OCCUPATIONAL STRESS MANAGEMENT

A CASE OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CENTRAL DIVISION OF KAJIADO DISTRICT

BY

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Occupational Stress Management: a case of
DECLARATION

I confirm that this project is my original work and has not been presented in any other Institution for any other award or degree.

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ABSTRACT

There is general consensus that everybody needs some dosage of stress otherwise life would be boring and without interest. Stress is characterized as the spice of life showing that we are all subject to some form of it. Although too much stress may be damaging to our body and disastrous for our mental health, some stress may be a source of motivation and challenge if put under proper control.

Teachers should confront occupational stress as a test that will lead them to professional maturation and as a result it should be regarded as a creative challenge, which can lead through its proper management to productive results. A degree of stress should always accompany the professional activity and challenge and motivate the human organization into action. Stress is an essential condition leading to constructive change as long as it is in manageable doses.

The purpose of this study was to put in place mechanisms that teachers can use to be able to manage stress better thus enriching in this way the existing literature with new knowledge. This study therefore sought to identify sources of stress among secondary school teachers in Central Division of Kajiado District in Olkejuado high school and A.I.C Girls.

A number of perspectives were examined which included the factors that caused teachers to be stressed, the effect of stress on their work, and the strategies that they used to cope with stress. Data was collected by means of questionnaires with head teachers, and teachers, which were administered personally by the researcher.

Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and results presented in percentages, tables and figures. Qualitative data was organized into themes and categories pertinent to the study and from which the researcher closely evaluated the usefulness of the information in answering research questions.

The researcher analyzed the information from the field with a view of fulfilling the research objectives and answering the research questions. On the basis of information gathered, the researcher concluded that teachers were faced with various job stressors, which affected their performance at work. The most stressful factors were inadequate salary with a response rate of 100% and lack of promotion prospects at 91.1%. Teachers used various strategies to cope with stress. In general, the findings of this research showed that teachers were moderately stressed. Teachers lacked information on the management of stress.

The study suggested that the school management should play a significant role in preventing teacher stress. More attention should be paid to what can be done to help teachers cope with the responsibilities, pressures and demands of their work in a constantly changing educational environment.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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May God bless you all.
DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my dear Mother, Son and my sisters to whom I shall always be grateful and thankful for their love, support, encouragement and understanding. With all my love.
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### ABBREVIATIONS

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<td>EASH</td>
<td>European Agency For Safety and Health</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labor Organization</td>
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<td>GAS</td>
<td>General Adaptation Syndrome</td>
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<td>HSE</td>
<td>Health and Safety Commission</td>
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<td>TUC</td>
<td>Trade Union Congress</td>
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DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Burnout**
A syndrome of complete and emotional exhaustion with psychological, psycho physiological, and behavioral components.

**Coping**
The process of managing demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person.

**Distress**
This is harmful stress that may have a noticeable short-term or long-term effect on individuals if they fail to cope with or adapt to the effect of stress.

**Eustress**
Eustress is beneficial stress that enhances performance, and leads to a positive outcome.

**Fight or flight response**
The reaction to a stressor by avoidance or confrontation.

**Occupational stress**
Harmful responses that can happen when there is a conflict between job demands on the employee and the amount of control one has over meeting these demands.

**Stress**
An internal state, which results from demanding, frustrating or unsatisfying conditions.

**Stressor**
It is a stimulus with the potential of triggering the flight or fight response; it is the factor that produces stress.
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Stress is a complex phenomenon. It is a very subjective experience. What may be a challenge for one person will be a stressor for another. It depends largely on background experiences, temperament and environmental conditions. Stress nowadays is a natural and unavoidable part of everyday life. There is general consensus that all people need a certain amount of stress, otherwise their lives would be dull and without interest. (Seyle, 1974) characterizes stress as “the spice of life,” showing that we are all subject to some form of it. Although too much stress may be damaging to our body and disastrous for our mental health, some stress may be a source of motivation and challenge if put under proper control. Stress has been described as an epidemic of modern times. It is blamed for causing physical and mental illness in employees. It has also been blamed for costing organizations millions in lost work time.

Cranwell (1987) has defined Stress as the physiological and psychological reaction that occurs when people perceive an imbalance between the levels of demand placed upon them and their capability for meeting that demand. The Health and Safety Commission of United Kingdom describe work related stress as the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demands placed upon them; occupational stress derives specifically from conditions in the workplace. These may cause stress initially or aggravate the stress already present from other sources.

Stress in its wider meaning constitutes an integral part of a person’s life and is closely interwoven with every aspect of Human activity. Within this context, teachers should confront occupational stress, as a test that will lead them to professional maturation and as a result it should be regarded as a creative challenge, which can lead through its proper management to productive results. A degree of stress should always accompany the professional activity and challenge and motivate the human organization into action. Stress is an essential condition leading to constructive change as long as it is in manageable doses (Chaplain, 2001)
1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In real life occupational stress is an inevitable phenomenon and exists in all kinds of occupations. It is a problem for all organizations, both large and small although it varies in degree and extent. In today’s typical workplace, stress is seen as becoming increasingly more common. People appear to be working longer hours, taking on higher levels of responsibility and exerting themselves ever more strenuously to meet rising expectations about job performance. Competition is sharp. There is always someone ready to “step into one’s shoes” should one be found wanting. This definition provides a central clue as to why managing stress in the workplace is so complex. For not only can pressures be wide-ranging but also those that may seem excessive to one person may not cause problems to others (Jarvis, 2002).

A 1992 United Nations Report labeled job stress “the 20th century disease” and a few years later the World Health Organization said it had become a “world wide epidemic”. The education industry is not immune from this general phenomenon. For the last two decades at least, education staff in schools have been feeling the effects of the overwhelming demands being increasingly placed on them. Schools are being called upon to find the remedies for many of society’s ills. They are often blamed for what goes wrong even if they do not have complete control over the matter. They are constantly called upon to incorporate new content and approaches into the curriculum, to develop new educational programs and pedagogical practices. Computing and information technology on the other hand brings its own set of challenges.

All these demands often have to be met in the face of cuts to education budgets and staffing schedules and calls for economies of every kind on all levels of school life. Faced with all these demands and challenges, it is not shocking that stress among employees working in schools and educational settings are particularly high (Pithers, 1995; Yagil 1998). In view of this, this study will focus on factors that contribute to stress and identify strategies to deal with stress among teachers.
1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

According to Weightman (1999) and Mulumbi (2002) stress is the chief emerging risk exposure facing employees this century. It is a fact that when the environment in which people live is stable, then most of them can cope. Unfortunately, today the environment is dynamic and it is extremely difficult to avoid stress. Since one of the elements of the environment is people’s occupation, it follows that their work will cause stress. Teaching is not an exception to this general rule. Teacher stress affects almost every aspect of life in schools and is increasingly becoming a recognized occupational hazard of the teaching profession.

Stressed teachers are often exhausted from lack of sleep and overwork which impacts on their class demeanor, and their relationship with others in school. They are less sympathetic towards students; less committed to and involved in their jobs, have a lower tolerance for classroom disruption, are less apt to prepare adequately for class and are generally less productive. This has negative consequences, including higher rates of absenteeism, job turnover, tardiness, job dissatisfaction, sabotage and poor performance on the job. Continued stress can exceed an individual’s ability to cope and the result is reduced capability (Cooper & Marshall 1976).

If teacher stress is left unresolved it will have substantial negative impact on teachers’ mental and physical health. This will accelerate the turnover rate of teachers; aggravate the problem of teacher shortage and negatively impact on learners’ performance. The whole education system will be impaired and inefficiency will ensue. This is unacceptable cost to business and industry (Watts & Cooper, 1992). In view of the possible adverse consequences of teacher stress, measures must be undertaken to alleviate teacher stress in order to enhance their enthusiasm in teaching and to help students effectively.

This study, therefore, seeks to put in place mechanisms that will help teachers manage stress better.
1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify causes of stress among teachers in Central Division of Kajiado District
- To determine the effects of teacher stress on performance
- To identify methods of overcoming stress and examine various stress management strategies in practice.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the stressful factors among teachers in secondary schools?
2. What are the effects of stress on the performance of teachers?
3. What are the strategies that teachers use to cope with their occupational stress?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It is hoped that the findings and recommendations of this study shall:

- Help the research identify factors likely to cause stress among teachers and come up with actions that individual teachers can take at work and outside of work to increase their ability to cope with sustained pressure and thus improve learner effectiveness
- Help fill the gap in research in this area and might prompt other researchers to undertake similar studies in other secondary schools
- It will create awareness amongst secondary schools of the need of being socially responsible by providing quality working life
- Help official authorities to make their policy on stress.

1.6 THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study aims at identifying possible causes of stress among secondary school teachers and put in place mechanisms to help teachers manage stress better.

Teachers have been chosen for this study because they are likely to experience a reduced sense of personal accomplishment when they judge as inadequate their own capacities to respond to the challenges they face. These may be challenges presented by the government’s reform efforts, the general challenge being “do more with less” at the present time. A reduced sense of personal
accomplishment among teachers arises from a belief that the support available to them is less than they need.

The study will cover public secondary schools in Central Division of Kajiado District, which has two public secondary schools. These are Olkejuado High school and A.I.C Girls. The study will focus on teachers, and the head teachers in order to identify stressful factors and their effect on the performance of teachers and their students and identify strategies to manage stress.

