

The Effect of Relaxation Techniques in Reducing Anxiety and Stress in Adolescents: A Systematic Review

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Abstract:

Anxiety and stress are directly related to a person's daily activities which can certainly interfere with psychological and physical health. Over the past few years, several studies have investigated the causes, symptoms, and sources of anxiety and stress. However, research that studies techniques to reduce anxiety and stress in adolescents, especially in Indonesia, is still very limited. The study used a systematic review of ten articles discussing various relaxation techniques and their effects on reducing stress and anxiety levels in adolescents. Methods such as deep breathing relaxation, progressive muscle relaxation, supportive therapy, meditation therapy, Benson's relaxation, and autogenic relaxation can significantly lower anxiety and stress levels in adolescents.

Keywords: Relaxation, Anxiety, Stress, Adolescent

Introduction

Anxiety and stress are two psychological disorders that are often encountered in daily life which can certainly interfere with a person's well-being. Both of these disorders appear as a psychic reaction to the many burdens and difficulties that a person faces in their routine (Ogba et al., 2019). Anxiety refers to the negative mental condition or atmosphere of an individual that often occurs and is experienced when facing situations or things that are considered to pose a threat or risk (Gumantan et al., 2020). Symptoms of anxiety can vary from psychological to physical symptoms such as a fast heart rate and high blood pressure (Mayliyan & Budiarto, 2022). While stress is a response to the imbalance between the burden or pressure experienced by a person and their ability to solve the problem, stress can appear at a low level to a high or severe level accompanied by various impacts such as physical disorders or serious psychological disorders (Aulia & Panjaitan, 2019).

Symptoms of anxiety and stress for some people have become commonplace because they are directly intersecting with daily activities. Therefore, not a few people can go about their daily activities without feeling anxious and nervous about something, but in certain situations they are suddenly attacked panic attack (Aryani, 2016). Anxiety symptoms are often underestimated or something that is normal when carrying out daily activities. Anxiety can be a reminder of a potential danger and provide an opportunity to be able to immediately evaluate and react to the potential danger (Arizona et al., 2019). However, keep in mind that if the anxiety that a person feels is unfounded and too excessive, it can cause difficulties. So

anxiety is often interpreted as a vague and pervasive feeling that involves negative thoughts and gives rise to a sense of inferiority (Annisa & Ifdil, 2016).

Many studies have studied anxiety and stress to explore various aspects of these two disorders. Research conducted by Hernawati and Mayliyan explores the symptoms caused by anxiety and its long-term impacts, while other studies describe physiological signs related to anxiety (Hafida; Effendi, Zulian; Purwanto, 2023). Regarding stress, Dwitama (Dwitama, 2021) Presenting various levels of stress and their implications for a person's well-being. However, there is still a very lack of literature that discusses in detail the various effects of relaxation techniques in dealing with anxiety and stress, especially experienced by adolescents, where this phase is seen as a transitional phase. Some examples of research that are a little related to this are the effect of progressive muscle relaxation on academic stress (Rahmawati, 2021) Likewise, a study on the effects of meditation and yoga on reducing academic stress (Octav et al., 2016) However, it does not consider other factors in the study. Therefore, a more specific study is needed on the effect of relaxation techniques on anxiety and stress so that it can be a reference in determining intervention techniques to deal with psychological problems that are often experienced by adolescents optimally.

Based on the references that have been collected, various variables that generally cause anxiety and stress in adolescents are discussed, as well as a variety of relaxation techniques that can be done to reduce the situation. Then, it is necessary to pay attention to other factors that can be potential for anxiety and stress as well as relevant relaxation techniques to deal with it. An in-depth study of the impact of various relaxation methods and their benefits for overcoming anxiety and stress experienced by adolescents is considered important, especially in a comprehensive scope and not only focusing on academic pressure. Therefore, this systematic review aims to provide an overview of relaxation techniques to reduce anxiety and stress levels in adolescents in general.

This analysis will thoroughly discuss various relaxation methods that can be implemented in various situations, not only academic problems and pressures, but also more broadly on other elements that affect the psychological well-being of adolescents. By compiling and analyzing data from several empirical studies, this systematic assessment is expected to identify the most optimal relaxation techniques and provide recommendations that can be applied in daily practice by practitioners and mental health experts, educators, especially parents.

