



THE EFFECT OF ART THERAPY (DRAWING) AND GROWTH MINDSET ON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' ANXIETY IN JAKARTA WITH EMOTIONAL REGULATION AS A MEDIATING VARIABLE

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Abstract: Teacher anxiety is a significant psychological issue affecting the quality of learning, teacher well-being, and school climate, particularly at the elementary school level, which faces high emotional demands. Although numerous studies have examined art therapy and growth mindset separately in educational contexts, comprehensive studies integrating these two variables with emotion regulation as a mediating mechanism are limited. This study aimed to conduct a systematic literature review (SLR) of empirical evidence regarding the effects of drawing-based art therapy and growth mindset on teacher anxiety, with emotion regulation as a mediator. The review was conducted following PRISMA guidelines by searching Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, PsycINFO, and Google Scholar databases from 2010–2025. A total of 57 reputable articles met the inclusion criteria. The study results showed that drawing-based art therapy consistently reduced anxiety by facilitating emotional expression and strengthening psychological self-control. Growth mindset plays a role in strengthening adaptive cognitive appraisal of teachers' work stressors. Emotion regulation, specifically cognitive reappraisal strategies, emerged as a key mediator linking art therapy and growth mindset to reduced teacher anxiety. This study provides a theoretical contribution in the form of an integrative framework as well as practical implications for the development of teacher welfare policies in the context of urban primary education such as Jakarta.

Keywords (English): systematic literature review, art therapy, drawing, growth mindset, teacher anxiety, emotional regulation.

INTRODUCTION:

Teacher anxiety is a complex and multidimensional psychological issue, encompassing emotional, cognitive, and physiological responses to the demands of their profession. Elementary school teachers, in particular, must juggle a variety of complex roles, including classroom management, curriculum achievement, administrative duties, and students' social and emotional needs. Each of these aspects places significant pressure on teachers, which can impact their mental well-being. The high and varied demands of this profession make teachers vulnerable to prolonged anxiety, which, if not managed effectively, can lead to burnout, or emotional exhaustion, which can negatively impact the quality of their teaching and relationships with students[1].



Teacher anxiety not only impacts their emotional well-being but also their teaching effectiveness and classroom performance. The decline in teaching quality caused by anxiety can affect how teachers interact with students and manage classroom dynamics. This leads to a decline in the quality of education students receive, which in turn can impact their academic achievement. Therefore, it is crucial for educators and stakeholders in the education sector to find effective solutions to address teacher anxiety and create a healthy and productive educational environment[2].

One approach that can be applied to address anxiety in teachers is art therapy, particularly through drawing activities. Art therapy is known as an effective nonverbal therapeutic approach in helping individuals express their emotions and reduce stress. Drawing activities allow teachers to channel their feelings creatively, providing an outlet for emotions that are difficult to express verbally. This drawing-based art therapy provides a practical, low-cost, and accessible solution that can be easily incorporated into teachers' daily routines at school. This activity also helps increase self-awareness, helping teachers better understand their feelings and find ways to manage anxiety more effectively[3].

Besides art therapy, another approach that has the potential to reduce teacher anxiety is the growth mindset, developed by Carol Dweck. A growth mindset refers to the belief that abilities and competencies can develop through continuous effort and learning. Teachers with a growth mindset are more likely to view challenges in their work as opportunities for growth and improvement. This makes them better able to manage the stress and anxiety that arise from these challenges. By developing a growth mindset, teachers can view difficulties and failures as part of the learning process that can enhance their abilities, rather than seeing them as threats to their abilities[4].

A growth mindset not only helps teachers manage anxiety more adaptively but also increases their psychological resilience in the face of work-related stressors. Teachers with a growth mindset tend to be more flexible in responding to stressful situations and are better prepared to overcome obstacles. This mindset also increases teachers' self-confidence and internal motivation, as they view each challenge as an opportunity for growth and development. Thus, a growth mindset can be an effective tool for supporting teachers' psychological well-being and improving their performance in the classroom[5].

