



Raising Awareness and Knowledge of Work-Related Stress Prevention among Indonesian Migrant Workers in South Korea

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ABSTRACT

Indonesian migrant workers (IMWs) in South Korea face various challenges during the adaptation process, such as high work demands, language barriers, cultural differences, and separation from family, which can increase the risk of work stress. The aimed to increase IMW's knowledge about the prevention and management of work stress through mental health education. The activity was conducted online via Zoom on April 18, 2026, and involved around 20 migrant workers from the Indonesian Muslim community at the An-Noor Mosque in Daejeon, South Korea. Activities include a pre-test, health education accompanied by discussions and question-and-answer sessions, and post-tests. Educational materials include the definition and causes of work stress, the impact of stress on health, and stress management strategies for migrant workers. Evaluation was conducted using pre- and post-test questionnaires, which were analyzed with a paired-samples t-test. There was an increase in the average knowledge score from 59% to 61%, with an average pretest score of $5.92 \pm 1,676$ and a posttest of $6.08 \pm 1,165$. However, the results of statistical analysis showed that the increase was not significant ($p=0.787$). Participants showed an increased understanding of the factors that cause work stress, the importance of recognizing signs of stress, coping strategies, social support in dealing with work pressure, and the adaptation process overseas. Ongoing mental health education with a more interactive approach is needed to increase the effectiveness of interventions on migrant workers.

Pekerja migran Indonesia (PMI) di Korea Selatan menghadapi berbagai tantangan selama proses adaptasi, seperti tuntutan kerja yang tinggi, hambatan bahasa, perbedaan budaya, serta keterpisahan dari keluarga yang dapat meningkatkan risiko stres kerja. Kegiatan ini



bertujuan untuk meningkatkan pengetahuan PMI tentang pencegahan dan pengelolaan stres kerja melalui edukasi kesehatan mental. Kegiatan dilaksanakan secara daring menggunakan Zoom pada 18 April 2026 dengan melibatkan sekitar 20 PMI yang tergabung dalam komunitas muslim Indonesia di Masjid An-Noor, Daejeon, Korea Selatan. Kegiatan meliputi pre-test, edukasi kesehatan disertai diskusi dan tanya jawab, serta post-test. Materi edukasi meliputi definisi dan penyebab stres kerja, dampak stres terhadap kesehatan, serta strategi pengelolaan stres pada pekerja migran. Evaluasi dilakukan menggunakan kuesioner pre-test dan post-test yang dianalisis dengan uji t berpasangan (paired-samples t-test). Adanya peningkatan rerata skor pengetahuan dari 59% menjadi 61%, dengan rerata skor pretest sebesar $5,92 \pm 1,676$ dan posttest sebesar $6,08 \pm 1,165$. Namun, hasil analisis statistik menunjukkan bahwa peningkatan tersebut tidak signifikan ($p=0,787$). Peserta menunjukkan peningkatan pemahaman mengenai faktor penyebab stres kerja, pentingnya mengenali tanda stres, strategi coping, dukungan sosial dalam menghadapi tekanan kerja, dan proses adaptasi di perantaraan. Edukasi kesehatan mental secara berkelanjutan dengan pendekatan yang lebih interaktif diperlukan untuk meningkatkan efektivitas intervensi bagi pekerja migran.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Migrant workers are prone to health problems due to individual factors, high-risk jobs, work environments, psychosocial pressures, and limited access to health services in the destination country. Harsh working conditions and long working hours increase stress and health problems (Agustiansyah et al., 2026). According to the International Labour Organization, migrant workers tend to face greater pressure compared to local workers because they are often trapped in unstable work situations and lack mental well-being support (International Labor Organization, 2022).

A common problem experienced by all workers is work stress caused by challenges in an increasingly competitive workplace such as the pressure of job targets, high job demands, and imbalances between personal and work life. Stress that is not properly managed can have a negative impact on employees' mental health, which ultimately affects productivity, job satisfaction, and work atmosphere in the Company (Pradiptya, Simamora and Ariefiantoro, 2025). High stress and workload, associated with long working periods or heavy work shifts indicate a significant prevalence of work stress among the workforce (Adiba and Bahri, 2022).

The consistent trend of increasing the prevalence of work stress among workers is often exacerbated by factors such as job insecurity and income disparities (Ramdhan and Fajrianthi, 2021). In general, the factors that cause work stress are pressure from superiors and colleagues and many job demands. The impact felt is in the form of psychological impacts, namely feeling depressed and physical impacts, namely often feeling tired, dizzy, headaches, difficulty sleeping, and difficulty concentrating (Zainiyah, 2012; Ahmad et al., 2021). This phenomenon



of work stress not only has an impact on individuals, but also on productivity and overall quality of life (Savitri and Widajati, 2023).

