

# Building Independent Learning With Students' Productive Mindsets Through Cognitive-Behaviour Therapy Group Counseling At Sawangan State Junior High School, North Minahasa, Indonesia

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## Abstract

A healthy mindset produces progressive learning behaviour through a positive attitude towards educational growth and development. This involves the eradication of negativity from all learning activities, through the provision of adequate materials and appropriate assistance. Therefore, this study aims to develop independent learning with students' productive mindsets, through a group counselling approach known as Rational Emotive Behaviour (REB). A total of four students with irrational (unproductive) thinking patterns were used as the experimental subjects, which experienced mindset changes by using specific counselling actions. This analysis was carried out through 2 cycles, with the first process showing that two students exhibited strong learning challenges. In this condition, the counselling process for these subjects led to the independent expression and interaction of healthy perspectives and progressive learning experiences. These helped the remaining two students in the second cycle, where changes in expressing productive communication and independent learning behaviour were observed. Based on these results, cognitive-behaviour counselling was effective in correcting negative and unproductive thinking patterns, as dependent subjects became productive, positive, and independent. In addition, counselling guidance teachers need to study subsequent behavioural processes, to help deviant students.

**Keywords:** productive mindset, dependence learning, productive, group counselling, rational emotive behaviour

## INTRODUCTION

A life filled with challenges requires a healthy mindset allowing productive progress and success, through a positive attitude towards educational growth and development. This indicates that the learning process is the main task of students to achieve educational academic success. Student learning activities also require a positive mindset, which is manifested through individual perspectives and learning

efforts, to obtain academic success. From the developmental phase, Junior High School students are often known as teenagers, although no longer as children. This shows that adolescence is a transition period marked by physical, emotional, and psychological changes, with the affected individuals having confidence in their abilities. In this case, family social support is specifically needed, indicating that adolescent students often lead successful lives with adequate parenting roles.

According to Adler (1964), the interpretation of encouragement was meaningful and based on thriving for success. This emphasized the important role of parents in conditioning the success of children's learning efforts at school. Despite this, the phenomenon experienced by some students was still different at Sawangan State Junior High School, Airmadidih Sub-district, North Minahasa Regency, Indonesia, where initial observations showed a lack of learning independence. In this condition, academic assignments were often incomplete, although assistance is commonly expected during exams based on completion. This showed the lack of attention, parental control, and assistance to children in completing academic tasks. In family life, teenagers did not also provide problem-solving exercises, including a lack of encouragement towards school assignment completions.

Based on these conditions, children often become unconfident and uncreative, futuristically leading to the unclarity of their hopes and aspirations. Furthermore, a personal pessimistic mindset is caused by the blurriness of perspectives, with the consideration of high inconsistent incapacities. This contributes to the formation of negative patterns, which increasingly lead to incompetence and haunting failures. It also weakens positive thinking abilities, decreases personal motivation, allows market appearance behaviour, and causes despair. This is a risky mindset and dangerous behaviour, with Ellis & Palmer (1975) proving that disappointing events conditioned and labelled personal incapacities, as well as worthless and negative abilities leading to inappropriate self-talk. These results were in line with Berne (1961), where personal perspective patterns characterized internal and external interactions. This explained that a personal negative view was very detrimental due to the allowances for struggle, failure, anxiety, and despair. Based on Ellis (in Corey, 2014: 236), Rational Emotive Behaviour (REB) was a therapy used to improve and change irrational thinking patterns. This was important in

changing the deviant mindset, to condition highly productive transformations. Regarding helplessness, a mindset needs to be empowered by directing and observing the progressive abilities of individuals towards optimization, with all facilities being creatively utilized with a healthy foresight. Hutton (2017) also explained that meaningful strategies were planned to produce learning, with the involvement of cognitive activities to determine the types of associative, elaborative, and organizational plans. This was based on ensuring a decisive process (responsibility), with the implementation of counselling needed for the treatment of cognitive abilities, to activate rational decisiveness.