Furthermore, emotional regulation plays a crucial role in managing teacher anxiety. Emotional regulation is the ability to monitor, evaluate, and modify emotional responses to suit the demands of the situation. In the educational context, emotional regulation helps teachers remain calm and focused when facing stressors, whether arising from their work or interactions with students. Teachers with strong emotional regulation skills can manage feelings of anxiety or anger more constructively, enabling them to continue carrying out their duties effectively[6].

The process of emotional regulation also enables teachers to be more tactful in dealing with difficult situations, such as classroom conflict or pressure related to curriculum achievement. Through emotional regulation, teachers can learn not to let negative feelings influence their decisions or actions. In the long term, these emotional regulation skills can help teachers reduce their anxiety levels, improve emotional well-being, and create a more positive and productive



learning environment for students. Therefore, emotional regulation is a crucial skill in the teaching profession, and it needs to be considered in developing policies and support programs for educators[7].

This study aims to delve deeper into how drawing-based art therapy, growth mindset, and emotion regulation can work together to reduce anxiety experienced by elementary school teachers. This systematic literature review will examine existing empirical evidence to identify the relationship between these three factors in addressing anxiety. Through this analysis of the existing literature, this study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of ways to improve teachers' psychological well-being, particularly in the context of the anxiety they frequently face[8].

Furthermore, this study will also discuss how emotional regulation can act as a mediator in the relationship between art therapy and a growth mindset and the reduction of teacher anxiety. In this regard, emotional regulation can serve as a bridge connecting these two approaches, helping teachers better manage their emotions, thereby increasing the effectiveness of art therapy and enhancing the outcomes obtained from the application of a growth mindset. This study is expected to provide deeper insights into the integration of various psychological approaches in addressing teacher anxiety, as well as provide recommendations for the development of teacher mental well-being policies in Indonesia[9].

Through this systematic literature review, this study hopes to offer evidence-based solutions that can be implemented in elementary schools, particularly in reducing the levels of anxiety frequently experienced by teachers. Thus, it is hoped that the results of this study will not only provide practical benefits for educators in managing their stress and anxiety but also make an important contribution to the design of educational policies that better support teachers' holistic mental well-being[10].

METHODOLOGY:

2.1 Research Design

This study used a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design to comprehensively and systematically review studies relevant to the topics of teacher anxiety, art therapy, growth mindset, and emotion regulation. This approach was chosen because of the SLR's ability to integrate findings from various studies, provide a comprehensive overview, and increase the validity and reliability of the research results. The SLR focused on selecting, evaluating, and analyzing previously published articles to provide a clearer understanding of trends, patterns, and relationships within this field of study[11].

The SLR study design adhered to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure that each stage of the literature search and selection process was transparent and replicable. The PRISMA guidelines ensured that the methodology used in this study was well-structured and accountable. By following these procedures, this study aimed to reduce bias and improve accuracy in selecting relevant literature[12].



The systematic literature search and analysis of selected articles followed a rigorous procedure, enabling researchers to identify and analyze data comprehensively and objectively. This study also ensured that every step taken in the review process could be audited and re-examined, ensuring transparent and accountable results. Furthermore, the use of the SLR method improved the quality of the research results, which can serve as a basis for further interventions in educational contexts[13].

As a method based on the collection and analysis of existing literature, SLR enables researchers to provide a clear and valid synthesis of existing issues. In the context of this study, SLR helps to gain a deeper understanding of the influence of art therapy, growth mindset, and emotion regulation on teacher anxiety. Therefore, this study aims to identify relevant empirical evidence that can inform evidence-based recommendations to support teacher mental health[14].

Overall, the SLR design in this study allowed for a thorough and systematic analysis of the literature, which resulted in evidence-based insights into strategies to reduce anxiety in teachers and improve their well-being through various psychological interventions[15].

2.2 Literature Search Strategy

The literature search was conducted by accessing five reputable international databases in the fields of education, psychology, and social sciences. The databases used in this study were Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC (Education Resources Information Center), PsycINFO, and Google Scholar. These databases were selected because they provide access to extensive and reliable scientific articles and cover the latest literature relevant to the research topic[16].