The main goal of this systematic review is to increase understanding of the efforts that adolescents can make to deal with anxiety and stress more optimally and efficiently so that they can improve their quality of life and overall well-being. This systematic assessment is designed to provide a broader perspective on the optimal intervention method to address the psychological problems of the younger generation based on relevant sources and factual data. It is important to gain a broad understanding of these two psychological issues not only for those affected but for society as a whole. Researchers hope that this article can offer a broader perspective to direct individuals so that they can recognize and manage anxiety and stress more optimally in the hope of increasing life satisfaction and performance in a person's daily routine.

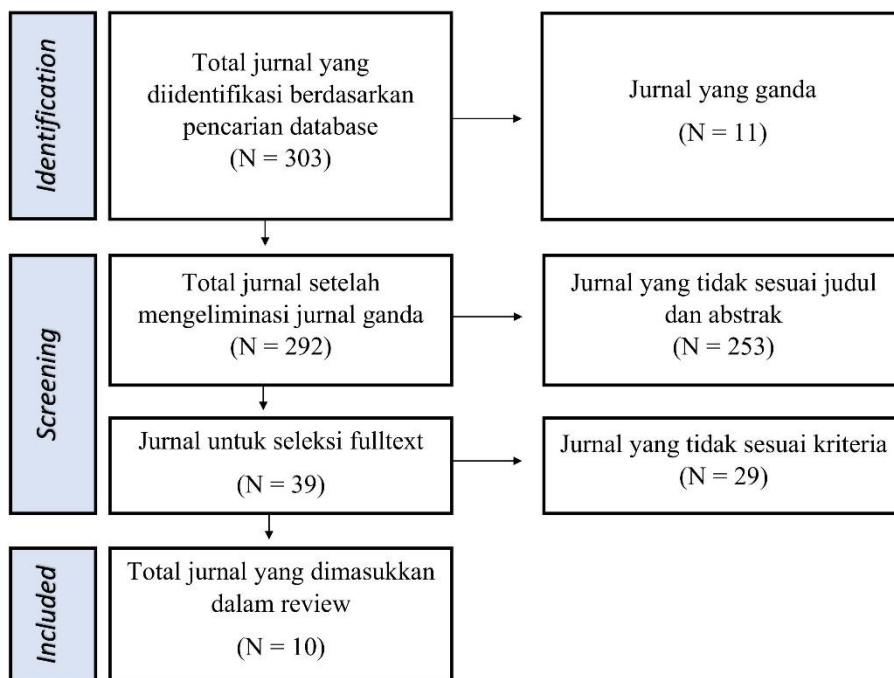
Method

Researchers explored articles with the theme "The Effect of Relaxation Techniques in Reducing Anxiety and Stress in Adolescents" through search sources such as Scopus, Google Scholar, and PubMed to collect articles on both national and international scales. The easy-to-reach accessibility of several databases

allows researchers to conduct intensive studies on the selected articles. The researcher used keywords in Indonesian and English to search for these articles. The keywords used are relaxation, anxiety, stress and adolescent. The use of keywords using two languages makes it easier for researchers to obtain articles that may have never been published in international journals or those that have been published.

Researchers have set standards for selecting articles to be selected. The two main criteria for article selection are: (1) Articles published during the last ten years (2014 – 2024) so that the material presented remains and is still relevant and the report of the research results shows that there is an influence of relaxation techniques in reducing anxiety and stress experienced by adolescents, (2) Using quantitative research methods and the research subjects are adolescents. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) guide is used to analyze selected articles. This guide includes an explanation of the topic and criteria, selection of information sources, collection of relevant literature, collection of articles and analysis of articles (PRISMA-P 2015).

