



Job Stress on Government Officials: A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

Work stress is a momentum experienced by workers that comes from work pressure. Government employees as part of formal work have a great chance of experiencing work stress. This systematic review aims to present the factors that trigger work stress in government employees in several countries. The findings of this systematic review are 15 factors that trigger work stress in government employees in 7 different countries. These factors are classified according to the source of the trigger into 3, namely internal individuals, organizations, and also the environment.

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines work stress as a worker's response that can arise when faced with work demands and pressures, where these demands do not match their knowledge and abilities. Mangara (2025) stated that stress is tension that arises due to differences in expectations and reality. Herdiana et al. (2023) also found that work stress can arise from a misalignment between the desires and expectations of individual workers. Robbin classifies stress-causing factors into three main factors, namely individual factors, organizational factors, and environmental factors. Individual factors are triggers of work stress related to the lives of individual workers (Guridno et al., 2021). Things that happen in company life that trigger work stress are organizational factors. While other factors that trigger work stress that arise from outside the individual or organization are categorized as environmental factors.

Handoko stated several working conditions that often cause work stress for employees (Asih et al., 2018). These working conditions include excessive workload, role ambiguity, and interpersonal or group conflict. In addition, there is an influence from external factors of the company organization on work stress experienced by employees. These factors can arise from financial strength, family problems, and employee physical health problems. Stress will be stronger when an individual is faced with continuous problems. Work stress in several studies has been found to have an impact on employee work performance and company productivity. The psychological state of workers affected by work stress will have an impact on power and effort at work (Lu, 1997; Richardson and Rothstein, 2008; Lai et al., 2022; Chen et al., 2022).

Of course, decreased productivity will affect many aspects, such as decreased service quality and decreased income. Work stress can be experienced by all workers, both formal and non-formal workers. One of those who are vulnerable to work stress is government employees. Government employees are citizens who work for the government, either as permanent employees or working on a contract basis. In Indonesia, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, government employees are classified into 2 (two) groups, namely civil servant (ASN), and non-civil servant employees. Radiojičić et al. (2020) stated that as carriers of important roles in administrative activities in each country, government employees have a role as drafters and implementers of government policies.

They are also required to make maximum efforts to realize the public interest as the main goal that the government wants to achieve. According to Sigma (in Radiojičić et al., 2020) as representatives of the state, government employees are expected to demonstrate a trustworthy attitude, behave properly, and be respectful. Government employees in countries in the Asian region are often identified with a very obedient attitude but have a very low level of autonomy. This is different when compared to government employees in western countries (Berman, 2010; Van der Wal and Yang, 2015; Yong Li et al., 2023). Government employees in most countries in the world are known to have high levels of job dissatisfaction and a fairly high risk of mental health disorders (Bogg and Cooper, 1995; Lallukka et al., 2008; Lopes et al., 2010; Yong Li et al., 2023).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies that examined government employees found that those who work for the government are not free from work stress (job stress). Yamauchi et al. (2018) stated that more than 50% of government employees in Japan receive compensation for mental health disorders, 47% of which are caused by work stress. Another study found that in one government agency in Indonesia there is a potential for employee work stress of more than 40%. According to Maulik (in Albashitu, 2023) this demand also requires workers to be able to complete it. Most studies also highlight the high risk of government employees who must continue to ensure that the public is served at Covid-19 pandemic. Summarized from various studies, there are several government employee jobs that have a high prevalence of experiencing work stress.

These jobs include government employees working at the Regional Disaster Management Agency (Purnama et al., 2019), government employees working as firefighters (Igboanugo et al., 2021), and government employees working as police or civil police (Queirós et al., 2020). In addition, government employees who carry out administrative work are also found to experience work stress. They include those working in the financial aspect (Pujiwati et al., 2017) and those who occupy managerial positions in government agencies (Herdiana et al., 2023). The impact of work stress experienced by government employees not only affects individual workers, but also government organizations. The impacts found range from reduced individual focus to decreased quality of service provided.

METHODOLOGY

In the review process, the author used the PCC question formulation (Population, Concept, and Context). This formulation is used to find anything antecedent or causes of work stress in government employees. To start this review, the first step taken is to create review questions. The questions are what antecedent work stress experienced by government employees? The next stage is to design keyword search on database, based on research questions and several terms obtained terms. Terms found as keyword among others civil servant, government, work stress, And job stress.

From the four terms, a search for research journals was conducted using the repository method. This stage was carried out using the Pubmed and Scopus databases to search for related research journals. Then the author continued the process by checking for duplication through the Mendeley application on all collected articles. Filtering was carried out through the title and abstract, after which it was continued with filtering the entire manuscript. After the selection of 298 journals and there were 13 journals that met the criteria, namely searching for antecedent work stress in government employees.