In the literature search, the researcher used a combination of specific and relevant keywords to narrow the search results and ensure that the articles found truly align with the research objectives. The keywords used in the literature search included: "art therapy," "drawing," "growth mindset," "teacher anxiety," and "emotion regulation." This keyword combination enabled the researcher to find articles discussing the relationship between art therapy, emotion regulation, growth mindset, and anxiety experienced by teachers[17].

The literature search was conducted by focusing on articles published between 2010 and 2025. This time period was chosen to ensure that the articles obtained were up-to-date and relevant to the latest developments in education and psychology. Furthermore, this period encompasses numerous empirical studies that have reflected the use of novel approaches to addressing teacher anxiety through art therapy and the development of a growth mindset[18].

The literature search process was conducted using various search filters to narrow the results. Only high-quality articles that met the inclusion criteria were retrieved for further analysis. During this process, researchers also monitored articles frequently appearing in the literature, which could provide new insights for the study. All found articles were then compiled for further selection and analysis[19].



With a systematic and careful search strategy, researchers can ensure that the selected literature provides valid and relevant information. This allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the topic at hand and identify empirical evidence that can support the research conclusions[20].

2.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

In this study, articles included in the review must meet predetermined inclusion criteria. The primary criterion for inclusion is that articles be published in reputable, peer-reviewed scientific journals, ensuring the quality and validity of the information they contain. Furthermore, only articles written in English were considered, given limitations in understanding other languages and to maintain consistency in the literature analysis[21].

Articles discussing teachers or educators and linking variables such as anxiety, emotion regulation, art therapy, or growth mindset will be the focus of the review. This criterion ensures that the selected literature is relevant to the research topic, which focuses on teachers' mental well-being and effective intervention strategies to reduce their anxiety. Only articles containing empirical evidence or research findings that can provide new insights on this topic will be analyzed further.

Conversely, articles categorized as non-journals, conference proceedings, or publications lacking a clear methodology were excluded from this study. This was done to ensure that only literature with a valid and accountable methodology was used as the basis for the analysis. Articles lacking a clear research methodology or articles that have not undergone peer review may contain bias or lack reliable information[22].

Exclusion criteria also included articles that did not provide sufficient information about teachers or education or did not address the relationship between teacher anxiety, emotion regulation, and art therapy. Articles that did not focus on the primary theme of this study were excluded to avoid diluting the analysis and conclusions. This rigorous selection process aimed to ensure that the literature analyzed was relevant and useful for the research objectives[23].

By applying strict inclusion and exclusion criteria, this study is expected to produce valid and useful findings for the development of more effective teacher mental well-being policies and evidence-based interventions in schools.

2.4 Data Selection and Extraction Procedures

The selection process began with identifying relevant articles from the five international databases mentioned above. The initial search identified 2,521 articles matching the keywords used in the search. These articles were then screened based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The selection process was multi-layered, beginning with assessing the article titles and abstracts to determine their relevance to the research focus[24].

Of the 2,521 articles found, 57 met the final criteria for inclusion in this review. These articles were then analyzed in depth to assess the methodology used, sample characteristics, instruments used, and key findings relevant to teacher anxiety, emotion regulation, art therapy, and growth mindset. This process also included coding key findings related to the study's purpose, which was



to identify the relationship between art therapy, growth mindset, emotion regulation, and teacher anxiety[25].

Data extraction was performed by recording relevant information from each article, including the research objectives, study design, and the authors' findings and conclusions. This information was then analyzed to identify any patterns or trends within the existing studies. The data extraction process also included an evaluation of the quality of the methodology used in each article to ensure that the articles included in the study were the most relevant and valid[26].

During the data extraction process, researchers also recorded the variables used in the selected studies, including the intervention techniques implemented, and the outcomes achieved by each study. This data helped provide a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of various approaches in reducing teacher anxiety. This extraction process ensured that the study's findings were based on valid and accountable evidence.

Overall, the data selection and extraction procedures used in this study were designed to ensure that only the most relevant and high-quality literature was included in the analysis, which would ultimately result in reliable and useful findings for improving teachers' mental well-being in primary education[26].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The study results showed that drawing-based art therapy consistently contributed to a decrease in teacher anxiety by increasing emotional awareness and emotional regulation skills. Growth mindset was shown to be negatively correlated with anxiety, with teachers with a stronger growth mindset demonstrating greater psychological resilience. Emotion regulation, particularly cognitive reappraisal strategies, acted as a mediator explaining how the intervention and cognitive framework affected teacher anxiety[27].

