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Evaluation of Peer Helpers: From Recruitment to Mindfulness Skills Competence

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Abstrak

Rekrutmen pembimbing teman sebaya di perguruan tinggi perlu memastikan kesesuaian antara kriteria seleksi dan kompetensi yang dibutuhkan dalam pendampingan. Penelitian bertujuan mengevaluasi program rekrutmen pembimbing teman sebaya dan merumuskan pola penguatan kompetensi berbasis *mindfulness skills* di Forum Teman Sebaya Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus deskriptif evaluatif. Partisipan terdiri atas pengurus penyelenggara rekrutmen dan mentor layanan Teman Cerita yang dipilih melalui *snowball sampling*. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara, kuesioner terbuka, analisis dokumen, dan keterangan informan historis, kemudian dianalisis secara tematik serta divalidasi melalui triangulasi, *member check*, dan penilaian ahli. Hasil menunjukkan tujuan dan pelaksanaan rekrutmen telah terbentuk, tetapi belum didukung kebijakan formal, instrumen seleksi terstandar, dan indikator kompetensi pendampingan. Kompetensi *mindfulness skills* lebih banyak berkembang melalui penguatan kompetensi dan karakteristik awal daripada proses seleksi. Penelitian menghasilkan pola penguatan tata kelola rekrutmen dan panduan kompetensi berbasis *mindfulness skills* yang dinyatakan layak oleh ahli.

Kata kunci: CIPP; evaluasi program; *mindfulness skills*; pembimbing teman sebaya; rekrutmen.

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Abstract

Peer counselor recruitment in higher education needs to ensure alignment between selection criteria and the competencies required for peer support. This study aimed to evaluate the peer counselor recruitment program and formulate a competency development model based on mindfulness skills at the Peer Support Forum of Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. A qualitative approach with an evaluative descriptive case study design was employed. Participants consisted of recruitment organizers and Teman Cerita service mentors selected through snowball sampling. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, open-ended questionnaires, organizational document analysis, and information from a historical informant. The data were analyzed thematically and validated through source and method triangulation, member checking, and expert assessment. The findings indicate that the recruitment program has clear objectives and an open implementation process, but lacks formal policies, standardized selection instruments, and specific peer-support competency indicators. The mentors' mindfulness skills were more strongly associated with competency development and initial characteristics than with the recruitment process. The study produced a recruitment governance strengthening model and a mindfulness skills-based competency development guide, both of which were considered feasible by experts after revision.

Keywords: *CIPP; mindfulness skills; peer helper; program evaluation; recruitment*

INTRODUCTION

One in three Indonesian adolescents was indicated to have experienced mental health problems in the past twelve months, while only 2.6% of them had accessed professional services (Wahdi et al., 2023). The wide gap between the magnitude of need and the limited reach of services extends into higher education, as the highest prevalence of depression occurs among those aged fifteen to twenty-four, an age range in which most are university students (Kementerian Kesehatan RI, 2023). A national survey in the United States reported that 60% of college students experienced anxiety and 12% had suicidal thoughts in the past year (American College Health Association, 2019), indicating that psychological distress among the student population is a cross-national concern.

Guidance and counseling services in higher education constitute an institutional response to students' psychological support needs through preventive, developmental, and curative functions (Kitzrow, 2003). Formal service capacity faces structural constraints in the form of stigma, low mental health literacy, and an inadequate counselor-to-student ratio. The ideal ratio ranges from 1:1,000 to 1:1,500 (International Association of Counseling Services, 2026), whereas the ratio in Indonesia can reach 1:2,000 or more (Gamayanti, 2016). This disparity makes adding professional counselors a slow and costly solution; therefore, higher education institutions have developed community-based service strategies as part of comprehensive guidance and counseling.

Peer helper programs utilize proximity of experience and relational equality to provide more accessible psychosocial support (Bandura, 1977; Cohen & Wills, 1985; Tindall & Black, 2011). Involvement in peer support is associated with improvements in students' social-emotional skills, well-being, retention, and self-efficacy (Brown, 2020; Gehreke et al., 2024). The practice has evolved from informal activities toward structured interventions that also support students' academic and social integration (Le et al., 2024). This shift toward structured forms has an important consequence: service quality no longer depends on the good intentions of implementers, but rather on the quality of the system that selects and strengthens its implementers.

