

# The Effectiveness of Reality Counseling Approach to Reinforce Responsibility Character on Students Who Has An Interdependence *Cultural Background*

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**Abstract.** The responsibility character in era of industrial revolution 4.0 is very crucial owned by students, because of this responsibility will appear trust, fluency, and an objective attainment. Not all students have enough responsibility character, so its reinforcement is needed. The responsibility character reinforcement was conducted on the variety of ways, in education world such as through counseling by using reality counseling approach. Therapy in reality counseling aims at facilitating client to attain mature autonomy indicated by his behavioral evaluation capacity rationally and realistically as well as taking responsibility its problem-solving consequence. The responsibility character reference within student self is influenced by culture that makes background it, that is why, cultural factor should be involved within reality counseling. Students dominantly orienting independent culture placed on responsibility concept on the balance between “right and obligation”, while students dominantly orienting on interdependence culture primarily place on “social relation obligation”.

**Keywords:** Effectiveness, reality counseling, responsibility character, interdependence, students.

## 1 Introduction

The power of character cannot be changed by other force, such as economic strength. While good character will support and manifest strong economic. Character can be meant holistically and deeply by its kind, such as characters of honest, caring, independent, responsibility. Responsibility is one of the most important character owned by every individual within all daily life aspect and covers action, feeling, and thought. [1] mentioned this character component was considered as moral acting, moral feeling, moral knowing. Individual was said owning good character when he/she fulfilled three-character elements. Character is the attaching attribute in self human daily life, that is why, character is classic and dynamic. Consequence of dynamic character attribute either at the level of individual, group, community or people, would be needed reinforcement so good character can be maintained and developed as well as bad character could be changed to be good character.

Character at the individual level can extend, for instance becoming national character. In Indonesia, the national character formation had been doing since Indonesia proclaimed their independence and the government has currently been making it to be national program underlined by rule of republic president of Indonesia Number 87 Year 2017 on the character education reinforcement. The character education reinforcement was conducted with primarily

judgment that Indonesian as cultured peoples is nation that respect noble character, glorious values, wisdom, and mind [2], via reinforcement of religious, honest, tolerance, discipline, working hard, creative, independence, democratic, curiosity, spirit of nationality, birthplace, respect of achievement, communicative, peaceful love, literacy, environment caring, social care, and responsibility [2]. Those values were in relevance to values of Indonesia education objectives implied in Indonesia Republic Laws Number 20 Year 2003 [3].

The character education reinforcement either at the level of individual, group, community, or people, is collaborative responsibility among family, education unit, community, nation, that conducted in the milieu of informal, formal, non-formal. Thus, every individual of Indonesian peoples are expected to take responsibility to manifest Indonesian people's strong character. The character behavior happened in Indonesia could be observed from the happened events in daily life activities. This later decade, bad character behavior had always been happened in the youngsters, university students, adults, even children. This was happened not only in the milieu of work place, business, politic, but also in the milieu of government, education even more that that penetrating and damaging family life.

Viewed from the kind of bad or weak character, the happened things are not often honest characters (such as cheating, plagiarism, corruption, falsifying reports), ignoring other people's right (such as ignoring feet walkers right, damaging public facilitations) less of responsibility (such as avoiding from obligation to pay tax, no paying debt, absence in school, absence in working, hit and run). The other bad character behaviors such as robing, doing violence in home, doing torturing, trafficking in, doing abortion, killing case, drugs user and circulator. If those bad characters are compared with bad character in later eras, its frequency is increasing high and has used more sophisticated and dangerous modus. In term of drugs crime, Indonesia currently considers their nation in "drugs danger/crisis" as this was displayed in some social media displaying and communities' words in either daily conversation or in scientific meetings.

Based on the elaboration written above, showed that Indonesia government nationally must and has been doing serious completing process in controlling bad characters. This nationally effort is expected to become state of Indonesia republic to be one of world welfare nation. In this significant moment, namely international seminar moment in subtheme "Multicultural Counseling", theme "The Science Education on Industrial Revolution 4.0", writer provided writing contribution that applied counseling approach and including cultural factor, with topic: "The Effectiveness of Reality counseling approach to enforce responsibility character to students who has interdependence cultural background". Focused on students as subjects, by reminding that students are intellectual community that will lead and/or nation existence doer. This role required students having higher responsibility. The power of character cannot be changed by other force, such as economic strength. While good character will support and manifest strong economic. Character can be meant holistically and deeply by its kind, such as characters of honest, caring, independent, responsibility. Responsibility is one of the most important character owned by every individual within all daily life aspect and covers action, feeling, and thought. [1] mentioned this character component was considered as moral acting, moral feeling, moral knowing. Individual was said owning good character when he/she fulfilled three-character elements. Character is the attaching attribute in self human daily life, that is why, character is classic and dynamic. Consequence of dynamic character attribute either at the level of individual, group, community or people, would be needed reinforcement so good character can be maintained and developed as well as bad character could be changed to be good character.

