

## Rational and Irrational Thoughts According to Gender Variable Among Third Grade High School Students

دراسة الأفكار العقلانية واللاعقلانية وفقا لمتغير الجنس لدى تلاميذ الصف الثالث الثانوي

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- **Abstract:** This study aims to find out the differences in rational and irrational thoughts between males and females. The study was applied to a sample that we selected in a random way, consisting of (181) male and female students in El Alma High School in the state of Setif (Algeria), during which the test of rational and irrational thoughts by Suleiman Al-Rihani (1985) was used, and the study showed Next result:

There are no statistically significant differences in rational and irrational thoughts between (males/females) in third-year secondary school students.

- **keywords:** Rational thoughts, irrational thoughts, According to Gender.

- **المخلص:** تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة الفروق في الأفكار العقلانية وغير العقلانية بين الذكور والإناث. تم تطبيق الدراسة على عينة تم اختيارها بطريقة عشوائية مكونة من (181) طالبا وطالبة بثانوية العلمة بولاية سطيف (الجزائر)، وتم خلالها اختبار الأفكار العقلانية واللاعقلانية لسليمان العلي، تم استخدام الريحاني (1985) وأظهرت الدراسة النتيجة التالية: لا توجد فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في الأفكار العقلانية واللاعقلانية بين الذكور/الإناث) لدى تلاميذ الصف الثالث الثانوي.

- **الكلمات المفتاحية:** أفكار عقلانية، أفكار غير عقلانية، متغير الجنس.

### - Introduction:

A person faces many pressures that are reflected in his behavior and emotions, and thus his dealings with those around him are based on unrealistic beliefs or irrational thoughts. In this context, Ellis has given the utmost importance to ideas and beliefs in shaping an individual's life, whether by giving it positivity and happiness or feeling defeated and having a low self-concept. As a person creates for himself and himself his own emotional disturbances due to his adherence to false beliefs, he can also achieve psychological well-being, emotional balance, and success in the areas of life by adhering to rational ideas and beliefs. Based on the extreme importance

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for students of the final sections of the third year of secondary school as it is an important and essential stage, it is better to enjoy this... The group of students who have rational ideas, so that they can succeed easily and keep pace with technological development. From this standpoint, through our study, we wanted to know if there are differences in rational and irrational ideas between males and females among third-year secondary school students.

**- The problem:**

Humanity has been interested in the nature of knowledge, cognitive processes, and mental activities as a very important means that a person uses to understand himself and the world in which he lives (Al-Zaghloul, 2003). Cognitivists believe that when this knowledge is disturbed, the individual magnifies everything that is negative and reduces everything that is positive, and all of this is related to his cognitive formation. And in the way it is perceived (Abu Shaar, 2007). In this regard, researchers in cognitive psychology distinguish between two types of ideas: realistic and positive ideas that are linked to appropriate attitudes and behaviors, and irrational ideas that refer to imaginary and negative beliefs.

Many studies and research have also supported Ellis's hypothesis that an individual's irrational thought system is responsible for his erroneous behavior and psychological disorders in general. Al-Rihani pointed to a number of field studies that confirmed the validity of Ellis's theory through the existence of a relationship between... Irrational thinking and a number of forms of psychological disorder and maladaptation. Many studies have proven the spread of irrational thinking in Western and Arab societies, including the study of Defenbacher & Hazaleus (1985) and the study of Al-Rihani (1985) (Al-Ghamdi, 2009, p. 20).

There is significant importance attached to gender that begins to emerge from childhood, dictated by societal roles assigned to both males and females. This involves reinforcing and encouraging each gender to emulate a proper and suitable model, by adopting rational ideas to avoid falling into cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and

social problems appropriate for both males and females. In light of this, the current study focuses on examining rational and irrational thoughts among both males and females.

Therefore, the problem of the current study aims to answer the following question: Are there statistically significant differences in rational and irrational thoughts attributed (due) to gender (males/females) among third-grade high school students"?

**\* Study hypothesis:**

- There are statistically significant differences in rational and irrational thoughts between (males and females) among third-grade high school students.

