

Mapping Psychological Interventions for Stress and Anxiety in Indonesia: The Dominance of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and the Emergence of Alternative Approaches

Pemetaan Intervensi Psikologis untuk Stres dan Kecemasan di Indonesia: Dominasi Terapi Perilaku Kognitif dan Pendekatan Alternatif yang Mulai Berkembang

Yolanda Christine
Universitas Paramadina
Email:
yolachristi@gmail.com

Ressi Nuryanasari
Universitas Paramadina
Email:
ressinuryanasari@gmail.com

Raden Mutiara Puspa Wijaya
Universitas Paramadina
Email:
raden.mutiara@lecturer.paramadina.ac.id

Correspondence:

Raden Mutiara Puspa Wijaya
Universitas Paramadina
Email: raden.mutiara@lecturer.paramadina.ac.id

Abstract

Stress and anxiety are psychological issues that can affect people of all ages and require interventions tailored to individual characteristics and the context of the problem. This study aims to map the types, characteristics, and outcomes of psychological interventions for managing stress and anxiety in Indonesia during the 2021–2026 period. The study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines. The literature was searched via Google Scholar using the “Publish or Perish” tool with Crossref and Google Scholar metadata. The selected articles were peer-reviewed and open access, published between 2021 and 2026, conducted in the Indonesian context, indexed in SINTA 1 or SINTA 2, and involved interventions in the field of psychology with the participation of researchers or practitioners in the field of psychology. Of the 1,986 articles identified, 21 studies met the inclusion criteria. The mapping results show that Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) was the most prevalent, accounting for 12 studies (57.14%), followed by group-based interventions (3 studies, 14.29%), Art Therapy (2 studies, 9.52%), and four other categories, each with 1 study (4.76%). Overall, the studies showed positive results in reducing stress, anxiety, and related psychological problems, with CBT being the most commonly used approach.

Keywords: anxiety; Indonesia; cognitive behavioral therapy; psychological intervention; stress

Abstrak

Stres dan kecemasan merupakan permasalahan psikologis yang dapat dialami berbagai kelompok usia dan memerlukan intervensi sesuai karakteristik individu serta konteks permasalahan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memetakan jenis, karakteristik, dan hasil intervensi psikologis untuk menangani stres dan kecemasan di Indonesia pada periode 2021–2026. Penelitian menggunakan metode Systematic Literature Review (SLR) berdasarkan pedoman Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA). Literatur ditelusuri melalui Google Scholar menggunakan Publish or Perish dengan metadata Crossref dan Google Scholar. Artikel yang dipilih merupakan artikel peer-reviewed dan open access, diterbitkan pada 2021–2026, dilakukan dalam konteks Indonesia, terindeks SINTA 1 atau SINTA 2, serta melibatkan intervensi dalam ranah psikologi dengan keterlibatan peneliti atau praktisi bidang psikologi. Dari 1.986 artikel yang teridentifikasi, sebanyak 21 studi memenuhi kriteria inklusi. Hasil pemetaan menunjukkan Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) paling dominan, yaitu 12 studi (57,14%), diikuti intervensi berbasis kelompok 3 studi (14,29%), Art Therapy 2 studi (9,52%), serta empat kategori lainnya masing-masing 1 studi (4,76%). Secara keseluruhan, studi menunjukkan hasil positif dalam menurunkan stres, kecemasan, dan permasalahan psikologis terkait, dengan CBT sebagai pendekatan yang paling banyak ditemukan.

Kata Kunci : Indonesia; intervensi psikologis; kecemasan; stres; terapi perilaku kognitif

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Received 10/07/2026

Revised 31/08/2026

Accepted 12/10/2026



INTRODUCTION

Stress is a psychological response that arises when an individual faces demands or pressures perceived to exceed their ability to cope with them. According to the *Transactional Model of Stress and Coping* developed by Lazarus & Folkman (1984) stress occurs through a process of cognitive evaluation of a situation deemed threatening or taxing on an individual's resources. If it persists over time and is not properly managed, stress can develop into more serious psychological disorders, including anxiety, depression, and various impairments in social and emotional functioning (Santika, 2025). Therefore, stress and anxiety have become two major mental health issues receiving significant attention due to their far-reaching impact on an individual's quality of life.

Mental health issues are currently a global challenge, including in Indonesia. *The Global Emotions Report* (2025) indicates that Indonesia is among the countries with relatively high stress levels in the ASEAN region (Alfathi, 2025). This situation is reinforced by national data showing that approximately 28 million Indonesians experience symptoms of mental disorders of varying severity (CNBC Indonesia, 2026). This high figure indicates that mental health issues are no longer merely individual concerns but have become a public health issue requiring serious attention from various stakeholders.

The WHO emphasizes that mental health is an integral part of overall health; therefore, promotive, preventive, and curative efforts must be undertaken to reduce the burden of mental disorders in society (WHO, 2022). Various studies show that *evidence-based* psychological interventions can significantly reduce symptoms of stress and anxiety while improving individuals' emotional regulation abilities and coping strategies (Huang et al., 2025). Furthermore, strengthening community-based mental health services and expanding access to psychological services are recommended strategies for addressing the gaps in mental health care that still exist in various countries (Barbui, 2023).

Issues related to stress and anxiety are found across various age groups. Among children and adolescents, data from the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia indicate that mental health problems begin to emerge as early as school age and represent a critical concern in the health development of the younger generation (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023). Results from the *Indonesia National Adolescent Mental Health Survey* (I-NAMHS) also indicate that one in three Indonesian adolescents experiences mental health issues (Gadjah Mada University, 2023). Among Generation Z, the prevalence of mental disorder symptoms is the highest compared to other generational groups, with anxiety being one of the most dominant symptoms (Widi, 2023).

Similar issues are also found among adults and the elderly. Various work demands, economic pressures, and family responsibilities are factors that contribute to the onset of stress and anxiety in adulthood. Research shows that women who juggle dual roles as workers and homemakers

have relatively high levels of anxiety (Santoso & Rinaldi, 2022). Among pregnant women, anxiety is also a fairly common problem that has the potential to affect both maternal and fetal health (Suyati & Alpiyah, 2025). Meanwhile, among the elderly, changes in physical, social, and health conditions also increase the risk of emotional disturbances and anxiety (Kaloeti & Desiningrum, 2023).

These findings indicate that stress and anxiety are issues that can be experienced throughout the human lifespan. The rising prevalence of stress and anxiety has spurred the development of various psychological and non-pharmacological interventions to help individuals manage these conditions. In recent years, research in Indonesia has demonstrated the use of various approaches such as CBT (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024), REBT (Novinta & Mastuti, 2023) group-based interventions (Hayya & Savitri, 2023), *art therapy* (Widiasavitri et al., 2024), *expressive writing* (Jannah, 2022), *relaxation* (Nurmina et al., 2026), *mindfulness* (Pratama & Chann, 2025), and *group counseling* (Susanto & Hartini, 2024).

International research indicates that digital-based mental health interventions are increasingly prevalent because they can expand access to psychological services more broadly (Chau et al., 2025). *Mindfulness-based interventions* have also been shown to be effective in helping individuals manage stress, improve emotional regulation, and reduce anxiety symptoms across various population groups (Chin et al., 2024).

The development of these various forms of intervention is crucial, given that access to professional mental health services among the Indonesian population remains relatively low. Data indicate that only a small portion of the population seeks professional help when experiencing mental health issues (Santika, 2023). Conversely, the majority of the population prefers self-help coping strategies, including spiritual approaches and social support from their immediate environment (Santika, 2023). This situation highlights the need to identify interventions that are effective, practical, and easily implemented across various population groups.

Although numerous studies on stress and anxiety interventions have been conducted, previous research findings indicate significant variations in effectiveness. These differences can be attributed to variations in intervention types, participant characteristics, duration of implementation, research methods, and the measurement instruments used. For example, a *systematic review* and meta-analysis of stress management interventions among college students in low- and middle-income countries showed that, overall, the interventions had a significant effect in reducing stress; however, very high heterogeneity was found across studies ($I^2 = 92.89\%$).

After analyzing *outliers*, heterogeneity decreased to 38.9%, indicating that specific study characteristics can influence the magnitude of the intervention's effect. Additionally, most studies still have methodological limitations, such as small sample sizes, high risk of bias, and the use of passive control groups (Juniar et al., 2025). These findings suggest that although psychological interventions

generally provide benefits, their effectiveness cannot yet be fully understood across various conditions and target groups.

