

## Coping Stress Recovery Agent in Community-Based Intervention Programs (IBM)

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### Abstract

The rising prevalence of drug abuse in Indonesia has prompted the National Narcotics Agency to implement Community-Based Intervention (IBM) programs, positioning recovery agents as frontline providers of psychosocial support. These agents face significant work-related stress from client mentoring, administrative duties, and community stigma, yet research on their coping experiences remains scarce. This study aims to explore the coping strategies used by recovery agents in the IBM Program in Gayamsari Subdistrict, Semarang City, Indonesia. A qualitative phenomenological approach was employed, involving three recovery agents purposively selected based on preliminary questionnaire results that represented high, moderate, and low work-stress levels. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and non-participant observation and analyzed using thematic analysis with NVivo 15 software. The findings reveal that recovery agents employ dynamic combinations of problem-focused coping (confrontative coping, planful problem solving, and seeking social support) and emotion-focused coping (distancing, self-control, positive reappraisal, accepting responsibility, and escape-avoidance). Comparative analysis indicates that coping effectiveness correlates with emotional regulation maturity, as lower-stress agents demonstrate more integrated coping repertoires. Institutional support from the National Narcotics Agency and community acceptance significantly influence the effectiveness of coping. This study addresses a critical research gap regarding the subjective coping experiences of recovery agents in community-based rehabilitation. The findings highlight the importance of structured psychosocial support, regular supervision, peer support groups, and culturally adapted stress management training to enhance agent well-being and program sustainability.

**Keywords:** community-based intervention, Indonesia, phenomenology, recovery agents, stress coping

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## INTRODUCTION

The escalating prevalence of drug abuse within Indonesian communities has reached alarming proportions, with the National Narcotics Agency (BNN) reporting over 3.4 million individuals engaged in substance abuse, predominantly among the productive age population between 15 and 64 years (BNN, 2021). This phenomenon extends beyond metropolitan areas into urban villages, including Gayamsari Subdistrict in Semarang City, where cases of light drug users have been identified in densely populated residential areas with limited access to formal rehabilitation services. The multifaceted consequences of drug abuse, encompassing health deterioration, social disintegration, economic burdens, and family disruption, necessitate comprehensive intervention strategies that extend beyond medical approaches to embrace community-based solutions. The importance of this research lies in its focus on understanding how community-embedded recovery agents navigate work-related stress, as their psychological well-being directly influences the quality and sustainability of rehabilitation services delivered at the grassroots level, ultimately determining the success of national efforts to combat substance abuse.

Community-Based Intervention (CBI) programs, operationalized through the "*Kampung Bersinar*" initiative, position Recovery Agents (*Agen Pemulihan*) as primary providers of psychosocial support for individuals with mild substance abuse histories (BNN, 2021). According to the BNN guidelines (2021), recovery agents perform multidimensional functions encompassing location mapping, client assessment, motivational support, and administrative reporting to district or provincial BNN offices. The demanding roles of community health workers (CHWs) in Mexico expose them to significant occupational stress and psychological distress.

Research consistently demonstrates the high prevalence of these issues, with one study in Aracaju finding that "29.3% of CHWs exhibited characteristics of burnout syndrome, with 57.2% experiencing psychological pressure and marked job control (Mota et al., 2014). This vulnerability was further exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a study reporting high levels of burnout (49.8%) and stress (46.8%) among healthcare workers in Mexico (Juárez-García et al., 2021). The sources of this distress are multifaceted, rooted in challenging working conditions. CHWs face a demanding work-life balance and close involvement with their communities, which contribute negatively to their mental well-being (Sullivan et al., 2024). Similarly, in institutional settings such as public hospitals, nurses frequently experience burnout due to high workloads, hazardous work, and tedious tasks (Molina Zavala et al., 2022), highlighting that the emotional burden is a systemic issue across healthcare roles in Mexico.

