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The Effectiveness of Seligman's Parenting Training on Child Abuse Inclination, Parenting Style, and Parental Self-Efficacy in Mothers of Preschool Children in Isfahan

Elham Aghasi[1], Zahra Yousefi[2*], Bahman Kord Tamini[3]

1 Master of Science in Clinical Psychology, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
2 Assistant Professor, Clinical Psychology Group, Education and Psychology Department, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
3 Associate Professor in Psychology, Department of Psychology, University of Sistan and Baluchestan, Zahedan, Iran

*Correspondence: z.yousefi@khuisf.ac.ir

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted with the aim of evaluating the effectiveness of Seligman's parenting training on the inclination toward child abuse, parenting style, and parental self-efficacy in mothers of preschool children in the city of Isfahan during the academic year 2018–2019. This research employed a quasi-experimental design with a pretest-posttest control group and follow-up. Using convenience sampling, 40 mothers of preschool children were selected and randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. The instruments used in the study included the Child Abuse Questionnaire (Yousefi & Shamaeizadeh, 2018), the Parenting Styles Questionnaire (Baumrind, 1996), and the Parental Self-Efficacy Scale (Dumka, 1996), all of which were administered in three stages: pretest, posttest, and follow-up. The experimental group received Seligman's optimistic child parenting training over 15 sessions, while the control group did not receive any training. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (repeated measures ANOVA). The results indicated that the educational method employed significantly improved child abuse inclination, parenting style, and parental self-efficacy in mothers of preschool children in Isfahan ($p < .05$). Based on the overall findings of the study, it can be concluded that Seligman's parenting training has a significant impact on reducing the inclination toward child abuse and improving parenting style and parental self-efficacy in mothers. Thus, it can be utilized as an effective intervention method.

Keywords: Child abuse, parenting style, parental self-efficacy, Seligman's parenting style.

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Introduction

Children have always been the most vulnerable group in society who, due to factors such as young age and lack of adequate skills, are unable to fully protect or care for themselves and therefore require the support of adults, especially their parents (1). Unfortunately, there are families in which parents—either consciously

or unconsciously—employ improper parenting practices without regard for the importance of sound child-rearing, leading to child maltreatment. Furthermore, in both the home and society, the mother typically plays the most prominent educational role. The significance of this role is underscored by the fact that a child is first held by the mother and learns social norms and customs from her. It is from the mother's nurturing that a child learns how to behave toward others and how to interact socially (2).

According to the guidelines of the World Health Organization, child maltreatment refers to any physical, psychological, emotional, or sexual abuse, or neglectful behavior toward a child under the age of 18 (3). Child abuse can be categorized as follows: physical abuse (intentional use of physical force against a child that likely results in harm to the child's health, endangers life, or diminishes developmental potential or self-esteem), psychological/emotional abuse (patterns of parental interaction that hinder the child's cognitive, emotional, psychological, and social development), sexual abuse (recruiting, using, persuading, encouraging, luring, or coercing a child to engage in any form of explicit sexual behavior or simulation), educational abuse (harm inflicted via the educational system—typically by teachers, teaching methods, or content—that causes distress in students), economic abuse (exploitation of the child for income generation without allocating the proceeds to the child), and neglect (insufficient attention by parents to the child's basic physical and psychological needs, indicating minimal interaction between caregivers and the child). Child abuse may be influenced by parenting style, as each family adopts specific approaches to the physical and emotional upbringing of children, which are referred to as parenting styles.

Baumrind (2005) (4) identifies two fundamental dimensions of parenting styles: warmth and control. The warmth dimension refers to parental affection and responsiveness to the child's needs, while control refers to the degree of parental dominance. Steinberg and Darling (2017) (5) emphasize two dimensions—responsiveness and demandingness—and propose four parenting styles based on these: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful. Undoubtedly, parenting style can either undermine or enhance parental self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy is defined as an individual's belief in their ability to successfully perform specific tasks (6). It is considered one of the strongest predictors of success because it not only influences a person's goal setting and participation in activities but also affects the strategies used in difficult situations. Individuals with high self-efficacy in a given domain think, feel, and behave differently from those who do not perceive themselves as capable (7).

