

Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy: Is There Something New? Identifying Its Benefits in Education Counseling of the Literature from 2014–2024

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the development and efficacy of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) in educational settings over the last decade, emphasizing its potential to improve students' mental well-being and academic performance. A systematic review of 13 articles published between 2014 and 2024 reveals advancements in REBT, such as incorporating neurobiological perspectives and technology, adjustments for online learning, and tailored interventions for at-risk groups. The findings indicate that REBT effectively addresses various psychological challenges, including math anxiety, exam-related stress, and bullying, contributing to a nurturing learning environment. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of training REBT educators to manage their stress and enhance classroom dynamics. While the results show positive outcomes for both students and teachers, limitations include a small sample size and a narrow focus on specific populations. The study calls for further research to confirm REBT's relevance in diverse educational settings, emphasizing its role in fostering resilience and mental well-being for students and educators alike.

Keywords: Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy, REBT, School, Counseling

INTRODUCTION

Counseling in education is a crucial link that helps students access the support they need to achieve their full potential. According to Heppner (2017), educational counseling not only aids students in addressing personal challenges but also fosters the development of social and emotional skills necessary for their academic and lifelong success. Through counseling, students can learn to identify and regulate their emotions, vital for maintaining their mental health and overall well-being (Agyapong et al., 2023).

Numerous studies suggest that a considerable number of students are grappling with mental health issues that may impact their academic performance. According to a report by the World Health Organization, one in four adolescents experiences significant mental health challenges (Farooq et al., 2020). Given this situation, it is essential to offer support through counseling to help students overcome these obstacles. For example, research by Ogakwu et al. (2024) indicates that counseling interventions can effectively reduce teacher stress levels, fostering a more positive learning environment for students.

Counseling is also employed to bolster student engagement in the learning process. By offering emotional and psychological support, students can develop a stronger connection to the school and experience an increase in their motivation to learn (Turner et al., 2014). As a result, counseling is essential to education, not only for the individual well-being of students but also for their overall academic success.

Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) is a therapeutic approach that recognizes and alters irrational thoughts and beliefs. The goal of this approach is to aid individuals in cultivating a more rational and adaptive mindset, ultimately improving their emotional well-being (Ellis, 1999).

In educational settings, REBT can be utilized to assist students in addressing a range of issues, such as anxiety, stress, and behavioral problems.

The use of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) in education extends to addressing exam anxiety. According to research by Egbochuku et al. (2008), applying REBT can significantly reduce exam anxiety among students, leading to improved academic performance. Furthermore, REBT can help students deal with social issues such as bullying or difficulties in peer interaction (Stewart & Bernard, 2023). Implementing REBT in education also involves training teachers to identify and address irrational thoughts among students. By providing appropriate training, teachers can assist students in developing critical thinking skills to effectively manage their emotional challenges (Vernon & Bernard, 2019). Thus, REBT is not only beneficial for students but also enhances teaching practices in the classroom.

REBT, which stands for Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy, is not a novel approach in counseling; it is recognized as a form of cognitive counseling that has existed for a considerable amount of time. First introduced by Albert Ellis in 1955, REBT focuses on the interconnectedness of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. This approach is predicated on the belief that many emotional issues stem from irrational thoughts, and by altering these thoughts, individuals can transform their feelings and behaviors (Ellis, 2005). Since its inception, REBT has been refined and implemented in various contexts, including education. This approach has been demonstrated to be effective in aiding individuals in conquering a range of issues, from anxiety to depression. According to research by Terjesen et al. (2021), REBT has been integrated into numerous school counseling programs to help students overcome emotional challenges and enhance their social skills.

Despite having existed for several decades, the approach must continue to be explored and adapted in response to the demands and complexities of contemporary times. With the evolution of learning methods and social interactions among students, REBT must be adjusted to ensure its relevance and efficacy in today's educational landscape (Hyland & Boduszek, 2012). The evolution of REBT is in sync with the societal and cultural transformations. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in utilizing REBT to address mental health issues among adolescents and young adults. For instance, research by Ifelunni et al. (2023) demonstrates that REBT can tackle work-family conflicts among educators, a challenge that has become increasingly prevalent in the modern era.

Furthermore, Uwakwe et al. (2023) conducted research indicating that REBT can enhance awareness and understanding of hypertension among university lecturers. This suggests that the application of the REBT approach extends beyond formal education settings and can be beneficial in diverse environments to promote individual mental well-being. Within education, multiple studies have highlighted the efficacy of REBT in improving student academic involvement. For example, Yazdizadeh et al. (2023) discovered that REBT interventions can mitigate negative academic behaviors and promote increased student engagement in the learning process.

