

## Job stress of university employees: The role of guidance and counseling

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### Abstract

Work stress appears as an interesting topic in the era of society 5.0, this condition can even arise among university workers. The emergence of work stress among workers in higher education can be caused by involvement in work. This lack of involvement triggers low performance and low welfare. The aim of this research is to obtain a representation of the work stress of university employees in Yogyakarta and the factors that influence it. The research sample was 329 workers at Yogyakarta City Universities who were selected using proportional random sampling techniques. Limitations for determining the research sample using the Krejcie Table for sample size. The data collection technique uses the Job Stress Scale adopted from Vic Catano's Stressors and Stress Outcomes, consisting of 8 aspects, namely competence, workload, work schedule, role conflict, role ambiguity, routine, rewards, life balance, and policy making. The data analysis technique used in this research is descriptive. The research results showed that 72% of workers said they were not experiencing work stress in terms of workload, routine, rewards and life balance. Meanwhile, health factors show a high percentage compared to the environment, meaning that health describes the work stress experienced by workers. University guidance and counseling service units can at least play a role in providing the training, counseling and therapy programs needed to overcome work stress.

**Keywords :** *Work stress, Workers, University, Yogyakarta*



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## **Introduction**

The job stress of university workers requires special attention in the era of society 5.0 in influencing individual involvement in the workplace. Stress is a common problem experienced by workers as a result of excessive work, especially the presence of freedom to learn which causes changes in the education system in higher education (Sari, et al., 2021). This change affects workers' work stress levels because they have to adapt to new habits. Yinghao et al. (2023); Commey-Mintah (2023); Jadidi et al. (2023) stated that work stress is attracting increasing attention because it has been proven to be related to work engagement, affecting the resilience of worker groups, and even daily life. This means that individual involvement in the work environment is influenced by work stress that is generated as a result of the initial perceptions that arise. Furthermore, the transactional model states that work stress can occur due to continuous interactions between individuals and the environment which is caused by initial perceptions of a situation (Silinda, 2019; Akah, et al., 2022; Chadi, 2023). College workers' initial perceptions of their work tasks influence their cognitive and emotional abilities, so that the resulting behavior is a manifestation of work stress or not.

Work stress is a psychological and physiological response to certain events and disrupts an individual's personal balance (Emadikhalaf, et al., 2023; Bano, et al., 2023). Individuals who experience work stress generally experience fatigue, high blood pressure, and sleep disturbances. Wang et al. (2023) stated that the specific factors that trigger stress are workload and role conflict. Workload and role conflict can affect the mood and fulfillment of workers' personal needs, which can trigger the risk of work stress. Furthermore, the risks that arise when individuals experience work stress are boredom, fatigue, and not achieving job satisfaction (Harju, et al., 2023; Zhagini, et al., 2023; Duffee & Willis, 2023). Boredom and fatigue are a result of excessive work stress and can occur among workers, one of which is workers at colleges or universities.

Lee et al. (2022); Hammali & Nastiezaie (2022) state that universities are responsible for mental health needs to improve learning, personal growth and the well-being of academic staff as a result of work stress. Universities need to understand stress agents that can affect work, such as high responsibilities, challenges, work complications, and high workloads. State of the Global Workplace 2023 reports that workers in East Asia will experience an increase in 2022 to 60% of workers experiencing work stress, but the specific cause is not yet known (Gallup, 2023). This means that work stress needs to be a concern for universities to maintain and improve worker welfare.

The role of guidance and counseling services at universities can play a role in improving the welfare of university workers and reducing work stress. This is due to the need to provide a comfortable and collaborative environment through systematic support to face work challenges (Mullen, et al., 2021). The implementation of guidance and counseling at the tertiary level can be carried out by the service unit at the tertiary institution (Putra & Fauziah, 2022). Guidance and counseling service units can play a role in providing assistance services needed by workers in higher education. Dieudonne (2022) states that access to assistance services can be obtained, one of which is helping to improve performance, either through training or counseling. However, studies on the level of work stress of university workers need to be studied in order to provide appropriate support services. Thus, the aim of this research is to obtain a representation of the work stress of university employees in Yogyakarta and the role of guidance and counseling .