These limitations are also evident in a previous systematic review conducted by (Maddock et al., 2021), who examined psychological and social interventions for mental health issues in Southeast Asia and found that the available studies encompassed a variety of approaches, such as *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy*, yoga, meditation, EMDR, interventions conducted by healthcare professionals, and programs delivered by non-professionals. However, heterogeneity in program content, delivery methods, intervention duration, sample characteristics, and measured outcomes made it difficult for researchers to draw general conclusions regarding the effectiveness of all interventions. That review also included only 32 *randomized controlled trial* (RCT) studies and indicated that most studies had low to moderate methodological quality (Maddock et al., 2021).

Thus, previous studies still have limitations in providing a specific picture of the development and effectiveness of various stress and anxiety interventions in Indonesia. On the other hand, *evidence mapping* from studies on anxiety interventions remains concentrated on specific populations and types of interventions. A recent *scoping review* of college students in Indonesia found that out of 269 identified reports, only 15 studies met the inclusion criteria. The mapping revealed a predominance of *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy* (CBT), *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy* (ACT), and *Mindfulness-based Interventions*, accompanied by the use of relaxation techniques, art and expressive approaches, as well as digital interventions and culturally adapted programs.

Most studies employed *quasi-experimental* designs with relatively short intervention durations and primarily focused on anxiety related to academic issues. These findings indicate that research in Indonesia has developed a variety of intervention approaches; however, the available evidence remains scattered across specific populations and has not yet provided a comprehensive overview of interventions targeting stress and anxiety across various population groups.

Given these circumstances, a study is needed that can integrate various research findings on stress and anxiety interventions in Indonesia. A systematic literature review is necessary to map the types of interventions that have been used, identify the target groups for these interventions, and evaluate the effectiveness of each approach based on available empirical evidence. Therefore, this study aims to conduct a *Systematic Literature Review* of various interventions used to reduce stress and anxiety in Indonesia and to identify the effectiveness of interventions reported in studies during the 2021–2026 period.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research design used in this study is a *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR). The SLR method was chosen because it allows researchers to identify, evaluate, and synthesize relevant empirical evidence to comprehensively

answer the research questions. To ensure transparency, accuracy, and minimize bias in the literature search and selection process, this study strictly followed the *Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses* (PRISMA) guidelines (Lubis & Rahayu, 2026).

In this systematic literature review, the research variables were not measured directly through participants but were identified as the conceptual focus of the reviewed literature. The objects of study in this research were not research participants but scientific articles that met the inclusion criteria. The focus of the study was on various psychological interventions used in the management of stress and anxiety in Indonesia.

This study examined articles on stress and anxiety interventions published within the last five years, specifically from 2021 to 2026. The reviewed literature was also limited to articles available via open access. The literature search was conducted via Google Scholar, accessed using the Publish or Perish software and utilizing metadata from Crossref and Google Scholar. The selection of databases for this study also took into account accessibility to reputable international databases such as *Scopus* and *Web of Science* (WoS). Both of these databases generally require paid institutional subscriptions, which are not fully accessible to researchers at various universities in Indonesia.

Therefore, the literature search for this study was conducted via Google Scholar with the assistance of the Publish or Perish software, while the quality assurance of the reviewed articles was conducted using the national journal accreditation indicator, namely the *Science and Technology Index* (SINTA), which is managed by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia.

To further ensure the quality of the analyzed articles, this study restricted the inclusion criteria to articles published in Sinta 1 and Sinta 2 accredited journals the two highest rankings in the Sinta accreditation system, which represent stricter standards for journal governance, peer-review processes, and content quality compared to lower rankings. This restriction serves a dual purpose: it acts as an additional screening strategy to ensure that articles come from journals with high academic standards, while also yielding a more curated and proportionate body of literature for in-depth analysis.

The search utilized keywords closely related to “stress intervention,” “anxiety intervention,” “stress management,” “anxiety management,” “psychological intervention,” and “anxiety in Indonesia.” This initial identification phase successfully gathered a total of 1,986 open-access records or articles.

These 1,986 articles were then screened based on basic inclusion criteria: year of publication (2021–2026), document type (must be journal articles), and research conducted in Indonesia. At this stage, articles that did not meet the inclusion criteria regarding year of publication, document type, and research context were eliminated during the initial screening. This process left 407 articles.

The researchers conducted a more in-depth review of the titles and abstracts of the remaining 407 articles. A total of 40 articles were excluded due to detected duplicate data. This screening resulted in 367 articles that were of high quality and potentially relevant.

These 367 potentially relevant articles were downloaded and reviewed in full (*full-text review*). Based on a full-text analysis grounded in strict inclusion and exclusion criteria, 331 studies were excluded because they were not published in SINTA 1 or SINTA 2-indexed journals.

Following the *full-text review* process, 36 articles were identified that met the initial criteria. Next, an *eligibility assessment* was conducted based on substantive research criteria, namely (1) the intervention was conducted by a

psychologist or a researcher with a background in psychology, or utilized psychological assessments, and (2) the intervention under study was the primary psychological intervention and not merely a supporting measure. Based on this process, 15 articles were eliminated, leaving studies that met all criteria for analysis.

After completing all selection stages, 21 studies were selected as the final results. Data from these 21 articles were then extracted and further analyzed to map research trends, identify patterns of collaboration among researchers, and synthesize thematic developments regarding stress and anxiety intervention methods in Indonesia over the past five years.

Table 1. Inclusion And Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Details
Inclusion	1. Peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2021 and 2026. 2. Research conducted in the Indonesian context 3. Studies focusing on interventions for anxiety and stress in Indonesia. 4. Journal articles indexed in Sinta 1 and Sinta 2 5. Research involving researchers or practitioners from the field of psychology (psychologists, psychology academics, and professional psychology students).
Exclusions	1. Conference papers, book chapters, editorials, and gray literature. 2. Articles that do not report psychological interventions as the core intervention (interventions used only as a medium or support for other primary interventions).

To ensure the validity and relevance of this study, literature selection is based on strict inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria focus on empirical articles that have undergone a peer-review process and were published between 2021 and 2026. Specifically, eligible literature consists of studies conducted in the Indonesian context, particularly those focusing on the evaluation of stress and anxiety interventions, and published in academic journals indexed in SINTA (*Science and Technology Index*) at ranks 1 and 2, as well as research involving researchers or

practitioners from the field of psychology (psychologists, psychology academics, and professional psychology students).

Conversely, exclusion criteria include conference papers, book chapters, editorials, and various forms of gray literature. Additionally, articles that do not report psychological interventions as the core intervention (interventions used only as a medium or support for other primary interventions) are excluded

Table 2. PRISMA Flowchart – Study Selection Process.

Phase	Step	Records (n)
Identification	Data identified from the “Publish or Perish” database	1986
	Articles excluded due to detection of duplicates	40
Screening	Articles screened	1946
	Articles eliminated based on publication year, document type, and research context	1,579
	Articles retrieved for full-text review	367
Eligibility	Articles assessed for eligibility through <i>full-text review</i>	367
	Articles excluded because they were not published in SINTA 1 or SINTA 2 indexed journals	331
	Articles that met the initial criteria	36
	Articles excluded during the <i>eligibility assessment</i> because they did not meet the criteria	15
Included	Studies included in the <i>final review</i>	21

The article selection procedure in this study used a systematic approach based on the PRISMA framework to ensure transparency and methodological rigor. The initial

identification stage was conducted through a comprehensive literature search using the *Publish or Perish* software, utilizing metadata from Google Scholar and Crossref. By applying

keywords closely related to stress and anxiety interventions in Indonesia, this stage yielded a total of 1,986 scientific documents. Subsequently, a *duplicate check* was performed, identifying 40 duplicate articles that were then eliminated, leaving 1,946 articles to proceed to the screening stage.

During the screening stage, the 1,946 articles were evaluated based on basic research criteria: publication years 2021–2026, document type limited to journal articles, and studies conducted in the Indonesian context. Based on this screening process, 1,579 articles were eliminated because they did not meet the established criteria. Consequently, 367 articles remained that met the initial requirements and proceeded to the

eligibility phase, 367 articles were thoroughly reviewed by reading the full text. The evaluation results indicated that 331 articles had to be excluded because they were not published in journals indexed in SINTA 1 or SINTA 2. Following this process, 36 articles were identified as meeting the initial research criteria.

Next, a further *eligibility assessment* was conducted on the remaining 36 articles. At this stage, 15 articles were excluded because they did not meet the study's inclusion criteria, such as the intervention used not being a core intervention, the study not being conducted by a psychologist, not falling within the field of psychology, not utilizing psychological assessments, or being irrelevant to the study's focus. After all selection stages were completed, 21 studies that met all criteria were identified and included in the *final review*.

Ultimately, the 21 articles included in the *final review* met all inclusion criteria and were used as the final sample in this study. These articles were then analyzed to identify publication characteristics, map trends in the use of psychological interventions, explore patterns of researcher collaboration, and synthesize thematic developments related to stress and anxiety interventions in Indonesia during the 2021–2026 period.