As technology advances, REBT has also been modified for digital use. Surilena et al.'s (2023) research demonstrates that incorporating REBT into online mental health services during the COVID-19 pandemic yielded substantial benefits for individuals dealing with mental health challenges. The findings revealed that attendees of REBT-based online therapy sessions experienced enhancements in mental well-being and decreases in symptoms of anxiety. Furthermore, research by Igbokwe et al. (2019) demonstrates that using technology in REBT-based education can enhance student engagement and reduce anxiety.

Research has shown that Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) can have a significant impact on how students manage the stress and anxiety associated with academic life. Students often face high pressure from academic demands and social expectations (Ezenwaji et al., 2021). REBT can help students identify and address irrational thoughts, such as believing they must achieve perfect scores on every exam or that failure would be catastrophic (Bernard, 2021). Additionally, Ogakwu et al. (2022) found that REBT-based interventions for teachers reduced work stress levels and improved the balance between work and personal life. This suggests that REBT can be an effective tool to help students reach their full potential while promoting a positive mindset for

teachers and educational staff. In summary, it is evident from the preceding discussion that REBT counseling services play a crucial role in supporting students, teachers, and educational staff in addressing issues like anxiety and stress while also improving their involvement in the learning process.

Study Aim

Therefore, this research aims to examine the evolution of REBT in the educational setting and assess its effectiveness in aiding students in overcoming emotional and psychological challenges. This study is anticipated to offer fresh perspectives on the innovative use of REBT and its impact on psychological well-being in an educational context.

METHODS

This study utilizes a systematic literature review approach, following established protocols and adhering to the guidelines outlined in the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA). The review process involves four stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion of articles (Cooper et al., 2018). According to Sierra-Correa and Kintz (2015), PRISMA offers three primary benefits: 1) defining the research topic for systematic investigation, 2) establishing inclusion and exclusion criteria, and 3) facilitating the analysis of a substantial body of scientific literature within a specified timeframe.

Literature Searching Process

We conducted a search in the SCOPUS database using the keywords ("REBT" OR "Rational AND Emotive AND Behavior AND Therapy" OR "Rational AND Emotive AND Behavioral AND Counseling") AND ("School" OR "Education"). Initially, 203 articles were found, but 134 were excluded for failing to meet specific criteria related to publication date, article type, subject, final stage, journal, language, and open access status. This left 69 articles for screening; after reviewing the titles and abstracts, 46 were excluded due to irrelevance. We then assessed the remaining 23 articles for eligibility, and 10 were further excluded as they did not align with the population and research methods. Ultimately, 13 articles were selected for analysis. The PRISMA flow diagram can be seen in figure 1.

Screening and Eligibility Criteria

The screening process involves a comprehensive review of the gathered articles to ensure adherence to the criteria. Inclusion and exclusion parameters are used to sift through articles based on their relevance to the research inquiries. One approach employed is implementing a time limit for publication, as Mengist et al. (2020) highlighted, indicating that less developed research often requires more time to complete due to a shortage of articles and numerous unanswered research questions. All studies were filtered based on publication years from 2014 to 2024, article type, subject areas (including psychology, social science, multidisciplinary studies, arts and humanities, and health professions), final stage of the article, journal source, language (English), and open access status. The eligibility criteria covered: (1) population: education; (2) method: quantitative-experimental design.

Research Questions

In the initial phase of a systematic literature review, formulating research questions (RQs) is essential to guide the literature search and extraction process. These RQs are structured around five key elements, commonly known as PICOC: 1) Population (P): the target group of the investigation; 2) Intervention (I): specific aspects of the investigation or issues of interest to the researcher; 3) Comparison (C): aspects against which the Intervention (I) will be compared; 4) Outcomes (O): the effects and results of the Intervention (I); and 5) Context (C): the setting and environment of the investigation (Mengist et al., 2020). The research questions formulated in this study are as follows:

RQ 1: What innovations or developments in REBT counseling have occurred in the educational context between 2014 and 2024?

RQ 2: What issues within the educational context can be addressed through REBT counseling from 2014 to 2024?

Quality Assessment and Analysis

It is essential to emphasize the significance of quality assessment in determining the suitability of the research design for the study topic. This involves a comprehensive review of the primary characteristics of the design. As Munn et al. (2020) noted, quality evaluation is a method for assessing the relevance and validity of research findings by scrutinizing the strengths and weaknesses of published research. In this study, the quality of the articles was evaluated based on several criteria:

- 1) Relevance of the research questions
- 2) Adequacy of the research design in addressing the research questions
- 3) Discussion of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) in the educational context
- 4) Presentation of research findings on the effectiveness of REBT within the educational setting

The quality of the 13 articles included in this study was assessed through peer review.

