

Implementation of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) Techniques to Improve Students' Adaptation Skills

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Article Information	ABSTRACT
Received: February 2025	Background: The ability to adapt for students in facing various demands of academic, social, and emotional development in the school environment. Inability to adapt can have a negative impact on students' learning achievement and psychological well-being. Thus, appropriate psychological intervention is needed to help students develop this ability. The Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) approach is a view based on humans, which explains that individuals have a tendency to think irrationally one of which is obtained through social learning. Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) aims to eliminate emotional disorders that can damage the individual such as anxiety, hatred, fear, troubled feelings, anger, and so on. Aim: This study aims to test the effectiveness of group counseling services based on Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) in improving students' self-adjustment abilities at MTsN 2 Aceh Besar. Using a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental one group pre-test and post-test design, the study sample consisted of 7 students selected through a purposive sampling technique based on the results of the self-adjustment questionnaire. Result and Discussions: The research instrument was a self-adjustment questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability. The results of data analysis showed that the average score of students' self-adjustment increased from 194.71 in the pre-test to 236.71 in the post-test. The paired sample t-test showed a significance value of 0.001 (<0.05), indicating a significant difference between the scores before and after the intervention. These findings prove that REBT-based group counseling services are effective in improving students' self-adjustment abilities, including emotional, intellectual, social, and responsibility aspects. Keywords: Group Counseling, Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT), Self-Adjustment.
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Corresponding Author: Faiza Maulidia Guidance Counseling Study Program Ar-Raniry State Islamic University, Banda Aceh, Indonesia, Jl. Sheikh Abdur Rauf Kopelma Darussalam Banda Aceh. Email: 210213053@student.ar-raniry.ac.id Citation Information: Maulidia, F., & Khaira, W. (2025). Implementation of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) Techniques to Improve Students' Adaptation Skills. <i>Suluh: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling</i>, 10(2), 103–107. https://doi.org/10.33084/suluh.v10i2.9774	

INTRODUCTION

The ability to adapt is an important aspect that determines the success of students in facing challenges, both academically and socially. Adolescence is a critical period in student development, because during this period they often face pressure from various aspects of life, including academic demands, social interactions, and emotional changes. The level of student adaptation, to test the relationship between emotional maturity and student adaptation (Laia & Daeli, 2022). Adolescents who are able to adjust well generally show higher psychological well-being, are adaptive to new environments, and are able to build positive social relationships. (Counseling & Subagyo, 2013). On the other hand, inability to adjust can cause various problems such as anxiety, academic stress, and social conflicts that can hinder the learning process and personal development. This phenomenon often occurs in students who are entering a new level of education, such as the transition to junior high school, which often presents challenges in adjusting to a new, more complex environment.

According to (Bandini & Saadah, 2020) Adjustment is a person's success in adjusting to others by having criteria, real appearance, and the ability to adjust to various groups. This statement shows that adjustment includes the individual's ability to adapt to various social groups around them, which is very important in adolescent development. This understanding is in line with findings in the field, where students at MTsN 2 Aceh Besar face difficulties in adjusting, both socially, emotionally, academically, and interpersonally. They experience obstacles in interacting with peers, feel emotional pressure, and do not achieve optimal learning outcomes. The results of the Student Needs Analysis (AKPD) at MTsN 2 Aceh Besar show that this adjustment problem is indeed a major concern in the school environment. Based on the results of the initial study conducted by distributing adjustment questionnaires to all students in grades VII-3, data was obtained that 7 students were identified as having low adjustment abilities, namely with scores below the minimum standards set. This finding indicates a real need for appropriate psychological intervention to help students improve their adjustment

abilities. This is reinforced by the results of interviews with Guidance and Counseling (BK) teachers, as well as direct observations during the Field Practice Implementation (PLP 2), which confirmed that students had difficulty adjusting to the various social and emotional challenges they faced, which had an impact on their overall development.

A similar phenomenon was found in Ridha Yasni's (2021) study, which showed that students experienced increased self-adjustment abilities after participating in group counseling services. This indicates the need for appropriate psychological interventions to help students build adaptive strategies. One effective counseling approach for this purpose is Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT), developed by Albert Ellis. This approach focuses on restructuring irrational thought patterns that are the source of emotional disturbances and maladaptive behavior. (Tamamiyyah, 2024). Through REBT, individuals are helped to replace irrational beliefs with rational and functional thought patterns.

