

Needs Assessment of Mental Health Promotion among Teachers to Support Healthy Schools: A Study at Junior High Schools In Yogyakarta City, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Background: Teachers' mental health is a crucial factor in creating a healthy and conducive school environment for learning. However, teachers' workload and psychosocial stressors may impair their mental well-being. This study aims to conduct a needs assessment for mental health promotion among teachers in junior high schools in Yogyakarta City as an effort to support a healthy school. **Methods:** This study applied a Cross-sectional design and Chi-Square analysis, and Fisher's Exact test. A total of 42 people were sampled in this study, using the total sampling technique. The instruments used included personal data sheets, as well as questionnaires to assess the level of work stress and mental workload. **Results:** Most of the respondents were female, as many as 61.9%, with age >34 years, as many as 54.8%, and tenure >5 years, as many as 59.5%. There were 42.9% who experienced work stress, and most of the teachers stated that the workload was experienced at a moderate level, namely 90.5%. There is a relationship between mental workload and work stress in teachers with a p-value of 0.027 ($p < 0.05$). **Conclusion:** The higher the mental workload, the more likely teachers are to experience job stress. These findings are important for improving teacher welfare, which in turn will support the creation of a positive and quality learning climate in schools. This study contributes to the development of sustainable mental health programs for teachers as an integral part of efforts to create healthy schools in Indonesia.

Keywords: Mental Health Promotion, Needs Assessment, Teachers, Workload, Work Stress

INTRODUCTION

Mental health promotion in the school environment is one of the important efforts to create a conducive learning atmosphere and support the well-being of all school members, especially teachers and students. Teachers, as the spearhead in the learning process, have a strategic role in recognizing and addressing students' mental health problems, as well as being effective mental health promotion agents in schools (Chrisnatalia, 2023; Nuriani, 2023; Ekayani, Primatanti, and Ningrum, 2024). Good mental health in teachers is also very important because it directly affects the quality of teaching and interaction with students, so that it can support the creation of a healthy school as a whole (Mayasari *et al.*, 2022).

Creating a conducive learning atmosphere and supporting the well-being of School members, both teachers and students, through mental health promotion, should be a priority. Teachers,

as the spearhead in the learning process, have a strategic role in recognizing and addressing students' mental health issues, as well as being effective mental health promotion agents in schools (Chrisnatalia, 2023; Nuriani, 2023; Ekayani, Primatanti and Ningrum, 2024).

Everyone has a human right to a safe and healthy working environment. This also applies to teachers. Minimizing conflicts and tensions in the workplace, such as in schools, is a basic asset in improving worker retention, performance, and productivity. Strong regulations are needed regarding psychosocial risks that include job content, work schedules, workload, discrimination, and so on. It is recorded that around 15% of working-age adults experience mental health disorders. Approximately 12 billion working days are lost annually due to worker depression and anxiety, at US\$1 trillion per year due to lost productivity (WHO, 2024).

Stress is one of the many global health issues affecting professionals in

both developed and developing countries (Pramono and Paramananda, 2024), including teachers at school. Berdasarkan data *Health and Safety Executive* (HSE), there are 828,000 workers experiencing anxiety, stress, or despair because of their job (Aprilia *et al.*, 2023). Stress and depression also contribute to 44% of health problems and 57% of time off work due to illness (Putri, Sukyati and Febriyanti, 2021). Moreover, Work stress is also defined as tension that affects a person's emotions, processes, thinking, and condition (Hermawan, 2022).

Job stress that occurs in teachers usually results from multiple factors, ranging from class size, grade level taught, workload, poor student ability, school location, and other job-related factors (Agyapong *et al.*, 2022). In this case, the 8-hour full-day school policy is a potential stressor. Symptoms of work-related stress can include anxiety, unemotional restlessness, insomnia, heavy smoking, hypertension, indigestion, and other problems (Zenivansari and Dewanti, 2024).

