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Research Article

EFFORTS TO REDUCE OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG NON-ASN WORKERS IN THE SOCIAL REHABILITATION ENVIRONMENT OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT THROUGH RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of relaxation techniques in reducing work-related stress among Non-Civil Servant (Non-ASN) employees in the field of social rehabilitation at the Social Affairs Office of District X. High work demands, administrative pressure, and uncertainty regarding employment status are among the factors contributing to work stress, which can negatively affect job performance and psychological well-being. This study employed a quantitative approach. The pre-test and post-test groups consisted of five participants. Data were collected using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-14) to measure changes in stress levels before and after the intervention. During the intervention process, participants were taught breathing relaxation techniques and stress management strategies through several training sessions. The results indicated that the average stress score decreased from 49.2 to 37.4, with a significance value of 0.02 ($p < 0.05$). These findings demonstrate that relaxation techniques are effective in helping Non-ASN employees manage work-related stress, regulate their emotions, and improve mental health in the social work environment.

Keywords: Non-Civil Servant employees (Non-ASN), psychological well-being, work-related stress

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INTRODUCTION

Non-Civil Servant employees (Non-ASN) constitute an integral part of Indonesia's public service system, particularly within social institutions that directly serve vulnerable populations (Adarsh et al., 2022). At the Social Affairs Office of District X, Non-ASN workers in the Social Rehabilitation Division carry substantial responsibilities in addressing individuals with various social and psychological problems (Launay, 2001). In practice, these workers are frequently exposed to highly demanding work conditions, including excessive workloads, uncertainty regarding employment status, lack of recognition, and limited social support (Riches et al., 2023). Such conditions have a high potential to trigger continuous work-related stress. Prolonged exposure to work stress can result in various negative consequences, affecting both physical and mental health (McKegney & Schwartz, 1986). Moreover, it may lead to a decline in the quality of services provided to the community and increase the risk of interpersonal conflicts among coworkers (Monfort et al., 2003). Therefore, maintaining mental health and psychological well-being among Non-ASN employees should not be overlooked within the context of public service organizations.

Efforts to manage work-related stress should focus on strategies that strengthen individuals' capacity to cope with occupational pressures (Woo et al., 2006). One approach that has been proven effective in reducing stress levels is the application of relaxation techniques (Dange et al., 2025). These techniques assist individuals in regulating breathing patterns, calming the mind, and reducing physical and emotional tension caused by work-related stress (Garcia Dias et al., 2025). The implementation of relaxation techniques also contributes to the improvement of emotion regulation and psychological balance (Shin et al., 2025). When individuals are better able to manage their emotions, they tend to respond to work pressures in a more adaptive and productive manner (Oprinca-Muja et al., 2025). In the context of Non-ASN workers in the Social Rehabilitation Division of the Social Affairs Office of District X, relaxation-based interventions are expected to help reduce work-related stress, improve emotional conditions, and enhance overall psychological well-being (Carter et al., 2025). Such programs not only benefit individuals but also contribute to the creation of a healthier, more harmonious, and more productive work environment within government social institutions.

RESEARCH METHOD

The following sections detail the methodology employed in this study, which focuses on a targeted psychological intervention for workplace stress.

Research Design

The study employed a quantitative approach using a one-group pretest–posttest experimental design (Alshammari et al., 2025). This design was specifically selected to allow for an objective and measurable comparison of participants' psychological conditions before and after the intervention (Elkefi et al., 2025). By using this experimental framework, the researcher could establish a baseline of stress levels and subsequently measure the magnitude of change following the introduction of relaxation techniques, ensuring that the results provide empirical evidence of the intervention's impact.

Research Target/Subject

The research subjects consisted of five Non-Civil Servant (Non-ASN) employees working in the Social Rehabilitation Division of the Social Affairs Office of District X (Liu & Yang, 2025). The subjects were selected using a purposive sampling technique based on two primary criteria: having a demonstrably high level of work-related stress and expressing a commitment to participate in all stages of the intervention until completion (Chen et al., 2025).

This small, focused sample size allowed for intensive monitoring and high adherence to the experimental protocol within a specific professional context.