Furthermore, the study employed thematic analysis techniques. According to Xu and Zammit (2020), thematic analysis is a versatile and accessible method for analyzing qualitative data. Flemming et al. (2019) also describe thematic analysis as the most effective approach for synthesizing data within an integrative (mixed) research design. The thematic analysis in this study is divided into two sections: the first part details the identity of the articles. In contrast, the second part discusses innovations or developments in REBT counseling and the issues in the educational context that can be addressed through REBT counseling from 2014 to 2024.

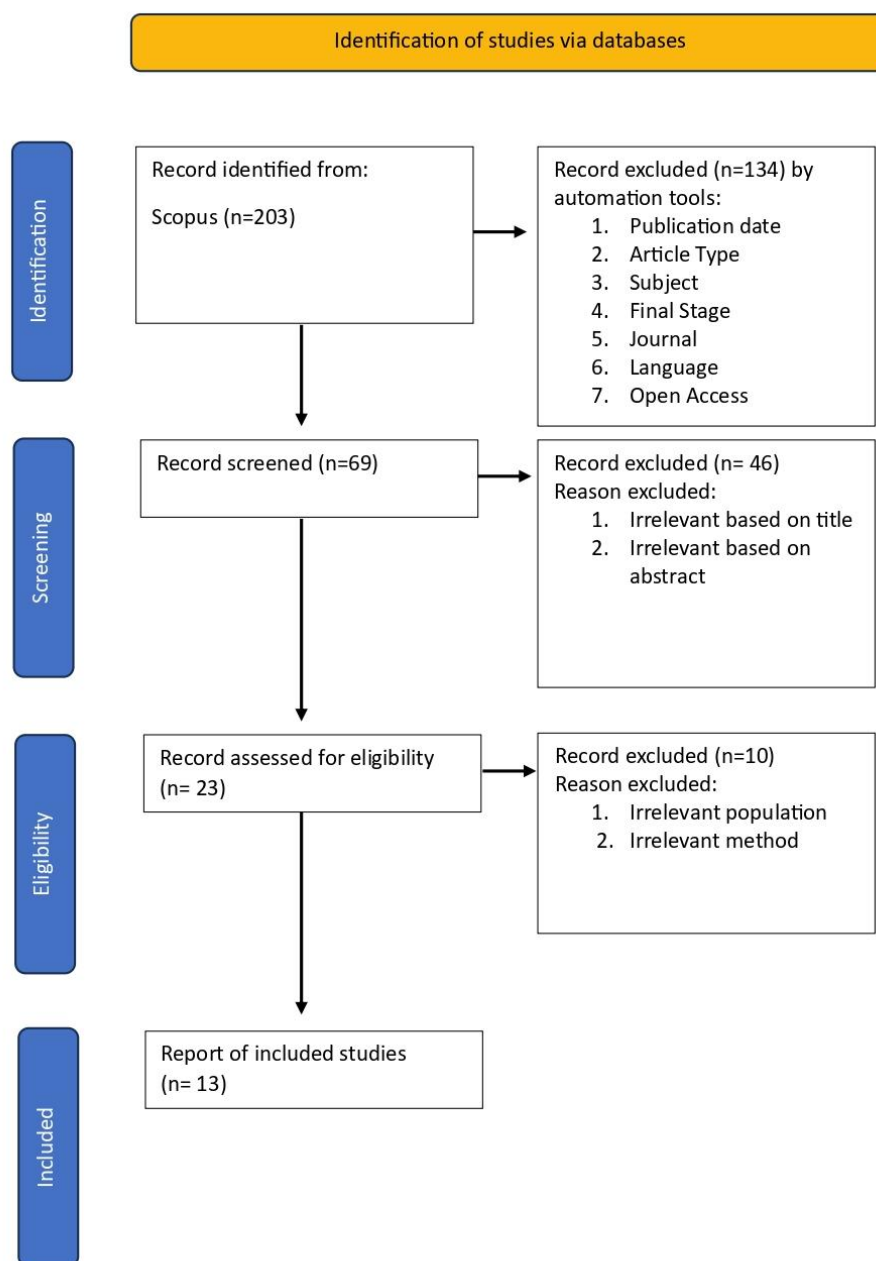


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The study found 13 articles that satisfied the inclusion and exclusion criteria. These articles are listed in Table 1. The research findings were then divided into two sections. The first section discusses the publication year, research methods, and research results, while the second section is organized around the research questions (RQ).

First Section

In the first section, the articles are grouped according to title and author, publication year, location, delivery system, population, research methods, and research results.