Data from South Korea's Employment Permit System (EPS) from 2016 to 2020, as many as 46 migrant workers died by suicide. This makes suicide the second leading cause of death after traffic accidents. Studies show that almost all migrant workers experience depressive symptoms, triggered by harsh working conditions, EPS policies that limit work mobility, and social discrimination. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated this situation with increased unemployment and limited access to health services. This condition underscores the urgent need for intervention from the government and the community to support the mental health of migrant workers (Na-hye, 2023).

Indonesian migrant workers (IMWs) in South Korea mostly work in manufacturing or industry. Previous research indicates that about 20% of workers in the manufacturing sector experience significant levels of stress, which are mainly triggered by factors related to work routines as well as the dynamics of interpersonal relationships in the work environment (Zainiyah, 2012). Therefore, efforts are needed to increase knowledge and strengthen the capacity to prevent work stress. Workers' sources of knowledge can come from formal or informal education (Sipayung, Zahara and Noor, 2021). It is mentioned in the study that education has a close correlation with the level of knowledge acquired by individuals (Sianturi et al., 2021). Knowledge gained through higher education has the potential to affect stress levels, as broader knowledge allows individuals to manage work stress more effectively as well as increase job satisfaction (Sembiring and Rupang, 2023). In addition, work experience is also a source of knowledge that is acquired gradually over the course of working life, where workers with longer working periods tend to have more in-depth experience and knowledge (Fadli, Daud and Mira, 2023).

The implementation of stress management education and training programs at PT Cakra Manggilingan Jaya yielded positive results, including a 10.1% increase in employee knowledge of workplace mental health and a 3.9% reduction in stress levels. This is done to improve employees' understanding and skills in managing stress, so that it can contribute to increasing work productivity (Suratmini et al., 2024). In addition, increased knowledge through stress management training also plays a role in behavior change. This increase in knowledge further contributes to a significant increase in work motivation (Dinata and Kholifah, 2023). Therefore, this activity aims to increase workers' awareness and knowledge of work-stress prevention among Indonesian Migrant Workers (IMW) in South Korea.

B. METHODS

This activity will be held online via Zoom on April 18, 2026. The participants were Indonesian migrant workers (IMWs) who are members of the Indonesian Muslim community at the An-Noor Mosque in Daejeon Province, South Korea. The online implementation was chosen for ease of accessibility. The implementation of activities is carried out in three stages, namely pre-test, health education and discussion, as well as question and answer, and post-test. Here is a detailed explanation of each stage:

1. Stage 1: Pre-test

At this stage, participants are given a pre-test to assess their initial level of knowledge about work stress. The pre-test was conducted using a Google Form containing 10 short questions on the basic concept of work stress, its causes, and how to manage it, particularly among migrant workers.

2. Stage 2: health education

Health education is carried out interactively via Zoom. The material presented included the definition and causes of work stress, the impact of work stress on physical and mental health, stress management strategies and techniques that can be applied by migrant workers. The delivery of material was carried out by lecture, discussion, and question and answer methods, assisted by using PowerPoint media to ensure that participants understood the material given.

3. Stage 3: Post-test

The last stage is that participants are given a post-test questionnaire using Google Form. The questionnaire contains the same questions that were shared in the pre-test stage.

The use of questionnaires before and after health education serves to evaluate participants' understanding of the educational material. Furthermore, the data were processed and statistically analyzed using a paired t-test.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main target of this intervention activity is Indonesian migrant workers who are members of the Indonesian Muslim community at the An-noor Daejeon mosque, South Korea. A total of around 20 participants participated in this activity online for approximately 90 minutes. This activity aims to encourage the concerns of migrant workers in South Korea regarding work stress. High work demands, distance from family, language barriers, and the desire to survive often make IMWs ignore the signs and symptoms of work stress.