Researchers have examined the impact of self-efficacy on performance across various domains, including parenting. Parental self-efficacy can be defined as a parent's judgment of their own ability to fulfill parenting roles and responsibilities (8). A parent's belief in their ability to nurture and protect their child throughout life is one of the hallmarks of healthy parenting (9). Parents with high self-efficacy are described as supportive, warm, and sensitive, show greater adaptation to parenting roles, report lower levels of parenting stress and depression, and maintain healthier parent-child relationships (10).

Based on previous studies, in order to reduce the risk factors contributing to child maltreatment, it is essential to enhance parental competencies, prevent ineffective parenting styles, increase parental self-efficacy, modify parental attributions, and promote teamwork among caregivers. Accordingly, proper parenting training can help reduce abusive behaviors toward children (11). In recent years, Martin Seligman has proposed valuable insights on parenting through his concept of raising optimistic children.

Martin Seligman (1996) (12) identifies three key principles of parenting. The first is cultivating positive emotion, which fosters and expands a child's cognitive, social, and physical resources, functioning as a psychological "bank" they can draw upon in later life. The second principle involves reinforcing positive emotions in children to initiate an upward spiral of emotional growth. The third principle emphasizes taking a child's positive emotions and abilities as seriously as their negative ones, asserting that a child's strengths are just as real and authentic as their weaknesses. Therefore, the primary role of parents—especially mothers—should be to generate positive emotions and strengths in their children rather than merely focusing on the elimination of negative traits. According to Seligman's theory of the optimistic child (2007), the ideal parenting style is one that fosters optimism and emphasizes several key dimensions: recognizing the traits of effective and ineffective mothers, raising strong and socially connected boys and girls, distinguishing between correct and incorrect parenting practices, managing criticism and reprimands, identifying sources of pessimism, introducing optimism, analyzing causal attribution styles, and responding constructively to children's failures and challenges (13). Pessimistic individuals are more likely to succumb to helplessness and are at higher risk for depression and physical illness, whereas optimistic individuals tend to resist helplessness in the face of unsolvable problems and persevere. Optimism acts as a psychological immunizer against the development of depression and physical disorders (14). Optimistic parents can instill trust, initiative, enthusiasm, kindness, and pride in their children (15).

Previous research has examined the influence of maternal traits on children's characteristics, both causally and non-causally. For example, Daneshmand and Yousefi (2018) (16) investigated the effect of group-based parenting style modification training—based on maladaptive schema correction—on reducing behavioral problems in preschool children. Salimi and Yousefi (2017) (17) assessed the effectiveness of parenting styles based on acceptance and commitment therapy in reducing behavioral disorders in preschoolers. Shariati, Ashrafi, and Fathi-Ashtiani (2017) (18) evaluated the impact of positive parenting education on changing attitudes toward child abuse and reducing child maltreatment among mothers in Qarchak County. Knerr et al. (2013) (19) demonstrated the effectiveness of positive parenting skills in reducing violence and verbal abuse among parents in low- and middle-income countries. Jones (2014) (20) also highlighted the positive outcomes of group-based parenting programs on parent-child relationships.

As observed, no prior study has specifically addressed the effectiveness of Seligman's parenting training on child abuse inclination, parenting style, and parental self-efficacy in mothers. Therefore, it is hypothesized that Seligman's optimistic child parenting style, through mechanisms such as identifying effective and ineffective maternal traits, fostering strong and community-minded individuals, correcting faulty parenting methods, managing criticism, addressing the roots of pessimism, promoting optimism, and teaching problem attribution and coping strategies, may reduce tendencies toward child abuse, improve parenting styles, and enhance parental self-efficacy. Consequently, this study seeks to answer the following research question: Does Seligman's parenting training affect child abuse inclination, parenting style, and parental self-efficacy in mothers of preschool children in the city of Isfahan?

Methods and Materials

Study Design and Participants

Given that this study investigated the effectiveness of Seligman's parenting training on child abuse inclination, parenting style, and parental self-efficacy in mothers of preschool children in the city of Isfahan, it employed an experimental design. Since sampling was conducted using convenience sampling and assignment was randomized, the study is categorized as quasi-experimental, specifically employing a pretest-posttest-follow-up design with experimental and control groups. The statistical population included all mothers with preschool-aged children in Isfahan during the academic year 2018–2019. For implementation, 40 mothers were selected via convenience sampling from children's educational centers and were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. Mothers in the experimental group were then invited to join the parenting training program. Both groups completed the research instruments at three points: pretest, posttest, and 45-day follow-up.

