



The Effect of Mental Health Education on Students' Knowledge at SMPN Satap 2 Tikep

Ismiliani Saffia¹⁾, Habriani²⁾, Wa Ode Fifin Annur³⁾, Fajirin Alam Syah⁴⁾,
Nurna Ningsih⁵⁾, Wa Ode Risna Juhanda⁶⁾

^{1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)} Muhammadiyah Institute of Health Business and Technology, West Muna

Email: saffiaismil@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Adolescent mental health is an important public health issue, but students' knowledge remains relatively low. This study aims to determine the influence of mental health counseling on student knowledge at SMPN Satap 2 Tikep. The method used is a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental design (one pretest-posttest group). The sample amounted to 30 respondents who were selected through purposive sampling techniques. The research instrument is in the form of a questionnaire to measure the level of knowledge before and after counseling. Data analysis was carried out using univariate and bivariate using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test. The results showed that before counseling, most respondents had knowledge in the poor category (43.3%), while after counseling the majority were in the good category (66.7%). The results of the statistical test showed a value of $p = 0.001$ ($p \leq 0.05$), which means that there is a significant influence of counseling on improving student knowledge. In conclusion, mental health counseling is effective in improving the knowledge of junior high school students, so it needs to be carried out continuously to improve mental health literacy in the school environment.

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INTRODUCTION

Mental health among adolescents is one of the most important issues in public health around the world. About 1 in 7 adolescents (14.3%) between the ages of 10 and 19 experience mental health problems, with depression, anxiety, and behavioral disorders being the leading causes of disability in this age group. In addition, the World Mental Health Report emphasizes that suicide is the third leading cause of death among 15 to 29-year-olds, showing how serious mental health problems are among adolescents globally (WHO, 2022; World Health Organisation, 2021).

In Indonesia, this situation is also very concerning. Based on the results of the Indonesian National Adolescent Mental Health Survey, it shows that adolescents in Indonesia experience various mental health problems in general such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, and also behavioral disorders (Center for Reproductive Health, 2022).

The prevalence of depression rates reached about 5.1% and emotional disorders around 9.8% among adolescents (Basrowi, 2024). Various factors such as pressure from the academic field, family problems, and social media use are considered to be the main causes of deteriorating mental health in adolescents (Wahid et al., 2025)

When viewed from the perspective of the region, Southeast Sulawesi Province, data in 2025 shows that the prevalence of mental emotional disorders will reach around 11% of the total population. In addition, the number of people with depression is estimated to reach more than 165 thousand people, while severe mental disorders such as schizophrenia reach more than 14 thousand people. This high number shows that mental health is one of the serious public health problems in the area. However, the utilization of mental health services is still very low, with only about 2.6% of sufferers accessing professional services (Kementrian Kesehatan Republik Indonesia, 2023)

This condition is inseparable from various factors, such as public stigma against mental disorders, lack of mental health literacy, and limited access to health services, especially in archipelagic areas such as Southeast Sulawesi. The impact of this condition is felt not only by adult individuals, but also by adolescent groups, including junior high school (SMP) students (Central Statistics Agency, 2025).

The high prevalence of mental disorders in the people of Southeast Sulawesi indirectly reflects the social environmental conditions that also affect junior high school students. A less supportive family, school, and community environment can increase the risk of stress, anxiety, and depression in students. In addition, the limited counseling services in schools and the low awareness of students to seek help have led to many mental health cases in students that are not detected early on that have serious impacts, such as decreased learning achievement, the emergence of deviant behaviors, and the risk of mental disorders that continue into adulthood. Therefore, mental health counseling is very urgent and needs to be given to junior high school students. The early adolescence phase in junior high school is a critical developmental transition period, vulnerable to identity crises, academic pressure, and peer association dynamics. The provision of education in this phase serves as an essential primary preventive intervention to equip students with emotional regulation skills, psychological resilience, and self-awareness, so as to be able to prevent the escalation of minor emotional problems into severe mental disorders in the future.