The Special Region of Yogyakarta is one of the most stressful provinces in Indonesia, with a high rate of mental and emotional disorders at around 10.1% or 10,810 people. In Yogyakarta City, the need for mental health promotion for teachers in junior secondary schools is increasingly urgent, given the increasing psychosocial challenges faced by both teachers and students. Mental health disorders in teachers can be influenced by various factors, such as academic pressure, social environment, and family conditions, which, if not handled properly, can harm learning achievement and student well-being (Chrisnatalia, 2023; Marianty, 2025).

This is in line with the preliminary study, which found that some teachers at State Junior High School 9 Yogyakarta admitted to having difficulty maintaining concentration while teaching, feeling bored during afternoon lessons, experiencing disturbances in sleep patterns, and experiencing increased blood pressure, headaches, and dizziness. These symptoms indicate the presence of job stress among teachers.

This study aims to conduct a needs assessment of mental health promotion in teachers as a basis for developing strategies and programs that can increase

teachers' capacity to support students' mental health and create a healthy and productive school environment. Assessment of mental health promotion needs in teachers is needed as a first step to design appropriate and effective interventions in supporting healthy school programs in junior high schools in Yogyakarta City, especially regarding work stress.

METHODS

This study used a quantitative study with a cross-sectional design at SMP Negeri 9 Yogyakarta in August 2024. Sampling was done by total sampling and obtained 42 teachers. Stress and workload became research variables in the needs assessment of mental health promotion to support healthy schools. Work stress was measured using 14 items from the DASS-42 questionnaire, which was adopted from the study of Muttaqin and Ripa (2021) and Refiany (2019) with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.981 and 0.873, respectively. Two categories were used: non-stressed (0-14) and stressed (15-42).

Mental workload was measured with a Likert scale based on a modification of Tosziah's scale Refiany (2019), which consists of 24 items divided into quantitative and qualitative workload. Scores were categorized into low (<48), medium (48-72), and high (>72). Data were analyzed with Fisher's Exact Test to analyze the relationship between mental workload and job stress because the data did not meet the requirements of the Chi-Square test. This research has also obtained ethical approval from KEP Ahmad Dahlan University with No. 012408244 on August 23, 2023.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Characteristics of Respondents

The characteristics of respondents in this study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents Based on Gender, Age, and Years of Service

Characteristics of Respondents	Category	N	Percentage
Gender	Male	16	38.1%
	Female	26	61.9%
Total		42	100%

Age (years)	20-24	1	2.4%
	25-29	11	26.2%
	30-34	7	16.7%
	>34	23	54.8%
Total		42	100%
Period of Employment (years)	<5	17	40.5%
	>5	25	59.5%
Total		42	100%

Source: Primary Data, 2024

Based on the table above, it is known that 16 respondents (38.1%) are male, while 26 others (61.9%) are female. A total of 1 respondent (2.4%) was 20-24 years old, 11 respondents (26.2%) were 25-29 years old, 7 respondents (16.7%) were 30-34 years old, and 23 respondents (54.8%) were more than 34 years old. From the length of service, 17 respondents (40.5%) had <5 years of service, while 25 other respondents (59.5%) had >5 years of service.

2. Univariate Analysis

The results of univariate analysis in this study are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Characteristics of respondents by stress category

Work stress		Stress		Normal		Total	
Gender		n	%	n	%	n	%
Male		10	23.8	6	14.3	16	38.1
Female		8	19.0	18	42.9	26	61.9
Total		18	42.9	24	57.1	42	100
Age		n	%	n	%	n	%
20-24 years		0	0	1	2.4	1	2.4
25-29 years		3	7.1	8	19	11	26.2
30-34 years		5	11.9	2	4.8	7	16.7
>34 years		10	23.8	13	31	23	54.8
Total		18	42.9	24	57.1	42	100
Period of Employment		n	%	n	%	n	%
<5 years		6	14.3	11	26.2	17	40.5
>5 years		12	28.6	13	31.0	25	59.5
Total		18	42.9	24	57.1	42	100

Source: Primary Data, 2024

Based on the table above, Based on the table above, it is obtained that more female respondents experience job stress than male respondents. Moreover in higher age groups there is a tendency to increase job stress. and in longer tenure there is also a tendency for job stress to increase.

