

# Rationalization of Action in Education Investment Decisions: Parents' Perceptions

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## ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melihat bagaimana rasionalitas yang dimiliki orang tua terhadap keputusannya untuk bertindak dalam peningkatan kualitas sumber daya manusia yang dimiliki anak melalui pendidikan. Hal ini dikarenakan permasalahan yang muncul dari berbagai studi teori tentang "Apakah keputusan yang diambil orang tua dalam menyekolahkan anak merupakan sebuah tindakan yang rasional ataukah hanya sebatas pemenuhan dari kebijakan pendidikan yang telah dibuat oleh pemerintah dalam mendukung peningkatan kualitas sumber daya manusia melalui pendidikan?". Oleh karena itu, untuk menjawab permasalahan dan tujuan penelitian ini, maka peneliti menggunakan jenis penelitian kuantitatif dengan metode korelasi dan uji regresi. Data penelitian dikumpulkan menggunakan instrument penelitian skala 7-point yang disebarluaskan melalui survey online, dan data yang diperoleh sebesar 185 responden. Populasi dan sampel dalam penelitian adalah para orang tua wali murid di kelas XII, Malang, Jawa Timur. Hasil dari penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa rasionalisasi tindakan instrumental dan rasionalisasi tindakan nilai mampu mempengaruhi secara signifikan keputusan orang tua dalam berinvestasi pada bidang pendidikan. Harapan dari penelitian ini lebih ditekankan kepada kemampuan orang tua dalam berfikir secara rasional ketika mengambil keputusan berinvestasi pada bidang pendidikan anak, khususnya pada analisis biaya dan manfaat yang rasional, serta menghindari keputusan implusif atau emosional. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan penelitian lanjutan tentang bagaimana respon orang tua terhadap keputusan berinvestasi pada bidang pendidikan jika dilihat dari faktor lainnya, baik yang berasal dari internal orang tua maupun faktor eksternal dari orang tua.

## ABSTRACT

This research aims to see how the rationality of parents towards their decision to act in improving the quality of human resources owned by children through education. This is due to the problems that arise from various theoretical studies on "Is the decision taken by parents in sending their children to school a rational action or is it only limited to the fulfillment of educational policies that have been made by the government in supporting the improvement of the quality of human resources through education?". Therefore, to answer the problems and objectives of this study, the researchers used a type of quantitative research with correlation and regression test methods. The research data was collected using a 7-point scale research instrument distributed through an online survey, and the data obtained was 185 respondents. The population and sample in the study were parents of students in class XII, Malang, East Java. The results of the study revealed that instrumental action rationalization and value action rationalization were able to significantly influence parents' decisions in investing in education. The hope of this research is more emphasized on the ability of parents to think rationally when making decisions to invest in children's education, especially on rational analysis of costs and benefits, and avoiding implicit or emotional decisions. Therefore, further research is needed on how parents respond to the decision to invest in education when viewed from other factors, both from internal parents and external factors from parents.

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## **1. Introduction**

Education investment is an issue that cannot be ignored by various parties (Madani, 2019; Patrinos & Psacharopoulos, 2020; Sahnoun & Abdennadher, 2022) because this is closely related to preparing superior human resources to face the challenges of the globalization era (Heckman & Letkiewicz, 2021). Therefore, apart from the preparations made by the government in improving the quality of human resources through education, education users, especially parents, should also prepare education that can later support the preparation of children in facing the challenges of the globalization era (Wati & Sahid, 2022). Thus, there needs to be good cooperation between the government and education users (parents) so that improving the quality of human resources through educational investment can run optimally. One of the things that can be done from the parents' side in supporting the implementation of the goal of optimizing the quality of human resources is to rationally consider all decisions to send children to school.

