

THE ROLE OF MENTAL HEALTH IN IMPROVING WORK SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

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Abstract

This literature study aims to review the crucial role of mental health in improving workplace safety through a systematic literature review guided by PRISMA 2020. Of the 62 articles identified, 20 articles were selected based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. The results of the study confirm that mental health is the main foundation in creating a safe and productive work environment through three dimensions: preventive, adaptive, and promotive. The preventive role of mental health prevents risky behavior through the management of stress, emotions, and psychological fatigue that can trigger accidents. The adaptive role allows workers to maintain emotional stability and focus at work amid environmental pressures. Meanwhile, the promotive role of mental health builds a strong safety culture by improving communication, social support, and compliance with occupational safety and health procedures. The study also found that organizational policies such as Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) and Psychosocial Safety Climate play an important role in reducing accident rates by up to 25% by providing adequate psychological support and reducing mental stigma. Integrating mental health aspects into the occupational safety system not only improves employee well-being but also enhances overall organizational performance and resilience. Psychological factors such as motivation and safety knowledge are important mediators in shaping sustainable safe work behavior. The study recommends the development of inclusive OSH policies, mindfulness training, and wellness programs to comprehensively support workers' mental health. Awareness of the importance of mental health as a fundamental element of OSH systems is expected to create a safe, healthy, and productive work environment in the long term.

Keyword: mental health, occupational safety, Psychosocial Safety Climate, OSH system, accident prevention.

INTRODUCTION

Mental health in the workplace is one of the important issues that has gained attention in the last decade. Changes in work patterns, pressure to meet targets, and demands for efficiency and high competition make employees more vulnerable to stress and psychological fatigue. This condition not only reduces productivity but can also threaten workplace safety. According to (Hayati 2019) stress and mental fatigue can lead to a decrease in concentration and increase the risk of accidents in the workplace.

Recent research confirms that workplace safety cannot be separated from an individual's psychological condition. (Kelloway dkk., 2023) argues that poor mental health contributes to an increase in work errors and absenteeism, which directly impacts safety risks. (Amoadu dkk., 2024) It was also found that the psychosocial safety climate plays a crucial role in creating a safe and healthy work environment for employees.

In the national context, mental health issues in the workplace have increased significantly. A report by (Ratih Ibrahim (2022), t.t.) reveals that around 33% of employee counseling cases through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) in Indonesia are related to psychological disorders that affect work performance and safety. (Andri Suseno, 2025) adds that the Fit-to-Work policy in the oil and gas industry still focuses on physical aspects and does not fully accommodate workers' mental readiness.

From an organizational perspective, (Ballard dkk., 2025) demonstrate that organizations implementing integrated mental health policies experience a 25% reduction in accident rates and turnover. Approaches such as mindfulness training (Sun, 2023) and workplace wellness programs have been shown to reduce stress and increase safety awareness. (Coventry, 2022) emphasizes the importance of integrating clinical mental health programs with Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) systems for comprehensive risk prevention.

Additionally, personality factors and safety motivation influence safe behavior in the workplace. (Syarifah & Adiati, 2018) show that safety motivation and safety knowledge are psychological components that affect safety performance. Good mental health is the main foundation for the formation of safe work behavior and a safety culture.

Several other studies support the importance of psychological well-being in creating a safe work environment (Fadillah, 2024) and (Nadya Armani Salma & Najma Farisa Agustina, 2024) argue that good mental health increases productivity and job satisfaction, thereby reducing risky behavior. . (Fridayanti dkk., 2019) shows that workplace well-being has a significant effect on the mental health of employees with disabilities, while (Ompusunggu dkk., 2023) find that mental health education can improve psychological resilience and work performance.

Globally, institutions such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) (2025) have established best practices for mental health management in the workplace as part of a sustainable occupational safety system. (Minshall dkk., 2024) emphasize that workers' mental health impacts individuals as well as economic stability and national productivity.

With increasing awareness of the crucial role of mental health in creating a safe work environment, a comprehensive understanding of the influence of psychological factors on occupational safety is needed. Therefore, this study aims to review the literature on the role of mental health in improving occupational safety from an individual and organizational perspective.

