

Enhancing Self-Esteem Among Low-Achieving Adolescents: Insights From The Role Of Disputation Technique

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Abstract

Students' thoughts are crucial for academic motivation and learning. This research aims to determine the influence of the disputation technique on a student's self-esteem with low academic achievement. The sample was recruited using purposive sampling and selected based on predetermined criteria. The study conducted six counseling sessions, the observation list, and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale through action research stages. The data were then analyzed using descriptive and content analysis. This study demonstrates the symptoms of low self-esteem among student. The outcome revealed that the student's self-esteem has improved within the duration and treatment. This result suggests that using the disputation technique efficiently increases students' self-esteem with low academic performance through cognitive, emotional, and behavior analysis.

Keywords: Adolescent, counseling, disputation technique, motivation, self-esteem.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic crisis has forced education systems worldwide to transform into a virtual learning environment. Online teaching and learning interactions potentially hinder the students from social activities, interpersonal communication, and potentially low self-esteem (Tus et al., 2021; Nur, De Vega & Muhammad, 2022). The apparent changes in the online learning environment leaving uncertainty about academic achievement, impending jobs, adjustments in social life, and other problems all had a role in amplifying their self-esteem level in dealing with everyday life. Therefore, self-esteem is essential in influencing whether a child will be successful as a person, and part of its power stems from the fact that it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy (Sharma & Sharma, 2021).

Increasing positive self-esteem is critical to academic performance because it provides a stable foundation of knowledge. As a result, Ahmed (2018), and Diale and Victor (2022) postulated that self-esteem significantly correlated with enthusiasm for study, attentiveness, and willingness toward their future self-concept and self-confidence. Abundance of previous research proposed strategies to ensure students' self-esteem (Artiran & DiGiuseppe, 2022; Aman et al., 2018; Turner et al., 2022). However, REBT is considered to warrant conflicting perspectives, for students are frequently identified as vulnerable, suffering from stress and low self-esteem due to various factors. Therefore suggestion to promote the disputation strategy based on Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) is an option to help raise the degree of self-esteem in the students is essential.

Research Background

Adolescence is a significant emotional and physical transformation in a young person's life (Orben, Tomova & Blakemore, 2020). Around this time, teenagers begin forming positive or negative opinions about themselves. Vijayakumar et al. (2018) revealed that adolescents are experiencing more significant social and psychological challenges than ever before. These trends indicate that adolescents are under increased strain, which eventually erodes their confidence and lowers their self-esteem. Each day, an adolescent spends a significant amount of time in school and as a result, no aspect of school life, whether academic performance or social acceptance, shall escape a child's self-esteem.

High self-esteem and academic accomplishment can lead to a better life (Yang, 2019). Many adolescents are pressured out daily due to low grades and exam results. Academic performance, educational success, and social adjustment all impact a student's self-esteem (Costa & Faria, 2018). The phrase self-esteem relates to how people's views and personal characteristics about themselves could impact those (Rameli et al., 2010). From all these ideas, judgments and sentiments about their talents and worth are developed. Over childhood, children develop and build emotions about their capacities and self-worth that they can convey to everyone as their self-esteem. Ramsey and Brown (2018) mentioned that self-esteem results from a person's perception of accomplishments and goals. Thus, people who believe they will achieve their goals should have better self-esteem than those who fear failing.

The formal education system could significantly impact a student's self-esteem because the youngster needs to grasp particular learning abilities measured using school academic assessments. Therefore, low academic achievement will impair an adolescent's self-esteem because of an irrational belief the student holds due to the negative

association between irrational belief and self-esteem (Diale & Victor, 2022).

Balkis and Duru (2019) discovered that these two specific irrational beliefs have persisted in predicting low self-esteem among adolescents. One of the irrational beliefs is the desire for acceptance, in which they seek affection and validation from people who are important to them while avoiding condemnation from any aspect. For example, the following irrational belief would be that to be a worthwhile person; one should perform and excel in all they pursue while making no errors. As a result, a student's irrational ideas about his poor academic achievement will affect his self-esteem.

Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) Approach

REBT is a strategy that emphasizes action. This technique emphasizes the importance of thinking and belief systems in causing significant human difficulties. People's feelings and behaviors are heavily influenced by their thoughts (Nurshobah, Awalya & Sunawan, 2021). This psychoeducational paradigm stresses therapy as a learning process, including acquiring and practicing new abilities, new ways of thinking, and more efficient problem-solving strategies (Corey, 2005). According to REBT theory, humans are born with the ability to think rationally and irrationally. Therefore, they are predisposed not just to be self-preserving and to realize their potential to live and grow but also to be self-destructive and to engage in self-harming behaviors. Individuals can influence their ideas, attitudes, and behaviors, but they should be conscious of whatever they feed themselves. As a result, one's behaviors are related to internal monologue (self-talk) (Hewitt, 2020).

