

A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW OF ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH IN PONTIANAK PUBLIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

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Received: 1 March 2026

Accepted: 28 July 2026

Published: 30 July 2026

Abstract

Adolescent mental health shapes academic achievement, social relationships, and quality of life, yet local evidence on senior high school students in Pontianak is scattered across single site reports. This review synthesises Indonesian evidence on adolescent mental health at the secondary level and maps its relevance to public senior high schools in Pontianak, West Kalimantan. Google Scholar, Garuda, PubMed, and national journal portals were searched for studies published between 2013 and 2025, and records were screened following PRISMA 2020. Thirty-one studies were included and analysed through thematic synthesis. Academic stress, anxiety, and mild to moderate depressive symptoms were reported most often, with prevalence estimates varying widely by instrument. Academic workload, parenting, bullying, social support, and religiosity recurred as determinants. No study compares mental health indicators across public senior high schools in Pontianak, and closing that gap is the review's central recommendation.

Keywords: academic stress, adolescent mental health, Pontianak, senior high school students, systematic literature review

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transitional period marked by rapid biological, cognitive, emotional, and social change, and this pace of change makes the age group vulnerable to mental health problems. Mental health is understood as a state of well being in which a person realises their own potential, copes with the normal stresses of life, works productively, and contributes to the community (World Health Organization, 2016). For students, good mental health underpins character formation, learning achievement, stress regulation, and the quality of social interaction, so monitoring it belongs to the promotive and preventive work of schools rather than to the health sector alone (Nuryana et al., 2025).

The Indonesian evidence base has grown quickly but points in several directions at once. The 2018 Basic Health Research reported emotional mental disorders in about 9.8 per cent of residents aged fifteen and over and depression in 6.2 per cent of those aged fifteen to twenty four (Kementerian Kesehatan Republik Indonesia, 2018), while the 2023 Indonesian Health Survey recorded a measured prevalence of 2.0 per cent (Kementerian Kesehatan Republik Indonesia, 2023; Zhafirah & Hastono, 2024).

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Diagnostic interview data from the National Adolescent Mental Health Survey placed any past year mental disorder among Indonesian adolescents at 5.5 per cent (Erskine et al., 2024), whereas school based studies using validated screening scales have reported psychological distress in roughly one quarter of students (Pham et al., 2024; Nafisah et al., 2025) and self reported symptom rates far higher again (Juliansen et al., 2024). These figures are not contradictory once the measurement basis is taken into account, and the review below treats that distinction as a substantive finding rather than a technicality.

Among students specifically, Mubasyiroh et al. (2017) found anxiety symptoms in around 40.75 per cent of junior and senior high school students, Marthoenis et al. (2022) estimated psychological distress at 7.3 per cent in the same national survey series using a narrower definition, and Addini (2022) documented a high proportion of depressive symptoms during the COVID-19 pandemic. Determinants reported across these studies include bullying victimisation, family and peer support, socioeconomic hardship, and sedentary behaviour (Ngurah et al., 2022; Pratiwi et al., 2022).

In Pontianak the issue is equally present, although publications addressing it at the senior high school level remain few. Pramana et al. (2024) documented academic stress among students of SMAN 1 Pontianak and found that most participants experienced moderate to severe levels. At the junior high school level, Rosanti et al. (2022) described academic stress among grade eight students of SMP Negeri 18 Pontianak as a basis for strengthening guidance and counselling services, and Firdausi and Mardhiyah (2025) linked academic stress to learning loss and self directed learning during the post pandemic recovery period. Elsewhere in Kalimantan, Alap et al. (2025) reported bullying victimisation in 21.4 per cent of high school students. Adolescent mental health problems are therefore experienced by students in the region in line with the national pattern, yet evidence focusing comparatively on several public senior high schools in Pontianak is still absent.

Two features of the local literature motivate this review. First, existing studies are dispersed across community service reports, small single site surveys, and national datasets, so their combined message has never been assembled for the West Kalimantan context. Second, the instruments, cut off points, and age ranges differ widely, which makes informal comparison of headline percentages misleading. A systematic synthesis that makes those differences explicit is needed before any primary study is designed.

This article accordingly reviews Indonesian evidence on the mental health of secondary school adolescents and maps its relevance to three public senior high schools in Pontianak that serve as the contextual unit of analysis. Three questions guide the review. The first concerns how the mental health of Indonesian senior high school students is described in the available literature, and how far the estimates depend on measurement choices. The second concerns the risk and protective factors that recur across studies. The third concerns the extent to which those findings transfer to public senior high schools in Pontianak, and what remains unknown. The review aims to synthesise the evidence and to derive implications for schools, counsellors, and education policy makers in the city.