Research Procedure

The intervention was conducted over a three-month period between April and June 2025 (Maniaci et al., 2025). The procedure began with an initial pretest phase to assess baseline stress levels. This was followed by the intervention phase, which took the form of relaxation technique training and the enhancement of coping abilities (Chaika, 2025). The program was delivered through several structured sessions involving breathing exercises and group discussions (Gupta & Mishra, 2025). To ensure sustainability, participants were also provided with a guidebook to support independent practice outside the scheduled training. Finally, a posttest phase was conducted to re-evaluate stress levels following the completion of the sessions.

Instruments, and Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-14) developed by Cohen et al. (1983). This instrument measures stress levels based on individuals' subjective perceptions of life stressors. The PSS-14 was chosen because it has been rigorously tested for validity and reliability, making it an appropriate tool for assessing psychological changes in an experimental setting (Roßbach et al., 2025). The data collection technique involved the administration of this scale twice: once before the intervention (pretest) and once immediately after the intervention (posttest).

Data Analysis Technique

To determine the effectiveness of the intervention, the collected data were analyzed using a paired sample t-test. This statistical technique was applied to analyze the pretest and posttest data to identify if there was a significant difference between the two conditions (Zhang & Keat, 2025). The analysis aimed to test the hypothesis with a significance threshold of $p < 0.05$. In this study, the results yielded a significance value of 0.02, indicating that the relaxation techniques were statistically effective in reducing work-related stress among the participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After completing the psychoeducation process and conducting observations of the employees, the researcher administered a post-test to five participants. The post-test was distributed on May 26, 2025. The measurement results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Post-Test Scores

Nama	**Lama Bekerja**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**Jumlah**
H	6 bulan	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	2	3	2	3	3	3	**45**
YA	8 tahun	3	2	3	3	2	4	3	4	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	**40**
FHE	1 tahun	3	2	3	2	4	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	**38**
ROS	1 tahun	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	**32**
LR	6 bulan	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	**32**
Jumlah																	**187**
Rata-rata																	**37.4**

The post-test results indicated that participant H obtained a score of 45, which falls into the High category, although this score showed a slight decrease compared to the previous pre-test score. Participant YA obtained a score of 40, which is classified as Moderate, followed by FHE with a score of 38, also categorized as Moderate. ROS obtained a score of 32, which falls into the Moderate category, and LR also achieved a score of 32, categorized as Moderate. The total post-test score was 187, with a mean score of 37.4.

In addition to implementing the program, the researcher also assisted the Social Rehabilitation Division with administrative activities, such as compiling data on elderly meal provisions, preparing official correspondence, and attending meetings. The researcher was present at the institution before working hours began and remained until the end of the workday. Every Monday, a morning assembly was held and attended by all employees. The researcher also participated in routine Monday morning activities conducted at the institution, which aimed to foster a sense of responsibility and promote courteous behavior among employees.

No	Nama Sampel	Pre-test	Post-test
1	FHE	51	38
2	ROS	46	32
3	H	51	45
4	LR	48	32
5	YA	50	40
	Jumlah	246	187
	Rata-rata	49,2	37,4

The total score at the pre-test stage reached 246, while the post-test score decreased to 187. These results indicate a substantial reduction in the total score following the intervention. The mean pre-test score was 49.2, whereas the mean post-test score declined to 37.4. The decrease of 11.8 points in the mean score suggests an improvement in participants' ability to manage work-related stress more effectively.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretest	5	46.00	51.00	49.2000	2.16795
Posttest	5	32.00	45.00	37.4000	5.54977
Valid N (listwise)	5				

