

An In-depth Review of Psychological Interventions to Address Depression for Children with Special Needs

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Informasi artikel

Received: 15 Desember 2024;

Revised: 26 Desember 2024;

Accepted: 31 Desember 2024.

Keywords:

Children With Special Needs;

Intervention;

Literature Review;

Psychotherapy.

ABSTRACT

This think about points to investigate different comprehensive learning strategies for children with extraordinary needs, such as autism and Down syndrome, and identify challenges and solutions in addressing students' mental health issues in Indonesia. Using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, this study reviewed 195 publications and screened relevant articles for analysis. The discoveries illustrated the Islamic propensity demonstrate, Talaqqi wa Musyafahah, Al-Quran treatment, and game-based approach are great Islamic learning techniques for kids with extreme introvertedness and Down disorder. The biggest obstacles to school counseling are a lack of infrastructure, time, expertise, and social stigma. Proposed solutions include training for counselors, improving infrastructure, and collaborating with external counselors. This think about emphasizes the significance of comprehensive instruction and early intercession to back the mental well-being of children with uncommon needs, the require for advance investigate to create inventive approaches that can move forward the adequacy of learning.

ABSTRAK

Tinjauan Mendalam tentang Intervensi Psikologis dalam Menangani Depresi pada Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus. Tinjauan Mendalam Intervensi Psikologis untuk Mengatasi Depresi pada Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi berbagai metode pembelajaran yang inklusif bagi anak-anak dengan kebutuhan khusus, seperti autisme dan sindrom Down, serta mengidentifikasi tantangan dan solusi dalam menghadapi masalah kesehatan mental siswa di Indonesia. Menggunakan pendekatan Tinjauan Literatur Sistematis (SLR), penelitian ini mengkaji 195 publikasi dan menyaring artikel yang relevan untuk dianalisis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa metode pembelajaran Islam yang efektif bagi anak-anak dengan autisme dan sindrom Down meliputi model kebiasaan Islam, Talaqqi wa Musyafahah, terapi Al-Quran, serta pendekatan berbasis permainan. Tantangan utama dalam konseling sekolah meliputi kurangnya keterampilan, waktu, infrastruktur, serta stigma sosial. Solusi yang diusulkan meliputi pelatihan bagi konselor, perbaikan infrastruktur, dan kolaborasi dengan konselor eksternal. Penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya pendidikan yang inklusif dan intervensi dini untuk mendukung kesejahteraan psikologis anak-anak dengan kebutuhan khusus, serta perlunya penelitian lebih lanjut untuk mengembangkan pendekatan inovatif yang dapat meningkatkan efektivitas pembelajaran.

Kata-kata kunci:

Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus;

Intervensi;

Psikoterapi;

Tinjauan Literatur.

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How to Cite : Priambodo, P. A. (2024). An In-depth Review of Psychological Interventions to Address Depression for Children with Special Needs. *Lentera : Jurnal Kajian Bidang Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran*, 4(2), 58–65. <https://doi.org/10.56393/lentera.v4i2.2806>



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Introduction

Depression a frame of mental clutter that can have a genuine affect on a person's life, including children (Dewi, Purbaningrum, Budayasa, & Andajani, 2022). In children, depression is often not obvious, because they tend to show different symptoms than adults, such as behavioral changes, difficulty adapting, or even physical problems such as recurring headaches or stomachaches without a clear medical cause (Purnomo & Basuki, 2024). This condition is certainly more complex when experienced by children with special needs, who have greater developmental challenges than other children. Children with special needs, which can include children with formative disarranges such as extreme introvertedness, Down disorder, or certain physical disorders, have a higher risk of experiencing depression due to physical and psychological limitations, as well as the social pressures they face every day (Hidayat & Rahmatullah, 2023). One of them is children with special needs, children with extraordinary needs regularly involvement different challenges in their lives, including in social interaction, communication, or carrying out daily activities that for other children may not be too difficult. Their inability to adapt to their environment, as well as the sense of isolation that may arise due to these limitations, can trigger prolonged emotional stress (Hidayat, Rahmatullah, & Aziz, 2023). If not treated properly, this condition can develop into depression. Unfortunately, because the symptoms of depression in children with special needs can be different from children in general, this condition is often not detected early. As a result, many children do not get the intervention they need, so their condition worsens over time (Anuar, Jamaluddin, Bakar, & Saleem, 2023).