RESEARCH METHODS

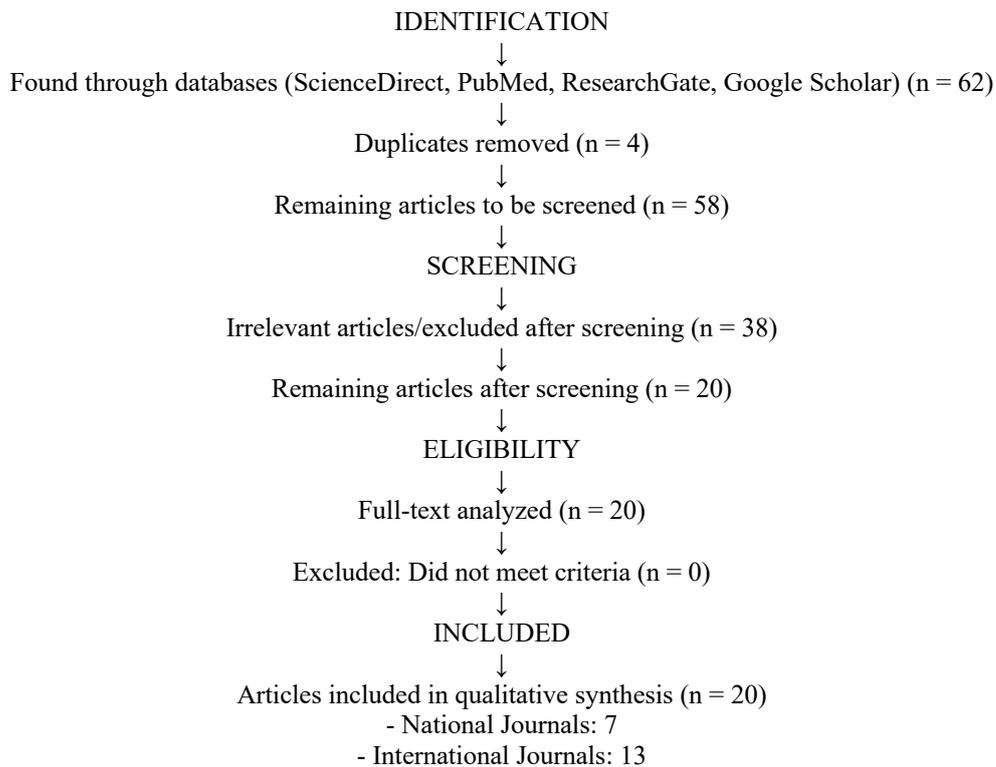
This The method used for the literature study was a systematic literature review employing the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) approach. This approach aims to identify, evaluate, and synthesize the results of previous studies relevant to the topic of "The Role of Mental Health in Improving Workplace Safety." The literature search process was conducted through several scientific databases, including ScienceDirect, PubMed, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar. The keywords used included: "mental health," "occupational safety," "psychological well-being," "psychosocial safety climate," "workplace well-being," and "employee safety."

This study followed the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, which include four main stages, namely:

1. Identification: searching for relevant articles based on keywords.
2. Screening: selecting articles based on titles and abstracts.
3. Eligibility: evaluating the content of articles according to inclusion and exclusion criteria.
4. Inclusion: determining the final articles used in the analysis.

From the initial search results, 62 articles were obtained, then selected based on topic, method, and year of publication, resulting in 20 articles that met the criteria and were used as analysis material in this study.

Journal selection using the flowchart method.



These steps help ensure that only articles meeting the methodological criteria and relevant to the topic of OSH and employee performance are included in the analysis. This approach allows for a targeted analysis that focuses on the empirical aspects of the relationship between the implementation of K3 and improved employee performance, as shown in various previous studies, (Kurniawati & Chairina, 2020).