METHOD

Review Design

This article is a systematic literature review with thematic synthesis. The approach was chosen because the eligible studies are methodologically heterogeneous, combining cross sectional surveys, secondary analyses of national datasets, correlational studies, and community service reports, and because they use different instruments and cut off points. Such heterogeneity makes a pooled meta-analysis inappropriate, whereas thematic synthesis allows patterns across designs to be compared while preserving the context of each study (Dixon-Woods et al., 2005; Siddaway et al., 2019). Identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion are reported according to PRISMA 2020 (Page et al., 2021).

Search Strategy

Literature was retrieved from Google Scholar, the national databases Garuda and university journal portals, and the Consensus research platform, which searches Semantic Scholar, PubMed, and Scopus simultaneously. Six search strings were run on the platform and their full result sets were exported. The search combined a population term, an outcome term, and a setting term using Boolean operators, in Indonesian and English. Representative strings were ("kesehatan mental" OR "stres akademik" OR kecemasan OR depresi) AND (remaja OR "siswa SMA" OR "peserta didik") AND (Indonesia OR Pontianak OR "Kalimantan Barat"), and ("adolescent mental health" OR "academic stress" OR anxiety OR depression) AND ("senior high school" OR secondary OR adolescents) AND Indonesia. The window ran from 2013, the year of the earliest eligible Indonesian study on academic stress in public senior high schools (Taufik et al., 2013), to 2025. Accredited national journals, indexed international journals, and official government survey reports were prioritised, and the reference lists of retrieved articles were screened manually for additional sources.

Eligibility Criteria

Studies were included when they were written in Indonesian or English, reported empirical data on mental health, academic stress, anxiety, depression, psychological distress, or their determinants among Indonesian adolescents at the junior or senior secondary level, were published in a scientific journal or an official government survey report between 2013 and 2025, and provided full text or an abstract sufficient for extraction. Studies were excluded when they addressed populations outside secondary education, when they were opinion pieces or reviews without primary data, and when they duplicated a dataset already represented. Where the same dataset appeared in more than one output, the most complete report was retained. International studies outside Indonesia were not eligible for inclusion; a small number are cited in the discussion for interpretive comparison only, and they are identified as such wherever they appear.

Selection Process

Six search strings run on the Consensus platform returned 120 records, and a further 12 records were held by the authors from earlier searching of Google Scholar and Garuda and from hand searching of reference lists, giving 132 records in total. Two duplicate records were removed, leaving 130 records for title and abstract screening.

Screening excluded 84 records, mostly because the study population lay outside Indonesia. Forty-six reports were assessed in full text and 15 were excluded, leaving 31 studies for the synthesis. Figure 1 presents the full flow according to PRISMA 2020 (Page et al., 2021).

