THE ROLE OF WORK STRESS IN MARRIAGE COMMITMENT AMONG POLICE PERSONNEL: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

Work stress in police personnel is one of the important factors influencing psychological well being and family dynamics, particularly marital commitment. This study aims to identify and analyze the relationship between work stress and marital commitment among Indonesian National Police personnel thru a systematic literature review (SLR) approach to recent national and international research. The study results indicate that work stress has an impact on reducing communication quality, causing role conflict, and increasing emotional tension in the marital relationships of police personnel. Work-family conflict is the main mediator in this relationship. While social support, flexible work policies, and individual coping strategies are important moderating factors in overcoming existing conditions. The limitations of the research found are primarily related to the dominance of quantitative studies, the limitations of the local Indonesian context, and the scarcity of longitudinal studies, which pose challenges for the development of effective interventions. This study recommends strengthening organizational and family support and developing policies responsive to the dynamics of work stress to improve resilience and the quality of marital commitment among police personnel. This finding is very important in efforts to strengthen understanding of the work-life balance in the police environment in order to support the professionalism and well-being of members and their families.

Keywords: : work stress, marital commitment, police personnel

Introduction

In recent decades, within the dynamics of modern life, the presence of stressful conditions in the workplace has become a new psychosocial phenomenon, particularly in jobs with high levels of pressure or demands, as seen in police (Utari & Arisandy, 2024). Police personnel are required to be mentally and physically prepared to carry out duties that involve safety risks, irregular working hours, and high social expectations as servants, protectors, and law enforcers for the community. As a result, they are highly susceptible to work-related stress, both physically and mentally (Sangeetha, 2020). Work stress is a fundamental challenge faced by police personnel in various countries, including Indonesia, where this profession demands high mental and physical readiness due to operational challenges, safety risks, and significant social expectations (Utari & Arisandy, 2024). Research conducted by Pinki dan Sandeep Panchal (2020),) confirms that police work stress not only impacts task performance but also has far-reaching implications for personal life, particularly in building and maintaining marital commitment. Similar findings were also reported by Ganachari (2021), who found that work stress in a police environment is closely related to role conflict within the family, decreased psychological well-being, and an increased risk of domestic conflict.

Excessive work stress often affects job performance and personal life, especially in building and maintaining marital commitment (Hayati et al., 2020). Previous studies have shown that the stress caused by police work can reduce the quality of relationships within households,

leading to role conflict and disrupting psychological and emotional stability within the family. One of these impacts is a decline in marital commitment, characterized by reduced satisfaction and intimacy, as well as an increased risk of domestic disputes (Priatna & Budiani, 2021).

Marital commitment is defined as a strong desire to maintain one's marital relationship, reflected in their behavioral, emotional, and cognitive responses to living together with their partner in a household (Shaik, 2022). Long working hours, sudden assignments, and job risks often lead to limited time with family, reduced communication, and excessive anxiety in the spouses of police officers (Liu et al., 2019). If this issue is not handled well, marital commitment will weaken and there is a greater possibility that the household will break up (Matthews, 2011). Additionally, Matthews also stated how important it is to have social support from an adaptive partner in order to reduce the impact of work stress on household relationships. New studies show that police personnel and their families will be more resilient to stress attacks when they receive institutional support (Humaira & Aprilia, 2024), such as stress management training, work-life balance plans, and family counselling. In other words, maintaining the harmony of police personnel's households often depends on preventing and managing systemic work-based stress(Humaira & Aprilia, 2024).

Most research has emphasized how work stress impacts the well-being and household relationships of individuals working in the police force (Hayati et al., 2020). However, there is little research that systematically addresses the relationship between work stress and marital commitment among police officers. The number of studies conducted in Indonesia on the dynamics of marital commitment in the context of police work pressure is very small. Most research tends to emphasize factors that cause work stress or conflict between work and family, but not much has studied how work stress affects the strength and quality of marital commitment (Priatna & Budiani, 2021). Additionally, international literature exploring the relationship between work stress and marital commitment in law enforcement officers has largely failed to explicitly examine protective mechanisms, such as spousal social support, shared coping strategies, or institutional interventions that could mitigate these negative impacts. The unique cultural and organizational context of the Indonesian National Police has also not been extensively explored in previous studies (Sangeetha, 2020), resulting in limited understanding of how these variables moderate the relationship between work stress and marital commitment.