**- Defining the concepts of the study:**

**- Rational thoughts:**

**- Terminological definition:**

It is a set of verifiable ideas that are objective and help the individual achieve his goals and feel psychological happiness (Al-Ghamdi, 2009, p. 14).

**- Procedurally:**

It is defined as a score obtained by the individual who answers the irrational thoughts test, which he Arabized and modified to suit the Arab environment (Al-Rihani, 1985) and which is adopted in this study so that the total score (below 78) expresses rational thinking.

**\* Irrational thoughts:**

**- Terminological definition:**

Ellis (1990) believes that irrational ideas are false ideas, which are characterized by a lack of objectivity, and are based on incorrect predictions and generalizations and that they rely on exaggeration and exaggeration to the extent that they are inconsistent with the individual's mental potential (Raja Mahmoud Munira Abdullah Al-Shamsan, 2017, p. 571).

**Operational definition:**

The degree of irrational thoughts is determined by the grades the individual obtains on the test of rational and irrational thoughts used in our study.

**- Objectives of the study:**

\* Knowing the differences in both rational and irrational thoughts according to the gender variable (males, females) among third secondary school students.

**- Importance:**

**- Theoretical importance: represented by:**

- Providing researchers and scholars with a study that represents a descriptive reference for the reality of third-year secondary school students.
- Providing new information and additions about rational and irrational ideas to an important segment of students who are preparing to pass the baccalaureate degree and move on to university.

**- Practical importance: as follows:**

- Providing guidance to educators, specialists, and students on how to get rid of all irrational thoughts to the greatest possible degree.
- Providing information that benefits the academic, psychological, and counseling process for this group, may have a significant impact on the development of their rational ideas.

**- Previous studies:**

Durm & Stowers (1998) study, "Gender in Rational and Irrational Ideas."

- It aimed to know the role of gender in relation to rational and irrational ideas
- The study sample size was (46) individuals whose ages ranged from (21-52).
- The irrational beliefs test was used.
- The results indicated that there are no statistically significant differences between males and females in rational and irrational thoughts (Mamdouh Saber, 2009, p. 9).

Al-Sheikh's study (1990) "The spread of irrational thoughts among students at the Jordanian, American, and Egyptian universities.

The study aimed to find out to what extent these irrational thoughts spread among students at the Jordanian, American, and Egyptian universities, and whether irrational thinking is affected by factors of culture and gender.

The sample size was (400) male and female students at the College of Education.

The irrational thoughts test prepared by Al-Rihani (1985) was used.

The results showed a widespread spread of irrational ideas in the three societies, with an increase in their percentage among students at the University of Jordan. They found that gender had no effect on the totality of rational and irrational ideas and that the idea of “complete solutions” was among the ideas that were common among Jordanian females, while There was a difference due to the cultural factor (Al-Zahrani, 2010, p. 85).

A study by Munira Al-Shamsan (1998) “Irrational thinking among university students and its relationship to pathological symptoms.”

The aim of this study is to shed light on the irrational thinking of female university students and whether it is related to the medical symptoms that the female university student suffers from.

The study consisted of (399) female students at King Saud University.

- The researcher used the test he prepared about thoughts and irrationality.

One of the most important results is the existence of a significant correlation between irrational thinking and pathological symptoms among female university students.

- There are differences between literary and scientific majors in a number of irrational ideas, as the idea of (seeking approval) was in the interest of female students in scientific majors, while the idea of (being disturbed by the problems of others) was in the interest of female students in literary majors (Mamdouh Saber, 2009, p. 9).

Al-Rihani’s study (1987b) “The spread of irrational ideas and the impact of sex workers and specialization in them.”

It aims to know the spread of rational and irrational ideas, and the impact of sex factors, and specialize in them

The study sample consisted of (400) male and female baccalaureate students at the University of Jordan

The results showed a prevalence of irrational thoughts, and no statistically significant effect appeared for the factors of gender and specialization on irrational thoughts (Hadeel Abdullah, 2013, p. 350).

Study by Nadia Rateeb (2000) "Social anxiety and its relationship to irrational thoughts."

The study sample was (686) third-year students at Damascus University.

The researcher used the social anxiety test and the irrational thoughts test, both tools that the researcher designed.

One of the most important results is the presence of a statistically significant relationship between rational and irrational thoughts and social anxiety among males, and the absence of statistically significant differences between the average scores for rational and irrational thoughts between males and females.