In response to these challenges, psychosocial support mechanisms, particularly those fostering peer connection, have proven effective in mitigating occupational stress. For instance, an intervention program implemented by the NGO *Compañeros En Salud* (CES) focused on fostering a sense of community among peers and enhancing self-efficacy, an approach that participants viewed positively, as it improved their mental well-being. However, consistency in access and implementation varied (Sullivan et al., 2024). This aligns with findings that family and peer support are significant resources for managing stress and burnout (Juárez-García et al., 2021). On a broader scale, Mexico's National Mental Health Strategy during the pandemic offered virtual clinics with mindfulness sessions for healthcare workers, demonstrating that early participation in



mental health strategies can mitigate immediate and long-term effects such as burnout and compassion fatigue (Real-Ramírez et al., 2020). Collectively, these findings underscore that while CHWs face substantial psychological burdens, structured interventions and peer support groups are vital for managing occupational stress and promoting well-being.

Despite the growing body of literature on stress coping among healthcare workers and formal employees, a significant research gap exists concerning the subjective experiences of Community-Based Intervention (CBI) recovery agents in Indonesia. Existing research has predominantly focused on community-based interventions for specific clinical populations, with studies demonstrating that such interventions enhance patients' knowledge, coping skills, social functioning, and quality of life among individuals with schizophrenia in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia (Hikmat et al., 2025). Similarly, research in Yogyakarta Province found that community-based rehabilitation programs significantly improved quality of life for people with schizophrenia, yet the psychological experiences of those delivering such interventions remain unexplored (Puspitosari et al., 2019). Furthermore, studies on stress management in Indonesia have concentrated on university students, with investigations revealing that web-based stress management interventions show feasibility and potential effectiveness in reducing student stress (Juniar et al., 2022), while emphasizing that systematic cultural adaptation is essential when implementing such programs in non-Western contexts (Juniar et al., 2019). Additional research has examined the reduction of psychological distress among students through adapted Self-Help Plus interventions, demonstrating promise for university settings (Andriani et al., 2025). This extensive attention to student populations and clinical recipients, while valuable, completely overlooks the unique pressures confronting recovery agents who serve as frontline non-professional providers within community rehabilitation structures.

The absence of research on CBI recovery agents is particularly concerning given the multidimensional challenges inherent in their roles, which parallel stressors documented among community health workers in other contexts. Studies have demonstrated that community health workers in disaster-affected areas benefit significantly from psychoeducational interventions focused on stress responses and coping strategies, which help reduce acute stress and improve perceived knowledge and social support (Powell & Yuma-Guerrero, 2016). Research further emphasizes that effective provider communication and therapeutic relationships are crucial in recovery-oriented practices, highlighting the importance of addressing emotional aspects and supporting self-determination (Okumura & Katsuki, 2024). In the Indonesian context, studies on community resilience consistently highlight the critical role of local agents, with research noting that community engagement, local knowledge, and multi-stakeholder cooperation are essential for effective disaster management and recovery in post-tsunami Banda Aceh (Irwansyah et al., 2024). Investigations into climate adaptation in Indonesian cities emphasize that strengthening community participation and collaboration between various stakeholders is fundamental to program success (Gaborit, 2022), while post-disaster economic recovery research demonstrates that strengthening community livelihoods depends on active local participation and capacity building (Hariyono et al., 2025). These findings collectively underscore that community-based programs succeed or fail based on the capacity and well-being of local agents, yet the



specific coping experiences of CBI recovery agents navigating client mentoring responsibilities, administrative duties, community stigma, and personal boundaries remain entirely unexamined in the current literature, creating a critical knowledge gap that limits the development of culturally-appropriate psychosocial support systems essential for sustaining agent well-being and ensuring the effectiveness of Indonesia's national rehabilitation efforts.

Despite the growing body of literature on stress coping among healthcare workers and formal employees, a significant research gap exists concerning the subjective experiences of Community-Based Intervention recovery agents in Indonesia. While studies have examined stress among clinical rehabilitation staff, community health workers in international contexts, and the structural implementation of CBI programs, no known research has specifically investigated how Indonesian recovery agents perceive, interpret, and manage work-related stress within the unique sociocultural context of community-based rehabilitation. This gap is particularly problematic given that recovery agents operate as non-professional community members who simultaneously navigate client mentoring responsibilities, administrative duties, community expectations, and personal boundaries, creating distinct stress dynamics that differ from those of formal healthcare workers. The absence of empirical understanding regarding their coping experiences limits the development of targeted psychosocial support interventions and evidence-based training programs essential for agent well-being and program effectiveness.

