

Person-Centered Therapy for the Recovery of Social Alienation in a Student with Internalized Conditions of Worth: A Case Study

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Person-Centered Therapy for the Recovery of Social Alienation in a Student with Internalized Conditions of Worth: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Background: Academic pressure among students has become a significant psychological concern, particularly in cultures where academic success is closely linked to personal worth and social recognition. In such environments, strong parental expectations may be internalized as conditions of worth, leading individuals to believe they are valued only when they meet specific standards. This internalization can create incongruence between the real self and the ideal self, which often manifests as anxiety, perfectionism, low self-esteem, and social withdrawal. **Objective:** This study aims to examine the formation of internalised conditions of worth and to analyze how Person-Centred Therapy (PCT) facilitates psychological recovery and self-concept reconstruction. **Method:** The study employed a qualitative, single-case study design with a high school student experiencing social alienation and achievement-contingent self-worth. Data were collected through semi-structured counseling interviews, classroom observations, and psychological assessments, and analysed using thematic analysis to identify patterns related to self-concept and family expectations. **Result:** The findings revealed that conditional acceptance related to academic achievement contributed to a fragile self-concept and social withdrawal. Through empathy, congruence, and unconditional positive regard, PCT supported emotional openness and reduced self-criticism. **Conclusion:** Person-Centred Therapy effectively facilitated self-acceptance and reduced social alienation. **Contribution:** This study provides practical insight for school counseling interventions addressing conditional self-worth among students.

1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence represents a critical developmental stage in the formation of identity, self-concept, and the need for social acceptance (Khan et al., 2016). During this period, interactions with parents, teachers, and peers play a significant role in shaping an individual's sense of self-worth. When acceptance is conditional or based on specific standards, individuals may develop a fragile self-concept (Li et al., 2025). One psychological consequence that may emerge is social alienation, characterised by feelings of isolation, rejection, and emotional disconnection from the so-

cial environment. Among students, social alienation can negatively affect psychological well-being, academic participation, and the quality of interpersonal relationships (Jiang et al., 2025).

From a humanistic psychological perspective, particularly the theory proposed by Carl Rogers, this condition can be understood through the concept of conditions of worth (Joseph, 2021). Conditions of worth refer to conditional acceptance granted by significant others (Bolton & Ault, 2025). When individuals receive messages that they are valued only if they meet certain expectations, such as ac-

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achieving high academic performance, being obedient, or conforming to family norms, they tend to internalise these standards (Pinquart & Ebeling, 2020). This internalisation may lead to incongruence between authentic personal experiences and a self-concept shaped by external expectations. Such incongruence frequently results in anxiety, diminished self-acceptance, and withdrawal from social interaction.

This phenomenon is reflected in the case of a high school student (initials MCH), who serves as the subject of this study. The student demonstrated withdrawal behaviours, reluctance to engage with peers, and difficulty expressing opinions in class. Initial interviews and counseling assessments indicated that the student's sense of self-worth was highly dependent on academic achievement and parental evaluation. When unable to meet expected standards, the student experienced feelings of failure and shame and chose social isolation. This pattern indicates a strong internalisation of conditions of worth, contributing to the emergence of social alienation.

Previous studies have examined social alienation in adolescents in relation to family environment, academic pressure, and peer relationship dynamics (Hu & Liu, 2025; Chen & Lu, 2022; Wang et al., 2023). Several studies have found that low levels of unconditional acceptance within the family are associated with low self-esteem and increased social anxiety among students (Popov et al., 2020; Antonietti et al., 2020; Wałejko, 2025). Other research within the humanistic framework has shown that excessive internalisation of external standards is linked to incongruence and interpersonal difficulties (Amiot et al., 2020; Nedelcea & Ciorbea, 2013; Medlock, 2014). Furthermore, studies on the effectiveness of Person-Centered Therapy demonstrate that this approach can enhance self-acceptance, reduce social anxiety, and improve interpersonal relationships through unconditional positive regard, empathy, and therapist authenticity.

Certain analytical gaps remain. First, most research on student social alienation focuses on external factors such as bullying, family environment, or academic pressure, without deeply examining the internal dynamics of internalised conditions of worth. Second, research on Person-Centred Therapy has largely emphasised general improvements in self-esteem or anxiety reduction, rather than specifically exploring recovery from social alienation rooted in conditional acceptance. Third, in-depth case study approaches that trace psychological change throughout the counseling process remain relatively limited, particularly within school counseling contexts.

