



Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy Counseling to Minimize Anxiety: Reviewed from a Theoretical Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Anxiety is something that everyone tends to experience. Basically, individuals who are in an anxious state will find it difficult to think optimally and cannot carry out their activities smoothly and optimally like normal people in general. So that this anxiety is very important to be overcome and minimized so as not to have a negative impact on the life of the individual. The purpose of this study is to see theoretically that REBT counseling can minimize anxiety. The research uses a literature study method. The data in this study was obtained from various references such as books, articles, journals and other scientific studies that are related to REBT and anxiety counseling. The data in this study were analyzed, classified, processed, and described in an easy-to-understand and understandable language. Based on the results of the theoretical review, it can be understood that anxiety is a psychological problem that stems from the inability to think rationally. So it is suitable to be overcome by providing REBT counseling that focuses on rationalizing individual irrational thoughts, and can be used to reduce or minimize anxiety experienced by individuals. However, it must be done by a professional counselor who can implement this REBT counseling properly according to the stages that have been set.



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Introduction

Anxiety in general is a psychological problem that tends to be experienced by every individual. Individuals who experience anxiety will show behaviors such as nervousness, cold sweats, shaking or restlessness. Christiano, et al. (2020) explained that anxiety is one of the early warning systems that humans have to prepare themselves for danger or threats that come. Normal anxiety usually only occurs for a short time. Anxiety is a manifestation of mixed emotions and experienced by individuals as a reaction to threats, stresses, worries that affect physical and psychological. This means that once the thing that causes anxiety has been passed, the anxiety will disappear and the individual will be in a normal state again. Usually, this anxiety will come at a certain time, such as when you want to make a presentation, face an interview, start a match, or face an exam.

Anxiety occurs due to various factors, one of which is the inability to face something (Dewi & Pujiastuti, 2020). Anxiety is also defined as a feeling of worry and increased physiological reactivity when individuals deal with things they find difficult and frightening, resulting in fear and insecurity (Luttenberger, Wimmer, & Paechter, 2018). One form of anxiety experienced by students is anxiety in dealing with mathematics subjects. Math anxiety generally starts from negative or embarrassing experiences of students, so math anxiety is not a learning disability, but it interferes with the individual's ability to learn math and hinders the student's ability to understand and participate in math (Passolunghi, et al., 2016). Likewise, anxiety in various other fields, both in

terms of work and competition, which causes feelings of anxiety that interfere with concentration so that individuals cannot display their potential optimally.

Individuals who are in anxiety have at least three irrational thoughts: (1) they cannot succeed on their own, (2) thinking that avoiding exams can help them cope with the anxiety they experience, and (3) a "disaster" for them when they cannot perform optimally (Asanjarani & Zarebahramabadi, 2021). One form of anxiety that often occurs is anxiety experienced by students. This anxiety describes an emotional state associated with fear. The types that describe anxiety vary, 1) fear of the school situation as a whole, 2) fear of special aspects of the school environment, teachers, friends, subjects, or exams and 3) school phobia, causing children to refuse to go to school (Mukholil, 2018).

It can be understood that anxiety is a problem that must be alleviated quickly and appropriately, because it can have a negative impact on the sufferer. One of them is through counseling services using the rational emotive behavior therapy approach or more commonly known as REBT. One of the counseling techniques taken from the cognitive behavior approach is REBT counseling which is a cognitive behavior approach that emphasizes the relationship between feelings, behaviors and thoughts. The REBT approach was developed with the basic view that humans are individuals who have a tendency to think irrationally, one of which is obtained through social learning. In addition, individuals also have the capacity to relearn to think rationally. Because the problem in anxious people is the decrease in the ability to think rationally Based on theoretical reviews and research results, REBT counseling focuses on helping rationalize irrational individual thinking. So that it can be used to overcome the anxiety experienced by individuals by rationalizing their thoughts.

REBT is an approach in counseling science that emphasizes the relationship between feelings, behaviors and thoughts. In REBT counseling, emotions and negative thoughts that are self-destructive must be handled through the reorganization of thoughts and perceptions and irrational thinking can be changed towards logical and rational thinking (Taufik & Putriani, 2023). So it can be understood that REBT counseling seeks to rationalize irrational thoughts that can harm oneself. Fauziah (2018) explained that in counseling, REBT seeks to invite individuals to improve and change their attitudes, ways of thinking, beliefs and views that are irrational to rational, so that individuals are again able to build and develop themselves and achieve more optimal realization. The application of REBT counseling is to help students to live their lives with rational thinking and be more productive. Irrational thinking can cause problems that affect students' emotions so that it can cause behavioral disorders (Thahir & Rizkiyani, 2016).