The novelty of this research lies in its phenomenological exploration of recovery agents' lived experiences with work stress coping, offering the first in-depth qualitative investigation of this population within Indonesian community-based rehabilitation contexts. This study aims to comprehensively explore the coping stress experiences of recovery agents involved in the Community-Based Intervention Program in Gayamsari Subdistrict, Semarang City. Specifically, the research seeks to: (1) understand how recovery agents perceive and interpret work-related stressors emerging from their mentoring roles; (2) identify the problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies employed by agents in managing occupational stress; (3) analyze how agents representing different stress levels vary in their coping approaches; and (4) examine the influence of social contextual factors, including community support and institutional collaboration with BNN, on coping effectiveness. Unlike previous quantitative studies that measured stress levels or coping strategy frequencies, this study employs a phenomenological approach to uncover the essential meanings agents ascribe to their coping experiences, revealing how they dynamically combine problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies in response to contextual demands. The use of NVivo 15 software for systematic thematic analysis enables comprehensive mapping of coping patterns across agents representing high, moderate, and low stress levels, generating a nuanced understanding of how stress perceptions relate to coping strategy selection within the specific sociocultural environment of Gayamsari Subdistrict, where collectivist values, community stigma, and institutional collaboration shape agents' adaptive responses.



## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative, phenomenological approach to explore in depth the coping stress experiences of recovery agents involved in the Community-Based Intervention Program in the Gayamsari Subdistrict, Semarang City. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), a phenomenological study describes the common meaning among several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or phenomenon, focusing on what all participants share as they experience it. The phenomenological approach is particularly appropriate for this research as it seeks to understand how recovery agents perceive and manage work-related stress during their mentoring roles as they consciously experience it. As explained by Smith et al (2022), interpretative phenomenological analysis examines how people make sense of their major life experiences, making it well-suited for exploring affective, emotional, and often intense human experiences. Furthermore, van Manen (2016) emphasizes that the aim of phenomenology is to transform lived experience into a textual expression of its essence, focusing on the deep meaning of human experiences rather than mere descriptions of events. Moustakas (1994) adds that phenomenological research involves returning to experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for reflective structural analysis to portray the essences of experience. The focus of this research is not on statistical generalization but on revealing the essential meaning of coping experiences within community-based social work contexts, allowing for a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of participants' lived experiences.

The research was conducted at the IBM Gempita program in Gayamsari Subdistrict, Semarang City, chosen because the IBM program implementation remains actively ongoing. Participant selection employed a purposive sampling technique, which Patton (2015) describes as the deliberate selection of information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under investigation. Patton further explains that information-rich cases are those from which researchers can learn a great deal about issues central to the research's purpose. In phenomenological research, a relatively small number of participants is considered adequate because the research emphasizes deepening the meaning of experiences rather than variation across broad populations. Creswell and Poth (2018) recommend studying 3 to 10 participants in phenomenological research, as this range allows sufficient depth to explore individual experiences while maintaining an analytical focus. Morse (1994) suggests that researchers should plan to interview at least six participants for phenomenological studies, while Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) found that saturation often occurs within the first twelve interviews. The three participants were purposively selected based on the following inclusion criteria: (1) having a minimum one year of work experience as recovery agents, (2) actively accompanying clients in program implementation, (3) residing in the program implementation area, and (4) voluntarily agreeing to participate.