The Central Division of Kajiado District has been selected for this study as it gives a good representation of secondary schools and for ease of accessibility. To prevent biasness, the staff will be required to answer the questionnaires in order to get a true picture of the study.
CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will review literature on stress management with a view to identifying various stressful factors and the reported effects on performance and productivity and the strategies that have been adopted to manage stress. The chapter is divided into the following sections: conceptual framework, the nature of stress, past studies on stress management which will cover stress in general, stress in teaching, sources of stress, the symptoms and signs of stress, effects of stress, the cost of stress and stress coping strategies.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The provision of education and training to all Kenyans is fundamental to the success of the Government’s overall development strategy. Education aims at enhancing the ability of Kenyans to preserve and utilize the environment for productive gain and sustainable livelihoods. The development of quality human resource is central to the attainment of national goals for industrial development. For teachers to be able to perform effectively and enhance learners’ performance in a highly dynamic environment, they should have the ability to effectively cope with pressures at work and respond to challenges that may confront them in a dynamic environment (Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005).

Several organizational stress researchers have offered a blue print for change: (for example, Kahn, 1981; McGregor, 1967). First, physical work stressors such as noise, harsh lighting, and crowding or temperature extremes should be reduced as much as possible. Second, an effort to minimize unpredictability and ambiguity in expected tasks and standards of performance reduces stress. When workers know what they are expected to do and at what level, they are less distressed. Third, involving workers as much as possible in the decisions that affect their work life reduces stress.

A number of organizations have given workers at least some control over facets of their job, including working hours, the rate at which a task is performed, with corresponding increases in productivity and drops in absenteeism and tardiness (McGregor, 1967). Using the primary work
group as the decision-making body, rather than more removed authorities in a company also reduces stress (Kahn, 1981; Sutton & Kahn, 1986).

The goal of stress management is not to eliminate all stress. A degree of stress should always accompany the professional activity and challenge and motivate the human organization into action. Within this context, teachers should confront occupational stress as a test that will lead them to professional maturation and as a result it should be regarded as a creative challenge, which can lead through its proper management to productive results. Stress is often a motivator for peak performance (Chaiton 1983).

Occupational stress management is therefore an approach that can bring about continuous improvement in the quality of education services, hence improved teacher effectiveness and guarantees the right of every learner to quality and relevant education. The key stress management strategies that this study will focus on are: Job redesign, career development, performance management processes, communication, training, satisfying social relationships, participatory management, autonomy and control and reward packages (Lussier, 2003).

Job redesign is the changing and restructuring of individual’s jobs. Jobs can be redesigned to minimize the creation of stress. There are three main approaches to job redesign that concentrate on the restructuring of individual jobs: job rotation, job enlargement and job enrichment. Job redesign enhances the personal satisfaction that people derive from their work and makes the best use of people as a valuable resource of the organization and to help overcome obstacles to their effective performance (Vecchio & Schunz).

Career development consists of planning careers and promoting staff in accordance with their capabilities, taking care not to over- or under promote. Perceived inadequate career development is tied to psychological distress and to illness precursors. Employees, who feel they have been promoted too quickly or too slowly, feel insecure about job futures and feel that their ambitions are thwarted in their current jobs, feel more stressed (Mullins, 2002).

Performance management fosters high degree of involvement and participation in decision-making process. Involving teachers in decision-making matters that are of direct concern and
interest to them encourages close cooperation and quality solutions and is a means of coping with stress (Mullins, 2002)

Communication is the life-blood of any organization. Good communication on stress issues fosters a supportive environment in which stress issues can be identified, discussed and addressed. School managers and teachers should avail themselves of the opportunities available to become better informed about the subject and how it can be managed. A good communication system should be developed in schools through regular staff meetings, circulars or individual discussions. A friendly and cooperative working environment should be established where teachers are free to express their opinion (Luccier, 2003)

Head teachers should try and build good relationships with teachers, students, and parents. A good relationship is developed when head teachers understand their stakeholders’ feelings and show respect for them. A seek of support, advice and suggestions from other colleagues provides workers with opportunities to develop or promote meaningful social relationships that can reduce stress or buffer its impact (Lewis, 1999)

In order to build team spirit, morale and commitment in any organization, people should be in control of at least some part of their lives and that they should be given some influence over things that affect them. Lack of control over work is related to job dissatisfaction and absenteeism. Participation creates a sense of control, involvement and improves communication. When workers know what they are expected to do and at what level, they are less distressed (Lussier, 2003)

Rewarding workers for good work rather than focusing on punishment for poor work improves morale and provides incentives for better future work. School administration can help their members to overcome burnout by recognizing and rewarding teaching excellence, nominating excellent teachers for external teaching awards and sponsoring teachers to attend seminars, workshops and conferences. Giving merit salary increments to educators of recognized excellences are ways of rewarding members and reducing their occupational stress (Kaikai, 1990).
Training is linked with performance appraisal and career development. Training is necessary for improving the quality of work of employees. Teachers have not only to work, but work effectively and to enhance the performance of students. Continuous training to upgrade their skills and training in stress management issues will enhance teachers’ ability to confront challenges presented by a dynamic environment (Storey, 1993)

It is vital that secondary schools take steps to manage stress as outlined in the following Conceptual framework, which shows the major variables and their interrelationships:

![Conceptual framework showing stress management strategies and their interrelationships]

**Figure 1.0- Model showing interrelationships between variables**

Source: (author 2006)

The effect of implementing stress management strategies is to substantially reduce the prospect of stress among teachers, required for life-long learning and teaching that lie ahead in this dynamic society. This leads to the continuous improvement in the quality of education services.
2.3. THE NATURE OF STRESS

Stress is a part of life and is generated by changing situations that a person must face. Stress is a complex and dynamic concept. It is a source of tension and frustration, and can arise through a number of interrelated influences on behavior including the individual, group, organizational and environmental factors. Today the struggle is tied to a number of choices available to us, which are increasingly a source of stress. Even as our physiological needs are satisfied more easily, the urge to satisfy higher psychological needs intensifies. Since satisfying these needs can be difficult and not at all assured our susceptibility to tension and stress increases. Society is complex and filled with contradictions. The increased complexity at work, a result largely of technology contributes to stress. Success can generate stress just as failure can. It is therefore important to understand the nature of stress so as to be able to alleviate stress and strain in order to enhance their enthusiasm in teaching (Mullins 2002).

Stress may be seen as having two dimensions to it. First, there is the experiential aspect. This can be described as an unpleasant feeling that people have when they feel in a psychological state of distress or tension. This state relates to the way they perceive their situation. Prolonged exposure to stressful situations where the individual begins to feel increasingly inadequate can be harmful. When the internal balance in a personal life is lost that person is suffering from stress. Then there is the physiological aspect. According to some psychologists, in threatening situations the body responds with a “flight or fight” syndrome. Confronted by a challenging situation, a person’s body releases a change of adrenalin, which helps to equip it to either face the danger or run. Life without demands or excitement would be dull and boring. However there is an optimal level of arousal beyond which physiological responses become unbalanced (Dawis 1989).

Stress is unlikely where the outcome is not considered to be important to the individual; but when the outcome is seen as important, and then stress is definitely more likely. Stress, however is a very personal experience, as is the response to each individual to it and their beliefs about how best to cope with the causes and effects of stress. A certain amount of stress may be seen as positive and even as a good thing and helps to promote a high level of performance. However, stress can potentially be very harmful (Steptoe, 1999)

It is rather obvious that, at both a personal and organizational level, there exists a very real interest in decreasing the amount of stress in our lives. To eliminate or even reduce stress, we
need to understand exactly what it is. Unfortunately that is not an easy task. For years, stress researchers have been trying to agree on a definition of stress (Ivancevich and Matteson, 1980; Mason 1975; Monat and Lazarus, 1985). The disagreement among experts about a common definition of stress and the wide variations in perceiving stress among individuals present a challenge in investigating occupational stress.

2.3.1 Stress defined

According to Cooper and Marshall (1978) stress is something more than mere pressure. It carries strong overtones of the breakdown of normal human performance. Stress is essentially individually defined and must be understood with reference to characteristics of both the individual and his environment and it is the outcome of the two.

Byars and Rue (1987) defined stress as the mental and physical condition that results from a perceived threat of danger and a pressure to remove. The potential for stress exists when an environment situation presents a demand threatening to exceed a persons capabilities and resources for meeting it, under conditions in which the person expects a substantial difference in rewards and costs resulting from meeting the demand versus not meeting it.

Mullins (2002) defines stress as a source of tension and frustration, which tends to arise when an individual feels that a certain situation should not exist.

Workplace stress is the harmful physical and emotional responses that can happen when there is a conflict between job demands on the employee and the amount of control an employee has over meeting these demands. In general, the combination of high demands in a job and a low amount of control over the situation can lead to stress. Work is not inherently stressful, but certain intrinsic elements of a job task may be highly stressful if the occupational demands are hyper stimulating and exceed the individual’s available resources (Murphy 1995).

Stress should not be approached as one dimensional, trying to solve a complex problem with a simple solution. Stress is a multi-dimensional phenomenon and if it’s detrimental effects are to be reached, an individual’s entire style of living must change to some degree. There must be a reduction in the stressful environment accompanied by an attempt to change stress-producing personality characteristics.
According to Greenberg (1980) success in the control of stress and tension demands a holistic approach, which consists of the following:

- The relationship between the mind and body, the psychosomatic theory of disease, and the mechanisms that link stress and illness and the design for the holistic approach of intervention.
- The broad concept of the stress producing environment and the underlying causes. Success in controlling stress and tension is enhanced by knowledge of conditions, attitudes and behavior, which contribute to the stress response.
- The strategies/techniques used to alleviate stress and tension. The ability to create a total personalized system of controlling stress and tension is the hoped for outcome of this study.