39 articles were found that met the criteria after a search. Furthermore, 39 articles were placed in the program to arrange references, namely Mendeley to make it easier for researchers to read the title and abstract of their respective articles. Followed by a review based on title and abstract, so that there were 29 articles issued because they did not meet the requirements, leaving 10 articles. After that, the ten selected articles are then evaluated in three stages, namely: (1) Reading and understanding the content of the article thoroughly then making a table of the results of reading and discussion containing information such as the author of the research, the research subject, the research design used, the treatment or relaxation technique used and the conclusion of the research results. Next, the researcher analyzed the similarities and differences in the content of the article and concluded the results. The results of the analysis showed seven relaxation strategies that can reduce anxiety and stress in adolescents. The results of the analysis and other findings are listed in the results and discussion section.



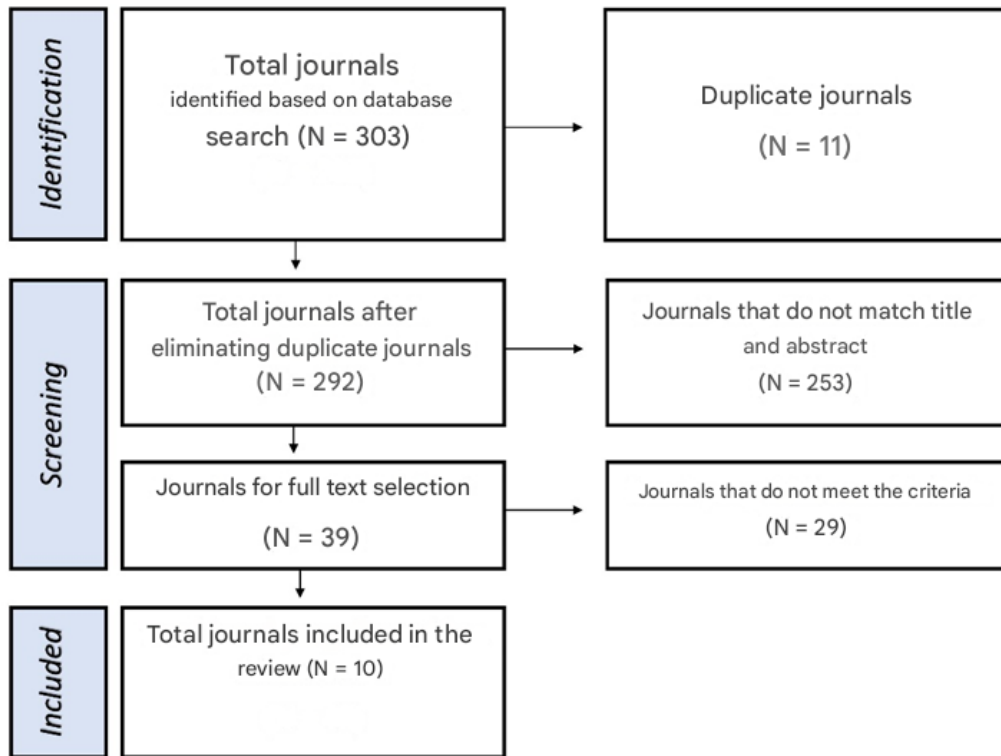


Figure 1. Journal selection process with PRISMA

Results and Discussion

The description of ten articles shows that relaxation techniques can have an impact on reducing the level of anxiety and stress experienced by adolescents. A summary of the results of the breakdown of each article is shown in table 1.

The results of the discussion show that relaxation techniques can be effective in reducing anxiety and stress levels in adolescents, including: (1) The Effect of Relaxation Techniques Deep Breathing and Supportive Therapy to Reduce Anxiety in Students and Students (Atika & Purnamasari, 2023), The Effect of Progressive Relaxation Therapy on Stress in Adolescents in Correctional Institutions (Furqan, 2016), Progressive Relaxation Techniques to Lower Students' Anxiety Levels Facing Computer-Based National Exams (Nurnaningsih, 2020), Effectiveness of Muscle Relaxation Techniques to Encourage Students to Reduce Learning Stress in XI Students at SMAN 1 Sewon (Dwitama, 2021), The Effect of Relaxation Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR) on the Level of Student Anxiety in Facing Thesis in Final Year Regular Nursing Students at the University of Indonesia Maju Jakarta in 2023 (Wahono et al., 2023), Benson's Relaxation Therapy for Reducing Anxiety Levels during the Covid-19 Pandemic (Cahyanti et al., 2023), The Effectiveness of Relaxation Meditation Techniques to Help Students Cope with Stress before Facing National Exams (Juliawati et al., 2019), Progressive and Autogenic Muscle Relaxation to Reduce Adolescent Stress at SMKN 1 Depok Sleman Yogyakarta (Liliana, AnitaLestiawati, 2019), The Effectiveness of Positive Affirmation Therapy and Relaxation on Reducing Stress Levels in Elementary School Students (Aji & Rizkasari, 2023) and Effectiveness of Relaxation Techniques in Behavioral Group Counseling to Reduce Learning Stress of High School Students (Nurcahyani & Fauzan, 2016).

