

**A PROGRAM BASED ON RATIONAL-EMOTIONAL GUIDANCE IN
DEVELOPING DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP AND REDUCING EXTREMIST
THOUGHTS AMONG UNIVERSITY FEMALE STUDENTS**

**UM PROGRAMA BASEADO NA ORIENTAÇÃO RACIONAL-EMOCIONAL
PARA DESENVOLVER A CIDADANIA DIGITAL E REDUZIR OS PENSAMENTOS
EXTREMISTAS ENTRE ESTUDANTES UNIVERSITÁRIAS**

**UN PROGRAMA BASADO EN LA ORIENTACIÓN RACIONAL-
EMOCIONAL PARA EL DESARROLLO DE LA CIUDADANÍA DIGITAL Y LA
REDUCCIÓN DE LOS PENSAMIENTOS EXTREMISTAS ENTRE ESTUDIANTES
UNIVERSITARIOS**

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ABSTRACT

The current research aims to investigate the impact of a program based on rational-emotional guidance on the development of digital citizenship and the reduction of extremist thoughts among university female students. The sample was selected from kindergarten female teacher-students at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and early childhood education students at Minia University in the Arab Republic of Egypt. The main research sample consisted of 99 university students, with 48 Saudi students and 51 Egyptian students. The following tools were utilized to achieve the research objectives: the Digital Citizenship Scale, the Intellectual Extremism Scale, and a program based on rational-emotional guidance. The research results revealed the impact of the rational-emotional guidance program on the development of digital citizenship within the investigated sample. Statistically significant differences were observed between the pre-and post-measurement means of the digital citizenship scale, favoring the post-measurement. Furthermore, the research results demonstrated the impact of the rational-emotional guidance program in reducing extremist thoughts within the investigated sample. Statistically significant differences were found between the pre-and post-measurement means of the intellectual extremism scale, favoring the pre-measurement. The study concludes by proposing avenues for further research and providing recommendations for future initiatives in this domain.

Keywords: Rational-Emotional Guidance; Digital Citizenship; Extremist Thoughts.

RESUMO

A presente investigação tem por objetivo investigar o impacto de um programa baseado na orientação racional-emocional no desenvolvimento da cidadania digital e na redução de pensamentos extremistas entre estudantes universitárias. A amostra foi selecionada a partir de professoras-estudantes do jardim de infância da Universidade Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz, no Reino da Arábia Saudita, e de estudantes de educação infantil da Universidade Minia, na República Árabe do Egito. A amostra principal da investigação era constituída por 99 estudantes universitários, dos quais 48 eram sauditas e 51 egípcios. Para atingir os objectivos da investigação, foram utilizados os seguintes instrumentos: a Escala de Cidadania Digital, a Escala de Extremismo Intelectual e um programa baseado na orientação racional-emocional. Os resultados da investigação revelaram o impacto do programa de orientação racional-emocional no desenvolvimento da cidadania digital na amostra investigada. Foram observadas diferenças estatisticamente significativas entre as médias pré e pós-medição da escala de cidadania digital, favorecendo a pós-medição. Além disso, os resultados da pesquisa demonstraram o impacto do programa de orientação racional-emocional na redução de pensamentos extremistas na amostra investigada. Foram encontradas diferenças estatisticamente significativas entre as médias pré e pós-medição da escala de extremismo intelectual, favorecendo a pré-medição. O estudo conclui propondo pistas para novas investigações e fornecendo recomendações para futuras iniciativas neste domínio.

Palavras-chave: Orientação Racional-Emocional; Cidadania Digital; Pensamentos Extremistas.

