# An Ethnography Study of Stress Management among Sundanese, Chinese, and Javanese

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## Abstract

*This ethnographic study examines how the cultural backgrounds influence stress management among Sundanese, Chinese, and Javanese officers in the Directorate General of X. Through a qualitative ethnographic approach, data were gathered via in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis to uncover the unique stress management methods employed by each cultural group. The findings demonstrate that Sundanese officers focus on work-life balance and rely on supportive social networks, guided by the values of "Silih Asah, Silih Asih, Silih Asuh," which emphasize care, support, and self-improvement. Chinese officers prioritize discipline, hard work, and harmony, using structured task management and involving senior colleagues in decision-making, influenced by Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist beliefs. Javanese officers rely on spirituality and empathy, following "Tepa Selira" principles, which promote understanding and respect in relationships, and include prayer and parental guidance in stress coping strategies. Despite these distinct methods, all three cultural groups emphasize the importance of support systems, in the workplace. This study suggests that understanding these cultural approaches can help organizations design culturally sensitive support systems to enhance employee well-being and performance. Future research could expand these findings by including more participants and diverse work settings to better understand culturally influenced stress management across Indonesia.*

*Keywords: Stress Management; Sundanese; Chinese; Javanese; Shared value*

## INTRODUCTION

'Stress' is a common word we get to hear in our daily life from coworkers, relatives, and people around us. But what actually the definition of stress is? The definitions of stress by experts are as follows- Arnod (1960) thinks that "Stress is any condition that disturbs normal functioning". Selye (1974) defines stress as "Stress is a non-specific response of the body to any demand". According to Beehr and Newman (1978) "Stress is a condition arising from the interaction of people and their jobs and characterized by changes within people that force them to deviate from their normal functioning" (Panigrahi, 2017). World Health Organization (2023) defined stress as

a state of worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation. Stress is a natural human response that prompts us to address challenges and threats in our lives. Everyone experiences stress to some degree. The way we respond to stress, however, makes a big difference to our overall well-being.

Stress can be triggered by at least (3) three factors, involving biological, psychological, and environmental factors. Sonara (2018) explained that recently occupational stress is increasing due to globalization and global economic crisis which is affecting almost all countries, all professions and all categories of workers, as well as families and societies. According to the research carried by Cigna 360 Well-Being (KPKN, 2019), stress levels in 23 countries, including Indonesia, were generally 84% and stress in the workplace was 87% with the most common stressors were financial problems (17%), workload (16%), and health problems (14%).

As reported by The Least and Most Stressful Cities Index 2021, Jakarta is one of the cities with quite high levels of stress. The study, conducted by CBD and hemp brand Vaay, researchers looked at 15 stress indicators, including safety, poverty levels, weather, gender equality and healthcare access in 500 global cities before narrowing them down to the top 100 (Kompas.com, 2021). Director of Effort Development Mental Health Ministry of Health, Eka Viora (2015) explained that people who lived in urban areas tend to experience stress due to pressure and work demands (Wiliana & Mintorogo, 2022). Workplace stress remains a major interest of occupational health research, office workers were especially exposed to stressors such as high workload and time pressure (Bolliger et. al., 2022).

Stress can be reduced or managed without having a negative impact. Stress can be reduced or managed without having a negative impact. Management or management of stress is usually referred to by the term of coping. In terms of coping with stress, stress management needed to combat stress. Study conducted by Panigrahi (2017) resulted there were many effective ways which help an individual to combat stress and live a happy and healthy life. these methods include get more sleep, enter in physical activities, relaxation techniques, talking to a close one, time management, take adequate rest, avoid habits, and facing the cause.

In accordance with the research background, the research question in this research is "How is the stress management among Sundanese, Chinese, and Javanese?". This study focuses on stress management among three different cultural tribes, Sundanese, Chinese, and Javanese. The aim is to examine stress management of the officer in the Directorate General of X on top of their cultural tribes using an ethnographic study. Ethnographic methods are usually used to focus on certain activities or rituals in society, language, beliefs, ways of life, and so on (Jaya, et. al., 2022). The finding of the study can provide insights and recommendations for individuals and institutions on how they can manage stress for their own or their officers that will enable them to optimize performance efficiently.

