

## Intervention in Academic Stress in Adolescents

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### Abstract

Academic stress in adolescents often affects their emotional and cognitive well-being, which can interfere with academic achievement and quality of life. This study aims to explore interventions that can reduce academic stress in adolescents with an approach based on stress management techniques and social support. The method used is a literature study that reviews various studies on academic stress in adolescents and effective intervention strategies. Based on the literature, relaxation techniques, time management, and social support from family and school have been shown to reduce academic stress in adolescents. In conclusion, an integrated intervention approach between psychological skills and environmental support is very important to overcome academic stress in adolescents.

**Keywords:** Academic Stress, Adolescents, Intervention.

### Abstrak

Stres akademik pada remaja sering kali mempengaruhi kesejahteraan emosional dan kognitif mereka, yang dapat mengganggu prestasi akademik serta kualitas hidup. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi intervensi yang dapat mengurangi stres akademik pada remaja dengan pendekatan yang berbasis pada teknik manajemen stres dan dukungan sosial. Metode yang digunakan adalah studi literatur yang meninjau berbagai penelitian mengenai stres akademik pada remaja serta strategi intervensi yang efektif. Berdasarkan literatur, teknik relaksasi, pengelolaan waktu, dan dukungan sosial dari keluarga dan sekolah terbukti dapat mengurangi stres akademik remaja. Kesimpulannya, pendekatan intervensi yang terintegrasi antara keterampilan psikologis dan dukungan lingkungan sekitar sangat penting untuk mengatasi stres akademik pada remaja.

**Kata Kunci :** Stres Akademik, Remaja, Intervensi.

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is the main foundation in shaping an individual's life and plays an important role in the development of society. In Indonesia, education is a national priority with the implementation of a 12-year compulsory education program aimed at ensuring that every citizen completes their education up to the high school level. This aligns with the vision of national education as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Article 3, which emphasizes the development of students' potential to become individuals who are faithful, pious, have noble character, are independent, creative, and competitive (Hasan, 2019).

However, in practice, the formal education journey is often accompanied by various challenges that affect students. One of the most prominent challenges is academic stress. Academic stress refers to the psychological pressure that arises due to high academic demands, such as the expectation to achieve satisfactory grades, complete assignments on time, and compete with peers (Nurmina et al., 2019). According to a survey conducted by [research institution or survey data], it was found that [percentage or findings related to academic stress levels among students]. A study by (Utama & Ambarini, 2023) found that 65% of high school students in urban areas experience moderate to high levels of academic stress, primarily due to workload and pressure from teachers and parents. Similarly, research conducted by (Rizkana, 2023) highlights that university students face academic stress due to tight deadlines and social expectations.

The causes of academic stress are highly complex and involve various aspects. Excessive academic demands, poor time management, and exam anxiety are the main factors commonly experienced by students (Febriani et al., 2024). Additionally, the educational environment also influences the level of academic stress, including inadequate school facilities, ineffective teaching methods, and the long distance between home and school. Previous studies have also highlighted the role of individual factors such as self-efficacy, hardiness personality, optimism, achievement motivation, and procrastination in influencing students' stress levels. Social support, especially from parents and peers, is also a crucial element in helping students manage academic stress (Romadhani et al., 2017).

Given these findings, it is essential to understand the factors contributing to and the impact of academic stress to develop effective strategies for addressing this issue. By utilizing a holistic approach and considering previous research, educators and policymakers can create supportive learning environments that reduce academic stress and enhance students' overall well-being and academic performance (Maulana et al., 2023).

Research in Indonesia shows that the level of academic stress in adolescents is very worrying. found that high school students in grade X had significant levels of academic stress. During the COVID-19 pandemic, as many as 81.6% of high school students in grades 10 and 11 were

reported to experience high academic stress, especially students aged 16 years (Azzahra et al., 2023).

The adolescent phase is a challenging transition period towards adulthood. In addition to facing academic pressures, adolescents also must face various social, emotional, and physical pressures. This makes them more vulnerable to stress, which in turn affects their learning performance (Fachrunisa & Saptandari, 2023).

