



## DEVELOPING STUDENT'S MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY THROUGH PODCAST

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### Abstract

College students and youth at their age are more susceptible to mental health problems. That has increased the need for mental health information in recent years. However, often the information received is not necessarily valid. Thus, education regarding mental health literacy is also needed. Podcasts are an alternative mental health service in the digital era. The research aims to prove the effectiveness of podcasts as a medium for developing mental health literacy. This study uses a quasi-experimental method to test the effectiveness of the podcast content entitled "Ngomongin Diri" Podcast. The research design was carried out with a one-group pre-test and post-test design. The research population was BKI UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten's third-semester students. Samples were taken at random at 20% of the population, and 30 people were obtained as samples. Research data regarding mental health literacy was obtained using a mental health literacy questionnaire which refers to the construct from Jorm, which consists of three domains: Knowledge, Believe, and Resource. The study results show that Podcasts are proven effective media for developing mental health literacy. The role of podcasts in increasing mental health literacy is psycho-educational media, mental health promotion, and a resource for learning coping skills.

**Keywords:** podcast, mental health, literacy

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### Introduction

The need for health information for millennials has increased in recent years. Several studies have shown that with the increasing prevalence of mental health disorders, the need to know and understand more about mental health also increases. Stallman's research explains that university students generally experience mental health problems compared to the general public (Baik et al., 2019; Dodd et al., 2021; Said et al., 2013). College students and youth of their age are more susceptible to mental health problems (Hunt & Eisenberg, 2010). Rickwood et al. (Gashya & Alamiyah, 2019) state that millennial limitations in knowledge about mental health impact the need to provide available access to mental health information and services.

Access to information on mental health for the majority of millennials is obtained through social media. Idham et al. (2019) show that online media is the primary source of millennials in finding help regarding mental health problems and then followed by family or friends, while getting professional help (therapy) is the final choice. The presence of social media makes it possible to promote mental health more effectively (Santoso & Musdalifah, 2019).

Instagram is the media millennials use to seek information and entertainment, including information related to mental health issues. The growth of content about mental health on Instagram today has increased. Based on keyword searches on the Instagram application, 297,000 posts were found with the keyword mental health

(#KesehatanMental). Mental health content on Instagram tends to present self-disclosure of survivors of mental health problems.

A preliminary study of UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten students showed that 58% of respondents felt that information about mental health problems was easy to obtain through Instagram. However, it was still difficult to get professional help. Based on these facts, it can be understood that students not only need mental health information content but also need mental health literacy sourced from professionals in handling mental health problems. Mental health literacy is a series of knowledge or understanding to recognize mental health issues (Jorm, 2019), prevent mental disorders (T. M. Morgado et al., 2022), monitor mental health conditions (Morgado et al., 2021), and perform first aid in overcoming mental health problems (Wei et al., 2013).

Estherita & Novianty (2021) recommends that young adults need education related to positive mental health literacy. The benefit of developing mental health literacy is to help individuals at that age stage reflect on the things needed to have a good mental condition. Education can be through campaigns, seminars, outreach, and media content.

Podcasts are an alternative that needs to be tried to increase mental health literacy through mental health promotion. Davidson et al. (2019) explained that podcasts are an effective and exciting medium for conducting psychoeducational activities and promoting positive societal growth and change. Sari et al. (2020) argue that podcasts are an alternative mental health service in the digital era in the form of telepsychology (telemedicine).

In recent times, mental health podcasts have started to increase in number and now feature a wide variety of topics, viewpoints, and levels of professional experience (Flanagan et al., 2020). O'Connell (2017) identified that mental health podcasts are usually 20-120 minutes long and contain informative discussions and chats about mental health issues, clinical perspectives, and evidence-based practices.

As a new medium, podcasts have become popular among Indonesia's younger generation. Specifically for university students, the use of podcasts has the opportunity to increase mental health literacy massively. The results of Zulfa and Salim's (2021) study of 25 pre-clinical students at the UKI medical faculty showed that after listening to the *Metanoia* podcast, they had a high level of depression literacy and were also able to provide good knowledge about depression. Moreover, depression literacy had a strong relationship with seeking legal mental health services.

Researchers question whether podcasts can effectively improve mental health literacy in UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten students. Researchers created podcast content that focuses on increasing mental health literacy, called the "Ngomongin Diri" podcast, and tested it on students. Compelling content is expected to help students recognize symptoms of mental health disorders earlier and understand the importance of professional assistance and self-help media based on information from professionals.