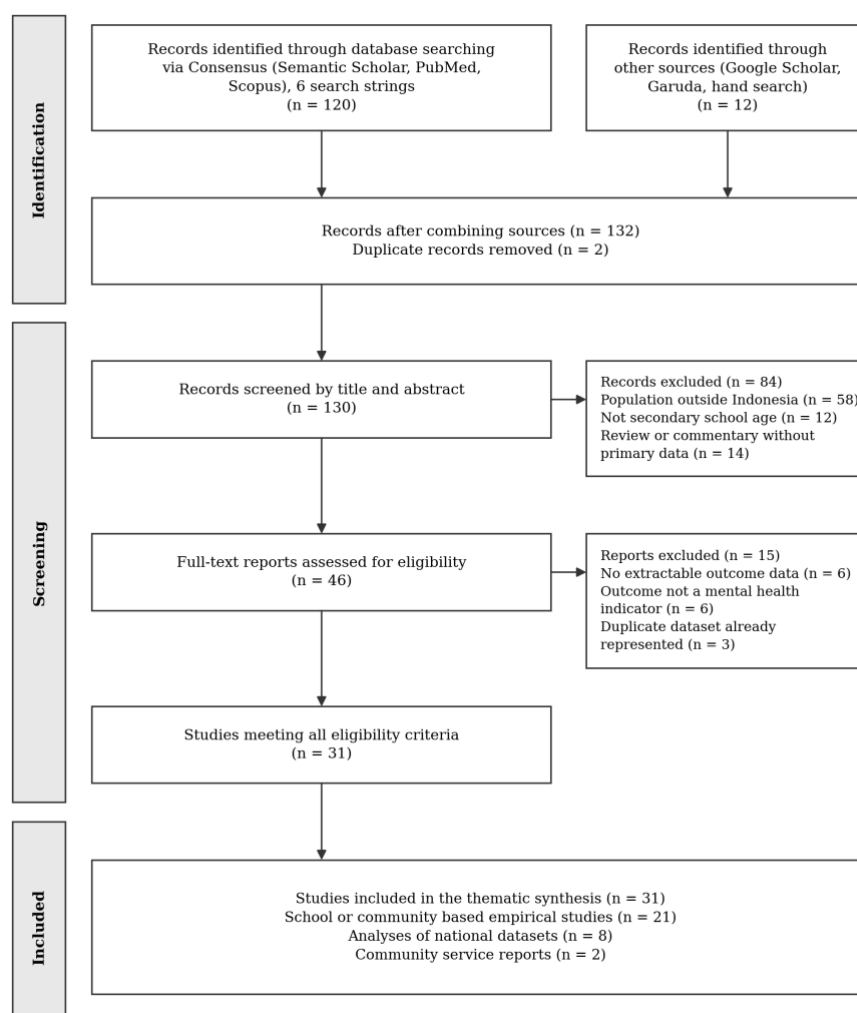


Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 flow diagram of the study selection process

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of the Included Studies

Table 1 summarises the thirty-one included sources. Twenty-one are school based or community based empirical studies, eight draw on national datasets, and two are community service reports retained for their local relevance. Five were conducted in West or Central Kalimantan, and the remainder cover Java, Sumatra, Sulawesi, and national samples. Instruments range from the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales to the Kessler-10, the Global School-based Student Health Survey items, structured diagnostic interviews, and locally developed academic stress scales. Sample sizes range from twenty participants in a single school activity to national household samples of more than five thousand, and this spread is the main reason the synthesis is narrative rather than statistical.

Table 1. Characteristics and main findings of the included studies

Author (Year)	Setting and sample	Design and instrument	Main findings
Taufik et al. (2013)	Public senior high schools, Padang	Descriptive, local academic stress scale	Academic stress varied in level and was driven mainly by academic demands.
Kumara et al. (2017)	308 students and 28 teachers, Yogyakarta	Instrument validation, school mental health information system	Student mental health was mostly moderate; no school system or policy supported mental health at the time.
Mubasyiroh et al. (2017)	Junior and senior high school students, national (GSHS 2015)	Secondary data analysis	Anxiety symptoms in 40.75 per cent; determinants included family, school, and social environment.
Kementerian Kesehatan RI (2018)	Residents aged 15 and over, national	Riskesdas household survey	Emotional mental disorders about 9.8 per cent; depression 6.2 per cent at ages 15 to 24.
Wiguna et al. (2020)	113 adolescents, national online survey during COVID-19	Cross-sectional, SDQ 11-17	14.2 per cent at risk on total difficulties; parental and peer support were protective.
Safira & Hartati (2021)	SMAN 04 and SMAN 09 Semarang, 311 students	Quantitative descriptive	Moderate academic stress was the modal category during distance learning.
Pandia et al. (2021)	3,452 students, 32 schools, West Java	Cross-sectional, SDQ	Total difficulties abnormal in 31.6 per cent; higher in junior high school and district areas.
Hidayati et al. (2021)	12 adolescents aged 12-15, Indonesia	Qualitative phenomenology	Bullying victims reported hopelessness, low self-worth, and self-harm.
Addini (2022)	Junior and senior high school students, national online survey	Quantitative descriptive	58 per cent mild and 25 per cent moderate to severe depressive symptoms during the pandemic.
Rosanti et al. (2022)	SMP Negeri 18 Pontianak, grade VIII	Quantitative descriptive	Mapped academic stress as a basis for

