

## The Benefits Of Mental Health Promotion In School Environments On Improving Emotional Well-Being In Adolescents

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### Abstract

Adolescents are an age group that experiences puberty which is marked by physical and psychological changes. The demands of facing challenges during this period can affect the emotional well-being of adolescents. Improving emotional well-being in adolescents can involve the role of schools because in general adolescents will spend more time at school with their peers. Schools are considered to be the right place to promote mental health. This study aims to see the benefits of mental health promotion in the school environment on improving emotional well-being in adolescents. This study is a quasi-experimental study with a control group pre-posttest design. The sampling technique used Stratified Random Sampling with a total sample of 70 adolescents aged 15-18 years from one of the Senior High Schools (SMA) in East Kolaka Regency, Southeast Sulawesi. Assessments related to emotional well-being were assessed using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). There was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test after mental health promotion in the school environment on improving emotional well-being by showing a p-value <0.005. The results of the study indicate that mental health promotion in the school environment has a significant effect on improving emotional well-being in adolescents. Due to the great benefits of mental health promotion, it is highly recommended for schools to integrate mental health promotion into school activities to improve emotional well-being in adolescents.

### INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a phase where growth and development occurs both physically, intellectually, mentally, emotionally and psychosocially (Alini & Meisyalla, 2022). The changes experienced by adolescents, both physically and psychologically, require adolescents to be able to adapt to the environment and life challenges they will face, the ability to adapt is able to improve emotional well-being in adolescents. Emotional well-being is a condition that can refer to optimal human function which is characterized by positive relationships, self-acceptance, and better personal growth. However, adjustment is often difficult and accompanied by emotional tension in facing new situations so that this often affects emotional well-being in adolescents. This emotional well-being includes mental health so that it is considered an important component that must be possessed by every

individual (Arslan & Allen, 2021; O'keefe *et al.*, 2022; Latifah, Zwagery, Safithry, & Ngalmun, 2023). Emotional well-being problems in adolescents are usually found in the school environment because in general adolescents will spend more time at school and with their peers because schools provide a space for adolescents to practice social skills. (Tomé, Ramiro, Gaspar, & Gaspar De Matos, 2021; Eriksen & Bru, 2023). Indonesia has made efforts to improve health in the school environment, namely through the School Health Program (UKS), but emotional well-being problems in adolescents still often occur, this is caused by several conditions, for example the lack of support and quality services (Fatmawati, 2019; Islam, Khanam, & Kabir, 2020; Elsad, Ari Rahmat., & Widjaja, 2022). The problem of emotional well-being in adolescents is an important thing to pay attention to so that it requires appropriate efforts to resolve it, where these efforts can

be carried out in the school environment as a place that can reach the adolescent population.

Schools not only affect academics, but also social development and emotional well-being in adolescents because basically schools have a very strong relationship with indicators of emotional well-being in adolescents including positive aspects and life satisfaction. Schools have an important role in improving the emotional well-being of adolescents, but basically schools do not fully understand their role in the emotional well-being of adolescents. The problem of bullying in the school environment continues to occur, this is associated with the problem of emotional well-being in adolescents (Wong, Dosanjh, Jackson, Runger, & Dudovitz, 2021; Bidick & Sisman, 2021; Arslan & Allen, 2021). Improving emotional well-being can be done in several ways, one of which is by promoting mental health in the school environment. Health promotion is a process that focuses on the health and well-being of individuals in a holistic manner (Santre, 2022). Schools can be the right place to convey information about mental health because basically schools can reach a wider group of teenagers so that health promotion programs in schools can positively improve the social and emotional development of teenagers (Tomé et al., 2021; Kliziene, Cizauskas, Sipaviciene, Aleksandraviciene, & Zaicenkoviene, 2021). The problem that is still a challenge today is the lack of understanding of schools regarding the role of improving mental health in adolescent groups, this lack of understanding can have an impact on the level of knowledge of adolescents in improving mental health so that it can have an impact on the inability to recognize and prevent mental health problems. So the purpose of this study is to see the benefits of mental health promotion in the school environment in improving emotional well-being in adolescents.

