

# Help-Seeking Behavior for Mental Health Problems among Employees: A Systematic Review

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## Abstract

Mental health problems are treatable and preventable. Nevertheless, getting treatment seems inconvenient for many people. Sufficient and effective treatments that motivate help-seeking are required for mental health issue prevention, early identification, prompt treatment, and recovery. In the workplace, mental health issues should be enlightened as they could affect work performance and impact others in the surrounding. Hence, this study aimed to systematically review randomized research on help-seeking behaviors for mental health problems focusing on employees using the Scopus database. Based on the review, the research on help-seeking behavior remains understudied even though most studies encourage help-seeking for mental health issues. Thus, further research is warranted to expand the understanding of this matter, such as people's preferences and factors or barriers to seeking assistance when facing mental health issues, especially in the work context.

**Keywords:** Employees, help-seeking behavior, mental health, systematic literature review.

## INTRODUCTION

In past decades, the critical role that mental health plays in attaining global development goals have been extensively acknowledged (World Health Organization, 2021). An individual is considered healthy if the individual is physically and mentally healthy. Nevertheless, certain life difficulties or uncertainties can lead to mental health issues such as stress, depression, anxiety, and other issues. The Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation (2021) reported that depression is a common mental illness worldwide, with approximately 3.8% of the global population impacted. Up to 5.0% of adults and 5.7% of those aged above 60 are among those affected. An estimated 280 million people worldwide experience depression (Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation, 2021). In reality, an upsurge has been witnessed in the prevalence of mental illnesses worldwide since the World

Health Organization declared the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 (Pfefferbaum & North, 2020).

Mental health problems may be treated and avoided. Unfortunately, receiving treatment appears to be inconvenient for many individuals (Phillips & Bruckmayer, 2020). Sufficient and effective interventions that motivate people to seek assistance are essential for mental health problem prevention, early detection, timely treatment, and recovery (Hom et al., 2015). Thus, proper help obtained from a mental health professional is pivotal in controlling and managing mental health problems. Nevertheless, previous research has found that many people are hesitant to seek professional treatment for their mental health concerns. For example, Thornicroft (2007) reported that globally, more than 70% of adults and youngsters diagnosed with mental health issues did not get any mental health treatment from professionals. Besides, Shi et al. (2020)

confirmed that most Chinese adults with mental health issues refused to seek help from mental health professionals for mental health treatment. In another study, McLafferty et al. (2017) found that 22.3% of their respondents with mental health problems stated that they would not obtain assistance. Given the exhausting nature of mental health issues and the availability of mental health treatments, the awareness to promote help-seeking behavior is crucial to tackling mental health problems within the community.

### Prevalence and Burden

Mental health problems are among the greatest contributors to the health-related burden worldwide (Santomauro et al., 2021). The World Health Organization ranked depression as the biggest single cause of disability globally in 2017, while anxiety was placed sixth. Depression is also the leading cause of suicide deaths, contributing close to 800 000 cases annually (World Health Organization, 2017). In 2019, The Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries, and Risk Factors Study (2020) reported that the two major disabling mental health problems were depression and anxiety. Both issues have been consistently rated among the top 25 leading causes of the global burden. According to the report, the global healthcare burden caused by mental health problems is a lifelong issue, irrespective of gender or geographical location.

The COVID-19 outbreak globally has regrettably worsened the situation. Bueno-Notivol et al. (2020), who undertook a meta-analysis of 12 significant studies, found that the integrated depression rate in the general population during the COVID-19 pandemic is 25% (95% CI: 18%-33%). Their findings proposed that the prevalence of depression in the general population might be seven times higher during the COVID-19 pandemic. In comparison, the reported prevalence of depression among the general population during other pandemics in the past, such as Ebola and SARS, was lower than during the COVID-19 pandemic (Chew et al., 2020). Previous pandemics were controlled more quickly. Despite greater mortality rates, infection rates were relatively low, suggesting the lesser severity of depression symptoms (Huremovi, 2019). The lockdown measures enforced across countries worldwide could account for the high prevalence of depressive

symptoms during the COVID-19 pandemic (Bueno-Notivol et al., 2020).

