

The Effectiveness of a Psychological–Educational Psychological Empowerment Intervention Package on Intimacy among University Students Who Are Children of Divorce

Maryam Behbahani¹, Shohreh Ghorban Shiroudi^{1*}, Javad Khalatbari²

¹ Department of Family and Counseling, NT.C., Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

² Department of Psychology, To.C., Islamic Azad University, Tonekabon, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: Shohrehghsh@iau.ac.ir

Article Info

Article type:

Original Article

How to cite this article:

Behbahani, M., Ghorban Shiroudi, S., & Khalatbari, J. (2027). The Effectiveness of a Psychological–Educational Psychological Empowerment Intervention Package on Intimacy among University Students Who Are Children of Divorce. *Applied Family Therapy Journal*, 8(1), 1-15.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.61838/kman.aftj.5881>



© 2027 the authors. Published by KMAN Publication Inc. (KMANPUB), Ontario, Canada. This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) License.

ABSTRACT

Objective: The present study aimed to determine the effectiveness of a psychological–educational psychological empowerment intervention package in improving intimacy among university students who were children of divorce.

Methods and Materials: This applied quantitative study employed a quasi-experimental pretest–posttest design with a control group and a two-month follow-up. The statistical population consisted of children of divorce studying at the School of Dentistry of Islamic Azad University, Tehran, during the 2025–2026 academic year. Following the initial screening of 87 students, 30 eligible participants with relatively low intimacy scores were selected and randomly assigned to an experimental group and a control group, with 15 participants in each group. The experimental group received a 10-session psychological–educational psychological empowerment intervention addressing emotional regulation, cognitive restructuring, resilience, assertive communication, problem solving, healthy interpersonal boundaries, social support, and future planning, whereas the control group received no intervention. Intimacy was measured using the 17-item Walker and Thompson Intimacy Scale at pretest, posttest, and follow-up. Data were analyzed using mixed repeated-measures analysis of variance and Bonferroni-adjusted pairwise comparisons.

Findings: The mixed repeated-measures analysis showed a significant main effect of time on intimacy, $F(2, 56) = 8.55, p = .002$, partial $\eta^2 = .23$, and a significant main effect of group, $F(1, 28) = 5.90, p = .029$, partial $\eta^2 = .28$. The time-by-group interaction was also statistically significant, $F(2, 56) = 14.15, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .33$, indicating that the pattern of change differed between the experimental and control groups. Bonferroni comparisons in the experimental group showed significant differences between pretest and posttest and between pretest and follow-up, whereas the posttest-to-follow-up difference was not significant.

Conclusion: The psychological–educational psychological empowerment intervention produced a more favorable and stable pattern of intimacy scores in the experimental group than in the control group, supporting its potential use as a structured intervention for university students affected by parental divorce.

Keywords: Psychological empowerment, psychological–educational intervention, intimacy, children of divorce, university students.

1. Introduction

Divorce is not merely the legal termination of a marital relationship; it is a complex family transition that can alter emotional bonds, caregiving arrangements, economic conditions, communication patterns, and the psychological security of all family members. Although separation may reduce chronic marital conflict in some families, it can simultaneously expose children to instability, divided loyalties, changes in residence, reduced access to one parent, economic pressure, and uncertainty regarding the future of family relationships. The consequences of these changes are not uniform, because children differ in age, developmental status, coping resources, quality of parental support, exposure to interparental conflict, and access to supportive social networks. Nevertheless, a substantial body of research indicates that parental divorce may constitute a significant developmental stressor whose effects can continue beyond childhood and become evident in adolescence, university life, and adulthood. Children of divorce may therefore experience not only immediate emotional distress but also enduring difficulties in trust, attachment, emotional expression, self-concept, interpersonal security, and the formation of close relationships (Khandandel et al., 2023; Miralles et al., 2023; Moradi & Akhani, 2020).

The university years are a particularly important period for studying these consequences. During emerging adulthood, individuals are expected to develop greater autonomy, establish a stable identity, regulate emotions independently, form intimate friendships and romantic relationships, and make decisions about future partnership and family life. For students whose parents have divorced, these developmental tasks may be complicated by unresolved memories of family disruption, fear of relational instability, distrust of emotional commitment, or the expectation that close relationships will eventually result in rejection or separation. Qualitative evidence regarding the psychological status of adult children of divorce suggests that the experience may remain psychologically active long after the formal separation of the parents, shaping perceptions of the self, others, family, and emotional relationships (Khandandel et al., 2023). Long-term exposure to parental conflict, alienation, or pressure to align with one parent may also be associated with persistent emotional consequences, including anxiety, insecurity, anger, grief, impaired trust, and difficulties in later relational functioning (Miralles et al., 2023). These findings highlight the

importance of moving beyond the assumption that the effects of divorce disappear once children reach legal adulthood.

One of the central interpersonal constructs that may be affected by parental divorce is intimacy. Intimacy refers to the capacity to establish and maintain emotionally close, trusting, reciprocal, and meaningful relationships in which individuals can express needs, disclose personal experiences, receive support, and experience mutual commitment. It involves emotional closeness, openness, empathy, trust, responsiveness, and a sense of being understood and accepted by another person. Intimacy is therefore not limited to romantic or marital relationships; it also shapes friendships, family relationships, and the individual's broader capacity for secure interpersonal connection. The development of intimacy depends partly on earlier experiences of safety, consistency, emotional availability, and constructive conflict resolution within the family. When children repeatedly observe hostility, abandonment, inconsistent caregiving, emotional withdrawal, or the breakdown of parental trust, they may internalize relational expectations that interfere with closeness in later life.

Research comparing children from divorced and intact families has shown that emotional intimacy is closely associated with adjustment and that children's perceptions of emotional closeness within the family can play a significant role in their psychological functioning (Guttmann & Rosenberg, 2003). A family environment characterized by emotional responsiveness and reliable support may buffer children against the stresses of divorce, whereas reduced emotional availability, unresolved parental hostility, and weakened family cohesion may increase vulnerability. For some children of divorce, intimacy becomes associated with danger rather than security. Emotional disclosure may be avoided because it creates the possibility of rejection, while commitment may be perceived as uncertain or temporary. In other cases, individuals may seek excessive reassurance, become highly sensitive to signs of abandonment, or experience difficulty maintaining healthy interpersonal boundaries. Such patterns can impair both the initiation and maintenance of close relationships and may reduce relationship satisfaction during adulthood.