This study aims to examine in depth the application of Person-Centred Therapy in facilitating recovery from social alienation in a student who has internalised conditions of worth. Through a case study approach, this research not only describes symptoms and behavioural changes but also analyses the psychological processes that unfold

throughout counseling, including the shift from a conditional self-concept toward more authentic self-acceptance. This study is expected to contribute theoretically to the strengthening of humanistic perspectives within educational settings and, practically, to assist school counselors in designing interventions that are sensitive to students' self-concept dynamics.

2. METHOD

2.1 Study Design

This study employed a qualitative research design using a single case study approach to explore in depth the psychological dynamics of social alienation experienced by a student who internalised conditions of worth and to analyse the counseling process using Person-Centred Therapy. A case study design allows researchers to investigate complex psychological processes within their real-life context and to understand individual experiences holistically. The approach was selected because the research aimed not to generalise the findings but to provide a detailed, contextualised understanding of therapeutic change during the counseling process.

2.2 Participant and Setting

The participant in this study was a second-year high school student (initials MCH), aged 16 years, whom the homeroom teacher referred due to observable social withdrawal and decreased participation in classroom activities. The study was conducted in a school counseling setting where individual counseling sessions were provided. The student demonstrated reluctance to interact with peers, avoidance of class presentations, and signs of anxiety in evaluative academic situations. Preliminary assessments indicated that the student's self-worth was strongly dependent on academic achievement and parental expectations.

2.3 Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected using multiple qualitative methods to obtain comprehensive information about the participants' psychological conditions and therapeutic progress. The techniques included: (1) Semi-structured counseling interviews were conducted during assessment and therapy sessions to explore the participant's subjective experiences, beliefs about self-worth, emotional responses, and family expectations; (2) Classroom observations to document behavioural patterns, including participation in discussions, interaction with peers, and avoidance behaviours during academic activities; (3) Psychological assessment instruments measuring self-esteem and social anxiety to support the qualitative interpretation of the participant's psychological condition; (4) Collateral information was obtained from the homeroom teacher and parents to understand contextual factors related to family expectations and academic pressure. The combination of these

sources enabled triangulation and strengthened the credibility of the findings.

2.4 Data Analysis

The data were analysed using thematic analysis, focusing on patterns related to self-concept formation, internalisation of conditions of worth, and psychological changes occurring throughout the counseling process. The analysis followed several stages: (1) Data familiarisation, involving repeated reading of interview transcripts and observation notes; (2) Initial coding, identifying statements related to conditional self-worth, emotional experiences, and social withdrawal; (3) Theme development: grouping codes into broader themes such as academic pressure, incongruence between the real self and the ideal self, fear of negative evaluation, and the development of self-acceptance; (4) Interpretation, connecting the themes with the theoretical framework of Person-Centred Therapy and humanistic psychology. This analytic procedure allowed the researcher to trace psychological change across therapy sessions and understand how therapeutic conditions influenced the participant’s self-concept.

2.5 Procedure

The intervention procedure consisted of six sequential stages as follows:

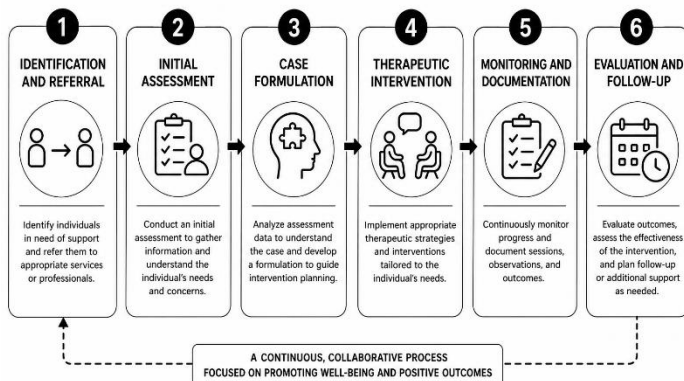


Fig. 1. Intervention Procedure

Identification and Referral: The process began when the homeroom teacher identified behavioural indicators of social withdrawal and decreased classroom participation. The student was then referred to the school counselor for further psychological assessment.

