

Self-Control Psychoeducation Through Role Play as a Preventive Approach to Juvenile Delinquency among Adolescents in RW 04 Bandarharjo Village

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Self-Control

Psychoeducation

Role Play

Adolescents

Juvenile

Delinquency

Juvenile delinquency remains a community concern, particularly when adolescents encounter peer pressure and situations that may encourage harmful behavior. Self-control may help adolescents regulate their responses to such situations, but adolescents also need opportunities to practice appropriate responses. This community engagement program aimed to provide self-control psychoeducation and opportunities for adolescents to practice preventive responses through role play. The program involved 20 adolescents aged 12–15 years in RW 04 Bandarharjo Village. The activities consisted of interactive psychoeducation, role play using situation-based cards, and a goal-setting activity. Program outcomes were evaluated through participatory observation during the role-play sessions and open-ended participant reflections. The observations showed that participants were able to demonstrate assertive refusal in simulated situations involving invitations to smoke and participate in fights. Participants also identified productive activities related to their personal goals and reported gaining an understanding of self-control and its relevance to avoiding potentially harmful behavior. These findings suggest that psychoeducation combined with role play can provide adolescents with an opportunity to understand and rehearse preventive self-control responses in a supportive learning environment. However, because the program did not employ pre-test, post-test, or follow-up measurements, the findings do not establish long-term behavioral change or a reduction in juvenile delinquency. Future programs should incorporate more systematic evaluation to assess the maintenance and application of self-control skills in everyday situations.

INTRODUCTION

Juvenile delinquency is one of the social problems that worries the community because it can disrupt security and order in the surrounding environment. The Public Relations of the Semarang Police (2025) stated that the police had arrested 278 teenagers in the Kreak Convoy in March 2025. Kreak, taken from two words, namely “kere” which means poor and “mayak” which means act affected, is a term that refers to a group of young people who like to make a fuss or violence in Semarang (Azizah, 2025). Kreak reflects juvenile delinquency behavior that leads to criminal acts, such as brawls and street violence (Nurkamila, 2025). This shows that this problem still often arises in the community. Acts of violence, brawls, liquor consumption, illegal racing, and serious crimes such as drug trafficking, often involve teenagers. Based on interviews with PKK members in RW 4, Bandarharjo Village, North Semarang District, Semarang City which was conducted in July 2025, it is known that brawls still occur regularly, while drug trafficking under economic pretext is also often found among teenagers. This further worsens the condition of order and security in society (Tjukup et al., 2020). In fact, based

on the news written by Utami (2024), the teen brawls that are rampant in Semarang took two lives, both from brawl participants to passers-by.

According to Willis (2014), juvenile delinquency is an act committed by adolescents that violates the law, religious norms, and social values that apply in society, thereby causing harm to others and disturbing public peace, including themselves. Juvenile delinquency, in addition to harming the surrounding community, also has a bad impact on adolescents, namely disturbing physical and mental health, and even disrupting family harmony (Mahesha et al., 2024). Therefore, juvenile delinquency is a taboo for adolescents to support the glorious future of adolescents. Erikson (in Santrock, 2012), said that adolescents are individuals aged 12 - 18 years who face a crisis to know their identity. In the stage of finding self-identity, Erikson said that adolescents can explore by trying various social roles. In addition, adolescents are expected to be able to develop good relationships with peers. In Santrock (2012) it is also explained that the task of adolescent development is to build personal identity such as knowing values and interests, developing healthy relationships with peers and the opposite sex, learning independently, and having clear academic and career goals. However, through field phenomena, it can be seen that there are still many teenagers who commit juvenile delinquency.

