



Self-Awareness and Emotion Regulation to Strengthen Mental Health Support Systems among University Students and Communities in Berau Regency

Merlin D*, Darmono, Safitri Nurhidayati

¹Universitas Muhammadiyah Berau, Indonesia

²Universitas Muhammadiyah Berau, Indonesia

³Universitas Muhammadiyah Berau, Indonesia

merlinstiem19@gmail.com, darmonosemsi@gmail.com, safitri.n091183@gmail.com.

Article Info

Article history:

Received 01/07/2026

Revised 09/07/2026

Accepted 17/07/2026

Keyword:

Psikoedukasi; self-awareness; regulasi emosi; kesehatan mental; support system mahasiswa.

ABSTRACT

Mental health problems among university students have shown an increasing trend, as evidenced by the high prevalence of anxiety, academic stress, and difficulties in emotion regulation, while access to structured psychological support services within universities and communities remains limited. This community service program aimed to provide psychoeducation on self-awareness and resilience in emotion regulation as an effort to strengthen the mental health support system for university students and the wider community in Berau Regency. The program was conducted on Saturday, November 29, 2025, at Universitas Muhammadiyah Berau through a collaboration between the Office of Population Control, Family Planning, Women's Empowerment, and Child Protection (DPPKBP3A) of Berau Regency and the Center for Gender Studies (PSG) of Universitas Muhammadiyah Berau. The event also marked the official inauguration of PSG and the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the two institutions.

The program employed psychoeducational lectures, interactive discussions, and pre-test and post-test questionnaires as its implementation methods. The results indicated an improvement in participants' understanding of self-awareness and emotion regulation strategies, as well as positive responses toward the sustainability of mental health assistance programs. This initiative highlights the importance of cross-sector collaboration between local government and higher education institutions in developing a sustainable mental health support ecosystem.



©2024 Authors. Published by Universitas Muhammadiyah Berau.. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License. (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

INTRODUCTION

Mental health is one of the key determinants of students' academic success and overall well-being. Numerous studies have indicated that mental health problems among university students in Indonesia remain a significant concern, ranging from anxiety symptoms and academic stress to mild and severe depression (Setyanto, 2023). A recent study conducted in Samarinda, East Kalimantan, further revealed that stress is the most prevalent mental health issue experienced by university students, followed by anxiety and depression (Arfandi et al., 2025). These findings suggest that mental health challenges are also highly relevant to the context of East Kalimantan, including Berau Regency.

High academic demands, the need to adapt to new environments, and family socioeconomic conditions contribute substantially to students' vulnerability to mental health problems (Lahesi & Wulandari, 2024). Moreover, intensive social media use has also been found to influence students' psychological well-being (Nugroho & Fitriyani, 2020). This situation is exacerbated by the limited availability of structured psychological support services on university campuses, resulting in many students experiencing emotional difficulties without receiving adequate early intervention.

Self-awareness is one of the core components of emotional intelligence that enables individuals to recognize, understand, and manage their emotions more effectively (Goleman, 1995). This ability serves as a prerequisite for emotion regulation, which refers to an individual's efforts to monitor, evaluate, and modify emotional reactions to meet situational demands (Gross, 1998). Resilience in emotion regulation has been proven effective in improving psychological well-being across various contexts, including among university students, school students, and the general community (Ninawati et al., 2026; Irdi et al., 2024).

From a policy perspective, the Government of Berau Regency, through the Office of Population Control, Family Planning, Women's Empowerment, and Child Protection (DPPKBP3A), has established the Family Learning Center (PUSPAGA) as a family education and counseling service unit in accordance with Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government (Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, 2020). However, the reach of PUSPAGA services among university students still needs to be strengthened through collaboration with higher education institutions, considering that university students represent a productive age group that is highly vulnerable to psychological pressures yet remains inadequately served by community-based family support programs (Boreel, 2022).

In response to these conditions, Universitas Muhammadiyah Berau, through its Center for Gender Studies (PSG), initiated a collaboration with DPPKBP3A of Berau Regency by organizing a PUSPAGA psychoeducational program entitled "Self-Awareness: Resilience in Emotion Regulation." The event also marked the official inauguration of the PSG at Universitas Muhammadiyah Berau and the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the two institutions. This initiative represents a strategic and innovative effort because it integrates three major agendas into a single program: institutional strengthening (through the inauguration of PSG and the MOA), mental health education based on self-awareness and emotion regulation, and the development of a sustainable mental health support system for university students and the wider community in Berau Regency.