RESUMEN

La presente investigación tiene como objetivo investigar el impacto de un programa basado en la orientación racional-emocional en el desarrollo de la ciudadanía digital y la reducción de pensamientos extremistas entre las estudiantes universitarias. La muestra se seleccionó entre maestras-estudiantes de jardín de infantes de la Universidad Príncipe Sattam bin Abdulaziz en el Reino de Arabia Saudita y estudiantes de educación infantil en la Universidad Minia en la República Árabe de Egipto. La muestra principal de la investigación estuvo compuesta por 99 estudiantes universitarios, 48 estudiantes sauditas y 51 estudiantes egipcios. Para lograr los objetivos de la investigación se utilizaron las siguientes herramientas: la Escala de Ciudadanía Digital, la Escala de Extremismo Intelectual y un programa basado en orientación racional-emocional. Los resultados de la investigación revelaron el impacto del programa de orientación racional-emocional en el desarrollo de la ciudadanía digital dentro de la muestra investigada. Se observaron diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre las medias pre y posmedición de la escala de ciudadanía digital, favoreciendo la posmedición. Además, los resultados de la investigación demostraron el impacto del programa de orientación racional-emocional en la reducción de los pensamientos extremistas dentro de la muestra investigada. Se encontraron diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre las medias pre y posmedición de la escala de extremismo intelectual, favoreciendo la premedición. El estudio concluye proponiendo vías para futuras investigaciones y proporcionando recomendaciones para futuras iniciativas en este ámbito.

Palabras clave: Orientación Racional-Emocional; Ciudadanía Digital; Pensamientos extremistas.

1. INTRODUCTION

Female university students, who are the teachers and mothers of the future, constitute a formidable human force that must be harnessed, guided, and directed. This involves not only preparing them for their future roles but also fortifying and refining their minds against extremism and irrational thoughts. The rationale behind this is that the mind is the primary driver of a student's actions and behaviors. Consequently, what a student adopts as either positive or negative behavior is a result of her beliefs, thoughts, and what becomes ingrained in her mind. Universities, as educational institutions, bear a particular responsibility in fortifying the ideas and beliefs of their students and shielding them from extremist thoughts (Abdelgwad, 2023; Al Hammouri & Altuwayjiri, 2021; Mohamed et al., 2021).

Intellectual extremism is considered one of the most dangerous psychological, social, and political phenomena that threaten the essence of humanity (Hussein, 2019). It forms the

basis for freezing minds, stifling freedoms, silencing voices, and robbing intellects. This is because it turns an individual's mind into a pliable tool that accepts and embraces everything imposed upon it without the capacity to say no or even express dissatisfaction or discomfort (Davies, 2016). The interdisciplinary nature of extremism, involving psychological and sociological sciences, has led to diverse perspectives and the development of specific criteria for identifying extremism in religious, political, ethical, and social contexts (Al-Madadha, 2015).

Extremism is a complex phenomenon that is challenging to observe or define clearly. Nevertheless, it is simply understood as a set of beliefs, attitudes, emotions, actions, and strategies characterized by deviation from the moderate or ordinary. In situations of conflict, extremism manifests itself as an intense form of engagement in conflict with another party (Abdulhamid, 2017). It is meant, as noted by Al-Osaimi (2018), to be the improper use of the intellect and deviation from the path of correctness, resulting in harm to oneself and others. Its manifestations include the following: the ability to mislead and deceive, distortion of facts, justification of goals, distorted simplification, inclination towards disagreement and conflict, and cognitive-behavioral inconsistency.

Extremism is regarded as a form of ideological deviation, with its core substance being thoughts that contravene societal standards. It is closely linked to criminal activities, involving either explicit or implicit incitement to offenses punishable by law, not falling under the realm of freedoms (Al-Madadha, 2015). According to At-Tawari (2005), intellectual extremism can be attributed to several factors, including a misunderstanding of religion, the frustration faced by young people and their lack of role models, an error in perceiving the reality and nature of human societies and the approach to reform, a mistake in simplifying and generalizing judgments, the prevalence of oppression and suppression instead of ensuring tranquility at the family and societal levels, and some countries resorting to the use of political coercion, which creates an atmosphere of tension and extremism.

Extremism manifests through varied facets, including unwavering devotion to personal opinions, negative assumptions about others, misconceptions about societal ideals, blind imitation of personalities, and the perilous extreme of radical thinking. These expressions involve cognitive rigidity, accusations against rulers, pessimistic outlooks, isolationist

tendencies, and the potential for forceful attempts to reshape society. The multifaceted nature of extremism poses challenges, encompassing religious, ethical, and societal dimensions (Al-Harbi, 2019; Shahata, 2018; Borum, 2014; Berger, 2018).

