

## Optimization of Psychological Wellbeing in Local Communities of Hypertensive Patients Through Forgiveness Therapy and Emotional Regulation

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### ABSTRACT

**Background.** Psychological wellbeing is an important element in supporting the quality of life of individuals, especially in local communities facing various emotional and social challenges.

**Purpose.** This community service aims to optimize psychological wellbeing in the local community in the Bukit Sandi area, Solok Regency.

**Method.** The methods used include education, interactive training, group discussions, and hands-on practice facilitated by a multidisciplinary team. Through Forgiveness Therapy interventions and emotion regulation. This program is designed to help people develop the ability to forgive, manage negative emotions, and increase emotional resilience in dealing with conflicts and daily life pressures. The intervention involved 50 participants from various backgrounds, with a focus on community empowerment through a participatory approach.

**Results.** The results of this activity showed a significant increase in knowledge and psychological wellbeing of participants. A positive relationship between Forgiveness Therapy and Emotion Regulation on knowledge improvement was seen with a moderate to strong correlation ( $r = 0.45-0.48$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Forgiveness Therapy and Emotion Regulation have a strong association with Psychological Wellbeing ( $r = 0.52-0.58$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Participants also reported reduced stress levels, increased forgiveness, and more harmonious interpersonal relationships.

**Conclusion.** Through this program, it is hoped that the community can be more adaptive in facing emotional and social challenges, as well as build a more psychologically healthy community. The program also provides an intervention model that can be replicated in other areas with similar conditions.

### KEYWORDS

Psychological wellbeing, forgiveness therapy, emotional regulation, and empowerment of local communities.

### INTRODUCTION

Psychological wellbeing is an important aspect of individual and community life that can affect the overall quality of life. In the local community in the Bukit Sandi area,



Solok Regency, there are challenges in achieving optimal psychological well-being, especially in dealing with social stress, family problems, and conflicts between individuals.

Solok Regency is one of the districts included in the province of West Sumatra, which geographically stretches from southwest to southeast with an area of 3,738 km<sup>2</sup>. Judging from its location, Solok Regency, Bukit Sundi District is one of 14 sub-districts in Solok Regency. Based on its geographical position, Solok Regency is located in a strategic area because it is passed by the Trans-Sumatra Route and is directly adjacent to Padang City. Health problems are encountered in this district. One of them is the high number of hypertension cases in Solok City as many as 21,907 cases (West Sumatra Health Office, 2018). Especially in Bukit Sundi District, the hypertension rate at the top level of the disease was found at the Bukit Sundi District Health Center in 2020 as many as 2516 patients. In addition, based on the results of the 2022 Perinatal Maternal Audit (AMP), hypertension is still one of the causes of maternal mortality in Solok Regency. Hypertension is a condition in which blood vessel pressure increases chronically because the heart pumps much faster than normal (Putri & Cahyanti, 2020). Hypertension cannot be cured, but it can be controlled. One of the dominant risk factors that affect hypertension in old age is stress (Wahyuningsih & Astuti, 2013). Stress is an unpleasant physical and psychological pressure so that it can stimulate the kidney gland in releasing the hormone adrenaline and spurring the heart so that blood pressure will increase (Kurniawan & Sulaiman, 2019). If it occurs over a long period of time, it will cause complications. These complications can attack various target organs of the body so that the patient's quality of life becomes low and causes death (Prasetyorini & Prawesti, 2012). Thus, hypertension and stress that affect health levels can affect an individual's quality of life. This is in line with research that states that there is a strong relationship between stress levels and the quality of life of the elderly and hypertension where the higher the stress level, the lower the quality of life of the elderly (Azizah & Dwi Hartanti, 2016). Then, in other studies, it was also stated that physical activity is disrupted when hypertension recurs, which has an impact on quality of life (Yulitasari et al., 2021). Based on this, the importance of controlling hypertension and stress is one of the keys in determining quality of life. Controlling emotions can be one of the solutions to overcome this. When individuals are able to understand the emotions they feel, they will be better able to regulate and regulate their emotions positively so that the risk of hypertension and stress that affects the quality of life of individuals can be controlled (Kurlia, 2023).