Anxiety and depression cost the world economy USD 1 trillion in lost productivity annually (World Health Organization, 2021). The consequence of the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020 in the mental health effects context might generate direct psychological impacts and long-term social and economic outcomes (Kola et al., 2021). The need for up-to-date facts on the burden of mental health problems and the worldwide scale of this issue, including the mental health effects of COVID-19 that can inform the healthcare delivery system, has never been more critical (Bueno-Notivol et al., 2020). Mental health problems and suicidal risk might be caused by the economic downturn, increased access to means of committing suicide, low concern about mental health and precautionary interventions at the societal level, mistreatment and abuse at the relationship level, poverty, isolation, and loss of hope at the individual level, increased constraints to obtaining health care, improper media reportage at the community level, interpersonal disputes, and job losses (Wasserman et al., 2020). Suicide should be discouraged by reinforcing comprehensive approaches directed to the whole population, involving plans to reduce unemployment, poverty and inequities, prioritizing admittance to mental healthcare, accountable media reporting with information about accessible mental health support, obstruction of elevated alcohol consumption, and prohibition of access to fatal means of suicide (Wasserman et al., 2020).

### Help-Seeking for Mental Health Problems

According to numerous studies, in spite of the ramifications that mental health problems can cause, only a few people are willing to seek help. For instance, Doll et al. (2021) stated that most individuals with mental health problems do not seek assistance at all or only acquire assistance after a substantial delay. They specifically mentioned that only 22.5% of individuals with mental health issues seek assistance. In a separate study, Subramaniam et al. (2019) identified that help-seeking had not shown an increasing trend despite the significant surge in the prevalence of mental health problems in the general population. Moreover, individuals often prefer to seek help from unprofessional sources, such as family or friends, instead of professional

sources, namely psychiatrists or psychologists (Shumet et al., 2021), who can diagnose mental illnesses and formulate proper treatment plans. Hence, providing and enhancing professional and unprofessional sources of help is vital to developing a competent and efficient care model for those with mental healthcare needs.

Seeking professional care for mental health concerns is critical for establishing well-being and preventing the grave impacts of mental health disorders. Nevertheless, many people, particularly teenagers, with mental health difficulties refuse to talk to a professional (Pearson & Hyde, 2020). Eigenhuis et al. (2021) stated that regardless of the availability of mental health care, not many people with depression get mental health treatment.

## **AIMS AND SCOPE OF STUDY**

Encouraging help-seeking for mental health issues is essential. Unfortunately, to date, minimal systematic reviews of research have been undertaken on help-seeking behavior to comprehensively understand people's preferences and factors or hindrances to seeking help when facing mental health problems. Hence, this study systematically reviewed randomized research on help-seeking behaviors for mental health problems focusing on employees. This study specifically aimed to address the research questions stated below.

RQ1: How many articles were distributed over the years?

RQ2: What is the distribution of subject areas in the articles?

RQ3: What is the distribution of authors in the articles?

RQ4: What is the distribution of authors' country of origin in the articles?

RQ5: What is the distribution of authors' affiliation in the articles?

RQ6: What is the distribution of 'what,' 'who,' and 'how' concerning help-seeking behavior for mental health issues among employees in the articles?

The review employed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) (Sarkis-Onofre et al., 2021). A PRISMA checklist is attached as Additional File 1: PRISMA 2020 Checklist.

## **METHODS**

### Search Methodology and Inclusion Criteria

The Scopus database was searched in December 2021 using specific search terms. Scopus was utilized in this study as it has its own uniqueness and is generated by the recognized Elsevier. Scopus comprises more than 140000 journals indexed, covering various subjects, including social science (Mohamed Ghazali & Samsudin, 2020).

