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Irrational Beliefs in Parenting Behaviors: Comparison of Turkish and Syrian Parents

Ali ÇEKİÇ¹, Ülkü PAKSAL-ÇETİN², Ahmet BUĞA³

¹Gaziantep University, Faculty of Education, Gaziantep, Turkey  0000-0002-7893-268X

²Minister of National Education, Gaziantep, Turkey  0000-0003-4118-0688

³Gaziantep University, Faculty of Education, Gaziantep, Turkey  0000-0002-9598-2451

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the irrational beliefs of Turkish and Syrian parents about parenting behaviors. The study was conducted with 22 mothers and eight fathers whose children are in kindergarten. Content analysis method was used for the analysis of the data acquired within the scope of the study. Four different cases were presented to the mothers and fathers in the study that they can encounter while raising their children. They were asked questions on their beliefs, emotions, and behaviors when faced with these circumstances. The first result obtained from the study findings is that the mothers made more irrational evaluations in all four scenarios than the fathers. Another finding from the study is the similarity of responses to all scenarios from Turkish and Syrian mothers. In summary, in line with the ranking of gender inequality in Turkey, fathers may have identified with a more masculine role and therefore tend not to see themselves as responsible for the care, upbringing and possible problems related to their children.

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Keywords:

Parenting, irrational beliefs, qualitative method.

1. Introduction

Being a parent is one of the most important and challenging responsibilities that an individual undertakes during his/her life. Throughout history, parents have strived to improve themselves in issues such as how to be a better parent or how to raise their children. The first practices related to interfamilial relations and the responsibilities of parents date back to Sumerian texts. As in many communities, the primary responsibility for the child's upbringing and development was given to the mother (Oktay, 2011). Although this is still largely true today, it should be noted that women's better access to education, their participation in professional life and the growing awareness of gender equality in society have led to fathers taking on more responsibility in raising children and contributing to their children's development together with their mothers..

Parenting behaviors that make up the source of the attitudes and behaviors of the parents concerning raising their children are fed from different resources. According to Grusec and Danyluk (2014), three primary resources affect parents' behaviours. First is the behavior of their parents. Books, websites, formal or informal advice make up the second resource. Whereas the third and the most effective resource, regardless of whether parents are aware of it is the active beliefs throughout parenting. The beliefs of parents on parenting are mostly made up of their personal experiences. These experiences of the parents are also significantly affected by the cultural values they were born into and raised in (Goodnow, 1988).

¹ Corresponding author's address: Gaziantep University, Faculty of Education, Gaziantep, Turkey
e-mail: alicekic79@gmail.com

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As is the case in many areas of human life, the beliefs that impact our attitudes and behaviors related to parenting are assumptions of individuals with regard to the presence or absence of certain things. For parents, these beliefs may be at two opposite poles with varying certainty or levels such as whether the child is hardworking or not (Hirsjarvi& Perala-Littunen, 2001).

Founder of Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy Albert Ellis states that individuals believe in all circumstances or events they encounter. According to REBT, these beliefs may display rational or irrational characteristics. Rational beliefs are flexible, logical and scientific. They help individuals overcome the problems they are faced with while also preserving their mental health (Sharf, 2014). This is also true for parents. A father whose son received a low grade from an exam may see the reasons and solutions of the problem more easily when he has the belief that, "My son did not study enough, he needs to study more". However, it may be much more difficult to come up with a solution if in the same situation, the father has the belief that, "My son is lazy. He laid around all year and never studied".

Furthermore, the irrational beliefs of parents are somehow passed on to their children as well. As an example, Jonhson (2010) put forth proof that certain irrational beliefs are passed down to children from their parents. Azizia and Besharat (2011) observed that the irrational perfectionist characteristics of parents affect their children, leading them to display perfectionist behaviors themselves.

According to Ellis and Harper (2005), this is due to the fact that their parents influence children as role models. Because REBT asserts that the important people in the lives of children play a critical role in acquiring irrational beliefs (Corey, 2015), irrational beliefs acquired in this manner may be transferred into a rule by the individual. Thus, the irrational ways of thinking of the parents have adverse impacts on their children and themselves.