## METHOD

The method in this research used qualitative method using Ethnography Theory approach to accomplish the objective. Creswell (1998) explains that ethnographic research is a type or procedure of qualitative research for explore, analyze, and interpret a cultural group or cultural aspect in society such as behavior, beliefs and traditions that persist over time. Cooper and Schindler (2006) in Shabrina, et. al., (2022) explain that the use of qualitative research is a

research strategy by collecting data that describes a comprehensive picture of events, situations and interactions with people and objects. Qualitative research with an ethnographic approach emphasizes an in-depth understanding of a social phenomenon through the researcher's direct experience in the field (Nurman, 2014 in Fazarullah, 2024). Six officers who came from different cultural tribes, namely Sundanese, Chinese, and Javanese, were chosen to participate in this study using Purposive Sampling research technique. This research explored in-depth of the stress, what causes stress, and stress management of the officers. The collection techniques used by researchers in collecting data according to the themes in the research problem are interviews, observations, and documentation.

The procedure for conducting an Ethnographic approach, began with identifying the respondent and making ethnographic notes. The ethnographic notes are a crucial step because it is the step that determines the respondent's pattern based on their background, culture, profession, and specific day-to-day activities, allowing the interviewer to create questions that are primarily divided into three types: descriptive questions, structural questions, and contrast questions, when this paradigm is used, researchers can also see the world through the eyes and experiences of the participants (Malini, 2022). The next phase involves the analysis of data, focusing on cultural aspects, cultural behaviors, and the significance of human activities. Data collection, analysis, and interpretation are crucial components of ethnographic research. Ethnographic research entails providing an in-depth and intricate description of the culture of a particular group or set of individuals, with a particular emphasis on presenting these cultural elements within their real-life contexts. Ethnographers in this field seek to compile a wide range of information, including typical and atypical details, as well as verbal and behavioral expressions. The practice of conducting ethnographic studies is highly esteemed by contemporary cultural ethnographers and researchers (Saputro, et., al. 2023).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The respondents of this study consist of 6 (six) officers in the Directorate General of X who have typically same job descriptions, and they came from 3 (three) different cultural tribes, namely Sundanese, Chinese, and Javanese. Table below shows the profile of the respondents.

**Table 1.** Profile of Respondents

| No | Respondents | Gender | Age | Tribe | Marital Status | Label |
|----|-------------|--------|-----|-------|----------------|-------|
| 1 | W | F | 29 | Sundanese | Unmarried | S1 |
| 2 | Y | F | 37 | Sundanese | Unmarried | S2 |
| 3 | L | F | 35 | Chinese | Married | C1 |
| 4 | A | M | 34 | Chinese | Married | C2 |
| 5 | E | F | 30 | Javanese | Unmarried | J1 |
| 6 | U | M | 30 | Javanese | Unmarried | J2 |

Respondent 1 (W) is a 29-year-old unmarried female from the Sundanese tribe, reflecting her cultural background in her professional role as a young Sundanese professional. Respondent 2 (Y) is a 37-year-old unmarried Sundanese female, offering a more experienced perspective in her work environment due to her age and cultural roots. Respondent 3 (L) is a 35-year-old married female from the Chinese community, balancing her responsibilities as a professional and a family

member. Respondent 4 (A) is a 34-year-old married Chinese male, representing his cultural values while managing both his family and work roles. Respondent 5 (E) is a 30-year-old unmarried Javanese female, navigating her career within the framework of Javanese cultural values. Respondent 6 (U) is a 30-year-old unmarried Javanese male, bringing his cultural identity into his role within the organization.

Each respondent was asked direct open-ended questions to reflect on and articulate their experiences with stress, what causes their stress, and how they manage stress. Observations, In depth interview, and Documentary Data were carried out in order to answer the research objectives. In terms out what stresses the respondents out, findings from this study reflects that the the respondents tend to able to identify what stress was. The three reported common stressors among the respondents were workload, work environment, and family-related problem. The result of in-depth interview of how the respondents managing stress based on each cultural tribe was given as depict on the table below.

