


# Individual Counseling Empty Chair Technique on Introverted Children Self-Concept: A Single Subject Research (SSR)

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| <b>Abstract</b>   | The aim of this study is to describe the condition of introverted children's self-concept before and after being given individual counseling using the empty chair technique. This research is a descriptive quantitative research type of experimental research using single subject research (SSR) with A-B-A design. This research was conducted in Palu City with research samples selected using purposive sampling technique totaling 2 children with low self-concept. The data collection method used a self-concept scale. The results showed an increase in the self-concept of introverted children after being given individual counseling with empty chair techniques of 50% and 43% in baseline 1 conditions which are natural conditions without any treatment or intervention for 2 subjects. There is an increasing change in the intervention condition (B) with an average subject of 60%, 65%, 70%, 80%, 85% of the data obtained by the subject when given treatment or intervention by applying the empty chair technique to the baseline 2 (A2) condition obtained 85% and 90% showing the percentage results in the intervention (B) and baseline 2 (A2) conditions are higher than the baseline 1 (A1) condition. These results show that there is a change in direction in both conditions, thus it can be interpreted that individual counseling services using the empty chair technique are effective for improving the self-concept of introverted children. |                      |
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## INTRODUCTION

Children's self-concept plays an important role in their educational journey as it is closely related to academic success, mental well-being and healthy social interactions. A positive self-concept can empower children to believe in their own abilities and potential (Bilicha et al., 2022; Carrillo-López et al., 2022), which often translates into better academic performance (Binder, 2023; Prehn et al., 2021), also contributes to their overall mental well-being (Ahmed & Zaman, 2019; Upadhyay, 2021), because having a positive self-concept can help children develop resilience, overcome challenges, and maintain a positive outlook on life (Suratinah et al., 2022).

In addition, a strong self-concept allows children to engage in healthy social interactions (Kusumawati et al., 2021). This includes forming meaningful relationships, effectively communicating their needs and opinions, and collaborating with others. Children with a positive self-concept are more likely to feel confident in interacting with their peers, thus contributing to a positive and supportive classroom environment (Pratiwi & Rustika, 2018). However, not all children have a high positive self-concept, some of them actually have a low self-concept such as children who tend to be introverted.

Research shows that introverted children face unique challenges in developing a high self-concept, their introverted nature and lack of confidence in social interactions may hinder their ability

to build a high positive self-concept (Asrini et al., 2023; Prayitno, 2023). These children feel uncomfortable or awkward in situations where they have to perform or actively engage with others. This can lead to negative perceptions of themselves and lower self-esteem resulting in a low self-concept.

Introverted children who have a low self-concept tend to be more shy, strong self-control, quiet, closed to the problems that individuals experience, fixation on a problem within themselves (Warjono et al., 2020). Children who have a low self-concept will be oriented to internal stimuli, namely paying attention to the thoughts, moods and reactions that occur within the child (Dewi & Mugarso, 2020). Indications of personal and environmental problems indicate that children have a low self-concept or do not understand their own self-concept (Widiarti, 2017).

Introverted children's self-concept is classified as low self-concept in learning or socially (Novita, 2021). Introverted children who have low self-concept are oriented towards internal stimuli paying attention to thoughts, moods, reactions that occur within themselves. In addition, children who have a low self-concept are unable to develop their potential well to achieve optimal self-actualization, so they tend to reflect inappropriate behavior (Carrillo-López et al., 2022). Introverted children who have low self-concept have low self-acceptance, low self-expectations, difficulty understanding themselves as well as their own potential.

The field phenomenon shows the results of observations made at the research location that there are still children who have a low self-concept, especially introverted children. Introverted children who have low self-concept tend to be difficult to get along, difficult to make decisions, doubt themselves, children feel that they are not smart, do not have excess academic potential, inferior or inferior, feel disliked or tend to feel ignored, less able to get along and socialize with the environment around the school. Therefore, it is important for introverted children to get support in developing a high positive self-concept.