## METHOD

This study is a quasi-experimental study with a control group pre-posttest design with the same test. This study was conducted for 3 weeks at a Senior High School (SMA) in one of the East Kolaka Districts, Southeast Sulawesi. This meeting was divided into 3 meetings, namely the first meeting discussed the concept of emotional well-being, the second meeting provided material related to recognizing and preventing emotional well-being problems in adolescents, the third meeting related to how to develop emotional well-being. The sampling technique used Stratified Random Sampling, the results obtained were a sample size of 70

adolescents aged between 15-18 years. Inclusion Criteria: Adolescents who are willing to sign informed consent and adolescents who can communicate well. Exclusion criteria: teenagers who have physical limitations such as deafness, speech impairment, and visual impairment. The independent variable in this study is Mental Health Promotion and the dependent variable is emotional well-being, the measuring instrument used is the SDQ (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire) questionnaire to detect early emotional well-being of children and adolescents aged 4-18 years. SDQ contains 25 items with five components where each question is answered incorrectly (score 0), somewhat correct (score 1), and correct (score 2) which are calculated according to category. The results of the SDQ are 3 classifications for each category, namely normal (1-5), borderline (16-19) and abnormal (20-40). The test used is the data normality test first, after that the normally distributed data will be subjected to a dependent t-test to see the difference in pretest and posttest after mental health promotion in adolescents. The data analysis used in this study uses descriptive data analysis, namely in the form of presentation in the form of tables.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

**Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Respondents Based on Demographic Data**

Respondent Characteristics	Category	N = 70	%
Gender	Man	36	51.4
	Woman	34	48.6
Age	15-16	40	57.1
	17-18	30	42.9

Source: Statistics Agency for the year 2024

Based on the characteristics of demographic data in table 1, it shows that the gender in this study is dominated by male respondents, namely 36 respondents (51.4%). In the age distribution, the age group with the highest percentage is 15-16 years old, namely 40 respondents (57.1).

**Table 2. Normality test of respondent characteristics and variables in this study**

Questionnaire	Kolmogorov-Smirnov
Emotional well-being	0.061

Source: Statistics Agency for the year 2024

Based on the Kolmogorov Smirnov test in table 2, it is found that the significance value of the relationship between emotional well-being is  $> 0.05$ , which means that the data is normally distributed. To determine the differences before and after the provision of mental health promotion in the school environment on improving emotional well-being in adolescents, a dependent t test will be conducted.

**Table 3. Improvement of emotional well-being in adolescents before and after health promotion in the school environment**

Component	Pretest and posttest values				Sig
	Pre Test		Post Test		
Emotional well-being	Mean	SD±	Mean	SD±	
	25.11	2,917	20.41	2.493	0.00

Source: Statistics Agency for the year 2024

Based on the data analysis in table 3, a significance value of  $0.00 < 0.05$  was obtained, meaning that there was a difference between the pretest and posttest on the emotional well-being variable with a p-value  $< 0.05$ . The emotional well-being component experienced a decrease in average value from 25.11 (SD± 2,917) to 20.41 (SD±2,493). Based on these results, it can be concluded that there is a difference between the pretest and posttest on adolescent emotional well-being.

## Discussion

Based on the research results, emotional well-being in adolescents before mental health promotion was carried out was still low. This is in line with previous research which explains that emotional well-being problems generally first appear in adolescence because at this time there are emotional, social, and physical changes so that a program is needed to develop adolescent mental health as a form of preventing mental health problems from occurring (Santre, 2022). Adolescents are an age group that often experiences emotional well-being problems, this is associated with the changes experienced during puberty.

This study was conducted in a school environment to promote mental health in adolescents, in line with previous studies that using schools as a means for mental health promotion programs is the right choice because basically schools play an important role in the lives of adolescents, because schools are the optimal environment for identifying, managing, and maintaining adolescents with mental health problems. The implementation of this health promotion also

recommends a population-based approach so that schools are the right place to carry out this activity. Schools provide the right environment to improve emotional well-being and prevent mental health problems (Hoover & Bostic, 2021; Ford et al., 2021; Kuyken et al., 2022; Santre, 2022; Annah, 2023).

The results of this study after being given mental health promotion in adolescents there was a significant increase in emotional well-being, this re-emphasizes that providing education in the school environment is considered effective in improving emotional well-being in adolescents. This is in line with previous research that schools are a very important place in preventing mental health problems, namely through promotive interventions as a way to improve emotional well-being in adolescents, because in general schools have a close relationship to emotional well-being in adolescents (Arslan, 2021; Widnall et al., 2022). The implementation of mental health promotion in schools can increase understanding related to fostering positive relationships between students and teacher-student relationships to support improving emotional well-being for adolescents, because basically this health promotion is a process to empower individuals in changing lifestyles and behaviors so as to support and create an environment that encourages healthy living (Butler et al., 2022; Santre, 2022). Based on the results of research that has been conducted and the results of previous studies that support it, it explains that the implementation of mental health promotion interventions in school environments is considered successful and beneficial for improving emotional well-being in adolescents.

## CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that there is an increase in emotional well-being in adolescents through mental health promotion in schools. The development of this health promotion program can be sustainable as a strategic step to ensure that this program can be integrated into the curriculum with the aim of improving mental health in adolescents. The development of mental health promotion programs in the school environment can be done by involving guidance and counseling (BK) teachers to deliver mental health promotions based on appropriate references.

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