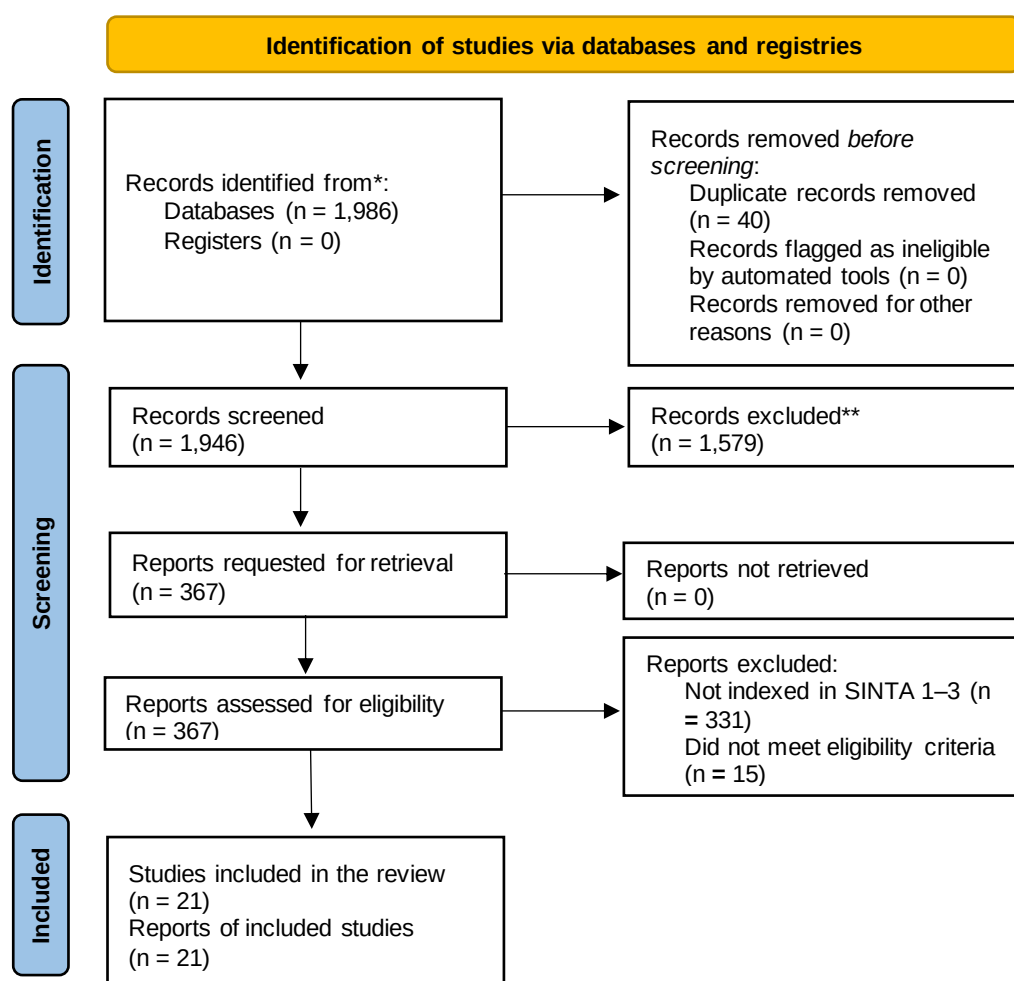


Figure 1. Article Selection

RESULTS

An analysis of 21 articles that met the inclusion criteria revealed a diversity of psychological interventions used to reduce stress and anxiety in Indonesia during the

2021–2026 period. Various approaches were applied to different population groups, ranging from adolescents, college students, and young adults to the elderly. These findings indicate that the practice of psychological interventions in Indonesia has evolved by adopting various

evidence-based approaches tailored to the characteristics of the problems and the needs of the intervention targets.

To gain an overview of trends in the use of psychological interventions, a mapping was conducted of all types of interventions identified in the analyzed articles. The

frequency distribution of each intervention's use is presented in Table 3. This analysis aims to identify the most dominant approaches used in managing stress and anxiety and to describe the direction of development in psychological intervention practices in Indonesia.

Table 3. Characteristics of Studies Meeting the Inclusion Criteria

No.	Study Title	Author & Year	Study Results	Similarities	Differences
1	<i>Emotion Regulation Training Based on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy to Reduce Anxiety Levels in Adolescents</i>	(Afifah & Boediman, 2024)	CBT-based emotion regulation training showed a reduction in emotional dysregulation of 26.9%–30.5% and in anxiety of 17.1%–42.8% among adolescent girls. The effects of the intervention were also reported to persist for up to three weeks after the intervention.	Like (Murnitamia & Urbayatun, 2023), this study used a <i>one-group pretest-posttest</i> design with adolescent girls. The use of a <i>follow-up</i> to assess the sustainability of the intervention's effects is also consistent with (Nurlaila et al., 2024)	Unlike (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024), who specifically targeted academic anxiety, this study included emotional regulation as an additional target and used the DERS-SF and DASS-21 to evaluate psychological changes.
2	<i>A Feasibility Study of Brief Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Using Mobile Apps to Overcome Anxiety Among Young Adults in a Rural Area of Bali: A Mixed-Methods Study</i>	(Asril et al., 2025)	The mobile-based MB-CBT intervention significantly reduced anxiety levels ($p \leq 0.002$) and stress ($p \leq 0.000$) in young adults. The SUS evaluation yielded an average score of 74.5 (Good category).	The use of digital/mobile apps to deliver CBT interventions to reduce stress is similar to the “Kancani” web app by (Maghfirani & Mardhiyah, 2024)	MB-CBT utilized the System Usability Scale (SUS) among young adults (ages 18–25) in rural Bali, an area with limited healthcare facilities. This differs from the study by (Maghfirani & Mardhiyah, 2024), which involved middle school students and employed REBT via a web-based application.
3	<i>Positive Thinking Training to Reduce Stress in People with Hypertension</i>	(Aulia & Widyana, 2022)	Positive thinking training demonstrated a significant reduction in psychological stress among individuals with hypertension (Wilcoxon Rank Test: posttest–pretest $Z = -2.032$; $p = 0.042$), with the reduction remaining evident at <i>follow-up</i> ($Z = -2.023$; $p = 0.043$).	The Indonesian version of the DASS-42 was used with the experimental and control groups to measure stress levels, similar to (Susanto & Hartini, 2024).	Although this is similar to (Asril et al., 2025), in that the intervention was delivered via a digital application, the subjects of this study were hypertensive patients (adults and older adults) in Gunung Toar, and the positive thinking training was conducted online via the Zoom video conferencing application.
4	<i>Assertive Communication Skills Group Intervention for Adolescents with Social Anxiety</i>	(Hayya & Savitri, 2023)	A group intervention on assertive communication skills significantly increased assertive behavior (STLA scale) and reduced social anxiety (SAS-A scale)	The study used a <i>one-group pretest-posttest design</i> with a <i>follow-up</i> session among a population of middle school adolescents,	Unlike (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024), who focused on academic anxiety, this study specifically targeted social anxiety and used the Social-