### The Systematic Review Procedure

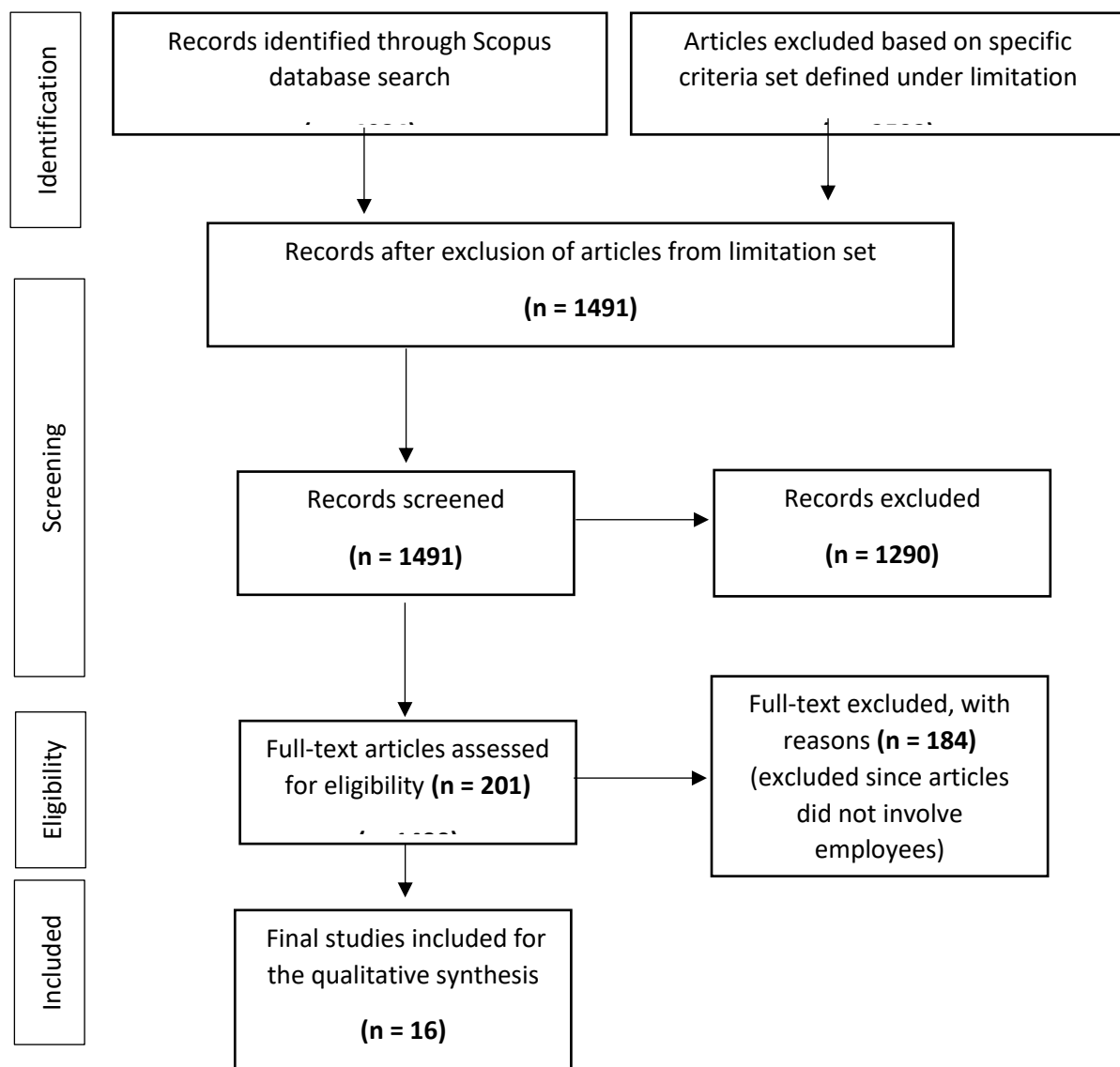


Figure 1. *PRISMA flow map*

### Identification

The first procedure was the identification phase. In order to retrieve as many relevant articles as possible, the synonyms of key research terms were carefully selected, listed, and searched on the database. The first process was to generate search strings in Scopus by entering specific study keywords in the Advanced Search menu. Figure 2 shows that the specific keywords search from the Scopus database are TITLE-ABS-KEY (“help-seeking behavior” OR “help-seeking” OR “seek help”) AND (“mental health” OR “mental health problems” OR “mental disorders”) AND (“adults” OR “workers” OR “employees”). These terms were selected to

reflect the main concepts of ‘help-seeking’ and ‘mental health’ or ‘mental health problems’ in the context of adults. The keyword search process managed to retrieve 4084 documents in total.



