

# The Impact of Using Online Counseling Platforms and Virtual Community Support on Managing Work Stress among Young Professionals in Jakarta

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effects of online counseling platforms and virtual community support on work-related stress management among young professionals in Jakarta. A quantitative methodology was employed, gathering data from 150 participants via a Likert scale (1-5), and analyzed with SPSS version 26. The findings indicated substantial beneficial correlations between online counseling platforms and virtual community support regarding job stress management. Multiple regression analysis indicated that virtual community support exerted a somewhat greater impact on stress management than online counseling platforms. Collectively, these interventions accounted for 49% of the variance in stress management, suggesting their efficacy in mitigating work-related stress. The findings indicate that combining professional therapy with peer support provides a holistic strategy for the mental well-being of young professionals in urban settings.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Work stress is a major issue for young professionals in urban areas like Jakarta, where high demands and rapid technological changes intensify stress. Managing workload and optimising schedules are key strategies to reduce job stress, as shown in a study at PT United Young Generation, where workload and shifts were significant stressors, while the work environment was not [1]. Another study emphasised the importance of supportive management in reducing stress, finding that external factors like weather had minimal

impact [2]. Digital stress, or technostress, also hampers well-being, but targeted interventions can improve digital work environments [3]. Stress management training has proven effective, as seen in a study with nurses, improving both performance and stress levels [4]. Effective coping strategies, such as time management, exercise, and social support, enhance mental health and job performance, underlining the need for organisational support [5].

Online counselling platforms have become vital tools for supporting mental

health, particularly for young professionals who benefit from their flexibility and accessibility. These platforms, such as empower mindscape, offer services ranging from chatbot support for less severe cases to qualified therapists for more serious issues, allowing users to seek help at their own pace without physical appointments ('Revolutionising mental health care: an analysis of online mental health platforms [6]. The integration of digital tools and community networks helps democratise access to mental health care, addressing gaps for those unable to reach traditional services [7]. Peer support within these online communities has been shown to reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety, while also offering relief from academic stress among students through active listening and motivational interviewing [8], [9]. However, challenges remain, including ensuring data privacy, maintaining ethical standards, and verifying therapist qualifications, while the psychological impact of social media on mental health needs further exploration [10].

Although research has examined the advantages of online counseling and virtual community support in several settings [11]–[13], there is a paucity of studies particularly addressing their effects on work-related stress among young professionals in Jakarta. In Jakarta's fast-paced work climate, comprehending the potential of these digital solutions is essential for enhancing mental health results. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the effects of online counseling platforms and virtual community support on work-related stress management among young professionals in Jakarta. This research will utilize quantitative data analysis to assess the efficacy of these interventions and their potential as alternative stress management strategies for urban workers.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 *Work Stress Among Young Professionals*

Work-related stress, especially among young

professionals, has been extensively studied because to its considerable effects on job performance, mental health, and general quality of life. [14] transactional model of stress posits that work stress occurs when job expectations surpass an individual's coping capabilities, resulting in detrimental psychological and physiological effects. In fast-paced urban settings such as Jakarta, young professionals frequently experience heightened work stress due to job insecurity, extended working hours, elevated expectations, and the pressure to succeed in competitive industries [15], [16]. Research indicates that unaddressed stress can result in burnout, job dissatisfaction, and plans to leave the position [1], [2]. Consequently, it is essential to investigate therapies that alleviate these adverse effects and enhance mental health within this population.

### 2.2 *Online Counseling Platforms*

The emergence of online counseling platforms has revolutionized the provision of mental health services by providing flexibility, anonymity, and accessibility, hence facilitating help for persons with rigorous schedules. [17] demonstrate that online counseling is equally beneficial as in-person treatment for treating psychological disorders such as stress, anxiety, and depression. These platforms provide young professionals with the advantage of obtaining assistance without detracting from their work commitments. Research demonstrates that millennials are progressively

favoring digital solutions for their health and wellness [10], [18]. In Indonesia, the utilization of online mental health services has increased significantly, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic when face-to-face counseling was restricted. Research conducted by [9], [19] underscores the increasing utilization of these platforms by Indonesian professionals for the management of stress and anxiety. Nonetheless, although the efficacy of online counseling appears promising, empirical information regarding its specific influence on controlling work-related stress in urban settings such as Jakarta is scarce.

### 2.3 *Virtual Community Support*

Virtual communities, facilitated by social media platforms and specialized forums, allow individuals a venue to exchange experiences, provide support, and solicit guidance on coping with work-related stress. These communities function as informal support networks, augmenting professional counseling by providing peer-driven solutions and emotional reassurance. [20], [21] indicate that engagement in virtual communities can alleviate feelings of isolation and cultivate a sense of belonging, essential for effective stress management. Moreover, these communities are available around the clock, rendering them especially beneficial for young professionals experiencing work-related stress across several time zones or shifts [22], [23]. Social support has been acknowledged as crucial in alleviating stress [24], and virtual

communities leverage this principle by providing a digital platform for engagement. In Jakarta, young professionals face heightened work stress due to prolonged commutes and rigorous schedules; thus, virtual support groups offer a pragmatic and immediate solution for stress management. Nonetheless, whereas current study underscores the mental health advantages of virtual communities, additional studies are required to evaluate their particular efficacy in alleviating work-related stress among young professionals.