Initial Assessment: An initial investigation was conducted through counseling interviews, classroom observations, and psychological assessments to identify the underlying psychological dynamics. This stage focused on understanding the student’s self-concept, emotional experiences, and the role of academic expectations in shaping conditional self-worth:

Case Formulation: Based on the assessment results, the student’s difficulties were conceptualised within a humanistic psychological framework. The primary issue was

identified as social alienation rooted in the internalisation of conditions of worth, leading to an incongruence between the real and ideal selves.

Therapeutic Intervention: The counseling intervention was conducted using Person-Centred Therapy across eight individual sessions, each lasting approximately 60 minutes. The therapeutic process emphasised the three core conditions of Person-Centred Therapy: (1) Accurate empathy; (2) Congruence (therapist authenticity); (3) Unconditional positive regard. These conditions were intended to create a supportive therapeutic environment that allowed the student to express emotions openly, explore internal conflicts, and reconstruct a more authentic sense of self.

Monitoring and Documentation: Throughout the counseling process, session notes were recorded to document emotional expressions, emerging insights, and behavioural changes. Teachers’ observations of classroom participation were also collected to monitor progress.

Evaluation and Follow-Up: After the completion of the therapy sessions, a post-intervention evaluation was conducted to assess changes in self-esteem, social engagement, and anxiety levels. A follow-up evaluation 1 month later was conducted to assess the stability of therapeutic outcomes and the sustainability of behavioural changes.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Case Presentation

3.1.1 Investigations

The study subject was a 16-year-old second-year high school student (initials MCH). The referral was made by the homeroom teacher, who observed a decline in academic participation and a tendency toward social withdrawal over the past semester. MCH rarely engaged in group discussions, avoided class presentations, and exhibited signs of anxiety in evaluative situations.

The investigation process involved semi-structured counseling interviews, classroom observations, and psychological assessments using validated instruments measuring self-esteem and social anxiety. Additional information was obtained through communication with the homeroom teacher and the student’s parents to understand the family context better.

Interview findings revealed that MCH perceived self-worth as contingent upon achieving high academic standards. To strengthen the qualitative depth of these findings, selected excerpts from the participants’ narratives are presented. During the initial counseling sessions, MCH explicitly associated his sense of personal value with academic achievement, stating, “I feel like I am only appreciated when I get high scores. When my grades are good, my parents seem happy, but when they are not, I feel like I disappoint them.” This statement reflects the internalisation of

conditional acceptance, in which perceived parental regard is contingent upon performance.

MCH further described his emotional responses in evaluative situations, emphasising experiences of shame and perceived judgment: *“When I cannot answer questions in class or when my scores drop, I feel ashamed. It’s like everyone is judging me, so I prefer to stay quiet.”* These feelings contributed to avoidance behaviours in both academic and social contexts, particularly in situations involving public evaluation, such as classroom discussions and presentations.

Regarding peer interaction, MCH acknowledged an underlying desire for social engagement but reported significant apprehension about negative evaluation. He stated, *“I actually want to talk more with my classmates, but I’m afraid I might say something wrong or look stupid.”* This finding indicates that the observed social withdrawal was not rooted in social disinterest, but rather in evaluative anxiety and fear of rejection associated with a fragile self-concept. Classroom observations further supported these findings, as MCH demonstrated limited eye contact, minimal verbal responses, and a tendency to avoid spontaneous interaction.

As the counseling process progressed, shifts in MCH’s self-perception became evident. In later sessions, he demonstrated a more adaptive interpretation of academic difficulties, stating, *“Now I realise that making mistakes does not mean I am a failure. I can still be valued even if my grades are not perfect.”* This shift reflects the gradual reconstruction of self-concept from a conditional toward a more unconditional form of self-acceptance.

No indications of psychotic disorders, developmental disorders, or medical conditions affecting psychological functioning were identified. Cognitive functioning was within the average to above-average range. The primary concerns centred on self-concept dynamics and interpersonal relationships.

3.1.2 Diagnosis

Based on the assessment results, MCH’s primary concern was social alienation stemming from the internalisation of conditions of worth. Clinically, the presenting symptoms included: a) Social withdrawal; b) Fear of negative evaluation; c) Contingent self-esteem dependent on achievement; d) Excessive self-criticism; e) Incongruence between lived experience and self-concept.

Although MCH exhibited symptoms of social anxiety, their intensity did not meet the clinical criteria for Social Anxiety Disorder. Therefore, the case formulation focused on intrapersonal dynamics within a humanistic psychological framework, specifically on the dominance of external evaluative standards that shape a conditional self-concept.