Figure 2. *The number of documents retrieved on the Scopus database using the search string*

## Screening

The next process was the screening phase. Articles were excluded or included in the screening phase according to specific criteria to fulfill the study's objective. The phrase 'excluded articles' refers to unsuitable articles not focused on in this study. Contrarily, 'included articles' are relevant articles that likely met the criteria defined for this study. The excluded and included criteria for this study are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *The exclusion and inclusion criteria*

Criteria	Exclusion	Inclusion
<b>Type of Article</b>	Conference proceeding, systematic review articles, book series, chapters in books and books	Article (Journal research articles)
<b>Language</b>	Non-English	English
<b>Timeline</b>	-	Until 2022
<b>Field</b>	Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacology, Toxicology and Pharmaceutics, Genetics and Molecular Biology, Biochemistry, Agricultural and Biological Sciences, Health Professions, Neuroscience, Computer Science, Veterinary, Environmental Science, Economics, Econometrics and Finance, and Engineering	Psychology, Social Sciences, Business, Management and Accounting, Multidisciplinary, and Arts and Humanities

Figure 3 shows the number of documents that resulted from the screening process. A total of

2593 articles were excluded from the 4084 articles due to the limitation on document type, which requires only articles published in the English language. Hence, 1491 articles were generated from the search string from the screening phase. Next, the articles were reviewed according to subject area, country, and distribution of articles published by year, author, and author's affiliation.



Figure 3. *The number of documents resulted from the screening process in the Scopus database using the search string*

## Eligibility and Included

In the eligibility phase, 201 studies were included. Each study was reviewed by reading through the titles, abstracts, methods, results, and discussions to ensure the selected study followed the inclusion criteria and aligned with the study's objectives. A total of 184 studies were excluded as they did not discuss employees. Finally, only 16 studies that fulfilled the requirement were available for analysis.

## RESULTS

The included articles selected for this study were examined to answer the study's research questions.

RQ1: How many articles were distributed over the years?

As displayed in Table 2, no articles were published from 1992 to 1993, 1995 to 2009, 2011 to 2013, and 2017. The biggest gap is from 1995 to 2009. Subsequently, published articles focusing on workers' perspectives on help-seeking behavior for mental health problems were limited from 1991 to 2020. For the record, the total number of related publications to date is only 16 articles. Nonetheless, the publication in the area has shown an increasing trend in 2020, indicating possible growing interest among researchers to explore the matter from employees' perspectives.

Table 2. *Distribution of articles by year*

Years	N
2020	5
2019	1
2018	4
2016	1
2015	1
2014	1
2010	1
1994	1
1991	1

RQ2: What is the distribution of subject areas in the articles?

The number of related articles according to distinct subject areas from the Scopus database is examined, and its outcomes are exhibited in Table 3. The breakdown of topic areas in the included articles revealed that the majority of the research was conducted in the Social Sciences (11 articles), followed by Psychology (ten articles). Nevertheless, although the Medicine field was already excluded in the search limitation setting, the search analysis still resulted in six articles related to the Medicine field. After screening the six articles in-depth, the articles were found to be more focused on workers such as mental health practitioners, white-collar workers, military personnel, and working-age adults. Besides, the study emphasized comparing unemployed and employed persons concerning help-seeking for mental health concerns. Hence, based on this screening, the six articles were still relevant to be included in this study. Additionally, two articles were published under arts and humanities.

Table 3. *Distribution of articles by subject area*

Subject Areas	N
Social Sciences	11
Psychology	10
Medicine	6
Arts and Humanities	2

RQ3: What is the distribution of authors in the articles?

Table 4 exhibits that a total of 53 authors have published articles on help-seeking behaviors for mental health issues among employees. The authors, Carleton, Hom, and Joiner, recorded two publications, respectively. Therefore, the

three of them may be regarded as the current leading scholars in this study's context.

