

FROM ANXIETY TO ADAPTABILITY: RECONSTRUCTING CAREER RATIONALITY THROUGH COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (CBT): A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Abstract

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is increasingly being applied in the context of career guidance and counseling in response to the growing phenomenon of career anxiety and uncertainty in the BANI (Brittle, Anxiety-inducing, Non-linear, and Incomprehensible) era. This study examines the contribution of CBT in helping individuals transition from a state of career anxiety to more rational thinking and stronger career adaptability. The study was conducted using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method on nine articles obtained from the Google Scholar and Publish or Perish databases with the criteria of publications in English and Indonesian in the period 2015–2025. The results show that the consistent application of CBT improves self-efficacy, career maturity, and career adaptability in various population groups, including students and professionals. CBT has been proven effective in reducing career anxiety through cognitive restructuring, strengthening self-control, and developing reflective and realistic thinking patterns about one's career future. In addition, CBT also strengthens the four main dimensions of career adaptability concern, control, curiosity, and confidence which form the basis of psychological resilience in facing changes in the world of work. Based on these findings, this study confirms that the integration of CBT into career guidance services is an effective strategy for shaping a generation that thinks rationally, is adaptive, and is resilient in facing career dynamics in the BANI era.

Keywords: : *cognitive behavioral therapy, career anxiety*

Introduction

The phenomenon of career uncertainty in the BANI era (Brittle, Anxiety-inducing, Non-linear, and Incomprehensible) demands serious attention, especially in the context of the psychological challenges individuals face when making career decisions. This era is characterized by the fragility of systems that were previously considered stable, increased existential anxiety, and the emergence of career paths that are no longer linear and often difficult to understand. These conditions have implications for increased career anxiety, indecision, and low adaptability to the rapidly changing dynamics of the world of work (Kusumawati & Wahyuningsih, 2020; (Dwatra & Adri, 2023)).

This condition is not merely a conceptual issue, but has been empirically proven in various official national reports. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2024, there were approximately 369,500 young people aged 15–29 who were classified as hopeless of job, namely young individuals who gave up looking for work because they felt there were no realistic job opportunities available to them (CNBC Indonesia, 2024). Furthermore, the August 2023 National Labor Force Survey (Sakernas) reported that the open unemployment rate (TPT) among young people aged 15–24 reached around

19.40%, showing how difficult the transition from education to work is for Indonesia's younger generation (Tirto.id, 2023).

In the context of these challenges, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) has emerged as a relevant and effective counseling approach to help individuals cope with career uncertainty. CBT is based on the principle that thoughts, emotions, and behaviors interact with each other, and that changing irrational thinking patterns can lead to adaptive behavioral changes (Mustakim dkk., 2022). Through techniques such as cognitive restructuring, behavioral activation, and mindfulness integration, individuals are trained to recognize and replace negative beliefs with more rational and productive mindsets (Sofiannisa dkk., 2025). In the context of career counseling, various studies show that the application of CBT can reduce career anxiety, strengthen self-confidence, and increase clarity of direction and purpose in an individual's life (Khofifah dkk., 2023). Furthermore, CBT is not only effective in addressing emotional symptoms, but also contributes to the development of career adaptability, which is a key skill in facing the disruptions and complexities of today's world of work (Milot-Lapointe & Arifouline, 2025).

However, although the effectiveness of CBT has been widely recognized in clinical contexts, especially for managing stress and general anxiety, studies that specifically explore the contribution of CBT techniques to the formation of rational thinking in career decision-making are still limited (Lee dkk., 2017; Lee dkk., 2017). This gap indicates the need for in-depth research on how cognitive restructuring techniques and other CBT interventions can help individuals transition from a state of anxiety to a more adaptive and rational mindset. Understanding these mechanisms is important in developing contextual, effective, and relevant career guidance models for individuals in the BANI era (Ogbuanya dkk., 2017).

Based on this gap, this study attempts to present a systematic review of empirical studies on the application of CBT in the context of career development. The main focus is on exploring how the CBT approach can strengthen rational thinking, foster adaptive mindsets, and increase career readiness and flexibility in various population groups, including students and workers (Iskandar & Lisbet, 2025). Using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method based on PRISMA guidelines, this study aims to present a comprehensive knowledge map of CBT's contribution to the formation of rational mindsets and adaptive abilities in individuals facing career uncertainty. The results of this study are expected to provide new directions for counselors, academics, and human resource practitioners in designing CBT-based counseling interventions that are in line with the demands of the times and the complexity of career realities in the BANI era.

