Psychoeducation Based on Malay Culture Using Gurindam Dua Belas to Improve Students' Self-Regulation

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Abstract.

The decrease in students' self-regulation abilities can affect poor control over emotions, behaviors, and academic achievement. Efforts for adaptive and contextual intervention are essential to create effective self-regulation. This research aims to explore the possibilities of psychoeducation rooted in Malay culture as a strategic method for enhancing student self-regulation. The research method uses a literature review of several relevant sources. The findings of the research suggest that Malay cultural principles like politeness, responsibility, local wisdom, and moral lessons found in traditional literature such as Gurindam Dua Belas can be incorporated into psychoeducational initiatives designed to enhance cognitive, affective, and behavioral components of self-regulation. Consequently, psychoeducation rooted in local culture enhances psychological intervention methods and reinforces students' awareness of their identity and values. This research suggests creating culture-focused on psychoeducational modules as an innovative approach to enhance guidance and counseling services in higher education.

Key words: psycho education, Malay Culture, Self-Regulation, Student, *Gurindam Dua Belas*

INTRODUCTION

The transition of students from late adolescence to early adulthood is a critical developmental stage in the improvement of self-identity, independence, and social and emotional adjustment. Students need to have strong self-regulation skills to face the various demands they face at this stage, including social, academic, and personal demands (Santrock, 2012; Zimmerman, 2002).

Various problems can occur when students have an undeveloped self-regulation. Research conducted by Umerenkova et al. (2018) explains that self-regulation is positively related to student development and health such as the ability to manage behavior and emotions. According to Wolters and Brandy (Han, DiGiacomo, & Usher, 2023) one indicator of students who have undeveloped self-regulation is procrastination, because it shows the inability of students to manage time effectively.

Ramli, Alavi, Mehrinezhad and Ahmadi (2018) showed that students experience academic stress due to various challenges in the academic environment, so it is necessary to develop self-regulation in dealing with academic stress so that students can achieve academic goals such as completing assignments on time and managing the study load. Research conducted by Luthans, Luthans and Chaffin (2022) concluded that self-regulation is effective in helping students manage their positive strengths in achieving their desired academic goals. Furthermore, psychological strength and self-regulation are key to improving students' academic performance.

Similarly, Fuente et al. (2020) assert that stress and problems faced by undergraduate students will provide empirical backing for the initial theory suggesting that teaching self-regulation to students can forecast the strategies they will use to handle academic stress. These findings emphasize the importance of instructional strategies that promote self-regulation, as they support the development of more effective problem-solving skills in improving both academic achievement and emotional wellness.

According to Zimmerman (Yan, Chiu, & Ko, 2020) self-regulation is the process by which people control their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in a deliberate and periodically modified manner to achieve their own goals. This suggests that individuals who have self-regulation actively plan and modify their strategies to achieve specific goals instead of merely reacting to situations.

Psych education focused on local culture is a strategy that remains uncommon as the primary emphasis of psychological interventions in higher education. The richness and iconic cultural heritage of the Malay people in Riau, Indonesia, are reflected in Raja Ali Haji's classical literary work,

Gurindam Dua Belas. It is by the internalization of values like responsibility, politeness, self-awareness, and desire regulation; students' self-regulation skills can be enhanced through the impactful moral, spiritual, and social teachings found in Raja Ali Haji's work(Haji, 2012).

The ideas of good character and wisdom are also highly valued in Riau Malay culture. These ideas align with modern psychological concepts of self-regulation, which encompass the ability to regulate impulses, set goals, and evaluate behavior (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007). Values in the Gurindam Dua Belas such as "if you want to know someone, look at their character and language," highlight the importance of the relationship between self-awareness and social moral expression, two critical aspects of self-regulation (Santrock, 2011).

Because contextual relevance increases participant engagement and acceptance, previous research suggests that culturally based interventions can enhance the effectiveness of psychosocial programs (Sue, Cheng, Saad & Chu, 2012). In this context, the use of classical literature as a psych pedagogical tool, such as the *Gurindam Dua Belas*, can enhance teaching strategies while strengthening students' sense of cultural identity and local values (Rosyada, 2013) .

Given this context, the purpose of this study is to investigate how *Gurindam Dua Belas* can assist as a basis for developing a psych pedagogy rooted in Malay culture that can enhance students' self-regulation skills. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the development of more contextual, culturally based, and meaningful guidance and counseling services in higher education settings.