Inclusion criteria for mothers were: having a child below school age, literacy, access to the internet and Telegram, no concurrent participation in other training programs, and willingness to participate in the study. Exclusion criteria included: psychological disorders (screened via a brief preliminary interview), absence from more than two training sessions, and failure to provide appropriate responses to individually asked questions designed to assess both engagement with the program and understanding of its content.

It should be noted that the average age of mothers was 34 years, and their minimum education level was a bachelor's degree. Sixty percent of the children were first-born, while the rest were second-born. None of the mothers were separated from their spouses, and all children lived with both parents.

Data Collection

Child Abuse Inclination Questionnaire: This questionnaire was developed by Yousefi for the study by Shamaeizadeh and Yousefi (2018) (21), with its content and face validity confirmed by psychology experts. The questionnaire consists of 19 items measuring four subscales: sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect. Respondents rate their answers on a 5-point Likert scale (from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"), scored from 1 to 5. Cronbach's alpha was calculated at .87. Concurrent validity was assessed by correlating scores with the neuroticism factor from the 60-item NEO questionnaire, yielding significant results. Construct validity was supported through exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, affirming the four dimensions. Discriminant validity was verified via a significant inverse correlation with the agreeableness trait. The scale was adapted to assess tendencies toward child abuse (e.g., "Sometimes I feel like pinching my child"), and internal consistency was reported at .78.

Parenting Style Questionnaire: To assess parenting style, the standardized Parenting Style Questionnaire by Buri (1991) (22) was used. This instrument is based on the parental authority model derived from Baumrind's theory and includes three parenting styles: permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative. It consists of 30 items—10 for each style. Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree," scored from 1 to 5. The dominant parenting style is determined by the highest total score for each subscale. Buri (1991) (22) used discriminant validity and reported that the authoritarian style had a negative correlation with both permissive ($r = -.38$) and authoritative ($r = -.48$) styles. No significant correlation was found between the permissive and authoritative styles. Test-retest reliability coefficients were .81 for permissive, .86 for authoritarian, and .78 for authoritative styles. Internal

consistency measured by Cronbach's alpha was .75, .85, and .82, respectively. Yousefi and Homaei (2018) (11) reported acceptable internal consistency for all subscales.

Parental Self-Efficacy Questionnaire: The Parental Self-Efficacy Scale was developed by Dumka et al. (1996) (23) to assess overall levels of parental self-efficacy. It evaluates parents' effectiveness or helplessness in dealing with child-related situations, their conflict resolution skills, and persistence in parenting. The scale contains 10 items, with higher scores indicating higher self-efficacy. Dumka et al. (1996) (23) reported a Cronbach's alpha of .70 in a sample of English-speaking mothers with moderate economic status. Items are rated on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 7 ("strongly agree"). The questionnaire was translated into Persian by Talei, Tahmasian, and Vafaei (2011) (10), reviewed for face validity by three academic experts, and pilot tested on a random sample of 25 mothers with daughters aged 7 to 9. Cronbach's alpha for this sample was .70. In the present study, internal consistency was calculated at .69.

Intervention

The intervention protocol for Seligman's Optimistic Parenting Style Training consisted of fifteen structured sessions aimed at enhancing maternal parenting skills, reducing child abuse tendencies, and improving parental self-efficacy. The first session introduced the goals of the program and different maternal identities, prompting mothers to reflect on their dominant parenting behaviors. The second session covered various parenting styles and helped participants identify their own style. The third session focused on distinguishing between effective and ineffective mothers, emphasizing proper responses to children's failures. The fourth session examined the influence of maternal behavior on children, encouraging mothers to adopt effective styles. In the fifth session, the developmental stages for raising socially competent and strong individuals were outlined. The sixth and seventh sessions addressed common maternal mistakes and the psychological consequences of improper parenting, including learned helplessness. The eighth session introduced optimism and attribution styles, guiding mothers to identify and modify their own attribution patterns. Sessions nine and ten taught correct methods for blaming and criticizing children—emphasizing behavior over character and maintaining balance to avoid shame or irresponsibility. In session eleven, barriers to maternal performance such as depression were addressed. The twelfth session explored the sources of pessimism in children and strategies for counteraction. The thirteenth session focused on identifying at-risk children and teaching them optimism, assertiveness, and social skills. The fourteenth session reviewed all training content and resolved outstanding issues. The fifteenth session was a follow-up assessment involving the administration of questionnaires on child abuse, parenting styles, and parental self-efficacy, along with answering participants' remaining questions. Each session included practical exercises, self-reflection assignments, and group discussions to reinforce learning and behavior change.