Generally, stress is more likely to occur in women. However, this study found

new facts that men experience stress more often, especially those who work as teachers. This is in line with previous research, which states that men take longer to heal from stress, so their stress potential is much higher (Roni *et al.*, 2024). Tarigan's research (2021) also found similar results. Gender may influence work stress, as men have more responsibilities given their status as head of the household and main breadwinner (Tarigan, 2021).

The inverse relationship between job stress levels at different ages according to Rauschenbach and Hartel's theory (2011). As a person gets older, his or her stress level will increase as well, peaking at 36-50 years old. Whereas, when a person reaches the age of >50, when working or is younger (<36 years old), the stress level is lower. However, this theory depends on the organization/company/place of work. Research on the correlation between age and job stress often shows mixed results (Akbar *et al.*, 2024). The decline in organ function and physical condition as we age is also a trigger for stress among workers (Azizah, Prihatin and Asrina, 2023).

In the tenure variable, respondents with less than 5 years of service consisted of 6 people (14.3%) who experienced stress. Another 11 people (26.2%) did not experience stress (normal). Meanwhile, respondents with more than 5 years of service who experienced stress consisted of 12 people (28.6%), and 13 other people (31%) did not experience stress (normal).

The length of service will be related to the amount of experience and understanding that employees have. The longer the working period, the more good understanding to deal with existing stressors. However, Robbins mentions that if the experience during the working period is negative, then there can be excessive tension that has an impact on the mental health of the workers themselves. They have the potential to experience stress, just like workers with a short tenure who are still in the adaptation period (Hapsari, Lestantyo and Ekawati, 2023). The difference in the relationship between tenure and job stress is also evidenced by the research of Rosanna, Hartanti and Indrayani (2021). They found that there



was no relationship between tenure and job stress among elementary school teachers in Wuluhan District. Teachers have the understanding and knowledge to convey to students during learning so that even though teachers with a new tenure must adapt again to the new environment does not trigger stress because the understanding possessed by teachers can minimize the occurrence of stress. In other words, there are no significant differences. Every teacher has the same opportunity to experience stress, both for those with new and old tenure (Rosanna, Hartanti and Indrayani, 2021).

3. Bivariate Analysis

The results of the bivariate analysis of the relationship between mental workload and job stress are presented in Table 3.

Tabel 3. The Relationship Between Mental Workload and Work Stress

Workload	Work Stress						Sig
	Stress		Normal		Total		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
High	4	9.5	0	0	4	9.5	0.027
Moderate	14	33.3	24	57.1	38	90.5	
Jumlah	18	42.9	24	57.1	42	100	

Source: Primary Data, 2024

Based on the table above, it can be seen that as many as 4 respondents (9.5%) with high workload categories (all) experienced stress, and 14 respondents (33.3%) with moderate workload experienced stress. Fisher's Exact test results show that there is a relationship between mental workload and work stress in teachers at SMP Negeri 9 Yogyakarta, where the p value = 0.027 ($p < 0.05$). Observations show that teachers experience work stress due to the many tasks given, so that they feel tired and have difficulty concentrating.

Work stress can be triggered by many factors, including workload. The amount of workload felt by someone is usually proportional to their ability to complete the task. Teachers often face many tasks with limited time to complete, which can trigger stress. This finding is in line with Riznanda &

Kusumadewi's research (2023), which revealed that workers feel stressed because they get many tasks with a short completion time from their superiors (Riznanda and Kusumadewi, 2023).

