

## **Common Rumination and Its Relationship to the Quality of Friendship among University Students**

**By**

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### **Research Problem**

With the development of life and the increase in its requirements, man needs friends who support him in overcoming the difficulties in his social and practical life, for decades, as psychological research has shown the importance of social relations in improving the well-being of individuals (Cohen & Wills, 1985). However, nurturing behavior by bona fide social relationship partners sometimes causes unintended harm, reversibly increasing emotional stress (Bolger, Zuckerman, & Kessler, 2000; Gleason et al., 2008). Recent research indicates that friendships do not uniformly lead to positive outcomes. In fact, some friendships are characterized by dysfunctional relationship styles that promote maladaptive behaviors, such as eating disorder, substance abuse, or bullying. One factor driving these negative outcomes may be shared rumination, which Rose 2002 referred to it as the tendency to discuss and reformulate problems excessively and encourage focus on the conversation that contains the problem and dwell on the negative impact between social relationship binaries, as Rose, 2002 research indicates that joint rumination may be a "double-edged sword". Among the youth. Co-rumination is at the crossroads of self-rumination and self-disclosure (Rose, 2002). The obsessive and repetitive component of self-rumination is also present in co-rumination (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991). Like rumination, co-rumination has been associated with increased anxiety and depression (Rose, 2002; Tompkins et al., 2011; Waller & Rose, 2010). This is because rumination and shared thinking often involve an intense focus on psychological distress, uncertainty about whether problems will be resolved or controlled, and feelings of hopelessness about the future, all of which contribute to increased anxiety and depression (Nolen-Hoeksema, 2000) (DiGiovanni and others, 2021, 4).

### **Research Importance**

(Carver 1989) and others hypothesize that seeking socio-emotional support is a double-edged sword, because it may promote adaptation to the problem, or it may distract from the activity of coping, and instead encourage empathy seeking and venting, and thus This concept has led researchers in the fields of psychopathology and social psychology to pay attention to the negative outcomes associated with seeking verbal support between bilateral and group relationships as it relates to the risk of different pathological outcomes (Carver and others, p. 269, 1989).

Recently, a new structure has been introduced that may help in better understanding the potential costs and benefits of employing social support to cope with stress. (Rose, 2002) introduces common rumination as a broad participation in discussing one's problems with close ones. This strategy of confrontation focuses on feelings and involves sharing negative feelings and reviewing past events often. Co-rumination is negative in nature, and involves a focus on

feeling upset or speculating on the causes and consequences of problems. Co-rumination does not involve an active problem-solving or counseling function like other forms of social support. This type of coping combines the pursuit of social comfort from others as well as an excessive focus on negative emotions, distress, and re-fragmentation of events. It is similar to characteristics of rumination and other forms of rumination. Frequent Negative Thinking (Laura, 2015, 8).

### ***2nd: Theoretical Framework***

Joint rumination emerged to explain why females with apparently supportive friendships, which should protect against emotional distress, still report the highest levels of depression and anxiety.

Rose suggested that rumination could be used as a starting point for investigating such high levels of depression and anxiety and suggested that there could be a social aspect of rumination, which she called "Common Rumination". Which could explain the discrepancy between time spent in supportive pairs of friendships and negative emotional outcomes for adolescent girls. This is supported by Nolene Huxma and McLoughlin who suggest that it could be because individuals who ruminate are more likely to seek social support from others and that this support request may take the form Common Rumination, (Laura 2014, p.10)

Therefore, the social support theory was put forward by (Afife, 2013), which indicated that if the second individual does not actually provide high-quality support, and instead shares it in the discursive process with the original ruminant, the pair may slip into co-rumination, leading to persistent ruminant anxiety and possibly It hurts the relationship (ARDEN, 2017, p. 15).

Also, (Boren, 2014) points out in Social Support that sharing experiences may actually be beneficial when the content of social support is focused on problem solving rather than problem solving, as many pairs often fail to do so, and they engage in shared rumination, (ARDEN, 2017, p. 16).

According to (Campos 2013) theory, joint rumination is a functional emotional response to sadness that is summarized in the appropriate emotional response to expressing sadness to another person in an attempt to alleviate his distress, and this pathetic response to another person's sadness requires that the respondent have the ability to integrate and understand emotional information, then constitutes a response consistent with the goal of providing comfort to the person expressing grief (Sarah, 2014, p.43).

In the theory of social penetration, it indicates that with the development of human relations, self-disclosure between individuals in these relations moves from superficial levels to deep levels in which the relationship is more intimate (West, 2013: 150).

