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Profiling Preferences of the Counseling Paradigm by School Counselors in Indonesia

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Profiling Preferences of the Counseling Paradigm by School Counselors in Indonesia



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Abstract: This study aims to obtain an overview of the paradigm tendencies owned and practiced by school counselors in Indonesia. The study involved 233 school counselors in Indonesia on Sumatra, Java, and Bali islands. The research instrument reveals the counseling model that respondents use in providing counseling services (individual/group) and the reasons for its use. Statistics such as frequencies and percentages are used for quantitative data analysis. Qualitative data for reasons for specific counseling models were analyzed using Miles and Huberman data analysis. The results of this study show that school counselors most widely use behavior counseling models because they are effective in overcoming student behavior problems. This approach suits general needs and concerns and is easily understood with its techniques. The rational-emotive behavior therapy counseling model was chosen because it helps change mindsets to be more realistic and mature. This technique follows the needs and problems that arise and the development of adolescents who often act without consideration. Referring to Cotton's opinion, both models are counseling models that fall into the psychological paradigm. The tendency of school counselors to use psychological paradigms may be due to the psychology-focused counselor education curriculum, lack of resources or knowledge of other paradigms, and limitations of the school environment that encourage the use of traditional psychological approaches. School counselors must work with other school staff to integrate counseling approaches into the school program, which is essential. Professional organizations are expected to encourage training in behavioral counseling and REBT, supporting students' holistic education that includes academic, social, and emotional aspects.

Key Words: Counseling Paradigm; Indonesian School Counselor; Profiling Preferences

INTRODUCTION

The role of school counselors is essential in the education system as they aim to enhance student achievement by implementing comprehensive school counseling programs (Ellington et al., 2023; Jones & Pijanowski, 2023). By implementing a comprehensive school counseling program, school counselors can address students' academic, career, and social/emotional needs. This approach aligns with the ASCA National Model, which guides counselors in effectively supporting students (ASCA, 2019) the same is true for school counselors, especially in Indonesia, who are currently following the guidelines set by the Indonesian guidance and counseling professional organization (ABKIN) through operational guidelines for implementing guidance and counseling in schools.

Counselors are expected to be professional in providing counseling services and possess good competencies or skills (Hatton et al., 2023; Havlik et al., 2019; Maor & Hemi, 2021). Counselors should

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have knowledge based on scientific theory and the ability to implement it according to the needs of the client (Grzanka et al., 2019). By mastering the understanding and practical application of theories or approaches in counseling, counselors will have a foundation and tools to provide services that meet the needs of their clients as well as deliver the most effective services possible.

Cottone (2012) put forward, Counselors and psychotherapists should be familiar with the notion of paradigms. Counseling and psychotherapy paradigms (also described as "counseling paradigms") are models that are frequently exclusive and based on various professional, political, and philosophical perspectives about the nature of psychotherapeutic practices. In counseling and psychotherapy, paradigms are bigger than theories. Understanding paradigms in counseling or psychotherapy will help counselors comprehend the mental health professionals better. In counseling or psychotherapy, it is generally known the four paradigms are: (a) the organic-medical paradigm; (b) the psychological paradigm; (c) the systemic-relational paradigm; and (d) the contextual paradigm. This paradigm forms the basis of a scientific view of the counseling theory or model school counselor's practice.

The influence of the counseling paradigm adopted by school counselors on counseling services to students can be seen from several aspects, including those related to counseling approach, the counseling paradigm adopted by school counselors will affect the approach used in the counseling process. Some commonly used counseling approaches include psychodynamic, humanistic, cognitive-behavioral, and systemic approaches. (Depreeuw et al., 2017; Moe & Thimm, 2021; Prochaska & Norcross, 2018; Sperry & Sperry, 2023; Suranata et al., 2022). Counsellors' chosen approach can influence how they assist students in coping with problems and achieving counseling goals. The counseling paradigm adopted by school counselors will also affect in terms of counselors' relationships with their students, for example, with a humanistic approach that emphasizes more on forming warm, empathetic, and authentic relationships, this is different from the cognitive-behavioral approach that will focus more on changing student behavior and thinking. The relationship between counselors and students can affect the effectiveness of counseling services.