<i>N</i> <i>o</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Yea</i> <i>r</i>	<i>Locatio</i> <i>n</i>	<i>Deliver</i> <i>y</i> <i>System</i>	<i>Populatio</i> <i>n</i>	<i>Research</i> <i>Method</i>	<i>Results</i>
1	Reducing	202	Nigeria	Face to	Students	Randomized	REBT and

	Mathematics Anxiety Among Deaf Learners Through Relaxation and Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy	4		Face	(School)	Control Trial	relaxation therapy significantly reduced mathematics anxiety in deaf students compared to the control group.
	Author: Adigun et al. (2024)						
2	Effect of Group Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy on Mathematics Anxiety in Secondary School Students	2024	Nigeria	Face to Face	Students (School)	Experimental with pretest-posttest control group	Group REBT effectively reduced math anxiety and irrational beliefs about math among secondary school students.
	Author: Mosimege et al. (2024)						
3	Bridging Minds and Machines in Industry 5.0: Neurobiological Approach	2024	Mexico	Face to Face	Students (University)	Experiment using EEG and neuropsychological tests	Incorporating a neurobiological approach in technical education helps understand cognitive abilities of technical students in Industry 5.0 contexts.
	Author: Rueda-Castro et al. (2024)						
4	Rational Emotive Intervention for Work-Family Conflict and Female Primary School Teachers' Well-being	2023	Nigeria	Face to Face	Teachers	Quasi-experimental with pretest-posttest	REBT significantly improved the well-being of female teachers facing work-family conflict.
	Author: Ede et al. (2023)						
5	Empowering the Victims of Bullying: The 'Bullying: The Power to Cope'	2023	Australia	Face to Face	Students (School)	Experimental with pretest-posttest	The program significantly improved students' cognitive and

	Program						emotional coping skills against bullying.
	Author: Stewart and Bernard (2023)						
6	Irrational Beliefs Among Competitive High School Student Athletes: Are They General or Context-Driven?	2023	United States	Face to Face	Student-athletes	Correlational Analysis	Both general and context-driven irrational beliefs were related to students' academic and athletic performance, with no significant differences between them.
	Author: Everson & Terjesen (2023)						
7	The Effect of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy on Work-Irrational Beliefs Among Electrical and Electronic Educators	2023	Nigeria	Face to Face	Lecturers	Quasi-experimental with control group	REBT significantly reduced work-related irrational beliefs among technical educators compared to the control group.
	Author: Bailey and Turner (2023)						
8	Management of Mental Health Problem among Primary School Teachers using Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy	2023	Nigeria	Face to Face	Teachers	Randomized Control Trial	REBT significantly reduced work stress in primary school teachers after a 12-week intervention.
	Author: Ugwuanyi (2023)						
9	Irrational Beliefs and Stress Levels: Evidence Among Orphaned Students in Kenyan Secondary Schools	2021	Kenya	Face to Face	Orphaned students	Cross-sectional correlational study	Irrational beliefs had a weak positive correlation with stress levels among orphaned students.
	Author: Umija et						

	al. (2021)						
10	Stress in Teachers of Children with Neurodevelopmental Disorders: Effect of Blended Rational Emotive Therapy	2021	Nigeria	Blended (Face to face and online)	Teachers	Randomized Control Trial	Blended REBT (face-to-face and online) significantly reduced job stress among teachers compared to the waitlisted group.
	Author: Obiweluzo et al. (2021)						
11	Development of Rational Emotive Education Module for Stress Intervention of Malaysian Boarding School Students	2019	Malaysia	Face to Face	Boarding school students	Module development with validation and reliability tests	REE module based on REBT was developed with a content validity value of 0.92 and reliability of 0.93, effective for stress intervention among boarding students.
	Author: Mahfar et al. (2019)						
12	The Effect of Adjustment Training Based on Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy on Adjustment to University	2018	Turkey	Face to Face	Students (University)	Quasi-experimental with pretest, posttest, and follow-up	REBT-based adjustment training significantly improved university adjustment among first-year students from various cities compared to the control group.
	Author: Yontem and Ozer (2018)						
13	Efficacy of Client-Centred and Rational-Emotive Behaviour Therapies in Reducing Bullying Behavior	2015	Nigeria	Face to Face	Students (School)	Quasi-experimental with 3x2 factorial design	REBT and client-centered therapy significantly reduced bullying behavior among secondary

Publication Year

The studies were conducted over several years, with the highest number published in 2023 (n=6) and 2024 (n=3). Other years included 2021 (n=3), 2019 (n=1), 2018 (n=1), and 2015 (n=1). This indicates a recent surge in research activity related to educational interventions.

Research Location

A total of 13 studies (n=13) were analyzed, with the majority originating from Nigeria (n=7). Other countries represented include Australia (n=1), Mexico (n=1), the United States (n=1), Kenya (n=1), Turkey (n=1), and Malaysia (n=1). This highlights Nigeria as a significant contributor to this area of research.

Delivery System

The delivery systems employed in the studies predominantly featured face-to-face interactions (n=10), with one study utilizing a blended approach that combined face-to-face and online methods. This preference for face-to-face delivery suggests a focus on direct engagement in educational settings.

