



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AND STRESS COPING STRATEGIES IN EMPLOYEES

May Lia Elfina¹

¹Prodi Psikologi, Fakultas Psikologi, Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Malang, Indonesia

Email: mayliaelfina@umm.ac.id

p-ISSN: 2337-4845

e-ISSN: 2620-7486



Received	Revised	Accepted	Published
18 Desember 2025	27 Januari 2026	11 Maret 2026	30 April 2026

Abstract

It is essential to maintain employees' health conditions, particularly the often-overlooked aspect of mental health. One factor that supports employees' psychological well-being is their ability to manage and adapt to their environment. This includes being competent in regulating their surroundings, having an interest in participating in environmental activities, and possessing awareness of mental health. Mental health awareness serves as a foundation for individuals to understand their well-being, identify problems, and engage in problem-solving, which can also be referred to as a coping stress strategy. This study is quantitative research with a correlational design aimed at examining the relationship between mental health awareness and stress coping strategies among employees. The instruments used were the Mental Health Literacy Questionnaire–Short Version for Adults (MHLq-SVa) and the Stress and Coping Inventory (SCI). The study involved 217 employees selected through convenience sampling. The analysis results indicate a significant positive relationship between mental health awareness and employees' coping stress strategies. This finding suggests that the higher the employees' mental health awareness, the better their coping stress strategies. The implication of this study highlights the importance of mental health awareness in enhancing employees' ability to cope with problems, which ultimately contributes to other aspects of work performance.

Keywords: Mental Health Awareness, Coping Stress Strategy, Employee Well-Being, Mental Health Literacy, Workplace Psychology

Abstrak

Menjaga kesehatan karyawan merupakan hal yang penting, terutama yang sering terlupakan, yakni terkait kesehatan mentalnya. Salah satu hal yang menunjang kesehatan mental/psikologis karyawan yakni kemampuannya dalam menguasai lingkungannya, sehingga karyawan kompeten untuk mengatur lingkungannya, memiliki minat dalam berpartisipasi untuk mengendalikan aktivitas yang ada di lingkungannya, dan memiliki kesadaran terhadap kesehatan mental. Kesadaran akan kesehatan mental menjadi landasan seseorang dalam memahami kondisi sehat dan mengidentifikasi serta melakukan pemecahan masalah pada dirinya, atau dapat dikatakan sebagai coping stress strategy. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kuantitatif dengan desain korelasi untuk mengetahui hubungan antara kesehatan mental dengan strategi coping stres pada karyawan. Skala yang digunakan yakni skala Mental health literacy questionnaire-short version for adults (MHLq-SVa) dan Stress and Coping Inventory (SCI). Subjek penelitian ini berjumlah 217 karyawan, dengan metode convenience sampling. Hasil analisis data menunjukkan terdapat hubungan positif yang signifikan antara mental health awareness dengan coping stress strategy pada karyawan. Hal ini mengartikan bahwa semakin baik mental health awareness karyawan, maka semakin baik pula coping stress strategy yang dilakukannya. Implikasi dari penelitian ini adalah pentingnya kesadaran kesehatan mental pada karyawan yang berdampak pada kemampuan coping terhadap masalah dan bermuara pada aspek performa kerja lainnya.

Kata kunci: Kesadaran Kesehatan Mental, Strategi Koping Stres, Kesejahteraan Karyawan, Literasi Kesehatan Mental, Psikologi Kerja

1. Introduction

Employees have an important role in the company's productivity; specifically, a well-being program includes physical, psychological, dan work life balance increase productivity significantly. Health is not only about physical health, but also mental health. Mental health problems were positively correlated with occupational stress, and this association was partially mediated by coping mechanisms (Jin & Wang, 2025). Coping stress strategy is a person's ability to face problems and how to interpret a problem to decide on a behavior in solving the problem, and the dimensions of coping stress strategy include, (1) positive thinking; (2) active stress coping; (3) social support; (4) support in faith; and (5) alcohol and cigarette consumption (O'Rourke et al., 2021).

Workplace stress can affect people when they are under pressure beyond their capacities and coping mechanisms (Siegrist, 2016). In the long term, if this work-related stress is not managed, it can lead to burnout, characterized by negative feelings towards work and low efficacy at work (i.e., reduced productivity, retention, absenteeism, and presenteeism). The World Health Organization (WHO) acknowledges that burnout has a significant detrimental influence on employees' personal and professional lives, affecting public health and the economy in many nations, despite the lack of precise figures of its prevalence. (Coppens et al., 2023).