Table 4. *Distribution of articles by authors*

Authors	N
Carleton, R.N.	2
Hom, M. A.	2
Joiner, T. E.	2
Alcock, K.	1
Bennett, C.	1
Black, K. J.	1
Britt, T. W.	1
Bromet, E. J.	1
Brownlow, C.	1
Cramm, H.	1
Curtis, E. C.	1
Dew, M. A.	1
El Seifi, O. S.	1
Greenberg, N.	1
Hourani, L.	1
Ireland, M.	1
Jones, N.	1
Kartalova-O'Doherty, Y.	1
Keeling, M.	1
Ko, J.	1
Krakauer, R. L.	1
Lane, M. E.	1
March, S.	1
Mooney, T.	1
Morgan, J. K.	1
Mortada, E. M.	1
Norman, J.	1
Oexle, N.	1
Parkinson, D. K.	1
Ricciardelli, R.	1
Robertson, S.	1
Rosvall, S. B.	1
Roy, P.	1
Rüsch, N.	1
Sawhney, G.	1
Schulberg, H. C.	1
Scior, K.	1
Spencer-Thomas, S.	1
Staiger, T.	1
Stanley, I. H.	1
Stelnicki, A. M.	1
Tay, S.	1
Tedstone Doherty, D.	1
Thandi, G.	1
Tremblay, G.	1
Tueller, S.	1
Vayro, C.	1
Waldmann, T.	1

Authors	N
Wigand, M.	1
Wilson, C. A.	1
Zalat, M. M.	1
de Terte, I.	1

RQ4: What is the distribution of authors' country of origin in the articles?

Based on the analysis, the top ten countries for articles published in the related subject matter are depicted in Table 5. The outcomes portray that the United States has the most published articles with six articles. In contrast, Canada and the United Kingdom recorded three articles, respectively. The remaining seven countries, namely Australia, Egypt, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, and South Korea, recorded one article publication. Therefore, western countries have published the highest number of articles on this subject matter.

Table 5. *Distribution of articles by authors' country of origin*

Countries	N
United States	6
Canada	3
United Kingdom	3
Australia	1
Egypt	1
Germany	1
Ireland	1
New Zealand	1
Saudi Arabia	1
South Korea	1

RQ5: What is the distribution of authors' affiliation in the articles?

Table 6 displays the distribution of authors' affiliations concerning the help-seeking behavior for mental health among employees. Out of 16 institutions reviewed in this study, Florida State University and the University of Regina published two articles each, while the rest recorded one article publication.

Table 6. *Distribution of articles by authors' affiliation*

Affiliation	N
Florida State University	2
University of Regina	2
Independent Practice	1
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga	1

Affiliation	N
Zagaziq University	1
Mental Health Ireland	1
Brigham Young University	1
Massey University	1
Taibah University	1
University of Minnesota Duluth	1
Universität Ulm	1
King's College London	1
University of Pittsburgh	1
Queen's University	1
Health Research Board Ireland	1
Hallym University	1
Memorial University of Newfoundland	1
University of Southern Queensland	1
Westinghouse Electric Company	1
University College London	1
Stony Brook University	1
Clemson University	1
RTI International	1
Université Laval	1
Leeds Beckett University	1
Renaissance School of Medicine Stony Brook University	1
Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University	1
New Zealand Defence Force	1

RQ6: What is the distribution of 'what,' 'who,' and 'how' concerning help-seeking behavior for mental health issues among employees in the articles?

The questions concerning 'what,' 'who,' and 'how' of help-seeking behavior for mental health issues among workers are categorized into three groups outlined in Table 7. First, the 'what' denotes the study's aim. Next, the 'who' represents the research scope that focuses on employees from several occupations, including one research on unemployed individuals. Nevertheless, the study's contents also discuss employment matters and their perceived need

for jobs and help-seeking behavior. Last but not least, the ‘how’ represents the method to measure the study’s data.

