

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL FATIGUE AND WORK STRESS WITH PERFORMANCE AMONG MOTHERS WORKING AT ALASA PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER, NORTH NIAS REGENCY**Taruli Rohana Sinaga¹, Rinawati Sembiring¹, Seri Asnawati Munthe¹, Mido Ester J Sitorus¹, Enjel Siska Dewita Hulu¹**¹*Faculty of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, Sari Mutiara Indonesia University, Medan, North Sumatera, Indonesia***Article Info**

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Email: taruli71@yahoo.co.id**Abstract**

Working mothers in the health sector, particularly in community health centers, face the challenge of playing dual roles as professionals and homemakers. This situation has the potential to cause psychological fatigue and work stress, which can impact their performance. This study aims to analyze the relationship between psychological fatigue and work stress and their effects on the performance of working mothers at the Alasa Public Health Center (PHC) in North Nias Regency. This study is quantitative and cross-sectional. The sample comprised 36 married women employed at the Alasa PHC. Data were collected using a questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability. Data analysis was performed using univariate and bivariate analysis using the chi-square test. The results showed a significant relationship between psychological fatigue and performance ($p = 0.0005 < \alpha = 0.05$) and a significant relationship between work stress and performance ($p = 0.001 < \alpha = 0.05$). Mothers who experienced psychological fatigue and high work stress tended to show low performance. This situation is exacerbated by heavy workloads, significant domestic responsibilities, particularly within the family environment, lack of rest time, and minimal social support. This study recommends managerial efforts to identify and manage psychological factors affecting working mothers, including emotional support from superiors, colleagues, and family, adequate rest time, more flexible work schedules, and improved welfare. The implementation of these strategies is expected to reduce psychological fatigue and work stress, thereby significantly and measurably improving the performance of female health workers, particularly working mothers, thereby positively impacting overall performance.

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1. Introduction

Today, women play an important role in driving economic progress, both in the public and domestic sectors. This is evident from the fact that many women continue their careers after marriage and the birth of children. Currently, women actively participate in various employment sectors, both in private companies and government agencies.

Data on female workers in Indonesia's health sector indicate that women predominate in this profession. According to the Ministry of Health in 2019, around 70% of the total 1,244,162 medical personnel in Indonesia are women. Despite their significant numbers, women still face challenges in securing leadership positions and earning equal pay to men. According to a study, around 70% of workers in the health, social, and direct service sectors are women, which shows the dominance of female workers in the health sector (Nuraeni & Lilin Suryono, 2021).

In Indonesia, according to the Ministry of Research and Technology, 55% of the population experiences stress, with 0.8% experiencing very high levels and 34.5% experiencing mild levels (Kemenristek RI, 2020). Given the high incidence of stress, the government needs to take control and focus on minimizing its occurrence in the workplace. This is regulated in the Indonesian Minister of Manpower Regulation No. 5 of 2018 concerning Occupational Health and Safety. It states that psychological factors are factors that influence worker activity due to interpersonal relationships in the workplace, roles, and responsibilities towards work. This relates to the role of mothers in the household, who must take care of their husbands and children as well as other household chores. In addition to carrying out their duties at work, these mothers must also prepare their husbands and children before leaving for work, such as providing food and school supplies, as well as cleaning the house. (Fatin et al., 2023).

Jobs related to hospitals or the health sector have a high tendency to cause stress or depression. Among health workers, nurses are a group at high risk of experiencing work-related stress (NIOSH, 2013). According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2014, work-related stress is one of the most frequently reported health problems, with 50-60% of all lost workdays caused by work-related stress. The number of individuals experiencing work-related stress is also expected to continue to increase (Awalia et al., 2021).

Based on preliminary surveys, the Alasa PHC has 111 employees, comprising 28 male and 83 female employees. The health workers are mothers, with a total of 36 staff members distributed across various service units, including inpatient rooms, emergency rooms, and delivery rooms. This working mother holds dual roles: professional and family administrator. In carrying out their duties, they face various challenges, including the division of work shifts (morning, afternoon, and night), heavy workloads, limited resources, and demands to provide timely and accurate health services to the community.