This study aimed to explore the impact of drawing-based art therapy and a growth mindset on reducing teacher anxiety. The results showed that both approaches significantly reduced teachers' anxiety levels and improved their emotional well-being. One of the key findings of the study was that art therapy, specifically drawing, provided teachers with an effective outlet for releasing pent-up emotions, which in turn helped them cope with anxiety. Through the creative process of drawing, teachers were able to express their feelings nonverbally, which is difficult to do in everyday interactions. This helped reduce mental tension and improve overall mental health[28].

Furthermore, the growth mindset emphasized in this study plays a significant role in improving teachers' emotional responses to the pressures of their work. Teachers with a growth mindset tend to view challenges as opportunities for learning and development, rather than as threats. The results show that teachers with a growth mindset tend to be more resilient in the face of stressful situations encountered in their profession. They are able to view failure as part of the learning process, which allows them to manage anxiety more constructively.



Emotion regulation was also found to be an important mediator in the relationship between art therapy and a growth mindset and reduced teacher anxiety. Teachers who are able to regulate their emotions well, either through art therapy or by adopting a growth mindset, show lower levels of anxiety. One highly effective emotion regulation strategy is cognitive reappraisal, which allows teachers to change their perception of stressful situations, thereby reducing the negative impact of the anxiety they experience. Teachers who use this technique are able to view challenges as opportunities for growth, leading to reduced stress and anxiety.

Furthermore, drawing-based art therapy has been found to be particularly useful in helping teachers identify and manage their feelings. By using art as a means of expression, teachers can more easily recognize the emotions they are experiencing and find healthy ways to manage them. The drawing process helps them resolve internal conflicts and provides space for self-reflection, allowing them to become more aware of their feelings and how best to deal with them. Art therapy, therefore, plays a crucial role in facilitating self-awareness and improving teachers' emotional control[29].

Furthermore, art therapy also plays a role in creating a sense of balance between teachers' personal and professional lives. By providing a space for creative activities outside of busy work hours, drawing-based art therapy gives teachers the opportunity to distract themselves from work demands and improve their work-life balance. This is crucial in helping teachers manage the stress that arises from the high demands of their jobs and the expectations that often weigh them down. Thus, drawing-based art therapy offers benefits in maintaining a work-life balance for teachers, leading to reduced anxiety.

The study also showed that teachers who improved their emotional regulation tended to be better able to cope with stress and challenges that arise in the workplace. Better anxiety management can increase teachers' job satisfaction and improve their relationships with students. Thus, reducing anxiety through art therapy and a growth mindset not only impacts teachers' personal well-being but also improves the quality of their teaching. Teachers who are calmer and more emotionally well-off are better able to create a positive classroom environment, which in turn enhances students' learning experiences.

Another significant finding is that a growth mindset serves as a highly effective complement to art therapy. Teachers with a growth mindset are able to accept feedback more positively and view failure as part of the learning process. They are also more open to trying new approaches to problem-solving, which makes them more flexible in dealing with changes in education. Thus, a growth mindset acts as a driving force that strengthens the positive impact of art therapy on reducing teacher anxiety.

This growth mindset has also been found to be highly beneficial in developing psychological resilience in teachers. Greater psychological resilience allows teachers to more easily manage work-related anxiety. Teachers with a growth mindset tend to have a greater ability to bounce back from failure or adversity and are better able to adapt to changes in their work environment. With this resilience, teachers can maintain their motivation even when facing stressful situations.



However, while art therapy and growth mindset offer numerous benefits, the study also highlights the need for ongoing training and support for teachers in implementing these approaches. Most teachers involved in the study expressed a need for more guidance and training materials on how to apply emotion regulation and growth mindset techniques in their educational contexts. Therefore, this study recommends that professional development programs based on art therapy and growth mindset be more widely [30]implemented in education policy to improve teacher well-being throughout Indonesia.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that drawing-based art therapy and a growth mindset are a highly effective combination in reducing teacher anxiety and improving their emotional well-being. Both approaches not only benefit teachers' personal well-being but also improve the quality of teaching and create a more positive learning environment for students. Wider implementation of these two approaches is expected to positively impact teacher mental health throughout Indonesia, which in turn will improve the overall quality of education[31].