This study aims to obtain an overview of the tendency of counseling models used to refer to certain paradigms and practices and the reasons for using these models by school counselors in Indonesia. Understanding the Preferences of Counseling Paradigm Profiling and its reasons by School Counselors in Indonesia is a crucial issue and has never been done by other researchers. Information from this study will help map and design several training programs or professional development of school counselors amid several issues related to the still need for optimal recognition and role of counselors in schools in Indonesia and the low level of some of their competencies. (Rahmawati, 2021; Umami, 2022; Wardhani et al., 2019).

METHOD

The method used in this study is a mix method with descriptive and survey study research types. The quantitative approach is used to see the frequency distribution of counseling models used by counselors. Also, the percentage of perceptions of their success rate. In contrast, the qualitative approach is used to find out the reasons or arguments behind school counselors using specific counseling models in providing counseling services they do. The study was conducted from January to March 2023. Data collection in this study used Google Form.

Participants

The study involved 233 school counselors in Indonesia who were attending in-service counselor professional education at 5 universities in Sumatra, Java and Bali. The distribution of the number of respondents according to university affiliation of respondent's is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic data of respondents (N = 233)

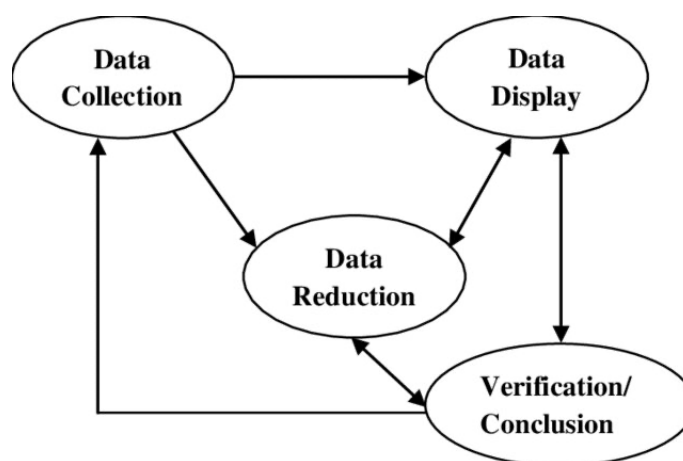
University	N	Percentage (%)
Universitas Negeri Semarang	48	20,6
Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha	89	38,2
Universitas Negeri Padang	60	25,7
Universitas Negeri Medan	23	9,9
Universitas PGRI Semarang	13	5,5

Instrumentation

The research instrument asked about the approaches that respondents predominantly or frequently use in providing counseling services (individual/group), the reasons for using them and the level (percentage) of success. The introduction and purpose and online links of research instruments were conveyed by the school counselor professional education program coordinator to the counselor trainee participants through the WhatsApp group of each class. There is no compulsion for the respondents to participate in this study, and all respondent's personal information is credentialed. All respondents involved in this study agreed and will use the data for academic purposes or activities.

Data Analysis

Statistics such as frequencies and percentages are used for quantitative data analysis. The frequency of the counseling model chosen was summed and divided by the number of respondents (N = 233) who filled out the instrument. Qualitative data related to respondents' reasons for using certain counseling models were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman approach, which in the process includes the components: (a) data collection, (b) data reduction, (c) data display, and (d) verification/conclusion.

**Figure 1.** Components in Data Analysis (Miles & Huberman, 2007)

RESULTS

The results of data processing related to the Approaches that respondents predominantly or frequently use in providing counseling services (individual/group) are summarized in the Figure 2:

