

Developing Students' Mental Health Programs to Create School Well-being and Prevent Juvenile Delinquency

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ABSTRACT

The understanding of student's mental health in schools is still limited. The main attention of schools and students tends to be more towards academic and non-academic achievements. Whereas when students are mentally health, they will be able to absorb lessons and understand it easily than those who are less mentally health. Schools and students also need to be aware of the negative impacts of juvenile delinquency behavior so they could prevent this behavior from occurring, both in school and society. The importance of student mental health program is not only applicable in Indonesia, but also in other countries. Based on preliminary study conducted at schools in Thailand, information obtained that there was a feeling of pressure in carrying out activities at school and there was concern about juvenile delinquency behavior. This international community service activity was carried out to help overcome the problems faced by schools in Thailand. The development of student mental health programs in schools is important to create school well-being and prevent juvenile delinquency behavior. This community service activity was attended by 40 participants consisting of teachers and students from Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School Thailand. The community service activity programs were in the form of education on adolescent mental health programs and prevention of juvenile delinquency. The results of this activity showed that students increasingly understand the importance of developing things that can maintain their mental health. Teachers have knowledge about factors that could improve students' mental health and preventive efforts to prevent juvenile delinquency in schools.



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1. Introduction

Teenagers' behavior can be influenced by their environment. One of them is the school environment. A school that is able to actualize student potential in a holistic manner so as to make its students feel prosperous (well-being) is certainly the hope of all students. Students feel prosperous when they feel safe, comfortable, happy, and healthy while attending school (Rasyid, 2021). School well-being is a concept in the world of education that is currently become attention of many researchers. This concept was developed by (Konu & Rimpela, 2002) based on the theory of welfare from Allardt, (1993) which explains welfare as a condition when basic needs, material, and non-material, can be met properly (Hongwidjojo et al., 2018).

Other experts mention school well-being as a subjective and emotional evaluation of students' experiences at school which focuses on the quality of comfort at school (Tian *et al.*, 2013).

School well-being is very important to implement because students will feel happy and prosperous when participating in learning and can contribute actively at school (Rasyid, 2021). Students who feel happy will of course be less likely to feel anxious and depressed in their lives (Buchori *et al.*, 2021). Another benefit of school well-being is that students feel comfortable and motivated in learning, students treat difficulties as challenges (high self-efficacy), create student success, students easily adapt to environments that are considered difficult, and can reduce students' levels of aggressiveness (Azhari & Situmorang, 2019). On the other hand, low school well-being can have a negative influence on students, including academic stress (Muhid & Ferdianto, 2020), delinquency intentions (Effendi & Siswanti, 2016). Mental health condition could bring influence to school well-being. There are many factors that could interfere with students' mental health, for example feelings of depression. The feeling of pressure during school is something that a lot of students experienced, especially in Asia (Assana, Laohasiriwong, & Rangseekajee, 2017). If this is not handled, it can cause mental health problems on students.

Based on a previous cross-sectional study conducted in Northeast Thailand on 1,112 high school students, there were around 26% of high school students who had high levels of educational stress, 16.41% of students had high levels of anxiety, and there was a prevalence of depression of 18.55%. The high prevalence of anxiety may be due to the influence of various stressors on students because anxiety is associated with a major negative influence on children's social, emotional, and academic success. Long study hours and additional time attending lessons or tutoring, especially for those who are pursuing the best performance, can cause students to feel stressed. Furthermore, this stress condition tends to increase if students want to continue to superior universities (Assana, Laohasiriwong, & Rangseekajee, 2017).