The theoretical formulation suggested that internalised conditional acceptance from significant figures reinforced the belief that personal worth depended on academic performance. This dynamic contributed to the development of social alienation as a protective strategy against potential failure and rejection.

3.1.3 Treatment

The intervention was conducted using a Person-Centred Therapy approach over eight individual counseling sessions, each lasting 60 minutes. The primary focus of the therapy was to establish therapeutic conditions reflecting three core attitudes: a) Accurate empathy, through reflective listening and clarification of the student’s subjective experiences; b) Congruence, by maintaining authenticity and transparency in the therapeutic relationship; c) Unconditional positive regard, characterised by nonjudgmental acceptance of the student’s experiences and emotions.

These therapeutic conditions were intended to facilitate the reduction of internalised conditions of worth and support the development of a more authentic and integrated self-concept.

Table 1. Summary of Therapy Sessions

Session	Primary Focus	Therapeutic Process	Student Response	Observed Changes
1	Establishing therapeutic relationship	Creation of a safe atmosphere, initial empathy	Still reserved	Began to feel heard
2	Exploration of academic pressure	Reflection of feelings, clarification	Expressed anxiety	Awareness of conditional thinking patterns
3	Identification of conditions of worth	Clarification of the meaning of self-worth	Recognized dependence on achievement	Initial insight emerged
4	Exploration of incongruence	Reflection on internal inconsistencies	Expressed internal conflict	Greater emotional openness
5	Emotional acceptance	Validation of subjective experiences	Acknowledged feelings of shame and fear	Reduced resistance
6	Reconstruction of self-meaning	Reframing the meaning of mistakes	Separated self-worth from academic performance	Decreased self-criticism

Session	Primary Focus	Therapeutic Process	Student Response	Observed Changes
7	Strengthening self-acceptance	Reinforcement of unconditional acceptance	More confident in speaking	Increased social participation
8	Termination and evaluation	Reflection on progress and consolidation	Acknowledged changes in self-perception	Improved emotional stability

Table 1 illustrates a progressive therapeutic trajectory in which change unfolded gradually through relational depth rather than directive techniques. The initial sessions focused on establishing psychological safety and trust, allowing the student to move from guarded responses toward emotional expression. As the process advanced, exploration of academic pressure and identification of conditions of worth facilitated cognitive and emotional insight into the student's contingent self-concept. Mid-phase sessions addressing incongruence and emotional acceptance reduced internal resistance and self-criticism, indicating early restructuring of self-evaluation patterns. In later sessions, reconstructing self-meaning and reinforcing unconditional acceptance supported greater differentiation between personal values and academic performance, which translated into observable behavioural changes, such as increased classroom participation and greater confidence in social interaction. Overall, the table reflects a coherent shift from conditional self-worth toward more stable self-acceptance and emotional regulation.

3.1.4 Follow-up and Outcomes

Post-intervention evaluation indicated positive changes across several domains: a) Increased participation in classroom discussions; b) Reduced avoidance behaviour during presentations; c) Improved self-esteem scores; d) Decreased levels of mild social anxiety.

MCH reported feeling more comfortable expressing opinions and no longer interpreting mistakes as personal failure. He began developing more open relationships with peers and demonstrated increased self-confidence.

A follow-up evaluation was conducted one-month after the final counseling session. The improvements remained stable. Teachers reported enhanced social engagement, and MCH stated that he was able to accept academic outcomes more realistically without excessive shame.

The findings of this case study indicate that Person-Centred Therapy was effective in facilitating recovery from social alienation rooted in the internalisation of conditions of worth, primarily through strengthening self-acceptance and reducing dependence on external validation

3.2 Discussion

The findings show that MCH's social alienation originated from intrapersonal dynamics shaped by the internalisation of conditions of worth. An integrative analysis of interview data, classroom observations, and assessment documentation demonstrated that MCH's sense of self-worth was constructed conditionally and heavily depen-

dent on academic achievement and parental validation. This pattern contributed to the formation of a fragile self-concept that became easily threatened in evaluative situations, thereby triggering anxiety and social withdrawal.