The goal of stress management therefore is not to eliminate all stress but to keep it to manageable doses. Stress is often a motivator for peak performance, is stimulating and welcome. This is achievable by adopting strategies such as job redesign, career development, communication, satisfying social relationships among others, which cause feelings of satisfaction (Chaiton, 1983)

2.4 PAST STUDIES ON STRESS

It is estimated that 91.5 million working days are lost annually through stress related illness affecting up to half a million people in Britain (Kinnie 2002). Stress has also been found to be the number one health concern for two-thirds of safety representatives according to a survey carried out by Trade Union Congress in Britain (Stress News International, 2000). Health care costs consume a growing part of the costs of doing business. Job stress in America has cost the American Industry 150 billion dollars per year in terms of absenteeism, diminished productivity, compensation claims, health insurance and direct medical expenses (Cahill, 1995).

In one US study, as many as 40% of workers described their jobs as very stressful. While not a scientific gauge and not measuring serious stress health problems, this gives some indication as to how prevalent work related stress is. As regards official health records in the UK, the nursing and teaching occupations are the most affected by work related stress with 20% of workers at
any one time suffering from work related stress, depression and anxiety. (The figure for teachers rises to 40% when including physical conditions relating to stress).

In a nationwide survey conducted by a large life insurance Company in America it was established that nearly 46% of American workers felt that their jobs are highly stressful while another 27% felt that work was the greatest source of stress in their lives. There is growing evidence that high levels of stress adversely affect physical health, psychological well-being and many aspects of task performance (Greenberg, 1999). It is not difficult, therefore, to see that virtually no one is immune from stress. An American poll found that 89% of respondents had experienced serious stress at some point in their lives. The threat from stress is perceived so strongly in Japan that the Japanese even have a word for sudden death due to overwork, ‘KAROUSHI’.

Stress in teaching is a worldwide phenomenon. Studies conducted in Australia (McCormick, 1977) Hong Kong (Hui & Chan 1996), Israel (Yogul, 2004) New Zealand (Manthei, Gilmore, Tuck & Adair, 1996), and the United Kingdom (Griffith, Steptoe & Cropley, 1999) and elsewhere, all show that teachers are experiencing some degree of occupational stress.

One of the most interesting findings of all these studies is the fact that the general stress level is very similar. Around 25 to 30 percent, that is one in every four teachers, describe the profession as very to extremely stressful (Kyriacou, 2000).

Despite the fact that majority of teachers report high levels of stress, at the same time a high percentage (around 40 up to 80 per cent) regard teaching as a profession that gives rewards and satisfaction. In the above studies, it was found that stress and job satisfaction had a negative correlation, since high levels of stress were correlated with low levels of job satisfaction. Kyriacou (1987) gives a possible explanation with which we agree who supports that job satisfaction is comprised by a series of determinants, one of which is stress. There is also the possibility that some teachers find the profession as satisfactory despite the stress it causes while teaching experience can differentiate individuals perceptions and minimize their expectations. Stress is not only an unavoidable by product of significant change; it is an essential condition leading to constructive change as long as it is in manageable doses.
2.4.1 Sources of stress

Regardless of how one job may compare to another in terms of stress, it is helpful to recognize that every job has potential stress agents, which vary in the degree to which the agents are found to be causally linked to stress in each job. Stress is a highly personalized phenomenon and can vary widely even in identical situations for different reasons. The severity of job stress depends on the magnitude of the demands that are being made and the individuals’ sense of control or decision making latitude he or she has in dealing with them. Researchers have identified five chief categories of work stress (Cooper & Eaker, 1988). These are factors intrinsic to the job; role in the organization; relationship at work; career development and organization structure and climate.

The sources of teacher stress have well been researched and a great deal of information have been revealed; Cooper & Kelly (2000) studied at a national level all the United Kingdoms head teachers, and using factor analysis, they grouped the sources that cause stress to head teachers in the following five factors: work overload, handling relationships with staff, resource management, the local educational authority and handling poor performance of staff. On the other hand, Carr’s (1994) study with 94 teachers in South Australia revealed that the main factors that caused stress to them were the following: a lack of support from the Education Department, coping with heavy work demands and expectations of the employer and difficulty in interpersonal relationships with other staff.

Caplan & Jones, (1975) and Sorenson et al (1975) have both found that workload is a chief factor producing high levels of occupational stress. Workers who feel required to work too long and too hard at too many tasks feel more stressed, practice poorer health habits and sustain more health risks than do workers not suffering from overload.

Role conflict and role ambiguity are also associated with stress as stated by Caplan & Jones (1975). Role ambiguity occurs when a person has few clear ideas of what is to be done and no idea of the standards used for evaluating work. Role conflict occurs when a person receives conflicting information about work tasks or standards from different individuals. In contrast, when people receive clear feedback about the nature of their performance, they report lower levels of stress.
Perceived inadequate career development has also been tied to psychological distress and to illness precursors. People, who feel they have been promoted too quickly or too slowly, people who feel insecure about their job futures and people who feel that their ambitions are thwarted in their current jobs feel more stressed, are more likely to seek help, and show high rates of illness, including cardiovascular disease. (R.A. Catalano, Rook, & Dooley (1986).

In their study, Ostell and Oakland (1995), grouped the problematic situations that teachers face under the following headings: organizational external conflicts/complaints, behavioral/special needs, internal conflicts/complaints, students’ performance, and intrapersonal. In addition, the researchers found that educational changes were reported more frequently as the main difficulty in teachers’ role.

In addition, Travers & Cooper (1997) found that teachers named lack of government support, lack of information about changes, constant change and the demands of curriculum as among their greatest source of stress. Extra organizational sources of stress arising from family problems, life issues and financial difficulties could also cause stress on the job.

Lack of control over work has been related to a number of stress indicators, including heightened catecholamine secretion, job dissatisfaction, absenteeism, and the development of coronary artery disease (Bosma et al; 1997).

Stress may arise from the need to make hard or unpopular decisions or engaging in interpersonal conflict. Individuals who are responsible for other people, who must motivate them, reward or punish them and communicate with them experience higher levels of stress than individuals who handle other organizational functions (Armstrong, 1999) & Cooper, 2001).

Chaplain (2001) categorizes the aspects of teacher’s work that caused most stress under the following four headings: external factors (e.g., legislation, inspections); school structures (e.g. maintaining standards); school structures); interpersonal processes (e.g. relationships with other teachers and parents); and personal factors (e.g. professional activities and lifestyle).

Organization structure and climate is also another job stressor where by the work is devoid of opportunities for participation thus leading to strain. Participation creates a sense of control,
involvement and improves communication. When the organizational structure is too rigid, people feel that there are few opportunities for growth and personal development, whereas if the structure is ill defined it could raise feelings of anxiety. Either extreme could result to stress to the employee (Kollinson, 2002).

To a degree having an amiable social environment at work depends on being an amicable co-worker. Social relationships may not only be important in combating stress in their own right; they may also buffer other job stressors and act as a moderating factor that reduces some of the stressful demands of the work role as possible ill effects on health (French 1974; House 1981). Good relationships between members of a work group are a central factor in individual and organizational health (Drummond, 2000).

Occupational stress occurs in different contexts: political, cultural, organizational settings, psychological, biological, physical and environmental. Occupational stress influenced by political and sociological factors is considered a more complex construct than merely inclusive of some sources of stress at work. Certain social motivating factors such as team spirit, respect, acceptance and friendly social interactions contribute to a positive work environment, which lead to occupational distress. Workers perceptions of the degree of participation in the decision making process on issues affecting the organization have proven to be related to job satisfaction and enhanced self-esteem (Barnsley, 1992).
The sources of stress at the workplace can be summarized in table 1.0 below:

**Table 1.0: Summary of sources of stress**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of job stressors</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Factors unique to the job   | • Work load (over load and under load  
|                             |   • Autonomy  
|                             |   • Physical environment (noise, air quality.  
|                             |   • Isolation at the work place  
| Organizational             | • Participation/non participation in decision making  
| structure/climate           | • Management style  
|                             | • Communication patterns  
| Role in the organization    | • Role conflict, role ambiguity and level of responsibility  
| Career development          | • Under/over promotion  
|                             | • Job security, overall job satisfaction  
|                             | • Career development opportunities  
| Relationship at work        | • Supervisors, coworkers, subordinates  
| (interpersonal)             | • Threat of violence, harassment  

Adapted from: Murphy, L.R; Occupational Stress Management: Current Status and Future Direction in Trends in Organizational Behavior, 1995, Vol. 2; PG 1-14

The knowledge of the main sources of teachers stress is very important, since such understanding can offer a useful basis for the development of strategies that teachers can use to minimize their own levels of stress on the one hand and on the other hand schools can change those practices that make the situation more difficult.

2.4.2 Symptoms and signs of stress

According to a report on the Independent Education union Survey 1996, there are many signs and symptoms that can indicate when someone is having difficulty coping with the amount of stress they are experiencing. There are the emotional manifestations: irritability, anxiety, depression, nervousness, withdrawal or aloofness; secondly, there may be a behavioral aspect: for instance,
over-impulsiveness, aggressiveness, impaired ability to perceive and evaluate a situation, overeating or loss of appetite, procrastination, withdrawal or isolation from others, neglect of responsibility, poor job performance and sometimes an excessive dependence on alcohol.