Cultural factors, such as the values and social norms inherent in a particular community, also play a significant role in how police officers and their families cope with work stress and maintain their marital commitment (Hayati et al., 2020). For example, Javanese culture, which prioritizes family harmony and social responsibility, has been shown to support marital resilience amidst work pressures (Rakhmawati, 2022). The importance of social support from the surrounding environment, including the community, colleagues, and extended family, has been shown to reduce the negative impact of work stress and improve psychological well-being and the quality of marital relationships (Rakhmawati, 2022). Coping strategies implemented together by police couples, such as open communication, clear role division, and mutual emotional support, can reduce work-family conflict and strengthen marital commitment (Utari & Arisandy, 2024). Additionally, police organizational policies that support work-life balance, such as flexible work schedules and mental health programs, can be significant protective factors in maintaining the harmony of Polri personnel's households. Thus, efforts to increase marital commitment and family well-being for members of the Indonesian National Police require intervention not only at the individual level but also at the family, organizational, and even societal levels, as well as cross-cultural collaboration, to ensure truly optimal and sustainable results (Ganachari, 2021).

This study uses a systematic literature review (SLR) approach to examine the relationship between work stress and marital commitment among police officers theoretically and empirically. In addition to examining the impact of work stress, this study also analyzes protective factors and coping strategies. The aim is to identify and synthesize findings from nationally and internationally reputable journals to produce a comprehensive understanding that supports the development of effective and relevant marriage commitment interventions across various cultural contexts. This research is expected to provide a strong evidence base for practical application by professional counselors in supporting married couples within the Indonesian National Police environment.

Method

This study uses a systematic literature review (SLR) approach to examine the relationship between work stress and marital commitment in police personnel theoretically and empirically. The articles were selected using the following keyword combination: "work stress" AND "marital commitment" AND "police personnel". A literature search was conducted on three major databases: Google Scholar, Scopus, and ProQuest. Initially, the search yielded a total of 160 articles, with 100 articles from Google Scholar, 50 articles from Scopus, and 10 articles from ProQuest. After screening to ensure only original research articles were included, 110 articles were selected for the next stage. Further screening eliminated 35 articles because they were not fully accessible, not available in full text format, or used an inappropriate language (not English). As a result, 75 articles remained that could be screened in depth. Next, 25 articles were excluded because they were not relevant to the research topic, mainly because the titles did not contain the keywords "work stress," "marital commitment," and "police personnel." Thus, 49 articles were considered relevant and suitable for the research topic. After a duplication check, 25 duplicate articles were removed, leaving 24 articles for in-depth content review. From this stage, 18 articles were excluded because, although they discussed marital commitment, they did not specifically address the relationship between work stress and commitment in police personnel. Finally, a total of 6 of the most relevant and appropriate research articles were successfully identified as the basis for this systematic review. The origin details of the articles are as follows: 4 articles are from Google Scholar and 2 articles are from Scopus.
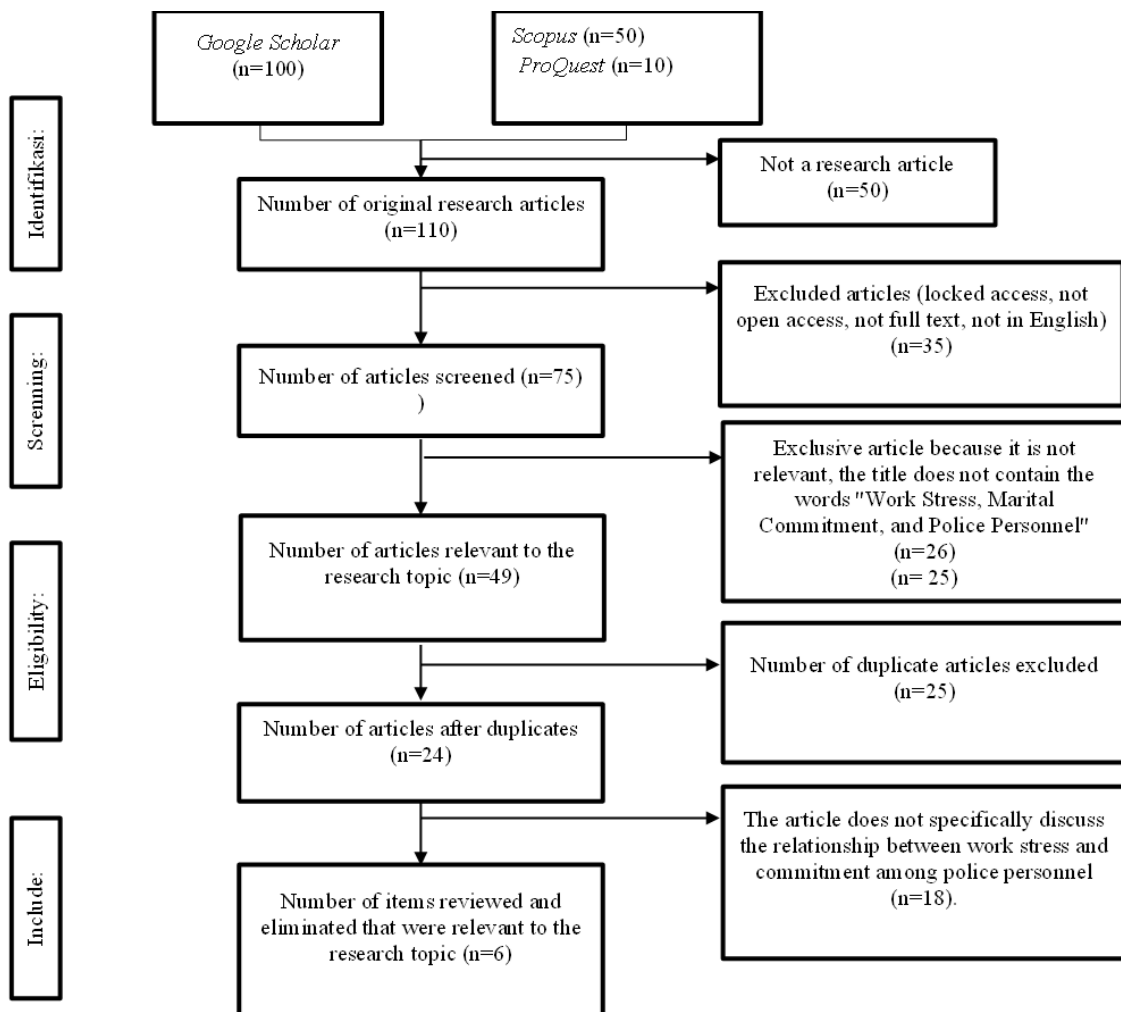
Figure 1 Systematic Literature Review (SLR)

