

Stress Coping Strategies In Farmers As An Effort To Overcome Psychosocial Problems

Enggal Hadi Kurniyawan^{1*}, Esa Darma Nurfatekha¹, Rifanti Dwi Aisyah¹, Chicha Amilia Putri¹, Kholid Rosyidi Muhammad Nur¹, Dicky Endrian Kurniawan¹, Alfid Tri Afandi¹

¹Faculty of Nursing, Universitas Jember

* Corresponding Author: enggalhadi.psik@unej.ac.id

Submission date: 16-07-2024; Date of received: 29-07-2024

Abstract

Introduction: Agriculture plays a crucial role in Indonesia, with farmers as the backbone of this sector. However, farmers often experience high levels of stress due to workloads and other psychosocial issues. **Objective:** This study aims to review the literature on coping strategies used by farmers to address their psychosocial problems. **Method:** A literature review was conducted by searching for relevant articles in databases such as Science Direct, PubMed, and Google Scholar. Keywords related to “stress”, “farmers”, and “coping” were used. Selected articles were published in the last five years (2019-2024). **Results:** The literature review revealed that farmers employ various coping strategies to manage stress, including good work practices, stress management, mental health counseling, relaxation therapy, and coping strategies focused on problems or emotions. Social support, self-confidence, and self-efficacy also play crucial roles in reducing stress among farmers. **Conclusion:** Farmers in Indonesia face significant psychosocial challenges, but they demonstrate the ability to address these issues through various coping strategies. Social support and self-confidence are crucial in improving the mental well-being of farmers. The implications of this study emphasize the importance of developing more effective intervention programs to enhance the mental well-being of farmers in Indonesia.

Keywords: stress, farmers, coping

Introduction

In Indonesia, farmers play an important role as one of the largest groups of

workers. They struggle in the middle of open land as part of the informal workforce. A farmer is an Indonesian citizen who individually or with his family is involved in various agricultural businesses, including food crops, horticulture, plantations, and animal husbandry. Agricultural activities are not just the production of food but are also human involvement in a process that involves renewal, development, and consideration of economic aspects.¹ According to the Strategic Plan (Renstra) of the Ministry of Agriculture for the period 2020-2024, most of the country's economic growth and foreign exchange earnings come from the agricultural sector through exports of agricultural commodities.²

However, in fact, farmers in Indonesia often face increasing and increasing risks of psychosocial disorders. This is caused by changes in the world of agriculture, such as changes in the way the industry operates, increasing family burdens, and climate change. Farmers in Indonesia, in particular, are more vulnerable and at high risk of various health problems. One of the main problems is the psychosocial impact, especially stress due to the ever-increasing workload. For example, rice farmers are faced with extra challenges, such as minimal income from running their farming business. This can be caused by limited business capital, low education levels, and high production costs.³ Farmers also have to work long hours, up to 14 hours a day, with the risk of disease and the danger of accidents when lifting heavy loads. This challenge not only takes a physical toll but also puts serious mental stress. Work demands that are too heavy can cause extraordinary workloads and mental stress that disrupt the welfare of farmers.¹

Stress is a condition that often puts psychological pressure on a person when they face various obstacles or limitations in achieving desired opportunities (Muslim, 2020).⁴ Meanwhile, coping is a process carried out by individuals to overcome problems, relieve tension, and deal with the pressures that exist within themselves. Coping stress itself is an effort made by an individual to overcome pressure that leads to stress. This can involve various strategies, including direct problem-solving strategies (Problem Focused Coping) and emotional adjustment strategies (Emotion Focused Coping).⁵