Population

The research focused on various populations, with in-school students being the most studied group (n=5), followed by teachers (n=4), university students (n=3), boarding school students (n=1), student-athletes (n=1), orphaned students (n=1), and lecturers (n=1). This diversity indicates a broad interest in educational interventions across different educational levels and contexts.

Research Method

In terms of research methodology, randomized control trials were the most commonly used method (n=3), followed by quasi-experimental designs, which included pretest-posttest and control groups (n=6). Other methods included experimental designs with pretest-posttest control groups (n=2), cross-sectional correlational studies (n=1), module development with validation and reliability tests (n=1), and experiments using EEG and neuropsychological tests (n=1). This variety in research methods reflects a comprehensive approach to evaluating educational interventions.

Second Section

RQ 1: What innovations or developments in REBT counseling have occurred in the educational context between 2014 and 2024?

Several innovations and developments in Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) counseling within the educational context from 2014 to 2024 can be identified in tabel 2.

Tabel 2. Innovations In REBT Counseling Within The Educational Context

No	Innovation Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) Strategies
1	Integration of Relaxation Techniques: Recent studies have shown that combining REBT with relaxation techniques significantly reduces anxiety, particularly mathematics anxiety among students. This integration highlights a holistic approach to addressing emotional challenges in education (Adigun et al., 2024).
2	Group Therapy Applications: The effectiveness of group REBT has been emphasized, particularly in reducing irrational beliefs and anxiety among secondary school students. Group therapy formats are being increasingly recognized for their benefits in educational settings (Mosimege et al., 2024).
3	Neurobiological Approaches: Innovative research has begun to incorporate neurobiological perspectives into REBT, using EEG and neuropsychological tests to understand cognitive abilities in students. This represents a significant development in aligning psychological theories with biological underpinnings in education (Rueda-Castro et al., 2024).
4	Work-Family Conflict Interventions: REBT has been adapted to address work-family

conflicts experienced by teachers, demonstrating its versatility beyond student-focused applications. This expansion acknowledges the importance of teacher well-being in creating a supportive educational environment (Ede et al., 2023).

- 5 **Coping Skills Programs:** Programs designed to empower students against bullying have integrated REBT principles to enhance cognitive and emotional coping skills. This development reflects a broader application of REBT to improve social dynamics within schools (Stewart & Bernard, 2023).
- 6 **Technology Integration:** The rise of blended learning environments has led to the adaptation of REBT for online and face-to-face settings. This includes the application of REBT in digital mental health services, which gained prominence during the COVID-19 pandemic, showcasing its flexibility in various delivery formats (Obiweluzo et al., 2021)
- 7 **Focus on Vulnerable Populations:** Research has focused on applying REBT to specific vulnerable groups, such as orphaned students and student-athletes, addressing unique challenges faced by these populations in educational settings (Everson & Terjesen, 2023; Umija et al., 2021).
- 8 **Development of Educational Modules:** New educational modules based on REBT principles have been created for stress intervention, emphasizing the importance of structured programs tailored to student needs (Mahfar et al., 2019).

RQ 2: What issues within the educational context can be addressed through REBT counseling from 2014 to 2024?

Several issues within the educational context that can be addressed through Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) counseling from 2014 to 2024 can be seen in Table 3.

Tabel 3. Issues Within The Educational Context Can Be Addressed Through REBT Counseling

<i>No</i>	<i>Issues</i>
1	Mathematics Anxiety: REBT is effective in reducing mathematics anxiety among students (Adigun et al., 2024; Mosimege et al., 2024).
2	Exam Anxiety: REBT helps reduce exam anxiety, improving students' academic performance (Everson & Terjesen, 2023).
3	Stress Management: REBT reduces work-related stress among teachers and enhances their well-being (Obiweluzo et al., 2021; Mahfar et al., 2019).
4	Bullying: REBT reduces bullying behavior and enhances students' emotional coping skills (Stewart & Bernard, 2023; Alabi and Lami, 2015).
5	Irrational Beliefs: REBT addresses irrational beliefs negatively impacting students' academic and athletic performance (Everson & Terjesen, 2023; Umija et al., 2021; Bailey and Turner, 2023).
6	Mental Well-being: REBT assists teachers and students in overcoming mental health issues, such as depression and work-family conflicts (Ede et al., 2023; Ugwuanyi, 2023).
7	Student Adjustment: REBT supports students in the adjustment process in higher education (Yontem and Ozer, 2018).

Discussion

The results of this study, which analyzed thirteen articles focusing on Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) in educational settings, reveal a significant evolution in the application of this therapeutic approach over the past decade. This discussion will elaborate on the findings and implications, referencing the recent literature on REBT to provide a comprehensive understanding of its effectiveness and adaptability in various educational contexts.