Data analysis

The sample included all mothers with preschool-aged children in Isfahan during the 2018–2019 academic year. Following approval from the university's research deputy, one municipal child center was selected via convenience sampling based on cooperation and coordination with its management. Forty mothers were selected from among 350 registered members who had scored low on the parental self-efficacy scale. These

mothers were randomly assigned to either the experimental or control group. Both groups completed all research instruments during three phases: pretest, posttest, and 45-day follow-up. The experimental group received Seligman's parenting training over 15 sessions, conducted three times per week, in the form of written educational content and Q&A sessions. The control group was placed on a waitlist.

Findings and Results

To address the research question (*Does Seligman's parenting training affect child abuse inclination, parenting style, and parental self-efficacy in mothers of preschool children in the city of Isfahan?*), repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used.

Table 1 presents the mean and standard deviation of child abuse, parenting styles, and parental self-efficacy by group.

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of Child Abuse, Parenting Styles, and Parental Self-Efficacy by Group

Variable	Group	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Child Abuse Pretest	Experimental Group	44.57	8.37	20
	Control Group	40.54	9.93	20
Child Abuse Posttest	Experimental Group	32.77	2.48	20
	Control Group	43.74	7.89	20
Child Abuse Follow-up	Experimental Group	32.25	2.59	20
	Control Group	42.42	7.99	20
Permissive Parenting Pretest	Experimental Group	27.11	5.58	20
	Control Group	26.08	5.15	20
Permissive Parenting Posttest	Experimental Group	25.88	2.24	20
	Control Group	26.94	4.35	20
Permissive Parenting Follow-up	Experimental Group	25.05	2.14	20
	Control Group	25.82	4.33	20
Authoritarian Parenting Pretest	Experimental Group	23.25	6.64	20
	Control Group	23.05	6.44	20
Authoritarian Parenting Posttest	Experimental Group	12.28	1.29	20
	Control Group	24.11	5.55	20
Authoritarian Parenting Follow-up	Experimental Group	12.37	1.26	20
	Control Group	24.08	5.52	20
Authoritative Parenting Pretest	Experimental Group	41.31	4.25	20
	Control Group	42.31	6.17	20
Authoritative Parenting Posttest	Experimental Group	47.62	1.69	20
	Control Group	42.05	4.04	20
Authoritative Parenting Follow-up	Experimental Group	48.60	6.56	20
	Control Group	42.11	4.02	20
Parental Self-Efficacy Pretest	Experimental Group	40.19	6.14	20
	Control Group	41.11	10.12	20
Parental Self-Efficacy Posttest	Experimental Group	37.37	2.22	20
	Control Group	40.94	9.97	20
Parental Self-Efficacy Follow-up	Experimental Group	37.45	2.13	20
	Control Group	41.17	10.17	20

The results in Table 1 show that the posttest and follow-up scores of child abuse, permissive parenting style, authoritarian parenting style, authoritative parenting style, and parental self-efficacy in the experimental group changed compared to the control group. To determine the significance of these differences—and given that each participant was assessed three times on child abuse, permissive parenting, authoritarian parenting, authoritative parenting, and parental self-efficacy—repeated measures ANOVA was employed.

To examine the normality of the data, the Shapiro–Wilk test was used, and results indicated that the data followed a normal distribution. Levene's test was used to examine the assumption of equality of variances, and results showed no significant difference in the variances of the dependent variables between groups. Box's M test was used to assess the homogeneity of covariance matrices for the dependent variables, and results indicated no significant difference in covariances between the groups. To evaluate the assumption of sphericity, Mauchly's test was performed. Results of Mauchly's test indicated that the variances of the dependent variables across the three measurement phases did not differ significantly, thus satisfying the assumptions necessary for repeated measures ANOVA.

Table 2 presents the results of the repeated measures ANOVA for child abuse, permissive parenting style, authoritarian parenting style, authoritative parenting style, and parental self-efficacy by group.