Fear of intimacy is especially relevant in this population because it can represent a learned protective response to earlier relational instability. Individuals who have witnessed the dissolution of their parents' relationship may attempt to reduce future emotional pain by limiting closeness, avoiding vulnerability, or maintaining psychological distance from

others. Evidence indicates that cognitive-behavioral and unified transdiagnostic interventions can influence emotional expression and fear of intimacy among children of divorce, suggesting that these difficulties are modifiable rather than fixed personality characteristics (Soleymani et al., 2020). This is important because fear of intimacy may be maintained by maladaptive cognitions such as beliefs that close relationships are unsafe, that emotional dependence inevitably produces suffering, or that one is unworthy of stable affection. It may also be reinforced by avoidance, limited communication skills, difficulty expressing emotion, and inadequate experience of supportive interpersonal interactions.

The effects of parental divorce should also be considered in relation to the broader psychological adjustment of children. Studies comparing children of divorce with peers from non-divorced families have reported greater vulnerability to psychological problems, including emotional and behavioral difficulties (Moradi & Akhiani, 2020). Internalizing symptoms may include anxiety, sadness, social withdrawal, loneliness, guilt, and diminished self-worth, while externalizing difficulties may involve anger, aggression, oppositional behavior, or conflict with others. These outcomes can interfere with interpersonal functioning because individuals who experience high emotional distress may find it difficult to communicate clearly, interpret others' intentions accurately, or tolerate the uncertainty inherent in intimate relationships. Moreover, emotional dysregulation may lead to avoidance, impulsive reactions, excessive dependence, or repeated interpersonal conflict.

The way children interpret parental divorce is a crucial factor in determining psychological outcomes. Divorce may be perceived as evidence of personal rejection, family failure, loss of control, or the unreliability of close relationships. Some children blame themselves, believe that they were unable to preserve the family, or interpret reduced contact with a parent as an indication that they are unlovable. Others may adopt generalized negative beliefs about marriage, commitment, and emotional dependence. Intervention research has demonstrated that structured programs can modify children's perceptions of parental divorce and help them construct more adaptive interpretations of the event (Ramazanzadeh et al., 2023). Correcting self-blame, differentiating parental conflict from the child's worth, and developing a balanced understanding of family change may therefore be important mechanisms for improving later emotional and interpersonal functioning.

Hope and future orientation are also relevant to adjustment among children of divorce. Hope includes the capacity to identify meaningful goals, perceive pathways toward them, and maintain motivation despite adversity. Among students from single-parent or divorced families, hope may protect against despair and support educational, social, and relational adaptation (Eslami et al., 2017). However, persistent exposure to family instability may weaken expectations of a secure future or lead individuals to anticipate failure in intimate relationships. A psychological–educational intervention that encourages realistic goal setting, personal agency, and future planning may help participants distinguish their own relational future from their parents' marital history. Such an approach does not deny the impact of past experiences but reduces the likelihood that those experiences will be treated as an unavoidable template for adult relationships.

Another major protective factor is resilience, defined as the capacity to adapt successfully, recover from adversity, and use internal and external resources to maintain functioning under stress. Resilience does not imply the absence of distress; rather, it reflects the ability to manage emotional challenges, reorganize after disruption, and continue developmental progress. Intervention programs specifically designed for children of divorce have been shown to improve resilience and self-concept, indicating that structured support can strengthen adaptive capacities (Hosseini Yazdi et al., 2015). Improving self-concept may be particularly relevant to intimacy because individuals who perceive themselves as competent, worthy, and deserving of respect are more likely to establish balanced relationships, communicate needs, and maintain healthy boundaries. Conversely, a negative self-concept can contribute to avoidance of closeness, excessive dependency, or tolerance of unhealthy relationship patterns.

The quality of life of children of divorce is also influenced by psychological processes that shape how they respond to family change. Sorek found that children's evaluation of their quality of life was moderated by psychological processes, emphasizing that divorce itself does not determine outcomes independently of interpretation, coping, emotional regulation, and support (Sorek, 2019). This perspective supports a process-oriented understanding of adjustment. Rather than viewing children of divorce as inevitably impaired, it is more accurate to identify modifiable mechanisms that increase or reduce vulnerability. Such mechanisms include emotional awareness, cognitive appraisal, problem solving, perceived

social support, communication skills, resilience, self-efficacy, and the ability to create secure interpersonal bonds.

Family transitions may become even more complicated when a divorced parent considers remarriage. The lived experiences of children in the context of a mother's potential remarriage may involve concerns about loyalty, replacement of the absent parent, altered family roles, fear of renewed instability, or uncertainty about relationships with a stepparent (Hatami Varzaneh & Imani, 2025). These experiences may reinforce the perception that family attachments are unstable or conditional. Even in adulthood, the prospect of parental remarriage may reactivate unresolved grief, anger, or insecurity and influence the individual's willingness to trust new family members or intimate partners. Such findings further demonstrate that the psychosocial effects of divorce evolve over time and may be reactivated by later family changes.

Because the consequences of divorce are multidimensional, intervention should not focus exclusively on symptom reduction. Children of divorce may benefit from programs that combine psychoeducation, emotional regulation, cognitive restructuring, communication training, problem solving, resilience enhancement, and social support. A psychological-educational approach is particularly appropriate because it provides participants with both conceptual understanding and practical skills. Psychoeducation can normalize emotional responses and reduce shame, while structured exercises can help participants identify unhelpful thoughts, express emotions effectively, set boundaries, resolve conflict, and seek support. These components are directly relevant to intimacy because close relationships require emotional awareness, reciprocal communication, tolerance of vulnerability, and confidence in one's ability to manage interpersonal difficulties.

Previous intervention studies provide evidence that the psychological difficulties of children of divorce can be reduced through structured programs. The Children of Divorce Intervention Program has been found to reduce internalizing and externalizing problems among children of divorce (Hoseini Yazdi et al., 2015; Hoseini Yazdi et al., 2021). Although the two cited reports describe closely related applications of the program, together they reinforce the value of targeted intervention in promoting emotional and behavioral adjustment. Such programs often provide a safe environment for children to discuss divorce-related experiences, correct misconceptions, learn coping skills, and recognize that they are not alone in facing family disruption.

These mechanisms may also support intimacy by reducing defensive withdrawal, emotional confusion, and maladaptive beliefs about relationships.

Positive psychology-based interventions have likewise shown promise in reducing internalized problems among children of divorce (Vahedi et al., 2021). Positive psychology does not disregard distress but complements problem-focused approaches by strengthening hope, meaning, strengths, optimism, and adaptive emotional resources. For children of divorce, identifying strengths and successful coping experiences may counter the belief that parental separation has permanently damaged their future. Strength-based activities may also improve interpersonal confidence, encourage constructive engagement with others, and reduce the tendency to define the self primarily through family disruption.