A study by Al-Awaidah (2008) "Irrational thoughts and their relationship to levels of mental health."

The study aimed to find the relationship between the two variables.

The study sample was (181) university students.

Use the Irrational Thoughts Test by Sulaiman Al-Rihani (1985) and the Goldbert-Gwilliam Scale in public health.

One of the most important results of the study is that there are no differences in irrational thoughts according to gender, except for the fifth thought, which is related to emotional recklessness for the benefit of males (Al-Zahrani, 2010, p. 93).

Through the studies presented, we find a diversity of topics and objectives, as some of them aimed to know the extent of the spread of both rational and irrational ideas, such as the study of Al-Rihani (1987), and other studies aimed to know the

relationship between rational and irrational ideas with some variables, such as the study by Hasaballah and Al-Aqqad (2000). The relationship of irrational ideas to dogmatism and the study of Ibrahim (1990). There are also studies that dealt with rational and irrational ideas and their relationship to multiple variables.

From the source of the study sample:

The samples varied according to the study population and were studied in different environments, and most of these Previous studies were applied to university students.

**- Regarding study tools:**

We find a difference in the tools used depending on the objectives of each study. Most of the studies related to rational and irrational ideas used the test of ideas related to rational-irrational ideas prepared by Al-Rihani Suleiman (1985).

**In terms of results:**

We find differences in results depending on the different objectives, sample sizes, and age groups for each study.

We benefited from these studies in terms of contributing to formulating appropriate hypotheses for the current study and determining its objectives, examining the measurement tools used in them and knowing their dimensions, discussing and analyzing the results, and selecting the sample. Most of the studies focused on university students in the field of irrational ideas, so we selected third-year secondary school students. We note the scarcity of these previous studies in the local environment.

**- Concepts in Albert Ellis' theory:**

**- Rationality and irrationality:**

It can be defined as the use of logic in achieving goals, as it contributed to achieving two important goals, which are our feeling of psychological happiness and preserving our lives, as well as getting rid of pain, in light of an appropriate interaction with emotions (Nasser Abdel Aziz, 2005), while irrationality is represented by The

process of thinking in ways that stand in the way of achieving the previous two goals (Lan R Ridgway, 2005).

**- Mind and emotion:**

Ellis believes that human thinking and emotion are not different, they are greatly intertwined and mutually interactive and are sometimes considered the same thing. In fact, emotion is an expression of irrational thinking and is a cognitive process. Individuals respond to the life situations they live in in a way that involves prior intuitive and intellectual judgment. Therefore, the final decisions come with a situational response that is consistent with what the original emotion achieves or prevents (Abdel Fattah Abdel Qader, 2007, p. 11).

**- Biological tendencies:**

Ellis believes that every human being is born with a predisposition to act in a rational and irrational way, and he describes this by saying, "Biologically individuals think in a twisted way on many occasions, or they exaggerate various things and act strangely for trivial reasons, and they also have a strong predisposition to think easily." Naturally, they are innovative, learn from their mistakes, and change themselves several times (Ghormallah, 2009).

**- Definition of rational ideas:**

Ellis believes that rational ideas are those ideas that can be verified through arguments and evidence.

According to Baron (1990), rational ideas are closer to realism than contemplative ones (Saber Mamdouh, 2009, p. 6).

- Zayed (2003) defined it as a victory for the mind in various areas of life and existence with regard to science and social life (Hadeel Abdullah, 2013).

**Definition of irrational thoughts:**

According to the definition of Ellis (1977), it is a group of illogical, wrong, and subjective ideas based on false generalizations and expectations, suspicion,



exaggeration, and exaggeration to a degree inconsistent with the individual's capabilities (Saber Mamdouh, 2009).

Patterson (1980), defines it as the concepts and beliefs that an individual adopts through external circumstances and events whose origins are due to illogical and early learning (Shaya Abdullah, 2011).

According to Walen, 1992, it is logically incorrect thinking, and inconsistent with both reality and the individual's goals (Montaser Allam, 2012, p. 75).