METHOD

The method used in this study is a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental design. This research was conducted at SMPN Satap 2 Tikep on November 24, 2025. The research design used was a one-group pretest-posttest design, which is the measurement of knowledge scores carried out before and after the intervention on the same sample group without a control group. The health education used in this study is structured mental health counseling using the interactive lecture method. This type of intervention facilitates directed two-way communication, where the presenter can measurably convey basic psychological concepts, and students are given the space to ask questions and receive direct answers to clarify things they do not understand related to mental health issues in adolescence.

The sampling technique in this study uses the purposive method. The sampling technique in this study uses the purposive sampling method. The sample for the intervention was



determined by selecting active students aged 12–15 years who obtained permission from their parents/guardians and were willing to take the entire series from pre-test to post-test. Regarding the subject's involvement, all selected samples received intervention due to the absence of a control group in this design. Meanwhile, to ensure fairness (the ethical principle of justice), other students outside the sample who did not receive intervention during the study, were given educational materials in the form of official information sheets (leaflets) about mental health after the entire series of comparative data collection on the research subjects was completed, so that no student lost the right to obtain health knowledge.

The selected sample amounted to 30 respondents. A sample size of 30 subjects ($n=30$) was selected based on the empirical principles of basic statistics (referring to the limit of the central theorem), which considers that a size of $n \geq 30$ is a representative minimum threshold to approach the normal distribution curve on a small-scale institutional research scale, while providing sufficient statistical power to detect meaningful score differences before and after the intervention.

Interventions are implemented classically in the classroom. The intervention was given directly by a research team with a scientific background in health administration and public health, accompanied by homeroom teachers as facilitators. This activity was carried out in one intensive meeting with a duration of 90 minutes. The counseling material discussed includes a basic understanding of the definition of mental health, identification of emotions and stress in adolescents, coping mechanism strategies or simple stress management, and the importance of seeking professional help if needed. This intervention material has been standardized and adapted based on the guidelines for adolescent mental health education of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, and presented visually using PowerPoint media and the distribution of printed leaflets.

Data was collected through questionnaires, then processed and analyzed quantitatively through univariate and bivariate analysis. In this article, the statistical tests used for bivariate analysis depend on the data distribution conditions. The Shapiro-Wilk normality test was used for the first time to assess the distribution of data. If the data is normally distributed, the Paired Sample T-Test parametric test will be used. However, if it is proven that the data is not normally distributed, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test is used. Decision-making is based on a 95% confidence level ($\alpha = 0.05$). If the p value < 0.05 , then it can be concluded that there is a significant influence of counseling on improving student knowledge.

RESULTS

SMPN Satap 2 Tikep is a public junior high school located in Laworo Village, Tiworo Islands District, West Muna Regency, Southeast Sulawesi.

Characteristics of Research Subjects

Table 1. Characteristics by Sex (n=30) and Characteristics by Age

Characteristics	Categories	f	(%)
Gender	Male	12	40.0
	Women	18	60.0
Age (years)	11	3	10.0
	12	4	13.3
	13	7	23.3
	14	12	40.0
	15	4	13.3
Quantity		30	100

Based on Table 1, it is known that out of a total of 30 respondents, the distribution by gender shows that most of the respondents are women, namely 18 people (60.0%), while the male respondents are 12 people (40.0%). Based on age characteristics, the most respondents were at the age of 14, namely 12 people (40.0%). Furthermore, it was followed by 7 children aged 13 years (23.3%), children aged 12 years and 15 years old 4 (13.3%), respectively (13.3%), and children aged 3 years (10.0%) aged 11 years.

Description of Research Variables

Table 2. Student Knowledge After Being Given Counseling

Knowledge Categories	F	(%)
Good	5	16.7
Enough	12	40
Not Enough	13	43.3
Quantity	30	100%

Based on Table 2, respondents' knowledge data before mental health counseling was conducted, it was known that out of a total of 30 respondents, most had a level of knowledge in the insufficient category, namely 13 people (43.3%). Furthermore, respondents with sufficient knowledge categories were 12 people (40.0%), while respondents with good knowledge categories were only 5 people (16.7%).