The journal selection flow can be seen through the prism graph presented in Figure 1. The author determines the limitations in the journal review as follows: 1) The journal content discusses the antecedents of work stress; 2) The research subjects are government employees; 3) The year of publication of the journal from 2015 to 2025; 4) The journal is in English; and 5) The type of research

is qualitative and quantitative. For journals that are not selected, namely those that have the criteria 1) The research subjects are not government employees, 2) Do not use English, 3) Articles in the form of books, meta-analyses, and research without methods that are not clearly described.

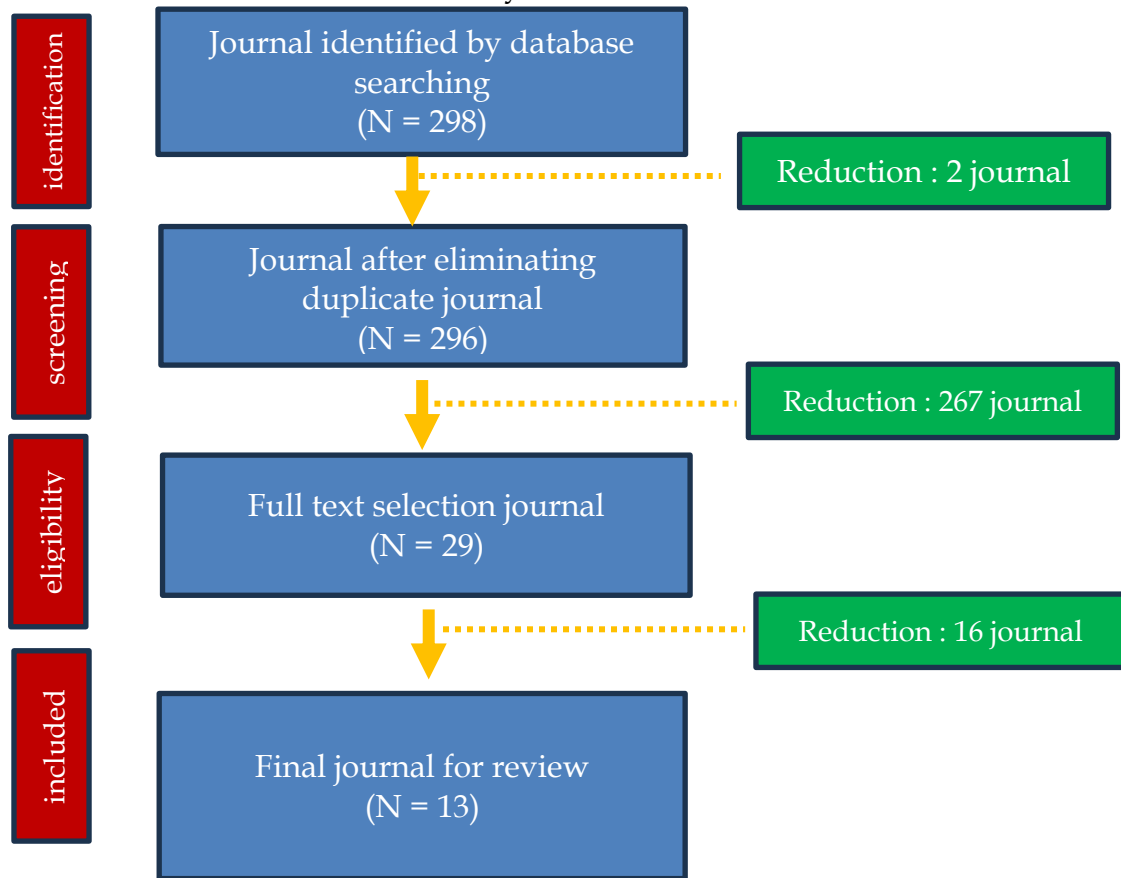


Figure 1. Prism Journal Selection Path Flow

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Various types of government employee jobs certainly have different triggers for work stress. Some factors that cause this difference include cultural differences and differences in government work systems. After conducting a selection, there were 19 articles that showed the causes of work stress in government employees in 8 countries.

Table 1. Antecedents of Work Stress in Government Employees

| No | Author | Year | Subject | Country | Job Stress's Antecedent |
|----|--|------|--|---------|--|
| 1 | Jaracz, M., Rosiak, I., Bertrand- Bucińska, A., Jaskulski, M., Nieżurawska, J., | 2017 | 100 civil servant at Citizens' Affairs Department dan Crisis Management Department | Poland | Salary System and Job insecurity |