**Table 2.** Stress Management on Sundanese

| No | Question | S1 | S2 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Ethnic origin and family background | Sundanese, Moslem, born and raised in Bandung, latest 3 years living in Jakarta | Sunda-Padang descendant, moslem, born and raised in Jakarta |
| 2 | Professional or business experience | Data analyst for book distributor (2015) Sales accounting for Muslim fashion company (2016-2018) Tax & budgeting staff for motorbike dealer (2018-2021) Civil servant (2021-current) | Private company (2007-2009) Civil servant (2010-current) |
| 3 | How do you explain your current job? | Main job: management of state property Additional job: disbursement documents Compared to previous work experience, so far, the current job is considered to have a lighter workload and is still under control | Job is related to finance and budgeting which is closely associated with college studies, Management. Fair workload, no need to work overtime |
| 4 | What things beyond your control have ever happened at work? | Mostly environmental factors and current issues, such as air pollution. Even if it is indirectly related to work, it causes changes in working habits. | Attitudes of superiors and/or colleagues that do not align with values and norms |

| 5 | How things beyond your control could make you stressed? | I felt stressed when this situation first arose because my work involved handling disbursement documents. This required me to constantly check documents from various departments and regions, without any assurance that these documents were free from viruses. Air pollution is significantly impacting my health, as I rely on public transportation to commute to work. | Even if it is not classified as pressure, factors beyond our control, such as colleagues' negative attitudes, can contribute to an uncomfortable work environment. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | Do you consider it as pressure and makes you stressed? If it's not, what kind of stress have you ever experienced at work? | Yes. | For instance, a situation that could be considered stressful is when a task originally intended for two people was assigned solely to me. |
| 7 | What are other things besides work disturbing your thoughts? | It is necessary to manage time effectively outside of work due to the decision to pursue further education, advancing from a diploma to a postgraduate degree. Living apart from family is also a challenge that must be managed. | Nothing |
| 8 | How do you overcome/manage daily work pressure? | Optimize office hours to ensure they do not encroach on rest time, as adequate rest is crucial for emotional stability and enhanced performance. | Engaging in activities I enjoy, such as exercising, traveling, listening to music, shopping, or attending a Quran study session will help maintain my mental health. |
| 9 | What cultural or social beliefs influence your decisions? | Focus on factors within one's control, such as personal reactions and actions taken to navigate challenging situations. Cultivate a positive environment, beginning with personal life choices. | The principle of "you reap what you sow" applies to acting with kindness, and goodness will return to you. |
| 10 | What strategies do you find useful in managing things beyond your control? | View workplace dynamics as opportunities for personal and professional growth. Seek guidance and share experiences with parents or more experienced individuals. | Have a clear understanding of my role and responsibilities. Avoid the need to work beyond the required hours. Prefer to interact with colleagues with whom I feel most comfortable. |

Table 3, "Stress Management on Sundanese," details how respondents S1 and S2, from the Sundanese cultural group, handle workplace stress, highlighting their cultural focus on work-life balance, adaptability, and reliance on supportive social networks.

Respondent S1, a Sundanese female, manages state property and handles document disbursement in her civil service role. Compared to her previous work experiences, she finds her current workload lighter, although environmental factors like air pollution and occasional assignments for two rather than one person create stress. To cope, S1 optimizes her work hours to prevent job demands from encroaching on her rest time. Outside of work, she participates in activities like exercising, traveling, and attending Quran study sessions, which help her maintain mental well-being. S1 focuses on managing factors within her control, creating a positive personal environment, and seeking guidance from family and experienced colleagues. Respondent S2, another Sundanese female, is involved in finance and budgeting. Although she finds her workload manageable, challenges arise when colleagues or superiors' values clash with her own, impacting her work environment. S2 manages stress by engaging in enjoyable activities, maintaining her well-being through travel and relaxation, and keeping a strong work-life boundary. To handle stressors beyond her control, S2 draws on her community, sharing experiences with family and colleagues, while ensuring she does not overextend herself at work. Both S1 and S2's approaches to stress management reflect core Sundanese values of balancing work and life, fostering positive environments, and seeking support from trusted networks, all of which contribute to a culturally grounded approach to stress and well-being in the workplace.