### **Productive mindset**

This is oriented towards the behaviour ensuring the production of positive and meaningful realistic conditions. In a learning process, it also shows the behaviour of students focusing on the explanation or presentation of subjects, as well as the timely abilities to complete academic tasks. According to Adler (1929), individuals initially displayed inferiority and struggled against success challenges based on powerlessness. This was in line with Lin (1997:1), where "low self-esteem ensured the success at the beginning of human growth". However, the negative development of this variable led to complete weakness and failure. This emphasized that individuals need to enthusiastically develop the process of struggle to success. Adler (1964) also showed that individuals were successful when committed to a goal-oriented lifestyle, indicating the high need for proper organization and adequate self-commitment. This was regulated by the present and future conscious cognitive orientations to meaningful life activities.

In building rational, productive, and innovative students' mindsets, the REB group counselling began with the patterns by which counsellors often condition or direct counselees. This was necessary for revealing the experienced events of the counselee, specifically those leading to unhappiness

and disappointment, which enthusiastically decreased the achievement of success. Ellis & Palmer (1975) also exhibited the patterns by which the assessment and interpretation patterns of a situation greatly affected emotional reactions, which subsequently influenced the actions adopted. Based on Adler (1964b), the reduction of neurotic feelings such as loneliness and detachment was observed as a healing process, when the individuals became part of the wider community. This promoted personal social adjustments, high cooperative improvements, a healthier and success-based lifestyle, and positive goal orientation. Moreover, Adler (1964) explained that social interest enabled people to strive and pursue excellence through healthy adaptations. This proved that individuals need to anticipate necessary performances while confronting the emergence of realistic challenges. These results were in line with the patterns by which the individuals perceived themselves towards becoming successful.

Based on Frankel Victor (1985), the interpretation of life was an important concept for understanding the endurance of a person towards challenges, while subsequently maximizing the observed unique potentials. Miller and Brown (1991) also stated that self-regulation was an individual's ability to direct and monitor behaviour, towards achieving a certain goal through physical, cognitive, emotional, and social elements. These two ideas complemented each other, where the perspective of life interpretation needs to be assessed due to containing numerous challenges. It is also based on the requirement of self-regulation, self-direction, and behavioural assessment ability, to determine appropriate actions. When the interpretative perspective is clouded by problems, the occurrence of a productive weakness is often observed, leading to various negative thinking orientations such as chaos and helpless painful events. Regarding realistic threats, confusion also leads to the loss of counselees' potential, which enables failure resistance. Furthermore, Ellis (1975) stated

that half of the counselled people detached from the reality of difficult achievements. This proved that some counselees were prejudiced against logic, enabling difficulties in the acceptance of logical analysis. These were in line with Beck (1976), where negative self-talk was continuously nurtured in the counselees, leading to dominance in all their thinking faculties, which complicated rejection or disputed anxiety. The internal dialogue containing a negative self-assessment also ensured the individual anxiousness in confronting the challenges of life, with fewer abilities observed in performing appropriate adjustment actions. This was observed as a weakness suspicion, which led to the term, "I am not okay" (Eric Berne, 1961). Besides helping counselees to recognize and stop negative/self-destructive thoughts, cognitive restructuring techniques also enhanced the acquisition of positive behaviours. This revealed that the models developed by Beck (A.T. Beck, Rush, Shaw & Emery, 1979) and Young (Young, Klosko & Weishaar, 2003) suggested that private and public schemas were often formed in early childhood, although Leahy (1996) stated that the occurrence of this formation was observed at any developmental age.

According to O'Donohue William & Fisher Jane (2012), the development of new thinking and endurance methods was one of the main goals of cognitive restructuring. This explained that the counselee should be able to identify, test, challenge, as well as change negative thoughts and more adaptive behaviours into the focus of attention. While confronting an atmosphere of depression, anxiousness, and abysmal threat, the counsellor also needs to be wise in openly attacking the counselee's irrationality. This required the possession and creation of good communication skills and a close interpersonal relationship with the counselees, as well as the provision of stimuli towards the causes of irrationalities. The counsellors should also direct the counselees through interviews, to reveal the causes of weakened productive mindsets. Subsequently, these individuals need to be stimulated towards the expression of belief,

