



Irrational Thoughts and Their Relationship to the Body Image Among An-Najah National University Students in Light of COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract. This study aimed to identify the level of irrational thought and its relationship with body image among Ann-Najah National University students in light of COVID-19 pandemic, the study sample consisted of (102) students. In order to collect the data, the irrational thought Scale Al-Rihani (1985) was used and The Body Image Scale which prepared by Abdel-Nabi (2010), The results showed that the arithmetic average for the study sample on the irrational thought scale was high, and the arithmetic average for the body image scale was average grade and it shows a statistically significant positive direct correlation between irrational thought and body image.

Keywords: Irrational thought · Body image · University students

1 Introduction and Theoretical Framework

In late 2019, the release of COVID-19 pandemic was linked to health systems crisis and emerging economies it often parallels with the world diffusion of conflicting information about COVID-19, which WHO must sit it as a pandemic (Munich Security Conference, 2021).

Perhaps thinking of it as the highest level of knowledge as its weight is a necessity for the existence and continuity of the individual's existence and not just a tool for measuring human progress only, in addition to the fact that thinking plays a fundamental and important role in helping individuals to agree with those who are around them (Al-Moalem & Miqdad, 2020).

Studies confirmed that all rational and cognitive theories in psychotherapy agree with the basic assumption that irrational operations are the causes of psychological problems, and the best way to get rid of these problems is to modify the thinking processes behind them. At the same time, Craig Head considers that both Ellis and Beck are the most important influencers in cognitive behavioural therapy, As for Corsini points for the importance of beliefs, irrational thoughts, and emotional disorders, (Yasin and Al-shawi 2016).

Irrational thought for the individuals linked with their behaviours and their psychological, social, and physical compatibility, The behaviour of individuals, whether negative or positive, is determined by these thoughts. Ellis has been selected eleven ideas that have been considered in his theory as Irrational, superstitious and meaningless thoughts. However, as he says, it is common and imprinted in people's minds, it inevitably leads to the spread of neurosis, all ideas begin with necessity or indicate idealism, and past experiences and events determine current behaviour, the influence of the past cannot be ignored or hidden, one should be upset or sad about the misfortunes that happen to the other. These thoughts affect the life of the individual and build his personality. It may also play a role in his psychological variables (Al-Madani 2018).

As for the body image, which drops within the psychological variables that play an important role in building the personality of individuals of different ages, and which are related to how the individual understands it, the body image is a mixture of several components and is formed through interaction among them, and these components are represented in three, the first is the cognitive component or the perceptual, which is related to how much the individual's appreciation the size and shape of his body, and the second component is the sentimental (emotional), which expresses our feelings, thoughts and attitudes about our bodies, and the third component is the (behavioural) component, which refers to repeated interactions and behaviours that express a desire to repeat situations that make us feel comfortable around our bodies, or avoiding those that make us feel uncomfortable around our bodies (Al-Qadi 2009).

This is related to the concept of satisfaction with the body among individuals with their achievement, happiness in life in general, and their special way of thinking, that the image of the body is "the image or mental image that a person has about his own body while resting or in motion at any moment, and it is derived from subconscious sensations, changes in the body, contact with people and things outside, emotional experiences, fantasies and thoughts. (Abu Shaar, 2017:22)".

In other words, the body image is the mental image that the individual forms about his body, including the physical, functional and intellectual characteristics, and his attitude towards them, and the body image comes from conscious and unconscious sources, and constitutes an essential component in the individual's concept of himself, which constitutes several ideas about the body which reflected as behaviours, such as concerns about body weight and shape, especially among girls, and interest in losing weight and thinness, in addition to giving attention to body shape and consistency, clothes and general appearance, and how others see them. Such behaviours may turn into exaggeration and may lead to other problems (Al-Moallem and Miqdad, 2020).

From the above, it has been shown that the adopted ideas from the individual may affect his personality, his life in general and may play an important role in psychological and social aspects, and from these aspects the issue of body image Hence, this study came to reveal the relationship between irrational thoughts and body image among An-Najah National University students, since this age of group contemporary youth is clearly interested and pays more attention to the shape of the face and body in general, in line with what the century is witnessing of publishing pictures of celebrities, the impact of this group on them and their desire to reach what these personalities have achieved.

1.1 Study Statement

The Corona pandemic considers a great challenge to mental health, as this epidemic poses a threat to individual health and their loved ones, and it has a significant impact on important aspects of their lives such as the social and economic aspects, as the conditions of closure which imposed by the widespread of the emerging virus led to a change in the general way of thinking among the people, including university students, became more afraid and worried about their health, their lives and their general appearance if they were infected with the disease directly or indirectly.

