



The Effectiveness of Group Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy to Reduce Student Learning Burnout

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of the Group Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy approach in reducing learning burnout experienced by students due to irrational thoughts. This research is a quantitative analysis that uses the method of Quasi-Experiment through the design of The Non-Equivalent Control Group. The subjects in this study were class VIII-1 students as the experimental group and class VIII-8 students as the control group. The instrument used is a learning burnout scale with the validity of 0.273 (Pearson Product Moment) and reliability of 0.936 (Alpha Cronbach). Data analysis was conducted using nonparametric statistics with the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test and Kolmogorov-Smirnov 2 Independent Samples. The results of this study show that the REBT approach in a group setting is effective for reducing student learning burnout. This can be seen from the score of student learning burnout in the experimental group, which experienced a greater and more significant decline than the control group.

Keywords: Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT), Learning Burnout

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Introduction

Learning activities are the most important elements of education. They help students develop the potential in them, gain knowledge, and transform their attitudes and behavior positively (Hasgimianti, Nirwana, & Daharnis, 2017). Teachers have an important role to play in creating a conducive and dynamic learning atmosphere for an effective learning process. Students and teachers need to interact in a conducive learning atmosphere to achieve specified educational goals that will produce motivated and intelligent students (Prayitno, Wibowo, Marjohan, Mugiyarso, & Ildil, 2015).

In most cases, the learning process is not conducive, as students face a lot of pressure while learning (Lin & Huang, 2014). Factors like changes in socio-cultural conditions could create psychological problems like poor adjustment and behavioral disorders that cause undue pressure for students (Netrawati, Khairani, & Karneli, 2018). The pressure students face during the learning processes affects learning outcomes negatively. Learning burnout is one of the outcomes of a disruptive and unconducive learning environment.

A lot of students experience learning burnout at one point or the other during their schooling days. (Charkhabi, Abarghuei, & Hayati, 2013; Jatmiko, 2016). Learning burnout is a phenomenon that needs to be given more attention as it causes a lot of problems for students, tutors, parents and other parties. Students who experience learning burnout perform poorly in their academics (Aypay, 2011). Several studies have shown that, if learning burnout is unchecked, it can lead to depression and academic stress (Aypay, 2011; Salmela-Aro, Savolainen, & Holopainen, 2009; Yang & Chen, 2016). For this reason and others, there is a need for more research on how students can overcome learning burnout caused by irrational thoughts.

Learning burnout is a psychological or mental condition in which a student experiences excessive boredom and fatigue, which eventually results in feelings of laziness, lethargy, and lack of enthusiasm for learning activities (Hakim, 2005). Schaufeli, Martínez, Pinto, Salanova, & Bakker (2002) explain that learning burnout refers to situations where students feel tired due to rigorous learning demands. This leads to cynicism, a dislike for learning, and feelings of incompetence. Irrational learning beliefs are one of the major causes of learning burnout. Irrational learning beliefs inhibit the learning process and result in negative

learning behavior. Irrational thoughts like loss of confidence, inferiority complex, illogical thinking, anxiety, negative thinking towards teachers, friends, and academic lessons lead to misbehavior. These elements must be rationalized to repair negative behaviors. According to Aypay (2011), learning burnout in schools is caused by the pressure on students to obtain good grades, which leads to psychological stress. This psychological stress furthermore causes emotional fatigue, which is a tendency to withdraw from physical and emotional activities, inferiority complex, reluctance to attend lectures, low learning motivation, and high dropout rates.

The research by Lin & Huang (2014) reported that 58% of 2640 students experienced learning burnout with indicators of low achievement, depersonalization, tiredness, and negative learning emotions. The research by Muna (2013) furthermore showed that 41.17% of 34 students experienced learning burnout in the high category, 26.47% were in the moderate category, while the remaining students experienced learning burnout in the low category. Research by Ratuloli, Kasih, & Nita (2013) showed that 49.12% of students in SMP N 33 Padang, experienced learning burnout. Based on the observations made and the information obtained from BK teachers in SMP N 13 Padang, the associated symptoms of learning burnout in students, include lack of enthusiasm for participating in teaching and learning activities, inability to concentrate in class, chatting with friends during lectures, inactivity in class, truancy and refusal to attempt assignments.

One of the counseling strategies that help students overcome learning burnout is the use of a cognitive behavioral counseling approach. REBT is a cognitive behavioral counseling approach that aims to understand and overcome negative emotional and behavioral problems caused by irrational beliefs (Komalasari, Wahyuni, & Karsih, 2011). The REBT approach helps students to rationalize their thinking, and it can be applied as a group therapy. The group therapy is a method where by group members are taught to apply REBT to colleagues in their groups (Corey, 2012; Ogbuanya et al., 2018).

REBT uses the ABCDE format (Activating event, Belief, Consequences, Disputing, Effective new philosophy) to help students understand why they experience learning burnout. With the ABCDE format, students are taught how to change irrational beliefs and manage damaging emotions. This helps them to overcome learning burnout and leads to positive behavior that will improve their quality of learning. This study aims to determine the Effectiveness of Group Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy to Reduce Student Learning Burnout.