Publication Trends and Research Methodology

The analysis revealed a significant increase in research activity related to REBT, especially in 2023, which marked the highest number of publications (n=6). This upsurge may indicate a growing acknowledgment of the importance of mental health interventions in educational environments, particularly in response to the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. As noted by Ogakwu et al. (2021), the pandemic has heightened the demand for effective mental health strategies for both students and educators, leading many institutions to consider implementing therapeutic approaches to address heightened levels of stress and anxiety (Ezenwaji et al., 2021; Agyapong et al., 2023). Additionally, the focus on mental health during this period aligns with the broader trend of integrating psychological well-being into educational frameworks, as advocated by Vernon and Bernard (2019), who argue that promoting mental health in schools is crucial for nurturing academic success and emotional resilience.

Moreover, the prevalence of randomized control trials (n=3) and quasi-experimental designs (n=6) indicates a robust methodological rigor in assessing the effectiveness of REBT, which is vital for establishing credible evidence of its efficacy in reducing various forms of anxiety and promoting overall well-being. The emphasis on empirical research bolsters the credibility of REBT as a viable option for addressing psychological issues in educational settings. As highlighted by Turner et al. (2014), using robust research methodologies is essential for validating therapeutic interventions and gaining a deeper understanding of their impact. This methodological strength is further reinforced by the systematic review conducted by King et al. (2024), which underscores the necessity of evidence-based practices in educational psychology to ensure that interventions like REBT are practical and tailored to address the diverse needs of students.

Innovations and Developments in REBT

The findings have highlighted numerous innovative uses and benefits of REBT counseling in educational settings. These include incorporating neurobiological approaches and interventions to tackle work-family conflicts. Furthermore, there is a strong emphasis on integrating technology and addressing the needs of vulnerable populations. Educational module development and the inclusion of relaxation techniques are also crucial aspects. Group therapy applications and coping skills programs are emerging as essential components of REBT counseling in educational environments.

Cutting-edge research has recently integrated neurobiological perspectives into Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT), using EEG and neuropsychological tests to gain deeper insights into students' cognitive abilities. Rueda-Castro et al. (2024) underscore that connecting psychological theories with biological foundations signifies a significant advancement in education, especially in Industry 5.0. This fusion expands the theoretical framework of REBT, enabling a more comprehensive approach that enriches its practical applications in technical education environments. Understanding the brain's responses can guide the implementation of psychological interventions, as emphasized by Takasugi (2022), who underscores the significance of cognitive-behavioral strategies in creating effective learning environments. Furthermore, integrating neurobiological perspectives into REBT can facilitate personalized interventions that cater to students' specific cognitive and emotional needs, ultimately promoting enhanced educational outcomes (DiBlasi & Kassinove, 2022).

The versatility of REBT extends beyond student-focused applications to address work-family conflicts experienced by teachers, as highlighted by Ifelunni et al. (2023). Their research emphasizes that interventions to enhance teachers' well-being can lead to a more conducive learning environment. Recognizing the direct impact of teacher mental health on student success, Ogakwu et al. (2024) further report that effective teacher stress management contributes to a more positive classroom atmosphere. By utilizing REBT to address these work-related challenges, educational institutions can foster an environment that promotes the welfare of both teachers and students.

The emergence of blended learning environments has significantly impacted the integration of REBT in both online and traditional settings. The versatility of REBT in digital mental health services, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrates its adaptability across different delivery formats, as Surilena et al. (2023) emphasized. This adaptability not only improves accessibility but also aligns with the growing reliance on technology in education. A wider audience can be reached by incorporating REBT into virtual platforms, providing greater convenience and allowing students to engage with therapeutic content at their own pace. Moreover, research suggests that online REBT interventions can be equally effective as traditional face-to-face therapy, particularly in reducing anxiety and enhancing emotional well-being (Yazdizadeh et al., 2023). The convenience of digital platforms has also been found to boost student participation, creating a supportive environment for mental health intervention (Ezenwaji et al., 2021). Furthermore, integrating technology into REBT corresponds with modern educational practices prioritizing personalized learning experiences, as highlighted by Bernard (2021), who underscores the importance of tailoring therapeutic approaches to meet individual needs in the digital age. Overall, the shift towards blended learning environments in REBT reflects the evolving landscape of education and enhances the delivery of mental health support for students.