A person's belief system primarily causes problems. Their emotions and behavior will be influenced by how they perceive occurrences in their lives. Several irrational thoughts, attitudes, and even behavior tendencies make it difficult for people to be happy (Stephenson et

al., 2018). Irrational beliefs arise from incorrect notions of "musts" or "shoulds" that do not align with the person's true interests and preferences. This dichotomy creates isolation in a person's mind, making him miserable and worthless. In other words, this strategy's primary premise is that our ideas about external conditions cause us to be sad, affecting our self-esteem (Ahmed, 2018). Three key demands that contribute to an individual's misery seem to be self-demands, where they believe they must accomplish well or be accepted by significant others, other demands, where they believe they should be treated with respect by others, and world or life demands, in which they assume their living expectations are precise, however, they want them should become (Davis & Turner, 2020).

REBT educates people to be more tolerant of themselves and others and to see the importance and naturalness of their wants and desires, as shown in Figure 1. The REBT A-B-C-D-E model is crucial to the approach. A is the presence of an event, B is the person's belief about A, and C is the individual's emotional and behavioral consequence or reaction to A. D is disputing by using the approach to assist the client in challenging the irrational beliefs and eventually leading the client to E, an efficient and suitable belief. The purpose of this technique would be to assist a client in comprehending how they may live a more rational and healthier lifestyle by addressing errors in their thinking to remove unwanted feelings (Corey, 2005).

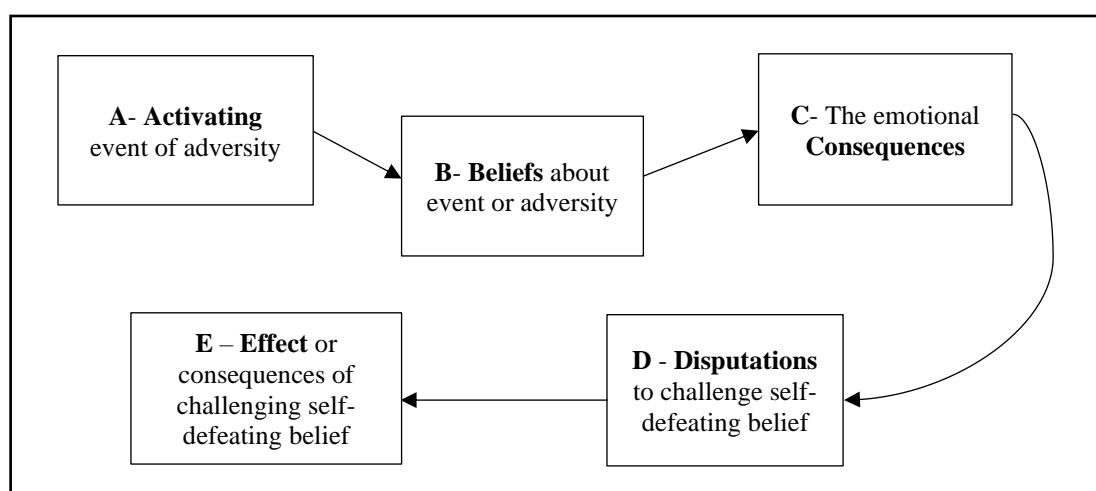


Figure 1: The A-B-C-D-E Model of REBT

Disputation Technique

The disputation technique in REBT seeks to identify and replace erroneous assumptions and misconceptions with constructive beliefs so that clients begin to appreciate themselves despite their flaws and retain excellent overall wellbeing (Nurshobah, Awalya & Sunawan, 2021). Furthermore, this strategy aims to assist a client in modifying his self-defeating behaviors or ideas by educating the client on how to dispute and improve his narrow

viewpoint. Finally, the strategies will replace them with new, more rational beliefs.

At the start of the treatment, the A-B-C-D-E framework developed by REBT challenges the client to confront irrational beliefs with contrary evidence that they assemble and assess, as well as to assist the clients in re-evaluating their strict belief systems and minimizing them while substituting them with more divergent thinking (Corey, 2005). This approach also aims to teach clients that their thoughts regulate their emotions. The client will be trained to challenge his unreasonable belief and will be assisted in understanding that his views are erroneous. Cognitive disputation and

imaginal disputation are two disputation techniques. Cognitive disputation involves asking the client questions that test the logic of the client's view. In contrast, imaginal disputation consists of the client's images to explore the scenario that has distressed the client (Corey, 2005).