Extremist ideology demonstrates pathological attributes across psychological, emotional, and cognitive levels. Psychologically, it manifests as a distortion of individuals' mental capacities, shaping a foundation rooted in extremism. Emotionally, extremists display heightened intensity, marked by a sense of threat, defensiveness, radicalism, and an unyielding stance, potentially resulting in destructive reactions. At the cognitive level, extremist thoughts exhibit insularity, deviating from rationality and societal norms, propelled by impulsivity and a predisposition towards destructive actions. This multifaceted pathology underscores the complexity of extremist thinking (Al-Otaibi, 2018; Al-Awratani, 2019; Atallah, 2017; Trip et al., 2019; Jensen et al., 2020).

The extremist individual is characterized by a refusal to explore new modes of thinking and a lack of interest in embracing intellectual diversity, contravening the principles of human life that emphasize variety and dynamism. It tends towards hostility, driven by a narrow desire for dominance rather than genuine communication. Evolving from seemingly acceptable beliefs, extremist thinking becomes inflexible, detached from objective knowledge, relying on self-centered perceptions. This mindset dismisses differing perspectives, distorting interpretations of events. Within this ideology, a preference for unwarranted certainties emerges, lacking critical evaluation of sources and rejecting a balanced approach to intellectual frameworks. This intellectual discourse perpetuates a self-reinforcing cycle of conformity, impeding genuine intellectual growth (Al-Zahrani, 2018; Al-Mulahi, 2022; Mohammed et al., 2021; Sawyer & Hienz, 2016).

The confrontation of intellectual extremism involves fundamental elements endorsed by scholars. Firstly, there is an emphasis on social and psychological stability, entailing the creation of a conducive environment for development, the regulation of negative societal phenomena, and the fostering of a harmonious community. Secondly, religious and ethical stability necessitates the correction of religious concepts, the promotion of national belonging, the advocacy for justice, and the encouragement of a culture of dialogue based on legitimate foundations. Thirdly, political stability encompasses initiatives to enhance youth confidence,

increase loyalty to political leadership, foster social cohesion, resist harmful ideas, and prevent crimes. Lastly, economic stability assumes a crucial role in mitigating conditions conducive to extremism and preserving societal well-being (Abu Humeidi, 2010; Al-Ghamdi, 2010; Abu Arad, 2010; Al-Jahni, 2005; Al-Sudais, 2005; Martini et al., 2020; Haugstvedt & Gunnarsdottir, 2023).

Several studies have investigated the negative effects of intellectual extremism on various factors. Sulaiman's (2022) research found a positive correlation between cyberbullying and intellectual extremism. Al-Mughazzi's (2020) study explored social media's role in countering intellectual extremism, emphasizing its impact on youth's intellectual security and shaping public opinion. Al-Madadha's (2015) study revealed a positive relationship between psychological stress and self-esteem and the level of intellectual extremism. Davydov (2015) emphasized the need for preventive techniques and noted the tendency to disobey laws as a contributing factor.

The global arena has witnessed rapid changes in information and communication technology, leading to the emergence of new media channels and a multitude of diverse social networking platforms. As a result, there has been a notable alteration in the ways individuals express their thoughts and viewpoints (Al-Zahrani, 2019; Razak & Abbas, 2011). Concurrently, societal transformations have manifested in a spectrum of behaviors, encompassing both positive and negative aspects. This highlights the current imperative to cultivate awareness regarding prudent and responsible technology usage, concurrently promoting the principles associated with digital citizenship.

Citizenship is acknowledged as a crucial element for societal cohesion, acting as a deterrent against divisive influences propagated by extremism. Extremists strategically seek to distort the perceptions of citizens, particularly those vulnerable to online manipulation (Midtbøen, 2015). Effectively thwarting these extremist endeavors necessitates the cultivation of a sense of belonging among citizens, with an emphasis on unity and the reinforcement of national identity. This strategy functions as a robust defense mechanism against extremist agendas, contributing to the establishment of a safer and more unified society (Akram & Richardson, 2009; Gholami, 2020; Sobolewska, 2012).

The importance of digital citizenship has escalated in tandem with the growing risks associated with modern digital communication technologies. This concept encapsulates the contemporary values embraced by technologically inclined societies, embodying a framework comprising rules, regulations, standards, ethical considerations, and guiding principles that dictate the responsible use of digital technologies. At its core, digital citizenship involves the cultivation of awareness, knowledge, and respect among individuals participating in digital activities. It advocates for a conscientious and ethical approach to navigating the extensive array of digital tools and platforms prevalent in the contemporary world (Grigorieva et al., 2022; Al-Thubetat et al., 2023).