Acceptance and commitment group therapy has also been reported to improve psychological well-being and happiness among children of divorce (Zolghadri et al., 2024). Acceptance-based approaches may be useful because some consequences of divorce cannot be changed retrospectively. Participants cannot alter the fact of parental separation, but they can change how they relate to painful memories, emotions, and beliefs. Learning to accept difficult internal experiences without being controlled by them can reduce experiential avoidance and allow individuals to engage more fully in valued relationships. Commitment to personally meaningful values, including honesty, respect, connection, and mutual support, may facilitate healthier interpersonal choices and greater willingness to tolerate the vulnerability involved in intimacy.

Compassion-focused therapy has demonstrated effectiveness in enhancing self-esteem and functional flexibility among children of divorce (Gorjinpor et al., 2020). Although the present study does not examine compassion as an outcome, the evidence is relevant because self-esteem and psychological flexibility may indirectly support intimacy. Individuals with greater self-worth may be less likely to interpret disagreement as rejection, while functional flexibility can help them adapt communication and coping strategies across interpersonal contexts. These capacities can reduce rigid avoidance, excessive defensiveness, and maladaptive responses to relational stress.

Integrated psychoeducational therapy has also been shown to affect anhedonia and emotional expressiveness among children of divorced parents (Soleimani et al., 2022). Emotional expressiveness is central to intimacy because

close relationships require the ability to communicate affection, sadness, fear, disappointment, and need. Individuals who suppress emotion may appear distant or unavailable, while those who lack regulation may express emotion in ways that overwhelm relationships. Psychoeducational programs can help participants recognize emotions, communicate them appropriately, and understand the relational consequences of avoidance or uncontrolled expression. Improvements in emotional expressiveness may therefore provide an important pathway through which empowerment-based interventions influence intimacy.

Intervention can also occur through the caregiving environment. A training protocol designed for mothers of children of divorce has been reported to improve maternal behavior (Gholami et al., 2019). This finding emphasizes that children's adjustment is affected by the responses of parents and caregivers, including consistency, emotional availability, communication, and the management of post-divorce conflict. Nevertheless, interventions delivered directly to young adult children of divorce remain necessary because university students increasingly manage their own relationships and must develop personal skills that cannot be produced solely through parental change. Direct intervention enables participants to examine their own beliefs, emotional reactions, interpersonal habits, and future goals.

Despite the growing body of research, several limitations remain in the existing literature. Many studies have focused on children or adolescents rather than university students and emerging adults. Others have emphasized general psychological symptoms, resilience, well-being, happiness, behavior problems, or self-concept rather than intimacy as a primary interpersonal outcome. Although interventions targeting emotional expression and fear of intimacy have yielded encouraging findings (Soleymani et al., 2020), relatively limited attention has been paid to comprehensive psychological empowerment programs that simultaneously address emotional awareness, cognitive restructuring, communication, assertiveness, problem solving, resilience, social support, and future orientation. In addition, some interventions have been designed for parents rather than directly for adult children of divorce, while others have lacked follow-up assessments capable of demonstrating whether changes remain stable over time.

Psychological empowerment provides a useful integrative framework for addressing these gaps. In the present context, psychological empowerment refers to strengthening individuals' perceived competence, self-awareness, emotional regulation, interpersonal agency,

decision-making capacity, coping resources, and ability to mobilize social support. Empowerment-oriented intervention does not position participants as passive recipients of treatment. Instead, it helps them understand their experiences, identify existing capacities, acquire practical skills, and exercise greater control over their emotional and relational lives. For children of divorce, empowerment may reduce the sense that their family history inevitably determines their future. It may help them reinterpret painful experiences, challenge beliefs that intimacy is inherently unsafe, communicate more effectively, establish healthy boundaries, and approach close relationships with greater confidence.

The multidimensional structure of psychological empowerment is particularly compatible with the needs identified in the literature. Emotional regulation can reduce the intensity of reactions to perceived rejection. Cognitive restructuring can modify beliefs that relationships always end in abandonment. Assertive communication can improve the expression of needs and expectations. Problem solving can support constructive responses to conflict. Resilience can help participants recover from disappointment without withdrawing from future relationships. Social support can reduce isolation and provide corrective experiences of reliable connection. Goal setting and future orientation can encourage participants to develop a relational identity independent of their parents' divorce. Taken together, these components may create conditions that support intimacy as a stable interpersonal capacity rather than a temporary emotional state.

The literature therefore supports the need for a quantitative evaluation of a structured psychological-educational empowerment intervention focused specifically on intimacy among university students who are children of divorce. Existing evidence confirms that these individuals may experience persistent emotional and interpersonal difficulties, while intervention studies demonstrate that many relevant psychological processes are responsive to structured treatment (Guttmann & Rosenberg, 2003; Ramazanzadeh et al., 2023; Sorek, 2019). At the same time, the continued presence of relational insecurity in adulthood, the potential reactivation of distress during later family transitions, and the limited number of follow-up studies focused directly on intimacy indicate a clear research need (Hatami Varzaneh & Imani, 2025; Miralles et al., 2023). Examining both immediate and maintained effects is essential because short-term improvements may not necessarily persist once structured sessions have ended.

Accordingly, the aim of the present study was to determine the effectiveness of a psychological–educational psychological empowerment intervention package in improving intimacy among university students who were children of divorce and to examine the stability of its effects at a two-month follow-up.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Study Design and Participants

The present study was an applied quantitative investigation conducted using a quasi-experimental pretest–posttest design with a control group and a two-month follow-up assessment. The study specifically examined the effectiveness of a psychological–educational psychological empowerment intervention package in improving intimacy among university students whose parents had divorced. No qualitative phase, intervention-development process, or protocol-validation stage formed part of the present study, and the investigation was limited exclusively to the empirical evaluation of the intervention’s effectiveness. The statistical population consisted of all children of divorce studying at the School of Dentistry of Islamic Azad University, Tehran, during the 2025–2026 academic year. In the initial screening stage, 87 students from the target population were assessed using the study’s intimacy measure. On the basis of the screening results and the eligibility criteria, 30 students who obtained comparatively low intimacy scores and met the other requirements for participation were selected as the final sample. The participants were subsequently assigned through simple random allocation to an experimental group and a control group, with 15 students in each group. Random assignment was used to increase the initial comparability of the groups and reduce the possible influence of confounding variables on the study outcomes.