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## **2 Methodology**

KBBI [4] wrote the meaning and characteristics of character as follows: Character is "individual's unique attribute that distinguish him/her from the other person; character;

attribute; behavior; aptitude”. Characteristic is “to own unique attribute in relevant to particularly character; to own particularly uniqueness..... In English, character was written “char-ac-ter”, interpreted as : “The combination of qualities distinguishing any person or class of persons; any distinctive mark or trait, or such marks or traits collectively, belonging to any person, class, or race; the individuality which is the product of nature, habits, and environment” [5]. The citation as written above generally showed that character indicates the existence of the owned unique features, which distinguish from others.

### **3 Result and Discussion**

#### **3.1 Meaning and Component of Character (Responsibility)**

KBBI [4] wrote the meaning and characteristics of character as follows: Character is “individual’s unique attribute that distinguish him/her from the other person; character; attribute; behavior; aptitude”. Characteristic is “to own unique attribute in relevant to particularly character; to own particularly uniqueness..... In English, character was written “char-ac-ter”, interpreted as : “The combination of qualities distinguishing any person or class of persons; any distinctive mark or trait, or such marks or traits collectively, belonging to any person, class, or race; the individuality which is the product of nature, habits, and environment” [5]. The citation as written above generally showed that character indicates the existence of the owned unique features, which distinguish from others.

According to the meaning of character [6]; [7] proposed the meaning of character at the individual level, namely “character is an individual characteristic integration, which distinguish the individual from others in adapting himself to the environment”. “Character is good unique values (knowing kindness value, wish to do kind, real to live well and positively affect to environment) that internalizes in self and implements in behavior [8]. “Character is the group of individual or individual’s unique feature that imply value, capacity, moral capacity, and rigidity in facing the difficulties and challenges”, while character at the national level, is “quality of unique and good nation collective behavior reflected in awareness, insight, feeling, wish, and civilized behavior as a result of thinking processing, heart processing, feeling and wish processing, as well as someone or group of people’s physical exercise” [8]. Some character definitions as noted above showed briefly that character is the attaching unique attribute, to someone/group/society/nation that imply the internalized values and attributes and determine adjustment toward environment.

Character owns variety of kinds, such as character of honest, tolerance, interest to science, independence, responsible. What is meant with character of responsibility is “the condition of obligation to do everything (if happened anything, then it can be demanded, blamed, brought to court....) [4]. The International [5] proposed the meaning of “re-spon-si-bil-i-ty”, like as “The state on being responsible or accountable”. Departure from the meanings of character and responsibility as written above, it can be formulated that what is purposed with character of responsibility is the unique attribute owned by someone/group/society/nation, about behavior, thinking, feeling to be responsible for responsible thing. This responsibility implied consequence to be able to be brought to court or asked if not to be done. The responsibility character at students means that it is burdened to themselves.

The character has dimensions of good and bad or positive and negative ones. In related to good character, a Greek philosopher, his name, Aristoteles defined “good character as the life of right conduct-right conduct in relation to other persons and in relation to onself”. (“good

character as the life of right conduct-right conduct in relation to other persons and in relation to oneself"). As discussed earlier, character consisted of three components (namely moral knowing, moral feeling, moral acting); those three components function holistically, performs in individual's behavior. If they are applied to responsibility character, then they are meant or told to be able to take responsibility in moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral actions.

Each character components were explained by [1] [9] as follows: moral knowing consisted of 1) moral awareness, namely ability to evaluate good/bad, right/wrong; 2) knowing moral values, namely ability for developed moral values and ability to apply them; 3) Perspective taking, namely ability to other people's perspective taking, looking at the situation as it is, imagining how they will think, response, and feel the existing problem; 4) Moral reasoning, namely reasoning about reason used in determining good/bad or right/wrong; 5) Decision making; 6) Self-knowledge, namely knowledge about moral weakness and strength of himself/herself. Moral feeling covers: conscience, namely commitment to do in accordance with known; 2) Self-esteem, namely evaluating self and others valuable in order to facilitate the appearance of good character, for example self-esteem based on the values of responsibility, honesty, fairness; 3) Empathy, is ability to turn out to be others like the other people's thinking or feeling; 4) Loving the good, this encourages individual to do something good as well; 5) Self-control to variety of feelings such as angry feeling, sad, lazy, improper; 6) humility in the self-placement. Moral action covers: 1) Competence (competent to change moral feeling and knowledge into the effective moral action); 2) Wish to do something come true; 3) habit to do something good without feeling the existence of pressure.