| No | Author | Year | Subject | Country | Job Stress's Antecedent |
|----|--|------|--|----------------|--|
| | & Borkowska, A. | | | | |
| 2 | Kong, W., Yang, Y., Zhang, F., Wang, H., & Feng, D. | 2020 | 559 civil servant at Shandong province who trained by Shandong Academy of Governance | China | Workload, over responsibility, working competition, and complex interpersonal relation |
| 3 | He, J., Chen, Y., Lin, J., Yang, X., Ding, N., Wang, X., Chen, X., Du, M., Zhang, G., & Song, Y. | 2023 | 327 Wenzhou city's civil servant | China | Work-family conflict and social support |
| 4 | Tseng, P C., Lin, P Y., Liang, W M., Lin, W Y., & Kuo H W. | 2021 | 11.875 government worker on 647 China governmental institution | China | Effort-reward imbalance, over commitment, and high job demand |
| 5 | Zhang, L., Fu, J., yao, B., & Zhang, Y. | 2019 | 874 China's civil servant | China | Work task and job responsibilities |
| 6 | Da Silva, L P B., & Silva-Costa, A., | 2024 | 106 Brazil state university's civil servant who hold managerial position | Brazil | High job demand, low control, and low social support |
| 7 | Dich, N., Lange, T., Head, J., & Rod, N H. | 2015 | 7.007 United Kingdom's civil servant | United Kingdom | High job demand and low control |
| 8 | Topa, G., & Del Pozo, J F J. | 2018 | 80 firefighter, 77 army, and 107 prison staff | Spain | Working period and breach of contract |
| 9 | Bianchi, R., Cavalcante, D C., Queirós, C., Santos, B D M., Verkuilen, J., & Schonfeld, I S. | 2023 | 1.612 Brazil civil servant | Brazil | Work-related adversity |

| No | Author | Year | Subject | Country | Job Stress's Antecedent |
|----|---|------|--|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| 10 | Hall, C E., Brooks, S E., Greenberg, N., & Weston, D. | 2025 | 30 United Kingdom's civil servant | United Kingdom | Job redesign (work from home) |
| 11 | Koura, U., Sekine, M., Yamada, M., & Tatsute, T. | 2017 | 3.053 Japan west coast's civil servant | Japan | Work-family conflict |
| 12 | Suzhen, G., Xiadiya, X., Li, N., Yulong, L., Yu, J., Jiwen, L., & Tzi Bun, N. | 2017 | 5.000 China's civil servant | China | Chronic illness and high job pressure |
| 13 | Yasuaki, S., Shigeru, C., Eiji, Y., Yoshihiko, N., Toshihiro, I., Kazuyo, K H., & Takahiko, Y. | 2014 | 2.121 Australia's Government Workers | Australia | Job control and social support |

From a study on work stress in government employees in 7 countries, 15 triggers of work stress were found. Excessive workload and job responsibilities are the highest factors triggering work stress in government employees. Several studies have found that excessive workloads carried by individual workers trigger mental stress in completing work (Moningka et al., 2024). The next highest factor is social support, followed by low control and work-family conflict (work-family conflict). Cohen et al. (in M. Nashich et al., 2020) stated that social support is a resource provided by other parties to individuals, and has an impact on individual well-being. So that decreasing social support, especially from the family, can have an impact on the psychological well-being of individual workers.

Job control in several studies has negative implications for physical, mental, and social well-being in individual workers. In individual workers with low levels of self-control, self-control, job control was found to have a negative impact on subjective well-being in individuals (Abdel Hadi et al., 2025). While conflict work and family usually arise from demands from work and family (Kurnia et al., 2025). Female workers in several studies were found to be more susceptible to work stress due to work and family conflicts. From the findings of the factors that trigger work stress in government employees, they can be classified according to the source of the trigger into 3, namely internal individual, organizational, and environmental. Factors that originate from internal individuals include job insecurity, work-family conflict, over commitment, and chronic diseases.

Wage system, excessive workload, job control, length of service, breach of contract, difficulties in employment, effort-reward imbalance, and the implementation of the system work from home, is a trigger factor originating from the organization. Meanwhile, the trigger factors originating from the environment include work competition, interpersonal relationships between workers, and social support. Although in the 13 journals included in the category in the journal review through the database there was no research in Indonesia, several studies on work stress for government employees have been conducted. Not much different, the findings of studies on work stress for government employees in Indonesia are influenced by excessive workload, chronic diseases, and also problems with interpersonal relationships between workers.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Government employees are known for their discipline and loyalty. This does not rule out the potential for pressure that can trigger work stress. Several studies have found several dominant aspects that can trigger work stress. These include the high workload received by workers, an inappropriate wage system, and poor interpersonal relationships. Cultural differences are one of the challenges that need to be considered in formulating policies. Policies that are more tolerant of various cultures, according to several studies, can improve several aspects. These aspects include *commitment*, *job engagement* And *job satisfaction*. Government institutions should start shifting their thinking paradigm in placing employees as dynamic assets.

So far, not many government agencies have provided space for their employees to be mentally healthy. There needs to be a policy that is part of improving the psychological well-being of workers. For further researchers, it is hoped that they can dig deeper into the aspects of the causes of work stress in government employees outside the 7 countries that have been found. This is in addition to adding references to research on work stress in employees government, is also expected to be deepened through studies that emphasize whether or not there is a relationship between work stress and cultural background. In addition, the impact and efforts to deal with work stress on government employees are important issues to elaborate. This aims not only to increase worker productivity, but also to improve the quality of workers' psychological well-being.

FURTHER STUDY

This study still has limitations so that further research is still needed on the topic "Job Stress on Government Officials: A Systematic Review".

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