Result and Discussion
Article Extraction Results

Based on the review of 6 articles, it was found that group counselling had a positive impact on marital commitment among police personnel, particularly in terms of effectively creating an open dialog atmosphere and marital relationships. The main findings are as follows:

Table 1. Article Extraction Result

No	Title/author/ year	Research Objective	Research Type	Data Collection Method	Population and Sample	Size Results
1	Perceptions of Law Enforcement Spouses Regarding Officer Safety and Danger (Disertasi, Walden University) (Rose, 2025)	Exploring police officers' perceptions of safety and danger in police work	Qualitative	Semi-structured interview	12 police couples married in a Texas urban community.	Partners experience high levels of anxiety regarding officer safety, especially when officers are injured, interacting with the public, or when the media shows negative sentiment. This stress impacts work-life balance and work-family conflict, and causes secondary traumatic stress in partners. The findings highlight the importance of partners' role in managing stress and supporting police professionalism.
2	Perceived Impact of Police Work on Marital Relationships. The Family Journal, 23(2), 120-131.(Karaffa et al., 2015)	To study the perceptions of police officers and their spouses regarding the impact of police work on their marital relationships	Qualitative and Quantitative	Needs survey and in-depth interviews with police officers and their partners	Police and their partners (sample size unspecified)	Police work stress brought home results in communication difficulties, role conflict, and emotional tension in marital relationships. Appropriate intervention and support are needed to reduce these negative impacts on household harmony.
3	Impact of Job Stress on Personal and Professional Life of Police Personnel, International Journal of Scientific Research (Sangeetha, 2020)	Analyzing the impact of work stress on the personal and professional lives of police personnel.	Quantitative	Survey questionnaire	Police personnel (sample size not specified)	Work stress significantly negatively impacts personal well-being and professional performance. Stress can lead to psychological disorders and reduce work effectiveness.