## **3.2 Reality Counseling Approach**

### **3.2.1 Definition, Basic concept, Principle, and Reality Counseling Characteristic**

Counseling is a professional relationship between counselor and client for client's problem-solving goal. The helping implementation in counseling is told with other term, such as therapy. There are several theories within counseling and therapy, namely Psychoanalytic Therapy, Adlerian Therapy, Person-Centered Counseling, Gestalt Therapy, Transactional Analysis, Behavior Counseling, Rational-Emotive Therapy, Trait and Factor Counseling, Reality Therapy [10].

Reality therapy was developed by William Glasser, this therapy was popular among counselors since 1960. Reality therapy can be applied within group and individual counseling, in mental health, society agents, and schools. The popularity of reality therapy was based on a number of positive attributes, namely easy to understand, non-technical, based on common sense, orientation to product and successful, focused on problem, and efficient in time, resources, and effort. That is why, reality therapy could be studied and applied broadly, more teaching process than therapeutic process, more preventive method than preservative method [11].

There are several important basic concepts to understand in the reality therapy, namely 1) Basic human needs (every individual had basic needs that requires to fulfill); 2) Identity (individual's way to look at himself as human relating to other people, as failed or successful person); 3) Responsibility, (able to response in behavior is reality therapy objective); 4) Need fulfillment (individual cannot response in behavior when he failed to learn or when he lost his ability to fulfill his needs); 5) Current behavior, reality therapy relates to current behavior, because counselor is unable to change client's behaviors in the last time); 6) Behavior versus feelings, emotions, and attitudes(reality therapy focused on the behavior more than emotions, because only behavior can be changed. Controlling client's behavior is practically easier than

controlling feelings, emotions, and attitudes of theirs); 7) Involvement, reality therapy considers accountable involvement and personally, that efforts to help as a main skill); 8) Alternatives (principle task of reality therapy is to produce much more possible alternatives; 9) Growth force (reality therapy builds individual feeling satisfied and happy, able to response and to own good interpersonal relationships); 10) Learning (reality therapy considered that learning was happened through life and this was central concept of reality therapy) [12]. In other part, Gilliland (1984) proposed seven principles of reality therapy applications, as follows: 1) Becoming personally involved with the client, focusing on the clients present behavior rather than on feelings and on present time rather than past; 2) Helping the client evaluate and make a value judgment about his or her own behavior; 3) Assisting the client in planning responsible behavior; 4) Helping the client to make decisions and commitments to responsible action steps; 5) Accepting no excuses when the client does not perform or fulfill the plan; 6) Elimination of punishment for the clients failures but allowing reasonable consequences to occur; 7) Never give up. While key strategy to help client is “involvement” between therapist and client. The Reality therapy strategies were completely: 1) Involvement; 2) Keeping in the here and now; 3) Living the reality experience; 4) Being positive; 5) Responding to the unhappiness of clients; 6) Looking at the whole picture; 7) Using humor; Confronting clients; 8) Dealing with conscious thinking; 9) Helping clients understanding and accept themselves; 10) Planning responsible behaviors [10].

There were eight reality therapy characteristics, namely 1) rejecting psychological diagnosis of mental disease, because of reality therapy views, mental disease is not due to last time, but form of unaccountable behavior; 2) Focusing on current behavior, not to the past; 3) emphasizing value judgment building client’s awareness that client will not obtain anything they wish when acting destructively; 4) Not to emphasize transference like to psychoanalytic approach. In reality therapy, client was realized so he was not involved in repetition in the past, but here and now; 5) Refer to consciousness aspect, not unconsciousness; 6) Deleting concept of punishment application, but counselor facilitated client feeling the genuine consequence of his behavior; 7) emphasizing client’s responsibility, this was core of reality therapy [11]; [12].

### **3.2.2 Human Personality Dynamic in View of Reality Therapy**

In view of reality counseling/therapy, human personality dynamic was determined by psychological and physical basic needs, the both form success identity or contrarily failing identity. To obtain success identity, individual has to take responsibility and weave valuable interpersonal relationship with his environment. But not all individual really are able to carry on responsibility and ready to weave valuable interpersonal relationship, this caused problem for individual (Glasser in [11]) as proposed by Lubis [12] told that emotional disturbance or mental disease were persons who reject world reality like in norms, law, and social; the rejection time to time appeared problem behavior mentioned with failure identity (versus success identity), signed by isolation, self-rejection and irrational, rigid behavior, less of objectivity, less of responsibility, less of self-confidence, rejecting reality.