Method

This research uses the Quasi-Experiment method, with the design of The Non-Equivalent Control Group, to examine the superiority of the REBT approach in the experimental group compared to the control group. This is accomplished by examining the difference in scores between the two groups. The subjects of this research are 16 students of SMP N 13 Padang. The 16 students were divided into two groups of eight. Class VIII-1 with 8 students was the experimental group, while class VIII-8 with 8 students was the control group. The students of both groups exhibited learning burnout in the high, medium, low, and very low categories. The instrument used is the learning burnout scale, which has been tested for validity and reliability through statistical analysis. The instrument validity is 0.273 (Pearson product moment), and its reliability is 0.936 (alpha cronbach). The Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test and the Kolmogorov Smirnov 2 Independent Samples were used to analyze the data.

Results

Based on the data obtained, the results before and after treatment using the group REBT approach is detailed in Table 1. The following is the score of the student learning burnout in the experimental and the control group.

Table 1. Results of pretest and posttest Experiment Group and Control Group

Number.	Experiment group				Control group			
	Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
	Scores	Category	Scores	Category	Scores	Category	Scores	Category
1.	154	H	88	L	152	H	130	H
2.	152	H	91	L	151	H	128	H
3.	124	M	67	VL	124	M	105	M
4.	121	M	67	VL	120	M	101	M
5.	121	M	69	L	119	M	99	M
6.	97	L	57	VL	97	L	79	L
7.	96	L	60	VL	96	L	93	L
8.	67	VL	51	VL	67	VL	60	VL
Total	932		550		926		795	
Average	116,50	M	68,75	L	115,75	M	99,38	M

From Table 1 above, there is a decrease in the average score of learning burnout in the experimental group. The score pretest is 116.50 in the medium category, down to 68.75 in the low category. The test results Wilcoxon showed a significance value of 0.012. This means that there is a significant difference between pretest and posttest values in the experimental group. In the control group, there was a decrease in the average score of learning burnout with the score pretest of 115.75 in the medium category, dropping to 99.38, but remaining in the same medium category. The learning burnout score of the experimental group was greater than the control group.

The changes in student learning burnout can be seen in the following diagram

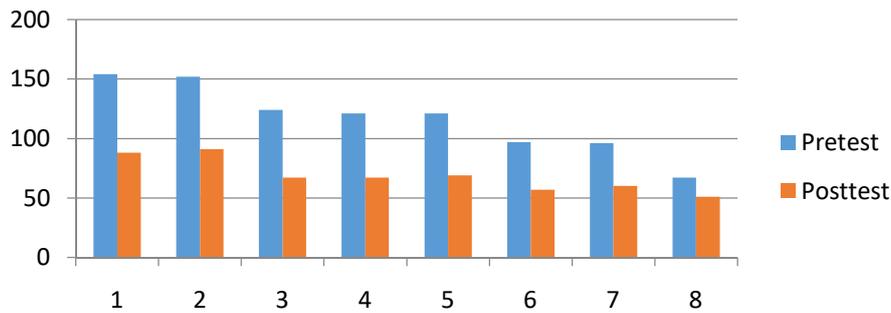


Diagram 1. The Difference in Results of the Pretest and Posttest Experiment Group

Based on Diagram 1, there are visible differences in students' learning burnout before counseling using the REBT group format compared to after they were counseled using the REBT group format. The diagram shows a significant decrease in posttest scores for the experimental group.

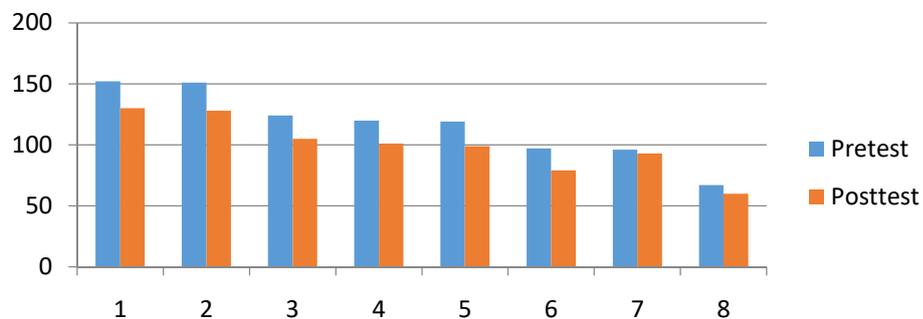


Diagram 2. Differences Results of Pretest and Posttest Control Group

Based on Diagram 2 above, there are differences in student learning burnout without the REBT approach compared to after the REBT approach was applied. In the diagram, the score of posttest student learning burnout has reduced, but the decrease in the experimental group is greater than that of the control group.

Table 2. Trial Kolmogorov Smirnov 2 Independent Experiment Group and Control Group

		Learning Burnout
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.750
	Positive	.750
	Negative	.000
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.500
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.022

From Table 2, the results of the posttest experimental group and the control group using the Kolmogorov Smirnov 2 Independent can be seen. The learning burnout values in the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) row is 0.022.