REBT is one of the approaches in counseling that helps clients to change the client's irrational views and beliefs into rational, helping to change attitudes, ways of thinking and perceptions, therefore clients are expected to be able to develop and achieve optimal self-realization. For example, low learning motivation of students results in poor learning achievement. In the REBT approach, BK teachers will help students to rationalize irrational thoughts, help students grow new motivation in themselves so that their learning achievement can increase. Nadila, Taufik, & Syarif (2021) stated that problems such as aggression, anxiety, irrational thoughts, discriminative behavior, low self-esteem, conduct disorder, low academic achievement can be overcome through the REBT approach.

Based on the phenomenon and explanation above, it can be understood that anxiety is something that must be handled appropriately so as not to harm the individual himself. Therefore, it is necessary to make efforts to change a rational and logical way of thinking for individuals who experience anxiety This is the basis for researchers interested in researching about attracting researchers to research more deeply related to anxiety and its handling reviewed from a theoretical perspective, namely with the research title "REBT counseling to minimize anxiety: reviewed from a theoretical point of view".

Method

The research uses a literature study method. Arikunto (2014) stated that literature study research is any effort made by researchers to collect information relevant to the topic or problem that will be or is being researched. This information can be obtained from scientific books, research reports, scientific essays, theses and dissertations, regulations, decrees, yearbooks, encyclopedias, and other written sources, both printed and electronic. Literature research is a data collection technique by conducting a study of books, literature, notes, and reports.

The data collection technique used in this literature research is by the documentation method, which is to find data on things or variables in the form of notes, books, papers or articles, journals, and so on and the results of other scientific studies that are relevant to REBT and anxiety counseling. The data analysis technique used is the content analysis method. The data obtained is then analyzed, classified, processed, and described in a structured manner in an easy-to-understand and understandable language.

Results and Discussions

Based on the results of research data analysis from various literature studies, rational *emotive behavior therapy* (REBT) counseling in minimizing anxiety which is theoretically reviewed can be seen in the following explanation.

1. Anxiety

a. The Definition of Anxiety

Anxiety is a subjective feeling of unsettling mental tension as a general reaction to the inability to overcome a problem or the absence of a sense of security (Fitria, et al., 2020). In addition, Annisa & Ifdil (2016) explained that anxiety is similar to fear but with a less specific focus, whereas fear is usually a response to some immediate threat, while anxiety is characterized by worry about unexpected dangers that lie in the future. Anxiety is a negative emotional state characterized by the presence of premonitions and somatic tensions, such as a racing heart, sweating, and difficulty breathing.

Anxiety experienced by a person and not getting treatment will cause impaired cognitive abilities, especially in solving the problems faced because the individual will feel burdened when getting tasks or responsibilities related to the thing he is afraid of (Namkung, Peng & Lin, 2019). This fear depends on the object, when you become a student, the object is the questions given by the teacher, assignments or daily tests or often known as exams. However, it is different from workers who cause anxiety that they are unable to complete their work optimally so that they are unable to achieve their targets. This will make individuals not concentrate and cannot complete their tasks properly, and cannot utilize their potential optimally. In line with that, Shishigu (2018) revealed that anxiety is defined as negative emotions that interfere with the problem-solving process. For example, students who do not like mathematics have an attitude of avoiding everything related to mathematics. This means that students' anxiety about mathematics is not only in the learning process, but also has a negative attitude and view towards mathematics which results in students experiencing fear before mathematics learning takes place. Students' anxiety about math usually stems from negative experiences in relating to teachers, tutors, classmates, parents or siblings. These feelings and thoughts about mathematical anxiety include tension, panic, helplessness, fear, distress, shame, and the inability to cope with it (Girginer, 2015).

In addition, anxiety is defined as a state of unpleasant feelings accompanied by physical sensations that will alert a person to danger. This state is often unclear and not detected appropriately, but anxiety itself is always palpable. A person who experiences anxiety tends to always feel worried about the worst conditions and circumstances that will happen to him (Nova, et al., 2020).

