

Adlerian counseling, fear of intimacy, and social interest among university students

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ABSTRACT

University students in early adulthood indeed encounter diverse developmental demands, particularly in the realm of relationships and social development. This stage often involves considerations related to establishing families and entering into marriage or long-term partnerships. This study aims to assess the efficacy of a premarital counseling program grounded in the Adlerian approach in enhancing intimacy and social interest among a sample of single university students. The sample comprised 718 single young individuals from a public university in Jordan. Among them, 38 students displaying low social interest and experiencing fear of intimacy voluntarily participated. They were divided into two groups: an experimental group of 19 participants and a control group of 19 participants. The study utilized two measurement scales—one for fear of intimacy and another for social interest. The group counseling program, consisting of 11 sessions, was administered. The findings revealed significant differences between the experimental and control groups in pre- and post-measurements, indicating the positive impact of the group counseling program on the experimental group. Additionally, follow-up assessments indicated that the beneficial effects of the group counseling program were sustained over time.

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1. INTRODUCTION

When the university's educational environment is safe, it significantly contributes to meeting the diverse needs of its students. As established in relevant literature, individuals at every developmental stage have specific needs that must be addressed. During the youth stage, which university students represent, they exhibit a range of cognitive, moral, social, and psychological needs. Adulthood is a vital area of adult psychological development, on a psychosocial level, in adulthood students require stable and purposeful social relationships to thrive, aligning with their primary need for forming families and marriages [1]. Marriage is the paramount and profoundly significant force within sacred human connections, uniting individuals of both genders [2]. The crux of a triumphant marital union lies in the mutual fostering of profound intimacy on physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual levels. Intimacy operates as an intermediary in the process of marital consent [3]. Intimacy is closely tied to psychological indicators of well-being within couples [4]. For some individuals, the apprehension of intimacy may deter them from embracing marriage. Such individuals might opt to confide in strangers, as they perceive them as safer and less likely to reappear, thus evading the perceived vulnerability of intimacy [5]. Disappointment and frustration can emerge when intimacy wanes [6]. In instances

where intimate relationships are perceived to be under threat, they can erode connections and hinder an accurate understanding of each other's needs [7]. Fear of intimacy has a discernible impact on an individual's readiness for marriage [8], [9].

To enhance readiness for marriage, individuals should work on overcoming any feelings of fear related to relationships. This often involves acquiring a range of social skills and emotional intelligence. Encompassing traits like cooperation, tolerance, empathy, and embracing a commitment to societal norms and open emotional sharing. Social interest is also intertwined with emotional intelligence, which serves as a predictor of social behavior [10]. Moreover, social interest is closely linked with indicators of psychological and intimate well-being, making it a fundamental component of positive psychology [11]. As social interest aligns with positive psychology, it's worth noting that individual psychology is a prominent concept within this approach [12].

Individual psychology is one of the pioneering psychological trends developed by its founder, Adler, who, in his theory, emphasized the concept of social interest and its importance in measuring equal personality and responsibility. He considered humans as unique, responsible, free, and capable of making choices. The role of the therapist is demonstrated by transforming misguided goals and targets into a lifestyle that embodies the therapist's significant efforts through guidance. This achievement can only be reached if the individual attains a state of self-awareness, motivation, appropriate behavior, and fulfillment of needs [13], [14]. Adler's theory of individual psychology educates clients about how they perceive themselves, others, and the world around them. By offering them a new cognitive framework that fosters a fundamental understanding of the motivations behind their behavior [15].

As per the relevant literature, Adler's approach has made groundbreaking contributions across various domains of psychotherapy and developmental interventions, including but not limited to marital counseling, school counseling, rehabilitation, and work with individuals of all age groups—children, adolescents, and adults alike. For instance, in the realm of marital counseling, specialists have shown keen interest in enhancing marital satisfaction by applying various treatment methods rooted in Adler's principles. Notably, Adlerian concepts have influenced the establishment of over 50 marital education centers across the United States. These centers follow a curriculum with an educational focus, prominently featuring techniques oriented toward lifestyle and work [16].