Before implementing the main research, a preliminary study was conducted by distributing a work stress questionnaire to six recovery agents at the research location. Based on questionnaire results, recovery agents were categorized into high, moderate, and low work-stress groups. Subsequently, one participant from each category was selected to obtain comprehensive variation in coping experiences. This sampling strategy aligns with Patton's (2015) maximum variation sampling, which aims to purposefully select a wide range of variation on dimensions of interest to document unique variations



and identify important common patterns that cut across them. The three purposively selected participants represented different stress levels: one participant with a high stress level, one with a moderate stress level, and one with a low stress level. This variation enables comparative analysis to identify coping dynamics across different stress levels. According to Miles et al (2020), such sampling strategies enhance the transferability of findings within qualitative research by ensuring that the phenomenon is examined under diverse conditions. Sandelowski (1995) emphasizes that purposeful sampling requires making strategic choices about where, how, and from whom data will be collected to ensure that the research questions are adequately addressed.

Data collection techniques employed in this research include preliminary study questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and non-participant observation. The research instrument used a semi-structured interview guide developed in accordance with established phenomenological guidelines. Kvale and Brinkmann (2015) describe qualitative interviews as attempts to understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences, and to uncover their lived world. Seidman (2019) emphasizes that interviewing allows researchers to understand the lived experience of others and the meanings they make of that experience. Interviews were conducted face-to-face and recorded with participant consent to maintain meaning accuracy. Observation was conducted to strengthen the understanding of the social context of program implementation and recovery agents' behavior in carrying out field roles. According to Angrosino (2007), observation in qualitative research involves the systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study, enabling researchers to understand complex interactions and natural contexts. Spradley (2016) adds that participant observation serves to understand the explicit and tacit aspects of culture and social processes, making it invaluable for contextualizing interview data.

Data analysis in this research employed phenomenological thematic analysis, following the guidelines of Moustakas (1994) and Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2022), with systematic steps of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, as formulated by Miles et al (2020). The analysis process was assisted by NVivo 15 software to enhance traceability and analytical rigor. Following the thematic analysis framework developed by Braun and Clarke (2022), the analysis included familiarization with data through repeated reading, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. Data trustworthiness was maintained through triangulation techniques as recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985), who established criteria for qualitative research trustworthiness, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Member checking was conducted by returning findings to participants to verify the accuracy of interpretation. Additionally, researchers applied reflective attitudes and epoché as emphasized by Moustakas (1994) and van Manen (2016), requiring the suspension of assumptions and presuppositions about the phenomenon to access purified experiences free from everyday assumptions. This research has obtained ethical approval from relevant institutions, with all participants provided explanations regarding research objectives, and researchers guaranteeing confidentiality and anonymity by using initials or pseudonyms in accordance with ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects as outlined by the British Psychological Society (2021).





management, and the dynamics of social interaction among agents, clients, and the community. Furthermore, the high frequency of words like *dukungan* (support) and *komunikasi* (communication) suggests the importance of collaboration and social relationships in building effective coping strategies.

### Thematic Mapping of Coping Strategies

The interconnection between main categories and subcategories generated during the coding process in NVivo 15 is visualized in the connection map below. This map illustrates two major themes, namely Problem-Focused Coping and Emotion-Focused Coping, each with several derivative sub-themes.

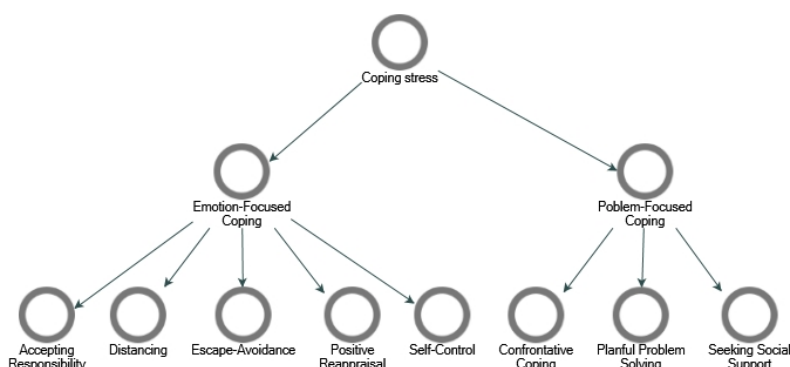


Figure 2. Connection Map of Coping Strategy Themes

Problem-Focused Coping encompasses agents' active strategies for directly addressing sources of stress, including confrontative coping, planful problem-solving, and seeking social support. Meanwhile, Emotion-Focused Coping describes agents' efforts to manage emotional responses to work pressure through sub-themes such as accepting responsibility, positive reappraisal, self-control, escape-avoidance, and distancing. This mapping demonstrates that both main categories are interconnected within a dynamic adaptation system. Recovery agents not only focus on rational problem-solving but also balance it with emotional regulation to maintain psychological well-being and work effectiveness. This relationship reinforces the finding that successful coping depends not only on problem-focused actions but also on individuals' ability to interpret and manage the emotional burden that arises during the mentoring process.