Poor levels of self-esteem during the growth period of adolescence can lead to a range of dangers, including delinquent behavior, adolescent pregnancy, drug misuse, and depression (Hewitt, 2020). Because of these circumstances, adolescence is an important time for self-esteem education and awareness. In addition, strong self-esteem and academic competence can result in a better quality of life (Yang, 2019).

Marsh et al. (2018) examined how academic achievement and failure influence an individual's self-evaluation. Researchers observed that persons who perform poorly in educational aspects or are unable to adhere to their academic goals rigidly experience severe self-esteem losses. Moreover, students generally behave in manners congruent with their ideas about themselves and their expectations for future success or failure (Ahmed, 2018).

Hence, to have positive impact the importance to improve self-esteem, which in long run will effect on mental health need to be emphasized (Aman & Aziz, 2018). In the era of pandemic, the children require more assistance and support to build their self-esteem. Hence, this research aims to enhance the self-esteem level of a student with a low academic performance by applying the disputation technique from REBT therapy. The research objectives of this study are as follows:

- a. to examine the level of self-esteem among the student
- b. to discover possible symptoms of low self-esteem among the student
- c. to investigate the impact of the disputation technique in enhancing the self-esteem level among the student

Methodology

Research Design

This study is to explore the impact of the disputation approach on boosting a student's self-esteem with poor academic achievement. The treatment approach was devised using the disputation technique based on Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT). REBT technique is able to increase self-confidence among students'. Throughout the psychological interventions, it is aimed to examine the role in identifying, addressing, and modifying a person's beliefs responsible for poor self-esteem.

Sample and Procedure

This study employed purposive sampling as the sampling approach based on criteria or qualities established. A form 5 student with low academic performance was recruited as the research subject. The subject was selected after he willingly came to counseling sessions due to his poor academic performance. Following an explanation of how to do the assessment, a pre-test was administered using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale to determine this subject's self-esteem level. The research subject was a 17-year-old Malay youngster who matched the researcher's criteria:

- a. a student with low academic record
- b. has a low self-esteem score on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (the score is below 20)
- c. capable of writing and reading
- d. volunteer to take part in this research

Instrument

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is a self-esteem evaluation tool widely utilized in past studies (Li et al., 2019). Rosenberg (1965)

assigned a score to each of the ten items based on four possibilities ranging from "highly agree" to "strongly disagree," with a coefficient alpha of 0.74.

Treatment Procedure

This study held six counseling sessions with the subject/client, each lasting between 40 and 50 minutes. Following the phases of the counseling sessions, the therapy procedure is

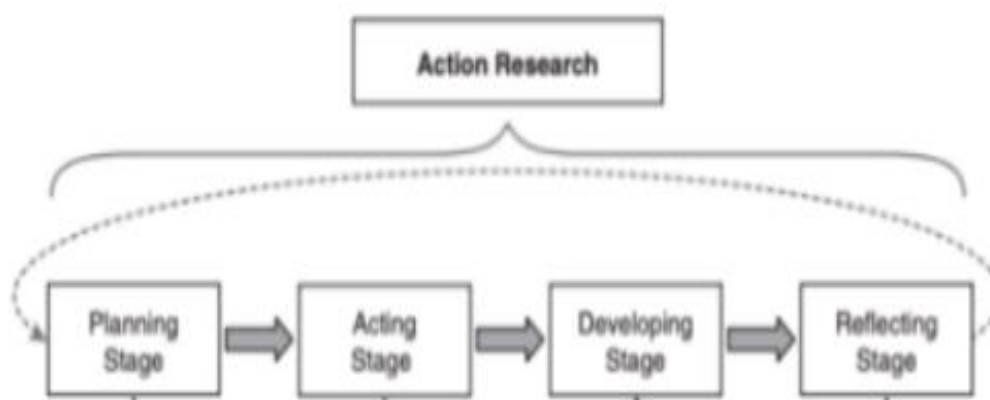


Figure 2: Action Research Process and Procedures

Results and Discussion

STAGE I: PLANNING STAGE

Reflection-Pre Action

Aside from the data acquired from the Needs Assessment Report, we discovered that the student consistently tries to avoid me whenever we approach him in front of the gate or during relief periods. The client was nervous and stuttered a lot during the early hours of our meeting as we tried to initiate a conversation about his exam grades. However, all the words he conveyed were well understood by the counselor. The client presented himself as docile and quiet. In addition, whenever we enter his class, he may allow high achieving students to treat him poorly, such as making fun of himself and his poor grades. He may have difficulty standing up for himself since he may remain quiet and silent. He constantly feels