Therefore, preparing for children's education in supporting their welfare in the future is not only related to parents' good understanding of the importance of education (Dhanaraj et al. 2019; Alonso-Carrera et al. 2020) and also a supportive socioeconomic status (Domino 2018; Jin 2020), but also the need for parents' rationalization in their actions to make this happen (Lambert, 2019). This means that after parents can understand the importance of investing in children's education and how the background of the socio-economic status that parents have in supporting children's education, then rational decisions are needed in making this education investment decision. Because basically, rationalization of action is an effort made by individuals in thinking rationally about factors that can influence actions to make decisions accurately and accurately (Hernandez & Ortega, 2019), meaning that people who have rational thinking will make decisions based on the information they have obtained in achieving goals, especially in the decision to send children to school. So decision-making by individuals is a consideration of various alternative actions that are considered the most relevant and can be used in achieving goals (Stanovich, 2016).

Normative measures in rationality will be used by individuals, especially parents, in evaluating their beliefs to make decisions and achieve goals that have been set (Baron, 2007). Therefore, as an action that has a normative measure, the main parameter in rational behavior is the goal that the individual has. Thus, it can be concluded that the ability of individuals to think and act rationally is the highest achievement that humans have (Shafir & LeBoeuf, 2002); (Santos & Rosati, 2015); (Hidayat, 2016). In addition, the ability to think rationally, especially in the act of investing in education will be closely related to how parents think rationally about the costs required during the education process and also the output they might receive in the future, so they need to think about and consider the various alternatives needed in reaching decisions to achieve the goals that have been planned so far by choosing the most relevant or best way to act, especially in their decision to invest in children's education (Stanovich, 2016).

The decision-making process in a rational approach focuses more on understanding the situation at hand, identifying problems that may arise, determining the type of decision to be taken, generating alternative decisions, evaluating alternative decisions that have been made, deciding on alternative actions to be used and implementing alternative decisions in carrying out goals and adjusting the steps needed based on alternative decisions that have been made in achieving goal success (Moorhead & Griffin, 2013). This means that in achieving the success of the planned goals, the internal and external factors of the individual will greatly influence them. In addition, the beliefs that individuals have about something will affect rationality in determining decisions, because individuals will combine various certain information before deciding to act (Ajzen 1991; Tamba 2017).

Rational decision making in investing in education made by parents in supporting their children's welfare in the future is a social action (Sahnoun & Abdennadher, 2022) because the actions they take will affect their children in actions in the future. Decisions in using rational choices, especially in investing in education made by parents are closely related to their social actions and decisions, meaning that the actions in investing in education that they will take will be directed and affect the lives of others, in this study the lives of their children in the future. Therefore, with the behavior caused by this social action, Max Weber states that in determining alternative choices based on rational thinking, there are four types of social action that can be observed, namely instrumental action, value-based action, affective action and traditional action (Ritzer, 2010). However, according to Max Weber, there are two types of actions that will accurately support the rationality of individuals in determining their actions, namely instrumental action rationality and value action rationality (Ritzer, 2010).

In instrumental action rationality, individuals have the idea that they can use this action as a condition or consideration that can support their actions in achieving goals, because in instrumental action rationality, this decision has considered various alternatives that allow these goals to be achieved optimally (Ritzer, 2010) This is because, in instrumental action rationalization. Individuals will carry out various

kinds of evaluations of the situations they are facing or will face as a consequence of the risk of making decisions in the future (Fast & Jago, 2020), so that in this type of instrumental action rationalization, individuals will focus more on identifying the goals they want before deciding to choose actions that are considered the most appropriate and effective in supporting the achievement of these goals (Cushman, 2020). As for value action rationality, individuals are no longer limited to having expectations of achieving goals by using various alternative actions that have been designed, but they already have confidence and awareness of the value or way these alternatives can be used to achieve goals that have been designed optimally (Ritzer, 2010) Therefore, the value action rationalization will provide effective support in considering the decisions to be taken, because it will allow individuals, especially parents, to maintain the consistency of decisions based on the consideration of values that apply in the environment and society and in line with existing ethics, morals and principles so that they will not intersect with the norms that apply in society.

From the various theoretical studies above, a problem arises, namely "Is the decision taken by parents in sending their children to school a rational action, or is it only limited to the fulfillment of educational policies that have been made by the government in supporting the improvement of the quality of human resources through education?". From this problem, the purpose of this article is more focused on the perceptions of parents, especially the rationality of parents' actions in supporting the improvement of the quality of human resources through education pursued by children.