Table 7. *Distribution of ‘what,’ ‘who,’ and ‘how’*

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>What is the Aim?</b>	<b>Who is Involved?</b>	<b>How?</b>
<b><u>Hom, M.A., de Terte, L., Bennett, C., Joiner, T.E.</u></b>	2020	“Examined associations between various indices of psychological well-being, resilience, and help-seeking stigma”	“New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) personnel”	“Self-report measures of psychological well-being, resilience, help-seeking stigma, and past-year help-seeking behaviors”
<b><u>Krakauer, R.L., Stelnicki, A.M., Carleton, R.N.</u></b>	2020	“Assessed levels of mental health knowledge, stigma, and service use intentions”	“Public safety personnel”	“Questionnaires assessing mental health knowledge, stigma against co-workers with mental illness, and professional service use intentions”
<b><u>Ricciardelli, R., Carleton, R.N., Mooney, T., Cramm, H.</u></b>	2020	“To better understand barriers to care-seeking and to assess the prevalence of mental disorders”	“Canadian public safety personnel”	“Optional open-ended final comments and online survey”
<b><u>Vayro, C., Brownlow, C., Ireland, M., March, S.</u></b>	2020	“To understand the ‘farming life’ factors that affect the mental health help-seeking of farmers”	“Farmers and farmers’ partners”	Interview
<b><u>Britt, T.W., Wilson, C.A., Sawhney, G., Black, K.J.</u></b>	2020	“Examined the perceived unit climate of support for mental health as a predictor of changes in the perceived stigma associated with seeking treatment, positive and negative attitudes toward treatment-seeking, and a preference for handling mental health problems oneself, and talking with fellow workers and a mental health professional about a mental health problem”	“Active-duty military personnel”	“Measures assessing unit climate and individual beliefs about treatment”
<b><u>Zalat, M.M., Mortada, E.M., El Seifi, O.S.</u></b>	2019	“To assess the level of mental health difference between working and non-working women and to explore their stigma and attitude	“Teachers and Housewives”	Self-reporting questionnaire



Authors	Year	What is the Aim?	Who is Involved?	How?
		toward seeking psychological help for mental health problems”		
<b><u>Ko, J.</u></b>	2018	“Tested the integrated model of suicide help-seeking to examine help-seeking behavior as a continuous decision-making process”	Working-age adults	Survey
<b><u>Staiger, T., Waldmann, T., Oexle, N., Wigand, M., Rüschi, N.</u></b>	2018	“Studied multiple discrimination among unemployed people with mental health problems and its consequences for job and help-seeking behaviors”	“Unemployed individuals with mental health problems”	“Survey measures job search self-efficacy, barriers to care, and perceived need for treatment”
<b><u>Tay, S., Alcock, K., Scior, K.</u></b>	2018	“To assess the prevalence of personal experiences of mental health problems among clinical psychologists, external, perceived, and self-stigma among them, and stigma-related concerns relating to disclosure and help-seeking”	“United Kingdom-based clinical psychologists”	“Anonymous web survey consisting of the Social Distance Scale, Stig-9, Military Stigma Scale, Secrecy Scale, Attitudes toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale-Short Form, alongside personal experience and sociodemographic questions”
<b><u>Hom, M.A., Stanley, I.H., Spencer-Thomas, S., Joiner, T.E.</u></b>	2018	“To identify rates of mental health service use and help-seeking, correlates of service use, and preferred sources of support among women firefighters with a career history of suicidality”	United States women firefighters	Web-based survey
<b><u>Morgan, J.K., Hourani, L., Lane, M.E., Tueller, S.</u></b>	2016	“Describe the issues for which soldiers reported seeking help, then outline the characteristics of those who are most likely to seek help from a chaplain”	Active-duty soldiers	Survey

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>What is the Aim?</b>	<b>Who is Involved?</b>	<b>How?</b>
<b><u>Jones, N., Keeling, M., Thandi, G., Greenberg, N.</u></b>	2015	“To understand the relationship between mental health symptoms, stigmatizing beliefs about mental health and help-seeking”	The United Kingdom Armed Forces personnel	Survey
<b><u>Roy, P., Tremblay, G., Robertson, S.</u></b>	2014	“Highlights important connections between rurality, farming, and masculinities in the context of men’s mental health.”	Male farmers from Quebec, Canada	Interviews
<b><u>Tedstone Doherty, D., Kartalova-O’Doherty, Y.</u></b>	2010	“To examine the sociodemographic and health status factors that predict help-seeking for self-reported mental health problems.”	General Practitioner (GP)	“Data from the HRB National Psychological Wellbeing and Distress Survey - a telephone survey of the population aged 18 years and over”
<b><u>Norman, J., Rosvall, S.B.</u></b>	1994	“To collect self-report data on willingness to seek personal therapy and to discover if group trends occur among marriage and family therapists, psychologists, and social workers”	Therapists in Utah	Mail survey
<b><u>Dew, M.A., Bromet, E.J., Schulberg, H.C., Parkinson, D.K., Curtis, E.C.</u></b>	1991	“Examines rates of mental health service utilization among depressed individuals in a large white-collar cohort”	White-collar cohort	Survey