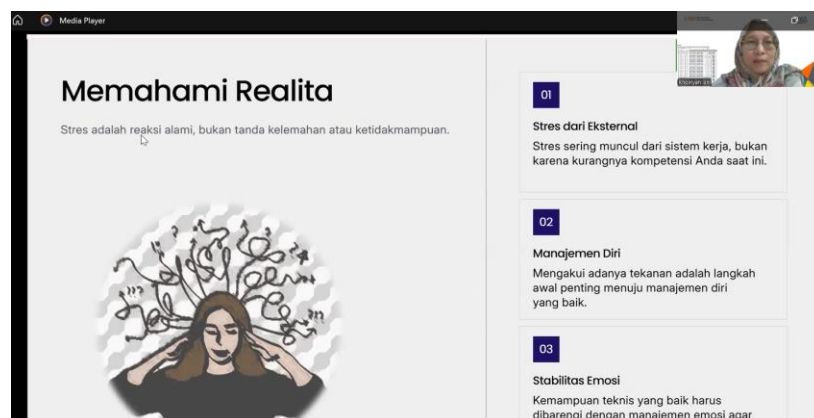


Figure 1. Health Education on Work Stress in Indonesian Migrant Workers

Based on the discussion, questions, and answers, participants admitted that the demands of work in South Korea are very high. In addition, fast work rhythms, long working hours, and communication barriers are triggers for mental health problems among migrant workers. However, it is also recognized that support from fellow IMWs is a factor that is urgently needed by IMWs. The study explains that social support helps mitigate the mental health impacts of migration-related stress, including financial difficulties, job challenges, and interpersonal issues. For example, social support in the form of togetherness or social companionship support plays a role as a factor that moderates the relationship between migration stress and mental health (Sumerlin, Kim and Chung, 2025).

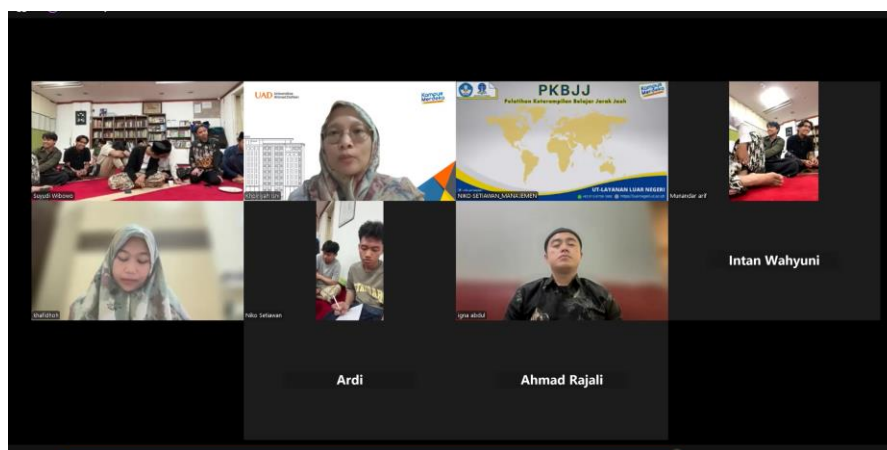


Figure 2. Discussion and Q&A Session

Furthermore, when examined from the results of the evaluation using pre- and post-test questionnaires, it showed a relatively small increase in the overall performance of the respondents, with the average score increasing from 59% to 61% (Table 1). Considerable improvement was observed in two specific areas: understanding how to adapt to the work culture in South Korea and understanding the role of social support in reducing work stress. However, not all items show positive developments. Scores decreased on items related to the strategy of keeping personal problems private without sharing them with others, as well as on the perception that work that matches one's abilities automatically does not cause stress. Some other items also showed consistent outcomes, with no measurable changes between pre- and post-intervention measurements.

Table 1. Tabulation of respondents' pretest and posttest scores

No	Questions	Pretest (%)	Posttest (%)
1	Work that is in accordance with the ability will not cause stress if the worker already has enough skills	17	8
2	Adapting to Korea's work culture can reduce stress, but it doesn't always take away the stress of work completely	92	100
3	Not revealing problems to others can be an effective strategy if one wants to stay focused on work	58	33
4	Symptoms such as insomnia and restlessness can occur even if a person feels they are able to complete their work well	33	75
5	Emotion regulation techniques, such as breathing, are only effective if they are done under stress-free conditions	33	25
6	Working constantly without breaks can increase stress, but in some conditions, it can still be considered normal in certain work cultures	83	83
7	The way a person assesses a work situation can affect stress levels, even if the working conditions are the same	83	83
8	Ignoring signs of stress can help a person stay productive without long-term repercussions	33	33
9	A hierarchical work system can limit communication, but it doesn't always have an impact on each individual's stress	75	75



No	Questions	Pretest (%)	Posttest (%)
10	Social support can help reduce stress, but it's not always enough if work pressure remains high	83	92
Average score		59	61

Source: Primary Data processed, 2026.