As a result of observations and preliminary interviews conducted with several teachers and students of Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School Thailand, information was obtained that there were students who felt stressed because of the learning load which was considered difficult, material which was difficult to understand, and assignments which needed to be completed. There was also a concern about juvenile delinquency might happen. Further, the problems experienced could be described as follows: (1) Students feel pressure in studying. The amount of material that needs to be studied, assignments that need to be completed, delivery of material by teachers that is not easily accepted, and lessons that are difficult to understand are examples of things that can cause academic pressure felt by students. (2) Teachers' attention to students' mental health is still limited. (3) Teachers have difficulty detecting symptoms of students who feel depressed. (4) Students do not know the forms of juvenile delinquency behavior. Based on the situation and problems described previously, efforts need to be made to provide alternative solutions in the form of education for students regarding the role of mental health in school and knowledge about juvenile delinquency behavior. Teachers also need to understand the factors that can support students' mental health. Students who experience problems can disrupt their mental health. Problems faced by students can include dealing with juvenile delinquency behavior. Students need to know what to do when they experience bad actions from other people and teachers need to know what efforts can be taken to protect students.

Based on these problems, a mental health program is needed at Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School Thailand. For this reason, it is necessary to provide education about student mental health programs and prevention of juvenile delinquency. This activity aims to increase knowledge of the importance of mental health in schools and the need for preventive efforts to prevent juvenile delinquency. After participating in this activity, students and teachers are expected to gain an understanding of things that can improve mental health in schools and the steps that can be taken to prevent juvenile delinquency.

2. Method

Based on problem statement mentioned before, it is necessary to implement proposed solution soon. In order to carry out the proposed solution, there are several stages that need to undertake so that the goals program could be achieved effectively.

2.1. Analyzing Problems and Needs

To get to the location of Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School, as shown in Figure 1, from YIA Yogyakarta airport, the flight to Hat Yai international airport (HDY) takes about 12 hours. After that, from the airport the trip to the location will take about an hour. The location of this community service program is in Sadao District, Songkla, Thailand. As the name implies, Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School is one of the Islamic-based schools in Thailand (Figure 1).

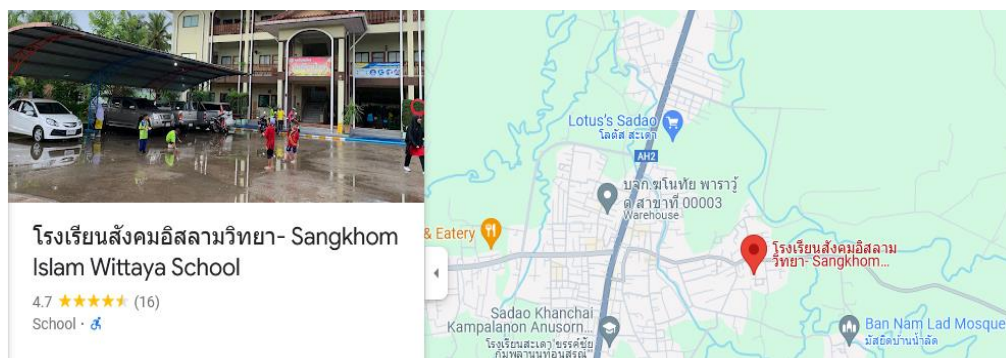


Figure 1. Location of Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School

After arrived at the location, the community service team conducted a field survey through an interview method with several teachers regarding problems that often arise. Based on the survey conducted, it was found that the problems often faced by students were feelings of pressure due to material that was considered difficult and hard to understand, assignments that needed to be completed, parental demands, and grades that they wanted to achieve. This caused anxiety and feelings of discomfort in going to school.

2.2. Solution Stated

Based on the determination of the problem, namely mental health in students, a study was conducted to find alternative solutions that can be offered to overcome the problem. One of the solutions offered is to provide an understanding of disorders that can affect psychological conditions and efforts that can be made to improve students' mental health. In addition, providing education about juvenile delinquency behavior and efforts that can be made to avoid it. The expertise needed in this field is professionals in the fields of law and psychology.

2.3. Implementation Activities

The implementation stage is the core stage in this community service activity. The target participants in this activity are students from Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School, Thailand. This educational seminar activity will be carried out hybrid, in class and online through the Zoom Meeting application.

2.4. Evaluation

Evaluation is a very important element used to see the effectiveness of the training provided. Therefore, in this community service activity, evaluation is also been carried out.