According to (Hakim, Netrawati, & Karneli, 2024), the main goal of REBT is to build positive thoughts, emotions, and behaviors by changing irrational beliefs into rational ones. In the context of group counseling services, REBT enables students to develop self-confidence, manage academic stress, and adapt socially more effectively. Therefore, this approach is a relevant strategy to be applied in overcoming adjustment problems among adolescents. (Tomy Dwi Apriyanto & Asni, 2024).

Although REBT has been proven effective in treating various psychological disorders, research that specifically highlights its application to the adjustment abilities of MTs students is still very limited. Most of the previous studies, such as those conducted by (Edmawati, 2023) more attention to test anxiety, not the overall adjustment aspect. Thus, further research is needed that focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of REBT-based group counseling in improving students' adjustment, especially at the junior high school level.

Given the importance of self-adjustment in student development, interventions are needed that are not only reactive, but also proactive and preventive. One counseling approach that has proven effective in improving self-adjustment is Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT). This approach was developed by Albert Ellis and focuses on restructuring irrational thought patterns that trigger emotional disorders.

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of the application of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) techniques in improving students' self-adjustment abilities. In this study, REBT-based group counseling acts as an independent variable, while students' self-adjustment abilities which include aspects of academic, social, and emotional adjustment serve as dependent variables.

The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of guidance and counseling services in schools, especially in helping students face academic and social

challenges better. Thus, the application of REBT in group counseling can be one of the strategic solutions in creating a learning environment that supports students' psychological and social development.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental design. (Balaka, 2022). The design used is one group pre-test and post-test design. The research respondents consisted of students who had difficulty adjusting to school.

Table 1. One group pre-test and post-test design

Pre-test	Intervention	Post-test
O1	X	O2

Information:

O1 = Pre-test value, measures the initial condition of the group before being given the intervention.

X = Intervention or treatment given to the research group.

O2 = Post-test scores measure the condition of the group after the intervention is given.

The population of this study were students of class VII-3 MTsN 2 Aceh Besar who experienced difficulties in adjusting themselves, selected based on the recommendations of BK teachers and case book data. The sample was taken by purposive sampling, namely 7 out of 32 students.

The instrument used in this study was the adjustment instrument adopted from Ridha Yasni's thesis (2021), which was designed to assess the level of students' adjustment to the school environment, covering four main aspects, namely emotional maturity, intellectual maturity, social maturity, and moral maturity or responsibility. This instrument is in the form of a questionnaire with 55 statement items using a five-point Likert scale: SS (Strongly Agree), S (Agree), KS (Disagree), TS (Disagree), and STS (Strongly Disagree).

This instrument has been tested for validity and reliability in previous studies. The validity test was conducted using Pearson Product Moment correlation, and out of 86 items tested, 55 items were declared valid with an r table value of 0.361. Meanwhile, the reliability test using the Cronbach's Alpha method showed a value of $\alpha > 0.70$, which indicates that this instrument is reliable and consistent in measuring students' self-adjustment abilities.

The pre-test and post-test data were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques (Akbar, Sukmawati, & Katsirin, 2024). Descriptive analysis was used to determine the average, standard deviation, and distribution of data from the adjustment scores before and after the intervention. Furthermore, a paired sample t-test was conducted to determine the significance of the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. This t-test was conducted with the help of the SPSS statistical program. The results of the analysis are considered significant if the significance value (Sig.) < 0.05 .

If there is a significant difference, it is concluded that REBT-based group counseling services are effective in improving students' adjustment abilities. With these procedures and analysis techniques, the results of the study will be presented and discussed further in the next section.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to determine the effectiveness of group counseling services with the Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) approach in improving students' self-adjustment abilities. Data were obtained from measuring self-adjustment scores before and after the intervention on 7 students using a questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability.