The significance value of 0.022 is smaller than 0.05 ($0.022 < 0.05$). This means that the REBT approach group format is effective for reducing learning burnout in schools.

Discussion

The results of this research prove that the REBT format approach is effective for reducing student learning burnout. The average score after treatment is lower than the average score before treatment, which proves this. The REBT approach is an effective strategy that can help students overcome learning burnout which arises from irrational, negative and illogical thoughts. This will make students more rational, logical, productive and optimistic. The REBT approach helps students to enjoy learning and accomplish educational tasks faster.

The REBT approach uses a relatively simple concept to understand how negative thinking can create disturbing, uncomfortable feelings that hinder students' education. The REBT approach helps students overcome these feelings with the aid of the ABCDE (Activating, Belief, Consequences, Disputing, Effective new philosophy) format (Jones, 2011; Palmer, 2011).

The effectiveness of the REBT approach for overcoming learning burnout can be seen from the results of the research by Widari, Dharsana, & Suranata (2014) titled *Penerapan Teori Konseling Rasional Emotif Behavioral dengan Teknik Relaksasi untuk Menurunkan Kejenuhan Belajar Siswa*.

Also, the results of the research by Ogbuanya et al., (2018) titled *Effect of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy Program on the Symptoms of Burnout Syndrome among Undergraduate Electronics Work Students in Nigeria* also proves that the REBT approach is effective for overcoming learning burnout.

The results of the research by Popov, Jelić, Raković, & Matanović (2018) titled *Emotions and Work Burnout from the REBT Perspective: A Short-Term Prospective Study*, showed that emotional experiences have a greater effect on burnout and this burnout leads to anxiety, anger, worry, depression, sadness and other negative feelings.

Irrational thinking could come in different ways. Students could think negatively about their teachers, friends and school subjects. They might feel unloved by teachers and parents. They might think that education does not affect their success in life. They feel inadequate and lack confidence. They become afraid to communicate and share ideas in class for fear of colleagues laughing at their opinions. They feel stupid and incompetent. The REBT approach can help to rationalize these irrational thoughts.

Students who experience learning burnout often start with irrational thoughts like lack of confidence, inferiority complex, and negative thoughts. Rigorous learning demands also make students think irrationally. Students start to feel incompetent and blame themselves for their poor performance in class (Palmer, 2011). These beliefs make students irresponsible and give them an irrational fear of tackling challenges.

The success of the REBT approach is also supported by the results of researchers like Dryden (2012), whose results show that counseling sessions are effective at making students increase their commitment to homework. The REBT approach is suitable for solving problems arising from emotional disorders. The research conducted by Tyas (2015) shows that the REBT theory applies to various settings, including elementary, secondary, individual and group counseling.

Teenagers and students have always exhibited irrational beliefs when something bad happens to them. The psychological problems experienced by adolescents are complex since adolescence is a period of transition. During this period, there are physical changes that affect bodily hormones. This causes a fluctuation of emotions among teenagers.

The REBT approach teaches people to solve life's problems independently. Students are taught to understand themselves and understand others. Students are taught how to change their basic personality patterns and philosophies by correcting wrong thoughts responsible for these thought patterns.

The REBT approach is a guidance and counseling technique that can effectively deal with problems relating to irrational attitudes and behavior. It teaches group members how to manage negative and wrong emotions that arise as a result of irrational thinking. The REBT approach helps students to realize that they can be more rational and productive. It helps students react appropriately to events (Gladding, 2012). The research by Collard & O'Kelly (2011) entitled *Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy: A Positive Perspective*, makes it clear that every individual has negative and positive emotions. Individuals are taught how to recognize their emotions and manage them to be more rational.

The effectiveness of the REBT approach for counseling groups was supported by Najafi (2012), whose subjects included young women aged 12-14 and 18-20 years. The study indicated that the REBT approach

was a very effective means of reducing irrational beliefs in Iranian teenage girls who were living in Kuala Lumpur.

The effectiveness of the REBT group in overcoming boredom was also supported by Popov et al (2018) in their research entitled "Emotions and Work Burnout from the REBT Perspective: A Short-Term Prospective Study". The results of their study showed that emotion is the most obvious manifestation of fatigue or saturation. The instrument used in their study is the WB Scale (Work Burnout Scale).

The REBT format is very useful for overcoming learning burnout because it focuses on changing irrational thinking among students using cognitive, emotive, and behavioral techniques. It is expected that the results of this study will be used as a reference for future research. This research can be developed in different contexts and backgrounds, so the findings from the results can be compared.

Conclusion

Based on the research data, it can be concluded that the REBT group format approach is effective at reducing student learning burnout caused by irrational thoughts. This can be seen from the score of learning burnout in the experimental group, which experienced a greater and more significant decrease than the control group. The results of the Kolmogorov test also show that there were significant differences in the mean score of the experimental group, which showed a greater and significant decrease in the average score after students were counselled using the REBT approach.

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