Characteristics of rational and irrational thoughts:

**- Characteristics of rational thoughts:**

Ellis (1997) believes that it is represented in the following:

- It is objective: it is derived from facts and evidence.
- I am also characterized by flexibility
- It helps us achieve and accomplish our goals.
- Reduces the individual's internal conflicts.
- Reduces collisions with others surrounding the individual.
- It helps to think about different possibilities (Al-Ghamdi, 2009, p. 32).

**\* Characteristics of irrational thoughts:**

Maher Omar 2003 believes that the characteristics of irrational beliefs are as follows:

**- Untrue beliefs:**

It is characterized by denial of reality and falsification of the truth, as it often stems from illusion and imagination, and is linked to mistrust.

**- Absolute beliefs:**

Irrational beliefs include absolute concepts that seem to be generalized to all people without exception and obligate a person to absolute behavior regardless of abilities, and without taking into account the capabilities available in relation to the individual's environment.

**- Intense emotional beliefs:**

It is associated with severe, always intense emotions that lead to behavioral deviation, and since it is linked to delusion, imagination, and mistrust, he exaggerates matters and covers them with negative feelings that may push him to verbal and physical aggression, or to withdrawal, escape, isolation, and depression. In both cases, we find him suffering from severe emotional disturbances.

**- Beliefs without goals:**

Irrational beliefs are associated with distress, psychological conflicts with oneself, personal conflicts with others, and environmental conflicts with society as a whole, which puts a person in constant fear of his present and future, and he may be afraid of his past. All of these things make him feel constant frustration.

Reasons for the emergence of irrational thoughts:

The reasons for the emergence of these irrational thoughts are the following:

**- Negative parental treatment:**

It has a role in the emergence and development of irrational thoughts, through the lack of a positive relationship between the parents and the child based on mutual respect, which leads to the child feeling self-defeated. It has also become clear that the negative family situation has a major role in the emergence of irrational and incorrect thoughts. (Al-Ghamdi, 2009).

**- Education**

It creates a receptive student dependent on indoctrination, as it does not encourage thinking and creativity, and this helps in the emergence of irrational ideas among students (Montaser Allam, 2012, p. 120).

**- Intellectual stagnation:**

This is due to their lack of desire to change their thoughts, or they change them with more rational and logical ones, so their thinking becomes rigid (Hadeel Abdullah, 2013).

**Field side:**

Method: The descriptive approach was used for this study to identify the extent to which there are differences according to the gender variable in rational and irrational thoughts among third-year secondary school students in (El-Eulma, Setif Province).

**Study sample:**

It was selected by simple random method, on a sample of third year secondary school students in El-Eulma, Setif Province (Algeria), which numbered (181) male and female students, and the number of males was (41), while the number of females was (141). The table N° (01) shows the distribution of students according to gender.

**Table No. (01) shows the distribution of students in the study sample**

Sex	Males	Females	total
	40	141	181

**- Limitations of the study:**

- 1- Human **limits**: It was applied to a sample of third-year secondary school students, where the number of individuals reached (181) students (41) male and (141) female.
- 2- Spatial **boundaries**: It was conducted at the level of three secondary schools in the state of Setif (Al-Eulma), which are secondary (Al-Arabi Ben M'hidi, Malek Ben Anas, and Al-Bashir Kassab).
- 3- Time **limits**: in the second semester, March 2014.

**- Study tools:**

The test of rational and irrational ideas prepared by Suleiman Al-Rihani (1985):  
 - How to correct and describe the scale of rational and irrational thoughts:

Alice put eleven ideas in the irrational ideas and Al-Rihani added two ideas to them so that this scale suits the Arab environment. Each idea has (04) paragraphs on the scale, so the number of paragraphs as a whole becomes (52) paragraphs, the answer to which is (yes) or (no), and the value was given (02). The value (01) for an answer indicates the student's rejection of the irrational idea measured by the paragraph. Thus, the total score for the test on the scale ranges between (52 - 104).

The minimum score (52) indicates the student's rejection of all irrational thoughts represented by this scale or also expresses a high degree of rational thinking.

- As for the upper limit (104), it expresses the student's acceptance of all irrational ideas or expresses a high degree of irrational thinking.

