

# USING HOUSE DRAWINGS IN ART THERAPY WITH ADOLESCENTS WITH AND WITHOUT DIVORCED PARENTS IN ISRAEL'S ARAB SOCIETY

## Dr. GIANA IBRAHIEM KHALIFA

Postdoctoral Student, Haifa University, School of Social Work, Art Therapy Department, University of Haifa.  
Email: giana87.khalifa@gmail.com

## Dr. SHELLY ENGDAU

Lecturer, School of Social Work at the University of Haifa, Director of the Laboratory for Migration, Resilience and Gender Research. Email: shellyeng@gmail.com

## MAIMOUNAH HEBI

Doctorate Student / Research Assistant -University of Haifa. Email: maimouna.hebi@gmail.com

## Dr. RAED MOHAMMAD AL MUSILI

Assistant Professor, Department of English Language and Literature of Islamic University of Minnesota, USA.  
Email: dr.raedmohammad2000@gmail.com

### Abstract

The objective of the study was to ascertain the use of home drawings in art therapy for adolescents in the Arab society of Israel, encompassing both those with divorced parents and those without. The study employed a quantitative methodology to compare house designs produced by adolescents from divorced families with those from intact families. As per the current study protocol, all participants were involved in art therapy by designing houses to treat their emotional issues. The house drawings constituted the primary data that was acquired. The data present some noticeable discrepancies along with rational arguments for children's emotions. Moreover, the results of this study highlight the effectiveness of using home drawings in art therapy as a culturally responsive approach to meeting the needs of teens in the Arab community of Israel. House drawings provide adolescents with a means to express and analyse their emotions in a safe and creative environment without using words. The findings suggest that art therapy can offer significant benefits to adolescents facing familial challenges, such as divorce, by offering them a constructive outlet for self-expression and self-reflection.

**Keywords:** House Drawings, Divorce, Children of Divorced Parents, Art Therapy.

### INTRODUCTION

Art therapy is a potent modality of psychotherapy that use creative expression as a method of communication and self-exploration. Art therapy has become more recognized in recent years for its efficacy in resolving psychological difficulties in teenagers, especially those dealing with intricate family dynamics like divorce. The effect of divorce on the mental well-being of adolescents is a matter of increasing concern in Israel's Arab population, where familial bonds carry substantial cultural and social significance.

Divorce rates have lately risen both globally and in Israel (Buchbinder & Abu Tahna, 2019). As a result of the observed global rise, the number of children whose parents are divorced has sharply grown (Harvey & Fine, 2010; Weaver & Schofield, 2015). Making divorce one of the most trying life situations for couples and their children (Harvey & Fine, 2010; Weaver & Schofield, 2015). Parental divorce can result in significant emotional distress and social challenges among teenage children (those who are between the ages of 10 and 17; Olofsson, 2019). These consequences could include behavioral and learning difficulties, low self-esteem, heightened stress responses, and a higher propensity towards engaging in risky and maladaptive behaviors (Levi-Schiff, 2018). In recent years, numerous therapeutic approaches addressing these issues have increased.

Art therapy has emerged as a promising approach to address the emotional and social challenges arising from parental divorce (Rubin, 2018). Moreover, teenage psychological issues can be effectively addressed using art therapy, which offers a platform for self-expression and investigation (Cukierman, 2002). This therapy method offers a distinct opportunity for children to communicate their emotions and experiences without using words, enabling a more profound investigation and manifestation (Rubin, 2018). Within this field, several assessments have been developed with the aim of understanding one's inner self and personal conflicts.

House drawings are recognized within the field of art therapy as a powerful drawing-based treatment and assessment method for identifying and relieving emotional suffering related to parental divorce. This technique has been extensively studied and supported in research (e.g., Lev-Wiesel, 2005; Pane, 2003; Rubin, 2018; Veltman & Browne, 2002). Although research undertaken in Western nations has shown effectiveness, there is a significant lack of literature about the relevance of these findings to children of divorced Arab parents.

Within Arab culture, divorce is commonly perceived with a higher degree of social stigma in comparison to Western nations (Al Gharaibeh, 2015). Consequently, the diverse interpretations of divorce among children might influence their understanding and ability to cope with parental separation. Thus, the distinctive aspects of Arab society can significantly influence the success of art therapy interventions within this cultural context (Kapitan, 2011). In Arab society, perceptions of therapeutic interventions vary due to cultural norms and attitudes towards mental health (Aloud, & Rathur, 2009).

This variety underscores the significance of culturally sensitive approaches in art therapy to children of divorced Arab parents. Thus, adapting interventions to consider these cultural subtleties can improve their significance and efficiency, ultimately promoting better results for children dealing with the difficulties of parental divorce in Arab communities. Further research and practical implementation are needed to develop culturally competent art therapy interventions tailored to this group's needs.

The purpose of this study is to provide light on the therapeutic possibilities and cultural significance of employing house drawings as an art therapy assessment, with a particular focus on teenagers whose parents have separated.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Divorce and its emotional impact on adolescents

Divorce is a difficult circumstance that drastically alters a child's life. Children whose parents are divorced exhibit a wide range of crisis responses, necessitating the use of coping mechanisms and extended periods of adjustment (Olofsson, 2019). Since young children might struggle to express their feelings during a divorce, Children of Divorced Parents (CDPs) need extra support due to the unique emotional and family changes they experience.

Divorce rates have witnessed a notable increase both globally and within Israel (Buchbinder & Abu Tahna, 2019). Consequently, there has been a significant rise in the number of children whose parents are divorced (Harvey & Fine, 2010; Weaver & Schofield, 2015). Divorce is recognized as one of the most challenging life events for both divorcing couples and their children (Harvey & Fine, 2010; Weaver & Schofield, 2015). Teenage children, particularly those between the ages of 10 and 17, are profoundly affected by parental divorce, experiencing considerable emotional and social distress (Allik et al., 2004; Olofsson, 2019).

The emotional and social repercussions of parental divorce can deeply impact teenagers' well-being and overall quality of life. Throughout history, there has been discussion about the negative consequences and behavioral challenges that divorce can bring about among adolescents (Fergusson et al., 1994). More recently, Levi-Schiff (2018) highlighted the adverse consequences of parental divorce on teenagers, including behavioral and learning difficulties, low self-esteem, heightened stress levels, and an increased likelihood of engaging in harmful behaviors.

In both Arab and Western countries, the divorce rate has increased dramatically in recent years (Majadele, 2015). There are various reasons for the growth of Arab society. First of all, Arab women are now more accepted in the workforce and are sometimes achieving educational levels higher than those of their husbands. Women may now support themselves financially, which lessens their reliance on their spouses. Second, divorce is simpler to handle emotionally and financially when Arab parents are having fewer children (Barnea & Eldar, 2003). Since being divorced is viewed by Arab society as an act that would bring shame to the lady and her family, the stigma places a burden on women.

Divorcees in Arab society are stigmatized Divorcees in Arab society in Israel face significant social stigma. This stigma arises from cultural and traditional norms that often view marriage as a cornerstone of social and family life. (Herbst-Debby, Sabbah-Karkabi, & Meler, 2022). The reputation of divorced individuals, particularly women, can suffer significantly. This stigma can affect their chances of remarriage, as they might be viewed as less desirable partners due to societal prejudices (Karkabi, 2017). While this stigma is present in other societies as well, Arab culture has a greater emphasis on it. Most women's parents and relatives reject their choice to file for divorce, and occasionally they even attempt to coerce them into staying in their husbands' homes in spite of the challenges they confront (Maccoby, & Mnookin, 1992). Therefore, it is reasonable to hypothesize that divorce presents heightened challenges for both parents and children within collective societies.