### Summary of Coping Strategy Findings

The main findings from coding interviews with the three participants are summarized in the following table, which identifies two major categories representing the balance between action and emotional management strategies.



**Table 1.**  
 Summary of Recovery Agents' Stress Coping Analysis Findings

Aspect	Sub-aspect	Description
Problem-Focused Coping	Confrontative Coping	Direct efforts to face problems through open communication, negotiation, and assertive agreement with clients
	Planful Problem Solving	Strategies for planning problem-solving steps by managing time, priorities, and work focus to effectively complete task burdens
	Seeking Social Support	Seeking help, information, or solutions from fellow recovery agents or BNN facilitators to overcome work problems
Emotion-Focused Coping	Accepting Responsibility	Accepting unchangeable situations, acknowledging mistakes, and improving them as a learning process
	Positive Reappraisal	Transforming perspective on stress into opportunities for growth and finding positive meaning in social work
	Escape-Avoidance	Temporarily avoiding pressure to calm down and restore energy before continuing tasks
	Self-Control	Controlling emotions and maintaining professionalism to avoid affecting working relationships with clients or colleagues
	Distancing	Maintaining boundaries between personal and work matters, and not becoming absorbed in clients' emotions

The table above shows that recovery agents employ a balanced combination of problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies. They not only focus on solving field problems but also develop reflective and affective capabilities to maintain psychological stability and work effectiveness in mentoring drug abuse clients.

#### Problem-Focused Coping Strategies

Problem-focused coping reflects recovery agents' active efforts to address sources of stress directly through concrete actions. This strategy manifests in three forms: confrontative coping, planful problem solving, and seeking social support.

Confrontative coping was evident in agents' courage to face problems openly and assertively. DW reported frequently conducting direct confirmation with parties who rejected IBM activities while maintaining communication ethics to avoid conflict. DK demonstrated a more diplomatic, confrontational approach through negotiation with clients, emphasizing the importance of providing space and time for clients without forcing or judging them. These statements demonstrate agents' ability to manage conflict with empathetic, open approaches, thereby effectively maintaining trust and interpersonal relationships with clients.



Planful problem-solving emerged through agents' systematic and measured action planning. DW emphasized focusing on completing IBM tasks before moving to other activities. SD stressed the importance of scheduling amidst numerous personal activities, while DK added that work priorities must be determined based on urgency levels. These findings indicate that recovery agents use planful problem-solving to maintain a balance between professional responsibilities and personal life, consistent with theoretical frameworks emphasizing the effectiveness of strategies when individuals have control over stress-inducing situations.

Seeking social support became the most frequently used coping form among recovery agents. SD revealed a pattern of regularly seeking advice from BNN facilitators and fellow recovery agents. DW showed similar patterns through active communication with colleagues, while DK emphasized the importance of group coordination and regular meetings as collaborative platforms. These findings confirm that social support functions not only as a source of technical assistance but also strengthens emotional cohesion among agents, reducing psychological pressure and increasing worker self-efficacy.

#### Emotion-Focused Coping Strategies

Emotion-focused coping strategies reflect agents' ability to manage emotional reactions to stress, particularly when situations cannot be directly changed. Based on analysis, five main forms of this strategy were identified: distancing, accepting responsibility, positive reappraisal, escape-avoidance, and self-control.

Distancing appeared when agents maintained emotional distance to avoid becoming emotionally involved with clients. DW explained how to separate personal and work matters while maintaining focus. SD added that when hearing clients' sad stories, she attempts to calm herself and regulate her emotions to avoid being swept away by clients' sadness. DK emphasized the importance of balancing empathy with self-calming, and of maintaining boundaries between personal problems and client issues. These findings indicate that agents use distancing to balance empathy with professionalism, maintaining effectiveness in emotionally demanding work situations.