### 2.4 *Integration of Online Counseling and Virtual Community Support*

The amalgamation of professional online counseling and virtual community support provides a comprehensive strategy for addressing work-related stress by merging systematic, expert-driven instruction with continuous peer-based emotional assistance. This dual strategy improves the efficacy of stress management programs by employing both official and informal support systems. Research conducted By [8], [25]–[28] revealed that those participating in both online counseling and virtual support groups exhibited more significant enhancements in mental well-being than those utilizing a single intervention. Nonetheless, there exists a deficiency in the evidence regarding the collective influence of these treatments on job stress management among young professionals, especially in Southeast Asian settings such as Jakarta. This study seeks to fill

the gap by investigating how the concurrent utilization of online counseling platforms and virtual community support can mitigate work-related stress among young professionals in Jakarta.

### 2.5 Theoretical Framework

This research is grounded in the transactional model of stress and coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), positing that stress emerges from an individual's assessment of their capacity to manage external pressures. In this context, online counseling platforms deliver coping resources via expert support, whereas virtual communities furnish emotional reassurance and peer validation, so augmenting individuals' total ability to manage stress. The social support hypothesis (Cohen & Wills, 1985) reinforces the significance of virtual communities in alleviating stress through the provision of emotional and informational support networks. This study seeks to investigate how the amalgamation of online counseling and virtual community support can function as a holistic solution for alleviating work-related stress among young professionals in Jakarta

## 3. METHODS

### 3.1 Research Design

This research employs a quantitative methodology to examine the influence of online counseling platforms and virtual community support on the management of work-related stress among young professionals in Jakarta. A cross-sectional survey method was utilized to collect data from respondents, facilitating the examination of correlations between the

independent variables (online counseling platforms and virtual community support) and the dependent variable (job stress management). The research focuses on young professionals aged 20 to 35, who experience heightened job constraints in urban environments and are adept with digital platforms. A purposive sampling method was employed to guarantee that participants possessed familiarity with online therapy or virtual community help for stress management. A total of 150 respondents who participated in various digital interventions throughout the past year were polled. The selected sample size adheres to the suggested minimum for quantitative studies employing Likert scales, facilitating the identification of statistically significant correlations between variables and augmenting the dependability of the results.

### 3.2 Data Collection

Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire aimed at evaluating the influence of online counseling platforms and virtual community assistance on the management of work-related stress. Participants assessed their concurrence with multiple statements regarding the efficacy of these therapies utilizing a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). The questionnaire underwent pre-testing with a cohort of 15 young professionals to establish its clarity and reliability before comprehensive dissemination. The poll was administered online via email and social media channels, including LinkedIn, Facebook, and WhatsApp, focusing on young professionals in Jakarta. It was open for two weeks, accompanied by intermittent reminders to enhance the response rate. Participation was voluntary, and confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed, with agreement acquired from all participants before commencing the survey.

### 3.3 Data Analysis

The survey data were analyzed with SPSS version 26. Descriptive statistics encapsulated respondents' demographic data,

including age, gender, and professional experience. Various inferential statistical techniques were utilized for the primary analysis. Cronbach's alpha was employed to evaluate the internal consistency of the questionnaire items, confirming the reliability of scales assessing online counseling, virtual community support, and job stress management, with a threshold of 0.70 or above deemed acceptable. Pearson's correlation coefficient was computed to assess the strength and direction of the correlations between digital interventions and job stress management. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis was used to assess the collective impact of online counseling platforms and virtual community support on the management of work-related stress, emphasizing the individual contributions of each variable. The findings were analyzed within the theoretical framework, with statistical significance evaluated at a 95% confidence level ( $p < 0.05$ ), assuring both statistical and practical relevance in comprehending the effects of digital interventions on work stress management.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The sample for this study consisted of 150 young professionals from Jakarta, with an average age of 28.65 years ( $SD = 3.50$ ), ranging from 23 to 34 years, and 50% of the respondents aged 29 or below. The gender distribution was 62% female (93 respondents) and 38% male (57 respondents), reflecting the increasing participation of females in Jakarta's professional workforce. In terms of education, 61% held a bachelor's degree (91 respondents), 32% had a master's degree (48 respondents), and 7% had other qualifications (11 respondents). Regarding work experience, 45% of respondents (68) had been employed for 3-5 years, 39% (58) for 1-2 years, and 16% (24) had over 5 years of experience. This demographic data offers a representative view of young professionals in early to mid-career stages, who are navigating various work-related stressors.

### 4.2 Reliability Analysis

The reliability of the scales used in the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, a measure of internal consistency. All scales demonstrated acceptable reliability, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients above the recommended threshold of 0.70. The Online Counseling Platforms scale had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.835, indicating high internal consistency for items measuring the effectiveness of these platforms in managing work stress. The Virtual Community Support scale had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.799, showing good reliability in capturing the impact of virtual community support on stress management. Lastly, the Work Stress Management scale had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.812, confirming the reliability of items measuring respondents' ability to manage work-related stress.

