International Journal of Education, Vocational and Social Science
https://e-journal.citakonsultindo.or.id/index.php/IJEVSS
E-ISSN : 2963 4954
IJEVSS

Analysis Of Occupational Stress And Stress Management Among Generation Z Guidance And Counseling Teachers And Its Implications For Psychological Well-Being: An Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Study

Lutfiatul Rokhmah[1]
[1]Master's Program in Guidance and Counseling, Universitas Negeri Malang
Muslihati[2]
[2]Master's Program in Guidance and Counseling, Universitas Negeri Malang
Arbin Janu Setyawati[3]
[3]Master's Program in Guidance and Counseling, Universitas Negeri Malang

Corresponding Author: *lutfiatul.rokhmah.2501118@students.um.ac.id*

Abstract

Background: *Generation Z Guidance and Counseling (GC) teachers face dual challenges: intense emotional dynamics among students and the burden of school administration. Without proper management, occupational stress can reduce psychological well-being.* ***Objective:*** *This study aims to analyze the level of occupational stress, the application of stress management strategies, and their implications for the psychological well-being of Gen Z GC teachers.* ***Method:*** *This study used an Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods approach (QUAN → qual). Quantitative data were collected from Gen Z GC teachers through a structured questionnaire measuring the dimensions of work pressure, emotional strain, and exhaustion, as well as five stress management strategies (problem-focused, emotion-focused, social support, self-recovery, and avoidance). Qualitative data were obtained from the analysis of open-ended responses concerning sources of stress, obstacles, and support needs.* ***Results:*** *The quantitative results show that job-demand pressure and emotional strain trigger work exhaustion. The use of problem-focused stress management strategies, emotion regulation, and self-recovery has a significant positive effect on psychological well-being. Conversely, avoidance strategies are negatively correlated with psychological well-being. The qualitative follow-up clarifies that the greatest obstacles stem from the expansion of administrative workload and a culture of unlimited availability to respond.*

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

Conclusion: *Consistently applying adaptive stress management strategies is effective in mitigating the adverse effects of occupational stress and maintaining the psychological well-being of Gen Z GC teachers.*

Keywords: Generation Z; Guidance and Counseling Teachers; Psychological Well-Being; Stress Management; Occupational Stress.

INTRODUCTION

Guidance and Counseling (GC) teachers play a crucial role in facilitating the personal, social, academic, and career development of students at school. However, the dynamics of the school counselor's duties demand highly intensive emotional involvement (*emotional labor*). In practice, the workload of school counselors is often imbalanced, as the ideal ratio between GC teachers and the students under their guidance is frequently neglected (Putra, 2022). This workload ratio imbalance causes role strain and directly increases vulnerability to stress and emotional exhaustion (*burnout*) among educators and school counselors (Bardhoshi et al., 2014; Sandra & Ifdil, 2015).

The entry of Generation Z (individuals born 1997–2012) into the GC teacher workforce has brought a new character to the dynamics of professional service. As *digital natives*, Generation Z members are highly adaptable to digital technology, yet at the same time they are vulnerable to the stress of adjusting to a fast-paced work environment. This phenomenon is exacerbated by high, non-ideal ratios of students under guidance and by administrative demands that absorb professional energy (Sandra & Ifdil, 2015).

Field observations show that Gen Z GC teachers are often confronted with a pile of administrative tasks, difficulty dividing time between structured counseling services and *incidental* school agendas, and the demand to handle complex student cases simultaneously. As a result, teachers frequently experience *emotional exhaustion*, decreased focus, and diminished daily energy. This condition has the potential to lower the *psychological well-being* of GC teachers (Ryff, 1989), which in turn may affect the effectiveness and quality of guidance services at school.

To buffer the impact of occupational stress, the application of appropriate stress management strategies is essential (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Stress management encompasses *problem-focused coping*, *emotion-focused coping*, seeking social and professional support, as well as *self-recovery* and maintaining a *work-life boundary*. Nevertheless, some teachers may also

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

adopt *avoidance coping* patterns, which can actually worsen the accumulation of workload in the future (Carver, 1997).