The subject's condition is viewed through the lens of humanistic psychology, as developed by Rogers, which holds that individuals have an innate tendency toward self-actualisation (Lin & Zainudin, 2024). However, this tendency can be hindered when acceptance from important figures is conditional. A value condition arises when individuals receive the message that they are only valued if they meet certain standards. Once internalised, these external standards form a self-concept that is not fully aligned with life experiences, creating a mismatch between the real and ideal selves (Vartanian et al., 2023). In the case of MCH, interviews revealed a conflict between the desire to be authentic and the perceived obligation to achieve high performance consistently. This conflict gives rise to evaluative anxiety, which is expressed through social withdrawal as a protective mechanism.

The phenomenon observed in MCH subjects, according to Erik Erikson's adolescent development framework, is at the stage of identity versus role confusion (de Carvalho & Veiga, 2022). Adolescents strive to integrate social expectations with authentic personal experiences. When social acceptance is conditional, identity integration may be disrupted, leading to feelings of alienation (Alchin et al., 2024). In this case, social alienation did not stem from objective peer rejection but from fear of negative evaluation that threatened a conditional self-concept (Pang et al., 2024). Classroom observations indicated that MCH possessed adequate communication abilities but avoided situations that might expose imperfection.

These findings are consistent with empirical studies within Self-Determination Theory developed by Deci and Ryan (Deci & Ryan, 2012). Their theory demonstrates that environments supporting autonomy and unconditional acceptance are positively associated with psychological well-being and stable self-esteem (Spence & Deci, 2016). In contrast, psychological control and performance-based parental pressure are linked to anxiety and contingent self-worth (Tang et al., 2020). Longitudinal studies on adolescent self-esteem further indicate that achievement-based self-worth tends to fluctuate and is vulnerable to evaluative stress (Cashman et al., 2023; Rose & Kocovski, 2021; Bozkurt, 2022). Thus, the dynamics identified in MCH's case align with empirical evidence emphasising the psychological risks of conditional self-valuation.

The effectiveness of Person-Centred Therapy in this case aligns with empirical findings highlighting the central role of therapeutic relationship quality (Rodríguez-Nogueira et al., 2020). Meta-analyses in humanistic psychotherapy consistently identify empathy, congruence, and unconditional positive regard as strong predictors of psychological change (Mahon, 2023). During counseling sessions, MCH experienced unconditional acceptance that had previously been absent in performance-based contexts. Session transcripts indicated a reduction in self-criticism and increased willingness to express emotions such as fear of failure and shame. Gradually, MCH was able to differentiate self-worth from academic performance, reducing internal tension and enhancing social engagement.

This case illustrates a coherent process linking conditional acceptance, the internalisation of external standards, the formation of a conditional self-concept, the emergence of incongruence, the development of evaluative anxiety, and eventual social alienation. Therapeutic intervention grounded in unconditional relational acceptance facilitated the reduction of conditions of worth and supported the integration of a more authentic self-experience (Murphy et al., 2020). Observed improvements in classroom participation and decreased social anxiety, maintained at follow-up, indicate the stability of change.

This study reinforces the understanding that adolescent social alienation may arise from internal conflict rooted in a conditional self-structure rather than solely from external rejection. Interventions emphasising unconditional positive regard and strengthened self-acceptance are particularly relevant for restoring authentic social engagement. These findings contribute to the literature on conditions of worth and social alienation, while offering practical implications for school counseling services to address students' self-worth dynamics more sensitively and effectively.

4. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

4.1 Implications of the Case Report

The findings of this case report highlight the importance of understanding students' social alienation from the perspective of self-concept dynamics rather than solely from observable social behaviour. The case demonstrates that withdrawal and reluctance to participate in social or academic activities may stem from the internalization of conditional acceptance related to academic achievement. In school counseling practice, this suggests that counselors should pay closer attention to the belief systems underlying students' self-worth, particularly when students display achievement-contingent self-esteem and fear of negative evaluation.

In practice, counseling interventions should emphasise the development of a therapeutic relationship characterised by empathy, congruence, and unconditional posi-

tive regard. Such relational conditions help students gradually separate their personal values from external performance standards and develop a more stable sense of self-acceptance. Early identification through classroom observation, psychological screening, and collaboration with teachers and parents can also play a critical role in preventing the escalation of social alienation among adolescents.

4.2 Contributions of the Case to the Literature

This case study contributes to the existing literature by providing an in-depth illustration of how internalised conditions of worth can foster social alienation among adolescents in educational settings. While previous studies have frequently examined external factors such as peer rejection or bullying, this case emphasises the intrapersonal mechanisms through which conditional acceptance shapes self-concept and emotional regulation.

