

## **The Relationship between Philosophical Mindedness Components and Irrational Beliefs in School Principals**

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### **Abstract**

This research was carried out with the aim of investigating the relationship between philosophical mentality components and irrational beliefs (Ellis theory) in the school principals of three educational levels in Islamshahr in the academic year of 2017-2018. The research method adopted is descriptive correlational. The statistical population selected for this study was 228 male and female managers of schools of three educational levels in Islamshahr in the academic year 2017-2018. The sample size was 140 using Morgan table. The stratified random sampling method was used. The instrument for collecting information was Philosophical Mental Questionnaire and Irrational Beliefs Questionnaire. Validity and reliability of the questionnaires were acceptable and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.74 for the philosophical mental questionnaire and .087 for irrational beliefs questionnaire. Data were analyzed by descriptive statistics including mean, as well as standard deviation and inferential statistics methods including correlation coefficients. Findings of the research revealed the inverse and meaningful correlation between each component of the philosophical mentality (comprehensiveness, meditations, and flexibility) and irrational beliefs.

**Keywords:** philosophical mentality, comprehensiveness, meditations, flexibility, irrational beliefs, managers, education.

### **Introduction**

In order to adapt educational organizations to global changes and preserve their survival, it is essential for philosophers to have a philosophical mindset. By gaining the knowledge and skills in this field, managers can turn organizational climate into a knowledgeable and constructive teacher for the increasing excellence of the performance of teachers and students ([TAGHIPOUR & TAVAKOLI, 2011](#)). One of the necessary features in managing affairs is the philosophical mentality, i.e., a manager, who in keeping with the ever-growing community, can plan for the future, and has the power of concluding, linking evidence and developing creativity. Hence, the philosophical mentality of managers is studied in three dimensions: comprehensiveness, meditations, and flexibility. Since the head of the organizational pyramid is an integral part, it has a more sensitive role to play in this and given that today's world education is the most important factor in the cultural, political, economic, and social development of society ([Fukuyama, 2001](#)). Irrational beliefs such as excessive anxiety about the future, and concern about access to goals, as well as helplessness to changes in life, result in repeated experiences at high levels of arousal. This feeling of excitement is often experienced by the individual in the face of a feeling of failure and failure to achieve goals.

[Ellis and DiGiuseppe \(1993\)](#) argue that the following are examples of irrational ideas that we internalize and inevitably lead to ourselves:

1. I must win the affection and approval of all the important people in life.
2. I have to do the right assignment with merit.
3. Because I deeply want people to deal with me fairly and equally, they must do it.

4. If I do not get what I want, it's horrible and I cannot withstand it.

Regarding the role of philosophical mentality on people's attitudes and behavior, one can state that mentality and thinking can affect all aspects of life and work which is an important factor in the decision-making process and problem-solving. Therefore, the existence of inefficient and irrational thinking can have a significant impact on the decision-making process or the adaptation and growth of the individual. Creating a philosophical mindset is one of a variety of management skills ([Talebian & Salavati, 2016](#)). The reliance on the philosophical mindset on some of the mediator variables, such as cognition, attitude, and thinking affects the manager's behavior and strengthens his mental, cognitive, and thoughtful thinking. This ability allows the administrator to integrate information from different sources together to solve complex problems, analyze different perspectives, analyze and evaluate, construct and test different hypotheses, and finally, judging critically ([Mortazavi & Bagherpour, 2016](#)).

When a manager manages to deal with issues of self-comprehension, contemplation, and intellectual flexibility, teachers feel that they can easily reach out to him. On the other hand, when the director is in a "low level" in the "philosophical mind", many teachers report that it is difficult for the director to easily get along, and many were afraid of when expressing explicit beliefs and responses with retaliation his unconscious and informal face.

It seems that there is a direct relationship between the manager's philosophical mindset and the general spirit of teachers. This relationship also appears in the reaction of teachers when studying the program and selecting issues related to the study. This relation extends from the limits of organizational forms and group methods and shows that philosophical mind is more important than organizational forms and systems ([Potter, 2016](#)).