METHODS

The research approach employed a review of literature. According to a literature review is a systematic method designed to find, evaluate, and combine different relevant studies or literature from a theoretical viewpoint to gain a deeper understanding of a specific phenomenon. This research primarily aims to investigate the connection between self-regulation concepts in educational psychology and the Malay cultural values presented in the literary piece Gurindam Dua Belas.

To select the literature for this study, a systematic search was used by using online academic databases like Garuda, Google Scholar, and Scopus. Some main criteria were decided. Firstly, the literature must have been published within the last ten years. Then, the content must be directly relevant to our key topics: self-regulation, psych education, and Malay culture. Afterward, it is important to note that we also included classic texts, such as the works of Raja Ali Haji, as a primary reference. Lastly, these works are essential because they contain the core cultural values that form the foundation of our conceptual framework.

The literature review process followed these four steps. They are (1) Collecting literature; it refers to access and download relevant scientific documents. (2) Selecting literature: these documents were filtered based on how well they fit to the topic, publication year, and the quality of the publication source. (3) Reviewing literature, namely it employed reading and analyzing the content to identify key concepts, themes, and patterns. (4) Drawing conclusion, these findings were synthesized to build a comprehensive understanding and create a theoretical framework that supports research goals. This systematic procedure resulted in a literature map, which provides the groundwork for developing recommendations for a psych education program rooted in local culture.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From a total of forty articles, twelve were deemed relevant to this study. These are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1 relevant articles

No	Year	Title	Method	Findings

1	(Kizilcec & Cohen, 2017)	Eight-minute self-regulation intervention raises educational attainment at scale in individualist but not collectivist cultures	Experimental Quantitative	This study shows that a brief intervention based on the Mental Contrasting with Implementation Intentions (MCII) strategy can significantly improve educational achievement in the context of online learning (MOOC), but its effectiveness is highly influenced by the cultural context.
2	(Peterson, Villarreal, & Castro, 2017)	Models and Frameworks for Culturally Responsive Adaptations of Interventions	Qualitative	This research produces a practical and responsive framework for cultural adaptation of interventions to local contexts. By systematically considering community data and cultural norms, interventions will be more acceptable, effective, and relevant to target groups.
3	(Ramli et al., 2018)	Academic Stress and Self-Regulation among University Students in Malaysia: Mediator Role of Mindfulness	Quantitative	Malaysia's collectivist culture affects the ways students manage stress and practice self-regulation. As a result, conventional Western mindfulness approaches might not be culturally suitable or impactful. Consequently, it is more effective to implement interventions and strategies that take into account local cultural values, spirituality, and social context to enhance student self-regulation in Southeast Asian countries
4	(Zaidi, Afari, Sevi, Urganci, & Durham, 2019)	Responsibility of learning: a cross-cultural examination of the relationship of grit, motivational belief and self-	Quantitative	The relationship between grit, motivation, and self-regulation was found

		regulation among college students in the US, UAE and Turkey		to be positive and strong, but the pattern of this relationship varied across cultures.
5	(Primasari, Hoeboer, Sijbrandij, & Olff, 2024)	Trauma web-based psychoeducational programme: systematic cultural adaptation and protocol for a feasibility-acceptability study	Mixed-method	The web-based psychoeducational program was well received culturally and is potentially feasible, with further trials being designed to test its effectiveness and acceptability with Indonesian students experiencing trauma.
6	(Messer, Roome, & Legare, 2025)	Learning to control through culture: Explaining variation in the development of self-regulation	non-empirical Qualitative (conceptual)	The development of self-regulation is a process that is substantially mediated by cultural context. Self-regulation in individualistic cultures is developed through the encouragement of autonomy and personal achievement, while in collectivistic cultures, self-regulation is directed towards social conformity, interpersonal relations, and fulfilling community expectations.
7	(Heim & Kohrt, 2019)	Cultural Adaptation of Scalable Psychological Interventions: A New Conceptual Framework	Conceptual Qualitative	Adapting psychological interventions for a new culture requires more than just translating the language. For an intervention to be truly effective, it must be deeply contextualized, taking into account the cultural meaning of suffering, the specific content the therapy, and the most appropriate way to deliver it.
8	(Lubis, Iramadhani, & Astuti, 2023)	The use of a psychoeducational leaflet intervention to enhance self-management knowledge	Quantitative	Psychoeducational interventions using simple media, such as leaflets, have proven