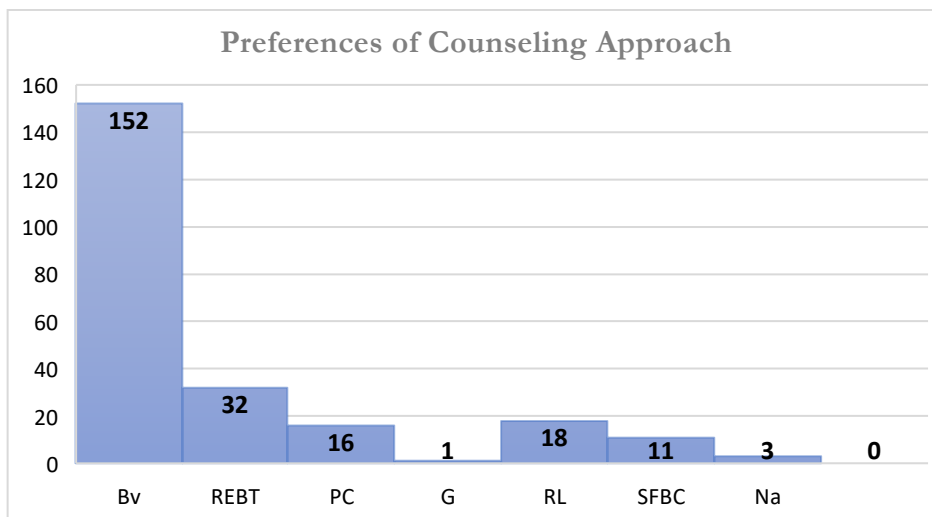


Figure 2. Percentage of counseling models used by school counselors (N= 233)

Bv = Behavioral
 RL = Realita
 G = Gestalt
 REBT = Rational Emotif Behavior Therapy
 SFBC = Solution Focuses Behavior Counseling
 PC = Person Center
 Etc = Did not answer

Figure 2 shows that the most dominant counseling model of school counselors is the behavioral counseling model used by 152 counselors (65%). The second is REBT used by 32 counselors (13.7%). The third is the reality counseling model used by 18 counselors (7.7%), the fourth is the person-centered therapy counseling model used by 16 counselors (6.8%), the fifth is the SFBC counseling model used by 11 counselors (4.7%), then 1 (0.4%) counselor stated using the gestal counseling model while 3 (1.2%) counselors did not specifically answer a particular counseling model.

Furthermore, regarding the reasons why school counselors tend to dominantly use specific approaches, the following table summarizes the results of the data collection process, data reduction, data display, and verification.

Table 2. The reasons for dominant using certain approaches.

Counseling Models	Reasons
Behavioral	Behavioral counseling is chosen because it is effective in overcoming student behavior problems, especially in adolescents who need guidance. This approach is suitable for common needs and concerns, easy to understand, and can be applied with various techniques. Behavioral counseling emphasizes changing maladaptive behavior to adaptive, thus helping students develop better study habits and social behaviors. Environmental conditions and student experiences also influence the application of this approach, which ultimately helps create positive changes in student behavior and life.
REBT	The REBT counseling approach was chosen because it is practical, easy to understand, and applied in addressing student problems. REBT suits the client's irrational and emotional issues, helping to change the mindset to be more realistic and mature. This technique fits into the needs and problems that arise and corresponds to the development of adolescents who often act without consideration. REBT is also more familiar and frequently used, integrating cognitive, emotive, and behavioral techniques into its interventions. This approach is considered the most relevant to students' problems and helps them think more rationally.
Person Centered	The person-centered counseling approach was chosen because it emphasizes counseling, matches basic skills, and is easy to apply. Focusing on the creative potential and self-expression of individuals, this approach prioritizes counseling as a decision maker. Person-centered is effective in helping students understand their needs, alleviate problems, and achieve independence in dealing with issues. With the belief that individuals can overcome their problems, this approach empowers counselors to become self-reliant.

Counseling Models	Reasons
Gestalt	Because clients can be more open in telling the problems that have been in their pent-up feelings of anger, hatred, and resentment towards the closest people from the family environment and the circle of friends.
Reality	The reality counseling approach was chosen because it is easy to understand, relevant to client problems, and has clear stages (WDEF). Closer and more tangible to the client, this approach is easy to apply to many cases. Other reasons include suitability to frequent problems, organized structure, and ease of application and understanding of techniques for counsellors. Focusing on current issues and adjusting to counseling problems makes this approach effective in helping students overcome their problems.
SFBC	The SFBC (Solution-focused Brief therapy) approach was chosen because it is flexible, easy to do, and solution-based. Other reasons include ease and speed in solving problems, suitability to various situations, and focus on solutions. Previous experience in applying SFBC and its relevance in handling career issues are also considered. This approach helps counselors find answers with counselors, making it easier for them to overcome problems.

