

# DISPUTING IRRATIONAL BELIEF IN ADOLESCENT USING COGNITIVE SIMULATION: A CASE STUDY

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## ABSTRACT

*The adolescent problems discussed in individual counseling sessions vary widely. The approach the counselor uses has an effect on the way the problem is solved and the follow-up determines the recurrence of the same problem. The use of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy focuses on aspects of irrational thinking as the root of individual problems. This article examines the case of a teenager and then determines the existing irrational thought patterns. This study uses a qualitative case study method by analyzing the counseling process. This study concluded that adolescents with emotional maturity tend to be potentially irrational by "demanding" and "awfulizing". This article recommends that educators outside of school and at school improve the rational thinking skills of adolescents through various awareness education.*

**Keywords:** Classroom Climate, Learning Outcomes

## INTRODUCTION

The use of individual counseling with the Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT) approach has been shown to be able to make a positive contribution to individual mental health. Among them are as a tool to increase self-confidence of child victims of violence (Handrianto & Rahman, 2018; Siahaan, 2020), increase self-confidence of new students (Dharma, Karpika, Sapta, Suhardhita, & Aman, 2020), increase awareness of closing "Aurat" (Alawiyah, Rahman, & Handrianto, 2020), curate cheating behavior (Wijayanti, Sugiharto, & Wibowo, 2019), alleviate the problem of loneliness among adults (Rosiana, Krisbiyantoro, & Solikin, 2021). REBT has also been shown to be effective in reducing anxiety due to Covid 19 (Fauziah, Neviyarni, Karneli, & Netrawati, 2020).

The practice of Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT) is based on theoretical foundations and scientific support. This approach is also suitable for individuals with age ranges in the adolescent stage even though their cognitive development has not yet reached optimum maturity (Handrianto, Salleh, & Chedi, 2020; Putri, Yendi, Taufik, & Yuca, 2019). In fact, Albert Ellis has been at the forefront of adopting REBT for children and young people from the beginning, with positive mental health that helps young clients develop social, emotional, behavioral and cognitive skills. It emphasizes the importance of teaching concepts (Vernon, 2019).

One of the many techniques used by REBT therapists is "disputing". Meanwhile, for certain types of irrational thinking other suitable techniques are required. Cognitive simulation is one way that can help the counselor to make the client's irrational thinking evaluated by the client himself. Thus, the principle of self-reliance counseling in decision-making can be implemented in the session. This is very important in achieving the goal of effective counseling (Masalimova, Levina, Platonova, Yakubenko, Mamitova, Arzumanova, & Marchuk 2017; Syuraini, Jamna, & Jalius, 2019).

The purpose of cognitive simulation is to build a cognitive map consisting of a description of the processes and activities of a logical law which is a formal reflection of the consequences of current decisions on a particular psychological subject (Handrianto, 2017; Masalimova et al., 2017; Syuraini, Wahid, Azizah, & Pamungkas, 2018). The essence of cognitive simulation as an educational technology is in the theoretical and practical study of a phenomenon (process, activity) created artificially for cognitive purposes, capable of reflecting its original objectively and replacing it at the counseling stage with the reproduction of the basic laws of its function. (Masalimova et al., 2017; Syuraini, Setiawati, & Sunarti, 2018). Thus, it provides objective information about the emotional potential and subsequent cognitive states.

The objectives of this study are: (1) To understand deeply the social case among female students; (2) To identify to understand in depth cognitive conflicts that have the potential to be the main problem in adolescents; and (3) to deepen the functioning of cognitive stimulation techniques on REBT in adolescent problems.