In this case, psychological intervention becomes very important. Psychological intervention is designed to help children overcome symptoms of depression, manage stress, and make strides their capacity to adjust to the social environment. The intercession strategies utilized are moreover differing, such as cognitive behavioral treatment (Wood et al., 2020), play therapy, art therapy, and family therapy (Hariati, 2024). Each of these methods has its own advantages and can be adjusted to the child's specific needs. For example, cognitive behavioral therapy, which focuses on changing thought patterns and behavior, has been shown to be effective in helping children understand and manage their negative emotions. Play therapy, on the other hand, provides opportunities for children to express themselves non-verbally, which is very beneficial for children who have difficulty communicating (Raharjo et al., 2024). Likewise, family therapy involves all family members in the therapy process, helping them understand the child's condition and creating a more supportive home environment. However, although many psychological interventions are available, the effectiveness of each intervention can vary depending on the individual characteristics of the child, the type of special needs they have, and the social and emotional situation around them (Putra, Faturochman, Al Fariz, Zahra, & Ermawati, 2024). revious research has shown that not all interventions provide the same results for all children. For example, children with autism spectrum disorders may respond better to behavioral-based interventions, while children with physical disabilities may need an approach that focuses more on emotional support and social skills (Bougeard, Picarel-Blanchot, Schmid, Campbell, & Buitelaar, 2021).

Given this complexity, a comprehensive systematic review is needed to evaluate the various types of psychological interventions that have been applied to children with special needs who experience depression (Freer, 2023). This systematic review aims to collect and analyze data from various studies that have been conducted, so that it can provide a clearer picture of the effectiveness of each intervention (Anderson et al., 2020). By conducting an in-depth analysis of the various existing approaches, it is hoped that the most effective and appropriate method can be found to be applied to

children with special needs. In addition, this review will also highlight factors that influence the success of the intervention, such as the level of family involvement, support from the social environment, and the relationship between the type of child's special needs and the intervention method used (Williams & Gilbert, 2020).

The purpose of this study is expected to be a reference for mental health practitioners, educators, and parents in dealing with depression in children with special needs. Furthermore, this review is also expected to contribute to the development of more effective and targeted intervention strategies in the future. In facing global challenges related to improving mental well-being, especially for vulnerable groups such as children with special needs, it is very important for all of us to continue to strive to improve the quality of psychological interventions so that every child gets the same opportunity to grow and develop optimally, free from mental stress that hinders their potential.

Method

This research will employ the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method. SLR is a structured and comprehensive approach to identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing existing research on a specific topic or research question (Pati & Lorusso, 2018). By following a rigorous and predefined protocol, SLR ensures the inclusion of high-quality studies, reduces bias, and provides reliable evidence to inform future research or practice. Inclusion Criteria for this article with the following scope: 1) Studies that discuss psychological interventions for depression in children with special needs, such as children with autism, ADHD, developmental disorders, and other disabilities. 2) Studies distributed in peer-reviewed diaries. 3) Studies published in the last 5 years. 4) Studies using relevant quantitative or qualitative research designs. Search Strategy, the researcher will search for literature in electronic databases such as PubMed, PsycINFO, Scopus, and Google Scholar. The search will be conducted using a combination of keywords and phrases such as “psychological interventions”, “depression”, “special needs children”, “autism”, “ADHD”, and “developmental disorders”. The look will be constrained to articles in English or Indonesian distributed in peer-reviewed diaries. Data Extraction. Analysts will extricate information from chosen papers, counting data on consider plan, sort of intercession, test estimate, member characteristics, assessment strategies, and primary results. A standardized information extraction shape will at that point be utilized to guarantee consistency in information collection. Study Quality Assessment. The quality of each study will be assessed by two independent reviewers, and the assessment results will be compared. Data analysis. Data from different studies will be qualitatively synthesized to assess general trends, effectiveness, and heterogeneity of interventions. Where possible, meta-analyses will be performed to combine results from studies with similar designs and outcomes.