Stress academics who are not handled can cause wide impact, both in a way physique and also psychologically. In terms of physical, symptoms like tiredness, sick head, and disturbances Sleep often appear. In emotional, students can experience anxiety, depression, and feelings No satisfied (Mahardhani et al., 2020). In behavior, stress can trigger aggressiveness, truancy, to habit lying. In addition, in cognitive, students often experience difficulty concentrate, think negativity, and excessive perfectionism (Romadhani et al., 2017).

A more serious impact is the emergence of self-harm behavior, namely the act of hurting oneself as a form of venting emotions that are difficult to express. This behavior is often done as a non-adaptive coping mechanism and includes various forms, such as cutting the skin, burning the body, to pulling out hair (Apriyani et al., 2023). Self-harm is not only a sign of emotional distress, but also a serious indicator of mental health disorders.

Given the high prevalence and negative impact of academic stress, comprehensive interventions are needed to help adolescents manage academic pressure effectively. These interventions can include stress management training, time management skills development, counseling programs, and mindfulness-based approaches. The focus of these interventions is to help adolescents identify their sources of stress, develop healthy coping strategies, and increase resilience to academic stress. This literature review aims to review various interventions that have been developed to address academic stress in adolescents. In addition, this review also evaluates the effectiveness of these interventions and identifies factors that influence their success. Thus, the results of this review are expected to provide new insights in designing more targeted and relevant strategies to support adolescent well-being, both in educational settings and in everyday life.

## METHOD

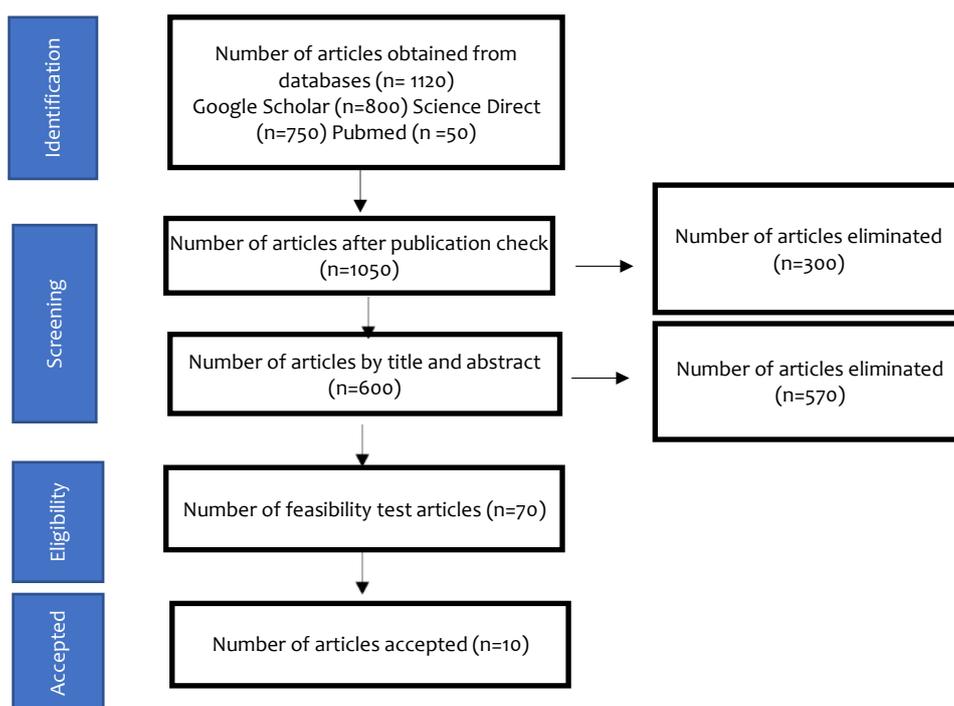
The method used in this article is a systematic literature review (SLR), which examines existing literature on academic stress interventions in adolescents (Rukminingsih, 2020). The literature search was conducted through Google Scholar using the keywords "academic stress intervention in adolescents." The initial search yielded 350 articles that were potentially relevant to the study. To ensure the quality and relevance of the selected literature, a structured screening process was carried out following specific inclusion and exclusion criteria.