## **Method**

The research method used is quantitative with a cross sectional study type of research to obtain an overview of the work stress of university workers in the city of Yogyakarta and the factors that influence it. This type of cross-sectional research was chosen because it was to

measure the prevalence and describe the work stress experienced (Wang & Cheng, 2020). The population of this study were workers at Yogyakarta City Universities and the research sample was 329 workers at Yogyakarta City Universities. The city of Yogyakarta was chosen because Yogyakarta is nicknamed the city of education, so it requires a workforce that is reliable and can work to meet demands (Darumurti, 2023). The sampling technique uses proportional random sampling at certain unnamed universities as a form of maintaining the confidentiality of research subjects. To limit the number of samples, the Krejcie Table is used for sample size. The data collection technique uses the Job Stress Scale adopted from Vic Catano's Stressors and Stress Outcomes (Catano, 2010; Catano et al., 2010) based on a review of research results. The research adaptation process consists of: (1) arranging permits for adapting research instruments; (2) changing the original instrument to Indonesian; (3) carry out readability tests; (4) the instrument was changed back to English to match the original instrument; (5) the instrument was changed to Indonesian and a field test was carried out. Test the validity of the I nstrument using expert judgment to determine the suitability between the scale prepared and the theoretical concept used. The data analysis technique used in this research is descriptive.

### **Findings and Discussion**

The aim of this research is to determine the representation of work stress for university workers, so that the role of guidance and counseling at universities in providing support services can be known. Many university workers in Yogyakarta have work stress at a very low level.

### **Findings**

The results of frequency analysis show that 72% of workers have low work stress regarding work (Table 1). An overview of workers who experience work stress and the work stress factors that influence it can be seen in the table below.

**Table 1. Results of Descriptive Analysis of Job Stress**

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Job stress	329	111.00	99.00	210.00	136.8116	15.13520

**Table 2. Results of Frequency Analysis of Job Stress and Factors that Influence Job Stress**

Information	Percentage	Mean
Job Stress	72% (Very Low) 26% (Medium) 3% (Very High)	136, 81
Aspect		
Competency Aspects	6% (Very Low) 20% (Medium) 74% (Very High)	21.26
Workload Aspects	51% (Very Low) 33% (Medium) 16% (Very High)	14.95
Aspects of Work Schedule	48% (Very Low) 33% (Medium) 29% (Very High)	11.81
Aspects of Role Conflict	33% (Very Low) 45% (Medium) 22% (Very High)	12.84

Information	Percentage	Mean
Aspects of Role Ambiguity	6% (Very Low) 17% (Medium) 77% (Very High)	16.85
Routine Aspect	59% (Very Low) 35% (Medium) 6% (Very High)	10.76
Rewards Aspect	61% (Very Low) 33% (Medium) 6% (Very High)	10.64
Aspects of Life Balance	63% (Very Low) 29% (Medium) 8% (Very High)	12.86
Aspects of Policy Making	12% (Very Low) 35% (Medium) 53% (Very High)	24.83
<b>Influencing Environment</b>		
Work environment	79% (Very Low) 17% (Medium) 4% (Very High)	33.51
Health	14% (Very Low) 76% (Medium) 10% (Very High)	47.57

Based on table 2 above, it shows that 72% of workers at Yogyakarta have low, even very low, work stress. This means that university workers in the city of Yogyakarta do not have high work stress. Meanwhile, in terms of work stress aspects, workload (51%), work schedule (48%), role conflict (33%), routine (59%), rewards (61%), life balance (63%) have an influence low, even very low levels of work stress. Meanwhile, other aspects, namely competence (74%), role ambiguity (77%), and policy making (53%) explain a lot of the causes of work stress among university workers. In fact, the average for these three aspects shows higher results than the others. Judging from the percentage of influencing factors, health factors can influence the work stress of workers in higher education. This can be seen in table 2, as many as 76% of respondents stated that health factors had a moderate influence on work stress. Meanwhile, 79% of workers stated that the work environment was very low in influencing worker stress at Yogyakarta.