The findings in this study are consistent with the research of Saleh et al. (2024), which also found a significance value of 0.003, indicating a significant relationship between workload and work stress in teachers (Saleh, Sulaeman and Gafur, 2024). Excessive workload on teachers can lead to physical and mental fatigue, as well as health problems such as headaches, indigestion and high blood pressure. In addition, excessive workload can lead to personal tension, potentially triggering stress (Ani et al., 2020).

High levels of emotional stress in teachers, according to Jennings & Greenberg (2009) can reduce performance and trigger burnout. This condition will certainly affect the relationship between teachers and students, classroom management, and classroom climate (Puteri and Suryanto, 2023). Teachers with good mental health will be able to manage their emotions towards students or learners, be able to manage learning, and can also be a role model for them. Thus, mental health is crucial for teachers to obtain optimal learning output (Mayasari et al., 2022).

The complexity and severity of the workload of teachers at various levels of education have increased psychological disorders, including anxiety, due to the demands of the job. This may lead to depression, which requires immediate treatment (Aziz et al., 2023). The results of this study reinforce the fact that mental health promotion is urgent in every institutional setting, including schools, both as educational institutions and workplaces. Such efforts can create a strong and supportive environment for individuals to live healthy lives. Education, justice, environment, and work are within the scope of mental health policies (Yustikasari, Anisa and Dewi, 2022).

Handayani et al (2020) mentioned that mental health plays an important role in social relations, productivity, peace, as well as stability in a community so that individuals can contribute to the socio-economic development of society. Mardhiyanah (2019) also describes mental

health promotion as a combination of health education and health interventions. It is useful for changing behavior and the environment through increased knowledge and attitudes that lead to improved universal public health status (Permatahati, Ihdalumam and Suhadiano, 2023).

Magnavita (2016) mentions that workplace health promotion is increasingly relevant in the context of globalization and demographic change (Jusuf and Martha, 2025). Poor mental health affects a person's cognitive, emotional, social, relational, and behavioral functioning. As a result, their capacity to work is compromised due to decreased productivity, performance, and difficulty in getting or keeping a job (WHO, 2022).

Comprehensive mental health interventions have generally resulted in positive physical and psychological outcomes involving families, schools, and communities. However, in low- and middle-income countries, such interventions are often neglected. Mental health bears a considerable burden that needs immediate attention, such as the MDGs (Singh, Kumar and Gupta, 2022), which are now continued with the SDGs.

A study of twelve studies with an educational approach on workers within an intervention period of 3-6 months found important findings. The implementation of stress management programs was beneficial in reducing physical fatigue, lethargy, cognitive fatigue, and conflicts related to home and work at the agency. Another study on three-day forest therapy as one of the health promotion efforts also found that there were beneficial effects on heart rate variability, stress, and mood (Javanmardi *et al.*, 2025).

The integrated intervention approach, the WHO organization's workplace mental health guidelines, and the Thrive at Work Integrative Framework are clear examples of previous workplace mental health promotion. A systematic, coordinated, and conscientious health promotion approach to workers' well-being can prevent psychological harm and support their recovery. The principle of valuing workers is important to create a healthy workplace that can help them thrive (Deady *et al.*, 2024).

The implementation of mental health promotion can help people achieve well-being throughout their life cycle. In the workplace, mindfulness and psychological health interventions can reduce workers' stress and improve their performance. Organizational interventions and mental health literacy training have also been shown to work in the workplace. (Barry *et al.*, 2024) with a wide scope. In this study, school is interpreted as a workplace that needs to highlight mental health inclusively. Not only focusing on students but also on teachers as workers in it.

CONCLUSIONS

This research shows that the need for mental health promotion in schools needs to be prioritized. Based on the results of the needs analysis, the higher the mental workload, the more likely teachers are to experience job stress. This finding is important for improving teacher well-being, which in turn will support the creation of a positive and quality learning climate in schools. This research contributes to the development of sustainable mental health programs for teachers as an integral part of efforts to create healthy schools in Indonesia.

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