Table 2. Results of Repeated Measures ANOVA for Child Abuse, Permissive Parenting Style, Authoritarian Parenting Style, Authoritative Parenting Style, and Parental Self-Efficacy by Group

Source of Variation	Variable	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	η^2	Power
Within-subjects	Time	Child Abuse	1085.343	2	542.671	18.322	.000	.212
	Time * Group	492.467	2	246.233	42.075	.000	.382	1.000
	Error	4028.190	136	29.619				
Between-subjects	Group	1708.576	1	1708.576	18.043	.000	.210	.987
Within-subjects	Time	Permissive Parenting	54.067	2	27.033	3.145	.046	.044
	Time * Group	44.752	2	22.376	2.603	.078	.037	.511
	Error	1169.181	136	8.597				
Between-subjects	Group	3.733	1	3.733	.106	.746	.002	.062
Within-subjects	Time	Authoritarian Parenting	1140.181	2	570.090	61.777	.000	.476
	Time * Group	1672.124	2	836.062	90.599	.000	.571	1.000
	Error	1255.029	136	9.228				
Between-subjects	Group	3178.519	1	3178.519	56.036	.000	.452	1.000
Within-subjects	Time	Authoritative Parenting	513.067	2	256.533	22.166	.000	.246
	Time * Group	583.657	2	291.829	25.216	.000	.271	1.000
	Error	1573.943	136	11.573				
Between-subjects	Group	713.186	1	713.186	16.127	.000	.192	.977
Within-subjects	Time	Parental Self-Efficacy	148.489	2	74.243	13.028	.000	.161
	Time * Group	138.467	2	69.233	12.149	.000	.152	.995
	Error	775.048	136	5.699				
Between-subjects	Group	326.876	1	326.876	1.982	.164	.028	.284

According to the data in Table 2, based on scores obtained from Seligman's parenting training, the main effect of the time factor was statistically significant for all variables: child abuse, permissive parenting style, authoritarian parenting style, authoritative parenting style, and parental self-efficacy. This indicates that the estimated means of child abuse, permissive parenting, authoritarian parenting, authoritative parenting, and parental self-efficacy differed significantly from the pretest to posttest and follow-up stages overall ($p < .05$).

The main effect of group membership (i.e., receiving Seligman's parenting training vs. no training) was significant for the variables of child abuse, authoritarian parenting, and authoritative parenting, meaning the experimental and control groups showed significant differences in these variables ($p < .05$).

The interaction between time and group (i.e., experimental condition) was statistically significant for child abuse, authoritarian parenting, authoritative parenting, and parental self-efficacy, but not for permissive parenting. This indicates that the pattern of change in these variables from pretest to posttest

varied significantly between the groups ($p < .05$). In other words, there was a significant difference in the mean changes in child abuse, authoritarian parenting, authoritative parenting, and parental self-efficacy between the experimental and control groups across time.

The statistical power for child abuse, authoritarian parenting, and authoritative parenting was 1.000, and for parental self-efficacy was .995, suggesting that the sample size was sufficient to support these conclusions.

Moreover, the effect size (η^2) values indicate that 38.2% of the variance in child abuse, 57.1% in authoritarian parenting, 27.1% in authoritative parenting, and 15.2% in parental self-efficacy can be attributed to Seligman's parenting training.

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study was conducted to examine the effectiveness of Seligman's parenting training on the inclination toward child abuse, parenting style, and parental self-efficacy in mothers of preschool children in Isfahan during the academic year 2018–2019. The results of the repeated measures ANOVA indicated that Seligman's parenting training was overall effective in reducing child abuse tendencies and improving parenting style and parental self-efficacy in mothers. These findings are in line with prior studies that have shown how enhancing maternal awareness can lead to improvements in children's emotional and behavioral outcomes, such as those by Daneshmand and Yousefi (2018) (16), who demonstrated the effectiveness of group-based parenting style modification based on maladaptive schema correction in reducing behavioral problems in preschool children; Salimi and Yousefi (2017) (17), who showed the effect of parenting styles based on acceptance and commitment on reducing behavioral disorders in preschoolers; Shariati, Ashrafi, and Fathi-Ashtiani (2017) (18), who confirmed the impact of positive parenting training on changing attitudes toward child abuse and reducing child maltreatment in mothers in Qarchak County; Knerr et al. (2013) (19), who demonstrated the effectiveness of positive parenting skills in reducing violence and verbal abuse among parents in low- and middle-income countries; Jones (2014) (20), who found that group-based positive parenting programs improved parent–child outcomes; and Abdille (2013) (24), who highlighted the role of positive parenting in preventing child abuse.