Results and Discussion

Six journal papers from diverse sources are used in this study, which satisfies the stated research requirements. Every article that was used was released between 2020 and 2024, or the previous five years. This research was conducted in various regions of the world, allowing for a broad and comprehensive analysis of the topic studied. This study intends to provide a better and broader understanding of the issues covered, as well as highlight important patterns and findings that are pertinent on a worldwide scale by encompassing studies from different areas.

Table 1. *Journal Article Review Result*

No	Types of Methods	Research Deficiencies	Advantages of Research	Author
1	Qualitative	<p>Limitations of the study include that the literature only covers up to January 2023, so recent studies may have been missed. Furthermore, although imagery therapy has been shown to be effective, variability in outcomes based on individual participant characteristics and application context has not been addressed.</p>	<p>Shows that imagery therapy can significantly reduce overall levels of depression, with results supported by meta-analyses and objective tests.</p>	(Anuar et al., 2023)
2	Qualitative	<p>Emphasizing the importance of quality teachers and adequate facilities, but not discussing the practical challenges in implementing the model in the field or how to overcome the lack of facilities and professionals for autistic children.</p>	<p>Gives a thorough rundown of the several Islamic learning methods, including Islamic habit models, for kids with autism. Analyzing 195 publications and selecting 5 quality articles for thematic analysis, providing an in-depth overview of challenges and potential solutions such as counselor training and infrastructure improvements.</p>	(Hidayat et al., 2023)
3	Qualitative	<p>Does not clarify in detail how the proposed arrangement can be for all intents and purposes actualized or its affect in a field setting.</p>	<p>A thorough evaluation of 19 publications outlining the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on autistic children and providing suggestions for interventions including online education and telemedicine.</p>	(Purnomo & Basuki, 2024)
4	Qualitative	<p>The limited number of articles, which may not cover all impacts and intervention strategies, and the lack of discussion of the effectiveness and practical challenges of implementing interventions.</p>	<p>Assessing Islamic educational approaches for kids with Down syndrome using the SLR method and identifying instructional techniques like quran therapy and talaqqi wa musyafahah.</p>	(Dewi et al., 2022)
5	Qualitative	<p>The limited number of articles (only four) and the lack of in-depth exploration of the practical challenges and adaptation of teaching strategies in the context of Islamic education.</p>	<p>Successfully shown how play-based treatment and cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) can help kids with ASC feel less anxious.</p>	(Hidayat & Rahmatullah, 2023)
6	Qualitative	<p>Limitations include the publication time span (1996-2021) and the lack of detail on practical implementation and tailoring of interventions to individual needs in the ASC pediatric population.</p>		(Choy, Guckin, & Miriam Twomey, Aoife Lynam, 2024)

Table 1 can be explained in previous research, namely about alternative therapies in depression (Anuar et al., 2023). The study investigated the impact of imagination therapy on depression levels using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR). The results showed that imagination therapy significantly reduced depression levels based on objective tests and meta-analysis. This study makes important contributions to clinical psychology and sports psychology (Pallathra, Cordero, Wong, & Brodtkin, 2019).

In a study conducted by (Hidayat et al., 2023) "n psychological strengthening of a child, the think about uncovered that the Islamic learning prepare for children with extreme introvertedness can be connected through different approaches, counting Islamic traditions, Talaqqi wa Musyafahah, and Al-Quran Treatment. In addition, there are several other methods that are also effective, such as ABA, TEACCH, Son-Rise, Music Treatment, and the Picture Trade Communication Framework. Although these methods are available, the success of learning is highly dependent on the quality of teachers, integrated curriculum, adequate facilities, and training. The accessibility of experts who are able to meet the particular needs of children with autism is also an important factor in supporting the effectiveness of learning (Adams & Young, 2021).

