

## COUNSELING PROGRAM TO ENHANCE SELF-CONTROL OF INMATES WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS IN CLASS IIB BREBES CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION



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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of a counseling program in improving the self-control of prisoners with psychological disorders at Brebes Class IIB Correctional Institution. Prisoners often experience psychological disorders due to social isolation, overcapacity, and the pressures of life in prison, which have a negative impact on their self-control. The counseling program implemented aims to help prisoners develop self-control through a Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) approach and mental health screening using the Self-Reporting Questionnaire (SRQ-29). The results indicated that counseling significantly improved the psychological condition of prisoners, with positive behavioral changes, increased self-discipline, emotional management, and healthy habits. The success of this program is measured through five main aspects: behavior change, mental health, problem-solving, self-discipline, and healthy habits. For optimal effectiveness, increasing the frequency of counseling, training prison officers, and providing better counseling facilities are recommended.*

**Keywords:** Self Control; Prisoners; Psychological Disorders; Counseling Program



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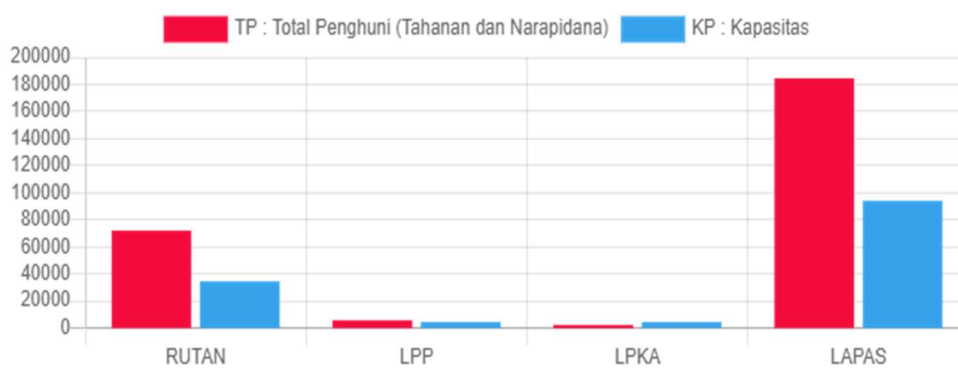
## INTRODUCTION

Prisoners who serve a criminal period in prison will experience changes in their lives, both positive and negative changes. Various negative changes felt by prisoners cannot be avoided. Prisoners tend to have high levels of stress and intense anxiety. This is due to the drastic change from outside life to the routine in prison. Gresham M, Sykes suggests that prisoners will experience psychological pressure while serving a criminal period, including:

1. Loss of liberty, prisoners feel deprived of their individual rights. This right causes various psychological disorders that affect the behavior of prisoners during the criminal period.
2. Loss of autonomy, inmates will lose the sense of self-regulation.
3. Loss of heterosexual relationship, prisoners are classified based on gender, which results in prisoners losing their biological needs, such as sex.
4. Loss of goods and services, prisoners do all their own activities, prisoners will lose services, and even the sense of affection that was given before they served their sentence.
5. Loss of security, prisoners serving a criminal period will lose their sense of security, being under the supervision and intervention of officers (Ramayani, 2020).

Basically, psychological well-being can create a picture related to the function of individuals as humans and what they want as beings who have goals and fight for their own life goals. A sense of well-being in oneself will make individuals survive and interpret the difficulties experienced and make them a life experience (Ryan, 2021). A Correctional Institution is a total institution, prisoners will experience social isolation and limited social interaction. A prisoner serving a sentence in a correctional institution not only loses physical freedom, but also limitations in the nature to engage in free social interaction. Prisoners face challenges in maintaining connections with the outside world, experiencing restrictions on relationships with family, friends, and the general public.

Social isolation forms a reality where prisoners must adapt to the limited social structures and norms that exist within the correctional environment. An overcrowded prison environment can have a negative impact on the psychological well-being of prisoners, increasing stress and creating a feeling of discomfort for prisoners. Overcrowding in correctional institutions can lead to conflicts between inmates and the potential for violence that will threaten the psychological condition of inmates.



Source: Public SDP, 2024

**Figure 1**  
**Statistics on the number of UPT residents in Indonesia**

The data shows that correctional institutions in Indonesia experience the highest overcapacity among other technical implementation units. This condition creates complex psychological pressures, affecting the emotional and mental well-being of prisoners. Prisoners are given the understanding to comply with all binding and coercive regulations in correctional institutions, this will trigger an increased risk of psychological disorders. In this case, the psychological condition of prisoners is a very important aspect to be given special attention.