DISCUSSION

School counselors stated that they tend to be dominant in using the Behavioral counseling because it is effective in overcoming student behavior problems, especially in adolescents who need guidance. This approach is suitable for common needs and problems, easy to understand, and can be applied with various techniques. Behavioral counseling emphasizes changing maladaptive behavior to adaptive, thus helping students develop better study habits and social behaviors. Environmental conditions and student experiences also influence the application of this approach, which ultimately helps create positive changes in student behavior and life. Moreover, there are several reasons why school counselors tend to use the behavioral counseling model to help students, Focus on Behavior Change: The behavioral counseling model emphasizes specific and measurable behavior change (Jakubowski-Spector et al., 1971; Ritterband et al., 2009). School counselors use this approach to help students identify and change unwanted or harmful behaviors. By working directly on concrete behaviors, counselors can provide strategies and interventions that can be applied in students' daily lives.

Scientifically, other evidence is proven effectiveness (Bootzin & Ruggill, 1988), the behavioral counseling model has a strong foundation in research and has been shown to be effective in helping students overcome various behavioral and social problems. It uses proven techniques and is based on psychological principles that can achieve positive and significant results in a relatively short period. Focus on Students' Internal Resources, the behavioral counseling model views that students have internal resources that can be used to change their behavior. Counselors work with students to identify and activate their existing strengths and skills. By increasing students' understanding of their abilities, they can feel more empowered and better able to cope with problems.

The behavioral counseling model is also viewed relevance in the School Environment, the behavioral counseling model is often used in school settings because this approach can be well integrated into school programs and policies (Hastings et al., 2022). School counselors can work closely with teachers and other school staff to provide a consistent approach to addressing student behavioral issues. This model can also complement existing teaching and coaching programs in schools. Practical and Structured, the behavioral counseling model provides a practical and structured framework for counselors and students. The counselor can use specific techniques that the student can clearly follow. This approach allows the counselor to plan and measure behavior change systematically.

Scientific evidence of the effectiveness of counseling with a behavioral approach with various modifications or combinations with techniques and media and implementation in various variations of student problems has been widely carried out. Among them, for example: Reza and Mulawarman (2021) tested the effectiveness of online group counseling with a behavioral approach with self management techniques aimed at reducing the tendency of online game addiction in high school students. They conducted experimental research with a one group pretest-posttest design. The results of their study

showed that online group counseling with a behavioral approach with self management techniques proved effective in reducing the tendency of online game addiction.

Furthermore, [Astuti et al. \(2023\)](#) conducted quantitative research with a true experimental research method with a matched group designs model on 16 junior high school students with low learning discipline. It is proven that group counseling services through a behavioral approach are effectively increase student learning discipline. Then [Laiila \(2023\)](#) researched on the effectiveness of individual counseling with a behavioral approach in overcoming the truant behavior of high school students, [Aini \(2022\)](#) tested the effectiveness of group counseling behavior modeling techniques to improve social intelligence for junior high school students. [Wijaya et al. \(2022\)](#) tested the effectiveness of behavioral approach group counseling with modeling techniques on improving student learning discipline. [Andayani \(2022\)](#) tested the effectiveness of behavioral approach counseling with peer group techniques to reduce the negative effects of westernization on high school grade x students. [Syafiq \(2022\)](#) tested the effectiveness of individual counseling based on a behavioristic approach to the discipline of junior high school students. [Mulia and Hutasuhut \(2022\)](#) tested the effect of group counseling services with a behavioral approach on the aggression of high school students. [Pebriyani \(2022\)](#) tested the effectiveness of behavioristic counseling with behavior contract techniques to overcome the problem of academic procrastination in high school students. Many other studies prove the effectiveness of counseling with a behavioral approach.

Furthermore, related to the second counseling model popularly used by school counselors, namely the Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy counseling model, the counselor stated that “The REBT counseling approach was chosen because it is effective, easy to understand, and applied in addressing student problems. REBT suits the client's irrational and emotional problems, helping to change the mindset to be more realistic and mature. This technique fits into the needs and problems that arise, as well as corresponds to the development of adolescents who often act without consideration. REBT is also more familiar and frequently used, integrating cognitive, emotive, and behavioral techniques into its interventions. This approach is considered the most relevant to face students' problems and helps them think more rationally”.