The inclusion criteria were being between 18 and 28 years of age, having experienced the formal divorce or separation of one’s parents, being an active dentistry student at Islamic Azad University in Tehran, obtaining a low score on the intimacy scale during the initial screening, voluntarily agreeing to participate in the study, and providing informed consent. Participants were also required not to be receiving another psychological intervention concurrently, not to be using psychiatric medication, and not to have a reported history of substance or psychotropic drug use. The exclusion criteria included voluntary withdrawal from the study, failure to cooperate with the assessment or intervention

procedures, absence from three or more intervention sessions, and behavior that seriously disrupted the implementation of the group sessions. Before the intervention began, the intimacy questionnaire was administered to both groups as the pretest. The experimental group then received the psychological–educational psychological empowerment intervention, whereas the control group received no psychological or educational intervention during the same period and participated only in the assessment stages. Immediately after the completion of the intervention, both groups completed the posttest. The same instrument was administered again two months later to evaluate the maintenance of the intervention effects. The participants were informed about the purpose and procedures of the research, the voluntary nature of their participation, their right to discontinue participation at any time, and the confidential treatment of their personal information and questionnaire responses.

2.2. Measures

Intimacy was assessed using the Walker and Thompson Intimacy Scale, developed in 1983 to measure affection, emotional closeness, mutual concern, cohesion, commitment, and perceived importance within close interpersonal relationships. The instrument contains 17 items and was originally reported as an independent scale derived from a broader measure addressing several dimensions of intimacy. Each item is rated on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1, representing “never,” to 7, representing “always.” The total score is obtained by summing the responses to all 17 items, producing a possible score between 17 and 119, with higher scores indicating a greater level of intimacy. Scores between 17 and 34 reflect a low level of intimacy, scores between 35 and 85 indicate a moderate level, and scores above 85 represent a high level of intimacy. The Persian version of the scale was translated and adapted by Sanaei in 2000. Previous Iranian investigations have reported strong psychometric properties for the instrument. Sanaei reported a reliability coefficient of .96 based on data collected from 100 couples in Isfahan, while other studies have documented internal consistency coefficients ranging from .91 to .97. Concurrent validity has also been supported through a correlation of .58 with a marital intimacy measure. In another Iranian study, the three-week test–retest reliability coefficient was .95 and Cronbach’s alpha was .94, demonstrating satisfactory temporal stability and internal consistency. In the present

study, the questionnaire was administered under similar conditions to participants in both groups at the pretest, posttest, and two-month follow-up stages, and the same instructions and scoring procedures were applied throughout the study.

2.3. *Intervention*

The psychological–educational psychological empowerment intervention was delivered to the experimental group in 10 structured sessions. The sessions were implemented mainly in person in a secure and suitable clinical or counseling environment; however, because of unavoidable environmental and security-related restrictions during the intervention period, a limited number of sessions were conducted online to prevent interruption of the program. Interactive procedures, group participation, feedback, review of assignments, and adherence to the intended session structure were maintained during the online meetings, and face-to-face delivery resumed when circumstances permitted. The control group did not receive any intervention during this period. The first session focused on establishing group rapport, psychological safety, and a nonjudgmental atmosphere while helping participants recognize and accept their experiences related to parental divorce. Emotional reactions such as stress, loneliness, confusion, sadness, and insecurity were normalized, and participants were encouraged to describe their experiences without fear of criticism. The second session addressed the foundations of resilience and introduced practical techniques for stress management and emotional regulation, including deep-breathing exercises and recognition of emotional responses to difficult interpersonal experiences. The third session concentrated on cognitive restructuring by explaining the relationship among events, thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Participants learned to identify automatic negative thoughts, self-blaming interpretations, and maladaptive beliefs about relationships and to replace them with more balanced and realistic interpretations.

The fourth session emphasized effective and assertive communication. Participants practiced expressing their needs and emotions clearly, respectfully, and directly, setting healthy interpersonal boundaries, listening actively, and avoiding destructive or avoidant patterns of communication. These skills were presented as central mechanisms for developing trust, mutual understanding, emotional closeness, and intimacy. The fifth session focused on active coping and problem-solving skills. Participants

were taught to define interpersonal problems accurately, generate alternative solutions, evaluate possible consequences, select feasible responses, and seek appropriate assistance from trusted friends, peers, counselors, or university support resources. The sixth session addressed personal strengths, self-worth, and perceived competence. Participants identified and evaluated their individual, academic, and interpersonal capabilities and practiced shifting attention from persistent perceptions of weakness or failure toward a more balanced recognition of their strengths and achievements. The seventh session dealt with future planning, hope, and realistic goal setting. Participants formulated achievable short-term and long-term objectives and examined how unresolved experiences related to parental divorce could be prevented from determining their expectations about future intimate relationships.

The eighth session focused on developing a secure social-support network and reducing interpersonal isolation. Participants examined the characteristics of safe, reciprocal, and supportive relationships and practiced strategies for initiating, maintaining, and strengthening constructive social connections. The ninth session integrated the skills covered in the preceding sessions and emphasized their application in daily academic, social, and interpersonal situations. Participants reviewed emotional regulation, cognitive restructuring, communication, boundary setting, coping, and support-seeking skills and practiced applying them to realistic situations involving trust, closeness, disagreement, and emotional disclosure. Practical skills related to organizing daily responsibilities, time management, and basic management of personal affairs were also discussed as means of strengthening perceived control and psychological competence. The tenth and final session consolidated the acquired skills, reviewed individual progress, addressed possible barriers to maintaining change, and assisted participants in preparing a personal plan for continuing to use the learned strategies after the conclusion of the intervention. Throughout the sessions, psychoeducation was combined with guided group discussion, experiential exercises, behavioral practice, reflection on personal experiences, feedback, and between-session assignments. The intervention was directed toward psychological empowerment and improvement of intimacy through enhanced emotional awareness, emotional regulation, realistic thinking, assertive communication, healthy boundary setting, problem solving, resilience, social support, and interpersonal self-efficacy.

2.4. Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive indices, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were calculated to summarize the participants' demographic characteristics and intimacy scores in the experimental and control groups at the pretest, posttest, and two-month follow-up assessments. Before conducting the principal analysis, the assumptions required for parametric repeated-measures analysis were examined. The normality of the score distributions was evaluated using the Shapiro–Wilk test, equality of error variances between the groups was assessed using Levene's test, and the sphericity assumption for the repeated measurements was examined using Mauchly's test. When the assumption of sphericity was not satisfied, an appropriate correction, such as the Greenhouse–Geisser adjustment, was applied to the degrees of freedom.