Author (Year)	Setting and sample	Design and instrument	Main findings
Putri et al. (2022)	Adolescents, mental health education during COVID-19, Pontianak	Community service, pre-post knowledge test	guidance and counselling services. Education improved adolescent knowledge of their own psychological condition.
Marthoenis et al. (2022)	8,698 students, national (GSHS 2015)	Secondary data analysis	Psychological distress 7.3 per cent; bullying and hunger raised risk, parental support and close friends lowered it.
Pratiwi et al. (2022)	9,628 students aged 11-18, national (GSHS 2015)	Cox regression on secondary data	Mental health disorder prevalence 9.4 per cent; lifestyle significantly associated after adjustment.
Ngurah et al. (2022)	Students, national (GSHS 2015)	Secondary data analysis, gender stratified	Bullying, physical attack, hunger, and sedentary behaviour predicted distress; effects differed by gender.
Bukhori et al. (2022)	1,640 Muslim students, Indonesia	Cross-sectional SEM, CRS, MSPSS, RES	Religiosity, social support, and self-efficacy affected well-being, mediated by resilience.
Hartanto et al. (2023)	Guidance and counselling teachers, Indonesia	Qualitative consensus study	Teachers recognised anxiety, depression, and self-harm, but lacked infrastructure, parental collaboration, and training.
Kementerian Kesehatan RI (2023)	Residents aged 15 and over, national	SKI national health survey	Measured prevalence of mental health problems 2.0 per cent; young people and women more vulnerable.
Erskine et al. (2024)	5,664 households, national (I-NAMHS)	Cross-sectional, DISC-5 diagnostic interview	Any mental disorder in the past 12 months 5.5 per cent; suicidal behaviour strongly associated with disorder.
Pham et al. (2024)	1,337 in-school and 824 out-of-school	Cross-sectional, K-10 and CESD-R	Psychological distress 24.3 per cent and

Author (Year)	Setting and sample	Design and instrument	Main findings
	adolescents, Jakarta and South Sulawesi		depression 12.6 per cent in school; distress higher in girls.
Juliansen et al. (2024)	2,021 students, 18 schools, Jambi City	Total sampling cross-sectional, multiple screens	Psychological distress 25.2 per cent, depression 17.5 per cent, cyber-bullying victimisation 16.9 per cent.
Handayani et al. (2024)	49 vocational school students, Kendari	Descriptive cross-sectional, GSHS items	Most respondents screened positive; stress management in school was rated poor by 73.5 per cent.
Zhafirah & Hastono (2024)	SKI 2023 data, all provinces	Geospatial and determinant analysis	Regional disparities in mental health burden; determinants included education, economy, and young age.
Borualogo et al. (2024)	15,604 children aged 10 and 12, Indonesia	Multilevel SEM, Children's Worlds survey	Sibling and school bullying lowered subjective well-being; family and school climate buffered the effect.
Pramana et al. (2024)	SMAN 1 Pontianak, 20 students of grades X-XI	Community service, descriptive	80 per cent moderate and 20 per cent severe academic stress; stress management education was needed.
Alap et al. (2025)	295 high school students, Central Kalimantan	Cross-sectional, OBVQ and SDQ	Bullying victimisation 21.4 per cent, mostly verbal, exclusion, and rumour; associated with gender and family status.
Juli et al. (2025)	401 junior high school students, Indonesia	Cross-sectional, OBVQ, RSES, DASS-Y, PAQ	Victimisation 23.2 per cent; peer pressure was the strongest predictor.
Nafisah et al. (2025)	167 secondary students, four schools, Surabaya	Cross-sectional, SDQ	24.6 per cent at substantial risk of difficulties; girls scored higher on total difficulties.
Agustina et al. (2025)	114 grade 7 students, Purwokerto	Descriptive survey, DASS and K-10	Moderate stress in 45.6 per cent and moderate anxiety in 37.7 per

Author (Year)	Setting and sample	Design and instrument	Main findings
			cent; depression mostly normal.
Wangid et al. (2025)	578 grade 11-12 students, public senior high schools, Yogyakarta	Cross-sectional survey	Awareness of counselling services was high, but heavier use was linked to lower satisfaction.
Astipa et al. (2025)	792 students aged 12-18, Semarang	Cross-sectional, MHLq, GHSQ, WEMWBS	Mental health literacy and help-seeking intention jointly predicted well-being, explaining 14.1 per cent of variance.
Firdausi & Mardhiyah (2025)	Post pandemic students, Pontianak	Quantitative correlational	Academic stress was associated with learning loss and self directed learning capacity.

Prevalence Estimates Depend on How Mental Health Is Measured

The single most consistent finding of this review is that reported prevalence tracks the measurement method more closely than it tracks the population. Structured diagnostic interviewing in a nationally representative household sample produced an estimate of 5.5 per cent for any past year disorder (Erskine et al., 2024), and the 2023 Indonesian Health Survey, which applies a narrow case definition, produced 2.0 per cent (Kementerian Kesehatan Republik Indonesia, 2023). Validated screening scales administered in schools produced roughly a quarter of students above threshold, at 24.3 per cent for psychological distress in Jakarta and South Sulawesi (Pham et al., 2024), 25.2 per cent in Jambi (Juliansen et al., 2024), and 24.6 per cent at substantial risk in Surabaya (Nafisah et al., 2025). Symptom checklists administered online during the pandemic produced higher figures again (Addini, 2022). The gap between 2 per cent and 25 per cent is therefore not evidence of contradiction between studies, and it is not a trend over time. A screening instrument identifies students who warrant attention, and a diagnostic interview identifies students who meet criteria for a disorder; the first number is the one a school plans services around, the second is the one a health system plans treatment around. Reviews that place these figures side by side without that distinction, and school reports that cite whichever figure is most striking, both misinform practice.