			among adolescents aged 13–15 years.	similar to (Afifah & Boediman, 2024)	Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A).
5	The Impact of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) on Academic Anxiety in College Students	(Izzah & Indrijati, 2024)	Individual CBT counseling effectively reduced academic anxiety among female accounting students (aged 18) from a pre-test score of 71 (high) to a post-test score of 53 (moderate).	The approach focused on restructuring dysfunctional/negative automatic thoughts and enhancing adaptive skills, similar to (Novinta & Mastuti, 2023)	Unlike (Nurlaila et al., 2024), who used resilience training with an experimental design and a comparison group, this study employed a <i>single-case design</i> focused on individual CBT counseling for students.
6	The Effectiveness of Expressive Writing Therapy in Reducing Anxiety Among Islamic Boarding School Students from Broken Homes	(Jannah, 2022)	Expressive writing therapy significantly reduced anxiety among boarding school students from broken homes ($p = 0.016 < 0.05$). There was a significant difference in post-test scores between the experimental and control groups.	Expressive writing therapy was utilized as a means of catharsis to release mental burdens and negative emotions, similar to (Maulida et al., 2026).	Unlike (Maulida et al., 2026), who used a single-group pre-experimental design, this study employed a <i>true experimental design</i> with a control group. The focus of the study also differed, specifically addressing anxiety among boarding school students with experiences of broken homes.
7	SMART-C Intervention to Reduce Anxiety in Elementary School Students Experiencing Cyberbullying	(Kaloeti & Desiningrum, 2023)	The results of the study indicate that the SMART-C training was effective in reducing anxiety ($Z = -2.317, p < 0.03$). This reduction was observed in overall anxiety ($Z = -1.975, p < 0.04$) and separation anxiety ($Z = -2.420, p < 0.01$).	Incorporating psychological capacity building as part of efforts to address psychosocial stress and using a quasi-experimental design to reduce anxiety levels among school-aged students is similar to the approach taken by (Afifah & Boediman, 2024)	Unlike (Afifah & Boediman, 2024), which involved middle school students, this study focuses on elementary school students. In addition to the age difference, the specific psychological issue addressed relates to experiences with cyberbullying.
8	The Effectiveness of Online Group CBT on Stress and Coping Strategies Among Adolescent Girls Affected by COVID-19	(Kartika & Tjakrawira laksana, 2021)	Online Group CBT significantly reduced stress (Friedman's ANOVA, $p = 0.035$) and significantly increased the use of <i>adaptive coping</i> (posttest, $p = 0.037$) through the 1-month follow-up phase after the intervention.	This study examined the effects of an online CBT intervention similar to that of (Asril et al., 2025); the intervention was conducted with adolescent girls of high school age, similar to (Afifah & Boediman, 2024)	Unlike (Asril et al., 2025), who used the <i>System Usability Scale (SUS)</i> with young adults, this intervention was conducted entirely online for adolescent girls and evaluated qualitative changes in adaptive and maladaptive coping patterns using the Brief COPE instrument.
9	Effectiveness of Rational Emotive Therapy	(Maghfira ni & ...)	The REBT intervention via the "Kancani" app	The study applied a specific cognitive-	Unlike (Novinta & Mastuti, 2023), who

	Behavior Therapy on the “Kancani” Web Application on Stress Levels of Junior High School Students	Mardhiyah, 2024)	significantly reduced the average stress levels of junior high school students ($t(21) = 2.141$, $p = 0.044$, Cohen’s $d = 0.456$).	behavioral REBT approach using the disputing process (ABCDE) to transform irrational thoughts into rational ones, similar to the approach used by (Novinta & Mastuti, 2023).	delivered REBT through face-to-face counseling, this study used a web-based application as the intervention medium, allowing participants to access the intervention more independently.
10	Overcoming the Quarter-Life Crisis: The Role of Eclectic Therapy, Support Groups, and Expressive Writing for Emerging Adults	(Maulida et al., 2026)	Eclectic therapy, support groups, and expressive writing were proven effective in reducing the level of <i>quarter-life crisis</i> (QLC) among emerging adults ($p = 0.008 < 0.05$).	Expressive writing was used as a means of catharsis to channel stress and negative emotions in writing, similar to (Jannah, 2022)	Unlike (Jannah, 2022), who used a true experimental design with a control group, this study employed a one-group pre-experimental design. Additionally, the intervention was eclectic in nature, combining several modalities.
11	The Effectiveness of Expressive Art Therapy in Reducing Anxiety Among Young Women in Islamic Boarding Schools	(Murnitama & Urbayatun, 2023)	Expressive Art Therapy has been shown to be effective in reducing anxiety among female boarding school students. All five participants experienced a decrease in their DASS-42 anxiety scores, falling into the moderate-to-normal range (Wilcoxon $Z = -2.032$; $p = 0.042$).	The characteristics of the adolescent subjects align with the study by (Hayya & Savitri, 2023). The one-group pretest-posttest design also shares similarities with that of (Maulida et al., 2026).	Unlike (Jannah, 2022), whose intervention was eclectic in nature and combined several modalities, this study used art as a medium for expression and the processing of emotional experiences.
12	Can Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) Reduce Academic Anxiety in High School Students?	(Novinta & Mastuti, 2023)	The administration of REBT over six sessions demonstrated a reduction in academic anxiety across emotional, cognitive, and physiological aspects. Imagery techniques were used to help participants identify and challenge irrational beliefs, transforming them into more rational ones.	The study used a single-case design, which was also employed in (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024). The focus on academic anxiety aligns with the studies by (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024) and (Nurlaila et al., 2024).	Unlike (Maghfirani & Mardhiyah, 2024), the REBT intervention in this study was delivered directly through face-to-face counseling sessions, whereas Maghfirani & Mardhiyah’s study used the <i>Kancani</i> web application as the intervention medium.
13	The Effectiveness of Resilience Training in Reducing Academic Stress Among College Students: A Randomized Pre-Test, Post-Test, and Follow-Up Study	(Nurlaila et al., 2024)	Resilience training (8 sessions) significantly reduced students’ academic stress (Partial Eta Squared = 0.399, $p = 0.000$), with effects persisting through the follow-up phase.	Like the study by (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024), this study also targeted stress or anxiety among college students (). An evaluation of the sustainability of the effects through a follow-up was also found in (Afifah & Boediman, 2024)	Unlike (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024), who used a single-case design, this study employed an experimental design with experimental and control groups. The intervention’s scope was also broader, focusing on the development of resilience as a

					psychological capacity for coping with stress.
14	<i>Effects of Progressive Muscle Relaxation on Stress, Anxiety, and Depression in University Students: A Quasi-Experimental Controlled Trial</i>	(Nurmina et al., 2026)	A 5-day PMR intervention significantly reduced stress (M: 29.63 to 22.10), anxiety (M: 25.17 to 18.37), and depression (M: 22.57 to 14.47) in the experimental group ($p < 0.001$).	The use of the Indonesian version of the DASS-42 is consistent with the studies by (Murnitama & Urbayatun, 2023) and (Susanto & Hartini, 2024). The characteristics of the subjects as college students are also consistent with the study by (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024).	Unlike (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024), who used CBT counseling to modify cognitive processes, this study employed physiological relaxation techniques to reduce tension and stress-related physical responses.
15	<i>Efforts to Overcome Adolescent Academic Anxiety through Intervention Programs Using a Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy Approach</i>	(Permatasari & Prasetyawati, 2023)	An individual CBT intervention program helped 14-year-old adolescent girls overcome academic anxiety and reduce the intensity of their emotional anxiety.	The focus on academic anxiety is similar to that of (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024) and (Novinta & Mastuti, 2023). The use of individual CBT with a single-case design is also similar to that of (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024).	The difference lies in the measurement instruments; this study used the <i>Coping Questionnaire-Child</i> (CQ-C) and the <i>Subjective Units of Distress/Discomfort Scale</i> (SUDS), whereas (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024), used a different academic anxiety instrument.
16	<i>The Effect of Mindfulness-Based Therapy on Anxiety Levels in Patients with Anxiety Disorders</i>	(Pratama & Chann, 2025)	The results showed a significant decrease in anxiety scores in the MBT group compared to the control group ($p < 0.01$). These findings indicate that MBT is an effective complementary intervention for reducing anxiety symptoms and can be integrated into routine clinical practice.	Like the studies by (Nurlaila et al., 2024) and (Nurmina et al., 2026), this study also employed a quasi-experimental design with a comparison group.	Unlike (Nurmina et al., 2026), which involved college students as a non-clinical population, this study involved patients with anxiety disorders in a clinical setting. The intervention approach also focused on mindfulness rather than physiological relaxation.
17	<i>Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy to Reduce Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Adolescents</i>	(Rakhmasari et al., 2021)	<i>Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy</i> (TF-CBT) demonstrated effectiveness in reducing PTSD symptoms in adolescent girls who were victims of sexual violence (Mann-Whitney, $p = 0.008$).	Both studies focused on treating PTSD in adolescent populations and employed a cognitive-behavioral approach, similar to (Subhi, 2021). The element of cognitive restructuring also aligns with the CBT principles	Unlike (Subhi, 2021), who addressed PTSD following a vehicle accident among college students using a single-case design, this study focuses on PTSD resulting from sexual violence in adolescents and employs the TF-CBT approach.

