

## Counseling Group of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) and Reframing Technique to Reduce Learned Helplessness

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### Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine the effectiveness of the counseling group in rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT) and reframing technique to reduce learning helplessness in students. Randomized Pre-test – Post-test Comparison Group Design was applied to 14 students at YADIKA Senior High School Lubuklinggau. The instrument used is the scale learned helplessness. Data analysis techniques used were a one-way ANOVA test and post hoc test. The results showed that the counseling group REBT and reframing techniques were effective in reducing learning helplessness in students. The findings of this study prove the effectiveness of group counseling services with REBT and reframing techniques in students at Lubuklinggau, Indonesia.

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## INTRODUCTION

Learned helplessness is the feeling of an individual who experiences helplessness in learning to assume that s/he does not have the ability in any field and chooses to give up or despair, though he has tried he thinks that the reality that he can get will be the same. Whereas behind a little effort, s/he will get results as the saying says that struggling first feels excellent then. Try to think positively as a goal does bring benefits, but it will not be obtained as much as if we directly applied it in our way (Awalya, 2013).

According to a researcher from Grundtvig Learning Partnership (2010) suggests the definition of learned helplessness as a perception or feeling unable to change the direction of one's life, as learning from previous failures. The causes of learned helplessness can be linked internally, externally or both, to individuals or social groups. This can lead to a new form of exclusion that prevents positive personal development. Individuals who experience learned helplessness tend to avoid failure more than trying to find knowledge (Titscher, and Kubinger, 2008).

According to Verma, and Gera (2014) students who are helpless to learn are generally considered by teachers as workers who are unconscious, negligent and disturbing. These students only do the tasks that require minimal effort because they feel that despite their best efforts they will not get good grades so why bother trying. They have developed a helpless response style because, after repeated academic failures, they begin to doubt their abilities and consequently reduce their efforts, especially when facing difficult or challenging academic assignments. These students lack confidence in their abilities, intelligence and underestimate their performance even when they can do well in class. They generalize their failures from one situation to another where they can perform well. They focus on what they cannot do rather than their strength and hence their passivity makes their school performance deteriorated.

Our current challenge for existence in the future is to fix and seek the empowerment of the nation's next generation that is currently not

running effectively both in the ongoing environment of informal (family) education, formal (school and higher education), and non-formal (community). Seligman (1991) in his research on "Learned Helplessness" which is considered the greatest psychology research of the century because it can explain why many people give up, fail or are powerless when faced with challenges or problems they face. The learned helplessness internalizes the belief that what will be done has no benefit, and learned helplessness eliminates the ability to control difficult events. The learned helplessness is the definitive obstacle to empowerment.

The application of group counseling services with reframing and REBT techniques is deemed appropriate as an alternative solution that is tested for its effectiveness in overcoming these problems and helplessness. The effectiveness testing of each technique mentioned to reduce learned helplessness has been done in previous studies. But in this study, not only testing the effectiveness of each of these techniques but also comparing which techniques are more effective in reducing learning helplessness between reframing and REBT technique. This is the renewal of this research with previous studies. The choice of this topic is also of course based on the study of theory from various sources to support the compatibility between alternative solutions offered with existing problems.

The choice of group counseling services is based on the assumption that the problems about learned helplessness in students are not directly visible to the naked eye, but this problem requires deeper identification to be able to find out the low awareness of helplessness in students.

Nurfitasari, Wibowo, and Sugiharto (2014) and Rachmawati, Purwanto, and Awalya (2018) said that group counseling service is a process of assisting with a group atmosphere with topics and problems that are personal and confidential in groups.

This is supported by the opinion of Natawidjaya in Wibowo (2005); Gladding (2012); Winkel, and Hastuti (2007);, Gibson, and Mitchell (2011) which states that group

counseling services is an effort to provide assistance to individuals in a group atmosphere that is preventive and healing in nature and directed towards providing convenience in the context of development and growth, for counseling is a change in attitude and behavior. Changes that occur after counseling are actualized attitudes in various aspects of attitudes such as self-acceptance, positive attitudes towards the problems, and feelings of satisfaction (Sugiyono, 2016).

Research by Febriani, Widodo, and Kristiana (2014) shows both the strengths and the weaknesses of REBT. The advantage is the pressure on the role of cognitive responses to the arising of feelings reactions. The disadvantage is the lack of recognition of basic feelings as a very dominant factor in human life, which is not so easy to change. Nevertheless, the style of counseling is very useful to be applied by school counselors to teenagers and college students.

Meanwhile, the findings of the research conducted by Solikhah (2016) concluded that the REBT approach is generally effective in reducing online game addiction both for those who have high and low addiction, so the hypothesis is proven. The percentage of the decrease in addiction rate in this study reached 40% in high addiction and 41% in low addiction. Addiction to online games is a disruption of control over the desire or eagerness to play online games in an excessive, inclusive or satisfying manner to arise helplessness or the inability to stop online gaming

activities which in turn affects normal daily activities.