Based on the results of data analysis, it is known that the average score of students' self-adjustment has increased. At the time of the pre-test, the average score of students' self-adjustment was 194.71 with the lowest score of 159 and the highest score of 229. After being given REBT-based group counseling services, the average post-test score increased to 236.71 with the lowest score of 214 and the highest score of 259. A descriptive comparison of scores can be seen in Table 3, which shows an increase in the average score of 42 points. The pre-test was conducted to measure the level of students' adjustment before the intervention. After the pre-test scores were collected, the researcher assigned categories using a distribution of scores based on the mean and standard deviation, with the following category divisions: Low Score: <180, Medium Score: 180–210, High Score: >210. The pre-test results showed variations in scores among respondents. Of the total 7 respondents, two students, namely ZM and ZA, obtained scores of 159 and 165 respectively, which were included in the low category. Three other students, namely AT (182), NR (200), and SM (206), were in the medium category. Meanwhile, two students, namely NA (229) and SB (222), were in the high category.

Table II. Comparison of pre-test and post-test scores

Types of Tests	Average (X)	Lowest Score	Highest Score
Pre-test	194, 71	159	229
Post-test	236, 71	214	259

Overall, the average pre-test score was 194.71 which is in the moderate category. This shows that most students still have suboptimal self-adjustment abilities, and there is a need for interventions that can help them improve these abilities, both in terms of emotional control, rational thinking patterns, and social adaptation in the school environment.

After being given an intervention in the form of group counseling services with the Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) approach, there was a significant increase in the adjustment scores of all students. The post-test results showed that all seven students obtained scores that were included in the high category. Students who were previously in the low category, namely ZM and ZA, showed a significant

increase with scores of 214 and 237 respectively, which placed them in the high category. Likewise, students who were previously in the medium category, such as AT, NR, and SM, now achieved higher scores with values of 221, 237, and 242 respectively. Two other students, NA and SB, who were already in the high category during the pre-test, also showed an increase in scores to 247 and 259.

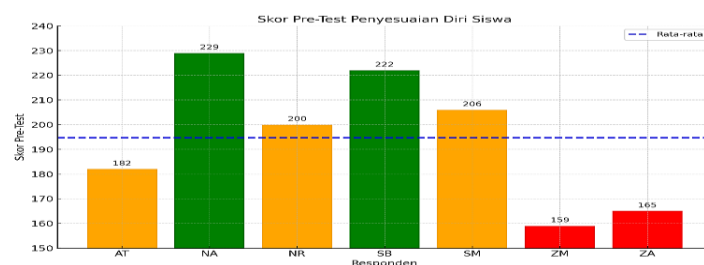


Diagram 1: pre-test scores of students' self-adjustment

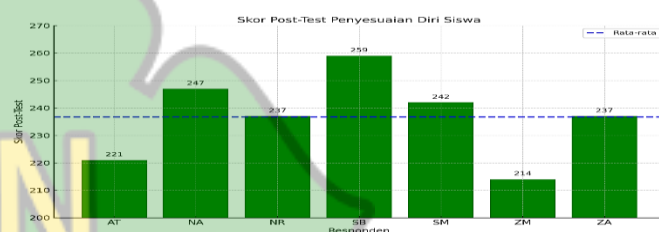


Diagram 2. post-test scores of students' self-adjustment

The two bar charts above illustrate a comparison of students' adjustment scores before and after being given REBT-based group counseling intervention. In the pre-test diagram, it can be seen that there is a variation in scores where two students are in the low category and three others are in the medium category. Meanwhile, in the post-test diagram, all students showed improvement and entered the high category. The horizontal blue line in each diagram shows the average score at each stage, namely 194.71 for pre-test and 236.71 for post-test.

The significant change in scores from pre-test to post-test reflects the effectiveness of the REBT approach in helping students recognize and change irrational thought patterns that may hinder their ability to cope with everyday situations. It also reinforces the important role of group counseling services in improving students' psychological and social aspects, as well as making a positive contribution in creating a learning environment that supports mental and emotional growth.

To test whether the increase is statistically significant, a paired sample t-test analysis was conducted. The test results showed that the t value = -6.525 with a significance of 0.001 (<0.05), which means that the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores is statistically significant. Thus, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted, namely that REBT-based group counseling services are effective in improving students' adjustment abilities.