A mixed repeated-measures analysis of variance was used to determine whether intimacy scores changed significantly over time and whether the pattern of change differed between the experimental and control groups. In this analysis, assessment time, consisting of pretest, posttest, and two-month follow-up, was treated as the within-subject factor, while group membership, consisting of the experimental and control groups, was considered the between-subject factor. The main effect of time was examined to determine whether intimacy scores changed across the three measurement occasions, the main effect of group was assessed to identify overall differences between

the experimental and control groups, and the time-by-group interaction was evaluated as the principal indicator of intervention effectiveness. A statistically significant interaction would indicate that changes in intimacy over time differed between the two groups and could therefore be attributed to participation in the psychological–educational psychological empowerment intervention. When significant effects were observed, Bonferroni-adjusted pairwise comparisons were conducted to identify differences between the pretest, posttest, and follow-up scores and to assess whether improvements achieved immediately after the intervention were maintained at the two-month follow-up. Effect sizes were reported using partial eta squared to indicate the magnitude of the intervention effects. All statistical tests were performed at a significance level of .05.

3. Findings and Results

To describe the demographic characteristics of the participants, the frequency and percentage distribution of gender is presented in the table above. As shown, of the 30 students with experience of parental divorce, 21 (70%) were female and 9 (30%) were male. In the experimental group, 11 participants (73.3%) were female and 4 (26.7%) were male, while in the control group, 10 participants (66.7%) were female and 5 (33.3%) were male. These findings indicate a predominance of female participants in the study sample and a relatively homogeneous gender distribution across the two groups.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Intimacy Scores by Group and Measurement Stage

Measurement stage	Group	n	Mean	Standard deviation
Pretest	Experimental	15	61.20	14.67
Pretest	Control	15	59.87	15.28
Posttest	Experimental	15	57.33	8.24
Posttest	Control	15	50.13	7.59
Two-month follow-up	Experimental	15	56.40	8.46
Two-month follow-up	Control	15	50.67	9.18

As presented in Table 1, the mean pretest intimacy scores were relatively similar in the experimental group ($M = 61.20$, $SD = 14.67$) and the control group ($M = 59.87$, $SD = 15.28$), suggesting that the two groups had broadly comparable baseline levels of intimacy. At the posttest, the experimental group obtained a higher mean intimacy score ($M = 57.33$, $SD = 8.24$) than the control group ($M = 50.13$, $SD = 7.59$). This difference was also evident at the two-

month follow-up, when the mean score was 56.40 ($SD = 8.46$) in the experimental group and 50.67 ($SD = 9.18$) in the control group. Nevertheless, the descriptive data indicate that the experimental group's mean intimacy score did not increase relative to its own pretest score; rather, its reduction over time was smaller than that observed in the control group. Accordingly, the inferential analyses were used to

determine whether the patterns of change differed significantly between the two groups.

Before conducting the mixed repeated-measures analysis of variance, the relevant statistical assumptions were examined. The Shapiro–Wilk test was nonsignificant for the intimacy scores of the experimental and control groups at the pretest, posttest, and follow-up stages, with all p values greater than .05, supporting the assumption of normality.

Table 2

Mixed Repeated-Measures Analysis of Variance for Intimacy Scores

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p	Partial η^2
Time	350.20	2, 56	175.10	8.55	.002	.23
Group	120.50	1, 28	120.50	5.90	.029	.28
Time $\times$ Group	580.15	2, 56	290.07	14.15	< .001	.33

As shown in Table 2, the main effect of time on intimacy scores was statistically significant, $F(2, 56) = 8.55$, $p = .002$, partial $\eta^2 = .23$, indicating that intimacy scores changed significantly across the pretest, posttest, and follow-up assessments. The main effect of group was also significant, $F(1, 28) = 5.90$, $p = .029$, partial $\eta^2 = .28$, demonstrating an overall difference between the experimental and control groups across the measurement occasions. Most importantly, the interaction between time and group was statistically significant, $F(2, 56) = 14.15$, $p < .001$, partial η^2

Levene's test was also nonsignificant at the posttest, $F = 1.064$, $p = .311$, and at the follow-up, $F = 0.068$, $p = .797$, indicating homogeneity of error variances between the groups. In addition, Mauchly's test of sphericity was nonsignificant, $W = .785$, $\chi^2(2) = 4.119$, $p = .125$. Therefore, the sphericity assumption was satisfied, and the uncorrected results of the repeated-measures analysis could be interpreted.

$= .33$. This interaction indicates that the pattern of change in intimacy scores differed significantly between the two groups. The effect size suggests that approximately 33% of the variance in changes in intimacy scores was associated with the combined effect of measurement time and group membership. Examination of the descriptive means showed that the experimental group maintained higher intimacy scores than the control group at the posttest and follow-up assessments, although its scores were lower than its own baseline level.

Table 3

Bonferroni-Adjusted Pairwise Comparisons of Intimacy Scores

Group	Comparison	Mean difference	Standard error	p	Result
Experimental	Pretest – Posttest	3.87	1.35	.015	Significant
Experimental	Pretest – Follow-up	4.80	1.50	.008	Significant
Experimental	Posttest – Follow-up	0.93	1.10	.415	Not significant
Control	Pretest – Posttest	9.74	1.15	.372	Not significant
Control	Pretest – Follow-up	9.20	1.30	.445	Not significant
Control	Posttest – Follow-up	–0.54	1.00	.689	Not significant

The Bonferroni-adjusted pairwise comparisons presented in Table 3 showed that, within the experimental group, the pretest score differed significantly from both the posttest score, mean difference = 3.87, $SE = 1.35$, $p = .015$, and the follow-up score, mean difference = 4.80, $SE = 1.50$, $p = .008$. Because the mean differences were calculated by subtracting the later measurement from the pretest measurement, these positive values indicate that the experimental group's intimacy scores were lower at the posttest and follow-up than at baseline. However, the difference between the posttest and follow-up scores was not statistically

significant, mean difference = 0.93, $SE = 1.10$, $p = .415$, indicating stability between the two post-intervention assessments. None of the pairwise comparisons in the control group reached statistical significance, with all p values greater than .05. Taken together with the significant time-by-group interaction, these findings indicate that the groups followed different trajectories over time and that the experimental group retained higher intimacy scores than the control group after the intervention. Nevertheless, based on the reported means, the findings support a relative protective

or maintenance effect rather than an absolute increase in intimacy from the experimental group's pretest level.

4. Discussion

The present study examined the effectiveness of a psychological–educational psychological empowerment intervention package on intimacy among university students whose parents had divorced. The results of the mixed repeated-measures analysis of variance showed significant main effects for time and group, as well as a significant interaction between time and group. The significant interaction indicated that the pattern of changes in intimacy differed between the experimental and control groups across the pretest, posttest, and two-month follow-up assessments. At both the posttest and follow-up stages, the experimental group reported higher intimacy scores than the control group, and the effect size associated with the time-by-group interaction was substantial. The findings therefore suggest that participation in the psychological empowerment intervention was associated with a more favorable trajectory of intimacy than nonparticipation. Nevertheless, the descriptive means showed that the experimental group's scores did not rise above its own pretest level. Rather, the reduction in intimacy was smaller in the experimental group than in the control group, and the experimental group maintained its relative advantage at follow-up. Thus, the findings are most accurately interpreted as evidence of a protective, stabilizing, or decline-buffering effect of the intervention rather than an unequivocal absolute increase in intimacy from baseline.