Table 3. Student Knowledge After Counseling

Knowledge Categories	F	(%)
Good	20	66.7
Enough	7	23.3
Not Enough	3	10.0
Quantity	30	100



Based on Table 3, it is known that out of a total of 30 respondents, most of them had a level of knowledge in the good category after being given mental health counseling, namely 20 people (66.7%). Furthermore, respondents with adequate knowledge categories were 7 people (23.3%), while respondents with insufficient knowledge categories were only 3 people (10.0%).

Normality Test Results

The normality test was carried out to find out whether the respondents' knowledge score data before and after counseling had been distributed normally. The results of this normality test are used as a basis for determining the right type of statistical test in bivariate analysis. In this study, the normality test used the Shapiro-Wilk test because the sample size was less than 50 respondents. If the data is distributed normally ($p\text{-value} > 0.05$), then *a paired sample t-test is used*. On the other hand, if the data is not normally distributed ($p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$), then a non-parametric test, i.e. a Wilcoxon-marked rating test, is used.

Table 4. Normality Test Results (Shapiro-Wilk) Knowledge Level Before and After Mental Health Counseling

Variable	Sig.	Remarks
Knowledge Before Counseling	0,200	Normal distribution
Knowledge After Counseling	0,000	Abnormal

Based on table 4, the results of the normality test using the Shapiro-Wilk test, the significance value (Sig.) for knowledge before counseling was 0.200, while the significance value for knowledge after counseling was 0.000. The results of this study show that knowledge data before counseling is usually distributed because of the Sig. value > 0.05 , while the knowledge data after counseling is not distributed normally because the Sig. value ≤ 0.05 . Because one of the data was not distributed normally, the bivariate analysis in this study used a non-parametric test, i.e. a Wilcoxon-marked rating test to determine differences in knowledge levels before and after mental health counseling.

Table 5. Wilcoxon Test Results Student Knowledge Level Before and After Mental Health Counseling

Variable	N	Sum of Ranks
Knowledge Before Counseling	30	53.00
Knowledge After Counseling	30	325.00
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		0.001

Based on Table 5, the results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test to determine the difference in knowledge level before and after being given mental health counseling, obtained an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.001. The value was less than 0.05 ($p \leq 0.05$),

so it can be concluded that there was a significant difference between the respondents' knowledge before and after counseling. Therefore, it can be concluded that the mental health counseling provided has an effect on increasing knowledge among SMPN Satap 2 Tiket students in improving their mental health as a promotive and preventive effort to increase knowledge about mental health.

DISCUSSION

Based on the results of research that has been conducted on students of SMPN Satap 2 Tipek with a total of 30 respondents, it is possible that mental health counseling has an effect on improving student knowledge.

The results showed that before being given counseling, most of the respondents had a level of knowledge in the insufficient category of 13 people (43.3%), the sufficient knowledge category of 12 people (40.0%), and the good knowledge category of only 5 people (16.7%). This shows that students' knowledge about mental health is still relatively low. This low level of knowledge can be caused by a lack of exposure to information about mental health in school and community settings. If individuals do not get enough information, the level of knowledge they have will also be limited. In addition, mental health issues are still often considered taboo or not discussed openly, especially among adolescents. This condition causes students to lack understanding of the importance of maintaining mental health and are less able to recognize the symptoms of mental disorders from an early age. Social environments, such as family and school, also play an important role in shaping students' knowledge.

This research is in line with the findings of Zaidabada Boot et al. which suggests that adolescents generally have less insight into mental health before getting the right education (Zeidabadi et al., 2025). Similar research was also conducted by Shahraki-Sanavi et al., who stated that low understanding of mental health among adolescents can be caused by limited access to information, lack of education, and stigma in the social environment¹¹. Similar research was also conducted by Nurfitriani and Sari which showed that students who had never received counseling had lower knowledge than students who had participated in educational programs. This situation reflects that prior to counseling, adolescents' understanding of mental health issues tended to be less profound (Nurfitriani, 2024).

The results of the post test showed that after being given mental health counseling, there was a significant increase, where most of the respondents were in the good category (66.7%), followed by the fair category (23.3%), and only a small number were in the insufficient category (10.0%). These results show that interventions in the form of mental health counseling are able to improve students' understanding in real terms.