Supporting introverted children to develop a high positive self-concept can be done through individual counseling services (Afifah et al., 2021). Individual counseling can increase understanding of children's self-concept, so that introverted children are able to recognize their self-concept maximally, and are able to improve children's self-deficiencies so that the expected self-concept is achieved (Suryaman, 2017). Individual counseling addresses problems faced by children in order to alleviate personal problems, the main concepts underlying child-centered counseling concern the concept of self, self-actualization, personality theory, and the nature of anxiety (Yola & Pranungsari, 2023). Individual counseling services can use the empty chair technique to get better results in alleviating the problems experienced by children (Warjono et al., 2020).

The empty chair technique is used to strengthen the counseling process in expressing something that comes to mind to express the feelings experienced by children (Cowen, 2017). Research by Afifah et al. (2021), proves that counseling with the empty chair technique can increase self esteem. Similar to the research of Warjono et al. (2020), that individual counseling services with the empty chair technique can increase children's self-confidence. The empty chair technique helps children who have conflicts with other people who are not present in the counseling process (Muthohharoh & Karneli, 2020). The empty chair technique is used to explore the conflict between top dog and under dog in children. Therefore, the application of the empty chair technique in individual counseling is considered capable of increasing positive self-concept in introverted children.

## **Rationale of Study**

A high positive self-concept is essential to a child's educational and developmental journey, especially for those who tend to be introverted. Introverted children often face challenges in expressing themselves and interacting with their social environment. Individual counseling provides an ideal platform to explore and understand themselves without pressure or anxiety from the social environment. In this context, the empty chair technique provides an innovative and in-depth

approach, allowing introverted children to interact with representations of themselves or relevant situations in their lives. Thus, this study aims to bridge the gap in the perhaps still limited literature on counseling interventions specific to introverted children, while enriching practical and theoretical knowledge on how to strengthen their self-concept.

### **Aims and Hypotheses**

This study aims to describe the condition of the self-concept of introverted children before and after being given individual counseling using the empty chair technique, through empirical testing using the single subject research (SSR) method whether individual counseling using the empty chair technique can improve the self-concept of introverted children. Therefore, the hypothesis that will be tested in this study is whether the self-concept of introverted children has increased from before and after being given individual counseling using the empty chair technique.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

This research is an experimental quantitative research using single subject research (SSR) design with A-B-A design type. This design shows that there is a causal relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable (Sumanto et al., 2005). In this design, measurements are taken continuously in the baseline condition (A1) with a certain period of time, then in the intervention condition (B). After measurement in the intervention condition (B) measurement in the second baseline condition (A2) is given. The addition of the second baseline condition (A2) is intended as a control for the intervention phase so that it is possible to draw conclusions that there is a functional relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable (Indra, 2021; Manikmaya & Prahmana, 2021).

### **Population and Sampling**

The population of this study amounted to 64 children and sampling using purposive sampling based on consideration of the criteria for introverted children with low self-concept levels, as many as 2 children.

### **Instrumentation**

Data collection in this study used an instrument in the form of a self-concept scale with a Likert scale to measure the self-concept of introverted students. The scale contains self-concept statements consisting of 30 positive and negative statement items. Each statement is equipped with 4 alternative answer choices, namely Very Suitable (SS), Suitable (S), Not Suitable (TS), Very Not Suitable (STS). The results of the instrument validity test which was tested on 60 participants showed that each statement item had a calculated  $r$  value greater than  $r$  table with a value of 0.361 and the reliability test results were 0.910. Therefore, the results of the research instrument trial were declared valid and reliable.