which leads to the paralysis of the productive mindset. Self-confidence is also the appropriate attitude of an individual, towards the development of a private and public positive assessment (Fatimah, 2008:149). By rejecting confusion-based beliefs, the counsellor's skills were able to direct the counselee's rational decisiveness. This was based on the ability to attract the affected individuals through a technique enabling the dismissal of all irrational feelings and negative self-talk. In this condition, the counsellor should be able to direct the counselee's mindset towards the realization of all detrimental elements and inbuilt strengths. Meanwhile, the counsellor is often observed to direct these individuals towards the exploration of buried potentials, resurrection, and rational ability operations. This led to the belief alterations based on the transformation of anxious events into a strong creative mindset promoting goal achievement. In line with the counselee's belief in the experienced events, Fatimah (2008:149) explained that self-confidence was a positive attitude of an individual towards the development of a private and public appropriate assessment. This indicated that the counsellors need to understand the counsees' beliefs towards these events to determine the patterns by which positivity is observed. In this condition, the guardians were found to struggle towards being creative, independent, and appropriate from the mindset confining the subjects as helpless individuals. These were in line with Corey (in Wibowo, 2005:20), where the analyzed problems highly emphasized education, work, as well as social and personal elements during group counselling. This showed that the feelings and relationships between members were analyzed in the group, with members also learning to solve problems based on external inputs. According to Perls (Corey, 2015), Gestalt therapy had the ability to ensure the counsees' independence and quick discovery of potential. This proved that the subjects' negative beliefs about experienced events need to be directed towards change. The counsellor should also direct the

perspectives of individual interpretation in a challenge-filled world, as well as assess life and the patterns by which it needs to have a good future. This was a form of effort to determine solutions to the encountered social problems faced.

Many of the counsees originated from mediocre family backgrounds, with some even having no parents. Despite this, they were still able to be independent and managed to appropriately change their life position. This confirmed that many positive elements need to be independently attempted, to experience progress and success, which initial impact is likely to trigger subsequent goals. Based on Frankl in Watts (2003:143), the role of interpretation was important in human life, due to being a cognitive category forming a personal realistic perspective and the patterns by which actions were defined. Santrock (2003:338) also showed that self-confidence was at the highest level when observed to be successful in important self-domains. This was in line with Desmita (2011), where students learning independence were observed through increased self-confidence. Furthermore, Campbell & Brigman (2005) found that the main or key factors for behavioural changes depended on reflection and encouragement, indicating that youths should be supported to identify and value their competencies. REB counselling is very didactic and directive, as well as deals more with the mind than the feelings. This helps counsees in changing negative thinking patterns into positive ones or being productive in dealing with life. As a CBT technique, cognitive restructuring has reportedly been effective in reducing students' academic procrastination (Saputra, 2017). This is the manifestation of a behavioural change, which increases the HOTS ability due to promoting students to think broadly and deeply about the subject matter (Gunawan, 2014).

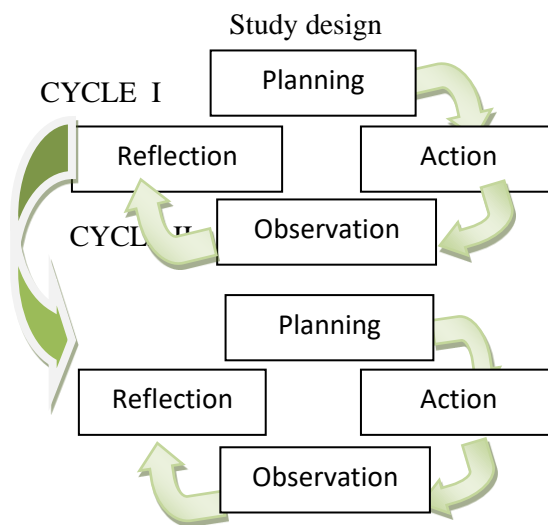
## **STUDY METHOD**

This study was conducted at Sawangan Junior High School, Airmadidi Sub-district,

North Minahasa Regency, Indonesia, with the subjects being some students with low independence. This was detected by showing the behavioural characteristic of a negative mindset (unproductive) due to external dependence, leading to the provision of group counselling through the REBT approach. This report is a problem-solving strategy that utilizes real action, as well as to detect problems and develop solutions. Using the REBT counselling

approach, the involved steps included (1) planning, (2) implementation (action), (3) observation, (4) reflection, and (5) documentation, which were appropriately applied to each cycle session. Based on Kemmis and Mc. Taggart (1988), this action experiment was essentially observed as strands with a set of components, namely planning, action, observation, and reflection.

