EDUSIGHT *ISSN: 3046-9023*
JURNAL PENGABDIAN MASYARAKAT (EduJPM)

Volume 3 No 3
Published on August 2026

Psychoeducation for Happy Teachers and Joyful Classrooms: Emotional Regulation Skills in Managing the Dynamics of Early Childhood

[*1]Lina Rahmawati, [2]Shinta Pratiwi, [3]Mulya Virgonita I.W

[1,2,3]Master of Psychology Program, Postgraduate Program, Universitas Semarang, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author:
ummulofa@gmail.com

Abstract

Teachers' emotional regulation is a critical aspect of early childhood education, yet teachers frequently experience job stress due to misconceptions regarding children's tantrum behaviors. This community service (PKM) program aimed to enhance Kindergarten teachers' emotional regulation capacity through neuroscience-based psychoeducation. The program's partners were Kindergarten teachers who reported stress vulnerability and reactive tendencies when dealing with tantrums. The intervention method involved interactive psychoeducation integrating brain development concepts, specifically the roles of the Amygdala and the Prefrontal Cortex (PFC), followed by qualitative reflective evaluation sessions. The evaluation results indicated a significant cognitive reframing among teachers. Prior to the intervention, teachers attributed tantrums to children's misbehavior, which triggered negative emotional responses. Post-intervention, teachers perceived tantrums as an expression of the biological limitations of a developing child. This paradigm shift reduced emotional tension, enhanced empathy, and increased teachers' self-efficacy in managing classroom dynamics. Neuroscience-based psychoeducation is proven effective in providing long-term impacts on teachers' psychological well-being and the quality of caregiving in schools.

Keywords: *Psychoeducation, Emotional Regulation, Kindergarten Teacher, Neuroscience, Tantrum.*

Copyright © 2026 Edusight Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat
reproduction in any medium so long as the original work is properly cited.

This is an open access article which permits unlimited use, distribution and

reproduction in any medium so long as the original work is properly cited.

1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching and educating young children is a complex and comprehensive role, as kindergarten teachers are responsible not only for educational functions but also for caregiving, emotional support, and the regulation of children's emotions. In daily classroom practice, kindergarten teachers frequently encounter dynamic situations that require adaptive emotional responses, including recurrent tantrums, conflicts among children, fluctuations in children's emotional states, and diverse individual needs. In addition to classroom demands, teachers are also expected to manage administrative responsibilities and professional duties, which may contribute to increased emotional pressure. These challenges can become more complex when teachers simultaneously fulfill multiple roles within their families, such as being mothers, wives, or daughters, potentially resulting in *multi-role conflict* and additional psychological burden.

Teachers' ability to regulate their emotions is an important factor in creating a safe, comfortable, and supportive learning environment for early childhood development. Teachers who are able to recognize, understand, and manage their emotional responses adaptively may be better equipped to respond calmly and constructively to challenging child behaviors. Conversely, difficulties in emotional regulation may lead to repeated use of *emotional suppression*, which can potentially affect teacher well-being and the quality of teacher–child interactions. Therefore, strengthening teachers' emotional regulation skills is important not only for supporting teachers' psychological well-being but also for fostering a positive classroom climate that facilitates children's learning and development.

In response to these needs, this community engagement program was designed as a psychoeducational intervention entitled "Happy Teachers, Joyful Classrooms," focusing on strengthening emotional regulation skills among kindergarten teachers. The psychoeducational materials incorporated a neuroscience-based approach to help teachers understand children's emotional responses, including the role of the amygdala in responding to situations perceived as threatening or stressful. This understanding was intended to help teachers interpret children's emotional behaviors more appropriately,

allowing them to respond to challenging behaviors not merely through spontaneous reactions but also through an understanding of the underlying emotional processes.