The initial screening stage focused on the publication year, where articles published before 2013 were systematically excluded. This step was taken to ensure that

only the most recent and relevant articles, reflecting the latest research developments, were considered, specifically those published within the last 10 years, from 2013 to 2023. The initial search across various databases, including Google Scholar, Science Direct, and PubMed, yielded a total of 1,120 articles, consisting of 800 from Google Scholar, 750 from Science Direct, and 50 from PubMed. However, after conducting a publication check, the number of articles eligible for further review was reduced to 1,050. This filtering step was essential to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the studies selected for the ongoing research process.

The second stage of the screening process focused on the research subjects of the articles. Only studies involving adolescents aged 12 to 23 years were considered for further review. Articles that did not specifically address adolescents

within this age group or those discussing academic stress without including intervention strategies were excluded. The selection process continued with a review of the titles and abstracts of the 1,050 articles that passed the publication check, narrowing the pool down to 600 articles that seemed relevant to the research topic. Among these, 70 articles passed the eligibility test based on their content, methodology, and thematic relevance. However, after a more rigorous and focused selection process, only 10 articles were deemed suitable for in-depth analysis in this study. This multi-stage selection process not only strengthened the validity of the study but also ensured that the included articles truly supported the research goals with credible data and approaches.



**Table 1. Flow Prisma Systematic Literatur Review**

In the eligibility stage, a more detailed evaluation was conducted by analyzing the abstracts and methodologies of the remaining articles. Studies that did not explicitly focus on academic stress interventions or that primarily addressed general anxiety rather than academic-related stress were excluded. Additionally, articles that lacked full-text availability or had unclear research methodologies were removed. As a result, the number of selected studies was further reduced to 10 articles that best matched the research objectives.

The final selection of 10 articles represents the most relevant and high-quality studies on academic stress interventions in adolescents. These studies were chosen based on their strong methodological foundations and their direct relevance to the research topic. The selection process ensures that only reliable and impactful research is included, forming a solid foundation for understanding effective intervention strategies for managing academic stress among adolescents.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

No.	Author Name	Research Objective	Research Subjects	Research Results	Research Limitations	Variables Examined
1	Nurmalasari, Y., Yustiana, Y. R., & Ilfiandra, I. (2016)	To examine the effectiveness of cognitive restructuring in reducing academic stress among students.	43 seventh-grade students of RSBI SMPN 1 Lembang	Cognitive restructuring is effective in reducing academic stress indicators, including negative thinking, declining achievement, difficulty in determining priorities, boredom, and nervousness in learning situations.	The study was limited to a specific school and grade level, making it difficult to generalize the results.	Cognitive restructuring, academic stress
2	Distina, P. P. (2021)	To investigate the effect of mindful breathing intervention on reducing academic stress in high school students.	A 16-year-old high school student in grade XI	Mindful breathing intervention successfully reduced academic stress in high school students.	The study focused on a single subject, limiting generalizability.	Mindful breathing, academic stress
3	Mahardhani, F. O., Ramadhani, A. N., Isnanti, R. M., Chasanah, T. N., & Prptomojati, A. (2020)	To assess the impact of emotion-focused coping strategy training on reducing academic stress among university students.	16 university students (M=19.81 years; SD=0.911) in Yogyakarta, Indonesia	Emotion-focused coping strategy training significantly reduced academic stress ( $t(15) = 2.149$ ; $p = 0.048$ ). The findings provide a basis for mental health programs in higher education.	The sample size was small, and only one coping strategy was examined.	Emotion-focused coping, academic stress
4	Kulsum, S., Hafina, A., & Yudha, E. S. (2021)	To examine the effectiveness of eco-art therapy in reducing academic stress among students.	Twelfth-grade students of SMAN 2 Bandung	The number of students experiencing high academic stress decreased significantly after eco-art therapy.	The study focused only on high-stress students, limiting its broader applicability.	Eco-art therapy, academic stress
5	Istighfana, D. (2019)	To evaluate the effectiveness of classical music in reducing academic stress among students.	Eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Berbah	Classical music was effective in reducing academic stress levels ( $p=0.000$ ; $p<0.05$ ).	The study only tested classical music without comparing it with other types of music.	Classical music, academic stress
6	Jatmiko, H. T., & Purnamasari, S. E. (2022)	To analyze the impact of Music and Imagery therapy on academic stress reduction in university students.	5 university students selected using purposive sampling	Academic stress before therapy ( $M = 111.40$ ) was significantly higher than after therapy ( $M = 73.40$ ), supporting the effectiveness of Music and Imagery therapy.	Small sample size, limiting generalizability.	Music and Imagery therapy, academic stress
7	Astuti, S. A. M. C. P., Kirana, N. A., Linardo, L. T., Eka, P., Widyawati, N.	To assess the implementation of art therapy (drawing and coloring) in managing academic stress.	69 ninth-grade students at SMPK 1 Harapan	Art therapy was effective in helping students manage academic stress through drawing and coloring activities.	The study only focused on one form of art therapy.	Art therapy (drawing & coloring), academic stress

