the short-term outcomes are maintained in
300 the long-term.

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302 CONCLUSION

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304 Our study indicates that the new instrumentation results in reliable and accurate implantation
305 of femoral and tibial components in majority of the cases, with a decrease in number of
306 alignment outliers. The early clinical results have been good to excellent with a low incidence
307 of complications. The influence of the improved alignment on overall medium and long term
308 survival remains to be studied.

309

310 SOURCE OF FUNDING: Nil

311 CONFLICT OF INTEREST: One of the authors is a paid consultant with Zimmer-Biomet,
312 and has received grants from Governments of India and UK.

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315 FIGURE LEGENDS:

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317 Figure 1: Intra-operative photograph showing intact cartilage in lateral compartment and an
318 intact ACL.

319 Figure 2: Method of marking flexion-extension axis on tibia using an osteotome. The vertical
320 tibial cut should be parallel to this mark.

321 Figure 3: Femoral sizing stylus (Extra small) in place showing 5 mm space between condyle
322 and stylus due to eburnated bone.

323 Figure 4: Tibial assembly in place showing the G clamp connecting the extramedullary tibial
324 jig with the stylus.

325 Figure 5: Marking the centre of medial femoral condyle.

326 Figure 6: Intramedullary rod and femoral cutting guide linked with the IM linker. The drill slots
327 in the guide must line up with the central mark on medial femoral condyle.

328 Figure 7: Final components and bearing in place. Ideally, a thin osteotome must easily pass
329 between the bearing and the tibial tray. This ensures that bearing will not impinge on the tibial
330 tray.

331 Figure 8: AP and lateral radiographs of a case showing meniscal dislocation. The dislocation
332 was a result of trauma. Arrow points towards the bearing location.

333 Figure 9: Intra-operative photograph of the dislocated bearing lying medially in the
334 suprapatellar space. The bearing was a size 3, and was replaced by a size 5 bearing based on
335 stability during trial.

336 Figure 10: AP and lateral radiographs of a patient with aseptic loosening of the tibia.

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338 TABLE LEGENDS:

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340 Table 1: Demographic data of the patients.

341 Table 2: Clinical assessment.

342 Table 3: Radiographic assessment.

343 Table 4: A review of comparative studies between Microplasty (MP) and Phase 3 (P3) Oxford
344 medial UKR.

345 Table 5: Outliers in component positioning.

346

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