				used by (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024).	
18	Group Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Reducing Anxiety in Middle-Aged Women	(Rinaldi & Musawwamah, 2024)	The CBT group showed a significant reduction in anxiety among middle-aged women (repeated-measures ANOVA, $F = 120$, $p < 0.001$). The decrease in BAI scores occurred from the pretest to the posttest and remained evident at the follow-up.	The group CBT intervention format was similar to that used by (Afifah & Boediman, 2024) and (Susanto & Hartini, 2024). The use of a follow-up assessment was also consistent with Afifah & Boediman (2024).	Unlike (Afifah & Boediman, 2024), which involved adolescent girls, this study focused on middle-aged women aged 54–60 years and used the Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI) as the instrument for measuring anxiety.
19	The Effectiveness of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in Reducing Motor Vehicle Accident-Related PTSD Among College Students	(Subhi, 2021)	CBT counseling was effective in reducing PTSD among female college students who were victims of motorcycle accidents. The SUD trauma scale decreased from a baseline of 50%–90% to 30% during the intervention and stabilized at 10% post-intervention.	Cognitive restructuring was used to transform irrational thoughts into rational ones, similar to (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024). Both studies employed a single-case design, as did (Rakhmasari et al., 2021).	Unlike (Rakhmasari et al., 2021), which focused on PTSD resulting from sexual violence, this study focused on PTSD symptoms following a traffic accident and used systematic desensitization as part of the intervention.
20	Group Counseling on Stress Coping Strategies for Special Education Teachers	(Susanto & Hartini, 2024)	Group counseling on coping strategies showed a significant reduction in stress levels among special needs teachers ($p = 0.008$). All three participants experienced a decrease in their DASS-42 scores from the high category to the low or normal category.	Like (Murnitamia & Urbayatun, 2023) and (Maulida et al., 2026), this study employed a one-group pretest-posttest design without a control group. The use of interviews as a supplementary evaluation method is also similar to that in (Hayya & Savitri, 2023).	Unlike (Murnitamia & Urbayatun, 2023), which involved adolescents as subjects, this study involved adult teachers working with children with special needs. The quantitative analysis also used a paired-samples t-test rather than the Wilcoxon test.
21	E-Group Art Journal Therapy to Reduce Adolescents' Levels of Stress, Anxiety, and Depression	(Widiasavetri et al., 2024)	The E-GAJT intervention significantly reduced adolescents' depression, anxiety, and stress scores ($p < 0.05$). Qualitatively, this therapy fostered belief in one's own potential and the courage to set healthy life boundaries.	Like (Murnitamia & Urbayatun, 2023), this study utilized art therapy in a group format. The use of the DASS as a measurement instrument also aligns with (Murnitamia & Urbayatun, 2023).	Unlike Murnitamia & Urbayatun (2023), who provided therapy in person, this intervention was conducted online via Zoom. The therapeutic approach also integrated art journaling activities with virtual group dynamics.

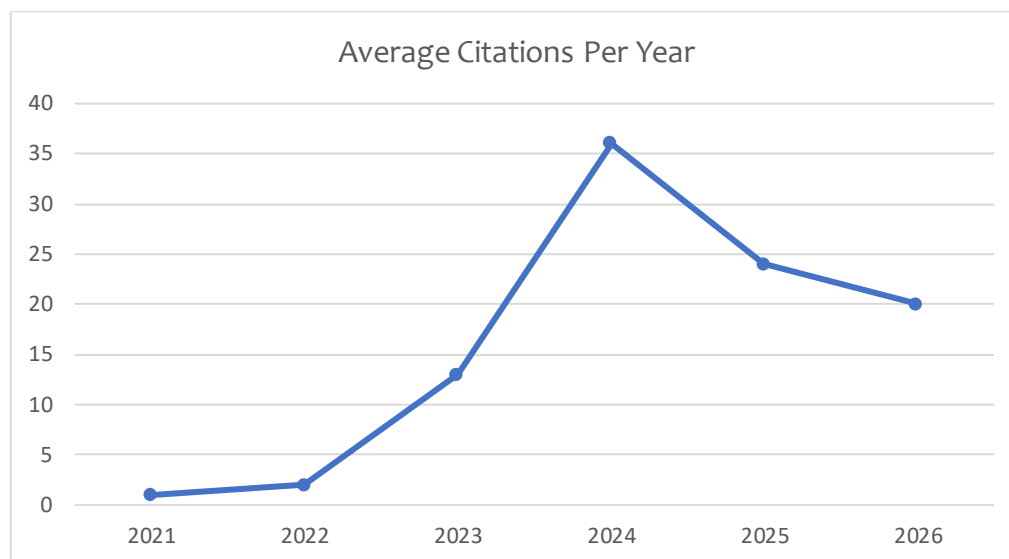


Figure 2. Number of Citations

This figure presents the average citations per year from publications during the period from 2021 to 2026. Overall, the trend shows a significant increase in citation impact, followed by a decline in subsequent years. In 2021, the average citations per year were relatively low, at around 1 citation, and increased slightly to about 2 citations in 2022. A significant increase occurred in 2023, when the average citations reached approximately 13 citations. Citation impact

then surged sharply in 2024, reaching a peak of approximately 36 citations per year. However, the average citation count declined to about 24 citations in 2025 and continued to decline to about 20 citations in 2026. This pattern shows that these publications reached their highest citation impact in 2024, indicating considerable academic attention during that period, while the subsequent decline reflects differences in citation accumulation over time.

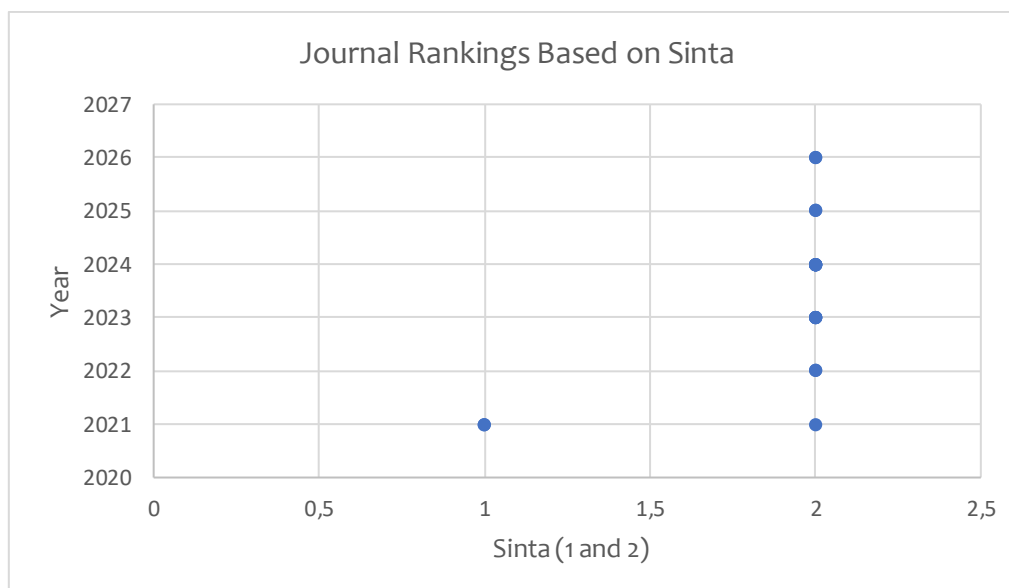


Figure 3. Journal Rankings

This figure presents the distribution of journal rankings based on SINTA accreditation from 2021 to 2026. Overall, the majority of publications appeared in SINTA 2 journals, while only a small number were published in SINTA 1 journals. In 2021, publications were distributed across both SINTA 1 and 2 journals, with SINTA 2 being the more dominant category. From 2022 to 2026, all publications were

consistently indexed in SINTA 2. This pattern indicates that SINTA 2 journals served as the primary publication channel throughout the observed period. The consistency of publications in SINTA 2 journals also indicates that research in this field has been disseminated through nationally accredited journals with a relatively strong level of academic recognition.

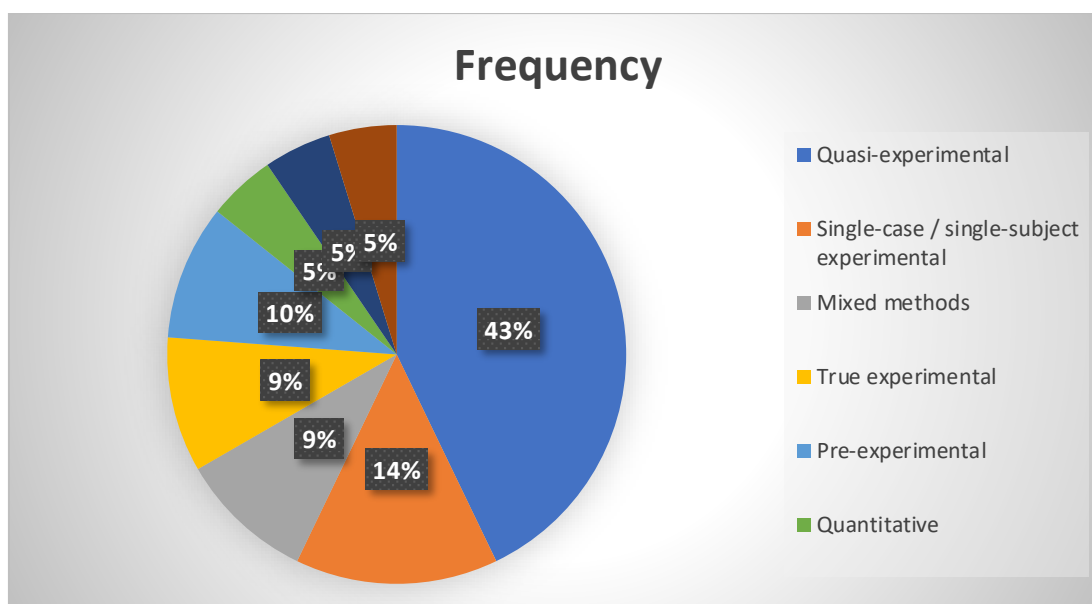


Figure 4. Research Methods

This figure presents the distribution of research methods used in the selected publications. Overall, quasi-experimental designs were the most frequently used method, accounting for 43% of all studies. Experimental case study or single-subject designs represented 14% of the publications, followed by mixed-methods and pure experimental designs, each accounting for 9%. Pre-experimental designs accounted for 10% of the studies, while quantitative research accounted for 5%. This distribution

indicates that quasi-experimental designs are the dominant methodological approach in the reviewed literature. The relatively high proportion of quasi-experimental studies suggests that researchers in this field generally use experimental approaches to test the effectiveness or outcomes of interventions while working in practical research settings.