Many of them report prolonged work stress due to constant pressure from the work environment. This includes administrative demands, additional work from superiors, hectic schedules, and interactions with diverse patients. As a result, psychological fatigue and work stress experienced by health workers at the Alasa PHC lead to unsatisfactory services, one of which is at the posyandu, where the visits and assistance of midwives that should be available are often not carried out, so that activities are only accompanied by community cadres and their effectiveness decreases, while in the administration department, the lack of friendliness and low concern from the officers cause patients to have to wait a long time to be served.

In addition to performing work tasks, these mothers must care for their husbands and children before going to work, including preparing meals, school supplies and cleaning the house. Some of them even continue their activities in the fields to help their husbands after work. This monotonous routine and heavy load lead to a lack of mental energy, difficulty concentrating, decreased caring, and loss of motivation. As a result, many health workers at the health center have difficulty completing work on time, make mistakes in prescribing drugs due to lack of focus, become less empathetic or even rude to patients and families, and experience a decrease in work efficiency, which has the potential to increase the risk of service errors.

Based on the explanation presented, the author seeks to investigate the relationship among psychological fatigue, work stress, and performance among working mothers and to understand how these problems can be overcome. Therefore, the researcher raised this topic, which is included in the research title "The Relationship between Psychological Fatigue and Work Stress on Performance in Mothers at the Alasa PHC.

2. Methods

This study employs a quantitative cross-sectional design. This study analyzes the relationship among psychological fatigue, work stress, and performance among mothers working at the Alasa PHC in North Nias Regency in 2025.

The location of this research was carried out at the Alasa PHC, North Nias Regency, with the time of this research being carried out from October to December 2025.

The population of this study comprises all married mothers who work at the Alasa PHC (n=36); all were included in the research sample using total sampling.

The independent variables in this study were psychological fatigue and work stress, while the dependent variable was the performance of working mothers. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire to assess psychological fatigue, work stress, and performance among mothers working at the Alasa PHC. Data were analyzed univariately to illustrate the distribution of each variable and bivariately using the chi-square test and the odds ratio with a significance level of 95% ($\alpha = 0.05$) to assess the relationship between psychological fatigue and work stress and the performance of mothers working at the Alasa PHC.

Data Collection commenced after obtaining an ethical approval letter from the Health Research Ethics Committee of Sari Mutiara Indonesia University: No. 3622/F/KEP/USM/X/2025.

3. Results

The following is a distribution of respondent characteristics

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Characteristics of Working Mothers at The Alasa Public Health Center, North Nias Regency

Respondent	Quantity (n)	Percentage (%)
Age		
26-35 (young adult)	21	58.3
36-45 (intermediate adult)	12	33.3
46-55 (older adult)	3	8.4
Education		
Diploma	29	80.6
Bachelor	7	19.4
Long Time Working		
<5 years	6	16.7
5-10 years	20	55.6
>10 years	10	27.8
Position		
Staff	19	52.8
Volunteer workforce	17	44.4

Based on Table 1, the proportion of respondents aged 26-40 years is 29 (80.6%), whereas respondents aged 41-50 years constitute 7 (19.4%). The highest proportion of last education was D-3 graduates (29 people, 80.6%), followed by S-1 graduates (7 people, 19.4%). For the proportion of long-term workers, the majority were 33 people (91.7%), while 16-25 years were 3 people (8.3%). The largest proportions of positions are held by staff (19; 52.8%) and volunteers (17; 47.2%).