No	Title/author/ year	Research Objective	Research Type	Data Collection Method	Population and Sample	Size Results
4	A conceptual framework for the work–life balance of police officers: a post-COVID-19 perspective. Cogent Business & Management, 11(1), 1-19. (Sandhya, 2024)	To examine the factors influencing work-life balance among police officers in the post-COVID-19 era, with a focus on the roles of organizational support and job satisfaction.	Quantitative Descriptive	The survey used a standard questionnaire.	242 police officers Gazetted in Karnataka, India	Organizational support has a significant positive impact on work-life balance, mediated by job satisfaction. Flexible work programs and family-friendly policies are recommended to improve work-life balance among police officers.
5	Do Work-Family Conflict and Resiliency Mediate Police Stress and Burnout: a Study of State Police Officers (Griffin & Sun, 2018)	Testing the role of work-family conflict mediation and resilience on the relationship between work stress and burnout in state police officers.	Quantitative	The survey uses a standardized scale instrument.	State police officers (sample size not specified)	Work-family conflict and resilience significantly mediate the relationship between work stress and burnout, indicating that resilience and conflict management are important in reducing fatigue.
6	Emotional Exhaustion and its Impact on Police Marriages. (Kumar & Shazania, 2021)	Investigating the impact of work-related emotional exhaustion on police marital relationships	Quantitative Empirical	Surveys & in-depth interviews	Police married, n=120	Emotional exhaustion reduces communication and intimacy, increasing marital conflict.

In-depth Discussion

RQ1: How does work stress affect marital commitment in police personnel?

From various empirical studies and international literature, there is a consensus that work stress has a significant negative impact on marital commitment among police personnel (Sharma & Panchal, 2020; Pinki & Sandeep Panchal, 2020; Ganachari, 2021). The main findings indicate that work stress not only acts as a trigger for conflict in household relationships but also affects the emotional and psychological dimensions of couples. A study conducted by Rose (2025), highlights the responses of police officers' partners to chronic anxiety about the safety of police officers, especially when dangerous incidents occur in the field. This condition increases the risk of secondary traumatic stress and reduces the stability of family relationships. This is supported by research (Karaffa et al., 2015), where police officers and their partners experienced increased role conflict, communication difficulties, and emotional stress due to work stress carried over into the home environment. At the inter individual level, Sharma & Panchal (2020) research confirms that there are variations in work stress levels based on gender, with female police officers being subject to higher levels of work stress compared to male officers. However, work-family conflict is felt almost equally by both genders in general. Chronic work stress can eventually reduce satisfaction and commitment in a marital relationship if not managed with an adaptive stress coping strategy (Kumar & Shazania, 2021).

RQ2: Determinant, Mediator, and Moderator Factors in the Relationship between Work Stress and Marital Commitment

According to a review (Sangeetha, 2020),), there are six categories of predictors of work stress for police officers, ranging from demographics, personal, organizational, operational, family, to community, with the main mediators being work-family conflict, individual resilience, gender, and supervisor support. Moderators such as social support, a supportive work environment, and self-control play a crucial role in strengthening or weakening the impact of work stress on family relationship outcomes. A literature review by Shaik (2022), also emphasizes that organizational environmental factors (e.g., excessive workload, lack of supervision, strict work rules, and minimal family-friendly policies) will exacerbate workplace stress. Conversely, flexible institutional policies and family-based interventions have been shown to reduce work stress and maintain family harmony, as suggested by Sandhya (2024). Simultaneously, social support provided by both partners and organizations is an important moderator that can strengthen the resilience of marital relationships. Flexible work policies and workplace wellness programs play a key role in reducing stress burdens, increasing resilience, and maintaining work-life balance. The interactive relationship between personal, family, and organizational factors forms a vital protective mechanism to prevent commitment breakdown due to work stress.

RQ3: Work-Family Conflict Mechanism as a Bridge between Work Stress and Marital Commitment

Work-family conflict, which occurs when job demands clash with family needs, becomes a key mediating factor. The studies by Sharma & Panchal (2020) and the review by Sangeetha (2020) show that work-family conflict directly reduces communication quality, intimacy, and increases the frequency of domestic conflicts, which can ultimately lower marital commitment among police officers. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this phenomenon, as described by Sandhya (2024), where changes in work patterns, increased workload, and reduced social interaction in the work environment have increased the risk of work-family imbalance, thereby reducing commitment and harmony within households. Sharma & Panchal (2020), illustrate that the conflict causes communication distortions and weakens trust and emotional support between partners. The emotional exhaustion and psychological stress that arise not only recur but are also chronic if not addressed, ultimately disrupting family functioning and potentially eroding the foundation of the marital relationship.