Psychological disorders can occur due to innate factors or past experiences. Psychological disorders can also occur due to past trauma so that emotional instability can have a negative impact on the level of self-control of prisoners. Increasing prisoners' self-control is the main essence in an effort to help prisoners who experience psychological disorders to control themselves. This condition results in the importance of health services to overcome various psychological disorders that befall prisoners while in correctional institutions. Various psychological approaches can be used as a way and therapy for prisoners who experience psychological disorders, one of which is counseling. Counseling is one part of the personality development program in prison. Counseling has great potential to increase inmates' self-control and provide an opportunity to understand the root of the inmates' psychological problems in depth.

Class IIB Brebes Correctional Institution is one of the Technical Implementation Units that provides psychological health services in the form of counseling programs as part of personality development for prisoners. The counseling program aims to improve the condition of the psychological well-being of prisoners by providing psychological support to overcome the mental, emotional, and psychological problems of prisoners while serving their sentences at the Brebes Class IIB Correctional Facility. The following are prisoners diagnosed with psychological disorders in February 2024.

**Table 1**  
**Data on Inmates with Psychological Disorders in Class IIB Brebes Correctional Institution**

No.	Type of Psychological Disorder	Number of Prisoners
1.	Schizophrenia	1 person
2.	Bipolar	1 person
3.	Depression	2 persons
4.	Anxiety Disorder	4 persons
Total		8 persons

Source: Data of Class IIB Brebes Correctional Institution, 2024

The above in Table 1 was obtained through a screening process carried out by psychologists at Class IIB Brebes Correctional Facility. Psychological conditions that are not well managed can put extra pressure on their self-control abilities. When there is no special attention to the psychological condition of prisoners with psychological disorders, they will more easily lose self-control. This is indicated by the appearance of symptoms such as impulsivity, difficulty managing emotions, and other negative behaviors that can cause security and order disturbances.

The psychological instability of prisoners with psychological disorders can have a negative impact on their ability to control impulsive or aggressive behavior. Excessive anxiety can put additional pressure on their self-control abilities. In addition, aspects of self-control are important in the prisoner development process. Lack of attention to psychological disorders can hinder the active participation of prisoners in coaching programs designed to strengthen their self-control. In the absence of adequate support,

the possibility of developing effective self-control strategies may also be hindered. When prisoners with psychological disorders do not receive adequate attention, not only are aspects of their mental health threatened, but also their self-control abilities which can affect their behavior within the prison environment. Therefore, approaches are needed to ensure proper attention to their mental health.

The Class IIB Brebes Correctional Institution faces challenges in implementing the counseling program which is part of the personality development program for prisoners with psychological disorders. Although a counseling program for prisoners with psychological disorders has been implemented, there has not been a thorough assessment of the extent to which this counseling has a positive impact and increased self-control of prisoners with psychological disorders.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Research by Rahayu, et al. (2022) aims to determine the effectiveness of Islamic counseling in an effort to increase self-control of victims of narcotics abuse at the Class IIA Rantauprapat Correctional Institution. It is concluded that Islamic guidance and counseling in improving self-control of victims of narcotics abuse has changed after getting treatment within the Class IIA Rantauprapat Correctional Institution. From the results of the post-test after being given Islamic counseling guidance, there was a significant increase when compared to the pre-test results before treatment. Post-test scores tend to be higher than pre-test scores before the intervention. This indicates that the beliefs of prisoners show positive changes and lead to improvement. These changes are more dominant towards positive aspects, indicating that Islamic Guidance and counseling has a positive impact on efforts to increase self-control of victims of narcotics abuse within the Class IIA Rantauprapat Correctional Institution.

Fajrin and Kusmiyanti's (2021) study aims to assess the impact of self-control on the level of compliance of prisoners in order to reduce the number of offenses in Purwokerto Class IIA Prison. The results of the influence in this study show a negative and insignificant impact, indicating that the level of self-control in prisoners in Purwokerto Class IIA Prison does affect, but its influence on the level of compliance tends to be small. However, this small impact does not mean that the compliance variable does not require a contribution from the self-control variable. Thus, it is important to maintain the level of self-control in each prisoner in the context of compliance. However, further studies are needed to efficiently and effectively evaluate how prisoners can improve their self-control abilities, so as to avoid rule violations that have the potential to cause the granting of register F. Improvements in self-control can be achieved through various steps, such as rejecting negative invitations from fellow prisoners, controlling emotions, and managing impulses. Targeted coaching and training efforts are needed to increase the level of self-control, so that prisoners can be more compliant with the rules that apply in Purwokerto Class IIA Prison.

## **METHOD**

The research aims to explore the lives of prisoners at the Brebes Class IIB Correctional Institution who experience psychological disorders, especially related to self-control. The research method chosen is qualitative research using a case study research design that focuses on an in-depth understanding of how counseling programs can be an effort to increase self-control. The background of this research was triggered by the importance of an in-depth understanding of the psychological factors that influence the level of self-control of prisoners.