Children oriented practices of Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy lead to positive impacts in different areas such as anxiety, destructive behaviors, academic success and self-concept. The positive effects of REBT in these areas are observed more frequently in children than in adolescents (Gonzalez, et al., 2004). It was observed as a result of a meta-analysis study on the practices of Rational Emotive Education as a psycho-education procedure based on REBT principles that RET played an effective role in decreasing nonfunctional behaviors and negative emotions as well as in leading the participants to make positive inferences. Moreover, this has been observed more frequently in children and adolescents compared with adults (Trip, Vernon and McMahon, 2007). Based on the results of both studies, it can be said that helping children acquire rational thinking skills leads to more effective and beneficial results compared with adolescents and adults. Such psycho-education or therapy practices may be used to help children acquire rational thinking skills, but parents' behaviours are also among the most effective methods.

As can be understood from previous studies, parents somehow pass down their irrational beliefs to their children. However, the irrational beliefs of parents also affect their own parenting behaviors thus determining their communication, attitudes and behaviors towards their children. Putting forth the reasons underlying the behaviors that parents display in their roles of parenthood and comparing the results concerning gender and culture will positively contribute to a better understanding of parental behaviors. For this purpose, the present study aimed to determine the parenthood beliefs considered to lead parental behaviors and to put forth the rational and irrational aspects of these beliefs concerning REBT. The impacts of gender, or being a mother or a father, and the impacts of the education level and the cultural values were also taken into consideration comparatively while putting forth these factors. For this purpose, answers were sought for the following questions within the scope of the present study:

1. Does the state of rationality or irrationality of the beliefs that guide parental behaviors differ in mothers and fathers?
2. Does the state of rationality or irrationality of the beliefs that guide parental behaviors differ concerning culture?

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Model

Phenomenology from among the qualitative research patterns was used in the present study to examine the reactions to different situations of mothers and fathers as parents and to put forth the beliefs that are among

the most important concepts of the cognitive processes underlying these reactions. The phenomenology pattern focuses on phenomena that we are aware of but do not have an in-depth understanding on (Yıldırım&Şimşek, 2011). As an example, REBT asserts that beliefs are the underlying reasons for the reactions of individuals against the events or circumstances they encounter (Corey, 2015). This study will how the relationship between beliefs, emotions, and behaviors influences parents and how they are reflected in child upbringing behaviors. The pattern of phenomenology lays down a suitable foundation for such concepts that are familiar but not fully understood.

2.2. Research Sample

The study group composed of 22 mothers and eight fathers whose children were continuing their education in a private kindergarten in the city center of Gaziantep province. Ten of the mothers were Turkish nationals and 12 were Syrian nationals. The duration of the Syrian mothers' immigration to Turkey and the length of their stay in Turkey varied between 5 and 8 years. All fathers were Turkish citizens. The parents in the study group were living with their children. The qualitative data acquired from the parents during face-to-face interviews conducted by their preschool teachers were classified in themes predetermined by experts and frequencies were provided for each question. Information on the participant's number, age and education level was provided as an explanation in parentheses after the mothers' responses (e.g.; F1, 30, Primary School). Table 1 presents the demographic data for the study group.

Table 1. Demographic Data of the Participants

Nationality		Parenting Status		Education Level		Mean age			
n	%	n	%	N	%				
Turkey	18	Mother	10	55	Primary School	4	40	29,1	
					High school	3	30		
					University	3	30		
		Father	8	45	Primary School	4	50		32
					High school	2	25		
					University	2	25		
Syria	12	Mother	12	100	Primary School	6	50	30,2	
					High school	3	25		
					University	3	25		

The majority of the participants are comprised of Turkish parents. The primary reason for this is the inability to contact Syrian fathers. About half of the participants are primary school graduates. The numbers of high school and university graduates were equal. The mean age of the participants was 30,3.