Thirdly, there are the interrelated cognitive and physiological aspects: anxious thinking patterns which result in psychosomatic conditions such as excessive fatigue, high blood pressure, skin irritations, cardiovascular diseases and susceptibility to infection. The physical ailments induced by stress can be of a short-term nature, for example, regular headaches or palpitations of the heart. Or they may be of a more long-term character: for instance, high blood pressure, heart disease, anxiety, nervous tics or prolonged sexual irregularities.

In the work place behavior may take the form of increased absences (flight) aggression towards colleagues (fight), committing more serious errors than normal and taking longer over tasks. The signs and symptoms from stress tend to progress through several phases or stages. Stress for teachers affect their environment, both personal and professional. Often they are exhausted from lack of sleep and overwork, which has an impact on their preparation, their class demeanor, and their relationships with others in school. Stress is taking a devastatingly high toll on our combined productivity and health (Watts and Cooper, 1992).

2.4.3 The effects of stress

There is considerable evidence that stress at work can contribute to cardiovascular disease (Repetti, 1993b). Stress also shows up in ways other than illness that may be extremely costly to the organization. Workers who cannot participate actively in decisions about their job show higher rates of absenteeism, job turnover, tardiness, job satisfaction, sabotage, and poor performance on the job (C.J. Cooper & Marshall, 1976). In essence, these workers have taken stress into their own hands and reduced it by refusing passively to work as long, as hard or as well as their employer apparently expect.

According to Chapman (1995-2005) stress significantly reduces brain functions such as memory, concentration and learning, all of which are central to effective performance at work. Certain tests have shown up to 50% loss of performance in cognitive tests performed by stress sufferers. Stress is bad for people and organizations, it is a threat and a health risk, and it needs to be recognized and dealt with.
At a personal level, teachers who experience burnout are less sympathetic towards students; less committed to and involved in their jobs, have a lower tolerance for classroom disruption, are less apt to prepare adequately for class and are generally less productive. Perhaps even more germane to school restructuring is the evidence that like professionals in other fields, teachers experiencing burnout tend to be dogmatic about their practices, to rely rigidly on structures and routine, thereby resisting changes to those practices (Cooper, 2001).

A person constantly experiencing a great deal of stress cannot function as efficiently as when working under less stress. Continued stress can exceed an individual’s ability to cope and the result is reduced capability. Stress in the workplace reduces productivity, increases management pressures, and makes people ill in many ways; evidence of which is still increasing. In the UK over 13 million working days are lost every year because of stress. Stress at work also provides a serious risk of litigation for all employers and organizations, carrying significant liabilities for damages, bad publicity and loss of reputation. Dealing with stress-related claims also consumes vast amounts of management time.

Stress also increases frustration when people are blocked from behaving the way they would like to behave or from getting what they want. Frustrated employees become passive and aggressive towards their supervisors and co-workers. In addition, frustrated employees become depressed and lose their self-confidence and self-esteem (Hugh & fieldman, 1986).

So, there are clearly strong economic and financial reasons for organizations to manage and reduce stress at work, aside from the obvious humanitarian and ethical considerations.

2.4.4 The cost of stress
To the individual whose health or happiness has been ravaged by the effects of stress, the costs involved are only too clear. Potential stress costs associated with individuals and society combine to lessen the satisfaction obtained from work and reduce on- the-job performance. Stress in the workplace is very costly with the price tag for US industry estimated at over $300 billion annually as a result of: accidents, absenteeism, employee turnover, and diminished productivity, direct medical, legal and insurance costs.
According to a survey of 800,000 workers in over 300 companies, the number of employees calling in sick because of stress tripled from 1996 to 2000. An estimated 1 million workers are absent everyday due to stress. The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work reported that over half of the 550 million working days lost annually in the US from absenteeism are stress related and that one in five of all last minute no-shows are due to job stress. If this occurs in key employees, it can have a domino effect that spreads down the line to disrupt scheduled operations. Unanticipated absenteeism is estimated to cost American companies $602.00/worker/year and the price tag for large employers could approach $ 3.5 million annually. A 1997 three year study conducted by one large corporation found that 60% of employee absences could be traced to psychological problems that were due to stress.

UK HSE statistics suggest stress related costs to UK employers in the region of 700 million pounds every year. The cost of stress to society is estimated at 7 billion pounds per annum (These figures were respectively 350 million pounds and 3.7 billion pounds in 1995/6 when total days lost were half the present levels.)

2.4.5 Stress coping strategies

Helping a person maintain the level of stress that is best for him or her is the goal of various stress management techniques. People respond very differently to stress; some throw up their hands in despair while others seem able to meet setbacks and challenges with equanimity, bringing their personal and social resources to bear on the problem at hand. The impact of any potentially stressful event is substantially influenced by how a person appraises it (Vecchio & Schunz, 2003).

Despite all the actions that might be taken to prevent stress in the first place, it is inevitable that some individuals will experience stress from time to time. This is because individuals stress levels are determined by such a wide variety of factors in their personal make-up, their work environment and their social domestic lives. (Atkinson, 1988).

Coping is the process of managing demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person. Coping consists of efforts, both action oriented and intrapsychic to manage environmental and internal demands and conflicts among them. Since the sources of workplace stress vary greatly, so do the strategies to reduce or prevent it. (Anschuetz, 1999).
Dunham (1994) concludes from his research, “teachers’ stress management strategies and resources can be classified as personal, interpersonal, organizational and community”. Personal strategies include work resources, positive attitudes and pressures and out of work activities, whereas interpersonal strategies involve the support teachers receive from their family or their social surrounding. Organizational strategies include supportive management and colleagues, whereas community strategies refer to the community activities that teachers can take part in.

Rewarding workers for good work, rather than focusing on punishment for poor work improves morale and provides incentives for better future work (Kahn, 1981). Providing workers with opportunities to develop or promote meaningful social relationships potentially can reduce stress or buffer its impact (Bunk, 1989; Moos, 1985). People who are in a supervisory position in workplace settings can look for signs before stress has an opportunity to do significant damage.

According to a report on the survey conducted by the Victorian Independent Education Union on workloads and perceptions of occupational stress among union members employed in catholic schools and education offices and independent schools, (1996), strategies most frequently cited centered on efforts to share the burden of stress with others by seeking the support of family/friends or colleagues, or on efforts to enhance individual professional performance. Importance in both cases was attached to engaging in physical activity or hobbies as a form of relaxation. In both instances also, relatively less importance appeared to be ascribed to involvement in school decision-making processes as a means of coping with stress. However the strategies adopted tended to be individualistic in their orientation.

Where a physical agent causes stress in the workplace for example, it is best to control it at its source. If the workplace is too loud, control measures to deal with the noise should be implemented wherever possible. If one is experiencing pain from repetitive strain, workstations can be re-designed to reduce repetitive and strenuous movements (Anschuetz, 1999).

According to Schunz & Vecchio (2003) one especially useful strategy for coping with job-related stress is effective time management. An inability to manage time can result in over commitment, a lack of planning and missed deadlines. They further point out that one means of resisting stress is to have a strong network of social support. The availability of sympathetic others especially co-
workers can help a person deal with job-related stress. The reassurance derived from knowing that others can be called on to help when needed can be invaluable.

Jobs can be redesigned to minimize the creation of stress. One approach to job redesign that seeks to reduce dull, repetitive aspects of work is job enrichment. Job enrichment makes a task more attractive by giving greater autonomy to the individual worker. Such autonomy is critical to alleviating feelings of pressure and the resistant stress. Two other common ways of reducing stress are to provide employees with opportunities to participate in decision-making and to improve communication, both of which can reduce workers feelings of helplessness and dependence (Vecchio & Schunz, 2003).

Employers should provide a stress free work environment, recognize where stress is becoming a problem for staff, and take action to reduce stress. Successful stress management frequently relies on reducing stress susceptibility and removing the stressors, and often factors will be both contributing to susceptibility and a direct cause. Physical exercise is immensely beneficial in managing stress. Exercise distracts us from the causes of stress, releases helpful chemicals in our brain and body that are good for us, and develops and maintains a healthy body, which directly reduces stress susceptibility. A growing number of firms have adopted ‘stress-down days’, when employees come to work wearing casual attire, including jeans and sweatshirts (Chapman, 1995-2005).

Prevention of work related stress is an important aspect of the International Labor Organization (ILO) primary goal, which has been defined by the Director General as to provide opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security, and human dignity. The International Labor Organization’s (ILO) experience shows that although many measures are taken to help workers cope with stress, these may not be effective in the long-term unless they go some way to addressing the causes of stress (Safe work, 2002).

It was clear from the studies that teachers are tending to adopt solutions to stress, which are of an essentially non-political nature. This tends to suggest a situation accepted by teachers as something to be coped with and adapted to, but not challenged. The effect of implementing all these conditions is to substantially reduce the prospect of stress among the employees.
2.5 CRITICAL REVIEW OF MAJOR ISSUES

The foregoing literature review indicates that various stress management techniques have been advanced which aim at reducing stress. However, there is little consensus between different professional groups regarding its aetiology, or how to tackle it.

Based on the literature review, teacher stress is a real phenomenon and that high levels are reliably associated with a range of causal factors, including those intrinsic to teaching, individual vulnerability and systemic influences. There is a reasonable understanding of the aetiology of teacher stress, but little is known about the effects of reducing or mediating the impact of stress.