### **Data Analysis**

The research data in this study were analyzed using visual graph analysis techniques, namely by plotting the percentageized data into a graph (Indra, 2021; Manikmaya & Prahmana, 2021). Graphs in this study are used to show changes in each condition within a certain period of time.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The results showed that in the baseline 1 (A1) condition to measure the initial ability of the self-concept of subject MF & subject AN measured for 3 sessions, the subject filled out a self-concept questionnaire, namely 30 statement items. At the first meeting until the end of the meeting, subject MF scored 50% and subject AN scored 43%. In the intervention condition (B) carried out for 8 meeting sessions, subject MF and subject AN were given treatment using individual counseling services using the empty chair technique. The results obtained by subject MF in sessions one to two were 50%, sessions three to four were 60%, sessions five to six were 70%, sessions seven to eight were 80%. The results obtained by subject AN in the first to second sessions were 43%, sessions three to four 65%, sessions five to six 70%, sessions seven to eight 85%. In the baseline 2 (A2) condition carried out for 3 meeting sessions, the self-concept ability of subject MF and subject AN was measured using a self-concept questionnaire. The results obtained by subject MF in the first to second sessions obtained a score of 80%, the third session obtained a score of 85%. The results obtained by subject AN in the first to second sessions obtained a score of 85%, the third session obtained a score of 90%. Comparison of conditions at baseline 1 (A1), intervention (B), and baseline 2 (A2) can be shown graphically in Figure 1.

The percentage of self-concept ability of subject MF and subject AN in baseline 1 (A1) condition the subject's self-concept ability is stable, in intervention condition (B) the subject's self-concept ability is variable, in baseline 2 (A2) condition the subject's self-concept ability is stable. After all the data results are obtained, the data is analyzed based on each baseline 1 (A1), intervention (B), baseline 2 (A2) condition. Deep analysis includes condition length, estimated direction trend, stability trend, data trace, stability level and range, level change. Analysis between conditions includes the number of variables, changes in directional trends and effects, changes in stability trends, level changes, percentage of overlap. In this study, the data were analyzed by visual analysis in conditions and visual analysis between conditions. The following results of visual analysis in the conditions of subject MF and subject AN can be seen in table 1.

Based on table 1, it can be seen that the analysis in the conditions of the two subjects in the length of the condition is the result of observations made in each condition of 14 sessions, the baseline 1 (A1) meeting was 3 sessions, the meeting in the intervention condition (B) was 8 sessions, the meeting in the baseline 2 (A2) condition was 3 sessions. The results of the directional trend in baseline 1 (A1) conditions, namely the natural conditions of subject MF and subject AN, the estimated directional trend remains (=) at intervention (B) improves (+) at baseline 2 (A2) improves (+). The level of stability tendency in baseline 1 (A1) conditions has a stability of 100% stable, in intervention conditions (B) has 50% stability, namely variable, in baseline 2 (A2) conditions has a stability of 100% stable.

The results of the data trace are the same as determining the directional trend, so the data in the data trace condition is the same as the results of the directional trend. The data trace in the baseline 1 (A1) condition remains (=) in the intervention condition (B) increases (+) in the baseline 2 (A2) condition increases (+). The stability level and range are determined by taking the smallest and largest scores obtained in each condition. The stability level for baseline 1 (A1) conditions remains at subject MF range 50%-50%, subject AN range 43%-43%. In the intervention condition (B), the variable in subject MF ranges from 50%-80%, subject AN ranges from 43%-85%. In the baseline 2 (A2) condition, the MF subject range is stable at 80%-85%, the AN subject range is 85%-90%.