## **Palestinian Arab Citizens of Israel**

Within the Palestinian Arab Citizens of Israel, where collectivist norms are prominent and family structures exhibit intricate dynamics, a complex interplay of social, gender, and familial challenges may contribute to the obstacles faced by this minority group (Abu-Kaf, 2019). In collectivist societies, people are encouraged to develop interdependent selves, in which they value healthy interpersonal relationships over achieving their own, distinct objectives and see themselves as fundamentally related to others (Dwairy & Jagelman, 2020). However, in individualistic cultures, where it is common to see oneself as distinct from others, even close ones, and to follow one's own goals, motivations, and personalities, people are encouraged to form separate conceptions of self and they are more encouraged to share this feelings openly without worrying about others' attitudes (Goldscheider, 2019; Schwartz et al., 2012)

Adolescents in Arab society are less likely to talk about their feelings, and attachment styles are frequently more formal than honest (Booth, 2002). Furthermore, because people in Arab society usually represent an authoritative figure (parent/grandparent, older sibling, aunt/uncle) who gives instructions to the child about behavior. Furthermore, it is common in Arab culture to attribute behavioral or emotional issues to outside forces (e.g., fate or the evil eye). Hence, they experience higher mental health issues yet exhibit reluctance to seek mental health services and professional support (Abu-Kaf, 2019). This reluctance stems from enduring stigmas surrounding mental illness, a preference for informal coping mechanism, and non-traditional mental health treatments; or prefer to cope on their own or within the family; and have certain attitudes and beliefs such as perceiving mental disorders as a God's test or punishment or attributing them to external events or supernatural sources (Al-Krenawi, 2019).

Family is essential to this paradigm because it provides the core of social and emotional support (Cukierman, 2002). But in this community, the divorce rate has increased recently, severely disrupting family dynamics and having a major effect on teenagers. Yet, several therapeutic modalities such as art therapy can help them process their emotions, problems, and identities (Keidar et al., 2022). In the context of collective societies, therapies are being carried out differently even if knowledge of art therapy has gradually increased in Arab society (Suit, 2018). Research have shown that art therapy is utilized across different disciplines in the Arab world to provide psychological support, participants consistently expressed a sense of security during the sessions, and art was found to be an effective means of revealing feelings without infringing against their sociocultural requirements. In addition, art therapy can be utilized among Arab children (Hebi et al., 2022), employing visual art to explore and respond to the complex experiences within their lives and their households (Al-Krenawi, & Slater, 2007). An assessment such as house drawing can provide a unique way to express and work through emotions and experiences (Al-Krenawi & Slater, 2007).

## **The therapeutic aspects of House Drawings**

Art therapy is a form of psychotherapy that utilizes artistic expression as a means of communication (Malchiodi, 2005). Art therapy has become recognized as an effective method for resolving the emotional and social difficulties that arise from parental divorce (Rubin,

2018). Children's drawings serve as a powerful tool for self-expression and exploration (Veltman & Browne, 2002; Lev-Wiesel, 2005; Pane, 2003). Through artistic expression, children can convey their inner thoughts, emotions, and experiences in a non-verbal manner, allowing therapists to gain valuable insights into their psychological and emotional states. Drawn objects, such as dilemmas, wishes, fears, and conflicts, can be both reflected and expressed subconsciously (Birch & Carmichael, 2009; Zakaria et al., 2020). Therapists can gain insight into a child's inner world and recognize and diagnose symptoms of distress by looking at these drawings (Pénzes et al., 2018; Veltman & Browne, 2002). Projective drawings were examined as a legitimate method for evaluating personality and are frequently regarded as a less formal and more natural form of communication (Veltman & Browne, 2002).

The majority of research on art therapy with CDP has been done in Western cultures. Nonetheless, several traits distinguish Arab society in this sense (Demir-Dagdas et al., 2018; Khalifa, Nasser, & Alkhateeb, 2018). In the current study we conducted an exploratory research based on art therapy intervention in order to gain deep insights how emotional states depicts on CDP house drawings from the Arab society.

Research has shown that drawings play a significant role in understanding children's psychological states (Bat or at al., 2022; Oster, & Crone, 2004). House drawings are used as a starting point for discussion and fostering reflective processes during art therapy sessions (Cukierman, 2002). Adolescents' house drawings during art therapy sessions can symbolize their inner thoughts and emotions, providing valuable in diagnosing and treating emotional challenges stemming from parental divorce (Latzer, Stein, & Witztum, 2019; Rubin, 2018). Notably, when children between the ages of 6 and 7 are invited to draw freely, house features appear in roughly 60% of their drawings, which decreases as children age, with older children incorporating more diverse elements into their drawings such as trees, flowers, and the sun alongside the house (Farokhi & Hashemi, 2011). The house drawing represents the emotions and stability achieved by living in the home, a place where basic needs are pursued (Farokhi & Hashemi, 2011; Kitahara, & Matsuishi, 2006). Through these drawings, adolescents are encouraged to delve into their emotions, memories, and aspirations non-verbally (Al-Krenawi, & Slater, 2007). Moreover, since significant changes in the home environment, such as relocating or moving to a different living situation, are common during the process of divorce, the house drawings can be used as a diagnostic and therapeutic tool to investigate the impacts of divorce on children (Giotsa & Mitrogiorgou, 2016). Drawings of houses provide a platform for teenagers from separated families to communicate the complexity of their experiences, their psychological troubles with their parents' divorce may be reflected in their depictions of broken houses, divided spaces, or symbols of loss (Cukierman, 2002). Moreover, trauma traits, like divorce, can show up in drawings of houses in a variety of ways. For example, they may appear as a weak and fragile structure, a house drawn superficially, birds flying to the house as if to destroy it, clouds representing danger, abandonment shown by the sun's rays failing to reach the house, or broken trees surrounding the house (Afolayan, 2015). In psychology, house drawings hold profound symbolism, often mirroring an individual's inner world, sense of place, and identity (Hays, & Abudabbeh, 2019).. Analyzing a child's drawings of their home allows for insights into how they perceive relationships in their life (Haring, & Sorin, 2014). These



artistic representations may display a range of emotions among teenagers from divorced homes, from melancholy and ambivalence to nostalgia and longing (Al-Krenawi, & Slater, 2007). In a similar vein, house drawings can give teenagers from intact families a window into how they view security, stability, and family dynamics (Keidar et al., 2022). Teenagers with intact homes, on the other hand, might utilize house designs to reinforce their sense of safety and identity (Al-Krenawi, & Slater, 2007). Their colorful, harmonious homes may be shown in their artwork, signifying the steadfastness of their support networks and ties to their families (Cukierman, 2002). These teenagers can learn to be more appreciative of their family ties and to practice thankfulness in the face of adversity through art therapy.

Through this comparative analysis, the study aims to shed light on how art therapy, particularly through the diagnostic and therapeutic use of house drawings, can be tailored to meet the emotional experiences of Arab teenagers dealing with parental divorce. Overall, the study addresses the gap in research by examining the applicability and effectiveness of art therapy interventions for CDP in Arab societies. By focusing on the diagnostic and therapeutic potential of house drawings, the study aims to provide insights into how art therapy can support Arab teenagers in coping with the emotional challenges associated with parental divorce. The study seeks to identify differences in the features of these drawings and draw conclusions regarding the treatment of CDP.

### **Research Hypothesis**

The primary research hypothesis of the current study is that there would be variations in the house drawings of Arab children with divorced parents in terms of emotional expression and coping mechanisms and children with non-divorced parents in terms of emotional expression and coping mechanisms.

**H<sub>0</sub> (Null Hypothesis): There will be no significant difference in the house drawings of Arab children with divorced parents and children with non-divorced parents in terms of emotional expression and coping mechanisms.**

**H<sub>1</sub> (Alternative Hypothesis): There will be significant variations in the house drawings of Arab children with divorced parents compared to children with non-divorced parents in terms of emotional expression and coping mechanisms.**

### **METHODS**

We conducted a quantitative-methods approach, to assess the effectiveness of house drawings in art therapy among Arab teenagers. Participants will be recruited from various communities within the Arab society in Israel.

The study is a quantitative study based on a comparison of house drawings made by adolescents whose parents are divorced and adolescents whose parents are not divorced. All the participants made house drawings as part of receiving art therapy sessions in their schools, based on some identified emotional difficulties? Participation in the study required specific ethical consent from the participants and their parents. Therefore, their consent was obtained in order to

comply with research ethics. All participants were provided by various educational institutions in charge, and participants' parents were in complete agreement. All participants were divided into experimental and control groups, participants with divorced parents and participants with non-divorced parents. According to reports from art therapists to school students, all participants had a variety of emotional challenges, whether related to the parents' divorce or not.