There are few studies of effective intervention or long-term follow-up. There are also serious problems in generalizing findings from stress management in other occupational sectors. Whilst the total volume of research into teacher stress is substantial, there are also notable limitations and gaps. Whilst research has demonstrated that overwork, long working hours and poor working relationships have been identified as intrinsic stressors in teaching there has been little research into the effects of reducing or mediating them partly because they are not open to experimental manipulation. Outcome studies for attempted strategies are lacking.

The limitations of using existing research base to plan stress management in secondary schools are compounded by other factors. Studies may not generalize well across education sectors and the base of cross-national and cross-sector comparisons is inadequate to make judgments as to whether generalization is justified.

We can see from the stressors identified in Travers & Cooper (1997) study that teachers view stress in environmental terms. This contrasts with the view of most stress management trainers who operate at the level of the individual.

Clearly, the knowledge of the sources of teacher stress is very important, since such understanding can offer a useful basis for the development of strategies that teachers can use to minimize their own levels of stress on the one hand and on the other hand schools can change those practices that make the situation more difficult.


2.6 SUMMARY AND GAPS TO BE FILLED BY THE STUDY

Teachers today are experiencing increased demands for accountability and are expected to contribute to the search for knowledge and serve the community in a professional manner. In addition to excelling in teaching skills, they are being called upon to find remedies for many of the society’s ills. They are often blamed for what goes wrong in schools even if they do not have complete control over the matter. They are constantly called upon to incorporate new content and approaches into the curriculum and develop new educational programs and pedagogical practices. The rapid growth of Information technology in the Kenyan society is placing new demands on teachers.

However, the government recognizes that teacher resource is one of the most important inputs into the education system and therefore efficient management and utilization of teachers is critical to the quality of learning outcome. Continuous improvement in the quality of education services should entail continuous skills upgrading for teachers. Providing teachers with skills in stress management will empower teachers to deliver quality service amidst changes in a dynamic environment (Author, 2006)

This study, therefore, aims at putting in place mechanisms that will help teachers manage stress better.
CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 STUDY DESIGN

This was a descriptive research. This study had been chosen because the researcher was able to establish what causes stress among secondary school teachers and how they coped with work-related stress. Questionnaires were sent to the head teachers, and teaching staff of the selected schools.

3.2 TARGET POPULATION

The population for the study comprised of two public secondary schools namely Olkejuado high school and A.I.C. Girls. The teachers in these schools formed the study population.

3.3 SAMPLING DESIGN

In view of the population of teachers in both schools, which in total was 60, that is 15 at A.I.C Girls and 45 in Olkejuado, the researcher carried out a census so as to have a good representation of the teachers. Questionnaires were issued to all the teachers and head teachers in both schools using a list of the teachers in each school that had been provided by the head teachers.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES/INSTRUMENTS USED

Both primary and secondary data were used in this study. Primary data was collected using questionnaires. The questionnaire to teachers was structured and semi-structured and was administered using the “drop and pick later” method. Each of the questionnaires was divided into three parts: part A covered background information, and was to be completed by all respondents. Part B was to be completed by head teachers only while part C was to be completed by all respondents. Both part B and C consisted of questions relating to objectives of the study. Questions were based on a 4-point likert type scale.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Data obtained from the questionnaires was grouped according to particular research questions and analyzed using factor analysis. Peil (1995) maintains that when making the results of research known to a variety of readers, percentages have considerable advantage over more complex...
statistics. Best and Kahn (1989) hold that the most widely used and understood standard proportion is the percentage.

Narrative summary of the open-ended questions was made. Care was taken by the researcher to note the number of times views were expressed and the number of respondents that expressed similar views. This formed the basis for drawing conclusions.

3.6 EXPECTED OUTPUT

After carrying out the study and analyzing the data, it was expected that the sources of teacher stress would be categorized. They were identified in terms of most stressful to least stressful depending on the number of times respondents expressed a similar view. These views in turn pointed out clearly the stress management strategies that teachers had or had not put in place to manage stress. Various suggestions were offered on how to manage stress in schools.
CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION TO DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the data that were collected from respondents at Olkejuado high school and A.I.C Girls. These included 43 teachers and two head teachers. The main purpose of this study was to identify the various causes of stress among teachers so as to put in place mechanisms that will help teachers manage stress better.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the stressful factors among teachers in secondary schools?
2. What are the effects of stress on the performance of teachers?
3. What are the strategies that teachers use to cope with their occupational stress?

This chapter contains the analysis of data and the presentation of results. There were 60 questionnaires issued, which comprised of 58 for teachers and 2 for head teachers. The two head teachers’ questionnaires were filled and returned. In total 45 questionnaires were dully filled and returned. All the returned questionnaires were accepted and analyzed since they were correctly filled. This gave a response rate of 75%, which was an acceptable rate for this kind of research (Orodho 2005).


4.2 QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE ANALYSES

4.2.1 Background Information

The head teachers in both A.I.C and Olkejuado had served an average of 6 years as head teachers and all of them were holders of university degrees. As for the staff, 3 teachers (7%) had served as teachers for less than 3 years, 6 teachers (14%) had served for between 3-6 years; 9 teachers (21%) had served between 6-10 years and 25 teachers (53%) had served for over 10 years. Only 4 teachers (9.3 %) were holders of college diplomas while 39 (90.7%) had university degrees. 2 out of the 9 teachers who had served between 6-10 years held positions of head of section and
departmental head respectively. Out of the 25 teachers who had served for over 10 years only 12 held positions in the school ranging from departmental heads, heads of sections to examination officers.

4.2.2 Factors Relating to Work
To determine the level of job satisfaction, respondents were asked “In general how satisfied are you with being a head teacher/teacher?” The answers to this question are presented in Table 4.1, which shows that 5 teachers (11.1%) are not satisfied, 27 (60%) were satisfied while 4 (8.9%) reported they were very satisfied.

Table 4.1. : Assessment of job satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Not satisfied</th>
<th>Moderately satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.I.C Girls</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 above shows that most teachers (60%) were satisfied with being teachers/head teachers, 20% were moderately satisfied, 11.1% were not satisfied while only 8.9% were very satisfied. The above information can be represented in a pie-chart and bar graph respectively as shown in figures 4.1(a) and 4.2(b) respectively:

Figure 4.1(a): Assessment of job satisfaction
From the figure above, 60% indicated that they were satisfied with their work while only 9% indicated that they were very satisfied.

![Chart showing level of job satisfaction](chart.png)

Figure 4.1(b): Assessment of job satisfaction

Despite the fact that majority of teachers report moderate to very stressful stress, at the same time a high percentage (60%) are satisfied with their jobs. This gives a possible explanation that job satisfaction is composed by a series of determinants and not just stress only. Despite the stress that teaching causes, some teachers find the profession as satisfactory.

When asked to provide suggestions that would make their jobs interesting, most teachers suggested improved remuneration, provision of modern and adequate teaching facilities, creating good relationships with other teachers and students and organizing education trips.

When asked to describe their tasks at work their responses are summarized in table 4.2 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Not satisfied</th>
<th>Moderately satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.I.C Girls</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>46.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>62.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This table clearly shows that a large percentage of the teachers 62.2% described their work as interesting, 20% less interesting, while 8.9% described their jobs as very interesting and another 8.9% as not interesting.

This information is represented in the figures 4.2(a) and 4.2(b) shown below:

![Figure 4.2(a): Description of tasks at work](image)

The figure above clearly indicates that the largest portion in the figure with 62% describes the tasks of teachers at work as interesting with the smallest portion of 8.9% indicating that their tasks were interesting or not interesting.

![Figure 4.2(b): Description of tasks at work](image)

In my opinion and based on the findings of this study, it is clear that even though teachers are stressed at work, majority of them (62.2%) consider their tasks at work as interesting.
Head teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the support they get from the government especially in the funding provided to schools, which they described as inadequate. This concurs with Travers & Cooper (1997) who found that teachers named lack of government support as a source of stress.

On being asked to identify the courses that they had undertaken in the last two years, out of the 45 respondents, only 5 (11.1%) had attended any courses and most of them were short computing courses. Only two teachers were undertaking masters’ degrees. Only one of the two head teachers had received formal training in stress management and time management. However, both had received formal training in communication and team building. None of the head teachers had nominated any staff to attend a stress management course.

This study indicates that a majority of the teachers have not undertaken training since they last graduated and as Storey (1993) indicates continuous training to upgrade teachers’ skills and training in stress management issues enhances teachers’ ability to confront challenges presented by a dynamic environment. Teachers must continuously upgrade their skills to be in a position to confront challenges presented by a dynamic environment. Lack of preparedness is a precursor of stress.

Reporting on any new duties that teachers had been given in the last two years only 9 teachers (20%) had been given new duties while 36 (80%) had not been given any new duties as depicted in table 4.3 below:

Table 4.3: Respondents given additional duties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.I.C Girls</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>62.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>80</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The information in table 4.3 is represented in figures 4.3 (a) and (b) below:
Figure 4.3 (a): Respondents given additional duties

As shown in the figure above, 80% of the respondents had not been given additional duties for the last two years while only 20% had.

Figure 4.3(b): Respondents given additional duties

Greenberg (1999) and Drummond (2000) indicate that lack of mental stimulation that accompanies many routine, repetitive and unchallenging jobs results to boredom and leads to stress. Job redesign enhances the personal satisfaction that people derive from their work, and makes the best use of people as a valuable resource of the organization. It helps to overcome obstacles to their effective performance. Such autonomy is critical to alleviate feelings of pressure and the resistant stress.
To determine the adequacy of facilities in the two schools in the areas of staff, equipment, and office space, both head teachers expressed inadequacy in the number of staff especially in the science subjects. Equipment and office space were also described as inadequate.