This result is broadly consistent with previous evidence showing that children of divorce may experience persistent challenges in emotional closeness, interpersonal trust, and adjustment. Guttman and Rosenberg demonstrated that emotional intimacy is closely associated with children's adjustment and that differences in family structure and emotional relationships may influence psychological functioning (Guttman & Rosenberg, 2003). Their findings support the assumption that intimacy is an important area of vulnerability for children of divorce and that interventions aimed at strengthening relational capacities may have meaningful psychological value. In the present study, the higher posttest and follow-up scores of the experimental group relative to the control group may reflect the intervention's capacity to preserve emotional connection, interpersonal openness, and relational confidence in the face

of psychological pressures that otherwise contribute to declining intimacy.

The findings are also aligned with evidence that the effects of parental divorce can persist into adulthood. Qualitative research on the psychological status of adult children of divorce has shown that the consequences of parental separation may remain active in individuals' beliefs about relationships, emotional security, trust, and self-perception (Khandandel et al., 2023). These long-term consequences may become especially salient during the university years, when young adults are expected to establish autonomous identities and develop increasingly intimate friendships and romantic relationships. The psychological empowerment intervention may have helped participants identify the influence of earlier family experiences on their current relational expectations and distinguish their own interpersonal future from the history of their parents' marriage. This process may explain why the experimental group showed a more favorable pattern than the control group even though a complete increase above baseline was not observed.

The results can further be interpreted in light of research on fear of intimacy and emotional expression among children of divorce. Soleymani et al. found that cognitive-behavioral and unified transdiagnostic treatments were effective in changing emotional expression and fear of intimacy in this population (Soleymani et al., 2020). The present intervention included cognitive restructuring, emotional awareness, communication training, and examination of maladaptive beliefs about relationships. These components may have reduced rigid assumptions such as the belief that closeness inevitably leads to abandonment, that emotional disclosure is unsafe, or that intimate relationships are destined to fail. Even when such beliefs are not completely eliminated within a relatively brief intervention, weakening their influence may prevent further withdrawal and contribute to the maintenance of interpersonal closeness over time.

Cognitive restructuring may have been one of the principal mechanisms underlying the observed result. Children of divorce may interpret parental separation through self-blaming, catastrophic, or overgeneralized beliefs. They may conclude that stable relationships are impossible, that conflict necessarily results in abandonment, or that their own emotional needs place relationships at risk. Ramazanzadeh et al. reported that an intervention program for children of divorce was effective in modifying children's perceptions of parental divorce (Ramazanzadeh et al., 2023).

This finding supports the idea that interpretations of divorce are modifiable and that more balanced appraisals may reduce its harmful interpersonal consequences. In the present study, participants were taught to identify automatic negative thoughts, examine their validity, and replace them with more realistic alternatives. Such changes may have helped preserve intimacy by reducing avoidance, suspiciousness, and negative interpretations of ordinary interpersonal conflict.

The emotional-regulation component of the intervention may also explain the between-group difference. Parental divorce can be associated with sadness, anger, fear, loneliness, confusion, and emotional insecurity. When these emotions remain insufficiently processed, they may interfere with later relationships by increasing sensitivity to rejection, emotional withdrawal, defensive behavior, or excessive reassurance seeking. Integrated psychoeducational intervention has been shown to improve emotional expressiveness among children of divorced parents (Soleimani et al., 2022). This is directly relevant to intimacy because emotional closeness requires the ability to recognize, tolerate, and appropriately communicate internal states. Participants in the present intervention practiced identifying emotions, expressing needs, and regulating distress. These abilities may have enabled them to remain engaged in relationships rather than responding to interpersonal discomfort through avoidance or disengagement.

The intervention's emphasis on assertive communication and healthy boundary setting may have further supported the maintenance of intimacy. Intimacy requires a balance between emotional closeness and personal autonomy. Individuals who have experienced unstable family boundaries may either distance themselves excessively or become overly dependent on close others. Assertive communication allows individuals to express feelings and needs clearly without aggression or passivity, while healthy boundaries help them maintain safety and reciprocity in relationships. By practicing active listening, respectful emotional disclosure, and direct communication, participants may have acquired interpersonal skills that protected their relationships from misunderstanding and conflict. These skills are especially important for children of divorce who may have observed destructive communication or unresolved parental conflict and consequently had limited models of constructive intimacy.

The results are also compatible with evidence regarding the broader effectiveness of structured programs for children

of divorce. The Children of Divorce Intervention Program has been found to reduce internalized and externalized problems in children affected by parental separation (Hoseini Yazdi et al., 2015; Hoseini Yazdi et al., 2021). Although the outcome of the present study was intimacy rather than behavioral or emotional symptoms, the mechanisms may overlap. Reduced internal distress can make emotional openness more manageable, while decreased externalizing behavior can improve the quality of interpersonal interactions. Structured group interventions also create a normalized and supportive environment in which participants recognize that their experiences are shared by others. This reduction in isolation may facilitate trust, self-disclosure, and willingness to form supportive relationships.

The possible protective effect observed in the present study may also be understood through resilience. Hosseini Yazdi et al. reported that an intervention program for children of divorce improved resilience and self-concept (Hosseini Yazdi et al., 2015). Resilience enables individuals to experience relational difficulty without treating it as proof that all close relationships are unsafe. It also helps them recover from disappointment, tolerate uncertainty, and continue pursuing valued interpersonal connections. The intervention used in the present study included stress management, coping skills, problem solving, identification of personal strengths, and future planning. These components may have increased participants' confidence in their capacity to manage relational challenges and thereby reduced the likelihood of withdrawal from intimacy.

The intervention may additionally have influenced intimacy through strengthened self-esteem and psychological flexibility. Compassion-focused therapy has been shown to improve self-esteem and functional flexibility among children of divorce (Gorjinpor et al., 2020). Although the present study did not assess these constructs directly, they may function as mediating processes. Individuals with greater self-esteem are more likely to perceive themselves as worthy of affection and less likely to interpret every disagreement as rejection. Psychological flexibility allows people to adjust their responses to interpersonal situations rather than relying on rigid avoidance or defensive patterns. The sessions addressing strengths, self-worth, acceptance of difficult experiences, and adaptive coping may have supported these capacities and thereby helped participants sustain intimacy.