### **Research Ethics**

The Ethics Committee of Al Qasemi, approved this study. To be involved in the research, participants' parents signed a written informed consent sheet that informed them about their rights and enabled their children to participate in art therapy through group workshops. Ethical considerations were paramount, ensuring confidentiality and informed consent throughout the research process.

### **Participants**

We recruited 99 Arab teenagers between 10 and 17 years old from 20 schools in north Israel who had undergone art therapy at school for a variety of emotional issues, whether connected to their parents' divorce or elsewhere. Inclusion criteria were teenagers studying in Arab School and living with their families. The sample was a convenience sample, and all participants, including their parents, provided their agreement to participate in the study. All participants and their parents were informed that they could leave the study any time without affecting their treatment.

### **Procedure**

The study was conducted at 20 Arab schools from 2/2022 to 4/2023. Once eligibility was established, participants' parents signed informed consent forms in Arabic on paper.

The drawings were completed as part of the usual treatment, which was administered by a trained art therapist.

Data Collection in the Research "Using House Drawings in Art Therapy with Adolescents with and without Divorced Parents in Israel's Arab Society" Materials Provided to Participants .In each session, participants received the following materials for their art therapy sessions:

- Blank sheets of A4 (21 cm x 27.9 cm) paper
- Pencils
- Erasers
- 24-colour oil pastels
- Thin and thick markers
- Colored pencils

**Total Duration:** The therapy program lasted for 12 weeks. **Session Frequency:** Participants attended one session per week. **Session Length:** Each session lasted for approximately 90 minutes. **Collection of House Drawings**

**Timing:** The house drawings were collected during the fourth session of the therapy program.

**Activity Description:** During the fourth session, participants were asked to draw a house using the provided materials. This activity was designed to elicit symbolic representations and emotional expressions related to their family situations.

#### Instructors

**Instructor Background:** The art therapy sessions were conducted by certified art therapists with extensive experience in working with adolescents and understanding the cultural context of Israel's Arab society.

**Role of Instructors:** Instructors provided guidance and support during the sessions, creating a safe and non-judgmental environment for participants to express themselves through their drawings. They also facilitated discussions and reflections on the drawings, helping participants explore their emotions and experiences.

#### Summary of Data Collection Process

**Preparation and Materials:** Participants were provided with a variety of drawing materials to encourage creativity and self-expression.

**Duration and Structure:** The therapy program spanned 12 weeks, with weekly 90-minute sessions.

**Specific Session for Data Collection:** House drawings were specifically collected during the fourth session to focus on participants' perceptions and emotions related to their home and family environment.

**Instructors' Role:** Certified art therapists led the sessions, offering professional support and ensuring the therapeutic process was culturally sensitive and effective.

This structured approach to data collection allowed for a consistent and meaningful analysis of the house drawings, providing insights into the emotional and psychological states of adolescents with and without divorced parents in Israel's Arab society.

The research methodology employed in the present study involved the utilization of home drawings as a tool. Each participant in both groups received the identical instruction: 'Please depict a house.' When participants were asked to choose colors for their residence, the art therapist responded by saying: 'You can choose any color you choose.' Upon the completion of the house drawing, the participant and the therapist engaged in a discussion regarding the artwork. Upon receiving consent from the individual, the drawings were collected for analysis.



## MEASURES AND INSTRUMENTS

### Baseline Demographics

We collected demographic data, such as age, family status (e.g., whether parents are divorced or not), religion, and residence (city, village, etc.).

### House Drawing

The House-Tree-Person (HTP) assessment tool was developed in 1948 by John Buck, a pioneering clinical psychologist, and was subsequently revised in 1969 (Buck, 1948; Hammer, 1958). The HTP is a projective technique commonly used in art therapy to explore individuals' thoughts, emotions, and interpersonal dynamics through their drawings of a house, tree, and person. In the context of our study, the house drawing component of the HTP assessment tool was specifically utilized to examine adolescents' perceptions and representations of their home environment through their house drawing. Participants were instructed to draw a picture of a house, and the drawings were subsequently analyzed based on predetermined criteria. The criteria for analyzing the house drawings included aspects such as the size and shape of the house, the presence of specific details or symbols within the drawing (e.g., doors, windows, colors), the overall emotional tone conveyed by the drawing, and any observable patterns or themes that emerged across participants' drawings. It's important to note that while the HTP assessment tool encompasses drawings of houses, trees, and people, our study primarily focused on the analysis of house drawings within the broader framework of the tool. This emphasis allowed us to delve deeper into adolescents' perceptions of their familial environment and explore the impact of parental divorce on their emotional experiences and coping mechanisms. Individuals who are at least three years old are eligible to acquire the HTP.

The primary use of the HTP is in the qualitative grading system. The test administrator assesses the drawings and responds to questions in a subjective manner to ascertain the test participant's personality. A diminutive dwelling, such as a little house, may indicate discontentment with one's domestic circumstances. The roof can represent the individual's intellectual aspect, the walls can reflect their ego power as a test taker, and the doors and windows can signify their link with the outside world. The branches in the tree drawing may symbolize the test taker's connection to the external world, while the trunk may symbolize their internal resilience (Gordon, 2011).

The analysis process includes examining and discussing the artworks created by participants, their narratives about the artworks, the meaning behind them, the process of creating them (both with the therapist and among themselves), the dynamics within the group, the mental and/or physical states of the participants, the utilization of space, and the specific art materials chosen. The primary criteria used for the analysis were as follows: page size, color usage, participants' choice of drawing tools, drawing angle, drawing style, drawing position, house size, space surrounding the house, presence of a chimney, presence of smoke and its direction, presence of a roof and its shape, number of roofs, presence of a door and/or door handle, handle position, door open or closed, presence of windows, number of windows, wall visibility (highlighted/transparent), number of floors.

## Statistical Analysis

Using IBM SPSS (Version 27), we conducted statistical analyses to examine the study questions. We calculated demographic frequencies and descriptive statistics for all variables using means and standard deviations, were used to assess.

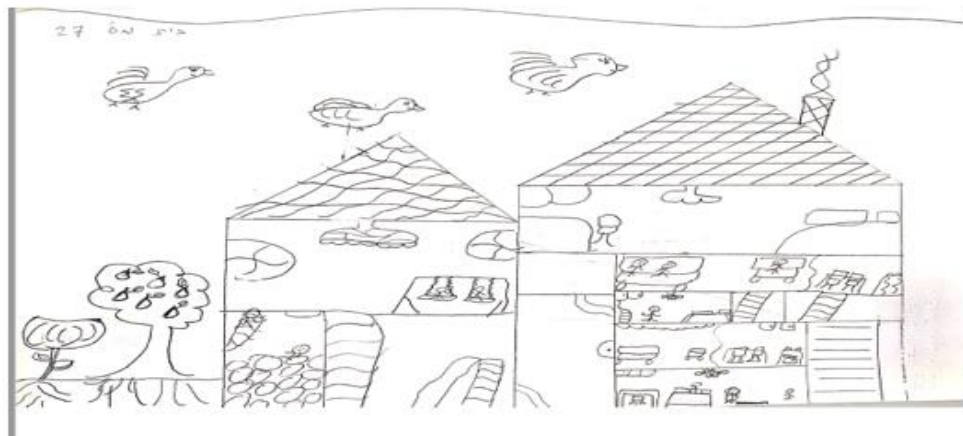
## RESULTS

### Demographics

The sample consisted of 99 participants, 51 (51.5%) from divorced parents and 48 (48.5%) from non-divorced parents. The sample includes 44 boys (44.4%) and 51 girls (51.5%) (4 participants refused to disclose their gender in the study). There were no significant variations between the groups in the proportion of boys and girls ( $\chi^2 = 3.03$ , N.S.). The individuals' ages ranged from 10 to 17, with a mean score of 13.31 ( $SD = 1.28$ ).