Class sizes in A.L.C, which has 15 teachers and 200 students averages 30-40 students. However Olkejuado high school, which has 45 teachers, 800 students, has an average of 60 students per class. This is above the recommended maximum class size of 40. This information is summarized in table 4.4 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>Class size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.L.C</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To determine the number of hours that teachers spend at work after the normal working hours, head teachers spend an average of 15 hours from Monday to Friday and occasionally spend extra hours on Saturdays and Sundays. Most teachers spend an average of 8 hours after the normal working hours from Monday to Friday but rarely on weekends.

It is clear from these findings that head teachers are overworked. Caplan & Jones (1975) and Sorenson et al (1975) have both found that workload is a chief factor producing high levels of occupational stress. Workers who feel required to work too long and hard feel more stressed, practice poorer health habits and sustain more health risks.

With regard to relationship with the other teachers, 51% described their relationship as very good, 43% described it as good while only 6% described their relationship as fair. Teachers suggested that meaningful social relationships can be provided through sports, organizing retreats, providing open and democratic forums, setting up of welfare societies, organizing get together parties and providing housing to teachers.

The table below gives a description of the relationship of teachers with other teachers.
Table 4.5: Description of relationship with teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th></th>
<th>Good</th>
<th></th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th></th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.I.C Girls</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above information is represented in the figures 4.5(a) and 4.5(b) below:

Figure 4.5(a): Description of relationship with other teachers

Figure 4.5(a) above indicates that none of the teachers described their relationship with other teachers as poor while 51% said their relationship was very good.

Figure 4.5 (b): Description of relationship with other teachers
According to French (1974), relationships are important in combating stress and also buffer other stressors and act as a moderating factor that reduces work demands. However having good relationship at work as this study has shown does not entirely eliminate stress, as there may be other stressors present at the work place.

An analysis of the communication process in both schools is provided in table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6: Rating of the communication process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.I.C Girls</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the analysis in table 4.6 above it is clear that a large percentage (73.4%) considered the communication process as fair. This information is represented in figures 4.6 (a) and 4.6 (b) respectively as shown below:

Figure 4.6 (a) Rating of the communication process

This figure shows the biggest pie (73%) as representing the respondents’ rating of the communication process as fair with only (9%) describing it as very good.
The findings of this study indicate that majority of teachers (73.4%) rate communication as only fair. This means a lot needs to be done to improve communication. Luccier (2003) maintains that good communication fosters a supportive environment in which stress issues can be identified and addressed.

When asked how often they received clear feedback about the nature of their performance, the responses of the teachers were as summarized in table 4.7 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.I.C Girls</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>68.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This analysis shows that 68.9% of the teachers sometimes received clear feedback while 31.1% rarely received clear feedback. The information on table 4.7 can further be represented in figure 4.7 (a) and 4.7 (b) below:
As the figure shows, 69% of the respondents indicated that they sometimes received clear feedback about their performance at work and 31.1% rarely did.

The findings indicate that teachers did not receive feedback always. Cohen & Williamson (1989) indicate that provision of clear feedback to teachers about the nature of their performance is important since it has been associated with lower levels of stress. Feedback provided should not just be clear but it should be provided all the time.

Regarding involvement in departmental decision-making in areas that affected their work 39 teachers (86.7%) said they were involved while only 6 (13.3%) said they were not involved.
Table 4.8: Respondents involvement in decision making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.I.C Girls</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>75.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The information in table 4.8 above is represented in figures 4.8 (a) and 4.8(b) below:

Figure 4.8 (a): Respondents involvement in decision-making

Figure 4.8(a) above indicates that a majority of the teachers participated in decision-making with only 13.3% not involved.

Figure 4.8 (b): Respondents involvement in decision-making
This indicates that most teachers were involved in departmental decision making in areas that affected their work. Involving teachers in decision-making matters that are a direct concern and interest to them encourages close cooperation and quality solutions and is a means of coping with stress (Mullins, 2002)

As far as problem solving at work is concerned, 40% of the teachers felt that problems at work were solved fast enough while 60% felt that they were not as indicated in table 4.9 below:

### Table 4.9: Satisfaction with pace of problem solving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.I.C Girls</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The information in table 4.9 above is further represented in the figures 4.9(a) and 4.9(b) below:

![Figure 4.9(a): Satisfaction with pace of problem solving](image)

Head teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the many protocols that had to be followed before decisions were taken.
The 60% were particularly dissatisfied with the communication process, failure to implement decisions and slow process in acquiring materials ordered for.

When asked how well they knew what was expected of them at work, their responses were as analyzed in table 4.10 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Very well</th>
<th>Well</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>Barely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.I.C Girls</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>48.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>62.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This analysis shows that a large percentage of teachers 62.2% knew what was expected of their work well, 20% knew very little while only 17.7% knew very well what was expected of them at work. The information on table 4.10 is further represented in the figures 4.10(a) and 4.10(b) respectively.
The largest pie in the figure above with 62%, which represents “well”, shows that respondents knew well what was expected of them at work.

The fact that a considerable percentage (20%) knew very little about their work suggests there is role ambiguity in the schools. According to Caplan & Jones (1975) role ambiguity is associated with stress when a person has few clear ideas of what is to be done.

When asked how often they were consulted on issues affecting the school, the responses of the teachers are shown in table 4.11 below:
Table 4.11: How often teachers are consulted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Very rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.I.C Girls</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

55.6% of the respondents were sometimes consulted on issues affecting the school, 13.3% were never consulted, and 31.1% were very rarely consulted. Figures 4.11(a) and 4.11(b) give a further representation of the information in table 4.8.

![Pie chart](image)

Figure 4.11(a): How often teachers are consulted

The findings of this study, as shown in the figure above indicated that a large proportion of the respondents, (56%) were sometimes consulted on issues affecting the school with (0%) indicating that they were never always consulted.
The findings indicate that teachers are not always consulted on issues affecting the school. Consultation encourages closer cooperation and quality solutions and is a means of coping with stress (Mullins, 2002).

Reporting on whether teachers had any conflicting demands made upon them, their responses were analyzed in table 4.12 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Very rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.I.C Girls</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This analysis shows that 66.6% of the teachers sometimes received conflicting demands made upon them, 6.7% said they never did while 26.7% very rarely did. This information is represented in figure 4.12(a) and 4.12(b) respectively:
From the figure above, a large proportion of the teachers representing 66% indicated they sometimes received conflicting demands made upon them.

66.6% of the teachers indicated that they sometimes received conflicting demands from the school administration. According to Caplan & Jones (1975) role conflict is associated with stress when people receive conflicting information about work tasks from different individuals.

Head teachers' occasionally rewarded teachers for good work done through verbal acknowledgements, written commendations and providing financial rewards when funds were available.
The head teachers said that performance appraisals were rarely conducted and even then most of the recommendations were rarely implemented. On delegation, the head teachers expressed difficulty in delegating because most teachers were unwilling to take up more responsibility because they felt it was not commensurate with their remuneration. They however continued to encourage teachers to take up more responsibility, as this would greatly enhance their career prospects and professional development.

The researcher wanted to find out if teachers were satisfied with the pace of promotion. Table 4.13 reflects the respondents feeling on promotion.

**Table 4.13: Respondents satisfaction with pace of promotion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.I.C Girls</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

91.1% of the respondents were dissatisfied with the pace of promotion compared with only 8.9 who were satisfied. This information is further represented in the figures below:

![Figure 4.13(a): Respondents satisfaction with pace of promotion](image)
The 91.1% who were dissatisfied were particularly unhappy with the long time taken for teachers to be promoted to the next job group, the lack of opportunities for career development with most of them being stuck in the same job group for over ten years.

![Satisfaction with promotion](image)

**Figure 4.13(b) Respondents satisfaction with pace of promotion**

It is evident that teachers in are clearly dissatisfied with the pace of promotion. This is unhealthy and as indicated by Mullins (2002), employees who feel that they have been promoted slowly feel insecure about job futures; they feel that their ambitions are thwarted in their current jobs and feel more stressed.

When asked, “How stressful do you find being a teacher? 8.8% felt that teaching was not at all stressful, 55.6% felt it was moderately stressful, 35.6% felt it was very stressful while non of them felt it was extremely stressful. These responses are summarized in table 4.14 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Very stressful</th>
<th>Extremely stressful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.I.C Girls</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

55.6% of the teachers are moderately stressed, while 35.6% are very stressed and 8.8% are not at all stressed. The information on table 4.11 is represented further in the figures below:
According to the figure above, 55% of the respondents indicated that they were moderately stressed. This comprises of a majority of the teachers.

This study indicates that majority of teachers are moderately (55.6%) to very stressed (35.6%). This study confirms researchers views that stress in teaching is a worldwide phenomenon and that teachers are experiencing some degree of occupational stress (Yogul 2004; Steptoe & Cropley 1999).

When asked to list areas that they found stressful in their work, the following sources of stress had 10 and above responses each from the 45 respondents and were therefore considered as crucial factors that cause stress among the teachers:

- Setting and marking of exams and assignments
- Performance of students in exams
- Dealing with students indiscipline
- Lack of teaching material/outdated equipment
- Lack of interest by the students and dealing with weak students
- Dealing with controlling parents
- Students complaints

When asked if areas they found stressful were a threat to their current performance, 66.7% stated Yes while 33.3% said No as indicated in table 4.12 below:

Table 4.15: Effect of stress on performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.I.C Girls</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The information on table 4.15 above can be depicted in the figures 4.15(a) and (b) below:

Figure 4.15(a): Respondents feeling on the effects of stress on performance
Figure 4.15 (a) above indicates that the largest proportion of the teachers (67%) reported that Stress was a threat to their current performance at work.