**Discussion**

The research results show that many university workers in the city of Yogyakarta do not experience work stress caused by aspects of workload, work schedule, role conflict, routine, rewards and life balance. Work stress is caused by interactions between workers and the work they do (Silinda, 2019; Akah, et al., 2022; Chadi, 2023; Jadidi, et al., 2023). This means that work stress occurs when individuals come into contact with the work they do. However, the results of this research show different results, not many university workers in the city of Yogyakarta experience work stress, one of which is because workers can manage stress from an early age. Kumar et al. (2022) stated that workers who can manage work stress from an early age can avoid work stress which has an impact on work effectiveness, work results and welfare. The ability to manage stress from an early age helps workers to be more responsible for work, professional and social life, teamwork, and the ability to manage time well, thereby avoiding stress.

Furthermore, the low work stress of university workers in Yogyakarta City is not caused by workload factors, work schedules, role conflicts, routines, rewards and life balance (chart 1).

Judging from workload, Abdelzaher & Kharbeche (2022); Mirzaei, et al. (2022) stated that workload is not a factor causing worker stress because workers have job satisfaction which is demonstrated by good resource planning, good communication, projects completed on time, so that work productivity and efficiency is good. Workers who have job satisfaction can avoid work stress because they are not overwhelmed by the work they do, so their workload is good. Minihan et al. (2022); Liao et al. (2022); Commey-Mintah (2023) added that workload is not a factor that triggers work stress when workers understand the limits of working hours, realistic expectations and the availability of resources. This shows that working hour limits and realistic expectations mean that workers do not experience work stress caused by workload, because workers are able to develop new initiatives at work. Thus, it can be concluded that workload is not a factor that triggers work stress because workers have clear limits on working hours, have good resources, good communication between workers, and realistic expectations, so they are able to create initiative and efficiency to complete projects on time. time.

In view of the work schedule, it does not cause work stress for workers depending on the type of work carried out by workers because it is related to the length of work carried out (De Silva et al., 2022). This means that workers with lecturer status and workers with educational staff status have varying or unequal work schedules, so it is necessary to understand that the types of work carried out have different levels of workload. Asadayoobi et al. (2023) added that the work schedule is not an aspect that causes work stress because the leader has measured the group's performance and the quality of the tasks produced. This causes workers' work stress levels to be low because workers carry out tasks according to their abilities or fields. Furthermore, in terms of role conflict, it is not an aspect that causes work stress because workers are able to design, organize and communicate work appropriately, do not have conflicting expectations, and are active at work (Christensen, et al., 2023). This means that workers understand the work being done, are able to act in accordance with expectations, and are active in completing the work. Najafi et al. (2023) added that role conflict can provide learning and role management for individuals. This is because individuals strive to acquire knowledge and skills, apply appropriate time and resource management strategies, and are able to be flexible in implementing strategies. Thus, an individual's ability to measure their ability to work and manage their roles well can reduce work stress.

Judging from routines, Takacs & Juhasz (2022) stated that routines do not cause stress because there is successful teamwork, so that task arrangements are clear and can adapt to unexpected conditions. Adaptation to changing situations requires good coordination through team coordination for setting tasks and developing appropriate strategies for completing work. Wang (2022) added that a clear structure of work tasks encourages workers to concentrate on the work being done. This motivates workers and can choose appropriate efforts to complete routine tasks. In addition, the skills possessed by workers can influence workers' ability to deal with routine work (Usabiaga et al. 2022; Jung et al., 2023). The skills in question are interpersonal communication skills and adequate technical skills to complete work routines. Thus, it can be concluded that routines do not cause work stress because workers are able to work in teams, have task organization, good work coordination, the ability to adapt, and interpersonal and technical skills that can motivate workers to complete work routines.

Judging from rewards, workers who receive proper recognition for the efforts they make can reduce emotional pressure which increases work stress (Babamiri, et al., 2022). This is because workers receive rewards not only in material form, but also dignity, work opportunities and fair job security. Carbonell & Rodríguez-Escudero et al. (2016) added that process-based rewards can positively influence workers' perceptions to direct teams to complete tasks effectively and on time. This process-based award is able to increase worker creativity to achieve the expected performance and be satisfied with the work done. Nevertheless, Nguyen et al. (2022) states that employee rewards are still adjusted to age, gender and education level. Thus, it can be concluded that respect for workers' work processes can increase workers' creativity. This award

can be realized in the form of material things, dignity, job opportunities and job security while still considering the worker's age, gender and educational level.