Table 4. Distribution of Psychological Interventions to Reduce Stress and Anxiety in Indonesia (N = 21)

Type of Intervention	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Variations in Interventions
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)	12 Journals	57.14%	Individual CBT counseling, individual REBT, CBT-based emotion regulation training, resilience training (integration of CBT and relaxation), CBT for trauma/PTSD due to accidents, group CBT, web-based REBT ("Kancani"), SMART-C (online CBT), individual CBT (Coping Cat), Mobile Brief-CBT (MB-CBT) mobile app, Trauma-Focused CBT (TF-CBT), and Online Group CBT.
Group-Based Interventions	3	14.29%	Assertive Communication, Positive Thinking Training, Eclectic Therapy
Art Therapy	2	9.52%	Group Expressive Art Therapy (drawing flower petals and coloring) and E-Group Art Journal Therapy (E-GAJT) conducted online via Zoom.
Expressive Writing	1	4.76%	Independent expressive writing therapy using a diary.
Relaxation Therapy	1	4.76%	Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR).
Mindfulness-Based Therapy	1	4.76%	Mindfulness-Based Therapy (MBCT).
Group Counseling	1	4.76%	Stress Coping Group Counseling (problem-focused and emotion-focused coping).
Total	21	99.99%	

Based on Table 3, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is the most commonly used type of psychological intervention in research on stress and anxiety in Indonesia, accounting for 12 studies (57.14%). The variations identified include individual CBT counseling, CBT-based emotion regulation training, resilience training integrating CBT and relaxation, CBT for trauma/PTSD, group CBT, web-based REBT via Kancani, SMART-C (online CBT), individual CBT via Coping

Cat, mobile brief-CBT (MB-CBT) via a mobile app, trauma-focused CBT (TF-CBT), and online group CBT.

The predominance of the cognitive-behavioral approach indicates that this approach offers high flexibility in its application across various population characteristics, psychological issues, and intervention formats whether individual or group-based, and delivered through in-person or digital technology based services. In this mapping, REBT is

placed in the CBT category as part of the broader cognitive-behavioral approach, rather than as a conventional form of CBT. This grouping is based on the common orientation of the interventions toward modifying thought patterns, irrational beliefs, and maladaptive emotional responses (Novinta & Mastuti, 2023). The diversity of intervention formats across the 12 studies demonstrates that the cognitive-behavioral approach offers high flexibility for adaptation to various intervention modalities.

Group-based interventions ranked second with 3 studies (14.29%). These three studies included *assertive communication* (Hayya & Savitri, 2023), *positive thinking training* (Maulida et al., 2026), and *eclectic therapy* (Aulia & Widyana, 2022). These three interventions have distinct characteristics in terms of techniques and theoretical foundations but are delivered in a group format, thereby facilitating participant interaction, the exchange of experiences, social support, and interpersonal learning throughout the intervention process.

Therefore, this category is best understood as group-based psychological interventions, including *assertive communication* which focuses on developing communication skills, *positive thinking training* which emphasizes the development of adaptive thought patterns, and *eclectic therapy* which integrates several therapeutic approaches according to participants' needs. This diversity indicates that the group format can serve as a setting for developing psychological skills while simultaneously leveraging interpersonal dynamics as part of the intervention process.

Art Therapy was identified in 2 studies (9.52%), namely the research by (Murnitamia & Urbayatun, 2023) and (Widiasavitri et al., 2024). The variations in interventions used included group expressive art therapy through activities such as drawing flower petals and coloring, as well as *E-Group Art Journal Therapy* conducted online via Zoom. This approach utilizes creative activities as a medium for emotional expression, exploration of psychological experiences, and self-reflection. The inclusion of *Art Therapy* indicates that interventions for stress and anxiety are not only directed toward cognitive and behavioral changes but

can also utilize nonverbal media to facilitate the expression of emotional experiences, particularly when such experiences are difficult to convey verbally.

Meanwhile, *expressive writing therapy*, *relaxation therapy*, *mindfulness-based therapy*, and *group counseling* were each found in 1 study (4.76%). *Expressive writing therapy* in (Jannah, 2022) study utilized writing as a medium for emotional catharsis and self-reflection through the use of a diary. *Relaxation therapy* in Nurmina et al., (2026), study employed *progressive muscle relaxation (PMR)* as a technique to help reduce stress-related tension. *Mindfulness-based therapy* in the study by Pratama & Chann, (2025) employed a *mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT)* approach, which helps individuals develop a more adaptive awareness of their internal experiences. Meanwhile, *group counseling* in the study by (Susanto & Hartini, 2024) utilized group counseling with a *coping-focused and emotion-focused coping* approach to help participants develop strategies for dealing with stress and managing emotional responses.

Overall, the distribution across the 21 studies indicates that research on psychological interventions to reduce stress and anxiety in Indonesia is dominated by the *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)* approach, with 12 studies or 57.14% of the total research. This dominance indicates that the CBT approach is the most commonly found intervention framework in the reviewed studies, with widespread application across various populations and service formats.

On the other hand, the mapping reveals a diversity of approaches through group-based interventions, *art therapy*, *expressive writing therapy*, *relaxation therapy*, *mindfulness-based therapy*, and *group counseling*. This diversity indicates that psychological interventions for stress and anxiety in Indonesia are not only oriented toward modifying thought patterns and behavior but also encompass the development of interpersonal skills, group support and dynamics, emotional expression and regulation, management of physiological responses, and increased awareness of internal experiences. Thus, the identified intervention landscape demonstrates an increasingly broad range of therapeutic strategies.

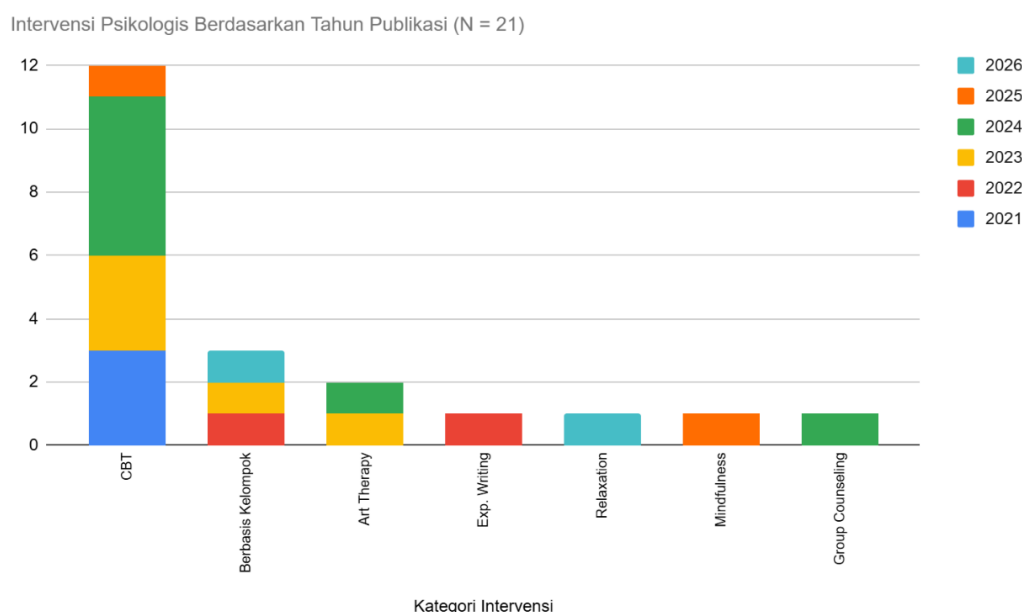


Figure 5. Categories of Psychological Interventions by Year of Publication

Figure 2 shows the distribution of psychological intervention categories by year of publication across the 21 studies that met the study's inclusion criteria. The publications identified in this study span the period 2021–2026, with the highest number of studies found in 2024 ($n = 7$). *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)* dominated nearly the entire publication period, followed by *support groups and art therapy*. Additionally, the graph also shows the presence of various other intervention categories, such as *expressive writing, relaxation, mindfulness, and group counseling*. These findings indicate that the studies meeting the inclusion criteria did not focus solely on a single type of intervention but encompassed a diverse range of psychological approaches in the management of stress and anxiety in Indonesia.