The ‘what’ question answers the study’s aims. All 16 articles were sought to study help-seeking behavior and a mix of other variables. For instance, stigma is one of the concerns in six out of 16 articles assessed in this study (Jones et al., 2015; Tay et al., 2018; Zalat et al., 2019; Britt et al., 2020; Hom et al., 2020; Krakauer et al., 2020). According to Stangl et al. (2019), stigma is a well-documented barrier to health and help-

seeking behavior. The remaining ten articles focused on mental health knowledge (Krakauer et al., 2020), mental health service (Dew et al., 1991; Hom et al., 2018; Krakauer et al., 2020), barriers to care-seeking (Ricciardelli et al., 2020), work factors (Morgan et al., 2016; Vayro et al., 2020), attitudes toward help-seeking (Norman & Rosvall, 1994; Zalat et al., 2019; Britt et al., 2020), preferences for support (Hom

et al., 2018), and sociodemographic factors (Doherty & Kartalova-O'Doherty, 2010; Roy et al., 2014).

The 'who' question represents the target group in the study. Based on the analysis, seven out of 16 studies focused on uniformed type workers such as military, safety personnel, firefighters, or soldiers (Jones et al., 2015; Morgan et al., 2016; Hom et al., 2018; Britt et al., 2020; Hom et al., 2018; Krakauer et al., 2020; Ricciardelli et al., 2020). The rest of the studies focused on farmers (Roy et al., 2014; Vayro et al., 2020), teachers versus homemakers (Zalat et al., 2019), working-age adults (Ko, 2018), health workers (Doherty & Kartalova-O'Doherty, 2010; Tay et al., 2018), and white-collar workers (Dew et al., 1991).

The 'how' question refers to the method of measuring the findings. Of the 16 articles, 13 studies (Dew et al., 1991; Norman & Rosvall, 1994; Doherty & Kartalova-O'Doherty, 2010; Jones et al., 2015; Morgan et al., 2016; Ko, 2018; Staiger et al., 2018; Tay et al., 2018; Zalat et al., 2019; Britt et al., 2020; Hom et al., 2020; Krakauer et al., 2020) used survey method, including online, web-based, telephone, and mail surveys. Roy et al. (2014) and Vayro et al. (2020) measured their studies through interviews. On the other hand, Ricciardelli et al. (2020) used a combination method involving open-ended questions mixed with an online survey.

From the systematic review, six aspects were identified as the main focus of past studies in help-seeking behavior for mental health problems among employees. The six aspects include stigma, mental health knowledge, preferences for getting support, attitudes toward help-seeking, and other factors, such as work or sociodemographic factors. The biggest concern is the stigma aspect. Stigma is one of the main barriers to people's reluctance to get help or mental health treatment. Mental health problems can occur to anybody. Thus, continuous efforts to increase the mental health knowledge of everyone, from the top management to subordinate staff, is vital to decrease the negative perceptions toward those in need of mental health support.

## DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

This study systematically reviewed previous studies published in Scopus concerning the help-seeking behavior of employees for mental health issues. The study's outcome revealed that the related studies from 1991 to 2020 illustrated a growing trend reflecting the growing interest in the study area (RQ1). Secondly, Social Sciences and Psychology are the prominent study fields that explore the issue of help-seeking behavior of employees for mental health problems (RQ2). Third, Carleton, Hom, and Joiner are the current top scholars in the field (RQ3). United States has undertaken and published (RQ4) the most scientific studies, while the most articles published are from Florida State University and the University of Regina (RQ5). Subsequently, the 'what' question recognized that stigma, mental health knowledge, the use of mental health services, barriers to care treatment, attitude toward help-seeking, preferences of support, and other factors (work or sociodemographic factors) are the most salient issues. The 'who' question revealed that help-seeking behavior for mental health problems among employees is primarily focused on uniformed-based work such as military, safety personnel, soldiers, or firefighters. The 'how' question showed that surveys were the most frequently chosen method in the studies (RQ6).