The foundational principles of individual psychology undoubtedly wield significant influence on the interpretation of individuals' behavior, particularly during the premarital stage. Additionally, the concept of lifestyle, which can be highly individualized, contributes to shaping people's beliefs and life orientations [17]. Aligned with Adler's tenets in individual psychology, therapists in premarital counseling often focus on evaluating individuals' lifestyles as a tool and integral aspect of the overarching framework for working with couples [18]–[20]. The services delivered by Adlerian counselors during the premarital stage serve as educational beacons, enabling couples to anticipate their behaviors within the context of their partnerships [21]. Premarital counseling programs typically emphasize the positive aspects of partners, including self-disclosure, honesty, and love, fostering their preservation to the fullest extent possible in service of the marital relationship [22].

Since 1931, adherents of the individual psychology trend have displayed pronounced interest in providing premarital counseling services by fostering individuals' social interest in various life domains, particularly work, friendship, and intimate relationships. These services are often administered by specialists trained in communication and conflict resolution skills [23]. The potential to predict the success and stability of a marriage based on partners' thought patterns and behaviors during the premarital stage is a driving force behind this approach [24]. Among the diverse experimental interventions employed in premarital counseling programs, the Adlerian approach has demonstrated significance both in Jordan and globally [25]–[27]. However, there is still a paucity of studies targeting premarital counseling according to this approach in Jordan, and this is what distinguishes the current study.

The application of the Adlerian approach in Jordan is indeed noteworthy and aligns effectively with the cultural context of the country. This alignment has made it a valuable framework for academics, psychologists, and school counselors in Jordan, facilitating its adoption in various counseling domains and age groups. Adler's theory is receive socially accepted by service recipients, including clients, families, and educators. Adler's emphasis on social interest and its promotion of well-being resonates with the cultural values and aspirations of Jordanians. The importance of work, ambition, perseverance, and following a purposeful path in life aligns with Adler's emphasis on goals and lifestyle choices. This cultural congruence likely contributes to the effectiveness and acceptance of Adlerian principles in Jordanian counseling contexts. Overall, this cultural alignment showcases the adaptability and universality of Adler's theory, making them valuable tools in promoting psychological well-being and personal development across different cultural contexts. The Adlerian approach in Jordan has garnered attention for its effectiveness in addressing a wide range of student-related issues [28]–[31]. Hence, we can describe Adler's approach as multifaceted. The relevant literature indicates that Adler's theory was not confined solely to school counseling; it extended to

encompass areas of guidance, particularly in marital and family counseling. Furthermore, its effectiveness has been demonstrated in pre-marital preparation programs, emphasizing its significance in family development during this crucial stage.

On a global scale, efforts within the field of premarital counseling have diversified with the establishment of matrimonial rehabilitation programs designed for both prospective partners and couples. This preventive approach is aimed at mitigating potential disputes and conflicts that may arise in the later stages of marriage development. These programs go by various names in different regions, including preventive marital counseling programs, premarital education, premarital counseling, and marriage preparation, as is the case in Jordan [32]. For instance, there are preparatory programs designed to mitigate potential marital issues among partners [33]–[39]. Some programs aim to enhance the understanding of single individuals regarding the significance of premarital counseling [40]–[42], while others focus on fostering communication skills, adaptation skills, conflict resolution skills, and effective management skills [43]–[51].

According to the relevant literature, early adulthood, as experienced by university students, brings forth a pressing need to address various developmental requirements, particularly in the realm of social relations. When the university environment fails to offer students opportunities for authentic and meaningful social interactions, it can lead to the development of a fear of forming intimate relationships and a deficiency in social interest, particularly toward potential partners of the opposite gender. This, in turn, can contribute to significant societal challenges, such as delayed marriages, marital disputes, and elevated divorce rates, as reflected in the following statistics.