Method

This research uses a literature review method. Searches were based on 3 databases: Science Direct, Pubmed, and Google Scholar. The selected literature reviews are articles published in the last 5 years (2019-2024). A literature search using English and Indonesian keywords. In searching English language literature, use the keywords "Stress Coping Strategies" OR "Stress Coping Strategies in Farmers" OR "Psychosocial Problems" OR "Psychosocial Problems in Farmers". Meanwhile, in Indonesian, the literature search used several keywords "Strategi Koping Stress" OR "Strategi Koping Stress pada Petani" OR "Masalah Psikososial" OR "Masalah Psikososial Pada Petani". Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for the journals studied, namely Inclusion criteria consisting of 1) Articles written in Indonesian or English, 2) Articles are research or systematic reviews that are relevant to keywords, and 3) Articles published in 2019 to 2024. Meanwhile, Exclusion criteria consist of 1) The journal does not match the topic and research objectives, 2) The focus of the research is not on coping with stress among farmers. The results of the literature search are then identified, screened, and filtered, to select journals that match the research criteria.

The article search process begins by identifying predetermined keywords. In the identification step, 9,998 articles matched these keywords. The next stage is to carry out screening by selecting the article title and year of publication based on research criteria. In the screening step, 4,778 articles matched the study criteria. After that, the next step is to filter articles according to the research inclusion and exclusion criteria. 542 articles met the criteria for study inclusion and exclusion. After that, filter the articles to focus on articles that match the research criteria. In this step, 24 articles fit the criteria. Then, of the 24 articles, they were again screened for language, research design, results, and several other predetermined criteria. Finally, the 10 selected articles were determined to meet the research criteria and could proceed to the analysis stage.

Literature search results from
Science Direct, Pubmed, and
Google Scholar
(N: 9,998)