Finally, in terms of life balance, university workers have flexible work arrangements, so they are able to achieve their work/life balance (Pittens, et al., 2022; Lambrianou, et al., 2022). This good work arrangement reduces worker fatigue, so it does not trigger work stress. Chance et al. (2022) added that life balance can be seen from being a leader in one's profession, personal financial security, maintaining family commitments, and being able to overcome other people's hatred of academic achievements can reduce work stress. This shows that work balance can be seen from the worker's ability to balance personal life and work, even academics which are carried out simultaneously. Apart from that, life balance does not have an influence on work stress because there is recognition of work, high worker motivation, and adequate working hours (Hammali & Nastiezaie, 2022; Rawal, 2023). Thus, it can be concluded that life balance does not have an influence on work stress because workers are able to be flexible regarding work arrangements, personal life, including maintaining family commitments, have high work motivation, adequate working hours, and good work recognition, thereby reducing the risk of stress.

Although university workers in Yogyakarta do not experience work stress caused by workload, work schedules, role conflicts, routines, rewards and life balance. However, aspects of competence, role ambiguity and policy making can cause workers to experience work stress (see table 1). Competency can cause work stress because it affects the remuneration received by workers (Akah, et al., 2022). Remuneration is a reward that workers receive based on the services provided, the higher the work performance produced, the more remuneration they receive. Apart from looking at competencies that have an impact on remuneration, role ambiguity that arises at any time can create work stress. Tu et al. (2022) stated that individuals have various roles in life that must be fulfilled and have limited resources to fulfill their role expectations, both at work and at home which can cause resource depletion and cause work stress. Lastly, policy decisions such as government, academic administration, and the availability of comfortable institutional facilities can cause work stress (Akah et al., 2022; Antoniou et al., 2023; Zaghini et al., 2023). This is because workers need adequate support, for physical comfort and professional development at work, so as to avoid work stress.

It cannot be denied that work stress is a functional response of the body that occurs due to a mismatch between an individual's physical and mental state, so that it has a negative impact on his life, both personal and social. This can disrupt workers' health, as the results in this study show that health is a factor that influences work stress compared to the work environment. Stress is the body's response due to the interaction between emotional and cognitive regulation, so it has an impact on individual well-being (Lee et al., 2022; Seo & Yuh, 2022; Emadikhalaf et al., 2023; Güçlüel & Can, 2023). This means that work stress affects an individual's health because there is an inability to regulate emotions and cognition, thus affecting their well-being. This can be seen in the mean health value (47.57) which is higher than the work environment (33.51). Meanwhile, the work environment is not a factor that influences work stress because workers have a work environment with good social support from co-workers, autonomy, and positive feedback. Jentsch et al. (2023) stated that a good work environment related to autonomy, feedback, and social support from colleagues can reduce work stress. Thus, there is a need to improve and support a positive work environment in reducing work stress among university workers.

In this case, the guidance and counseling service unit can play a role in providing guidance and counseling service programs needed by university workers to reduce work stress. Guidance and counseling are expected to be able to bring out positive things in individuals (Daulay, et al., 2022). The goal is for individuals to develop themselves optimally. The guidance and counseling service unit can provide preventive services and healing services with systematic and continuous counseling and therapy (Astuti, et al., 2021). The assistance services provided are in the form of

guidance and counseling programs for workers, both through training and counseling and therapy. Training provided to university workers in the city of Yogyakarta can be carried out by providing reliable instructors to help workers achieve well-being and good mental health (Choirunnisa, et al., 2023). The instructors present can provide interesting training materials and methods, so that workers benefit from the training they receive for their own well-being. Meanwhile, in the field of guidance and counseling, various counseling techniques and approaches can be applied according to the problems experienced by the counselee, such as cognitive, humanistic and behavioral approaches.