### **3.2.3 The Role and Objective of Reality Counseling**

Reality counseling in essence contradicted the other counseling approach treating client like a sick individual. Reality counseling played counselor role as a teacher creating conducive condition, teaching and give an example, as well as helping client in order to be able to evaluate his behavior realistically, and accepting reality. Counselor teaches client that the goal of reality therapy is not only to reach happiness, but also able to accept the responsibility.

Shortly, counselor in reality counseling was active to educate, guide, encourage and contradict client to be able to take responsibility to his behavior to reach therapy goal [12].

Reality therapy goal was to reach success identity, to help client attaining autonomy, namely emotional maturity to change external support with internal support. The emotional maturity was also signed by responsibility readiness upon his behavior [12]. Then proposed that in effort to reach the objective, counselor focuses on effort to develop client potential strength to attain his successful in life. Counselor is able to use technics like: 1) involving in role with client, and involving themselves with client to search for more effectively life; 2) making a joke; 3) contradicting and rejecting whatever reason of client; 4) helping client formulating action plan specifically; 5) Serving client (acting) as teacher and model; 6) Determining limitations and counseling/therapy structure; 7) using accurately sarcasm to be in confrontation with client's unreal behavior.

### **3.3 Interdependent-Independent cultural Orientation**

The interdependent-independent cultural orientation concept was proposed by Markus and Kitayama. Markus and Kitayama [13]; [14]; [15] proposed idea about self-construal. There are individual inclined to orient independent construal of self and there are individual inclined to orient interdependent construal of self. The independent construal of self is an understanding who considers self as limited entity, separated from the significant others like relative, colleague, close friend. While interdependent construal of self considers self and other peoples is interconnected, clearly unlimited.

Elaborated by Kitayama and Markus [13]; [14]; [15] that individual who has the independent construal of self has normative tasks surviving the independence, and separated entity from others. Individual was grown up to become himself, to be unique, to express himself, to actualize himself, to have self-esteem upon achievement of his internal attributes and to express the achievement in public area. While individual who has interdependent construal of self tends to express behavior and his achievement based on the affecting situational strength, not based on his readiness. Separation between self and other people is clearly not respected, on the contrary, interconnection among individuals is highly emphasized. Individual carries on normative tasks to maintain interdependence and do self-adjustment to be fit. Individual's failure maintaining normative tasks caused guilty, this supports individual harmonizing back. Individual who has interdependence construal of self is grown up to be individual adjusting with others, to be a sympathetic person, to place on self as we, and to act properly.

### **3.4 The effectiveness of Reality Counseling Approach to reinforce responsibility character at students who has background of interdependence construal of self**

Effectiveness related to an action, implied the meaning of "berhasil guna" [4]. The effective reality counseling approach to strengthen responsibility character means that the reality counseling is productive to strengthen responsibility character to client. In this paper client was meant as students.

A counseling (therapy) could be effective if looking at related factors, such as client, namely client's forming the background of psychological aspect and cultural factor. To scholar students as client, they are individuals more or less 19-23 years old. This age range was development period named as mid-adolescent and post-adolescent [16]. Their thinking ability was categorized on period of formal-operation [17]. At the period of this formal-operation, adolescent is able to think abstractly, deductive hypothetic, and can solve problem systematically [18].

Viewed from emotional development, mid-adolescent period and post-adolescent period are still period unstable emotion yet (easy to change), they still search for and strengthen their self-identity in variety of values and norms, in order to form their self-character next time. That is why, viewed from developmental psychology, students are developmental periods needing its internalized value reinforcements, including in value of responsibility.

Viewed from social development, mid-adolescent period and post-adolescent period are periods to extend their social interaction from limited in milieu of core family, close family, neighbor, to wider environment, in face to face social interaction or via social media. This is meant that they have placed on themselves within extended social interaction net, including responsibility character formation, adolescent (student) is affected by directly face to face net and unlimited social net via internet and television broadcasting usages.

Culture as forming the background of factor and here is in milieu of adolescent social interaction, can be categorized as west or east cultures, collectivism and individualism cultures, cultures of independent construal of self and interdependent construal of self. East culture, collectivism, interdependence is categorized as one group culture meant similar. On the other side, west culture, individualism, independence is purposed as similar culture group. Indonesian or Asian peoples are considered as society who generally orients to east/collective/interdependent culture.