Digital citizenship is a concept intertwined with an individual's affiliation to a community governed by principles dictating rights, obligations, and responsibilities in societal interactions. It necessitates active participation and a clear comprehension of one's duties within that community. In the realm of education, digital citizenship assumes paramount significance for educators, technology leaders, and parents. These stakeholders play a pivotal role in directing students toward the responsible use of technology. Such guidance is indispensable for ensuring that students cultivate a comprehensive understanding of the ethical and responsible utilization of digital tools. Educators bear a critical responsibility in imparting this knowledge, thereby equipping students to evolve into responsible digital citizens (Al-Zahrani, 2019; Öztürk, 2021; Logan, 2016; Fleming, 2018).

Digital citizenship entails the preparation of students for a technology-rich society, involving the cultivation of adherence to acceptable behavioral standards when utilizing Clustered Network Technology, commonly referred to as the Internet (Abdulaziz, 2016; Logan, 2016; Ausawasowan et al., 2021). Moreover, it encompasses the cultivation of responsible and appropriate rules of communication with technology, facilitating individuals in safely navigating the digital age (Bolkan, 2014). This multifaceted concept incorporates ethical principles, legal regulations, behavioral standards, and frameworks designed to safeguard students against potential risks associated with digital technology. The overarching objective is to optimize the advantages offered by technology, empowering individuals to evolve into proficient digital citizens capable of navigating the intricacies of the digital age securely. This transformative process necessitates the exercise of rights, concomitant with the fulfillment of

duties and responsibilities as citizens in the contemporary era (El-Masry & Sheta, 2017; Ausawasowan et al., 2021; Frau-Meigs et al., 2017).

The aim of digital citizenship, as delineated by Al-Qahtani (2017), is to cultivate awareness across diverse age groups through an engaging introduction to its concept. This initiative encompasses the promotion of a culture of expression characterized by a commitment to etiquette, with the overarching aim of mitigating the adverse effects of internet usage in real life. The goal is to establish a social communication environment devoid of violence and to elevate the standard of electronic security (Emejulu& McGregor, 2019).

Digital citizenship, as elucidated within literature and related studies (Al-Azab, 2019; Ribble, 2015; Jabeen& Ahmad, 2021; Al-Abdullatif& Gameil, 2020; Kim& Choi, 2018), consists of nine key elements that form its backbone. These elements serve as the starting point for preparing digital citizens and are represented as follows:

- Digital Accessibility: Digital access for full electronic participation in society.
- Digital Commerce or Digital Economy: Buying and selling goods electronically.
- Digital Communication: Electronic exchange of information.
- Digital Literacy: The process of teaching and learning technology and its tools.
- Digital Fitness and Etiquette: Digital standards for behavior and procedures.
- Digital Laws: digital responsibility for actions and deeds.
- Rights and Duties: Digital responsibilities.
- Digital Health and Safety: Mental and physical health in the digital technology world.
- Digital Security and Privacy: Measures for electronic prevention and protection.

The cultivation of these attributes in students is realized through the implementation of informative guidance programs. Counseling, as elucidated by Ali et al. (2011), is construed as a reciprocal relationship between two individuals, directed towards a specific purpose. In this dynamic, one participant, identified as the counselor, leverages their skills and experience to aid the other party, referred to as the client, in articulating their thoughts and behaviors in interpersonal interactions. The predominant mode of this interaction involves face-to-face

interviews between the counselor and the client. Scholars in the domain of psychological counseling commonly concur that within the cognitive-behavioral counseling domain, there exist various approaches that share a fundamental essence while diverging in their methodologies. A prominent example among these methods is Rational Emotive Therapy (RET), rooted in the rational emotive theory propounded by Albert Ellis, enjoying widespread prevalence in the field.

Rational Emotive Therapy (RET) is characterized as an innovative psychological treatment approach, pioneered by Albert Ellis. Ellis embarked on this journey toward a new logical therapeutic methodology in 1954, basing it on a philosophical model rather than a strictly psychological one. The articulation of his groundbreaking therapeutic approach commenced in a series of articles in 1962 and reached its culmination with the publication of his book, "Reason and Emotion in Psychotherapy." In this work, Ellis delved into the intricate relationship between cause and emotion in the realm of psychological treatment. This marked the inception of a distinctive therapeutic paradigm that prominently incorporates logical reasoning as a foundational element (Ellis, 2013).