Method

This study uses a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design to thoroughly examine the latest research findings on the application of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) in helping individuals transition from anxiety to career adaptability. According to Kitchenham, Ann, & Charters (2007), SLR is a scientific method used to identify, evaluate, and interpret all research relevant to the research questions that have been formulated. The main objective of this approach is to obtain a comprehensive overview of existing empirical findings, map research gaps, and find conceptual development directions that can enrich future career counseling practices. The SLR approach also provides opportunities for researchers to integrate various study results across contexts and methods, resulting in a comprehensive and valid scientific synthesis (Aliyah & Mulawarman, 2020).

The research procedure followed systematic stages based on the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, which consisted

of four main steps, namely: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion (Siringo Ringo, 2025). In the identification stage, researchers searched for articles through the Google Scholar and Scopus databases using a combination of the keywords “Cognitive Behavioral Therapy” OR ‘CBT’ AND “career adaptability” OR “career anxiety” OR “career uncertainty.” The initial search yielded 404 relevant articles. Next, 327 articles were automatically excluded based on a number of criteria, namely year of publication (38), article type (70), publication stage (4), source type (0), language (4), and open access status (211). Thus, 77 articles were considered to meet the initial criteria for further selection.

At the screening stage, the researchers examined the titles and abstracts of the 77 articles to assess their relevance to the research focus. A total of 62 articles were eliminated because they did not meet the criteria, consisting of 27 articles that were irrelevant based on their titles, 16 articles that were irrelevant based on their abstracts, and 19 articles with inappropriate research designs. This left 15 articles that were deemed suitable for the next stage.

The eligibility stage was conducted by reading the full text of the 15 articles to assess the suitability of the research substance to the focus of the study. From the results of this assessment, 6 articles were excluded because they did not meet the research objectives or had a focus that was not relevant to the topic of CBT in the context of careers.

Finally, at the inclusion stage, 9 articles that met all the criteria were obtained and used as the basis for the main analysis in this study. These articles came from various countries such as Thailand, South Korea, China, Nigeria, Indonesia, and Malaysia, with a publication range of 2015–2025. The inclusion criteria used included: (1) empirical research articles, (2) published in scientific journals, (3) in English, (4) open access, and (5) focusing on the application of CBT in the context of anxiety or career adaptability. This literature selection process ensured that all articles analyzed were of adequate methodological quality and relevant to the SLR objectives.

Thus, the entire analysis process was conducted systematically and transparently in accordance with PRISMA guidelines to ensure the validity and replicability of the research. The PRISMA flowchart illustrating the complete literature selection process can be seen in Figure 1 in this research report.