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia provides guidance and counseling services through the Directorate of Guidance and Counseling, Inclusion Diffusion, and Career Development (BKDIPK). One of its supported programs is the Peer Support Forum (4Tab), a student activity unit that has provided a peer counseling service called Teman Cerita since 2021. The service is delivered by trained students who serve as peer helpers or mentors, with a workflow resembling a triage model, in which mentors act as the first recipients of students' concerns before referring cases beyond their scope to professional counselors (Cortina & Muentner, 2025; Shaffer et al., 2017; Tardif & Stark, 2024). The mentor's position as the first point of contact makes the quality of prospective mentor screening a determinant of service safety for student service users.

Internal organizational documentation indicates several conditions that require further investigation. In the 2025–2026 academic year member recruitment, 58 applicants completed the selection form. All applicants passed administrative screening because limited implementation time prevented strict screening of applications, so quality screening relied entirely on the interview stage, which accepted 31 of 58 applicants, or 53.4%. The number of active members in 2025–2026 was 47 after two members resigned. From January to April 2026, Teman Cerita was accessed by 59 students and facilitated by 12 of the 47 active members, or 25.5%. The difference between the number of recruited members and the number of members who actually facilitated sessions cannot immediately be interpreted as recruitment failure, because at least three other explanations remain possible: the number of service requests was indeed limited, the scheduling mechanism restricted the number of mentors on duty at one time, and members' availability was constrained by their academic workload. This uncertainty itself reveals the core problem: the organization does not yet have an evaluative basis for explaining why recruitment outcomes do not fully translate into actual involvement in service delivery.

Serving as a peer helper presents its own demands. Mentors experience emotional pressure arising from involvement in the helping process, along with the risk of prolonged exhaustion and declining commitment as they simultaneously fulfill the roles of student and helper. Similar conditions are recognized in the helping professions through the concept of compassion fatigue, which underscores the importance of helpers' psychological readiness (Christopher & Maris, 2010; Figley, 2002; Zhang et al., 2021). Ethical demands to maintain confidentiality and role boundaries add complexity to mentors' tasks (Cowie & Wallace, 2000). These cumulative demands position intrapersonal readiness as a prerequisite rather than an accessory.

A preliminary study mapping 47 active members was conducted using an online closed-ended questionnaire developed based on the seven aspects of mindfulness skills identified by Wolever et al. (2020). The mean total score was 16.79 out of a maximum of 24 points, or 69.95%, with 8 participants in the high category (17.0%), 29 in the moderate category (61.7%), and 10 in the low category (21.3%). Analysis at the aspect level revealed a sharper disparity. Awareness had the lowest score at 52.77%, followed by turning toward at 58.87%, while accessing wise mind and curious observation had the highest scores at 91.49% and 89.36%, respectively. The distribution pattern indicates that members' strengths lie in observing and weighing matters cognitively, whereas weaknesses lie in awareness of their own condition and willingness to face difficult stories without avoidance. These two weakest aspects constitute a foundation for mentor resilience during support sessions, so the disparity has direct implications for service safety.

The literature on peer helpers reveals three interrelated gaps. The first is a gap in research focus, as most previous studies have examined program effectiveness and mentor training, while evaluation of recruitment as the entry gate to a program remains rare (Nuha et al., 2024; Su & Luo, 2024). Mentor selection criteria are often developed without a clear empirical basis, although personality, motivation, and interpersonal skills are commonly considered (Deng & Turner, 2024; Weimer, 2021). The second gap is conceptual, because mindfulness is generally studied as training material for mentors who have already been accepted, rather than as a basis for consideration during selection (Janssen et al., 2024; Ong et al., 2025); consequently, the relationship between the quality of candidate screening and subsequent intrapersonal competency tendencies has rarely been examined within a single analytical framework. The third gap is methodological and contextual, because studies of mentor training are still dominated by self-report designs without longitudinal support (Preovolos et al., 2024; Spaulding et al., 2020), while the context of peer counseling organizations in Indonesian higher education is underrepresented compared with literature from medical education settings and English-speaking institutions (Ahmed et al., 2023; Akinla et al., 2018).