8	K. A. M. P., & Widiyasavitri, P. N. (2022) Yunita, Y. (2018)	To examine the effectiveness of gratitude training in reducing academic stress among students.	12 third-semester university students (experimental group) and 12 students (control group)	Gratitude training significantly reduced academic stress ( $p=0.002$ for the experimental group; $p=0.012$ compared to the control group).	The study did not measure long-term effects.	Gratitude training, academic stress
9	Fitria, A. Z. N., & Putri, N. A. P. (2018)	To analyze the impact of laughter therapy in reducing academic stress among adolescents affected by the pandemic.	14 research participants (7 in the experimental group, 7 in the control group)	Laughter therapy had a significant effect in reducing academic stress (Asymp. Sig. = 0.030; effect size = 1.24).	The study was conducted during the pandemic, making it unclear whether the results apply to normal school conditions.	Laughter therapy, academic stress
10	Adawiyah, W. (2016)	To examine the effectiveness of Spiritual Emotional Freedom Technique (SEFT) therapy in reducing academic stress among high school students in Islamic boarding schools.	14 high school students at Darul Aman Islamic Boarding School (7 experimental, 7 control)	SEFT therapy was effective in reducing academic stress, with the experimental group showing lower stress scores than the control group.	The study focused only on students in Islamic boarding schools, limiting generalizability.	SEFT therapy, academic stress

The findings from the reviewed studies indicate that various intervention strategies are effective in reducing academic stress in adolescents. Cognitive restructuring, mindful breathing, and emotion-focused coping training have been shown to significantly lower stress levels by improving students' emotional regulation and thought patterns. Additionally, alternative therapeutic approaches such as eco-art therapy, classical music, and music therapy have proven beneficial in creating a calming effect, thereby reducing stress-related symptoms. Furthermore, interventions like gratitude training, laughter therapy, and Spiritual Emotional Freedom Technique (SEFT) provide psychological relief by enhancing positive emotions and resilience. These findings highlight the importance of both cognitive-behavioral techniques and creative interventions in managing academic stress, offering a comprehensive approach to adolescent mental well-being.

## Discussion

Cognitive restructuring techniques, mindful breathing, and emotion-focused coping strategies are effective interventions to help adolescents manage academic stress (Fachrunisa & Saptandari, 2023). These approaches focus on changing maladaptive thought patterns, enhancing emotional regulation, and promoting relaxation to reduce stress levels and improve overall well-being. For example, cognitive restructuring aims to modify negative thought patterns, particularly those associated with academic stress, by encouraging students to reframe their perceptions of academic challenges (Mahardhani et al., 2020). This technique helps students identify and challenge irrational thoughts, replacing them with more realistic and positive perspectives that reduce feelings of anxiety and inadequacy. Research supports the effectiveness of cognitive restructuring in lowering academic stress by altering students' cognitive responses to academic pressures, helping them feel more in control of their academic experience (Agustin et al., 2023).