Recent statistical data from Jordan reveals significant rates of unmarried individuals and a hesitance to marry. From 2013 to 2021, there has been an upward trend in the average age at which young marry. In 2021, the average age for males was 32.0, compared to 29.4 in 2013, and for females, the average age in 2021 was 27.5, compared to 25.8 in 2013 [52]. Statistical indicators further reveal a rise in the instances of cumulative divorces in Jordan during both the engagement period and marriage itself within the years spanning 2017 to 2022. Over this period, there has been a total cumulative count of 20,775 divorces, with 4,396 divorces occurring in 2021 and 3,681 in 2022. This represents a notable increase from 2020, which saw 3,400 divorces.

Furthermore, there has been a substantial rise in the number of cases registered with the Shari'a courts aimed at resolving disputes between partners. Specifically, the number of registered cases in 2021 was 141,529, and this figure increased to 154,134 in 2022, a notable compared to 116,413 cases recorded in 2020 [53]. Thus, the research questions are formulated as: i) are there statistically significant differences on the fear of intimacy scale (FIS) between the means of the study groups, due to the counseling program?; ii) are there statistically significant differences on the social interest scale between the means of the study groups, due to the counseling program?; and iii) are there statistically significant differences in the fear of intimacy and social interest scores between the experimental study group means in both the post and follow-up assessments due to the counseling program?

2. METHOD

2.1. Participants

A semi-experimental approach was employed for this study. The sample was drawn from a large university student community who received an invitation to participate in the counseling program. A total of 718 single students completed a self-administered survey questionnaire over three months during the academic year of 2022. Participants underwent screening for fear of intimacy and social interest before being included in the study. Through individual pre-selection and screening sessions, participants were intentionally chosen based on having higher scores on the FIS and lower scores on the social interest scale. The FIS scores from 35 (mildest traits) to 175 (extreme fear) [54]. The social interest scale scores range from 0 to 208, with higher scores indicating greater social interest [55].

A total of 38 students with a fear of intimacy and low social interest voluntarily enrolled. These participants were randomly and equally divided into two groups: 19 in the experimental group and 19 in the control group. The experimental methodology guidelines suggest a minimum of 15 participants per group [56], as well as the requirement of a minimum of 15 participants in both control and experimental groups for effective comparison [57]. After obtaining written voluntary consent from participants in the pilot group, the lead author proceeded to implement the program, while the control group was placed on a waiting list.

2.2. Participants descriptive

This collection of descriptive data about the participants was aligned with Adlerian philosophy and incorporated concepts such as birth order and the inferiority complex. The participant group encompassed individuals aged 19 to 22, with a distribution of 16 males and 22 females. Among them, 18 were from the first academic year, 15 from the second year, and 5 from the third year. Regarding academic performance, 27 participants held very good academic grades, while 6 were good and 5 were graded as excellent. Notably, the

participants exhibited a diverse range of experiences related to relationships. Specifically, three participants reported a current experience with the opposite gender, 10 participants had prior experiences, and the remainder had no previous or current experiences with the opposite gender. Birth order revealed a distribution of 19 participants as middle siblings, 9 as the oldest, and 8 as the youngest. Concerning physical health, all participants reported good health, except for one who indicated a physical disability.