Based on these three gaps, the study was directed at evaluating the peer helper recruitment program according to the context, input, process, and product dimensions of the CIPP model; mapping helpers' competency tendencies across seven aspects of mindfulness skills; examining the relationship between recruitment evaluation results and competency tendencies; and formulating practical recruitment and competency-strengthening patterns. Combining Stufflebeam's CIPP evaluation model to examine recruitment governance quality with the mindfulness skills taxonomy of Wolever et al. (2020) to map intrapersonal readiness enables the relationship between the quality of the entry gate and competency attainment to be traced within a single analytical line (Stufflebeam, 1971; Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014; Suherman, 2023).

RESEARCH METHOD

The study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study design (Yin, 2018). The descriptive label refers to both the purpose of the case study and the manner of presenting the findings, namely describing the actual conditions of the recruitment program across the four CIPP dimensions and the mentors' mindfulness skills competency tendencies as found in the field, without manipulating the object under study. The evaluative nature is embedded in the study's ultimate purpose, because the description of actual conditions serves as

the basis for assessing program quality against criteria of need, resource adequacy, implementation appropriateness, and outcomes, leading to the formulation of recruitment and competency-strengthening patterns. The single-case nature entails conceptual transferability rather than statistical generalization.

The research site was the Peer Support Forum (4Tab), a student organization that provides the Teman Cerita service at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia under the guidance of BKDIPK. The study was preceded by a preliminary study mapping mindfulness skills tendencies among 47 active members through an online closed-ended questionnaire from March to April 2026. The questionnaire was developed based on the seven aspects of mindfulness skills identified by Wolever et al. (2020) and had been tested, yielding 24 valid items with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.724.

Participants for the main data collection were selected using snowball sampling because the required participants were not merely organization members, but individuals with actual involvement in recruitment or direct experience supporting mentees. The tracing began with the Chairperson of the Peer Support Forum (4Tab), coded P01, continued with the person responsible for and serving as a mentor in Teman Cerita, coded P02, and proceeded until P03 through P06 were identified. Tracing stopped when recommendations led to individuals who had already participated and when the data were considered sufficient. P01 and P02 participated through in-depth interviews, whereas P03 to P06 participated through open-ended questionnaires based on their time availability. Additional information was obtained from P07, the chairperson during the first recruitment period, through personal communication as a source of historical triangulation.

Data were collected through document analysis, in-depth interviews, and open-ended questionnaires. Document analysis examined the guidelines for open recruitment implementation, selection interview procedures, membership data resulting from recruitment, and service data recapitulation. The interview guide and open-ended questionnaire were developed based on the CIPP framework and the seven aspects of mindfulness skills, then reviewed by an assessment expert and readability-tested before use. The main data collection took place in May 2026.

Data analysis used coding of units of meaning in interview transcripts, open-ended questionnaire responses, and documents (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), assisted by NVivo 12 Pro software. A codebook was developed before coding began, consisting of twelve nodes within the CIPP framework and fifteen nodes within the mindfulness skills framework. The researchers specifically marked experience-based accounts and anticipatory accounts for each mindfulness skills node, because distinguishing between the two determines the interpretive weight assigned to the level of competency occurrence. Anticipatory responses were coded as representations of participants' understanding and were not treated as equivalent to tested behavioral evidence.

