

Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito Teachings-Based REBT Counseling: A Study of Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito Teachings in REBT Counseling Perspective

Muhammad Misbahul Huda^{1✉}, Sunawan² & Muhammad Japar³

¹ Tahfizh Islamic Boarding School, and Integrated Islamic Middle School Tabligh Al Kahfi, Sidoarjo, Jawa Timur, Indonesia

² Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

³ Universitas Muhammadiyah Magelang, Indonesia

Article Info

History Articles

Received:

July 2019

Accepted:

August 2019

Published:

December 2020

Keywords:

cognitive restructuring

technique,

self instruction technique,

social anxiety

DOI

<https://doi.org/10.15294/jubk.v9i2.33839>

Abstract

Counseling will be more effective when a counselor understands the cultural background of clients. Therefore, this study aimed to describe the implementation of REBT counseling that is Javanese culture friendly, especially to the adherents of Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito' teachings. The study belonged to qualitative research on discourse analysis. The main source this study was the master piece work by Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito, namely: Serat Wirid Hidayat Jati, Serat Kalatidha, Serat Sabda Djati, Serat Sabda Tomo, Serat Joko Lodhang, Serat Jayengbaya, Serat Wedharaga. Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito's teachings always include morals and spirituality in life. Even his teachings became the main character in rationality reasoning, so the rationality is relevant to Javanese culture. The results of this study are expected to be implemented in the practice of REBT counseling with a Javanese culture nuance that is a collaboration between REBT and Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito' teachings. At last, these findings enrich theories in the context of multicultural counseling.

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✉ Correspondence address:

Melati No. 9 RT.07/RW.03 Singogalih, Tarik,

Sidoarjo, Jawa Timur, 61265

E-mail: misbah371@yahoo.com

[p-ISSN 2252-6889](https://doi.org/10.15294/jubk.v9i2.33839)

[e-ISSN 2502-4450](https://doi.org/10.15294/jubk.v9i2.33839)

INTRODUCTION

In this complex era, humans often experience psychiatric problems, such as frustration, emptiness, anxiety, and others. That is why today's people aware of the roles of counselors has increased. It was proven by the involvement of counselors in various institutions or workplaces.

As a science born in western culture, counseling practice often faces adaptation issues with clients who hold fast to local culture. As a result, not all approaches/counseling techniques are friendly and appropriate to use in the local culture.

One technique that is assumed to be potentially adapted to local culture is Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT). It was proven by the success of studies and discussion on journal regarding the collaboration between REBT with local cultures, such as studies by Bastomi, and Aji (2018); Kwee, and Ellis (1998); and Phillips (2016).

The relatively easy understanding of A-B-C and rational - irrational concepts and humans perspective agreement on REBT theories make this approach considered potential as a friendly counseling tool in the local culture.

The implementation of counseling will be more effective when the implemented approach can touch rational-logical, and psychic-spiritual aspects through religious values and local culture that are believed (Marhamah, Murtadlo, and Awalya, 2015). It is because those two aspects will build self-balance.

One of the Javanese culture figures whose teachings include the psychic-spiritual aspect is Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito (III). Both (REBT – Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito's teachings) will be a good combination in a counseling practice by complementing each other to achieve inner equilibrium regarding action, emotion, and cognition.

Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito was chosen as a prototype of Javanese local teachings, and the researchers did not claim that his teachings are better than others' Javanese figures, such as Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, Drs. R.M.P.

Sosrokartono, and others. In addition, the reason of choosing Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito's teachings were first, the unique concepts proposed by Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito contain eternal happiness philosophical values (*roso sejati*); second, his unique dialectics in delivering his teachings by inserting various arts, such as *tembang* (Javanese songs), philosophical stories, and Javanese-based literatures, third, the unavailability of Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito's teachings in relation to counseling. Therefore, this study was expected to contribute to Javanese culture preservation.

Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito always built rationality in three logical reasoning maps in one entity, namely spirituality, morals, and science, so his teachings have three goals which are the dynamism of personal, social, and divinity. For more, the basic unique concept by Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito's for human's life purpose are to know "*roso sejati*" and ending with unity with the Gods. These concepts fully support REBT principals as well as Javanese society beliefs.

By employing a reliable counseling technique and local teachings, it was expected that there would be a cultural friendly counseling communication and a combination of both perspectives.