Accepting responsibility for difficult working conditions became an important strategy in maintaining psychological balance. SD demonstrated a reflective attitude by acknowledging mistakes and committing to improvement. DW showed similar patterns with willingness to learn from experience, while DK emphasized that every mistake must be corrected to avoid deviating from work goals. This attitude reflects an acceptance of responsibility as part of emotional maturity in the face of pressure, helping individuals adapt to stress more realistically.

Positive reappraisal was evident in agents' efforts to interpret work pressure as an enriching and strengthening experience. SD conveyed that field challenges actually expand knowledge and social networks while building resilience. DW added that witnessing positive changes in clients provides emotional satisfaction and renewed motivation. These findings align with research indicating that positive reappraisal can enhance a sense of meaning and psychological resilience among social workers.

Escape-avoidance mechanisms were employed as temporary avoidance to restore emotional energy. SD described choosing rest and light healing with family to calm the mind. DW mentioned that when feeling tired or pressured, she prefers solitude and listening to her favorite music. DK calms himself by watching entertainment programs as



a form of distraction from work pressure. These forms represent not negative escapism but a means to balance psychological conditions to maintain work focus, with relaxation and light activities serving as effective ways to prevent emotional exhaustion.

Self-control emerged as a crucial aspect in maintaining the professionalism of recovery agents. In high-pressure situations, SD chooses silence and self-restraint to avoid emotional reactions. DK emphasizes the importance of maintaining calmness and professionalism with clients, including punctuality and control of emotional expression. These findings illustrate that recovery agents exercise self-control by restraining impulsive reactions and maintaining emotional expression, thereby sustaining professionalism and work effectiveness, as supported by the literature indicating that social workers with good emotional regulation are more resistant to long-term work stress.

#### Cross-Participant Comparison of Coping Strategies

To provide a more systematic overview of coping patterns across participants by stress level, a comparative thematic matrix is presented below.

**Table 2.**

Cross-Participant Comparison Matrix of Coping Strategies

Participant	Stress Level	Problem-Focused Coping (Quotations)	Emotion-Focused Coping (Quotations)
DW	High	Planful Problem Solving: "When there are IBM tasks, I focus on completing those first."	Distancing: "Trying to separate time, thoughts, and focus."
		Seeking Social Support: "I usually consult with BNN facilitators or other AP friends."	Escape-Avoidance: "Rest for a moment, refresh the mind, maybe listen to music."
SD	Moderate	Seeking Social Support: "I share with fellow agents or BNN facilitators."	Positive Reappraisal: "I get to know people's characters, gain experience."
		Planful Problem Solving: "We arrange schedules first because I have many activities."	Self-Control: "I stay silent first to hold back emotions."
DK	Low	Confrontative Coping: "We must be able to provide space and time to clients."	Self-Control: "Cannot show angry facial expressions."
			Accepting Responsibility: "If there are mistakes, just correct them."

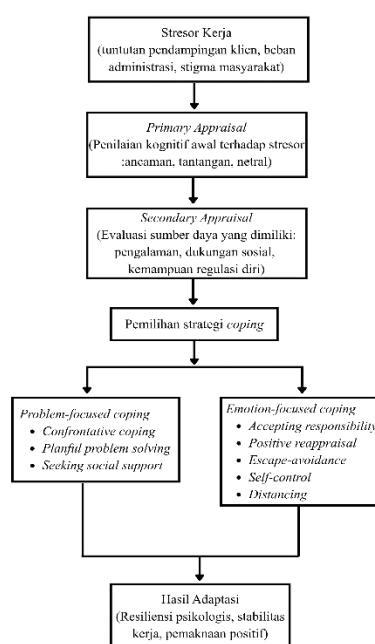
The matrix above shows that participants with high stress levels (DW) tend to rely on work planning and social support to manage task burdens, while still requiring emotional regulation strategies such as distancing and temporary rest. Participants with moderate stress (SD) demonstrate a relative balance between problem-focused and



emotion-focused strategies. Meanwhile, participants with low stress (DK) show more stable emotional regulation, maturity and assertive communication in facing pressure. This pattern indicates that emotional regulation maturity correlates with lower perceived stress levels.