		among first-year students.		effective in enhancing self-management knowledge among first-year university students in Aceh. This non-training approach offers a viable, low-cost, and scalable alternative for promoting self-regulation skills early in their academic journey.
9	(Kurniady, Firman, & Harun, 2024)	Riau Malay Culture Transmission And Learning Development In The Society 5.0 Era	Descriptive Qualitative	Technology facilitates the rapid transmission of Riau's Malay culture. The influence of this culture on educational development contributes to the advancement of a more effective learning process.
10	(Soraya, Maryam, Syarnubi, & Zulhijra, 2022)	Moral and Ethical Educational Values of the Malay Community	Descriptive Qualitative	Moral education within Malay society is grounded in the synthesis of Islamic doctrines and indigenous cultural practices. These values, transmitted through oral tradition and behavioral modeling, are instrumental in the formation of individual character and the cultivation of social harmony within the community.
11	(Mulyadi, 2019)	Malay Guidance and Counsel: The Legacy of Values in the Verses of Gurindam Dua Belas by Raja Ali Haji	Qualitative	Raja Ali Haji's *Gurindam Dua Belas* contains universal lessons on morality, ethics, Sufism, and Islamic educational values. The work serves as a form of "Tunjuk Ajar Melayu," or Malay guidance and counsel, offering wisdom and advice to help people develop strong character,

				critical thinking, and a civilized way of life.
12	(Sirait, 2018)	The Revitalization of *Gurindam Dua Belas* by Raja Ali Haji as Education Based on Malay Local Wisdom	Descriptive Qualitative	This research confirms that *Gurindam Dua Belas* not only functions as a literary work, but also as an educational medium that internalizes the values of local wisdom of the Malay ethnic group, as well as a tool to strengthen the character and cultural identity of the nation.

The topics discussed in this article are:

The values of *Gurindam Dua Belas* in Psychoeducation

Raja Ali Haji's *Gurindam Dua Belas* stands as a rich literary work in the Malay tradition, offering profound guidance on moral conduct and personal growth. The wisdom it contains goes beyond religious and ethical advice, providing a framework for students to develop self-control in the current era. This emphasis on self-regulation—a key factor for academic and social success—is built on values such as truthfulness, responsibility, and self-assessment. The *Gurindam Dua Belas* as a form of Malay instruction that uses clear, simple poetry to help internalize Islamic teachings.(Mulyadi, 2019).

Sirait (2018) proposes that this literary work could be reintroduced as a valuable resource for character education based on local knowledge. The study demonstrates how the Gurindam's values can be woven into the educational framework as meaningful psychopedagogical content. Through methods such as dialogue, value-based reflection, and hands-on activities, the principles of *Gurindam Dua Belas* can be applied. The line "He who knows himself, knows his God," for example, could be a tool to help students develop self-awareness when grappling with academic struggles. In a similar vein, the principle "If you want to know a noble person, observe their behavior" can be a powerful guide for students to reflect on and build ethical conduct in a school environment.

In conclusion, *Gurindam Dua Belas* is not merely an immortal work of literature; it is a strong pedagogical tool. It provides a means to nurture values of self-discipline that are aligned with the local cultural context and the specific developmental phase of students.

The Influence of Culture on Self-Regulation

One contextual element that has a significant impact on how students form and develop self-regulation is culture. Self-regulation is not only defined as the ability to control one's own behavior and emotions in collectivistic societies such as Indonesia and Malaysia, but also as the ability to adapt to social norms, expectations, and values that apply in the surrounding environment. Ramli et al. (2018) state that despite value-based psych pedagogical interventions are in line with their daily experiences, students in collectivist cultural environments respond more positively. After participating in psych pedagogical programs that focus on cultural and religious values, they show significant improvements in self-discipline and goal orientation.

Similarly, Zaidi et al. (2019) found that methods that incorporate cultural and religious elements into the learning process are more effective than generic or Western-based interventions in helping students develop self-awareness and emotional regulation. A more empathetic, cooperative, and morally grounded self-regulation character is formed through collectivist cultures that encourage individuals to consider social relationships and shared interests when making decisions. Consequently, culturally based interventions provide deeper meaning in the process of internalizing self-regulatory values, in addition to strengthening the emotional bond between students and the curriculum. This suggests that the ability to adapt intervention programs to the dynamic and rich foundations of local cultures and social experiences is crucial to the effectiveness of psychological education in collectivist societies.

