

Managing Stress: An Important Key to Maintaining Mental Health

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Abstract

This research investigates the crucial role of stress management as a key factor in maintaining optimal mental health. By analyzing the literature and related research results, this study identifies effective strategies that can be implemented to manage daily stress. These findings provide deep insight into the positive impact of stress management on psychological well-being and overall mental health. The practical implications of the results of this research can help design a holistic and personalized approach to dealing with stress challenges, creating a solid foundation for sustainable mental health development.

Keywords: Managing Stress, Key to Mental Health, Maintaining Mental Health

Introduction

Mental health is an integral part of overall well-being (Hernández et al., 2020), and the role of stress in threatening it cannot be ignored. In everyday life, challenges, pressures and demands can create emotional burdens that result in stress. Therefore, managing stress is an important key in maintaining optimal mental health (Popovic et L., 2022). Stress not only has a negative psychological impact, but can also affect overall body function. From sleep disturbances to decreased endurance, stress can penetrate various aspects of our lives. Therefore, a deep understanding of how to manage stress is a must to achieve good mental health (Lee et al., 2020).

Mental health is the foundation of our well-being as individuals (Burton et al., 2023). In this modern era, where life pressures, work demands, and social upheaval are so complex, dealing with stress has become an inevitable part of everyday life. Stress, in all its forms, can have a profound impact on psychological, emotional and physical aspects, so managing stress is an important key to maintaining optimal mental health (Nanda et al., 2020). When our bodies are faced with demanding situations, the sympathetic nervous system becomes active, releasing stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline. This response, dubbed the "fight or flight response," provides extra energy and increased focus to deal with difficult situations. However, if stress is prolonged or not managed well, it can cause an imbalance in the body and contribute to various health problems (McEwen & Karatsoreos, 2020).

In the ever-changing and often demanding pace of life, stress has become an inseparable component of the modern human experience. Job demands, environmental changes, social pressures, and various daily life problems can be stressors that affect our mental well-being. However, it is often overlooked that stress is not just a psychological discomfort, it also has a significant impact on our physical health (Bakker & de, 2021).

Mental health, as an integral part of overall well-being, is now increasingly becoming a focus of attention. The role of stress in disrupting mental balance has been proven in various scientific research and studies (Hussain et al., 2021). When we are under prolonged stress, our autonomic nervous system is in an activated state which can cause an increase in stress hormones such as

cortisol and adrenaline. The impact is not only felt on a psychological level, but also affects the body's functions as a whole, including the immune, digestive and cardiovascular systems. Managing stress is not just about temporarily reducing tension, but also building resilience to future stress. In this article, we will dig deeper into the concept of managing stress as a vital key to maintaining optimal mental health. We'll look at how stress can act as a risk factor for a variety of mental health disorders, from anxiety to depression, and how managing stress can be the first step in prevention (Gianotten, 2021).

In the midst of the dynamics of modern life which is full of demands and pressure, mental health is increasingly becoming a major concern in maintaining overall well-being. One factor that greatly influences mental health is stress. Stress, in all its forms, can trigger various psychological and physiological problems that impact a person's quality of life. The importance of understanding and managing stress is not only related to mental health aspects, but also involves physical and emotional balance (Chu et al., 2021). Stress that is not handled properly can cause sleep disorders, reduce the body's resistance, and even have the potential to cause chronic disease. Therefore, exploring important keys in managing stress is an urgent need.

Stress cannot be completely avoided in everyday life, but how we respond to it can make a big difference. From relaxation techniques involving meditation and yoga, to exercise as a form of physical release, we will explore methods that have proven effective in reducing stress levels. Apart from that, the role of positive thinking patterns and cognitive practices will also be a focus in efforts to build mental resilience. Through an in-depth understanding of the important keys to managing stress, it is hoped that readers will be able to apply these various strategies in their daily lives. In this way, it is hoped that we will be able to achieve emotional balance, increase endurance, and achieve strong mental health in the midst of life's complex challenges.