**Table 3.** Stress Management on Chinese

| No | Question | C1 | C2 |
|----|----------|----|----|
| 1 | Ethnic origin and family background | Chinese, Muslim, born and raised in Cirebon | Chinese, Christian, born and raised in Bogor |
| 2 | Professional or business experience | - Private sector, 2 years as Sales Support and Production Supervisor - 2 years as a Civil Servant | - 5 years in the Banking industry as an Account Officer in Lending - 6 years as a Civil Servant |
| 3 | How do you describe your current job? | Being a civil servant, especially in the procurement department, is a significant responsibility. As policy makers, civil servants must meet the needs of society. | A job that involves a wide range of tasks, minimal targets, but a heavy workload and substantial responsibility. |
| 4 | What events beyond your control have occurred at work? | Job rotation or transfer; I have been transferred to another unit, and the process is still ongoing, so I am currently handling two sets of job responsibilities. | Leaders' decision-making style and choices. |

| 5 | How do things beyond your control cause stress? | I have no choice but to accept the situation, as the only option is to perform tasks that should have been assigned to others. | Sometimes, it is necessary to follow orders from leaders without fully understanding their purpose, which may lead to inefficiency or ineffectiveness. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | Do you consider this to be pressure that causes you stress? If not, what kind of stress have you experienced at work? | Yes, job transfers can serve as a form of refreshment, allowing civil servants to adapt to new challenges, but sometimes they place us in environments where our efforts are undervalued. | No, but certain ad hoc tasks with tight timelines and deadlines can be stressful. |
| 7 | What other factors besides work disturb your thoughts? | Family, such as having to entrust my daughter to my parents who live in another town. | Family issues, like concerns about my child's health or adjusting to the perspectives and mindsets of my in-laws. |
| 8 | How do you manage daily work pressures? | When work accumulates, I create a to-do list to prioritize tasks. | Avoid procrastination and set clear priorities. |
| 9 | What cultural or social beliefs influence your decisions? | Worship and gratitude. | Hard work and discipline are key factors for success. |
| 10 | What strategies do you find effective in managing things beyond your control? | Accept and adapt to changing circumstances. | Involve leaders or more experienced colleagues in decision-making processes. |

Table 3, "Stress Management on Chinese," describes how respondents C1 and C2, both from the Chinese community, address workplace stress through culturally influenced strategies that emphasize discipline, responsibility, and a structured approach. Respondent C1, a Chinese female, works in a civil service role with responsibilities in procurement, a position she views as significant due to its impact on public needs. Her professional background includes experience in both private and public sectors, which shapes her approach to stress. She encounters stressors such as job rotations or transfers, which require her to manage dual responsibilities temporarily. When facing these uncontrollable changes, C1 accepts the situation and adapts by prioritizing tasks through a to-do list and avoiding procrastination. Her decisions are influenced by cultural beliefs in hard work and discipline, and she maintains a balance between work and personal life through worship and gratitude, engaging leaders or mentors in decisions for additional support. Respondent C2, a Chinese male with extensive experience in banking and civil service, holds a demanding role with diverse tasks and heavy responsibilities. His primary stressors include leader-driven decisions that may not align with his understanding or timeline, sometimes creating inefficiencies. He manages stress by organizing tasks to avoid last-minute pressures and by setting clear priorities, guided by cultural values that prioritize hard work and responsibility. Family is also a factor in his stress, as he often worries about his child's health and in-laws' perspectives. C2's strategies include accepting workplace demands and involving more experienced colleagues

in decision-making processes, underscoring his commitment to discipline and collaboration. Both C1 and C2 illustrate a culturally embedded approach to stress management, rooted in a dedication to responsibility, task prioritization, and reliance on guidance from senior colleagues, reflecting the Chinese emphasis on harmony, discipline, and familial commitment in balancing work and stress.