3. Result and Discussions

World Health Organization (2020) stated that many children and adolescents living with mental health conditions are sent to segregated schools that tend to provide lower-quality education; or they are institutionalized in facilities that provide no or highly-limited education. According to The Comprehensive mental health action plan 2013–2030 emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach to promotion and prevention, which showed in Figure 2. The program implemented in this activity is in accordance with this. There is a need for more attention to the development of children's mental health through school-based programs. The programs developed not only improve social skills and positive emotional development, but also provide education on the importance of being physically and mentally healthy.

Selected priorities for action, and associated strategies, to promote and protect mental health



Figure 2. Priorities Adolescence Mental Health

Schools are one of the most important settings for mental health promotion and protection among children and adolescents. They can be places that nurture well-being, equipping students with the knowledge, skills, competencies, and lifestyles they need to thrive. Schools also offer a strong platform for early identification and treatment of mental health conditions in children and adolescents because they operate where most school-going children are, have access to families, are free at point of use and overcome typical access barriers such as inconvenient location, costly transport, and stigma. There is much impetus for the educational system to offer this platform as there is strong evidence that investing in mental health improves educational outcomes (Becker, 2014; Kase, 2017). Meanwhile, for children whose home environment is not safe and nurturing, school can be a crucial safety net supporting basic social, emotional, and physical needs. But schools can also be places that undermine well-being, for example by exposing students to bullying, racism, discrimination, peer pressure and excessive stress about academic performance (World Health Organization, 2021). Juvenile delinquency behavior can cause feelings of worry and discomfort in students. There are many examples of this form of delinquent behavior, for example bullying. Bullying has been identified as the leading risk factor for mental health problems in the Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries and Risk Factors Study (2019). Schools, where priority interventions include social and emotional learning programs as well as initiatives to counter bullying, discrimination, and violence.

The potential role of schools in safeguarding student health and wellbeing is well-recognized in WHO's Global School Health Initiative and in WHO and UNICEF's HAT initiative. WHO's recent guidelines for school health services state mental health should be part of school health services (World Health Organization, 2021).

To be effective, each intervention in a school-based promotion and prevention programs requires active engagement and support from students, teachers, caregivers, and communities. To develop a positive school climate, a whole-school health-promoting approach is needed (WHO & UNICEF, 2021). In turn, such an approach supports better health and educational outcomes and influences health behaviors, to the benefit of students, school personnel and the broader community (WHO & UNESCO, 2020).

Based on the results of the initial information gathering conducted on several students and teachers at Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School, it was obtained that attention to students' mental health was still limited. For this reason, a program was developed that aims to increase awareness of the importance of student welfare in schools and programs to prevent juvenile delinquency behavior. The details of the implementation of the activities carried out are as follows:

3.1. Mental Health Socialization Activities in Schools

This activity was carried out face-to-face with students, consisting of 40 students. Students were given knowledge about mental health in schools and efforts that can be made to develop mentally healthy individuals to become resilient students. This activity went smoothly (Figure 3). The students were enthusiastic about paying attention to the material presented. Socialization and discussion activities were carried out in English, and there was a class teacher who helped as a translator for students who did not understand English.



Figure 3. Education Mental Health Awareness in Class

3.2. Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Program Development Activities

This activity was carried out in a hybrid manner, namely some participants participated in the classroom and others via the Zoom Meeting application. Participants in the activity consisted of 36 students and 4 representatives of class teachers. The material and discussion were carried out in English, with the help of the class teacher as a translator. Translator tools are also used to facilitate communication. There is a shared understanding of the importance of mental health and protecting oneself from juvenile delinquency behavior. Teachers understand how to develop mental health improvement programs and develop juvenile delinquency prevention programs that can be implemented in schools (Figure 4).