One of the internal factors that plays a role in the emergence of juvenile delinquency is the ability to control themselves. In general, adolescents are still in the unstable phase of psychological development so adolescent behavior tends to be impulsive, emotional, and difficult to think for the long term. This weak self-control makes them easily carried away by negative social trends, such as participating in fights or fights, consuming alcohol, and abusing drugs (Baharudin, 2019). In addition, adolescence is also marked by an identity crisis and the process of finding identity, where they want to get recognition from the surrounding environment. If these needs are not directed to positive things, then adolescents will be prone to deviant behavior for the sake of status or acceptance by certain groups (Trianingsih et al., 2024). Another important factor is the lack of understanding of moral and religious values, because adolescents who do not have a strong ethical or spiritual foundation will have difficulty distinguishing which behaviors are in accordance with norms and which behaviors violate norms. The urge to try new things and high curiosity, if not balanced with mature self-control and self-defense, will further increase the risk of a teenager falling into delinquent behavior that can harm oneself and others.

Self-control refers to an individual's capacity to regulate thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in response to internal impulses and situational demands. Averill (1973) conceptualized personal control as the ability to regulate one's responses to potentially aversive situations, while Tangney, Baumeister, and Boone (2004) emphasized self-control as the capacity to regulate or restrain internal and behavioral responses, including

resisting temptation, controlling emotions, and maintaining behavior that is consistent with personal goals and social standards. In the context of adolescence, self-control is particularly relevant because adolescents may encounter situations involving peer pressure, emotional impulses, and decisions that may have immediate appeal but negative consequences. Therefore, in this program, self-control is understood as the ability to regulate emotions and behavior, resist potentially harmful invitations, and make decisions that are consistent with personal and social goals.

Self-control can be strengthened through repeated practice and the development of behavioral habits (Nurhayati et al., 2022). In this context, psychoeducation can provide adolescents with knowledge and practical strategies for recognizing risky situations and regulating their responses. Psychoeducation is not limited to the delivery of information but may also involve active learning and behavioral practice (Suzuki & Tanoue, 2020). Therefore, the present program uses psychoeducation as a preventive educational approach rather than as a therapeutic intervention. The program combines interactive explanation with role play so that participants are not only introduced to the concept of self-control but are also given opportunities to rehearse appropriate responses to situations that may involve peer pressure or potentially delinquent behavior.

Previous community-based and educational interventions suggest that psychoeducation can contribute to adolescents' understanding of behavioral risks and self-control. Hasni et al. (2024), for example, reported increased knowledge about juvenile delinquency following psychoeducational activities. Marlia (2024) and Marlia and Affandi (2024) also reported the potential of self-control psychoeducation to support the reduction of juvenile delinquency-related behavior among adolescents. In addition, role play has been used as an active learning method that allows participants to practice behavioral responses through direct experience (Pedi, 2024). Ahmad and Maharani (2023) also reported an effect of role-playing techniques on students' self-control in the context of social media use. These findings provide a basis for combining psychoeducation with role play in a preventive community program.

Based on the local situation and the potential of these approaches, the present community engagement program aims to provide adolescents with knowledge about juvenile delinquency and self-control, while also giving them opportunities to practice self-control responses in potentially risky social situations. More specifically, the program focuses on three immediate outcomes: understanding the consequences of juvenile delinquency, recognizing situations that require self-control, and practicing assertive refusal through role play. The program therefore does not aim to establish a long-term reduction in juvenile delinquency, but rather to provide adolescents with knowledge and opportunities to rehearse preventive self-control skills.

The first material used is a role play card which contains real-life scenarios that are often faced by adolescents and contains scenarios that aim to practice self-control, the ability to make the right decisions, and think critically. This card is made based on problems that are often encountered by teenagers in their daily lives such as calls for fights, invitations to smoke, confronting friends who take things, and playing with cellphones until they forget time. Then the second material used is a poster that contains general information about juvenile delinquency such as general definitions, reasons underlying delinquency behavior, legal views, and ways to exercise self-control. The purpose of this poster is to provide brief education targeting the knowledge of participants conveyed through visual media.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT METHOD

Material Preparation

The first material used is a role play card which contains real-life scenarios that are often faced by adolescents and contains scenarios that aim to practice self-control, the ability to make the right decisions, and think critically. This card is made based on problems that are often encountered by teenagers in their daily lives such as calls for fights, invitations to smoke, confronting friends who take things, and playing with cellphones until they forget time. Then the second material used is a poster that contains general information about juvenile delinquency such as general definitions, reasons underlying delinquency behavior, legal views, and ways to exercise self-control. The purpose of this poster is to provide brief education targeting the knowledge of participants conveyed through visual media.