2.3. Instruments

2.3.1. Fear of intimacy scale

The authors developed a fear of intimacy measurement tool based on a previously established framework [54]. The scale comprised 35 items, with response scores rated as: 1 (not at all characteristic of me), 2 (slightly characteristic of me), 3 (moderately characteristic of me), 4 (very characteristic of me), 5 (extremely characteristic of me). To explore the psychometric properties of this tool, the authors ensured its validity by verifying its consistency across cultures. This process involved reverse translation by individuals proficient in both English and Arabic. Initially, the subsections of the English version were meticulously translated into Arabic while preserving the original content. After confirming the translation's accuracy, the Arabic text was then retranslated into English to ensure alignment, and the resulting texts (in both Arabic and English) were rigorously cross-verified. Additionally, the validity of the tool was confirmed by subjecting the scale to evaluation by five experts in the fields of psychometrics, pedagogical psychology, psychological and family counseling, as well as marital professors. The internal consistency was assessed by calculating the correlation between item scores and the relevant dimensions. This analysis was conducted on a survey sample of 35 students and single individuals who were randomly selected from outside the main study group. The obtained correlation coefficients ranged from 0.300 to 0.692. All indicators surpass the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.30, as recommended for item distinctiveness [58]. Furthermore, the reliability coefficient was determined through Cronbach's alpha method, yielding a value of .934, signifying strong internal consistency.

2.3.2. Social interest scale (ASIS-RR)

In alignment with the goals of the present study, the authors employed the social interest scale introduced by Kalkan [55]. This scale was deemed suitable for the study's context which is consistent with Adler's theory of social interest. Comprising 24 items, the scale employed a five-point Likert response format as: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (undecided), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree). For the adaptation of the scale within the current study, rigorous psychometric assessments were conducted to ensure its reliability and validity. Translation procedures were employed, involving proficient individuals in both English and Arabic. The initial translation focused on accurately rendering the English version's sub-items into Arabic, maintaining content consistency. After confirming the translation's objectivity, the Arabic text was then retranslated into English, and the resulting texts in both languages (Arabic and English) underwent meticulous cross-verification. Furthermore, to ascertain the tool's validity, a panel of five experts spanning the fields of psychometrics, pedagogical psychology, psychological and family counseling, as well as marital professors, evaluated the scale. In addition, the internal consistency of the scale was assessed by calculating correlations between each item score and its respective dimension. This analysis was carried out on a survey sample of 35 students and single individuals randomly selected from outside the primary study group, i.e., individuals not included in the main study sample. The correlation coefficients ranged from 0.320 to 0.683. All indicators surpass the minimum threshold of 0.30, which is considered acceptable for item distinctiveness [58]. Additionally, the scale's reliability coefficient was assessed using Cronbach's alpha method for internal consistency, yielding a value of .886, indicating a favorable level of reliability.

2.3.3. Counseling program

A premarital counseling program, rooted in individual psychology, was developed to enhance intimacy and social interest. The program's overarching framework aligns with the Adlerian theory of social interest, a central concept within the realm of individual psychology [59]. This program was specifically tailored for single students within the university setting, a crucial life stage denoting early adulthood. This phase holds significant importance in terms of marriage and family formation prerequisites [1].

When designing and implementing the group counseling program, the authors employed Adlerian techniques by distinct sequential stages: establishing a robust therapeutic relationship. Uncovering psychological dynamics pertinent to members' social interest and fear of intimacy. Fostering members' self-insight development. Rehabilitating and educating members regarding marriage and partner relationships. The sessions comprised a range of Adlerian techniques, notably including encouragement, Insight, immediacy, paradoxical approaches, push-button techniques, acting-as-if methodology, catching oneself, avoiding the tar baby scenario, spitting in the client's soup analogy, task-setting and commitment exercises, and termination and session summarization.

Preliminary individual interviews with members were conducted during the group's formation stage. After obtaining written voluntary consent from participants in the pilot group, the control group was placed on a waiting list. The lead author proceeded to implement the program. The cumulative counseling program, as implemented in this study, encompassed a total of 11 sessions, as shown in Table 1. These sessions occurred twice a week and spanned 2 to 3 hours each.