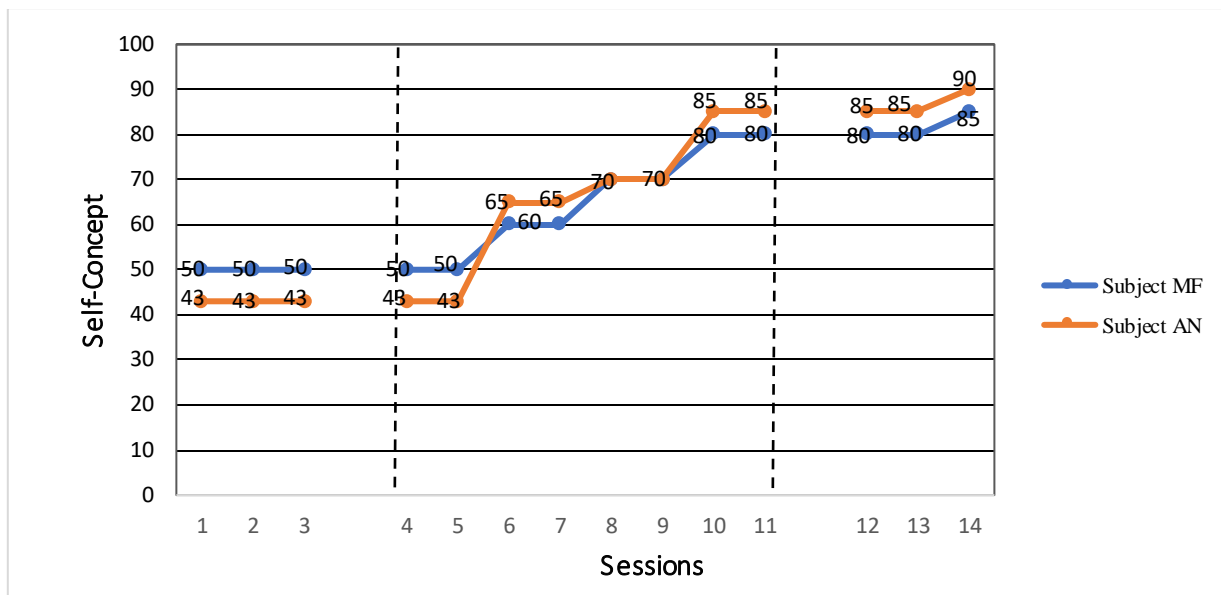


Figure 1. Graph of Self-Concept Score Conditions at Baseline 1 (A1), Intervention (B), and Baseline 2 (A2)

The results of level changes are carried out by calculating the difference between the largest data and the smallest data from each condition. The sign (+) indicates an improving change, the sign (-) indicates a decrease, and the sign (=) indicates no change. The results of the level of change in the baseline 1 (A1) condition of subject MF and subject AN = (0) which means that the data shows that the baseline 1 (A1) condition has no change or is stable. In the intervention condition (B) subject MF obtained results = (+30), subject AN obtained results = (+42) which means that both subjects showed an improved condition. In baseline 2 (A2) subject MF and subject AN obtained results = (+5) which means that both subjects showed improved conditions. After all data is analyzed in conditions, then the data is analyzed between conditions. The following visual analysis between conditions on subject MF, and subject AN, seen in table 2.

Based on table 2. it can be shown that the number of variables changed in this study is 1, namely self-concept. The results of changes in directional trends are determined by taking data on the analysis in conditions with trends (up, down, and fixed) carried out in order to prove changes in behavior. Changes in directional trends and effects at baseline 1 (A1) the self-concept ability of subject MF and subject AN remained (=) and in the intervention condition (B) the self-concept of subject MF and subject AN increased (+) which means that the baseline 1 (A1) condition with intervention (B) condition improved after being given individual counseling services empty chair technique. Comparison between intervention (B) with baseline 2 (A2) the trend of direction and effect in the baseline 2 (A2) condition, the self-concept of subject MF and subject AN increased (+), which means that it shows an improved condition after the provision of individual counseling services using the empty chair technique.

Changes in stability trends are intended to prove the stability of behavior in both subjects in each condition. The tendency of stability in baseline 1 (A) conditions with intervention conditions (B) is stable to variable. comparison in intervention conditions (B) with baseline 2 conditions (A) is stable to stable. The results of level changes are carried out by calculating the difference between the last data and the first data between conditions then the difference is marked (+) improved, (-) worsened, and (=) no change. In the intervention condition (B), it shows that there is an improved condition (+) after the intervention is given, it can be shown that the level change at baseline 1 (A1) with intervention (B) subject MF (+30), subject AN (+42), and in the intervention condition (B) with baseline 2 (A2) subject MF and subject AN (+5) shows that there is an effect of improved condition (+) after the intervention is given.