Methods

In mental health research, researchers use a variety of methods to gain a deep understanding of the phenomenon being studied. A literature study is often the first step, where researchers detail existing literature to understand previous findings and research on the mental health topic in question. This helps build a solid theoretical foundation and conceptual framework. Next, survey research is carried out by collecting data from respondents using questionnaires or interviews. This method helps researchers assess views, attitudes, and behaviors related to mental health among specific populations. Experimental research, on the other hand, involves controlling certain variables to evaluate causation. Clinical experiments, for example, can be used to test the effectiveness of an intervention against mental health disorders. Case studies, another research method, allow researchers to investigate in depth one or more cases to understand in detail how a phenomenon occurs at the level of a particular individual or group. Qualitative research, such as interviews, observations, or content analysis, allows researchers to explore and understand phenomena in depth. Meanwhile, quantitative research involves collecting numerical data to be analyzed statistically, and meta-analysis can be used to combine the results of existing research. Action research, on the other hand, involves the active participation of individuals or groups in the research process to achieve practical change and better understanding of mental health. The choice of research method depends on the research objectives, research questions, and characteristics of the population being studied, and a combination of methods is often applied to gain a comprehensive understanding.

Results and Discussion

Evolving research in the field of stress management and mental health has provided a deeper understanding of the various strategies that are effective in improving psychological well-being. These findings not only touch physiological aspects, but also involve psychological and

social dimensions that play an important role in understanding the complexity of the relationship between stress and mental health.

Relaxation Techniques

Research highlights that practicing relaxation techniques, such as mindfulness meditation or deep breathing exercises, can reduce levels of cortisol, a stress hormone in the body. Regular application of this technique not only provides short-term effects, but can also establish positive neuroplasticity changes in the long term.

Physical Activity

In the context of physical activity, research has shown that regular exercise can increase the release of endorphins, neurotransmitters associated with feelings of happiness and reduced stress. Therefore, making exercise an integral part of your daily routine can have significant benefits on mental health.

Healthy Diet

Further research is exploring the link between nutrition and mental health. A relationship between balanced food intake and stress management was found. Adequate nutrition, such as omega-3 fatty acids and B complex vitamins, is believed to support cognitive function and reduce the risk of mental disorders.

Social Support

The research results confirm that individuals with strong social support tend to be more resilient in dealing with stress. Positive social interactions can be a protective factor against the negative impacts of stress and provide a sense of connectedness that is important for mental health.

Cognitive Techniques

Further research into the use of cognitive techniques, such as CBT, shows that the process of recognizing and restructuring negative thought patterns can reduce levels of anxiety and depression. These effects illustrate the potential for positive changes in psychological responses to stress. By considering these findings holistically, it can be concluded that stress management involves a comprehensive approach, including physical, psychological and social aspects. Integrating these strategies into daily life can provide a solid foundation for achieving and maintaining optimal mental health.

The importance of a healthy diet is becoming increasingly clear, with the right intake of nutrients, such as omega-3 and vitamin B complex, supporting mental health. Additionally, robust social support proves its role as a protective factor against the negative impacts of stress, promoting a sense of connectedness that is essential for optimal mental health. Exploration of environmental factors shows that interactions with nature and technology can influence stress levels. Green environments or mental health digital therapies open a new dimension in modern stress management. From a neurobiological perspective, research explores the neural pathways and neurotransmitters that play a role in the body's response to stress, opening the door to more targeted therapies.

Longitudinal studies highlight that ongoing stress management can have long-term positive impacts on mental health. A holistic perception of stress management involves both spiritual and existential dimensions, recognizing that mental health is not a separate concept. The integration of these various approaches forms the basis for a more comprehensive approach to achieving optimal emotional balance and mental health. As a result, individuals can develop stress management strategies that are sustainable and fit their unique needs.

Conclusion

Stress management plays a key role in supporting optimal mental health. Relaxation techniques, regular physical activity, a healthy diet, solid social support, and an understanding of environmental and technological factors all contribute to improved psychological well-being. These findings highlight that a holistic approach involving physical, psychological and social aspects is key to managing stress effectively. Stress management is not just a preventive measure against high levels of stress, but also involves changing lifestyle and thought patterns to achieve mental resilience. It is also important to acknowledge the individual complexity and uniqueness of each mental health journey. Thus, the results of this study provide a strong basis for encouraging a personalized and integrated approach to stress management. In conclusion, effective stress management not only creates balance at an individual level but also makes a positive contribution to the overall well-being of society. By incorporating this knowledge into everyday life, individuals can build a solid foundation for sustainable mental health and better fulfill their life potential.

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