Albert Ellis, in developing Rational Emotive Therapy (RET), identifies common sense as a model encompassing irrational thoughts believed to be the root cause of emotional issues. He observes the prevalence of these thoughts in American society and suggests their potential existence in other cultures, grounded in certain underlying principles. Ellis's therapeutic approach hinges on the premise that psychological problems stem from irrational thinking patterns. The core tenet of REBT is to alleviate human suffering by addressing and rectifying these irrational beliefs, fostering rational thinking, and consequently alleviating psychological distress. It is a widely adopted method designed for the explicit purpose of confronting and modifying cognitive processes that contribute to emotional difficulties (Hartanti et al., 2020; Matliwala, 2017).

According to Albert Ellis's perspective, if a client's complaints are deemed irrational thoughts, the initial step in Rational-Emotive Therapy entails enlightening the client about the irrationality and lack of logic in their thinking (Collard & O'Kelly, 2011). The therapist employs a persuasive approach, presenting logical reasoning and real-life examples to substantiate the irrational nature of the client's thoughts. Convincing the client of their irrationality constitutes

a crucial starting point. Subsequently, the second step involves enlightening the client about the correlation between their logical reasoning and the disturbances they experience. The therapist adopts a direct approach, challenging irrational thoughts and promoting inquiry. Maintaining decisiveness and assertiveness, the therapist guides the client until they acknowledge the connection between their thoughts and symptoms (Dryden, 2013).

Upon the client's acknowledgment of the relationship between their thoughts and symptoms, the transition to the third step logically ensues. In this phase, the client is urged to relinquish these thoughts and discard associated assumptions. Albert Ellis emphasizes that Rational-Emotive Therapy goes beyond the mere alteration of erroneous thoughts; its fulfillment hinges on the client embracing a comprehensive philosophy that unifies their thoughts. The client's belief in this philosophy is integral, guiding their life and serving as a safeguard against future disturbances. Assisting the client in formulating a valid and logical philosophy constitutes the fourth step in the sequence of therapeutic interventions (Şahin& Acar, 2019; Blan, 2015).

The proliferation of intellectual extremism is attributed primarily to the lack of vigilance by responsible institutions, compounded by factors such as ignorance, misconceptions about religion, intellectual stagnation, youth frustration due to challenging living conditions, and a weakened sense of national belonging (Salem, 2018). In countering this phenomenon, universities hold a pivotal role in influencing the intellectual and moral fabric of society through critical thinking, open dialogue, and knowledge dissemination. To effectively combat extremism, universities should prioritize creating an environment that fosters intellectual diversity, free expression, and respectful debate. By promoting a comprehensive understanding of various perspectives, beliefs, and cultures, universities empower students to challenge extremist ideologies. Additionally, universities can actively engage in research and educational initiatives addressing the root causes of extremism, collaborating with diverse stakeholders to develop holistic prevention strategies. In essence, universities emerge as influential agents of change, nurturing informed, tolerant, and socially responsible individuals crucial in the fight against extremism.

Recognizing the profound impact of irrational thoughts on individuals' behavior and life perspectives, leading to manifestations such as persistent anxiety about the future,

condescension towards others, issuing absolute judgments on the environment, reluctance to assume responsibility, and seeking external approval while avoiding challenges, researchers identified the imperative to develop a program. Specifically tailored for female students, this program encompasses a series of activities designed to modify irrational thoughts. The overarching goal is to shield them from extremism and bolster their digital citizenship, fostering a mindset characterized by rationality, resilience, and responsible use of digital technologies. Hence, the current research aims to investigate the impact of a program based on rational-emotive therapy on the development of digital citizenship and the reduction of extremist thoughts among university female students. In line with this objective, the following hypotheses were developed:

- There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the pre-measurement and post-measurement in digital citizenship among the research sample of university female students in favor of the post-measurement.
- There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the pre-measurement and post-measurement in intellectual extremism among the research sample of university female students in favor of the pre-measurement.

2. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The current research utilizes a quasi-experimental design with a one-group pretest-posttest measurement to examine the impact of the rational-emotional counseling program on the development of digital citizenship and the reduction of intellectual extremism among university female students.