![Figure 4.15(b): Respondents feeling on the effects of stress on performance](image)

The 66.7% stated that the marking and setting of exams took a large proportion of their preparation time with most of them failing to adequately revise their work with students owing to the large classes. Outdated equipment made it difficult for teachers to effectively teach while the lack of morale by students, cases of indiscipline, controlling parents all hampered teachers’ ability to effectively perform their duties.

Reporting on how stress manifests itself in teachers, their responses were summarized under the following considering responses that had a frequency of 10 and above:

- Withdrawal and keeping to self
- Lack of concentration
- Missed deadlines and uncharacteristic errors
- Anger or tantrums
- Emotional outbursts and alcohol abuse

The researcher wanted to find out ways in which teachers coped with stressful work situations. Below are common mechanisms that teachers used:

- Talking with fellow staff
- Watching TV and listening to music
- Taking a break
- Exercising
- Prioritizing work and putting in extra hours
- Planning ahead, reading books and smoking

When asked if head teachers provided teachers with information and assistance on self-management of stress, they said they sometimes did to those who requested for it. When the respondents were asked how they perceived their role with regard to stress management in their schools, 24.4% perceived their role as very important, 48.9% as important, 15.6% as less important and 11.1% as not important. This information is summarized in table 4.16 below:

### Table 4.16: Perceived role with regard to stress management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Less important</th>
<th>Not important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.I.C Girls</td>
<td>1 2.2</td>
<td>5 11.1</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>1 2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olkejuado</td>
<td>10 22.2</td>
<td>17 37.8</td>
<td>7 15.6</td>
<td>4 8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>11 24.4</td>
<td>22 48.9</td>
<td>7 15.6</td>
<td>5 11.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A large percentage of the respondents (48.9%) perceived their role with regard to stress management as important with only 11.1% indicating that it was not important. The information in table 4.16 is represented further in the figures below:

![Figure 4.16(a): Respondents perceived role with regard to stress management](image)

From the figure above almost half of the respondents (48.9%) perceived their role with regard to stress management in their schools as important.
The figure indicates that a majority of the teachers 48.8% perceived their role with regard to stress management as important even though very few of them received any information on the management of stress.

When asked to provide suggestions towards managing stress in schools, teachers provided the following suggestions:

- Establishing a stress management office in every district headquarters to provide guidance and counseling and come up with a policy on stress management
- Involving teachers in decision-making in matters affecting their work
- Empowering teachers by instructing them on stress and time management
- Improving communication channels and establishing clear goals and objectives
- Establishing clear goals and objectives
- Seeking help from others by developing social support networks
- Improving working conditions
- Reducing bureaucratic procedures in acquiring of teaching materials
- Solving problems in time when they occur and providing prompt feedback
4.4 SUMMARY OF DATA ANALYSIS

From the data analysis, it is evident that a large percentage of teachers (60%) are satisfied with being teachers. 62.2% of them described their work as interesting. However it is worth noting that 100% of the teachers suggested that better remuneration would make their job more interesting. Teachers expressed satisfaction with the support they get from their head teachers. It was noted that only 11.1% of the teachers had attended courses in the past two years while none of the teachers had been nominated to attend a stress management course.

Only 20% of the teachers had been given new duties in the last two years. There was inadequate staff in the area of sciences in both schools as well as equipment and office space. Both the teachers and head teachers spend an extra 8-15 hours at work after the normal working hours. 51% of the teachers described their relationship with others as very good. 73.4% described the communication process as only fair while 68.9% said they sometimes received clear feedback about the nature of their performance. Only 13.3% were not involved in departmental decision-making. 60% of the teachers felt that their problems at work were not solved fast enough. 55.6% of the teachers said they were sometimes consulted on issues affecting the school, and 66.6% said they sometimes received conflicting demands on their jobs.

Teachers were only occasionally rewarded. Performance appraisals were rarely conducted and their recommendations were rarely implemented. Head teachers experienced difficulty in delegating and 91.1% of the teachers were dissatisfied with the pace of promotion. The stress levels among teachers range from moderate at 55.6% to very stressful at 35.6%. Stress is caused by many factors among the teachers. Stress was a threat to the current performance of teachers at work.

Stress in teachers manifests itself in several ways and teachers used different ways to cope with the stress. Very few teachers had received information on the management of stress. However 48.9 % perceived their role with regard to stress management as very important and they provided several suggestions towards the management of stress.
CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

As far as occupational stress is concerned findings of the study show that the overall stress level of teachers in Central Division of Kajiado District is moderate and that the stressors involved are varied. Despite the moderate to high levels of reported stress, teachers in central Division of Kajiado District are satisfied from their job, as the results of the study have shown with a response of 60% being satisfied.

From the study it was noted that most teachers held no additional responsibilities other than their teaching assignments yet a majority of them (55.5%) had been teaching for over 10 years. Most of them had stagnated in the same job group and cited lack of promotion opportunities in the teaching profession. Over 80% of the teachers had not undergone training since they last graduated. Both schools had inadequate facilities with most of the equipment being obsolete.

The communication process in both schools was considered as fair. Most teachers did not always receive feedback about their performance. Teachers’ problems at work were not solved fast enough. Only 55.6% were sometimes consulted on issues affecting the school. Teachers sometimes received conflicting demands about their work. Performance appraisals were rarely conducted and most of the recommendations were not implemented. Head teachers had difficulty in delegating responsibility.

From the study, stress is a major threat to the performance of teachers at work and stress manifested itself in several ways. Many teachers regard the management of stress in schools as important even though very few of them had received any information regarding the management of stress. Involvement in decision-making and improved communication among other suggestions would go along way towards the management of stress in schools.

The fact that this study shows that teachers are stressed confirms the general phenomenon that stress in teaching is a worldwide phenomenon and that the stressors involved are multiple and varied. Teachers sources of stress present similarities as well as differences with those reported
in other studies, such as Carr (1994), Chaplain (2001), Cooper and Kelly (1993) and Ostell and Oakland (1995). From the presentation of teachers' sources of stress many similarities have emerged among various studies that have been conducted. In all these studies it has clearly come out that failure to involve employees in decision-making, poor relationships, work overload, lack of career development and lack of training among others are common sources of stress.

Certain differences are considered absolutely normal, since the conditions and characteristics of each educational system prompt to different sources and priorities of each population. As far is stress management is concerned, teachers in Kajiado use various personal, interpersonal and organizational strategies and techniques. The strategies used are in line with the findings of other studies (Dunham, 1994; Griffith et al; 1999).

This study focused on job redesign, career development, performance management processes, communication, training, satisfying social relationships, participatory management, autonomy and control and reward packages as key stress management strategies. This study revealed that even though these strategies are in place in schools, they are still wanting and more needs to be done. This is very clear given the fact that 100% of the teachers were unhappy with their pay; 91.1% of the respondents were dissatisfied with promotion prospects, 88.9% were unhappy with training opportunities, 80% were unhappy with the job redesign while another 60% felt that their problems were solved slowly.

This clearly indicates that the management of schools should ensure that these strategies are implemented to the full so as to improve teachers' effectiveness and learners performance all geared to effective learning outcomes and most of all alleviate stress among teachers

5.2 ANSWERS TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS/RELATIONSHIP WITH HYPOTHESIS

With the aim of fulfilling the first research question, the researcher wanted to identify the stressful factors among secondary school teachers in Central Division of Kajiado District.

To this end, the sources of teacher stress were analyzed using factor analysis and grouped as shown in table 5.1 with the response rate given in percentage from the most stressful to the least stressful.
Table 5.1: Ranking of the sources of teachers’ stress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of stress</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate salary</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of promotion prospects</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>91.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of training</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited job design/uninteresting tasks</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students performance in national exams</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obsolete equipment/inadequate facilities</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role conflict</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>66.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance of school discipline</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>62.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow problem solving</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bureaucracy</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with difficult parents</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>49.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marking of exams and assignments</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to provide feedback continuously</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of clarity about tasks</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to consult on issues affecting the school</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the analysis on table 5.1 one of the major sources of stress for teachers is inadequate salary with a 100% response, followed by lack of promotion prospects with 91.1% while 88.9% cited lack of training and 80% indicated failure to redesign their jobs.

To find out the effects of stress on the performance of teachers, the respondents were asked if they felt that the stressful areas in their work which they had indicated in question 19 were a threat to their current performance. 60% of the respondents said ‘Yes’ while 40% said ‘No’. When asked to state how the stressful areas were a threat to their performance, their responses were analyzed and narrowed down to the following:

- Failure to prepare adequately for their lessons
- Lack of dedication and commitment to their work
- Taking longer breaks
- Neglect of responsibilities
- Increased absences
- Failure to effectively deliver due to lack of facilities
- Taking longer over tasks
- Ineffective evaluation due to the large number of students

With the third research question, the researcher wanted to identify the strategies that teachers use to cope with their occupational stress. The following were the most frequently used by the teachers since they had a response of more than ten respondents:

- Talking with fellow staff
- Dealing with the situation (flight)
- Watching TV and listening to music
- Exercising
- Going out with friends
- Planning ahead
- Putting in extra hours
- Reading books smoking and alcohol intake
- Taking a break

In addition, to be able to manage stress in schools teachers suggested the following:

- Come up with a policy on stress management and establishing a stress management office in all district headquarters to provide guidance and counseling
- Involving teachers in decision-making in areas that affected their work
- Improving communication channels in schools
- Providing in-service training to teachers and especially on the management of stress
- Improving working conditions
- Solving problems in time
- Providing feedback
- Reducing bureaucratic procedures in acquiring of teaching materials

In view of these findings, this research concurs with earlier researchers (Griffith, Steptoe & Cropley, 1999) that teachers are experiencing some degree of occupational stress. In this study it
was noted that most teachers were moderately stressed (55.6%) to very stressed at (35.6%). The stressors involved were varied but there were common sources of stress that teachers encountered in the course of their work that were similar to those reported by other researchers.