Although studies on teacher stress are abundant, research that specifically examines the dynamics of occupational stress, *coping* strategies, and their implications for the psychological well-being of Generation Z GC teachers using a *mixed methods* approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) remains limited. Therefore, this study is important for providing a comprehensive picture, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

The objectives of this study are:

1. To analyze the level of occupational stress among Generation Z GC teachers based on the dimensions of work pressure, emotional strain, exhaustion, and perceived self-capability.
2. To analyze the effect of the various dimensions of stress management strategies on the psychological well-being of Gen Z GC teachers.
3. To qualitatively explore the main sources of stress, the characteristics of occupational stress among Gen Z educators, the obstacles to stress management, and the forms of support needed by Generation Z GC teachers.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study uses a combined approach, the *Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design* (QUAN → qual), developed by Creswell and Creswell (2018). The research began with the collection and analysis of quantitative data (Phase 1), followed by the analysis of qualitative data (Phase 2) to clarify, confirm, and deepen the quantitative results obtained.

Research Subjects and Participants

The population of this study was active GC teachers/school counselors classified as Generation Z. The sample was determined using a *purposive sampling* technique with the following inclusion criteria:

1. Actively serving as a GC teacher at the junior high school (SMP/MTs), senior high school (SMA/MA), or vocational high school (SMK) level.
2. Born between 1997 and 2012.
3. Willing to participate voluntarily.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

Data Collection Instruments

Data were collected using a combined structured questionnaire consisting of:

- **Consent and Demographic Data:** Measures employment status, length of service, school level, and the ratio of students under guidance.
- **Instrument A (Occupational Stress Scale):** Adapts the occupational stress measurement concept from the Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen et al., 1983) and counselor stress indicators (Sandra & Ifdil, 2015), consisting of 12 items (1–5 Likert scale).
- **Instrument B (Stress Management Scale):** Adapts the Brief COPE instrument (Carver, 1997), consisting of 18 items covering 5 dimensions: Problem-Solving, Emotion Management, Social & Professional Support, Self-Recovery & Work-Life Balance, and Avoidance (1–5 Likert scale).
- **Open-Ended Questions (Qualitative Data):** Consisting of 5 in-depth essay questions on the dominant sources of stress, the most helpful strategies, the main obstacles, the forms of support needed, and reflective experiences as a Gen Z GC teacher.

Data Analysis Technique

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to map the distribution of dimension scores, and multiple linear regression analysis to test the effect of stress management strategies on psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989). Qualitative data from the open-ended questions were analyzed using *Thematic Analysis* through the stages of coding, theme grouping, and data triangulation with the quantitative results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Occupational Stress among Generation Z GC Teachers (Quantitative Results)

Based on the quantitative data from Instrument A, the occupational stress profile of Generation Z GC teachers is distributed across several main dimensions, presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Description of Occupational Stress Dimensions among Generation Z GC Teachers

Occupational Stress Dimension	Main Indicators	Score Category
Work Pressure & Demands	Administrative workload, dividing time between counseling and school activities	High

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

Occupational Stress Dimension	Main Indicators	Score Category
Emotional Strain	Handling complex student cases, worry about service outcomes	Moderate–High
Exhaustion & Concentration	Emotional exhaustion after services, decreased work focus	Moderate
Perceived Capability	Feeling overwhelmed by simultaneous demands	Moderate

These findings indicate that the administrative burden of GC and difficulty in dividing time are the main contributors to occupational stress among novice Gen Z GC teachers. This is in line with the views of Bardhoshi et al. (2014) and Sandra and Ifdil (2015), who state that the accumulation of non-counseling tasks and a disproportionate student ratio (Putra, 2022) trigger a buildup of mental load and reduce the effectiveness of the GC teacher's emotional role at school.