DISCUSSION

The results of the review of 21 studies indicate that psychological interventions for managing stress and anxiety in Indonesia during the 2021–2026 period exhibit diversity in their approaches, target group characteristics, and implementation methods. This diversity indicates a tendency to use interventions tailored to the characteristics of the problems and the needs of the target groups, whether in academic contexts (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024), adolescent and early adult development (Asril et al., 2025), post-traumatic psychological issues (Rakhmasari et al., 2021), and specific psychosocial conditions (Nurlaila et al., 2024). The findings of this systematic literature review indicate that the management of stress and anxiety in the Indonesian context does not follow a single, uniform intervention pattern but rather demonstrates a variety of approaches that can be

considered based on individual characteristics, the type of problem, and the context in which the intervention is delivered.

Although Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is the most dominant approach in this review, the findings also indicate the use of various other approaches, such as group-based interventions, *art therapy*, *expressive writing*, *relaxation*, and *mindfulness*. This diversity indicates that psychological interventions for addressing stress and anxiety in Indonesia are not only aimed at changing thought patterns and behaviors but also encompass the development of coping skills (Kartika & Tjakrawiralaksana, 2021), the management and expression of emotions (Afifah & Boediman, 2024), reduction of physiological tension (Rinaldi & Musawwamah, 2024), and increased awareness of an individual's internal experiences (Subhi, 2021). Thus, the variety of approaches identified reveals a diversity of intervention mechanisms that can be tailored to the objectives and characteristics of psychological issues.

The predominance of CBT in this study does not imply that other approaches play a lesser role; rather, it illustrates a spectrum of intervention options that can be tailored to the needs and context of the target group. These findings have implications for psychological practice, particularly regarding the selection of interventions to address stress and anxiety. Although CBT is the most commonly found intervention, the diversity of approaches indicates that no single intervention can be applied to all individuals. Therefore, the selection of an intervention must take into account the results of the assessment, as well as the client's characteristics, needs, and the context of their issues, so that psychological services can be provided in a more precise and contextually appropriate manner.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy as the Most Widely Used Intervention

Research findings indicate that Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is the most widely used approach in studies related to stress and anxiety in Indonesia. This aligns with the view that CBT is one of the psychological interventions with strong empirical support for addressing various emotional issues, including stress and anxiety (Permatasari & Prasetyawati, 2023). The high prevalence of CBT can be understood because this approach has a clear intervention structure, is easily adaptable to various populations, and can be implemented in individual, group, or digital technology-based formats. The diverse forms of implementation identified in this study such as group CBT (Rinaldi & Musawwamah, 2024), online CBT (Kartika & Tjakrawiralaksana, 2021), and Mobile Brief-CBT (Asril et al., 2025), demonstrate the high adaptability of the cognitive-behavioral approach across various contexts.

CBT operates through various techniques aimed at transforming maladaptive thought patterns and behaviors into more adaptive ones, one of which is cognitive restructuring (Izzah & Indrijati, 2024). This approach not only aims to reduce psychological symptoms but also helps individuals develop skills they can use independently to cope with stressful situations. With a systematic and flexible intervention framework, CBT can be modified according to the characteristics of the problem and the individual's needs.

The application of CBT has also expanded to address trauma-related issues. (Subhi, 2021) used cognitive restructuring to help college students experiencing PTSD resulting from a vehicle accident, while (Rakhmasari et al., 2021), used Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy with adolescents who were victims of sexual violence. Both studies demonstrate the application of cognitive-behavioral principles to traumatic experiences, despite differences in the context of the trauma and the characteristics of the participants.

Meanwhile, (Novinta & Mastuti, 2023) used REBT to help individuals identify and challenge irrational beliefs. Another form of CBT involves CBT-based emotion regulation training for adolescents, which helps improve their ability to manage emotions while reducing anxiety (Afifah & Boediman, 2024). These findings demonstrate that the cognitive-behavioral approach can be applied to various types of problems involving maladaptive thoughts and beliefs. The diversity of techniques, target populations, and implementation formats demonstrates that CBT has a high degree of adaptability, making it the most consistently used approach in both psychological research and practice in Indonesia.

Limitations of CBT

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is the most commonly found approach in this review, but intervention results indicate that psychological changes do not always occur uniformly across all measured aspects. Online group CBT has been shown to reduce stress and improve adaptive

copng, whereas changes in maladaptive coping did not yield significant results (Kartika & Tjakrawiralaksana, 2021). These findings indicate that a reduction in psychological stress is not always accompanied by equivalent changes across all coping patterns. In resilience-based interventions, changes in stress-coping abilities are also developed through structured and gradual exercises (Nurlaila et al., 2024).

Meanwhile, CBT-based emotion regulation training incorporates skill-building exercises as part of the process to help participants manage their emotional responses to anxiety provoking situations (Afifah & Boediman, 2024). The effectiveness of CBT must be understood based on the psychological aspects targeted by the intervention, not merely based on changes in overall stress or anxiety scores. The long-term effects of CBT interventions are often a key focus in clinical evaluations. (Kartika & Tjakrawiralaksana, 2021) reported that only 50% of participants consistently completed and submitted their homework assignments, indicating that engagement in exercises outside of sessions is one of the challenges in maintaining coping skills during the follow-up phase.

(Rakhmasari et al., 2021) demonstrated that adolescents' emotional characteristics, as well as environmental conditions accompanying traumatic experiences, can be integral parts of the recovery process that require attention. In line with this, the success of transferring intervention sessions to daily life depends not only on the techniques provided but also on the individual's active engagement and self-regulation abilities. (Kartika & Tjakrawiralaksana, 2021) found that laziness, forgetfulness, and difficulty articulating internal experiences in writing can hinder the completion of tasks and exercises outside of sessions, thereby making the process of mastering coping skills less optimal. These findings align with those of (Nurlaila et al., 2024), who demonstrated that inconsistency in completing daily worksheets can affect the practice process and the development of resilience during the intervention.

Barriers to engagement may also arise when individuals are not yet ready to disclose the problems they are experiencing. (Maulida et al., 2026) found that in the early stages of the intervention, some participants tended to keep their problems to themselves because they felt ashamed to acknowledge the difficulties they faced. This situation indicates that participant engagement in the intervention needs to be built gradually through activities that encourage participation and self-expression. In this regard (Afifah & Boediman, 2024) emphasize the importance of assigning engaging out-of-session tasks and providing a distraction-free environment to support participant engagement. Thus, the sustainability of the intervention's benefits is determined not only by the quality of the psychological techniques used but also by the extent to which individuals are able to engage consistently, practice independently, and integrate the acquired skills into their daily lives.

In addition to participant characteristics, time constraints and limited opportunities for individual exploration are key considerations in the implementation of

both group-based and digital CBT interventions. In online group CBT, (Kartika & Tjakrawiralaksana, 2021) found that technical challenges, including connection issues, can reduce the time available for participants to discuss personal issues in greater depth. Obstacles to exploring individual needs in a group setting were also evident in the study by (Hayya & Savitri, 2023), which emphasized the importance of needs assessment to understand participants' characteristics and needs before the intervention is delivered. Regarding app-based services, (Asril et al., 2025) demonstrated that brief CBT interventions via mobile apps have limitations in addressing emotional conditions requiring more intensive management, thus necessitating individual follow-up.

These findings suggest that the choice of intervention format must take into account the participants' level of psychological needs, as neither group-based nor digital approaches always provide the same scope for individual exploration as face-to-face, one-on-one interventions. In the context of app-based interventions, (Maghfirani & Mardhiyah, 2024) also highlight the importance of monitoring participants' progress during the implementation of interventions via digital media. Thus, the limitation regarding individual exploration does not imply that group or digital formats are less effective; rather, it underscores the need for initial assessment, progress monitoring, and referral mechanisms when participants' needs require more personalized care.