The results of overlapping data or overlap show that there is a similarity of conditions between baseline 1 (A), intervention (B), and baseline 2 (A) conditions, the smaller the overlap presentation, the better the effect of intervention on self-concept. Data overlap between baseline 1 (A) to intervention (B) is 0%. In the data between baseline 1 (A) and intervention (B) there is no overlapping data, which means that the provision of intervention has an effect on self-concept by using individual counseling the empty chair technique has a good effect on subject MF and subject AN. Between intervention (B) and baseline 2 (A) the overlap data is 0%, the data shows a good effect. Baseline 2 data shows an increase in the percentage of self-concept achievement of subject MF and subject AN.

Table 1. Results of In-Condition Visual Analysis of Subject MF & Subject AN

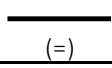
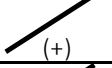
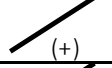
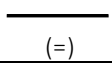
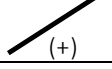
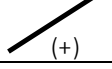
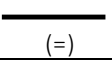
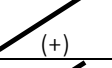
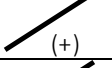
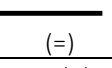
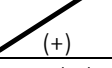
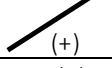
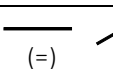
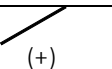
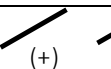
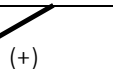
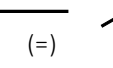
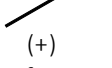
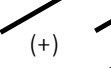
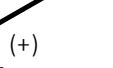
| The condition               | Subject | Baseline (A1)  | Intervention (B)   | Baseline (A2)  |
|-----------------------------|---------|--|--|--|
| Condition Length            | MF      | 3  | 8  | 3  |
|                             | AN      | 3  | 8  | 3  |
| Estimated Directional Trend | MF      |   |   |   |
|                             | AN      |   |   |   |
| Stability Trend             | MF      | <u>Stabil</u><br>100%  | <u>Variabel</u><br>50%   | <u>Stabil</u><br>100%  |
|                             | AN      | <u>Stabil</u><br>100%  | <u>Variabel</u><br>50%   | <u>Stabil</u><br>100%  |
| Data Trail                  | MF      |   |   |   |
|                             | AN      |  |  |  |
| Stability Level and Ranges  | MF      | <u>Stabil</u><br>50 – 50   | <u>Variabel</u><br>50 – 80   | <u>Stabil</u><br>80 – 85   |
|                             | AN      | <u>Stabil</u><br>43 – 43   | <u>Variabel</u><br>43 – 85   | <u>Stabil</u><br>85 – 90   |
| Level Change                | MF      | <u>50 - 50</u><br>(0)  | <u>80 - 50</u><br>(+30)  | <u>85 – 80</u><br>(+5)   |
|                             | AN      | <u>50 - 50</u><br>(0)  | <u>85 - 43</u><br>(+42)  | <u>90 - 85</u><br>(+5)   |

Table 2. Intercondition Visual Analysis Results of Subject MF & Subject AN

| Comparison of Conditions                  | Subject | A1/B  | B/A2   |
|---|---------|---|--|
| Variable Amount                           | MF      | 1   | 1  |
|   | AN      | 1   | 1  |
| Changes in Directional Trends and Effects | MF      |  <br>Positif |  <br>Positif |
|   | AN      |  <br>Positif |  <br>Positif |
| Changes in Stability Trend                | MF      | Stabil – Variabel   | Variable – Stabil  |
|   | AN      | Stabil – Variabel   | Variable – Stabil  |
| Level Change                              | MF      | (80 – 50)<br>(+30)  | (85 – 80)<br>(+5)  |
|   | AN      | (85 – 43)<br>(+42)  | (90 – 85)<br>(+5)  |
| Percentage of Overlap                     | MF      | 0 %   | 0 %  |
|   | AN      | 0 %   | 0 %  |