- With regard to the overall score (65), it expresses a high degree of rationality, while (78) is the general pattern line. The sub-scores on the scale are (13) scores, as they measure the dimensions of the test (13), and the score ranges on each After between (4-8) marks:

Minimum (4) expresses a high degree of rational thinking

The upper limit (8) expresses a high degree of irrational thinking, for the sub-score from (7 - 8) is irrational and from (4 - 5) it is the tendency toward rationality, and the score (6) represents the oscillation between rationality and irrationality, and the sub-score we obtain It is determined by collecting the dimension paragraphs. Example: Paragraphs No. (1, 14, 27, 40) measure the first idea.

**The following table No. (02) shows irrational thoughts and the phrases associated with them:**

**Table No. (2) shows irrational thoughts and the phrases associated with them**

idea	content of the idea	paragraphs
1	seeking -It is necessary for a person to be loved by all those around him approval	40 ,27 ,14 ,1
2	An individual must be competent or highly accomplished in order to be an important person -seeking personal perfection	41 ,28 ,15 ,2
3	Some people are evil and cowardly, deserving of punishment and reprimand -harsh blaming of self and others	42 ,29 ,16 ,3
4	It is a major calamity when things go the opposite of what the individual wishes -expecting disasters	43 ,30 ,17 ,4
5	Difficulties and unhappiness are caused by external circumstances - emotional recklessness	31,44 ,18 ,5
6	Scary things constantly require great attention to them (excessive anxiety)	45 ,32 ,19 ,6
7	It is better to avoid difficulties than to confront them (avoiding problems)	46 ,33 ,20 ,7

8	The individual must depend on others, and there must be someone stronger than him or the individual to depend on (dependence)	47 .34 .21 .8
9	Events that happened in the past determine the behavior in the present and we cannot ignore or eradicate them (feeling of helplessness)	48 .35 .22 .9
10	A person should feel sad about the problems and turmoil that befalls others (disturbed by other people's problems)	49 .36 .23 .10
11	There is a permanent and ideal solution to every problem that must be found (in the pursuit of complete solutions)	37.50 , 11.24
12	A person should be characterized by seriousness and formality in his dealings with other people in order to have a respectable and valuable position among people (seriousness and formality)	51 .38 .25 .12
13	There is no doubt that the status that belongs to a man is the most important with regard to his relationship with a woman (man's relationship with women)	52 .39 .26 .13

**- Psychometric properties of testing irrational thoughts:**

We randomly selected a survey sample of (40) male and female students. We also combined the thirteen axes to become five axes.

- **Validity:** The validity of the test of rational and irrational thoughts was calculated as follows:

- Honesty through internal consistency (terminal comparison): Honesty, represented by "terminal comparison," i.e. (discriminant honesty), was conducted. We arranged the members of our exploratory sample (40) in descending order according to the individuals' total score on the irrational ideas test, then we selected 27% of the individuals are relative to the upper group (10 individuals), and 27% of the individuals are relative to the lower group (10 individuals), in order to determine the differences between the two groups. The results were as follows in Table No. (3):

Table (3) shows the arithmetic mean as well as the standard deviation for the highest and lowest groups in the irrational thoughts test

Axes	Groups	N	X	S	Standard error	T	Sig
First axis 1.6.3	high	10	94.20	5.39	1.70	8.468	0.000
	Minimum	10	60.40	11.41	3.60		
Second axis 2. 7. 11	high	10	87.20	4.75	1.50	14.349	0.000
	Minimum	10	54.70	5.35	1.69		
Third Axis 12.10.13	high	10	78.70	4.57	1.44	16.106	0.000
	Minimum	10	55.30	4.42	1.39		
fourth Axis 9 .8	high	10	61.60	4.32	1.36	10.200	0.000
	Minimum	10	37.80	5.97	1.89		
Fifth axis 4. 5	high	10	50.60	3.20	1.01	14.566	0.000
	Minimum	10	31.10	2.767	0.876		

The significance of (T) between the lower and higher groups is clear from Table (3), and this shows us the validity of the scale of rational and irrational thoughts.