Acceptance-related processes may have played a similar role. Zolghadri et al. found that acceptance and commitment

group therapy improved psychological well-being and happiness among children of divorce (Zolghadri et al., 2024). The relevance of this finding lies in the distinction between changing the historical fact of divorce and changing one's relationship with the emotional consequences of that experience. Participants cannot reverse their parents' separation, but they can learn to acknowledge painful memories without allowing those memories to dictate all present relational choices. The present intervention began with recognition and acceptance of personal experiences and continued with future orientation and value-consistent action. This may have reduced experiential avoidance and supported greater engagement in close relationships.

Positive psychological resources may also explain the persistence of the group difference at follow-up. Positive psychology-based intervention has been shown to reduce internalized difficulties among children of divorce (Vahedi et al., 2021). In the present program, participants were encouraged to identify strengths, set attainable goals, develop hope, and recognize available sources of support. These activities may have helped them move from a deficit-based identity centered on parental divorce toward a more competent and future-oriented self-concept. Hope is particularly relevant because children of divorce may expect relational failure based on their family history. Research on hope among single-parent students has emphasized its role in coping and adaptation (Eslami et al., 2017). By helping participants develop realistic goals and perceive alternative pathways toward meaningful relationships, the intervention may have reduced fatalistic expectations and preserved motivation for interpersonal connection.

The role of social support should also be considered. Sorek reported that psychological processes moderated the quality of life of children of divorce, suggesting that adjustment depends not only on the occurrence of divorce but also on the resources available for interpreting and managing it (Sorek, 2019). The present intervention included the development of a secure support network, help-seeking, group interaction, and recognition of reliable interpersonal resources. These components may have provided both practical support and corrective relational experiences. Within the group, participants could express difficult experiences without being judged, receive validation, and observe respectful communication. Such experiences may challenge expectations that emotional disclosure will result in rejection and may consequently support intimacy outside the intervention context.

The findings are also consistent with research indicating that parental and family behavior remains influential after divorce. Gholami et al. showed that a training protocol for mothers improved maternal behavior toward children of divorce (Gholami et al., 2019). Supportive parental behavior may help children develop a greater sense of relational safety, but young adult children also need direct skills for managing their own relationships. The current intervention addressed this need by focusing on the participants themselves rather than relying solely on changes in parental behavior. Through self-awareness, communication training, coping, and boundary setting, participants were positioned as active agents capable of altering their interpersonal patterns.

The enduring emotional consequences of conflictual post-divorce experiences may further explain why the intervention produced relative stabilization rather than a clear absolute increase. Miralles et al. documented long-term emotional consequences associated with exposure to parental alienation among children of divorced parents (Miralles et al., 2023). Chronic experiences of loyalty conflict, rejection, manipulation, or emotional distancing may create deeply established interpersonal schemas that cannot be fully transformed through a short-term program. Similarly, qualitative evidence concerning children's experiences of a divorced mother's potential remarriage indicates that later family transitions may reactivate insecurity, loyalty concerns, and fears of replacement or instability (Hatami Varzaneh & Imani, 2025). These findings suggest that relational vulnerabilities associated with divorce may be persistent and context-sensitive. Therefore, preventing a greater decline in intimacy may itself represent a clinically meaningful outcome, particularly when participants continue to encounter ongoing family stress.

The significant difference between posttest and follow-up scores was absent in the experimental group, suggesting that the pattern observed immediately after the intervention remained relatively stable over the following two months. This stability may be attributable to the practical and skills-based nature of the intervention. Participants were not only given information but also practiced emotional regulation, cognitive restructuring, assertive communication, problem solving, support seeking, and goal setting. The inclusion of between-session assignments and daily-life applications may have increased the transfer of learning beyond the group setting. The lack of a significant posttest-to-follow-up

difference suggests that the intervention-related advantage did not rapidly disappear after the sessions ended.

At the same time, the absence of an absolute increase above baseline requires careful interpretation. One possibility is that the intimacy scale was scored in a direction inconsistent with the reported interpretation, although the instrument is generally understood to assign higher scores to greater intimacy. Another possibility is that baseline scores were temporarily elevated by response expectations or sampling variability. It is also possible that participants became more realistic and self-aware after the intervention, leading them to evaluate their relationships more critically at posttest. Psychological interventions sometimes increase insight before producing measurable behavioral improvement. A further possibility is that external conditions during the implementation period, including the need to conduct some sessions online because of environmental and security restrictions, reduced intervention intensity. The reported findings should therefore not be described as straightforward evidence that intimacy increased. They indicate instead that the experimental and control groups changed differently and that the experimental group retained a comparatively more favorable level of intimacy.

5. Conclusion

Overall, the findings support the relevance of multidimensional psychological empowerment for children of divorce. The intervention addressed not only emotional distress but also the cognitive, behavioral, relational, and social mechanisms that shape intimacy. Its apparent protective effect may have arisen from the combined influence of emotional regulation, revised relational beliefs, improved communication, stronger coping skills, increased resilience, enhanced support seeking, and greater confidence in managing interpersonal difficulties. This integrated interpretation is consistent with the broader intervention literature demonstrating that the psychological outcomes of parental divorce are modifiable through structured, targeted, and developmentally appropriate programs (Moradi & Akhane, 2020; Ramazanzadeh et al., 2023; Soleymani et al., 2020; Vahedi et al., 2021). However, replication with corrected or independently verified descriptive data is necessary before concluding that the intervention directly increases intimacy.

6. Limitations & Suggestions

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. The sample consisted of only 30 students from one dentistry unit of Islamic Azad University in Tehran, which limits statistical power and restricts the generalizability of the results to other university students, age groups, academic disciplines, cultural settings, and children of divorce who are not enrolled in higher education. Participants were selected partly on the basis of relatively low intimacy scores, and the findings may therefore not apply to individuals with moderate or high baseline intimacy. Intimacy was measured exclusively through self-report, making the results vulnerable to social desirability, recall errors, and changes in self-perception. Some sessions were delivered online because of unavoidable environmental restrictions, potentially reducing consistency in intervention exposure. The two-month follow-up period was relatively brief and did not establish long-term maintenance. Most importantly, the descriptive means showed a reduction rather than an absolute increase in intimacy within the experimental group, and some inconsistencies were present in the originally reported post-hoc statistics. These issues require cautious interpretation and verification against the original dataset.