There were no age differences between the groups ( $T(90.293) = 95$ , N.S.). In the group of divorced parents, the period since the divorce ranged from half a year to 13 years, with a mean score of 2.80 ( $SD = 2.13$ ).

The study's findings revealed notable disparities in several indices when comparing the experimental and control groups. However, no substantial disparities were observed between the groups in any indicators.



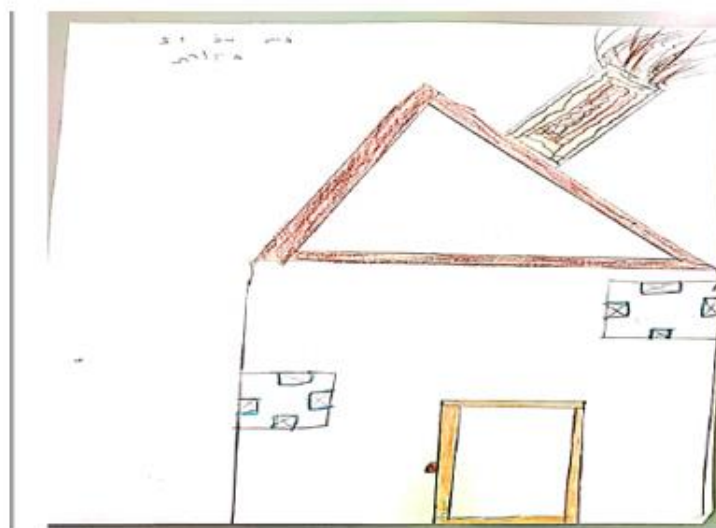
**Figure 1: Drawing of a house from the group of children of divorced parents.**

A notable disparity was seen among the groups in the selected page size preferred by the pupils. The majority of students in the experimental group (86.3%) opted to use an A4 paper size, but a smaller proportion of students in the control group (70.8%) made the same choice ( $\chi^2 = 9.24$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

Regarding color utilization, there was a significant difference between the groups ( $\chi^2 = 13.45$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In the experimental group, the majority of the participants (56.9%) did not use colors. In contrast, the control group's majority of students (79.2%) made use of colors. Regarding the

materials chosen, there was a significant difference between the groups ( $\chi^2 = 16.99, p < .01$ ): in the experimental group, most students chose pencils (54.9%), while in the control group, fewer students chose pencils (25%), and more students chose colored markers or pencils (47.9%, compared to 17.6% in the experimental group). While Figures 1 and 3 show that most participants in the experimental group chose not to use colors, Figures 2 and 4 show how colors were used in the control group.

The groups did not show any significant differences in the direction of the drawing ( $\chi^2 = .59, n.s.$ ), the number of dimensions chosen for the drawing (two or three dimensions) ( $\chi^2 = .44, n.s.$ ), and the position of the drawing on the page ( $\chi^2 = 2.21, n.s.$ ).



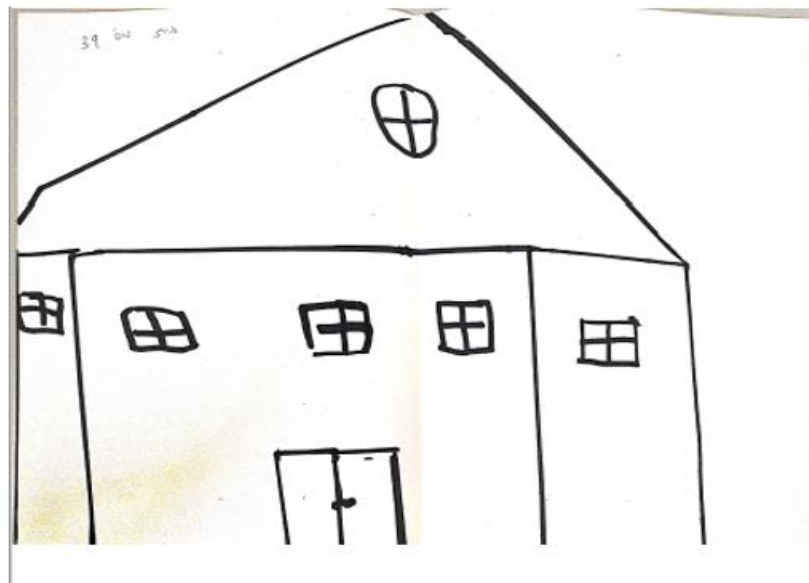
**Figure 2: House drawing from the group of children of non-divorced parents.**

The difference in housing size (small, medium, or big) across the groups was found to be marginally significant ( $\chi^2 = 5.60, p = .061$ ). The experimental group exhibited a higher proportion of participants who chose to depict a huge house (64.7%) in comparison to the control group (41.7%). The width of the home differed between the experimental group ( $M = 2.59, SD = .61$ ) and the control group ( $M = 2.35, SD = .60$ ) at a marginally significant level ( $t(97) = 1.93, p = .057$ ). No statistically significant variation in house length (cm) was observed across the groups ( $t(93) = .62, n.s.$ ).

Figures 3 and 4 provide a visual representation of the variations in the size of the house. Figure 3 depicts a drawing created by a participant in the experimental group, illustrating that the house's breadth is substantial, as it occupies a significant portion of the page. Figure 4 displays a drawing made by a participant in the control group, where the width of the house is noticeably lower.

A notable disparity was seen between the groups regarding the presence of empty space on the drawing sheet ( $\chi^2 = 7.39, p < .01$ ). The majority of the participants in the experimental group left the space vacant (62.7%), but in the control group, most of the participants completed the

space (64.6%). In the home surroundings drawing, similar results were observed. In the experimental group, the majority of students (64.7%) did not include the house's environment in their drawings. On the other hand, in the control group, most participants (56.3%) did include the house's environment. The difference between the two groups was statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 4.38$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Figure 3 depicts a drawing from the experimental group where the space surrounding the house is intentionally left blank. In contrast, Figure 4 shows a drawing from the control group where the participant included the external environment of the house.



**Figure 3: House drawing from a group of children of divorced parents.**

No significant differences were found between the groups in the existence of a chimney in the house ( $\chi^2 = .49$ , n.s.), in the illustration of smoke ( $\chi^2 = .01$ , n.s.), in the direction of the smoke ( $\chi^2 = 2.41$ , n.s.), in the existence of a roof ( $\chi^2 = .73$ , n.s.), and in the shape of the roof ( $\chi^2 = 1.07$ , n.s.). Also, the difference between the groups is not significant: ( $t(97) = 1.02$ , n.s.) regarding the number of roofs.

Furthermore, no significant difference was found between the groups in the existence of a door in the house ( $\chi^2 = 2.23$ , n.s.), nor was there a noteworthy difference in the number of doors in the drawings between the groups ( $t(97) = 1.59$ , n.s.). In contrast, in the presence of a door handle, there was a borderline difference between the groups ( $\chi^2 = 3.64$ ,  $p = .056$ ). In the control group, the participants were more likely to draw a door handle (83.3%) compared to the experimental group (66.7%). As for the position of the handle, the difference between the groups was insignificant ( $\chi^2 = 5.22$ , n.s.).

No significant difference was found between the groups in the existence of a window in the house ( $\chi^2 = 1.05$ , n.s.), nor is the difference in the number of windows in the drawing between the two groups significant ( $t(97) = 1.54$ , n.s.). No significant difference was detected between the groups in the presence of walls in the house ( $\chi^2 = 4.30$ , n.s.), nor in the number of floors in

the house ( $t(97) = .70, n.s.$ ). Also, in the drawing of the ground line (whether the house is close to the ground or hovering above it), there was no significant difference found between the groups ( $\chi^2 = .12, n.s.$ ). Concerning the distance of the house from the ground (cm), the difference between the groups is not significant ( $t(95) = .34, n.s.$ ).