Some of the above reasons seem quite reasonable with the support of several opinions, including that REBT: focus on Emotion Control, REBT recognises the importance of emotion control in overcoming emotional problems. ([Meyer & Turner, 2002](#)). Students often face emotional challenges such as anxiety, anger, or depression that can affect their well-being and academic performance. Through REBT, school counselors can help students identify irrational thoughts that trigger negative emotions and replace them with more balanced rational thoughts. This allows students to manage their emotions more effectively. Development of Critical Thinking Skills ([Vernon, 2019](#)), REBT teaches students to develop critical and logical thinking skills. Students are taught to question their irrational thoughts or cognitive distortions and replace them with more realistic and healthy thoughts. These necessary thinking skills can help students overcome academic challenges, make wise decisions, and deal with complex social situations.

REBT highlights the importance of overcoming inhibiting or unhelpful beliefs in students ([O'Toole, 1997](#)). Many students have negative beliefs about themselves, such as feeling worthless, incapable, or constantly failing. Using REBT, school counselors can help students recognize these beliefs, evaluate them critically, and replace them with more positive and constructive ones. Solution Focused and Direct, REBT emphasizes on practical and direct problem solving. School counselors using this approach can help students identify concrete actions to address their problems. This solution-focused approach of REBT gives students a feeling of active involvement in changing their situation and increasing their independence. REBT can be well applied in the school environment as this approach can be integrated with existing coaching programs. School counselors can use REBT strategies in classroom learning, counseling groups, or individual counseling sessions. This allows students to benefit from the REBT approach in various school contexts.

Many recent studies have proven the effectiveness of counseling with the REBT approach in the realm of education in Indonesia, especially in schools, including those conducted by [Stevani et al. \(2016\)](#) testing the effectiveness of group guidance services with REBT approaches to overcoming student anxiety. [Konadi et al. \(2017\)](#) tested the efficacy of the REBT approach through group guidance to overcome academic stress of high school students. [Fauzi et al. \(2022\)](#) tested the effectiveness of REBT

counseling using the Tiktok application to reduce student anxiety speaking in front of the class in junior high school students. [Soreh et al. \(2023\)](#) apply the REBT approach to increase self-confidence in high school student. [Wardani and Trisnani \(2022\)](#) testing the effectiveness of REBT counseling to reducing narcissistic personality disorder of high school students. [Zahroa et al. \(2023\)](#) using REBT in overcoming bullying against junior high school students. [Zulviana \(2023\)](#) tested the effectiveness of REBT approach group counseling in reducing phubbing behavior of vocational students. And many other studies have proven the REBT approach's effectiveness in overcoming various student problems at school.

Referring to [Cottone \(2012\)](#) opinion, he explains paradigms in counseling and psychotherapy that are still very relevant in the context of current counseling developments. Counseling and psychotherapy continue to evolve, but understanding the different paradigms remains essential in understanding the approaches and methods used by mental health professionals. Cotton explains there are four paradigms in counseling and psychotherapy, namely (a) the organic-medical paradigm, (b) the psychological paradigm, (c) the systemic-relational paradigm, and (d) the contextual paradigm. These paradigms form the basis of a scientific view of the counseling theory or model school counselor's practice. Organic-Medical Paradigm: This paradigm looks at mental health issues from a biological and medical perspective. With the development of science and technology, especially in neuroscience and pharmacology, this paradigm remains relevant and essential in explaining many psychological disorders and the effects of treatments. The second paradigm is the psychological paradigm; this paradigm focuses on mental processes, emotions, and behavior and includes various psychological theories. Modern psychotherapies, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), continue to use and develop the principles of this paradigm. The third paradigm is Systemic-Relational; in this paradigm, dynamics within the family system and social relationships are the focus. Approaches such as systemic family therapy demonstrate how this paradigm remains relevant, especially in addressing group and relational dynamics issues. The fourth paradigm is the contextual paradigm, which recognizes that environmental, social, cultural, and political factors influence mental health. With the growing awareness of the importance of these factors, this paradigm is becoming increasingly relevant, particularly in addressing issues such as trauma, discrimination, and social injustice.

Referring to Cotton's opinion above, the two popular models used by school counselors in Indonesia, namely the dominant two model approaches (behavioral and REBT), are counseling models that fall into the psychological paradigm. School counselors in Indonesia tend to use only the psychological paradigm, as viewed from Cottone's opinion, which is possible for several reasons. First, the counselor education and training curriculum in Indonesia may focus more on the psychological approach, which prioritizes understanding individual behavior, emotions, and mental processes. Second, there needs to be more resources or knowledge about other paradigms, such as the organic-medical, systemic-relational, or contextual paradigms. Third, school settings often limit the scope of interventions that counselors can undertake, encouraging them to rely on more traditional psychological approaches. These conditions result in a need for more application of holistic approaches in school counseling.