Participants

The sample for this research was selected randomly from kindergarten students, students majoring in Islamic Studies at the College of Arts at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and students from the Faculty of Early Childhood Education at Minia University in the Arab Republic of Egypt. The survey sample consisted of 198 university students from both the primary research sample and the non-primary research

sample. The primary research sample comprised 99 university students, including 48 Saudi students and 51 Egyptian students.

Data Collection Tools

The Digital Citizenship Scale among University Female Students

The scale was developed by the researchers to assess digital citizenship among university female students. The scale in its initial form consisted of (45) items distributed into four dimensions: digital commerce, digital communication, digital safety, and cybersecurity. The scale was administered collectively, with students electronically responding to it according to a using a Likert five-point scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree).

To validate the scale's validity and reliability, the scale was applied to a sample comprising (198) female students drawn from both the research population and a non-basic research sample. The exploratory factor analysis was employed as the optimal method to identify the factors constituting the digital citizenship scale and determine the factor loadings of items. The principal components method and Kaiser's criterion were used to determine the number of extracted factors. Kaiser's criterion halts the extraction of factors when their eigenvalues fall below 1 for the survey sample. The sample's adequacy was verified through the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure, which should not be less than 0.05. The calculated value was 0.824, exceeding 0.05, indicating its statistical significance. According to the statistical results, items (4 and 10) were omitted as they have non-significant loadings with values less than 3.0 according to Guttman's criterion.

The internal consistency was computed as an indicator of the validity of the digital citizenship scale. This process involved calculating correlation coefficients between the score of each statement and the total score of the corresponding dimension, as well as correlation coefficients between the score of each dimension and the total score of the entire scale. The correlation coefficients between each statement's score and the total score ranged from (0.002 to 0.794), with all correlation coefficients being statistically significant except for statement number (28), which was subsequently excluded. The correlation coefficients between the score of each item and the total score of the scale ranged from (0.762 to 0.847), indicating internal consistency for the scale. Consequently, the scale's final form consisted of (42) items.

To validate the scale reliability, the researchers calculated the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The values of the alpha coefficient for the dimensions of the digital citizenship scale ranged from (0.700 to 0.847). Additionally, the alpha coefficient for the total score of the scale was found to be (0.909), all of which are statistically significant values. This indicates that the scale exhibits an acceptable level of reliability. Thus, the scale demonstrates both validity and reliability, making it suitable for utilization in current research.

The Intellectual Extremism Scale for University Female Students

The scale was developed to measure intellectual extremism among female university students. The application of the scale was conducted collectively, requiring students to electronically respond to its items. The scale's initial form comprised (30) items distributed into three dimensions as follows: intellectual rigidity, bigotry and discrimination, and dilution of identity. The items on the scale were scored according to the Likert five-point scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree).

Principal component analysis was utilized as an optimal method to identify the factors constituting the extremism scale and determine the saturation of phrases, using Kaiser's criterion to determine the number of extracted factors. Kaiser's criterion ceases the extraction of factors when their eigenvalues fall below 1 for the survey sample, consisting of 198 students from the research community and its non-primary population. Rotation to remove the non-significant loadings with values less than 3.0, as per Guttman's criterion was conducted. Analysis results indicated that the loadings of items (24, 29) were less than (0.3) therefore, they were excluded.

To verify internal consistency, the internal consistency was calculated as an indicator of the reliability of the extremism scale. This involved computing the correlation coefficients between the score of each statement and the total score of the corresponding dimension, as well as correlation coefficients between the score of each dimension and the total score of the entire scale, ensuring the verification of internal consistency. The correlation coefficients between the score of each statement and its total score ranged from (0.333 to 0.729). The correlation coefficients between the score of each dimension and the total score of the scale ranged from (0.410 to 0.686). These are high correlation coefficients and statistically significant, indicating

internal consistency for the scale. Hence, the scale's final form consisted of (28) items. These high correlation coefficients are statistically significant, indicating internal consistency within the scale.

To ensure the scale reliability, the researchers calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficient, applying it to a sample comprising (198) children from both the research population and outside the primary research sample. The alpha coefficient values for the dimensions of the extremism scale ranged from (0.700 to 0.731). Additionally, the alpha coefficient for the total score of the scale was found to be (0.732), a statistically significant value, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale. The scale demonstrates both validity and reliability, thereby affirming its suitability and appropriateness for utilization in current research.