The increase in knowledge showed that the information provided during the counseling could be well received by the respondents. In the context of health education, knowledge is the result of a learning process that occurs through interaction between individuals and information sources. Counseling that is carried out in a structured manner allows students to obtain new information, correct misunderstandings, and strengthen the knowledge they already have.

The counseling process that involves the senses of hearing and sight, especially with the help of media such as PowerPoint and handouts, can improve the absorption of information making it easier for students to understand mental health material. In addition, the characteristics of respondents who are junior high school teenagers also play



a role in improving this knowledge. In adolescence, cognitive abilities develop well so that individuals more easily receive and process new information. This causes health counseling to be more effective in that age group.

This research is in line with that conducted by Maisa rara et al. found that a planned educational program can consistently improve students' knowledge after counseling (Stuart et al., 1998) Research conducted by Zeidabadi et al. also reported an increase in knowledge and changes in adolescents' attitudes after participating in educational programs in the field of mental health¹⁰. Similarly, research by Baskaran et al. shows that counseling has significantly improved understanding and readiness to seek help (Ferdian et al., 2024)

The results of bivariate analysis using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed the value of Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) was 0.001 ($p \leq 0.05$), which means that there was a significant difference between the level of knowledge before and after counseling. Thus, it can be concluded that mental health counseling has a significant influence on improving students' knowledge.

Similar research was also conducted by Tam et al. which showed that counseling programs in the field of mental health, both in the school and community settings, statistically contributed to increased knowledge and a reduction in stigma among adolescents (Tam, 2024). These results show that the relationship found is not a coincidence, but is influenced by the educational factors conveyed in the counseling. The increase in knowledge scores after the intervention was strongly suspected to be the result of the mental health counseling provided, as measurements were taken before and after the intervention using the same instrument and in a relatively short span of time. This condition minimizes the influence of external factors so that changes in knowledge scores are more likely to be caused by the information and education received during counseling. The results of statistical tests showing significant differences ($p = 0.001$) further reinforce that health education interventions contribute to improving student knowledge.

Increasing knowledge is inseparable from the use of lecture methods in the implementation of counseling. The lecture method is one of the effective health promotion methods in conveying information to the target group in a relatively short time. Through this method, mental health material can be delivered in a systematic, structured, and easily understood manner by students. In addition, the use of supporting media such as PowerPoint and leaflets also strengthens the delivery of messages so as to increase information absorption.

This study is in line with that conducted by Geraldly Bungi who showed that there was an effect of counseling with lecture techniques on balanced nutrition in elementary school students with meaningful results in the control group and experiment (Geraldly, 2020). A similar study was also conducted by Natalia Septriana which showed that the results of the t-test of paired samples (p value = 0.000 or $p < 0.05$), which means that there is a significant influence on the provision of health education about Hand Washing with Soap (CTPS) with lecture method (Natalia, 2024) The selection of the educational method of interactive lectures supported by PowerPoint media and leaflets is an effective strategy to improve student understanding. The combination of oral and visual information delivery is able to accommodate various learning styles, maintain students' attention, and facilitate

the understanding of mental health materials. In addition, the use of standardized materials ensures that all participants obtain the same information efficiently in a limited amount of time (Kristin et al., 2024). So that the use of this presentation media is able to attract the attention of respondents in carrying out health counseling related to mental health.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study on the impact of mental health counseling on student knowledge at SMPN Satap 2 Tikep, it can be concluded that there is a significant increase in student knowledge after receiving an intervention in the form of mental health counseling. Wilcoxon Signed- Rank test results show Asymp value. Sig. (2-tailed) 0.001 was smaller than 0.05, which suggests there was a significant difference between pre-test and post-test results. Thus, it can be concluded that mental health counseling has a significant influence on improving adolescent knowledge. The better the quality, intensity, and method of counseling delivered, the higher the knowledge obtained. This research has considered the principles of research ethics strictly and has obtained ethical approval (Ethical Clearance) from the Health Research Ethics Commission of the Muhammadiyah Institute of Business and Health Technology Muna Barat before the implementation of data collection was carried out.

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