**Figure 4: House drawing from the group of children of non-divorced parents.**

No significant difference was found between the groups in the existence of furniture inside the house ( $\chi^2 = .91, n.s.$ ), in the presence of a path leading to the house ( $\chi^2 = .06, n.s.$ ), and in the drawing of a fence ( $\chi^2 = 3.29, n.s.$ ). However, a significant difference was found between the groups in adding more details to the drawing ( $\chi^2 = 4.19, n.s.$ ). In the experimental group, a larger number of participants (35.3%) drew more details compared to the control group (17%). The additional details added by the experimental group included, for example, a nature drawing around the house, a broken heart near the house, an X on the house's door, or window or on the roof, an ambulance drawing, or a bird drawing above the house (see Figure 1). In the control group, fewer participants added details in the drawings, and these details included, for example, a pool, trees, and street lighting.

## DISCUSSION

Our study aimed to explore the efficacy of utilizing house drawings in art therapy as a means of assessment during the intervention for adolescents in Israel's Arab society, both those with divorced parents and those without. We addressed emotional and psychological challenges commonly experienced by adolescents, particularly in the context of familial disruption. The study compared the experiences and outcomes of adolescents with divorced parents to those from intact families in utilizing house drawings. We aimed to identify cultural and societal factors that may influence the perception and interpretation of house drawings in the context of art therapy within Israel's Arab society.



Children from divorced families may face challenges in expressing their feelings and thoughts. However, through drawing, they can visually depict the experience of parental abandonment and their emotional state (De Beer, 2013; Malchiodi, 2014; Shafferin, 1992). The images serve a greater purpose than simply illustrating the conversion. They also reveal and amplify certain features of transmission within the therapeutic setting. While some of the participants' children may begin to associate the colors in their drawings with what they see in the surrounding environment.

In order to achieve this objective, a quantitative study was conducted to compare house drawings between a group of 51 adolescents diagnosed with Conduct Disorder (Their parents are divorced) and 48 adolescents without a diagnosis of Conduct Disorder. The study postulated that there would be discernible symbolic disparities in the drawings between the two groups. The research hypothesis was confirmed by numerous substantial disparities observed in the drawings' attributes between the experimental and control groups.

The primary discernible difference between the groups was in their use of colors and materials: the participants in the experimental group used fewer colored pencils in comparison to the control group. This finding might be interpreted in accordance with the previous studies which suggests a correlation between the use of colors in drawings and the feeling of joy and happiness in one's life (Burkitt et al., 2009; Valdez, & Mehrabian, 1994). Adolescents from intact families perceive their household and relationships as a significant source of happiness and contentment, but adolescents from divorced families view their connections and family residence as somewhat less pleasurable.

There is another notable distinction between the groups in terms of drawing size: the participants in the experimental group typically utilized a bigger page for drawing, resulting in a larger house compared to the control group. According to the literature, drawing enables the construction of a navigational map into a child's inner emotional realm, and it brings forth both conscious and unconscious elements, such as dilemmas, fears, conflicts, and desires (Lev-Wiesel, 2005; Pane, 2003). Children may suffer a range of emotions, including confusion, stress (Barnea & Eldar, 2003), and mental strain (Shamri-Zeevi et al., 2018), as a result of their parents' divorce. Hence, it is plausible that the inclination of participants in the experimental group to utilize a bigger page and depict a larger house signifies their emotions of stress and confinement, whether consciously or unconsciously, due to the divorce encounter and an inherent longing for a feeling of expansion and alleviation.

An evident discrepancy was noted in the portrayal of the house surroundings: participants in the experimental group were more likely to leave the area surrounding the house empty, while showing less interest in illustrating the environment of the house, in comparison to the control group. This conclusion suggests a correlation between the experience of divorce and the feelings related to loss (Majadele, 2015; Al Gharaibeg, 2015). The participants in the experimental group's exclusion of the surrounding and lack of any mention of the external environment in their portrayal of the house may be interpreted as a reflection of the internal feeling of grief they experienced as a result of their parents' divorce.



To explore how these drawings might reflect feelings of stress and loss. One aspect of the analysis likely focused on the symbols present in the drawings, such as color usage, size, and the inclusion of specific elements like chimneys. In Arab society, as in any cultural context, symbols carry unique meanings and associations that may not align with Western or generalized interpretations. For instance, the choice of colors in the drawings could signify various cultural concepts or emotions specific to Arab culture. Similarly, the size and prominence of certain elements within the drawings may hold significance that differs from Western conventions. Additionally, the inclusion or absence of a chimney, for example, might convey symbolic meanings related to familial structure, heritage, or socio-economic status within the Arab cultural context.

Given these cultural differences, it's essential to approach the interpretation of symbols in the adolescents' drawings with caution and cultural sensitivity. Making assumptions based on external norms without considering the cultural background of the participants could lead to misinterpretations or oversimplifications of their experiences.

Art therapy was widely embraced and has the potential to offer an alternate method of processing emotions. When art therapists work with clients from Arab societies, they may come across intricate cultural, religious, and political matters. One should employ cultural awareness and humility to take this factor into account (Hebi et al., 2022).

The researcher believes that the appearance of realism can be observed in the artistic performances of young people between the ages of nine and twelve, and this is consistent with previous findings (Cox, 2013; Fick, 1999). The researcher believes that children in these age groups are witnessing significant development in their creative abilities. The findings provide various observable disparities with logical justifications for children's emotions. The capacity of house drawings in art therapy as a culturally sensitive measure for addressing the needs of teenagers in Israel's Arab population. They gain an enhanced view and understanding of visual symbols or outlines of human figures, animals, houses, trees, and other objects in the surroundings. Many of these symbols are widely used, such as drawings depicting doorknobs, windows, roofs, chimneys, birds, trees and other features and details. For example, the painting depicts trees of various shapes, heights, and colors, such as yellow and green. The trees have brown trunks and green tops. The presence or absence of the sun was also depicted. In addition, the painting includes a house with a sloping triangular roof, where coolers are used in an objective and subtle way.

A baseline is created, which serves as a reference line for the objects. Additionally, in some cases, the horizon is depicted as a blue line at the top of the image to represent the sky. A sense of depth in drawing is usually achieved by placing distant objects at the top of the page. House drawings offer adolescents a non-verbal outlet to explore and process their feelings within a secure and imaginative setting. The results indicate that art therapy can be especially advantageous for teenagers dealing with familial difficulties, such as divorce, by providing them with a productive means of self-expression and introspection. At ages nine and twelve, it is considered appropriate to exploit differences in size to communicate importance. For example, individuals may portray certain objects as larger than their actual size.

House drawings provide a secure outlet for adolescents to express emotions such as melancholy, rage, or confusion that may be challenging to articulate verbally. Engaging in the process of producing and sharing the drawing can have a cathartic effect and facilitate emotional processing. House drawings offer adolescents a non-verbal outlet to explore and process their feelings within a secure and imaginative setting. The results indicate that art therapy can be especially advantageous for teenagers dealing with familial difficulties, such as divorce, by providing them with a productive means of self-expression and introspection. The house can serve as a symbol for the family unit, where each room represents a specific family member or aspect of family relations (Cigoli, & Scabini, 2007). The arrangement of furniture, ease of access, and overall organization can provide valuable information about the perceived distribution of power, communication challenges, and feelings of being socially isolated (Chan et al., 2008).

Studies indicate that adolescents may be open to art therapy because of its non-verbal characteristics. Their level of comfort may be influenced by cultural norms about the open display of emotions. In Arab societies, divorce is sometimes subject to greater social shame, which might have a negative effect on teenagers' inclination to openly communicate about their personal experiences related to divorce (Ajami et al, 2015). Art therapists willing to engage such projective assessment must possess cultural sensitivity in order to effectively manage the intricacies involved.

Themes and symbols: Typical motifs may encompass: Incomplete dwellings convey a feeling of familial incompleteness. Closed or locked doors are symbolic representations of communication barriers or emotions of solitude. Empty rooms symbolize solitude or the absence of a parent. Unrealistic features: Expressing a longing for an ideal familial circumstance (Beardslee, 2009).