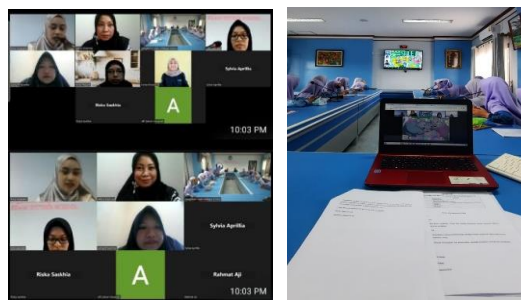


Figure 4. Prevention Juvenile Programs by Zoom Meeting and Hybrid Discussion of Programs Activities

The implementation of the mental health and juvenile delinquency prevention program at Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School in Thailand demonstrated several important outcomes. First, the socialization activities on mental health successfully increased students' awareness of the importance of maintaining psychological well-being. The participants showed enthusiasm during the sessions, actively engaging in discussions and demonstrating improved understanding of how mental health influences their resilience, academic performance, and overall school experience. This indicates that the program was effective in bridging the gap between students' prior limited knowledge and the need for comprehensive awareness of mental health issues in schools.

Second, the juvenile delinquency prevention program provided both students and teachers with practical knowledge about the forms of delinquent behavior and strategies to avoid them. The hybrid format of the activity, combining face-to-face and online sessions, allowed broader participation and facilitated interactive discussions. Teachers reported gaining new insights into how to detect early signs of stress and delinquency among students, as well as strategies to implement preventive measures within the school environment. This outcome highlights the role of teachers not only as educators but also as guardians of students' mental health and social behavior.

Third, the program aligned with global initiatives such as WHO's Global School Health Initiative and UNICEF's Helping Adolescents Thrive Toolkit, which emphasize the importance of school-based interventions in promoting mental health and preventing risk behaviors. By situating the activity within this international framework, the program demonstrated relevance and sustainability beyond the local context. The integration of mental health education and delinquency prevention into school activities reflects a holistic approach to student well-being, consistent with international best practices.

However, several challenges were identified during the implementation. Language barriers between facilitators and students required translation support, which occasionally slowed down the delivery of materials. Despite this, the presence of teachers as translators ensured that the content was accessible to all participants. This challenge underscores the importance of cultural and linguistic adaptation in international community service programs.

Overall, the results of this community service activity show that targeted interventions focusing on mental health and delinquency prevention can significantly enhance students' and teachers' understanding of these issues. The program contributed to building a healthier school climate, where students feel supported and teachers are better equipped to address psychosocial challenges. These findings suggest that similar initiatives could be replicated in other schools facing comparable issues, with adjustments made to local contexts to ensure effectiveness.

The community service program conducted at Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School in Thailand successfully addressed the urgent need to promote students' mental health and prevent juvenile delinquency. Through a series of educational seminars, socialization activities, and hybrid discussions, both students and teachers gained valuable knowledge about the importance of psychological well-being in schools and practical strategies to safeguard against delinquent behaviors. The program outcomes demonstrated that students became more aware of how to maintain their mental health, while teachers acquired insights into early detection of stress and preventive measures that can be integrated into school practices. Despite challenges such as language barriers, the collaborative role of teachers and facilitators ensured that the objectives of the program were achieved.

The initiative also aligned with global frameworks for adolescent mental health promotion, highlighting the relevance of school-based interventions in fostering resilience, positive emotional development, and safe learning environments. In conclusion, this community service activity contributed to building a healthier school climate by empowering students and teachers with knowledge and skills to support mental health and prevent juvenile delinquency.

The experience suggests that similar programs can be replicated in other schools, with appropriate cultural and contextual adaptations, to strengthen the role of education in promoting student well-being and safeguarding future generations.

4. Conclusion

All activity programs can be implemented well. The purpose of implementing the activities is to provide education on students' mental health to improve students' welfare in schools and the development of juvenile behavior prevention programs can be achieved. Students understand the importance of maintaining mental health and know the efforts that can be made to prevent delinquent behavior. Teachers and schools understand the ways that can be done to prevent delinquent behavior and develop mental health development activities. The existence of language differences is one of the things that makes the implementation of the program take time. Not many students understand English and resource persons who do not understand the local language are challenges in delivering materials and during discussions. The role of teachers and class facilitators in translating is very important in this community engagement activity programs.

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