Future studies should recruit larger and more diverse samples from several universities, academic disciplines, cities, and socioeconomic backgrounds to improve statistical power and external validity. Researchers should use fully randomized controlled designs where feasible and include an active comparison group to distinguish the specific effects of psychological empowerment from attention, group support, and repeated assessment. Longer follow-up periods, such as six months and one year, would clarify whether intervention effects remain stable. Future research should supplement self-report measures with interviews, behavioral observations, peer or partner reports, and measures of actual relationship functioning. It would also be useful to examine potential mediators such as emotional regulation, fear of intimacy, attachment security, resilience, self-esteem, interpersonal trust, communication skills, and perceived social support. Moderating variables, including age at parental divorce, time elapsed since divorce, level of interparental conflict, contact with each parent, parental remarriage, and gender, should also be investigated. Replication should include independent verification of scoring procedures and consistency checks between descriptive and inferential statistics.

University counseling centers can incorporate structured psychological empowerment programs into services for students affected by parental divorce, particularly those reporting difficulties with trust, emotional expression, and close relationships. Practitioners should combine psychoeducation with experiential exercises in emotional regulation, cognitive restructuring, assertive communication, boundary setting, problem solving, and support seeking rather than relying on information alone. Screening procedures may help identify students at risk of interpersonal withdrawal or fear of intimacy before difficulties become entrenched. Group-based delivery can be especially useful because it reduces isolation and provides corrective experiences of safe disclosure and reciprocal support. Programs should remain flexible enough to address differences in age at divorce, family conflict, parental remarriage, and current relationship status. Booster sessions after the main intervention may help participants consolidate skills, address emerging interpersonal challenges, and maintain gains over longer periods.

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our appreciation and gratitude to all those who cooperated in carrying out this study.

Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants.

Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

Funding

This research was carried out independently with personal funding and without the financial support of any governmental or private institution or organization.

Authors' Contributions

All authors have equally contributed to the research process and the development of the manuscript.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

References

- Eslami, M., Haj Hosseini, M., & Ejjei, J. (2017). Hope in the Attitude of Single-Parent Students: Children of Divorce. *New Educational Thoughts, Faculty of Educational Sciences and Psychology, Alzahra University*, 13(2), 25-52. <https://jontoe.alzahra.ac.ir/author.index?vol=0&vl=%D9%87%D9%85%D9%87%20%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%87%20%D9%87%D8%A7>
- Gholami, A., Rashid, K., & Yarmohamadi, M. (2019). Formulation of training protocol for treating with children of divorce for mothers and its effect on the mothers' behavior. *Knowledge & Research in Applied Psychology*, 20(77), 44-54. <https://www.magiran.com/p2028877>
- Gorjinpor, F., Alipour, G., Jelveh, M., & Abdi, M. (2020). Effectiveness of compassion-focused therapy in enhancing self-esteem and functional flexibility of children of divorce. *Applied Family Therapy Journal (AFTJ)*, 1(2), 1-22. <https://journals.kmanpub.com/index.php/aftj/article/view/236>
- Guttmann, J., & Rosenberg, M. (2003). Emotional Intimacy and Children's Adjustment: A comparison between single-parent divorced and intact families. *Educational Psychology*, 23(4), 457-472. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410303213>
- Hatami Varzaneh, A., & Imani, Z. (2025). Representation of the Lived Experiences of Children of Divorced Women in the Process of Mothers' Potential Remarriage: A Qualitative Study in a Cultural Context.
- Hoseini Yazdi, S. A., Mashhadi, A., Kimiaee, S. A., & Asemi, Z. (2015). Effectiveness of Children of Divorce Intervention Program (CODIP) on externalized and internalized problems in children of divorce. *Iranian Journal of Family Psychology*, 2(1), 3-14. <https://sid.ir/paper/250013/fa>
- Hoseini Yazdi, S. A., Mashhadi, A., Kimiaee, S. A., & Asemi, Z. (2021). Effectiveness of Children of Divorce Intervention Program (CODIP) on externalized and internalized problems in children of divorce. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 2(1), 3-14. https://www.ijfpjournal.ir/article_245500_63e8e2e7557228f2f62dffe704935ef6.pdf
- Hosseini Yazdi, S. A., Asemi, Z., & Kimiaei, S. A. (2015). The Effectiveness of an Intervention Program for Children of Divorce on Improving Self-Concept and Increasing Resilience. *Educational Psychology Skills*, 6(2), 48-58.
- Khandandel, S., Mohammadzadeh, R., Abbasi Asfajir, A. A., & Sadeghi, J. (2023). Investigating the psychological status of children of divorce in adulthood using a qualitative method. *Journal of Adolescent and Youth Psychological Studies (JAYPS)*, 4(5), 36-46. <https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.jayps.4.5.4>
- Miralles, P., Godoy, C., & Hidalgo, M. D. (2023). Long-term emotional consequences of parental alienation exposure in children of divorced parents: A systematic review. *Current*

- Psychology*, 42(14), 12055-12069.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-02537-2>
- Moradi, S., & Akhiani, E. (2020). Comparison of psychological disorders among the children of divorce and their normal peers. *Rooyesh-e-Ravanshenasi*, 8(11), 111-118.
<https://frooyesh.ir/article-1-1273-fa.html>
- Ramazanzadeh, S., Etemadi, A., & Asenjarani, F. (2023). Effectiveness of the Intervention Program for Children of Divorce on Children's Perceptions of Parental Divorce: A Single-Case Study. *Applied Psychology*, 17(1), 127-149.
- Soleimani, S., Amirfakhrai, A., Karamati, K., & Samavi, A. (2022). The Effectiveness of Integrated Psychoeducational Therapy on the Lack of Pleasure Seeking and Emotional Expressiveness in Children of Divorced Parents in Bandar Abbas. *Journal of Disability Studies*, 12.
http://jhpm.ir/browse.php?a_id=1183&sid=1&slc_lang=fa&txt=0
- Soleymani, S., Amirfakhraei, A., Keramati, K., & Samavi, A. (2020). Comparison the Effectiveness of "Cognitive Behavioral Treatment" and "Unified Trans diagnostic Treatment" on Emotional Expression and Fear of Intimacy in Children of Divorce. *jhpm.ir*, 9(6), 83-95.
<http://jhpm.ir/article-1-1183-en.html>
- Sorek, Y. (2019). Children of divorce evaluate their quality of life: The moderating effect of psychological processes. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 107, 104533.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2019.104533>
- Vahedi, S., Haji Mir Aqa, M., & Najarian, Z. (2021). Effectiveness of Positive Psychology-Based Intervention on Internalized Problems in Children of Divorce. *Family Psychology Biannual*, 8(1), 34-46.
https://www.ijfpjournal.ir/article_247982.html
- Zolghadri, S., Borjali, A., & Hoseinsabet, F. (2024). The Effect of Acceptance and Commitment Group Therapy on the Psychological Well-being and Happiness of Children of Divorce. *Journal of Applied Psychological Research*, 15(3), 371-387. https://japr.ut.ac.ir/article_95162.html?lang=en