Despite the negative results of co-rumination, there has been relatively little research on the positive outcomes of co-rumination since Rose and others, 2002, which indicated that co-rumination has a positive effect on friendship quality and supported some subsequent studies that included a measure of the quality of co-rumination. The relationship in same-sex friendships, including the study of Starr and Davila and the study of Smith (Starr & Davila, 2009), (Smith, 2011) supported the preliminary findings of Rose ;( Laura 2014, p.15)

In Newcomb's theory, he indicated that the quality of friendship strengthens between the two parties who have similar attitudes, directions, ideas or opinions towards people, things,

situations or opinions of common interest. For values, opinions and other things. (Meri, 1984, p. 59).

In Erikson's theory, the sixth stage of developmental periods mentioned by Erikson is the stage of young adulthood, which extends approximately between the age of (19-35), and he called it the stage of intimacy versus solitude. And competition (Schlitz, 1983, p. 213). When the young man fails in some of those friendly relations with others, we see him isolating himself from people and his relations become mere superficial ones, lacking spontaneity and warm emotional exchange (Ericson, 1954, p. 262).

As for the theory of social blending, formulated by (Irwin Altman and Dalmas Taylor in 1973) to understand the relationship between individuals, the main idea is that relationships become more intimate over time, as partners reveal more and more information about themselves that self-disclosure is the essence of the process of developing a relationship to intimacy, and that it depends on the mutual disclosure between the two parties to the relationship. (Mansour, 2017: 271).

In the theory of social exchange, (Homans, 1974), who laid the first building blocks of this theory, believes that we look at our relations with others in the light of the realized profit, that is, what you earn from the relationship minus the cost, the higher the profits and the lower the cost, the higher the quality of the relationship.

In the model of levels of association, Levinger classifies the social supports that increase the quality of friendship into three categories, each of which performs a special function:

- 1- Circumstances that facilitate the formation or continuation of the relationship between the two persons, including closeness and familiarity.
- 2- Psychological characteristics that contribute to achieving harmony between the two people, including similarities in economic background, attitudes and values.
- 3- Expressing mutual feelings, support and love, (Abu Sari, 1993 AD, 87).

In the integrative (Adams and Plessner) model, friendship passes through three stages: the stage of formation, the stage of maintenance, the stage of solution, and in the stage of formation, in which the penetration occurs through the levels of friendship over time, and it has stages that begin with adaptation to circumstances, then exploration, then frankness, disclosure, and familiarity, then disclosure Public and private areas in the personality As for the solution stage, either the friendship is strengthened, the friend is removed a little, or it is terminated, and there are reasons for ending them what is related to the friend, and some of them are related to structural and communicative changes, and the end has two forms: involuntary as the death of a friend, and voluntary and has Two forms of gradual termination or abrupt termination, (Al-Qadri, 2012, 79-107)

In the Bukowski and Hausa model 1989, he referred to friendship as the experience of reciprocal relationship (Thien and others, 2018, p.1). Bukowski and Hausa suggested the stinginess model to explain the quality of friendship, which refers to (to the simplest model or theory with fewer variables, but with greater explanatory power), which is A model consisting of five dimensions (Companionship, conflict, assistance, security, and proximity); (Thien, and others, 2018, p.2).

As for the Parker-Washer model, high friendship quality is characterized by support, openness, intimacy, and low conflict, while low friendship quality is characterized by a low level of support and a high level of competition and high conflict (Kelly K. Canute, 2016, p.1).

In the Mendelson and Abboud model, it is possible to examine certain dimensions of the quality of the friendship relationship using a practical framework based on friendship functions (Mendelson & Aboud, 1999) and to analyze the feelings between friends, Mendelson and Aboud suggest that this can be done by investigating the feelings of friends towards each other, and what the two parties think about this friendship Such as measuring positive feelings between people and friends, (companionship, motivation, help, intimacy, reliable alliance, self-verification, and emotional security); (邵姿毓,2020,p.11).

### ***Third: Research Methodology and Procedures***

#### ***Research Methodology***

The descriptive research method was used in a correlational method, due to its consistency with the nature of the current research.

#### ***Research Community***

The current research community was determined by the students of the University of Baghdad, as their number reached (61,481).

#### ***Research Sample***

The sample was chosen at random. The current research sample consists of (400) university students distributed over (6) colleges from the University of Baghdad, the College of Arts, Ibn Rushd College, and the College of Languages, Sciences, Engineering and Pharmacy.

## **Research Tools**

#### ***Common Rumination Scale***

The researcher adopted the common rumination scale, symbolized by Rose 2002, which was designed by (Rose 2002). The alternatives range from: (exactly true = 5) (mostly true = 4) (somewhat true = 3), (a little true = 2), (not true = 1). The apparent validity of the scale was verified by presenting it to the arbitrators, and 23 items were agreed upon and 4 items were excluded. Thus, the total of its items in the final picture became 23 items.