Univariate Analysis

Table 2. Distribution of Frequency of Psychological Fatigue of Working Mothers at Alasa Public Health Center, North Nias Regency

No	Psychological Fatigue	f	%
1	Low	16	44.4
2	Height	20	55.6
	Quantity	36	100

Table 2 shows that, in 2025, the proportion of working mothers experiencing psychological fatigue at the Alasa PHC, North Nias Regency, was 20 (55.6%), whereas the proportion experiencing low psychological fatigue was 16 (44.4%).

Table 3. Distribution of Work Stress Frequency for Working Mothers at the Alasa Health Center UPTD, North Nias Regency

No	Work Stress	f	%
1	No Stress	15	41.7
2	Stress	21	58.3
	Quantity	36	100

Table 3 shows that, in 2025, among working mothers at the Alasa PHC in North Nias Regency, 21 (58.3%) experienced work stress, whereas 15 (41.7%) did not.

Table 4. Distribution of Performance Frequencies from Working Mothers at Alasa Public Health Center, North Nias Regency

No	Performance	f	Percentage (%)
1	Good	17	47.2
2	Not Good	19	52.8
Quantity		36	100

Table 4 shows that, in 2025, the performance of working mothers at the Alasa PHC in North Nias Regency will be poor for 19 people (52.8%), while good performance is reported for 17 people (47.2%).

Bivariate Analysis Results

The results of the Bivariate Analysis between each independent variable and the dependent variable are shown in the table below.

Table 5. Cross-Tabulation of the Relationship between Psychological Fatigue and Maternal Performance at the Alasa Public Health Center, North Nias Regency

Psychological Fatigue	Performance				p	OR	95% CI
	Good		Not Good				
	n	%	n	%			
Low	13	81.3	3	18.8	16	44.4	0.0005 17.333 3.275-91,734
Height	4	20.0	16	80.0	20	55.6	
Quantity	17	47.2	19	52.8	36	100	

Based on Table 5, among the 36 working mothers, 13 (81.3%) had good performance, and 16 (80.0%) had poor psychological fatigue.

The chi-square test yielded a p-value < 0.05, indicating a significant association between psychological fatigue and the performance of mothers working at the Alasa PHC in 2025. With an odds ratio of = 17.333 (95% CI= 3.275-91.734), it shows that mothers with high psychological fatigue have a 17.333 times greater risk of underperforming compared to mothers with low psychological fatigue.

Table 6. Cross-Tabulation of the Relationship between Work Stress and Maternal Performance at the Alasa Health Center UPTD, North Nias Regency

Work Stress	Performance				p	OR	95% CI
	Good		Not Good				
	n	%	n	%			
No Stress	12	80,0	3	20,0	15	41,7	0,001 12,800 2,545-64,372
Stress	5	23,8	16	76,2	21	58,3	
Quantity	17	47,2	19	52,8	36	100,0	

As shown in Table 6, among the 36 mothers who did not experience stress, 12 (80.0%) had good performance, whereas among the 16 mothers who experienced stress, 16 (76.2%) had poor performance.

The chi-square test yielded a p-value < 0.05, indicating a significant association between work stress and the performance of mothers working at the Alasa PHC in 2025. With an odds ratio of = 12,800 (95% CI= 2,545-64,372), it shows that

stressed mothers have a 12,800 times greater risk of poor performance compared to non-stressed mothers.

4. Discussion

1. The relationship between psychological fatigue and maternal performance at Alasa PHC

Based on the chi-square test results, a p-value of 0.000 was obtained, indicating a significant association between psychological fatigue and the performance of mothers working at the Alasa PHC. Among respondents with psychological fatigue in the low category (76.5%), performance was good. On the other hand, among respondents who experienced psychological fatigue in the high category, 84.2% exhibited low performance.