Mindful breathing techniques, as a form of mindfulness intervention, are also widely recognized for their ability to alleviate stress and promote a sense of calm. These techniques, which involve controlled breathing patterns, help activate the parasympathetic nervous system, resulting in physical relaxation and reduced stress (Apriyani et al., 2023). Through regular practice, adolescents can develop greater self-awareness and emotional regulation, which are essential in coping with academic demands. Studies have demonstrated the positive impact of mindful breathing on students' cognitive and emotional functioning (Ryan et al., 2021), particularly in enhancing their ability to manage negative thoughts and emotions during stressful academic situations. As such, mindful breathing techniques serve as an accessible and effective strategy for reducing academic stress and promoting mental clarity (Rinera & Retnowati, 2020).

Emotion-focused coping strategies are another valuable approach in managing academic stress, particularly in addressing the emotional reactions students have to

stressors (Syazwani & Boediman, 2024). This strategy involves helping students process and release negative emotions, such as frustration, anger, or fear, which arise in response to academic challenges. By teaching students how to manage their emotional responses, emotion-focused coping strategies reduce the emotional toll of academic stress and increase students' resilience in the face of pressure (Febriani et al., 2024). Research has shown that training in emotion-focused coping strategies can significantly decrease academic stress, demonstrating the importance of emotional regulation in maintaining mental health and well-being during periods of academic pressure (Mufid & Al-Mufti, 2019).

Integrating these strategies—cognitive restructuring, mindful breathing, and emotion-focused coping—into a comprehensive intervention program provides a holistic approach to managing academic stress (Andriyani, 2019). By addressing both cognitive and emotional aspects of stress, students are better equipped to cope with the pressures they face. Additionally, these techniques can be easily incorporated into school-based counseling programs, offering students valuable tools for improving their mental health and academic performance. The combined use of these strategies ensures that students are not only learning to manage stress effectively but also developing lifelong skills in emotional regulation and cognitive resilience (Wati et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the integration of creative therapies such as Eco Art Therapy and music therapy can enhance these interventions by providing students with additional outlets for stress relief and self-expression (Azzahra et al., 2023). Both therapies promote relaxation and self-awareness through engagement with nature and music, respectively. These non-verbal forms of expression allow students to process their emotions in ways that traditional talking therapies may not (Siregar et al., 2020). The inclusion of these creative therapies within the broader framework of cognitive and emotional interventions offers a well-rounded approach to stress management that addresses the unique needs of adolescents facing academic challenges (Fachrunisa & Saptandari, 2023). Research supporting the effectiveness of these therapies demonstrates their potential to complement other stress reduction strategies, creating a more comprehensive and effective approach to managing academic stress in adolescents (Utama & Ambarini, 2023).

## CONCLUSION

Academic stress interventions in adolescents are essential to support their emotional and psychological development, especially in the context of education. Stress experienced by adolescents is often caused by academic pressures, such as demands to excel in school, stressful exams, or comparisons with their peers. This can affect their motivation to learn, mental health, and even their academic performance (Febriani et al., 2024). In a broader context, interventions for academic stress need to consider individual needs, using approaches that can improve stress management skills, such as relaxation techniques, time management, and effective communication. In addition, it is

also important to strengthen social support at school and home so that adolescents feel more supported and can better face academic challenges (Nurmina et al., 2019).

Reducing academic stress through appropriate approaches can improve adolescents' psychological well-being and help them develop into more resilient individuals. Problem-Based Interventions Learning (PBL), for example, can be an effective way to reduce stress by creating a more collaborative and meaningful environment. Through PBL, adolescents can be more involved in a more practical and contextual learning process, reduce feelings of isolation, and increase confidence in solving problems. In addition, strengthening values such as integrity, creativity, and critical thinking, which can also be applied in academic stress interventions, helps them face challenges in a more constructive and positive way.

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