This study brings to address an important issue related to psychological variables of importance to students, which is to identify the relationship between irrational thoughts and body image in light of the Corona pandemic, which may be of great importance at the university student phase. In light of the psychological tradition related to the study of irrational ideas adopted by the individual, irrational ideas may play an important and effective role in the individual's negative experience, including poor time management, especially in the university education stage. The problem of the study focuses on answering the main question of the following:

What is the relationship between irrational thoughts and body image among An-Najah National University students in light of the Corona pandemic?

The following sub-questions are derived from it:

1. What is the level of irrational thoughts among An-Najah National University students in light of the Corona pandemic?
2. What is the level of body image among An-Najah National University students in light of the Corona pandemic?

1.2 Terminology of Study

Irrational Thoughts: "Ellis" defines them as negative, illogical, and unrealistic thoughts that are characterized by the subjectivity that is affected by personal desires, based on false expectations and generalizations and a mixture of speculation, probability, and exaggeration, and do not agree with the individual's realistic capabilities (Kilani, 2021:19), The study defines irrational thoughts procedurally as the degree to which the respondent obtains on the scale of irrational thoughts which used in the study.

Body Image: It defined as "a person's thoughts, perception and attitude towards his personal appearance, which is how a person sees himself and how he feels about his body shape when looking in the mirror" (Al-Qadi 2009:17), The study defines Body image thoughts procedurally as the degree to which the respondent obtains on the scale of body image which used in the study.

Corona Pandemic (Covid-19): is a family of viruses that may cause illness in animals and humans and cause respiratory disease in humans, ranging in severity from a common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). and is characterized by its rapid spread (WHO 2020).

2 Methods of the Study

The descriptive correlational approach was used in data collection, The study population consisted of all students enrolled in the first semester of the year 2022, which reach 23,000 male and female students, and the sample was chosen by the accessible method, consisting of 102 students.

2.1 Instruments of the Study

The scale of irrational thoughts, which was developed by Al-Rihani (1985), the Jordanian standardized version, and the scale consists of (52) paragraphs, which aims to measure the irrational thoughts of university students. The paragraphs' correlation coefficients with the total score of the scale ranged between (33.-72.), all items were statistically significant, and the stability of the scale was confirmed, as the value of the stability coefficient of Cronbach's alpha was acceptable in all dimensions of the scale, as it came in varying degrees between dimensions, and ranged between (0.60 - 0.70) For each dimension, which indicates the stability of the tool and its suitability for use.

The Body Image Scale was prepared by Abdel-Nabi (2010), and this scale consists of (27) paragraphs. The validity of the scale was verified by calculating the construction validity (the internal consistency of the scale), and the paragraphs that were deleted are (1/5/7/16/. 22/26/27) of the scale because it is not statistically significant to the total score of the scale, and Cronbach's alpha stability coefficient for the scale paragraphs was high and appropriate, which reached (0.904).

3 Results and Discussion

- “What is the relationship between irrational thoughts and body image among An-Najah National University students in the light of the Corona pandemic?”

To answer the question, the Pearson Correlation coefficient was elicitation to reveal the relationship or not between irrational thoughts and body image.

Table 1 shows that there is a direct, statistically significant, correlation at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) between irrational thoughts and body image, and between some ideas and body image, where there was a relationship between the eighth irrational idea which states: “The person must be dependent on others/and there must be someone who is stronger than him in order to depend on him.” And the body image, where the correlation coefficient was (0.360**) and this means that there is a statistically significant and positive directional correlation. The owners of this idea may tend not to carry out the tasks that required to them, which may push them not to carry out their responsibilities and rely on others (Al-Moallem and Miqdad, 2020). This may be due to the fact that individuals who have a high score about body image form a high image, and this may contribute to explaining the above result.

There is also a relationship between the ninth irrational idea, which states that “past experiences and events determine the present behaviour, and that the influence of the past cannot be ignored or erased” and the body image, where the correlation coefficient

Table 1. Pearson correlation to reveal the relationship between irrational thoughts and body image

| | Body image | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|------------|--------------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Body image | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | -.111 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | .108 | .296 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | -.086 | .256 | .425 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | .057 | .504 | .190 | .426 | 1.000 | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | .181 | .198 | .360 | .390 | .367 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | .164 | .161 | .307 | .480 | .239 | .444 | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| 7 | .125 | .221 | .258 | .240 | .396 | .349 | .243 | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| 8 | .360* | .108 | .159 | .137 | .202 | .158 | .256 | .133 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| 9 | .296* | .252 | .295 | .236 | .165 | .334 | .291 | .218 | .148 | 1.00 | | | | |
| 10 | .160 | .265 | .179 | .223 | .353 | .273 | .344 | .370 | .247 | .193 | 1.00 | | | |
| 11 | .024 | .345 | .248 | .345 | .338 | .474 | .517 | .326 | .143 | .163 | .396 | 1.00 | | |
| 12 | .275* | .231 | .187 | .371 | .291 | .262 | .406 | .271 | .207 | .393 | .396 | .322 | 1.00 | |
| 13 | .218* | .111 | .260 | .040 | .038 | .314 | .288 | .226 | .189 | .140 | .298 | .306 | .282 | 1.00 |

* at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) ** at the significance level ($0.01 = \alpha$)

is (0.296**). Those who hold this idea believe that the past is an essential thing that can never be ignored, while individuals consider that the body image is cumulative and results from the past and the present, and is formed during all the stages that the individual goes through, as the past experiences that may relate to the social view and the experiences of the individual during the development and changing shape of the individual this may play a role in the body image, As the shape changes over time and according to age.