Based on the analysis of the situation that has been presented, it is necessary to hold education for the community in Bukit Sundi, Solok regarding the regulation of emotions and their relationship with quality of life. This education is an effort to increase public knowledge about the importance of emotional regulation. In addition to education, interventions in the form of forgiveness therapy are also carried out. This therapy is a protective factor that involves the reduction of emotions, bad thoughts, and negative behaviors in individuals. With this therapy, people can channel their emotions in the right way so that they can improve emotional regulation in society (Zuroida et al., 2023). One approach that can help improve psychological well-being is to use forgiveness therapy and emotion regulation. Both of these approaches have proven to be effective in reducing stress, anxiety, and improving interpersonal relationships.

Forgiveness psikologis (Cheadle & Toussaint, 2015). Forgiveness has been linked to multiple dimensions of psychological well-being, including reduced stress, lower levels of depression, and enhanced interpersonal functioning. Webb and Toussaint (2019) emphasize that forgiveness serves as a mechanism for mitigating the psychological and physiological impacts of chronic stress, particularly in individuals managing long-term health conditions, such as hypertension. By fostering emotional regulation and a sense of peace, forgiveness therapy provides

a pathway for improving mental health and overall quality of life (Webb & Toussaint, 2019). This therapy focuses on the process of releasing negative feelings towards individuals who are perceived to have hurt or disappointed. On the other hand, emotion regulation also plays an important role in managing negative emotions and improving mental well-being (Thompson, 2007). Skills in regulating emotions help individuals to respond to situations in a more constructive and adaptive way, which in turn improves their quality of life. Given the importance of these two approaches, this community service proposal aims to optimize the psychological well-being of the Bukit Sandi community through the application of forgiveness therapy and emotional regulation. By integrating this approach, it is hoped that people will be better able to face problems in daily life, reduce stress, and improve relationships between community members.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This educational activity is an implementation of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education in the form of lecturer and student service to the Bukit Tandang community by educating the community. The implementation methods are:

*Preparation:* Finding problems that exist in the community so that they can determine the right interventions and activity goals. Data collection was carried out by interview and observation methods. The next preparation, asking for permission from the government and coordinating with the person in charge of the activity, preparing the necessary equipment, namely sound system, infocus, laptop, PPT, and relaxing music.

*Implementation stage:* The activity was carried out on July 15, 2024 by lecturers and KKN students in Sawah Kandih, Bukit Tandang, Bukit Sundi District, Solok Regency. The target of this activity includes individuals with an early adult age range to the elderly (24 - 65 years old), especially housewives in Jorong Paddy Kandih as many as 35 people. Target determination is carried out by considering the potential risk of hypertension and stress, which mostly occurs in adulthood to the elderly. The target achievement in this activity is to increase public knowledge regarding the importance of emotional regulation through education and forgiveness therapy.

*Intervention:* The intervention used is in the form of Forgiveness therapy which is one of the therapy techniques that is carried out with a duration of 10 minutes accompanied by relaxing music that has been provided.

*Closing:* In the form of conveying reactions, messages and impressions by participants after the provision of materials and interventions followed by the closing of the activity.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Solok Regency is one of the districts that is included in the West Sumatra Province, stretching from the Southwest to the Southeast with an area of 3,738 km<sup>2</sup>. Based on Solok Regency data in 2023 figures, the population in 2021 is 394,237 people, in 2022 the population is 397,829 consisting of 200,218 male residents and 197,611 female residents.

**Table 1.** Frequency distribution table for knowledge and psychological wellbeing

| Variable     | Category | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|----------|---------------|----------------|
| Knowledge    | High     | 5             | 10             |
|              | Moderate | 25            | 50             |
|              | Low      | 20            | 40             |
| <b>Total</b> |          | <b>50</b>     | <b>100</b>     |

| Variable                | Category | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------------|----------|---------------|----------------|
| Psychological Wellbeing | Low      | 18            | 36             |
|                         | High     | 32            | 64             |
| <b>Total</b>            |          | <b>50</b>     | <b>100</b>     |

From the table above, it can be seen that high knowledge is owned by 5 participants (10%), medium by 25 participants (50%), and low knowledge by 20 participants (40%). This shows that the majority of participants have a moderate level of knowledge when participating in education and intervention programs about Forgiveness Therapy and Emotion Regulation. Psychological wellbeing explained that as many as 64% of participants were reported to have high psychological wellbeing, while the rest, namely 36%, was in the low category. These results indicate that the intervention program has a significant impact on participants' ability to cope with daily emotional and social stress.