Furthermore, the study expands the empirical discussion of Person-Centred Therapy by demonstrating how the therapeutic conditions proposed by Carl Rogers can serve as a mechanism for reconstructing self-worth in cases characterised by achievement-contingent self-evaluation. By documenting the psychological changes across multiple counseling sessions, this case report also provides methodological insight into the use of qualitative case study approaches for examining therapeutic processes in school counseling settings.

5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

5.1 Limitations of the Case Report

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings of this case report. First, the study focuses on a single participant, which limits the generalizability of the results to broader student populations. Although the case study approach allows for deep exploration of psychological processes, the findings should be understood as context-specific rather than universally representative.

Second, the evaluation of therapeutic outcomes relied primarily on qualitative observations, interview data, and psychological assessments conducted within a relatively short time frame. While follow-up observations indicated sustained improvement, longer-term evaluation would be necessary to determine the stability of the therapeutic changes over extended periods.

Third, contextual factors such as family dynamics and cultural expectations surrounding academic achievement were explored primarily through the participant's perspective and limited collateral information. A more comprehensive investigation involving additional family interviews could provide deeper insight into the relational dynamics influencing the development of conditions of worth.

5.2 Recommendation for Future Research Directions

Future research may expand on this case study by examining larger samples of students who experience achievement-contingent self-worth and social withdrawal. Comparative studies involving multiple cases could help identify common psychological patterns and strengthen the empirical understanding of how conditions of worth develop across different educational contexts.

Additionally, future studies could integrate mixed-methods approaches that combine qualitative counseling data with standardised psychological measures to evaluate therapeutic outcomes more systematically. Longitudinal research designs may also be particularly valuable for examining the long-term effects of Person-Centred Therapy on adolescents' self-concept development, emotional regulation, and social participation.

Further exploration of family-based interventions and school-wide counseling programs may also provide important insights into how educational institutions can foster environments that support unconditional acceptance and psychological well-being among students.

6. CONCLUSION

This case study demonstrates that social alienation in MCH originated in the internalisation of conditions of worth, which shaped a conditional self-concept and created incongruence between authentic experiences and internalised ideal standards. Interview data, classroom observations, and psychological assessments consistently revealed that MCH's sense of self-worth was heavily dependent on academic achievement and parental validation. This dependency produced evaluative anxiety and social withdrawal, not due to a lack of social competence, but as a protective response to perceived threats to self-concept.

The application of Person-Centred Therapy, grounded in accurate empathy, congruence, and unconditional positive regard as articulated by Carl Rogers, proved effective in facilitating meaningful change. Through a therapeutic relationship characterised by nonjudgmental acceptance, MCH was able to reconstruct the meaning of self-worth, differentiate personal value from academic performance, and integrate previously suppressed emotional experiences. These changes were reflected in reduced self-criticism, decreased social anxiety, and increased classroom participation.

The findings affirm that recovery from adolescent social alienation requires interventions addressing the structural dynamics of self-concept rather than focusing solely on social skills training. A humanistic approach emphasising unconditional acceptance plays a significant role in fostering stable self-acceptance and authentic social engagement. This study reinforces the relevance of client-centred counseling within school guidance services and un-

derscores the need to address contingent self-worth as a central factor in adolescent psychological adjustment.

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CRedit Authorship Contribution Statement

All authors discussed the results, contributed to the final manuscript, and approved the final version for publication. Reza Pahlevi: Conceptualization, Methodology; Validation, Data Curation. Dona Fitri Annisa: Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Writing - Original Draft. Yusi Riksa: Conceptualization, Writing - Review & Editing. Nur Sholehah Dian Saputri: Conceptualization, Writing - Review & Editing.

Declaration of GenAI Usage in Scientific Writing

The authors declare that generative artificial Intelligence (GenAI) tools were used solely to assist in language refinement, grammar checking, and improving the clarity of the manuscript. All intellectual contributions, including the study design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation, were conducted independently by the authors. The authors take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the content presented in this manuscript. All instances of Generative AI usage in this article were conducted by the authors in accordance with the [IJCP GenAI Tool Usage Policy](#), with the authors assuming full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the work."

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to this study. The study was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in this study prior to data collection. Participants were fully informed about the purpose of the research, procedures, potential risks, and their rights, including the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. All procedures were conducted in accordance with applicable ethical standards.

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