### Reflection on every action cycle



In this experiment, the utilized subjects were 4 students with less learning independence, with a descriptive-qualitative data analysis technique being used in each cycle. This report was conducted in 2 cycles, with the first process being carried out through three stages for 3 counselling sessions, namely (1) building relationships, (2) conducting assessments and presenting/expressing counsees' thoughts and feelings, and (3) personal determination. According to Beck (1976), educating clients on the systematic skills of self-observation was recommended, leading to the determination of the relationship between thoughts and emotions. Some hypotheses were also developed on their behaviours, with the use of specific problem-solving and coping skills being eventually learned in certain situations. Furthermore, Ellis (2004) was in the stage of presenting events and the

patterns by which belief directed the counselee towards the realization of accuracy. This proved that belief needs to be supplemented with objective data, which should be obtained from the subjects. Clients also need to acknowledge their disturbability and work towards correction, with Ellis (2004) subsequently and formally establishing the initial cognitive behavioural therapy. This was based on the proposition that therapists helped in the adjustment of thoughts and behaviours, as a treatment for emotional and attitudinal problems. These results were in line with Beck (1976), which is used as a reference in the determination and evaluation of the counsees. It was also related to the consequences experienced when the subjects remain in unproductive mindsets. These results confirmed that both perspectives had achieved the stages where the counsees need to realize the

consequences of the negatively experienced events and beliefs, which decreased the motion field and struggle area. This stage was accompanied by the growth of the ability, to dispel wrong understanding, reject harmful views, and strive towards a more successful orientation. Based on Adler (1964), social interest enabled people to appropriately strive for healthy excellence. This explained that the counsellor needs to socially direct the counselee's mind towards the ability to compete independently.

For increased awareness, cognitive restructuring techniques were also used, due to being the process of discovering and assessing one's cognitions, understanding the negative impact of certain thoughts on behaviour, as well as learning to replace these perceptions with more realistic and appropriate thoughts. According to Bryant (2003), CBT was a combination of two psychotherapy approaches, namely cognitive and behavioural therapy. Cognitive therapy focused on thoughts, assumptions, and beliefs, due to facilitate individuals' knowledge to recognize and change mistakes. Besides being related to positive thinking, it is also similar to happy cognition, with restructuring best accomplished by implementing a multi-step process that involves (1) generating problematic cognitions known as automatic thoughts (AT) or negative AT about self, the world, or the future, (2) formulating rational responses to these negative automatic thoughts, (3) identifying and eliminating the cognitive distortions found in negative thoughts, and (4) correcting beliefs, assumptions, false predictions, etc., using Socratic dialogue (A.T. Beck & Clark, 1997; A.T. Beck, Rush, Shaw & Emery, 1979; Hope, D. A. Burn, J. A. Heimbert J. D. & Warner, M.D. 2010; Mineka & Thomas, 1999). Watts (2006) also found that the process of encouragement was a fundamental key aspect to restore hope patterns, with Nasheeda A. (2008) stating that this restoration was one of the main tasks of the counsellors. This clarified the need for skills to promote and direct the counselee's mindset towards a positive, productive, and innovative mindset. These

skills included the encouragement of the attributes enabling the subjects to achieve counselling procedural expectations. In addition, these aforementioned stages were carried out in the second cycle, through the following steps of (4) building self-awareness, (5) helping the counselee to realize the importance of change through reconstruction, (6) reorientation and re-education to determine self-solution, and (7) termination. This indicated that the counsellors helped the counsees towards self-evaluation, with numerous results being observed. Based on Ellis (1975), rational individuals had an increase in (1) self-interest, (2) social interest, (3) self-direction, (4) tolerance, (5) flexibility, (6) uncertainty acceptance, (7) external commitments, (8) self-acceptance, (9) dare to take risks, and (10) reality acceptance.