Table 1. Content of the Adlerian theory sessions

Sessions	Instructions
First	Preface: special attention will be given to instructions that are central to facilitating effective group counseling. Explore participants' expectations.
Second	Tasks of life: participants will engage in a discussion about the fundamental life tasks, as outlined in Adler's theory: love, work, and marriage. Exploration of the participants' perspectives on the meaning of life.
Third	Lifestyle: participants will engage in a discussion centered around the concept of lifestyles and the patterns that have been cultivated since childhood. The conversation will delve into how lifestyles impact the emergence of fears connected to intimacy.
Fourth	Goals and purpose: the participants will engage in a dialogue focused on the objectives we set in our lives. By discussing this topic, participants will gain insights into the significance of aligning personal goals with healthy relationship choices.
Fifth	Insight: participants will delve into the dynamics that shape their behaviors, steering them toward seeking social acceptance and constructing stable, meaningful relationships to cultivate secure and intimate relationships.
Sixth	Mistaken beliefs: participants will engage in a discussion concerning prevalent personality myths and misconceptions, particularly those linked to values surrounding marriage, family, intimacy, and self-esteem.
Seventh	Feelings: participants will focus on enhancing their awareness and gaining deeper insights into the significance of emotions and empathy. This skill not only enhances the likelihood of developing social interest but also serves to mitigate fears associated with intimacy.
Eighth	Fight for supremacy: the objective is to empower participants to recognize and utilize their inherent strengths for healthier interpersonal dynamics. By investing in these strengths, participants can bolster social interest, overcoming the fear of intimacy.
Ninth	Social interest: participants will engage in purposeful exercises designed to elevate their capacity to cultivate genuine interest in others, including their partners. These exercises are specifically tailored to aid in surmounting fears related to marriage and relationships.
Tenth	Intimacy: dispelling misconceptions surrounding fearful intimacy. Participants will be guided through Adlerian techniques in encouragement, enabling them to grasp the proper approaches for Establishing positive relationships with their partners.
Eleventh	Concluding: discussion that assesses the degree to which the counseling program's objectives have been met. Discussion potential follow-up.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To test the first question, computational averages and standard deviations of the study sample members' scores were extracted for the experimental and control groups, and Table 2 displays this information. Table 2 displays a noticeable distinction in the median performances of individuals based on the dimensional measurement of the FIS. To ascertain the significance of these differences, the corresponding analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was employed, as shown in Table 3.

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation of the study participants on the scale of fear of intimacy

	Pre-tests			Post-tests			Estimated mean	
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	Mean	Std. Error
Control group	19	3.79	0.50	19	3.73	0.50	3.726	0.105
Experimental group	19	3.52	0.68	19	1.51	0.38	1.522	0.105

Table 3. ANCOVA results for the differences between pre-test and post-test scores in fear of intimacy

Source	Type III sum of squares	DF	Mean square	F	Sig.	Partial eta squared
Pre-test	0.028	1	0.028	0.137	0.713	
Group	43.878	1	43.878	216.900	0.000	0.861
Error	7.080	35	0.202			
Total	315.438	38				
Corrected total	53.782	37				

In Table 3, statistically significant differences are observed at the significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the means of the experimental group and the control group in the dimensional measurement of the FIS. The value of F is 216.900 for the experimental group, indicating that the experimental group's mean was lower than that of the control group. Eta squared (η^2) has reached 0.861, indicating a substantial impact according to the following criteria: $E_s \geq 0.80$ and < 1.10 , as per the impact size test [60]. This implies that the program accounted for 86.1% of the decrease in the level of fear of intimacy.

The obtained results shed light on the nurturing environment in which the counseling group. The collective inquiry model has been proven effective in enhancing students' interpersonal skills [61]. A social being possesses a spectrum of psychological needs: security, esteem, and blame avoidance. These interconnected factors play a significant role in behavior regulation and self-awareness augmentation [62].