Validation strategies included source and method triangulation, member checking, and expert assessment of the formulated patterns. Expert assessment was not positioned as a psychometric instrument validation test, but rather as a form of qualitative confirmability involving examination of the conceptual feasibility and implementability of the formulated patterns. The assessors represented three elements: academic experts in guidance and counseling, representatives of the directorate as the supervising body, and organizational administrators, with feasibility categories of adequate, moderately adequate, and inadequate, accompanied by qualitative comments. All feedback was recorded on assessment sheets as an audit trail, allowing every change to the formulated patterns to be traced back to its underlying source of feedback.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Evaluation of the Recruitment Program Based on the CIPP Model

Integration of findings from the four dimensions reveals one consistent pattern. The recruitment program is strong in clarity of direction and openness of implementation, but has recurring limitations in formalization and standardization, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Synthesis of Recruitment Strengths and Limitations by CIPP Dimension

Context	Strengths	Limitations
Context	Recruitment objectives are clear and oriented toward the mental health service needs of students.	The policy basis is not formally documented and needs analysis is not structured.
Input	Criteria emphasize commitment and willingness to learn, accompanied by an ethical filter. The committee understands the workflow.	Criteria do not include support competencies. Resources depend on individuals and incidental assistance.
Process	Broad socialization, two-stage selection, and results are publicly announced at each stage.	Interviewer workload is concentrated and selection decisions are subjective without a standard rubric.
Product	Member commitment and enthusiasm are achieved, accompanied by initial orientation and referral procedures.	Profile fit varies across divisions. Satisfaction and readiness still depend on the strengthening stage.

Source: Authors' Research Data (2026)

In the context dimension, recruitment objectives were articulated consistently across administrators' accounts and organizational documents. P01 explained that most students need a safe and confidential space to share their stories; therefore, peer helpers are directed to serve as first-line helpers before students access professional counseling. Clear objectives coexist with the absence of a formal written policy, because recruitment provisions are communicated through social media channels and passed down as organizational conventions. In the input dimension, selection criteria emphasize commitment, willingness to learn, time availability, and the ability to maintain confidentiality, supplemented by an ethical filter involving consideration of candidates' records. Interpersonal criteria are still formulated in general terms and have not been operationalized into indicators that can be assessed consistently; consequently, self-awareness, emotion regulation, and the ability to be fully present are not explicitly included as criteria. In the process dimension, implementation is conducted openly through broad socialization and public announcement of results at each stage, but is burdened by concentrated interviewer workload and the absence of a standardized assessment rubric. In the product dimension, recruitment outcomes meet the basic targets of member commitment and enthusiasm, although profile fit varies across divisions and readiness to perform the role still depends on post-recruitment strengthening.

The common thread connecting the four dimensions is the program's dependence on the organization's adaptive capacity rather than institutionalized system support. Stufflebeam and Coryn (2014) emphasize that the four CIPP dimensions need to be analyzed holistically, because limitations in one dimension spread to the next: the absence of needs analysis weakens the basis for determining resources, the absence of competency criteria removes a reference for assessment, and the absence of a rubric produces disparities in outcome quality. The interconnection among dimensions shows that helper quality cannot be assessed at a single point, but rather through the integrity of the chain from context to product; therefore, effective improvement requires intervention upstream in the chain rather than addressing downstream symptoms.

The application of the CIPP model to the recruitment subsystem occupies a space that has rarely been examined comprehensively in the literature. Previous studies tend to focus on short-term outcomes and self-report approaches and have not provided a comprehensive recruitment evaluation model (Preovolos et al., 2024; Spaulding et al., 2020). Even the most established peer program evaluation framework formulates evaluation at two levels: overall program evaluation and evaluation of each participant's skill development, with emphasis on training stages and service outcomes, without positioning the recruitment subsystem as a distinct evaluation object

assessed comprehensively through four dimensions (Tindall & Black, 2011). The contribution of this study lies in addressing this gap by applying the CIPP model to evaluate the recruitment subsystem as the entry gate to the service system.