5.3 CONCLUSION

Based on the study it is clear that the respondents are faced with various job stressors in their teaching profession which affect their performance at work and that they use various coping mechanisms. From the responses the most stressful factors among teachers are inadequate salary with a response of 100% and lack of promotion prospects at 91.1%. Work-related stress is a major threat to the health and performance of teachers and students in schools. In general, the findings of this research show that teachers are moderately stressed.

More attention should be paid by the school management to ensure that they provided their teachers with quality working life. Individual teachers and the school management should take a proactive approach to look for ways in which they can reduce workplace stress rather than focusing on what they can do to help teachers cope with stress more effectively. It is also important to note that the school management should play a significant role in preventing teacher stress.

From the ranking of sources of stress in table 5.1, it shows that work-related stress should not be ignored. Teacher stress affects people’s lives and diminishes their performance as educators. Neither head teachers nor teachers can combat stress by themselves. They need the official authorities to stand by their side and offer them the necessary help.

This study shows that teachers’ occupational stress is comparable to that of other teachers in general and the results attest that the sources of teachers’ stress are varied. The findings suggest that more attention should be paid to what can be done to help teachers cope with the responsibilities, pressures and demands of their work in a dynamic educational environment. The management of schools should provide a stress free work environment, recognize where stress is becoming a problem for staff, and take action to reduce stress.
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the discussions in the proceeding chapters, the following recommendations were offered as strategies that can be used to combat stress hence improving teacher effectiveness and efficiency at work:

- Provision of clear feedback to teachers about the nature of their performance is important since it has been associated with lower levels of stress (Cohen & Wiliamson, 1989).
- Proper planning of teachers’ careers and promoting them in accordance with their capabilities. Lack of promotion opportunities results to feelings of insecurity about job futures and makes them feel that their ambitions are thwarted in their current jobs. This makes them more stressed.
- A good communication system should be developed in the school through regular staff meetings, circulars, or individual discussions. A friendly and cooperative working environment should be established where teachers are free to express their opinions.
- Head teachers should avoid doing everything at once. Work should be spread so that a person is not put under pressure. Try to delegate duties fairly among teachers so that all can actively participate in the life of the schools and its activities.
- Schools should provide teachers with opportunities to interact with others and to develop satisfying social relationships at work. Inability to develop satisfying relationships at work is tied to job stress and to negative effects at work. Employees who are able to develop socially supportive relationships at work have enhanced well-being.
- Teachers should exercise and engage themselves with out of school activities. This will enable them to build resistance to stress.
- Involve all teachers in the decision-making process especially in matters that are of direct concern and interest to them. Workers who cannot participate actively show higher rates of absenteeism and poor performance on the job.
- The school administration should recognize and reward teaching excellence by sponsoring teachers to attend seminars, workshops and conferences or nominating excellent teachers for teaching awards. Rewarding workers for good work improves morale and provides incentives for better future work.
It is important to minimize unpredictability and ambiguity in expected tasks and standards of performance. When employees know what they are expected to do and at what level, they are less distressed.

Making jobs as interesting as possible may contribute to the reduction of stress. Job redesign enhances the personal satisfaction that people derive from their work and makes the best use of people as a valuable resource of the organization and help to overcome obstacles to their effective performance.

Increase general awareness amongst staff of the causes and effects of stress, provide staff with information and assistance on the self management of stress and provide training to HODs on the particular contribution they can make to the management of stress.

The Ministry of Education should see to the needs of teachers by discussing with the relevant authorities their pay and welfare benefits and come up with policy guidelines on the management of stress in schools.

Head teachers and heads of departments can look for signs of stress before stress has an opportunity to do significant damage.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY
At this point the researcher would like to recommend that:

- A further study is needed to verify the findings of this study and contribute to the development of a sound research database on occupational stress of secondary school teachers. This study would enlighten the issue and help the official authorities to make their policy on the issue.

- A similar study be replicated in other government and private schools and results compared with that of the present study.
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APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE TO TEACHERS

INSTRUCTIONS:
The questionnaire consists of THREE PARTS: A, B AND C

PART A: To Be Completed By All Respondents

PART B: To Be Completed By Head teachers only

PART C: To Be Completed By All Respondents

PART A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1) Name of the school

2) Please state your professional qualifications

3) How many years have you served as a teacher in this school? (Please tick appropriately)

   Less than 3 years  3-6 years  6-10 years  Over 10 years

   □             □             □             □

4) What position do you hold if any?

PART B (HEAD TEACHERS ONLY)

FACTORS RELATING TO WORK

1(a) Are you satisfied with the support you get from the government?

   Yes   □  No   □

(b) If no in 4(a) above briefly state areas in which you would like more support
2) Have you ever had formal training in the following courses? (Please tick appropriately)

(a) Time management
(b) Communication
(c) Team building
(d) Stress Management

3) Have you for the last two years nominated any staff to attend a stress management course?

Yes ☐ No ☐

4) Does your school have adequate (Please tick the appropriate box)

(a) Staff
(b) Equipment
© Office Space

5) How would you describe class sizes in your school?

Less than ☐ 20-30 ☐ 30-40 ☐ More than ☐

6) Do you have any conflicting demands made upon you by the ministry of education?

Always ☐ Sometimes ☐ Very rarely ☐ Never ☐

7 (a) Does your school recognize jobs done well?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) If yes, in 20(a) above, briefly say how

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
8 (a) How often are performance appraisals conducted in your school?

(b) Were most of the recommendations in the performance appraisal implemented?
Yes  [ ]  No [ ]

9(a) Do you have difficulty delegating responsibility?
Yes [ ]  No [ ]

(b) If yes in 21(a) above, briefly indicate areas of difficulty

10) What encouragement do you give your teachers to take up more responsibility?

11) Do you provide teachers with information and assistance on self-management of stress?
Yes [ ]  No [ ]

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

PART C (ALL RESPONDENTS)

FACTORS RELATING TO WORK

1) In general, how satisfied are you with being a teacher (tick appropriately)
Not satisfied [ ]  Moderately satisfied [ ]  Satisfied [ ]  Very satisfied [ ]

2) What would you suggest to make your job more interesting?
3) How would you describe your tasks at work?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Interesting</th>
<th>Interesting</th>
<th>Less interesting</th>
<th>Not interesting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4) List down the courses that you have attended in the last two years

5) List any new duties that you have been given in the last two years

6) List three major things that you would like to be improved regarding your working conditions:

7) State how many hours after the normal working hours do you spend at work?

   Monday to Friday [ ] Saturday [ ] Sunday [ ]

8) How would you describe your relationship with other teachers?

   Very good [ ] Good [ ] Fair [ ] Poor [ ]

9) In your opinion how can schools provide teachers with opportunities to develop meaningful social relationships?

10) How would you rate the communication process in your school?

   Very good [ ] Good [ ] Fair [ ] Poor [ ]

11) How often do you receive clear feedback about the nature of your performance?

   Always [ ] Sometimes [ ] Rarely [ ] Never [ ]
12) Are you involved in decision-making, especially in those areas that affect your work?

Yes □ No □

13(a) Do you feel your problems at work are solved fast enough?

Yes □ No □

(b) If No, in 16(a) above indicate areas of dissatisfaction

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

14) How often are you consulted on issues affecting the school?

Never □ Very rarely □ Sometimes □ Always □

15) How well do you know what is expected of you at work?

Very well □ Well □ Very little □ Barely □

16) Do you have any conflicting demands made upon you by the school administration?

Never □ Very rarely □ Sometimes □ Always □

17(a) Are you satisfied with the pace of promotion?

Yes □ No □

(b) If no in 18(a) above, indicate areas of dissatisfaction

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

18) How stressful do you find being a teacher?

Not at all □ Moderately stressful □ Very stressful □ Extremely stressful □
19) List four areas that you find most stressful in your work

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

20(a) Do you feel that the areas listed in 19 (above) are a threat to your work performance?

Yes ☐  No ☐

(b) If yes, in 20(a) above, state how they affect your performance

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

21) How does stress manifest itself in you?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

23) List four ways in which you use to cope with stressful work situations

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

24) How do you perceive your role with regard to stress management in your school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Less important</th>
<th>Not important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25) What suggestions would you make towards managing stress in schools?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION
## APPENDIX III: WORK PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time (Number of weeks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pilot study and adjustments</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
<td>10 11 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Report writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Compilation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Submission of report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Pilot study and adjustments

Data collection

Data analysis

Report writing

Compilation

Submission of report
## APPENDIX IV: BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Ksh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposal preparation</td>
<td>2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal typing, photocopying and binding</td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Browsing</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traveling expenses</td>
<td>5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of producing questionnaires</td>
<td>2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection</td>
<td>13000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data analysis</td>
<td>8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report writing, tying and photocopying</td>
<td>6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binding</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>49,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>