#### ***Friendship Quality Scale***

The researcher relied on the MFQ-FF scale (designed by Mendelson & Aboud, 1992) to measure the quality of friendship, as the researcher relied on their definition and theoretical framework. Applicability of the paragraphs to their friend on the Likert scale. It consists of 9 points (0 = never), (2 = rarely), (4 = once in a while), (6 = somewhat often), and (8 = always). The Nine-Likert Scale was used because it gives a better distinction between the respondents, and the apparent validity of the scale was verified by presenting it to the arbitrators. It was agreed on 29 items and the exclusion of one, and thus the total of its items in the final picture became 29 items.

The researcher believes that university students, especially in Iraq, are subjected to many pressures, financially and socially, in addition to the academic ones. They are required to work to provide material income in addition to studying, as well as social problems. Because of this, they may resort to social support as a means of relieving pressures, and this social support may take the form of co-rumination.

### ***4th: Presentation, interpretation and discussion of the results***

**First: Common Rumination of Research Sample**

**Table (1)** *T-Test for the difference between the sample mean and the hypothetical mean of the common rumination scale*

Sample Size	The Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Hypothetical Mean	Calculated T-Value	Tabular T-Value	Degree of Freedom	Significance
400	79.63	18.63	69	11.41	1.96	399	Significant

The result of Table (1) indicates that the research sample have common rumination.

This result was consistent with the theoretical framework of the study presented by (Rose, 2002), which indicated in a study conducted in 2017 by (Rose and others, 2017) that university students have common rumination and it is associated with high friendship quality as well as with mental alertness. Shared rumination is a discussion of personal problems in a bilateral relationship; (Rose, 2002, p.1830).

**2nd: The differences in joint rumination according to gender and specialization**

**Table (2):** *The results of a two-way analysis of variance to reveal the significance of differences in joint rumination according to gender and specialty*

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Means of Squares	F-Value	Sig
Gender	921.122	1	921.122	2.686	Non-Significant
Specialization	36.603	1	36.603	0.107	Non-Significant
Gender X Specialization	1676.902	1	1676.902	4.89	Significant
Error	135808.870	396	342.952	---	---
Total	2674659	400	---	---	---

The results of Table (2) indicate the following:

There is no statistically significant difference in joint rumination according to the gender variable, as the calculated q value was (2.686), which is less than the tabular q value of (3.84) at the significance level (0.05) and the degree of freedom (1-396).

This result is in agreement with the study of John E. Roberts and Christine A. Calmes (Calmes & Roberts, 2008), which indicated that males and females did not differ in the degree of rumination with fathers, romantic partners, and same-sex roommates, as well as Stone et al., (2010) did not find a There are differences between the sexes, but this result was in contradiction to the study of Rose, 2002, and the researcher believes that this difference may be due to the difference in the sample community in which the study was applied.

There is no statistically significant difference in joint rumination according to specialization, as the calculated q value was (0.107), which is less than the tabular q-value of (3.84) at the significance level (0.05) and the degree of freedom (1-396).

There is a significant interaction between (sex and specialization) in favor of scientific females, as the calculated t value reached (4.89) which is higher than the tabular t value of (3.84) at the level of significance (0.05) and the degree of freedom (1-396).

This result is consistent with the theoretical framework of the current research presented by Rose (2002). Rose pointed out that gender is related to co-rumination rates, and more specifically, as females tend to ruminate more than males, and females with their close friends, (Laura J. Taylor 2014, p.4).

**Table (3): T-test for the difference between the sample mean and the hypothetical mean of the friendship quality scale**

Sample Size	The Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Hypothetical Mean	Calculated T-Value	Tabular T-Value	Degree of Freedom	Significance
400	172.03	45.72	116	24.51	1.96	399	Significant

The result of Table (3) indicates that the research sample has friendship quality, and this result is consistent with the theoretical framework adopted in the current research of (Mendelson & Aboud, 1999), which indicated that there is a high quality of friendship among young people and adults, and this means the achievement of the six positive functions of friendship that Mendelson identified them as: (motivating companionship, help, intimacy, trusting alliance, self-verification and emotional security) Huang and others (2020, p.11). These positive friendship functions contribute to friendship satisfaction and denote the positive evaluation of the relationship, the affection of friends towards each other, and the stability of friendship between them (Lisa,2019, p.9).

**4th: The differences in the quality of friendship according to gender and specialization**

**Table (4): The results of the two-way analysis of variance to reveal the significance of differences in the quality of friendship according to gender and specialization**

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Means of Squares	F-Value	Sig
Gender	82656.250	1	82656.250	43.585	Significant
Specialization	216.090	1	216.090	0.114	Non-Significant
Gender X Specialization	225.000	1	225.000	0.119	Non-Significant
Error	750982.300	396	1896.420	---	---
Total	12671808	400	---	---	---

The results of Table (4) indicate the following:

There is a statistically significant difference in the quality of friendship according to gender and in favor of males, as the calculated t-value reached (43.585), which is higher than the tabular t-value of (3.84) at the level of significance (0.05) and the degree of freedom (1-396), and this result was in violation of the framework Theoretical current research identified by (Mendelson & Aboud, 2012).