Cultural Adaptation in Psychosocial Interventions

To ensure the effectiveness and applicability of programs across communities, cultural adaptation in psychosocial interventions is a crucial first step. Primasari et al. (2024) emphasized that when universal interventions are implemented without considering the local cultural context, they often fail to reach their full potential. Psychosocial interventions must undergo a process of reconstructing meaning to fit the value systems, customs, and mindsets of local communities. These interventions cannot be translated literally from one culture to another. According to Heim dan Kohrt (2019) the effectiveness of an intervention depends heavily on how well it addresses the deep meanings and beliefs that shape the interpretation of experiences and the regulation of one's emotions.

In the Malay cultural context, Raja Ali Haji's *Gurindam Dua Belas* is a concrete representation of local values that can be adapted in psychosocial interventions for university students. The work contains moral teachings, spirituality, and principles of social responsibility that are highly relevant to the goal of developing self-regulation. By making *Gurindam Dua Belas* the main material in psych education, the intervention not only becomes more contextual but also strengthens students' emotional attachment to the material presented. This aligns with a local wisdom-based approach that emphasizes the importance of internalizing values through cultural symbols and narratives familiar to the community. Therefore, cultural adaptation is not merely a technical strategy, but a conceptual foundation for developing meaningful and sustainable psychosocial interventions.

Media Design and Cultural Adaptation Strategies in Psycheducation

When implementing psych pedagogy, the format and media of the intervention must be contextually adapted to the characteristics and cultural backgrounds of the participants. According to Lubis et al. (2023) states that materials as simple as brochures can significantly improve students' understanding of self-management concepts, provided the information is presented in a culturally and cognitively appropriate manner. Reaching participants with different learning styles is possible through flexibility of delivery, whether in the form of group discussions, self-reflection, print media, or digital technology. However, it is the extent to which psych pedagogical media reflects relevant local values and norms that truly makes it effective, not just the format.

In developing psych pedagogical programs, the cultural adaptation frameworks developed by Barrera et al. (2013) dan Heim dan Kohrt (2019) are valuable resources. The use of local symbols or language translations are examples of surface adaptations (surface structures) that are often inadequate. Interventions should target deep structures, including cultural meanings, mindsets, and value systems underlying the behaviors being sought. The application of deep adaptation principles such as integrating the values of *Gurindam Dua Belas* can make psychological education more contextual, effective, and authentic, which will increase the likelihood of its success in shaping student self-regulation.

Effective Strategies and Digitalization of Culture-Based Psych education

The effectiveness of psych educational interventions depend not only on the content delivered, but is also greatly determined by the implementation strategy and the use of technology in the process. Kizilcee and Cohen (2017) through the Mental Contrasting with Implementation Intentions (MCII) approach showed that mental-based planning strategies and action commitments can improve self-regulation and academic achievement. However, the success of this approach is contextual and highly influenced by cultural background. In the context of Indonesia, which has a collectivist morality, this kind of approach needs to be adapted to prevailing social and spiritual values. Therefore, culturally adapted psych education has a greater chance of success in fostering self-regulation skills.

On the other hand, the development of digital technology provides new opportunities in delivering adaptive and broad-reaching psych education. Kurniady et al. (2024) and Soraya et al. (2022) emphasized that the integration of cultural values into digital media enables learning to be more contextual, interactive, and meaningful. Digitalization serves not only as a technical tool but also as a means to creatively transmit moral values through videos, online modules, LMS platforms, and social media. In this case, *Guindam Dua Belas* can be packaged in multimedia or interactive content that strengthens the internalization of values in the learning styles of the digital generation. The combination of measurable intervention strategies and a culturally sensitive digital approach will strengthen the effectiveness of psych educational programs in developing student self-regulation sustainably.

CONCLUSION

Psych education based on *Gurindam Dua Belas* is effective for developing students' self-regulation because it contains moral, ethical, and spiritual values that are relevant to academic life. These values reflect local culture that can strengthen self-awareness, emotional control, and social responsibility. A culture-based approach is more effective than generic methods because it aligns with the collectivistic character of Indonesian students. In addition, the use of flexible and adaptive psych educational media, both conventional and digital, allows the delivery of values to be carried out contextually and meaningfully. Thus, *Gurindam Dua Belas* can be used as a psych educational program to shape students' character and self-regulation in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

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