In addition to providing conceptual understanding, the program equipped teachers with practical emotional regulation techniques that could be applied in everyday situations. These techniques included the 10-Second Pause, the 4-4-4 breathing technique, and cognitive *reframing*. Teachers were also introduced to educational songs as a relaxation and *self-soothing* strategy that could be practiced independently to help reduce emotional tension and promote calmness. Furthermore, the program incorporated a reflection session using a *guided self-compassion* approach, which was designed to provide a safe space for teachers to recognize, validate, and process emotional burdens arising from both their professional and personal roles.

Overall, this community engagement program aimed to enhance teachers' understanding of emotional regulation through a neuroscience-informed psychoeducational approach, develop their ability to apply simple and practical emotional regulation techniques, introduce relaxation and *self-soothing* strategies through educational songs, and provide a reflective space that supports teachers' emotional acceptance and recovery. Through these activities, teachers were expected to develop more adaptive skills for managing the dynamics of early childhood behavior and, consequently, contribute to a more positive, safe, and joyful classroom environment.

2. METHOD

Design and Implementation of the Community Engagement Program

The community engagement program was implemented as an interactive psychoeducational session focusing on emotional regulation skills among kindergarten teachers. The activity was conducted on August 13, 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (Western Indonesian Time) at TK PGRI 113, as part of a meeting involving Gugus Bintang 3 and Gugus Bintang 4 of IGTKI-PGRI, Pedurungan District. The participants were kindergarten teachers who were members of IGTKI-PGRI in Pedurungan District. The program was facilitated by Lina Rahmawati, S.Pd.I, under the supervision of Dr.

MM. Shinta Pratiwi, S.Psi., M.A., Psychologist, and Dr. Mulya Virgonita I.W., S.Psi., M.Si., Psychologist.

The psychoeducational session employed an interactive approach that combined educational lectures, group discussions, relaxation simulations, and collaborative singing activities. The intervention was designed to provide participants with both conceptual understanding and practical skills in emotional regulation that could be applied in their daily interactions with young children. The session began with a discussion of myths and facts regarding teachers' emotions. Participants were encouraged to reconsider the assumption that teachers must always appear emotionally stable and free from negative emotions. Instead, the session emphasized that recognizing emotional limits and acknowledging personal emotional experiences are normal aspects of healthy professional functioning.

The subsequent session explored the potential influence of teachers' emotional states on classroom dynamics through the concept of *emotional contagion*. Participants were encouraged to understand that teachers' emotional states and expressions may influence the emotional atmosphere of the classroom and children's sense of safety. This discussion was followed by a neuroscience-informed explanation of children's emotional responses, particularly the role of the amygdala in emotional reactions. The material explained that intense emotional responses, such as tantrums, can occur as part of normal early childhood development. The ongoing maturation of the prefrontal cortex may also limit young children's capacity to regulate intense emotions effectively. This perspective was intended to help teachers interpret challenging behaviors more empathically rather than perceiving them solely as deliberate misbehavior.

The program then introduced three practical emotional regulation techniques: the 10-Second Pause, 4-4-4 breathing, and *reframing*. The 10-Second Pause encouraged teachers to briefly stop before responding to emotionally challenging situations involving children. The 4-4-4 breathing technique involved inhaling for four seconds, holding the breath for four seconds, and exhaling for four seconds. *Reframing* was introduced as a cognitive strategy for changing negative interpretations of children's behaviors into more empathetic and constructive perspectives. Each technique was explained and practiced

during the session to facilitate participants' understanding and application in classroom situations.

The program also incorporated an educational song entitled "Guru Hebat Selamanya," created by Lina Rahmawati. The participants learned and performed the song together as a group-based relaxation and *self-soothing* activity. This activity was intended to provide an accessible and enjoyable strategy for reducing emotional tension while fostering a sense of connection and togetherness among participants. In addition, participants received psychoeducation on strategies for maintaining their "emotional batteries," including meeting basic personal needs, establishing healthy boundaries, and strengthening peer support among teachers.

Reflection and Guided Self-Compassion Session

The final stage of the program consisted of a guided reflection session designed to promote mindfulness, emotional awareness, self-acceptance, and self-compassion. Participants were guided to temporarily shift their attention away from their external responsibilities and focus on their present emotional experiences. The reflection began with breathing exercises and instructions to release physical tension, followed by guided prompts that encouraged participants to recognize the emotional burdens they might experience in both their professional and personal roles.