## **2. Method**

This research uses a type of quantitative research with a correlation method in answering research problems, because this research tries to investigate or prove that action rationalization has a relationship or relationship with parents' decisions in choosing to invest in education. The population and sample used in this study were parents and guardians of students in class XII, Malang, East Java. The sampling technique in this study used random sampling, and the data on the number of samples totaled 185 respondents using the calculation of the number of samples from Cochran (1977). The instrument in this study used a 7-point Likert Scale and was collected using the Jotform online survey, starting from January 2023 – April 2023. The selection was online because the time spent by researchers in collecting data was shorter and in terms of research funding it was cheaper because there was no need to duplicate questionnaire, besides that the results obtained from online surveys are also faster to interpret (Schonlau et al. 2002; Sue & Ritter 2007) because the results of online surveys can be directly converted into the required format (Jotform, 2022). As for the data analysis technique, this study uses a regression test, but prerequisite tests (Normality, Multicollinearity, Linearity and Homoscedasticity) will be carried out first before testing the hypothesis. The decision basis for the normality test is  $Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) > 0.05$ , the multicollinearity test is  $VIF < 10$ , the linearity test is  $dL > 0.05$  and the heteroscedasticity test is the distribution of all data above and below zero, whereas for testing the decision making hypothesis the significance values are  $t_{count}$  and  $F_{count} < 0.05$  (Sugiyono, 2019).