carried out. Hewitt (2020), the ideal counseling method includes six steps: providing pre-session, building relationships, exploring and analyzing the problem, identifying the root of the situation where therapeutic techniques are used, and making a termination decision. Furthermore, the researcher had obtained formal permission and agreement from the subject/client to record the counseling sessions. For the research execution, the action research model was employed as illustrated in Figure 2.

unsure of himself. He might assume that if others do not accept him, he will not join the group. Therefore, we believe that one of the causes contributing to these is a lack of self-esteem.

Counseling needs assessment refers to the evaluative process of gathering information from the students and interpreting the data about the needs for programs and services. Before providing services, the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) suggests doing needs assessments to collect data so the counselor can support students and their families with what they need (ASCA National Model, 2012). Furthermore, it can be defined as a systematic set of procedures for identifying requirements, examining their nature and sources, and establishing priorities for future action. In other words, conducting a school counseling needs assessment is vital in running a successful counseling program. Therefore, needs assessments should be the backbone of every school counseling program. The survey results will assist counselors in better understanding the needs of students at the

school and generate ideas for what kind of programs are most needed and necessary to meet those needs and bring good changes to the school.

An in-depth and comprehensive awareness of all elements of students' needs is required for guidance and counseling programs to be effective. This survey enables counselors to thoroughly investigate the students' most pressing issues and capitalize on them to create something positive. Furthermore, needs assessments can assist in improving the quality of counseling services in school, like students can express their thoughts on the quality of counseling services, facilities, and their overall opinions of the counseling department at the school. Because the need assessment does not require personal information and the identity will remain anonymous, students who do not wish to come forward should be able to provide their views on the subject without fear of being identified. It can be a helpful tool for clarifying problems and identifying appropriate actions or solutions. Sunandar et al. (2020) postulated that need assessment can aid in identifying specific counseling services that clients want. Counselors can use the information gained from needs assessments to make decisions regarding service goals and specific counseling programs to provide clients. As a result, counseling needs assessment surveys play a critical role in developing effective counseling programs. From the results obtained, it was found that 81.1% of the students chose self-esteem as the topic that they wanted to know most about. This indicates that some students lack self-esteem and are intensely interested in this issue.

Participants Feedbacks on Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1985) was administered to the client before the start of treatment to assess the subject's level of self-esteem. The qualitative method is utilized to identify the symptoms of low self-esteem in the client. The counselor conducted interviews and observations during the counseling sessions to

determine the symptoms. The components of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale were utilized to validate the observation, and a reference to DSM IV was made to verify for signs. The first post-test was administered following the fourth counseling session. After completing the treatment in the sixth session, post-test two was administered using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. This was done to make data collecting easier and to compare pre-test and post-test scores to examine the impact of disputation techniques on the client. The qualitative research approach was also used to support the findings by analyzing the transcripts of the counseling sessions. The symptoms before and after the therapy were compared using the data obtained to assess the technique's effects. Information acquired from counseling session transcripts and observations were interpreted to understand further the impact of the disputation technique on increasing the subject's self-esteem.

STAGE 2: ACTING STAGE (INTERVENTIONS)

Disputation Technique Using ABCDE Framework of REBT

REBT emphasizes identifying and substituting false assumptions and misconceptions with reasonable beliefs, allowing clients to learn to accept themselves despite their flaws and preserve excellent wellbeing (Nurshobah, Awalya & Sunawan, 2021). This strategy aims to teach a client how to argue and change an absurd idea to assist him in changing his self-defeating habits or beliefs. The strategy will eventually be utilized to replace them with new and more rational beliefs. At the start of treatment, the A-B-C-D-E framework developed by REBT challenges the client to confront irrational beliefs with contradictory evidence that they assemble and assess, as well as to help the clients re-evaluate their rigid belief systems and minimize them while replacing them with more flexible thinking (Sahin & Acar, 2019).