Therefore, this community service program aims to: (1) improve participants' understanding of the concepts of self-awareness and emotion regulation; (2) equip participants with practical strategies for managing emotions in their daily lives; and (3) strengthen institutional collaboration between the local government and higher education institutions in developing a sustainable mental health support ecosystem in Berau Regency.

RESEARCH METHODS

This community service program was conducted on Saturday, November 29, 2025, at Universitas Muhammadiyah Berau (UMB), Berau Regency, East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia. The program was organized through a collaborative partnership involving the

Government of Berau Regency through the Office of Population Control, Family Planning, Women's Empowerment, and Child Protection (DPPKBP3A), the Center for Gender Studies (PSG) of Universitas Muhammadiyah Berau, PUSPAGA Sanggam, the Indonesian Psychological Association (HIMPSI), the Berau Children's Forum, and the Child-Friendly Regency/City Program.

The target participants of the program were students of Universitas Muhammadiyah Berau and members of the general public in Berau Regency who voluntarily attended the event. The implementation of the program consisted of four stages.



Picture 1 : The participants of the program

The first stage was the preparation phase, which included inter-institutional coordination, the development of psychoeducational materials, the preparation of evaluation instruments in the form of pre-test and post-test questionnaires, and the dissemination of information regarding the program to students and the broader community.

The second stage involved the opening ceremony and formal proceedings, including welcoming remarks from representatives of the Government of Berau Regency and Universitas Muhammadiyah Berau, the official inauguration of the Center for Gender Studies (PSG) at UMB, and the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between DPPKBP3A of Berau Regency and PSG UMB as a means of strengthening long-term institutional collaboration.



Picture 2 :The signing of MOA between DPPKBP3A of Berau Regency

The third stage consisted of the core psychoeducational session entitled “Self-Awareness: Resilience in Emotion Regulation.” The session employed interactive lectures, case illustrations, emotion-recognition simulations, and question-and-answer discussions.

Participants were also invited to engage in simple reflective exercises to identify and understand their own emotional patterns as a practical application of self-awareness concepts.

The fourth stage was the evaluation phase. Evaluation was conducted through pre-test questionnaires administered before the psychoeducational session and post-test questionnaires administered after the session to measure changes in participants' understanding of self-awareness and emotion regulation. In addition, direct observation of participants' engagement and responses throughout the activities was used to assess the overall effectiveness of the program.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The PUSPAGA Psychoeducation Program entitled “Self-Awareness: Resilience in Emotion Regulation” was attended by 85 participants, consisting of 65 students from Universitas Muhammadiyah Berau and 20 members of the general community from Berau Regency. Overall, the participants showed a high level of enthusiasm and engagement throughout the activity, as reflected in their active participation during discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and emotion-recognition simulations.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the psychoeducational intervention, pre-test and post-test questionnaires were administered before and after the session. The results indicated a significant improvement in participants' understanding of self-awareness and emotion regulation. The average pre-test score was 61.4 out of 100, while the average post-test score increased to 84.7 out of 100, representing an improvement of approximately 23.3 percentage points. In addition, the proportion of participants categorized as having a good understanding of the concepts increased from 35.3% before the intervention to 82.4% after the intervention. These findings suggest that the psychoeducational program was effective in enhancing participants' knowledge and awareness regarding emotional recognition and regulation strategies.

Table 1. Pre-test and Post-test Results of Participants

Indicator	Pre-test	Post-test	Increase/Decrease
Number of participants	85	85	–
Mean score	61.4	84.7	+23.3
Participants with good understanding (%)	35.3%	82.4%	+47.1%
Participants with low understanding (%)	64.7%	17.6%	–47.1%

Based on the pre-test and post-test results presented in Table 1, the psychoeducational program had a positive impact on improving participants' understanding of **self-awareness** and **emotion regulation**. The mean score increased from 61.4 in the pre-test to 84.7 in the post-test, representing an improvement of 23.3 points. Furthermore, the percentage of participants with a good level of understanding increased significantly from 35.3% to 82.4%, while the proportion of participants with low understanding decreased from 64.7% to 17.6%. These findings indicate that the learning methods employed in the program, including interactive lectures, emotion-recognition simulations, and reflective discussions, were effective in

enhancing participants' knowledge and awareness of the importance of recognizing and managing emotions in their daily lives.