## **3. Results and Discussion**

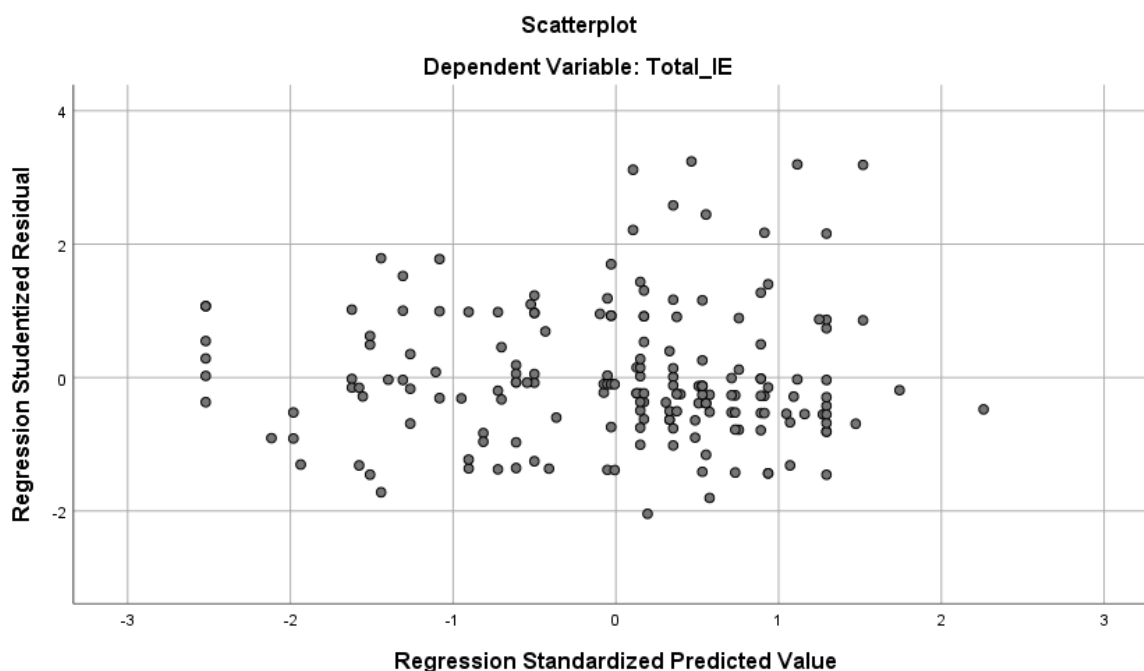
### **Results**

The results of calculations from the data that have been collected show that from the prerequisite test the data has a normal distribution, there are no symptoms of multicollinearity, there is a linear relationship between the variables of rationalization of instrumental actions and rationalization of value actions with parents' decisions in investing in education (Table 1). In table 1, it can be seen that all research data collected through 185 respondents has a normal distribution, this can be seen from the test results which show that the data in the field has an *Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)* value is greater than 0.05, namely 0.074, meaning that this research data can be used as a tool in answering research problems. Furthermore, in the results of the prerequisite test analysis it is also known that the collected research data does not show any symptoms of multicollinearity, this is because the calculation results show that the variance inflation factor (VIF) value is smaller than 10, namely 1,064. That is, the data in the field shows that there is no relationship or correlation between the independent variable (action rationalization) and the dependent variable (educational investment). So that from the results of the multicollinearity test using the VIF value, the research data collected can be said to be reliable and has stability in testing.

**Table 1.** Summary of Results of Normality Test, Multicollinearity Test, and Linearity Test

No.	Classical Assumption Test	Results	Decision	Summary
1.	Normality	0.074	Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) > 0.05	Data is normally distributed
2.	Multicollinearity	1.064	VIF < 10	No symptoms of multicollinearity
3.	Linearity	0.260	dL > 0.05	There is a linear relationship between instrumental action rationalization and value action rationalization with parents' decision to invest in education

In addition, in the results of the classical assumption test in table 1 above, it is also known that the action rationalization variable and the educational investment variable have a relationship or linearity between the two. This is evidenced by the results of the linearity test which show that the data collected to represent the two variables has data at a deviation from linearity (dL) greater than 0.05, which is 0.260. Whereas the results of the heteroscedasticity test show that the data does not have symptoms of heteroscedasticity, this is because the results of the heteroscedasticity test on the collected data show that all data is spread both above and below zero (Figure 1). That is, the data collected shows an unequal variance between several observations from existing respondents. Therefore, the collected data can be continued as an analytical tool in answering research problems.



**Figure 1.** Results of the Heteroscedasticity Test

After the data prerequisite test is met, the next step to test the hypothesis using multiple linear regression analysis tools can be done (Table 2). From the calculation of the hypothesis test results, it is known that the correlation coefficient (R) is 0.763 and the coefficient of determination is 0.812 (Table 2). It is known that the correlation coefficient (R) is 0.763 and the coefficient of determination (R-Square) is 0.812. That is, the results of the study show that the relationship between the variable rationalization of instrumental actions and the variable of rationalization of value actions with parents' decisions to invest in education is in a category that has a strong correlation, because it has a correlation value of 76.3%, so that if the rationalization variable increases or change, the education investment variable will also experience an increase or change at a proportional level. As for the value of the coefficient of determination (R-Square), it can be seen that the data has a magnitude of variation or fluctuation in the education investment variable which is influenced by the action rationalization variable of 0.812 or 81.2%. That is, the effect of the

contribution of rationalization of actions that parents have is able to provide a strong predictor of decisions in investing in education for their children.

**Table 2.** Summary of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Test

	<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
1	Regression	.763	.812	-	-	-	-
		-	-	93.084	.007	-	-
	(Constant)	-	-	-	-	16.497	.000
	Total_RIA	-	-	-	-	5.434	.001
	Total_RVA	-	-	-	-	5.706	.005

a. Dependent Variable: Total\_IE  
 Predictors: (Constant), Total\_RIA, Total\_RVA

From the data above (Table 2), it can be seen that parents in the Malang area, East Java, who have school-age children at the senior high school level, especially class XII, think that in determining investment in children's education, rational thinking is needed regarding their actions. In addition, table 2 also reveals that both the rationalization of instrumental actions and the rationalization of value actions partially affect parents' decisions in investing in the education sector. instrumental to parents' decisions to invest in education is 0.001 [0.001 < 0.05] and the significant value of tcount for the rationalization of value actions to parents' decisions to invest in education is 0.005 [0.005 < 0.05]. As for the relationship or simultaneous influence between the independent variable and the dependent variable, it has a significant value <0.05 for the  $F_{count}$ , which is equal to 0.007. So that it can be interpreted that the variable rationalization of instrumental actions and the variable of rationalization of value actions simultaneously or simultaneously will affect parents' decisions in investing in education.