2.3. Data Collection Tools and Procedure

Four different scenarios related to their children were provided to the parents within the scope of the study. These scenarios are comprised of events that can take place in the daily lives of the parents and their children at different areas of their lives. The scenarios include events that can frequently occur at different areas such as home, school, park and market where they spend time and communicate with their children. The researcher prepared the research questions regarding the related literature, and expert opinions were taken on the questions afterwards. Questions on their opinions, emotions, and behaviors regarding the four different scenarios were asked to the parents and audio recordings of the responses were taken. The scenarios and questions used in the present study are as follows:

Scenario 1: "Your son/daughter is playing in the park. And you are sitting on the sidelines watching. You avert your gaze for a moment and notice that your child has climbed to the top of the slide." In such an instant;

- a. What would be the first thing that comes to your mind? What would you think?
- b. What would you feel? What would be your emotions?
- c. How would you act? What would you do?

2nd Scenario: "The teacher of your son/daughter called you to school and told you that your child cannot get along with his/her friends. The teacher said that he/she hits his/her friends harming them. The teacher also told you that this behavior has been going on for some time, despite several admonitions, and that today your

child threw the toy they were fighting over, splitting the other child's eyebrows. The teacher also told you that he/she has spoken with the school's mental health counselor and that it would be best for your child to seek treatment from a psychiatrist."In such an instant;

- a. What would be the first thing that comes to your mind? What would you think?
- b. What would you feel? What would be your emotions?
- c. How would you act? What would you do?

3rd Scenario: "You went to the market for shopping with your son/daughter. Even though you told him/her that he/she can buy only one thing, your son/daughter asked for more. When you told him/her that he/she can only buy one thing, he/she started crying and banging on the floor."

In such an instant;

- a. What would be the first thing that comes to your mind? What would you think?
- b. What would you feel? What would be your emotions?
- c. How would you act? What would you do?

4th Scenario: "You set the table for dinner and sat down for dinner. Your son/daughter said he/she will not eat dinner. Because he/she did not like it."

In such an instant;

- a. What would be the first thing that comes to your mind? What would you think?
- b. What would you feel? What would be your emotions?
- c. How would you act? What would you do?

The study was conducted with 22 mothers and eight fathers whose children are in kindergarten. Content analysis method was used for the analysis of the data acquired within the scope of the study. Four different cases were presented to the mothers and fathers during the study that they can encounter while raising their children. They were asked questions on their beliefs, emotions, and behaviors when faced with these circumstances. Mothers and fathers were informed about the study, after which parent volunteers were invited to the school and their consent was obtained. Questions were asked face-to-face to the mothers and fathers by the preschool teachers during the agreed time and their responses were audio-recorded for further analysis. The data acquired within the scope of the study were evaluated by two different experts and themes were determined in accordance with REBT. According to REBT, while individuals' beliefs in themselves, other people and life can be harsh and exaggerated, they may also display flexible and unexaggerated aspects. Accordingly, if the individual has strict and excessive thoughts, this style of thinking also leads to three irrational forms of evaluation (Dryden and Neenan, 2004; Dryden, 2012):

1. Catastrophizing Beliefs: Evaluation of a situation much worse than it actually is.
2. Low Frustration Tolerance Beliefs: Individual's belief that he/she will not be happy in case undesired circumstances arise.
3. Devaluation Beliefs: The individual devaluating himself/herself, others and life.
4. Rational Beliefs: Flexible and unexaggerated beliefs are not catastrophizing and have a high frustration tolerance.

2.4. Data Analysis

The contents were then assessed separately by two experts and placed inside the determined themes. Inter-judge reliability coefficients for these two assessments were calculated using the following formula suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994):

$$\text{Reliability} = \frac{\text{Number of Agreements}}{\text{Total Number of Agreements+Disagreements}}$$

Inter-judge reliability values above .70 seem to be sufficient for the reliability of the assessments made (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Table 2 presents the inter-judge reliability values obtained within the scope of the present study.

Table 2. *Inter-judge Reliability Coefficients Obtained for the Study Questions*

Items	1	2	3	4
Reliability Coefficient	0,87	0,80	0,80	0,87

The reliability coefficients obtained from the assessments made by two different experts can be interpreted to indicate that the data acquired during the study are sufficient.

2.5. Ethical

The study first obtained the necessary permissions from the preschool institutions for data collection. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, its voluntary nature, and the confidentiality of personal data. They were also informed that the audio recordings of the parents' responses to the qualitative interview form would not be used; only the statements they made while maintaining their personal information would be included in the study.