Furthermore, these findings highlight the diverse avenues through which individual psychology can contribute to emotional well-being and relationship enrichment. It is noteworthy, that Adler's emerges as a pivotal factor in the success of the mentoring program in mitigating fear of intimacy. The curriculum is designed to employ educational techniques that leverage encouragement and capitalize on the personal strengths unveiled through group experiences [63]. The curriculum based on individual psychology stands as a triumphant model within the realm of marital counseling. Adler's writings on premarital engagement underscore the role of love in the triumph of marital unions. Love catalyzes intimacy, a quintessential gauge of marital strength and achievement [64]. In this context, counseling assumes the responsibility of guiding clients toward mastering the essential life tasks: work, friendship, and intimacy [65]. This assertion aligns with Adler's emphasis on mutual respect and collaboration between partners, a foundation that premarital counseling programs can establish [66]. Programs rooted in Adler's principles find relevance in premarital counseling endeavors [27].

It is noteworthy that individual psychology plays a substantial role in assisting individuals in resolving a multitude of emotional issues, particularly those linked to emotional detachment among college students [67]. Positive individual psychology also plays a pivotal role in aiding young individuals in coping with emotional challenges [68]. Interestingly, a plethora of programs can be geared towards psychological education due to the significance of emotional connection in romantic relationships [47], and in the context of mitigating fear of intimacy [9], [69].

To address the second question, computational averages and standard deviations have been calculated for both the experimental and control group members. Table 4 displays an evident difference between the mean of participants in the measurement of social interest. To ascertain the significance of these differences, the corresponding ANCOVA was employed, as shown in Table 5.

Table 4. Mean and standard deviations of the study participants' scores on the social interest scale

	Pre-tests			Post-tests			Estimated mean	
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	Mean	Std. Error
Control group	19	2.47	0.48	19	2.05	0.64	2.110	0.122
Experimental group	19	2.65	0.32	19	4.25	0.51	4.189	0.122

Table 5. ANCOVA results for the differences between pre-test and post-test scores in social interest

Source	Type III sum of squares	DF	Mean square	F	Sig.	Partial eta squared
Pre-test	2.529	1	2.529	9.237	0.004	
Group	38.991	1	38.991	142.418	0.000	0.803
Error	9.582	35	0.274			
Total	434.826	38				
Corrected total	57.981	37				

Table 5 shows that there are statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the means of the experimental group and the control group in the dimensional measurement of the social interest scale. The value of F is 142.418 for the experimental group, indicating that the experimental group's mean is greater than that of the control group. Eta squared (η^2) has reached 0.803, signifying a substantial impact according to the following criteria: $Es \geq 0.80$ and < 1.10 , as outlined in the impact size test [60]. This implies that the program accounted for 80.3% of the improvement in the level of social interest.

This outcome seamlessly aligns with the applied principles of group guidance within psychological counseling groups. This comprehensive approach provides participants with opportunities for engagement, a sense of belonging, skill development, effectively bridging real-life experiences, and fostering commitment fulfillment [70]. This became evident in the university environment for participating students, where experiential learning and the university's social climate greatly contribute to providing the best student life experiences [71].

On the other hand, the triumph of the group guidance program can be attributed to the foundational principles of individual psychology, with social interest playing a pivotal role. Individuals exhibit a natural inclination to shape their social and cultural environment [72]. The sense of importance is built upon social feedback [73]. Therapists grounded in Adler's theory share the core objective of nurturing clients' social interests through assessing prevailing beliefs and behaviors [74].

The leader's steadfast commitment to adhering to the sequential stages of the guiding process rooted in individual psychology, particularly in terms of identifying guide dynamics, re-education, and guidance, stands as a resounding testament to the effectiveness of this approach. The pilot group showcases qualitative training expertise that has significantly contributed to heightening young individuals' awareness of marital matters and fostering social interest in partners. This observation echoes findings from certain premarital counseling programs [22], [50], [75]. In resonance with the current study's findings, individual psychology emerges as a noteworthy contributor to the triumph of premarital counseling programs [25], [26]. In congruence with the hypothesized outcomes of the current study, the experimental application of individual psychology has notably enhanced the social interest development of numerous university students [76], [77].