Based on the definition above, it can be concluded that anxiety can be interpreted as a form of a person's feelings either in the form of feelings of fear, discomfort, tension, panic, helplessness, fear, pressure, embarrassment, and inability or anxiety to participate in activities or carry out responsibilities given to them. Anxiety can also result in a negative emotional condition experienced by the individual. People who have anxiety tend to be avoidant or stay away from objects that make them anxious.

b. The Symptoms of Anxiety

Symptoms are one of the important aspects that must be understood as a form of initial identification whether a person is identified with anxiety or not. This behavior consists of various forms that can be identified from the form of behavior or deed. Clark & Beck (2010) explained that there are several symptoms of a person identified as experiencing anxiety, including:

1) Physiological Symptoms

Physiological responses automatically occur in the presence of threats or dangers that are considered defensive responses. This response is seen in the context of evoking fear from animals and humans, involving an autonomous stimulus that prepares the organism to face danger by fleeing or by directly facing danger (resisting), a process known as a "fight or-flight" response. Its characteristics are; increased heart rate, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, rapid breathing, chest pain or pressure, choking sensation, dizziness, sweating, chills, nausea, abdominal pain, diarrhea, trembling, tingling or numbness in the arms, legs, weakness, shaking, fainting, tense muscles, stiffness and dry mouth.

2) Cognitive Symptoms

Widespread and frequent fear affects the ability to think clearly, solve problems and overcome the demands of the surrounding environment. Cognitive symptoms provide a meaningful interpretation of the individual's inner state as a form of anxiety. Its characteristics

are; fear of losing control, inability to cope with it, fear of physical injury or death, fear of negative evaluation by others, frightening memories, perception of unreality, poor concentration, confusion, easily distracted, narrowing of attention, excessive vigilance of threats, poor memory and difficulties in reasoning.

3) Behavioral Symptoms

Behavioral symptoms involve flight or avoidance as well as safety-seeking responses. Its characteristics are; avoiding signals or threatening situations, fleeing, chasing safety anxiety, agitation, pacing, hyperventilation, freezing or immobility and difficulty speaking.

4) Affective Symptoms

The affective domain consists of behaviors that emphasize aspects of feelings and emotions, such as interests, attitudes and ways of self-adjustment derived from cognitive and physiological activations are also subjective experiences of anxious feelings. Its characteristics are: nervousness, tension, despair, fear, restlessness, impatience and frustration.

In addition, Mukholil (2018) also explained that there are several symptoms of anxiety experienced by a person, namely symptoms of anxiety that are physical, such as restlessness, aches, twitching of the eyelids, tense facial expressions, sweating, dry mouth, continuous urination, difficulty concentrating, sweaty hands frequently, stomach disorders, heart palpitations, congestion, in the throat. Furthermore, psychological symptoms such as fear, chaotic thoughts and feeling unfortunate. Symptoms that arise from anxiety, namely: heart palpitations, increased pulse, shortness of breath or feeling of suffocation, chills, feeling hot, chest pain, sweating, trembling, feeling invulnerable/numb or tingling, nausea or abdominal pain, dizziness, lightheadedness, fainting, unstable, feeling afraid of dying, losing control or going crazy. Such anxiety and the symptoms of anxiety that appear, usually make people stressed. He used to feel disturbed in his work, personal functions, and social functions in the community.

One example of a form of anxiety is a person's anxiety in mathematics. Students' anxiety about mathematics is generally related to a person's anxiety related to a lack of mathematical knowledge and confidence in mathematics. The characteristics of students who experience mathematics anxiety are: (a) difficult to be ordered to do math, (b) avoid math classes, (c) feel physically sick, dizzy, afraid, and panicked, (d) cannot do math test questions (Mahmood & Khaton, 2011). Other forms of students' anxiety in mathematics are anxiety before exams, after exams, quizzes, difficult Math assignments, basic operations, and daily life applications (Seng, 2015).

c. The Factors of Anxiety

Anxiety experienced by individuals does not occur on its own, but is caused by various factors. Anxiety occurs due to a lack of *scaffolding* (Priyanito, 2017); emotional states, beliefs and interests that exist in each individual (Nurnjanah, 2021). So that unstable emotions and low confidence can cause a person to experience anxiety that can interfere with their way of thinking and behavior in establishing interaction with the social environment.

Other factors that cause anxiety can be classified into three categories: (1) environmental factors, such as negative experiences, parental pressure, overly strict regulations; (2) mental factors, such as methods of association that are not in accordance with one's own abilities, lack of trust; and (3) personal factors, such as reluctance to ask questions due to embarrassment, fear and low self-esteem (O'Leary, et al., 2017).

This anxiety often also occurs in students. For example, students' anxiety in mathematics subjects. Puteh & Khalin (2016) revealed that there are factors that cause mathematics anxiety, namely: curriculum weaknesses, negative experiences of students in learning mathematics, pressure from the family environment, teachers' personalities and teaching styles, influence on peers, and past experiences experienced by students. In addition, other factors that also affect math anxiety are math learning anxiety factors (anxiety about the learning process) and math evaluation anxiety factors or those related to test situations. Mathematics learning anxiety (anxiety about the learning process) is when completing one's own assignments, watching the teacher work on a math problem on the board, listening to the math teacher talk for a long time, listening to other students explain math, and starting a new topic in math. Anxiety factors in mathematics evaluation or related to the test situation are thinking about the math test the day before it is carried out, when taking a math test, difficult math homework, and quizzes before starting math lessons (Carey, et al., 2017).

