

## INFLUENCE OF BURNOUT ON WORK PERFORMANCE AMONG DELOCALIZED FEMALE PRINCIPALS IN SOUTH RIFT, KENYA

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.56293/IJMSSSR.2022.4555>

IJMSSSR 2023

VOLUME 5

ISSUE 1 JANUARY – FEBRUARY

ISSN: 2582 - 0265

**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to investigate burnout and its influence on work performance among delocalized female principals in South Rift, Kenya. The study was guided by theory of Psychological Well-Being. It was informed by positivism philosophy where positivist's perspectives were used to come up with research outcomes. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population consisted of all delocalized female principals in south rift; there are 151 public secondary schools headed by female principals. 80% of them have been delocalized since 2018. Therefore, the study targeted 121 delocalized female principals where Kericho had 50, Bomet 45 and Narok 26. The study employed census sampling method to sample schools and all principals to participate in the study. Therefore, a total of 121 principals were sampled and included in the study. Data was collected by means of interview schedule and questionnaire including Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) tool that measured the risk of burnout. However, all the sampled population was administered with questionnaires while 30% (36) were administered with interview schedules in order to enrich the study with qualitative information. A pilot study was carried out before the actual data collection and a reliability coefficient of 0.9 was obtained therefore the research instruments was deemed reliable. The collected data were subjected to statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer programme version 23.0. Descriptive statistics were used in the data analysis and the findings were presented in frequency tables, percentages and graphs. The study found out that that most of the female principals feel emotionally drained by their work and feel that they work too hard at their job a few times a year. The findings of this study may be of benefit to the government, school administrators and policymakers in coming up with effective strategies that will improve emotional wellness of principals in schools. The study may also benefit teachers' service commission and the Ministry of Education in designing and monitoring intervention strategies to address the challenges faced by female schools principals in mental build-up.

**Keywords:** Burnout, Delocalized and Work Performance

### 1.0 Introduction

Burnout is a relatively new concept (coined with its contemporary intent in 1975), although interest in this topic has significantly increased over the last 40 years. Most who have studied burnout agree that it is a multifaceted construct, including (but not limited to) domains like work-supportive energy (exhaustion and fatigue), perception of work meaningfulness, work-directed concentration and focus, and extent of work engagement. The definition of burnout varies, the most widely accepted model of burnout according to Maslach (2001), is a tripartite construct comprised of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Occupational burnout can be a significant concern for workers and employers alike. There are reasonable data to suggest that employees experiencing burnout exhibit significant decrements in the quality and quantity of their work output (Firth & Britton, 2009), increased rates of absenteeism and thoughts of leaving their jobs, degraded indices of physical health and immune functioning decreased career satisfaction and quality of life, and even changes in risk for suicidal ideation (Armon et al., 2010). The risk of burnout in teachers is increased when teachers have unmet or unrealistic goals and lack professional accomplishment (Evers et al., 2004). The study established the influence of burnout on work performance among delocalized female principals in South Rift, Kenya

## 1.1 Statement of the Problem

According to a survey conducted by Devadoss and Minnie (2013), almost 30,000 workers showed that females suffered workplace stress where burnout is one of the factors and this has been exhibited in South Rift. There had been a significant upsurge in occupational stress among female school principals in schools that had shortfalls of both physical and human resources. Burnout has been a subject of speculation, consternation, and concern since the formal development of work concepts thousands of years ago. Scientific investigation of the occupational burnout construct, however, likely started in the latter part of the twentieth century as greater attention was paid to the personal toll of work on workers. Majority of female school principals were also faced with excessive workload in relation to their different roles that were not only limited to their teaching duties but also administrative tasks, parents' meetings, organizing and attending seminars as well as other roles in the community and family. This has led to the increase in work load on the intrinsic characteristics of ever-changing teaching and administrative landscape thus burnout. The female principals are working and balancing between the home front chores and increased hours at work place phenomenon explained by traditional gender role perspective. There are some studies that have been done on principals in general and a few on female principals' moral orientation but none has been done on the influence of occupational stress caused by burnout among female principals' work performance in Kenya and specifically in South Rift where female principals have faced great challenges rooted from the occupational stress caused by burnout which in turn affect their work performance. For this reason, this study if not addressed, will strain the performance and service delivery of education in Kenya considering the fact that the children are in the hands of these principals. The study therefore, sought to uncover the high susceptibility of stress caused by burnout among female school principals and how it influences work performance of female principals in South Rift Kenya.