In line with progress, the results responsible for the comfortability and success of the counsees were observed. These increasingly triggered them to abandon a mindset limiting the space for movement, due to hoping for impossible help. The results also showed that REB counselling was effective in changing children's negative self-concept about learning. This revealed that effective independent planning was implemented for self-productiveness, towards the success of studies and decent job acquisitions. In addition, Ellis (1975) confirmed that rational counsees had an increase in (1) self-interest, (2) social interest, (3) self-direction, (4) tolerance, (5) flexibility, (6) uncertainty acceptance, (7) external commitment, (8) self-acceptance, (9) dare to take risks, and (10) reality acceptance.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Using REB counselling, all the subjects were found to progressively improve in learning activities and achievement. Based on the results, the first cycle showed that the difference in negative thought patterns gradually became positive, with learning experiences and progresses subsequently observed. In this condition, belief also became rational regarding the development

of self-motivation. After the counselling process and REBT action, the subject exhibited progress and changes in their respective learning outcomes, to achieve a successful self-identity, which influences goal-oriented and meaningful lifestyles. Therefore, the REB actions showed cognitive behaviour-oriented counselling, indicating this therapy highly emphasized the patterns of helping the counselee towards changing negative self-talk, subsequently leading to self-development and self-actualization. The Rational Emotive Behavioral Counseling Approach (KREB) was also important in helping dependent students to change negative thought patterns, with self-talk often being threatened through failure resistance by striving for independence learning. Based on these results, the internal dialogue containing a negative self-assessment led to the nervousness of confronting life challenges and less ability towards adopting appropriate adjustment actions. This indicated that false individual belief led to a wrong automatic thought (cognitive distortion), with the confrontation of a stress-prone situation. Moreover, a cognitive distortion is a misjudgment or interpretation of a situation developing over time. Amidst these core beliefs and cognitive distortions, a bridge separating the IB (intermediate beliefs) was observed, containing (1) assumptions, (2) attitudes, and (3) rules. Besides helping counsees learn to recognize and stop negative self-destructive thoughts, cognitive restructuring techniques also served as sources of positive replacements.

For the second cycle, the data obtained reflected the subject's involvement in cognitive restructuring, indicating the good status of self-adjustment, which was marked by the emergence of indicators. This was in line with Elder, Edelstein, and Davidson (1980), where cognitive restructuring was effective in helping counsees experience social anxiety. Nasheeda (2008) also found that the adaptive skills in positive behaviour enabled the effective utilization of daily demands and challenges. These basic skills were used to overcome challenges, for

individuals to feel more confident and motivated in struggling and developing positive attitudes towards life. Furthermore, Steinberg (2002) expressed a view of independence based on the ability to think, feel, and enable personal decisions. This emphasized the importance of independence in learning efforts, as restructuring ensured the healthy realization of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor abilities.

### **STUDY IMPLICATION**

Based on these results, cognitive behaviour counselling helped the counselee to change their irrational views into rational ones, with the provision of creative thinking characteristics. This was in line with Miller and Brown (1991), where self-regulation was an individual's ability to direct and monitor behaviour towards the achievement of a certain goal, using physical, cognitive, emotional, and social elements. This emphasized the setting of certain goals, namely independent learning, where students autonomously progress with successful behaviour becoming a habit. According to Shah (2005), learning was a permanent transformational stage in all individual behaviour, due to the experience and interaction with the cognitive environment.

This study aims to change negative mindsets and arrangements towards the direction of successful behaviour, due to the formation of individual goal orientation. In this condition, the counsellor directed the counselee to think about positive counselling patterns with a sense of responsibility, as well as explored the causes of failure and subsequent consequences. This showed that the mindset was strongly formed when the struggle for success was conducted with the tips. These results led to the ability to dispute failure, disappointment, and subsequent consequences. This was in line with Dweck (2006), where the mindset prowess changed a person's life and the psychological aspects. This proved that success was influenced by abilities, talents, and mindsets. The appropriate confrontation of life also enabled productive individuals to fill their

daily activities through learning, to positively observe or respond to the events with multiple creative thinking patterns.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the results, cognitive behaviour counselling was effective in helping counselees (students) improve the ability to change negative or productive thought patterns. This subsequently led to the awareness of independent learning.

### RECOMMENDATION

Counselling guidance teachers need to analyze subsequent cognitive behaviour processes, to help in adjusting the attitudes of deviant students.

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