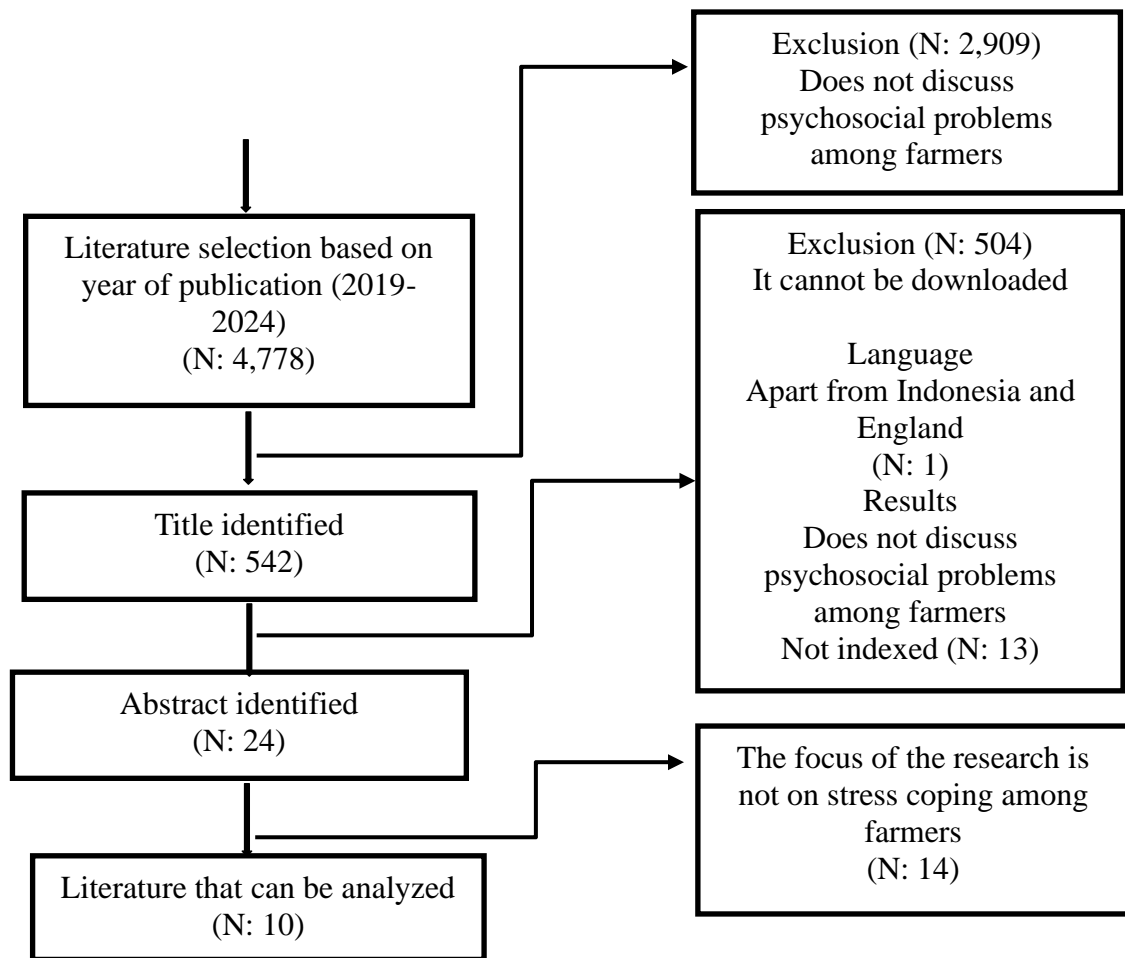


Figure 1. Literature Search Diagram

Results

Table 1. Literature Review Results

Table 1. Literature Review Results

No.	Author/Year	Article Title/Journal Title/Volume	Sample	Method	Results
1.	Noomnuai et al., 2024	Mental health disorders among Thai farmers: occupational and non-occupational	270 Thai farmers, 146 in the spray group, and 124 in the non-spray group.	Cross-sectional study	Good work practices and the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) can be important factors in minimizing occupational

		stressors ⁶			chemical exposure and reducing the potential for mental health disorders among Thai farmers.
2.	Folorunsho, 2024	Sociological Analysis of Stress Management among Farmers and Rural Development in Selected Communities in Kwara State ⁷	360 respondents from various selected communities in local government areas (LGAs) in Kwara State, Nigeria.	Multi-stage sampling	Effective stress management can increase farmer efficiency and productivity. For example, adapting to the lack of rainfall which is one of the external factors, by looking for alternative irrigation facilities will have a positive impact on agricultural productivity.
3.	Silvanasari et al., 2022	The Effectiveness Of Community Mental Health Counseling On The Mental Health Of Farmers During The Covid-19 Pandemic ⁸	There were 80 farmers in the Jenggawah Jember Health Center Working Area who were divided into 2 groups, namely an experimental group of 40 people and a control group of 40 people.	Quasy-experimental with pretest-posttest control group design.	Mental Health Counseling provides mental health applications for farmers, which are very effective in improving farmers' mental health during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Counseling Activity Program for farmers is useful for increasing farmers' ability to deal with high levels of stress due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This counseling program helps farmers to adapt to new habits by teaching farmers to accept the Covid-19 pandemic.
4.	Wiyani et al., 2021	The combination of progressive muscle relaxation and traditional Balinese music therapy is effective in reducing farmers' work stress ⁹	36 respondents were divided into 2 groups, namely the control and intervention groups, 18 people each in Banjar Bongon Jawa, Tabanan, Bali.	Quasy experiment with a pretest-posttest nonequivalent control group design.	Combination therapy of progressive muscle relaxation and traditional Balinese music therapy is effective in reducing work stress felt by farmers in Tabanan, Bali.
5.	Fitria & Riyadi, 2022	Stress Coping Strategies for Melon Farmers After Harvest Failure in Maguwan Village, Sambit District, Ponorogo Regency ¹⁰	3 melon farmers experienced crop failure in Maguwan Village, Sambit District, Ponorogo Regency.	Qualitative descriptive.	The three sources who experienced stress after harvest failure showed positive changes after implementing stress-coping strategies. The coping carried out by Mr K and Mrs ME shows problem-focused coping. The type of coping that Mrs. SH uses is emotion-focused coping.