Competency Tendencies Based on Mindfulness Skills

Mapping the seven aspects among five participants revealed strong but non-uniform competency tendencies, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of Competency Occurrence by Mindfulness Skills Indicator

Kode	Indicator	Occurrence and Response Characteristics
AWR1	Awareness of thoughts during support	Strongly present, experience-based among all participants
AWR2	Awareness of one's emotions during sessions	Strongly present, experience-based among all participants
AWR3	Awareness of bodily sensations during sessions	Tested in P02; anticipatory in P03, P04, P05, P06
FOC1	Focusing attention on peers	Strongly present, experience-based among all participants
FOC2	Maintaining attention throughout the session	Tested in P02, P04, P06; anticipatory in P03, P05
COG1	Shifting perspective to understand peers	Strongly present, experience-based among all participants
COG2	Consciously adapting the approach	Tested in P02, P03, P04, P05; anticipatory in P06
CUR1	Observing problems as they are	Strongly present, experience-based among all participants
CUR2	Distinguishing habitual reactions from contextual responses	Strongly present, experience-based among all participants
TUR1	Facing difficult stories without avoidance	Strongly present, experience-based among all participants
ATT1	Nonjudgmental toward peers	Strongly present, experience-based among all participants
ATT2	Patience in the support process	Tested in P05, P06; anticipatory in P02, P03, P04
ATT3	Acceptance of role limitations	Tested in P03, P05, P06; anticipatory in P02, P04
ATT4	Self-compassion	Strongly present, experience-based among all participants
WIS1	Balanced decision-making during sessions	Strongly present, experience-based among all participants

Source: Authors' Research Data (2026)

Ten indicators appeared strongly and were experience-tested among all participants. Awareness of automatic thoughts, for example, went beyond recognition and was accompanied by actions to pause and redirect attention toward the listening role. Willingness to face difficult stories without avoidance was documented among all participants, including cases involving high emotional intensity such as family problems, loss, and sexual abuse. These aspects are related to direct interactions that commonly occur in every support session, providing many opportunities for them to be tested.

Five indicators remained anticipatory or mixed: awareness of bodily sensations, maintaining attention during long sessions, consciously adapting the approach to one participant, patience in dealing with recurring cases, and acceptance of role limitations among some

participants. These five indicators require specific situations that do not always arise in every session, such as strong physical reactions, very long sessions, repeated support for the same mentee, or cases requiring referral. Limited experience in such testing situations explains why the related competencies have not been tested evenly.

Mindfulness is understood as a skill that develops through repeated experience and reflection on experience, making the frequency of opportunities for testing a major differentiating factor in the maturity of each aspect (Iani et al., 2020; Kolb, 1984). The occurrence pattern shows that mindfulness skills competency is not a uniform condition that one either possesses or lacks, but rather a varied profile in which some aspects have been tested and others remain potential, awaiting opportunities for testing. Aspects that remain anticipatory should be interpreted as potential awaiting opportunities, not as weaknesses.

The findings address a gap in previous research concerning the still-implicit integration of mindfulness in mentor programs. The literature indicates that reflective practices and embodied approaches have improved self-awareness and emotion regulation, yet mindfulness has not been structured as a target competency assessed systematically in various studies (Harrison et al., 2022; Thies, 2023). Dietrich and Bidart (2026) evaluated a mindfulness-based peer education program at a public university and found that all learning targets were achieved above average; however, the evaluation stopped at the impact of the presentation on participants and did not map the presenters' competencies as an assessment object. This difference in focus reinforces the position of the present findings: mapping peer helper mindfulness skills competencies as a basis for strengthening, rather than merely measuring service impact on recipients. Differentiated competencies require development strategies that target specific needs rather than uniform training for all participants (Noe, 2010; Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

Relationship Between Recruitment Evaluation Results and Competency Tendencies

Integrating the two groups of findings produces the core analysis of the study, as presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Relationship Between Recruitment Evaluation Findings and Competency Tendencies

Recruitment Findings (CIPP)	Competency Tendency Findings	Relationship Pattern
Selection criteria do not include specific support competencies.	Many aspects of mindfulness skills appear strongly without ever being selected for.	Competencies derive from strengthening and characteristics, not selection.
Quality and readiness of outcomes depend on the strengthening stage (product evaluation).	Direct-interaction aspects are strongly tested; situation-specific aspects are uneven.	Strengthening is the main determinant of competency emergence.
Absence of an assessment rubric and role-boundary guidance.	Acceptance of role limitations and patience remain anticipatory for some participants.	Recruitment gaps are not closed by unstructured strengthening.
Needs analysis is unstructured and time-pressured.	Situation-specific competencies develop depending on the type of case.	Competency development occurs incidentally rather than through planning.