## Method

This study used a quasi-experimental method to test the podcast developed on improving students' mental health literacy. The research examines the effectiveness of the podcast content entitled "Ngomongin Diri" podcast. The research design was carried out with a one-group pre-test post test design.

The population of the study was students of Islamic Guidance and Counseling at UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, third semester. This semester requires a strong understanding of mental health, and it is already vulnerable to conflicts and mental health problems. The research population was 150 students. The research sample was taken as much as 20% of the population randomly, and obtained 30 people as a sample.

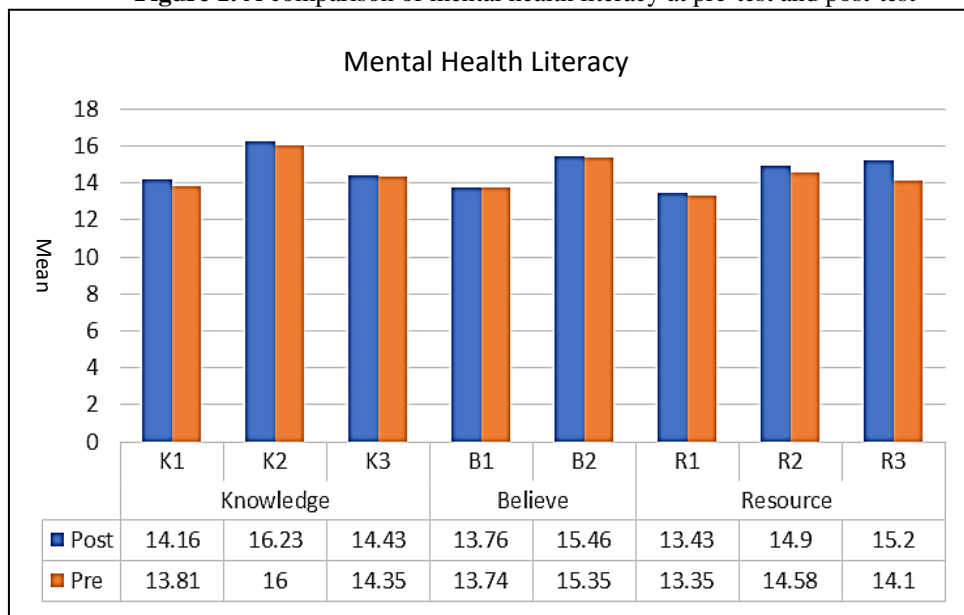
In the beginning, the researcher conducted an initial study and designed the format and content of the podcast that would be used as an intervention. The resulting design was then tested in a limited way by guidance and counseling media experts, as well as podcast creators. The final stage of the research is conducting field tests. Field tests were carried out by distributing podcast content to research samples over a period of 1-2 months, then giving the mental health literacy instrument back to the sample group after listening to podcast episodes.

Research data regarding mental health literacy was obtained using a mental health literacy questionnaire which refers to the construct from Jorm, which consists of three domains, i.e., Knowledge, Believe, and Resource. The questionnaire contains 40 items with a value of  $r > 0.248$ . The data obtained in the pre-test and post-test were then tested statistically using the t-test.

### Result and Discussion

The study wanted to describe the changes that occurred in the sample's mental health literacy before and after listening to the podcast that was developed. Researchers obtained an overview of mental health literacy at the pre-test and post-test stages. A comparison of mental health literacy in the two measurements can be seen in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1.** A comparison of mental health literacy at pre-test and post-test



Based on Figure 1 above, the researchers noticed a change in mental health literacy after students listened to the "Ngomongin Diri" podcast. In detail, the researchers obtained some information related to changes in mental health literacy as follows.

1. In the knowledge dimension, the indicator "recognizing various mental disorders (K1)" is the indicator that has the most significant increase, while in the indicator "knowledge about ways to maintain good mental health (K3)," the minor changes.
2. There are two indicators still experience minimal changes in the belief dimension. This is related to attitudes and beliefs in dealing with problems of mental disorders, especially when participants are experiencing problems of mental disorders.
3. In the resource dimension, the indicator "having the basic ability to deal with mental problems early (R3)" experienced the highest increase, while "seeking professional help (R1)" tended not to experience significant changes.