6.	Woolford et al, 2022	Male Farmers' Perspectives on Psychological Wellbeing Self-Management Strategies That Work for Them and How Barriers to Seeking Professional Mental Health Assistance Could Be Overcome ¹¹	15 male farmers with ages ranging from 23 to 47 years. The average age is 39 years with 20 years of farming experience.	Qualitative with an individual semi-structured interview approach	Male farmers use seven strategies to feel better emotionally interacting with friends or supportive networks, joining farmer groups, exercising, continuing to study, managing time between work and rest, being grateful, and focusing on things that they can control on the farm, such as how to manage and innovate.
7.	Fitria et al, 2023	Stress Management Due to Work Fatigue in Farmers ¹	There are approximately 30 farmers in Sukoreno Village, Kalisat District, Jember Regency.	Community service activities using a qualitative approach.	Deep breathing therapy and progressive muscle relaxation therapy can reduce muscle tension, improve physical recovery, reduce stress and anxiety, and improve sleep quality in farmers.
8.	Aristawati et al, 2022	Five Finger Hypnosis to Reduce the Degree of Anxiety for Milkfish Pond Farmers in Pasuruan City During the Covid-19 Pandemic ¹²	There are 25 fish pond farmers in Tapa'an Village, Pasuruan City	Experimental method with a quantitative approach, using pre-test and post-test questionnaires.	The application of five-finger hypnosis therapy significantly reduced the level of anxiety experienced by milkfish farmers in Pasuruan City during the COVID-19 pandemic.
9.	Padaallah et al, 2022	Description of Farmers' Stress and Coping Mechanisms in Kalisat-Jember District ¹³	100 respondents from the target population.	Descriptive non-experimental quantitative analysis with a cross-sectional design	Farmers in Kalisat tend to use coping mechanisms that focus more on emotions than on problems.
10.	Saragih et al, 2020	The Relationship between Self-Efficacy and Social Support and Coping Stress in Horticultural Farmers in Managing Farming Businesses in Saribudolok ¹⁴	160 horticultural farmers in Saribudolok who are mainly vegetable farmers.	Quantitative research with an observational analytical approach.	Self-efficacy is very important in dealing with stress in horticultural farmers. In addition, there is a positive relationship between social support and farmers' ability to deal with stress. The higher the social support received, the better farmers can deal with stress.

Discussion

The many studies that have been conducted show that farmers often experience

psychosocial problems. However, they have their own ways of dealing with the psychosocial problems they experience. One way they can do this is by implementing good work practices and using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when working on agricultural land. This method can reduce the possibility of psychosocial problems occurring in farmers.⁶

In dealing with psychosocial problems, farmers do not only focus on improving work procedures in the agricultural environment. They also manage stress so that the problem doesn't get worse. A study reveals that effective stress management can increase farmer efficiency and productivity. For example, adapting to the lack of rainfall which is one of the external factors. Farmers can look for alternative irrigation facilities that will have a positive impact on agricultural productivity.⁷

Another way farmers can deal with stress is by doing Mental Health Counseling. Mental Health Counseling provides farmers with an application that is very effective in improving farmers' mental health. With this Counseling Activity Program, farmers are able to improve their ability to deal with the high stress they are experiencing. Farmers can talk about the problems they experience. After that, the counselor will provide solutions that can help farmers deal with the psychosocial problems they face. Apart from farmers feeling more relieved because they can talk about their problems, farmers also feel helped by the solutions provided.⁸

In contrast to the study conducted by Wiyani et al. (2021), if farmers experience work stress they do a combination of progressive muscle relaxation therapy and traditional music therapy. Progressive muscle relaxation therapy involves the mind and body so this therapy can be done easily, cheaply, and independently. Music therapy itself can manage stress. The music used is music that is known and liked. The combination of the two has been proven to be able to reduce work stress in farmers.⁹