Table 1: Article Summary

Author	Subject	Research Design	Treatment	Result
Atika, Y. R., & Purnamasari Alif (2023)	6 students from MTs X in Yogyakarta	Focused Group Discussion (FGD), pre-post test using DASS-21 scale and interview	Deep Breathing relaxation technique	Students' anxiety decreases
Furqon, A. (2016)	20 juvenile inmates of the Correctional Institution	Pre-test – post test, Observation, Interview	Progressive Relaxation Techniques	Decreased stress levels
Nurnaningsih (2020)	Grade 12 students who have the highest score on the anxiety scale	Pre test- post test	Progressive Relaxation Techniques	Students' anxiety levels decreased
Dwitama, T.R. (2021)	34 students of the experimental group of grade 11 MIPA 2 and 34 control groups from grade 11 IPS 3 became the control class	Pre-test, post-test control group design using a learning stress scale	Muscle Relaxation Techniques	Students' learning stress decreases
Wahono, W.S., Agustina, M., Shifa, N.A (2023)	59 final semester students who completed their thesis at the University of Indonesia Maju Jakarta	One-group pre-test using HARS (Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale)	Relaxation Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR)	Decreased anxiety levels
Cahyanti, L., Setya D.,	2 Teenage Residents of	Pre-test, post-test, Interview,	Benson Relaxation	Decreased anxiety

Fitriana, V., Yuliana, A.R. (2023)	Mount Pantii	Observation and Study documentation	Technique	levels
Juliawati, Dosi, Ayumi, R.T., Yandri, H., Alfaiz (2019)	12 students of SMPN 26 Kerinci	One-group pre- test, Meditation, post-test design	Relaxation Meditation Techniques	Stress levels have decreased
Lestiawati, E., & Liliana, A. (2019)	51 Students of SMKN 1 Depok	Pre-test, Post- test using DASS 42	Progressive and Autogenic Muscle Relaxation Techniques	Decreased stress levels
Aji, P.T., Rizkasari, E. (2021)	31 students of SD Sekaran Wonosari Klaten	Pre-test, Post- test	Progressive Muscle Relaxation Techniques	Decreased stress levels
Nurchayani, Istiana, Fauzan, Lutfi (2016)	5 students of class X of UM TA Laboratory High School. 2015/2016	One-group pre- test, post-test design	Autogenic relaxation and muscle relaxation techniques	The level of study stress decreases

Deep Breathing Relaxation Technique and Supportive Therapy

Relaxation techniques deep breathing It is influential in making the body relax by regulating the rhythm of breathing in an orderly, slow and deep manner. This method can increase the oxygen supply so that the heart rate can decrease (Wida Ningsih et al., 2023). This technique is a simple relaxation technique that can be done at any time and without the need for prior training. Meanwhile, supportive therapy helps individuals feel more comfortable and calm by providing support so that they can express their anxiety (Arfiani et al., 2022). Many research results show the effectiveness of relaxation techniques deep breathing and supportive therapy in overcoming psychological problems such as stress and depression because the application of this method forms a therapeutic relationship that is positively beneficial to a person's psychology (Ikhwanudin et al., 2023).

This study was conducted on 6 students and grade 7 students with details of 2 male students and 4 female students who had anxiety scores in the moderate to severe category after a pre-test using the Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21) psychological measuring tool. Furthermore, these six students were given interventions in the form of psychoeducation about anxiety and the application of deep breathing relaxation techniques and supportive therapy designed in meetings for 7 sessions. After being given a post-test, the score showed a decrease in anxiety levels with a range of 3 to 8 points.