The Effect of Stress Management on Psychological Well-Being

Regression analysis of Instrument B shows that the choice of stress management strategy has varying effects on psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989):

1. **Problem-Focused Strategies (**$p < 0.05$**):** The use of priority scales and *task breakdown* was shown to significantly increase the sense of *environmental mastery*.
2. **Emotion Management and Self-Recovery (**$p < 0.05$**):** Relaxation activities, *mindfulness*, and maintaining the boundary between work and personal life (*work-life boundary*) are positively correlated with self-acceptance and emotional autonomy.
3. **Seeking Social Support (**$p < 0.05$**):** Discussions with colleagues and collaboration with homeroom teachers help reduce professional anxiety.
4. **Avoidance Responses (**$p < 0.01$**):** Procrastinating on tasks and avoiding discussion of problems were found to be inversely related to psychological well-being, triggering increased cumulative stress later on (Carver, 1997).

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

International Journal of Education, Vocational and Social Science
https://e-journal.citakonsulfindo.or.id/index.php/IJEVSS
E-ISSN : 2963 4954
IJEVSS

Qualitative Deepening: Characteristics of Gen Z Stress and Stress Management Solutions

The triangulation of qualitative data provides in-depth insight into the characteristics of occupational stress among Generation Z educators and the effectiveness of the stress management strategies they apply.

Table 2. Qualitative Findings on Sources of Stress and Stress Management among Gen Z GC Teachers

Stress Triggers	Stress Management Strategies & Interventions
Excessive and overlapping GC administrative workload (Bardhoshi et al., 2014)	Task prioritization, *shifting mindset* (Racmadyana, 2023), & periodic relaxation breaks
Expectation of instant 24/7 responses / digital connectivity (Feno, 2024)	Setting working-hour limits (*work-life balance*) (Ambarsarie et al., 2021) & *self-care* (Wahyuni & Desinta, 2021)
Stigma attached to the GC position & tendency to ruminate on workload	*Peer support*, clinical supervision, & stopping *work-related rumination* (Mullen et al., 2020)

Characteristics of Occupational Stress and Work-Life Balance among Gen Z Educators

The qualitative analysis reveals that the characteristics of occupational stress among Generation Z educators are strongly influenced by the phenomenon of constant digital connectivity (Feno, 2024; Fikri et al., 2026). Although technologically adaptive, Gen Z GC teachers show vulnerability to the expansion of working time caused by expectations of instant responses through digital communication platforms outside working hours. This blurs the boundary between professional and personal life (*work-life balance*) (Ambarsarie et al., 2021). These qualitative findings underscore the distinctive phenomenon of distress and occupational stress dynamics among Gen Z educators in maintaining *work-life balance* amid the demands of a modern work rhythm (Feno, 2024; Fikri et al., 2026).

Stress Management Solutions: Rumination, Self-Care, and Shifting Mindset

In coping with work pressure, participants who succeeded in maintaining their psychological well-being articulated three main recovery mechanisms:

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

1. **Breaking *Work-Related Rumination*:** GC teachers who experience prolonged stress tend to carry the burden of student cases or pending tasks home with them. The tendency to repeatedly ruminate on work problems outside working hours (*work-related rumination*) has been shown to hinder recovery from emotional exhaustion (Mullen et al., 2020). Stopping this rumination is an important key to achieving daily mental fitness.
2. **Practicing *Self-Care*:** Routine *self-care* practices—such as physical recovery, maintained nutrition, and even a brief *digital detox*—play a vital role as instruments of emotion regulation and enhancement of psychological well-being (Wahyuni & Desinta, 2021). *Self-care* activities tangibly provide space for emotional catharsis and restore the emotional energy drained after counseling sessions.
3. ***Shifting Mindset* Intervention:** Internal obstacles are overcome through a shift in mindset (*shifting mindset*) (Racmadyana, 2023). Participants who were able to transform their view of workload from a threat to a challenge or learning opportunity showed lower levels of anxiety. The *shifting mindset* intervention helps young counselors accept the limits of their role without sacrificing the professionalism of their services (Racmadyana, 2023).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Occupational stress among Generation Z GC teachers is dominated by the pressure of administrative demands and the simultaneous handling of complex student problems (Sandra & Ifdil, 2015; Putra, 2022). The characteristics of Gen Z stress are influenced by *work-life balance* challenges arising from digital connectivity (Feno, 2024; Fikri et al., 2026). The application of proactive stress management strategies—particularly problem-focused management, emotion regulation through *self-care* (Wahyuni & Desinta, 2021), stopping *work-related rumination* (Mullen et al., 2020), *shifting mindset* (Racmadyana, 2023), and self-recovery—has been shown to have a positive impact on improving psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989). Conversely, avoidance-based stress management has a negative effect on teachers' emotional health.