The practical implication for Pontianak is direct. A school that adopts a screening instrument should expect roughly one student in four to score above threshold, should plan its counselling capacity against that expectation rather than against the 2.0 per cent national figure, and should not interpret a high screening yield as evidence of a crisis specific to that school.

Academic Stress in Public Senior High Schools

Studies in public senior high schools converge on moderate academic stress as the modal category. Pramana et al. (2024) found moderate stress in 80 per cent and severe stress in 20 per cent of participants at SMAN 1 Pontianak, with assignment load and examination demands named as the main triggers, although the sample of twenty students recruited for a community service activity does not support a prevalence claim. Safira and Hartati (2021) reported the same modal category among 311 students in two public senior high schools in Semarang during distance learning, and Taufik et al. (2013) had earlier documented varied but academically driven stress in Padang. Agustina et al. (2025) found moderate stress in 45.6 per cent of students in Purwokerto using the DASS. At the junior secondary level in Pontianak, Rosanti et al. (2022) described a comparable pattern, and Firdausi and Mardhiyah (2025) showed that academic stress in the recovery period is entangled with learning loss and with the capacity for self directed learning.

The consistency of the modal category across a twelve year span and five cities suggests that academic stress is a structural feature of the senior secondary experience in Indonesia rather than an artefact of one setting or one cohort. International evidence, cited here for comparison rather than as included evidence, points the same way and adds a temporal dimension. A systematic review of sixty studies across seventeen countries found that about one student in six experiences excessive distress in the final years of school (Wuthrich et al., 2020), and a longitudinal study tracking Australian students across the final year found that stress and anxiety rise as the year progresses (Wuthrich et al., 2021). Indonesian studies are almost entirely cross sectional and therefore cannot detect this within-year escalation, which matters for a system in which the university entrance selection dominates the final year.

Anxiety and Depressive Symptoms

Anxiety and depressive symptoms are documented mainly through national and multi site data. Mubasyiroh et al. (2017) found anxiety symptoms in 40.75 per cent of junior and senior high school students, with determinants in family relationships, peer relationships, and the school environment, while Marthoenis et al. (2022) analysed the same national survey with a narrower distress definition and obtained 7.3 per cent, again illustrating the measurement point above. Addini (2022) reported 58 per cent mild and 25 per cent moderate to severe depressive symptoms during the COVID-19 pandemic; those figures were collected under distance learning through online self report, which over represents students with internet access and an interest in the topic, so they mark the upper bound of the range rather than a stable estimate. Wiguna et al. (2020), working during the same period with the SDQ, found 14.2 per cent at risk on total difficulties, and identified parental and peer support as protective.

Two demographic patterns recur. Female students report higher distress and depression in most school based samples (Pham et al., 2024; Nafisah et al., 2025), although Agustina et al. (2025) found the reverse for stress and anxiety in a single junior high school, and Pandia et al. (2021) found higher total difficulties at the junior rather than senior level and in district rather than city settings. The junior-senior contrast has not been examined within a single Indonesian school system, which limits what can be concluded about the transition into senior secondary schooling.

Risk and Protective Factors

Five clusters of determinants recur across the included studies. The first is academic load and achievement pressure, which appears in every school based study reviewed here. The second is bullying victimisation, reported in 21.4 per cent of high school students in Central Kalimantan (Alap et al., 2025), 23.2 per cent of junior high school students nationally (Juli et al., 2025), and 16.9 per cent for cyber-bullying in Jambi (Juliansen et al., 2024), with consistent associations with distress (Marthoenis et al., 2022; Ngurah et al., 2022) and documented psychological consequences including hopelessness and self-harm (Hidayati et al., 2021). The third is family context, where parental support and family climate buffer the effect of victimisation on well being (Borualogo et al., 2024; Wiguna et al., 2020), while parenting style itself shows less consistent effects than the Indonesian literature usually assumes; Juli et al. (2025) found authoritarian parenting apparently protective against victimisation relative to authoritative parenting, a result the authors read through Indonesia's collectivist frame and one that should caution against importing Western parenting typologies wholesale. The fourth is socioeconomic and lifestyle context, including hunger as a poverty proxy and sedentary behaviour (Ngurah et al., 2022; Pratiwi et al., 2022; Zhafirah & Hastono, 2024). The fifth comprises protective dispositions, with religiosity and social support operating on well being through resilience rather than directly (Bukhori et al., 2022).