Further research conducted by (Purnomo & Basuki, 2024) on a challenge that often occurs in Indonesian schools. This challenge is useful for solving a student's psychological health problems. The think almost recognized creating challenges in school counseling in Indonesia to address students' mental wellbeing issues and elective arrangements. Using a literature review method with qualitative analysis of 195 publications published between 2018 and 2023, this study filtered into 5 articles after quality evaluation. The results showed that challenges in counseling include lack of skills, time constraints, inadequate infrastructure, stigma, and obstacles in the school system. To overcome this, some proposed solutions include training for counselors, more effective counseling sessions, improved facilities, efforts to reduce stigma, and collaboration with external counselors (Hollocks, Lerh, Magiati, Meiser-Stedman, & Brugha, 2019).

Research conducted by (Dewi et al., 2022) on intervention efforts for individuals with autism during the COVID-19 period. It can be explained that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on children with autism, resulting in increased stress and anxiety due to extreme changes in routine. This study examines these impacts and intervention efforts made during the pandemic by analyzing 19 articles. The results showed that this stress causes behavioral changes such as anxiety, sleep disturbances, irritability, obsessions, and impulsivity, as well as possible depression in adolescents with autism. To address this problem, interventions through telehealth, online learning, and family-based approaches with various activities can be effective solutions (Menezes, Harkins, Robinson, & Mazurek, 2020).

Hidayat & Rahmatullah (2023) conducted a study entitled a learning method to strengthen the psychological analysis of a child with Down syndrome. The ponder highlights the significance of comprehensive Islamic instruction for children with Down disorder and their mental well-being. Employing a subjective approach and Orderly Writing Audit (SLR) strategy, this consider recognized significant Islamic educating strategies, such as Talaqqi wa Musyafahah, Quran treatment, and the Islamic Full Communication strategy. The discoveries emphasize the require for assist inquire about on custom-made instructive approaches to move forward the viability of learning and the well-being of children with Down disorder in Islamic instruction (Gosling et al., 2022).

Choy et al. (2024) in their study on a systematic group play intervention in overcoming anxiety in early childhood autism. The think about has surveyed the viability of group-based non-pharmacological mediations to overcome uneasiness in children with extreme introvertedness range (ASC) matured 2-12 a long time. Using a systematic approach and PRISMA guidelines, this study analyzed 7,300 articles, filtered to 44 relevant articles, and found that cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and play-based approaches were effective in reducing anxiety. This study identified nine evidence-based strategies and provided recommendations for further research in the field of early intervention and the well-being of children with ASC (Zhou, Zhao, & Zhang, 2022).

Research shows that a variety of intervention methods and educational approaches have a significant impact on the mental health and development of children with special conditions, such as depression, autism, and Down syndrome. Imagery therapy has been shown to be effective in reducing depression, while play-based learning and intervention methods are effective in supporting children with autism. Key challenges in school counseling in Indonesia include lack of skills, infrastructure, and stigma, with solutions including counselor training and external collaboration. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on children with autism, triggering anxiety and behavioral changes that can be addressed with family-based and telehealth interventions. These findings underscore the importance of developing inclusive educational approaches, modifying learning methods, and providing mental health support for children with special needs, while emphasizing the need for further research in these areas.

This research is expected to develop inclusive learning methods that are suitable for children with autism, Down syndrome, and other mental conditions in the context of Islamic education. Improving the quality of teachers and counselors through special training, as well as improving infrastructure and access to services such as telehealth, is urgently needed, especially in emergency situations. Holistic psychological support, including behavioral therapy, play-based methods, and family approaches, should also be implemented. Collaboration between educational institutions, mental health professionals, families, and the government is needed to create a supportive learning environment. Destigmatizing mental conditions through public education is also important. In addition, further research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of the methods that have been implemented. This relates to a systematic review of psychological interventions for depression in children with special needs, where appropriate interventions can help overcome their psychological problems.

Conclusion

Research shows that a variety of intervention methods and educational approaches have a significant impact on the mental health and development of children with special conditions, such as depression, autism, and Down syndrome. Imagery therapy has been shown to be effective in reducing depression, while play-based learning and intervention methods are effective in supporting children with autism. The biggest obstacles to school counseling are a lack of infrastructure, time, expertise, and social stigma. Proposed solutions include training for counselors, improving infrastructure, and collaborating with external counselors. This think about emphasizes the significance of comprehensive instruction and early intercession to back the mental well-being of children with uncommon needs, the require for advance investigate to create inventive approaches that can move forward the adequacy of learning.

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