The researcher believes that this may be due to the different cultures and customs of Western societies from Arab ones. Female friendships in the West are closer because they are more liberal and spend more time together outside the framework of universities and studies.

In the Arab world, female friendships are more specific and there is difficulty in sharing activities together and often Only during business hours.

There is no statistically significant difference in the quality of friendship according to specialization, as the calculated t-value reached (0.114), which is less than the tabular t-value of (3.84) at the level of significance (0.05) and the degree of freedom (1-396).

There is no significant interaction between (sex and specialization), as the calculated t-value was (0.119), which is less than the tabular t-value of (3.84) at the significance level (0.05) and the degree of freedom (1-396).

#### ***5th: The correlation between joint rumination and the quality of friendship among the research sample***

To achieve this goal, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used to calculate the correlation coefficient between the total scores obtained by the sample members in the scale of joint rumination and the quality of friendship. 0.52) which is higher compared with the value of the Pearson tabular correlation coefficient of (0.098) at the level (0.05) and the degree of freedom (398). This result was consistent with the theoretical framework adopted in the current research presented by (Rose, 2002) and indicated in her study (Rose, 2017) that joint rumination is associated with high friendship quality among university students who were on a high degree of personal alertness (Rose, 2017).

(Rose, 2017) pointed out that this positive aspect of joint rumination is due to self-disclosure, as far as the ability to disclose oneself provides an increased sense of intimacy, joint rumination is associated with emotional closeness and high quality in friendships (Miller and others, 2020, p.7).

#### ***6th: Defining the significance of the differences in the relationship between joint rumination and the quality of friendship according to the variables of gender and specialization***

There is a difference in the relationship between joint rumination and the quality of friendship between males and females and in favor of males, because the calculated value is higher than the tabular value of (1.96) at the (0.05) level.

There is a difference in the relationship between joint rumination and the quality of friendship according to the scientific and humanitarian specialization and in favor of the scientific, because the calculated value is higher than the tabular value of (1.96) at the level (0.05).

This result was in violation of the theoretical framework adopted in the current research presented by Rose, 2002, and the researcher believes that this may be, as we mentioned previously, because male friendships in Arab societies are more close and achieve an important function of friendship functions identified by (Mendelson & Aboud, 1999), which is a function Companionship stimulation means doing more activities together in contrast to females, and this interpretation agrees with the hypothesis (Levinger, 1974: 30). Levinger and Snok indicate that the social relationship between two people passes through three gradual stages: (awareness, superficial contact, and exchange). The determinants that facilitate the upgrading of the relationship vary from one stage to another. Among the variables affecting the transition of the relationship from the first level to the second level are spatial proximity, moderate climate, similar economic and social variables, personality characteristics and age convergence. Levinger classifies social supports into three categories, each of which performs a special function, the most important of which are the conditions that facilitate the formation or

continuation of the relationship between the two people, including closeness and familiarity. (Abu Saree, 1993 AD, 87).

The researcher believes that as a result of this, male friendships in Arab societies are of higher quality, and the social role of males in Arab societies exposes them to great pressures and difficulties, as it imposes on them the responsibility of work and living in the shadow of a society that suffers from unemployment and lacks available fields of work.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the results of the current research, the researcher recommends the following to the competent and relevant government agencies:

The necessity of holding courses in universities by counseling centers that focus on positive lifestyles and their potential to address collective and individual problems and work to alleviate negative lifestyles, including joint rumination (negative rumination), as its continuation may lead to many psychological problems, including depression. and psychological isolation.

Preparing strategies by specialists in psychological and cognitive-behavioral therapy and university professors to develop and develop positive psychological talk for university students, since negative self-talk stimulates joint rumination and thus leads to negative emotional infection.

## **Suggestions**

- 1- Conducting a longitudinal study to examine the relationship between joint rumination and the quality of friendship and knowing its long-term effects.
- 2- Conducting an empirical study to find out the percentage of negative talk between males and females and its prevalence.
- 3- Studying other types of rumination such as revenge rumination, relational rumination (RelRQ) and verbal rumination.
- 4- Studying the quality of other relationships, such as the quality of the romantic relationship, the quality of the marriage relationship, and others, and their relationship to joint rumination.
- 5- Expanding the research on joint rumination (negative rejection), its causes and consequences, and the extent of its prevalence in different samples of society.

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