Regarding specific symbolic components, it was found that the students in the experimental group showed a decreased inclination to portray a handle on the entrance of the house. On the other hand, a greater percentage of participants in the experimental group included more complex details in their drawings. Therefore, the absence of a door handle on the house could be interpreted as a physical representation of the child's distress and discomfort with the events taking place inside (Johnston et al, 2009). This finding may also correspond to the fact that divorce in Arab society is accompanied by a social stigma that impacts the entire family, including the children (Al Gharaibeh, 2015; Barnea & Eldar, 2003; Majadele, 2015 ;). Afolayan (2015) describes additional characteristics in the drawing that are indicative of trauma, such as parental divorce. An illustrative case in point is the portrayal of "avian descent to dismantle a residence" (Afolayan, 2015, p. 23). The shown image is showcased in a sketch produced by a participant of the experimental cohort (see Figure 1). This artwork presents a mesmerizing and innovative interpretation.

### **Significance of the Study:**

This study investigates the possibilities of house drawings in art therapy for teenagers in an Israeli Arab community. The significance of this research is as follows:

Scarce Research on Arab Adolescents: Most art therapy studies are conducted on populations in the West. This work adds to the small amount of literature on art therapy in Arab countries and offers insightful information about this understudied population. Impact of Divorce: Because of cultural conventions and family arrangements, divorce can be very stressful for teenagers in Arab society. It may be helpful for them to comprehend how house drawings can assist them in processing these feelings.

Drawings of houses are a projective method used in art therapy to delve into a patient's inner world. This study investigates the application of this method in this cultural context to adolescents coping with parental divorce. Cultural Specificity: Through house drawings, adolescents from Arab society express themselves in ways that are culturally specific, as this study can show. With this information, art therapists can better adapt their treatment to this population.

Possible Advantages, the results of the study can help:

Art therapists: They can create culturally relevant therapies by knowing how house drawings represent the realities of teenagers from split families in Arab society. Mental health professionals: The study can provide information on the possible applications of art therapy to mental health professionals who work with teenagers from comparable backgrounds.

Teenagers: The research may aid in the creation of art therapy methods that assist teenagers in resolving challenging feelings associated with parental divorce in Arab culture. This study can guide culturally appropriate mental health services for teenagers and provide doors for future research on art therapy in Arab civilizations.

The research highlights the need for culturally sensitive approaches to interpreting symbols in art therapy with adolescents from diverse cultural backgrounds. By acknowledging and respecting cultural differences, therapists can create a more inclusive and effective therapeutic environment that honors the unique experiences and expressions of their clients.

### **Practical implications**

The present study has practical implications for addressing the emotional challenges related to CDP, particularly within Arab community. According to the study's findings, young children often and significantly reflect sentiments of stress and bereavement in their drawings. In addition, the children's house drawings provided a means to detect the presence of these emotions by the dimensions of the page they selected, the dimensions of the house they depicted, and the presence of empty space surrounding the house. The findings of this study were compared to earlier research (Brown, 2020; Gresse, 2013; Massengale, 2020), which indicates that art therapy, as an intervention programme for children of divorced parents (CDP), assists them in managing the indicated emotions and aids in coping with their parents' divorce.

Hence, the research outcomes can assist art therapists in comprehending the manner in which distressing feelings, primarily stemming from the divorce encounter, manifest in the artistic depictions of children. This may also be linked to the presence of the social disapproval of divorce in Arab culture, resulting in the necessity to address this matter when dealing with

divorced parents in Arab society during childcare, as well as the challenges faced by these children in dealing with the prevailing social stigma.

By exploring the unique cultural and societal contexts within which these teenagers navigate emotional difficulties, the study contributes to the development of culturally sensitive interventions for CDP within Arab society.

Our study underscore the importance of cultural competence in art therapy practice, particularly when working with adolescents from diverse cultural backgrounds. Art therapists should engage in open dialogue with their clients to understand the cultural meanings they attribute to their drawings. This collaborative approach allows for a deeper exploration of the adolescents' experiences and emotions related to stress and loss within their specific cultural context. Furthermore, therapists should be prepared to adapt their therapeutic interventions to align with the cultural values and perspectives of their clients. This might involve incorporating culturally relevant symbols or rituals into the therapeutic process to enhance engagement and promote a deeper understanding of the adolescents' experiences.

#### **Limitations of the Study:**

There are several limitations, even though the study's conclusions suggest that the home drawings of CDP and CNDP differ symbolically. First off, since the study group was limited to pupils attending Arab schools in Israel. On the basis of this, additional demographic groupings can be studied in further research to see whether any differences emerge.

Second, only children referred for emotional therapy (both in the experimental and control groups) were included in the study, which may have limited the sample size and affect the statistical power and generalizability of the results. However, the literature suggests that not all CDPs are at risk for mental injury (Wesolowski et al., 2008). Consequently, the distinctions observed between children with CDP and those whose parents are not divorced might only apply to children who have emotional challenges; these children do not typically exhibit CDP traits. Additional studies can look into this by mentioning CDP groups that do not face emotional difficulties following divorce.

The examination of home designs may be biased, due to the subjective nature of art interpretation. External variables that could affect participants' experiences and answers include their educational background and socioeconomic level. Many studies have been conducted on the aspects of psychotherapy that vary among western civilizations' cultures (Cohen & Miller, 2016). Studies on non-Western countries, however, have claimed that there are significant gaps in the knowledge of psychotherapy and its application (Haque & Masuan, 2002; Rogers-Sirin et al., 2017).

Also we conducted only a quantitative approach. It is possible that a mixed-method study with qualitative analysis and phenomenological approach may provide a holistic and deeper understanding of the adolescents' deeper experience

## CONCLUSIONS

This study compared adolescents from Israel's Arab population who had divorced parents to those who had not in order to investigate the utility of house designs in art therapy. The results offer important new perspectives on the emotional and psychological environments these teenagers experienced, as conveyed through their artistic interpretations. Teens whose parents were divorced frequently drew houses that were unfinished, disjointed, or had symbols of unpredictability and insecurity. The teenagers' experiences and feelings regarding their familial circumstances were reflected in these drawings, which typically featured themes of isolation and a lack of cohesiveness. Adolescents from intact families, on the other hand, typically drew more finished and organized homes that represented security, stability, and cohesiveness. These teenagers have a useful non-verbal communication tool to convey their inner selves and emotional states: house drawings used in art therapy. These illustrations guided therapy procedures and helped therapists identify underlying difficulties. The research highlights the significance of adopting culturally sensitive methodologies in art therapy, acknowledging the distinct familial and societal environments of the Arab community in Israel.

In summary, house drawings are a powerful technique in art therapy that provide deep insights into the psychological and emotional states of teenagers from various family origins. The results imply that art therapy can assist teenagers through emotional difficulties and family changes in an efficient manner when it is customized to cultural specifics, encouraging healing and resilience in this susceptible group. To build on these results and investigate other therapy approaches that might be helpful for teenagers in comparable cultural circumstances, more research is advised.

## References

- 1) Abudabbeh, N. (1996). Arab families. *Ethnicity and family therapy*, 2, 333-46.
- 2) Abu-Kaf, S. (2019). Mental health and Palestinian citizens in Israel. In M. Haj-Yahia, O. Nakash & I. Levav (Eds.), *Mental health issues among Palestinian women in Israel* (pp. 165–176). Indiana University Press.
- 3) Afolayan, A. (2015). Haitian children's house-tree-person drawings: global similarities and cultural differences. *Dissertation Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Psychology, Antioch University New England*
- 4) Ajami, J., Rasmi, S., & Abudabbeh, N. (2015). Marriage and family: Traditions and practices throughout the family life cycle. In *Handbook of Arab American psychology* (pp. 103-116). Routledge.
- 5) Al Gharaibeh, F. M. (2015). The effects of divorce on children: Mothers' perspectives in UAE. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 56(5), 347-368.
- 6) Al-Krenawi, A. (2019). Attitudes, beliefs, and stigma toward mental health issues among Palestinian citizens in Israel. In M. Haj-Yahia, O. Nakash & I. Levav (Eds.), *Mental health and Palestinian citizens in Israel* (pp. 165-176). Indiana University Press.
- 7) Al-Krenawi, A., & Slater, N. (2007). Bedouin—Arab Children Use Visual Art as a Response To the Destruction of Their Homes in Unrecognized Villages. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 47(3), 288-305.
- 8) Allik, J., Laidra, K., Realo, A., & Pullmann, H. (2004). Personality development from 12 to 18 years of age: Changes in mean levels and structure of traits. *European Journal of Personality*, 18(6), 445-462.