A Program Based on Rational-Emotive Therapy for the Development of Digital Citizenship Among Female University Students

A Rational-Emotive Therapy Program for Female University Students, aged between 20-23 years, has been developed to foster digital citizenship. The program encompasses techniques of rational-emotive therapy, detailed as follows: (Reinforcement, Dialogue, and Discussion, Modeling, Relaxation, Lectures, Cooperative Work, Problem Solving, Brainstorming, and Homework). Tools and resources utilized in the implementation of the program include a laptop, a projector, pens, and paper.

The program's execution spanned eight weeks, commencing from the beginning of April until the end of May 2023, with three sessions per week (Saturday, and Wednesday), each lasting 60 minutes. Program sessions incorporated diverse and engaging individual and group activities aimed at developing digital citizenship among university female students.

The evaluation of the program is structured as follows:

- Pre-assessment: The Digital Citizenship Scale and the Extremism Scale were administered to the university female students (prepared by the researchers).
- Formative Assessment: The performance of the primary research sample is assessed during the program's activities, providing feedback to facilitate their attainment of the specified proficiency level.

- Post-assessment: The final assessment evaluates the performance of the primary research sample after the implementation of the proposed program. This is achieved through the application of predefined measures that were previously administered in the pre-assessment phase.

Several sessions of the program were implemented on a sample of university female students, including those outside the primary research sample. The purpose was to assess the student's receptiveness to some program sessions, the appropriateness of techniques and tools, and the types of assessments used in the program. Additionally, this process aimed to gauge the time required for these sessions.

Following the necessary adjustments made to the program based on the insights gained from the survey experiment, the program has taken its final form. It is now deemed suitable for application in current research, demonstrating adaptability to the needs and preferences of the target audience. The modifications were informed by the practical experience gained during the survey, ensuring the program's efficacy and relevance for the intended research objectives.

Data Analysis

various statistical methods were utilized to validate the assumptions. These included the examination of mean, standard deviation, and the Paired Sample T Test were applied to investigate the statistically significant differences in means for related groups, while effect size calculation contributed to measuring the practical significance of the findings. The analyses were conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 22. The ensuing research results were derived from a meticulous application of these statistical techniques.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the First Hypothesis

‘There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the pre-measurement and post-measurement in digital citizenship among the research sample of university female students in favor of the post-measurement.’

To validate the first hypothesis, the Paired Sample T Test was utilized to calculate the significance of differences between the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test within the primary research sample regarding digital citizenship. Additionally, the effect size was computed as Table (1) illustrates.

Table 1.

The Significance of Differences Between the Mean Scores of The Pre-measurement And Post-measurement in Digital Citizenship Scale for The Research Sample

Digital Citizenship	Pre-measurement		Post-measurement		t-value	Sig.	Effect Size
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
The Saudi Women (N=48)	189.1	8.9	200	14.5	-13.5	0.01	0.61
The Egyptians (N=51)	172.9	16.2	199	13.6	21.4	0.01	0.90
The Total Sample	180.7	19.3	198.8	15.2	23.4	0.01	0.85

Table 1 indicates statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test in the digital citizenship scale among the primary research sample of Saudi and Egyptian university female students, as well as the total sample. The calculated values for the t-test were (-13.5, -21.4, -23.4), all of which were statistically significant, favoring the post-test. This suggests that the Rational-Emotive Therapy Program has an impact on developing digital citizenship among them. The effect size value overall was (0.85), and it varied across samples (Saudi students, Egyptian students), ranging from (0.61 to 0.90), indicating a large overall program impact. Thus, the first hypothesis is accepted, confirming statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test scores in digital citizenship among the primary research sample.

Results of the Second Hypothesis

‘There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the pre-measurement and post-measurement in intellectual extremism among the research sample of university female students in favor of the pre-measurement.’