Based on the results of several types of research presented, it is proved that the application of the reframing technique and REBT technique has been used in reducing the learned helplessness of a person. This study was conducted to test the effectiveness by using rational REBT with the reframing technique.

## METHODS

The subject of the research was selected by using purposive sampling technique that is a technique to determine the selection with consideration to choose a subject who later on spread the scale of the instrument learned helplessness to all students of class X and XI of YADIKA SHS Lubuklinggau. In this study, the subjects of the study were 14 students who had high learning helplessness, consisting of 7 students for the group using reframing technique and seven students for the group using the REBT approach as a comparison group.

The data collecting technique in this study is using the scale of helplessness that was studied Learned Helplessness Scale (LHS) made by Quinless, and Nelson (1988) it has a different item power index range moving from 0.112 to 0.552. This scale also has an alpha reliability coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.681 means that the scale is reliable and can be used as a data collection tool in the research.

**Table 1.** Systematics of Group Counseling Activities

Session	Reframing	Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT)
1	Form a group that understands each other and supports better changes between group members with the comprehension they have about the counseling process that will be carried out	Form a group that understands each other and supports better changes between group members with the comprehension they have about the counseling process that will be carried out
2	Introducing the problem experienced with Learned helplessness by using the reframing technique	Introducing the problem experienced with Learned helplessness by using the rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT) technique
3	Educate group members to be able to define maladaptive thoughts and beliefs	Educate group members to be able to define maladaptive thoughts and beliefs
4	Practice to strengthen the positive statements	Practice to strengthen the positive statements

Experimental research procedures were carried out based on the experimental design "randomized pre-test – post-test comparison group design." After the first step was done by giving a pre-test to collect data using scale learned

helplessness, group 1 was given counseling intervention in the rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT) by converting its irrational thoughts to a more rational mind, the second step was done by giving post-test to collect data using

scale learned helplessness, group 2 was given a group counseling intervention with reframing technique that is forming or developing different thoughts about ways of thinking that are better from negative to positive thinking. After that, a post-test is given using the same scale. The group counseling stages will be described in Table 1.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The condition of learned helplessness in students after getting a counseling intervention group in the rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT) and reframing techniques shows a decrease in the learned helplessness level score. They are testing the hypothesis to test  $H_a$  in this study using the Mann-Withney and Wilcoxon Two Independent Sample Test analysis techniques. The Mann-Withney Two Independent Sample Test was used to determine the mean or mean differences that were significant between the results of the pre-test and post-test in each subsequent group Wilcoxon test to determine the difference in effectiveness between rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT) and reframing techniques. The results of the calculation of the data before and after and the differences in the effectiveness of the rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT) group counseling services and reframing techniques are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Results of Changes in Pre-test and Post-test Scores

Group	Pre-test		Post-test		$Z_2$
	M	SD	M	SD	
A	63.29	3.72	52.14	5.24	2.37*
B	60.14	2.34	49.14	2.11	2.38*
$Z_1$	-0.32				

Information:

$Z_1$  = Mann-Whitney;  $Z_2$  = Wilcoxon;  $P < 0.05$

Based on Table 2 it is known that there is no difference in the effectiveness of counseling in the REBT group with the counseling of the REBT group in combination with the reframing technique in reducing learning helplessness ( $Z_1 = -0.32$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). However, it is known, the two group counseling has a significant level of effectiveness in reducing learned helplessness.

The helpless learning level of the REBT counseling group at a pre-test ( $M = 63.29$ ,  $SD = 3.72$ ) was higher than at the post-test ( $M = 52.14$ ,  $SD = 5.24$ ,  $Z_2 = 2.37$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ). The level of learned helplessness in the group given the REBT counseling intervention group combined with reframing technique at the pre-test ( $M = 60.14$ ,  $SD = 2.34$ ) was higher than at the post-test ( $M = 49.14$ ,  $SD = 2.11$ ;  $Z_2 = 2.38$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ).

From a series of analysis above, it can be concluded that from the two experimental subject groups which examined subjects that were given group counseling treatment using reframing technique, subjects that were given group counseling treatment using REBT technique and subjects that were given group counseling treatment used a combination of reframing and REBT in an effort to reduce learned helplessness in students, the results obtained that subjects that are given group counseling treatment using a combination of reframing technique and REBT technique have the same level of effectiveness with subjects that are given group counseling treatment using reframing technique to reduce learned helplessness in students of YADIKA SHS Lubuklinggau.

This is by several studies related to the implementation of group counseling with the reframing technique and the REBT technique to reduce learned helplessness. As with the application of reframing technique to reduce learned helplessness once carried out by Laksmi, Antari, and Dantes (2014) which states that with this technique, counselees are made aware of irrational thoughts maintained, the impact of irrational thinking and the need to change irrational thinking into a more rational one.