Based on the scores on the question items, some questions showed a percentage increase, especially those about work-stress symptoms such as insomnia and feelings of anxiety, as well as about understanding the importance of adapting to work culture and the role of social support in reducing stress. Symptoms such as feeling tired, dizzy, having headaches, decreased performance, difficulty sleeping at night, and difficulty concentrating while working are the effects of physical work stress (Ahmad et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2022). In addition, adaptation and social support are very helpful for migrant workers in South Korea in preventing work stress. An unhealthy work environment and culture are significant factors that affect employees' mental health, especially in triggering work stress (Zhang, Li and He, 2022; Nuari and Modjo, 2023). This vulnerability is increasingly felt by migrant workers who work in isolation, with unlimited working hours, and a lack of social support due to separation from their families. Coupled with the experience of discrimination and exploitation, this condition has the potential to have a long-term impact on the quality of life of workers (Agustiansyah et al., 2026).

Meanwhile, several other questions showed a decrease in scores between the pretest and posttest, especially on questions about the strategy of hiding problems from others and the assumption that work that matches your abilities will not cause stress. Previous research has shown that many workers do not know how to cope with the problems they are facing (Ahmad et al., 2021). This reinforces that, after health education, IMW understands better that sharing the problem or feelings experienced is preferable and can reduce stress compared to hiding the problem without knowing how to solve it alone or seek help. The analysis of each question in this activity showed a decrease in several unfavorable items, indicating that IMW causes stress beyond reduced productivity. However, working beyond one's ability, keeping problems to oneself, and ignoring signs of stress are causes of work stress.

Table 2. Results of Knowledge Measurement Before and After Health Education

Variabel	Mean $\pm$ SD	Mean Difference	p-value
Pre-test	5,92 $\pm$ 1,676	0,167	0,787
Post-test	6,08 $\pm$ 1,165		

The results of the paired-samples t-test showed that the average pretest score was 5.92 ± 1.676 , while the average posttest score was 6.08 ± 1.165 , indicating a small increase of 0.167 after the intervention. However, the statistical analysis yielded $p = 0.787$, which is much larger than the commonly used significance level ($p < 0.05$). This shows that the difference between pretest and posttest scores is not statistically significant. Thus, although scores tended to increase after the intervention, the increase was insufficient to demonstrate a measurable effect on participants' performance in this study.

Although the statistical test did not show a significant difference between before and after health education, participants' average knowledge score about work stress increased. This illustrates that the education provided provides IMW with initial experience in recognizing and managing work stress. This can happen because education is delivered only



for a limited time and through online media. The implementation of Zoom-based education is indeed convenient because it can reach migrant workers abroad without requiring in-person meetings. However, the online method also has limitations, such as differences in participants' focus, internet connectivity constraints, limited interaction, and a less conducive learning environment because some participants engage in community service activities after working 12 hours. This condition can affect the acceptance of the material and participants' ability to understand the content of the education as a whole. The large number of migrant workers in South Korea who participate in communities such as mosque worshippers has a positive impact on the lives of migrant workers who are far from their families. With this community, IMW became more integrated and engaged in other activities that could help divert their stress. The same thing was also done to IMW in Seoul City, which said that the mosque's routine activities became a means of filling free time and helped channel IMW's emotions. Then, the role of mosque administrators also strengthens the social role of individuals in South Korea, which is used as a support for psychological well-being (Farida et al., 2025).

D. CONCLUSION

This service activity increased the average knowledge score of Indonesian migrant workers in South Korea after they received mental health education and work stress prevention training, although the increase was not statistically significant. The education continues to benefit participants by increasing their initial understanding of the factors that cause work stress, the importance of recognizing signs of stress, and the role of coping strategies and social support in dealing with work pressure and the adaptation process overseas. Ongoing mental health education with more interactive methods is needed to increase the effectiveness of interventions on migrant workers.

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F. AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The authors listed below contributed to the community engagement activities and the article writing process as follows: Khoiriyah Isni (KI); Khafidoh Khafidoh (KK); Intan Wahyuni Tukiyo (IWT); Muhammad Ardi Kurniawan (MAK); Agus Supriyanto (AS). Activity implementation: KI, KK, IWT, MAK; Article preparation: KI, KK; Impact analysis: IWT; Results presentation: KI, IWT; Article revision: MAK, AS; Other contributions: All authors contributed to coordination with partners, development of educational materials, and field facilitation.



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