The facilitator invited participants to reflect on the expectations placed upon them to remain patient, cheerful, and emotionally composed while working with young children. Participants were encouraged to acknowledge that, behind their professional roles, they may experience fatigue, frustration, sadness, anxiety, and feelings of guilt. Rather than suppressing these emotional experiences, the reflection emphasized the importance of recognizing and validating emotions as a natural part of being human. Participants were then guided to practice self-compassion through affirmative statements expressing gratitude toward themselves for their efforts, perseverance, and ability to continue fulfilling their responsibilities despite various challenges.

The reflection concluded by emphasizing the importance of self-care and emotional replenishment. Through breathing exercises and a gradual redirection of attention toward the present moment, participants were encouraged to reconnect with themselves and

acknowledge their own emotional needs. The session ended with participants being invited to open their eyes and return their attention to the group with a sincere smile as an expression of self-appreciation and self-acceptance.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of the Educational Song

One of the activities that received a positive response during the program was the introduction and practice of the educational song "Guru Hebat Selamanya," created by the facilitator. The group singing activity functioned as an ice breaker that helped create a more relaxed, warm, and interactive atmosphere. In addition to providing variation from the educational content, the activity encouraged interaction among participants and created a positive shared group experience. From an emotional regulation perspective, the song was also introduced as a simple relaxation and *self-soothing* strategy that teachers could practice independently, both at school and at home.

The use of music-based activities in this program suggests that emotional regulation strategies do not necessarily have to be delivered through formal psychological techniques. Simple, enjoyable, and easy-to-remember activities may provide accessible alternatives that can be incorporated into daily routines. For kindergarten teachers who simultaneously manage professional responsibilities and family roles, practical strategies that require relatively little time may be easier to integrate into their everyday lives.

Emotional Catharsis and Guided Reflection

One of the most notable qualitative findings emerged during the guided reflection and *self-compassion* session. The reflection process appeared to provide participants with an opportunity to recognize and express emotions that may have been suppressed while fulfilling their roles as teachers and family members. This was reflected in emotional catharsis observed during the session, including several participants becoming tearful.

This response was not interpreted as a clinical indicator of intervention effectiveness but rather as a qualitative observation suggesting that the reflection session created a sufficiently safe space for participants to acknowledge their emotional experiences. The process also appeared to foster a sense of *common humanity*, referring

to the awareness that fatigue, frustration, and emotional pressure are experiences that can be shared by others in similar roles. Thus, participants were not only encouraged to learn emotional regulation techniques but also to develop greater acceptance of their own emotional experiences.

The reflection session further highlighted the importance of an approach that focuses not only on controlling emotions but also on emotional acceptance and validation. In the context of teaching, expectations to remain patient, cheerful, and professional may lead individuals to conceal unpleasant emotional experiences. Through the *self-compassion* approach, participants were encouraged to view fatigue and personal limitations from a more humane perspective. Emotional regulation was therefore framed not as the requirement to remain positive at all times, but as the ability to recognize, accept, and respond to emotional experiences in a more adaptive manner.

Qualitative Evaluation through Participant Testimonials

The qualitative evaluation indicated positive responses to both the content and implementation of the program. Testimonials from the group leaders and participating teachers suggested that the materials were perceived as relevant to their everyday experiences, particularly in relation to managing professional responsibilities alongside multiple family roles.

Dila Ayu Putri, S.Psi., M.Psi., Head of Gugus Bintang 4, expressed appreciation for the program, emphasizing that it provided teachers with an opportunity to gain new knowledge while also engaging in relaxation activities amid their responsibilities as educators and family members. She also expressed hope that the knowledge obtained through the program would support teachers in improving their emotional regulation skills.