Research shows a strong relationship between work and mental health and emphasizes the importance of developing and implementing interventions to create mentally healthier workplaces (Davenport et al., 2016). Because of the stigma attached to mental disorder and the inability to identify symptoms, a significant percentage of person with mental problems did not seek care at this time (Henderson et al., 2013). Interventions aimed for mental health problems in the workplace by improving mental health literacy, strengthening early intervention skills, encouraging help-seeking behaviors, and facilitating return to work after absences due to mental problems appear to be particularly promising (Coppens et al., 2023). Currently, a large proportion of people with mental disorders do not seek help, due to factors including not recognizing symptoms and the stigma associated with mental illness (Henderson et al., 2013). Self-awareness of mental health, exemplified by knowledge of mental health, that is known as mental health awareness. This urge can serve as a motivation to conduct research on the importance of mental health awareness and coping strategies, aiming to enhance public understanding of mental health knowledge and its role in helping individuals cope and survive, particularly in the workplace. Mental health awareness can be known by measuring the mental health literacy possessed by a person that consist of 4 dimensions including knowledge of mental health problems, misconceptions or beliefs or stereotypes, the ability to seek first aid, and self-help strategies (Campos et al., 2022). Thus, researchers want to conduct research to see the relationship between Mental Health Awareness and Coping Stress Strategy in Employees.

2. Research Method

Participants

The subjects of this study were employees from various job sectors, with the following criteria: aged 18 years and working in an official/licensed agency. The sample size for this study was determined using the G*Power software (Faul et al., 2007) through an *a priori* power analysis. Because the present research aimed to examine the relationship between mental health awareness and stress coping strategies among employees, the appropriate statistical test was the Pearson product–moment correlation. In accordance with (Cohen, 1988) guidelines for behavioral science research—particularly when prior empirical estimates are unavailable—a medium effect size ($r = 0.30$) was selected as a reasonable assumption. The significance level was set at $\alpha = .05$ (two-tailed), and the statistical power was set at 0.80, which is the conventional threshold to minimize the risk of Type II error.

Using these parameters, the G*Power computation indicated that a minimum sample size of 85 participants was required to detect a statistically meaningful correlation. To accommodate potential incomplete responses or missing data, an additional 10–20% buffer was incorporated into the recruitment target. Therefore, the study aimed to obtain approximately 94 to 102 participants to ensure adequate statistical power and data stability.

Research Design

This study used correlational study method. A study that examines the relationship between two or more variables, that is, the degree to which one variable is connected to the variation of another, is known as a correlational study. The level of relationship between these variables can be seen in the correlation coefficient (Noor, 2016). The population of this study consisted of employees from various job sectors in formal institutions aged 18 years and above. A total of 271 participants were selected using a convenience sampling technique. The term "mental health awareness" refers to an individual's literacy-based understanding of their own mental health. The instrument used, namely the Mental Health literacy questionnaire – young adult form (MHLq-YA) (Campos et al., 2022) with reliability of $\alpha = 0.885$ and validity ranging from 0.400-0.680. Furthermore, the Coping Stress Strategy variable is the attitude taken by a person in a stressful situation. The Stress Coping Inventory (SCI) scale (O'Rourke et al., 2021) was used to measure stress coping strategy, which is presented in a 20-item scale with reliability of $\alpha = 0.886$ and validity ranging from 0.369-0.670. Higher scores indicate better outcomes with

the respective coping style. The researcher conducted an analysis using Pearson correlation data analysis to find the potential relationship and nature of the relationship between the two variables being tested. Pearson correlation analysis or also known as Product-Moment correlation is an analysis to measure the closeness of the linear relationship between two variables that have a normal data distribution (Priyatno, 2013).