Basically, an individual who experiences anxiety is caused by the high production of the hormone thyroxine in the human brain. A person who experiences a negative emotional process will stimulate the hypothalamus to produce high levels of thyroxine. This causes individuals to get tired

easily, easily anxious, tense easily, easily fear, and have trouble sleeping, so that the individual's condition becomes less than optimal (Rosanty, 2014). To overcome this, a person must be able to balance themselves in every condition they experience. The human brain has four natural morphins in the body, which are positive hormones that can relieve diseases and make life happy. The morphines are the hormones endorphins, dopamine, serotonin, and oxytocin. The function of these natural morphines can make the body more relaxed, so that it can reduce anxiety or stress (Atiwannapat, et al., 2016).

d. The Effect of Anxiety

Anxiety is something that can harm individuals if not treated quickly. Putra & Yulia (2020) explained that there are several parts of anxiety that have different impacts on the sufferer, namely:

1. Mood anxiety gives rise to irritability and feelings of extreme tension.
2. Anxiety of the mind causes worry, difficulty concentrating, empty minds, exaggerating threats, seeing oneself as very sensitive and feeling helpless.
3. Motivational anxiety causes avoidance of situations, high dependence and wanting to escape.
4. Behavioral anxiety causes anxiety, nervousness, and excessive alertness.
5. Anxiety due to biological symptoms causes sweating, trembling, dizziness, palpitations, nausea, and dry mouth.

In addition, Aqobah & Rhamadian (2022) explained that excessive and uncontrolled anxiety can have an impact on decreasing the body's immunity, making the body weak, lethargic and restless. The impact on this anxiety can be seen in individuals who play in the world of sports, such as athletes. If a high level of anxiety will affect the stretching of the muscles which also affects their technical ability, their appearance will be affected (of course worse). Furthermore, the state of mind is increasingly disturbed and negative thoughts appear, for example the fear of losing and other anxiety (Ilsya & Komarudin, 2019).

Based on the explanation above, it can be understood that many negative impacts are caused by not being able to deal with anxiety properly. In addition, in the learning process at school, anxious students can cause the learning results they get are not optimal, due to the division of concentration or mind.

2. REBT Counseling

a. The Definition of Counseling REBT

Rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT) counseling was born from Ellis's dissatisfaction with traditional counseling practices that were considered inefficient, especially the classical psychoanalytics that had been practiced. Rational-emotive therapy counseling is a form of active counseling that resembles the process of education and teaching by maintaining the dimension of the mind rather than feelings (Nasuki, 2014). The Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) approach is a cognitive behavior approach that emphasizes the connection between feelings, behaviors and thoughts." The basic view of this approach about humans is that individuals have a tendency to think irrationally, one of which is obtained through social learning. In addition, individuals also have the capacity to relearn to think rationally. This approach aims to invite individuals to change their irrational thoughts into rational thoughts through the ABCDE theory.

According to Corey (2009) *Theory and Practice of Counseling & Therapy* that "There are three pillars that build individual behavior, namely Antecedent event (A), Belief (B), and Emotional consequence (C). The framework of this pillar is later known as the concept or theory of ABC which means: 1). Antecedent Event (A) is all external events experienced or exposed to an individual. A precursor event in the form of facts, events, behaviors, or attitudes of others. The divorce of a family, graduation for students, and entrance selection for prospective employees are antecedent events for a person. 2). Belief (B) is the individual's beliefs, views, values, or verbalization of themselves towards an event. There are two types of a person's beliefs, namely rational beliefs (rB) and irrational beliefs (iB). Rational confidence is a way of thinking or belief system that is precise, reasonable, wise, and therefore prosuicive. Irrational beliefs are the belief that the system thinks someone is wrong, unreasonable, emotional, and the faucet is unproductive. 3). Emotional Consequence (C) is an emotional consequence as a result or reaction of an individual in the form of a feeling of pleasure or emotional inhibition in relation to an antecedent event (A). These emotional consequences are not a direct result of A but are caused by several variables between in the form of belief (B) both the rB and iB ones. 4). Disputing Irrational Belief (D) or arguing irrational thoughts. 5). Effective New Philosophy Of Life (E) or developing an effective philosophy of life.