## **METHODE**

There are many definitions of case studies that emerge with the need to understand complex social phenomena (Yin, 2014). Davey (1991) defines case studies as expressing complex situations with rich descriptions and contextual analysis. Case studies are concerned with the process rather than the outcomes, the context rather than the specific factors that affect the phenomenon, and exploration rather than verification (Merriam, 1998). The case study is a method in which a specific situation is examined in depth rather than statistically scanning studies (Shuttleworth, 2008). This research is part of a qualitative study using case studies to gain an in-depth understanding of the tendency to think irrationally among adolescents which causes individuals to experience mental health problems. Data collection used a set of record of counselling sessions. The interview transcripts were analyzed by using REBT method and Cognitive Simulation technique.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Respondents` Demographic**

This study involves the junior high school's student as the respondents who originally come for counselling session. The client is a grade IX student who is a well-respected senior student at school because she has a strong organizational background previously. The client is the eldest of two siblings, all of whom are girls; 1) Religion, Clients come from parents who are graders of IAIN (State Islamic Institute) so that they have a fairly good pattern of religious education, clients claim to maintain compulsory worship at home or in other places; 2) Economic Class, The client's father is a consultant in the mining sector and the client's mother also works as the administrator of a semi-autonomous body that assists the government in public information matters; 3) Sexual Identity, The client claims to have had a boyfriend, so it can be concluded that the client has no problem in sexual identity as a normal woman. In this day and age, the client is not having a partner; 4) Psychological Maturity, Compared with other friends, clients are quite mature both in terms of attitude and behavior and in mindset; 5) Ethnic background, The client's biological father and mother are Minang people, although the client's behavior and daily life are not so thick with the Minangkabau traditional atmosphere caused by clients who live in families who live in Bandar; 6) Cronological Challenges, The client grows up in a family that is very strict in maintaining the rules for both cleanliness and for mass management problems. The client admitted that sometimes the client's mother raised too little problems in terms of cleanliness and management at this time, the client's mother was considered difficult to talk to. This keeps the client from being open with his mother; 7) Trauma, There are no client stories that tell that the client has experienced experiences that lead to trauma; 8) Family History, The client's family has moved house 3 times because the family work has changed, the client has experienced quite a lot of adjustments in his social life. There was also a client who lived away from his father for a long time as well; 9) Unique Physical Characteristic, Clients have personal

characteristics that are not too cheerful and do not take too much weight on what is happening around them (easy going). The client also has a tall and large body compared to most of his friends; 10) Language and Location of residence, Counseling clients in Indonesian according to school regulations.

### **Issues Shared by Clients**

At the initial exploratory stage, in addition to conveying that the client felt less time to be alone, the client admitted that whenever he wanted to be alone during school breaks, the client's friends also said that the client had changed and was somewhat arrogant.

Counseling was extended to a second session for further exploration. In this session it was identified that the client's problem also stems from the client's mother's hard parenting pattern. The client's mother works very busy as a Village Fund Expert who is responsible for managing the use of village funds and often comes to many areas for field surveys. Time to communicate is very limited. Exploration of the past is no longer taken seriously because in this case the counselor tries to adopt a REBT approach that emphasizes more on the present.

In the exploration, it is known that the client not only wants to have time with his Mother, but there are some things he actually wants to discuss with his mother as he sees his friend being able to talk sympathetically with his mother. From this narration, I detected a tendency to compare his mother with his friend's mother. With it, counselors see suitability for the use of REBT.

Furthermore, the client also stated that her close friends now often compared herself to the client, including her mother's problems. In addition, he also likes to touch on body care issues and the past when they were a couple. What makes the client not accept is that while the client offends the past of his close friend, the client is not even given a way to talk.

The client also explained that his close friends started to move away and closer to other friends since class IX because they are no longer one class. In classroom conversations, clients are often not followed because they say clients often respond rudely or offensively. But the client feels that's right and needs to be conveyed in contrast to the sweet -faced but drifting.

### **Client Goals**

a) General goal, Clients want to have friendships with good quality and loyalty; b) Specific goals, The client does not want anyone to compare himself and his family with himself and the family of a friend or anyone. Existing conflicts also want to be resolved.

### **Client Strength**

The client's intellectual strength: the client is mature enough to make decisions and is not overwhelmed by the atmosphere compared to most students his age. External strength / support system; the organization that he has followed so far makes the client have friends who can be a party to exchange ideas.

### **Past Treatment Received**

Previously the client had never taken medication and made a counseling session.