Research conducted by Ningsih (Wida Ningsih et al., 2023) shows the results of giving Techniques deep breathing Effective in reducing students' academic anxiety based on scores Pre-test by 141 to 117 on the score post-test his. Academic anxiety arises due to feelings of nervousness, anxiety and bad assumptions about themselves and their studies. So that the deep breathing and supportive therapy students can be more relaxed and open about the problems they are experiencing and are able to overcome their problems (Atika & Purnamasari, 2023).

Progressive Relaxation Technique

Progressive relaxation techniques are relaxation therapies that help clients feel relaxed by tensing certain muscles. This technique uses deep breathing exercises with several specific muscle contraction and relaxation sessions. Edmund Jacob in 1929 through his book entitled "Progressive Relaxation" is seen as the early originator of the progressive relaxation technique. This technique is based on muscle tension which is the result or reaction of the body to anxiety (Furqan, 2016). In this article, a decrease in stress scores was found with an average of 4.7 points in the group of research subjects who were given treatment in the form of progressive relaxation. The application of this technique has an effect on a person's physiological condition so that it can reduce psychological tension. The research subjects who were given an intervention using this technique not only felt physically relaxed but also could relax the psychological tension so that they were able to reduce their stress levels.

A study on the application of progressive relaxation techniques was also carried out by Nurnaningsih (Nurnaningsih, 2020) with students who will face the computer-based National Exam as their research stub. Anxiety that arises among students is due to several factors such as an exam package consisting of 20 question packages so that students on one or on a computer are different from each other, the ability of students to operate computers and technical problems such as Logout suddenly so that the process of answering questions had to be repeated and resulted in them not passing the exam. Treatment Progressive relaxation was given as many as 6 sessions accompanied by the assignment of relaxation at home to students with a score of Pre-test who are in the category of experiencing severe and very severe anxiety levels. After getting the results post-test It was found that the application of progressive relaxation techniques succeeded in lowering anxiety scores from 9 to 20 points.

Muscle Relaxation Technique

The phenomenon of increasing stress in adolescents is a concern, life experiences that are still few make it difficult for adolescents to find solutions when facing a problem. The problems that teenagers usually face can come from the social environment, school or subjects. Given that stress can have a negative impact on students' academic achievement and physical and mental health, there is a need for treatment that can help reduce stress. Treatment in the form of muscle relaxation can reduce tension structuring and facilitate the transformation of illogical ways of thinking or irrational beliefs into rational.

Research by Endang and Anita (Liliana, AnitaLestiwati, 2019) It proved that respondents who received progressive muscle relaxation treatment 3 times for 30 minutes experienced stress scores and students stated that they felt relaxed and comfortable after doing progressive muscle relaxation. Likewise, the research conducted by Dwitama (Dwitama, 2021) It involved 68 students who were divided into two groups, namely the experimental group as the group to be treated and the control group that was not treated. Samples were taken using cluster random sampling. Based on data Pre-test In the experimental group, it was found that there were 25 students (73.53%) who had high stress levels and 9 students (26.47%) who

had moderate stress levels, Results post-test students' learning stress after being given treatment in the form of muscle relaxation techniques showed that none of the students were in the high stress category (0.00%), 11 students (32.35%) were still in the medium stress category and 23 students (67.65%) were in the low stress category. Meanwhile, in the control group that was not given treatment in the form of muscle relaxation, the results were Pre-test and post-test shows that no student is in the low learning stress category.

Recent research with a similar theme shows that progressive muscle relaxation and positive affirmation therapy have succeeded in helping to reduce stress in a person. This research was conducted on grade VI elementary school students who will face the Final School Exam. Stressors are affected by mental unpreparedness when facing the final exam so that it has an impact on the physical and psychological of students. Symptoms that appear include feeling tired, overly anxious, not enthusiastic and avoiding studying. The results of the pre-test on 31 research subjects showed that 16.1% of students were in the mild stress category, 74.2% in the moderate category and 9.7% of students experienced severe stress. After being given an intervention in the form of progressive muscle relaxation and post-test, 48.4% were in the normal category, 41.9% were in the mild category and only 9.7% were still in the moderate category. This figure shows the effectiveness of providing progressive muscle relaxation in reducing students' stress levels (Aji & Rizkasari, 2023).