The results also showed a correlation between the twelfth idea, which states: “A person should be formal and serious in his dealings with others in order to have a value or a respectable position among people” and the body image, where the correlation coefficient reached (0.275**), and finally there is a positive relationship correlation between the thirteenth idea, which states: “There is no doubt that the men position is the most important in his relationship with the woman” and the body image, where the correlation coefficient between them is (0.213**). It is expected that this result is due to the nature of the intellectual formation of women and men and how to interpret the surrounding matters, and since the owners of this idea believe that males are more important, therefore, the source of this belief may be due to psychological, social and other factors and may also be related to the way they interpret the body image.

– “What is the level of spread of irrational thoughts among An-Najah National University students in light of the Corona pandemic?”

the mean, standard deviations, and ratios of the scale of irrational thoughts among the students of An-Najah National University were calculated. Table 2 shows this:

Table 2. t-test on one-sample test for the difference between the average sample and the average hypothetical community of irrational ideas (n = 102).

| Irrational thoughts | M | % | SD | P | (T) | Degree |
|---------------------|------|-------|------|------|------|--------|
| First | 3.77 | 75.4% | .647 | .000 | 12.1 | high |
| Second | 3.82 | 76.4% | .506 | .000 | 16.5 | high |
| Third | 3.86 | 77.2% | .573 | .000 | 15.2 | high |
| Forth | 3.74 | 75.0% | .659 | .000 | 11.4 | high |
| Fifth | 3.77 | 75.4% | .559 | .000 | 14.0 | high |
| Sixth | 3.75 | 75.0% | .514 | .000 | 14.8 | high |
| Seventh | 3.74 | 75.0% | .558 | .000 | 13.4 | high |
| Eight | 3.67 | 74.8% | .542 | .000 | 12.5 | high |
| Ninth | 3.47 | 69.4% | .596 | .000 | 7.97 | high |
| Tenth | 3.52 | 70.4% | .587 | .000 | 9.02 | high |
| Eleventh | 3.79 | 75.8% | .578 | .000 | 13.8 | high |
| Twelfth | 3.56 | 71.2% | .575 | .000 | 9.89 | high |
| Thirteenth | 3.53 | 70.6% | .546 | .000 | 9.91 | high |

* at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) ** at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.01$)

The results showed that all irrational thoughts ranged between (3.47 to 3.86), as the third irrational **thought** was the highest degree among the irrational thoughts and came with an average higher than the hypothetical average and it was somewhat high and amounted to (3.86), followed by the second **thought** with an average of (3.82).), then the eleventh **thought** with an average of (3.79), then the fifth and the first, and the average for each of them was (3.77), and the seventh and fourth **thought** reached an average of (3.74), while the ninth **thought**, which averaged (3.47), was the lowest among the irrational thoughts, But it is also high, and this result can be explained by the fact that university students, especially during the current stage, and the difficult circumstances they have gone through as a result of all the difficulties that the world has been exposed to resulting from the Corona pandemic, such as quarantine, e-learning and other circumstances, has caused them a lack of self-confidence. Weakness in emotional stability. The current study agreed with a conclusion with the findings of each study: (Al-Anari 2018). While the results of the current study differed from the study of (Chan and Sun 2019; Abdullah and Hussein 2019; Al-Madani 2018; Al-Miqati and Shaheen 2019).

– “What is the level of body image concept among students of An-Najah National University?”

Table 3. One-sample t-test for body image (n = 102)

| | M | % | SD | P | T | Degree |
|------------|------|-------|------|------|-------|--------|
| Body image | 2.97 | 55.8% | .625 | .000 | -0.50 | Medium |

Table 3 showed that the level of body image among students of An-National University was statistically significant, at the level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$), for the overall level of body image concept level, where the value of the level of significance (0.00), and the average calculation of the responses of the sample members was average (2.97). Thus, the concept of body image in the sample was low. This may be because the concept of body image is a vital part of our sense of self, as it is linked to our self-esteem, social and family relationships, and affects many social factors. Under the light of quarantine conditions, as well as the lack of social relations, particularly among colleagues, university students have suffered from some of the social problems caused by the corona, which may play a role in explaining this result. This result agreed with the findings of each study (Al-Ashram, 2008; Al-Azzawi, 2005). While this result differed from the findings of a study (Karim and Khamis 2017).

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