### **Case of Conceptualization, Intervention Planning and Application of Theory**

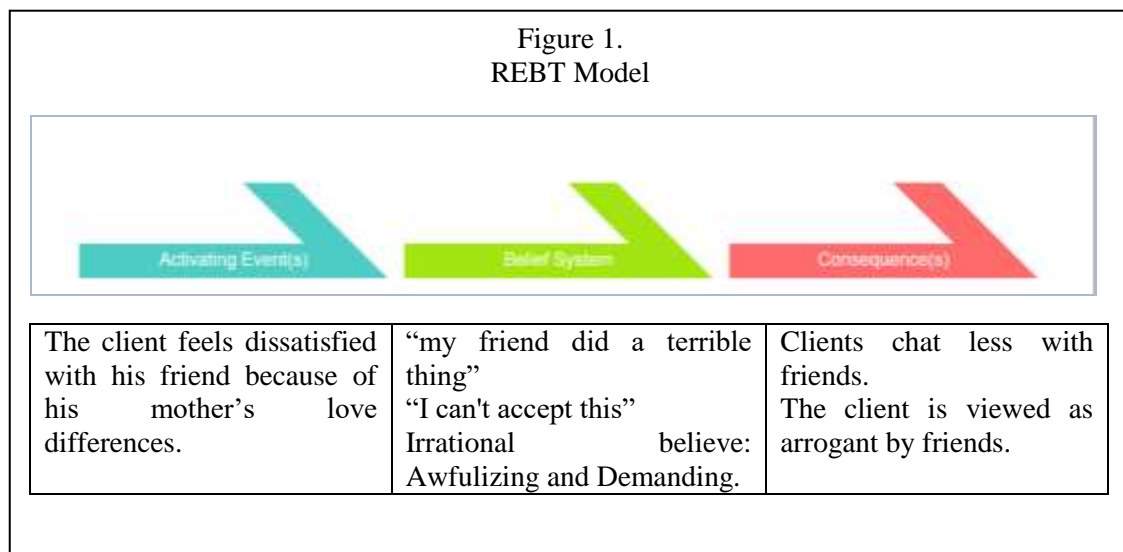
Counselors make grouping (grouping) of client partnership according to three human elements namely; thinking/cognitive, feeling/affective, behavior/behavior; a) Affective: the client feels unacceptable when his friends compare the client's mother with his friend's mother. Clients also feel lonely when the client's mother is too busy managing the work. But at school, clients don't even feel there is enough time to be alone; b) Behavior: clients find time to be alone at school by sitting in isolation from the crowd, during crowded times, clients often do not talk, just sit together. Clients also often offend their friends with language that is not appropriate for their friends; c) Cognitive: the

client thinks he has a double personality because at school he is considered a wise senior student but he needs attention from the mother and does not accept comparisons (small children).

Conceptualization can be made through REBT as well as through CTRT. But I am currently using REBT because I am dealing with a case experienced by a student who is mature enough and is believed to have good cognitive and potentially facilitate the achievement of counseling goals. Counselors also diagnose a tendency to think irrationally by comparing what they have with what others have.

In REBT, the philosophy used is that an event does not make an individual become troubled or disturbed. What makes an individual problematic is his or her view of the incident.

The following is a conceptualization of this client case according to REBT:



The client's storytelling is categorized into the ABC concept in the counselor's "head" so that the Consequences identified in this case are solitary behavior and lack of association with his friends. This behavior has become the cause of the client's friend's perception that the client has become arrogant and no longer wants to be friends with them.

The counselor also discussed how exactly the client wanted to be treated by his friend, the client replied that he wanted the theme not to discuss things of the past and not to touch on the problem of differences between them. The counselor also asks why the client wants the matter from his friend, so the discussion in this session also answers this question which the client does not want to be looked down upon by his friend because of differences that are considered demeaning. After this conceptualization the counselor formulates that the client's issues are: a) Not enough time with mom to feel lonely; b) Want to have time with mom because want to share things experienced at school; c) conflict with close friends; d) feeling uncomfortable when friends make comparisons with other friends; d) avoiding being looked down upon by friends.

According to REBT, discussions with clients should be analyzed according to the concept of ABCD (activating event, belief system, consequence and disputation). The client's experience with a busy family situation and not having much time to gather and talk together is not seen as an event that is the cause of the client's withdrawal behavior. The client understands the working conditions of his mother and father and can accept them as such.