With reference to the issue of help-seeking behavior for mental health problems among employees, it is strongly proposed that the efforts to encourage help-seeking must come from both sides. For instance, the efforts must come from the individual that needs help and the people in their surroundings, such as bosses, colleagues, and mental health professionals. As reported in this study, stigma is the most common barrier that hinders people from getting help. Thus, continuously educating everybody in the organization is a must to minimize the negative perceptions toward those with mental health problems. People need to recognize that mental health is equally vital as physical health. Mental health problems can occur to any individual. An individual experiencing a mental health issue needs help to resolve it. For instance, psychological first aid knowledge might come in handy when a co-worker needs psychological help.

Early intervention can decrease the severity of mental health problems. Through exemplary efforts and better understanding, people should acknowledge help-seeking behavior as a beneficial and positive action. Hence, stigma (problem) and mental health knowledge (solution) are two significant variables commonly involved in the related research. By increasing mental health knowledge, mental health problems among those experiencing it can be decreased by helping them understand how to manage them. For the rest of society, knowledge about mental health may alleviate some anxiety associated with providing support. In addition, it may also help to eradicate stigma and shed a more positive light on the act of seeking help.

People with mental health problems tend to seek help from two primary sources: professional and unprofessional. Examples of unprofessional sources are family or friends, while the professional source of help comes from mental health professionals, such as psychiatrists, psychologists, or counselors. Whichever type of mental health support they choose, it is notably a good sign that they dare to handle their mental health problems. However, the help provider should encourage the help-seeker to extend their matters to a professional source for further treatment if the mental health problems are severe. According to McGorry (2008), seeking early help promotes better outcomes.

Furthermore, barriers to help-seeking behavior for mental health treatment must be highlighted. Besides stigma, other factors act as barriers to help-seeking behavior. Based on the analysis in this study, other factors could come from work or sociodemographic factors. In general, work factors could be job security. Employees might not be willing to share or disclose their mental health problems as they are afraid it could affect their job position. Moreover, the privacy of the issues is also essential. Workers will only share if they acknowledge that their problems will be treated as private and confidential to avoid negative rumors that might harm their profession. Therefore, implementing firm policies about this matter and explaining it to employees is vital to encourage help-seeking behavior in an organization. Sociodemographic factors such as gender, masculinity versus femininity, and access to healthcare are among the factors stated in the articles analyzed in this

study. Therefore, an individual's personality and demographic background might influence their decision to seek help.

Without sufficient financial capability or due to non-monetary constraints, such as lack of transportation or time to go for treatment, the final objective of aiding healing or at least decreasing the mental health burden will not be met. Hence, many factors must be considered in encouraging individuals' willingness to seek help for mental health problems. With this in mind, the management team's role, such as the immediate boss or colleague, in getting to know the worker's background is crucial to motivate them further to seek help from professionals. Thus, programs, such as employee's assistance, are vital to improving relations between co-workers.

Key search terms were carefully determined and defined during the identification stage using the PRISMA template. In order to identify studies that discussed help-seeking behavior for mental health problems among employees, relevant phrases such as "employees," "workers," and "adults" were included during the search process to reflect the study's aim. After identification, the following steps involved screening and filtering (inclusion or exclusion based on eligibility criteria). The appropriateness of each study was assessed prior to inclusion. The PRISMA template proved very helpful in facilitating researchers' self-learning via online platforms.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The review has highlighted significant research trends on the topic of help-seeking behavior for mental health problems among employees. Based on the researchers' analysis, more research is evidently required in this area, particularly in other professions. An excellent place to begin would be occupations with high exposure to mental health problems, such as anxiety, stress, or depression. Mental health issues are one of the primary contributors to the global healthcare burden. However, very little research focused on interventions to mitigate this problem, such as encouraging help-seeking behaviors. Despite its limitations, this study provides researchers, organizations, and mental health practitioners with valuable insight into current issues pertaining to help-seeking

behavior among employees. The study can also help point future researchers in the right direction to understand this topic in different work settings further.

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