## 1.2 Research Objective

- (i) To find out the influence of burn out caused by job demands on work performance of delocalized female principals in secondary schools in South Rift, Kenya.
- (ii) To examine the influence of burn out caused by increased pressure on work performance of delocalized female principals in secondary schools in South Rift, Kenya.
- (iii) To find out the influence of burn out caused by anxiety on work performance of delocalized female principals in secondary schools in South Rift, Kenya.

## 2.1 Theoretical Framework

The study confined itself to the theory of psychological well-being. The UK Health and safety Executive (HSE, 2007) has attempted to categorize the key work design factors which may relate to stress-related health issues. These are presented as part of a "Management Standards" framework and include Demands; Control; Support; Relationship; Role; and Organizational change. All these pressures are known as "psychological stressors", and these have been implicated as risk factors for many physical and psychological problems (Cox & Griffiths, 1995). These outcomes can also have serious consequences for employers, leading to high turnover, absence, strikes, decreased productivity and low morale.

Burnout has gained more attention in the recent years, as the number of principals experiencing it increase since globalization takes place. An occupationally stressful leader fails to ensure fulfilling the productive and gainful outcomes in an organization. Burnout is interminable condition created by the conditions in workplace that can belligerently influence the employment progress of the employees and their general prosperity. Theory of psychological well-being entails people's feeling in the routine life, and these feelings may vary from positive feelings to negative feelings. Principals' burnout contributes to stress as mentioned by the theory of psychological well-being. Psychological well-being is the fundamental component of overall well-being and is related to physical well-being, longer lives and greater pleasure for employees. Any impact on principals' psychology affects the outcome or rather their workability.

The model that explains psychological well-being in this study is job demand-control model. It is currently the most influential model in the workplace and has dominated the field of occupational stress research for more than two decades (Leka et al., 2012). It postulates that job strain (a component of occupational stress) results from the interaction between psychological job demands and job control. Psychological demands refer to workload, mainly

in terms of time pressure and role conflict (Kompier, 2012). Job control refers to the worker’s ability to control their work activities, through an ability to make decisions about their job and ability to utilize their skills on the job. According to this model, job strain results from pairing combination of high psychological demands with low job control. According to Leka et al., (2010), occupational stress increases when employees experience high demands such as role overload and yet have minimal control over their work environment. The JDC model was later modified to include social support and was renamed the Job Demand-Control-Support (JDACS) model (Johnson & Hall, 1988). The JDACS model is based on the assumption that social support can moderate the negative impact of job strain on workers’ physical and mental health. The model argues that workers who are exposed to job strain with minimal workplace support are most likely to experience poor physical and mental health (Van Der Doef&Maes, 1999).

### 3.1 Research Methodology

Descriptive survey of the study research was used in the study with the aim of establishing the influence of occupational stress on work performance of female principals in secondary schools in South Rift. Descriptive survey research design permitted gathering of data which is quantitative and qualitative. To recount the features of a larger population, descriptive survey research came in handy. There is cost effectiveness, easy completion and tabulation allowance of results together with a numerous amount of responses which can be obtained within a shorter timeline in the survey method of collecting data according to Kothari (2004). A Descriptive survey was also beneficial in the enquiry to influence of occupational stress on work performance of female principals in secondary schools in South Rift.

In South Rift there were 151 schools headed by female principals. However, 80% of them have been delocalized since 2018. Therefore, study targeted delocalized female principals. This study targeted 121 respondents that comprised of delocalized female principals in South Rift. Census sampling method was used so as to enable the research to have all female principals selected to participate in the study. Data from this study were gathered using questionnaire and interview. Since the study only targeted female principals, all female principals were given questionnaires to fill. To enrich the study with qualitative data, 30% of the female principals that were given questionnaires were also interviewed

Piloting was held in 15 schools in Nakuru County which were not part of the actual study. The researcher was acquainted with what to expect from participants in the piloting. Before handling any responses, the questionnaires were scrutinized by the researcher to ensure consistency. Instrument reliability in the study was assessed using Kuder-Richardson (KR20) method. Piloting gave a coefficient index of 0.9 thus reliable. Piloting process also pointed out the ambiguity in the questionnaire and the interview schedule which was corrected. Due diligence was undertaken to guarantee that the questions were comprehensible to the participants.