Source: Authors' Research Data (2026)

Several aspects of mindfulness skills appeared strongly among all participants even though they had never been formal selection criteria. Nonjudgmental attitudes, willingness to face difficult stories, unbiased observation, and self-compassion appeared consistently even though recruitment did not explicitly screen for them. Training that combines modeling, observation, simulation, and reflective discussion enables helping skills to develop gradually, and several

mentor training studies show that support skills are formed through deliberately designed training processes rather than solely through initial screening (Brown, 2020; Garcia-Melgar, 2018; Menzies & Tredinnick, 2017). The strong emergence of competencies that were never screened provides an indication that helper quality derives from strengthening and initial dispositions refined through practice, consistent with the view of competence as a combination of inherent characteristics and trained skills (Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

Recruitment limitations and untested competency aspects converge at one point: the absence of mechanisms deliberately designed to identify and develop support competencies. Recruitment that does not screen for support competencies provides no baseline data on candidates' strengths and weaknesses, while strengthening that lacks role-boundary guidance and concrete response examples does not close the gap left by recruitment. Development programs that are not based on needs analysis and are not accompanied by adequate evaluation produce impacts that are difficult to measure and uneven (Repi, 2019), while a comprehensive strengthening structure requires systematic supervision and competency evaluation (Noe, 2010). Dependence on chance is a serious vulnerability because important competencies cannot be left to the types of cases that happen to be encountered by each helper.

The unbridged space between what is assessed during recruitment and what is needed during support is a major finding of the study. Various studies have examined mentor selection criteria and mentor training processes separately, but have not connected comprehensive recruitment evaluation with the integration of mindfulness skills as a basis for competency development (Garcia-Melgar, 2018; Maghbouli et al., 2020; Menzies & Tredinnick, 2017; Young et al., 2024). The theoretical contribution of the study lies in linking CIPP-based recruitment evaluation with the mindfulness skills taxonomy, so that assessment of peer helper quality moves from separate evaluations toward an integrated analysis connecting selection, competency, and strengthening as one system.

Formulation of Recruitment and Competency-Strengthening Patterns

The unbridged space provides the basis for two formulations with different but mutually supportive targets. The separation into two documents follows the nature of the findings: the recruitment gap is a policy issue requiring institutional decisions, whereas the competency gap is curricular and requires the organization of technical strengthening (Kiettikunwong & Narot, 2024).

The recruitment pattern is set out in the Recruitment Governance Strengthening Policy Brief, intended for decision makers, and accompanied by the Standard Operating Procedure for Recruitment as its technical translation. Four policy recommendations are derived directly from four root problems identified in the CIPP evaluation: institutionalizing a written recruitment policy addressing CTX2; standardizing member needs analysis based on service workload data addressing CTX3; preparing a uniform selection instrument based on a one-to-four interview rubric, with assessment by more than one interviewer, addressing INP3, PRO2, and PRO3; and including the seven aspects of mindfulness skills as observation indicators from the selection stage, addressing INP1 and PRD1. The recommendation to institutionalize policy is consistent with the requirement that selection criteria be derived from systematic job analysis and person specification, while preparing an interview rubric is consistent with the principles of structured interviewing to maintain assessment consistency (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023; Gatewood et al., 2016; Noe et al., 2021).

The competency-strengthening pattern is set out in the Mindfulness Skills-Based Competency Strengthening Guide, structured into three parts: a conceptual competency framework, three strengthening modules, and supporting governance tools. The core of the pattern lies in sequencing three modules that position each aspect according to its mastery characteristics as identified in competency mapping, as presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Sequencing of Three Competency-Strengthening Modules

