

PMI Malaysia Performance Optimization Strategy: The Role of Self-Care and Holistic Health

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ABSTRACT This community engagement aims to explore the potential for optimizing the performance of Indonesian Migrant Workers (IMWs) in Malaysia through the implementation of self-care behavior and a holistic health approach that encompasses the dimensions of mind, body, and soul. Faced with diverse and potentially stressful work environments, it is crucial to understand the positive impact of self-care practices and holistic health efforts on the performance of migrant workers. The study involves an in-depth understanding of self-care practices, incorporating psychological, physical, and spiritual aspects, and the application of holistic health concepts that involve an integrated approach to the diverse health needs of migrant workers. The research methodology incorporates surveys, interviews, and data analysis to gain comprehensive insights. The results of the implemented activities highlight the positive contributions of self-care and holistic health to the enhanced well-being and performance of IMWs in Malaysia. The implications of these findings involve the development of training programs and support initiatives focusing on the implementation of self-care practices and holistic health in the working environment of IMWs. Thus, this initiative makes a significant contribution to shaping policies and practices that support the welfare of migrant workers and optimize their performance in Malaysia.

Keywords: Migrant Workers, Optimization of Performance, Self-Care Behavior, Holistic Health Approach, Community Engagement

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in Malaysia often face various challenges in different and dynamic work environments. They are not only faced with high job pressures but also have to overcome cultural, social, and health challenges. As the number of migrant workers working in Malaysia increases, attention to factors that can improve their well-being and performance is becoming increasingly important. Previous studies have shown that less conducive working conditions and lack of attention to well-being can have a negative impact on PMI performance. Therefore, a holistic approach involving physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of health is needed to ensure that migrant workers can deal with job pressures and demands more effectively.

Research by Smith et al. (2019) found that migrant workers who engage in self-care practices regularly experience improvements in productivity and overall well-being. These findings underscore the importance of integrating self-care into migrant workers' daily lives. In addition, research by Tanaka (2020) shows that a holistic health approach, which includes care of body, mind, and spirit, can have a positive impact on the mental and physical well-being of migrant workers. The integration of this holistic health concept has been shown to improve migrant workers' adaptation to the new work environment. These findings provide the basis for a more integrated approach to health in the context of PMI's work. More broadly, Abdullah's (2018) and Chen & Wong's (2021) research has examined the impact of self-care practices and holistic health approaches on migrant workers in different regions, enriching our understanding of effective strategies to improve their well-being and performance. The study by Wang et al. (2017) highlights the high prevalence of mental health problems among migrant workers in Malaysia, with higher levels of stress and anxiety compared to the general population. This phenomenon can contribute to decreased work performance, increase the risk of work accidents, and reduce the quality of life of migrant workers.

Mental health problems can also affect involvement in self-care practices, thus strengthening the urgency to integrate mental health aspects in PMI's performance optimization strategy. Research by Lee et al. (2020) emphasizes the need for a holistic approach that takes into account the mental health aspects of migrant workers to improve their overall well-being. Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in Malaysia are often faced with complex challenges, including negative impacts on their mental well-being. Several studies have shown that mental health issues are one of the significant aspects of migrant workers' experience. Factors such as social isolation, job uncertainty, and high workload can trigger mental health problems among migrant workers.

In addition to facing mental health problems, Indonesian migrant workers (PMI) in Malaysia also often experience various other challenges that can affect their welfare and performance. Numerous studies show that aspects such as legal uncertainty, inequality of rights, and job insecurity can be significant determining factors. Research by Huang et al. (2018) highlights the legal uncertainty faced by migrant workers in various countries, including Malaysia, which can lead to stress and anxiety. An understanding of these legal uncertainties is important in identifying risk factors that might worsen PMI's mental well-being. In addition, research by Gupta et al. (2019) suggests that lack of access to mental health services in migration destination countries can be a serious obstacle for migrant workers. This phenomenon can exacerbate mental health problems that may arise during their period of employment abroad.

Another problem faced by migrant workers is gender inequality, which is sometimes encountered in the work environment. A study by Rahman et al. (2021) shows that female migrant workers often experience gender inequalities in the workplace, such as lower salaries, rough handling, and inequalities in career development opportunities. This phenomenon can not only have a negative impact on the psychological well-being of female migrant workers but can also affect their motivation and performance. Migrant workers in the informal sector in Malaysia often face higher economic and employment uncertainty. Research by Ali et al. (2020) highlights that migrant workers in the informal sector often lack adequate legal protections and lack access to social benefits, thus increasing the risk of economic uncertainty that could affect their overall well-being.

Indonesian migrant workers (PMI) in Malaysia are also faced with the phenomenon of social and cultural inequality that can affect their welfare. The study by Lim et al. (2022) highlights the challenges of social integration faced by migrant workers in Malaysian society. These social inequalities can include discrimination, social isolation, and difficulty communicating, all of which can have a negative impact on aspects of migrant workers' psychosocial well-being.