However, conversations between fellow friends who had been offended about the level of concern of the client's mother and compared to other friends became a point of source of feelings of depression.

- Client* : RN (client's friend) is weird, sir, she likes to compare me with herself... she compares only to what she's superior to me. He didn't want to lose, so I was lazy to talk.
- Couns* : You're uncomfortable comparing it to one another? What did he actually compare?
- Client* : Many sir... hm.... Once upon a time we were talking about the bedroom. Yes, I said what about my room, eh, she was like shocked and said that if her mother saw her room while it was a little messy, her mother immediately started to clean it. She said her mother is very passionate about her room.
- Couns* : Oh I see... is there anything else?
- Client* : Hm ..... ha yes, when she mentioned the body treatment he also compared skin brightness.... I also have a little treatment but yes, there are still pimples. Just because he's white.... (angry)
- Couns* : What did you think about when she compared herself with you?
- Client* : He is pretentious sir. That's why it's not good to be friends with her anymore. What was discussed, she made a comparison. Again and again
- Couns* : So, by comparing, you are disadvantaged?
- Client* : Not really, sir, but how do we hear the others....
- Couns* : How, tell me how?
- Client* : Yeah, it's as if we are being looked down on.
- Couns* : Ooh, so you did not accept it because your friend looked down on you in front of her friends
- Cl* : Yes, sir.
- Cn* : Okay, fine... so .....

This is one part of the client's unpleasant experience or an **activating event** for the client. **The Belief System** that was created in this event was that the client thought that being compared was an action that aimed to embarrass herself in front of her friends. The client sees this situation as **very bad and unacceptable**.

- People who compare themselves to me DEFINITELY aim to embarrass me in front of others.
- I have to look good to my friends, so NO ONE can embarrass me.
- What other people talk about me, MUST be in line with my expectations.

### **Irrational Themes: Awfulizing and Demanding**

Client was invited to discuss her own views regarding irrational thinking by discussing what may apply when such thoughts are continued. An indirect disputation was made in the session when the thought arose:

- Kn* : So when we compare, we are being looked down on? Then all teachers look down on princesses? Isn't there a ranking and learning value? (bookmark)
- Cl* : That's not it sir.... I mean Rania is the one who wants to look down on a princess
- Kn* : How do you know that Rania intends to humiliate?
- Cl* : From the way he is, sir, keep on comparing.
- Kn* : So according to Putri, everyone who compares it intends to be degrading, right?
- Cl* : Not all sir, this one .....
- Kn* : Well, not all those who compare are degrading right? The way of thinking of a daughter that concludes this and troubles her own daughter.

## Cognitive Simulation

The purpose of cognitive simulation is to build a cognitive map consisting of a description of the processes and activities of a logical law which is a formal reflection of the consequences of current decisions on a particular psychological subject (Masalimova et al., 2017; Syuraini, Sunarti, & Zukdi, 2019). The essence of cognitive simulation as an educational technology is in the theoretical and practical study of a phenomenon (process, activity) created artificially for cognitive purposes, capable of reflecting its original objectively and replacing it at the counseling stage with the reproduction of the basic laws of its function. (Masalimova et al., 2017; Syuraini, 2020). Thus, it provides objective information about the emotional potential and subsequent cognitive states.

In this case, the client is invited to use the client's irrational way of thinking for future events. Simulations of various conditions are practiced in the mind of the client (Masalimova et al., 2017). After that, the client is asked to explain how the feelings will arise in these events. The client's understanding of activating events that has been taught in the previous session is used to sharpen the client's analysis in the cognitive simulation about the losses he will experience if he continues to let irrational beliefs remain in his mind.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that social problems among students stem from irrational thinking and illogical perspectives. Drawing wrong conclusions causes negative feelings such as depression and hostility. Common irrational thinking among adolescents is demanding and awfulizing. Teenagers are easily trapped in the wrong conclusion of a special event, known as an activating event. The use of cognitive simulation techniques is very possible to help adolescents choose to destroy their irrational thinking consciously and voluntarily. Not a suggestion or an order from the counselor. Thus, the repetition of the similar future conflict will be minimized.

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