### 4.3 Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between the use of online counseling platforms, virtual community support, and work stress management. The results revealed a moderate positive correlation between Online Counseling Platforms and work stress management ( $r = 0.583$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that greater use of these platforms is associated with improved management of work-related stress among young professionals. Additionally, Virtual Community Support showed a slightly stronger positive correlation with work stress management ( $r = 0.624$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), suggesting that participation in virtual community support is also positively linked to better stress management.

### 4.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

To assess the combined effect of online counseling platforms and virtual community support on work stress management, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Multiple Regression Results

Predictor Variables	Beta ( $\beta$ )	t-value	p-value
Online Counseling Platforms	0.417	5.237	0.000
Virtual Community Support	0.472	6.023	0.000

The regression analysis revealed that both online counseling platforms ( $\beta = 0.417$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and virtual community support ( $\beta = 0.472$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) had significant positive effects on work stress management. The  $R^2$  value of 0.49 indicates that 49% of the variance in work stress management can be explained by the use of online counseling platforms and virtual community support. Virtual community support was found to be a slightly stronger predictor of stress management compared to online counseling platforms. These findings confirm that both forms of digital interventions contribute to alleviating work-related stress among young professionals.

### Discussion

The results of this study provide substantial evidence that both online counseling platforms and virtual community support significantly contribute to managing work stress among young professionals in Jakarta. The findings are in line with previous research on the effectiveness of digital mental health interventions, while also highlighting the unique contributions of these tools in an urban, high-pressure professional environment.

The correlation analysis demonstrated a moderate positive relationship between online counseling platforms and work stress management, aligning with previous studies that highlight the role of digital counseling in providing accessible and flexible mental health support [10], [17]–[19]. For young professionals in Jakarta, the ability to access counseling online without the need for physical appointments offers a practical solution for managing stress amid busy schedules. Additionally, multiple regression analysis confirmed the significant positive impact of online counseling platforms, indicating that while online counseling is a key factor in reducing stress, it is not the sole determinant. The structured

nature of counseling likely provides long-term benefits by addressing the root causes of stress and equipping individuals with coping mechanisms, but its effectiveness is further enhanced by peer-based support.

Virtual community support demonstrated a slightly stronger positive relationship with work stress management compared to online counseling platforms, consistent with research highlighting the importance of social support networks in reducing stress [20]–[22], [24]. These communities enable young professionals to share experiences, offer mutual support, and receive advice from peers facing similar challenges. The regression analysis revealed that virtual community support, making it a stronger predictor of stress management than online counseling. This may be due to the immediacy and accessibility of peer support, as virtual communities provide continuous, informal interactions that help individuals cope with daily work stressors. The emotional and informational support in these communities can quickly alleviate feelings of isolation, enabling professionals to manage stress in real time.

The combined effects of online counseling platforms and virtual community support explained 49% of the variance in work stress management ( $R^2 = 0.49$ ), underscoring the value of using both tools together. These findings suggest that young professionals benefit most from an integrated approach to stress management, combining professional counseling for addressing deep-rooted stressors with virtual community support for immediate, ongoing peer-based reassurance and advice. This study has practical implications, particularly for young professionals in Jakarta, as engaging with both online counseling and virtual communities significantly improves their ability to manage work-related stress. Organizations can leverage these insights by

incorporating such platforms into their workplace wellness programs, promoting access to online counseling services, and fostering internal virtual support communities to create a supportive environment for employee mental health.

These findings align with previous studies that have emphasized the role of both professional counseling and peer support in mental health [8], [25]–[28]. However, this study contributes to the literature by focusing on the specific context of young professionals in a high-stress urban environment like Jakarta. The slightly stronger impact of virtual community support in this context may reflect the unique challenges faced by individuals working in competitive industries, where peer reassurance and shared experiences play a critical role in daily stress management.

#### **Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

While this study provides valuable insights, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the data were self-reported, which may introduce bias as respondents could have underreported or overreported their stress levels. Future research could incorporate objective measures of stress, such as physiological indicators, to offer a more comprehensive view of the effectiveness of these interventions. Additionally, the study focused exclusively on young professionals in Jakarta, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other regions or demographic groups. Future

studies could explore the impact of these digital interventions in different geographic locations or industries. Moreover, examining other forms of digital support, such as mobile apps or AI-based mental health interventions, could provide a more holistic understanding of how digital tools can help manage work stress

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

This study highlights the significant role that online counseling platforms and virtual community support play in managing work-related stress among young professionals in Jakarta. Both interventions were found to have a positive and significant impact on stress management, with virtual community support having a slightly stronger effect. The combined use of these tools explained 49% of the variance in work stress management, demonstrating that a holistic approach—combining professional mental health services with peer support—can effectively mitigate the pressures faced by young professionals in high-demand environments. For organizations and policymakers, these findings suggest the value of promoting digital mental health solutions as part of broader workplace wellness programs. Future research should explore other digital interventions and examine their effectiveness in different demographic contexts to build on these findings.

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