The improvement in participants' understanding is consistent with Goleman's (1995) theory of emotional intelligence, which emphasizes that self-awareness is the fundamental component of an individual's ability to manage emotions and build healthy social relationships. The findings also support Gross's (1998) model of emotion regulation, which suggests that the ability to regulate emotional responses can be strengthened through structured learning and reflective practice. Therefore, the psychoeducational intervention not only contributed to participants' cognitive understanding but also served as a preventive strategy for strengthening the mental well-being of both university students and the wider community. These findings are in line with previous studies demonstrating that psychoeducational interventions focusing on self-awareness and emotion regulation are effective in improving psychological well-being, reducing vulnerability to stress, and enhancing individuals' capacity to cope with academic and social pressures (Ninawati et al., 2026; Irdi et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the PUSPAGA Psychoeducation Program entitled “Self-Awareness: Resilience in Emotion Regulation” successfully enhanced participants' understanding of self-awareness and emotion regulation concepts. The pre-test and post-test results demonstrated a substantial increase in participants' knowledge, indicating that the psychoeducational intervention effectively improved their ability to recognize, understand, and manage their emotions. The high level of participation and engagement throughout the activities also reflected the strong interest of both university students and community members in mental health education and emotional well-being.

Furthermore, the program contributed to strengthening the mental health support system in Berau Regency through the establishment of institutional collaboration between DPPKBP3A Berau Regency and the Center for Gender Studies (PSG) of Universitas Muhammadiyah Berau. This partnership provides a foundation for developing sustainable mental health services and referral mechanisms for students and the broader community. Therefore, continuous psychoeducational programs, regular emotion regulation training, and the establishment of peer support groups are recommended to ensure the sustainability of mental health promotion efforts and to foster a more comprehensive and inclusive mental health support ecosystem in Berau Regency.

REFERENCES

- Arfandi, M., et al. (2025). Mental health problems among university students in Samarinda, East Kalimantan: The prevalence of stress, anxiety, and depression. *Journal of Community Mental Health Studies*, 8(1), 45–57.
- Boreel, M. (2022). Strengthening community-based family support services through cross-sector collaboration: Lessons for family learning centers. *Journal of Family and Community Development*, 14(2), 89–101.
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. Bantam Books.

- Gross, J. J. (1998). The emerging field of emotion regulation: An integrative review. *Review of General Psychology*, 2(3), 271–299. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.2.3.271>
- Irdi, R., et al. (2024). Psychoeducation and emotional regulation training to improve psychological well-being among adolescents and university students. *Jurnal Pengabdian Psikologi Indonesia*, 6(1), 55–66.
- Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak Republik Indonesia. (2020). *Pedoman penyelenggaraan Pusat Pembelajaran Keluarga (PUSPAGA)*. Kementerian PPPA Republik Indonesia.
- Kinkie, A., et al. (2025). Sustainable psychoeducational interventions and peer support systems in educational settings: A systematic review. *International Journal of Mental Health Promotion*, 27(1), 34–49.
- Lahesi, S., & Wulandari, D. (2024). Socioeconomic factors and mental health vulnerability among university students in Indonesia. *Indonesian Journal of Psychology and Education*, 11(2), 102–114.
- Mawaddah, N., & Prastya, H. (2023). The effectiveness of peer support groups and psychoeducation in improving students' mental health literacy. *Jurnal Psikologi Pendidikan Indonesia*, 9(2), 118–129.
- Ninawati, R., et al. (2026). The effectiveness of self-awareness and emotional regulation interventions on psychological well-being among university students. *Journal of Educational Psychology and Counseling*, 12(1), 23–35.
- Nugroho, A., & Fitriyani, E. (2020). Social media use and psychological well-being among Indonesian university students. *Jurnal Psikologi Sosial*, 18(3), 201–212.
- Rizky Aulia Fitriana, R., et al. (2024). Psychoeducational approaches to enhancing emotional regulation skills among students. *Jurnal Konseling dan Kesehatan Mental*, 5(1), 44–56.
- Setyanto, A. (2023). Mental health challenges among Indonesian university students: Current issues and preventive approaches. *Indonesian Journal of Mental Health*, 7(2), 75–88.
- Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 23 Tahun 2014 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah. (2014). <https://peraturan.bpk.go.id>
- World Health Organization. (2022). *World mental health report: Transforming mental health for all*. World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240049338>