Relaxation Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR)

A relaxation method that utilizes the individe sensory senses is now known as relaxation therapy Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR. This technique uses auditory stimuli using soothing sounds or visuals. The stimulus gives rise to certain sensations in the body such as a pleasant tickling sensation, spreading from the scalp to the whole body that can make people feel comfortable and calm. This relaxation technique can be used for a variety of situations such as when a person feels pain, anxiety, lack of sleep or when experiencing stress. Research on ASMR was conducted by Barrat and Davis (2015) and showed data that 98% of respondents agreed that this technique could be used for relaxation, 82% said using ASMR could help them sleep and 70% thought ASMR could be used to manage stress (Barratt & Davis, 2015).

The latest research discussing ASMR techniques was conducted by Wahono et al. (Wahono et al., 2023) with a total of 59 students who are working on their thesis. Hamilton Anxeity Rating Scale (HARS) is used as a measuring tool to see the level of anxiety experienced by the research subjects. Based on the results of the pre-test conducted on all respondents involved, there were 3 students (5.7%) who experienced very severe anxiety, 32 students (60.4%) were at the level of severe anxiety and 18 students (33.9%) experienced moderate anxiety. After intervention in the form of Automous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR) respondents' anxiety levels managed to decrease with details of 11 students (46.7%) who did not experience anxiety that were previously zero (0%) and students who experienced severe anxiety to 0 (0%) from 5.7% before the intervention (Wahono et al, 2023).

Benson Relaxation Technique

The Benson Relaxation Technique is a relaxation method that can be used to lower anxiety levels. This technique combines breathing techniques with words or expressions that a person believes in so that it can reduce the burden felt and improve their health. Repeated positive words combined with a relaxed state and regular tapping patterns are key in this relaxation method. This technique can be used twice a day in

a span of five to ten minutes. People who are given this relaxation must be calm and not tense, they are asked to surrender and believe that this method is effective in reducing the burden and can improve health (S et al., 2020).

A study on the effectiveness of Benson's relaxation was conducted by Cahyanti et al. (Cahyanti et al., 2023). This study was conducted on 2 adolescent subjects aged 20 years and 19 years using Pre-test and post-test use Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale to see the level of anxiety accompanied by interviews and direct observations. Result Pre-test The first respondent showed the number 27 which indicated that it was in the medium sub-district category and the second respondent got a score of 25 which was also in the medium category. Post Pre-test a physical examination was carried out and then continued with the administration of Benson therapy which was immediately practiced by the respondents. After therapy, both respondents were given post-test which resulted in a number of 24 in the first respondent and 20 in the second respondent which illustrates that there is a decrease in anxiety levels in both respondents after being given an intervention in the form of Benson relaxation.

Meditation Relaxation Techniques

Meditation relaxation technique is one of the behavioral therapy techniques that can be applied to build an inner mechanism in a person by creating a positive personality, eliminating various types of negative thoughts caused by a person's inability to control their ego, making it easier for a person to control himself, maintaining mental and physical health (Wida Ningsih et al., 2023). This technique, if done regularly, can optimally reduce stress and depression. Stress can be caused by many factors, one of which is when students are about to face the National Exam (UN). Feelings of anxiety, fear and worry about not getting the score that has been set so that they do not pass the national exam are the focus of the problem in the research conducted by Juliawati et al. (Juliawati et al., 2019)

This study involved 12 respondents who were junior high school students who would face the National Exam (UN). The research method used is quantitative with a pre-experimental approach with Pre-test and post-test. Result Pre-test showed that only 1 respondent had a low stress level and there were 5 respondents (41.66%) in the category of having a high and very high stress level. After Pre-test and produce data as an overview of the stress condition of students who will face the UN, then all respondents were given 6 interventions in the form of meditation techniques with Breath Counting Meditation, Breath Meditation, Sound Meditation, Visual Meditation, Meditation of the Bubble, and Meditation Mantras. Post-test given after the implementation of the intervention, showed positive development for all respondents with details that none of the respondents had very high or high stress levels (0%), 4 respondents were in the moderate stress level category, half of the respondents (50%) had low stress levels, and 2 respondents (16.67%) had very low stress levels (Juliawati et al., 2019).