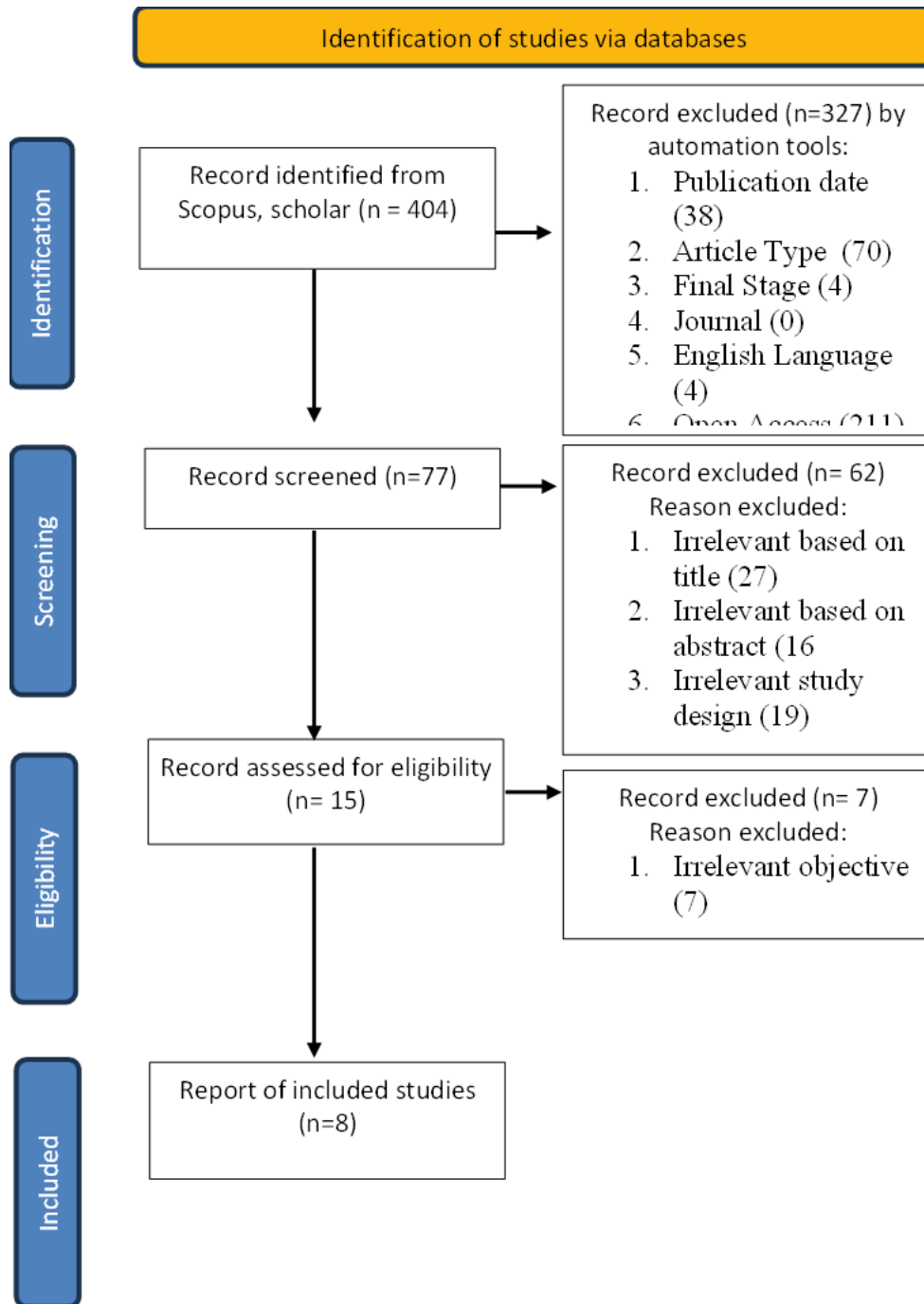


Figure 1 research report

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication Year	2015–2025	Before 2015
Type of Document	Research articles	Books, book chapters, proceedings, or non-research reports
Publication Status	Fully published (final version) articles	Articles in press or unpublished manuscripts
Source Type	Accredited or indexed scientific journals	Non-journal sources (e.g., reports, theses, or websites)
Language	English	Non-English
Accessibility	Open Access	Restricted or paid access
Focus of Study	Studies examining the application of CBT in the context of career anxiety, career adaptability, or cognitive restructuring in career decision-making	Studies not addressing CBT, career-related topics, or relevant psychological variables
Population/Research Subjects	Students, university students, or working adults	Non-relevant populations

Result and Discussion

This study identified eight articles that met the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The review of these articles focused on two main areas of discussion in accordance with the research questions. The first section discusses the role of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) in reconstructing career rationality from a state of anxiety to adaptability (RQ1), while the second section examines the effectiveness of CBT in improving career adaptability among students and workers (RQ2). The synthesis results of the nine articles are presented in Table 2 below as the basis for interpreting the findings and interpreting the overall research results.

Table 2. Literature Review Results

No	Title	Year	Research Location	Delivery System	Population	Research Method	Results
1	<i>An Enhancement of Career Adaptability Through Positive Cognitive Behavioral Training Program (Charatcharunkiat dkk., 2024)</i>	2024	Thailand	Group Training Program (Positive CBT)	180 private-sector employees (young adults)	Experimental – Pretest–Posttest Control Group (Mixed MANOVA)	Positive CBT enhanced career adaptability, self-efficacy, and psychological well-being among private-sector employees.
2	<i>The Effects of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy on Career Attitude Maturity, Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy, and Career Preparation Behavior of College Students (Lim dkk., 2015)</i>	2015	South Korea	Structured CBT Group Counseling	University students (aged 18–24 years)	Quasi-Experimental – Pretest–Posttest Control Design	CBT significantly improved career attitude maturity, career decision-making self-efficacy, and career preparation behavior.
3	<i>Comparative Analysis of Cognitive Behavioral</i>	2024	China	Group Counseling (CBT vs. DBT)	56 medical students	Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT)	Both CBT and DBT enhanced psychological