From the initial search process, 62 scientific articles were obtained. After undergoing screening and feasibility evaluation, 20 articles that met the criteria were selected and used as the basis for analysis in this literature review. These articles served as the primary sources for developing the theoretical and empirical synthesis regarding the influence of occupational safety and health on employee performance.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The article search was conducted through the ScienceDirect, PubMed, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar databases using the keywords: “mental health,” “occupational safety,” “psychological well-being,” “psychosocial safety climate,” “workplace well-being,” and “employee safety.” The initial search yielded 62 articles relevant to the research topic. This literature study used literature sourced from national and international journals published from 2019 to 2024. After going through a selection process using the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, an inclusion and exclusion screening stage was carried out based on text completeness, topic relevance, and methodological quality. Of the total articles found, 42 articles met the initial inclusion criteria. After reviewing the full text and content relevance, 25 articles were found to be eligible for further analysis. Of these, 20 articles were selected as the main sources for this Systematic Literature Review (SLR). The selected articles were studies on the role of mental health in occupational safety, particularly among workers in the industrial, service, and health sectors.

Table 1. Literature Review

No	Title	Author/ Year	Type of article	Method	Main findings
1.	Implementation of Fit-to-Work in Maintaining the Mental Health of Oil and Gas Industry Employees: A Case Study at PT MN	(Andri Suseno, 2025)	Qualitative Research (Case Study)	In-depth interviews, focus group discussions, document studies	The <i>Fit-to-Work program</i> effectively prevents physical accidents, but mental health aspects are not yet optimal; work stress affects the risk of operational errors.
2.	Enhancing Social Dialogue Towards a Culture of Occupational Safety and Health	(Ratih Ibrahim (2022), t.t.)	Seminar Presentation /Paper	EAP Counseling Case Data Analysis and Conceptual Review	Mental health issues such as depression and anxiety are the main causes of up to 80% of workplace injuries.
3.	Mental Health and Work Stress in the Workplace: A Literature Review	(Sahadewa & Durry, t.t.)	Literature Review	Systematic Literature Review	Work stress increases the risk of injury, misdiagnosis, and intention to leave the job.
4.	Mental health at work: a practical framework for employers	(Ballard dkk., 2025)	Literature Review	Literature Review and Expert Consensus	The “3P” approach (Protection, Promotion, Intervention) prevents the impact of stress on safety.
5.	Mental health in the workplace	(Kelloway dkk., 2023)	Literature Review	Narrative Literature Review	Mental disorders reduce the ability to work safely; prolonged stress causes fatigue.
6.	Employee Mental Health in the Workplace. A Study of the Support Division of a Multinational Company	(hayati 2019, t.t.)	Quantitative Research	Questionnaire Survey	Work stress reduces concentration and increases the risk of accidents.
7.	The importance of employee mental health in the workplace on employee performance	(Fadillah, 2024)	Literature Study	Literature Study	Good mental health increases safety awareness; mental disorders decrease alertness.

No	Title	Author/ Year	Type of article	Method	Main findings	
8.	Workplace Mental Health and Well-being: Review and Framework	(Coventry, 2022)	Policy Review	Policy analysis	document	The integration of mental health and occupational safety and health policies strengthens the culture of safety and reduces absenteeism.
9.	Workplace Well-being dan Mental Health pada Pekerja Disabilitas	(Fridayanti dkk., 2019)	Quantitative Research	Surveys and descriptive analysis		Workplace well-being improves mental resilience and reduces risky work behavior.
10	Mind the Workplace Report 2024	(Minshall dkk., 2024)	Global Report	International survey and trend analysis		1 in 4 workers experience high psychological stress, which impacts productivity and safety.
11	Employee Well-being and Safety Outcomes	(Amoadu dkk., 2024)	Quantitative Research	Surveys & regression analysis		Psychosocial Safety Climate (PSC) reduces stress and improves workplace safety.
12	Good Practice Note on Managing Mental Health in the Workplace	(Asian Development Bank, 2025)	Policy Guide	International studies	policy	Integrating mental health into occupational safety and health reduces the risk of accidents by up to 25%.
13	The Relationship between Safety Motivation and Knowledge on K3 Performance	(Syarifah & Adiati, 2018)	Quantitative Research	Questionnaire survey		Motivation and safety knowledge mediate between psychological well-being and safe behavior.
14	Workplace Well-being terhadap Mental Health Pekerja	(Ompusunggu dkk., 2023)	Quantitative Research	cross-sectional Survey		Work well-being has a significant impact on stress and safety compliance.
15	Peran Workplace Well-being terhadap Mental Health	(Nadya Armani Salma & Najma Farisa)	Quantitative Research	Survey		Workplace well-being improves psychological well-being and safety awareness.