### Flowchart of Recovery Agents' Coping Process

Based on cross-participant thematic synthesis, the coping process of recovery agents does not occur spontaneously but through stages of cognitive appraisal of work stressors. This process is visualized in the following flowchart.



**Figure 3.** Recovery Agents' Coping Process

The figure above illustrates that the coping process occurs gradually and relationally, from the emergence of work stressors to the production of psychological adaptation. Stressors such as client mentoring demands, administrative burden, and community stigma are first assessed through primary appraisal, namely, evaluation of whether the situation is considered threatening, challenging, or neutral. Subsequently, agents conduct secondary appraisal, namely assessment of available resources such as field experience, social support from fellow agents and BNN facilitators, and self-regulation capabilities.

The results of this evaluation determine the coping strategies selected based on the perceived level of control over the situation faced. When situations are perceived as controllable, agents tend to use problem-focused coping, such as confrontational coping, planful problem-solving, and seeking social support. Conversely, when stressors are perceived as difficult to change, agents rely more on emotion-focused coping, such as self-control, positive reappraisal, accepting responsibility, distancing, and escape-avoidance. The selected coping strategies then lead to adaptation outcomes, including psychological resilience, work stability, and positive meaning-making of social roles. Overall, this model confirms that recovery agents' adaptation success is determined not



only by problem-solving abilities, cognitive evaluation quality, and self-regulation capacity, but is also influenced by contextual factors such as social support and community stigma.

## Discussion

This study reveals that recovery agents in the Community-Based Intervention program employ dynamic combinations of problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies in managing work-related stress, consistent with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model. The findings demonstrate that agents utilize problem-focused approaches, including cognitive restructuring and active problem-solving, supporting evidence that group-based stress management intervention based on cognitive-behavioral therapy principles showed significant reductions in perceived stress and improvements in coping strategies such as positive reframing (Willert et al., 2009).

Similarly, agents employ emotion-focused strategies, including mindfulness and relaxation, which align with research showing that web-based interventions incorporating mindfulness and relaxation exercises have been effective in reducing stress, anxiety, and depression among workers (Ryan et al., 2017). The integration of both coping forms reflects a comprehensive approach in which interventions addressing psychosocial work-related stress combine multiple components, including cognitive-behavioral techniques, psychoeducation, and relaxation training (Restrepo & Lemos, 2021). Social support mechanisms in agents' coping repertoires align with findings that psychoeducational interventions that help community health workers identify stress responses and utilize healthy coping strategies significantly reduced acute stress scores. In contrast, social support and team building helped normalize emotions and reduce stress levels (Powell & Yuma-Guerrero, 2016). These convergent findings confirm that recovery agents' adaptive coping aligns with the transactional model's core premise that effective stress management requires a flexible deployment of both problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies tailored to situational demands.

The significant reliance on emotion-focused coping strategies among recovery agents, particularly distancing, self-control, and positive reappraisal, reflects the unique emotional demands of mentoring individuals with substance abuse histories. Research has documented that individuals recovering from substance abuse often employ emotion-focused coping strategies to manage stress and emotional challenges, including distancing themselves from stressors and exercising self-control to avoid relapse (Valtonen et al., 2006). Furthermore, qualitative evidence confirms that positive reappraisal, which involves reinterpreting stressful situations in a more positive light, is another common emotion-focused strategy that helps individuals manage their emotional reactions and maintain a positive outlook during recovery (Setiawan et al., 2024). The emotional demands of mentoring are substantial, as mentors often engage in activities that provide emotional support and help mentees navigate their recovery journey, a process that requires mentors to manage their own emotions effectively while supporting others (Lawlor et al., 2014). Additionally, studies emphasize that maintaining self-control and commitment to recovery goals involves managing emotional reactions and staying focused on long-term recovery objectives (A'zami et al., 2015). These convergent findings confirm that recovery agents' reliance on emotion-focused coping is not merely a preference but a necessity arising from the high emotional demands of mentoring,



enabling them to manage personal stress while providing effective support to individuals with substance abuse histories.