Module	Activity Form	Target Aspects	Basis for Placement
Basic Strengthening	*Capacity building*	Awareness of thoughts and emotions, focus, curious observation, turning toward, nonjudgmental attitude, self-compassion, introduction to cognitive flexibility and accessing wise mind	Aspects strongly tested in direct interaction, maintained and deepened
Skill Strengthening	*Training of trainers*	Maintaining attention during long sessions, deepening cognitive flexibility, curious observation, turning toward, self-compassion, accessing wise mind	Aspects requiring advanced technical practice through simulations and controlled case studies
Guided Experience	Support for real cases with supervision	Awareness of bodily sensations, adapting the approach, patience with recurring cases, acceptance of role limitations	Aspects still anticipatory, requiring deliberately created opportunities for testing

Source: Authors' Research Data (2026)

The sequencing is based on experiential learning logic, which positions concrete experience and reflection as mechanisms for competency development, as well as on the function of supervision in ensuring guidance, feedback, and reflection throughout role performance (Kolb, 1984; Noe, 2010). Each module includes qualification requirements for facilitators so that strengthening is conducted by competent authorized parties, with the third module explicitly requiring professional counselor supervision because it involves real cases.

Expert assessment placed the Policy Brief in the category of feasible for use with minor revisions and the Competency Strengthening Guide in the category of feasible for use with revisions. Technical feedback included clarifying the policy implementation target at a clearly defined institutional level, sharpening the relationship between recruitment and strengthening so that it would not appear as a logical leap, restructuring the guide by clearly separating governance and competency aspects, clarifying the theoretical basis for sequencing, and specifying facilitator qualifications at each stage. All feedback was addressed through documented revisions before the pattern formulations were presented as research findings. Traceability between each recommendation and the evaluation finding code is a key feature distinguishing the study's pattern formulations from general recommendations (Kiettikunwong & Narot, 2024; Patton, 2008).

The study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. Asymmetry in data collection techniques means that some competency assessments rely on shorter written responses. The anticipatory nature of some responses means that some findings represent stated competencies rather than tested competencies. The small number of participants and single context make the labels of competency occurrence levels context-specific analytical conclusions rather than measurements that can be quantitatively generalized (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Yin, 2018). The restriction of scope to the recruitment subsystem should be distinguished from methodological limitations because it is based on a staged argument: the quality of candidates screened at the earliest stage establishes the foundation for subsequent stages, so improvement at the entry gate can have a cascading influence on the overall system without requiring simultaneous evaluation of all stages.

CONCLUSION

Evaluation of the peer helper recruitment program across the context, input, process, and product dimensions shows that the program has a clear purpose and an open implementation process; however, policy formalization, standardization of selection instruments, and peer-support competency indicators have not yet been systemically organized.

The competency tendencies of peer helpers across the seven aspects of mindfulness skills show strong and tested mastery in aspects involved in direct interaction, whereas aspects requiring specific situations, such as awareness of bodily sensations, patience with recurring cases, and acceptance of role limitations, remain potential and have not been tested evenly.

The relationship between recruitment evaluation results and competency tendencies shows that the mindfulness skills competencies emerging among peer helpers derive from competency strengthening and initial characteristics rather than the selection process; thus, an unbridged space remains between the aspects assessed during recruitment and the competencies required during support.

Based on the three conclusions, the study formulated two complementary patterns: a recruitment pattern set out in the Recruitment Governance Strengthening Policy Brief and Standard Operating Procedure for Recruitment, and a competency-strengthening pattern set out in the Mindfulness Skills-Based Competency Strengthening Guide through three sequenced modules. Both patterns have received confirmation of conceptual fit, relevance to needs, and implementation feasibility through expert assessment and are therefore ready to serve as references for continuously strengthening recruitment governance and peer helper competencies.

Recommendations are directed to the Peer Support Forum (4Tab) to institutionalize a written recruitment policy, conduct scheduled member needs analyses, prepare a standardized selection instrument based on a rubric, and include support competency indicators from the selection stage. For the Directorate of Guidance and Counseling, Inclusion Diffusion, and Career Development, recommendations focus on implementing the Competency Strengthening Guide in stages through capacity building and training of trainers, providing ongoing supervision, and ensuring resource support. Future research may evaluate the effectiveness of the competency-strengthening stage as a separate object, explore the perspectives of mentees as service recipients, and examine implementation of the strengthening pattern through direct observation of support sessions.

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