No	Title	Author/ Year	Type of article	Method	Main findings
		Agustina, 2024)			
16	Peran Kesehatan Mental terhadap Perilaku Aman Pekerja	(Robi Rojaya Simbolon dkk., 2024)	Quantitative Research	Regression analysis	Mental health affects safety behavior through increased focus and self-control.
17	Psychosocial Safety Climate and Mental Health at Work	(Dong dkk., 2024)	Quantitative Research	SEM Analysis	High PSC reduces stress and improves safety compliance.
18	The Economic and Health Imperatives of Workplace Mental Health	(<i>OECD 2024</i> , t.t.)	Policy Report	Cross-country data analysis	Mental disorders cause significant economic losses and physical safety risks.
19	The Effect of Work Stress on Occupational Safety in Industry	(Anwar, 2024)	Quantitative Research	Surveys and correlation tests	Mental health is positively related to occupational safety awareness.
20	Workplace Mental Health: Aligning Well-being and Safety	(<i>winsherly 2024</i>), t.t.)	Conceptual Review	Literature review	Strengthening mental health improves safety culture and reduces workplace accidents

From the results of a review of 20 articles analyzed, it can be concluded that most studies (around 70%) emphasize the direct relationship between workers' mental health and occupational safety levels. Factors such as work stress, burnout, and organizational support emerge as dominant variables in explaining this relationship. Various organizational policy approaches, such as Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), Fit-to-Work Policies, and Psychosocial Safety Climate (PSC), have proven effective in improving workplace safety while supporting the psychological well-being of employees. Furthermore, the findings show that the diverse research contexts—covering the industrial, public service, health, and education sectors—illustrate that the issues of mental health and workplace safety are universal and relevant across all fields of work.

DISCUSSION

This literature study reviews the role of mental health in improving occupational safety based on an analysis of 20 scientific articles, which show a significant influence on safety behavior, compliance with occupational safety and health procedures, and a reduction in workplace accidents. The role of mental health is described in three main dimensions: preventive (preventing unsafe work behavior by controlling stress and psychological fatigue), adaptive (enabling workers to adjust to high pressure to remain safe and focused), and promotive (building a safety culture through communication and organizational compliance).

Organizational policies such as Employee Assistance Programs and Fit-to-Work Policies also support this role in reducing stress and accident risks. The (Asian Development Bank 2025) report states that integrating mental health into OSH systems can reduce accidents by 25%, confirming mental health as an integral part of risk management strategies to create a safe, healthy, and productive work environment. The relationship between mental health and occupational safety is crucial, as good mental health can reduce stress levels and improve safe work behavior, thereby reducing the risk of accidents in the workplace. Organizations that systematically manage their employees' mental health through integrated policies tend to have safer and more productive work environments.

Psychological factors such as work stress, emotional exhaustion, and psychological well-being directly affect workers' focus and safety awareness. Therefore, organizational support that includes mental health policies and safety training is necessary to build a strong safety culture. Although occupational health programs in some places still focus too much on physical aspects, workers' mental preparedness is also crucial in maintaining accuracy and compliance with safety procedures. Integrating mental health into occupational safety systems is not only beneficial for individual well-being but also an effective strategy for reducing accidents, increasing productivity, and preventing social issues in the workplace. Optimal occupational safety is achieved when workers' psychological and social aspects are holistically addressed alongside procedural compliance.

CONCLUSION

Mental health plays a significant role in improving workplace safety by maintaining workers' emotional stability, focus, and cognitive abilities to manage risks effectively. In addition to controlling safe work behavior, mental health also helps workers adapt to work pressures and reduces the risk of accidents due to stress and burnout. At the organizational level, policies such as Employee Assistance Programs, Fit-to-Work Policies, and strengthening the Psychosocial Safety Climate are crucial for reducing stress and promoting safe work behavior. Workers' psychological well-being also strengthens accountability, communication, and collaboration, which build a collective safety culture. Therefore, integrating mental health is a key aspect of occupational safety and health strategies to create a safe, healthy, and productive work environment..

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