In many studies, the relationship between philosophical mentality and various variables have been investigated. [Babaei and Vaezi \(2014\)](#), in a research entitled "The Study of the Dimensions of the Philosophical Mentality of Managers and their Relationship with their Performance in High Schools of Talesh", showed that there was a weak correlation between managers' intellectual comprehension and their performances, between the intellectual thinking of managers and their performances. There is a moderate correlation between the managers' intellectual flexibility and their performances, as well as a moderate correlation between the total dimensions of the philosophical mentality of managers and their performances.

[Sheikh Zadeh and Pourhashemi \(2014\)](#), in a research entitled "Investigating the Relationship between the Philosophical Mentality of Managers and the Organizational Culture of the Employees of the Khorasan Prison", showed that 72.5% of the managers have a medium-high philosophical mentality. There is a significant relationship between the philosophical mindset of managers and the organizational culture of employees with a 95% confidence level and a correlation coefficient of 0.55. Regression analysis also showed that the philosophical mentality of managers could predict 31% of the variance of employee organizational culture and 39% of organizational culture changes are predicted by dimensions of philosophical mentality. The dimension of flexibility and comprehensiveness has the greatest impact on organizational culture.

[Dasí, Quintanilla, and Daniel \(2013\)](#), in a research entitled "Improving emotion comprehension and social skills in early childhood through philosophy for children" found that students participating in the curriculum for children's philosophy have a better performance in

critical and creative thinking skills. Also, the findings revealed that the difference between the two experimental and control groups at the level of 0.5.

Considering that educational management is a process that integrates all material and human resources to improve education, it can be provided to achieve the educational goals if the school administration system does not fit into the goal. Therefore, in the present research, the researchers intend to investigate the relationship between comprehensiveness, meditations, flexibility as components of philosophical mentality with irrational beliefs.

## Material and Methods

The research is "descriptive" in terms of its purpose and is quantitative in terms of data. In descriptive research, the researcher tries to report what is happening without any interference and obtaining objective results from the position. This research also investigates the relationship between the two variables, hence the type of "correlation research". In the correlation research, we try to determine the relationship between different variables using the correlation coefficient.

The statistical population selected for this study was 228 male and female managers of three schools of Islamshahr in the academic year 2017-2018. In this study, a stratified random sampling method was used. According to the sample size of the Morgan table, the sample size was determined as 140 people.

In this study, two questionnaires were used to collect data:

A. *Soltani Philosophical Mentality Inventory*: Soltani's Questionnaire for Philosophical Mentality Measurement has been developed and implemented, containing 60 items and is used to measure the amount of philosophical mentality of individuals. It needs to be explained that this questionnaire is distributed among managers and is completed by them. The scoring scale of the questionnaire is a 4-point Likert scale, which is considered for "never," "rarely", "sometimes", "almost always" options 1, 2, 3, and 4, respectively.

B. *Ahwaz's irrational beliefs questionnaire*.: This questionnaire was designed and evaluated to measure the unreasonable beliefs of individuals prepared and modified and it is the shortened form of the 100-item questionnaire of Jones's irrational beliefs. This questionnaire was re-examined by [Ebadi and Motamedin \(2005\)](#) and 60 items were removed from 100 questions and a factor structure was obtained. Finally, this questionnaire contains 40 questions that the subject answers on a 5-point Likert scale, with the lowest score of 1 and the highest grade for each score of 5.

In this study, a questionnaire for "philosophical mentality" and "irrational beliefs of managers" was provided by a respected professor, a professor and some other respected professors, and finally, with the approval of professors, the validity was approved. In this study, Cronbach's Alpha method was used to assess the reliability of the questionnaires. Accordingly, the reliability coefficient of the philosophical subjective questionnaire was 0.74 and for the irrational beliefs 0.87, was calculated.

According to the research objectives, for analyzing the data using the SPSS software, version 21, and descriptive statistics (statistical tables, mean and standard deviations), as well as the index of inferential statistics, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, correlation coefficients, and regression tests, were all used to examine the hypotheses.

## Results

Table 1 presents statistical descriptions of the components of philosophical mentality and irrational beliefs. Table 1 show that the component of universality has the highest mean and flexibility component with the lowest average. Also, the mean of irrational beliefs is 251.29 and its standard deviation is 54.56.