This strategy also aims to assist the client in realizing how their thoughts influence their moods. First, the client will be taught how to refute his irrational thinking and then will be guided in learning that his beliefs are irrational. Cognitive and imaginary disputations are two types of dispute resolution techniques. In cognitive disputation, the client is asked questions that test the logic of the client's view. Still, in imaginary disputation, the client is asked to utilize images to evaluate the circumstance that has distressed them (Corey, 2005). The first step is known as A or activating event or situation. This first step of the A-B-C-D-E coaching technique involves the counselor assisting the client in identifying specific events or conditions that trigger negative thought patterns. This stage might be thought of as a seeking for negative triggers. Then, B is for beliefs. The second stage of the A-B-C-D-E coaching framework is to assist the client in gaining a better understanding of their underlying belief structures and systems that come into play when the triggering occasion occurs.

Next, is C for consequences in which the counselor assists the client in understanding the effects of their beliefs in the third stage of the A-B-C-D-E coaching approach. Simply helping the individual understand that their ideas have an impact could be a good starting point. Following that, it may be able to investigate what those effects are. After that, D is for disputations of beliefs. The counselor's role in the next step of this approach is to assist the individual in challenging their belief system, with the ultimate aim of serving them in replacing it with a more beneficial set of beliefs or beliefs that suit them greater. This procedure could begin with a review of the effectiveness of the client's present beliefs—finally, E for a practical new approach. The

counselor then works with the client to transform their detrimental beliefs with a new set of more helpful beliefs in the last stage of the A-B-C-D-E framework model. It is also a stage during which the acquisition and implementation of new adaptive beliefs will be highlighted. Verma, Kumar, and Yashmeen (2019) conducted action research in a local university in India utilizing a disputation technique based on the REBT approach to increase university students' self-esteem. The study found that the students' self-confidence increased significantly after the session. Thus, this study used a disputation technique inside the A-B-C-D-E framework of REBT theory to help enhance and improve the student's self-esteem in the academic domain.

STAGE 3: DEVELOPING

The first session of individual counseling was conducted on 27th April 2022. This counseling consists of six sessions as Table 1. During the initial session, the counselor performed a series of induction exercises to establish rapport between the counselor and the client. Rapport refers to a feeling of connection with another person. The counselor must create rapport with our client to work effectively with them. Whatever form of counseling the counselor uses, rapport is essential. We also informed client of the rules and regulations of the counseling session and asked the participant to sign the contract form. After that, the counselor carried out an activity entitled "The Amazing Me" to assist the client in identifying his positive qualities and accomplishments, as he appeared to be unsure about his self-esteem during the first session. This activity also aids the counselor in learning more about the client's background and profile.

Table 1: Details of Individual Counseling Sessions

Client's Code	Session	Date	Hours
	1	27/4/2022	1

WAD0422M	2	10/5/2022	1
	3	16/5/2022	1
	4	25/5/2022	1
	5	30/5/2022	1
	6	2/6/2022	1

The counselor began implementing the disputation technique in the second session using the A-B-C-D-E framework of REBT. This strategy aims to teach a client how to dispute and change an irrational thought to help him change his self-defeating behaviors or beliefs. The techniques will eventually replace them with new and more rational beliefs. During the second session, the counselor initially concentrated on aspects A (activating event) and B (beliefs) of the A-B-C-D-E framework. This step involved the counselor guiding the client in identifying specific events or situations that trigger the client's negative thought patterns. This stage could be viewed as a search for negative triggers. During this session, the counselor recognized the event that triggered the client, in which his parents repeatedly scolded him for obtaining poor grades on a previous examination. This event caused him to lose self-esteem in the academic aspect while also thinking that he was a failure and not skilled at anything, which was an irrational belief that he had.

During the third session, the counselor focused on the C aspect of the A-B-C-D-E model of REBT, which are consequences. The counselor helped the client understand the implications of his beliefs. Results are more than simply the noticeable impact of an event; they can also take behavioral or emotional expressions. The client managed to list the consequences he experienced: he felt useless for disappointing his parents and did not meet their expectations. He exhibited a real disappointment, regret, and somehow withdrawal from his friend and refusal to adhere to family expectations. However, to boost his self-esteem again, the counselor conducted an activity entitled "My Positive Traits". The session has made the client more

difficult in recognize the good in himself, so this activity may be the most excellent fit for him. This activity encouraged the client to circle the positive features he may overlook to re-establish his self-esteem (Hewitt, 2020). The counselor then asked the client to relate a story about a time when they demonstrated these characteristics in any situation. They were given the activity worksheet to remind them of their positive attributes.