There is growing research interest in the application of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) to support specific vulnerable groups, such as orphaned students and student-athletes, in effectively addressing the unique challenges they face in educational settings (Igbokwe et al., 2021; Uwakwe et al., 2023). This targeted approach highlights the adaptability of REBT in addressing individual circumstances and stressors, signaling a move towards personalized interventions that can effectively cater to diverse needs. For example, orphaned students often experience heightened emotional distress due to the loss of parental support, making them particularly susceptible to mental health issues (Ezeudu et al., 2020). By integrating REBT, educators, and mental health professionals can assist these students in developing coping strategies that alleviate feelings of anxiety and depression, ultimately enhancing their academic performance and overall well-being (Ogakwu et al., 2022). Similarly, student-athletes encounter unique pressures related to performance expectations, injury risks, and juggling academics with sports commitments. Research has demonstrated that implementing REBT techniques can significantly reduce performance anxiety and irrational beliefs among athletes, enabling them to maintain a healthier mindset during competitions (Turner & Davis, 2019). This showcases the versatility of REBT in meeting the specific needs of different groups, thereby enhancing its effectiveness as a mental health intervention within educational frameworks (Bernard, 2021).

In addition, personalized interventions such as those utilizing REBT are crucial in modern educational settings as they acknowledge and cater to students' varied backgrounds and experiences. This aligns with the growing emphasis on social-emotional learning (SEL) frameworks in education, which advocate for customized approaches to meet students' emotional and psychological needs (Vernon & Bernard, 2021). By concentrating on vulnerable populations, REBT tackles immediate psychological challenges and fosters resilience and adaptive functioning, which are essential for long-term success in academic and social spheres (Hyland & Boduszek, 2012).

New educational modules rooted in REBT principles have been developed for stress intervention, highlighting the importance of customized, structured programs to address students' needs (Yazdizadeh et al., 2023). The effectiveness of these modules in bolstering students' emotional resilience signifies a shift towards systematic implementation of REBT in educational settings. Studies indicate that structured interventions can significantly enhance students' coping mechanisms and academic performance (Ezeudu et al., 2020). Recent research has shown that integrating REBT with relaxation techniques notably diminishes anxiety, particularly mathematics anxiety, among students. For example, Adigun et al. (2024) observed that this fusion underscores a comprehensive approach to tackling emotional

challenges in education, effectively combining cognitive restructuring with physiological relaxation. This dual approach not only addresses cognitive distortions but also aids in managing the physiological symptoms of anxiety, thereby improving students' academic performance. The significance of this integration is underscored by studies illustrating that relaxation techniques can enhance focus and alleviate anxiety-related symptoms in educational environments (Wang et al., 2005; Turner & Slater, 2014).

The efficacy of group REBT has become increasingly recognized, especially in alleviating irrational beliefs and anxiety among secondary school students. The program developed by Stewart and Bernard (2023) has shown significant advancements in students' ability to cope with bullying through group REBT. Group dynamics provide emotional support and foster community among participants, making this approach particularly advantageous for students with social challenges. Studies have indicated that group interventions can improve social skills and resilience, particularly in high-pressure academic settings (Vernon & Bernard, 2019; Igbokwe et al., 2021). Moreover, programs aimed at empowering students against bullying have integrated REBT principles to enhance cognitive and emotional coping skills. The effectiveness of these programs reflects a broader application of REBT to enhance social dynamics within schools (Bernard & Terjesen, 2021). For instance, research by Chukwuma et al. (2023) demonstrated that students participating in REBT-based interventions exhibited improved coping strategies, reducing bullying incidents.

Addressing Educational Issues Through REBT

The analysis of REBT interventions reveals critical insights into various psychological issues that can significantly impact students and educators within educational contexts. Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) is increasingly recognized for its versatility in addressing a spectrum of challenges ranging from anxiety and stress management to irrational beliefs and mental well-being. By tailoring its techniques to meet the diverse needs of students and teachers, REBT serves as a robust framework for fostering positive educational environments.

Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) has emerged as an effective intervention for various forms of anxiety among students, notably mathematics anxiety. The effectiveness of REBT in reducing mathematics anxiety is well-documented, with Adigun et al. (2024) demonstrating that targeted interventions lead to significant reductions in anxiety levels and improvements in overall academic performance. This finding is consistent with earlier research by Egbochuku et al. (2008), which indicates that cognitive restructuring techniques can alleviate performance-related anxiety in educational settings. These techniques empower students to challenge irrational beliefs about their mathematical abilities, fostering a positive attitude toward learning and enhancing academic outcomes (Zhao et al., 2021).

Another significant area where REBT proves beneficial is in addressing exam-related anxiety, a common challenge that often impacts student performance. REBT provides a framework for students to reframe their thoughts about examinations, enabling them to cope more effectively with the pressures associated with academic assessments (Bernard, 2021). Supporting this perspective, Egbochuku et al. (2008) found that employing REBT strategies to reduce exam anxiety can improve academic outcomes, highlighting the therapy's utility in educational settings. Cognitive reframing encourages students to perceive exams as opportunities rather than threats, enhancing their performance.