3. Results

The data acquired during the study were categorized as the beliefs of Turkish mothers, Turkish fathers and Syrian mothers for each scenario and presented below.

Table 3. *Opinions of Turkish Mothers Related to the First Scenario*

Categories	N	Opinions of the mothers
Catastrophizing	7	I would instantly think that he/she will fall. I would think, what if we cannot make it on time to the hospital when he/she falls. I would stand up right away to try to take him/her down. (F1, 28, High School)*
Rational Evaluation	3	I would be scared. I would think that something will happen and he/she will get hurt. I would tell him/her that he/she can fall and hurt himself/herself and I would warn him/her to be more cautious (F5, 27, University)*

The majority of the Turkish mothers used the catastrophizing beliefs as expressed by REBT when reacting to the scenario. At the same time, three of the mothers made a more rational assessment indicating that they would react. When considered a percentage, 70 % of the Turkish mothers evaluated the first scenario irrationally, which is considered a catastrophe and reacted accordingly. While 30 % perceived the situation more realistically without exaggerating it in a positive or negative sense, accepted the situation and reacted accordingly.

Table 4. *Opinions of Turkish Fathers Related to the First Scenario*

Categories	N	Opinions of the fathers
Catastrophizing	4	I would feel bad, I would panic. I would think, what if he/she falls and something happens. I would immediately rush to his/her side, take him/her down and tell him/her to never do that again. (F11, 29, Primary school)
Rational Evaluation	4	I would think that he/she has grown up. I would perhaps feel a bit anxious but I would still feel happy that he/she has grown up. I would think, "Can he/she fall down?" but we are at the park right, he/she has not climbed on a window ledge. I wouldn't panic a lot. I would tell him/her to be more cautious. (F17,31, University)

The responses to the first scenario of the Turkish fathers were equally divided into the two categories of catastrophizing and rational evaluation. This indicates that half of the fathers considered the situation as a catastrophe and acted accordingly. In contrast, the other half considered the situation more rationally and responded that they would react accordingly.

Table 5. *Opinions of Syrian Mothers on the First Scenario*

Categories	N	Opinions of the mothers
Catastrophizing	8	I would be scared that he/she may fall. What would I do if something happened, if he/she fell, get injured, or worse... I cannot bear that. I would run there and take him/her down. (F23, 26, High School)
Rational Evaluation	4	Of course I would be scared a bit. I would consider going there and helping him/her. I would not go if there isn't anything too dangerous and I would advise him/her to be more cautious. (F21, 27, High School)

It can be stated based on the evaluation of the responses of Syrian mothers to the first scenario that the majority include erroneous cognitive assessments. Eight of the mothers perceived the situation as a catastrophe, while four mothers evaluated the situation more rationally and stated that they would react accordingly. A total of 7 mothers corresponding to 66 % evaluated the situation more rationally. It did not distort it, while 33,3 % perceived the situation to be more negative than considering it a catastrophe.

Table 6. *Opinions of Turkish Mothers on the Second Scenario*

Categories	N	Opinions of the mothers
Devaluation	7	I would feel very bad. I would think about my own mistakes. I would think, What am I doing wrong? Why is this so? I would try to find out why my child is acting this way. I would speak with my spouse and try to find out our mistakes. I would go to the psychiatrist as soon as possible. (F9, 32, University)
Rational Evaluation	2	This is actually how he/she always acts, my child always quarrels with his/her friends. I would consider taking him/her to the psychiatrist but he/she is just a child. I would act calmly. (F1, 28, High School)
Low Frustration Tolerance	1	I would feel very bad, indeed I would cry. I would ask him/her why he/she acted like this after talking to him/her with his/her father. I would take him/her to the psychiatrist. (F7,28,High School)

When the mothers' responses to the second scenario were evaluated, it was observed that while eight mothers distorted the situation, two of the mothers indicated that they would react after a more realistic evaluation of the situation. Seven of those who distorted the situation and made a more negative evaluation resorted to devaluation ideas, while one of the mothers responded catastrophically. The percentages of the Turkish mothers' responses to the second scenario showed that the responses of 80% of the mothers included irrational evaluations, while only 20% made rational evaluations and did not perceive the situation as worse than it actually is.,