Furthermore, the fourth session witnessed the emphasis of the D aspect from the A-B-C-D-E model of REBT, which is disputed. The counselor conducted an activity entitled "Coat of Army" as Figure 4 to defend him from irrational thoughts and come back stronger with new reliable thoughts by answering some questions. This phase was proactively disputing harmful belief systems by carefully analyzing, questioning, and challenging them. The counselor was able to aid the individual in challenging their belief system, with the ultimate goal of assisting them in replacing it with a more constructive set of beliefs or beliefs that are more suitable to them. The client managed to pass the disputation phase, as this session has caused the client to question his beliefs. He convinces himself that everyone makes mistakes and that one mistake does not make him worthless or incapable of doing anything. Some of the questions in the worksheet were, 'Does this belief support the achievement of reasonable/constructive interests and goals?' 'Does this belief help foster positive/healthy relationships?' 'Does this belief fit with reality?' and 'Is this belief generally detrimental or helpful?' These questions are designed to aid in distinguishing between realistic and destructive thinking (Sunandar et al., 2019). Then, the counselor also administered the first post-test assessment on

the client using The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale to determine his current self-esteem level. This activity is known as "Rate My Super-Self." The result of the first post-test one exhibited a slight increase from the pre-test result.

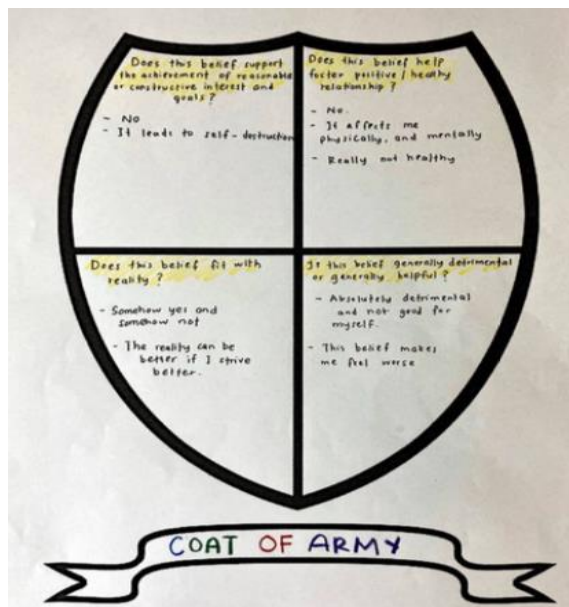


Figure 4: Action Research Process and Procedures

Then, in the fifth session, the counselor continued the counseling process by implementing the E aspect from the A-B-C-D-E model of REBT, which is a reasonable new belief. The counselor then worked with the client to replace the client's negative beliefs with a new set of more beneficial ideas. It is also a stage in which the client emphasizes acquiring and executing new adaptive beliefs. He began to develop a fresh stream of thought based on more plausible and logical views. The client recognizes that we all make mistakes and replaces negative thinking with positive thoughts. He promises to learn from his mistakes and strive for better in the future. He would also love to find alternatives for online classes and tuition to improve his potential academic aspect slowly. The counselor also conducted an activity called the "Self-Esteem Sentence Completion" worksheet to refresh him and get on track towards betterment. People frequently overlook their strengths while

focusing on their flaws and adverse experiences. The worksheet's purpose is to assist the client in identifying his current progress and planning for a better future for himself.

Last but not least, is the sixth session of therapy. The counselor preceded to the termination process by distributing the client an illustrated take-home brochure entitled "Positive Steps to Well-Being" with recommended activities and exercises to improve wellbeing. This printable is ideal for clients who are self-motivated and want a list of suggestions to help them achieve their happiness goals. Being kind to yourself, exercising regularly, picking up a hobby, being creative, helping others, relaxing, eating well, balancing sleep, connecting with others, avoiding drugs, seeing the broader picture, and learning to accept things as they are among the suggestions. Also, the counselor administered the post-test two assessments on the client using The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale to determine his current self-esteem level. This activity is known as "Rate My Super-Self." The result of the first post-test two, exhibited a dramatic increase from the post-test one consequence. The result has shown that the client is positively re-establishing his self-esteem consistently to achieve his goal and a bright future.