This study was not interfaced that favor or demean others. It was even aimed at creating harmonious concepts in counseling implementation (cultural friendly counseling) by preserving the authenticity of each discipline (REBT and local culture). In this study, the concepts of each discipline were presented entirely in their true meanings.

Efforts to create a cultural friendly counseling concept have been done by many researchers, covering: Riswanto (2016); Prafitralia (2015); Hwang (2009); Charema, and Shizha (2008); Gray, and Wanmudiwi (2012).

Unfortunately, those were "binary" (investigating strengths and weaknesses) or indigenous that had ambitions to create new counseling concepts. Based on these reasons, this study was more focused on exploring R. Ng Ronggowarsito's thoughts, and their relevance in

REBT counseling so that an adaptive REBT counseling perspective in the context of Javanese culture can be obtained.

METHODS

This was a qualitative study on discourse analysis. Through discourse analysis, the researchers will know texts/discourse comprehensively, covering underlying motivation texts or the selection of research methodology to interpret the texts. In this way, the researchers will be able to reveal multiple facts, idealism in discourse for knowing the meaning or purpose of the authors.

The method used in the study was Gadamer hermeneutics. Literature was the dominant information in this study because the text is stronger than words; a paper will always pass correction and evaluation both from the authors and outside them. Besides, the main instrument in this hermeneutics study was the researchers themselves. According to Heidegger, the understanding and interpretation of a text in hermeneutic approach are not merely based on the grammatical “meaning” in the text, but also from the psychological “meaning” in the form of the world of the authors (Palmer, 2003). Through Gadamerian hermeneutic approach, the researchers were given broad chances to directly involve as interpreters, find or make meanings on the interpreted texts. (Rahardjo, 2007).

The texts used as the data source was the original work of Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito in the form of literature. It required detail and holistic understandings in its interpretation. The texts were; *Serat Wirid Hidayat Jati*, *Serat Kalatidha*, *Serat Sabda Djati*, *Serat Sabda Tomo*, *Serat Joko Lodhang*, *Serat Jayengbaya*, *Serat Wedharaga*.

In data interpretation, this study used the followings steps: (1) Interpretation of parts, and elements, (2) Whole interpretation, (3) Obtaining an understanding of the underlying meaning. To get the accuracy of meaning, data validation was done using the followings steps: (1) Researchers' participation, (2) Perseverance in observation,

(3) Triangulation (theory, sources, researchers, methods), and (4) Data checking.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito

"Raden," "Ngabehi," and "Ronggowarsito" are *Abdi dalem Kliwon Kadipaten Anom* (Keraton) or people who devote themselves to the palace and the king with all the rules in Surakarta Adiningrat. "Raden" is a position given to Javanese aristocrats who are considered to have attained spiritual nobility, and *akhlaq* (morals) glory that makes him a model of moral, attitude, and manners for people. "Ngabehi" is a title given by *keraton* (Palace) to elders of *keraton*. Meanwhile, "Ronggowarsito" is a position given to a person who is considered as the leader of Javanese who masters "the knowledge of life," while *pujangga* is a title intended for a person who is smart, alert, and has many works (Janutama, 2016).

The real name of Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito III is Bagus Burham. He was born on March 15, 1802, in Yasadipuran Village, Surakarta, Central Java, Nuswantara country (Indonesia), and passed away on December 24, 1873 (Achmad, 2012; Purwadi, and Mahmudi, 2004). The teachings of Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito strongly influenced Javanese society. They were relevant to Javanese society's thoughts, namely integrating three main points of knowledge; moralist, sufism, and *klenis* (mystical speculation). Janutama (2016) mentions that Ronggowarsito teachings had their characteristics with the orientation to three basic Javanese society perspectives, namely culture, religion (in Javanese concept), and mysticism.

Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito's teachings believe that human is a holy creature delegated by God to live and prospering the world with happiness and gratitude. Human has nature (a basic instinct) to know and believe in the existence of God, and even human can achieve unity or fuse with God to a certain degree. The unity is not in the form of material/physical, but in the form of feeling/ "*roso sejati*," self-negation, believe in the God existence with "*haqul yaqin*"

(no doubt/the peak of unshakeable belief) and behave like the God with all his holy qualities.

Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito's teachings are still used as a basic reference for Javanese society. They are used by people such as cultural observer, the adherents of mysticism, Javanese artists, Sufism adherents, and *klenis*. Moreover, the teachings are still being investigated until now, even the tomb of Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito is still visited by the community for various businesses, such as data collection, praying for him, and seeking blessings.

The Dynamics of Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito-based REBT

The goal of counseling is basically in the form of education aimed to create happiness and maintain it with awareness (Kwee, and Ellis, 1998). In Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito teachings, happiness is called as "*Roso Sejati*," namely consistent happiness obtained by concentrating mind and heart only for the God, so the happiness one gets will never be easy to be influenced by surrounding conditions. *Roso Sejati* is not hedonic or personal happiness but is concerned about self and environmental happiness. For example, a person will never be happy with this success if, at the same time, his surrounding environment experiences a disaster.

A person who is in a state of *roso sejati* is described as a man whose conditions are "*suwung, nanging sejatine isi, isine cipto sayektos*." It means that the person is only focused on the acceptance or dynamization of environment, himself, and life in any states (miserable or happy) and always *ridho* (accept) with the whole heart as a highest form of servitude to the God. This condition is also known as unconditional acceptance, namely unconditional acceptance, which covers the acceptance of the person, others, and life. In Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito's teachings, one's will is always based on acceptance concept. Next, the belief "*manunggal*" of unity with the God (in the form of feeling/soul) will help a person to always the attitude of "*terami mawi pasrah*" / "*tawakkal bi ridho*" (total acceptance).

This attitude negates one's ego, and is showed as a form of servitude to God, so the belief in transcendental (the God) will be the navigation of happiness as well as self-control.

Human's behavior is controlled by the soul state which is resulted by the interaction between reality, "*utek*" (thought), and "*roso*" (emotion) as a unity in associating the pattern of forming belief (self-beliefs) that is actualized in human's behavior (Wirid Hidayat Jati). "*Rosho*" or emotion influences human's mindset, which intersects with the reality and ideality (perspectives and hopes) that a person created (beliefs). Thus, it will form the right way (rational), and the wrong way (irrational) of thinking and beliefs. This concept is similar to B substance (belief in pure REBT), namely Beliefs-Feelings- Behaviors. Additionally, a human can control his thought, but cannot stop his emotion because emotion is a result of mindset. If one can manage his mindset, he will also be able to manage his emotion.

Ellis (1999) states that "Human was born with a strong tendency to be rational and irrational, do self-improvement and self-destruction. Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito-based REBT also believes that human was born with various potentials to do right or wrong actions. The tendency of thinking rationally or irrationally is influenced by desire. A healthy individual is an individual who can control his desire rationally at the right level, the right time, the right place, as well as being able to accept all circumstances that occur wisely, responsibly, with high tolerance, acceptance, and able to maintain the stability of his happiness with all beliefs that he employed (*Serat Kolotidho, Sinom, Sabdo Jati, Sabdo Tomo*). Meanwhile, irrationality is always associated with a troubled individual who tends to follow his desire. That is the attitude of excessive and indulgence in the desire or rigid self-perspective (absolute necessity demands) that is unlimited, and "blaming" that is rigid, about himself, others, and life (Wirid Hidayat Jati). This makes human neglects the purpose of his live and suffers the consequences of following the irrational and miserable whisper of Satan.

Desire is always integrated with thinking activity and consideration of self-knowledge, self-experience, and interaction with the environment. There are four desires in human, namely *lawaman* or earth desire, *amarah* or fire desire, *sufiyah* or wind desire, and *mutmainnah* or water desire. Those four desires tend to be rational and beneficial, or irrational and destructive. Belief (from, by, desire) will be rational if belief perspective is a reality and does not intervene in emotion. On the other hand, irrational belief is realized if belief perspective contains absurdity, utopian, and all perspectives which may disturb happiness stability.

Mutmainnah desire or water desire has a calm characteristic. This desire may have a basis

for one's belief to do something (such as religion). For example, by doing self-destruction in the name of "goodness/truth," individuals hope to get greater goodness in the future. "A person will look silly when he works in a company without being paid in the name of kindness, someone will look silly while letting himself in ignorance without learning patiently, one receives misery in his life without trying to change his life to be better by proposing to expect God's love (Qonaah bil maujud), or a young ascetic who continues to enjoy his hermitage and leaves his wife and children starving to death". To find out more details about the rationality and irrationality of desire, see table 1.