Table 7. *Opinions of Turkish Fathers on the Second Scenario*

Categories	N	Opinions of the fathers
Rational Evaluation	5	Of course I would feel sad. I would make a self-criticism as a parent. I would talk to the child and state that what he/she has done is not right. I would treat him/her more calmly at home and ask him/her to do the same. (F13,32, Primary School)
Low Frustration Tolerance	3	I would feel very bad and anxious for my child. I would think why my child is like this. I would immediately talk to my child and take him/her to the psychologist. (F11, 28, Primary School)

Rationality was in the majority with five fathers among the evaluations of Turkish fathers regarding the second scenario. In contrast, three fathers made a negative evaluation based on low frustration tolerance and could not assess the given scenario rationally. Concerning percentages, 62,5 % realistically evaluated the given scenario and reacted accordingly, while 37,5 % considered the scenario negatively indicating that it would make them unhappy.

When the responses of Syrian mothers to the second scenario were examined, only three mothers stated that they would evaluate the situation with a realistic perspective and would react accordingly. Four of the remaining nine mothers indicated that they would not be happy at all in such a case, three estimated the situation to be worse than it is, stating that they would consider it a disaster, while two indicated that they

would question their parenting skills and devalue themselves in such a scenario. The percentages show that 25% of the mothers evaluated the situation rationally and 75% irrationally..

Table 8. *Opinions of Syrian mothers on the second scenario*

Categories	N	Opinions of the mothers
Low Frustration Tolerance	4	Of course I would feel despondent. I would think why this is happening. I would think about how I can help my child. I would ask help from specialists and I would of course take my child to a psychologist. (F20, 34, Primary School)
Rational Evaluation	3	I would feel slightly sad but we also used to argue sometimes as a child. I would consider it as something that may happen. Nothing important if it doesn't happen very frequently. If it's the first time I would talk to my child and if it takes place frequently I may take them to a doctor. (F21, 27, High School)
Catastrophizing	3	I would feel bad for him/her, it wouldn't be nice for him/her to be an aggressive person. No one would like or befriend him/her. I would think that there is a problem. He/she might have an issue. I may take him/her to a psychiatrist. (F23, 26, High School)
Devaluation	2	I would feel sad and ashamed. I would think that I failed to give the proper education. I would warn my child not to do this again. I would go to a specialist and ask for help. I would ask the specialist what I should do and what I did wrong. (F25, 27, High School)

Table 9. *Opinions of Turkish Mothers on the Third Scenario*

Categories	N	Opinions of mothers
Rational Evaluation	4	This is something that always happens, and they do not come out without getting what they want. I would ask my child to settle with what I bought. He/she may cry. There is nothing to do about it. (F1, 28, High School)
Low Frustration Tolerance	4	I would feel embarrassed in the crowd. I would convince my daughter and tell her that what she did is a "shame". I would try not to buy it but I generally do so in order to make her stop. (F8, 31, Primary School)
Devaluation	2	I would feel sad of course and I would get angry. I would question why he/she is doing something like this. I would try to find the middle path without offending him/her in public. (F4, 32, High School)

Four mothers rationalised the third scenario, whereas six mothers stated that they would be very happy in such a scenario or that they would question their own self-worth. In other words, it was observed that the reactions of 60 % of Turkish mothers included irrational evaluations with the reactions of the remaining 40 % including rational evaluations.

Table 10. *Opinions of Turkish Fathers on the Third Scenario*

Categories	N	Opinions of fathers
Rational Evaluation	5	I would perhaps feel slightly sad, or in other words I would get angry. But if we talked about this before and if I said that I will not buy anything else I will not buy anything else. I will talk to my child but I would not buy something just because he/she cried. (F12, 34, Primary School)
Low Frustration Tolerance	3	I would get mad and I would feel sad. I would take my child home right away. I would leave the market. I would tell him/her that I will never take him/her to the market if he/she does this again. (F18, 30, Primary School)

The majority of Turkish fathers indicated that they would evaluate the third scenario realistically and respond rationally. Three fathers gave an irrational evaluation, saying that they would not be happy at all in such a situation. Thus, when examining the fathers' responses to the third scenario, it can be seen that 62.5% contain rational opinions and 37.5% contain irrational opinions.