STAGE 4: REFLECTION

Following the implementation of interventions, it is crystal clear that the client's self-esteem improved after six counseling sessions. The results of Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale pre and post therapies indicated that these approaches successfully raised his self-esteem as indicated in Table 2. The subject of this study was a form 5 student who had a low academic performance based on his most recent examination results, in which he practically failed all topics. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was used to assess the client's level of self-esteem before beginning the intervention (pre-test), during the intervention (post-test 1), and after the intervention (post-test 2). Table 2

exhibits that the client's RSES score in the pre-test was 11, and the post-test score was 19. According to Rosenberg (1965), this score reflects low self-esteem. In post-test 2, however, the client scored 28, indicating a high level of self-esteem. A score of less than 20 on the RSES indicates a poor degree of self-esteem, while a score of less than 10 indicates a

very low level of self-esteem. The increase in self-esteem achieved by implementing the disputation technique revealed in this study is consistent with the findings of Verma, Kumar and Yashmeen (2019) research, which discovered that disputing illogical beliefs as part of therapeutic interventions improved undergraduate university students' self-esteem.

Table 2: Self-Esteem Score for Pre-Test, Post-Test 1, and Post-Test 2 and the level based on Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)

Evaluation	Score	Level
Pre-Test	11	Low
Post-Test 1	19	Low
Post-Test 2	28	High

Symptoms of Low Self-Esteem of Student with Low Academic Performance

According to the transcripts, the symptoms of low self-esteem displayed by the client in this study included low self-confidence, downplaying or dismissing his positive qualities, a tendency to blame himself, negative words to convey himself, an inferiority complex that results in avoiding activities, especially in a group, and feeling embarrassed of himself. The research findings revealed that the client exhibited the symptoms of poor self-esteem described in the reports from the counseling session transcripts. According to the counseling transcripts, low self-confidence indicated that the client did not believe in himself. In the first case, the client lacked confidence in his abilities to keep pace with his studies, and in the second case, the client lacked the courage to ask his teacher any questions. He struggled with self-confidence and social interactions with others, both of which reflected his low self-esteem. It also impacted his studies because he skipped school and showed no interest in studying. Downplaying or ignoring his positive quality indicates that the client commented that he discounted his skill or positive trait by claiming that it was all chance when he achieved anything or that other people

could do it. As a result, his accomplishment was unremarkable. This was also a clear sign of low self-esteem. The client's inclination to blame himself meant that whenever something went wrong with him or even other people, such as his parents, he would blame himself. He felt terrible and continued to blame himself for everything that went wrong in his life without addressing the root cause. He hated himself for disappointing his parents and failing to achieve their expectations.

Negative statements signified that the client had used negative phrases to characterize himself during the session. According to the counseling transcripts, the client-branded himself dumb for failing his tests. Aside from that, the client viewed himself as worthless, and he restated these negative characteristics several times during the sessions. The client displayed an inferiority complex by claiming that his peers were far better than him and that he was unfit to engage or study with them. Due to his inferiority, the client also attempted to avoid activities involving other people. All of the client's thoughts and actions exhibited indicators of poor self-esteem. Being embarrassed by him meant that the client was embarrassed because he believed he was not as bright as others and unable to accomplish his

parents' hopes. As a result, the client downgrades and is ashamed to be himself.

Other researchers have also observed the same signs of poor self-esteem (Balkis & Duru, 2019). The activating event that resulted in the irrational belief, which affected the client's self-esteem in this study, was his unfulfilling examination results, which were not what he expected. He had the unreasonable assumption that to be a valuable person; he must succeed and excel in all he does and make no mistakes. He also should meet the expectations of others in favor of making them proud of him. As a result, when he had low academic achievement, his irrational beliefs caused the symptoms indicated previously. Thus, his self-esteem was diminished. The client's irrational belief was similar to the finding by Yang et al. (2019) that two specific irrational beliefs that had continued to predict low self-esteem in the young population were the demand for approval

from those significant to them and they had to be successful in everything they did without making any mistakes.

The Impact of Disputation Technique on Self-Esteem of Students with Low Academic Performance

Overall, the implementation of the REBT model-based disputation approach had a significantly positive influence on the client's self-esteem. To assess the effects of the disputation technique on the client's self-esteem deeper, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale score and counseling session transcripts were evaluated. Based on the RSES conducted by the clients (pre-test, post-test one, and post-test 2), the analysis revealed an increase in the score, indicating a higher degree of self-esteem in the client following the intervention. Figure 5 depicts the increase in RSES score.