Also, this technique also allows students to obtain alternative perceptions that are relevant to the problem experienced. This causes students to be aware of the irrational view that is believed to be true is wrong, and it motivates students to keep maintaining rational thinking. Empirically, the results of this study are supported by research conducted by Aulia (2012), which states that reframing or relabeling technique can overcome learned helplessness in students.

Meanwhile, there is no previous study conducted about the effectiveness of group counseling uses a combination of reframing technique and the REBT technique to reduce learned helplessness. So that in this study the discussion of the effectiveness of group counseling utilizing a combination of reframing and REBT technique to reduce learned helplessness is explained through theoretical studies of the two techniques.

The combination of the two techniques in this study is not so difficult because the two techniques combined in theory have a positive correlation. This can be seen from the definition of the two techniques, Wiwoho (2011) reframing is an attempt to reframe an event by changing the point of view without changing the event itself, where reframing technique is an approach that changes or reconstructs the perceptions or views of the counselee on problems or behavior and to help counsees form or develop other different thoughts about themselves. The strategies carried out in reframing techniques are rational, identification of the counselee's perceptions and feelings in a problem situation, outlines the role of selected perception features, identification of alternative perceptions, modifications, and perceptions in problem situations, homework and their completion. While the rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT) is an approach that emphasizes the interaction of thinking and common sense (rational thinking), feeling (emoting), and behaving (acting), this theory emphasizes that a profound change in thinking can produce meaningful changes in ways of feeling and behaving as well as related to learned helplessness problems in particular, as a whole person has the ability within himself to control thoughts, feelings, and actions, but firsts s/he must realize what they say to themselves (talk to themselves) to get command of their lives.

Based on the definitions of these two techniques, it appears that there is a common vision that is helping students to change the way they think better about themselves. It is just that the difference between the two techniques is the process of rearranging the counselee's perception of the problem or behavior and to help the

counselee to form or develop different thoughts about him in reframing techniques not carried out in rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT). So, by combining these two techniques it will have a positive impact to cover the weaknesses of each technique.

Mulawarman, and Sunawan (2012) examined "Application of a reality counseling approach to overcome learned helplessness (an embedded experimental model study on students)." The results of this study are seen from the qualitative results found that reality counseling can reduce the level of learned helplessness - not significantly ( $Z = -1.342$ ,  $p(\text{one tail}) = 0.09$ ). Although the average after and before counseling shows a decrease in the level of learned helplessness, the decline is not significant. In the qualitative hypothesis test using conversational analysis can also be found that changes occur in the speech or counselee speech and counselee desires and counselee actions to try to make a solution (solution) to the problem learned helplessness. Although there is a change, however, the changes made have not been explicitly planned according to the needs of each counselee.

Thus, theoretically, group counseling using a combination of reframing technique and REBT technique will be more effective than group counseling which only uses rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT) alone to reduce learned helplessness because it has a complete treatment to form helplessness learned behavior in individuals. This is in line with the results of this study, where group counseling using a combination of reframing technique and REBT technique proved that statistical analysis was more effective than group counseling using REBT technique to reduce the helplessness of students in YADIKA SHS Lubuklinggau.

The group counseling using a combination of reframing technique and REBT technique in this study was declared to be no more effective or the same as group counseling using reframing technique to reduce the learning helplessness of YADIKA SHS Lubuklinggau students. This is theoretically capable of being explained in this discussion. As explained earlier, the combination

of the two techniques in this study has a positive correlation. This means that the two techniques combined, namely reframing technique and rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT) technique, have aspects that are almost the same as emphasizing the development of imagination in both techniques. It is just that in the reframing technique not only limited to reconstructing the perception or perspective of the counselee on the problem or behavior and to help the counselee to form or develop other different thoughts about him. So that this reframing technique also includes the meaning of the REBT technique.

## CONCLUSION

This study has examined the effectiveness of group counseling using the reframing technique and REBT technique to reduce learning helplessness in Lubuklinggau YADIKA High School students. The results showed that subjects who were given group counseling services using the reframing technique had a higher reduction in helplessness compared to research subjects who were given group counseling services using REBT.

While the research subjects who were given group counseling used a combination of the two techniques (reframing technique and REBT technique), had the same effectiveness as the research subjects, who were only given group counseling services using reframing technique to reduce learned helplessness in YADIKA high school students Lubuklinggau.

This research still has limitations in terms of research subjects from high school students of class X and XI only, so that in future studies it would be better if it involved a wider subject, for example, involving elementary, middle school or vocational students. For practitioners in school, it is recommended to use the reframing technique to reduce learned helplessness in students so they can achieve optimal goals.

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