	<i>Therapy and Dialectical Behavior Therapy in Enhancing Psychological Capital among Medical Students (Dong dkk., 2024)</i>						capital (optimism, self-efficacy, resilience); CBT showed more stable short-term effects.
4	<i>Impact of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction in Mitigating Test Anxiety and Enhancing Academic Achievement among Vocational Education Students (Nwadi dkk., 2025)</i>	2025	Nigeria	CBT + Mindfulness (MBSR) Group Program	483 vocational students (technical and business education)	Randomized Controlled Trial (Pre–Post–Follow-up)	The CBT–MBSR program reduced test anxiety and increased academic achievement and career readiness among vocational students.
5	<i>Implementation of Group Counseling Using Cognitive Restructuring Techniques to Enhance Career Maturity of Dayah Inshafudin High School Students in Banda (Mafirja & Bulantika, 2020)</i>	2020	Indonesia	Group Counseling with Cognitive Restructuring	12 high school students (Dayah Inshafudin)	Quasi-Experimental (One Group Pretest–Posttest)	Cognitive restructuring effectively improved students' career maturity and reflective awareness.
6	<i>Cognitive Restructuring Techniques (CRT) in Reducing Career Women's Anxiety (Hassan & Abdullah, 2018)</i>	2018	Malaysia	Individual Counseling (CRT Sessions)	20 career women with high work anxiety levels	Experimental – Pretest–Posttest	CRT reduced work anxiety by 30.16% based on Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI-Malay) scores.
7	<i>The Effectiveness of Cognitive Behavior Therapy Group Counseling in Reducing Career Decision Doubt Among Vocational High School Students (Muwakidah & Pravesti, 2017)</i>	2017	Indonesia	Group Counseling (CBT)	10 vocational high school students (late adolescents)	Experimental – One Group Pretest–Posttest	CBT group counseling reduced career indecision and enhanced clarity and commitment toward career goals.
8	<i>Group Interventions with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Approach to Overcome Career Anxiety in Individuals with Bachelor</i>	2022	Indonesia	Group CBT Intervention	8 bachelor's degree graduates experiencing post-pandemic career anxiety	Quasi-Experimental (Pretest–Posttest)	Group CBT effectively reduced career anxiety and strengthened positive mindsets toward the

Referring to Table 2, the data is further broken down based on the year of publication, research location, and research method used. The research was conducted from 2015 to 2025, with details as follows: 2015 (n=1), 2017 (n=1), 2018 (n=1), 2020 (n=1), 2022 (n=1), 2024 (n=2), and 2025 (n=1), totaling 9 studies. The research locations were in several countries, namely Thailand, South Korea, China, Nigeria, Indonesia, and Malaysia. The research methods used in the 8 articles listed in Table 2 include: quasi-experimental, experimental, and randomized controlled trials.

RQ1: How does the application of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) help individuals transition from career anxiety to a more rational and adaptive mindset?

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) plays an important role in helping individuals transition from career anxiety to a rational and adaptive mindset. This process of change occurs through the mechanisms of cognitive restructuring and behavioral activation, in which clients are encouraged to recognize negative automatic thoughts such as fear of failure, self-doubt, and perceptions of inadequacy, and then challenge them with logical and evidence-based thinking. Based on a review of nine studies, the application of CBT in the form of group counseling, positive training, and mindfulness integration has been proven effective in reducing career anxiety, strengthening self-efficacy, and fostering rational optimism about one's career future. Thus, CBT not only functions as an intervention to alleviate anxiety, but also as a reconstructive strategy that shapes career rationality, namely the ability to think clearly, reflectively, and flexibly in navigating career direction amid the uncertainty of the world of work.