In explaining these findings, it seems that through Seligman's parenting training, mothers were able to identify and replace their ineffective parenting practices, thereby improving their interactions with their children and enhancing their parental self-efficacy.

More specifically, based on the content of the parenting sessions aligned with Seligman's optimistic child model, mothers learned how to adopt an authoritative approach. They were encouraged to reinforce their children's behaviors and permit decision-making and autonomy under supervision while still maintaining necessary control and boundaries. They were taught to maintain a warm relationship with their children, instill the importance of rules, encourage their children to pursue their talents and interests, and help them accept responsibility for their actions and reflect on behavioral consequences. During training, mothers were introduced to both effective and ineffective mothering strategies and their behavioral impacts, as well as how to manage a child's failures and apply constructive criticism—for instance, avoiding denial of failure and instead showing empathy, guiding the child to reinterpret failure with optimism, and teaching persistence and problem-solving by encouraging the child to try again after setbacks.

When criticizing their children, mothers were advised to focus on specific behaviors rather than the child's character, as blaming behaviors highlights modifiable causes and motivates change. Excessive blame was discouraged to prevent inducing shame or guilt, while insufficient criticism was noted to weaken accountability and behavioral change. Mothers were encouraged to deliver feedback in an optimistic tone whenever realistic, emphasizing changeable and situation-specific causes without undermining the child's abilities or personality. They also learned not to avoid experiencing or acknowledging negative emotions in themselves or their children, as such emotions, despite being painful, can lead to positive outcomes—specifically, improved maternal performance. Experiencing negative emotions often drives individuals to maximize their skills in response. These lesson contents and related activities appear to have contributed to the reduction of child abuse tendencies.

Through learning the techniques of Seligman's optimistic parenting model, mothers increased their knowledge, skills, confidence, self-efficacy, and optimism, which helped prevent severe behavioral and emotional problems as well as abuse. As a result, mothers not only improved their parenting style and self-efficacy through this optimism-focused training, but also reduced their inclination toward child abuse—especially emotional abuse and neglect.

Moreover, mothers realized through the training that authoritarian parenting practices, including punishment and blame, lead to discouragement, hopelessness, and pessimism in children. Pessimistic individuals are more likely to succumb to helplessness and are at greater risk for depression. Pessimism reduces individuals' resistance to helplessness and physical illness, drains physical activity, and undermines a child's natural optimism. Therefore, by modifying their parenting style, mothers were able to significantly reduce child maltreatment and experience a greater sense of self-efficacy.

Additionally, it appears that Seligman's parenting approach helped mothers revise their maladaptive beliefs about inappropriate child behavior—which itself may stem from the mother's ineffective behavior—thus correcting both maternal and child behaviors. Learning about different styles of mothering helped mothers achieve deeper self-awareness, and when combined with skill development, this self-awareness and the emotional elevation brought by Seligman's training enabled mothers to better meet their own needs and foster optimism within themselves.

Overall, it can be concluded that parenting training based on Seligman's optimistic child model highlighted the importance of raising optimistic children for mothers' success. Gaining maternal self-awareness and familiarity with parenting styles increased their knowledge, improved their child management skills, and promoted a sense of responsibility in their children. This led to enhanced parental self-efficacy and reduced inclination toward child abuse, as a large portion of child maltreatment can be attributed to maladaptive parenting styles. Thus, it can be stated that parenting education grounded in Seligman's theory of the optimistic child was effective in reducing child abuse tendencies, improving parenting style, and enhancing parental self-efficacy in mothers.

Like any other study, this research had limitations, including the non-random selection of participants and the inability to control for confounding variables such as the mothers' socioeconomic and family status. Furthermore, the study was conducted solely with mothers of preschool children and included only 40 participants from Isfahan, so the findings cannot be generalized to the broader population.

It is recommended that future studies examine the effectiveness of Seligman's parenting training on child abuse inclination, parenting style, and parental self-efficacy in other statistical populations to increase generalizability. It is also suggested that Seligman-based interventions be implemented alongside other therapeutic approaches in educational and counseling centers. Based on the results of this study, it is advisable to offer this training as a preventive program aimed at reducing child maltreatment and improving children's quality of life.

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Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contributed to 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. Written consent was obtained from all participants in the study. This study was approved by the Ethics Committee with code IR.IAU.KHUISF.1397.234.

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.

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