The testimonial from Harni Fitriani, S.Pd., a teacher at TK PGRI 113, reflected personal insight regarding the concept of emotional regulation. She recognized that displaying a smile or pretending to feel well does not necessarily indicate successful emotional regulation. The session also encouraged her to recognize the importance of sincerity and positive emotional engagement in creating a comfortable learning environment in which children can experience positive emotional energy.

Meanwhile, Dwi Wahyuningsih, S.Psi., Head of Gugus Bintang 3, emphasized the relevance of the program to the complexity of teachers' daily roles. According to her, teachers fulfill not only professional responsibilities at school but also various roles within their families, including roles as mothers, wives, daughters, and other family members. She further noted that teachers' ability to regulate their emotions positively may influence children's emotional experiences and contribute to a more conducive learning environment.

Overall, the qualitative evaluation indicated that the psychoeducational program was positively received and was perceived as relevant to the emotional needs of kindergarten teachers. Three main findings emerged from the activity: the usefulness of music-based activities as a practical relaxation strategy, the emergence of emotional awareness and expression through guided reflection, and participants' increased appreciation of the importance of emotional regulation in managing both professional and personal roles. Although these findings are qualitative and cannot be used to establish quantitative psychological changes, participants' responses suggest that an interactive and reflective psychoeducational approach may serve as a promising community engagement strategy for supporting emotional regulation awareness among early childhood educators.

4. CONCLUSION

The "Happy Teachers, Joyful Classrooms" psychoeducational program was implemented as planned and received positive responses from the participants. Based on observations during the program, the guided reflection session, and participant testimonials, the activity indicated a qualitative improvement in participants' understanding of the importance of healthy and authentic emotional regulation in fulfilling their roles as early childhood educators. Participants also demonstrated greater awareness that recognizing and accepting their own emotional experiences is an important aspect of maintaining psychological well-being, rather than something that should always be suppressed or concealed.

The use of interactive methods, including neuroscience-informed psychoeducation, emotional regulation exercises, breathing techniques, *reframing*, music-based activities, and *guided self-compassion*, provided participants with an

experience that was not only informative but also reflective and practical. In particular, the reflection session provided participants with an opportunity to recognize the emotional burdens associated with managing multiple roles as educators and family members. Therefore, this program may contribute to strengthening teachers' awareness of their own emotional states and their ability to respond more adaptively to the dynamics of early childhood behavior, ultimately supporting a safe, positive, and enjoyable learning environment that promotes *joyful learning*.

However, the findings of this program were qualitative and therefore cannot be used to establish quantitative changes in participants' emotional regulation skills. Future programs may involve a larger number of participants and incorporate pre- and post-intervention assessments to objectively evaluate changes in emotional regulation knowledge and skills.

Program Outputs

The program produced several outputs: (1) a draft community engagement article prepared for submission to a community service or psychology journal; (2) an educational song entitled "Guru Hebat Selamanya," created by Lina Rahmawati, which was used as a relaxation and *self-soothing* medium; and (3) activity documentation consisting of photographs, a video recording of the reflection session, and archived screenshots of three participant testimonials as qualitative evaluation documentation.

REFERENCES

Burnett, D. (2016). *The idiot brain: What your head is really up to*. Guardian Faber Publishing.

De Lange, C. (2022). *Brain power: Practical ways to improve your mind and habit*. Hachette UK / Robinson.

Gross, J. J. (2015). Emotion regulation: Current status and future prospects. *Psychological Inquiry*, 26(1), 1-26.

Hatfield, E., Cacioppo, J. T., & Rapson, R. L. (1993). Emotional contagion. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 2(3), 96-99.

Jennings, P. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (2009). The prosocial classroom: Teacher social and emotional competence in relation to child and classroom outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(1), 491-525.

Neff, K. D. (2011). *Self-compassion: The proven power of being kind to yourself*. William Morrow.

Siegel, D. J., & Bryson, T. P. (2012). *The whole-brain child: 12 revolutionary strategies to nurture your child's developing mind*. Bantam Books.

Sutton, R. E., & Wheatley, K. F. (2003). Teachers' emotions and teaching: A review of literature and directions for future research. *Educational Psychology Review*, 15(4), 327-358.