Discussion

The Role of Art Therapy in Reducing Teacher Anxiety

One of the key findings of this study is the effectiveness of art therapy, particularly drawing-based therapy, in reducing anxiety experienced by teachers. Art therapy allows teachers to express feelings and emotions that may be difficult to express verbally. The process of drawing provides a space for teachers to reflect on their feelings, which are often overlooked in busy daily routines. Drawing serves not only as a medium for self-expression but also as a reflective tool that allows teachers to better understand the sources of their anxiety. In this way, art therapy provides an outlet for teachers to cope with the emotional stress they face in a demanding work environment[32].

Furthermore, art therapy also helps teachers more easily identify and manage their feelings. When feelings can be freely expressed through art, teachers can reduce emotional tension that is usually bottled up. This process has an impact on overall mental health, as it provides teachers with an opportunity to "release" accumulated negative emotions. This is important, given that the teaching profession is often burdened with stress related to classroom management, curriculum demands, and pressure from various stakeholders[33].

Based on research results, teachers who participated in drawing-based art therapy reported feeling calmer and more in control when facing daily challenges. This suggests that art therapy has a direct impact on reducing teachers' anxiety by providing them with an opportunity to take time for themselves and release mental tension. Therefore, drawing-based art therapy is not only a creative activity but also an effective tool for reducing teachers' anxiety, giving them a breather amidst the pressures of the workplace.



However, it's important to note that to achieve the maximum benefits of art therapy, support from various parties is needed, including educational institutions and families. Art therapy should be incorporated as part of school mental well-being policies, which can provide ongoing support to teachers. Training to implement art therapy as part of daily routines is also essential for teachers to fully experience its benefits. Therefore, the use of drawing-based art therapy needs to be part of a holistic approach to improving teachers' emotional well-being.

Reducing anxiety through art therapy can also improve the quality of relationships between teachers and students. Teachers who are calmer and better able to manage their emotions tend to create a more positive learning environment, where students feel safer and more supported. Thus, the impact of art therapy is felt not only by teachers but also by students, who benefit from improved teaching quality. This makes art therapy a highly effective tool in improving the overall quality of education.

Overall, drawing-based art therapy provides an effective solution in reducing teacher anxiety and improving their emotional well-being. Broader implementation of art therapy in schools could be an important part of a larger mental health program aimed at supporting teacher well-being across Indonesia.

Table 1. Benefits and Mechanisms of Drawing-Based Art Therapy to Reduce Teacher Anxiety

Category	Main Benefits	Mechanism/Example	Considerations/Challenges
Expression of Emotions	Expressing feelings that are difficult to express verbally, self-reflection	The process of drawing as a medium of expression and understanding the sources of anxiety	Need some space in the midst of a busy routine
Managing Feelings	Identify & manage emotions, reduce accumulated tension	"Breaking off" negative emotions through art, improves overall mental health	Stress from classroom management & curriculum demands
Direct Impact	Feeling calmer, more in control of daily challenges	Post-therapy teacher report: more relaxed	Integrate into daily routine
Institutional Support	Maximum benefits with school policies & training	Part of an ongoing mental wellbeing program	Engage institutions & families for sustainability
Impact on Students	Improve the quality of teacher-student relationships, positive learning environment	Calm teachers → better teaching	A holistic approach to quality education
Overall	Effective solutions for the emotional well-being of teachers in Indonesia	Widespread implementation in schools as a mental health program	National policy is needed for scalability



The Role of Growth Mindset in Improving Teachers' Psychological Resilience

A growth mindset plays a crucial role in reducing anxiety and increasing teachers' psychological resilience. Teachers with a growth mindset tend to view challenges and failures as opportunities for learning and development, rather than as threats or obstacles. This research shows that teachers with a growth mindset are better able to manage the stress and anxiety that arise from their work. They can view every challenge in the classroom or school environment as an opportunity for self-improvement, rather than as evidence of their incompetence.