Autogenic Relaxation Techniques

Autogenic relaxation is a method of relaxation that comes from oneself in the form of words or short sentences, it can also be in the form of thoughts that can make you feel peaceful. Autogenic relaxation techniques help a person control several bodily functions such as heart rhythm, flow and blood pressure (Subiyakto, 2024). There are two studies that show the effect of providing autogenic relaxation on reducing anxiety or stress. The first research was conducted by Nurcahyani & Fauzan (Nurcahyani & Fauzan, 2016) which examined the role of providing autogenic relaxation to study stress in 5 respondents

who were high school X grade students. Based on results Pre-test Using the learning stress scale, the five respondents had high learning stress scores.

The intervention process was followed by the administration of treatment in the form of autogenic relaxation in a behavioral group counseling which was carried out for 6 meetings. The first meeting is held to form a relationship between the facilitator and the client, the second meeting is the assessment and goal setting, the third to fifth meeting is filled with the application of autogenic relaxation techniques and the last or sixth meeting is evaluation and implementation post-test. Result post-test showed a decrease in learning stress scores with details of respondent 1 obtaining a score of 83 out of a score of 148 on Pre-test, respondent 2 who originally obtained a score of 125 became 64 on the results post-test, respondent 3 scored 71 after treatment, Respondent 4 managed to lower his learning stress score from 114 to 70 and respondent 5 had a score decrease of 108 in the pre-test to 64 after participating in counseling using autogenic relaxation techniques (Nurcahyani & Fauzan, 2016).

Additional studies on the theme were conducted by Lestiawati & Liliana (Liliana, AnitaLestiawati, 2019) by using Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-42 (DASS 42) for instruments Pre-test and post-test to 51 vocational school adolescents with two criteria of inclusion and exclusion. The inclusion criteria in this study are (1) adolescents are willing to become respondents, (2) attend and follow the research process until completion and (3) have smartphone installed Whatsapp. Meanwhile, exclusion criteria include (1) adolescents using antidepressants or anti-anxiety drugs, (2) experiencing musculoskeletal injuries and (3) the results of measuring stress scores of 0 (zero). Based on the results of data analysis, it is known that there is a difference in stress scores between Pre-test and post-test which is -3.12 points and indicates that the autogenic therapy given has succeeded in reducing the stress score in respondents. The form of autogenic relaxation given in the form of positive suggestions as a response to stress by using words or short expressions that aim to provide a specific sensational effect on the body, this technique is given to respondents three times for 30 minutes.

Conclusion

This study aims to study relaxation methods as an alternative to overcome anxiety and stress that have a significant impact on adolescent mental health. The study, using a detailed literature review, emphasizes the urgency of broader and in-depth research on the use of a variety of relaxation techniques in adolescents. The findings of many studies show that Deep Breathing relaxation techniques, progressive muscle relaxation, supportive therapy, meditation therapy, Benson relaxation and autogenic relaxation techniques are able to significantly reduce anxiety and stress levels in adolescents.

Several studies have reviewed the symptoms, effects and causes of anxiety and stress, but not many studies that study the effect of relaxation techniques in a whole way on adolescents, especially in Indonesia, are still very limited. Therefore, the purpose of this systematic study is to fill the gap by studying various relaxation methods and their effects in reducing anxiety and stress in adolescents. An analysis of ten related articles showed that these relaxation techniques not only helped to suppress symptoms and levels of stress and anxiety, but also emphasized the urgency of psychoeducation and the identification of coping sources as an important part of the intervention process. This description provides a specific understanding of the influence of relaxation techniques in improving the psychological well-being of adolescents, although further research is needed.

This study is expected to be able to be a reference in the development of further research on relaxation techniques as a useful strategy in dealing with anxiety and stress in adolescents so that mental health also improves.

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