The t-test was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the "Ngomongin Diri" podcast as a medium for increasing mental health literacy. Based on t-test results in Table 1, obtained the results of t-statistics = 5.121 and the Sig. = 0.00. The table at 5% significance with  $n = 30$  is 2,042. When compared with t-statistics in the t-table, it can be seen that t-statistics (5.121) > t-table (2.042). Thus hypothesis H0 is rejected, and H1 is accepted. There is a significant increase in the sample's mental health literacy after participating in podcast episodes. Thus, podcasts are effective as a medium for increasing mental health literacy.

**Table 1.** t-test result

Pair		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
<b>1</b>	MHL_Post - MHL_Pre	2.733	2.924	.534	1.642	3.825	5.121	29	.000

Podcasts are media that have been proven effective for developing mental health literacy, as found in Zulfa and Salim's research (2021) which examined changes in depression literacy in 25 UKI pre-clinical medical students after listening to the Metanoia podcast. This study revealed that after listening to the Metanoia podcast, students had a high level of depression literacy and were also able to provide good knowledge about depression. In addition, depression literacy was strongly related to seeking legal help. Recognition of the symptoms of depression is one part of mental health literacy.

Nathan (2018) researched the relationship between listening to podcasts and attitudes toward mental illness. The research shows that the habit of listening to podcasts impacts positive changes in attitudes toward mental disorders and reduces stigma.

The focus of the study in the research above is one of the dimensions of mental health literacy, namely the belief dimension. This dimension is related to a person's attitude towards people who experience mental health problems. The central ability in this component is dealing with stigma, such as social situations where people with mental health diseases must be avoided. In addition to this component, individuals can overcome emotional reactions such as fear of people with mental health diseases. If it is related to the results of this study, there is a difference where the belief dimension is more challenging to increase through listening to self-talking podcast content.

Until now, the stigma against mental health disorders is still problematic. Even the role of mental health literacy in several previous studies has pros and cons. Lumaksono et al. (2020) explained that mental health literacy in the adolescent age group is not very influential in reducing stigma and seeking professional help. Some things that cause this condition are normative beliefs, difficulty differentiating mental health symptoms, and a lack of knowledge about how or where to access mental health services professionally.

In this study, the podcast content was aimed at Islamic Guidance and Counseling students who received learning about mental health and professional services. However, if they look back at the survey results on mental health information needs, they need more content focusing on the early prevention of mental health problems.

Therefore, "Ngomongin Diri" podcast content focuses on the dimensions of mental health literacy, namely resources. This dimension relates to knowing the right time and place to seek help and developing the competencies recommended by professionals. The resource dimension is related to improving the ability to maintain mental health and individual self-management (Jung et al., 2016).

Various podcasts on the Spotify platform contain content that facilitates listeners to understand mental health symptoms, identify first aid that can be done independently,

and get information on recommendations for therapy sessions that must be followed. The American Counseling Association (2018) stipulates that podcasts function as a resource to increase awareness of mental health symptoms, first aid in dealing with mental health symptoms, and understand the right time to do counseling about mental health. Thus, podcasts effectively increase mental health literacy with the following roles.

a. **Psycho-Educational Media**

As a psycho-educational media, podcasts are effective in introducing various forms of symptoms of mental health disorders, dispelling myths about mental disorders, and helping listeners distinguish between mental conditions that are still healthy or disturbed. Podcasts can also be used to transfer experiences from survivors of mental disorders.

**Promotion Mental Health Media**

b. As a promotional mental health media podcasts help shape attitudes toward survivors of mental disorders and mental health services. Podcasts can be used to promote the benefits and convince listeners to use professional services in dealing with mental problems. In this research, researchers have not been able to maximize this function and role properly, as seen from the slight increase obtained in the belief dimension

c. **Resource**

As a resource, podcasts provide inspiration and information about early detection, as well as equip listeners with coping strategies when facing situations that can be mentally disturbing. Thus listeners can exercise self-management and prevent the listener's mental condition from getting worse.

## **Conclusion**

Podcasts are media that have been proven effective for developing mental health literacy. The most noticeable change in mental health literacy is knowledge and resources. Participants understand and are aware of mental health symptoms and problems and have basic skills in dealing with mental health problems (coping). However, the stigma against mental health problems is still challenging to overcome. The role of podcasts in increasing mental health literacy is psycho-educational media, mental health promotion, and a resource for learning coping skills.

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## **Author Contributions Statement**

ARS contributed to the concept and design of the study, conducted data analysis and interpretation, drafted the manuscript, provided technical or material support, and gave final approval of the version to be published. AH contributed in instruments validation, and conducted data analysis.

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