Table 3. Application of CBT in Changing Career Anxiety into Rational and Adaptive Mindset

No	Focus of CBT Application	Psychological Change Results and Empirical Evidence
1	Restrukturisasi pikiran irasional	Cognitive restructuring is another technique involving identifying negative thoughts such as fear of failure or inadequacy and challenging these thoughts with logic and reality. Studies have revealed that this technique increases levels of career maturity and self-reflection skills among high school students (Mafirja & Bulantika, 2020), and reduced work-related anxiety by 30.16% for career women (Hassan & Abdullah, 2018) following Cognitive Restructuring Therapy.
2	Behavioral and career decision training	According to CBT, one should work on activities such as Career Planning and Job Exploration Exercises, which increase self-confidence and control over one's future. The effect of CBT on decreasing Career Indecision was verified by a research conducted by Muwakhidah & Pravesti (2017) on vocational high school students, while a significant increase in Career Confidence and Career Decision-Making skills was found by Cho & Lee (2024) on nursing students.
3	Emotion regulation and anxiety reduction	The incorporation of relaxation and mindfulness strategies in CBT practices aids individuals in relaxing their minds, managing stress levels, and enhancing rational thinking abilities. According to Nwadi et al. (2025), the impact of the CBT-MBSR initiative was evident in the reduced academic anxiety and work readiness levels amongst vocational students. Similar outcomes were achieved by Sudewaji & Menaldi (2022), who found that group CBT significantly assisted graduates in overcoming work-related anxiety and enhancing positive thinking attitudes towards the working world.
4	Strengthening self-efficacy and rational optimism	CBT encourages a belief in one's ability to learn and develop. Charatcharungkiat et al. (2024) found that the Positive CBT Training Program resulted in greater employee levels of adaptability, self-efficacy, and psychological well-being in the private sector. Research by Dong et

		al. (2024) indicates a higher degree of psychological capital (optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience) in individuals who completed a session of CBT compared to those who completed a session of DBT.
5	Reflection on values and rationalization of career choices	CBT assists individuals in reevaluating their values, interests, and abilities so that appropriate and adaptive decisions can be made. Career attitude maturity and self-efficacy among students have been found to improve by structured activities in CBT (Kang, 2015); this is confirmed by Cho & Lee (2024), which proves that career-related exercises under CBT facilitate adapting one's decisions to one's abilities and actual working situations.

RQ2: To what extent is CBT effective in strengthening career adaptability in various groups of individuals?

The effectiveness of CBT in strengthening career adaptability appears to be consistent across various groups of individuals, ranging from students to university students to professional workers. This approach works by restructuring irrational thoughts, strengthening self-efficacy, and activating adaptive behaviors that increase self-confidence and readiness to face change. Based on nine articles reviewed, the application of CBT has been shown to increase career maturity and decision-making clarity in students (Mafirja & Bulantika, 2020); (Muwakidah & Pravesti, 2017), strengthen career confidence, self-efficacy, and readiness in university students (Kang, 2015; Cho & Lee, 2024; Nwadi et al., 2025; Dong et al., 2024; Sudewaji & Menaldi, 2022), and improve psychological well-being and career adaptability in professional workers (Charatcharunskiat et al., 2024; Hassan & Abdullah, 2018). In general, CBT functions as a self-development intervention that not only reduces anxiety but also builds adaptive capacity that enables individuals to survive, transform, and thrive in a dynamic career environment in the BANI era.

Table 4. Effectiveness of CBT on Career Adaptability in Students and Workers

No	Career Development Group / Focus	Effectiveness & Empirical Evidence (Researchers & Year)
1	Students (High School / Vocational School) – Formation of Career Awareness and Early Career Maturity	Cognitive restructuring in group counseling improved career maturity and reflective awareness among high school students (Mafirja & Bulantika, 2020). Group CBT counseling reduced career indecision and enhanced clarity and commitment toward career goals among vocational students (Muwakhidah & Pravesti, 2017).
2	University Students – Strengthening Self-Efficacy, Direction Clarity, and Career Readiness	CBT enhanced career attitude maturity, decision-making self-efficacy, and career preparation behavior among university students (Kang, 2015). CBT-based skills training strengthened career confidence and preparedness (Cho & Lee, 2024). The integration of CBT with Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) reduced test anxiety and improved career readiness (Nwadi et al., 2025). CBT also enhanced psychological capital (optimism, self-efficacy, resilience) as a foundation for career adaptability among medical students (Dong et al., 2024). In addition, group CBT reduced career anxiety and fostered adaptive readiness among bachelor's graduates in the post-pandemic context (Sudewaji & Menaldi, 2022).
3	Professional Workers – Enhancing Flexibility, Self-Efficacy, and Work Well-Being	The Positive CBT Training Program increased career adaptability, self-efficacy, and psychological well-being among private-sector employees (Charatcharunskiat et al., 2024). Meanwhile, Cognitive Restructuring Therapy (CRT) reduced work anxiety by 30.16% and strengthened psychological balance among career women (Hassan & Abdullah, 2018).