**Table 4.** Stress Management on Javanese

| No | Question | J1 | J2 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Ethnic origin and family background | Javanese, Muslim, born and raised in Malang, East Java | Javanese, Muslim, born and raised in Central Java |
| 2 | Professional or business experience | 2 years as a Funding Officer in private banking and 3 years as a Civil Servant | 3 years as a Consultant in a consulting company, and 3 years as a Civil Servant |
| 3 | How do you describe your current job? | I serve as a facilitator in the procurement field for an organization. My responsibilities include identifying the most suitable goods or service providers based on price, technical specifications, and administrative requirements. Additional tasks include administrative duties, such as reporting on procurement data and budget absorption. | The job consists of repetitive tasks, which can become monotonous. There are no opportunities for skill development. The workload varies, with periods of high intensity followed by periods of low activity. |
| 4 | What events beyond your control have occurred at work? | Ad-hoc tasks and unexpected assignments that fall outside of my job description, often with conflicting deadlines. | Difficulty in maintaining focus when the workload is high. |
| 5 | How do things beyond your control cause stress? | Limited skills and capabilities, combined with colleagues being preoccupied with their own tasks, while leaders are strictly focused on results. | It is sometimes challenging to complete tasks to a satisfactory level. |
| 6 | Do you consider this to be pressure that causes you stress? If not, what kind of stress have you experienced at work? | Yes, absolutely. | Another source of stress is the unequal distribution of tasks. |
| 7 | What other factors besides work disturb your thoughts? | None; most stress originates from the work environment. | None; everything is under control. |

| 8 | How do you manage daily work pressures? | Enhance concentration and complete tasks to the best of my ability, without imposing on others. | Focus on completing tasks by listening to music. |
| 9 | What cultural or social beliefs influence your decisions? | Before making important decisions, they must be carefully considered. If there is doubt, I seek advice from my parents to gain a different perspective. | Work should be conducted in strict accordance with regulations. |
| 10 | What strategies do you find effective in managing things beyond your control? | Prayer and seeking guidance from God. | Effective time management, adhering to protocols, and discussing with peers who have similar responsibilities. |

Table 4 provides insights into how the two Javanese respondents, J1 and J2, approach stress management, highlighting their cultural values and specific strategies. Respondent J1, a Javanese female, approaches her work in procurement with a focus on responsibility, handling tasks like selecting service providers based on price and quality specifications, as well as managing administrative duties. She describes her work as repetitive but varies in intensity. When facing unexpected tasks or tight deadlines, which are stressors beyond her control, J1 feels the pressure but manages her stress by enhancing concentration and focusing on completing tasks. Culturally, J1's decisions are influenced by careful consideration, where she often seeks parental guidance to gain a different perspective, and she adheres strictly to rules and regulations. Her strategy for managing uncontrollable situations includes prayer and seeking divine guidance, as well as using effective time management and consulting peers with similar responsibilities. Respondent J2, a Javanese male, similarly experiences stress from unexpected assignments and tight deadlines. His work, which he describes as repetitive, lacks opportunities for skill development and thus can lead to stress, especially when workload peaks. For J2, careful decision-making rooted in Javanese cultural values is essential; he relies on guidance from family and spiritual support. His approach to handling stress focuses on completing tasks independently without imposing on others, often listening to music to maintain focus. For tasks beyond his control, he adheres to established protocols, engages in peer discussions, and relies on prayer and time management techniques to cope effectively. Both respondents illustrate a strong connection to spirituality and adherence to protocols, demonstrating the Javanese cultural emphasis on empathy, respect, and self-discipline in managing workplace stress.

Observations were carried out in daily activities and interactions, especially when respondents and researchers at the working environment. To better understand how they collaborate on group projects, the researchers take a more active approach and participate in some of their daily activities at work or social gatherings outside of work to better understand how their office dynamics differ from those of their personal lives. Documentary data used in this study are photographs. It supports the finding of the interview that in order to manage stress, the respondents need work-life balance and connect with each other. The interaction could be seen in the picture below.