To address the third question, a paired samples t-test was conducted on the pilot group's scores, which had undergone the counseling program, both on the post-test and the follow-up test. Specifically, Table 6 displays the outcomes of the paired samples t-test conducted on the pilot group's scores for both the post-test and the follow-up test. Table 6 indicates that there are no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) between the means of the experimental group members in post-test and follow-up measurements for fear of intimacy and social interest. The respective t-values are (-1.764, 0.218).

Table 6. Mean, standard deviation, and t-values from the pilot group in fear of intimacy and social interest

		Mean	SD	T	df	Sig
Fear of intimacy	Post	1.52	0.38	-1.764	18	0.095
	Follow-up	1.54	0.41			
Social interest	Post	4.25	0.51	0.218	18	0.830
	Follow-up	4.24	0.45			

This outcome can be attributed to the meticulous preparation undertaken by the leader during the final stage of the group program's development. The leader's strategic efforts contributed to fostering a stronger sense of belonging among the members. This notion resonates harmoniously with Adler's foundational principles in individual psychology, encapsulating the essence of social interest [78].

Interestingly, the prolonged impact of learning observed in the experimental group can be attributed to the composition of the guidance group itself, encompassing both genders. By having both males and females engaged, the group serves as a model for the roles of both spouses within an imagined couple's relationship. Particularly, when addressing intimacy concerns, this learning process is conducted in a context that can be less overwhelming. This requires students to remain optimistic, feeling that others around them support them, and also keeping them able to see that the situation in the near future will be more desirable than it is today [79].

Moreover, this favorable outcome owes its success to the valuable contributions of domestic tasks, which empowered members with a plethora of skills. The study's findings also shed light on the impact of the program's duration, which consisted of 11 sessions. This extended timeframe allowed participants ample opportunity to challenge and transform irrational beliefs and misconceptions regarding marriage. Through these sessions, they acquired a multitude of vital skills tied to social interest and intimacy, including transparency, honesty, conflict resolution, decision-making, effective communication, and self-confidence. These skills, aligned with the principles of individual psychology, are intertwined with life's key facets: love, work, and marriage. Furthermore, the cultivation of social interest in unmarried students lays the groundwork for future romantic relationships during their marital journey [80], [81]. It's worth noting that the discernible trajectory of individual psychology during the premarital stage represents a pioneering educational intervention, fostering hope and optimism [82]. Sequential premarital counseling programs similarly wield the potential to make a profound impact on guiding single young individuals [51].

4. CONCLUSION

The Adlerian approach provides valuable contributions to pre-marital counseling and education programs for university students, aligning with their diverse developmental needs. It refines students' personalities by equipping them with various skills, knowledge, and capabilities that are applicable throughout their university lives, particularly in their interactions with others. The necessity of building enduring and successful partnerships with future partners underscores the importance of thorough preparation for the pre-marital stage. This preparation demands individuals to earnestly cultivate social interests and genuine concern for their prospective partners without hesitation or fear of relationships, especially intimate ones.

The results of the study indicated that the Adlerian approach has a positive impact on the development of social interests among single students. Study participants appeared more understanding, compassionate, and genuinely interested in the happiness of others. They also exhibited sincere and positive intentions towards

social interactions with their future partners. The pre-marital counseling program was successful in significantly reducing participants' fear of establishing intimate relationships with their partners.

The study's sample size may be limited, potentially impacting the generalizability of the results to broader populations. The findings from one culture or context may not apply to other cultures or contexts. This is especially relevant in cross-cultural research. Sometimes, researchers are constrained by time limitations, such as the counseling program implementation period, which can affect the depth and breadth of their investigation. The study could be susceptible to bias and confounding variables that were not adequately controlled for during the design and data collection phases. The results may be constrained by the measures employed, particularly self-report scales, which can be influenced by social desirability bias.

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