Table 1. Types of Desire - Rational - Irrational

Types of Desire	Rational	Irrational
Earth or <i>Lawamah</i> , is animal lust as human nature that functions to sustain life.	If lust performs at the right level, it can be beneficial for human's life such as efforts to maintain life by eating, drinking and sleeping, efforts to improve the situation, regrets that are accompanied by self-improvement, regrets that do not cause anxiety that interfere with life activities, anti-awfulizing beliefs, high tolerance for frustration.	It is a lust that is realized by regretting self-inadequacy or regretting all circumstances (good or bad), forming an irrational nature that results in miseries such as inferiority, excessive anxiety, awfulizing beliefs, self-defeating, voracious, greedy, egoism, excessive, avoidance of responsibility, and bewailing misery.
Fire or " <i>amarah</i> ," the lust which is likened to a fire (<i>Geni</i>) which always stands up against and is hot such as passion and emotion. <i>Amarah</i> , lust is identified with human superiority. Even though this lust is hot, its existence is needed for human survival.	Lust "anger" rational if the use of this lust is appropriate, logical, and control. Such as enthusiasm, ambition with high tolerance, tolerance of hate with forgiveness, healthy competition, emotionally controlled and directed at the right time, the right place, and the right level.	Lust "anger" forms the nature of irrationality such as; high ambitions of non-tolerance, perceived themselves as a central life, force of will, demands a rigid, low tolerance, hate, properties at and destructive, objective is the others (control others), hypocritical, and so on.
Wind, or " <i>Sufiyah</i> ," is a lust about enjoyment, preoccupation, and romance. This lust is identified with the nature of the wind that blows to all directions. It is a part of " <i>roso</i> " (feeling) of man who is confused, delicate, and vague. This lust has difficulty distinguishing between good and bad, error and truth, or accuracy and neglect.	It functions normally if the desire and the pursuit of pleasure do not harm others, or harm themselves, thereby disrupting the activity and psychological.	If it is ambitious, the lust can be realized by problems and responsibilities avoidance, ideals rigid, perfectionistic, high narcissism, high level of consumerism, free sex/sex maniac, conflict with the moral-ethics, and high egoism, rushing to be happy, chasing pleasure for a moment without considering happiness for longer.
Water or " <i>mutmainnah</i> ," is a lust that tends to lead to things that are good, moral, and ethical. It is identical to the nature of water that always flows to a lower and dynamic place. <i>Mutmainnah</i> lust is positive, such as patience, forgiveness, spiritual, surrender, positive thinking, and believing	This lust will be rational if its implementation is accompanied by wisdom. Without wisdom, this lust will seem silly.	<i>Mutmainnah</i> lust would be irrational and ridiculous if the implementation is independent by turning off other lusts. It is similar to a man who only survives without trying to get out of the problems encountered because of "impatient," someone who is always positive thinking on his real enemy, or works hard without being well-paid in a state of poverty.

All form of lust irrationality is called as "satan" or "devil" in Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito-based REBT. The term satan or devil is used as a result of irrational thoughts

which disrupt happiness stability. This creature is seen as a manifestation of self-whispering or internal dialogue which tends to make human think wrongly and irrational. It is often assumed

as a source of human's error or misery, such as anxiety, a sense of injustice, or lack of gratitude. These are caused by the whisper of irrational desire, lust, and animal instinct. Further, the rational thoughts or "*suwung*" which have been contaminated by satan/devil's whisper will create hallucination or utopian imaginations that are irrational and unite in the wilderness of lust that is rigidly egocentric, forced, intolerant, self-defeating or destructive. Humans who are "corrupt" (fall into the whisper of the devil) will experience the obscurity of "*Ulap kalilipen wedhi*" (Serat Kolotido, 7) because of experiencing obscurity in rational or irrational thinking. (Sabdho Jati, Megatruh, 5).

It is one's right to either overcome or free your lust, but it is important to control lust to be balanced and rational. This statement is in line with the basic philosophical principles of REBT that "human is mostly responsible for his emotion and disturbances. He has rights to reject it. It is because people can act for the better or, the worse, grow or decay by feeding their minds with good or evil thoughts." (Kwee, and Ellis, 1998)

Mental and emotion health react when someone accepts himself, others, and his life situation by admitting the negative parts of his life and accepting them (Philips, 2016). A human can maintain his happiness if he knows his limits and understands the importance of maintaining happiness.

Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito's Teachings-based REBT Counseling

In the practice of Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito-based REBT, the basic principles are somehow the same as pure REBT, namely A-B-C-D-E-F-G cycle and emphasize the client's irrational dispute. However, the emphasis of terms and reason is modified with Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito basis to create a local culture friendly counseling.

Terms and scientific reasoning maps (REBT typical) was adapted to the more friendly terms in Javanese counseling, namely by using terms and collaboration of scientific reasoning map of Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito's teachings. They are such as the use of "rational"

which was adapted to "thoughts and heart that are *suwung*," "irrational" which was adapted to "the results of satan/devil's whispers," and other terms.

In the practice of Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito-based REBT counseling, praying at the beginning and the end of counseling becomes very important to do, they believe that life is governed by transcendental power that is the power (the God). By praying, the counselor indirectly supports the beliefs of his clients. The use of prayer is very supportive to build a good emotional relationship between counselor and client. Prayer can be seen as emotional relaxation and stabilization for mutual trust, openness, and the basis of a life philosophy that helps counseling succeed.

Also, the explanation of rational-irrational dynamics, the terms, and reason in R. Ng's teachings Ronggowarsito needs to be raised in counseling. This is important because it supports the client's trust and their culture. They consider counselors more as their teachers than as professionals.

K "R : " ... satan is your irrational thoughts that lead to the wildness of lust... the wildness of lust forms mistakes and sadness. If you follow it, you will remain the same as yesterday, feeling unappreciated.

In counseling practice, counselors are required to be able to integrate REBT and R. Ng Ronggowarsito's teachings. They should understand correctly about terms in the teachings of Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito. For example, the term "devil" which can be interpreted as "creature" or "nature". Thus, in this context "the devil" is seen as the result of irrational thought. Therefore, to get agreement on the meaning of the substance of "crucial" terms, the counselors also need to explore the client's view.

K "R : what do you think about lust?"

K "I : yes ... a desire to destroy because of obeying the whisper of the devil, but mutmainah lust as Mr. Toyib (the teacher of the Koran) said is good, brother.

K "R: ... goodness sometimes gets bad too If there is wild lust within it. For example, you are an *ustadzah* (moslem's female teacher), you keep on praying ... don't do anything, just pray ... *amarah* lust in a rational way will be an attitude of enthusiasm, but if it turns irrational, it will become anger ... from right or wrong thinking then affect your emotions (C)

Issues of transcendental spirituality and moral values in Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito-based REBT counseling also need to be raised in counseling, such as God, merit, heaven, or hell. These are very supportive of strengthening the client's beliefs.

K "R : "... If you are not sad and keep going to be a good person. It can make your father in heaven happy because he sees his children are good. However, if you keep sad, don't want to study, or are naughty, your father in heaven will be sad to see his children doing so."

Like a spiritual teacher, at the end of the counseling session, the counselor should reinforce the client's beliefs in the frame of the advice and conclude the counseling activity. The content of the advice should represent the REBT scientific terminology in terms and language of the client's belief (Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito's teachings).

K "R : " ... you must be patient, control your desires, purify your heart, correct yourself again, no more mistake, and always remember God, keep your mind and heart to remain *suwung* and rational. Satan only whispers the one who obeys and does is you."

A good counselor is a counselor who can camouflage dynamically and be able to balance with clients.

CONCLUSION

This study proves that REBT can adapt to Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito's teachings to have a local culture friendly counseling. This study has several implications: the findings of this study can be an offer and counseling practice

guides who are friendly to local culture, the findings of this study can be a reference for counseling science with new styles and ideas, namely Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito-based REBT. Therefore, the findings contribute to the enrichment of counseling science.

This study has several limitations. This study has not yet tested for the effectiveness of Raden Ngabehi Ronggowarsito-based REBT counseling so that the future researchers need to conduct further research on (1) Developing instruments to measure local phenomena/effectiveness of applying culture-friendly counseling, (2) Designing new/development studies on local culture, (3) Building local theories for counseling interventions.

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