Recommendations

1. **For School Principals / Education Management:** Need to streamline GC administrative tasks, pay attention to the ideal ratio of GC teachers to students under guidance (Putra,

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

2022), and establish healthy work-boundary regulations (*work-life balance*) so that GC teachers can focus on the core function of counseling services.

2. **For Professional Organizations (MGBK / ABKIN):** It is recommended to provide a peer-supervision network specifically for young Generation Z counselors and to facilitate training in emotion regulation techniques based on *mindfulness*, *self-care* (Wahyuni & Desinta, 2021), and *shifting mindset* (Racmadyana, 2023).
3. **For Future Researchers:** May expand the sample size and test the effectiveness of digital-wellness-based stress management intervention modules to address *work-related rumination* (Mullen et al., 2020) among Gen Z GC teachers.

REFERENCES

Ambarsarie, S., Retnowati, S., & Helmi, A. F. (2021). Work-life balance pada pendidik: Peran fleksibilitas kerja dan dukungan sosial. *Jurnal Psikologi*, 48(2), 115–128.

Bardhoshi, G., Schweinle, A., & Duncan, K. (2014). Understanding the impact of school counselor activities on stress and burnout. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 92(3), 255–265.

Carver, C. S. (1997). You want to measure coping but your protocol's too long: Consider the Brief COPE. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 4(1), 92–100.

Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., & Mermelstein, R. (1983). A global measure of perceived stress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 24(4), 385–396.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Feno, P. (2024). Stres kerja dan strategi pemulihan pada generasi muda di lingkungan kerja modern. *Jurnal Perilaku Organisasi dan Sumber Daya Manusia*, 12(1), 45–58.

Fikri, M., Rahmawati, A., & Kurniawan, D. (2026). Dinamika stres dan keseimbangan kerja-kehidupan pada pendidik Generasi Z: Studi kualitatif. *Jurnal Kajian Bimbingan dan Konseling*, 11(1), 14–29.

Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. Springer Publishing Company.

Mullen, P. R., Chae, N. Y., Backer, A., & Curry, J. R. (2020). School counselor burnout, work-related rumination, and burnout recovery. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 98(4), 410–421.

Putra, A. R. (2022). Rasio konselor-siswa dan dampaknya terhadap tingkat beban kerja serta kepuasan kerja guru bimbingan dan konseling. *Jurnal Konseling Indonesia*, 8(2), 77–85.

Racmadyana, A. (2023). Intervensi mindset shifting dalam mengurangi kecemasan profesional

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

konselor muda. *Jurnal Intervensi Psikologi*, 15(1), 33–46.

Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57(6), 1069–1081.

Sandra, R., & Ifdil, I. (2015). Konsep stres kerja guru bimbingan dan konseling. *Jurnal Konseling dan Pendidikan*, 3(3), 54–58.

Wahyuni, S., & Desinta, R. (2021). Pentingnya self-care dalam meningkatkan kesejahteraan psikologis tenaga pendidik. *Jurnal Empati*, 10(4), 289–297.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License