The comparative analysis across participants with varying stress levels reveals important patterns regarding coping effectiveness and psychological adaptation. Research on frontline medical workers during the COVID-19 pandemic identified three coping profiles, coping inadequately, coping appropriately, and coping excessively, finding that those who coped appropriately had lower levels of anxiety, depression, and PTSD compared to those who coped inadequately or excessively (Yan et al., 2023). This aligns with findings among adolescents, where engaged copers reported the lowest symptoms of internalizing psychopathology, while active copers reported higher symptoms (Perzow et al., 2021), suggesting that coping quality matters more than coping quantity. Studies on individuals with chronic illness further confirm that adaptive coping strategies were associated with lower psychological distress and higher life satisfaction (Livneh, Lott, & Antonak, 2004, p. 412).

Experimental research demonstrates that focus on positives and active coping led to lower psychological stress reactions compared to evasive coping (Schäfer et al, 2020). Furthermore, Kaiseler et al (2009) found that problem-focused coping was associated with lower psychological distress and higher perceived quality of life, while Ajibewa et al (2021) noted that emotion-focused and avoidance coping were less effective, often associated with higher psychological distress and maladaptive outcomes (p. 335). These convergent findings across diverse populations confirm that coping effectiveness and psychological adaptation depend not merely on the presence of coping strategies but on their appropriate matching to stressor characteristics and individual contexts, with adaptive coping profiles consistently associated with better psychological outcomes.

The contextual factors influencing the effectiveness of coping deserve particular attention, especially the role of institutional support from the National Narcotics Agency and community acceptance of recovery agents' roles. Participants consistently emphasized the importance of coordination with BNN facilitators and regular team meetings as sources of technical guidance and emotional reassurance. This finding aligns with research demonstrating that formal social support and satisfaction with these services significantly impact recovery outcomes by mediating the effects of informal social support and coping mechanisms (Yang et al., 2023). Furthermore, studies on recovery-oriented interventions confirm that work-related satisfaction among clinicians working at inpatient treatment facilities for substance use disorder is positively influenced by recovery orientation, including enabling patients to pursue their goals and choices (Johannessen et al, 2021). The importance of community acceptance is underscored by evidence that support networks, socioeconomic conditions, and the availability of timely treatment are crucial, while dysfunctional relationships and stigmatization can hinder recovery (Ramos et al., 2026). Westermeyer (2015) further emphasizes that mutual-help groups and family support are vital in creating a supportive social network for individuals in recovery, helping to re-establish trust and provide a foundation for healthy living. These convergent findings confirm that institutional support from BNN and community acceptance of recovery agents' roles are not merely supplementary but fundamental to effective coping, providing both technical resources and emotional reassurance that enable agents to sustain their essential mentoring functions.



## CONCLUSION

This phenomenological study reveals that recovery agents in Indonesia's Community-Based Intervention Program manage work stress through a dynamic combination of problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies. Agents employ confrontative coping, planful problem-solving, and social support when facing controllable stressors, while utilizing distancing, self-control, positive reappraisal, accepting responsibility, and escape-avoidance to manage emotional burdens arising from client relapse and community stigma. The comparative analysis across participants with high, moderate, and low stress levels indicates that coping effectiveness correlates with emotional regulation maturity, as agents with lower stress demonstrate more integrated and balanced coping repertoires. These findings extend Lazarus and Folkman's transactional stress model to the underexplored context of community-based recovery agents and address the research gap in their subjective coping experiences. Practical implications suggest that the National Narcotics Agency should implement regular psychosocial supervision, peer support groups, and culturally-adapted stress management training. Community awareness initiatives addressing stigma toward drug users and recovery agents are also essential for creating supportive environments. Future research should employ multi-site longitudinal designs to examine changes in coping trajectories and evaluate intervention effectiveness across diverse Indonesian sociocultural contexts.

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