RQ4: Effective Strategies and Support in Overcoming the Negative Impact of Work Stress on Police Marital Relationships

Global and national literature studies agree that effective coping strategies and social support play a significant role in moderating the impact of work stress on family relationships. Kumar & Shazania (2021) state that spousal support and institutional social networks can build "marital resilience" in the face of high work stress. Similar findings from Shaik (2022) and Sandhya (2024) highlight the importance of stress management training, flexible work policies, and institution-based family counselling services accessible to police personnel and their partners. This kind of institutional intervention not only improves individual coping but also strengthens interpersonal relationships within police officers' families. The importance of supporting police partners in managing stress to foster open communication and emotional stability. Coping training programs and family counselling facilitated by police organizations play a significant role in strengthening the psychological resilience of their members (Griffin & Sun, 2018). Flexible work policies and welfare programs that support work-life balance are highly recommended for widespread implementation to maintain the quality of commitment and family well-being of police personnel.

RQ5: The Role of Individual Characteristics and Cultural Context in the Relationship between Work Stress and Marital Commitment

The cultural context in Indonesia and individual characteristics (age, years of service, family structure) also influence how work stress impacts marital commitment (Ogungbamila & Fajemirokun, 2016; Rakhmawati, 2022). Community support, social expectations regarding the

profession, and personal resilience capacity are complementary factors in understanding the dynamics of police families. Several studies, including those by Sharma & Panchal (2020) and Sangeetha (2020), emphasize the importance of role flexibility within the family, open communication, and cultural adaptation to institutional challenges as key elements in preventing the destructive impact of work stress on household life.

Strengthening organizational support can be achieved through the development of flexible work programs, the provision of psychological assistance services, and the integration of coping skills training within the police career development system. These initiatives enable members of the Indonesian National Police to better manage occupational stress, enhance psychological resilience, and maintain optimal performance in demanding work environments. By embedding well-being-oriented programs into institutional structures, the organization demonstrates a commitment to sustainable human resource development.

In addition, family-based interventions play a critical role in reinforcing resilience at the household level. Involving spouses or partners in stress management training and facilitating family communication forums can improve mutual understanding, emotional support, and adaptive coping within police families. Such approaches acknowledge that occupational stress extends beyond the individual officer and that family systems are essential protective factors in maintaining mental health and work-life balance.

To ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of these efforts, a comprehensive and integrative policy is required. This policy should prioritize the well-being of police personnel and their families as a strategic foundation for productivity, organizational commitment, and social harmony. Within the Indonesian National Police environment, an inclusive policy framework that aligns organizational support, family engagement, and psychological services will contribute to healthier personnel and a more resilient institution overall.Adapting interventions that consider culture and social customs, including gender roles and family communication styles, is essential for effective and sustainable strengthening of marital commitment. This culturally sensitive approach is crucial for accommodating the diverse characteristics and customs of different communities across various regions in Indonesia. Therefore, a more in-depth local study is urgently needed to plan supportive strategies and organizational policies that are contextual and effective in strengthening the resilience of police families.

This study has several limitations that need to be considered when interpreting the results and implications of the findings. These limitations include methodological aspects, the research context, and the scope of the literature analyzed. One of the main limitations is the limited number of articles that met the inclusion criteria, with only six journals being able to be analyzed in depth. Additionally, most of the studies found focused more on the application of marital commitment in the context of general work stress, without specifically exploring these dynamics in police personnel. Therefore, research on the role of work stress on marital commitment in married couples working as police personnel is still very limited. Another limitation is the lack of exploration regarding the practical challenges and cultural barriers faced in implementing related psychological interventions, as well as the limited empirical guidance that counselors can use to effectively apply strategies for improving marital commitment to police personnel.

The existing body of research on work stress and marital commitment among police personnel reveals several important limitations. First, there is a strong dominance of quantitative studies that rely primarily on survey methods, which, although effective for gathering large-scale data, are limited in their ability to capture the depth of lived experiences, perceptions, and emotional dynamics within police couples; consequently, qualitative and exploratory approaches remain insufficiently developed. Second, inconsistencies in population characteristics and wide variations in sample size across studies hinder the generalizability of findings, particularly given the lack of detailed sociodemographic reporting related to age, length of service, gender, and marital status. Third, most available literature is derived from international contexts, with minimal focus on the Indonesian National Police, despite Indonesia's distinctive cultural, organizational, and social characteristics that may shape stress experiences and marital dynamics differently. Fourth, the predominance of cross-sectional research limits understanding of

changes over time, as longitudinal studies and systematic intervention-based research examining the effectiveness of stress reduction or marital resilience programs are still very limited. Fifth, inconsistencies in measurement tools and variable definitions especially the use of modified or insufficiently validated instruments pose challenges to the reliability, validity, and comparability of findings across studies. Finally, research in this area is vulnerable to social and respondent bias, as police personnel may provide socially desirable responses or underreport psychological and marital difficulties due to stigma and institutional norms emphasizing professionalism and emotional resilience.