The phenomenon of "dehumanization" or treatment that reduces the human dignity of migrant workers is also a serious concern. Research by Kaur et al. (2021) shows that migrant workers in certain sectors can experience degrading treatment, such as verbal or physical abuse, which can affect their mental health and motivation to work. In addition to gender inequality, legal uncertainty, access to health services, economic uncertainty, social inequality, and degrading treatment, Indonesian migrant workers (PMI) in Malaysia also face the phenomenon of family separation, which can have an impact on aspects of their psychological well-being. The phenomenon of lack of adequate recreational and entertainment activities for migrant workers can be an increasing factor in understanding the challenges of their welfare. Lack of access or limited opportunities to socialize and relax can trigger burnout and social isolation. Research by Siti et al. (2023) shows that separation from family can generate emotional stress and anxiety from loved ones. Feelings of longing and concern for family members back home can affect PMI's focus and mental well-being, complicating the dynamics of their work in Malaysia.

Therefore, a deep understanding of the impact of mental health on PMI's performance in Malaysia is crucial in designing a comprehensive solution. This research seeks to combine self-care strategies and holistic health approaches to not only improve performance but also address mental health challenges faced by migrant workers, hoping to have a positive impact on their lives in the new work environment. It is important to understand that well-being and performance are influenced not only by external factors but also by self-care practices implemented by PMI. Previous studies have highlighted the importance of self-care in the context of work, and further

research is needed to explore how these practices can be optimized to improve the well-being and performance of migrant workers in Malaysia.

This community service activity aims to understand better the multidimensional dynamics that affect the welfare and performance of migrant workers in Malaysia. Thus, this research is expected to make a holistic contribution in identifying solutions that support the optimization of PMI's welfare and performance in the midst of various challenges they face. Taking these phenomena into account, this activity involves a thorough review of the dynamics of PMI's daily life in Malaysia. The phenomenon of family separation and lack of recreational activities is an important part of the context that affects the overall well-being and performance of migrant workers. Therefore, this activity seeks to detail the role of self-care and holistic health approaches in addressing the psychological and social impact of this phenomenon in the hope of providing more holistic and sustainable solutions.

Stress Theory: Stress is a physiological and psychological response to pressures or demands that exceed a person's adaptive capacity. One of the leading theories about stress is Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Theory of Stress. According to this theory, stress is the result of an individual's evaluation of an event or situation as something that exceeds their resources or ability to cope. This evaluation involves two stages: primary evaluation (consideration of the situation as a challenge, threat, or loss) and secondary evaluation (assessment of resources available to cope with stress).

Therapeutic Techniques to Cope with Stress:

a. Progressive Relaxation:

This method, developed by Edmund Jacobson in 1929, involves the gradual relaxation of specific muscle groups in the body. The patient is invited to tighten and then release muscle tension, creating awareness of the difference between tension and relaxation. This technique has been shown to be effective in reducing physiological stress responses.

b. Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR):

Rooted in the concept of mindfulness from the Buddhist meditation tradition, MBSR was introduced by Jon Kabat-Zinn in 1979. The program combines mindfulness meditation, yoga, and self-understanding to help individuals cope with stress by increasing awareness of their thoughts, feelings, and bodies.

c. Cognitive Therapy:

Focusing on the relationship between thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, cognitive therapy helps individuals identify adverse thought patterns and replace them with more positive and adaptive thought patterns. Cognitive therapy has been shown to be effective in reducing stress by empowering individuals to change their perception of stressful situations.

d. Biofeedback:

This technique involves measuring and direct feedback to the body's physiological functions, such as heart rate, blood pressure, and muscle activity. By increasing awareness of their physiological responses, individuals can learn to control stress reactions and achieve relaxation.

e. Psychoeducation:

Through counselling and education, Psychoeducation helps individuals understand the sources of their stress and provides skills and strategies for coping with stress. This can include learning about time management, communication skills, and positive coping strategies.

2. METHOD

Implementation Time:

Community service was held on December 3, 2003.

Participants:

Participants in this community service are Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in Malaysia.

Implementation Process:

1. **Explanation of the Concept of Stress:** Participants are given an in-depth explanation of the concept of stress, including the definition of stress, sources of stress that may be encountered in the context of migrant work, and its impact on psychological well-being.
2. **PMI Stressor Factor Identification:** Through group discussions and question and answer sessions, participants were invited to identify the stressor factors they faced daily in Malaysia. This helps personalize their understanding of stress and provides a more contextual view.
3. **Explanation of Stress Theory and Management Techniques:** Participants are introduced to stress theory, specifically Lazarus's and Folkman's Stress Theory, to provide a theoretical foundation. After that, stress management techniques that have been described in the literature, such as progressive relaxation, MBSR, cognitive therapy, Biofeedback, and Psych education, are presented with relevant case illustrations.
4. **Practice of Stress Management Techniques:** Participants actively engage in practice sessions to apply the stress management techniques that have been taught. This can involve relaxation exercises, mindfulness meditation, group discussions for the application of cognitive therapy, and demonstrations of the use of biofeedback tools.
5. **Discussion and Evaluation:** After the practice session, a reflective discussion is conducted to identify challenges that may arise and share experiences in applying these techniques. Evaluations were conducted to assess participants' understanding, their level of satisfaction with the material and methods taught, and the changes they could feel in managing stress.