The success of trauma interventions, including Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), is influenced not only by the intervention process itself but also by the support and environmental conditions surrounding the individual. Rakhmasari et al., (2021) demonstrated that the discontinuation of legal proceedings by the victim's family can be followed by the reemergence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms, indicating that environmental responses can influence the continuity of the recovery process. Conversely, Subhi, (2021) found that support from parents and peers plays a role in creating social conditions that support the recovery process following a traumatic experience. In addition to social support, the cultural appropriateness of interventions is also a critical consideration in their implementation.

Asril et al., (2025) emphasize the importance of considering cultural values and local wisdom in psychological services so that interventions are more readily accepted by the target group. This indicates that the effectiveness of psychological interventions cannot be separated from the social and cultural context in which they are provided. Therefore, the implementation of interventions must take into account the involvement of the immediate environment, cultural characteristics, and the individual's psychological needs so that the recovery process can proceed more optimally (Permatasari & Prasetyawati, 2023). Methodological limitations in a number of CBT studies in Indonesia must be taken into account when interpreting the strength of conclusions regarding the effectiveness of interventions, particularly regarding causality and the generalizability of results.

Subhi (2021) used a single-case experimental design with an A-B-A pattern, which allows for in-depth observation of changes in individuals but has limitations in generalizing the findings to a broader population. Limitations in ensuring that changes stem entirely from the intervention are also evident in the study by Rinaldi & Musawwamah (2024), which used a one-group pre-test-post-test design without a control group; consequently, changes in scores before and after the intervention cannot be entirely separated from the potential influence of external factors.

In line with this, Afifah & Boediman (2024) demonstrated that the use of a quasi-experimental design without a comparison group limits researchers' ability to control for other factors that could potentially influence changes in anxiety levels. These conditions indicate that improving the quality of research design particularly through the use of a control group and the control of confounding variables is necessary to strengthen internal validity and provide a more robust foundation for drawing conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the intervention. In this context, Maghfirani & Mardhiyah (2024) emphasize the importance of including a control group in future experimental studies so that the observed changes can be evaluated more convincingly compared to conditions without intervention.

Nevertheless, these various limitations do not diminish CBT's status as the most widely used approach. On the contrary, these findings indicate that CBT continues to have a strong empirical foundation; however, its implementation needs to be tailored to clients' characteristics and can be integrated with other approaches that place greater emphasis on acceptance, psychological flexibility, and self-awareness.

Group-Based Interventions

Group-based interventions are an approach that utilizes interactions among individuals as part of the psychological change process. In this study, the group approach was used not only to deliver intervention content but also to foster the development of interpersonal skills, the sharing of experiences, social support, and the formation of strategies for coping with stress. Forms of intervention include assertive communication (Hayya & Savitri, 2023), positive thinking training (Aulia & Widyana, 2022), and eclectic therapy involving support groups (Maulida et al., 2026).

Hayya and Surini (2023) demonstrated that group-based assertive communication training can enhance assertive behavior while reducing social anxiety in adolescents, whereas (Aulia & Widyana, 2022) found that positive thinking training in a group format can reduce psychological stress in individuals with hypertension. These findings suggest that the group format can serve as a space for collaborative learning, receiving feedback, and developing more adaptive responses and perspectives toward problems. The flexibility of this format is also evident in the study by (Maulida et al., 2026), which integrated support groups, expressive writing, and eclectic therapy in addressing the quarter-life crisis among young adults.

Thus, group-based interventions do not rely on a single technique or theoretical foundation but can serve as a platform that integrates various psychological strategies according to participants' needs. Nevertheless, their implementation must still take into account group dynamics, participant engagement, and the facilitator's ability to create a safe and supportive environment.

Art Therapy as an Evolving Creative Approach

Research findings also indicate that art therapy is increasingly being used as an alternative intervention for managing stress and anxiety. Although the number of studies identified remains relatively limited compared to CBT and group-based interventions, the existence of various forms of art therapy reflects growing attention toward approaches that utilize creative media as a means of psychological expression (Murnitamia & Urbayatun, 2023). Art Therapy is an alternative intervention that utilizes creative activities as a medium for expressing and processing emotional experiences.

Murnitamia & Urbayatun (2023) demonstrated that expressive art therapy can reduce anxiety in young women, while (Widiasavitri et al., 2024) found that E-group art journal therapy can reduce stress, anxiety, and depression in adolescents. These findings indicate that artistic activities can provide a space for individuals to express experiences and emotions that are not always easy to convey verbally, while also serving as a means of self-exploration within the intervention process (Murnitamia & Urbayatun, 2023). The diversity of its implementation both in-person and online demonstrates that Art Therapy offers flexibility in adapting media and formats to participants' characteristics.

However, its implementation must still take into account the availability of tools and materials, the conditions under which it is conducted, the limitations of observing nonverbal expressions in online formats, and the duration of the intervention to ensure that the therapeutic process can proceed optimally (Widiasavitri et al., 2024). Thus, Art Therapy has the potential as an alternative psychological intervention, although the evidence in this review is still limited to two studies with specific intervention characteristics and populations.

Expressive Writing, Relaxation, Mindfulness, and Group Counseling

The diversity of psychological interventions identified indicates that the management of stress and anxiety in Indonesia does not rely solely on cognitive-behavioral approaches. According to (Jannah, 2022), expressive writing provides a space for individuals to articulate their experiences, thoughts, and feelings through writing as a medium for processing emotional experiences. Expressive writing therapy significantly reduced anxiety, with a difference in post-test scores between the experimental and control groups. These findings suggest that writing can serve as an alternative medium to help individuals express

and process emotional experiences in a more personal way (Jannah, 2022).

Unlike expressive writing, which focuses on the expression of experiences, Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) directs the intervention toward physiological responses to stress. Nurmina et al., (2026) found reductions in stress, anxiety, and depression following PMR, which is conducted through the systematic tensing and relaxing of muscle groups. Meanwhile, Mindfulness-Based Therapy emphasizes awareness of the present moment and acceptance of thoughts and emotions without excessive judgment. Pratama & Chann (2025) found a significant reduction in anxiety among patients with anxiety disorders following the intervention compared to the control group.

Group counseling, on the other hand, utilizes the group interaction process to develop coping strategies. (Susanto & Hartini, 2024) demonstrated that group counseling incorporating problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies can reduce stress among teachers of children with special needs. A comparison of these four approaches reveals differences in the focus of their mechanisms of change. Expressive writing emphasizes processing experiences through written expression (Jannah, 2022); relaxation focuses on changing physiological responses (Nurmina et al., 2026); mindfulness focuses on awareness and acceptance of internal experiences (Pratama & Chann, 2025); while group counseling utilizes group interaction and the development of coping strategies (Susanto & Hartini, 2024).

Thus, the findings of this systematic literature review indicate that interventions for stress and anxiety can be directed through emotional, physiological, self-awareness, or interpersonal pathways, depending on the characteristics of the problem and the needs of the target group.

CONCLUSION

This study indicates that Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is the most widely used psychological intervention for managing stress and anxiety in Indonesia during the 2021–2026 period. Additionally, the findings also show a growing use of group-based interventions, art therapy, expressive writing, relaxation, mindfulness, and group counseling, reflecting the increasing diversity of psychological intervention practices in Indonesia. These findings suggest that the management of stress and anxiety in Indonesia is no longer focused on a single specific approach but is evolving toward the use of more diverse, contextual interventions that align with the development of evidence-based psychological practices.

The results of this study can serve as a reference for psychology practitioners, educational institutions, and professional organizations in understanding trends in the use of psychological interventions for managing stress and anxiety in Indonesia. However, this study is limited to studies that met the inclusion criteria and focused on mapping the types of interventions without conducting an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of each approach. Therefore,

future research is recommended to examine and compare the effectiveness of various psychological interventions across different populations and contexts. Studies with stronger designs, larger sample sizes, and adequate intervention durations are also needed to strengthen the empirical evidence and identify the approaches best suited to the characteristics of the population and the issues being addressed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank all researchers and academics whose work served as the foundation for this systematic literature review. Thanks are also extended to the reviewers and editors for their valuable input and suggestions in refining this manuscript.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

This study is a systematic literature review based entirely on published and publicly accessible academic literature. Since this research does not involve direct interaction with human participants, animal subjects, or the collection of personally identifiable data, formal ethical approval is not required.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that there are no financial interests or personal relationships that could influence the objectivity in the preparation and reporting of this manuscript.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT (TRANSPARENCY OF DATA)

The data, search protocols, and literature synthesis supporting the findings of this systematic review are available in the article and its supplementary materials. Additional data can be obtained from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

FUNDING

This study did not receive specific funding from any government, commercial, or nonprofit organizations.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors have read, reviewed, and approved the final version of the manuscript for publication.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI USAGE

The authors affirm that no generative artificial intelligence (AI) technology or AI-assisted tools were used in the design, data extraction, analysis, or writing of this manuscript.

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