Figure 1. Psychoeducation and Role-Play Materials

Program Evaluation

The program was evaluated using two qualitative instruments: participatory observation and open-ended participant interviews. These instruments were used to assess participants' immediate understanding of the material and their ability to demonstrate self-control responses during the activity. Because the program did not include pre-test, post-test, or follow-up measurements, the evaluation was not intended to determine changes in participants' long-term knowledge or behavior. Instead, it focused on

participants' observed performance and immediate reflections following the psychoeducation and role-play sessions.

Participatory observation was conducted during the role-play session. The observation focused on participants' ability to recognize potentially risky situations, express an assertive refusal to engage in the behavior presented in the scenario, provide a reason for their refusal, and identify an alternative or more productive response. These indicators were selected because the role-play scenarios were designed to provide opportunities for participants to practice self-control in situations involving peer pressure, such as invitations to fight or smoke.

The second instrument consisted of open-ended questions administered after the role-play activity. The questions were intended to explore participants' understanding of juvenile delinquency and self-control, their perceptions of the role-play activity, and what they learned from the activity. The responses were reviewed descriptively to identify recurring points concerning participants' understanding of self-control and their perceived ability to respond to potentially negative situations. The findings from the observation and participant reflections were then interpreted together to describe the immediate outcomes of the community engagement program.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The role-play activities showed that participants were able to demonstrate assertive responses to scenarios involving potentially delinquent behavior. For example, when presented with an invitation to smoke, participants expressed refusal and provided reasons related to the negative effects of smoking. Similarly, when presented with a scenario involving a fight, participants were able to express their refusal and identify the potential harm associated with fighting. These responses indicate that participants were able to rehearse self-control and assertive refusal within the simulated situations provided by the role-play activity.

In addition to the role-play activity, participants completed a goal-setting activity in which they identified personal goals and productive activities that could support those goals. This activity provided participants with an opportunity to connect self-control with decisions about how they use their time and pursue personal goals.

The participants' post-activity reflections also indicated that the program helped them understand the meaning of self-control and its relevance to avoiding potentially negative behavior. Taken together, the observations and participant reflections suggest that the program produced immediate educational outcomes, particularly in terms of understanding self-control and practicing appropriate responses to potentially risky situations. However, these findings reflect participants' performance during the activity and their immediate reflections; they should not be interpreted as evidence of long-term behavioral change or a reduction in juvenile delinquency.

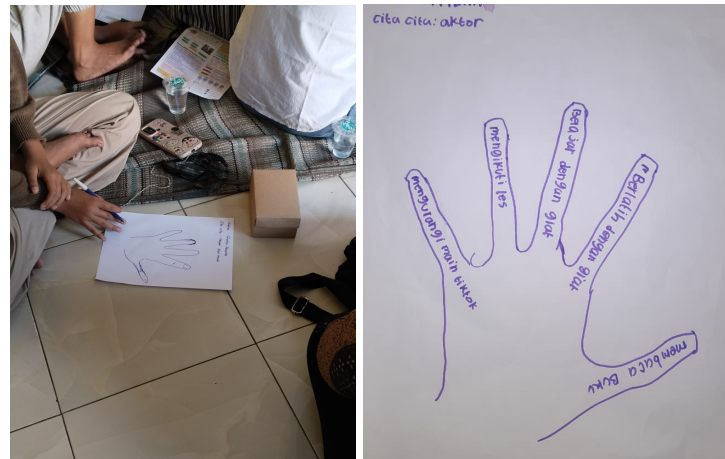


Figure 2. Participants' Goal-Setting Activity



Figure 3. Implementation of Role Play Sessions

Discussion

The findings indicate that the combination of psychoeducation and role play provided participants with an opportunity to understand and practice self-control in situations that may involve peer pressure. The ability of participants to express refusal when presented with scenarios involving smoking and fighting suggests that role play can function as a practical setting in which adolescents rehearse responses before encountering similar situations in everyday life. This is consistent with the view that self-control involves regulating emotional and behavioral responses and maintaining behavior that is consistent with personal goals and social standards (Tangney et al., 2004).