According to Creswell (2023), a qualitative research can begin with an assumption and the use of a theoretical interpretive framework by shaping and influencing the study of research problems with the meanings used by individuals and groups on social and human problems. Case study is a qualitative strategy in which researchers begin to examine a program, activity, event, process, either one or more individuals in depth. The case is limited by activity and time, the researcher must collect detailed information with a variety of data collection procedures used over a specified period (Creswell, 2023).

Case study research is defined as a qualitative approach in which researchers investigate real-life cases by collecting detailed and in-depth data. This process involves sources of information, including interviews, observations, audio-visual materials, and reports. The results of this research are then presented in the form of case descriptions and emerging themes. The purpose of a case study is to find out the causes behind the emergence of a problem and understand the relationship between the factors involved. In this research design, the researcher will involve prisoners at the Brebes Class IIB Correctional Institution as participants. Participant selection criteria include inmates who have a history of psychological disorders and are willing to participate. Data collection techniques will involve in-depth interviews, participatory observation during counseling sessions, as well as analysis of related documents.

In-depth interviews will be conducted to explore inmates' experiences related to self-control, the impact of psychological disorders, and perceptions of the counseling program. Participatory observation will allow the researcher to be directly involved in some counseling sessions, while noting any behavioral changes that may occur. Document analysis will include reviewing counseling records, inmate history, and documents related to the rehabilitation program.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Every prisoner who serves a criminal period in a correctional institution will experience his worst times, this greatly affects the psychological condition of the prisoner. Various pressures trigger various psychological disorders that make it difficult for prisoners to control themselves. Therefore, prisoners with psychological disorders need needs, especially to overcome their psychological problems. Counseling is one of the techniques that can be used in improving self-control of prisoners with psychological disorders.

Prisoners with psychological disorders face great challenges in managing emotions, thoughts, and behavior which results in a decrease in self-control, they have difficulty controlling themselves. The counseling program at Class IIB Brebes Correctional Institution is implemented as an effort to meet the needs of psychologically disturbed prisoners so that they can develop better self-control skills. Self-control is very important to reduce impulsivity, manage stress, and make it easier to adapt to the stressful environment of correctional institutions.

Early detection of psychological disorders experienced by prisoners begins with mental health and mental health screening. After screening, inmates with high levels of anxiety and depression will receive treatment in the form of counseling conducted by expert psychologists of Class IIB Brebes Correctional Institution. The instrument used in screening prisoners is the Self Reporting Questionnaire (SRQ-29) for adults which consists of 29 questions. From the results of the interview, the psychologist explained that on the SRQ-29 anxiety and depression symptoms are in one assessment category and are interrelated. This instrument can provide results in the form of psychological disorders experienced by prisoners and can assist psychologists in designing appropriate interventions during counseling.



Prisoners with psychological disorders tend not to realize what has happened to them, some of their actions are subconscious. They are also unaware of their psychological condition. Psychologists in this case play an active role in understanding their conditions, providing emotional support, and guiding them during counseling sessions. Regular screening and counseling shows a commitment to helping inmates improve their self-control. With the existing limitations, Class IIB Brebes Correctional Facility strives to continue to improve and maximize the quality of the existing counseling program. Based on the results of interviews and observations, 4 (four) aspects that become benchmarks in the successful implementation of counseling in an effort to increase the self-control of prisoners with psychological disorders can be achieved at Brebes Class IIB Correctional Facility, among others:

a) Behavior Change

The success of the counseling program can be seen from changes in behavior and patterns of daily life of inmates with psychological disorders that become more positive, psychologists conduct intensive communication with correctional officers, especially the duty commander to obtain information related to the condition of the inmates while in the block or room. When there is a relapse of psychological disorder inmates, the officer will report it to the duty commander and then forward it to be handled by a psychologist. Apart from officers, psychologists also receive reports from the roommate of the inmate, after counseling the condition of the inmate shows a fairly good change in behavior.

b) Positive Mental Health

Interview results show that counseling plays an important role in improving the mental health of prisoners with psychological disorders. Through regular counseling sessions, there is an emphasis on intrinsic motivation and drive to promote a more positive mental health state. Psychologically ill inmates show an internal motivation to change their behavior and manage their emotions. This process not only helps them overcome the psychological problems they are experiencing, but also build good responses and manage daily emotional challenges.

c) Problem solving

Based on the results of the interviews, the psychologist stated that various psychological approaches are carried out to help solve the problems of inmates with psychological disorders. One of them is the Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) approach which involves a series of questions to deeply understand the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of the inmates. This approach directly leads to the identification and resolution of inmate problems. By understanding the root causes of unwanted behaviors and negative emotions, inmates can learn to change mindsets and respond to situations in more effective and adaptive ways. Thus, CBT not only helps inmates address the specific problems they face, but it also teaches them useful skills for solving problems in general, strengthening their ability to better manage conflicts, stress, and everyday challenges.

d) Personal Effectiveness

Based on interviews with psychologists, inmates who experience anxiety and depression often require time to adapt to the new environment within the prison and interactions with other inmates. After passing through this adaptation phase, they can begin to adjust and manage their anxiety and depression more effectively. Therefore, this process demonstrates the personal effectiveness of inmates in

handling their psychological challenges, with the support and guidance provided by the counseling program in the prison.