Therefore, the results of this study confirm that the decisions taken by parents in investing in education for their children are not only used as a fulfillment of the policies that have been made and determined by the government to be carried out in supporting the improvement of the quality of human resources through education, but it is an objective thinking and based on rational thinking from parents that the level of education that will be pursued by their children will provide long-term benefits in the future.

**Discussion**

From the results of the above research, it is known that the actions taken by parents in supporting the success of their children's education, especially in parents who have children at the senior high school level in class XII and are in the Malang area, East Java, really understand the consequences that will be taken in supporting their children's education at a higher level of education according to their children's potential. The results of this study are supported by the results of other studies which state that the decision to invest, especially in education, is one of the parent's awareness of the ability to think in making decisions appropriately and rationally by paying attention to the factors that influence these decisions (Triventi, Vlach, & Pini, 2022) because the rationalization of actions in the field of education will encourage changes in new activities that are more professional, can create a more formal organization and a more rational structure (Schofer et al. 2021). Thus, with the ability to rationalize decisions in taking action on educational investment, parents are expected to encourage their children to improve their abilities professionally in the future, because they have received education according to their potential.

Other research results also reveal that action rationalization will help in setting the right priorities (Hernandez & Ortega, 2019), because through a decision process based on rational thinking, individuals can assess and see the importance of investing in education, especially in the context of their long-term goals. This will allow them to allocate their resources wisely, on target, and focus on the most important investments that affect the lives of their children (Wang, 2019; Dizon-Ross, 2019), as it will affect their personal and professional development. In addition, other research results also support the results of this study, they reveal that action rationalization allows parents to identify, evaluate and reduce the risks associated with decisions in investing in education (Stocké, 2019; Banks et al., 2019). This means that parents will tend to conduct a thorough risk analysis first before making the right decision for investing in children's education.

Therefore, the results of this study are also supported by thoughts which show that an individual's ability to think rationally will assist individuals in making the right decisions even though they are

influenced by several other factors outside the individual (Edwards, 1954; Hernandez & Ortega, 2019), so that individuals can also make various alternative actions that they might take in achieving goals when decisions in previous actions cannot support the desired goals (Stanovich, 2016). That is, with the ability of parents to rationalize the decisions they choose for the actions taken, especially in investing in children's education that is adjusted to their potential, it will provide implications and hopes that the education taken by children can later be used to improve their abilities future professionals. This is because the decision to invest in education is one of the awareness that parents have in creating changes to activities, especially new activities that can produce abilities according to the potential of the individual (Schofer, Ramirez, & Meyer, 2021).

In addition, the decision-making process in determining children's educational investment with a rational approach will make it easier for parents to state the purpose of the situation they are aiming for, because they must be able to identify problems related to the potential of their children before determining the appropriate level of education based on a wide selection of alternative decisions that will be adjusted to the success of these alternative decisions (Moorhead & Griffin, 2013) Moreover, by using rational thinking in the decision-making process, parents will be able to map out all forms of considerations thoroughly in relation to achieving their expected goals through planned actions (Hastie & Dawes, 2010).

#### 4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this study is to explore and understand how the relationship between instrumental action rationalization and value action rationalization with parents' decisions in choosing to invest in education. The results of the research findings and discussion above, show that instrumental action rationalization and value action rationalization affect parents' decisions to invest in education. This means that parents' decisions in taking action to invest in education are also influenced by rationalization in decision making, be it rationalization in considering various alternative decisions that allow these goals to be achieved optimally or rationalization of their decisions towards beliefs and awareness of values or ways that can be used to achieve goals that have been designed so that their implementation can be maximized. Therefore, to achieve these goals optimally, parents must make wiser and more informed decisions, so that they will make decisions investing in education based on a rational analysis of costs and benefits, and avoid implicit or emotional decisions that may be unfavorable to the long-term goals they have. Thus, the results of this study hope that parents can have full awareness in understanding every decision they will make, especially in determining the education their children will take, this needs to be done rationally, this is because the decisions they make will have an impact on the changes that will occur in the child's future after completing education because it will have an impact or implication on increasing good employment opportunities and higher income potential. Therefore, further research is needed on how parents' responses to investment decisions in the education sector when viewed from other factors, both from internal parents and external factors from parents.

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