3. Result and Discussion

Related to the result of the data normality test, found that the data had a normal distribution with skewness and kurtosis score values between -1.96 and +1.96, with statistical explanation in the following table 3:

Table 1. Statistical Test of Data Normality

	MHA	CSS
Skewness	-0.352	-0.450
Std. Error of Skewness	0.165	0.165
Kurtosis	-0.484	0.093
Std. Error of Kurtosis	0.329	0.329

Based on the results of data collection, 217 participants were obtained with the following explanation:

Table 2. Demographic data of participants

Last Education	Frequency	Percentage
Junior High School	1	0%
Senior High School	19	9%
Diploma	8	4%
Bachelor Degree	151	70%
Master Degree	38	18%
Total	217	100%

Marriage status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	217	100%

Years of service	Frequency	Percentage
0-10	169	76%
11-20	31	15%
21-30	17	9%
Total	217	100%

Hypothesis Testing

Thus, data analysis can be continued to correlation analysis using the Pearson Correlation Test with the following results:

Table 3. Correlation Between Variables

Correlation Between Variables

	Pearson's Correlation	
Mental Health Awareness	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Coping Stress Strategy	.427	<.001

Based on the table above, it is proven that there is a positive relationship between Mental Health Awareness and Coping Stress Strategy in Employees with a significance of $p < 0.001$ and a relationship of 0.472, which is included in the moderate category. A moderate correlation indicates that the two variables are related in a meaningful but not perfect manner, meaning that while mental health awareness contributes to coping stress strategies, other factors may also influence how employees manage stress.

Discussion

This study involved married employees, with the majority aged 26–35 years, and had a Bachelor's degree. All respondents worked in various sectors, dominated by the community, social, and personal services sectors. Most had 0–10 years of work experience. This profile reflects the population of young, highly educated workers who are active in the service sector, who often face significant work pressure. In accordance with the percentage of the working population, which is 11% aged 25–29 years and 11% aged 30–34 years of the total workforce, the number of these two age groups is greater than the percentage of other age groups, which averages only 9% (BPS, 2024). It is known that the highest work stress conditions are experienced by Generation Z employees, which is 6.9 times compared to Generation Y (Septama & Darmawan, 2024). Most respondents showed a level of mental health awareness in the moderate category (78%), with only 10% in the high category. Similarly, Coping Stress Strategy is mostly in the moderate category (68%), with 18% in the high category. This finding shows that despite awareness and efforts to manage stress, there is still room for improvement in both aspects. Good coping strategies will affect employees' work-life balance, especially in the aspect of problem-focused coping (Aras et al., 2023). On the other hand, the mental health condition of employees is also a consideration for further discussion. The survey shows that the highest prevalence and mental health issues are found in laborers, drivers, and domestic workers in Indonesia, so further efforts are needed regarding the provision of preventive, promotive, curative, and rehabilitative efforts (Yuningsih, 2024).

The impact of stress on workers can lead to various types of performance, the highest experiencing reduced job satisfaction and decreased work productivity (Jamil et al., 2023). Pearson correlation analysis showed a significant positive relationship between mental health awareness and stress coping strategies. This suggests that increased mental health awareness is associated with the use of more effective stress coping strategies. This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that individuals with high mental health awareness tend to use more adaptive coping strategies, such as positive reframing and acceptance (Elsary & El-Sherbiny, 2023; Torinomi et al., 2022). Positive reframing is a technique from a positive psychology perspective by changing the perspective of a situation or event to be more positive, by re-understanding negative thoughts to increase coping abilities and reduce stress (Bennett, 2024).

The findings of this study indicate a significant relationship between mental health awareness and stress coping strategies among employees. Although this study does not establish a causal relationship, the results suggest that workplace programs aimed at improving mental health awareness may potentially support employees in developing more effective coping strategies. Therefore, organizations may consider implementing mental health promotion initiatives, such as mental health training programs, access to counseling services, and supportive work environments that enhance employees' psychological well-being (WHO, 2022). However, because this study used a correlational design, the findings should be interpreted cautiously and cannot confirm causal relationships between variables. Companies that implement mental health programs provide significant benefits to employee psychological well-being, job satisfaction, productivity, and reduced turnover (Hidayat & Ahmadi, 2025). In addition, it is important to pay attention to groups of employees who are more vulnerable to stress, such as young and female workers, as well as workers with disabilities who, according to research, are more likely to experience psychological distress, including their self-efficacy. Study explained that there is a significant relationship between social support and self-efficacy on disability workers (Muhdhor et al., 2025). Support programs tailored to the needs of these groups can increase the effectiveness of interventions. For example, research shows that female employees experience higher work stress than male employees (Fatimah, 2019).

4. Conclusion

The research found a significant positive relationship between employees' Mental Health Awareness and their Coping Stress Strategy, indicating that higher awareness is linked to better coping abilities. Therefore, companies are advised to maintain and enhance mental health awareness among employees, while future studies could explore applied interventions such as training programs

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