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is one of the most influential approaches to psychotherapy and counseling in the modern era, developed by Aaron T. Beck in 1976 and rooted in the principle that the way individuals think determines the way they feel and act (Khofifah dkk., 2023). In the last two decades, this approach has expanded its context from the clinical realm to the fields of education and career guidance, making it an effective approach for overcoming career anxiety, decision-making doubts, and career uncertainty in today's unstable era (Gita Rismawan & Gading, 2021)

The BANI era (Brittle, Anxiety-inducing, Non-linear, and Incomprehensible) marks a paradigm shift in socio-economic life and the world of work. Career uncertainty, competitive tension, and rapid technological change encourage individuals to have a rational, flexible, and adaptive way of thinking (Kulcsár dkk., 2024). In this context, CBT offers conceptual and practical solutions: restructuring irrational thought patterns into constructive rational beliefs, as well as strengthening behaviors that support readiness for change (Khofifah dkk., 2023). According to Beck (2011), CBT works through the cause-and-effect relationship between cognitive stimuli and responses (CSR), where thoughts become the main bridge that determines how individuals interpret reality.

In the context of careers, individuals with dysfunctional thoughts often view challenges as threats rather than opportunities. For example, students who think “I won't be able to compete” or “there are no jobs that are right for me” will be more prone to anxiety and career confusion. CBT works to challenge and rearrange these beliefs by building self-efficacy, self-control, and evidence-based optimism. This approach is in line with the idea of Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994) which emphasizes that self-belief plays a central role in the process of adaptation and individual career success (Khofifah dkk., 2023).

Publication Trends and Methodological Patterns

An analysis of nine articles shows an increasing trend in publications on the application of CBT in the context of careers since 2015, with a peak in research in 2024–2025. This surge indicates a growing awareness of the urgency of evidence-based psychological interventions in a work environment fraught with pressure and uncertainty. Several recent studies conducted in various countries, such as Thailand, South Korea, China, Malaysia, Nigeria, and Indonesia, show that the application of CBT is universal with contextual cultural adjustments.

The methodologies used were dominated by experimental and quasi-experimental designs. Three studies used Randomized Controlled Trials (RCT) (Dong dkk., 2024; Nwadi dkk., 2025; Charatcharungkiat et al., 2024), while others used a pretest–posttest control group design (Kang, 2015; Cho & Lee, 2024) atau one-group design (Mafirja & Bulantika, 2020; Muwakhidah & Pravesti, 2017). This methodological diversity strengthens the external validity of the SLR findings and confirms that CBT is effective in various populations: students, university students, and even professional workers.

CBT in Career Rationality Reconstruction

The results of the review show that CBT functions as a cognitive mechanism to help individuals move from anxiety to adaptive career rationality. This process occurs through several stages: restructuring irrational thoughts, managing emotions, and activating adaptive behaviors.

A study by Mafirja & Bulantika (2020) shows that high school students who participated in group CBT sessions experienced a significant increase in career maturity and self-reflective abilities after restructuring their irrational thoughts about the future. Meanwhile, research by Hassan & Abdullah (2018) on career women shows a 30.16% decrease in work anxiety after participating in Cognitive Restructuring Therapy (CRT)

sessions. These findings confirm that negative thoughts such as “I will fail at this job” can be changed to “I will try again with a better strategy” through a process of targeted cognitive restructuring.

Furthermore, research by Kang (2015) and Cho & Lee (2024) shows that structured CBT improves career decision-making self-efficacy and the ability to make realistic decisions. Behavioral activation is key in this process, where individuals are encouraged to challenge their thoughts with actions, such as exploring new fields of work or trying different career experiences. In the context of vocational students, Nwadi et al. (2025) combined CBT with Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) to reduce academic anxiety and increase career readiness. The integration of mindfulness helps participants focus their attention on the present moment, reduce tension, and strengthen reflective awareness an important component of rational decision-making.

The Effectiveness of CBT on Career Adaptability

Empirical evidence shows that CBT not only plays a role in reducing anxiety but also in strengthening career adaptability the ability to navigate change and uncertainty in working life. Based on Savickas' (2013) model, career adaptability encompasses four dimensions: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence.