In dealing with the stressful conditions experienced by farmers due to crop failure, they prefer to use coping strategies to reduce their emotions due to the pressure they experience. There are two forms of coping strategies, namely, coping strategies that focus on problems (Problems Focused Coping) and coping that focus on emotions (Emotional Focused Coping). After implementing this strategy, they found a solution to solve the problem they were experiencing. Before knowing coping strategies, farmers used their own methods to overcome psychological problems but they were not very

helpful. According to them, implementing this strategy really helps farmers in overcoming psychosocial problems.¹⁰

In line with previous research, Woolford et al. (2022) show that male farmers have at least seven strategies to overcome the problems and emotions they face, using a combination of Problem Focused Coping and Emotional Focused Coping. These strategies include interacting with support networks, joining farmer groups, exercising, continuing to learn, taking time off, being grateful, and focusing on things they can control on the farm, such as innovating. This self-management helps farmers deal with the stress of their work and reduces the risk of serious problems such as depression and suicide.¹¹

However, research conducted by Fitria et al., (2023) found that some farmers felt stressed and tired because of their work, but not everyone in the community knew how to deal with the stress they experienced effectively, so counseling was carried out regarding stress management using techniques. deep breathing relaxation and progressive muscle relaxation. By using deep breathing relaxation techniques and progressive muscle relaxation, it has been proven to be able to reduce the stress experienced by farmers, this is because this stress management technique works by stimulating the relaxation response in the body, reducing muscle tension, diverting attention from stressful thoughts, and reducing related physical symptoms with stress.¹

Apart from that, research conducted by Aristawati et al. (2022) found that the COVID-19 pandemic caused a decrease in public interest in pond products, which had a direct impact on the farmers' economy. This situation creates feelings of anxiety among farmers. To overcome anxiety, five-finger hypnosis self-therapy training is carried out, which can help calm the mind and body. A pre-survey before training showed people's anxiety levels: severe (40%), moderate (25%), and mild (35%). However, after education, there was a significant reduction: severe (10%), moderate (10%), and mild (80%), indicating that the training was successful in reducing overall anxiety.¹²

Another study conducted by Padaallah et al. (2022) found that farmers in Kalisat tend to rely on coping mechanisms that are more focused on emotional aspects rather than problem-solving. They prioritize physical health as a response to stress that requires a lot of energy. In addition, positive beliefs and an optimistic outlook are very important for them in overcoming challenges, as this influences their motivation.

Spiritual beliefs are also the main foundation in facing difficult situations, providing strength and hope in facing various problems that arise.¹³

The results of research conducted by Saragih et al. (2020) emphasized that self-efficacy and social support have an important role in reducing stress in farmers. This research found a significant correlation between self-efficacy and coping with stress, as well as between social support and coping with stress. Self-efficacy and social support are part of the Problem Focused Coping strategy, which focuses on individuals' beliefs in their ability to complete tasks, achieve goals, and overcome obstacles, as well as the support provided by the closest people in the environment. Social support can take the form of information, advice, real help, or action from people who are trusted and care to help farmers face agricultural problems.¹⁴

Conclusion

Farmers are proven to experience many psychosocial problems, the main one being stress. On the other hand, they are able to overcome the psychosocial problems they are experiencing. Starting from improving work practices in the rice fields by using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), adapting to external factors such as erratic rainfall, carrying out therapy, mental health counseling, and using coping strategies to deal with stress and other psychosocial problems

Acknowledgment

Thank you to the Faculty of Nursing, University of Jember, and FKep students, especially Iftita Khoiril Waroh

Conflict of Interest

None.

References

1. Fitria.Y., Dewi, E. I., Kurniyawan, E. H., & Deviantony, F. (2023). Stress Management Due To Work Fatigue In Farmers: Manajemen Stress Akibat Kelelahan Kerja Pada Petani. *AgroNurse Kesehatan: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 1(1), 34–41.