The role-play component is particularly relevant because the activity moves beyond the delivery of information and gives participants an opportunity to practice a behavioral response. Rather than merely knowing that smoking or fighting may have negative consequences, participants were asked to respond to a simulated social situation and communicate their refusal. This practical component is consistent with Pedi (2024), who describes role play as an active learning method that allows participants to learn through

direct experience. The findings also correspond with Ahmad and Maharani (2023), who reported the relevance of role-playing techniques to self-control among adolescents in the context of social media use.

The goal-setting activity further complemented the role-play session by encouraging participants to identify productive activities and connect their daily choices with personal goals. This component is relevant to self-control because regulating immediate impulses can be understood in relation to longer-term goals and desired outcomes. Thus, the program did not focus solely on telling adolescents what behaviors to avoid, but also encouraged them to consider alternative activities that could support their personal goals.

However, the findings should be interpreted within the scope of the evaluation design. The observed ability to refuse an invitation during role play demonstrates a simulated behavioral response rather than actual behavior in the participants' everyday environment. Likewise, the participants' positive reflections indicate immediate perceptions of learning but do not establish that their knowledge or self-control increased compared with their condition before the program. Without pre-test, post-test, and follow-up measurements, the program cannot establish a causal effect on self-control or demonstrate a reduction in juvenile delinquency. The contribution of the present program is therefore best understood as providing adolescents with knowledge and an opportunity to rehearse preventive self-control responses in a supportive and low-risk learning environment.

The program also encountered several practical challenges. Some participants arrived late, while others were initially reluctant to participate actively in the role-play activities. These challenges were addressed by coordinating with local cadres and using simple participation strategies to encourage participants to feel more comfortable during the activity.

Several limitations should nevertheless be considered when interpreting the program outcomes. First, the limited implementation time prevented the use of pre-test and post-test measurements. As a result, the program could assess participants' immediate responses and reflections but could not determine whether their knowledge or self-control changed as a result of the intervention. Second, the program involved only 20 adolescents, so the findings describe the participants involved in the activity rather than representing adolescents in Bandarharjo Village more broadly. Third, the observation and interview procedures were designed for practical program evaluation and did not constitute a standardized behavioral assessment. Future community engagement programs could strengthen the evaluation by using validated measures of self-control, pre-test and post-test assessments, and follow-up measurements to examine whether the

skills practiced during role play are maintained and applied in participants' everyday lives.

CONCLUSION

The self-control psychoeducation program conducted in RW 04 Bandarharjo Village provided adolescents with knowledge about juvenile delinquency and self-control and opportunities to practice preventive responses through role play. During the simulated scenarios, participants were able to demonstrate assertive refusal toward invitations to engage in potentially harmful behaviors such as smoking and fighting. The goal-setting activity also encouraged participants to identify productive activities related to their personal goals.

These findings suggest that the combination of interactive psychoeducation and role play can serve as a practical preventive approach for introducing and rehearsing self-control skills among adolescents. However, the findings are limited to participants' immediate performance and reflections during the program. Because the activity did not include pre-test, post-test, or follow-up measurements, it cannot establish long-term changes in self-control or demonstrate an actual reduction in juvenile delinquency. Future programs should therefore incorporate more systematic evaluation procedures, including validated self-control measures and follow-up assessment, to determine whether the skills practiced during the activity are maintained and transferred to adolescents' everyday behavior.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to thank Bandarharjo Village, PKK RW 4 cadres, and RW 4 village officials who have helped the running of the event from applying for a place permit and assistance to send children to each RT. We would also like to thank the participants who have attended the socialization activity. Not to forget, we would like to thank the supervisor who guided the concept of making the event and provided supportive input.

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