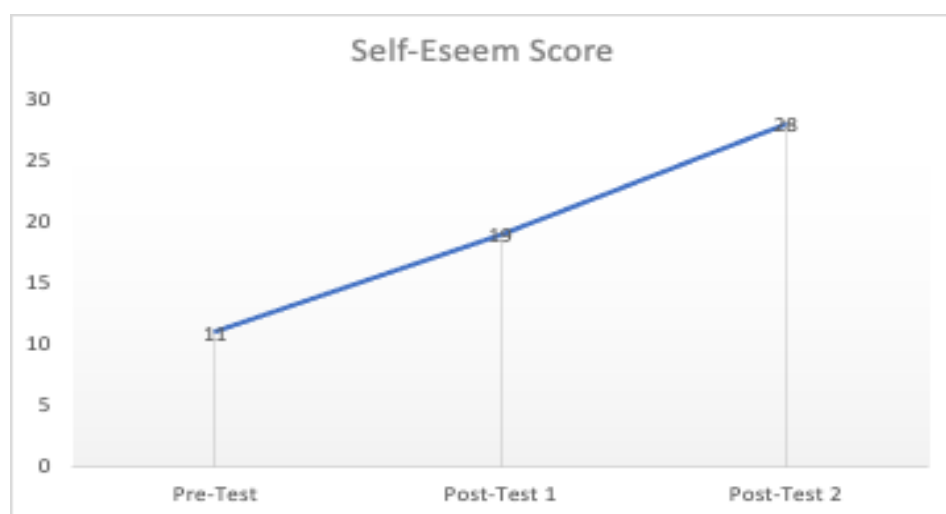


Figure 5: The Client's Self-Esteem Score based on Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)

Therefore, based on the RSES score, it can be inferred that the application of the disputation approach helps improve the client's level of self-esteem.

Impact of Disputation Technique on Client's Cognitive

The client has demonstrated more rational thinking and a more positive attitude toward a scenario that would have previously upset him, mainly if it involved his studies. The client has been utilizing the sound card, on which he has written the old belief at the top and the new belief at the bottom. He committed to keeping the card with him for a week and reading it between eight and ten times daily. When the client challenges the irrational idea and replaces it with a new concept, he feels driven and

believes he is not a failure. He has also acknowledged that he has achieved success on a few occasions.

Impact of Disputation Technique on Client's Emotion

Regarding the emotional aspect, the client has regained his interest in extracurricular activities and is enthusiastic and delighted to meet new people. The client has also expressed pleasant emotions, such as feeling calmer when thinking about his studies and himself. In addition, the client indicated that he is proud of himself and his family.

Impact of Disputation Technique on Client's Behavior

The client stated that he is now a member of an art club and is getting back into sports. This indicates that the client's desire to interact socially with his friends has improved. The client's behavior has also changed due to his continuous attendance at his classes and tutorials. He had also attempted to complete homework before attending class. Compared to before the intervention, this is a significant improvement.

According to the observation, the client initially displayed discomfort or embarrassment by frequently looking down when completing the questionnaire. In previous sessions, his expressions had likewise appeared sad or depressed. However, beginning with session four, the client began to show happier faces when the intervention was completed. When expressing his problems, he was able to relax and smile frequently. The client's nonverbal body language improved as a result of this.

Impact of Disputation Technique on Client's Self-Esteem

In comparison to before the intervention, the client expressed a more positive perspective of himself, saying that he has excellent

characteristics, is capable of doing things like others, and believes that he is valuable. According to the counseling transcriptions, these were indications of high self-esteem. REBT is helpful for the client because therapy aims for unconditional self-acceptance regardless of the client's characteristics, behaviors, accomplishments, or how others perceive them (Davis & Turner, 2020). As a result, even if the client's academic achievement is low, he can still consider himself worthy and equivalent to others because of his positive traits. The client recognized his earlier accomplishments after disputing his irrational belief and modifying it with a new one. The client's self-esteem has risen due to embracing himself as he is. This strategy aided in the development of self-acceptance by increasing reasonable self-talk and thus contributing to the development of self-esteem. This finding supports a study by Diale and Victor (2022), which established correlational evidence that irrational thinking is connected to conditional self-acceptance (which is tied to self-esteem). Still, rational thinking is related to unconditional self-acceptance.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, the symptoms of low self-esteem were discovered, and the results indicate that implementing the disputation technique efficiently boosts the self-esteem of a student with low academic performance by evaluating cognitive, emotional, and behavioral changes. A strong sense of self-esteem functions as a shield that a person brings when he goes out to perform. A person's self-esteem allows him to overcome all of life's problems. A person who believes in himself will go the extra mile to attain his objectives. There is no doubt in claiming that Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) is effective in identifying, addressing, and modifying a person's beliefs that are causing low self-esteem in general.

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