Table 11. *Opinions of Syrian Mothers on the Third Scenario*

Categories	Opinions of mothers
Rational Evaluation	I would not feel too much. I would think that he/she is just a child, children may cry. I generally talk to him/her before we go out and tell him/her what I will or will not buy. I would not do anything else. (F25, 27, High School)
Low Frustration Tolerance	I would get angry and I would feel sad. I would think that I have to go home right away because I would feel ashamed in front of all the people around us. I would not buy what he/she wants and I would punish him/her. I would never take him/her to the market unless I have to do so. (F23, 26, High School)

When the responses of the Syrian mothers to the third scenario were examined, six mothers, or in other words, half of the group, made rational evaluations. In contrast, the other half made irrational evaluations by indicating that they would feel unhappy in such a situation.

Table 12. *Opinions of Turkish Mothers on the Fourth Scenario*

Categories	N	Opinions of the mothers
Rational Evaluation	5	I would ask him/her why he/she is not eating. I would act normal, I mean I would not get angry. I would try to make him/her like the food and eat it. I would talk to him/her and say that he/she has to eat it even if only a few spoons. (F8, 31, Primary School)
Low Frustration Tolerance	3	I would get angry. I would feel sad. I would want to ask why he/she does not like it. I would not do anything, what can I do anyway? (F2, 29, Primary School)
Devaluation	2	Why didn't he/she like this food? Isn't it good? Should I cook something else? I am always indecisive in such situations. I feel sad. I would not force him/her to eat it but I would feel sad. (F10, 25, Primary School)

When the Turkish mothers' responses to the fourth scenario were examined, five mothers, or in other words 50 % of the Turkish mothers who took part in the study, said they would evaluate the situation rationally and not perceive it as worse than it already is. Three out of the remaining five Turkish mothers stated that they do not want to face such a situation at all and that they would feel sad if they actually did. Two mothers indicated that they would question their parenting skills and feel worthless in such a scenario.

Table 13. *Opinions of Turkish Fathers on the Fourth Scenario*

Categories	N	Opinions of the fathers
Rational evaluation	5	I would feel normal. Everyone has foods they do not like. So I would think it is normal. If he/she does not eat it because he/she really does not like it I would not insist and instead give him/her something else. (F14, 35, University)
Low Frustration Tolerance	3	I would get worried and wonder if he/she is sick. I would think why he/she is doing something like this. I would cook something else because otherwise he/she would cry and feel sad. I cannot bear that. (F16, 35, High School)

Majority of the Turkish fathers made a rational evaluation for the fourth scenario, while the number of fathers with low frustration tolerance was lower. In other words, 62,5 % of the fathers accepted this situation with a realistic perspective and 37,5 % made an irrational evaluation of the scenario considering it as worse than it actually is.

Half of the Syrian mothers evaluated the situation rationally. Of the Syrian mothers, 33,3 % stated that they would evaluate the situation as unacceptable or unbearable, thus giving reactions with low frustration tolerance, while 16,6 % said they would perceive the situation as worse than it is thus reacting in a catastrophizing manner.

Table 14. *Opinions of Syrian Mothers on the Fourth Scenario*

Categories	N	Opinions of the mothers
Rational Evaluation	6	I would feel somewhat sad but not a lot. I would try to convince him/her to eat. I would tell him/her that he/she needs to eat even if only a little bit. For example, I would tell him/her to help me while cooking and so he/she would learn what is inside the dish. Perhaps it would be easier for him/her to eat it if he/she cooks it himself/herself. (F24, 26, University)
Low Frustration Tolerance	4	I would get angry but I would still not push him/her too much. I would think why this is the case and when will all these problems end. I would give him/her something else to eat in order to avoid problems. (F25, 27, High School)
Catastrophizing	2	I would feel sad. I would think that he/she will get sick. I would never want anything to happen to him/her. I would cook whatever he/she wants. (F23, 26, High School)