This study has several strengths that make a significant contribution to understanding and developing interventions in the context of work stress and marital commitment among police personnel. First, the use of a systematic literature review (SLR) approach allows for a comprehensive and structured review, enabling the identification and synthesis of findings from relevant and reputable national and international studies. This strengthens the validity of the findings and allows for cross-study analysis, providing a holistic overview. Second, this study explicitly highlights the importance of protective factors and moderating mechanisms such as social support, flexible work policies, and adaptive coping strategies in managing the influence of work stress on the quality and resilience of marital commitment.

The emphasis on the role of these factors is an added value because it not only describes the problem but also proposes evidence-based solutions and preventive approaches. Third, this study considers the unique cultural and organizational context of the Indonesian National Police, an aspect rarely discussed in international literature (Humaira & Aprilia, 2024). Thus, the study results can be more applicable and relevant for developing policies and programs that are appropriate for local conditions, addressing the specific needs of police personnel in Indonesia and their families. Fourth, this study balances quantitative and qualitative data, making the analysis rich and in-depth, and focusing not only on statistics but also on understanding the complex psychological and social dynamics related to work stress and marital commitment. Finally, this study opens up opportunities and future research directions by detailing current research gaps, particularly the need for longitudinal studies and contextual interventions, thus serving as an important foundation for the development of science and practice in this field.

Future research in this area should prioritize several strategic directions to strengthen the quality and relevance of findings. First, the development of qualitative and mixed-methods studies is essential to provide a more holistic understanding of the lived experiences, emotional dynamics, and coping mechanisms of police officers and their partners through in-depth interviews and observational approaches. Second, greater emphasis should be placed on the local Indonesian context by designing studies that are culturally and organizationally responsive to the characteristics of police institutions in Indonesia, thereby ensuring that research outcomes are more applicable and meaningful. Third, longitudinal research designs and systematic evaluations of interventions are needed to monitor changes in work stress and marital commitment over time, as well as to assess the effectiveness of existing or newly implemented policy and support programs. In addition, the consistent use of standardized, internationally validated, and reliable measurement instruments should be encouraged to enhance data quality and comparability across studies. Finally, future studies should incorporate strategies to manage respondent and social desirability bias, such as ensuring anonymity, confidentiality, and the use of indirect measurement techniques, particularly when examining sensitive issues related to psychological well-being and marital relationships within the police environment.

Conclusion

This systematic desk-based observational study found that work stress significantly increases marital commitment among police personnel through the primary mediating mechanism of work-family conflict, which leads to decreased communication quality, dual role conflict, and increased chronic emotional tension, thus reducing couple intimacy and triggering the frequency of domestic violence. Further findings revealed that emotional exhaustion resulting from operational burdens such as irregular working hours, high safety risks, and excessive social

demands impact household dynamics, where police spouses often experience secondary anxiety and work-life imbalance that threaten marital stability. Identified protective factors include social support from partners, family, and coworkers; flexible organizational policies such as adaptive work schedules and wellness programs; and adaptive coping strategies including open communication, stress management training, and family counseling that effectively moderate negative impacts, thereby improving psychological resilience and marital relationship quality. Overall, the synthesis of the six selected articles confirms the predominance of quantitative studies highlighting the urgency of evidence-based interventions within the Indonesian National Police (Polri) to reduce social bias in reporting sensitive data, expand to include the Indonesian context, and develop longitudinal studies to support sustainable prevention programs. These findings provide a practical foundation for counselors and police organizational leaders in designing holistic interventions that improve work-life balance, strengthen family resilience, and enhance the performance of professional personnel amidst intense duty demands.

Author Contributions Statement

Author Contributions: AW, determined the idea into a theme. FA, translated the manuscript into English and submitted the article. AW, helped search for journal articles in the database. EC, filtered articles for inclusion. BI, wrote the article and the findings. JS, helped write and revise the article.

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