REBT is also one of the psychotherapies that can be given to clients who are prone to anxiety with the general goal of reducing irrational beliefs and strengthening rational beliefs that can be

effective in themselves and others through learning and training cognitive, emotional and behavioral. Thus, it is hoped that clients who easily feel anxiety who also have irrational beliefs will be able to have healthy emotions and behaviors (Wardani & Sari, 2018).

b. The Humans Views

Taufik & Putriani (2023) explained that there are several views of REBT on humans, namely:

1. Humans are born with various strengths and potentials for life. One of the unique strengths of humans is the ability to think rationally
2. Human tendencies essentially stem from the power of rational and irrational thinking.
3. Irrational thinking is the reality of human life that is formed through illogical experiences and learning processes, which are obtained through parents, family, community and culture where the individual lives.
4. Emotional disorders as a result of self-verbalization are not determined by external things or events, but by perceptions and attitudes towards the events that are incorporated.
5. Negative emotions and thoughts of a self-destructive nature must be dealt with through the reorganization of thoughts and perceptions that irrational and logical thoughts with the roots of certain beliefs can be changed in the direction of rational and logical thinking.

c. The Purpose of REBT Counseling

Taufik & Putriani (2023) explained that there are 2 goals of REBT counseling, namely:

1. Improving and changing the client's irrational and illogical attitudes, perceptions, ways of thinking, beliefs and views into rational and logical so that the client can develop himself, increase self-actualization as optimally as possible through positive cognitive and affective behavior.
2. Eliminate self-destructive emotional disorders such as hatred, fear, guilt, sin, anxiety, anger, as a consequence of the wrong way of thinking and belief system by training and teaching clients to face the realities of life rationally and awaken self-confidence, self-worth and ability.

In addition, Nadila, Taufik & Syarif (2021) explained that the main purpose of REBT is rational thinking. Rational thinking is closely related to positive things which include individuals being able to accept themselves, being able to actualize themselves well, and being able to maintain themselves well. While irrational thoughts are the opposite, individuals are unable to maintain themselves well, are unable to actualize themselves, and tend to have negative emotions displayed in the form of negative behaviors. This is certainly very important to pay attention to considering that students will later become the next generation of the nation that is expected, so the motivation that continues to be developed will also make individuals continue to have directed goals related to performance results that can provide proud achievements.

Research conducted by Srifianti (2017) proves that the REBT approach is able to solve counseling problems by developing itself to be better. Through the Quasi Experiment method, it was shown that there was a decrease in generalized anxiety disorder symptoms from before and after REBT therapy, which was 10.68%. By conducting research using counseling Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) has the goal of eliminating emotional disorders that can annoy oneself: anxiety, hatred, fear, guilt that results in students having irrational thoughts and training students to be able to face the reality of life rationally. Meanwhile, according to Aprianto, Fanisa, & Rahayu (2022), the main goal of counseling with the Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) technique is to help individuals realize that they can live more rationally.

It can be understood that the purpose of REBT counseling is to minimize the client's self-destructive view center and bring him back to rational thinking and behavior. In counseling, REBT seeks to provide the possibility for the client to rearrange his own perception of himself in a more positive direction, directing the client to be able to face the reality of his life with his own responsibility and not depending on others. In addition, it invites clients to be flexible in ideas, open to change and not fanatical.

d. The Steps of REBT Counseling

There are several steps that must be understood in the implementation of REBT counseling. Corey in Taufik & Putriani (2023) simplifies the four steps of REBT counseling so that they can be easily understood and implicit, namely:

1. The first step: the counselor needs to pay attention and show the client that the problem or difficulty he is facing is very related to irrational beliefs and try to direct the client to separate rational and irrational thinking.

2. Step two: the counselor shows the client that illogical thinking is actually the source of his personality disorder, but that can be overcome by making himself change his beliefs with a positive and rational view
3. Step three: the counselor tries to direct the client to think and free himself from irrational ideas.
4. Step four: in the counseling process, the counselor challenges the client to develop his or her rational philosophy of life and tries to reject other fictitious and irrational beliefs.

Based on the explanation above, it can be understood that there are four steps that counselors must understand in the implications of REBT counseling in helping clients. Success in understanding these steps is one of the key cornerstones in the success of counseling carried out by counselors.

Conclusions

Based on the results of research from various relevant literature, it can be concluded that there are many negative impacts caused by anxiety that does not receive proper treatment. Basically, every individual has the potential to experience anxiety. This anxiety comes from illogical perceptions so that individuals are unable to think rationally. So from the theoretical review, it can also be concluded that providing REBT counseling to individuals who experience anxiety can help change individual thinking from irrational to rational. This change in thinking is sought to help individuals get out of the anxiety state they are experiencing.

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