**Table 2.** Table of the Relationship between Knowledge and Psychological Wellbeing through Forgiveness Therapy and Emotion Regulation

| Variable                | Forgiveness Therapy   | Emotion Regulation     |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Knowledge               | $r = 0.45, p = 0.01$  | $r = 0.48, p = 0.005$  |
| Psychological Wellbeing | $r = 0.52, p = 0.001$ | $r = 0.58, p = 0.0005$ |

From the table above, there is a positive relationship between Forgiveness Therapy and Emotion Regulation on knowledge improvement with a moderate to strong correlation ( $r = 0.45$ – $0.48$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Forgiveness Therapy and Emotion Regulation have a strong association with Psychological Wellbeing ( $r = 0.52$ – $0.58$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

The results of this study are consistent with previous studies that highlight the importance of emotional management in improving the psychological well-being and quality of life of individuals. Gross (2002) emphasizes that good regulation of emotions allows individuals to respond to situations in a more adaptive way, which in turn improves mental well-being and interpersonal relationships. Emotion regulation is the process by which a person regulates their emotions, including determining when and how they feel and express those emotions. Gross emphasized that emotion regulation involves a variety of methods and strategies to decrease or increase the intensity of emotions (Thompson, 2007) This activity is about providing education on emotional regulation along with Forgiveness Therapy interventions to prevent the recurrence of hypertension, control stress and improve the quality of life in the community. This research was attended by participants who were 24-65 years old from the Sawah Kandih jorong community. This activity has two sessions, the first session is the beginning of the activity, namely the delivery of material on emotional regulation with the lecture method. In the first session, participants were enthusiastic and took an active role by asking questions during the activity.

The second session was the implementation of intervention in the form of Forgiveness Therapy. In the administration of this intervention, participants were directed to practice breathing relaxation by closing their eyes, sitting in a comfortable position, regulating their breath and relaxing. Participants were asked to follow three stages of instruction. The instruction in the first stage, namely 'Forgive', participants are asked to forgive themselves, forgive those around them and

forgive the situation. The second instruction is 'Thank you', participants are asked to thank themselves, thank themselves for their abilities, and thank the situation. The last instruction is 'Make Peace With Emotions'. In this instruction, participants are directed to do the Butterfly Hug movement, which is to cross your arms in front of your chest while patting your shoulders with your palms alternately. Participants were asked to re-feel the emotions that were always held, accept them and release them well without hurting themselves or others. After all the instructions were carried out, the participants were asked to readjust their breaths to neutralize the emotions, after which the intervention ended (Ardhiani, L. N. (2020) & Orizani, C. M. (2022). In addition, Forgiveness Therapy, as explained by Toussaint et al. (2015), is effective in reducing negative emotions such as resentment and anger, which are often triggers for psychological disorders. With the ability to forgive, participants can release emotional burdens that adversely affect their well-being. The program also showed that increased participants' knowledge of emotional regulation not only impacted their ability to cope with stress but also contributed to the control of hypertension risk factors, which is one of the health challenges in this community. This is in line with the findings of Safaria and Saputra (2009), who stated that controlling emotions can help reduce stress levels related to quality of life.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this activity found that there was a positive relationship between Forgiveness Therapy and Emotion Regulation on increasing knowledge with a moderate to strong correlation ( $r = 0.45-0.48$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Forgiveness Therapy and Emotion Regulation have a strong association with Psychological Wellbeing ( $r = 0.52-0.58$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Through this program, it is hoped that the community can be more adaptive in facing emotional and social challenges, as well as build a more psychologically healthy community. The program also provides an intervention model that can be replicated in other areas with similar conditions.

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## AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.  
Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; Investigation.  
Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.  
Author 4: Formal analysis; Methodology; Writing - original draft.  
Author 5: Supervision; Validation.  
Author 6-9: Resources; Visualization; Writing - original draft.

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