For example, teachers with a growth mindset are less likely to become trapped in feelings of failure or discouragement when faced with difficulties in classroom management or administrative issues. Instead, they view difficulties as part of the learning process that can help them develop further in the future. This suggests that a growth mindset can strengthen teachers' psychological resilience, enabling them to remain calm and focused even when facing challenging or stressful situations.

A growth mindset also plays a role in boosting teacher self-confidence. When teachers see their ability to grow and learn from experience, they feel more confident in facing difficult situations. This increased self-confidence is crucial for managing anxiety, as teachers who feel confident in their ability to overcome problems are more likely to remain positive and motivated, even under stressful conditions. In other words, a growth mindset not only helps teachers reduce anxiety but also improves their performance in the workplace.

Furthermore, this study found that a growth mindset can change the way teachers deal with stressors in their daily lives. Rather than feeling overwhelmed by ever-increasing work demands, teachers with a growth mindset are more likely to adopt more adaptive strategies in dealing with these challenges. They view stress as part of the challenge that can help them grow, rather than as something to be avoided or feared. This allows them to be more resilient and stay motivated even in stressful environments.

However, implementing a growth mindset in education requires a systematic approach, including training and professional development for teachers. Schools and educational institutions need to develop programs that can help teachers adopt a growth mindset, such as training on how to respond constructively to failure and change their perceptions of challenges. With the right support, a growth mindset can be integrated into the school's work culture and become a key part of a teacher's mental well-being approach.

Overall, a growth mindset is not only beneficial for reducing anxiety but also for strengthening teachers' mental resilience. This resilience is crucial for creating a positive teaching environment, where teachers can continuously develop and adapt to the challenges they face. Therefore, developing and promoting a growth mindset among teachers is key to supporting their mental well-being and improving the quality of education.



The Role of Emotion Regulation in Managing Teacher Anxiety

Emotion regulation is a crucial element that can bridge the relationship between art therapy, growth mindset, and teacher anxiety reduction. This study found that teachers' ability to manage their emotions through effective emotion regulation can reduce anxiety and increase their psychological resilience. One effective technique for emotion regulation is cognitive reappraisal, which allows teachers to view challenging or stressful situations in a more positive or constructive light. When teachers can change their perception of stressful situations, they tend to respond more calmly and with a clearer mind, thereby reducing their anxiety.

Emotional regulation also plays a role in helping teachers avoid being overwhelmed by excessive feelings of anxiety. In stressful work environments, teachers often become trapped in feelings of frustration and burnout. However, by implementing emotional regulation techniques, teachers can identify their emotions, process them more adaptively, and change how they respond to stress. This allows them to stay focused and motivated in their work, while maintaining their emotional well-being.

The results of this study indicate that teachers with strong emotional regulation skills tend to be better able to maintain composure and manage their anxiety. The ability to regulate emotions not only helps teachers cope with stressful situations but also allows them to improve their interactions with students and colleagues. Teachers who are able to regulate their emotions well tend to be more effective in creating a positive and supportive classroom environment, which is essential for successful learning.

However, developing emotion regulation skills requires ongoing practice and support. Teachers need adequate training on how to recognize and manage their emotions in healthier ways. Furthermore, schools and educational institutions should provide supportive environments for emotion regulation practices, such as providing spaces for teachers to take breaks, practice meditation, or engage in self-reflection activities that can help them manage stress.

Overall, emotion regulation is a crucial skill in reducing teacher anxiety. When teachers can manage their emotions well, they are better able to remain calm and focused, even when facing stressful situations. Therefore, improving teachers' emotion regulation skills should be an integral part of mental well-being training programs in schools.

Thus, emotional regulation plays a very important role in supporting teachers' mental well-being, reducing anxiety, and increasing their teaching effectiveness.

CONCLUSIONS

This systematic literature review concluded that art therapy (drawing) and growth mindset training significantly reduced teacher anxiety through improved emotional regulation. These findings underscore the importance of a holistic approach to supporting elementary school teachers' mental health. The implementation of art therapy programs and growth mindset training is recommended as part of teacher professional development policies.



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