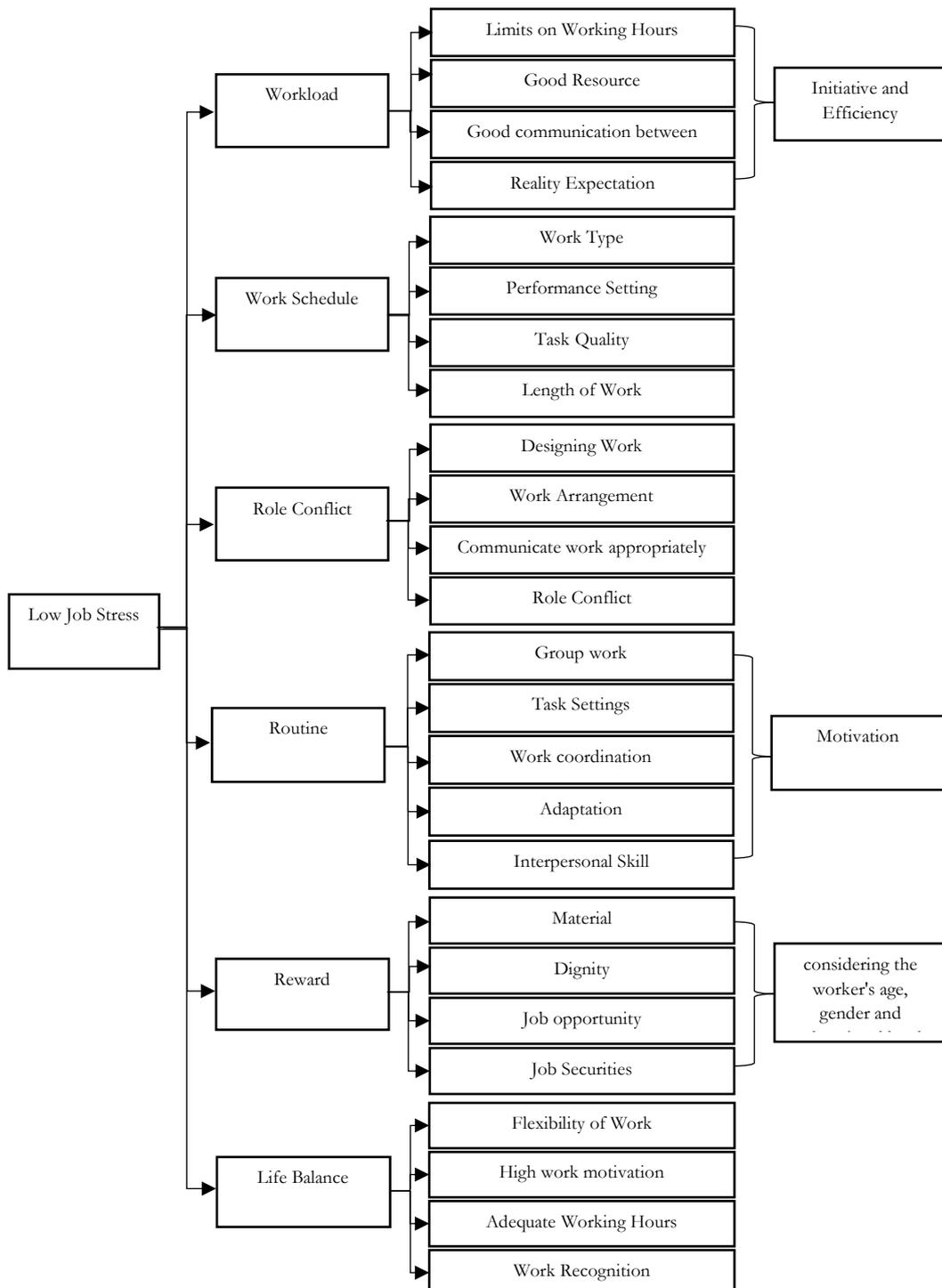


Figure 1. Description of university workers who do not experience job stress

## Conclusion

This research shows that many university workers in the city of Yogyakarta do not experience work stress, in terms of workload, routine, rewards and life balance. This is because workers have good initiative and time efficiency, high work motivation, rewards that are appropriate to age, gender and level of education, as well as a good life balance. However, health factors are considered to trigger work stress if not handled properly. A limitation of this research is that further analysis has not been carried out on other variables that influence increasing worker work stress, such as team work, time management, adaptability, interpersonal skills and individual expectations. Future researchers should be able to study health factors that can influence work stress using certain intervention techniques to anticipate the emergence of work stress. Apart from that, future researchers can examine the influence of the variable's teamwork, time management, adaptability, interpersonal skills, and work expectations which can influence work stress. Suggestions for future researchers could be to examine other variables, such as motivation, adaptation, resources, role management, and communication, which can influence work stress among university workers in Yogyakarta.

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