Table III. Paired Sample t-Test Results for Self-Adjustment Scores

Statistics	Mark
Mean Difference	-42.00
Standard Deviation	17.03
Standard Error Mean	6.44
95% Confidence Interval (Lower)	-57.75
95% Confidence Interval (Upper)	-26.25
T-value	-6.53
Degrees of freedom (df)	6
Significance (p-value)	0.001 (< 0.05)

Discussion

Overall, the results of this study indicate that group counseling services with the Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) approach are effective in improving students' self-adjustment abilities, which include emotional maturity, intellectual maturity, social maturity, and moral maturity or responsibility. After participating in the service, students become better able to manage and express emotions healthily (emotional maturity), think rationally and solve problems better (intellectual maturity), foster positive social relationships (social maturity), and demonstrate a responsible attitude in everyday life (moral maturity).

In the learning process, Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) is implemented, with the aim of...

in directing the development and ability of students towards the positive thinking process about increasing students' learning motivation which is used in changing students' views, attitudes, ways of thinking and perceptions, and irrational beliefs into rational ones and in order to increase students' motivation to follow the learning process, it is necessary to make students pay more attention to what is being taught, build self-confidence in their learning abilities, and give them assignments. Factors that cause students to be less enthusiastic about learning include the absence of student obligations for assignments given by the teacher, related to the lack of learning motivation for students who are less enthusiastic about learning. The function of providing Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) can overcome students who experience a lack of learning motivation is to change students' views, attitudes, ways of thinking, perceptions, and irrational beliefs into rational ones (Repalita, Suratini Zain, & Diswantika, 2023).

Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) is a view based on humans, which explains that individuals have a tendency to think irrationally, one of which is obtained through social learning. Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) aims to eliminate emotional disturbances that can damage the individual such as anxiety, hatred, fear, troubled feelings, anger, and so on. One of the factors that affects student achievement is motivation. With motivation, students will study harder,

tenaciously, diligently and have full concentration in the learning or teaching process. Motivational encouragement in learning is one of the things that needs to be raised in an effort learning in schools. The Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) approach to increasing learning motivation is an effort to provide assistance to students/learners to be able to optimize and develop the potential possessed by students/learners. (All Habsy, Ach. Tegas Tri Cahyo, Rania Surya Jelita, & Intan Nur Fadhillah, 2024). when students have low learning motivation, then by using the Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) approach, students/learners can become highly motivated to learn.

The REBT approach has also been shown to help students change irrational thinking patterns into more rational ones, so that they can adapt to the environment in a healthier and more constructive way. These findings reinforce that REBT-based group counseling services can be an effective strategy in guidance and counseling programs in schools, especially in supporting students' overall psychological development.

The results of the study showed that group counseling services with the Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) approach significantly improved students' adjustment abilities. The improvement was shown through changes in the average score from the pre-test of 194.71 to 236.71 in the post-test. All students who were originally in the low and medium categories managed to increase to the high category after the intervention. This indicates that the REBT approach is effective in helping students overcome difficulties related to adjustment in the school environment.

This finding is in line with Ellis's opinion that the REBT approach focuses on changing irrational thoughts into rational thoughts through cognitive restructuring techniques, so that individuals can respond to stress in a more adaptive way. (Giovanny Permata Putri, 2018). Students who are able to change their way of thinking about difficult situations will be better prepared to face challenges both academically, socially, and emotionally.

In addition, these results are also supported by research (Edmawati, 2023) who found that REBT group counseling services were able to reduce anxiety and improve emotional regulation in students, which is an integral part of self-adjustment. Likewise, Purwaningsih (2019) explained that REBT-based group counseling can foster self-awareness, improve emotional control, and strengthen students' social relationships with their surroundings.

In other words, this service not only affects the emotional aspect, but also influences the improvement in social interaction and the development of self-confidence. The success of the REBT intervention in this study shows that students have the ability to learn to recognize and manage their psychological responses to stress and adjust positively to the school environment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that group counseling services with the Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) approach have proven effective in improving students' self-adjustment abilities. This increase is indicated by a significant change in the self-adjustment score between the pre-test and post-test. Before the intervention was given, the average student self-adjustment score was 194.71, with two students in the low category, three students in the medium category, and two students in the high category. After the intervention in the form of REBT-based group counseling, all students experienced an increase and entered the high category with an average score increasing to 236.71. The results of the paired sample t-test statistical test showed a significance value of 0.001 ($p < 0.05$), which indicates a statistically significant difference between the scores before and after the service was provided. This shows that the REBT approach can help students identify irrational thoughts, change them into rational thoughts, and manage emotional responses more adaptively to stressful situations..

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