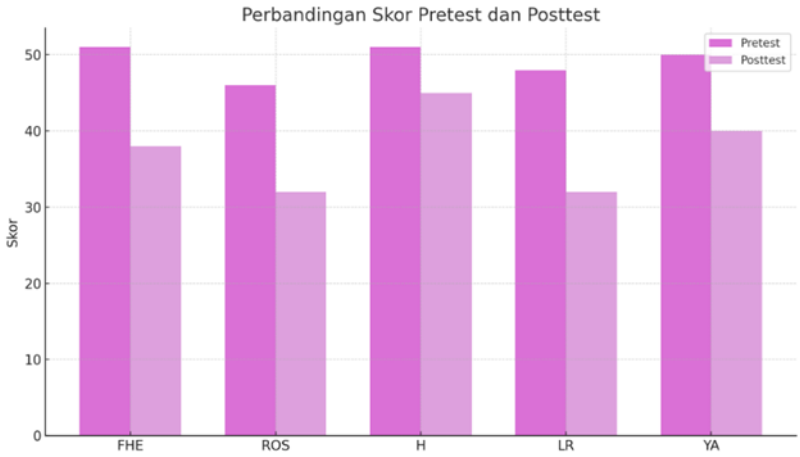
The descriptive statistical results showed that the mean pre-test score was 49.20 among five respondents, with a standard deviation of 2.167, while the mean post-test score was 37.40 among five respondents, with a standard deviation of 5.549.

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pretest	49.2000	5	2.16795	.96954
	Posttest	37.4000	5	5.54977	2.48193

The results of the paired sample *t*-test analysis showed that the mean pre-test score was 49.20 among five respondents, with a standard deviation of 2.167 and a standard error of 0.969. In contrast, the mean post-test score was 37.40 among five respondents, with a standard deviation of 5.549 and a standard error of 2.481.

The analysis results showed that the significance value (2-tailed) was 0.02, which is lower than the threshold of 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a statistically significant decrease in pre-test scores compared to post-test scores in the aspect of work-related stress management.



The chart diagram above illustrates that the relaxation technique intervention combined with coping skills enhancement was effective in helping all five Non-ASN employees in the Social Rehabilitation Division manage their emotions during work-related stress.

The implementation of the program aimed at reducing work-related stress among Non-ASN employees in the Social Rehabilitation Division of the Social Affairs Office through relaxation techniques demonstrated positive effects on the psychological well-being of the participants. The intervention was conducted with five participants who initially exhibited high stress levels based on pre-test results, with a mean score of 49.2. Through a series of activities, including group discussions, the distribution of a manual book, and the application of box breathing techniques, significant improvements were observed in participants' emotional regulation.

Following the implementation of the program, a post-test was administered to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. The results showed a reduction in the mean stress score to 37.4, with the total collective score decreasing from 246 to 187. This reduction indicates that most participants shifted from the "High" stress category to the "Moderate" category based on the PSS-14 score classification. These findings were further supported by the paired sample t-test, which yielded a significance value of 0.02.

Qualitatively, participants exhibited various behavioral changes that indicate improvements in emotion regulation. One participant, FHE, who had previously reported frequently crying in private due to work pressure, began to demonstrate greater emotional resilience in facing job demands. Other participants, such as ROS and LR, also showed improved focus and emotional control. Meanwhile, YA was able to better restrain anger when receiving repeated feedback from supervisors. These changes reflect that simple relaxation technique interventions can be practically implemented in a bureaucratic work environment.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study indicate that the relaxation techniques applied in the work stress management program were effective in reducing stress levels among Non-Civil Servant (Non-ASN) employees in the Social Rehabilitation Division of the Social Affairs Office of District X. The mean stress score decreased from 49.2 in the pre-test to 37.4 in the post-test, with a significance value of 0.02 ($p < 0.05$). These findings demonstrate a statistically significant difference between pre-intervention and post-intervention conditions, indicating that the application of relaxation techniques effectively reduced work-related stress.

Through the implementation of these techniques, individuals were able to reduce physical tension, stabilize emotions, and alleviate psychological pressure resulting from high workloads and job demands. Beyond providing individual benefits, the findings of this study also have practical implications for government institutions in the management of human resources, particularly within the social sector. It is recommended that the Social Affairs Office implement regular relaxation training programs as part of efforts to maintain employees' mental health and enhance work performance. Thus, this study confirms that simple interventions such as relaxation techniques can serve as an effective alternative strategy for improving psychological well-being and fostering a more positive, harmonious, and productive work environment in the public service sector.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.
Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-vestigation.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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