Based on the in-depth interview with the respondents, collated with observation and documentary data, the researchers do assessments in order to get what persona of each respondent and the shared values/points on top of stress management of each cultural tribe.

**Table 5.** Persona and Shared value among each Cultural Tribes to Stress Management

| No | Cultural Tribes | Persona of Stress Management | Shared-Values of each Cultural Tribe | Shared-Values among 3 Cultural Tribes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Sundanese | Adaptive to changes in the work environment | Emphasizes life balance | Seeking guidance and support system: The Sundanese, Chinese, and Javanese all value the importance of seeking advice or guidance from others (more experienced individuals, leaders, parents and/or God) when facing difficult situations. |
| | | Prioritizes work-life balance | Focuses on controllable factors | |
| | | Relies on positive activities for stress management (exercise, traveling, listening to music, shopping, attending religious study sessions) | Seeks guidance from more experienced individuals | |
| | | Believes in the principle of "reaping what one sows" | | |
| | | Focuses on controllable factors | | |
| | | Creates a positive environment, starting with personal life choices | | |
| | | Seeks guidance from more experienced individuals | | |
| 2 | Chinese | Oriented towards responsibility and performance | Values hard work, discipline, and adaptable to change | |
| | | Adaptive to changes in work situations | | |
| | | Prioritizes tasks by creating to-do lists | Emphasizes balance between work and family | |
| | | Values hard work and discipline as keys to success | | |
| | | Emphasizes balance between work and family | Involves leaders or more experienced colleagues | |
| | | Avoids procrastination and sets clear priorities | | |
| | | Involves leaders or more experienced colleagues in decision-making processes | | |
| 3 | Javanese | Relies on spirituality (prayer and seeking divine guidance) | Relies on spirituality | |
| | | Focuses on completing tasks to the best of one's ability | Values careful consideration in decision-making | |
| | | Values careful consideration before making important decisions | Emphasizes the importance of following rules and protocols | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Seeks parental advice for different perspectives | Seeks parental advice for different perspectives |
| Emphasizes the importance of adhering to established regulations and protocols | |
| Utilizes effective time management | |
| Engages in discussions with peers who have similar responsibilities | |
| Praying and | |

According to the research findings, the personas of each respondent based on each cultural tribe imply to different ways of stress management. From the analysis above, the researchers conclude the shared value of each cultural tribes.

Sundanese individuals tend to be adaptive to changes in their work environment, focusing on balancing their personal and professional lives. They prioritize manageable aspects, such as controlling their reactions and actions, and they often seek guidance from more experienced individuals when facing challenges. Stress management for the Sundanese often includes engaging in positive activities like exercise, travel, music, shopping, or attending religious study sessions to maintain mental health. The Sundanese philosophy of "Silih Asah, Silih Asih, Silih Asuh" (mutual sharpening, loving, and caring) reflects their stress management practices. This cultural value emphasizes mutual support, nurturing relationships, and continuous learning from others, which aligns with their reliance on a support system, such as family, peers, or more experienced people, to manage stress.

Chinese individuals are generally oriented toward responsibility and performance, valuing hard work and discipline as keys to success. They are adaptable to change, set clear priorities, avoid procrastination, and often involve leaders or more experienced colleagues in decision-making processes. Stress management for them involves balancing work and family, maintaining discipline, and focusing on controllable factors. Chinese culture is heavily influenced by Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, which emphasize balance, harmony, and the importance of maintaining both physical and mental health. These philosophies underpin their approach to stress management, where harmony is sought in both work and family life, and where balance and moderation are key. Practices such as networking (*Guanxi*), emotional bonding (*Ganqing*), and trustworthiness (*Xinyong*) are essential in coping with stress, fostering support systems, and ensuring a balanced life.