### 4.1 Results

Table 4.1: Maslach Burnout Inventory on Exhaustion of Female Principals

Questions	Never	A Few Times per Year	Once a Month	A Few Times per Month	Once a Week	A Few Times per Week	Every Day	Missing
Section A	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I feel emotionally drained by my work.	7 (6%)	35 (30.2%)	–	31 (26.7%)	–	32 (27.6%)	4 (3.4%)	7 (6%)
Working with people all day long requires a great deal of effort.	11 (9.5%)	25 (21.6%)	13 (11.2%)	22 (19%)	–	–	45 (38.8%)	–

I feel like my work is breaking me down.	41 (35.3%)	39 (33.6%)	8 (6.9%)	11 (9.5%)	10 (8.6%)	7 (6%)	–	–
I feel frustrated by my work.	75 (64.7%)	10 (8.6%)	6 (5.2%)	18 (15.5%)	7 (6%)	–	–	–
I feel that I work too hard at my job.	19 (16.4%)	29 (25%)	–	19 (16.4%)	10 (8.6%)	14 (12.1%)	25 (21.6%)	–
It stresses me too much to work in direct contact with people.	52 (44.8%)	36 (31%)	15 (12.9%)	10 (8.6%)	–	3 (2.6%)	–	–
I feel like I am at the end of my tether.	77 (66.4%)	18 (15.5%)	18 (15.5%)	–	3 (2.6%)	–	–	–
Sub-scores	212	192	60	111	30	56	74	7
<b>Section A Total Score</b>	742							

From table 4.1, majority of 35 (30.2%) and 29 (25%) respondents stated that they feel emotionally drained by their work and feel that they work too hard at their job a few times a year respectively. Furthermore, majority of 45 (38.8%) respondents stated that working with people all day long requires a great deal of effort every day. On the other hand, majority of 41 (35.3%), 75 (64.7%), 52 (44.8%) and 77 (66.4%) respondents stated that they never feel like their work is breaking them down, never feel frustrated by their work, never stresses them too much to work in direct contact with people and never feel like they are at the end of their tether respectively. These results corroborate with the findings of the study done by Subon and Sigie (2016) who claimed that supervision and teaching is one of the most stressful occupations as the education system encompasses all the factors that are associated with stress, such as bureaucratic structures, continuous evaluation of its processes and outcomes, and increased interaction with students, parents, colleagues, teachers, and the community.

**Table 4.2: Maslach Burnout Inventory on Depersonalization of Female Principals**

Questions	Never	A Few Times per Year	Once a Month	A Few Times per Month	Once a Week	A Few Times per Week	Every Day	Missing
Section B	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	

I feel I deal with colleagues or clients impersonally, as if they were objects.	88 (75.9%)	3 (2.6%)	–	6 (5.2%)	–	–	7 (6%)	12 (10.3%)
I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day at work.	34 (29.3%)	27 (23.3%)	22 (19%)	11 (9.5%)	8 (6.9%)	6 (5.2%)	–	8 (6.9%)
I have the impression that my colleagues or clients make me responsible for some of their problems.	40 (34.5%)	34 (29.3%)	4 (3.4%)	21 (18.1%)	3 (2.6%)	3 (2.6%)	3 (2.6%)	8 (6.9%)
I am at the end of my patience at the end of my workday.	48 (41.4%)	30 (25.9%)	6 (5.2%)	10 (8.6%)	–	7 (6%)	–	15 (12.9%)
I really don't care about what happens to some of my colleagues/clients.	87 (75%)	11 (9.5%)	4 (3.4%)	3 (2.6%)	3 (2.6%)	–	–	8 (6.9%)
I am more insensitive to people I was working with.	73 (62.9%)	25 (21.6%)	3 (2.6%)	7 (6%)	–	–	–	8 (6.9%)
I am afraid that the job was making me uncaring.	63 (54.3%)	28 (24.1%)	–	4 (3.4%)	3 (2.6%)	3 (2.6%)	–	15 (12.9%)
Sub-scores	433	158	39	62	17	15	10	74
<b>Section B Total Score</b>	808							

Form Table 4.2, majority of respondents (88 (75.9%), 34 (29.3%), 40 (34.5%), 48 (41.4%), 87 (75%), 73 (62.9%) and 63 (54.3%)) stated that they never feel depersonalized in that they never feel they deal with colleagues or clients impersonally, as if they were objects and never feel tired when they get up in the morning and have to face another day at work. Moreover, majority of them claimed that they never have the impression that their colleagues or clients make them responsible for some of their problems and never at the end of their patience at the end of their work day. They also care about what happens to some of their colleagues/clients and never insensitive to people they are working with neither afraid that the job was making them uncaring. Based on Mukundan, and Ahour (2011), burnout can lead to principals' negative reactions and attitudes towards the teachers.

Negative reactions are connected with reduced quality in teaching, less flexibility to accept various teacher and student needs, and poor teacher-principal interactions.