Counseling viewing cultural factors (multicultural counseling) is so very accurately counseling strategy for Indonesian peoples with heterogeneous society in variety of ethnic and culture. This multicultural counseling was “an integrative approach that draws upon ideas and techniques from existing theories of counselling, and builds them into a culture-informed and culture-sensitive model of practice” [18]. Clearly, multicultural counseling is an approach integrating counseling theory and then combining it in a knowledge practice model and sense of culture.

In cultural varied society, there will be culture difference between counselor and client, in order to need counselor knowledge about forming the background of client. The importance of paying close attention to cultural factor for an effective counseling was proposed by Steward [19] as follows:

“Counselors of college students often adopt the view that the counseling situation should be expanded into an event embedded in the wider context of the total life of the student. The need for this humanizing perspective arises spontaneously when one counsels foreign students. The problems foreign students convey to the counselor frequently bring to the surface cultural values and patterns of thinking that undermine common assumptions in counseling. These assumptions usually are considered universal and, though seldom examined for their cultural limits, they deserve scrutiny if the counseling of foreign students is to be effective”.

The main goal in handling client from various ethnic group (culture) are “to develop cultural flexibility ...”, this cultural approach required cultural flexibility and therapist’s high level self-awareness” [18]. In cultural orientation concept of interdependence-independence, counselor used the two cultural orientation continuously suitable for his dominance upon client and its negative-positive sides in effort to solve client’s problem.

In this final study, based on mid-adolescent and post-adolescent’s assumed thinking ability reach formal operation level, unstable emotional development yet, extended social development, client’s interdependent culture characteristic, so reality counseling applied on client (student) watches on the following things:

1. Counselor places on self as model who is able to inspire, to be a model, based on logical thinking, deductive-inductive analysis, systematic, and realistic.



2. Counselor helps student to solve their problem by exploring student's potential strength and to direct it in order to be founded action plan formulation of concrete problem solving.
3. Counselor confronts student's irrationally and unrealistically thinking, feeling, action, by building rational thinking.
4. In changing student's irrational, unrealistically thinking and behavior to be rational and realistically ones in responsibility character, counselor guides student arranging and implementing concrete steps in order to be happened responsibility character reinforcement in student itself, by appearing interdependent cultural values, namely causing ashamed feeling on student if he does not take responsibility, realizing condition that he was rejected or at least less appreciated by surrounding milieu if he did not take responsibility, encouraging students to relate his self-consequence and consequence happened to persons he loves, respects, appreciates such as father, mother, brother, other relates, if he did not take responsibility. Strengthening students that he will be appreciated upon his behavior maintaining good relationship, harmonizing, adapting, applying compatible ways in the environment. If students rejected, then they accommodate. Accommodating meant is to accept to keep in upon ideas/recommendations/advice/hopes provided by environment, it does not reject firmly and simply. Other ways are to avoid conflict appearing situation.
5. Reinforcement for interdependent cultural values on students in the university involves all civitas academic as well as the existing system in it. It is done as follows:
  - a. Based on class, this was done by lecture while lecture teaches the lecturing material and in daily behavior. Responsibility character applied by lecture on students like through internalizing discipline when present in the classroom, when task completion, bachelorship completion. The lecture also models himself to apply his self-for example in letting students know if coming late or absenting to provide lecturing. Lecture strengthens student's responsibility character through the applied learning model, such as lecture applies small group discussion learning model, project-based learning, cooperative learning, self-direct learning (cooperative learning jigsaw), collaborative learning, problem-based learning.
  - b. Based on extracurricular activities, namely atmosphere creation that conditions student taking responsibility in following activities suitable for his interest and aptitude. Some extracurricular activities that is able to strengthen the student's responsibility character were activities of Praja Muda Karana (Pramuka), Resimen Mahasiswa (Menwa), Palang Merah Indonesia (PMI), Mahasiswa Pencinta Alam (Mapala)..

## 4 Conclusion

Reality counseling is one of approaches in counseling that considers effective to reinforce responsibility character on clients/students, exceedingly if involving cultural factor who forms the background of student. The relevant cultural factor for Indonesian student, namely culture orienting interdependent construal of self.

Based on the conclusion, it was recommended so that reality counseling/therapy usage toward Indonesian students involves cultural characteristic orienting interdependent construal

of self, and interprets responsibility character as a form of adapting self to environment. On the contrary, for individual orienting independent construal of self, uses the meaning of responsibility character as equilibrium between right and obligation.

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