To verify the second hypothesis, the Paired Sample T Test was employed to calculate the significance of differences between the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test within the

research sample regarding intellectual extremism. Additionally, the effect size was computed. The results are as follows:

Table 2

The Significance of Differences Between the Mean Scores of the Pre-measurement And Post-measurement of Intellectual Extremism

Intellectual Extremism	Pre-measurement		Post-measurement		t-value	Sig.	Effect Size
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
The Saudi Students (N=48)	90.5	9.2	63.4	8.5	22.0	0.01	0.91
The Egyptian Students (N=51)	84.7	7.8	60.6	2.9	24.4	0.01	0.92
The Total Sample	78.5	8.9	61.9	6.4	32.1	0.01	0.91

Table 2 reveals statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test in intellectual extremism for the primary research sample of Saudi and Egyptian university female students, as well as the total sample. The calculated values for the t-test were (22.0, 24.4, and 32.1), all of which were statistically significant, favoring the pre-test. This suggests that the Rational-Emotive Therapy Program has an impact on reducing intellectual extremism among them. The overall effect size value was (0.91), and it varied across samples (Saudi students, Egyptian students), ranging from (0.91 to 0.92), indicating a large overall program impact. Thus, the second hypothesis is accepted, confirming statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test scores in intellectual extremism among the research sample.

4. CONCLUSION

By introducing a program based on Rational-Emotive Therapy (RET), the research pioneers a unique intervention strategy that combines psychological principles with the complexities of the digital age. This integration not only reflects a forward-thinking response to contemporary challenges but also underscores the significance of psychological well-being in navigating the digital landscape. The research's distinctiveness further manifests in its targeted focus on female university students, recognizing their pivotal roles as educators and future mothers. By directing attention to this specific demographic, the study contributes to

filling a notable gap in the existing literature, offering a nuanced understanding of how rational-emotive therapy can effectively cultivate responsible digital citizenship and counter extremist ideologies within the context of higher education.

The results of the first hypothesis indicated statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test scores in digital citizenship for Saudi and Egyptian university female students, favoring the post-test. The effectiveness of the Rational-Emotive Therapy Program in developing digital citizenship among university female students is attributed to the utilization of rational-emotional counseling techniques. These include promotion, dialogue, modeling, relaxation, lectures, cooperative work, problem-solving, brainstorming, and homework assignments. The execution of these techniques contributed to enhancing their communication skills in digital interactions, learning to employ digital technologies, and protecting themselves from their negative effects. This result aligns with the findings of previous study results (Abdul- Moneam, 2023; Vernon& Bernard, 2020).

The results of the second hypothesis reveal statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test scores in intellectual extremism for Saudi and Egyptian university female students, favoring the pre-test. The effectiveness of the Rational-Emotive Therapy Program in reducing intellectual extremism is attributed to the program's activities based on discussion and dialogue, which fortified the students' thinking and protected them from rigidity and extremism. The program also included group activities that helped students engage socially and collaborate without bias or discrimination. The utilization of brainstorming and problem-solving techniques in the program sessions assisted students in self-discovery to shape their identities, avoiding being swayed by the ideas and opinions of others. This aligns with D'Olimpio's (2023) assertion that teachers play a prominent role in educating students and protecting them from extremism.

Furthermore, the reduction in intellectual extremism among university female students is attributed to the effectiveness of the Rational-Emotive Therapy Program, which contributed to modifying their irrational thinking and replacing it with rational ideas. In general, the program contributes to developing students' self-guidance, and self-acceptance, building self-interest that recognizes the rights of others, flexibility, openness to change, developing a desire to try new things, accepting risks, and self-independence. This result is in line with various

study results (Al-Anzi, 2018; Trip et al., 2019; Trip et al., 2018; Harrington, 2013; Dryden, 2021; Abdelkader, 2022).

4.1 Recommendations

The research findings yield several recommendations aimed at enhancing the overall development of female university students and equipping them to navigate the digital landscape responsibly while resisting intellectual extremism. Firstly, emphasizing the importance of developing digital citizenship, particularly among future mothers and kindergarten teachers, is crucial for enriching children's academic, social, and emotional aspects. Second, integrating extremism awareness topics into university curricula, especially in education-related courses, and conducting informative seminars, serves to equip female students with tools to safeguard their thoughts and resist intellectual extremism. Third, promoting active participation in university activities focusing on digital citizenship and extremism prevention fosters critical thinking and open dialogue. Lastly, the activation of psychological counseling services at the university level, specifically within psychology departments of education colleges, ensures students have access to support, fostering their mental well-being and resilience against extremist ideologies. Overall, these recommendations collectively contribute to empowering female university students for their roles as educators and future mothers.

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