[Gunawan and Wahab \(2015\)](#) argued that the school counselor profession in Indonesia developed limited to the world of education or the scope of schools mainly due to unbalanced policies, public perceptions, and lack of strict professional standards. Inadequate educational policies led to guidance counselors being recruited from diverse educational backgrounds, often needing appropriate training or professional ethics. This has led to public distrust of the profession. In addition, the public perception that guidance and counseling services only focus on students' mental health problems or weaknesses also limits the development of the profession outside the school setting.

With the findings outlined above, school counselors should be able to use the structured and practical techniques of the behavioral approach to address student behavior problems directly, thereby providing clear and measurable interventions. The behavioral approach prioritizes behavior modification through positive and negative reinforcement, effectively changing unwanted behaviors ([Mundiri & Hamimah, 2022](#); [Richardson et al., 2019](#); [Schuman-Olivier et al., 2020](#)). This approach also allows counselors to provide immediate and specific feedback, essential in educational settings where rapid and measurable behavior change is often required. In addition, REBT, which emphasizes emotional control and developing critical thinking skills, can significantly assist students in dealing with emotional and academic challenges.

Counselors should also work with other school staff to integrate counseling approaches into the school program (Crothers et al., 2020), as this collaboration ensures that students' emotional and behavioral needs are addressed comprehensively. This collaboration allows for a consistent approach to supporting students, ensuring that all staff understand and support the goals and methods of counseling (Holman et al., 2019). It will also help create a positive and supportive educational environment where students feel safe and supported, increasing their chances of success both academically and social-emotionally (Holm, 2021).

Professional organizations in the counseling field are expected to actively encourage training and professional development in behavioral counseling and the Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) approach, as these techniques effectively address a wide range of psychological problems students face. Through training, workshops, and the provision of resources, such organizations can help school counselors master these techniques, improving their skills in identifying and responding effectively to students' behavioral and emotional problems. This training is essential to ensure counselors have the tools to effectively support students, promoting students' mental health and overall well-being (Beames et al., 2022).

In addition, it is crucial to ensure that all aspects of a student's education - academic, social, and emotional - are addressed holistically. This approach supports an inclusive and positive learning environment where students' emotional and psychological needs are considered, thus improving academic performance and overall well-being. Getting the necessary support to implement this approach effectively ensures that counselors have the necessary resources, training, and support to provide adequate and appropriate counseling services for students. Although this study shows the dominance of behavioral counseling and REBT approaches used by school counselors, there are some limitations in this study:

1. This study focused more on the school context; participants only included teachers who attended in-service school counselor professional education, so the results may only partially apply to other contexts.
2. This study did not fully cover the diversity of problems students face, so the application of this approach may need to be adjusted for specific cases.
3. Existing research has highlighted chiefly quantitative research results, thus not capturing the nuances and complexities of interactions from the individual counseling side.

CONCLUSION

Counseling paradigm insights are essential for school counsellors as they help them formulate a solid approach, goal orientation, ethics, and framework. Thus, this paradigm is crucial in ensuring that counsellors provide quality counseling services that benefit their students. School counsellors mostly use behavioral counseling and Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy models, especially in Indonesia. Referring to Cotton's opinion, both models are counseling models that fall into the psychological paradigm. School counsellors mostly use the behavioral counseling model because it is effective in overcoming student behavior problems. This approach is seen as suitable for general needs and issues that make it easy to understand the techniques. Meanwhile, the Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy counseling model was chosen because it helps change mindsets to be more realistic and mature. The tendency of school counselors to use psychological paradigms, especially behavioral approaches and REBT, may be due to the psychology-focused counselor education curriculum, lack of resources or knowledge of other paradigms, and limitations of the school environment that encourage the use of traditional psychological approaches. School counselors must work with other school staff to integrate counseling approaches into the school program, which is essential. Professional organizations are expected to encourage training in behavioral counseling and REBT, supporting students' holistic education that includes academic, social, and emotional aspects.

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