The success of the counseling program can be seen from the increase in inmates' self-control, demonstrated by improvements in their psychological condition and more positive behavioral changes. There are five (5) aspects used as benchmarks for the success of counseling for inmates with psychological disorders, namely:

a) Self-Discipline

Based on interviews with psychologists, self-discipline enables inmates to regulate and control themselves, follow daily routines, and maintain cleanliness and appearance. Active participation in work development programs and productive activities, such as making doormats, also reflects high self-discipline, as they must adhere to schedules, follow instructions, and complete tasks consistently.

b) Deliberate or Non-Impulsive Action

Based on interviews with psychologists, inmates with disorders such as bipolar and schizophrenia often engage in impulsive and repetitive actions without full awareness. Through counseling, they are taught to recognize and understand the thoughts and emotions underlying their impulsive actions. This process helps them develop better self-control. With time and proper counseling support, they begin to show the ability to think more deliberately before acting, reducing the frequency of harmful impulsive behaviors.

c) Healthy Habits

According to interviews with psychologists, the improvement in healthy habits is a direct result of counseling interventions focused on developing good self-control. Inmates who previously neglected their sleep patterns, diet, or personal hygiene begin to show positive changes in their daily habits. Counseling helps inmates understand the importance of healthy habits and provides them with tools to implement these in daily life. Improvements in sleep and diet patterns, as well as increased attention to personal hygiene—such as regularly bathing—are key indicators of enhanced self-control and better mental health. By adopting these healthy habits, inmates can manage stress and emotions more effectively, which in turn aids in their rehabilitation process.

d) Work Ethic

Through regular activities such as exercise, physical training, and work in the Bimker program, inmates learn to appreciate the value of hard work, discipline, and responsibility. They also develop habits of completing tasks and participating in the community, which are essential components of a good work ethic. These activities not only help them manage their psychological conditions but also prepare them for reintegration into society with positive work skills and attitudes.

e) Thus, the counseling program, supported by regular activities at Lapas Kelas IIB Brebes, plays a vital role in shaping the work ethic of inmates. Inmates who are active and engaged in meaningful activities tend to have better mental health, improved self-control, and develop work habits that will benefit them after leaving the correctional facility.

f) Reliability

The improvement in personal hygiene, communication skills, and inmates' compliance demonstrates positive changes in their behavior, which is directly related to an increase in reliability. Reliability is a quality that shows that a person can be trusted to fulfill their duties and responsibilities consistently and on time.

By paying more attention to personal cleanliness and showing more organized behavior, inmates prove that they can be relied upon to maintain expected standards of hygiene and behavior. Their ability to speak more clearly and coherently also shows improvements in communication skills, which are important for establishing reliable relationships with prison staff and fellow inmates. Additionally, becoming more manageable indicates that inmates are showing cooperative and disciplined attitudes, which are important indicators of reliability.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Inmates with psychological disorders at Lembaga Pemasyarakatan Kelas IIB Brebes face significant challenges in managing themselves, especially in terms of self-control. The counseling program implemented at this prison serves as an effective solution in helping inmates address their psychological issues. Through initial screenings and counseling interventions, inmates can show improvements in self-control, as evidenced by behavioral changes, better mental health, improved problem-solving abilities, and personal effectiveness. The success of this counseling program is measured through five key aspects: positive behavioral changes, improved mental health, problem-solving abilities using approaches like CBT, enhanced self-discipline, and the development of healthy habits and a strong work ethic. Additionally, counseling helps inmates reduce impulsive behaviors, improve personal hygiene, and enhance communication skills, which all support their reintegration into society.

To further enhance the effectiveness of the counseling program in increasing the self-control of inmates with psychological disorders at Lembaga Pemasyarakatan Kelas IIB Brebes, several steps need to be taken. First, the frequency of counseling sessions should be increased so that inmates receive consistent and continuous guidance. Additionally, prison officers need to receive special training related to early detection and handling of inmates with psychological disorders, so they can assist psychologists in monitoring inmates' conditions. It is also important to develop supporting programs such as group therapy, skills training, and physical activities that focus on stress management and self-discipline. In terms of facilities, the provision of a comfortable counseling room and comprehensive psychological screening tools is essential. The prison can also collaborate with external parties such as mental health institutions or universities with psychology programs to provide additional interventions. Regular evaluations of the counseling program should be conducted to ensure its effectiveness and identify areas that require improvement.

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