- 9) Aloud, N., & Rathur, A. (2009). Factors affecting attitudes toward seeking and using formal mental health and psychological services among Arab Muslim populations. *Journal of Muslim Mental Health, 4*(2), 79-103.
- 10) Amato, P. R. (2000). The consequences of divorce for adults and children. *Journal of marriage and family, 62*(4), 1269-1287.
- 11) Barnea, H. & Eldar, D. (2003). Divorce - What Happens to Parents and Children? *Al Ma: Journal for the Advancement of Women, 12*, 44-47.
- 12) Bat Or, M., Ishai, R., Barkay, N., & Shalev, O. (2022). Visual Expressions of Children's Strengths, Difficulties and Wishes in Person Picking an Apple from a Tree Drawings among Preschoolers Living in Areas of Persistent Political Violence. *Children, 9*(9), 1387.
- 13) Beardslee, W. R. (2009). *Out of the darkened room: When a parent is depressed: Protecting the children and strengthening the family*. Hachette UK.
- 14) Birch, J., & Carmichael, K. D. (2009). Using Drawings in Play Therapy: A Jungian Approach. *Alabama Counseling Association Journal, 34*(2), 2-7.
- 15) Booth, M. (2002). Arab adolescents facing the future: Enduring ideals and pressures to change. *The world's youth: Adolescence in eight regions of the globe, 207-242*.
- 16) Brown, A. A. (2020). *Exploring the lived experiences of adults who have experienced a parental divorce: Identifying collaborative divorce aspects as they adjusted to adulthood*. Nova Southeastern University.
- 17) Buchbinder, E., & Abu Tanha, B. (2019). The Distress and the Meaning Making of Divorced Abused Arab Women in Israel. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage, 60*(1), 12-26.
- 18) Buck, J. N. (1948). The House-Tree-Person Technique: Revised manual. Western Psychological Services.
- 19) Buck, J. N. (1948). The H-T-P. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 4*, 151-159.
- 20) Burkitt, E., Barrett, M. & Davis, A. (2009). Effects of different emotion terms on the size and color of children's drawings. *International Journal of Art Therapy, 14*(2), 74-84
- 21) Chan, M., Estève, D., Escriba, C., & Campo, E. (2008). A review of smart homes—Present state and future challenges. *Computer methods and programs in biomedicine, 91*(1), 55-81.
- 22) Cigoli, V., & Scabini, E. (2007). *Family identity: Ties, symbols, and transitions*. Routledge.
- 23) Cohen, A. B. (2009). Many forms of culture. *American Psychologist, 64*, 194-204.
- 24) Cohen, A. B., Wu, M. S., & Miller, J. (2016). Religion and culture: Individualism and collectivism in the East and West. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 47*(9), 1236-1249.
- 25) Cohen-Liebman, M. S. (1999). Draw and tell: Drawings within the context of child sexual abuse investigations. *The Arts in Psychotherapy, 26*(3), 185-194.
- 26) Cox, M. V. (2013). *Children's drawings of the human figure*. Psychology Press.
- 27) Cukierman, M. (2002). *The Muslim Arab Child's Perception of His Family, as Reflected in Kinetic Family Drawings*. Drexel University.
- 28) Czamanski-Cohen, J., & Weihs, K. L. (2016). The bodymind model: A platform for studying the mechanisms of change induced by art therapy. *The Arts in psychotherapy, 51*, 63-71.
- 29) De Beer, C. (2013). *Narrative Drawing as a Way of Exploring Children's Expression of Emotional (dis) Connectedness* (Doctoral dissertation, University of South Africa).
- 30) Demir-Dagdas, T., Isik-Ercan, Z., Intepe-Tingir, S., & Cava-Tadik, Y. (2018). Parental divorce and children from diverse backgrounds: Multidisciplinary perspectives on mental health, parent-child relationships, and educational experiences. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage, 59*(6), 469-485.



- 31) Demir-Dagdas, T., Isik-Ercan, Z., Intepe-Tingir, S., & Cava-Tadik, Y. (2018). Parental divorce and children from diverse backgrounds: Multidisciplinary perspectives on mental health, parent–child relationships, and educational experiences. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 59(6), 469-485.
- 32) Dwairy, M. A., & Jagelman, J. (2020). *Cross-Cultural Counseling: The Arab-Palestinian Case* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315809946>
- 33) Dwairy, M., & Van Sickle, T. D. (1996). Western psychotherapy in traditional Arabic societies. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 16(3), 231-249.
- 34) Elder-Avidan, D. (2011). In the Name of the Children: Life Stories and Insights of Divorced Children. *Tel Aviv: Am-Oved*.
- 35) Fagan, P. F., & Churchill, A. (2012). The effects of divorce on children. *Marri Research*, 1, 1-48.
- 36) Farokhi, M. & Hashemi, M. (2011). The analysis of children's drawings: social, emotional, physical and psychological aspects. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 30, 2219-2224
- 37) Fergusson, D. M., Horwood, L. J., & Lynskey, M. T. (1994). Parental separation, adolescent psychopathology, and problem behaviors. *Journal of the American academy of child & adolescent psychiatry*, 33(8), 1122-1133.
- 38) Fiske, A. P., Kitayama, S., Markus, H. R., Nisbett, R. E. (1998). The cultural matrix of social psychology. In Gilbert, D. T., Fiske, S., Lindzey, G. (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (4th ed., Vol. 2, pp. 915-981). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
- 39) Giotsa, A., & Mitrogiorgou, E. (2016). Representations of families through the children’s drawings in parental divorce incidents in Greece. *Journal of Child Development Disorder*, 2(4), 2472-1786.
- 40) Goldscheider, C. (2019). *Israel's changing society: Population, ethnicity, and development*. Routledge.
- 41) Gordon R.M., Rudd-Barnard A. (2011) House-Tree-Person Test. In: Kreutzer J.S., DeLuca J., Caplan B. (eds) *Encyclopedia of Clinical Neuropsychology*. Springer, New York, NY. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-79948-3\\_2029](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-79948-3_2029)
- 42) Gresse, C. (2013). *The role of a leisure-based programme on the relationship and attitudes of divorced single-parent families* (Doctoral dissertation, North-West University).
- 43) Hammer, E. F. (1958). *The clinical application of projective drawings*. Springfield: Charles Thomas.
- 44) Haque, A. & Masuan, K. A. (2002). Perspective: Religious psychology in Malaysia. *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 12, 277-289.
- 45) Haring, U., & Sorin, R. (2014). The CID lens: looking at children's drawings using content, interpretive, and developmental methods. *International Journal of Arts Education*, 8, 15-29.
- 46) Harvey, J. H. & Fine, M. A. (2010). *Children of Divorce: Stories of Loss and Growth*. New York and London: routledge.
- 47) Hays, P. A., & Abudabbeh, N. (2019). Cognitive behavior therapy with people of Arab heritage.
- 48) Hebi, M., Czamanski-Cohen, J., & Azaiza, F. (2022). Art therapy in the Arab world. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 81, 101969.
- 49) Hebi, M., Czamanski-Cohen, J., & Azaiza, F. (2022). Art therapy in the Arab world. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 81, 101969.
- 50) Herbst-Debby, A., Sabbah-Karkabi, M., & Meler, T. (2022). Palestinian mothers in Israel: Can a welfare-to-work program enhance their social capital?. *Current Sociology*, 70(1), 42-60.
- 51) Johnston, J. R., Roseby, V., & Kuehnle, K. (2009). *In the name of the child: A developmental approach to understanding and helping children of conflicted and violent divorce*. Springer Publishing Company.