This aligns with the view of Demerouti and Bakker (2023), who stated that psychological fatigue is a consequence of high job demands that are disproportionate to the available resources to address them. As a result, this negatively affects individual performance and psychological well-being. Fatigue causes emotional energy to be drained and decreases a person's ability to concentrate and work productively (Demerouti & Bakker, 2023)

Maslach and Leiter (2021) also reinforce this, noting that psychological fatigue comprises emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of self-achievement. This phenomenon is particularly relevant in the context of working mothers, as they have to deal with the layered pressures of work and domestic responsibilities, which ultimately affect their motivation, concentration, and work performance (Demerouti et al., 2021)

Some of the factors that trigger high levels of psychological fatigue include monotonous work, irregular work schedules, and lack of social support. This is consistent with the transactional theory of stress, as described by Lazarus and Folkman, which posits that stress and fatigue arise when external demands exceed an individual's ability to cope. When the coping strategy does not work well, psychological disorders will arise that have the potential to interfere with work performance.

This research is also strengthened by the study of Asiva Noor Rachmayani (2015), who found that work-related fatigue significantly reduces self-efficacy, which in turn decreases individual performance in the workplace.

Overall, the results of this study confirm that psychological fatigue is an important factor that warrants serious attention in efforts to improve and maintain performance quality, particularly among female health workers who perform dual roles at home and at work.

2. The relationship between work stress and maternal performance, Alasa PHC

Based on the chi-square test, $p = 0.001$, indicating a significant association between work stress and the performance of mothers working at the Alasa PHC. Descriptively, as many as 70.6% of mothers who were classified as not experiencing stress showed good work performance, while 84.2% of those classified as stressed showed low performance.

Work stress can be understood as a condition of physical and mental stress that arises when the demands of work exceed a person's capacity to face it. This concept aligns with the explanation from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH, 2013), which states that health workers are among the professions prone to stress due to high work-environment pressure, the complexity of social interactions,

and heavy administrative burdens.

According to Lazarus and Folkman, stress arises from a mismatch between the external burdens a person faces and their ability and resources to cope with them. If stress is not managed effectively, individuals may experience negative emotional and physical effects, such as feeling fatigued quickly, difficulty concentrating, and an increased risk of errors at work.

The study results are also supported by Awalia et al. (2021) and Naharini et al. (2023), who state that inadequately managed work stress can reduce the quality of work performance among health workers. In the long term, this stress can also lead to sleep disturbances, increased anxiety, and reduced work motivation.

In the work environment of Alasa PHC, work stress is exacerbated by the heavy burden of daily tasks, a changing shift-work system, a lack of appreciation or recognition from superiors, and pressure from dual roles as workers and housewives. This situation causes some employees to lose initiative, experience a decrease in work morale, and even experience burnout.

Therefore, work stress should be a primary concern for health center management. A handling strategy is needed that includes adaptive coping training, psychological empowerment, stress-management policy development, and strengthening social support in the work environment to maintain optimal employee performance, particularly among working mothers.

5. Conclusion

1. There is a significant relationship between psychological fatigue and maternal performance at the Alasa PHC, North Nias Regency, in 2025, with a *p-value* = $0.000 < 0.05$.
2. There is a significant relationship between work stress and maternal performance at the Alasa PHC, North Nias Regency, in 2025, with a *p-value* = $0.001 < 0.05$.

6. Suggestions

1. For working mothers, it is expected to pay more attention to psychological conditions by maintaining a balance between work and personal life. This can be achieved through simple activities such as getting enough rest, engaging in light exercise, or sharing experiences with colleagues. Additionally, it's important to recognize signs of fatigue and stress early on so that they can be addressed before they impact performance.
2. For the Management of the Alasa PHC, it is necessary to consider the preparation of a more proportionate work schedule, especially for female health workers who have dual roles. Management can also provide assistance through work counseling, stress management counseling, or activities to improve work motivation. Social support from leaders and colleagues is expected to reduce psychological fatigue and work stress.
1. For researchers, it is hoped that it can be carried out with a wider sample coverage, both in other health centers and in different health institutions, so that the results of the research can be compared between regions. In addition, researchers can include other variables, such as job satisfaction, family support, or leadership style, to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the factors that affect health workers' performance.

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