Javanese individuals rely heavily on spirituality, using prayer and seeking divine guidance as a core part of their stress management strategy. They value careful consideration in decision-making, adhere to established regulations and protocols, and use effective time management. When dealing with stress, they often engage in discussions with peers and seek advice from their parents or elders to gain different perspectives. The Javanese cultural concept of "Tepa Selira" (empathy or mutual respect) reflects their approach to stress management, which emphasizes understanding others' feelings, maintaining harmonious relationships, and making thoughtful decisions. This value encourages Javanese individuals to act with restraint, seek peaceful resolutions, and prioritize empathy and care in their interactions. It aligns with their reliance on spiritual and social support to navigate stress.

**Shared Values Among the Three Cultural Tribes: Sundanese, Chinese, and Javanese**

Among the Sundanese, Chinese, and Javanese cultural tribes, all three cultural groups emphasize the importance of support systems. A shared value lies in seeking advice or guidance from others, particularly those who are more experienced, such as leaders, mentors, parents, or spiritual sources. This shared value reflects a collective respect for wisdom, experience, and hierarchy, playing a crucial role in managing stress, making decisions, and navigating challenges. Across these three cultural groups, the practice of seeking advice from more experienced individuals, leaders, or elders is a unifying value, reinforcing the importance of community, respect, and shared wisdom in navigating both professional and personal challenges. This collective reliance on external guidance not only supports emotional well-being but also strengthens social bonds within each cultural framework.

## CONCLUSION

This research investigates the stress management strategies employed by officers in the Directorate General of X, with a focus on their cultural backgrounds—Sundanese, Chinese, and Javanese. The study reveals that each cultural group applies unique approaches to managing stress, influenced by their respective cultural values and beliefs. Sundanese officers prioritize maintaining a balance between work and personal life, reflecting the cultural principle of "Silih Asah, Silih Asih, Silih Asuh," which emphasizes mutual care, nurturing, and self-improvement. Their stress management strategies include engaging in positive activities, seeking guidance from experienced individuals, and focusing on controllable factors.

Chinese officers tend to manage stress by adhering to the values of hard work, discipline, and responsibility. Their strategies are influenced by Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, which emphasize harmony, balance, and mental well-being. This group demonstrates a strong focus on task prioritization, avoiding procrastination, and involving leaders or experienced colleagues in decision-making processes. Javanese officers manage stress by relying heavily on spirituality and careful consideration in decision-making. They follow the principle of "Tepa Selira," which involves empathy, understanding others' feelings, and maintaining harmonious relationships. Their approach includes seeking divine guidance, adhering to established protocols, and engaging in discussions with peers for perspective. Despite these differences, all three cultural groups share common values: the importance of a support system, maintaining work-life balance, and adaptability in the workplace. The findings underscore the significance of understanding cultural influences on stress management to enhance workplace well-being. Recognizing these shared and distinct values can help organizations develop culturally sensitive policies and support systems that foster a healthier and more productive work environment.

This research has made significant contributions to understanding the culturally nuanced stress management strategies of Sundanese, Chinese, and Javanese employees within an Indonesian organizational setting. However, some limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study's small sample size—limited to six respondents across three cultural groups—restricts the generalizability of the findings. This purposive sampling approach, while valuable for in-depth ethnographic insight, may not represent broader variations within these cultural groups or reflect other Indonesian cultures and diverse workplace environments. Additionally, the reliance on self-

reported data through interviews may introduce bias, as respondents may have emphasized socially acceptable or culturally idealized responses.

The implications of this research are both practical and theoretical. Practically, the findings suggest that organizations should consider cultural backgrounds when developing stress management programs, tailoring strategies that align with employees' values, such as community support, spiritual practices, or structured task prioritization. Such culturally sensitive approaches could enhance employee well-being, job satisfaction, and performance. Theoretically, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on cross-cultural occupational health, indicating the need for further research on stress management across other cultural and organizational contexts in Indonesia and beyond. Future studies could expand on these findings by incorporating a larger, more diverse sample, quantitative measures, or longitudinal observations to validate and build upon the identified stress management patterns.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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