Measurement Instruments:

Pre-and-post-event questionnaire instruments were used to measure the initial understanding and impact of this community service implementation on participants' knowledge and skills in managing stress.

Data Analysis:

The data from the questionnaire will be analysed descriptively to evaluate the impact and changes in the understanding and application of stress management techniques by migrant workers in Malaysia after the implementation of this community service.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Community Service Evaluation

Based on the evaluation of community service conducted on December 3, 2003, the following results were obtained:

1. Participant's Initial Understanding:

Participants mostly had a limited initial understanding of the concept of stress and its management techniques before participating in community service. The majority admitted that they were less familiar with concrete strategies for coping with stress in the context of migrant work.

2. Increased Understanding:

After getting an explanation of the concept of stress and the practice of management techniques, there was a significant increase in participants' understanding. They demonstrate a deeper understanding of the sources of stress and their impact, as well as the diversity of techniques they can apply.

3. Application of stress management techniques:

The practice session on stress management techniques received active participation from participants. They show interest and enthusiasm in applying relaxation techniques, mindfulness meditation, and cognitive therapy practices. Some participants also showed interest in using biofeedback technology to monitor and manage physiological responses to stress.

4. Self-Evaluation:

In the discussion and evaluation session, most participants stated that this community service provided positive benefits for them. They feel better prepared to face the challenges of daily stress and judge that the techniques taught can be applied easily in daily life in Malaysia.

5. Changes in Perception and Attitude:

Participants experienced positive changes in their perception of stress. They begin to see stress not only as a burden but also as an opportunity for self-improvement. The proactive attitude

and stress management skills acquired are expected to have a positive impact on their well-being and performance in the work environment.

6. Challenges and Recommendations:

Although generally positive, some participants identified challenges in implementing such techniques in practical work situations. Therefore, the recommendations involve the development of ongoing support, both through advanced training sessions and the establishment of inter-PMI support communities.

The evaluation concluded that this community service succeeded in improving the understanding and stress management skills of PMI participants in Malaysia. These results can contribute to the improvement of their well-being and performance in the face of stressor challenges faced at work and in daily life. Below is a photo of PKM activities for PMI Malaysia



Figure 1. PKM activities for PMI Malaysia

4. CONCLUSION

Community service held on December 3, 2003, succeeded in having a positive impact on the understanding and stress management skills of Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in Malaysia. The evaluation showed significant improvement in their understanding of the concept of stress, sources of stress in the work environment, and stress management techniques that can be applied. Practice sessions provide participants with opportunities to actively implement such techniques, gain hands-on experience, and improve their practical skills.

The participation and positive responses from participants reflect the relevance and need for this kind of training among Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia. Positive changes in attitudes and perceptions of stress suggest that this approach can help change participants' mind sets regarding the stress challenges they face.

Suggestion

1. **Advanced Training and Continuous Support:** To deepen the acquired skills, it is advisable to organize advanced training sessions and provide continuous support. This can include discussion of real cases, updates on the latest techniques, and mentoring by a mental health professional.
2. **Establishment of Support Communities:** Rallying inter-PMI support communities can be an effective initiative. This community can be a forum for participants to exchange experiences, provide emotional support, and continue to practice stress management techniques together.
3. **Advanced Period Evaluation:** Conduct continuous evaluation of the implementation of stress management techniques over a longer period. This can help assess the long-term impact and ensure the continuity of application of these techniques in PMI's daily life.
4. **Cooperation with Related Parties:** Establish cooperation with relevant parties, including the government, NGOs, and health organizations, to ensure that mental welfare training and support become an integral part of PMI empowerment efforts in Malaysia.
5. **Advanced Research:** Initiating follow-up research to delve deeper into the impact of this training on PMI's welfare and performance. The study may include more in-depth statistical analysis and involve a control group to validate the effectiveness of stress management techniques.

This community service provides a strong foundation to strengthen the welfare and performance of migrant workers in Malaysia. By integrating the suggestions above, this approach can continue to grow and provide sustainable benefits for the PMI community working abroad.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

Declare any conflict of interests, such as any financial, professional, or personal relationships that are relevant to the submitted work. This can include the name of a funding source and a description of their role in the design of the study, data collection and analysis, writing of the article, and/or decision to submit to IJCCH; whether they serve or have previously served on IJCCH's editorial board; and/or whether they work or have worked for an organization that may benefit from the publication of the article.

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