Table 4.3: Maslach Burnout Inventory on Personal Achievement of Female Principals

Questions	Never	A Few Times per Year	Once a Month	A Few Times per Month	Once a Week	A Few Times per Week	Everyday	Missing
Section C	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
I have accomplished many worthwhile things in the job.	12 (10.3%)	11 (9.5%)	7 (6%)	25 (21.6%)	3 (2.6%)	29 (25%)	22 (19%)	7 (6%)
I feel full of energy.	4 (3.4%)	4 (3.4%)	13 (11.2%)	3 (2.6%)	7 (6%)	47 (40.5%)	23 (19.8%)	15 (12.9%)
I can easily understand what my colleagues' or clients feel.	8 (6.9%)	4 (3.4%)	22 (19%)	11 (9.5%)	3 (2.6%)	25 (21.6%)	36 (31%)	7 (6%)
I look after my colleagues' or clients' problems very effectively.	8 (6.9%)	14 (12.1%)	28 (24.1%)	3 (2.6%)	33 (28.4%)	—	23 (19.8%)	7 (6%)
In my work, I handle emotional problems very calmly.	8 (6.9%)	8 (6.9%)	15 (12.9%)	7 (6%)	17 (14.7%)	30 (25.9%)	21 (18.1%)	10 (8.6%)
Through my work, I feel that I have a positive influence on people.	8 (6.9%)	3 (2.6%)	17 (14.7%)	11 (9.5%)	14 (12.1%)	—	56 (48.3%)	7 (6%)
I am easily able to create a relaxed atmosphere with my colleagues or clients.	8 (6.9%)	24 (20.7%)	—	21 (18.1%)	—	—	56 (48.3%)	7 (6%)
I feel refreshed when I have been close to my colleagues or clients at work.	8 (6.9%)	—	25 (21.6%)	31 (26.7%)	—	—	45 (38.8%)	7 (6%)
Sub-scores	64	68	127	112	77	121	282	67
<b>Section C Total Score</b>	918							

From table 4.3, majority of the respondents makes their personal accomplishment every day or a few times in a week. For instance, majority of 29 (25%) and 47 (40.5%) respondents have accomplished many worthwhile things in the job and feel full of energy a few times in a week while 36 (31%) respondents can easily understand what their colleagues or clients feel every day. Furthermore, majority of 33 (28.4%) respondents look after their colleagues' or clients' problems very effectively once a week. On the other hand, majority of 30 (25.9%) respondents stated that in their work, they handle emotional problems very calmly a few times per week. Moreover, majority of 56 (48.3%), 56 (48.3%) and 45 (38.8%) respondents respectively feel that they have a positive influence on people through their work, easily able to create a relaxed atmosphere with their colleagues or clients and feel refreshed when they have been close to their colleagues or clients at work every day.



Further findings from the interviews show that burnout has influence on work performance of delocalized female principals since they are rarely at one station due to delocalization. On how they manage stress caused by burnout, interviewed female principals indicated that they get enough rest after working hours and meditating to combat burnout symptoms and mindfulness training which decreases anxiety and perceived work stress (Yates, 2020).

## 5.1 Conclusion

The study concluded that most of the female principals feel emotionally drained by their work and feel that they work too hard at their job a few times a year. Every day, female principal's work with people all day long and this requires a great deal of effort. However, female principals never feel like their work is breaking them down, never feel frustrated by their work, never stresses them too much to work in direct contact with people and never feel like they are at the end of their tether. The study also concluded that female principals never feel depersonalized in that they never feel they deal with colleagues or clients impersonally, as if they were objects and never feel tired when they get up in the morning and have to face another day at work. Also, they never have the impression that their colleagues or clients make them responsible for some of their problems and never at the end of their patience at the end of their work day. They also care about what happens to some of their colleagues/clients and never insensitive to people they are working with neither afraid that the job was making them uncaring.

Also, female principals make their personal accomplishment every day or a few times in a week in that, majority of them have accomplished many worthwhile things in the job and feel full of energy a few times in a week. They can easily understand what their colleagues or clients feel every day since they look after their colleagues' or clients' problems very effectively once a week and in their work, they handle emotional problems very calmly a few times per week. They feel that they have a positive influence on people through their work, easily able to create a relaxed atmosphere with their colleagues or clients and feel refreshed when they have been close to their colleagues or clients at work every day.

## 5.2 Recommendation

The study recommends that elementary and secondary education department should collaborate with policy makers to formulate comprehensive strategies for stress reduction management of secondary school female heads so that they may perform their duties effectively. Furthermore, trainings, seminars and workshops on stress reduction management should be arranged for them. They should be taken into confidence while formulating educational policies. They may be provided basic facilities and for this purpose, special budget should be reserved to improve the working conditions. They should be granted handsome compensation and other incentives and political interference in school should be banned.

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