In baseline 1 (A1) with intervention (B), a 0% overlap percentage is shown. In the baseline 2 (A2) condition with intervention (B), the percentage of overlap is 0%. With the smaller percentage of overlap, the effect of intervention (B) on the self-concept ability of subject MF and subject AN is getting better. The data results of the two subjects prove that efforts to improve the self-concept of introverted children using individual counseling services using the empty chair technique have improved.

## Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the self-concept of introverted children before and after being given individual counseling with the empty chair technique has increased significantly. The application of the empty chair technique in individual counseling is an effective technique in improving children's self-concept. By using the empty chair technique, the counselor creates a safe and supportive environment for introverted children to explore and express their thoughts and emotions in the counseling process. During the counseling process with the empty chair technique, children sit in one chair and imagine an ideal version of themselves sitting in the empty chair, then they can dialogue with their ideal self, discuss their fears, insecurities, and aspirations ([van Maarschalkerweerd et al., 2021](#)).

The process of individual counseling with the empty chair technique enables introverted children to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and their self-perceptions. Through this process, they can challenge negative self-perceptions and develop a more positive self-concept ([Yola & Pranungsari, 2023](#)). By engaging in a dialogue with their ideal self, introverted children can also explore strategies and goals for personal growth and development, using the empty chair technique, counselors help introverted children visualize and internalize their ideal self-image.

Moreover, the empty chair technique also helps introverted children develop their communication and social skills, and gives them a comfortable space to practice assertiveness and express their thoughts and feelings ([Sopian et al., 2023](#)). Furthermore, the empty chair technique allows introverted children to build confidence and self-esteem as they actively participate in shaping their self-concept. Furthermore, the empty chair technique is also customized to specifically address the unique challenges and characteristics of introverted children. The counselor tailors the dialogue and questions to help introverted children explore their strengths, values, and interests. Using the empty chair technique in individual counseling sessions becomes a valuable tool for improving introverted children's self-concept.

These findings are in line with research by Afifah et al. (2021), proved that counseling with the empty chair technique can improve self esteem. Similar to the research of Warjono et al. (2020), that individual counseling services with empty chair techniques can increase children's self-confidence. The empty chair technique helps children who have conflicts with other people who are not present in the counseling process ([Muthohharoh & Karneli, 2020](#)). Positive self-concept has a considerable influence on individual behavior, namely individuals will behave in accordance with their self-concept. Individuals who have a positive self-concept will design goals in reality, namely goals that have a high probability of being achieved, being able to face the life to come.

## Implications

This study shows that individual counseling using the Empty Chair technique can be an effective approach to help introverted children in understanding and improving their self-concept. This may encourage school counselors to consider integrating this technique into their practice when working with children experiencing self-concept issues. This research also highlights the importance of understanding and accommodating the needs of introverted children in educational settings. Guidance and counseling teachers can use these findings to enhance their understanding of the dynamics of introverted children's self-concept and how best to support them.

## Limitations and Future Research Direction

This study used the Single Subject Research (SSR) method so it involved a small sample because it focused on a single subject or a small number of subjects. This makes generalization of the findings difficult, and the results may not be directly applicable to a wider population. In the future, it is necessary to develop research involving larger samples that can help strengthen the generalization of findings related to the effectiveness of the Empty Chair technique in improving the self-concept of introverted children.

## CONCLUSION

The self-concept of introverted children before being given individual counseling services with empty chair techniques is in the low category, while the self-concept of introverted children when and after being given individual counseling services with empty chair techniques is in the high classification. This means that there is a difference in children's self-concept before being given intervention and after being given individual counseling intervention with the empty chair technique. Therefore, the findings of this study confirm that individual counseling with the empty chair technique is effective in improving the self-concept of introverted children.

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