These clusters are not independent. Social support moderates the effect of academic load and of victimisation, and resilience mediates the effect of religiosity, so the determinants form a system rather than a list. This interdependence explains why single component interventions tend to produce limited effects, and it is consistent with the international meta-analytic finding that universal school programmes yield small average effects while targeted programmes yield larger ones (Feiss et al., 2019; van Loon et al., 2020, cited for comparison).

School Services and Promotive Efforts

The included studies describe a service system that exists on paper and functions unevenly in practice. Guidance and counselling teachers recognise anxiety, depression, and self-harm among their students, but report inadequate infrastructure, limited collaboration with parents, and few opportunities for capacity building (Hartanto et al., 2023). Students are aware of counselling services, yet heavier users report lower satisfaction, which points to a mismatch between what students expect and what the service delivers rather than to a lack of access (Wangid et al., 2025). Handayani et al. (2024) found that 73.5 per cent of students rated school stress management as poor. Against this, Daulay et al. (2022) identified five service types with demonstrated effects on academic stress, and Astipa et al. (2025) showed that mental health literacy and help-seeking intention jointly predict well being, so the levers are known even where implementation lags.

Community service programmes report knowledge gains immediately after delivery (Pramana et al., 2024; Putri et al., 2022), but none of the included reports followed participants long enough to show change in symptom levels. The wider evidence suggests why this matters. Indicated school interventions reduce depression and anxiety symptoms immediately after delivery, but the reductions are not maintained at follow up, and interventions delivered by school staff alone show weaker

effects than those delivered by clinicians (Gee et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2022, cited for comparison). A single annual psychoeducation event is therefore unlikely to change outcomes, however well received it is.

Relevance for Public Senior High Schools in Pontianak

Given the pattern above, students in the three public senior high schools that form the context of this article, referred to as School A, School B, and School C to preserve institutional confidentiality, can be expected to show a similar profile, with academic stress and anxiety symptoms concentrated before examination periods and university entrance selection. High performing public senior high schools in provincial capitals typically operate with an intense competitive climate, and the findings from SMAN 1 Pontianak (Pramana et al., 2024) are consistent with this reading. This is an inference from transferable patterns, not a measured finding for the three schools, and it is stated as such.

Three features of the West Kalimantan context deserve separate attention. Regional disparity in the mental health burden is documented at province level (Zhafirah & Hastono, 2024), so national averages should not be assumed to hold locally. Bullying victimisation in the neighbouring province reached 21.4 per cent, mostly in verbal and relational forms that school discipline systems detect poorly (Alap et al., 2025). And religiosity, which functions as a protective resource through resilience in Indonesian samples (Bukhori et al., 2022), is embedded in school life in ways that a screening programme could work with rather than around. Practically, school level screening in these three schools should pair an academic stress indicator with brief measures of perceived social support and victimisation, because an intervention targeting workload alone would leave both the strongest buffer and a major stressor unaddressed.

CONCLUSION

This review concludes that academic stress, anxiety, and mild to moderate depressive symptoms are common among Indonesian secondary school students, and that the available local studies indicate the same pattern for public senior high school students in Pontianak. The reported magnitude of the problem depends heavily on whether a diagnostic interview or a screening instrument was used, and treating those figures as interchangeable has distorted both the local literature and its practical reading. Academic, family, social, economic, and spiritual factors act as an interacting system rather than as independent causes, and psychoeducation programmes show short term knowledge gains without demonstrated effects on symptoms.

Four recommendations follow. Schools, in particular the three public senior high schools that form the context of this review, should strengthen guidance and counselling services for early detection, and should plan capacity against a screening yield of roughly one student in four rather than against national diagnostic figures. Schools should deliver psychoeducation as a sustained programme with follow up rather than as a single event, and in cooperation with health institutions or universities. The local education office should consider policies supporting a balanced academic workload, particularly in the final year. And subsequent researchers should conduct the comparative, repeated measures, and service linkage studies set out

above, so that intervention in these schools rests on local data rather than on national inference

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