



Complementary Therapy as an Approach in Managing Occupational Stress

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ABSTRACT

Occupational stress is caused by various reasons, such as, workload and long working hours. This leads to occurrence of trend in using wellness activities to treat physical and psychological illness that is known as complementary therapy, which is Yoga, Aromatherapy, Qi gong, and Islamic Medical Practices (Ruqyah). Therefore, this research offered a perspective on the use of complementary therapies as a tool in improving and maintaining mental health condition of employees located in Penang, Malaysia. Qualitative method was used where 5 complementary therapy practitioners were interviewed to identify the perceptions towards the use of complementary therapy and to identify the type of therapy that can be practiced to reduce stress, as well as, discuss the benefits of complementary therapies. It was found that complementary therapy is very beneficial as it acts as a holistic treatment, natural way of healing and more empowering, as it helps to improve employee's mental, emotional and physical health.

Keywords: occupational stress; complementary therapy; mental health; holistic; conventional

INTRODUCTION

Occupational stress is caused by various types of stressors, such as, workload, long working hours, role ambiguity and role conflict experienced by employees leading to

depression, anxiety, work-related stress, burnout and absenteeism (Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright, Donald, Taylor, & Millet, 2005). Complementary therapy is a type of treatment that can also be described as a non-conventional medicine. It serves as an alternative approach to mental health-care that emphasizes on the interrelationship between mind, body and spirit. The commonly used complementary therapies are music therapy, relaxation technique, acupuncture, mindfulness meditation,

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