**-Reliability: We calculated the reliability of the test as follows:**

**Cronbach's alpha method:**

Table (4) shows Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for testing rational and irrational ideas

Axes	Cronbach's alpha
1	0.596
2	0.672
3	0.498
4	0.629
5	0.667
6	0.63
7	0.680
8	0.575
9	0.570

10	0.546
11	0.588
12	0.606
13	0.600

The data in Table (4) indicates that the value of the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for testing rational and irrational ideas has an acceptable degree of reliability.

#### - Presentation of results related to the hypothesis:

The hypothesis states that “there are statistically significant differences between males and females in rational and irrational thoughts among a sample of third-year secondary school students.”

We verified our hypothesis by using a t-test with two independent samples to compare the two groups.

**Table No. (5) shows us the results of the t-test regarding the significance of the differences between the average scores of males and females on rational and irrational thoughts.**

variable	N-M 40 =	N-F 141 =	DF	T	0.05	F
	X	X				
Rational and irrational ideas	88.28	87.32	179	1.14	0.89	0.018
					Non-f	consistency

From Table (5), it is clear that the value of (t) is statistically significant, meaning that there are no statistically significant differences between males and females in the scale related to rational and irrational thoughts.

- Analysis and discussion of the hypothesis: “There are statistically significant differences between males and females in the rational and irrational thoughts of third-year secondary school students.”

The results in Table No. (5) showed that there are no statistically significant differences between males and females in rational and irrational thoughts among

members of the study sample. These results indicate that the hypothesis of our study has not been fulfilled, as the value of (t) reached (1.14) at the level of significance. (0.89).

By linking the results to previous scientific studies, we find their agreement with the study of Al-Rihani (1987b), the study by Hasballah and Al-Aqqad (2000), the study of Ratib (2000), and the study (Durm & Stower, 1998) on the absence of differences between (males - females) on the total number of rational ideas. And irrationality.

However, it is partially consistent with the study of Al-Rihani (1987a), which found that the effect of gender was limited to three irrational thoughts and its lack of effect in irrational thinking as measured by the total degree, and the study of Ibrahim (1990) also concluded that there were no differences between both (males - females). In the total score for the scale of rational and irrational ideas, except for the idea of dependency, the differences were in favor of females, and the study of Al-Sheikh (1990) found that gender had no effect on the total number of rational and irrational ideas and that the idea related to complete solutions was among the ideas that were common among females. Jordanian women.

According to the researcher, it is also attributed to the influence of female colleagues and teachers who may reinforce this idea among the students. And also for mothers who motivate their daughters by repeatedly emphasizing that their performance is perfect.

The high average of the total number of irrational thoughts is consistent with the result obtained by Munira Al-Shamsan (1998), where the prevailing feelings of weakness and dependency and the resulting lack of experience are attributed to these females, causing them to have a state of turmoil in evaluating matters, which creates the opportunity to form many wrong and irrational thoughts.

The prevalence of some irrational ideas among both males and females is attributed to the educational practices that are followed and the culture adopted by society, starting with the family environment, then the school, and finally society,



where many families tend to believe in some ideas that contain fallacies and implant them in the minds of their members in a suggestive manner. Thus, we find other parties, such as schools, the media, the Internet, especially social media, and even friends, promoting such ideas among both sexes.

From a psychological point of view, most of the ideas instilled by parents, colleagues, or school, or through what is circulated on social media, will give indications to the individual that they are correct in their adherence, knowing that they are wrong and illogical ideas, especially among students studying in the third year of secondary school, given that they are going through a very sensitive age for both. Gender and the pressures resulting from achieving success in the baccalaureate degree. They also live in almost the same conditions, whether inside or outside educational institutions, that is, in society, especially the constant interaction and communication between males and females.

**Conclusion:**

From what we have obtained, we can suggest the necessity of conducting numerous studies on the rates of spread of irrational thoughts, which will help in implementing a set of plans and treatment programs that are

It is appropriate to reduce the rates of its spread, with the need to point out the danger of adopting irrational ideas and false beliefs, from childhood all the way to adolescence, which is considered one of the most important stages in which individuals' attitudes are formed. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to students in the educational environment and follow them up until they have sound and correct ideas, with the necessity of providing standards. It has high credibility. We also suggest conducting other studies to study rational and irrational thoughts and their relationship to decision-making and to study the effectiveness of a rational-emotive counseling program to refute irrational thinking among secondary and university student

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