4. Conclusion and Discussion

The first finding of the study is that mothers gave more irrational evaluations compared to fathers in all four scenarios. While the proportion of rational opinions in the mothers' responses ranged from 70% to 50%, the proportion of irrational opinions in the fathers' responses varied from 50% to 37.5%. From these results, it can be concluded that the mothers' responses in all four scenarios contain more irrational valuations than the fathers' responses. There are studies in the literature that irrational beliefs vary according to gender (Balkis& Duru, 2020). However, according to Coleman&Ganong (1987), irrational beliefs are related to gender roles rather than gender. It has been observed that individuals who have adopted the female gender role have more irrational beliefs than individuals who have adopted the male, rogynous and undifferentiated gender role. Thus, the finding of the present study that mothers have more irrational beliefs than fathers is more related to gender roles than gender. According to the World Bank report, women in all developing and underdeveloped countries spend more time on childcare (World Development Report, 2012). Moreover, this task assigned to the mother as a gender role is not affected by whether the woman is working or not (Craig, 2006). Moreover, it is usually the others who are blamed for the behavioral problems, developmental problems and pathological cases (Jackson &Mannix, 2004). These could be the reasons why Turkish and Syrian mothers do not prefer to respond to the presented scenarios with irrational beliefs presented by REBT, such as catastrophizing, devaluing and low frustration tolerance.

Another finding of the study is the similarity of responses to all scenarios among Turkish and Syrian mothers. While the proportions of irrational beliefs in Turkish mothers' responses to the four different scenarios presented in the study were 70%, 80%, 60% and 50% respectively, these proportions were 66.7%, 75%, 50% and 50% for Syrian mothers. The reason for this could be the common cultural heritage of the two countries. It is inevitable that Syria, which was a state of the Ottoman Empire for about 400 years (Oeztuerk, 2010), and Turkish Republic, which was the continuation of this empire, share a common cultural heritage. The fact that the study was conducted in the city of Gaziantep, which is located on the Syrian border, may also have contributed to the sharing of this common cultural heritage. The shared religious beliefs of the people in the two countries may also have played a role in the answers becoming more similar. There is a close relationship between religion and culture that encompasses shared values and norms of behavior (Dawson, 2013). For this reason, it is expected that the results of Turkish and Syrian mothers who participated in the study will have similar characteristics. The fact that Turkish and Syrian mothers gave predominantly irrational responses to the different scenarios in accordance with societal gender roles may be related to the ranking of the two countries in the global gender inequality ranking. According to this ranking, Turkey is ranked 130th out of 153 countries in terms of gender inequality, while Syria is ranked 150th (WEF, 2020). This may have led to a habit in both countries of seeing the mother as responsible for matters such as the care, development and upbringing of children and blaming mothers in the event of likely problems.

In summary, in line with gender inequality in Turkey, fathers have identified themselves with a more masculine role and therefore tend not to see themselves as responsible for the care, upbringing and possible problems related to their children. It is very likely that mothers in both cultures feel responsible, are perceived negatively when problems occur during the child's growth period, and blame themselves for these circumstances because this is a behavior they have been taught by the culture in which they live. In addition,

outside observers expect mothers to engage in irrational behaviors. For example, it sometimes happens that a mother duck approaches a dog, which she sees as a stronger and natural threat, instead of running away from it. Thus, we can say that viewing motherhood as a form of sacrifice, unrequited love and responsibility (Uçakçı-Asaloğlu, et al., 2020) may have played a role in these results. Conducting studies with parents especially from different faiths and areas to further discuss the findings and present their generalizability will contribute to a better understanding and interpretation of the results. Based on the findings of the present study, it may be suggested that psycho-education programs based on REBT should be developed and that mothers should be made to participate more in such programs. It can also be suggested to develop psycho-education programs with different contents targeting only mothers or fathers if we take into account the differences in parents' ratings based on the study findings.

5. Limitations

It can be stated that the small number of Turkish fathers who participated in the study and the lack of participation of Syrian fathers may have been a significant limitation in identifying and comparing fathers' beliefs. Similarly, it can be said that language comprehension and expression during the qualitative interviews was a limitation, even though the Syrian mothers spoke Turkish well.

6. References

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