2. Sidharta, V., Tambunan, R. M., Azwar, A., & Ghaniyyu, A. (2021). Suatu Kajian : Pembangunan Pertanian Indonesia . *KAIS Kajian Ilmu Sosial*, 2(2), 229–232.
3. Putra, M. A., Dewi, E. I., & Kurniyawan, E. H. (2021). Hubungan Resiliensi dengan Burnout pada Petani Padi di Desa Ampel, Wuluhan. *Pustaka Kesehatan*, 9(3), 195–200.
4. Muslim, M. (2020). Manajemen stress pada Masa Pandemi Covid-19. *Jurnal Manajemen Bisnis*, 23(2), 192-201.
5. Umjani, S. U., Rianti, E., & Maulana, D. A. (2022). Dampak Positif Coping Stress terhadap Kesehatan Mental Remaja. *ISTISYFA : Journal of Islamic Guidance and Conseling*, 1(2), 115–127. <http://dx.doi.org/10.29300/istisyfa.v1i2.2420>
6. Noomnual, S., Konthonbut, P., Kongtip, P., & Woskie, S. R. (2024). Mental health disorders among Thai farmers: occupational and non-occupational stressors. *Human and Ecological Risk Assessment*, 0(0), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10807039.2024.2310810>
7. Folorunsho, S. (2024). Sociological Analysis of Stress Management among Farmers and Rural Development in Selected Communities in Kwara State. *Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences*, 7(1), 01–09. <https://doi.org/10.33140/jhss.07.01.04>
8. Silvanasari, I. A., Budiman, M., & ... (2022). The Effectiveness of Community Mental Health Counseling on The Mental Health of Farmers During The Covid-19 Pandemic. *Jurnal eduhealth*, 13(02), 678–683. <http://repository.stikesdrsoebandi.ac.id/698/2/8> The Effectiveness of Community.pdf
9. Wiyani, C., Widayati, R. W., Dewi, N. K. R. N. S., & Fadlilah, S. (2021). Kombinasi relaksasi otot progresif dan terapi musik tradisional Bali efektif menurunkan stres kerja petani. *Jurnal Kebidanan Dan Keperawatan Aisyiyah*, 17(2), 245–253. <https://doi.org/10.31101/jkk.2339>
10. Fitria, D. A., & Riyadi, M. I. (2022). Strategi Coping Stres Pada Petani Melon Pasca Gagal Panen Di Desa Maguwan, Kecamatan Sambit, Kabupaten Ponorogo. *ROSYADA: Islamic Guidance and Counseling*, 3(1), 51–60. <https://doi.org/10.21154/rosyada.v3i1.4383>
11. Woolford, D. D., Smout, M. F., Turnbull, D., & Gunn, K. M. (2022). Male farmers'

perspectives on psychological wellbeing self-management strategies that work for them and how barriers to seeking professional mental health assistance could be overcome. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 19(19), 12247. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph191912247>

12. Aristawati, E., Huda, N., & Cahyono, B. D. (2022). Hipnosis Lima Jari untuk Menurunkan Derajat Kecemasan Bagi Petani Tambak Bandeng Kota Pasuruan di Masa Pandemi Covid-19. *Jurnal Kreativitas Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat (PKM)*, 5(6), 1662-1667.
13. Padaallah, A. P., Wuryaningsih, E. W., & Afandi, A. T. (2022). Gambaran Stres dan Mekanisme Koping Petani Di Kecamatan Kalisat-Jember. *Pustaka Kesehatan*, 10(2), 95-98. <https://doi.org/10.19184/pk.v10i2.13144>
14. Saragih, S. A., Menanti, A., Budiman, Z. (2020). Hubungan antara Self-Efficacy dan Dukungan Sosial dengan Coping Stress pada Petani Hortikultura dalam Mengelola Usaha Tani di Saribudolok. *Tabularasa: Jurnal Ilmiah Magister Psikologi*, 2(1) 2020: 56-62