Furthermore, the application of REBT extends to stress management, particularly among teachers who experience work-related stress. Ogakwu et al. (2022) highlighted the success of REBT interventions in reducing job stress and enhancing teachers' overall well-being. This is crucial because teacher stress can have ripple effects on students, influencing their learning environment and academic success. By equipping educators with REBT strategies, schools can foster a more supportive atmosphere conducive to student learning and well-being, emphasizing the interconnectedness of teacher and student mental health (Agyapong et al., 2023).

However, it's important to note that implementing REBT in schools may face challenges such as the need for specialized training for educators, the time required for individual or group therapy sessions, and the potential resistance from students or parents who may be unfamiliar with the approach. Despite these challenges, the benefits of REBT in addressing bullying behavior and promoting a positive school culture are significant and warrant consideration. The effectiveness of REBT is also evident in its application to address bullying behavior in educational contexts. The program developed by Stewart and Bernard (2023) demonstrated that REBT principles empower students to develop coping mechanisms, significantly reducing incidents of bullying. This intervention aligns with broader efforts to foster safer school environments through psychological support, as bullying can lead to severe emotional distress among victims, impacting their academic performance and social development (Ugwoke et al., 2021). Implementing REBT not only helps in addressing the immediate consequences of bullying but also contributes to creating a positive school culture.

In addition, REBT plays a crucial role in addressing irrational beliefs that negatively impact academic and athletic performance. Research by Igbokwe et al. (2021) suggests that cognitive interventions focused on identifying and restructuring these beliefs can improve student performance outcomes. By challenging the irrational thoughts underlying students' fears and anxieties, REBT provides a pathway for enhanced self-efficacy and resilience, essential traits for success in academic and extracurricular activities (Bernard, 2021).

Beyond addressing specific anxieties and beliefs, REBT is effective in promoting overall mental well-being among students and educators. Uwakwe et al. (2023) demonstrated that REBT can assist educators in managing work-family conflicts, ultimately enhancing their mental health and job satisfaction. The implications of these findings underscore the importance of prioritizing mental health interventions in schools to support both students and staff, as the well-being of educators directly influences the learning environment for students (Ezenwaji et al., 2021).

Additionally, REBT is a valuable tool for students navigating the transition to higher education, a period often fraught with emotional and cognitive challenges. Research by Yazdizadeh et al. (2023) found that REBT can support students in adjusting to university life by addressing barriers to emotional and cognitive adjustment. This transition period is crucial for long-term academic success, making REBT an essential resource for educators aiming to support their students during this critical phase (Bernard, 2021).

Finally, the integration of REBT in addressing social anxiety among adolescents has gained considerable attention, particularly in light of challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Iyeke and Lawrence (2022) explored how REBT can assist adolescents in navigating these social challenges, emphasizing its relevance in current educational contexts. As social interactions become increasingly complex and stressful for young people, REBT provides essential strategies for managing anxiety and fostering social confidence (Hyland & Boduszek, 2012). Thus, the comprehensive applications of REBT across various issues in educational settings highlight its significance as a multifaceted approach to improving mental health and academic performance.

Implications

The findings of this study indicate that the integration of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) in education, particularly in school guidance and counseling, holds promise for improving students' mental well-being and academic performance. By incorporating REBT, schools can more effectively address issues such as math and test anxiety, as well as bullying, and assist students in developing positive coping skills. It is imperative to implement REBT as a proactive strategy, enabling students to recognize and challenge irrational beliefs that impede their academic advancement (Bernard & Terjesen, 2021). Moreover, providing teachers with training in implementing REBT is crucial for alleviating their work-related stress and enhancing their well-being, ultimately fostering a more

conducive learning environment for students (Uwakwe et al., 2023). Studies have demonstrated that when teachers effectively manage their stress, they can cultivate a more positive classroom atmosphere, leading to improved student outcomes (Ogakwu et al., 2022). Therefore, it is advisable for schools to embrace a REBT-based approach in their counseling programs and offer training for educators, thus reinforcing a comprehensive approach to mental health and academic success in educational settings (Yazdizadeh et al., 2023).

Limitations and Further Research

The study's limitation lies in the limited number of articles used, despite their relevance within the database. This constraint may impact the accuracy of the analysis and the ability to generalize the findings. Furthermore, the generalization of the data is confined to a specific school population due to the restriction to articles published between 2014 and 2024. As a result, future research should encompass a larger and more diverse population to ensure the production of representative and generalizable results.

CONCLUSION

In summary, this study underscores the effectiveness of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) as a valuable intervention in educational settings, particularly within school guidance and counseling programs. The results show that REBT can significantly reduce math and exam-related anxiety, address bullying behaviors, and improve overall mental well-being among students. Furthermore, the positive impact of REBT on teachers' stress management emphasizes the importance of supporting educators to create a healthier learning environment. By integrating REBT into school counseling practices and providing appropriate training for teachers, educational institutions can promote resilience and academic success, ultimately benefiting both students and educators in navigating the challenges of modern education.

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