- 52) Kapitan, L. (2011). *An introduction to art therapy research*. Routledge.
- 53) Karkabi-Sabbah, M. (2017). Ethnoreligious mixed marriages among Palestinian women and Jewish men in Israel: Negotiating the breaking of barriers. *Journal of Israeli History*, 36(2), 189-211.
- 54) Keidar, L., Snir, S., Regev, D., & Keidar, E. (2022). Ultra-Orthodox Parents' Perceptions of Arts Therapies for Their Children. *Children*, 9(10), 1576.
- 55) Khalifa, B., Nasser, R., & Alkhateeb, H. (2018). A comparison of students with and without disabilities on their perception of services in Qatar's public higher education system. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, 10(4), 493-513.
- 56) Kitahara, R., & Matsuishi, T. (2006). Research on children's drawings. *Journal of Disability and Medico-pedagogy (Journal of Disability, Medicine and Education)*, 14.
- 57) Latzer, Y., Stein, D., & Witztum, E. (2019). Treating ultra-orthodox adolescents with eating disorders in Israel: Culturally-sensitive interventions, difficulties, and dilemmas. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 75(8), 1455-1468.
- 58) Levi-Schiff, R. (2018). Short- and long-term effects of divorce on children. *Psychoactuality: The Association of Psychologists in Israel Quarterly*, April 2018, 15-27.
- 59) Lev-Wiesel, r. (2005). Painting a human figure and drawing a family, a tool for diagnosing sexual and physical abuse. *Kiryat Bialik: Brother*.
- 60) Maccoby, E. E., & Mnookin, R. H. (1992). *Dividing the child: Social and legal dilemmas of custody*. Harvard University Press.
- 61) Majadele, A. (2015). Coping of children with divorced parents in the Arab education system in mixed families of Hebrew citizens - Israelis and Palestinians living in the Occupied Territories. *Psychoactualia*, April 19-15.
- 62) Malchiodi, C. (2014). *Breaking the silence: Art therapy with children from violent homes*. Routledge.
- 63) Malchiodi, C. A. (1998). *Understanding children's drawings*. Guilford Press.
- 64) Malchiodi, C. A. (Ed). (2005). *What is Expressive Arts Therapy?*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- 65) Markus, H. R., Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion and motivation. *Psychological Review*, 98, 224-253.
- 66) Massengale, B. D. (2020). *Long-Term Impact of Child-Centered Play Therapy on Academic Achievement: A Longitudinal Examination of Academic Success in At-Risk Elementary School Students*. University of Arkansas.
- 67) Olofsson, E. (2019). *Children of Divorce: Long-Term Psychological Effects and Neurological Consequences*. Skövde: University of Skövde.
- 68) Oron, p. (1997). Graphology drawing and child. *Tel Aviv: Or-Am*.
- 69) Oster, G. D., & Crone, P. G. (2004). *Using drawings in assessment and therapy: A guide for mental health professionals*. Routledge.
- 70) Pane, M. (2003). Children's drawings as an expression of the child's inner world. *Apharta way*, 11, 117-128
- 71) Péntzes, I., Hooren, S. V., Dokter, D., & Hutschemaekers, G. (2018). How art therapists observe mental health using formal elements in art products: structure and variation as indicators for balance and adaptability. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 1611.
- 72) Peris, T. S., Goeke-Morey, M. C., Cummings, E. M., & Emery, R. E. (2008). Marital conflict and support seeking by parents in adolescence: Empirical support for the parentification construct. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 22(4), 633.

- 73) Rogers-Sirin, L., Yanar, C., Yüksekbaş, D., Senturk, M. I., Sirin, S. (2017). Religiosity, cultural values, and attitudes toward seeking psychological services in Turkey. *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology*, 48, 1587-1604.
- 74) Rubin, E. (2018). *Promoting Social and Emotional Functioning: Art Therapy with Children with Non-current Parents*. Belmont: Notre Dame de Namur University.
- 75) Schaverien, J. (1992). The revealing image. London: RoutledgeSchnitzer, P. G., & Ewigman, B. G. (2005). Child deaths resulting from inflicted injuries: household risk factors and perpetrator characteristics. *Pediatrics*, 116(5), e687-e693.
- 76) Schwartz, S. H., Ciecuch, J., Vecchione, M., Davidov, E., Fischer, R., Beierlein, C., Ramos, A., Verkasalo, M., Lönnqvist, J.-E., Demirutku, K., Dirilen-Gumus, O., & Konty, M. (2012). Refining the theory of basic individual values. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 103, 663–688. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029393>
- 77) Shamri-Zeevi, L., Regev, D., & Guttman, J. (2018). The efficiency of art-based interventions in parental training. *Frontiers in psychology*, 9, 1495.
- 78) Suit, C. (2018). Art therapy for children victims of sexual assault in Arab society in Israel. *Arts Therapy: Research and Creation in the Therapeutic Act*, 8 (1), 757-766.
- 79) Triandis, H. C. (1995). *Individualism and collectivism*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- 80) Valdez, P., & Mehrabian, A. (1994). Effects of color on emotions. *Journal of experimental psychology: General*, 123(4), 394.
- 81) Veltman, M. W., & Browne, K. D. (2002). The assessment of drawings from children who have been maltreated: A systematic review. *Child Abuse Review: Journal of the British Association for the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect*, 11(1), 19-37.
- 82) Vick, R. M. (1999). Utilizing prestructured art elements in brief group art therapy with adolescents. *Art Therapy*, 16(2), 68-77.
- 83) Vyse, S. A. (1997). *Believing in magic: The psychology of superstition*. New York & Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- 84) Weaver, J. M., & Schofield, T. J. (2015). Mediation and moderation of divorce effects on children's behavior problems. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 29(1), 39-48.
- 85) Wesolowski, K. L., Nelson III, W. M., & Bing, N. M. (2008). Relationship components and nature of postdivorce parenting responsibilities among individuals going through a divorce. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 49(3-4), 258-271.
- 86) Williams, K. J., Agell, G., Gantt, L., & Goodman, R. F. (1996). Art-based diagnosis: Fact or fantasy? *American Journal of Art Therapy*, 35(1), 9–31.
- 87) Zakaria, M. Z., Yunus, F., & Mohamed, S. (2020). Examining self-awareness through drawing activity among preschoolers with high socio emotional development. *Southeast Asia Early Childhood Journal*, 9(2), 73-81.
- 88) Zaken, S. B., & Walsh, S. D. (2021). Bridging the cultural gap: Challenges and coping mechanisms employed by Arab art therapists in Israel. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 76, 101853.
- 89) Zolezzi, M., Alamri, M., Shaar, S., & Rainkie, D. (2018). The stigma associated with mental illness and its treatment in the Arab culture: a systematic review. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 64(6), 597-609.

Illustrative objects of HTP test		
HOUSE	TREE	PERSON
<p><b>Roof:</b> The intellectual side of a person. It is also associated with fantasizing and ideation. Too little focus on the roof may suggest fears of ghosts in the attic.</p> <p><b>Wall:</b> An indication of how strong one's ego is.</p> <p><b>Doors and Windows:</b> The relation of the person with the outside world. It hints at the receptiveness, interaction with others, and perception about the environment.</p> <p><b>Size:</b> If the house is small, it might mean a rejection of one's life at home.</p> <p><b>Pathways:</b> Those leading directly to the door exemplify accessibility and openness, unlike when there is no pathway, indicating a closed, solitary, and distant state of mind.</p> <p><b>Fencing around the house</b> could be a sign of defensiveness.</p>	<p><b>Tree Trunk:</b> An individual's inner strength might be suggested from the tree trunk drawn. A slender trunk and large branches may suggest a need for satisfaction. Dark shadings of the trunk suggest anxiety about oneself.</p> <p><b>Branches:</b> These might also hint towards an individual's relation to the external world. A tree drawn without branches might indicate less contact with other people.</p>	<p><b>Arms and Hands:</b> Position of the hands, open or closed fists, and specific gestures, if any, indicate behavioral traits.</p> <p><b>Legs and Feet:</b> Drawing or not drawing feet, and the stance or the overall body posture is reflected from little strokes of lines, helping gauge inherent emotions like fear.</p> <p><b>Face:</b> Many details concentrated on the face of the drawn person can represent one's desire to present oneself in an acceptable/satisfactory/adequate social light.</p>