**Table1.** Statistical description of the components of philosophical mentality and irrational beliefs of managers

Variables	Mean	SD
Universality	18.54	1.49
Meditations	14.56	1.12
Flexibility	10.14	0.95
Irrational Beliefs	251.29	54.56

## Research hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1:** There is a relationship between the dimension of the Universality of the philosophical mentality and the irrational beliefs of the male and female managers.

According to Table 2, the correlation coefficient between the Universality of the philosophical mentality and the irrational beliefs of managers is equal to -0.560, and the probability value related to its significance is equal to (0.001). Therefore, with regard to the negative and significant sign of correlation coefficient, we can say that there is a reverse and significant relationship between the two variables. Accordingly, if the level of universality of managers increases, their irrational beliefs will be reduced.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a relationship between the Meditations dimension of philosophical mentality and irrational beliefs of female and male managers.

According to Table 2, the correlation coefficient between Meditations of philosophical mentality and irrational beliefs of managers is equal (-0.424), and the probability value related to its significant is equal to (0.001). Therefore, with confidence (0.95), there is a significant relationship and the second hypothesis is confirmed. Hence, with regard to the negative and significant sign of correlation coefficient, we can say that there is a reverse and significant relationship between the two variables. Accordingly, to any degree that the Meditations of managers increase, their irrational beliefs are reduced.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is a relationship between the dimension of the flexibility of the philosophical mentality with the irrational beliefs of male and female managers of the schools.

According to Table 2, the correlation coefficient between the dimension of the flexibility and the irrational beliefs of managers is equal to (-0.396), and the probability value related to its significant analysis is equal to (0.001). Therefore, with regard to the negative and significant sign of correlation coefficient, we can say that there is a reverse and significant relationship between the two variables. Accordingly, to any extent the flexibility of managers increases, their irrational beliefs are reduced.

**Table2.** Correlation coefficient between the components of philosophical mentality and irrational beliefs of managers

Variable	Correlation type	Value	Sig.
Universality	Pearson	-0.56	0.001
Meditations	Pearson	-0.424	0.001
Flexibility	Pearson	-0.396	0.001

## Discussion

The results of this study showed that there is a significant and inverse relation between the dimension of the Universality of philosophical mentality and irrational beliefs of managers. The results obtained for this hypothesis are consistent with the results of [Babaei and Vaezi \(2014\)](#).

Philosophical mindedness is operatively defined as an ethic, or habit of mind, imbuing educational action and reflection with an awareness of the philosophical implications and concerns of teaching and learning. Strengthening the philosophical mind enables school administrators to consider issues like educational and training problems with a comprehensive vision, and facilitate the development of teaching and learning processes by mastering their duties. As a result, the manager has a deep and wide view of the organization and its goals which do not limit itself to a particular case or immediate issues can better target the teaching and performance of teachers and take steps towards quality education. Therefore, the philosophical mentality is one of the characteristics of a person who can help managers when confronted with the numerous issues of educational leadership.

The results showed that there is a reverse and significant relationship between the dimensions of Meditations and irrational beliefs of managers. The results obtained for this hypothesis are consistent with the results of [Sheikh Zadeh and Pourhashemi \(2014\)](#) and [Amirtash, Abkar, and Mozaffari \(2011\)](#).

Managers who have a philosophical mind and, in particular, thinking, question the obvious and clear affairs, and it is important for them to understand the roots and depths of the cases. These managers are thinking of doing anything to the future and its sequel, to look at the outcome, check everything out and plan ahead before doing any work. It is logical that employees who work with these directors have a better attitude towards their work and are more enthusiastic about their administrative tasks and take full advantage of the manager's support for the proper implementation of the strategic management training model.

Finally, the results showed that there is a reverse and significant relation between the flexibility dimension of philosophical mentality and irrational beliefs of managers. The results obtained for this hypothesis are consistent with the results of earlier studies ([Friesen, 2012](#); [Riggs, 2015](#); [Sheikh Zadeh & Pourhashemi, 2014](#)).

Managers with philosophical thinking usually appear to be appropriate in new and unpredictable situations. They are continuously aware of far-reaching goals and are less influenced by specific situations and affairs due to the fundamental aspects of each situation and the revision of their judgments. Individuals who have a philosophical mindset recognize events of life as consequences of their permanent behaviors and attribute them to the results of their skills and behaviors, which in such a case the individual believes in internal control.



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