Research by Charatcharungkiat et al. (2024) shows that Positive CBT Training significantly improves these four dimensions in private sector employees in Thailand. This training fosters future awareness (career concern), control over career choices (career control), curiosity to explore new opportunities (career curiosity), and confidence to overcome challenges (career confidence).

In a group of students, Dong et al. (2024) found that CBT increases psychological capital, which consists of optimism, hope, self-efficacy, and resilience all of which are psychological components of career adaptability. Students who were initially anxious and uncertain about their career future showed an increase in self-efficacy and sense of control after participating in a group-based CBT program.

Research in Indonesia (Muwakhidah & Pravesti, 2017) also confirms that group CBT is effective in reducing career indecision among vocational high school students, as indicated by increased career direction clarity and commitment to long-term goals. Meanwhile, Sudewaji & Menaldi (2022) show that post-pandemic CBT helps fresh graduates change their negative mindset into a positive and constructive one toward the world of work, strengthening their readiness to face the transition to the professional world.

Theoretical Synthesis and Psychological Mechanisms of Change

Theoretically, CBT works by forming a loop between thoughts, emotions, and behavior. Restructuring irrational thoughts reduces emotional reactivity, which then allows for more adaptive behavior in response to career pressures. This mechanism explains how cognitive change produces behavioral resilience. Within the framework of Social Cognitive Career Theory, increased self-efficacy and outcome expectations serve as a bridge for the formation of sustainable career adaptability.

CBT also strengthens individuals' reflective functions in evaluating the compatibility between personal values, competencies, and external opportunities. Thus, CBT is not only curative but also transformative, turning anxiety into reflective awareness and uncertainty into flexibility of thinking.

Academic and Practical Implications

The results of this study expand the theoretical and practical foundations of career counseling in Indonesia. Academically, CBT proves its relevance as a multidimensional

approach that combines rational, emotional, and behavioral aspects. This approach makes a real contribution to the development of career construction and lifelong guidance theories in the Society 5.0 era.

Practically, CBT can be used as a basic model in career adaptability strengthening programs in schools, universities, and work institutions. (1) For students, CBT can be applied through group counseling that focuses on cognitive restructuring to increase maturity and clarity of career direction. (2) For university students, CBT is effective in mindfulness-based career decision-making training to foster work readiness and psychological balance. (3) For professional workers, Positive CBT can be a human resource development program to strengthen self-efficacy, psychological well-being, and resilience to work stress.

The integration of CBT with digital technology such as e-CBT or AI-assisted CBT also opens up new opportunities for more inclusive and adaptive career counseling in the digital age. Although the findings show the consistent effectiveness of CBT, this study has several limitations. First, the number of articles analyzed is still limited and tends to focus on the Asian context, so global generalization needs to be further examined. Second, most studies are short-term without follow-up measurements, so the long-term effects of CBT on career adaptability still need to be tested. With this prospect, CBT has great potential to become the main approach in future career guidance, fostering a generation that thinks rationally, is adaptive, and resilient in facing the dynamics of the world of work in the BANI era.

Conclusion

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) has been proven to be an effective approach in reconstructing irrational career thinking patterns towards constructive rationality and adaptability. Through cognitive restructuring, emotional regulation, and behavioral activation, CBT helps individuals reorganize negative beliefs into realistic thinking patterns that strengthen self-efficacy, personal control, and career direction clarity.

The application of CBT in various contexts shows consistent positive impacts: in students, it increases maturity and clarity of career choices; in university students, it strengthens self-confidence, psychological resilience, and readiness to face the world of work; while in workers, it expands adaptive capacity and psychological well-being in facing pressure and change.

Conceptually, CBT functions as a bridge between cognitive restructuring and the development of career adaptability, integrating rational, emotional, and behavioral aspects to build career resilience. This approach emphasizes that managing thoughts is key for individuals to think flexibly, act adaptively, and develop continuously amid career uncertainty in the BANI era.

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Author Contributions Statement

SA was responsible for formulating the research idea, conducting a systematic literature review, analyzing data, and writing the article manuscript. NH, FW, and AI served as supervisors who provided scientific supervision, methodological guidance, and critical review of the article manuscript. All authors have read and approved the final version of this article for publication.

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